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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

The Octopus's Garden:
Railroads, Citrus Agriculture, and the Emergence of Southern California

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Benjamin Thomas Jenkins

June 2016

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Clifford E. Trafzer, Chairperson

Dr. Larry E. Burgess

Dr. Rebecca Kugel

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The Dissertation of Benjamin Thomas Jenkins is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

Acknowledgements

Upon reflection, writing a dissertation seems not unlike summiting Mount Everest. The thrill of the challenge empowers the would-be climber at first, but soon the sheer enormity of the task overwhelms the senses. Only with the guidance of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual supporters does one have any hope of reaching the dissertation's peak.

Countless historians have written about agriculture and transportation in the American West, and many have focused specifically on topics pertaining to this study. Richard Orsi's *Sunset Limited*, William Deverell's *Railroad Crossing*, Donovan Hofsommer's *Southern Pacific*, Ward McAfee's *California's Railroad Era*, and Keith Bryant's *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway* have all shaped my understanding of the roles of railroads in the Golden State. In the realm of citrus agriculture, Douglas Sackman's *Orange Empire*, Jared Farmer's *Trees in Paradise*, Matt Garcia's *A World of Its Own*, Gilbert González's *Labor and Community*, and José Alamillo's *Making Lemonade out of Lemons* have offered fascinating, informative studies about the impact of oranges and lemons on workers, capitalists, and consumers. This work follows in their very capable footsteps.

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Dedication

For Mom, Dad, and Rico
We've always been our own "Big Four"

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Octopus's Garden:
Railroads, Citrus Agriculture, and the Emergence of Southern California

by

Benjamin Thomas Jenkins

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, June 2016
Dr. Clifford Trafzer, Chairperson

In Southern California, from 1870 to 1950, two sectors of the economy interacted to produce major changes in the region. Citrus agriculture and transcontinental railroads defined the economy, landscape, labor, and culture of the Southland. As railroads linked Southern California to the far corners of North America in the 1870s and 1880s, they ended centuries of isolation. They made it possible for growers to ship their goods to the Midwest and Atlantic Coast. Almost simultaneously, the citrus industry expanded in Southern California. Introduced by Spanish friars during the 1800s, orange and lemon growing boomed in the 1870s thanks to the importation of the Washington Navel orange from Brazil. Spreading out from the epicenter of Riverside, the orange empire incorporated portions of Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Imperial Counties. Railroad companies competed to corner the trafficking of citrus fruits from California, resulting in an extensive network of rails across this orange empire. Although high startup costs were associated with the

establishment of an orange grove, lucrative returns, facilitated by railroad connections to markets, led to prosperity in Southern California from the 1890s to the 1950s.

Numerous developments accompanied the intertwined activities of the orange and railroad industries. Technical innovations, such as the invention of refrigerator cars and advanced packing machinery to preserve oranges during transit, facilitated the growth of industry. New cities, devoted almost entirely to citrus cultivation, appeared along the railroad tracks. Railroaders and orange growers worked together to irrigate the parched Southland, and, when necessary, to limit the effects of floods, and promoted the spread of electricity. However, they also brought far more ambivalent consequences. Laborers, often drawn from ethnic minorities, suffered the constant threat of bodily harm and low wages. From the Pullman strike of 1896 to the guerilla war of 1936 in Orange County, railroads and grove owners quashed attempts at organized labor. Railroad and citrus boosters also promoted California as paradise, but minimized the roles of laborers by stereotyping them in advertisements and publications. Despite their gradual decline in the 1950s, these twin industries interacted in a variety of ways, creatively and destructively, overlapping to shape the history of Southern California.

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Introduction

If the West was a garden, there would surely be an easy locomotive passage through it.
--Carlos A. Schwantes and James P. Ronda¹

As an engineer for the Southern Pacific Railroad in California, Henry Irwin Randall did it all.² During his time with the company, around the turn of the twentieth century, Randall worked on a variety of projects to maintain the industrial infrastructure of the Golden State. He helped the railroad cross natural and manmade elements of the landscape of Southern California, including the Los Angeles Aqueduct.³ Randall made sure the Southern Pacific in California had enough access to water from its spur lines for its operations in Los Angeles.⁴ In Santa Barbara, he supervised workers as they laid tracks, poured concrete for new sideways and walkways, and installed switches for trains to change tracks.⁵ He made sure that telegraph lines went up wherever the railroad traveled, and installed cattle guards for livestock.⁶ As Randall's work demonstrates, operating a railroad in the early-twentieth century entailed far more than simply laying

¹ Carlos A. Schwantes and James P. Ronda, *The West the Railroads Made* (Seattle: University of Washington Press; Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society; St. Louis: The John W. Barringer III National Railroad Library at the St. Louis Mercantile Library, 2008), 16.

² "Joint Report of H.I. Randall, Assistant Engineer, Southern Pacific Company, And – R.D. Brown, Resident Engineer, Santa Fe Railroad, on proposed Sunset Railroad Improvement near Buena Vista Lake, Kern County, Cal, August 7th, 1907," Henry Irwin Randall Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, carton 8. Hereafter cited as "Joint Report," Randall Papers, and Bancroft Library, respectively.

³ William Hood to J.B. Lippincott, February 9, 1909, Randall Papers, carton 8, folder Correspondence, Dec. 1908-1909.

⁴ Southern Pacific Company to H.I. Randall, March 2, 1909, Randall Papers, carton 8, folder Correspondence, Dec. 1908-1909.

⁵ Southern Pacific Railroad Company, "Reconstruction Santa Barbara," Month of November, 1905, Randall Papers, carton 8.

⁶ "Joint Report."

tracks and running trains. It necessitated the creation of an industrial order, required buy-in from members of local communities, and instigated the creation of labor networks.

As a relatively well-to-do member of the upper middle class in California, Randall, along with his two brothers, used his money to invest in what many settlers of the Golden State did: an orange grove. Randall settled in western San Bernardino County, specifically in the city of Highland. One promotional pamphlet for the city proudly proclaimed it “the land of the orange.” Situated in the citrus belt of Southern California, “the playground of the immensely rich,” this pamphlet proclaimed, Highland enjoyed a Mediterranean climate, an ample supply of water from the Santa Ana River, and the Southern California State Hospital, a “model institution.”⁷ Most importantly, Highlanders reaped immense profits from the cultivation of oranges. “In 1901,” the promotional literature proudly stated, “there were shipped from the district 1100 cars of citrus fruit” along the railroad lines Randall and his company had built, yielding approximately \$300,000 to the city’s growers. This increased to 1,500 cars four years later, raising growers’ profits to a total of \$500,000.⁸

Randall shared in this lucrative return. As early as the 1896-7 growing season, he received the handsome sum of \$8,187.95.⁹ One of the eastern agents who sold Randall’s fruit at markets in New York City commented that “Prices that we are obtaining for the fancy Navels,” a highly sought-after variety of orange from the Golden State, exceeded

⁷ “Highland, California” brochure, Randall Papers, carton 1, folder Correspondence 1906.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ “Fruit Shipped on which Full Returns are Not Yet Received,” Randall Papers, carton 1, folder Correspondence 1898.

“any other fruit” in the city. “You can understand,” the agent explained, “that it is only the reputation that your fruit has that enables us to obtain these prices.”¹⁰ Like so many Southern Californians in his day, Randall’s life was defined by his connection to citrus agriculture and the railroad industry. Had he not worked for the Southern Pacific, he would have lacked the capital to invest in an orange grove with its notoriously restrictive startup costs. However, to open the narrative with Randall’s successes in the 1890s and 1900s ignores the context of the first railroads in the Southland and the birth of the orange empire. It also begs the question that this history hopes to answer: what other connections linked citrus growing and railroad transportation in Southern California, and what impact did they produce in the region as a result?

Citrus agriculture and railroad transportation form intersecting commercial, social, and political lines in the history of Southern California. Both industries contributed significantly to the region’s economic growth around the turn of the twentieth century. In the decades preceding this era, large scale agriculture displaced ranches based on stock-raising. Workers of diverse ethnic origins used state-of-the-art agricultural equipment to give the Southland its first major commercial commodity, the Washington Navel orange. In order to meet the needs of farmers in the 1870s and 1880s, railroads emerged simultaneously in Southern California, and lines such as the Southern Pacific Railroad (the so-called Octopus) and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad carried entire trains of cars filled solely with oranges to markets across North America.

Moreover, these overlapping economic sectors created and accelerated social relations as

¹⁰ York & Whitney Produce to Mrs. D.C. Randall, February 24, 1898, Randall Papers, carton 1, folder Correspondence 1898.

well as changes to the landscape of Southern California. Railroad pamphlets and magazines, coupled with promotional literature and citrus labels circulated by fruit growing cooperatives, shaped Americans' perceptions of the landscape of California, as well as the roles of native peoples, Mexican Americans, and Chinese Americans, even as members of these minorities laid rails and tended to the Golden State's orange groves. Finally, the newly-established citrus orchards, railroad lines, and accompanying infrastructure necessary to service them forever altered Southern California's landscape by industrializing the region. In sum, railroad corporations and orange growers significantly shaped the trajectory of the economy, mechanization of the landscape, and perceptions of nature and race, tangibly impacting the history of California.

To date, historians have not considered these two industries in tandem in terms of their social, economic, and environmental impact. No monograph has centered on the connections between railroads and orange growing in Southern California. Only a single scholarly article on the subject has appeared, challenging scholars to situate these two industries in the context of California history in national, hemispheric, and world markets.¹¹ This work examines the connections between railroads and citrus orchardists in California. Instead of focusing on all their interactions, which would take a lifetime to complete, it specifically focuses on the role these two industries played in economic development, social relations, and reconstruction of the landscape in the Southland. The three themes isolated in this work – economic development, race relations, and changes

¹¹ Benjamin Jenkins, "Steel, Steam, and Citrus: The Economic Transformation of Southern California," *Journal of the West* 51, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 36-49. A revised, expanded version of this article is split between chapters one and two of this work.

to the landscape – contribute to the economic history of California, and add to the considerable body of literature available on race relations in the state. The study’s focus on industry and landscape place it in conversation with scholarly works that relate to industrialization and American mastery over nature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which allowed the United States to control space and the grandiosity of the trans-Mississippi frontier.¹² More importantly, materials from archival repositories, as well as digitized primary sources, support the contention that railroad companies and citrus agriculturalists in Southern California reconstructed the region’s economy, shaped popular perceptions of race and space through booster material, and mechanized the landscape. A brief recapitulation of this history, as well as a look at the progression of perceptions about railroads and the citrus industry in California, will contextualize this argument.

Orange agriculture and railroad transportation both emerged in Southern California during the closing decades of the nineteenth century and tied the region to North American and global markets. They offered the Southland much-needed economic development. The Southern Pacific Railroad extended a line through Southern California in the early 1870s, connecting the small city of Los Angeles to Sacramento, San Francisco, and the rest of the United States. This line, one of a handful of transcontinental routes that spanned North America by the close of the nineteenth century, ran through the southwestern corner of the continent, and finally linked distant Southern California to the

¹² Jason Weems, “Vision at California Scale: Charles and Ray Eames, Systems Thinking, and the Diminishing Status of the Human Body after World War II,” in Volker Janssen, ed., *Where Minds and Matters Meet: Technology in California and the West* (Berkeley, CA: Published for Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West by University of California Press and the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, 2012), 256-7.

eastern United States across mountains and deserts that had previously stymied travelers.¹³ Los Angeles became a major stop along the Sunset Route of the Southern Pacific, which ran from the Pacific coast to New Orleans.¹⁴ By the mid-1880s, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad opened a competitive line through Southern California.¹⁵ This resulted in a rate war between the two railroads that allowed tens of thousands of emigrants from the Midwest to enter Southern California. Many new settlers tried their hand at horticulture, planting a wide assortment of fruits to see what would grow best in the Mediterranean climate.

Oranges became the most successful and recognizable strain of produce in Southern California. Commercial orange growing became a fixture of the Golden State's landscape during the same decades that railroads came to the Southland, the 1870s and 1880s. In the early 1870s, Eliza and Luther Tibbets, two homesteaders in the nascent burg of Riverside, brought the first Washington Navel orange trees to Southern California. The quality of the fruits these trees bore attracted visitors to orange shows and competitions from San Bernardino, California to Chicago, Illinois.¹⁶ Boosters of the region, as well as established agriculturalists, touted the beneficial climate and geography of Southern California, which aided in the cultivation of citrus fruits, particularly

¹³ Clifford E. Trafzer, *Yuma: Frontier Crossing of the Far Southwest* (Wichita, KS: Western Heritage Books, Inc., 1980), 113-5.

¹⁴ Bruce Petty and Larry Mullaly, *The Southern Pacific in Los Angeles: 1873-1996* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 2002), 15, 6.

¹⁵ Keith L. Bryant, Jr., *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974), 101.

¹⁶ H. Vincent Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation: G. Harold Powell, California Orange Growers, and the Corporate Reconstruction of American Agriculture, 1904-1922" (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 1994), 76.

oranges.¹⁷ The creation of industrial canals to water crops allowed Riverside orange growers to prosper by the 1890s. Settlers willed into being across Southern California towns that attempted to mimic the success of Riverside, devoted all but entirely to the cultivation of oranges. Growers in Pasadena, Ontario, and other cities in California, including Riverside, thrived as a result.

Citrus agriculture would not have prospered without access to markets that railroads offered. In 1877, Joseph Wolfskill, a cultivator of oranges from Los Angeles, California, sent the first shipment of citrus fruits by rail from Southern California to St. Louis.¹⁸ In the estimation of historian Ward McAfee, the citrus sector of California agriculture become so dominant that produce eclipsed grains as the state's primary export by the late 1880s.¹⁹ Railroads provided connections to markets in the eastern United States, Mexico, and Canada, as well as a means for wealth accrued through orange sales to return to Southern California. These two economic sectors interacted in a variety of productive and destructive ways to transform the region. Orange growing became so ubiquitous in Southern California that the Southern Pacific devoted entire trains to

¹⁷ Pierre Laszlo, *Citrus: A History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 63. Charles C. Teague, a reputable grower from Santa Barbara County and president of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, similarly praises the region in his recollections. See Teague, *Fifty Years a Rancher: The Recollections of Half a Century Devoted to the Citrus and Walnut Industries of California and to Furthering the Cooperative Movement in Agriculture*, (privately printed, 1943), 72.

¹⁸ Harry Lawton, "A History of Citrus in Southern California," in Esther Klotz, Lawton, and Joan H. Hall, eds., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area* (Riverside, CA: Riverside Museum Press, 1969), 10.

¹⁹ Ward McAfee, *California's Railroad Era, 1850-1911* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1973), 198.

carrying citrus fruits to markets across the United States.²⁰ Railroad companies expanded their services across the Southland to meet the needs of organized citrus cooperatives in the region. Railroads such as the Southern Pacific of Mexico carried oranges across the border of the United States to Latin American markets.²¹

For their part, agriculturalists also helped industrialize the landscape by relying on machinery in the fields and packinghouses along railroad lines to process oranges before shipping them across the continent. Finally, Mexican Americans, Chinese Americans, and native peoples of California took advantages of labor opportunities to improve their lives, working for orange growers and massive railroad companies even as booster publications from entities such as the California Fruit Growers Exchange and the Southern Pacific portrayed them as exotic foreigners, buffoons, or worse. As Larry Burgess and Nathan Gonzales explained, citrus growers relied on immigrant laborers as “a cheap source of labor,” but opportunities in Southern California sometimes benefitted immigrants such as Mexicans by allowing them a means to escape the political upheaval of revolutionary Mexico.²²

The citrus and railroad industries also overlapped to affect the Golden State in less benevolent ways. Newspapers hurled vitriol at the railroad, calling it “The Curse of California.” Cartoonist G.F. Keller used this phrase in a famed cartoon in *The Wasp* in

²⁰ Richard Orsi, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West, 1850-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 42-3.

²¹ Daniel Lewis, *Iron Horse Imperialism: The Southern Pacific of Mexico, 1880-1951* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2007), 49. As Lewis demonstrates, American railroads economically connected the United States to Mexico and gave agriculturalists access to Latin American markets.

²² Larry E. Burgess and Nathan D. Gonzales, *Redlands* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 54.

1882, where he graphically depicted the Southern Pacific as an abominable octopus. Its loathsome tentacles ensnared fruit and wheat growers, stagecoach operators, and miners, among other businesspeople. Within the creature's eyes lurked Leland Stanford and Charles Crocker, two of the Big Four whom historian Hubert Howe Bancroft praised, prime movers behind the Southern Pacific from its inception until their deaths.²³ Orange growers contributed to the pollution of the state when they adopted orchard heaters, or smudge pots, to heat their groves. The smoke they emitted hovered perpetually over Southern California, causing health problems for the unfortunate citizens who inhaled them. Both industries underpaid workers, often members of ethnic minorities, to maintain the orange groves and rail lines. From their social impact to their ability to technologically reconstitute the economy of Southern California, railroad companies and citrus agriculturalists interacted in a variety of ways that demand greater historicization. However, before charting the impact of these two industries, it is important to understand the place to which the term "Southern California" refers.

Long before it became part of the United States, the idealized region of Alta California exulted in a glorious, if not fully factual, past. "First described in a bestseller," stated historian Kevin Starr, "California entered history as a myth." The fabled realm first appeared in Garcí Ordoñez de Montalvo's novel *Las Sergas de Esplandián*, populated by Amazonian women and proximate to Paradise itself.²⁴ That history persisted for

²³ Eric Rauchway, "A Great Story, But Not a Good One," *California History* 89, no. 1 (December 2011): 59.

²⁴ Kevin Starr, *California: A History* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 2007), 5; Richard B. Rice, William A. Bullough, Richard J. Orsi, and Mary Ann Irwin, *The Elusive Eden: A New History of California* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2012), 9.

centuries, with academics treating California, particularly the southern portion of the state, as a promised land. In the words of four historians, “unabashedly chauvinistic” tendencies characterized “the essence of popular mythology about the state.”²⁵ Much of the skewed history of Southern California still focuses on one great megametropolis, Los Angeles. The city served, in historian Mike Davis’s apt phrasing, “as the promised land of a millenarian Anglo-Saxon racial odyssey,” a “Mediterraneanized idyll of New England life into the perfumed ruins of an innocent but inferior ‘Spanish’ culture.”²⁶

Doubtless the City of Angels, at the turn of the twentieth century as now, luxuriated at the epicenter of a promotional culture that sought (and seeks) to glorify it. Equally doubtless, as an in-depth review of newspapers and archival literature shows, various cities vied for the coveted spot as the dominant commercial and cultural force in Southern California. Historian Lee M.A. Simpson has categorized such towns as second- and third-tier cities, which carries a modern stigma of Angelocentrism while effectively showing that no other town could challenge the authority of the City of Angels.²⁷ Nonetheless, the history and identity of the Southland do not simply end at the city limits of Los Angeles. Archibald Williams, in the epigraph at the opening of the first full chapter of this work, spoke of Los Angeles in the same breath as another town, one that has lost much of its reputation as a commercial and cultural center today, although it proudly refuses to relinquish the history that made it so prosperous in 1900.

²⁵ Rice, Bullough, Orsi, and Irwin, *The Elusive Eden*, 4.

²⁶ Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, new ed. (London, UK: Verso, 2006), 20.

²⁷ Lee M.A. Simpson, *Selling the City: Gender, Class, and the California Growth Machine, 1880-1940* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 4-5.

At the center of the orange empire sat a city with a forgotten but important legacy for the citrus and railroad industries. The histories of Riverside and the California citrus industry are inextricably linked, both tinted white by a cadre of whiggish historians from the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. White immigrants from the Midwest incorporated Riverside in 1870 along the banks of the Santa Ana River for the purpose of establishing a colony rooted in orange agriculture. Although the colony's faltered in its first years, the introduction of the Washington Navel variety of orange led to the city's commercial prosperity by 1900, and the widespread adoption of citrus agriculture in towns across the Southland. Typical historiographers, such as Samuel Tolkowsky, connect the success of the Washington Navel orange industry to William Saunders of the United States Department of Agriculture and Eliza Tibbets, a Riverside farmer to whom Saunders sent trees. Tibbets capitalized on her new plants by selling clippings and buds to local growers to lay the foundation for an entire industry in California.²⁸ As Riverside's history demonstrates, Southern California extends well beyond Los Angeles.

Strangely, professional historians as a whole have not extended their gaze beyond the convenient metropole offered by Los Angeles. As anthropologist Thomas Patterson has rightfully noted, to many observers the so-called Inland Empire seems to be simply the eastern hinterland of Los Angeles, not a region in its own right so much as a vast backyard for Angelenos.²⁹ Local historians and journalists from the area such as Tom

²⁸ Samuel Tolkowsky, *Hesperides: A History of the Culture and Use of Citrus Fruits* (Westminster, UK: Staples and Staples Limited, 1937), 264-5.

²⁹ Thomas C. Patterson, *From Acorns to Warehouses: Historical Political Economy of Southern California's Inland Empire* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2015), 7-8.

Patterson³⁰ have heretofore filled a niche that academics avoided. Many academics have largely refused to acknowledge Riverside's proper role in the history of California in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, a few historians have expanded the scholarly conception of Southern California to include much of the old orange empire. Historian Matt Garcia, in his exploration of citrus *colonias* in the San Gabriel Valley, commented that the wealth of the citrus industry "led to the growth of towns such as Pasadena, Glendora, Claremont, Ontario, and Riverside, and contributed to the establishment of a 'polynuclear' suburban landscape," which he dubs Greater Los Angeles.³¹ Hopefully this study will prompt historians to expand the definition of Southern California to move south, beyond the Orange Curtain to Orange County, heartland of the Valencia orange industry.³² It will push readers north and west to Ventura and Santa Barbara, and east, into the nebulous entity known today as the Inland Empire. The present work necessarily mentions developments in Los Angeles, but extends its analysis to the broader region of Southern California. It also departs from existing works by treating citrus agriculture and railroading in tandem.

Over the years, a number of scholars have composed manuscripts to address the role of transcontinental railroads in the development of California during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Hubert Howe Bancroft, a popular, tireless historian in the late-nineteenth century who authored a seven-volume general history of the state from pre-

³⁰ This journalist is not related to the aforementioned anthropologist.

³¹ Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 2.

³² Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1994), 17.

