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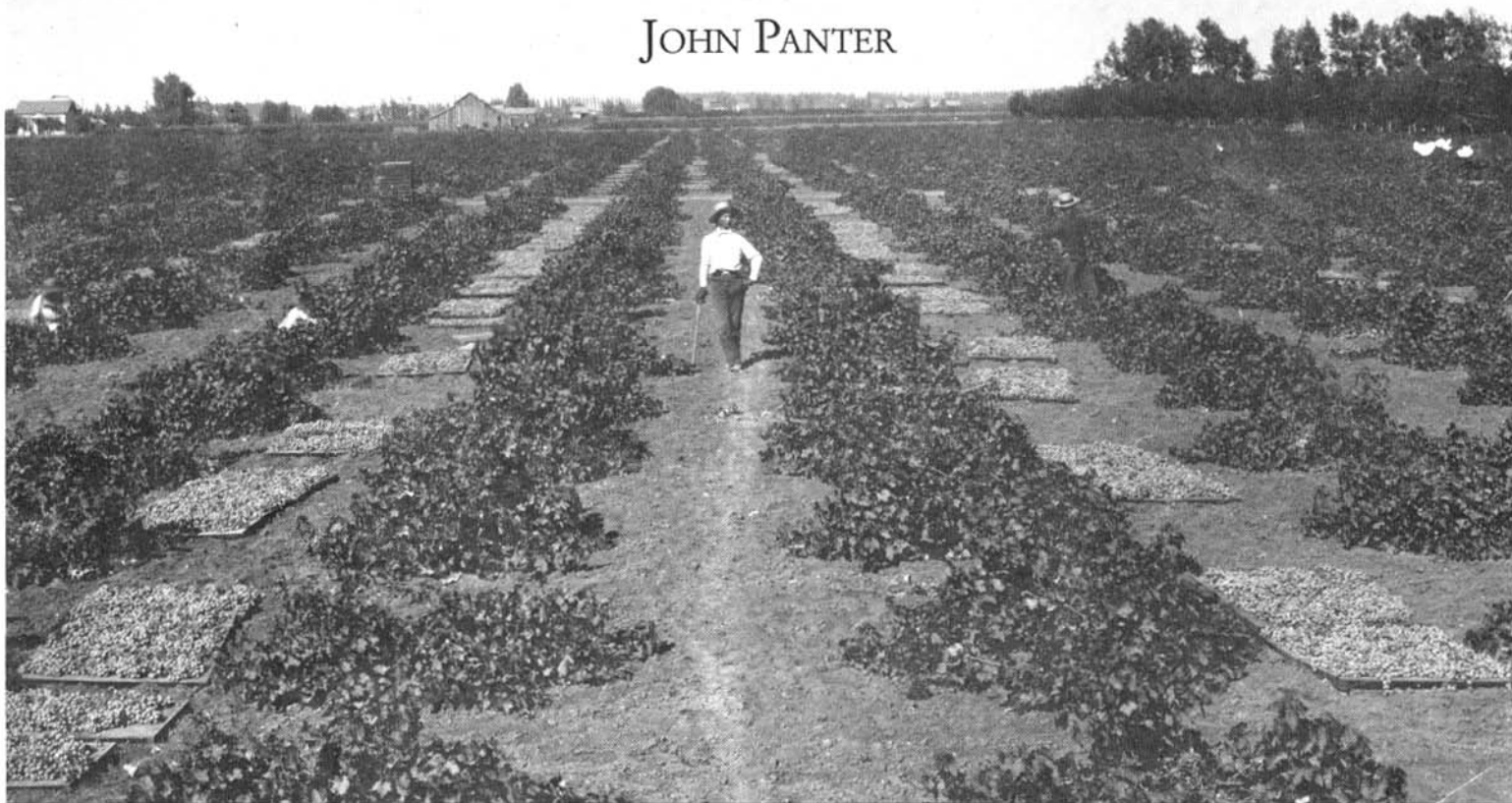
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Central California Colony: 'MARVEL of the DESERT'

JOHN PANTER



Muscat grapes on trays for raisins. (FCCHS Archives)

Three miles south of downtown Fresno, past the industrial parks and warehouses, lies an area that was known as the Central California Colony. Bound by avenues named for the four points of the compass, it comprised six full sections of land, 3,840 acres. Today it is an area of family farms from twenty to one hundred acres in size, covered with orchards, vineyards, row crops, dairies and pastures. One hundred and twenty-five years ago it was an arid and barren wasteland. The dramatic change, from wasteland to agricultural land, was a matter of enterprise and ambition. Quite simply, the Central California Colony was born of the dreams of a man named Bernard Marks, sown onto the land of William S. Chapman, watered by the canals of Moses J. Church, and nurtured to fruition by the people who came to live there. The accomplishments of all these people would earn the colony the distinction of being the first successful agricultural colony in Fresno County.

On May 19, 1875, the *Fresno Weekly Expositor* contained an article describing a new project on the plains south of Fresno. In the following month a prospectus was issued on this new development describing a 4,000-acre project, enclosed by a fence and divided into lots of 20 acres each.¹ Each lot was to have two acres of grapevines and guaranteed water rights for irrigation. In the weeks following, an intense advertising campaign began, not only in the *Expositor*, but also in a supplement to the California Immigrant Union's brochure, "All About California and the Inducements to Settle There."² The Central California Colony was thus born.

The Colony was the brainchild of one man, Bernard Marks. Marks, a German immigrant, was born in 1833. He came to California from New York City to try his hand at gold mining. Initially prosperous, he soon became embroiled in a lawsuit involving competing mining claims. Leaving the mining and courtrooms to others, he turned his attention to his new bride, Cornelia D. Barlow, and moved with her to San Francisco.³

Marks entered the field of education where he was immediately fortunate in being named principal of Lincoln school. He was successful as an educator, receiving the first Life Diploma issued by the state as well as being a member of the State Board of Examiners for teachers.⁴

While he was in San Francisco, the lawsuits involving his interest in the gold mine of the New York Tunnel Company were resolved by compromise. It was apparently a good compromise for Marks, for he soon sold his mining stock and purchased a 1,400-acre farm on Stockton Delta land reclaimed from the San Joaquin River. The river was uncooperative, however, flooding his land with water five feet deep and destroying his crops. And, as if to add insult to injury, when the flood waters subsided, his buildings were accidentally burned to the ground. However, a chance meeting soon after this was to turn Marks to what was to be his life's calling.⁵

At a Grange convention in Stockton,⁶ Marks met William A. Sanders, a professor of horticulture. The arrival of the railroad and irrigation convinced Sanders of the viability of farming the desert-like Fresno plains. Marks too saw the possibilities and, though he was daunted by the land requirements to secure irrigation water (160-acre minimum at five dollars per acre), he devised a scheme to secure water for smaller farms and approached William S. Chapman with his idea.⁷

Chapman was, for a time, one of the largest land holders in the state of California, owning one million acres in 1871.⁸ Chapman was receptive to Marks' idea for it would not only increase the profitability of the land involved in the scheme, but any land in the area would also rise in value. Simply put, Marks' plan was to secure the water rights for a large tract of land, break the land into smaller twenty-acre plots, plant small vineyards on the land, and then sell the plots as family farms. The new enterprise would be called the Central California Colony.⁹

The idea of a colony of farmers sharing a common water delivery system for their mutual benefit was not a new one.

