



**WATER AND OIL MIX AT HUNTINGTON BEACH,
VIEWED FROM HUNTINGTON PIER**
JANUARY 1940

Southern California's oil boom began in 1892 when prospector Edward Doheny correctly divined that natural pools of petroleum were

buried beneath the city's bubbling tar pits. California quickly became the third largest oil-producing state in the nation. This dra-



matic photograph illustrates the aggressive pursuit of "black gold" after Huntington Beach became, in 1920, the site of one of the

largest oil strikes ever in Southern California. The thicket of wells shown here remained part of the local landscape for decades. Less

obtrusive oil pumps still operate in the Los Angeles basin. Even after 100 years, the region's oil fields have not been exhausted.