European contact to the 1890s, wrote extensively about railroad businessmen, particularly the so-called Big Four who headed the Southern Pacific Railroad: Charles Crocker, Mark Hopkins, Collis P. Huntington, and Leland Stanford. For the most part, Bancroft praised these builders of the first transcontinental railroad and attempted to tell readers that trains had a positive impact on California's economy and development. Huntington provided "skilled management." Hopkins always had "a comprehensive grasp of the business situation," "whose decisions were seldom at fault." Bancroft characterized Stanford "not only as a railroad artificer, but as a statesman, a citizen, and as a philanthropist."³³ Even through the late 1930s, authors such as Oscar Lewis, a journalist who wrote *The Big Four* on California's major railroaders, largely characterized the railroads' impact on California as beneficial. The Southern Pacific and other lines, they contended, furnished Southern California with vital connections to the rest of the United States, allowing for massive demographic shifts as Euro-Americans claimed the state, and connecting the Southland to the goods and services of the entire nation.

However, by the late-twentieth century, as American history matured as a critical scholarly discipline, academic historians began to grasp the railroad as a multifaceted topic of historical study, wresting control of the subject from the grip of popular historians who only touted the virtues of this method of transportation. To scholars, the railroad became an ambiguous entity.³⁴ As opposed to simply fostering commercial

³³ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Volume XXIV: History of California, Vol. VII, 1860-1890* (San Francisco, CA: The History Company, 1890), 532-3.

³⁴ Monte George Kim, "The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Making of Place and Community in California" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005), vii.

prosperity, historians Carlos Schwantes and James Ronda argued, “every train carried cargoes of progress and poverty, triumph and failure.”³⁵ The history of railroads has exercised a particularly influential grasp over the interest of California historians. Indeed, *California History*, a scholarly journal that explores the Golden State’s past, has devoted two entire issues to the subject in recent decades.³⁶ Lifting eulogies such as those Bancroft provided for the Big Four have faded, replaced by a new cadre of historians who have questioned the benevolence of the railroad. Seizing upon a popular epithet used by journalists in the late-nineteenth century, they began to describe the railroad as an Octopus, a monstrous entity whose tentacles ensnared every citizen of California.³⁷

Initially, historians focused not on the regional influence of railroads, but on particular corporations, such as the Southern Pacific Railroad, the most important of its kind in California, and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway that originated in the Midwest. However, by the closing decades of the twentieth century and the opening years of the twenty-first, historians such as Richard Orsi and William Deverell³⁸ considered the social and political complexities that arose as a result of the railroads’ involvement in the

³⁵ Schwantes and Ronda, *The West the Railroads Made*, 201.

³⁶ See *California History* 70, no. 1 (Spring 1991), “Railroads in California and the Far West,” and *California History* 89, no. 1 (December 2011). The latter published the proceedings of the Huntington Library’s Institute on California and the West: *Railroaded* Workshop, a response to the publication of Richard White’s *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011).

³⁷ Many of these historians tip their hats to Frank Norris, author of *The Octopus: A Story of California* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1986 [1901]), for popularizing the phrase.

³⁸ Readers who wish to gain an overview into the Southern Pacific Railroad’s long-term impact on California should consult William Deverell’s *Railroad Crossing: Californians and the Railroad, 1850-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). Deverell chiefly concerns himself with political relations between Californians and the Southern Pacific.

politics and economic development of specific western states, including California. They concluded that, while lines such as the Southern Pacific often benefitted businesses and the population as a whole, they also employed corrupt public officials at various levels and devastated the environment. Similarly, as historian Larry E. Burgess has shown, railroads such as the Southern Pacific received land grants that ran through Indian Country, but California tribes received no compensation in exchange for this land.³⁹ The most recent overarching account of American railroading, written by Richard White, operated in a similar vein.⁴⁰ White, a lauded historian of the American West, focused his account on the business and economic aspects of early transcontinental lines, arguing that the United States simply did not require the half-dozen such routes it sported by the close of the nineteenth century. Not only did the railroads practice bad business, White's analysis showed, but their impact on the development of the United States often harmed as many people as it helped.

The historiography of citrus agriculture in Southern California follows a similar pattern. By the late-nineteenth century, as citriculture permeated the Southland, growers and botanists felt it necessary to chronicle their exploits. They recognized their roles as historical figures and consciously carved out a place for themselves in history by authoring tracts and tomes on citrus agriculture in the Golden State. Among the most important was Thomas A. Garey. Born in Ohio in 1830, he ventured to California shortly

³⁹ Larry E. Burgess, "Commission to the Mission Indians, 1891," *San Bernardino County Museum Association Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 13, 24. This is particularly true of the Palm Desert area, where, Burgess notes, the Southern Pacific Railroad owned half the land, and Indians the other half.

⁴⁰ Scholars seeking to learn more about the influence of transcontinental railroading on the United States as a whole in the second half of the nineteenth century should read Richard White, *Railroaded*.

before his twentieth birthday. Unlike the majority of immigrants to the Golden State, who aimed for the gold mines of the Central Valley, Garey spent his years in Southern California.⁴¹ After flitting about the Southland for years, Garey settled in Los Angeles in 1865 to establish a nursery. He bred silkworms and experimented with citrus, breeding his own varieties for Southern Californians to grow for commercial use.⁴² Garey viewed oranges as a catalyst to develop the Golden State. “That the culture of the citrus family of fruits is destined to become one of the leading industries of the great State of California,” he remarked, “is no longer disputed by the intelligent, reflective, progressive mind. That it is now, and will continue to be, one of the principal incentives to immigration into this State, is an acknowledged fact, which is amply proven by the testimony of all that have taken the trouble to inform themselves on the subject.”⁴³ Many proponents of citrus propagation in Southern California agreed with Garey’s assessment.

Edward J. Wickson was one such supporter of the industry. A horticulturalist at the University of California, Wickson spent his career examining the development of fruit across the Golden State. In his seminal book, *California Fruits and How to Grow Them*, Wickson sub-titled his chapter on the orange “The King of California Fruit.” Tracing the origins of citrus agriculture from Southeast Asia to the western United States, Wickson demonstrated how growers in California surpassed their competitors in Florida,

⁴¹ James A. Jensen, “Thomas Andrew Garey,” *Pomona Valley Historian* 5, no. 3 (July 1969): 115.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 116.

⁴³ Thomas A. Garey, *Orange Culture in California, with An Appendix on Grape Culture by L.J. Rose* (San Francisco, CA: Pacific Rural Press, 1882), 7.

their only true rival in the United States.⁴⁴ Never before had place and production become so entwined as the orange and California had, Wickson said. “The orange from the West Indies and South Florida,” the scholar explained, “is different from the California orange in main ripening season and in character of the fruit, but the differences do not give full relief.” The Golden State had an advantage, Wickson held. “With the late ripening varieties, the California grower extends his shipments into the autumn and thus laps upon the early fruit from Florida and Jamaica, while the parts of California which bring earliest maturity to the fruit are shipping before the southern fruit is cleared away.” Ultimately, things seemed to work in California’s favor. “In fact, California can keep the markets supplied with oranges fresh from the trees and in prime condition the year round.”⁴⁵ Early chroniclers of the orange in California such as Wickson predicted a bright future for their commodity. However, their accounts obscured the full complexities of the industry, particularly its social impact on the Southland.

Typical early narratives concerning citrus agriculture had a tendency to forego nuance in favor of mythology. A history of orange production in California published by Sunkist Growers, Inc., the major citrus cooperative in the state, similarly praised Tibbets, as well as the Spanish missionaries who brought the first orange seeds to Alta California. The text elided the displacement Native Americans and Mexican Americans and instead lauded wealthy white growers such as T.H.B. Chamblin, a pivotal figure whose organizational efforts contributed significantly to the formation of the Southern

⁴⁴ Edward J. Wickson, *California Fruits and How to Grow Them*, 4th ed. (San Francisco, CA: The Pacific Rural Press, 1909), 294-5.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 295.

California Fruit Exchange, which eventually transformed into Sunkist.⁴⁶ J. Eliot Coit, a scientist at the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of California, even tied Washington Navel oranges to America's national identity by noting President Theodore Roosevelt's role in replanting an original Washington Navel orange tree at the Mission Inn, a nationally recognized landmark in Riverside designed to depict the Spanish missionary era of Alta California's history in a favorable light.⁴⁷ Historian Robert Glass Cleland characterized the California Fruit Growers Exchange, one of the first modern agricultural cooperatives, as "of incalculable benefit to the California citrus ranchers" and "a pattern for agricultural co-operative enterprises throughout the world."⁴⁸

Modern literature concerning the history of citrus agriculture in Southern California has treated the subject less charitably. Broad works have characterized farming in California as agribusiness, moving the nation toward corporate modernity while holding farm laborers thrall in enforced poverty.⁴⁹ As early as the 1940s, when the unparalleled Carey McWilliams composed his greatest book on the Southland, scholars conceived of impoverished workers, often Mexicans, Japanese, or Chinese, forced to live in pitiful, segregated communities "across the tracks," using the railroad as a

⁴⁶ Catherine Merlo and Sunkist Growers, Inc., *Heritage of Gold: The First 100 Years of Sunkist Growers, Inc., 1893-1993* (Los Angeles, CA: Sunkist Growers, Inc., 1993), 3, 19-20.

⁴⁷ J. Eliot Coit, *Citrus Fruits: An Account of the Citrus Fruit Industry, with Special Reference to California Requirements and Practices and Similar Conditions* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1915), 21-2.

⁴⁸ Robert Glass Cleland, *From Wilderness to Empire: A History of California* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), 200.

⁴⁹ Cletus E. Daniels, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 39.

sociocultural boundary.⁵⁰ Historian Douglas C. Sackman composed the only general book on the subject of California citrus in *Orange Empire*. Particularly useful was his analysis of the racial distribution of this corporate empire with its monied white overseers and laborers of ethnic minority origins, particularly Mexicans who crossed the border for better jobs in the United States from the 1880s through the 1950s, at which time orange groves began to recede. Just as importantly, Sackman placed agriculturalists at the center of financial politics in California in the early-twentieth century, charting citrus moguls' connections to the powerful press, young but influential Hollywood studios, and elite irrigation companies and syndicates. While treating the region as a literal orange empire, Sackman never failed to draw attention to the Californians at the heart of his narrative, writing an agricultural tome that places human agents at its nucleus, thereby authoring a social history. The present work borrows from Sackman the notion that citrus agriculture affected the individuals living in the region in different ways depending on their racial backgrounds and social strata, and the fact that orange growing helped solidify California's position as a leading economic sector thoroughly Americanized in its culture.⁵¹

In recent decades, leading scholars have written sterling accounts that examine various aspects of citrus agriculture in California. Among these works, historian H. Vincent Moses's work stands out for its contextualization of citrus agriculture as a

⁵⁰ Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land* (New York, NY: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), 217-8.

⁵¹ For the most complete treatment of California citrus agriculture as a whole, see Douglas Cazaux Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

corporate, industrialized undertaking organized by wealthy growers in the late-nineteenth century.⁵² Moses demonstrated that orange growers in California differed significantly from Midwestern grangers and populist farmer contemporaries in the late-nineteenth century because of their reliance on mechanization and corporate organization into entities such as the California Fruit Growers Exchange. By juxtaposing orange orchardists from the Southland against farmers across the rest of the country, Moses clearly showed how growers in the Golden State established a different form of agriculture that made the state atypical of American farming. Historian Anthea Hartig's dissertation on the cultural impact of citrus growing largely echoed Moses's appraisal, adding that citrus agriculture allowed Californians of various ethnic origins to thrive and to participate in the reconstruction of the landscape of the Southland.⁵³ Jared Farmer, in his tome *Trees in Paradise*, expanded on the "cultural costs" of planting orange groves across the Southland.⁵⁴ Long before the first freeways appears in Southern California, Farmer argued, the citrus industry "yielded pollution, exploitation, and violence in

⁵² Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation." Also see Moses's scholarly article, "'The Orange grower is Not a Farmer': G. Harold Powell, Riverside Orchardists, and the Coming of Industrial Agriculture, 1893-1930," *California History* 74, no. 1 (1995): 22-37. Moses trained at the University of California, Riverside, under the direction of historians Ronald Tobey and Charles Wetherell, who also wrote a scholarly article on citrus, published as "The Citrus Industry and the Revolution of Corporate Capitalism in Southern California," *California History* 74, no. 1 (1994): 6-21. Indeed, the first issue of the seventy-fourth volume of *California History* deals with the citrus industry in the Golden State, and is valuable to any and all students of the subject.

⁵³ Anthea Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880-1940" (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2001), 394. Margo McBane similarly places women in the constellation of citrus agriculture in the Southland in "The House that Lemons Built: Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Citizenship and the Creation of a Citrus Empire, 1893-1919" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2001).

⁵⁴ "Cultural Costs" is the title of a crucial chapter regarding orange and lemon production in Jared Farmer, *Trees in Paradise: A California History* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013).

addition to those luscious fruits with perfectly colored rinds.”⁵⁵ Citrus growing, many historians now agree, came part and parcel with the subjugation of nonwhites by an elite class of Anglo Americans, and often harmed the formerly pristine environment.⁵⁶

This work departs from the dominant tendency to focus on a single company or industry and instead analyzes Southern California as a distinct region that transformed as a result of citrus agriculture and railroad transportation, which carried produce to world markets. It draws upon the historiography of these two topics, moving chronologically from Bancroft’s histories through more recent texts, to demonstrate the wider impact that orange growing and industrial transportation had on California’s many populations. It aims to demonstrate that these two sectors of California’s economy interacted culturally and economically to restructure the Golden State’s economy, promote a racial hierarchy in the Southland, and overall integrate it into the United States as a distinctly American region by remolding the past to emphasize white accomplishments over those of Mexicans, immigrants, and native peoples. Moreover, it focuses on the cooperation between citrus growers and railroaders in transforming California’s economy around the turn of the century, as well as their role in mastering the natural landscape while simultaneously industrializing it.

Historians of California have not approached the development of the Southland using this technique. Tracing the development of railroads and orange growing illuminates previously unexplored interstices where capital and industrial development,

⁵⁵ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 332.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 224.

labor, and racial formation intermingle. For instance, this work's exploration of the labor of native peoples in the orange industry of Southern California uses archival records to argue that Indians found employment in industrial trades related to orange growing. Similarly, manuscript sources on railroad and promotional pamphlets published by citrus cooperatives led the author to place these two industries at the center of booster advertising in California. This history characterizes citrus crate labels and other advertisements as critical documents that explain the process of racial formation in Southern California, and argues that railroads and citrus associations worked in tandem to develop ideas on white sociopolitical supremacy. This study's intervention and departure from the existing historiography stems from its ability to examine critical historical topics such as economic roles and industrialization from a new perspective by placing heretofore segregated subjects of California history into conversation.

Two periods of development significant to the Golden State's history offer rather convenient bookends to this research. In 1869, Phineas Banning opened the first railroad in Southern California, which ran from the harbor at San Pedro to the small town of Los Angeles.⁵⁷ The following year, enterprising settlers from the Midwest, led by John W. North, established the colony of Riverside, the city that became the capital of California's orange empire. On the other end of the chronological spectrum, industrial development in Southern California prompted by wartime demands from 1941 to 1945 generated a postwar housing boom and caused the number of citrus groves to reduce as growers retreated north to California's Central Valley. Simultaneously, the increase in the number

⁵⁷ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 94.

of Americans driving cars and the coming of commercial airlines began to challenge the monopoly that railroads, particularly the Southern Pacific, had on transportation in the Golden State from the 1870s through the early decades of the twentieth century. This study therefore uses 1870 and 1950 as its respective start and end dates. This research also invites onto the stage during this epoch historical agents who have previously been marginalized in the histories of citrus agriculture and railroading, particularly Mexicans, Native Americans, and Chinese who have received uneven consideration by academics.

Multiple scholars of the history of Native Americans in California have noted the deficiencies of traditional scholarships that marginalize indigenous peoples of the American West. Some histories discounted them as victims of harsh government policies that awarded Indian land to the railroads, doubtless a historical truth that cost many natives in Southern California their lives.⁵⁸ Yet this did not completely wipe out Native Americans in the region. Renowned California Indian scholar George H. Phillips underlined the economic clout of Native Americans in the ranching and agricultural economy of California from the mission age to the 1870s.⁵⁹ Historian James J. Rawls revealed the inaccuracy behind the myth of the total destruction of California Indians. While indigenous populations in California plummeted as a result of Spanish and American hegemony, wiping out many tribes, native populations slowly began to recover

⁵⁸ The Cahuillas, Chemehuevis, and Serranos, for instance, lost their land as the state awarded it to the Southern Pacific Railroad. See Clifford Trafzer, *A Chemehuevi Song: The Resilience of a Southern Paiute Tribe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015), 168-9, and Trafzer, *The People of the San Manuel Indian Reservation* (Patton, CA: San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, 2002).

⁵⁹ George H. Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros: Indian Labor and the Economic Expansion of Southern California, 1771-1877* (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2010), 34.

in the twentieth century.⁶⁰ Indians often used labor as a mechanism to mitigate the negative effects of domination by outsiders and to integrate into the economy of the United States. In a recent investigation into the condition of Indians on the Round Valley Reservation in Northern California, William J. Bauer, Jr. commented that the natives of California, as well as the Ottowas, Paiutes, and Diné, among other peoples of the American West, participated in the capitalist economy.⁶¹

Existing histories could stand to expand on Rawls and Bauer's theories by placing native peoples of the Southland in the context of industrial expansion, thereby expanding knowledge of Indian history. Historians of minorities in the Golden State must deconstruct existing conceptions of the productive roles of native peoples in California and acknowledge their clout as agricultural and industrial workers. Examining the interactions of Native American peoples with the industrial landscape of the western United States reveals the complex roles that indigenous peoples played. Colleen O'Neill's study of Navajo labor in the twentieth century, decades after the subjugation of the first inhabitants of Arizona, showed that natives in the state worked in the railroad and coal-mining industries, joining the market economy *en masse* as laborers in industrial capacities.⁶² Such innovative scholarship breathes new life into the historiography of

⁶⁰ James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 217.

⁶¹ William J. Bauer, Jr., *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here: Work, Community, and Memory on California's Round Valley Reservation, 1850-1941* (Chapel Hill: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 209.

⁶² Colleen O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (St. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 30-1.

Native Americans, as do other social histories related to ethnic minorities in the American West.

Recently, historians have productively located Mexican American and Chinese American labor at the heart of orange growing in Southern California. Historian Harry Lawton, for example, characterized Chinese laborers as crucial to the development of the city of Riverside, California. While many Chinese worked in unskilled trades, he argued, some mastered professions and earn respectable livings, complicating existing histories of this social group in the Golden State.⁶³ Mexican American historians such as Matt Garcia similarly reframed the existing histories of Mexican Americans in California by highlighting the economic agency of workers in the early-twentieth century, rather than the prejudice leveled against them by white growers.⁶⁴ Perhaps most importantly for the present work, recent scholarship has structured narratives around native peoples in cities across the United States, breaking the paradigm of treating Indians as rural laborers. As Nicolas Rosenthal theorized, native peoples occupied major metropolises across the American West, including Los Angeles, where they took part in modern industrial capitalism.⁶⁵ As this work argues, Native Americans, Mexicans, and Chinese made the expansion of industry and mechanized agriculture in Southern California possible.

⁶³ Harry W. Lawton, "Two Riverside Chinatown Merchants Describe Their Operations during a Geary Act Deportation Hearing," in Great Basin Foundation, ed., *Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, Volume One: History*, (San Diego, CA: Great Basin Foundation, 1987), 287-289. See also Harry W. Lawton, "Riverside's First Boom and the Chinatown of the Eighties" in the same volume.

⁶⁴ Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 187.

⁶⁵ Nicolas G. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration and Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 8-9.

This study is divided into five thematically driven chapters. Borrowing the title of Carey McWilliams's lauded volume on the region⁶⁶, the first chapter of this work offers a brief exploration of the landscape of Southern California. This section presents the region's economic history and its physical and human geography. Brief accounts of agriculture and transportation in the Southland appear, thereby allowing readers to understand the historical environment of Southern California before the proliferation of citrus groves and railroads. Cultural interpretations of the landscape from before the mission era through the nineteenth century, which in the words of art historian Jason Weems characterized the Golden State's "landscape as a never-diminishing wonder and resource," lay the groundwork for further developing the theme of the natural environment in later chapters.⁶⁷ Ultimately, this chapter contextualizes the later detailed examination of industrial transportation and agriculture in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Following this introductory chapter, the second and third chapters move from the 1870s through the first decade of the twentieth century and begin to develop the major themes of the work. The second chapter introduces the topics of orange growing and railroad transportation into Southern California before the boom of the 1880s. It expands the economic and geographical themes presented in the first chapter. It argues that orange growing offered an economic lifeline to Southern California around the turn of the

⁶⁶ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*.

⁶⁷ Jason Weems, "The Meaning of Landscape in Late Twentieth-Century California Photography and Vice Versa," in *Seismic Shift: Lewis Baltz, Joe Deal and California Landscape Photography, 1944-1984* (Riverside, CA: California Museum of Photography, 2011), 75.

twentieth century, and would not have succeeded without the access to markets that the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads provided. This chapter relies primarily upon archival material from the Tomás Rivera Library at the University of California, Riverside, and the Riverside Metropolitan Museum. Additionally, data from the Henry E. Huntington Collection at the Huntington Library tangibly illustrates the connections between orange growing and railroading. Finally, the papers of Charles C. Teague from the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, provide pivotal insights into orange growing by a prominent California horticulturalist.⁶⁸

Chapter three discusses the development of an industrial infrastructure by railroads to service the growth of the orange industry in Southern California. Many scholars have attempted to balance the integration of mechanization and the natural landscape of the American West, using technology such as railroads to dominate the productive potential of the natural environment and placing space under human control.⁶⁹ In particular, managing the flow of water in semiarid Southern California was important to figures such as George Chaffey of Ontario, whose development of water and other utilities shaped orange agriculture and modernization in the region. Drawing from the Henry E. Huntington Collection at the Huntington Library and the papers of Collis P. Huntington from the Bancroft Library, this chapter shows how railroad magnates and orange growers cooperated to alter the physical landscape of the Golden State, balancing mechanical and natural elements. Papers from the Ontario Public Library's Robert Ellingwood Model

⁶⁸ This term originates from Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, xxv.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 259-60.

Colony Room present George Chaffey's revolutionary water policies in the context of citrus growing and railroad transportation.