In Southern California it had proven its success in the Anaheim Colony, which was founded in 1857. The Anaheim Colony was used as a model for other colony developments in the south, most notably J. W. North's in Riverside (1870) and the Pasadena project of D. M. Berry (1874). These colonies were all successful and served as precursors to the Central California Colony.¹⁰



Bernard Marks, founder of the Central California Colony. Portrait from Elliott's *Fresno County, California*, 1882. (FCHS Archives)

There had already been at least three documented attempts at establishing some form of agricultural colony on the Fresno plains. The first was an by Alabamans north of the San Joaquin River in 1868,¹¹ the second was a settlement of German immigrants near the sink of Fancher Creek in 1871,¹² and the third was Vineland on the San Joaquin River in 1873.¹³ Though all of these early attempts failed, mostly due to the lack of a secured source of irrigation water, they nonetheless stimulated interest in the development of the land around Fresno.¹⁴

Along with water problems, another limiting factor in the early colonization attempts was the lack of a well developed and aggressive promotional campaign for land sales. Chapman and Marks must have realized this for they took William H. Martin as their partner in the Central California Colony. Martin was a San Francisco capitalist and the general agent for the California Immigrant Union. The Union had the declared purpose of "the preparation, publication, and gratuitous circulation of documents concerning the resources and attractions of California in the Eastern States, England and her provinces, and those portions of Europe from where we might hope to draw useful additions."¹⁵ It was the Union that published the brochure and supplement which advertised the new Central California Colony during the summer of 1875. Many people responded and purchased lots.¹⁶

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COLONY
Land owners and residents, 1875-1881

Anderson, A.O.	Harbaugh, L.F.	Pierce
Artz, Christiana M.	Harbaugh, W.	Pine, John W.
Ashley, Thomas	Harris	Porteous, James
Austin, Miss M.F.	Harrison	Powell
Avis	Harrison, R.J.	Pratt, F.E. & Susan B.
Babcock, H.B.	Hartin, J.	Rasmussen, Herman C.
Backer, F.	Hatch, L. H.	Ritchie, John
Bacon, J.	Hatter	Ring, George
Balding	Hendson	Robertson, William
Banister, W.B.	Hingley	Ross
Barrows, C.C.	Hitchings	Rowe, E.A.
Beck, R.	Hoffman	Rucker, J.W.
Bishop, Herbert	Holmes, W.	Saxe
Blakely, Y.C.	Hudson, Ella M.	Sayre
Blanchard, Mary	Humphrey	Schmidt, Carl
Booth S.C.	Hunt, Mattie B.	Schmidt, J.
Bransom	Hurley, J.	Scott, Mrs. Elizabeth
Burr, Henrietta B.	Inns, Charles & Mrs.	Seeberg, Laurite
Byinton, Ira W.	Jensen, Adelheid	Sewell, Hannah A.
Caine, Charles E.	Jensen, J.	Shaw, Robert
Carter, Ellen	Johnson, Andrew	Shepard
Caughell, Charles	Johnson, Annie	Short, Miss J. B.
Caughell, George A.	Johnson, Peter	Simmons, E.
Caughell, W.F.	Johnson, W.P.	Smith
Central California Colony	Joy	Smith, J.C.
Water Company	Kennedy	Spinney
Chapman, William S.	Kirkland	Spinney, Elizabeth F.
Church, M.J.	Krohn, J.S.	Springer
Cleveland, E.A.	Krohn, Mrs. J.H.	Stebbins
Coldman, Henry	(M.K.?) & John S.	Stewart
Con(w?)ley, John	Kutner-Goldstein	Stratton
Connolly, Jossie J.	Lambert	Stretch
Craig, P.M.	Lawden, W.H.	Sumner, John M.
Crowell	Loring	Swett, F.
Crowley, J.	Madsen, Hans	Symonds, Edward
Cummings	Marks, Bernhard	Taylor
Davis, Mrs. A.A.	Marks, Cornelia D.	Toft, M.E.
Davis, E.E.	Marks, H.B.	Toft, S.M.
Delventhal, John F. H.	Martin	Tommasini, E.G. (H?)
Dibble	Mason, John E.	Tora
Dickie	Maxwell	Tupper, Walter D.
Dodge	McBurney	Watson
Doyle, John	McCay, J.M.	Wadsworth, N.
Dudley, H.	McCay, William R.	Webster, H.
Dunn, David	McCarthy, James	West, W.B.
Eazer, James	Michelson	Wexinda
Faymonville, William	Mihailovitz, Charles	White, A.P. Fink
Ferguson, Agnes	Miller, Sarah J. (S.F.?)	White, Charles B.
Fink, A.P.	?)	White, Ray
Fink-Smith, Mrs. J.A.	Miller, W.	White, R. A.
Flood	Mills, Charles O.	White, T.C.
Fresh, Stephen D.	Mitchenson, John	Wilkins
Fuller, D.	Moller, William	Williams, Richard
Fuller, George A.	Montague, R.E.	Williams, R.B.
Fustian	Moore, Jennie P.	Williamson, Charles
Gardener, Frederick	Mullens, D.J.	Wilson, D.M.
Gordon, William	O'Conner, Joseph	Wilson, Lucy A.
Grout, I.A. & Mary	Oed, Mrs. J.	Wilson, J.M.
Hadsell	Oleannor	Wilson, R. Monroe
Hamill	Olney	Witham, L.
Hansen, G.	Orange Center School District	Wold, John
Hansen, Jens	Orton	Wold, Martin
Hansen, Jorgen	Paige	Wood, E.B.
		Wright, S.S.

Compiled from the following sources: Fresno County, Recorder, Deeds, vols. M-39, 1875-1881. Fresno County, Assessor, Assessment Book, 1877-1879. *Fresno Morning Republican*, *Fresno County Directory*, Fresno, California: *Fresno Morning Republican*, 1882. Thompson, *Thompson's Atlas of Fresno County*, Tulare, California: Thompson, 1891. Fresno County, *Colony Check Book*, Fresno, California: Fresno County, 1892. Fresno County, *Colony Check Book*, Fresno, California: Fresno County, 1900.

New To-Day.

SECURE A HOMESTEAD

With an Income!

RAISIN CULTURE

—AND—

FRUIT DRYING.

THE MOST PROFITABLE AND DELIGHTFUL INDUSTRY IN CALIFORNIA.

ONLY NINE HOURS RIDE FROM SAN FRANCISCO BY RAIL.

