

Right: The Pass Road looking south. A grove of trees surrounds the Eight Mile House.

Below: The Eight-Mile House was Hollywood's first hotel.

Bottom: Travelers camp on the Cabuenga Pass.



## PASS ROAD

Two years into California's statehood, a road for two-wheel carts was graded through the Pass gully. Six years later, in 1858, the Butterfield Stagecoach ran mail twice weekly from San Francisco to St. Louis. Soon, Butterfield came every other day.

The Cabuenga Pass Hotel appeared at the top of the southern side of the Pass, among a grove of blue-gum trees. It became a familiar landmark known as the Eight-Mile House that operated until the early 1920s.

When hard times fell in 1858, the region fell into demoralized poverty. The barbarism lasted ten years. Los Angeles oozed crooks, thieves and con artists. With an unsavory population drifting down from the northern mines, the Cabuenga Pass Road became dangerous. Thieves used the crevices in Dark Canyon to stash their loot. (Dark Canyon, graded, paved and developed, is Barham Blvd.)

A notable Pass traveler was William Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, visiting Los Angeles in 1868 after buying Alaska for the United States. The mayor of Los Angeles, with a welcoming party, met Seward's stagecoach close to the intersection of Hollywood and Cabuenga Boulevards, escorting him into the city while serenading him.

By 1880, most of Nopalera was firmly in American hands. Southern Pacific Railroad had arrived in Los Angeles from San Francisco, supplanting stages for mail delivery and passenger travel. Traffic thinned on the Pass Road, and the road lay neglected.



## NOPALERA, HERE WE COME

In 1860, a California farmer shipped the first cargo of wheat to Europe. Like a starting bell, it signaled opportunity to farmers around the world who came to participate in a trade that grew to huge proportions.

In the late '60s and early '70s, the U.S. government re-surveyed the area. Much of the ungranted land went to Southern Pacific Railroad that planned to link the state with rail. Remaining parcels of 160 acres each were available for homesteaders at \$1.25 an acre.

With the opening of the man-made harbor, San Pedro, in 1868, the first Southern California real estate boom began. Steamers loaded with people seeking cheap land arrived from San Francisco. Immigrants in large numbers, seeking a perfect spot to farm, spread across the basin. Prospective buyers in Nopalera found the valley mostly as it had been for millions of years.

An international, agrarian population appeared suddenly, making its presence obvious. According to Hollywood biographer E.O. Palmer, "The Cahuenga Valley seemed one great barley field dotted here and there by a windmill with its surrounding garden and young orchard." Wooden houses with front porches began to outnumber adobes. Few of the farms had been fully plowed. Most farmers had a cow and two horses.

The government surveyors' delineation still crudely included landmarks like trees and big rocks. It was the first step in defining future roads. Farmers, plowing up the old trails, routed traffic

along property lines that would eventually become the streets of Hollywood. A second official road called Foothill appeared crossing Pass Road and running westward to the ocean. It is today's Santa Monica Boulevard.

Prime farming land started south of Foothill Road, where Germans, Danes, and Swedes snapped up parcels. In the Hollywood Boulevard area, land went for ranches. A Mexican bought the northwest corner of Gower St. and Franklin Ave. A Spaniard named Andrada acquired 20 acres at the northeast corner of Franklin and Bronson Avenues which was

*Above:* Early Hollywood farmers, the Duens lived near Western Avenue and Sunset Boulevard.

*Below:* A bridge crossed a creek at Bronson and Franklin Avenues.