The fourth and fifth chapters propel the narrative into the twentieth century, through the Progressive era to the troubled days of the Great Depression and the Second World War. New historical actors also emerge in this section. Following a prevailing trend in the history of the American West to reclaim the agency of minorities such as Mexican Americans, Chinese Americans, and Native Americans, chapter four centralizes laborers from these three groups. It cites the history of these ethnic groups to demonstrate how the politically and economically dominant Anglo-American elite directed vitriol against minorities, or "others." However, as archival material shows, Indians, Chinese Americans, and Mexican Americans could, to a limited extent, harness the opportunities provided by citrus agriculture and industry to survive in California's shifting economic landscape. This chapter extensively examines employment in packinghouses, where workers directly bridged the gap between orange growing and railroad transportation. Papers at the National Archives in Perris, specifically records from the Bureau of Indian Affairs relating to the work of Indians, provide fascinating data on Native American workers. The Henry E. Huntington Collection offers valuable insights into the roles of Hispanic railroad workers in Southern California around the turn of the century. These records show that the railroad industry depended significantly on Mexican American workers to lay tracks and electrify the Southland. In a similar vein, the papers of Charles Teague detail the triumphs and challenges of the Bracero Program for Mexican workers during the Second World War. Despite their relative powerlessness and poor public

perceptions of these groups, without their labor, the trains would not have run and oranges and lemons would have rotted on the trees.

The final full chapter of this work discusses the role of railroad companies and orange growing associations in the field of California promotional literature and iconography. For much of the nineteenth century, so-called boosters lured tens of thousands of Americans from all niches of society to the Golden State by publishing tourist brochures, travel guides, and colorful advertisements depicting California as a paradise, a new Eden for white Americans. Using the Collection of California Historical Brochures from the Rivera Library, citrus crate labels from the Pomona Public Library, collections of historical issues of *Sunset* magazine published by the Southern Pacific Railroad, brochures and promotional pamphlets from the Bancroft Library, and booster material from the Huntington Library, this chapter argues that railroad admen and citrus agricultural promoters occupied the forefront of the booster movement by depicting nonwhites as subservient in California, marginalizing the very laborers who industrialized California. They also turned the manmade orange landscape of Southern California into a new Garden of Eden, offering wealth and plenty, no matter how seemingly illusory from the vantage point of the twenty-first century.

This study concludes by incorporating public history perspectives of the citrus and railroad heyday of Southern California, interpreting monuments and memorials to these topics. It begins with a description of the retreat of citrus agriculture from the region and the replacement of railroads by other forms of transportation. However, as the conclusion shows, these two forces continue to exercise a major influence over the public

imagination, as demonstrated through images of citrus and railroads from across the Southland. Public murals of Navel oranges dominate the landscape of the San Gabriel Valley and the Inland Empire. Explorations of the California Citrus State Historic Park and Orange Empire Railway Museum show how oranges and railroads have become ensconced, affective components of the historical landscape of modern Southern California. The conclusion applies the ideologies of Marita Sturken and Erika Doss, as well as the notion of history as a personal and comforting entity as articulated by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, to show that the two industries detailed in this study retain powerful grasps on the popular imagination.

Overall, this detailed exegesis focused on railroading and citrus agriculture in Southern California will broaden the study of the region's history. As the following chapters show, railroaders and orange growers cooperated to reconstitute the Southland's economy in the industrial age. They created a productive (and sometimes destructive) balance between mechanizing the Southland and cultivating it into a garden, physically transforming the landscape while building a new infrastructure. Finally, the labor of and promotional materials relating to ethnic minorities in Southern California generated by organizations such as Sunkist and the Southern Pacific Railroad constituted invaluable elements in the process of racial formation in the region, departing from other sections of the American West in important ways.

Chapter One

Southern California Country: History of the Southland, 1769-1869

Nowadays when I return from a trip to the East, I can hardly wait for the train to make that final swift descent through Cajon Pass to the floor of the plain at San Bernardino where it begins to pick up speed for the race through the orange groves to Los Angeles.

--Carey McWilliams¹

Since the nineteenth century, Southern Californians have conceived of their home as a specified entity, a semi-autonomous region within the larger confines of the Golden State. The greatest full articulation of this worldview emerged in the 1940s, when journalist and social historian Carey McWilliams turned his mind and his pen toward the Southland. Descended from Scots-Irish stock and raised in Colorado, McWilliams came to California with his family in the 1920s. For almost the next three decades, McWilliams immersed himself in every aspect of Southern California, examining and criticizing its culture, politics, and most importantly, its history.² McWilliams was largely skeptical of the flowery booster conceptions of authors such as Helen Hunt Jackson, whose *Ramona* ignited a national fixation on Southern California's Spanish fantasy past.³ McWilliams had no use for Jackson's rose-tinted spectacles, and interpreted Southern California more critically.⁴ While he agreed with Jackson that history and memory exercised a powerful

¹ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 376.

² Wilson Carey McWilliams, "Foreword," in Dean Steward and Jeannine Gendar, eds., *Fool's Paradise: A Carey McWilliams Reader* (Santa Clara, CA: Santa Clara University; Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 2001), ix-x.

³ Peter Richardson, *American Prophet: The Life and Work of Carey McWilliams* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008), 140.

⁴ Carey McWilliams, "The Growth of a Legend," in Steward and Gendar, eds., *Fool's Paradise*, 4. McWilliams characterized the authoress as "little, plump, fair-skinned, blue-eyed Helen Hunt Jackson, 'H.H.' as she was known to every resident of Southern California," the woman who was "solely

influence over the Southland, McWilliams took it upon himself to write a more inclusive work that confronted the region's significant problems.

McWilliams's interest in Southern California generated perhaps his most important work. A reinterpretation of much of the history of and mythology surrounding the Golden State, his book *Southern California Country* was, in the words of biographer Peter Richardson, a "labor of love."⁵ Almost since time immemorial, McWilliams seemed to suggest, geography and culture had isolated California from the surrounding world. This trend continued through McWilliams's lifetime, in the early-twentieth century, when Southern California had seized the American imagination.

In addition to the social history he created on the Golden State, McWilliams defined Southern California for scholars in his monumental work. He used the Tehachapi Mountains as an imperturbable dividing line, collectively referring to those portions of the Golden State "below" this range as Southern California.⁶ "Even under Mission rule," McWilliams reported, "the Franciscans repeatedly suggested that the state should be divided, for administrative purposes, at the Tehachapi line."⁷ McWilliams's Southern California "include[d] part of Santa Barbara County (the portion south of Tehachapi), all of Ventura, Los Angeles, and Orange Counties, and those portions of San Bernardino,

responsible for the evocation of its Mission past, and it was she who catapulted the lowly Digger Indian of Southern California into the empyrean."

⁵ Richardson, *American Prophet*, 140.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 15.

Riverside, and San Diego Counties ‘west of the mountains.’”⁸ While McWilliams willfully excluded Imperial County, it, too, as this history will show, shared in the benefits of rail transit and citrus agriculture, earning itself a spot in Southern California.⁹

McWilliams has influenced generations of historians to critically reinterpret the troubled history of Southern California. Socially and geographically, this work will rely upon McWilliams’s definition of Southern California as a discrete geopolitical entity. It will also place the Southland in the broader contexts of American expansion in the nineteenth century, the struggle of Indians and Californios to survive in a changing world, and the coming of industry and agribusiness by the twentieth century. Before unpacking the social and economic significance of railroad transportation and citrus agriculture, a brief general history of Southern California, from its prehistoric geographic development to the arrival of the first human inhabitants and the region’s condition on the eve of the first transcontinental railroad, will offer necessary context.

Southern California, scholars note, did not exist until approximately 200 million years ago. Tectonic activity between the North American and Pacific Ocean plates at that time caused the region to emerge.¹⁰ Most importantly, it brought into being the Olympian geographic features that defined much of the prehistory and early history of Southern California. From the Pacific Ocean that bounds it on the West to the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains to the East, the Mexican border to the south, and the Tehachapi

⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁹ *Ibid.* Other scholars include San Luis Obispo and Kern counties as components of Southern California.

¹⁰ Patterson, *From Acorns to Warehouses*, 15-7.

Mountains to the north, Southern California is largely an enclosed geographical entity.¹¹ San Diego represents the only viable harbor in the southern portion of the state, a fact that limited California from connecting to much of the globe for centuries.¹² The so-called Transverse Ranges, rare mountains that run from east to west, tower over the Southland. The San Gabriel Mountains, San Bernardino Mountains, and Tehachapis that shaped the region all run from east to west.¹³

At the base of the mountains, fertile areas such as the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Valleys contain chaparral vegetation, while to the east forbidding deserts prevented contact from the outside world.¹⁴ From these mountains, three small bodies of water originate, the San Gabriel, Los Angeles, and Santa Ana Rivers. They provided life-giving liquids to the alluvial plains of Southern California.¹⁵ Over the epochs and eras through which California passed, the area has experienced numerous earthquakes. It straddles the intersection of the North American and Pacific tectonic plates. Numerous fault lines, most prominently the San Andreas Fault, have made their presence known throughout history through dramatic tremors. In addition to giving rise to the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains, demonstrating their creative powers, the fault lines have

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Andrew Rolle and Arthur C. Verge, *California: A History*, 8th ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 5.

¹³ Rice, Bullough, Orsi, and Irwin, *The Elusive Eden*, 16.

¹⁴ Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo, *Natives of the Golden State: The California Indians* (San Francisco, CA: The Indian Historian Press, 1995), 117.

¹⁵ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 6.

also destroyed human communities. This materialized most visibly in the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, which all but leveled the city.¹⁶

The Southland enjoys unique weather as a result of its geography. At 34° N latitude, the region has a Mediterranean climate, with dry summers and wet winters, the inverse of many other areas of the globe.¹⁷ Rains usually last only from October to March.¹⁸ The Southland generally receives far less rainfall than the Central Valley. Los Angeles averages approximately 15 inches per year, edging out San Diego's 10 inches.¹⁹ This aridity gives rise to a unique ecosystem, one occupied by roadrunners, buzzards, horned toads, and dry brush.²⁰

Cultural perceptions of the region differed from these physical realities. To many observers of the region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Southern California seemed to have the most agreeable climate on Earth. Edward J. Wickson, professor of horticulture for the University of California, remarked that the Southland “enjoys the protection of the Sierra Madre [Mountains] and other uplifts on the north and east of her citrus region.” This held blizzards from eastern North America at bay.²¹ Moreover, the coast range blocked winds from the Pacific, preventing crops in California from

¹⁶ Starr, *California*, 8-9.

¹⁷ Wayne N. Engstrom, “Weather and History: The Climate of Nineteenth-Century Southern California,” in Gordon Morris Bakken, ed., *California History: A Topical Approach* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2003), 66.

¹⁸ Starr, *California*, 9.

¹⁹ Rolle and Verge, *California*, 4.

²⁰ Carey McWilliams, “Water! Water! Water!” in Steward and Gendar, eds., *Fool's Paradise*, 147.

²¹ Wickson, *California Fruits and How to Grow Them*, 301.

freezing.²² As many boosters claimed, Southern California seemed not far removed from the Garden of Eden.

Prior to the arrival of Spanish explorers in the early modern era, Alta California was home to a diverse population of native peoples. Traditional archaeological theory suggests that the first denizens of the American West traversed an icy land bridge across the Bering Strait, connecting Siberia to Alaska, to reach North America. Newer theorists have postulated that these migrants could have used watercraft to venture from Asia to the Americas.²³ Regardless of their preferred ingress, the first humans appeared in North America approximately 14,000 years ago.²⁴ Across the Southland, various groups developed regional identities that remain intact to this day. Along the Pacific, from Santa Barbara to Orange counties, the Chumash and Tongva established coastal societies, using canoes to fish.²⁵ In modern San Diego County, the Luiseño and Kumeyaay peoples lived in peace.²⁶ Inland, the Cahuilla peoples dominated a large territory, from the San Bernardino Mountains to the Colorado Desert.²⁷ They shared the northern San

²² *Ibid.* Oranges are notoriously susceptible to cold, so the coastal range benefits them in particular.

²³ Costo and Costo, *Natives of the Golden State*, 6-7. The Costos offer a brief and insightful, if slightly dogmatic, account of the archaeological and historical debate over the Bering Strait theory and the first peoples of North America in the opening chapter of their work.

²⁴ Rice, Bullough, Orsi, and Irwin, *The Elusive Eden*, 26.

²⁵ Lisa E. Emmerich, "Managing the Gold Rush: California Indians and California History," in Bakken, *California History*, 3; McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 25. Europeans referred to the Tongva as Gabrielenos, due to their proximity to Mission San Gabriel.

²⁶ Richard L. Carrico, *Strangers in a Stolen Land: American Indians in San Diego, 1850-1880* (Newcastle, CA: Sierra Oaks Publishing Co., 1987), 4.

²⁷ Costo and Costo, *Natives of the Golden State*, 121.

Bernardino Valley and eponymous mountains with the Serranos.²⁸ Even farther east, along the banks of the Colorado River, the Cocopas, Mohaves, and Quechans practiced natural irrigation to develop agriculture. These groups developed the first irrigation projects in the state. Native American historian Clifford Trafzer, writing of the Quechans who lived along the southern Colorado River, mentions that group's use of ditches to irrigate corn, beans, watermelons, and cantaloupes, among other goods.²⁹ The Chemehuevi people of the desert neighbored them to the north, similarly growing some of their own food.³⁰

Enterprising natives laid the groundwork for the infrastructure of Southern California. They established trails and water routes that connected various regions through trade and warfare. Indigenous of Alta California used roads before the age of European exploration that connected people who traveled by foot. California Indians used these safe, well-trodden paths for religious ceremonies, messaging, or trading.³¹ Later denizens of the region would build upon these accomplishments, introducing new methods of transportation such as railroads that often followed Indian footpaths, as well as new methods agriculture that would alter the course of history and destroy native cultures across the American West.

²⁸ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 25; Starr, *California*, 14. For a more detailed account of the Serrano people and their relationship to the San Bernardino area, see Trafzer, *The People of the San Manuel Indian Reservation*, 20-1.

²⁹ Trafzer, *Yuma*, 5.

³⁰ Rice, Bullough, Orsi, and Irwin, *The Elusive Eden*, 28; Starr, *California*, 14.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

Upon the arrival of Spanish explorers in the New World, North America developed rapidly. This historical epoch began in 1493, when, initially motivated by the desire to obtain spices and gold from East Asia, a Genoese sailor named Christopher Columbus convinced the king and queen of Spain to finance a voyage west across the Atlantic to reach the spice-rich ports of China, Japan, and India.³² During the 1490s and early years of the 1500s, Columbus made numerous voyages to what he claimed were islands off the coast of East Asia. Over the next few decades, however, it became clear to Europeans that, during his voyages, Columbus had not reached “the Orient,” but instead discovered an entirely new land mass previously unknown to denizens of the Old World. Europeans wasted no time investing themselves in what they soon called the New World. Numerous European explorers working to advance Spanish holdings in the Americas brought ships and domesticated animals with them to map and conquer the Americas. Men such as Juan Ponce de León and Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca commanded large European galleons across the Atlantic and mapped the coast of the Gulf of Mexico in the early 1500s.³³

Spaniards found the task of penetrating the interior of North America daunting. No anecdote better illustrates this point than the journey of Cabeza de Vaca in 1528. Departing from the Spanish base of Cuba to help Pánfilo de Narváez map the coast of Florida, a shipwreck marooned Cabeza de Vaca and his men in Texas, where native peoples enslaved the Spanish explorers. This group of Spaniards ventured up the Rio Grande, across New Mexico and Arizona, and ultimately reached the safe haven of

³² Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 30.

³³ *Ibid.*, 31-3.

Spanish Mexico. Throughout his journey, Cabeza de Vaca had received reports from native peoples detailing rich cities with incalculable sums of gold north of where he had traveled, the so-called Seven Cities of Cibola.³⁴ As a result of these rumors, European invaders decided to significantly develop the transportation infrastructure of North America. Although utilizing footpaths and navigating waterways had allowed Native Americans to live in peace prior to European arrival in the Americas, such methods proved inadequate to the Spaniards. They created new trails, modified existing ones, and exported beasts of burden from Europe to facilitate conquest of southwestern North America. Ultimately, Spanish success in the New World depended on substantially recreating the existing infrastructure to promote greater transportation, resulting in an even greater flow of foreign peoples to North America.

Cabeza de Vaca's Seven Cities of Cibola tantalized Spaniards, causing them to explore California in search mineral wealth. Francisco de Ulloa explored the Gulf of California, and even reached the mouth of the Colorado River in 1539.³⁵ In 1542, Juan Rodriguez de Cabrillo sailed along the coast of Alta California, but died before he could complete his journey as a result of conflicts with native peoples.³⁶ As a result of this inconclusive expedition, Spain contented itself with other imperial colonies, and California would not play a significant role in imperial politics for centuries.

³⁴ Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 32.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

³⁶ White, "*It's Your Misfortune*," 32.

Cary McWilliams, ever the wit, drolly remarked that “nothing much happened in Southern California between Cabrillo’s voyage of exploration and the arrival of Father Junipero Serra at San Diego in 1769.”³⁷ Veritably, Spaniards returned to California in the 1760s, following the global Seven Years War that ignited renewed imperial designs among all European empires. The Spanish crown became wary after it found itself on the losing side of this conflict, launching a number of initiatives to consolidate control of its most distant imperial holdings and safeguard California from Russian or British invasion. In 1769, the Spanish Empire and the Franciscan order of the Roman Catholic Church sent Don Gaspar de Portolá and Father Junípero Serra to establish a series of religious missions and presidios along the coast of Alta California. Serra used overland routes while Portolá’s command sailed the Pacific to build a chain of religious missions along the coast of Alta California, ranging from San Diego in the south to San Francisco in the north.³⁸ To connect the missions, Spaniards blazed el Camino Real, the Royal Road, to provide necessary supplies and spread information along their newest colony. Sea trade thrived, particularly at San Diego and Monterrey.³⁹ In addition to Christianizing native Californians, Serra hoped to use missions to introduce Indians to agricultural labor to feed the expansive Spanish Empire.

The missionization of Southern California took a gruesome toll on Native Americans. Spaniards seized native lands and kidnapped indigenous Californians to construct

³⁷ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, vii.

³⁸ Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 366.

³⁹ White, “*It’s Your Misfortune*,” 32.

missions and practice European agriculture.⁴⁰ Cattle and pigs introduced by Europeans devoured grasses upon which native Southern Californians had subsisted prior to Spanish incursion.⁴¹ Native Californians who lived inland initially avoided Spanish control. However, indigenous individuals who escaped from missions often unwittingly transmitted European diseases to populations that had avoided laboring in the Franciscan missions.⁴²

While Spaniards possessed the military capacity to control native peoples within the vicinity of missions, they relied on native Californians to perform the agricultural work of plowing, mastering draft animals, and irrigating fields to uphold the European economy in the region. Indians mastered adobe-making, blacksmithing, and carpentry, creating necessary tools and structures such as plows, horseshoes, and mission walls.⁴³ In the vicinity of San Diego, Spanish Franciscans and, later, Mexican ranchers forced native peoples into massive agricultural labor projects completely foreign to native peoples who primarily hunted and gathered to subsist.⁴⁴ Missionaries scourged native laborers who refused to work by whipping or beating them, all in the name of disciplining indigenes

⁴⁰ Costo and Henry Costo, *Natives of the Golden State*, 169-170.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 174.

⁴² Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 240. This trend worsened with the “liberation” of Indians from Franciscan missions after Mexican independence from Spain. Indians freed from Franciscan control returned to their communities and inadvertently spread lethal microbes from the Old World against which native peoples of the Americas had no immunities.

⁴³ Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*, 69-71.

⁴⁴ Carrico, *Strangers in a Stolen Land*, 17.

into Christian laborers.⁴⁵ Enduring such physical cruelties, California natives produced citrus fruits, figs, olives, wheat, grapes, and vegetables.⁴⁶ Native Americans thus became as the first true agricultural laborers in California history. Despite Spanish cruelties and disease, George H. Phillips argued that the Indian tradition of gathering food to survive allowed the native Californians to survive the economic transition to an agricultural system.⁴⁷

The transportation infrastructure of Southern California also developed under the Spanish Empire. In the mid-1770s, Juan Bautista de Anza blazed a treacherous route through the deserts of Sonora and Arizona on his route to California, naming his path el Camino del Diablo, or the Devil's Highway.⁴⁸ Upon reaching the Colorado River, Anza established good relations with the Quechans, and reached Mission San Gabriel a mere two months after his departure.⁴⁹ Importantly, Anza followed a path originally established by the Cahuillas well before the arrival of Spaniards in Alta California, traveling from Yuma through Borrego Valley to the Hemet-San Jacinto Valley before passing through the future town site that Riverside would occupy before he reached the

⁴⁵ Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*, 68.

⁴⁶ H. F. Raup, "Transformation of Southern California to a Cultivated Land," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 49, no. 3 (1959): 58.

⁴⁷ Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*, 68.

⁴⁸ Trafzer, *Yuma*, 16.

⁴⁹ Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 368.

San Gabriel Valley.⁵⁰ Much later, railroad engineers would similarly follow the footpaths of Native American peoples in Southern California.

Following the successful Mexican independence movement and the secularization of Franciscan missions in Alta California during the 1830s, Native Americans found it necessary to adapt to changing economic opportunities.⁵¹ Californios, as Hispanic denizens of Alta California called themselves, secularized mission lands, removing them from the control of the Roman Catholic Church. They undertook this action partly in an attempt to wash away the authoritarian taste of Spanish rule and also out of a desire to help Indians, whom they recognized had suffered and died in the missions. However, less benevolent motives also explain the actions of Californios. Wealthy Hispanic families had eyed the vast fields surrounding Southern California's missions as potential grazing land for enormous ranches. The dismantling of missions as center of economic life allowed families such as the influential Bandinis and Lugos to establish rancho empires, creating hide-and-tallow and beef industries that bolstered Alta California's economy in the early nineteenth century.⁵² These rancho empires would later break apart, and orange trees would replace grasses used to feed cattle.

A few enterprising California natives entered the employ of Mexican rancheros. For example, the Lugo family asked a powerful Cahuilla man named Juan Antonio to lead his

⁵⁰ Costo and Costo, *Natives of the Golden State*, 33.

⁵¹ Lowell John Bean and Lisa J. Bourgeault, *The Cahuilla*, ed. Frank W. Porter III (New York, NY: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989), 85.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 85.

clans against raiding Utes from the north.⁵³ In 1834, the eve of secularization, French sojourner Duflot de Mofras found 30,000 Indian neophytes caring for 400,000 head of cattle, 60,000 horses, 300,000 sheep, and various other kinds of livestock.⁵⁴ Although Indians could carve out livings for themselves in such capacities, Antonio and his ilk were outliers, exceptions to the poverty that forced labor under the Spanish and secularization by the Californios created among native communities in Southern California. The cattle industry that rendered countless natives homeless fared far better.

During the Californio era, the Southland's economy revolved primarily around the massive cattle industry. Introduced to the area by Spanish settlers in the eighteenth century, the cattle system blossomed after Mexican independence in 1821. As a result of land grants, many Californios built rancho empires that stretched for tens of thousands of acres. Thomas Larkin, a prominent American immigrant to California, whose policies helped gradually anglicize the region and who later served as a government agent under President James K. Polk, commented that essentially forty-six men held power in the state. These men were primarily members of powerful rancho-politico families such as the Yorbas, Bandinis, Lugos, and Vallejos.⁵⁵ Land, the great resource upon which California's economy depended, was centralized under the control of a select few. From 1830 to 1846, the Mexican government, through land grants, allowed fewer than eight

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 84-5.