200 TWENTY-ACRE FARMS, AT \$1,000 EACH.

TERMS — \$100 CASH; \$12.50 PER month for sixty months, and \$150 at the end of the time, unless the income pays it before, will buy a Twenty-acre Farm in the

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COLONY, NEAR FRESNO,

on the Central Pacific Railroad, improved as follows: The whole tract, 4,000 acres, will be inclosed with a tight fence. Twenty-three miles of roads will be laid out within it, and lined with choice shade trees. Water for irrigation will be brought to the land, within sixty days, from King's river. The water is purchased with the land. Two acres of choice Raisin Vines will be set out on each twenty acre farm. A nursery will be established, and additional vines, or the more valuable Fruit Trees will be set out by special contract, on very moderate terms. The land is of the best for the purpose in California, and the climate is especially favorable to the business of Fruit Drying.

Those wishing to locate immediately upon the property can do so, and cultivate the same to suit themselves, the Company carrying out their original plan of planting the two acres of Vines, in addition to the Shade and Fruit Trees.

Pamphlets, Maps and particulars at the

CALIFORNIA

IMMIGRANT UNION OFFICE,

No. 1 Webb Street, San Francisco.

WM. H. MARTIN, General Agent.

DIXON & FAYMONVILLE,

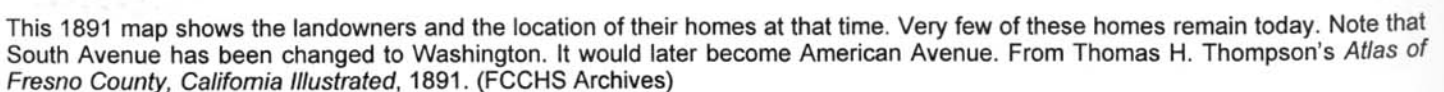
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Agents, Fresno.

The California Immigrant Union was the principal promoter for the Central California Colony when the colony first began. William H. Martin was the Union's general agent as well as being a partner in the development of the colony. This advertisement appeared in the *Fresno Expositor* on July 14, 1875. (FCCHS Archives)

"Perfect California climate; No Fever and Ague. The natural home of the Fig, Citron, Oranges, Lemons, Raisins, Prunes, Olives, Walnuts and Almonds. For Pamphlets apply to M. Theo Kearney, San Francisco; or Dixon and Faymonville, Fresno."¹⁷

The Central California Colony was located on sections 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, and 34 of Township 14 south, Range 20 east. It covered six square miles for a total of 3,840 acres. According to the plan drawn by Richard Stretch and filed at the county recorder's office, the colony was divided into 192 twenty-acre plots and bounded by avenues named North, South,²² East, and West. It was further divided at half-mile intervals by Cherry, Elm, Fig, Walnut, and Fruit avenues running north and south, and by Central Avenue running east and west.²³



One of the most attractive physical features of the colony was the plantings included in its development. Not only was each of the twenty-acre parcels planted with a two-acre vineyard of grapevines imported from Spain, but each of the avenues was to be shaded by trees appropriate to its name. In addition, North Avenue was shaded with Monterey cypress and eucalyptus, South Avenue with eucalyptus, East Avenue with almond and eucalyptus, West Avenue with pecan and eucalyptus, and Central with California figs. Fruit Avenue was lined with orange, lemon, and other fruit trees, planted in 1878. The trees for all twenty-three miles of avenues came from the nursery of William B. West of Stockton and were initially cared for by Henry Coldman, a resident of the colony. It is unfortunate that so few of these plantings remain to this day; the largest existing run of original trees is along Elm Avenue, State Highway 41.²⁴

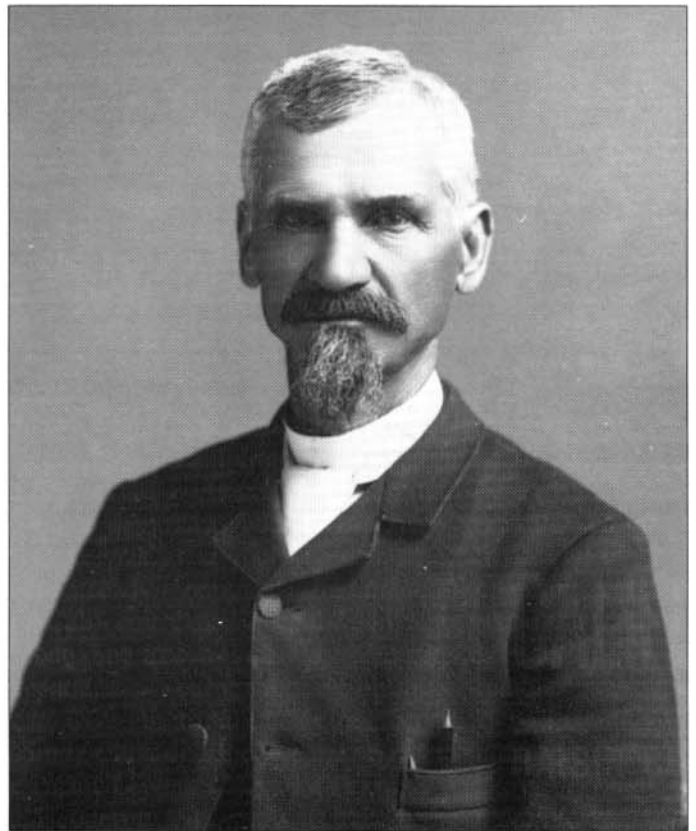
One feature of the colony that remains unchanged to this day is the location of the canals. The canals were surveyed in May 1875 by the Mills Brothers engineering firm; it soon started construction and completed the main canals in December of the same year. Sixteen feet wide at the bottom and two feet deep, they ran east to west through the land, roughly dividing it into fourths, with one canal running alongside Central Avenue, and the others just north and south of it. Unfortunately for most of the initial settings of grapevines, the Mills' ditch leaked badly. The first water was not fully delivered onto the land until late in the spring of 1876, but by then most of the vines had perished.²⁵

Along with water delivery troubles, the first settlers in the colony had to deal with marauding wild animals that would eat the new plantings almost as soon as they came up. With thirsty plants on one side and hungry animals on the other, the problems that first winter and spring were so acute that Chapman, Martin and Marks discussed abandoning the project. In the end, Marks persuaded Chapman to continue with the colony. Subsequently they bought out Martin. Adequate delivery and flow of water, however, continued to be a problem for the colony.²⁶

Water rights for the colony had been secured initially by Chapman from Moses J. Church's Fresno Canal and Irrigation Company. Reportedly purchased in August 1875, the twenty-four water rights would give the colony twenty-four cubic feet per second with each twenty-acre farm receiving an equal share of the total.²⁷ Conflicts arose between Church and Chapman in 1877 that would not be fully resolved until 1880.²⁸ At one point, the conflict evolved into a four-cornered argument between Church, Chapman, Marks, and the colonists.²⁹ Fortunately for the colonists, Church allowed some water to flow through the canals often enough to prevent a complete disaster.³⁰ In the end, the colonists formed the Colony Water Company and were successful in negotiating and securing water rights from Church.³¹

