

Watts: A Growing Suburb with a Future

BY C. H. DODD

Were one to take a map of Greater Los Angeles and, beginning at San Pedro, describe a circle taking in Redondo, Ocean Park, Hollywood, Carvanza, Pasadena, Whittier and Long Beach, one would find the nucleus of the circle to locate Watts. To this location is partly due the increased activity in building, improving of streets and the general advance in realty values. Watts has the very best car service, situated as it is just eight miles from the city hall, Los Angeles (twelve minutes from Sixth and Main) and at the end of the four-track road, making it a transfer point for the Santa Ana, Long Beach and San Pedro lines, and any Pacific Electric engineer will tell you that a line from this point to Redondo will be realized at no distant date, making it possible to shorten the time to that port by getting out of the city over the four-track road. Besides giving us an unsurpassed car service over a thoroughly oiled and rock-ballasted track, the Pacific Electric has built a beautiful and commodious depot where are to be found the Wells-Fargo Express company and the Western Union Telegraph company offices. Using the depot in the sense of a clearing house, the business of the city has increased 50 per cent over last year, making it necessary for extra help to handle the freight.

Watts is a city of the sixth class, incorporated a little over two years ago, and today is on a sound financial basis. It has a population of about 2500, well improved streets, a fire department, a weekly newspaper, just completing a \$12,000 city hall, the best of public schools, churches of the leading denominations, the principal fraternal orders, a chamber of commerce and a good government league.

The soil about the city is a silt or sandy loam, affording excellent drainage, and is indeed fertile, as is evident by the rapid growth of trees and shrubbery, many residents growing sufficient fruit and vegetables for their own consumption on a single lot. There is no place in Southern California where intelligent effort will win from the soil greater returns than this particular locality, and for this reason should arrest the attention of the fruit grower and truck farmer. The shipping facilities are the very best and the nearby city will always offer

The water is of the purest and most healthful, and were the Owens river water never to reach Los Angeles it would not be considered of great moment to Watts, as the surface water rises to within a short distance of the surface. Together with the well regulated water system coming from artesian wells the supply is inexhaustible.

Owing to the altitude and distance from the ocean it does not experience the fog that comes sifting in from the sea as does that district lying lower and nearer the ocean. At the same time it is just removed far enough from the foothills to be relieved from the excessive heat so common in July and August. Together with the fact that we always have a gentle breeze to freshen the atmosphere, giving us that mean temperature with which Southern California is credited.

The bonded indebtedness of the city is \$50,000, a small part of which is already expended for the paving of streets, etc. This money is considered an asset, as the property owners, through petitioning the council, can draw on the same to in part pay for the grading of streets in front of their property. The accused valuation of property has increased materially over that of last year.

The council is made up of men man size, four square, who are enterprising and progressive, who have at all times civic pride in municipal affairs and bend every effort toward furthering the best interests of our growing city. W. H. Turner, William Diller, C. Doran, L. L. Blackman and Patrick Kelly make up the board of trustees, with S. J. Lord and F. H. Anderson as clerk and treasurer.

The problems with which the city is wrestling at present are the building of the city hall, paving of streets, procuring a suitable location for park and bending every effort toward procuring a 5-cent carfare to Los Angeles.

A city to be attractive to the investor and home builder must have good soil, water, public improvements, but first of all a well regulated school system, and this is to be found in Watts under the able supervision of and instruction of Prof. P. Shoaff. There are two buildings with a staff of eight teachers. The schools are

crowded, which will necessitate the erecting of another building in the near future.

The Watts Advertiser, a weekly newspaper, owned and edited by W. F. Schubert, is considered one of the city's assets. The Advertiser is a public-spirited sheet and always to be found on the right side of the city's interest. Seldom is there to be found a great

and municipal affairs and believes in "hewing to the line, let the chips fall where they will." The league had its origin not so much from discord in internal affairs, but as a sort of fifth wheel, to serve as ballast, as it were, and strengthen interest in local government. The city council is made up of business men who have their own private interests and who serve with-

being able to ship goods from here and bill them from Los Angeles, thus drawing on the influence that always comes from being connected with a great city.