⁵⁴ Monica Highland, *Greetings from Southern California* (Portland, OR: Graphic Arts Center Publication Company, 1988), 88.

⁵⁵ Steven W. Hackel, "Land, Labor, and Production: The Colonial Economy of Spanish and Mexican California," *California History* 76, no. 2/3 (1997): 132.

hundred individuals to gain control of eight million acres.⁵⁶ Even during the economic and social upheavals generated by the Gold Rush and the scores of inhabitants who raced to enter California's gold fields, the cattle industry remained strong, and ranchers gained huge profits by generating beef for miners.⁵⁷ However, the hide-and-tallow industry represented the dominant use of cattle in California, and the market for hides stretched far beyond the region's borders. California hides wound their way along the Santa Fe Trail to New Mexico, and even departed ports for such faraway destinations as Honolulu and New England.⁵⁸ The agricultural potential of Southern California beckoned foreigners to travel there, including citizens of the fledgling United States.

The emergence of a new political player on the North American stage dramatically altered Southern California's history. In 1776, the United States of America came into existence after declaring independence from Great Britain. Stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River by 1783, this country made of the port of New Orleans at the mouth of that river to sell agricultural goods on the international market. Here Americans interacted with Spanish, English, and French traders.⁵⁹ In the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Americans migrated across North America and expanded

⁵⁶ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 61.

⁵⁷ Gerald D. Nash, *State Government and Economic Development: A History of Administrative Policies in California, 1849-1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), 70.

⁵⁸ Jessie Davies Francis, *An Economic and Social History of Mexican California, 1822-1846, Volume I: Chiefly Economic* (New York, NY: Arno Press, 1976), 538-9.

⁵⁹ Eliga Gould, *Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 112.

their agricultural output.⁶⁰ Spaniards, fearful of American economic encroachment into the Southwest, tried to ban them from using New Orleans. Thomas Jefferson, president of the United States, attempted to purchase the city of New Orleans from the French in the early 1800s. In response, Napoleon Bonaparte, the First Consul of France, instructed his diplomats to sell the massive French territory of Louisiana to the United States for the relatively inexpensive sum of \$15,000,000.⁶¹ This became the first step in a race to reach the Pacific Ocean and conquer an empire.

Impassioned citizens of the United States, gazing ever westward with a covetous eye toward Mexico, hoped to settle a continental republic that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Americans saw it as their “manifest destiny” to “overspread and possess the whole continent allotted by Providence of the free development of our yearly multiplying millions,” explained New York newspaperman John O’Sullivan in the 1840s.⁶² Manifest destiny soon became the name of the movement into the American West, and would result in the seizure of California from Mexico.

California’s political upheaval in the late 1840s paved the way for radical economic developments during the second half of the nineteenth century. During the mid-nineteenth century, Americans gradually infiltrated California, marrying into the prominent Mexican families who had gained so much wealth from various land grants, gaining economic power in the process. Men such as Abel Stearns, who married Arcadia

⁶⁰ Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 316.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 236-8.

⁶² Quoted in Hampton Sides, *Blood and Thunder: The Epic Story of Kit Carson and the Conquest of the American West* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 2006), 57.

Bandini, daughter of powerful rancher Juan Bandini, gradually consolidated their influence over the state's economy by taking control of massive tracts of land. They hoped for an orderly transition from Mexican to Anglo-American control of California, and eventually for California to become one of the United States.⁶³ A pair of expansion-minded presidents of the United States, John Tyler and James K. Polk, attracted Texas into the Union and integrated the Oregon Territory, wresting it from British hands through diplomacy.⁶⁴ Following a skirmish between American and Mexican troops in a contested zone of Texas that both nations claimed, the neighboring republics plunged into war, which the United States won in a year and a half.⁶⁵ Although the Anglo-American revolt against Mexican governance beginning in 1846 resulted in very little bloodshed in the Golden State, following the more gruesome Mexican War's conclusion in 1848, California became part of the United States through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.⁶⁶ Americans would make far different use of California's economic resources than the Californios.

⁶³ Robert Glass Cleland, *The Cattle on A Thousand Hills: Southern California, 1850-1880* (Los Angeles, CA: The Ward Ritchie Press, 1941), 189.

⁶⁴ White, "It's Your Misfortune," 73, 75.

⁶⁵ Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 495, 500.

⁶⁶ To be sure, Americans, primarily private settlers backed by the U.S. Navy, clashed with Californios. In the Southland, a small engagement at Chino, as well as a larger battle at San Pascual, where General Andrés Pico and his Mexican lancers defeated General Stephen Watts Kearny, hardly impacted the course of the war in Texas and Mexico. See Rice, Bullough, Orsi, and Irwin, *The Elusive Eden*, 144. The opportunistic explorer John C. Frémont and a large army secured the capture of Los Angeles in January of 1847. This led to the Capitulation of Cahuenga, where Californios in the Southland officially surrendered to Frémont. See Starr, *California*, 69-70.

The California Gold Rush multiplied the region's global connectivity to an astounding degree. After the discovery of the precious mineral on John Sutter's mill on the American River in 1848, Anglo-Americans, Latin American miners, French adventurers, Chinese laborers, and Australians flooded the area in search of the elusive element. While Northern California, dominated by the San Francisco Bay area, began to radically reorganize its economy to accommodate the physical and economic needs of miners, the southern counties continued the ranching trade that had proven so successful in the past. Indeed, the industry thrived during the Gold Rush. Beef, a rare commodity in the mining camps of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, sold at a high price.⁶⁷ Agricultural growth also resulted from the population influx from the East. The soil of the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys, combined with the excellent climate, intermingled to create an ideal zone for the cultivation of crops. Farmers grew fruits, vegetables, and, most importantly, grains such as wheat on an increasingly large scale in the Central Valley. One major grain producer, Isaac Friedlander, began to export his product to England, further demonstrating that California had become a hub for global trade by 1860.⁶⁸

However, as Northern California's economic base expanded, the southern part of the state continued to rely on the cattle industry for its economic stability. Historians can attribute part of Southern California's economic lag to geography. Miners fortunate enough to find gold in the Sierra Nevadas naturally spent their newfound wealth in the

⁶⁷ Joseph S. O'Flaherty, *An End and A Beginning: The South Coast and Los Angeles, 1850-1887* (New York, NY: Exposition Press, 1972), 16.

⁶⁸ Nash, *State Government and Economic Development*, 64.

northern part of the state, not the distant and isolated cities of the Southland.⁶⁹ Efforts to draw Americans to the Golden State, which the United States had formally admitted to the Union in 1850, focused on attracting settlers to northern cities such as San Francisco. Northern Californians at this time began to use the derisive epithet of “cow counties” when referring to the region south of the Tehachapi Mountains. This phrase denoted their perception that the Southland lacked the civil structures that United States citizens hoped to install across North America as a result of their fervent belief in manifest destiny.⁷⁰ The physical isolation, a result of poor transportation connections in the area, raised prices in Southern California to a staggering degree.⁷¹ Many Anglo-Americans also perceived the Southland as a haven for criminals. One such writer characterized the region as “overrun by Mexican banditti.”⁷²

In the years between the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo and the completion of the grand transcontinental railroad, Southern California’s economy significantly lagged behind that of the northern part of the state. Droughts, poor irrigation, lack of investment or market access, and poor transportation prevented Southern Californians from achieving prosperity.⁷³ Droughts in 1862 and 1863 took the lives of between 1,000,000

⁶⁹ O’Flaherty, *An End and A Beginning*, 11.

⁷⁰ Gerald Haslam, “Literary California: ‘The Ultimate Frontier of the Western World,’” *California History* 68, no. 4 (1989): 190.

⁷¹ John E. Baur, *The Health Seekers of Southern California, 1870-1900* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 2010), 22-3.

⁷² Ken Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West, 1850-1935* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 175.

⁷³ Cleland, *The Cattle on A Thousand Hills*, 220.

and 3,000,000 heads of cattle, estimates McWilliams.⁷⁴ In January of 1864, the *Los Angeles News* noted “[the] cattle of Los Angeles County are dying so fast in many places that the large ranchos keep their men busily employed in obtaining hides. Thousands of carcasses strew the plains in all directions, a short distance from this city, and the sight is harrowing in the extreme.”⁷⁵ Desolation had eviscerated the once-vital cattle industry, robbing the cattle barons of their most valuable economic asset.

The Californios of the Southland faced the most severe degradations during this period. Anglo American encroached upon their lands and diminished their economic power. American courts often validated the Hispanic and Indian families that had lived in the Southland for generations, but court proceedings could last for decades, crippling Californios with debt.⁷⁶ Anglos often perceived of Californios as inferior successors to the Spanish colonizers who came before them.⁷⁷ Californios periodically petitioned to turn Southern California into a separate territory to escape expansionist Americans, but to no avail.⁷⁸ They were reduced to feeble forms of protest to express their displeasure with their loss of status. In San Juan Capistrano in Orange County, a Hispanic woman named Modesta Avila placed a sign on the tracks of the Santa Fe Railroad asking for money for

⁷⁴ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 62.

⁷⁵ As cited in O’Flaherty, *An End and a Beginning*, 83.

⁷⁶ Lisbeth Haas, “Modesta Avila vs. the Railroad and Other Stories about Conquest, Resistance, and Village Life,” in María Herrera-Sobek, ed., *Chicana Literary and Artistic Expressions: Culture and Society in Dialogue* (Santa Barbara: University of California, Santa Barbara, 2000), 23.

⁷⁷ Joseph A. Rodríguez, “Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos, and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 170.

⁷⁸ Starr, *California*, 105.

land that she believed rightfully belonged to her family, across which the railroad had been built. Ultimately, authorities jailed Avila for her actions, and she died in prison at San Quentin.⁷⁹ It would take a miracle, or a total restructuring, to save Southern California from its economic doldrums.

The Hispanic impact on Southern California forever characterized the region's legacy. In 1917, as the world plunged into war almost sixty years after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Professor E.J. Wickson, a horticulturalist for the University of California, delivered an address at Riverside. Titled "The Development of California Fruit Industries," it opened with a wistfully-labeled section, "Lands of Fruit and Lands of Gold." In this prescript to the conquest of California by the United States, Wickson ruminated on the triumphs and lost opportunities that the Franciscan padres had failed to seize, effectively composing an epitaph for the Hispanic age of Southern California. After establishing the importance of Eden as a biblical horticultural center by quoting Moses, Wickson declared that "About 150 years ago in the name of the Lord, the Spanish padres planted gardens in western California and introduced, directly from the Mediterranean region of the Lord's original garden to the geographical areas which we now occupy, the fruit and other esculents, the manifold production of which is the recipient of our greatest investments, the source of our greatest income, the expensive and enduring foundation of our civilization."⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Haas, "Modesta Avila," 21-2.

⁸⁰ E.J. Wickson, "The Development of California Fruit Industries," E.J. Wickson Papers, Bancroft Library, carton 1, folder Wickson, E.J. Writings – The Development of California Fruit Industries. Hereafter cited as Wickson Papers.

The Franciscan padres, Wickson sadly concluded, fell short of the greatness of their American successors. The Americans, not the Spanish or the Californios, mined the Sierra Nevada Mountains and tamed the West. Wickson's narrative affirms his belief that permanently consigned the Californio age to the past, where it was destined to languish. "And thus it was," he concluded in his most pompous language, "that Edens were lost to both Adam and the monks of St. Francis because they both lacked the wisdom of Moses, whose brows had been lifted by Egyptian Kultur until he could see that 'the gold of the land is good.'"⁸¹ To Wickson and many like-minded Anglos, gold and land served as the most important pillars of civilization in early American California. By the 1850s, the sons and daughters of the Spanish conquerors of California had lost both.

In addition to disenfranchising Californios, Anglos in the Golden State further subdued native populations. Official policies limited the areas where California Indians could officially reside, creating reservations to isolate Native Americans.⁸² As Native American historian Clifford Trafzer notes, federal officials emulated this system, creating reservations on which to economically strand Native Americans across the United States.⁸³ Americans maligned the previous denizens of the region. They referred to Mexicans as "mongrels" or Indians as "savages" to justify sociopolitical and economic marginalization of non-American Californians, as well as widespread physical cruelty

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Rawls, *Indians of California*, 141.

⁸³ Trafzer, *As Long as the Grass Shall Grow*, 198.

and death leveled against such populations.⁸⁴ Between the discovery of gold in California in 1848 and 1870, approximately 50,000 Indians died of starvation, disease, and widespread homicide perpetrated by Anglo-American miners.⁸⁵

Despite restrictive government policies, California Indians never disappeared completely from the economic landscape. Benjamin Wilson, a wealthy American rancher and entrepreneur in Southern California, once characterized Indians as “a necessary part of the domestic economy. They are almost the only source of farm servants we have.”⁸⁶ James J. Rawls, a leading scholar of California’s native peoples, commented that whites such as Wilson made a distinction between “wild” Indians relegated to reservations and productive, “useful” individuals who contributed to the economy through labor.⁸⁷ The *San Bernardino Daily Times* reported that Indians helped extend the Southern Pacific Railroad into Southern California during the late 1870s.⁸⁸

By the time the ink had dried on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, eager American pioneers had already formulated various transportation methods to conquer the rugged new frontier. The discovery of gold in California precipitated a vast rush of people from

⁸⁴ Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West*, 28.

⁸⁵ Robert F. Heizer, “Introduction,” in Robert F. Heizer, ed., *The Destruction of California Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974), xiv. See also Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).

⁸⁶ Benjamin D. Wilson, *The Indians of Southern California in 1852*, ed. John W. Caughey (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library Press, 1952), 149, as cited in Carrico, *Strangers in a Stolen Land*, 29-30.

⁸⁷ Rawls, *Indians of California*, 145-6.

⁸⁸ *San Bernardino Daily Times*, February 22, 1877, p. 2, as cited in Harry W. Lawton, “A Selected Chronological History of the Chinese Pioneers in Riverside and the Southern California Citrus Belt,” in Great Basin Foundation, ed., *Wong Ho Leun* Great Basin Foundation, 66.

the eastern United States in search of that mineral, drawing hundreds of thousands of Americans to the Golden State, as well as the Oregon Territory.⁸⁹ These migrants relied on overland transportation to repopulate the trans-Mississippi frontier. Travelers typically started their overland journeys in Arkansas or Missouri, using packed wagon trains pulled by dozens of mules and oxen to cross the American West. In addition to existing paths, such as the Santa Fe Trail, these pioneers blazed new routes, including the Overland Trail. This route, consisting of smaller yet vital branches such as the Oregon Trail, California Trail, Mormon Trail, and Bozeman Trail, ultimately connected travelers from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast.⁹⁰ By the mid-nineteenth century, a number of different entities would utilize these trails to connect the Far West to the Union.

The federal government of the United States played a significant role in the expansion of the American transportation frontier by partnering with private organizations to develop the West. It supported the Pony Express, wherein riders carried postage hundreds of miles from Missouri to California in less than two weeks.⁹¹ By the mid-1850s, Congress authorized mail service by stagecoach across the trans-Mississippi West, using the Yuma crossing as an important relay station along the route.⁹² Stage lines such as the D.A. Butterfield Company freighted passengers, mail, and commodities across the West

⁸⁹ White, "*It's Your Misfortune*," 189.

⁹⁰ H. Wilbur Hoffman, *Sagas of Old Western Travel and Transport* (San Diego, CA: Howell-North Books, 1980), 24.

⁹¹ Hoffman, *Sagas of Old Western Travel and Transport*, 204, 208-9.

⁹² Trafzer, *Yuma*, 98.

by the mid-1860s.⁹³ The trend of partnerships between the federal government and private entities continued after the Civil War and provided a model for the fledgling railroad industry to follow.

Americans, like their Spanish predecessors, applied the most sophisticated technology available to them to the challenge of transportation across the frontier. Steam engines revolutionized water transport, allowing Americans to ply rivers along the frontier and use riverine commerce to produce large cities. This trend expanded after the United States purchased Louisiana and the Mexican Cession. New Orleans and St. Louis became particularly important in steamboat trade by the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861. Settlers often established these cities in agricultural zones as distribution centers for wheat and other goods produced across the American West. Steamships allowed traders to carry goods along the mighty Mississippi River and its important tributaries, linking peoples across the central United States.⁹⁴ Americans applied steamboat technology to the trans-Mississippi frontier, and by the mid-nineteenth century a veritable fleet of steamboats dominated rivers across the United States. Western historian Clifford Trafzer claims that “Between the 1850s and the late 1870s, paddle wheelers on the Colorado provided much of the Southwest with its principal link with the outside world.”⁹⁵ As the nineteenth century progressed, though, a new form of land transport rapidly supplanted steamboats as the principal trade link of the American West.

⁹³ Winthur, *The Transportation Frontier*, 27.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 74-5.

⁹⁵ Trafzer, *Yuma*, 82.

Rail transport preceded the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo by decades. First developed in Britain, railroads crossed the Atlantic to the United States in 1829.⁹⁶ Powered by coal, locomotives allowed nations to break their dependence on nature, such as foot or animal travel or wind power, which all ultimately derive from solar power.⁹⁷ Americans became fascinated with this form of transportation early in the nineteenth century, using it to connect far-flung regions of the expanding republic to create a unified nation. In Maryland, capitalists paid workers to lay out the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The first commercial line in the United States, it allowed the city of Baltimore to tap into developing resources in Ohio, then part of the western frontier of the United States. This gave the city a competitive edge against New York and Philadelphia, serviced by manmade waterways such as the Erie Canal.⁹⁸ Engines carried manufactured goods across hundreds of miles of track from the industrialized North to the rural, agricultural South and back.⁹⁹ By the time the American Civil War divided the northern and southern sections of the nation, the North, which held the greater part of the country's rail lines, eventually prevailed due to the logistical superiority offered by the so-called iron horse.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ John H. White, Jr., "The Railroad Reaches California: Men, Machines, and Cultural Migration," *California Historical Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (Summer 1973): 131.

⁹⁷ Robert B. Marks, *Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Ecological Narrative from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-first Century*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 101, 136.

⁹⁸ Richard Reinhardt, ed., *Workin' on the Railroad: Reminiscences from the Age of Steam* (New York, NY: Weathervane Books, 1970), 27.

⁹⁹ Schwantes and Ronda, *The West the Railroads Made*, 4.

¹⁰⁰ Marks, *Origins of the Modern World*, 132.

Citizens of the United States dreamt of building a rail line that would easily connect to the Atlantic and the Pacific and eventually tapping into the vast wealth of East Asia, the same dream that had driven the Spaniards to explore the New World centuries before. This conception began to circulate widely across the United States by the 1830s, shortly after the iron horse began to tirelessly steam across the industrial northeast.¹⁰¹ This would allow the United State to share the prosperity of other industrialized nations, particularly Great Britain.¹⁰² It seemed particularly useful for taming the newly acquired western portions of the nation, such as California.¹⁰³

Following the acquisition of the Mexican Cession, the government of the United States launched a quartet of surveys to determine viable routes for a railroad to the Pacific Ocean. In 1853, Congress passed the Pacific Survey Act, which authorized the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers to explore the West, making extensive notes as to the best potential route for a railroad.¹⁰⁴ Exploring four different routes, members of the Corps trekked across western United States. Different teams vied for routes from the Canadian to the Mexican border.¹⁰⁵ Among the leaders of the various expeditions was Lieutenant Amiel W. Whipple, who journeyed along the 35th parallel from Arkansas through Albuquerque and Yuma before settling on Los Angeles as a potential terminus

¹⁰¹ Schwantes and Ronda, *The West the Railroads Made*, 17.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 9-10.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁰⁴ Walter R. Borneman, *Rival Rails: The Race to Build America's Greatest Transcontinental Railroad* (New York: Random House, 2010), 10.

¹⁰⁵ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nothing Like It in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad, 1863-1869* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2000), 31.

for the Pacific railroad.¹⁰⁶ Farther south, along the 32 parallel, Lieutenant John G. Parke went across the southern United States, from Texas to New Mexico and the Gila River, with hopes of eventually sending a railroad to San Diego.¹⁰⁷ While the government chose not to support a railroad along either route, although Whipple had strongly endorsed his own, the Santa Fe Railroad eventually placed steel tracks along the path he had surveyed.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, other surveyors disagreed with Whipple and Parke, saying that the most practicable way to link California by rail was through the Sacramento Valley. These surveyors discounted both routes through Southern California.¹⁰⁹ Various political factions in Congress lobbied for funding railroad lines that would benefit the sections of the country from which they hailed.¹¹⁰ While this politicking prevented the launch of a transcontinental railroad venture in the 1850s, it demonstrated Americans' undying desire to linking east and west by rail. However, not all Americans shared this dream.

Native Americans rarely enjoyed the benefits of railroading in the American West. The manifest destiny ideology that drove Americans to seize lands formerly part of Mexico posited white English-speakers as the inevitable dominant force of the North American continent. Americans who pursued western expansion in the nineteenth century saw the decline of native peoples as inevitable and forgivable, particularly when coupled

¹⁰⁶ David Haward Bain, *Empire Express: Building the First Transcontinental Railroad* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 50.

¹⁰⁷ Borneman, *Rival Rails*, 16-7.

¹⁰⁸ Trafzer, *Yuma*, 50. All the surveys sponsored by the federal government in 1853 would eventually become transcontinental routes by the close of the nineteenth century.

¹⁰⁹ Bain, *Empire Express*, 50.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

with economic growth as facilitated by rail lines.¹¹¹ Along the Great Plains, for instance, the Northern Pacific Railroad allowed white Americans to poach buffalo almost out of existence, devastating native economies.¹¹² While Native Americans and animals of the American West suffered during this invasion, new forms of agriculture helped settle the frontier. This included the oranges and lemons that characterized agriculture in Southern California by 1900.

Humans have cultivated citrus fruits for millennia, almost since the dawn of recorded history. Three species from the *Citrus* family, the citron, the pomelo, and the mandarin orange, existed in nature. Experimentation by botanists and horticulturalists over the course of human history, as well as natural mutations, resulted in the creation of new varieties, such as the sweet orange, a cross between the pomelo and the mandarin. Crossing a sweet orange with a pomelo led to the creation of grapefruit.¹¹³ The earliest records date the production of citrus to the Malay Peninsula approximately four thousand years ago.¹¹⁴ Lemons, according to California citriculturalist Floyd Bunnelle, came from northern Burma or India, close to the point of origination of the orange.¹¹⁵ The Chinese wrote extensively about oranges from the sixth century BCE to the second century CE,

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹¹² Edward M. Bruner, "Mandan," in *Perspective in American Indian Culture Change*, ed. Edward H. Spicer (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 241.