In spite of all the difficulties experienced by its early settlers, the colony itself progressed and added new people regularly. The first settler was J. H. Sewell, an employee of Chapman. Sewell bought a lot sight unseen, and received for his efforts a cow, farming implements, and seed grain,

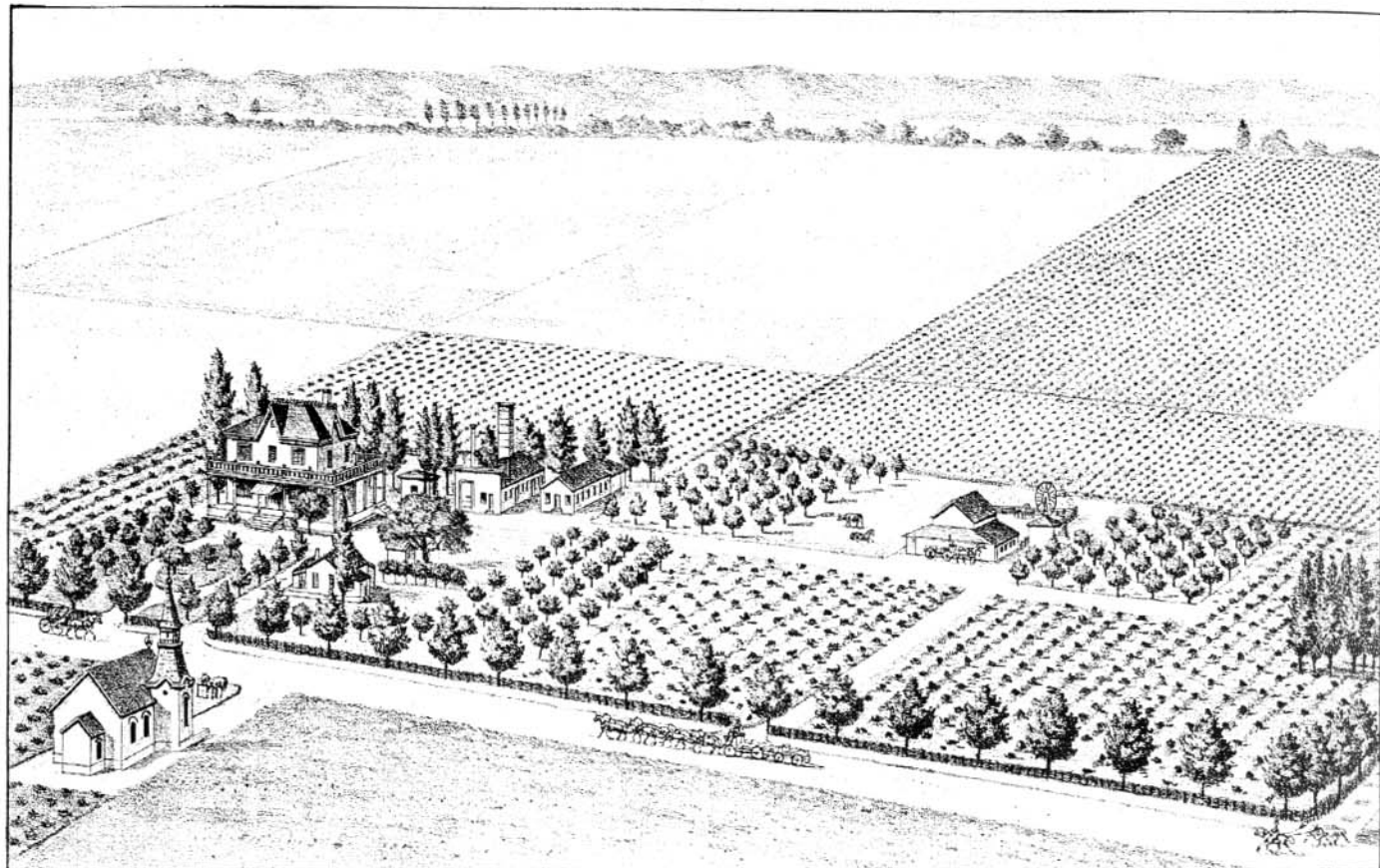
along with the loan of a few horses from Chapman. Sewell paid \$800 for his lot, which was the lowest price paid. The average price was \$900, and \$1,100 was the highest. By October, six other families and a number of bachelors had joined Sewell, all of them soon busily erecting homes on their property. Some of these early settlers may have been enticed to come by the special offer of the Central Pacific Railway; for \$15 one could buy a round-trip ticket from San Francisco to Fresno to come and look over the new colony. Bernard Marks also located his family in the colony in October and in December invited all of the colony residents to a Christmas dinner. At the close of 1875 there were thirty-six adults and eighteen children living in the colony, with a reported \$100,000 being spent on improvements by Chapman.³²



Moses J. Church, the father of irrigation in Fresno County. This portrait was taken by E. R. Higgins, ca. 1900. (FCCHS Archives)

It was the critical task of M. Theo Kearney during these early stages of the colony's development to keep positive and upbeat information flowing to the local newspaper, particularly after the pessimistic reports of that first winter in the colony.³³ Kearney was somewhat aided in his job by the fact that the editor of the *Fresno Weekly Expositor*, J. W. Ferguson, was himself a lot owner in the colony.³⁴ This was also the case for S. A. Miller, the editor of the *Fresno Weekly Republican*. Miller purchased his lot in 1878 and persuaded nineteen other fellow Nevadans to join him in the colony.³⁵ Many articles appeared in the newspapers during this time as reports from Kearney on the production of the farms or social events. These articles contained information that would help establish the venture as a success.

Of the many articles appearing in the *Expositor* during



HEDGE-ROW VINEYARD ELM AVENUE CENTRAL COLONY FRESNO.
MISS M.F. AUSTIN MANAGER FROM AUGUST 1878 TO MARCH 1889

The Hedge Row Vineyard was located on Elm Avenue just north of Central Avenue. The Central California Colony Union Church is in the foreground. Reprinted from Thompson's *Atlas of Fresno County*, 1891. (FCCHS Archives)

the early years of the colony, quite a few celebrated the fruits of the field. A turkey's egg was the first official produce from the colony, a humble beginning!³⁶ Later articles detailed the introduction of new crops to the colony as diverse as strawberries and Egyptian corn.³⁷ The first delivery of milk into town from the colony occurred in 1880 from the Baird brothers.³⁸ The papers regularly carried a report on the status of the raisin crop, with the first raisins being packed during the autumn of 1878.³⁹

Among the numerous social events was the first devotional service in March of 1876, attended to by the Rev. Baker of Ohio.⁴⁰ The Workingmen's Party of California established a local club and they looked forward to the possibility of Denis Kearney himself (the founder and leader of the Workingmen's Party of California, not related to M. Theo Kearney) coming to the county to help them organize more clubs.⁴¹ The local Grange, Raisina Grange #267, was formed in 1876 and was soon meeting in its newly constructed hall on the northeast corner of Central and Cherry avenues.⁴²