Nowhere are offered more inducements to the prospective home builder than in our growing community. Beautiful building sites can be had by the man with a moderate income, these, together with the intellectual advantages of Los Angeles and the quiet of the suburb, make the ideal place for the building of a home. The laboring man has a special opportunity for procuring a home at reasonable terms—just like paying rent—and employment for such can readily be found in Los Angeles, where there is always a demand for mechanics and artisans.

To the man who is looking for a safe investment in real estate would say here is the opportunity, for apart from the rapid growth of Watts, located as we are between Los Angeles and the ocean (the acknowledged direction in which Los Angeles is growing), gives one a double assurance of an increase on one's investment. Mr. C. Donovan, agent for the Golden State Realty company, reports increased activity in real estate and a general rise in realty values.

The merchants are prosperous and doing a good business, and everywhere a spirit of optimism prevails. The stores and buildings are full and few houses are for rent. In the meantime, the moving van is pulling into the city and strange voices are heard inquiring the way to their destination.

THE BOY AND THE CENT

Mr. Peterson did not mind being called a moralist. In fact, he was rather proud of the habit, which he sedulously cultivated, of discoursing in a high, ethical tone about whatever came to his notice. Mrs. Peterson, a silent, hard-working woman, listened to her lord's remarks faithfully, applauding and commenting at what she thought were appropriate spots.

One day Mr. Peterson returned from the village hot with righteous indignation and overexertion.

"These people!" he said, fanning himself rapidly with a palm leaf. "These people and their children! I am almost glad we haven't any children, Maria, for if we had, I'm sure we should train them up to be just as thoughtless and ill-mannered as the rest of the world."

"What—" began Mrs. Peterson, in her soft voice.

"Begging!" answered her husband. "Plain, every-day begging! And John Lincoln's son, too! The little rascal! I don't think he's six yet."

"He was five last May," replied Mrs. Peterson, with a readiness which showed that although she herself had no children, her interest in her friends' offspring was keen.

"Anyway," maintained Mr. Peterson, "he's old enough to know better." This was somewhat illogical, seeing that only a moment before a virtue had been made of the lad's youth. However, Mr. Peterson was a moralist.

"He's old enough to know better," said Mr. Peterson, "and he doesn't do better. This very morning, for example,"—he paused to emphasize again the fact that it was today, as if the date made an important difference—"this very morning I was passing by John Lincoln's house on Vernon street, and there, in the front yard, was his son John, junior, playing with the puppy. No sooner did the boy see me than he said, 'Please, Mr. Peterson, give me a cent.'"

"I am surprised that Sarah Lincoln's boy—" began Mrs. Peterson.

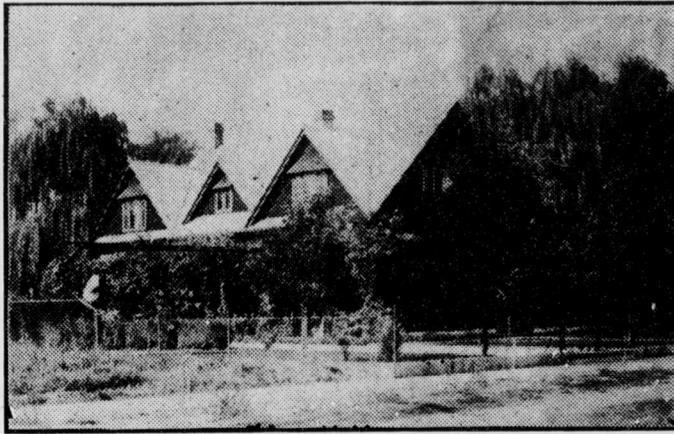
"I am not surprised at anything in this world," announced Mr. Peterson, "after the things I've seen and heard in my life. I am disappointed. So I said to him, 'What do you want with a cent, John?' And to this he replied, 'Buy something.' If any boy of mine—had I a boy—were seen on the public streets—"

"What did you say to him then?" asked Mrs. Peterson, becoming a little impatient to get to the point of the story, as she had cakes in the oven.

"Why," said Mr. Peterson, "I happened to have an extra cent in my pocket, and so I lectured him for several minutes on the crime of begging and—"

"Then you gave him the cent!" said Mrs. Peterson, with an odd smile on her lips.