¹¹³ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 227.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 228-9.

¹¹⁵ Floyd R. Bunnelle, "The Journeys of Citrus to California," *Pomona Valley Historian* 10, no. 3 (Summer 1974): 98.

long before this family of fruit spread to Europe or the Americas.¹¹⁶ Persians cultivated citrus fruits during the fourth century BCE, when Alexander of Macedon conquered a large empire. His soldiers brought seeds back to Greece, and oranges circulated around the Mediterranean as a result, where they won fame as the “Persian apple.”¹¹⁷ After the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century CE, Arabs introduced citrus to what would eventually become Spain and Portugal, further ensconcing oranges and lemons as prized fruits in the minds of Europeans.¹¹⁸ By the twelfth century, the Chinese recorded twenty-seven varieties of orange grown in the Middle Kingdom.¹¹⁹

The orange has perpetually fascinated societies across the globe. Wickson, writing on this commodity as the “King of California Fruit,” glorified its history. “From the beginning,” the professor remarked, “the orange has reigned as king in the international fruit trade of the world.” Since humans began to actively grow this fruit,

the orange has not only been accepted in northern climes as a symbol of tropical and sub-tropical salubrity and sumptuousness, but by its own distinctive characteristics as a fruit it has won recognition as befitting the highest uses of mankind. By its nature too the orange ministers to its own commercial popularity. It endures long shipment; it ripens slowly and through a season of several months which constitute the winter in northern latitude when local fruits are scant or absent and the refreshment in the citric juices most welcome.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Tolkowsky, *Hesperides*, 6-7. The *Book of History*, possibly edited by Confucius, and the great Han historian Sima Qian both mention citrus fruits.

¹¹⁷ Pierre Laszlo, *Citrus: A History*, 13; Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 228-9.

¹¹⁸ Laszlo, *Citrus*, 14-8.

¹¹⁹ Rahno Mabel MacCurdy, *The History of the California Fruit Growers Exchange* (Los Angeles, CA: Sunkist Growers, Inc., 1925), 1.

¹²⁰ Wickson, *California Fruits*, 294.

Still, the orange seemed to have a stronger pedigree in Asia, rather than Europe or the Mediterranean. The Selecta variety, the ancestor of the Washington Navel that appeared after the Columbian Exchange, grew around Goa, on the western coast of India. It fascinated Portuguese explorers during the fifteenth century.¹²¹ By the sixteenth century, oranges and lemons had acquired a reputation as royal delicacies across Europe.¹²² Even after Christian Spaniards expelled their Muslim conquerors, they sold citrus fruits widely across the kingdom.¹²³

Europeans brought oranges to the Western Hemisphere during their conquest of the Americas. Christopher Columbus imported them to Haiti on his second voyage to the New World in 1493.¹²⁴ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, a conquistador in the army of Hernan Cortes during the conquest of the Aztec Empire from 1519 to 1521, was one of many Iberians who introduced citrus to the New World. “I sowed some orange pips” in Mexico, he wrote in his account of the conquest, “which I had brought from Cuba, for it was rumoured [*sic*] that we were returning to settle. The trees came up very well, for when the [natives] saw that these were different plants from any they knew, they protected them and watered them and kept them free from weeds. All the oranges in the province are descendants of these trees.”¹²⁵ Portuguese traders exported the Selecta orange to Brazil,

¹²¹ MacCurdy, *The History of the California Fruit Growers Exchange*, 4.

¹²² Tolkowsky, *Hesperides*, 150-1.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹²⁴ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 229.

¹²⁵ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The Conquest of New Spain*, trans. and ed. J.M. Cohen (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1963), 42.

where it mutated into the Navel orange at Bahia in 1820.¹²⁶ One legend holds that the Bahia Navel was exported to Florida before 1835, but that frost killed it off.¹²⁷ It fared much better along the Pacific Coast, at least following the period of tremendous in Southern California during the 1850s and 1860s.

Few regions of North America experienced as much social, political, and economic upheaval and restructuring in as short a time as Alta California did from 1769 to 1869. The introduction of the mission system by Spanish Franciscans and soldiers devastated the native economy and all but rendered the California Indian extinct by the mid-nineteenth century. Those who still survived by the 1820s became laborers under the control of Californios, men and women of Spanish descent who maintained control of the Southland even after the Mexican Revolution. Both groups suffered, losing land and, in the case of Indians, life when citizens of the United States crossed North America to conquer much of the Pacific Coast.

Americans finally reached the Southland in the 1840s. While San Francisco and Central California commercially blossomed and economically diversified as a result of the Argonauts in search of mineral wealth who arrived during the Gold Rush, the cow counties languished. The cattle industry dwindled by the 1860s as the northern portion of the state became a major commercial center of the Pacific Rim. The gold mined from the Central Valley so transfixed the world that Americans began to conceive of faster ways to reach California. As congressmen debated the best routes to establish a transcontinental

¹²⁶ MacCurdy, *The History of the California Fruit Growers Exchange*, 5.

¹²⁷ Tolkowsky, *Hesperides*, 264. Tolkowsky attributes this anecdote to Coit. While ultimately apocryphal, it seems entirely possible that Coit, a major proponent of the citrus industry in California, fabricated the tale in an attempt to promote citriculture in the Golden State.

railroad, thousands of miles away, in Brazil, a new form of orange emerged. Europeans introduced citrus to the New World during the Columbian voyages and the conquest of Spain. Portuguese conquerors had brought the orange to Brazil, where it mutated into a variety that scientists dubbed the Navel by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1850, as the Golden State formally entered the Union, San Francisco flourished from international connections, and the Army of the United States began to survey routes across the West for a railroad, few observers could have predicted that citrus agriculture and industrialized transportation would conspire to alter the history of Southern California.

Chapter Two

Steel, Steam, and Citrus: The Economic Transformation of Southern California

Who has not heard of the lemons and oranges of Los Angeles and Riverside – those seedless oranges, famous all the world over? The fortunes of this citrus-growing district are so much bound up with those of the railways passing through, that... a digression will be pardonable to glance at the history of Riverside, which has, so to speak, grown out of oranges.

--Archibald Williams¹

In the mid-nineteenth century, many Americans referred to Southern California, with more than a hint of sarcasm and disapproval, as an area comprised of “cow counties.” When compared to certain northern parts of the state, which had economically diversified as a result of the Gold Rush, this description seemed apt. The economy of Southern California clung dearly to the hide-and-tallow industry that had characterized Spanish and Mexican control of the region before 1850. However, two events in the late-nineteenth century transformed the Southland’s economy. First, the Southern Pacific Railroad and other lines built tracks into the southern part of the state, opening it up to Midwestern and Eastern Americans. Secondly, the citrus industry came to Southern California. Citrus agriculture became economically viable in the region because of the establishment of railroads that linked growers to markets as far away as the East Coast. The City of Riverside became a pioneer in the field of citrus agriculture and one of the most important economic hubs in the Southland. The ensuing economic transformation, in which first the railroad and subsequently citrus agriculture played leading roles, helped

¹ Archibald Williams, *The Romance of Modern Locomotion: Containing Interesting Descriptions (in Non-Technical Language) of the Rise and Development of the Railroad Systems in All Parts of the World* (London, UK: C.A. Pearson, 1904), 107.

wipe away the perception of Southern California as an economically anachronistic wasteland.

The coming of railroads to the Golden State drastically altered the lot of the so-called cow counties. The dream of a transcontinental line took its first steps toward reality in the 1850s, when a railroad engineer in California named Theodore Judah began to agitate in Washington and Sacramento for a transcontinental line. He surveyed various routes to prove the feasibility of such a railway.² Although Americans from various socioeconomic strata had clamored for a transcontinental railroad for much of the mid-nineteenth century, debates over whether the line would pass through the North or the South rendered Congressional discourse on the subject inconclusive. However, in the early 1860s, President Abraham Lincoln turned the unique political circumstances of secession and the Civil War to his advantage by pushing through Congress the Railroad Acts of 1862 and 1864 with little opposition. The secession of southern states in response to Lincoln's election and the subsequent absence of southern politicians from Congress allowed for the creation a transcontinental railroad that would pass through states and territories loyal to the Union.

Congress relied on two corporations to complete the transcontinental line. It used the Pacific Railroad Acts to direct federal money and large land grants to the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads, the companies that would construct a transcontinental line. In California, Theodore Judah had gathered four capitalists, former grocery store and construction firm owners to organize the financial components of this

² Oscar Lewis, *The Big Four: The Story of Huntington, Stanford, Hopkins, and Crocker, and of the Building of the Central Pacific* (New York, NY: A.A. Knopf, 1938).

venture through a company they named Central Pacific Railroad. The four powerful executives of the Central Pacific, Collis Huntington, Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker, often referred to as the Associates or the Big Four, constructed a railroad east from Sacramento, California.³ Passage of the Pacific Railroad Acts facilitated this process and handed acres of land across California and the American West to the Central Pacific.

Although they helped complete the first transcontinental railroad by 1869, it did not immediately benefit the nation or California, as the Big Four and countless Americans had hoped it would. The nationwide Panic of 1873, sparked in part by the transcontinental railroad's crippling encounters with Midwestern winters from 1869 to 1872 and high railroad rates, did not benefit Californians, and kept the Associates from selling their railroad line and abandoning the railroad business as they had initially planned.⁴ Too, construction workers employed by the Central Pacific during construction, including Chinese laborers who had immigrated to the Golden State during the Gold Rush and who worked for lower wages than Anglo-Americans, were unable to find employment after completion of the transcontinental line, complicating the California job market.⁵ Agriculture, however, performed admirably during the economically troubling 1870s, transforming California into one of the most important grain production centers in the United States. Agriculturalists particularly benefited from

³ Richard Rayner, *The Associates: Four Capitalists Who Created California* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 44-45.

⁴ Richard White, "Information, Markets, and Corruption: Transcontinental Railroads in the Gilded Age," *The Journal of American History* 90, no. 1 (June 2003): 23; White, *Railroaded*, 47-49.

⁵ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 30-31.

this enterprise, since shipping food to eastern markets by rail proved faster than sending steamships to Panama, where they could ship goods overland and then transfer them back onto ships for further transport to the East Coast of the United States. The practice of shipping agricultural goods via the transcontinental railroads additionally helped keep perishable products in good condition.⁶ In short, the first transcontinental railroad proved irreplaceable to growers, businessmen, and their bankers in the central and northern parts of California.

The construction of railroads in California also increased the Golden State's global connections. European investors helped finance the line, linking the development of the American West to foreign capital. The Big Four used their railroad capital to charter the Occidental & Oriental Steamship Company, linking California to Japan and China.⁷ Steamship service and the first transcontinental line reconstituted the United States as a meeting ground for diverse international groups. The Central Pacific targeted customers from Australasia, promising to transport them by steamer to San Francisco, from which point they could travel via the "American Overland All Rail Route."⁸ However, while most railroads in the Golden State focused their activity on the Central Valley or the San Francisco area, some began to look south.

⁶ Nash, *State Government and Economic Development*, 159.

⁷ Lewis, *The Big Four*, 363-4; D.D. Stubbs to Charles F. Crocker, Collis P. Huntington Papers, series I, reel 41. Collection hereafter cited as CPH, "s" for series and "r" for reel, respectively. The author would like to thank the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, for allowing him to review microfilm reels of this collection. The original documents are housed at Syracuse University. Charles F. Crocker was the son of Charles Crocker, member of the Big Four.

⁸ "Australia to United States & Europe via the United States, New Zealand and Australia Line," CPH, s. IV, r. 1.

Despite its lack of attraction to businesspeople of any kind in the 1860s, some prominent figures had decided to make Southern California their permanent home. One such individual, Phineas Banning, even showed a particular interest in establishing railroads to the region. His efforts to bring the iron horse to Los Angeles, the informal capital of the cow counties, resulted in the creation of the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad in 1869, a line that connected the two cities from which it took its name.⁹ Railroads crisscrossing the Southland emerged during the early 1870s, as the region finally became attractive enough to garner the interest of the Big Four.

On September 5, 1876, Charles Crocker himself drove the final gold spike into the tracks laid at the behest of the Southern Pacific Railroad. In the 1860s, before the Associates acquired it, the Southern Pacific had linked San Francisco to the west with the city of Gilroy to the southeast.¹⁰ The Associates bought this line, which originally ran through the Central Valley of California, in 1869 to prevent other corporations such as the Texas and Pacific Railroad from attempting to lay tracks in the Golden State.¹¹ Crocker, Hopkins, Huntington, and Stanford had grand dreams of using the Southern Pacific as the beginning of a second transcontinental line, one that would swing south through Yuma, Arizona, to Texas and Louisiana, and the waters of the Atlantic.¹² The Southern Pacific became the center of the Big Four's railroad empire by the end of the

⁹ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 93.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹¹ White, *Railroaded*, 95; statement before stockholders of the Central Pacific Railroad Committee, p. 1 Central Pacific Railroad Collection, box 1050, folder 6, California State Library, Sacramento, California. Hereafter cited as CPRR and California State Library, respectively.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2-9.

1870s, thereby connecting Los Angeles to California's most important commercial metropolis, San Francisco.¹³ The Big Four built the Southern Pacific to Mojave by 1892, and later to Needles.¹⁴

During the 1870s, the California populace began to conceive of the railroad as an execrable entity. Newspapers heaped bile upon the monopolistic Southern Pacific. They scornfully referred to the corporation as the Octopus, which ensnared the people of California with its vile, groping tentacles.¹⁵ In 1879, when delegates to the second constitutional convention in California wrote a new governing document for the state, they created a Railroad Commission in an attempt to tame the Octopus, but the beast used its tendrils to ensnare this agency and transformed it into a mechanism to promote the interests of the Southern Pacific.¹⁶ Between the financial hardships the railroad imposed and the seemingly boundless greed of the Associates, citizens of California found many reasons to criticize this new form of transportation. Nonetheless, the railroad remained California's principal link to the outside world, and all agriculturalists, including members of the nascent orange industry, relied upon the Southern Pacific to freight goods.

Southern California did not immediately reap the benefits of its rejuvenated transportation network. The Panic of 1873, a major international economic crisis, stunted

¹³ Cleland, *The Cattle on A Thousand Hills*, 225.

¹⁴ Franklyn Hoyt, "A History of the Desert Region of Riverside County from 1540 to the Completion of the Railroad to Yuma in 1877" (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1948), Iii-iv.

¹⁵ Rauchway, "A Great Story, But Not a Good One," 59.

¹⁶ Statement by Hiram Johnson, Hiram W. Johnson Papers, box 43, folder News Statements, 1911, Bancroft Library. Hereafter cited as Johnson Papers.

the expected volume of immigration from the Eastern United States to Southern California. Historian H. Vincent Moses cites elevated railroad rates, the prevalence of farm tenancy over ownership, and the lack of available credit for farmers as factors that caused the crisis.¹⁷ Collis P. Huntington once famously remarked that he would charge “all the traffic would bear,” squeezing every cent he could from his customers.¹⁸ The Central Pacific, like many rail lines, operated in deep debt thanks to the high costs of construction. European investors who had helped fund the growth of rails across North America had begun to adopt the gold standard even as a long crisis over the use of gold and greenbacks erupted in the United States, disrupting the economy.¹⁹ While the Central Pacific and Southern Pacific ultimately escaped the worst of the disaster, rail lines across the United States failed due to the financial crisis of 1873, costing investors countless sums and constricting American markets.²⁰ As a result, Southern California would have to find a new product to justify the massive sums spent establishing railroads there in the early 1870s. Still reeling from the collapse of the cattle industry, Southern Californians turned to a new industry, one that had quietly developed for decades, and which soon transformed the economic and social landscape of the state with the help of railroads.

Long before the boom of the 1880s solidified orange growing as a major commercial activity in Southern California, citrus agriculture had a history in the region. Spaniards, who inherited citrus from Moorish conquerors, brought seeds and pips to the

¹⁷ Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 30.

¹⁸ Rayner, *The Associates*, 161.

¹⁹ White, *Railroaded*, 78.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

New World in the sixteenth century. During the creation of the mission system, Spanish missionaries had brought the first oranges to Alta California as early as 1770 to Mission San Buenaventura.²¹ Franciscans planted the first orange grove at Mission San Gabriel in 1804.²² Harry Lawton, an expert in the history of citrus, claims that Spanish padres planted orange trees at Rancho San Bernardino, but his accounts remain uncorroborated.²³ More definitively, following the secularization of the Spanish missions during the Mexican period, citrus agriculture began to move beyond missions. In 1834, Jean-Louis Vignes of France brought oranges from Mission San Gabriel and planted them on a tract he owned outside the city of Los Angeles. By 1841, Vignes had the largest orange grove in North America at 70 acres, and by the close of the decade had achieved commercial success selling oranges to gold miners to prevent scurvy.²⁴

Vignes's neighbor, William Wolfskill, made even greater contributions to the citrus industry in Southern California.²⁵ A trapper from Kentucky, Wolfskill settled in Southern California during the Mexican era, and in 1841 acquired orange trees from

²¹ "Riches from the Soil," p. 12, folder F3741:3, Department of Agriculture Records, California State Archives, Sacramento, California. Hereafter cited Department of Agriculture Records and California State Archives, respectively.

²² Lawton, "A Brief History of Citrus in Southern California," in Esther Klotz, Lawton, and Joan Hall, eds., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area*, 6; David Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California* (Santa Monica, CA: Angel City Press, 2013), 31.

²³ Lawton, "A Brief History of Citrus," 7. Lawton cites Taliesen Evans, an early citrus historian, as claiming that Rancho San Bernardino practiced orange agriculture. Lawton notes that Anson van Leuven planted the first orange groves in San Bernardino in 1857, after California achieved statehood.

²⁴ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 230; Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 32.

²⁵ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 230.

Mission San Gabriel, thus sowing the seeds for his own success in the citrus industry.²⁶ Although William Wolfskill passed away in 1866, he left his property to his children, including his son, Joseph, who maintained control of the orange and lemon trees his father had planted.²⁷ It was the oranges that eventually garnered the greatest profits and cemented the Wolfskill name in the citrus history of California. In early citrus groves such as those of Wolfskill, the Valencia orange thrived. Other varieties included the St. Michael and Mediterranean Sweet orange, as well as lemons.²⁸ The Lisbon lemon, imported from Australia, and the Eureka lemon, which orchardist C.R. Wirkman developed in Los Angeles, became the dominant varieties of that crop in Southern California.²⁹ Although it never matched the excitement of the Gold Rush, the commercial possibilities offered by citrus agriculture enticed new immigrants to California, and they expanded the variety of oranges and lemons grown while drastically increasing the scale of production.

In the 1870s, pioneers in a new town laid the groundwork for massive growth in Southern California's citrus industry. Thanks to the introduction of a new variety of orange, Riverside, California, a small colony settlement situated along the Santa Ana River in San Bernardino County, became the heart of a vast citrus empire. Like much of

²⁶ Iris Wilson Engstrand, *William Wolfskill, 1798-1866: Frontier Trapper to California Ranchero* (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clarke Company, 1965), 149.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 200, 214-5, 152.

²⁸ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 157, 168, 193. Historian Iris Engstrand loftily claims that the Valencia, "a summer orange," can "thrive in no other part of the United States but California." Engstrand, *William Wolfskill*, 177.

²⁹ MacCurdy, *History of the California Fruit Growers Exchange*, 5-6; Tolkowsky, *Hesperides*, 265.

the Southland, Riverside had a ranching past. Rancho Jurupa, originally given by Mexican Governor Juan Alvarado to Juan Bandini in 1838, passed through the hands of American rancher Benjamin D. Wilson to Abel Stearns, a wealthy Anglo-American promoter of California in the early-nineteenth century, before it eventually fell under the control of the Los Angeles Land Corporation. From this point, it came into the hands of eastern emigrants.

Decades after the American conquest of California, a group of easterners attracted to the Golden State by the success of the orange industry in the Central Valley worked to establish a citrus town in San Bernardino County. Judge John W. North of Knoxville, E.G. Brown and A.J. Twogood of Belle Plain, Iowa, and James Greaves of Washington, D.C., purchased from the Los Angeles Land Corporation the land that formerly belonged to Stearns. They christened the region Riverside due to its proximity to the Santa Ana River. North sounded a clarion call to establish “A Colony for California,” as he called it in a tract he circulated asking for 100 families to join him in creating a community in the Golden State.³⁰ North specifically called for “All persons of good character” to join him in this endeavor. With their help, he proposed to seed “a colony of 10,000 persons” devoted to farming. Through collective industry, North stated, “We expect to have Schools, Churches, Lyceum, Public Library, Reading-room etc. at a very early day, and we invite such people to join our colony as will esteem it a privilege to build them.”³¹

³⁰ Patricia Ortlieb and Peter Economy, *Creating an Orange Utopia: Eliza Lovell Tibbets and the Birth of California's Citrus Industry* (West Chester, PA: Swedenborg Foundation Press, 2011), 46-7.

³¹ John W. North, “A Colony for California,” Special Collections and Archives, Tomás Rivera Library, University of California, Riverside. Hereafter cited as Rivera Library.

More specifically, Greaves believed these colonists would venture “to California for the purpose of selecting a suitable tract of land on which to settle a colony of industrious people to engage in the culture of semi-tropical fruits and grapes for the manufacture of raisins” that had been undertaken with moderate success elsewhere in the state, including Los Angeles.³² These men formed the Southern California Colony Association, and set to work irrigating their land using water from the Santa Ana River.

As Riverside attracted more settlers, it gradually gained prominence as a center of economic growth in Southern California. Greaves praised the arability of the land, noting “[t]he soil of the first quality for the growth of trees and vines. It is generally conceded that growth of trees and vines in this colony surpasses any other portion of California.”³³ People flowed into the town, establishing markets, saloons, inns, stables, pharmacies, churches, school districts, and what Greaves described as “the first Public town library in all Southern California” by 1875.³⁴ Most importantly, the railroad network that bound California to the markets of the eastern United States, in the form of the Southern Pacific Railroad, “was slowly but surely approaching the settlement [along with] a reasonable certainty that we should soon be close neighbours [*sic*] to the rest of the world.”³⁵ Despite Greaves’s lack of impartiality (after all, he had been one of the city’s founders), his

³² James P. Greaves, *History of Riverside* (1877), 2. Unpublished manuscript available through Rivera Library.

³³ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

prediction rang true. The transformation of Riverside into the citrus capital of Southern California occurred after the introduction of a new type of orange from Brazil.