As in any new community, a school for the children was of high importance. The Orange Center District was organized on October 3, 1876, with classes beginning in January of the following year. The children met in the Grange hall until a proper school building was erected in December of 1880 on the south side of Central, west of Elm. The new school had two classrooms, an auditorium, and a library. A sliding door that raised into the attic separated the auditorium from the classrooms.⁴³

A little over eight years after the construction of the Orange Center School, an additional school was required. The Pomona Colony School was organized on February 26, 1889. Initially a one-room schoolhouse was built; a second story was added later. The Pomona school was located on the south side of Central, just east of West Avenue.⁴⁴

Within a few years of erecting the Orange Center elementary school, many of the colonists met for the purpose of forming a church. The Central California Colony Union Church was the result of the December 19, 1883 meeting. The following year, bids were received for constructing a church building. A bid for \$1,665.50 was accepted from a Mr. Ferral, and Ingvar Teilman drew up the plans for construction. The church was located on Elm Avenue, just north of Central Avenue, on land donated by Miss Lucy Hatch. It was soon completed and was dedicated on Sunday, November 9, 1884.⁴⁵

In order to keep the colony's first settlers supplied with all their horticultural needs, W. B. West of Stockton opened a nursery on the west side of Elm, near South Avenue. West was the man who had sold Marks and Chapman the trees for the avenue plantings. The Central Colony also was served by a blacksmith shop on Elm, north of Central, and lumber could be purchased at the lumberyard on the southwest corner of North and Cherry avenues.⁴⁶

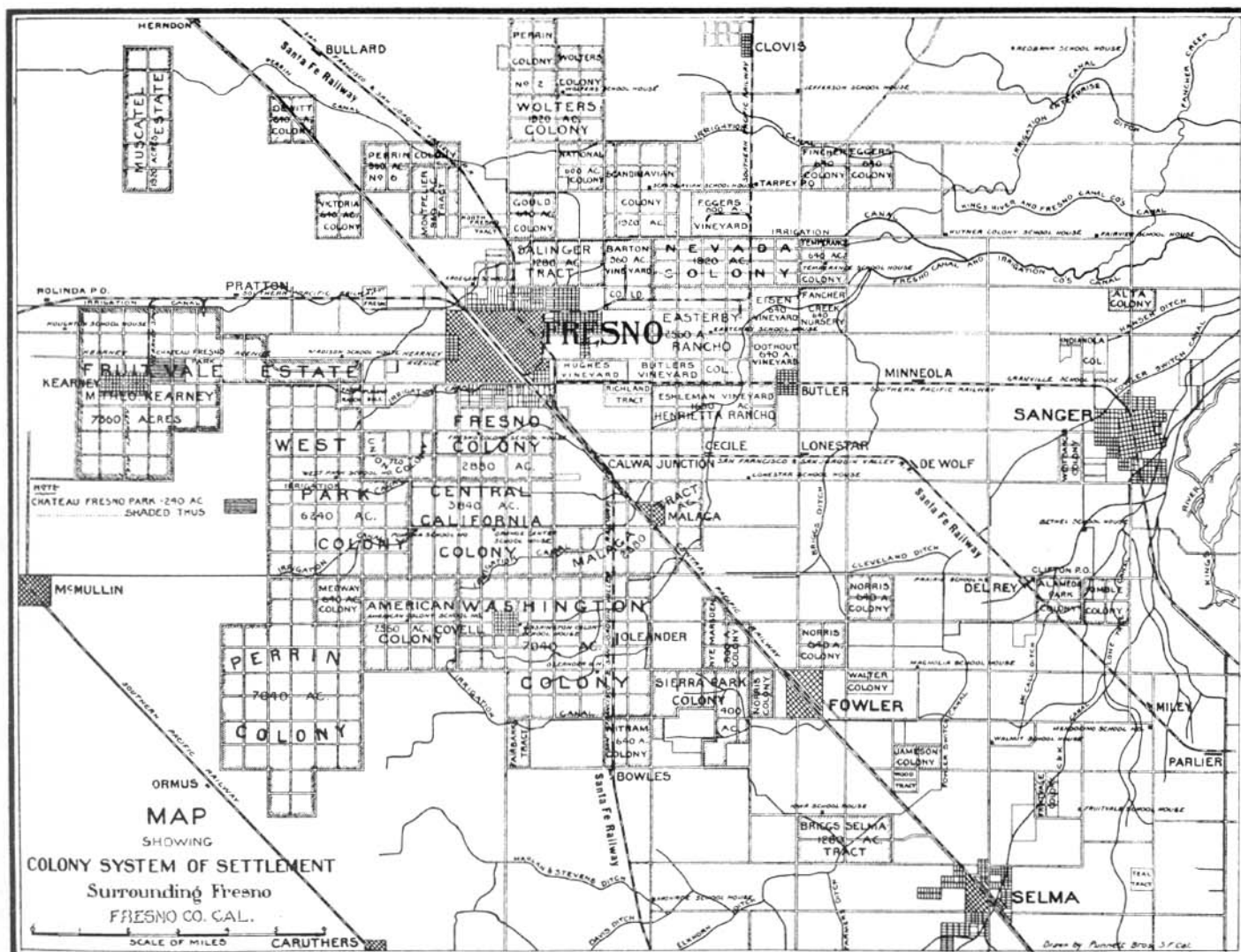
Of the many early colonists perhaps the most noteworthy were four women who pooled their resources and bought five lots, one hundred acres, to form the Hedgerow Vineyard. Miss Minnie F. Austin, Miss Lucy H. Hatch, Miss

"Teaching, stenography, telegraphy, weaving, operating sewing machines, standing all day behind a counter-typesetting and other such employments, are too hard on the system to admit of being followed for life by women of ordinary physical capacity. Besides, such employments generally admit only the earning of monthly or weekly wages, and afford no opportunities for independent business with a sure living and a possible fortune in the event of extra success."⁴⁷

