

---

## Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Werner von Boltzenstern Postcard Collection

**Dates:** 1898-1970

**Bulk Dates:** 1907-1960

**Collection number:** Consult library

**Collector:** Boltzenstern, Werner von, 1904-1978

**Collector:** Loyola Marymount University. Library. Department of Archives & Special Collections

**Collection Size:** Approximately 1 million postcards, 200 of which are available online200 online items

**Repository:** Loyola Marymount University. Library. Department of Archives and Special Collections.  
Los Angeles, California 90045-2659

**Abstract:** The Werner von Boltzenstern postcard collection is one of the largest publicly-accessible collections in the United States. It contains approximately 1 million postcards from around the world, dating from the beginnings of postcard production in the late 19th century, and extending to the present. Items selected for digitization document the history of Southern California, particularly the greater Los Angeles area, during the first half of the 20th century. This subset of images was selected to provide considerable breadth of coverage, and features prominent businesses and shopping centers, resorts, parks, celebrities' homes, amusement parks and rides, earthquakes, transportation, religious and educational institutions, as well as general views.

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English  
Selected digitized images from this collection.

## Access

Collection open for research.

## Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Werner von Boltzenstern Postcard Collection, Department of Archives and Special Collections, Charles Von der Ahe Library, Loyola Marymount University.

## Acquisition Information

Werner von Boltzenstern donated his postcard collection to Loyola Marymount University in 1967, continuing to add to it until his death in 1978. Loyola Marymount University continues to accept donations of postcards to add to the collection.

## Project Information

This digital collection consists of postcards from the Werner von Boltzenstern Postcard Collection in the Department of Archives & Special Collections at Loyola Marymount University. These items were digitized in order to improve access to the collection, which is uncataloged, as well as to highlight the history of the Greater Los Angeles Area through the popular medium of postcards.

200 postcards were digitized as part of the California Local History Digital Resources Project (LHGRP), a multi-year program supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. Leveraging the infrastructure of the CDL in partnership with Califa and Infopeople, the LHGRP explores a model to aggregate, preserve, and provide permanent public access to local history materials maintained by California cultural heritage institutions via a single statewide online access point. For more information about the LHGRP, see <http://www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/oac/lsta/>.

Project activities spanned from July 2007 through June 2008. Digital objects were created and cataloged using CONTENTdm, a digital asset management tool shared by LHGRP participants. The cataloging conforms to the CDL's Guidelines for Digital Objects specifications for descriptive and copyright metadata (see <http://www.cdlib.org/inside/diglib/guidelines/>). Digitization was performed by Northern Micrographics using flatbed scanners. For each physical item, three digital image files were created: a TIFF master, a JPEG access image, and GIF thumbnail image. Digital image files conform to the CDL's Guidelines for Digital Images (see <http://www.cdlib.org/inside/diglib/guidelines/bpgimages/>).

## Biography / Administrative History

---

Werner von Boltensern was born in Berlin, Germany in 1904. He worked for several years as a photographer, which brought him in contact with the field of postcards. He traveled throughout Europe, selling photographs of points of interest for use on postcards. He emigrated to the United States in 1947, settling in Los Angeles where he married and raised a family. Although he changed careers to become a real estate salesman, his interest in postcards and postcard collecting continued. He was active in several Southern California postcard clubs and amassed a huge personal collection, which he donated to Loyola Marymount University in 1967. During 1969 and 1970, he also published a series of 24 monthly bulletins on the history of postcards and postcard collecting.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The Werner von Boltensern postcard collection is one of the largest publicly-accessible collections in the United States. It contains approximately 1 million postcards from around the world, dating from the beginnings of postcard production in the late 19th century, and extending to the present. The collection is divided into two major groupings: view cards and thematic cards. The view cards are organized by place name and contain images of nearly every country in the world. The thematic cards include advertising cards, art reproduction cards, comic cards, greeting cards, political cards and many others. The collection also includes cards made of materials other than paper such as leather, wood, copper and embroidery.

Items selected for digitization document the history of Southern California, particularly the greater Los Angeles area, during the first half of the 20th century. This subset of images was selected to provide considerable breadth of coverage, and features prominent businesses and shopping centers, resorts, parks, celebrities' homes, amusement parks and rides, earthquakes, transportation, religious and educational institutions, as well as general views. The collection includes both printed and Real Photo postcards.

### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection.

#### **Names and Places**

Los Angeles (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Glendale (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Long Beach (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Pasadena (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Santa Catalina Island (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Santa Monica (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Topanga (Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works  
Venice (Los Angeles, Calif.)--20th century--Pictorial works

#### **Topics**

Businesses--California--Los Angeles--20th century  
Celebrities--Homes and Haunts--California--Los Angeles  
Transportation--California--Los Angeles  
Earthquakes--California--Los Angeles  
Amusement Parks--California

#### **Genres and Forms of Materials**

Postcards  
Real Photo postcards