The Washington Navel orange served as the catalyst for the citrus boom that eventually swept much of Southern California, spreading out into the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Valleys and beyond. The Washington Navel, a mutated variety that developed in Brazil following the European conquest of the Americas, lacked seeds.³⁶ As historian Jared Farmer explained, “The name Navel references the characteristic bulge at one end of the fruit, which looks something like a distended belly button (actually an embryonic second fruit encased above the main fruit).”³⁷

A historical controversy surrounds the Washington Navel orange’s introduction into the welcoming climate of Southern California and to the blossoming city of Riverside, along with a few unimpeachable facts. This particular type of orange originated in Brazil after the Portuguese introduced it to the New World, originally known as the Bahia Navel. How this fruit came to the United States remains a point of contention. In an article for *Reader’s Digest* penned in 1944, botanist Donald C. Peattie claimed that:

a missionary in Bahia, Brazil, happened upon a particularly big, juicy, seedless orange, [and] he had the enterprise to send six young trees to the Department of Agriculture back in Washington. Two of these seedlings were presented to a homesteading couple on their way to Riverside, Calif. Only 20 years later, California was glad to inform Uncle Sam that this new Navel orange had brought

³⁶ Ortlieb and Economy, *Creating an Orange Utopia*, xviii. See chapter one for more information on the development of the Washington or Bahia Navel orange.

³⁷ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 236.

the Golden State more money than it had cost to run the entire U.S. Department of Agriculture from its foundation.³⁸

The means by which the first Navel orange came to Riverside remains debatable.

One article published in the *California Citrograph*, a periodical established to spread knowledge on the commodity that had become so crucial to the Southland's economy, credited F.I.C. Schneider, a Presbyterian missionary in Brazil, with bringing twelve orange trees to the United States, thus giving birth to the Navel orange industry.³⁹ Herbert Webber, director of the University of California Citrus Experiment Station established in Riverside in the early-twentieth century, commented in a letter to the United States Department of State that "the [former] American Consul at Bahia, Brazil, has informed me that the records of that consulate show that U.S. Consul Richard A. Edes was responsible for making the first shipment of trees of the Washington Navel, or Bahia orange from Brazil to the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.," the first of its kind in the United States.⁴⁰ Ruth Tatum of *Reader's Digest* seconded Webber's conclusion, telling him in a letter sent in 1944 that American Consul Richard A. Edes had indeed passed the first Navel oranges to the United States.⁴¹ Webber's letter additionally upholds the role played by the Tibbets family in the introduction and proliferation of the Washington Navel orange in the Riverside area. In an article published by the *California*

³⁸ Donald C. Peattie, "Uncle Sam's Valiant Plant-Hunters," *Reader's Digest*, October 8, 1944, in Herbert J. Webber Papers, box 11, folder 2, Rivera Library. Hereafter cited as Webber Papers.

³⁹ Webber Papers, box 11, folder 2.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Citrograph, Webber explained that “It was from [. . .] two trees grown by Mr. and Mrs. Tibbets in their home yard at Riverside, that the millions of trees of the Washington Navel orange, scattered all over the world, have descended.”⁴²

The identities of the first Riverside to adopt the Washington Navel orange are clearer. Luther and Eliza Tibbets, the “homesteading couple” Peattie mentioned in his article, brought the trees to Riverside in the mid-1870s. Eliza Lovell, a former medium and abolitionist, had met her future husband Luther Tibbets in New York. The two moved in spiritualist and transcendentalist circles, hoping to start a utopian community where Americans of all racial backgrounds could live in harmony.⁴³ Prior to settling in Riverside, the Tibbets had lived in Washington, D.C. During that time, Eliza Tibbets befriended William Saunders of the United States Department of Agriculture, a friendship that would bear tremendous fruit by the 1870s.⁴⁴ The couple joined North in Southern California in 1870.⁴⁵

Noted Riverside historian Tom Patterson contends that either the husband or wife planted the first Navel orange tree in Riverside. Unfortunately, the actual date of the planting remains conjectural, although it likely occurred between 1873 and 1875.⁴⁶

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Ortlieb and Economy, *Creating an Orange Utopia*, 22-3, 27-8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 47-8.

⁴⁶ Tom Patterson, *Beginnings of Riverside* (Riverside, CA: Press-Enterprise Company, 1980), 9. Available through Rivera Library. Patterson, a journalist by training, spent much of his career publishing articles on the history of the Riverside area for the city’s *Press-Enterprise* newspaper. Historians have yet to build upon his work and fully engage with the city’s history and importance to California. A memorial park

Historians tend to offer her, rather than Luther, credit for founding the Washington Navel orange industry in Southern California. They point to the dedication she showed in keeping the trees alive through such colorful means as using dirty dishwater for irrigation. The orange trees for which she so lovingly cared founded the Southern California orange belt, running from Pasadena, located northeast of Los Angeles in the San Gabriel Valley, to Riverside.⁴⁷

Regardless of the industry's origins, the fact remains that by the mid-1870s, Eliza Tibbets had facilitated the Washington Navel orange's arrival at Riverside. It precipitated an agricultural phenomenon that, when combined with the population boom of the 1880s in Southern California, forever altered the region's economy. Ebenezer G. Brown, one of the men behind the original colonizing effort of Riverside and a tireless booster of the city during the 1870s, planted his own orange grove soon after the Tibbets family introduced the Washington Navel orange to the city.⁴⁸ His idea caught the attention of other growers, and many large Riverside landowners began to emulate him on a massive scale, planting acres of citrus fruits, particularly Navel oranges, by the late 1870s.

established to commemorate the seminal event in Southern California's history proclaims Eliza Tibbets responsible for the act and maintains that the planting occurred in 1873.

⁴⁷ Laszlo, *Citrus*, 36-7.

⁴⁸ John Brown and James Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Company, 1922), 768-769.



Figure 2.1. One of the parent Washington Navel orange trees grown by Eliza Tibbets, circa 1880. Courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Riverside, California.

The weather of the Southland proved quite agreeable to the cultivation of citrus fruits. Charles Teague, a lemon- and orange grower in Southern California who had transplanted himself from Maine and later became an influential leader of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, supports the idea that Riverside provided the perfect climatic conditions necessary to grow Navel oranges. “The influence of climate on different varieties of citrus fruits,” he wrote, “is very marked. Neither Navel nor Valencia orange varieties thrive too near the sea. The Navel is an island variety. The Valencia thrives in

coastal areas but is also successfully produced in inland areas.”⁴⁹ Large orange growing communities dedicated to the propagation of the Valencia orange appeared in the 1880s in Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Diego, and especially Orange Counties close to the coast.⁵⁰ Just as Los Angeles received endorsement from a legion of boosters because of its perpetual warmth and sunshine, so, too, did Riverside hope to attract settlers through its agreeable climate. One pamphlet proclaiming Riverside “An Agricultural Empire . . . The Promised Land in a Romantic Paradise of Citrus and Palms” particularly emphasized this pleasant feature of Southern California. According to this document, the land that eventually became Riverside County contained “wooded mountain playgrounds [and a] warm, dry, sun-drenched desert,” all “conveniently close by” for recreation.⁵¹ Echoing Teague, the brochure idealized Southern California as “consist[ing] of fertile valleys, plains and mesas dotted with low-lying hills. A rich agricultural area [formerly] devoted to ranches as large as eighty-seven thousand acres, and hundreds of medium-sized farms” characterized the region.⁵² Riverside’s climate thus ensured that orange agriculture could occur on a massive scale, with considerable returns on investment for citriculturalists.

The cultivation of citrus in the Southland had long-lasting economic impacts for the Golden State. The Washington Navel orange eventually became the dominant crop in the Riverside area. One booster pamphlet produced in 1945 placed the total annual

⁴⁹ Charles C. Teague, *Fifty Years a Rancher*, 72.

⁵⁰ Merlo and Sunkist Growers, Inc., *Heritage of Gold*, 4.

⁵¹ *Riverside County California: An Agricultural Empire . . . The Promised Land in a Romantic Paradise of Citrus and Palms* (Riverside, CA: Rubidoux Printing Co., 1945), 6. Available through the Rivera Library.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 9.

revenue of the orange industry at \$15,499,242 by that date. It vastly outpaced its competitors, with grapefruit coming in at a dismal second place with total revenue at \$3,381,416 in the same year.⁵³ Another pamphlet, produced in 1934 for a Navel Orange Pageant, described the wonders of “California’s greatest fruit industry, which has brought more wealth to the state than all of the gold mined in California since 1848.”⁵⁴ Despite the dubious veracity of this statement, orange groves extended to Rialto, Pomona, Ontario, the San Bernardino Valley, and Etiwanda by the close of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Thanks to the introduction of railroad transportation, oranges grown in California sold far and wide across North America.

As early as 1877, in the midst of the turbulent 1870s, Joseph Wolfskill, whose father had cultivated citrus in Los Angeles since the 1840s, shipped an entire car of oranges over Southern Pacific lines to St. Louis. This brought national attention to orange production in Southern California.⁵⁶ Joseph Wolfskill sent “the first trainload of oranges” from Southern California by rail for about \$500. He met personally with Leland Stanford to arrange the proper preservation of fruits during the journey.⁵⁷ Indeed, the Southern Pacific even opened a terminal, the famous Arcade Depot, on the Wolfskill property within sight of the productive orange groves, partly to demonstrate the potential for

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁵⁴ Riverside City and County, California Collection, box 1, Rivera Library.

⁵⁵ Patterson, *Beginnings of Riverside*, 9.

⁵⁶ Laszlo, *Citrus*, 64.

⁵⁷ Engstrand, *William Wolfskill*, 176.

agriculture in Southern California and also to capitalize on shipping this product.⁵⁸ This opened the door for railroads and citrus agriculturalists to cooperate in the Golden State to benefit mutually from their relationship.



Figure 2.2. A Southern Pacific train in the citrus groves of Joseph Wolfskill. Reproduced from John Albert Wilson, *History of Los Angeles County, California, with Illustrations Descriptive of Its Scenery* (Oakland, CA: Thompson & West, 1880).

Starting with Riverside’s first citrus fair in 1879, where Eliza Tibbets’s oranges won the highest honors, exhibitions of produce from the Golden State became a critical marketing tactic to attract national attention. San Diego County held its first citrus fair in

⁵⁸ Nathan Masters, “Lost Train Depots of Los Angeles,” *KCET.org*, January 17, 2013, http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal_focus/history/la-as-subject/lost-train-depots-of-los-angeles.html. The Southern Pacific touted this fact in booster publications. For instance, see Bureau of News, Southern Pacific Company, *Southern Pacific Historical Outline*, Railroad – Local – Southern Pacific File, Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario Public Library. Hereafter cited as Ellingwood Room.

National City in 1882.⁵⁹ Orange exhibitions also familiarized denizens of Midwestern cities such as Louisville, New Orleans, and Chicago with delicious oranges grown in California.⁶⁰ Fruits cultivated in Riverside and neighboring regions made their way to distant markets. Extension of the markets led to increased production, which brought Washington Navel oranges from Riverside all the way to the Atlantic coast of the United States. From its River Station in Los Angeles, the Southern Pacific Railroad sent the first Special Orange Train east in 1886 to capitalize on the increasing clamor in eastern state for oranges grown in Southern California.⁶¹ By the time of the harvest in 1890, growers had sent at least 2,000 cars from Los Angeles east of the Rocky Mountains by rail on special orange trains.⁶²

The citrus industry in Riverside displayed phenomenal growth in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Between 1887 and 1888, growers from that city alone shipped 2,500,000 crates of citrus fruits. By 1937, that number had jumped to 50,000,000 crates per year, thanks in part to the introduction of refrigerated cars that preserved perishable products such as citrus fruits.⁶³ Measured by railroad cars, the 1880-1881 citrus crop produced only enough orange crates to fill 15 train cars. Before the year of that harvest, growers did not produce enough fruit to warrant the establishment of a

⁵⁹ Irene Phillips, "National City in Review," *The San Diego Historical Society Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (July 1964): <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/62july/national.htm>.

⁶⁰ Douglas Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 35-36.

⁶¹ Merlo and Sunkist Growers, Inc., *Heritage of Gold*, 7. As Merlo notes, River Station was the only rail depot in Los Angeles at that time.

⁶² "Orange Shipments," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 12, 1890, p. 1.

⁶³ Herbert J. Webber Papers, box 10, folder 11.

record of fruit shipment by rail. By the 1899-1900 harvest, however, Riverside growers, through the Riverside Fruit Exchange, shipped enough fruit crates to fill 5,763 train cars.⁶⁴ By 1930, California produced 90% of America's dried fruit, 45% of all fruits and nuts, and 25% of its canned foods.⁶⁵

The success of the citrus industry in the Southland gave rise to a class of aristocratic planters who differed markedly from traditional American farmers in their business strategies and political views. Historian H. Vincent Moses, in his analysis of citrus growers and industrial agriculture around the turn of the twentieth century in the United States, points out that rather than acting on Luddite tendencies and choosing to ignore industrial developments, the large landowners of burghs such as Riverside rallied around the idea of mechanized farms. Moses effectively demonstrates that orange growers in California typically followed corporate practices by operating along business lines that became typical in the early-twentieth century, a trail he credits orange growers as helping to blaze.⁶⁶ The city of Riverside, Moses remarks, "emerged by 1895 as the per-capita wealthiest town in the United States."⁶⁷ Economic analyses, it seems, certainly supported some of the booster statements about Southern California that had emerged by the late-nineteenth century.

⁶⁴ "Riverside Fruit Exchange," Riverside – Arlington Heights Fruit Exchange Collection, folder A1204.I.C.26, Riverside Metropolitan Museum Archives.

⁶⁵ Nash, *State Government and Economic Development*, 231.

⁶⁶ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 2-3.

⁶⁷ Moses, "'The Orange grower is Not a Farmer,'" 24-25.

In the 1880s, as the citrus industry began to spread from Riverside across Southern California, local newspapers prided themselves on the city's growth. The *Citrograph*, established in Redlands in the eastern San Bernardino Valley, viewed the growth of Riverside as a triumph.⁶⁸ "Riverside stands to-day as the third city in Southern California," posited the *Citrograph*. "Los Angeles standing first, San Diego second, and Riverside third, San Bernardino fourth, with Santa Ana and Pomona standing fifth and sixth, with a close race between them. Riverside occupied this position both in population and assessable property."⁶⁹ While it could not match the wealth or influence of San Francisco, Riverside's fortunes had increased vastly since the early days of North's original settlement.

The success of Riverside prompted more immigrants to spawn a plethora of like-minded communities across the Southland. At the crux of North's original vision had been the notion that Riverside would be a "cooperative colony," one where settlers worked together to transform a barren landscape into a productive part of the expanding United States.⁷⁰ He sought to transplant modernity to an uncivilized landscape. Following North's model, a number of associations established colonies in Southern California that laid the foundation for citrus-based communities. In the western San Gabriel Valley, for instance, D.M. Berry organized 50 families from Indianapolis into the Indiana Colony of California. The Indiana Colony eventually became the town of Pasadena, whose settlers

⁶⁸ This periodical came into being long before the *California Citrograph*, an entirely separate publication.

⁶⁹ "The Third City," Redlands *Citrograph*, July 30, 1887, p. 1. Hereafter simply *Citrograph*.

⁷⁰ Merlin Stonehouse, *John Wesley North and the Reform Frontier* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965), 232.

turned to orange growing thanks to the success of the nearby San Gabriel Orange Grove Association.⁷¹ Many immigrants brought their religious beliefs to California, such as the Quakers who founded the town of Whittier.⁷²

By the 1890s, citrus producers in Southern California shared a worldview that glorified opulence. Many newspapers and growers began to conflate membership in the citrus industry with wealth. This belief found one of its most important manifestations in the creation of South Grove Avenue in Pasadena, California. Commonly referred to as “Millionaires’ Row,” citrus agriculturalists populated South Grove Avenue by the turn of the twentieth century.⁷³ Indeed, orange growers in cities such as Pasadena or Riverside often physically separated themselves from the surrounding communities by use of geography. In Riverside, the city where the Navel orange industry began, districts such as Highgrove and Arlington Heights served as homes to the wealthiest growers.⁷⁴ The *California Citrograph* ran an entire series praising “Those Who Have Achieved in the Citrus Industry,” upholding wealth as the ideal outcome from planting oranges and lemons in the Golden State.

Perhaps no city better displayed the capacity to intertwine orange growing with wealth than Redlands. California historian Jared Farmer contended that Redlands served as the “truest rival” to Riverside in terms of its devotion to citriculture and the wealth that

⁷¹ Laszlo, *Citrus*, 69-70.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 36; Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 233.

⁷³ Laszlo, *Citrus*, 76-7.

⁷⁴ Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 25.

industry returned to the community.⁷⁵ Founded in 1887, Redlands became famed for its eponymous “red, clayey soil, extending from the eastern foothills of the San Bernardino [V]alley to the long plains which tame the impetuous onrush of the Santa Ana [River] where it swings to the lower levels from its high birthplace north of Mt. San Bernardino.”⁷⁶ Growers in Redlands noted the success of Riverside to the south and used their famed soil to nourish “magnificent orange-groves” by the close of the 1880s.⁷⁷

Historian Glenn Dumke credits the California Southern line, part of the Santa Fe network, for the early development of Redlands.⁷⁸ Connections to distant markets did not come cheaply for the orange growers of Redlands. Private citizens had to raise a significant sum of money, almost \$43,000, to convince the Santa Fe to build a branch to that city.⁷⁹ Private investment to develop the city continued after the establishment of a railroad station. Brothers Albert and Alfred Smiley, who arrived in the city in 1889, led the charge to transform wealth from the orange industry into urban development. They created Canyon Crest Park, colloquially dubbed Smiley Heights, echoing the Arlington Heights of neighboring Riverside.⁸⁰ In the estimation of one contemporary of the brothers, “The public spirit A.K. and A.H. Smiley has furnished these transient guests a

⁷⁵ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 242-3.

⁷⁶ William M. Tisdale, “Redlands,” *Land of Sunshine* 6, no. 5 (April 1897): 218.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Glenn S. Dumke, *The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1944), 122.

⁷⁹ Joan Hedges McCall, *Redlands Remembered: Stories from the Jewel of the Inland Empire* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2012), 37.

⁸⁰ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 242-3.

superb object lesson in what may be accomplished here by good taste and money. The far-famed 'Smiley Heights,' or Cañon Crest Part is the most unique and elaborate private park in California." Physically elevating wealthy citriculturalists above other citizens of Redlands, "These grounds comprise 200 acres on the crest of the hills south of Redlands, 200 feet higher than the town." Thanks to the efforts of the Smileys and other prominent citizens of Redlands to plant flowers on the hill, "a barren, sun-burnt, irregular mass of hill-side has been transformed into a wonderland of flowers and foliage."⁸¹ The same author cited the character of wealthy residents of Redlands as a reason for the community's success. "The population" of the city came mainly "from New England, New York and other Eastern States," and brought with it "thrift, enterprise, refinement and regard for education and progress." This resulted in the creation of "commodious churches, beautiful and well-equipped public library, and schools excellent in buildings and standard of scholarship."⁸² Far from the homesteading families of the Midwest, orange growers such as the citizens of Redlands defined themselves as the very epitome of eastern refinement.

Californians equated membership in the citrus industry with opulence and good character. One insider of the citrus industry provided a particularly poignant account. Thomas Garey, a prominent early citrus botanist in California and a founder of the orange city of Pomona, lauded the character of orange growers in the Southland. Garey had joined the citrus industry before the boom of the 1880s, bringing new types of oranges to

⁸¹ Tisdale, "Redlands," 223.

⁸² *Ibid.*

California as a nurseryman.⁸³ Garey credited John W. North of Riverside, claiming that “Settlement by colonies is becoming the favorite method of peopling the unoccupied portions of our State. Some of these are composed almost entirely of Eastern people.” This process typically began when “A few persons organize themselves into a company or corporation, obtain a considerable tract of land, appropriate a considerable supply of water, and then advertise for settlers. A large number come from the Atlantic States, bringing their all, and investing it in these colonies.”⁸⁴ Many newspapers and growers echoed Garey’s sentiments. As more Anglo-Americans settled in the Southland to grow oranges, they conceived of themselves as the apex of manifest destiny zeal, bringing the splendor of American capitalism and the values of the Gilded Age to the Golden State.

This investment came at great cost. It took years before an orange grove paid for its startup cost, much less turned a profit. “It is safe to say that a seedling orchard of ten-year-old trees will, at present prices, pay all expenses and net the owner a fair marginal profit,” Garey professed. “Budded trees will do the same at five years from the bud, if budded on three-year-old stocks. The yield thereafter increases with surprising rapidity.”⁸⁵ In many cases, only immigrants who already had enough money to subsist for five to seven years without any new income could participate in the industry.

Examinations of the records of citrus companies reveal sizable startup costs and continued spending to maintain profitability. In addition to purchasing orange buds to graft onto trees, or simply buying new orange trees, citrus associations paid significant

⁸³ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 32.

⁸⁴ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 56.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 92.

sums of money to clear land before planting. They expended large sums acquiring water to irrigate their crops, and paid out large amounts to cover the cost of labor. To prevent infestation from insects, growers purchased chemicals and paid workers to fumigate orange groves. Finally, associations purchased various types of machinery for their packinghouses to prepare oranges for shipment by rail as quickly as possible.⁸⁶ In all, establishing and maintaining an orange grove was not a cheap endeavor, further supporting growers' conception that only wealthy men could take part in the industry.

Growers fortunate enough to see a return on their investment in orange trees derived significant profits. According to the *Riverside Press*, "There was in Riverside about 6,000 acres of land under cultivation prior to" 1887. "Of this acreage there were about 3,000 acres planted to orange and lemon." From this land, "The orange and lemon crop of 1885-6 amounted to 506 carloads, or about 150,000 boxes of fruit that was shipped to market in addition to the home retail market, which amounted to many boxes more." Rather than focusing on local markets, growers from Riverside fixed their attention on cities in the Midwest. "The crop was picked, packed and sent to market at a cost of 50 cents per box, and freight, which latter item amounted to 75 cents per box when shipped to Chicago and other Western cities. The fruit in Chicago sold at \$3.50 to \$6 per box, an average probably of \$4 per box – or \$2.75 per box on the tree – net."