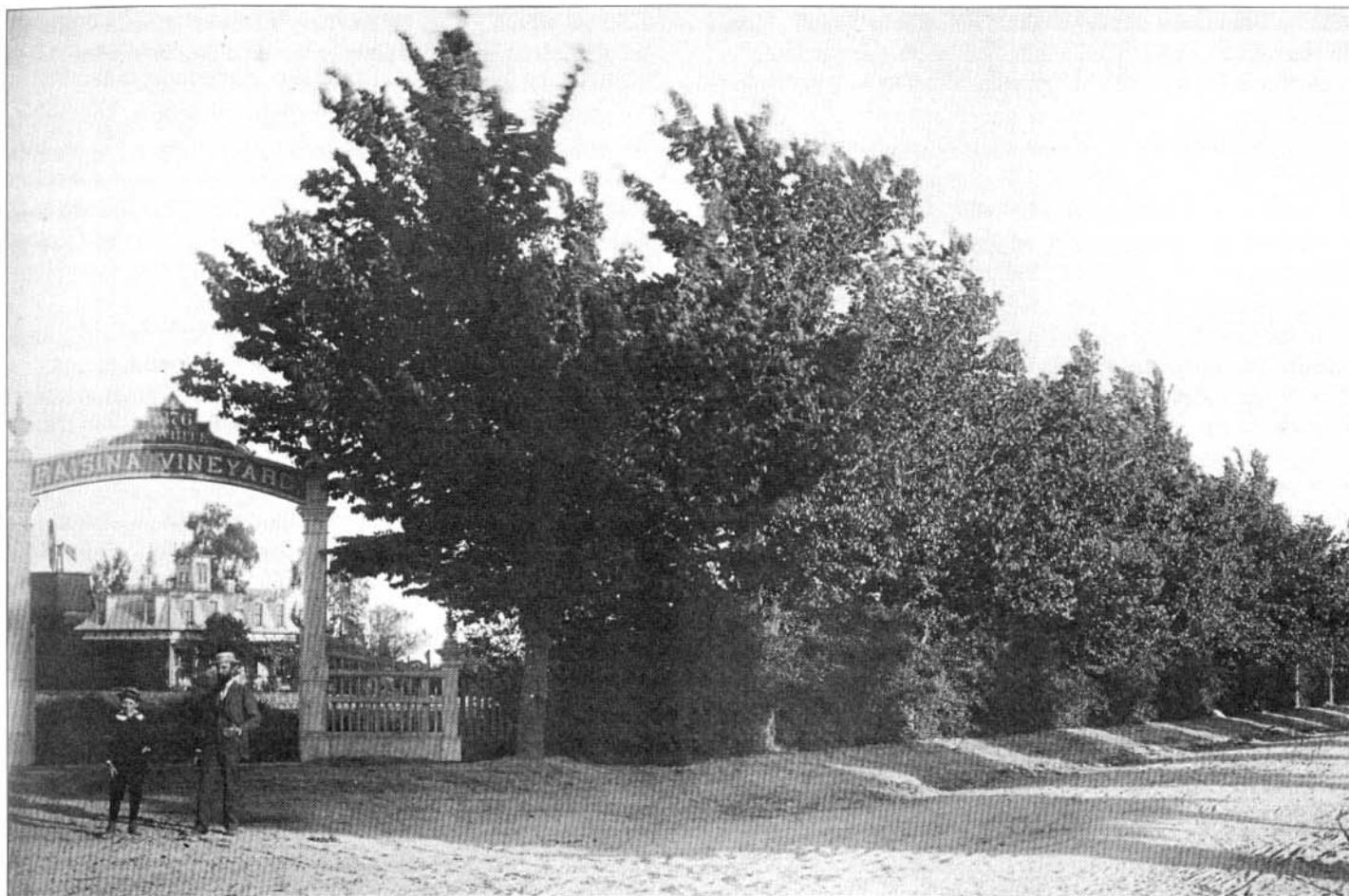
The article went on to offer its version of a successful independent woman as being one with a twenty-acre farm: ten acres in raisins, five in orchards, and the remaining acreage for grass, flowers, and poultry. To take care of any "rough work in the fields," it was recommended that "all such labor may be done by men hired in . . . season."



M. Theo
Kearney
in 1874.
(FCHS
Archives)



This map, published in 1903, shows the numerous colonies that were developed in Fresno County after the initial success of the Central California Colony. There are forty-eight colonies with 71,080 acres devoted to agriculture. From M. Theo Kearney's *Fresno County California and the Evolution of the Fruit Vale Estate*. (FCCHS Archives)



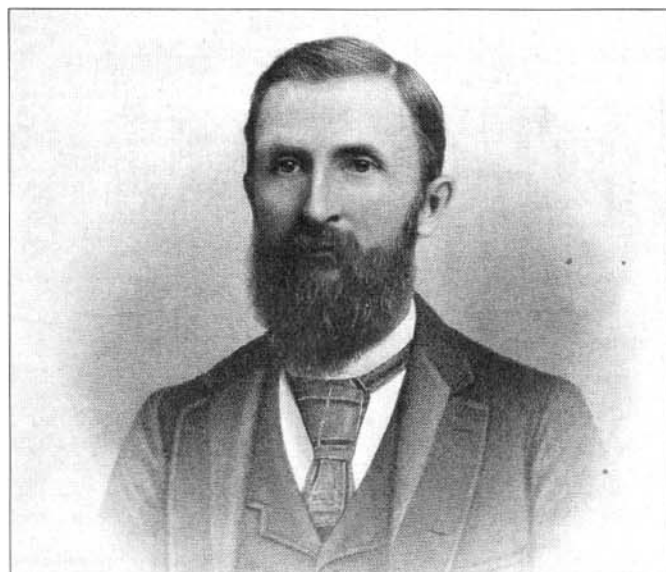
T. C. White's Raisina Vineyard stood at the southeast corner of Elm and North avenues. The White home is visible through the entry arch. T. C. White is the gentleman on the right in front of the arch. (FCCHS Archives)

California, San Francisco, and Fresno fairs.⁵¹

T. C. White was born in Vermont in 1850 and at the age of twenty-seven came to California because of his failing health. He arrived in Fresno at the invitation of his brother, Ray White, a farmer in the Central Colony. T. C. invested in twenty acres of colony land located on Cherry Avenue but later sold this and invested with his sister-in-law, Mrs. Julia Fink-Smith. As a result of his successful management, he was able to purchase several other large tracts of land throughout the county. He also was one of the founders of the Central California Colony Water Company, formed to secure water rights for the colony. He was on the Fresno County Board of Supervisors from 1887 to 1892 and helped develop downtown Fresno with the construction of the Hotel Fresno in 1910 and the White Theater in 1912.⁵²

Equally as important as the Hedgerow and Raisina vineyard successes were the many other settlers who came to the colony and made a good living there. After all, the stated purpose of the colony was for the small farmer to be able to support himself and his family on a twenty-acre parcel.⁵³ Many of these colonists came from areas other than San Francisco and the eastern seaboard. The Ritchie and Porteous families emigrated from Scotland.⁵⁴ S. M. Toft, H. C. Rasmussen, and many others came from Denmark.⁵⁵ Sam Hartley, from England, told of how he was able to make enough money from his initial twenty-acre investment to buy twenty more.⁵⁶ All of these people helped turn Bernard Marks' dream into a reality.

As the Central Colony began to prove its viability, many other colony farm systems sprang up around it and spread throughout the county. In 1880, there were 10,240 acres of land in production in various colonies.⁵⁷ By 1903, approximately 71,080 acres were either under production, or scheduled to be, in 48 different colonies or tracts.⁵⁸ The Fresno, Washington, American, Wolters, and Scandinavian colonies, to name only a few, continued to use the successful formula of Chapman, Marks and Kearney in developing



T. C. White. (FCCHS Archives)

and selling small plots of land for self-sufficient family farms.

