



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
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(San Diego - Panoramic Photograph) [San Diego Panorama with Coronado, North Island and Point Loma]

Stock#: 96577
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1913 circa
Place: San Diego
Color: Uncolored
Condition: Fair
Size: 47.75 x 8 inches
Price: \$ 2,400.00



Description:

Early 20th-Century Panoramic Photo of San Diego

A wonderful and quite impressive panoramic view of downtown San Diego, circa 1913. The view, likely made from the roof of a building on Broadway - possibly the U.S. Grant Hotel - faces south and west toward San Diego Bay, with Coronado and Point Loma in the distance.

Interestingly, Coronado, North Island and Ft. Rosecrans are the only sites labeled in the negative, which may suggest a military purpose for the image. San Diego Congressman William Kettner, first elected in 1912, was then advocating for San Diego to become a permanent U.S. Navy center. For example, in 1914, Kettner was lobbying to have North Island purchased by the Army and developed as an air training station. The city was also busy planning for the Panama-California Exposition.

San Diego emerged from the real estate bust and economic depression of the late 1890s with optimism, forging ahead with big plans for the new century, particularly through the Panama-California Exposition (1915-16). Several large new hotels shot up in the 1910s, as well as new auto garages, and related tourist businesses. A number of automobiles are visible in the present panorama, though there are still plenty of horse-drawn carriages evident in the downtown streets. Many business buildings and shops are clearly discernable in the present image, including a significant number of construction-related enterprises. The prominent advertisement for Wieland's Beer confirms the image was made before the 18th Amendment which brought Prohibition in 1919.

An elaborate boat loading facility can be seen at the foot of F and G Streets, which is likely related to San Diego's historic tuna fleet and fish canning businesses. The fresh fish industry in San Diego was well established by 1910. An article from that year reported San Diego's fisheries had produced more than 4.6



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million pounds of fresh fish, salt fish, picked fish, lobsters, and turtles, valued at \$225,216. The fishing fleet anchored at the foot of A, B, C, D, E and F streets, and was then composed of about thirty boats, all owned by fishermen.

San Diego and the U.S. Navy

William Kettner, first elected to Congress in 1912, dedicated his tenure from 1913 to 1921 to establishing San Diego as a major naval hub. Leveraging his congenial personality and strategic relationships, including a friendship with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Kettner worked tirelessly to promote the city's potential. His efforts culminated in significant federal appropriations and the establishment of key naval bases like Camp Kearny, the Broadway Naval Supply Depot, and the Naval Air Station North Island, among others. His persistent lobbying and ability to navigate political waters earned him the nickname "Million Dollar Congressman," reflecting his profound impact on San Diego's naval and economic landscape.

Hotel Robert E. Lee (1913)

We can estimate the date of the image as circa 1913, which is when the Hotel Robert E. Lee opened for business on the corner of 3rd Ave. and F Street. The hotel's sign is clearly visible in the photograph. The Robert E. Lee Hotel, named for the leading general of the Confederacy, was one of a number that were built in San Diego in preparation for the Panama-California Exposition of 1915. The Lee was completed about three years after the U.S. Grant Hotel, the latter having been partly financed by the Union general's son, U.S. Grant, Jr. "Lost Cause" revisionism was very strong in American culture at this period, and it is possible that a desire to honor both Civil War generals by naming hotels for them may have been seen as appropriate by some San Diego residents. The Robert E. Lee Hotel building was torn down to make room for the Horton Plaza shopping mall in the 1980s.

The following buildings and sites are visible here:

- 3 Boys Transfer - Commercial Storage
- A Erie Hotel
- Allason's Auto Exchange
- California Livery & Boarding Stables
- Cole Block Building (corner of 5th Ave and G, still standing in Gaslamp Quarter)
- Golden West Hotel
- Harry W. Leggett, Horseshoer (1st Ave.)
- Hotel Harvey
- Hotel Knickerbocker



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- Hotel Robert E. Lee
- Hotel Yokum
- Independent Sash & Door Co.
- L.N. Skinner Furniture
- North Island
- O. Shelley & Sons, Junk Dealers
- Pickwick Stages
- Pioneer Truck Co.
- Portina Grill
- Price Haynes Storage
- Russ Lumber & Mill Co.
- San Diego Coffee Club
- San Diego Paper Box Co.
- San Diego Rowing Club
- Southern Electrical Co.
- Southwest Cal. Wine Co.
- Spreckels Wharf
- The Benbough Furniture Co. (5th Ave.)
- U.S. Grant Garage
- Union Ice Co.
- Wagenheim Co.
- Western Lumber Co.
- Wieland's Beer advertisement

Rarity

While we have seen a few late 19th-century panoramas of San Diego, and several later 20th-century views, the present pre-Panama-California Expo view is particularly scarce in the market.

Detailed Condition:

Original panoramic photograph print. Age-toned. Corners chipped. A large (mended) horizontal tear in the left-hand area of the sheet, approximately 11 inches in length, and a smaller tear to the extreme right. Some light soiling, also in the left part of the image. While overall condition is fair only due to the tears in the sheet, the image quality is generally good, with business signs and other details quite sharp.