Growers ultimately enjoyed "a profit of \$412,500 on the orange and lemon crop taken from 3,000 acres of orchard. Of course the growers did not get all this profit for many

⁸⁶ Book of Minutes, 1902-1908, Balance Sheet, February 9, 1903, Azusa-Foothill Citrus Company Collection, box 1, folder 4, Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Hereafter cited as AFCC and Huntington Library, respectively.

sold their crops on the tree at from \$1.50 to \$2 per box net, but the profit was theirs.”⁸⁷

Those who could survive the high startup costs enjoyed immense profits. As the governor of California remarked in 1913, “It has recently been stated that in our citrus industries alone \$175,000,000 are invested and its annual production is around \$40,000,000. A vast territory is still available for its expansion and its possibilities are unlimited.”⁸⁸

Growers at Riverside also used the harvest cycles of different types of oranges to their advantage, cultivating Navel orange trees between December and April while producing Valencia orange trees during the summer months.⁸⁹ The citrus empire rapidly diffused across Southern California in the final decades of the nineteenth century, spreading from the San Gabriel Valley to Orange County, a region created from southern Los Angeles County lands in 1889 and named, of course, after the region’s most lucrative crop.⁹⁰ In 1880, noted botanist Herbert Webber, J.H. Briansworth planted seeds yielding a tree twenty-five feet in height in Anaheim, within the future boundaries of Orange County. Similarly, in 1876, E.B. Normanplace planted orange seeds in Duarte, while H.B. Brontley brought up trees in Claremont, both within Los Angeles County.⁹¹ Following the example set by Riverside, cities across the orange empire came into existence.

⁸⁷ Article from *Riverside Press*, reprinted in *Citrograph*, “Average Profits of Fruit Culture in San Bernardino,” July 13, 1887, p. 3.

⁸⁸ First Biennial Message, Hiram W. Johnson, Johnson Papers, box 7, folder Speeches, 1913.

⁸⁹ *Riverside County, California*, 11.

⁹⁰ Phil Townsend Hanna, *California through Four Centuries: A Handbook of Memorable Historical Dates, With a Foreword by Herbert Eugene Bolton* (New York, NY: Ferris Printing Company, 1935).

⁹¹ Webber Papers, box 10, folder 5.

Starting with the boom of 1887, dozens of new communities dedicated to citrus agriculture, so-called orange cities, appeared in Southern California. Orange growing defined the geographic contours of this ascendant agricultural empire. Riverside, where the Navel orange had first entered California, remained important in the early development of the orange empire. As early as the 1880s, Garey referred to the “Washington or Riverside Navel” orange, affirming that city’s centrality to the citrus industry.⁹² From Riverside, the orange empire spread westward. The rich San Gabriel Valley to the east of Los Angeles became a haven for oranges. As railroads developed competing lines through the valley, settlers conjured various settlements along the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific tracks into being all for the purpose of growing oranges. To Garey’s mind, “The oranges of this city [Los Angeles] cannot compare, in point of excellence, with those of the San Gabriel fruit-belt and of other favored localities.”⁹³ Far northwest of Riverside and Los Angeles, orange groves also appeared in Santa Barbara as early as the 1870s.⁹⁴

Moving south, the orange empire encapsulated much of Orange County through the creation of vast tracts of Valencia trees. George Fullerton of the Pacific Land Improvement Company coaxed the Santa Fe into running its California Central line through Orange County, thereby guaranteeing access to markets.⁹⁵ Charles C. Chapman,

⁹² Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 154-5.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 168.

⁹⁴ Robert B. Ord to Catherine Georgiana Ord, March 18, 1874, Henry E. Huntington Collection Correspondence, box 165. Hereafter cited as HEH.

⁹⁵ Judy Wright, “Mr. Fullerton’s Handiwork,” *Claremont Courier*, January 14, 1998, p. 5.

a major proponent of the citrus industry in Orange County, once explained that the area, “as the name implies, gives splendid evidence of being the ideal section for the culture of the orange. It is as highly developed here as in any other part of the world.”⁹⁶ He noted that the county specialized in producing the Valencia during the winter, after the Washington Navel had gone out of season, and cited this variety “as it has been developed here” as “the best orange grown in the world. For more than a dozen years it has made the record for prices received for California oranges. It has many excellent qualities which make it a more desirable and profitable orange for grower, handler and consumer.”⁹⁷ In San Diego County, the first orange and lemons trees appeared in National City, on the land of Frank A. Kimball, who hoped to attract the Santa Fe Railroad to the region.⁹⁸ East of San Diego, at the Imperial Valley well in the interior of Southern California, “The Navel orange, which is almost synonymous with California citrus culture, [had] been tried” and “proven very successful” by the early-twentieth century.⁹⁹

Citrus agriculture and railroading completely displaced ranching as the dominant, recognizable, and iconic industries of Southern California. The Stearns Ranch Company, named for one of the great Anglo-American land barons of the region, sold much of its

⁹⁶ Charles C. Chapman, “The Citrus Industry,” in Samuel Armor, ed., *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County, Who Have Been Identified with the Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present Times* (Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Company, 1911), 71.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 73. As the fifth chapter will explore, boosters in Southern California often made grandiose claims about their communities.

⁹⁸ Coit, *Citrus Fruits*, 3-4.

⁹⁹ “Citrus Fruits in the Imperial Valley,” *Pacific Rural Press*, June 4, 1910, p. 445.

land to the Southern Pacific for that company's right of way.¹⁰⁰ The Southern Pacific often purchased land from Californio families in orange growing areas such as San Bernardino County to expand its rail network.¹⁰¹ Perhaps most notably of all, the Southern Pacific bought land from Arcadia Bandini de Baker, widow of Abel Stearns and the daughter of wealthy rancher Juan Bandini. As the railroad gradually consolidated its hold on Southern California, it began to displace Californios and the ranches at the center of their economy in order to promote agriculture.¹⁰² "The mark of the grazing era," claimed noted Riverside historian Tom Patterson, "had been the freedom of anybody's animals to wander over any land – a freedom not compatible with raising alfalfa, grain or oranges."¹⁰³ Railroading and citrus agriculture, the Southland's new major commercial activities, had literally driven out the old, ushering in a new system for a new era in American history.

The citrus industry would have failed in the long term without basic necessity of transport provided by railroads. Initially, Southern California had no major railroad lines, and Riverside in particular suffered due to this limitation. As historian Anthea Hartig

¹⁰⁰ Untitled article from Riverside *Daily Press*, Henry E. Huntington Collection, box 16/4/(3), folder 41, Huntington Library.

¹⁰¹ Record of land sale from Felomena Arauja, et al. to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, Southern Pacific Collection, Land Department Records, volume 38, California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, California. Hereafter cited as SP Collection, Land Department, and CSRM, respectively.

¹⁰² Record of land sale from Arcadia B. de Baker & Husband to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Records, v. 23.

¹⁰³ Patterson, *Beginnings of Riverside*, 11. The records of the Land Department of the Southern Pacific Railroad also reveal that that organization often agreed to erect cattle guards, further restricting bovine mobility. For a more robust discussion of the railroad's impact on the California landscape, see the following chapter.

noted, during the 1870s, the line closest to Riverside was located forty miles away, at Rancho del Chino.¹⁰⁴ As a result, Riverside did not achieve commercial prominence during that decade. However, the Southern Pacific, still run by the Associates, made overtures revealing its intention to expand into the citrus empire of the Southland. E.G. Brown, one of the founding members of Riverside, had dealt with the company in the early 1880s, purchasing tracts of land the federal government had granted the Octopus under the Pacific Railroad Act of 1862.¹⁰⁵ Later, the Big Four laid tracks to the city of Colton, which they had constructed to support the new line, located less than ten miles northwest of Riverside.¹⁰⁶ Just as significantly, in 1883 the Southern Pacific completed a second transcontinental line, dubbed the Sunset Route, which connected San Francisco to New Orleans by way of Los Angeles.¹⁰⁷ Despite an attempt in 1885 to construct a line from Santa Ana to Riverside, a plan conceived in part by Leland Stanford himself, no track was laid. A similar endeavor the following year, which would have sent a branch of the Southern Pacific through Colton to Riverside, Arlington, and eventually San Jacinto, similarly fizzled out. A final failed plan, conceived in 1887, would have run the Southern

¹⁰⁴ Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape," 176.

¹⁰⁵ Southern Pacific bill of land sale to L.V.W. Brown, in Lyman Van Wickle Brown/Sharon Hageman Collection, Box 11, Riverside Metropolitan Museum Archives.

¹⁰⁶ Mullaly and Petty, *The Southern Pacific in Los Angeles*, 17. Reputedly, the Big Four established Colton as a way of avoiding the construction of a line that would link to the nearby city of San Bernardino, whose residents had clamored for a rail line for some time and would soon begin to woo executives of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe system. San Bernardino had refused to subsidize the railroad to build a line to that city, which precipitated the Associates' retaliation. See Edna Monch Parker, "The Southern Pacific Railroad and Settlement in Southern California," *Pacific Historical Review* 6, no. 2 (June 1937): 118. A colleague of the author once characterized Colton as a "spite town."

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

Pacific from Lordsburg south to Corona and then northeast to Riverside. Unfortunately for the Southern Pacific, in 1887 the Southern California boom turn into a bust, forcing the railroad to halt further attempts to enter Riverside for half a decade.¹⁰⁸

By the time they established a connection with Riverside, the surviving Associates had to deal with competition in the railroad industry in California, particularly that offered by a powerful newcomer that challenged the Southern Pacific's monopoly over transportation in the Golden State.¹⁰⁹ As early as the 1860s, Americans hoped to build a second transcontinental line, one that would run through the southern portion of the country to terminate in San Diego. The Texas Pacific Railway Company, later rechristened the Texas and Pacific, wanted to complete this job. Headed by Thomas A. Scott of the highly successful Pennsylvania Railroad, the Texas and Pacific faced the powerful Associates, particularly Huntington, in the 1860s and 1870s.¹¹⁰ Scott's line could have provided the Southland a much-needed connection to the Mississippi River, and cemented San Diego as one of the greatest metropolises of the state.¹¹¹ San Diegans could only watch in resignation as Huntington persuaded Congress to back the Southern

¹⁰⁸ Steve Lech, "The Octopus in the Orange Groves," *Journal of the Riverside Historical Society* no. 9 (February 2005): 36-37.

¹⁰⁹ In truth, most of the original Associates had passed away by 1900, leading their families to take the reins of power. Of the original Big Four, only Collis P. Huntington remained alive in that year, at least until August, when he finally succumbed. The new managers of the Southern Pacific, however, did everything in their power to retain control of transportation in California.

¹¹⁰ Lewis B. Lesley, "A Southern Transcontinental Railroad into California: Texas and Pacific versus Southern Pacific, 1865-1885," *Pacific Historical Review* 5, no. 1 (March 1936): 52-3.

¹¹¹ Ward M. McAfee, "Local Interests and Railroad Regulation in California during the Granger Decade," *Pacific Historical Review* 37, no. 1 (February 1968): 59.

Pacific and its Sunset Route, keeping the Texas and Pacific from building to California.¹¹²

Another would-be transcontinental had greater success against the Big Four, and by the turn of the century established good relations with the orange growers of Southern California. The Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe Railroad, the roots of which stretched back to the 1860s, had gradually consolidated various lines across the Midwest and Southwest, creating a network that linked Kansas with Texas, New Mexico, and even faraway Mexico.¹¹³ The line's creator, Colonel Cyrus K. Holliday, envisioned it as an industrial replacement for the old Santa Fe Trail.¹¹⁴ During the 1870s, the Santa Fe Railroad, which Holliday named out of reverence for his desire to reach the almost mythic capital city of New Mexico, battled its way across the West in search of a terminus on the Pacific Ocean.¹¹⁵ Doing so would require the Santa Fe to pass through the orange empire of Southern California, perturbing the leaders of the Southern Pacific and offering citrus agriculturalists an alternative to the Octopus.

By the opening of the 1880s, as the Santa Fe Railroad approached the borders of the Golden State, the managers of the corporation devised a number of methods to enter

¹¹² Lesley, "A Southern Transcontinental," 60.

¹¹³ Donald Duke, *Santa Fe: The Railroad Gateway to the American West* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1995), 11-13.

¹¹⁴ Merle Armitage, *Operations Santa Fé: Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fé Railway System* (New York, NY: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1948), 6.

¹¹⁵ The struggles of the Santa Fe Railroad against competing lines for tracks in Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico fall outside the bailiwick of the present history. For a more complete account of the Santa Fe Railroad's early history, see James Marshall, *Santa Fe: The Railroad that Built an Empire* (New York, NY: Random House, 1945), and Bryant, Jr., *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway*.

Southern California. Under the presidency of William Barstow Strong, the Santa Fe purchased a controlling interest in the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad, which hoped to wind south from the city of Needles, California, through the treacherous Cajon Pass to San Bernardino.¹¹⁶ The Cajon Pass connected the valleys east of Los Angeles to the desert, twisting between the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountain ranges. Strong's plan would have allowed San Bernardino, one of the most important orange growing cities, to ship goods on a railroad not owned by the Southern Pacific. Strong planned to connect this line to San Diego, thus reaching the Pacific Ocean and fulfilling Holliday's original intention for the corporation by turning it into a transcontinental railroad. However, the Santa Fe shared ownership of the Atlantic and Pacific line with the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad, the so-called Frisco. This joint ownership undermined Strong's efforts to turn the Santa Fe into a transcontinental network.

Sensing a potential rival that might challenge their iron-fisted control of California's railways, the Associates shrewdly offered the Santa Fe Railroad passage to Los Angeles on tracks built and operated by the Southern Pacific. While Huntington professed to the president of the Santa Fe Railroad never to have harbored any "hard feeling between your people and ours," he took drastic action to cut Strong's legs out from underneath him.¹¹⁷ When negotiations did not stymie Strong's feverish desire to reach the coast, the Southern Pacific resorted to financial intervention to block his progress. In the fall of 1881, Collis P. Huntington teamed with railroad financier Jay Gould to purchase

¹¹⁶ McAfee, *California's Railroad Era, 1850-1911*, 183.

¹¹⁷ Collis P. Huntington to William Barstow Strong, March 22, 1886, CPH, s. II, r. 27.

the Frisco. This provided the pair control over the Atlantic and Pacific, bringing Strong's plan to a screeching halt.¹¹⁸ In a letter to H.C. Nutt, president of the Atlantic and Pacific, Huntington insisted that the former "turn over his maps, profiles +c. of the line between Mohave Station" in the Mojave Desert of eastern San Bernardino County "and the Colorado [R]iver" to forestall the Santa Fe's progress in building a railroad through California.¹¹⁹

Undeterred, Strong and the executives of the Santa Fe Railroad developed an alternative plan for a route to the Pacific Coast. In the process, they turned the orange empire into the central battleground against the Southern Pacific. In one letter to Huntington, Strong feigned "regret that you should do me the injustice of supposing . . . that I should seek to promote my influence with our company by antagonizing yours. I know of nothing that I have done" to garner the Southern Pacific executive's distaste.¹²⁰ Secretly, however, Strong plotted to build rails to California, whether Huntington approved or not. During the early 1880s, the Santa Fe Railroad curried favor with key communities in Southern California, most importantly those surrounding the port city of San Diego. In 1879, Frank and Warren Kimball, two prominent landowners and citriculturalists in San Diego County, secured an agreement with the Santa Fe that would

¹¹⁸ Bryant, *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway*, 91-2.

¹¹⁹ Collis P. Huntington to H.C. Nutt, March 3, 1882, CPH, s. II, r. 27.

¹²⁰ William Barstow Strong to Collis P. Huntington, November 13, 1882, CPH, S I, r. 30.

benefit both parties. In exchange for land and a link to the Pacific, the Santa Fe would use San Diego as its coastal terminus.¹²¹

Operating from this critical port and economic hub, the Santa Fe created the new California Southern Railroad, which quickly laid tracks north from National City, a prominent orange growing town outside San Diego, through the Temecula Pass to Colton, where the Southern Pacific had a station in the heart of the orange empire.¹²² Simultaneously, a second Santa Fe line built south from Waterman through the Cajon Pass to San Bernardino in 1884.¹²³ However, the connection from San Bernardino to Colton proved challenging to secure due to interference by the Southern Pacific. That railroad sought to delay its competitor's construction efforts, and only a court order resulted in the connection of the California Southern from National City to Colton and then San Bernardino, just a few miles from Riverside.¹²⁴ In 1885, the Santa Fe completed its railroad from San Diego to Needles, which linked up with other railroads outside California and completed its own transcontinental line.¹²⁵ Californians across the nascent orange empire, from San Bernardino to San Diego, rejoiced that they now had a means to

¹²¹ McAfee, *California's Railroad Era*, 181-3.

¹²² This line later merged with others to form the Southern California Railway.

¹²³ Duke, *Santa Fe*, 16-17.

¹²⁴ James Marshall, *Santa Fe*, 187. A flood wiped out the Temecula Canyon portion of the line in the 1880s, prompting the Santa Fe to build replacement tracks through San Juan Capistrano and Santa Ana instead of reestablishing its line through the former flood zone.

¹²⁵ White, *Railroaded*, 256.

ship products across the continent that did not involve the dreaded Southern Pacific.¹²⁶

The Riverside, Santa Ana & Los Angeles Railway came into being in the mid-1890s, also under the control of the Santa Fe, to further connect the orange empire.



Figure 2.3. An early station of the Santa Fe Railroad in Riverside, California. Courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

Strong achieved Holliday's dream of reaching the Pacific Ocean by the mid-1880s. In 1887, the Santa Fe Railroad stretched from Chicago on Lake Michigan to the Gulf of Mexico at Galveston, Guaymas, Mexico, on the Gulf of California, and Los Angeles. One newspaper in the citrus-growing town of Redlands observed that "This is a vast domain over which to exercise the power and influence of a single corporation, but

¹²⁶ Lewis B. Lesley, "The Entrance of the Santa Fé Railroad into California," *Pacific Historical Review* 8, no. 1 (March 1939): 96.

the vast responsibility which is imposed rests with just and liberal minded men, to whom the rights and interests of the public, as well as of their stockholders, are subjects of conscientious consideration.”¹²⁷ The Santa Fe also bought existing lines when possible, as it had with the Atlantic and Pacific. In 1883, for instance, it purchased the Los Angeles & San Gabriel Valley Railroad from J.F. Crank, who previously had an opportunity to sell the line to Leland Stanford. This line would have connected one of the richest orange growing districts of Southern California to the City of Angels. Even before Crank declined this offer, the Southern Pacific had limited the growth of the Los Angeles & San Gabriel Valley line. A meeting with William Barstow Strong left Crank far more impressed, convincing him to sell his railroad to the Santa Fe.¹²⁸ Up to the mid-1880s, the Santa Fe Railroad had relied upon tracks of the Southern Pacific to reach Los Angeles, diminishing the former company’s access to the city.¹²⁹ Strong extended Crank’s tracks from Pasadena to Duarte in 1885, and eventually connected them to San Bernardino.¹³⁰ In 1887, after working to construct its own line between San Bernardino and Los Angeles by way of Pasadena, the Santa Fe owned tracks to Los Angeles, Southern California’s largest metropolis, and no longer relied on the road provided by the Southern Pacific.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Article from *Railway Age*, republished in *Citrograph* “The Santa Fe,” July 23, 1887, p. 9.

¹²⁸ Bryant, *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway*, 102-3. For a comprehensive list of the railroads of Southern California from 1869 to 1900, see Franklyn Hoyt, “Railroad Development in Southern California, 1868 to 1900” (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1951), 444-454.

¹²⁹ Franklyn Hoyt, “The Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley Railroad,” *Pacific Historical Review* 20, no. 3 (August 1951): 228.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

This not only increased the commercial prominence of Los Angeles, but it also gave orange growers access to the largest city in Southern California to sell their products or distribute them across North America from a centralized rail hub.

Thanks to the California Southern line's intense building efforts during the 1880s, the orange growers of Riverside gained a connection to transcontinental markets before the Southern Pacific reached the city. By 1887, reported one newspaper, "Regular trains are now running to South Riverside [Corona], leaving Riverside at 7:40 p. m. and Rincon at 6 a. m." Few citizens lamented the triumph of railroading over older forms of transportation. When an old stable in Riverside "took fire last week, cremating five horses and nearly causing the death of one man," newspapers scoffed. "Now Riverside has her own railroad and stage lines are things of the past. 'Behold, old things are passed away and all things are become new.'"¹³² Even as industry began to permeate Southern California, residents acknowledged the historical significance of railways.

The Santa Fe's efforts to lay tracks over every square inch of Southern California forced its competitor to expand into orange growing districts. "The Southern Pacific Railroad Company are [*sic*] laying a track around the west side of Slover Mountain, near Colton, to accommodate the Colton Marble and Lime Company," one newspaper explained, "and the California Southern are [*sic*] laying a track around the eastern side of the mountain for the same purpose. The works are located on the south and southwest sides of the mountain. It is intimated that the Southern Pacific will extend this branch line

¹³² Untitled article, *Citrograph*, July 16, 1887, p. 10.

to Riverside, but of this purpose there is no definite information.”¹³³ Moreover, the Southern Pacific modernized its infrastructure to meet the needs of orange growers. “The capacity of a freight car is nominally ten tons, or 20,000 pounds,” one newspaper told readers. By the 1880s, railroads had begun “building cars of 40,000 to 60,000 pounds capacity, in which 500 boxes of oranges can be loaded,” the newspaper triumphantly explained.¹³⁴

Despite its setbacks, the Southern Pacific’s desire for access to the fruit market never entirely abated. However, by the early 1890s Riverside growers had achieved economic power and a railroad to service them, putting them in a position to ask, as an issue of the Riverside *Enterprise* put it, “for favors” from the Southern Pacific in order for the line to “come into our city.”¹³⁵ In short, because growers in the Inland Empire (marked by San Bernardino and the nascent Riverside County, which formed after it separated from the former in 1893) had access to the Santa Fe lines that connected it to the Midwest and Chicago, the Southern Pacific’s desire for an inroad to the citrus empire outweighed citrus producers’ need for a second railroad line. Citriculturalists at Riverside only granted the Southern Pacific a right of way to the city in May of 1893, after the creation of Riverside County. The state legislature’s willingness to quickly form Riverside County over protests from San Diego and San Bernardino counties suggests, according to Riverside historian Steve Lech, that the Southern Pacific had speedily

¹³³ Article from *Riverside Press*, reprinted in *Citrograph*, July 16, 1887, p. 1.

¹³⁴ “Capacity of a Freight Car,” *Citrograph*, September 3, 1887, p. 12. The use of oranges as a unit of measure over other agricultural goods is telling.