And what happened to the men who were so instrumental in creating the Central California Colony? W. S. Chapman began to have financial difficulties about the same time the colony was starting to climb out of its initial faltering. His vast land holdings were lost to the Bank of California, Miller and Lux, and to his Scottish financial backers. His part in the development of California was essentially over after the Central California Colony.⁵⁹

Marks lived in the Central Colony for ten years, bringing in his raisin crop, operating a dairy of one hundred cattle, and running a land business. He then worked for the firm of Bovee, Toy and Company of San Francisco, where he was in charge of starting agricultural colonies in Merced, Fresno, and Kern counties. His last project was the Dos Palos Colony in northern Fresno and southern Merced counties.⁶⁰

M. Theo Kearney also continued developing colony farm systems. He left Chapman's employment in 1878 to start a new venture. In 1879, Kearney and N. K. Masten became partners in the 2,560-acre Easterby Colony. Its success spurred Kearney on to his last project, the Fruitvale Estate. Fruitvale was a 7,360-acre development that featured a 240-acre park surrounding the proposed five-story Chateau

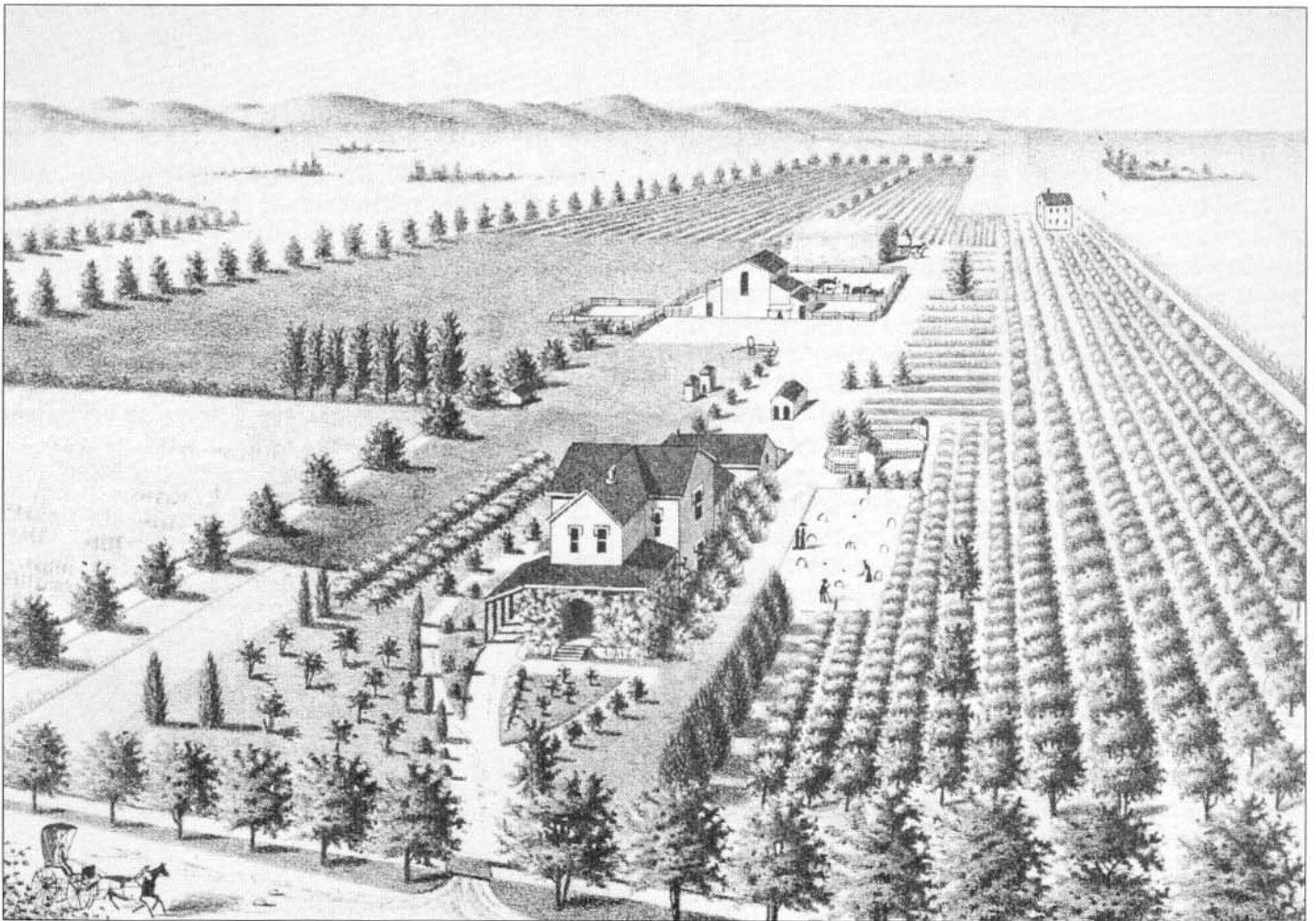
Fresno, which was to be Kearney's residence. His untimely death ended his plans, and the chateau was never built. He willed his estate to the University of California.⁶¹

Gone are many of the old farmhouses today, lost either to fires or demolition in the name of progress. Gone, too, are the beautiful trees along the avenues; only a broken line of elms along Highway 41 remains. The Grange hall, the Orange Center and Pomona schools, and the Central California Colony Union Church are all gone, too. However, the essence of the colony remains; the twenty-acre parcels are still covered with vineyards and orchards, and, of course, the water still flows through the old canals.

Perhaps early Fresno historian L. A. Winchell most clearly described the importance and meaning of the colony to the development of agriculture in the Central Valley when he wrote:

"Eventually the Central California Colony became the marvel of the desert, set with pleasant homes surrounded by prolific orchards, vineyards and green pastures—a gladdened and contented people; the first to achieve competence from small land holdings.