Her husband nodded. "I thought I might as well."—Youth's Companion.



"The Willows," Home of W. H. Turner, Watts

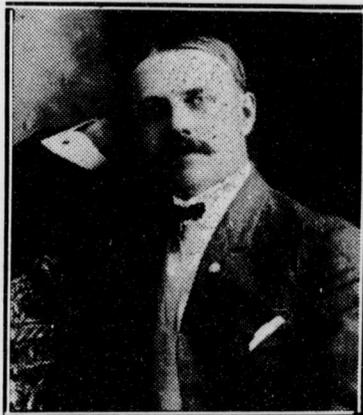
feeling of fellowship than prevails among the business men and merchants, and to this condition is largely due the organizing of the chamber of commerce. Its members are made up of men from every walk of life, and all matters that would tend to upbuild or promote the city's interest find their way into this organization, where, if merited, receive its hearty support. Its motto is "All for one and one for all," and its members have shown their

out pay; therefore the league is often able to aid the city fathers by bringing in a suggestion or registering a protest. The league is democratic in spirit and has for president J. H. Hurley and E. C. Street, secretary, together with a board of directors who have at all times the interest of the organization at heart and are thoroughly imbued with the idea that an intelligent and systematic effort can aid materially in shaping the future welfare of the city.

Watts is enjoying at present a wave of prosperity that is unabating. Buildings are springing up as if by magic. The new city hall is receiving its interior finish and when completed would do credit to a city of much greater pretensions. A large two-story brick with four stores underneath is being erected; one store is already leased for a term of five years for a bank, the fixtures of which are already ordered, the bank to be occupied by the first of the year. The Methodist Episcopal church has just completed a large auditorium to make room for the ever-increasing growth of the church, making it one of the largest and finest in the city.

It has been said that if the flour gold that flows down the Snake river in one year could be caught it would be sufficient to pay off the national debt. It may be of interest to some to learn that we have manufactured in Watts by the California Gold Recovery company a machine that will collect flour gold. The machine is being placed in the mining districts from Mexico to Alaska as rapidly as the company can manufacture them. J. H. Macartney, the inventor, is an old quartz and placer miner, a thorough mechanic, a man of wide experience and one who knows "pay dirt" when he sees it.

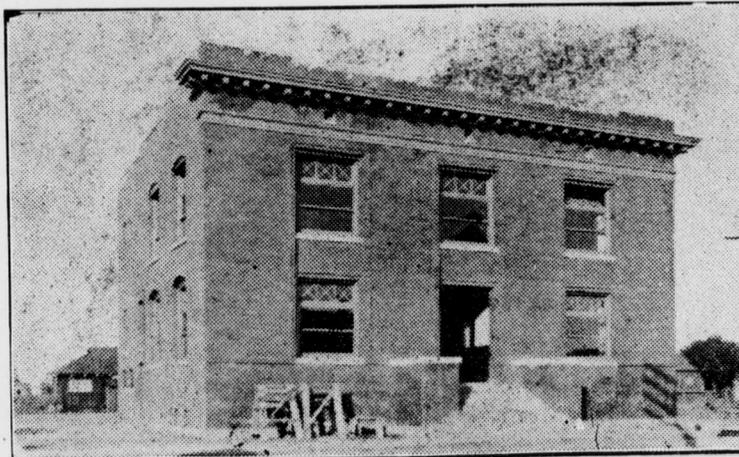
Not only does Watts offer special inducements to shop keeper, merchant and mechanic, but especially to the manufacturer, for with the public-spirited board of trustees, who are always willing to aid in procuring a suitable site, we have the natural drainage and unlimited water supply, together with the great advantage of



W. H. Turner, President Board of Councilmen, Watts

usual good judgment by pledging the organization to non-political action, knowing that the entering of a political wedge sooner or later would tend toward strife and discord. Mr. Charles H. Dodd as president and Prof. P. Shoaff as secretary, together with a strong executive council, lend solidity to the organization. The committees have been chosen with a view of gaining the very best service, and as a result much good is being done the commercial interests.

The Good Government league, as the name implies, stands for purity in pol-



New \$12,000 City Hall, Watts