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[Metro History Fact]

Huntington’s Heirs Sold Los Angeles Railway in 1945

In January 1945, railroad entrepreneur Henry Huntington’s heirs sold the Los Angeles Railway (1911-1945), to Los Angeles Transit Lines (1945-1958), another privately owned company.

Huntington had bought the Pacific Electric Railway in 1898 and, within a few years, had made it the most extensive inter-urban system in the nation, linking hundreds of Southern California towns with more than 900 “Big Red Cars” on more than 1,100 miles of track.

Los Angeles Railway was Pacific Electric’s urban cousin, the yellow streetcars that covered some 700 street miles. From 1911 until his death in 1927, Henry Huntington oversaw Los Angeles Railway’s expansion throughout the urban core of Los Angeles.

Los Angeles Transit Lines (LATL) continued to operate the extensive urban motorbus and streetcar system while slowly converting all but five streetcar rail lines to bus routes. The company also operated 110 electric trolley buses.

LATL’s routes and assets were acquired by the first publicly governed transit agency, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, in 1958.

By 1963, the remaining five rail lines and two electric trolley bus lines had been converted to bus lines, leaving Los Angeles without urban rail service until the opening of the Metro Blue Line in 1990. (Jan. 11, 2006)

– Courtesy of Metro Research Center