"Theirs was the wedge which, driven to the head, laid open the heart of hidden riches, which grew, amassed and overspread the land to make the San Joaquin Valley the garden of the world."⁶²



Bernard Marks' farm was the site of many of the social gatherings for the colony. The farm was located on the southwest corner of Elm and Central avenues. Reprinted from Elliott's *Fresno County, California*, 1882. (FCCHS Archives)

Notes

1. *Fresno Weekly Expositor*, 30 June 1875.
2. *Ibid.*, 14 July 1875.
3. F. L. L. Bowen, ed., *Atlas of the Dos Palos Colony, California*. Dos Palos, Calif.: Bowen, 1890, 15.
4. L. A. Winchell, *History of Fresno County and The San Joaquin Valley*. Fresno, Calif.: Cawston, 1933, 135; Bowen, *Atlas*, 15.
5. Bowen, *Atlas*, 15; Winchell, *History*, 135; Elliott, *History of Fresno County, California*. San Francisco: Elliott, 1882, 112.
6. The Granger Movement, formed to combat the agrarians' problems with railroads, merchants and banks, was peaking in membership and power at this time.
7. Elliott, *History*, 112; Winchell, *History*, 135.
8. Gerald D. Nash, "Henry George Reexamined: William S. Chapman's Views on Land Speculation in Nineteenth Century California," *Agricultural History* 33 (July 1959), 133.
9. Charles W. Clough and William B. Secrest, Jr., *Fresno County: The Pioneer Years*. Fresno, Calif.: Panorama West, 1984, 143.
10. Oscar Oshurn Winther, "The Colony System of Southern California," *Agricultural History* 27 (July 1953), 94-97.
11. Lewis, *A History of the Counties of Fresno, Tulare, and Kern, California*. Chicago: Lewis, 1892, 64-65. Virginia E. Thickers, "Pioneer Agricultural Colonies of Fresno County," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 25 (1946), 24-25.
12. David G. Hedgecock, "The Fresno Plain, 1868-1885: A Cultural Geographic Interpretation." M.A. thesis, California State University, Fresno, 1972, 41.
13. *Ibid.*, 62-63.
14. The San Joaquin Valley Land Association was in one form or another behind these initial attempts at colonization. Formed by San Francisco capitalists, it acquired huge tracks of federal government land in the San Joaquin Valley through the purchasing of Agricultural College Script. Also known as the "German Syndicate," it included William S. Chapman, Isaac Friedlander, Frederick Roeding, A. Y. Easterby, L. A. Gould, Auguste Weihe, and Frederick Eisen. Hedgecock, "Fresno Plain," 34-36; Schyler Rehart and William K. Patterson, *M. Theo Kearney: Prince of Fresno*. Fresno, Calif.: Fresno City and County Historical Society, 1988), 5.
15. Winther, "The Colony System," 94.
16. Hedgecock, "Fresno Plain," 41; California Immigrant Union, *Supplement to All About California, The Inducements to Live There*, San Francisco: California Immigrant Union, 1875, 1-4.
17. I. Teilman and W. H. Shafer, *The Historical Story of Irrigation in Fresno and Kings Counties in Central California*. Fresno, Calif.: Teilman, 1943, 15.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Expositor*, 22 Mar. 1876.
20. Kearney, *Fresno California: Subdivision of the Fruitvale Estate*. Fresno, Calif.: Kearney, 1890.
21. Rehart, *Kearney*, 15.
22. South Avenue would later be changed to Washington, then American Avenue.
23. Thompson, *Atlas of Fresno County, Calif.* Tulare, Calif.: Thompson, 1891, 68; Fresno County, Recorder, Deeds, Book M, 1875, 453.
24. *Expositor*, 18 Aug. 1875; *Ibid.*, 24 July 1878; *Ibid.*, 8 Mar. 1876.
25. *Ibid.*, 12 May 1875; *Ibid.*, 15 Dec. 1875; Lewis, *History*, 63.
26. Winchell, *History*, 136; Rehart, *Kearney*, 8.
27. *Expositor*, 18 Aug. 1875.
28. California State Supreme Court, Wm. S. Chapman vs. The Fresno Canal and Irrigation Co. et al., 14 Dec. 1878, 9-28; Hubert H. Bancroft, *Chronicles of the Builders of the Commonwealth*. San Francisco: The History Co., 1892, 240-243.
29. *Expositor*, 14 May 1879.
30. Hedgecock, "The Fresno Plains," 44-45.
31. *Expositor*, 1 Sept. 1880.
32. Winchell, *History*, 136; Fresno County, Recorder, Deeds, Vols. M-32; *Expositor*, 13 Oct. 1875; *Ibid.*, 15 Sept. 1875; *Ibid.*, 6 Oct. 1875; *Ibid.*, 8 Dec. 1875.
33. Elliott, *History of Fresno County, California*. San Francisco: Elliott, 1882, 114.
34. Fresno County, Recorder, Deeds, Vol. T, 566.
35. There were so many Nevadans living on the west side of the colony, near S. A. Miller, that people began to call it the Nevada colony! *Expositor*, 24 July 1878; Fresno County, Recorder, Deeds, Vol. T, 638; Hedgecock, "The Fresno Plains," 75-76.
36. *Expositor*, 6 Oct. 1875.
37. *Ibid.*, 14 Feb. 1877; *Ibid.*, 11 Sept. 1878.
38. *Ibid.*, 17 Nov. 1880.
39. *Ibid.*, 25 Sept. 1878.
40. *Ibid.*, 12 Mar. 1876.
41. *Ibid.*, 6 Mar. 1878.
42. Thickers, "Pioneer Colonies," 32; *Expositor*, 11 Dec. 1878; Hedgecock, "The Fresno Plains," 67.
43. Easton Historical Society, *Washington Union High School Centennial: 1892-1992*. Easton, Calif.: Easton Historical Society, 1992, 26; Thickers, "Pioneer Colonies," 32; Thompson, *Atlas*, 68.
44. Easton, *Washington Union*, 22-23; Thompson, *Atlas*, 68.
45. Easton, *Washington Union*, 86.
46. *Expositor*, 22 Sept. 1875; Hedgecock, "The Fresno Plains," 67.
47. Union, *Supplement*, 5.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Fresno Weekly Republican*, 16 April 1889; *Ibid.*, 18 April 1929; Winchell, *History*, 137; Gustav Eisen, *The Raisin Industry*. San Francisco: Crocker, 1890, 210.
50. Ernestine Winchell, "Fresno Memories," *Republican*, 1 June 1930.
51. Lewis, *History*, 617-618; Eisen, *Raisin Industry*, 209-210; Winchell, *History*, 197-199.
52. Winchell, *History*, 197-199; Lewis, *History*, 618.
53. M. Theo Kearney, *Real Estate: The Basis of Wealth*. San Francisco: Kearney [1877]; Union, *Supplement*, 3, 8-9.
54. *Republican*, 1 Jan. 1924.
55. *Ibid.*, 5 June 1924; *Ibid.*, 23 June 1931.
56. M. Theo Kearney, *Fresno County, Calif. and the Evolution of the Fruitvale Estate*. Fresno, Calif.: Kearney, 1903, 28.
57. Hedgecock, *The Fresno Plains*, 77.
58. Kearney, *Fresno County*, 24.
59. Nash, "Henry George Reexamined," 135.
60. Bowen, *Atlas*, 15.
61. Rehart, *Kearney*, 12, 13, 18, 45.
62. Winchell, *History*, 137.

This article was part of John Panter's graduate studies research project at California State University, Fresno. The project documented some of the remaining historic resources of the Central California Colony in the hopes they might be recognized and preserved as part of Fresno County's agricultural heritage.

Panter recently left his position as associate director of the Fresno Historical Society to relocate to New York City, where he will complete his graduate work in history. He was associated with the Society for six years, first as an undergraduate student at CSUF while researching a paper on Congressman B. W. Gearhart, then briefly as a volunteer before being named the Society's archivist.