¹³⁵ *Riverside Enterprise*, January 24, 1891, quoted in Lech, “The Octopus in the Orange Groves,” 39.

appeased Riverside growers by pulling its numerous political strings so as to obtain its highly sought after inroad into the heart of California's orange capital.¹³⁶

Although the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific competed for traffic and economic dominance in California, they shared responsibility for improving Southern California's image as an orange paradise to the rest of the United States. The Santa Fe and Southern Pacific established the region as a new Eden in the minds of eastern Americans, distributing pamphlets and advertisements depicting the railroad as a mechanism that bridged the continent and allowed travelers to reach a veritable earthly paradise. Richard Orsi, in his examination of the Southern Pacific's impact on the American West, skillfully examines the partnership between that railroad and the University of California's College of Agriculture, an alliance that drew attention to the Golden State as the nation's most important orange- and lemon-producing region. By running demonstration trains "with blue and gold banners unfurled along [their] sides" to mark the colors of the University of California through the Midwest and South, the Southern Pacific and the University simultaneously portrayed the benefits of scientific farming of oranges and commercialism in the Golden State. This firmly established the image of the region as a paradise that produced the fruit of the gods.¹³⁷ The association between the Southern Pacific Railroad and the state government of California made the latter realize the infinite possibilities of promoting the Golden State and its agricultural

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 41-2.

¹³⁷ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 279; Roy V. Scott, "American Railroads and Agricultural Extension, 1900-1914: A Study in Railway Development Techniques," *The Business History Review* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1965): 83.

bounty. This would eventually prompt the University of California to devise an agricultural station to support orange growers in the Southland.

Competition among railroads in Southern California demonstrated the degree to which the Southern Pacific's formerly impenetrable monopoly had deteriorated by the turn of the century. Challenging the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific networks, the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad connected Southern California to the capital of Utah. Completed in 1905, it allowed agriculturalists in Southern California an alternative to the existing rail networks.¹³⁸ In April 1903, the National Orange Company carried out an agreement with the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad Company that resulted in the construction of a railroad through the City of Riverside's Rancheria de Pachappa, owned by the National Orange Company, so that it could ship its products quickly and efficiently. Agreements made by that company during the early 1910s prompted the construction of new Southern Pacific and Santa Fe lines to service the company, with the citrus developer often maintaining control of various new tracks.¹³⁹ While it may have had a monopoly on the state's railroads during the 1870s, then, the Southern Pacific had gradually begun to lose its former total control due to the intervention of competitors by the turn of the century. Due to its relatively early entrance into the citrus heartland of Southern California, the Santa Fe had gained a significant

¹³⁸ Edward Leo Lyman, "From the City of Angels to the City of Saints: The Struggle to Build a Railroad from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City," *California History* 70, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 91-2. Not unlike the Atchison system during its early years, the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad signed an agreement with the Santa Fe to use that company's tracks through the Cajon Pass. See John R. Signor, *The Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Company: Union Pacific's Historic Salt Lake Route* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1988), 37.

¹³⁹ National Orange Company Collection, series I, sub-series A, folder 23, Riverside Metropolitan Museum Archives.

foothold on freight traffic from orange and lemon growers, a hold that the Southern Pacific would not significantly challenge until the 1910s.¹⁴⁰ Nonetheless, railroad service greatly benefitted Riverside and other growers in Southern California.



Figure 2.4. Grand Opening of the San Pedro, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake Railroad station in Riverside, 1904. Courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

Californians particularly saw the Santa Fe network as a benevolent force within the state's economy. While the Redlands *Citrograph* excitedly reported that "The Southern Pacific railroad company ha[d] opened a ticket office in San Diego" by 1887, further linking growers in the orange empire to the most important port city in the Southland, the paper also held that "One by one the offices are opened by this company which has for so many years had its grip on every portion of South California. The Atchison system has compelled the Southern Pacific to hunt for business and then

¹⁴⁰ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 342-3.

compete for rates.” Later, “According to the dispatches, ‘2,000 men are at once to be put at work’ by the Southern Pacific railroad Company [*sic*], building from Oceanside to San Diego.”¹⁴¹ According to this newspaper, at least, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe played the role of savior of California from the reviled Southern Pacific, which had begun to lag during the 1880s. Increasingly, the Southern Pacific had to sign operating agreements with the Atchison to operate lines in Southern California, sharing stations and tracks so as to avoid competition that minimized profits for both parties.¹⁴² However, business agreements did little to blunt public perception toward the Octopus.

By the 1890s, Californians’ hatred toward the Southern Pacific knew no bounds. The king of California boosters, Charles F. Lummis, used *The Land of Sunshine*, a widely read periodical in the 1890s, as his bully pulpit to announce his distaste for Collis P. Huntington. Lummis heaped vitriol upon the railroad magnate, accusing Huntington of “fixing” legislatures by buying off politicians and amassing a fortune, cementing himself as “the heaviest burden to her [California’s] commerce, the worst corrupter of her politics, the deadliest example to her youth.”¹⁴³ Even more critically, the *San Francisco Examiner* noted that “Huntington does not like Californians. He has weeded most of them out of office since he became head of the railroad’s affairs. He has filled most of the responsible positions under him with as rare a collection of enemy breeders as could be

¹⁴¹ “Local Briefs,” *Citrograph*, July 30, 1887, p. 7.

¹⁴² Agreement between the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company and the Southern Pacific Company, 1907, Railroad Operating Agreements Collection, box 1, folder Southern Pacific + Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Concerning Sunset Railroad, CSR.M.

¹⁴³ Charles F. Lummis, “In the Lion’s Den,” *The Land of Sunshine* 6, no. 5 (April 1897): 198-9.

collected using a microscope in all the land. In them his worst qualities are reflected.”¹⁴⁴

In 1897, when the Times Mirror Company of Los Angeles accidentally sent Huntington a six-month subscription to one of its periodicals that he had not purchased, the publisher, Harrison Gray Otis, commented that Huntington should pay for the product anyway.

Huntington had, after all, received a free newspaper for six months. “We take it for granted,” Otis acidly remarked, “when you have been made acquainted with the facts in this case, that you will not ask The Times to render you a gratuitous service while your company charges us ‘all the traffic will bear.’”¹⁴⁵

The Southern Pacific also bloodied its nose in a nasty fight over the construction of a harbor in the Los Angeles area. Members of the railroad, including Collis P. Huntington himself, favored situating a port for Los Angeles at Santa Monica, where the Southern Pacific owned land.¹⁴⁶ Other Angelenos hoped to create a terminal at San Pedro.¹⁴⁷ Huntington exercised all his political clout to delay construction of a breakwater at San Pedro until 1899, but ultimately Congress sided with the people of Los

¹⁴⁴ “Why the Railroad is So Unpopular,” *San Francisco Examiner*, March 27, 1896, in HEH, box 16/4/1, folder 6.

¹⁴⁵ Harrison G. Otis to Collis P. Huntington, December 16, 1897, HEH Correspondence, box 165. Huntington had once used this phrase to describe how much he would charge customers to ship their goods over the Southern Pacific’s lines.

¹⁴⁶ McAfee, *California’s Railroad Era*, 213-5.

¹⁴⁷ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 94; Frederick W. Viehe III, “The Los Angeles Progressives: The Influence of the Southern Pacific Machine on Urban Reform, 1872-1913” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1983), 25.

Angeles.¹⁴⁸ San Pedro triumphed over Santa Monica, and the people of Southern California realized they could wrench themselves free of the Octopus's grasp.

No man better capitalized on negative sentiment turned against the Southern Pacific than Hiram Johnson. A practicing lawyer from San Francisco and a Progressive Republican, Johnson rallied the voting population of California to turn against the Southern Pacific, making regulation of the Octopus the center of his successful campaign for governor in 1910.¹⁴⁹ Johnson stumped on a promise to "Kick the Southern Pacific Out of Politics."¹⁵⁰ He helped charter the Lincoln-Roosevelt League to curb the political and economic influence of the railroad on California.¹⁵¹ In his inaugural address in 1911, Johnson hammered at the Southern Pacific as the "former political master of the State."¹⁵² He proposed empowering the California Railroad Commission to transform it from a promotional entity that favored railroads into a true regulatory agency that protected consumers from exorbitant rates and political corruption.¹⁵³ From approximately 1880 to 1900, this body had failed to regulate railroads in California,

¹⁴⁸ McAfee, *California's Railroad Era*, 215; Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 120.

¹⁴⁹ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 173.

¹⁵⁰ W. H. Hutchinson, "Prologue to Reform: The California Anti-Railroad Republicans, 1899-1905," *Southern California Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (September 1962): 208.

¹⁵¹ Untitled statement by Hiram Johnson, Johnson Papers, box 7 folder Statements 1911.

¹⁵² Inaugural Address of Governor Hiram W. Johnson, January 3, 1911, Johnson Papers, box 7, folder Statements 1911.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* The second constitution of California, drafted in 1878, institutionalized the California Railroad Commission as a sanctioned body within the state government. See Ward M. MacAfee, "A Constitutional History of Railroad Rate Regulation in California, 1879-1911," *Pacific Historical Review* 37, no. 3 (August 1968): 265.

exacerbating economic and political tensions.¹⁵⁴ Johnson and the state legislature of California significantly bolstered the regulatory authority of the Railroad Commission, giving it the power to exercise more influence than ever before over the Octopus and utilities in the Golden State.¹⁵⁵

Public response to the Southern Pacific Railroad's money-grubbing policies forced the organization to revivify itself. In 1901, Edward H. Harriman took control of the corporation as its new owner. He had first shown interest in the Southern Pacific after the Panic of 1893, a financial meltdown that harmed railroads across the United States. Following the death of Collis P. Huntington in 1900, Harriman bought enough shares from the deceased executive's family to seize the reins of power.¹⁵⁶ Harriman integrated the Southern Pacific into his national railroad network, Harriman Lines, which included the Union Pacific, and modernized the corporation.¹⁵⁷ For instance, he formed the Pacific Fruit Express subsidiary, providing enough refrigerator cars to satisfy the clamor of growers in California, Oregon, and Washington.¹⁵⁸ The Southern Pacific's new tactic of lowering tariffs also attracted growers to the line, and as a result that railroad gained a significant foothold in the business of shipping produce from the Golden State to Canada.

¹⁵⁴ Gerald D. Nash, "The California Railroad Commission, 1876-1911," *Southern California Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (December 1962): 303.

¹⁵⁵ Untitled statement by Hiram Johnson, October 11, 1911, Johnson Papers, box 7, folder News Statements, 1911.

¹⁵⁶ Lewis, *The Big Four*, 409-10.

¹⁵⁷ Donovan Hofsommer, *The Southern Pacific, 1901-1985* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1986), 23. As Hofsommer explains, Harriman Lines was not a corporation, but rather an informal name for the mogul's extensive transportation holdings.

¹⁵⁸ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, xvi, 34-5.

The Santa Fe Railroad had previously all but monopolized access to Canadian markets, so this transition represented a significant victory for the Southern Pacific's new owner.¹⁵⁹ Harriman significantly invested in the modernization of the Southern Pacific by using more powerful locomotives and improving bridges.¹⁶⁰ As a result of such changes, popular discontent against the Southern Pacific abated somewhat by the opening of the twentieth century.

Regardless of the difficulties they imposed, railroads nonetheless engineered the success of the orange industry in Riverside and Southern California. When the Santa Fe completed its own line to Los Angeles, the company initiated a rate war against the Southern Pacific to lure passengers to Southern California. Railroad fare had continuously dropped since the Santa Fe had entered the Golden State, and by March of 1887, reported Carey McWilliams, "the Santa Fe was advertising a rate of \$1 per passenger" from the Midwest to California. The result of this so-called rate war was nothing short of a mass migration that brought 120,000 people to Southern California in 1887 alone.¹⁶¹ By 1892, Los Angeles, the Santa Ana Valley, the Cajon Pass, Temecula, Pasadena, San Bernardino, and the San Gabriel Valley all boasted railroad lines due to the Santa Fe Railroad's building frenzy.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 343.

¹⁶⁰ Mullaly and Petty, *The Southern Pacific in Los Angeles*, 35-40.

¹⁶¹ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 118.

¹⁶² Brown and Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, 97-98.

Initially, railroads acted quite generously toward orange growers. From 1886 to 1887, at the height of the rate war between the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe, a refrigerator unit was developed “and adapted to fruit use” to preserve the commodities during shipment.¹⁶³ Indeed, the Santa Fe and fruit growers formed a key alliance, wherein the former sent refrigerated cars and provided re-icing stations in Needles, Albuquerque, and elsewhere to preserve the crops of the latter.¹⁶⁴ Railroads also gave orange growers rebates for freight rates.¹⁶⁵

Occasional tensions with railroads in the early citrus days proved minor. Wilson Crewdon of the Riverside Trust Company, in a meeting with a high-ranking executive of the Santa Fe, brought up a qualm with the railroad: he did not believe the Santa Fe did enough to provide enough “time [. . .] to excursionists in order that they might see something of Riverside,” and suggested “running an old English stagecoach” through the city to promote it. The executive agreed to the suggestion.¹⁶⁶ This interaction further demonstrated the respect with which the Santa Fe viewed Riverside, or at least the railroad company’s efforts to curry favor with an increasingly affluent community. Finally, the railroads facilitated the growth of Southern California’s citrus producing population by organizing their physical transport, bringing the population of Riverside to

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹⁶⁴ Patterson, *A Colony for California*, 163.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 175.

¹⁶⁶ Frank Miller Hutchings Collection, folder A500-190.I.A.7, Riverside Metropolitan Museum Archives. Hereafter FMHC.

6,000 by 1890.¹⁶⁷ While growers naturally profited from these agreeable terms, other parties also profited from the connection between railroads and citrus in Southern California.

The connection between Southern California's nascent citrus economy and its emerging transportation network proved beneficial for the railroads, as well. In 1889, Collis P. Huntington perceived that "great development . . . is coming to Southern California."¹⁶⁸ By the early-twentieth century, the Southland boasted 107 railroad stations, 60 percent of them located in rural areas known for their citrus agriculture. By 1939, citrus traffic proved so voluminous that six out of every fifty trains transported only citrus products. This required no small financial effort on the part of railroads, which continuously erected new lines and stations in from 1885 to the mid-twentieth century.¹⁶⁹ Railroad moguls also often enjoyed smaller, less notable benefits from Riverside. For example, Henry E. Huntington, Collis's nephew and an executive of the Southern Pacific, obtained a crate of oranges for which he received no charge from Frank Miller, proprietor of the Mission Inn and a major booster of Southern California.¹⁷⁰ Despite this seemingly insignificance of this event (a prominent railroad executive such as Huntington could easily afford to buy crates of oranges), Huntington's gracious acceptance of the shipment

¹⁶⁷ Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape," 182.

¹⁶⁸ Collis P. Huntington to Blanton Duncan, August 12, 1889, CPH, s. II, r. 28.

¹⁶⁹ Tobey and Wetherell, "The Citrus Industry," 13.

¹⁷⁰ FMHC, folder A500-190.I.A.6.

underscored his respect for citrus growers and their economic clout, or at least his desire to continue shipping their products for his own good.

A corporate symbiosis developed between America's major transportation network and the rapidly expanding citrus fiefdoms of Southern California. John G. North, son of John W. North, the founder of Riverside, noted in an article he wrote concerning Riverside in 1900 that "Both of California's great railroad systems – the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fé – reach Riverside, and have contributed not a little to the upbuilding of the community" by allowing growers to ship oranges to Los Angeles or San Diego for distribution across the nation.¹⁷¹ Even before its connection to the railroads, Riverside had played a leading role in the development of the citrus industry in California. Combined with lines linking it to the ports of Los Angeles and San Diego, as well as direct connections with the eastern United States, the economic impact compounded Riverside's importance and solidified oranges as a major commercial crop. By the 1920s, citrus had become important enough to merit its own category in Santa Fe's report to State Railroad Commission on its freight.¹⁷²

California citrus fruits had become highly desired commodities by the 1890s. However, a number of economic factors prevented oranges and lemons from achieving their full economic potential. First, uneven production schedules plagued the citrus industry of Southern California. When attempting to acquire oranges for Collis P.

¹⁷¹ John G. North, "Riverside: The Fulfillment of a Prophecy," *The Land of Sunshine* 13 (December 1900): 475-479.

¹⁷² Annual Report of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company to the Railroad Commission of the State of California for the year Ended December 31, 1924, Public Utilities Commission Records, California State Archives. Hereafter cited as PUC.

Huntington, for instance, J.A. Muir of the Southern Pacific reported that “No oranges have been sent to Mr. Huntington for some weeks past because no good ones can be obtained. The good oranges went out of the market very rapidly this season.”¹⁷³

The importance of railroads stretched beyond the bountiful citrus fields of the Southland. Riverside reaped cultural and social benefits from the iron horse, as well. In the late-nineteenth century, many prominent citizens, entrepreneurs, orange growers, and respectable businessmen in Riverside wished to establish a school for Native American students in the city. Frank Miller, proprietor of the city’s famed Mission Inn, asked Collis P. Huntington to obtain support from Congress for Riverside’s proposed Indian school among the orange groves, which could perhaps provide many growers in the area an inexpensive source of labor.¹⁷⁴ In February of 1899, Huntington wrote to Miller that he had “communicated with friends of mine in Washington on the subject of getting \$250,000 appropriated for the construction of proper buildings for the Indian schools.”¹⁷⁵ Despite Riverside’s indifference toward the Southern Pacific’s entrance into the citrus hub of the Southland in the 1890s, prominent individuals such as Miller took advantage of Huntington’s innumerable political strings in Washington, D.C. for the city’s benefit. Miller also solicited the California State Legislature for this cause. He counseled A.S. Milice of the state legislature, when considering whom to elect as California Senator in

¹⁷³ Muir to Henry E. Huntington, May 1, 1896, HEH Correspondence, box 156.

¹⁷⁴ For a more detailed examination of Miller’s motivations and the processes behind the creation of the Sherman Institute in Riverside, see Nathan Gonzales, “Riverside, Tourism, and the Indian: Frank A. Miller and the Creation of Sherman Institute,” *Southern California Quarterly* 84, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 2002): 193-222.

¹⁷⁵ FMCH, box 1, sub-series I.A, folder A500-190.I.A.2.

the United States Congress, to support a candidate “with a view of obtaining his influence and co-operation in the location of the [Native American] School at Riverside,” noting that such an institution would greatly contribute to “the growth and prosperity of” the city.¹⁷⁶

Riverside did indeed establish such a school in the early-twentieth century. Named for Vice President James S. Sherman, the Sherman Institute opened in 1902 to educate and assimilate Native Americans, and to employ them in the citrus groves.¹⁷⁷ It continues to operate in the twenty-first century, thanks at least in part to the Southern Pacific Railroad’s influence.

Frank Miller’s letters also reveal the degree to which Southern California’s political and social climate had changed as a result of the economic expansion resulting from citrus agriculture. By the turn of the twentieth century, the cow counties had transformed themselves from rural, decrepit ranch empires into important sources of capital, including the Inland Empire’s thriving citrus producing realms, which earned lucrative sums by using railroads to access markets across the United States. At one point Miller initiated a petition, declaring “that it is to our best interests that a senator from Southern California be elected” to the United States Congress. Citizens of Riverside from all socioeconomic strata endorsed the petition: merchants, capitalists, artists, farmers, and one “railroad man” added their names to Miller’s declaration of Southern California’s

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Esther Klotz, *Riverside and the Day the Bank Broke: A Chronicle of the City, 1890 – 1907* (Riverside, CA: Rubidoux Press, 1972), 86.

political power in 1899, the most visible victory of which would occur in the early-twentieth century during a battle over a legislative tariff.¹⁷⁸

A powerful political lobby defended the interests of the orange growers of Southern California. This group influenced the Congress to enact tariff legislation protecting domestically grown oranges.¹⁷⁹ Growers from Southern California could easily afford to finance such a lobby, and they also possessed business outlooks akin to those of the great industrialists of the late-nineteenth century. When the United States Senate proposed a reciprocity treaty with Jamaica, Riverside lobbyists fought vigorously at the state level against what they referred to as “the Jamaica treaty.” Thanks to the urging of Miller and other Riversiders, in early 1900, the California State Legislature produced a resolution stoutly condemning the Senate’s Jamaica resolution. The Assembly and the Senate resolved that the State of California

deprecates the attempt to disturb present existing conditions of the tariff upon sugar, citrus fruits and fresh vegetables; that it is an unequal and unjust hardship to sacrifice the interests of a few for the benefit of a very large majority; that the supposed benefits accruing to this country in its added proportion of the eight millions [*sic*] of dollars of trade with Jamaica, will not compensate it for the loss inflicted upon one item alone, of California production.

The resolution concluded “That the California producer is entitled to a protective duty as against foreign competition, at least equal to the difference in their several freight rates, and that the American producer shall be maintained in his demand for the market of

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ North, “Riverside,” 473.

his own country.”¹⁸⁰ Miller fervently urged Governor Henry T. Gage of California to contact President Theodore Roosevelt and members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, particularly Republican members of that body, since Californians had generally favored Republicans since 1860.¹⁸¹ Miller remarked that passage of the Jamaica Treaty would “reduce the price of [California citrus fruit] 20%, which means a loss of \$1,400,000.00 in one year.”¹⁸² The orange growers’ lobby in Riverside eventually swayed Congress not to pass the treaty.¹⁸³ Growers further organized in the early-twentieth century to limit railroads’ control over the Southland.

Despite the initial friendliness between growers and the rail lines in Southern California, significant hardships plagued them by the early-twentieth century. The tendrils of the Octopus had the capacity to ensnare innocent victims and wring the life from their bodies, best demonstrated during the Mussel Slough incident in 1880. In May of that year, the Southern Pacific and U.S. marshals attempted to remove squatters who had taken refuge on land granted to the railroad by the American government in Mussel Slough, located in California’s fertile San Joaquin Valley. The Southern Pacific hoped to lay track in this area, but farmers had settled on the land without any formal permission to do so.¹⁸⁴ As tensions and tempers mounted, militant squatters and marshals exchanged

¹⁸⁰ FMHC, box 1, sub-series I, folder A500-190.I.A.5. Indeed, the Big Four themselves promoted the party during the 1860 campaign.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* Californians elected Leland Stanford as the state’s first Republican governor that year.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ North, “Riverside,” 473.

¹⁸⁴ Neill C. Wilson and Frank J. Taylor, *Southern Pacific: The Roaring Story of a Fighting Railroad* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Irwin Book Company, Limited, 1952), 117.

gunfire, ultimately resulting in the death of five squatters and two marshals. Journalists immortalized this event as the “Battle of Mussel Slough,” exploiting it as a further example of the Southern Pacific’s cruel disregard for the lives of farmers in their drive for corporate profit.¹⁸⁵

Although railroads and growers rarely came into political conflict, they clashed over economic matters.¹⁸⁶ Overproduction of fruit severely limited the prices Californians could expect to receive at local markets.¹⁸⁷ Only by shipping beyond the confines of the Golden State could citriculturalists hope to recoup their high startup costs. Railroads often inflated shipping charges for fruit growers. In 1887, seemingly without warning, “Freight on raisins from California to the East has been doubled. The new rate is \$1.50 per hundred pounds. Why the rate has been doubled is not yet known to us. This raise will serve to reduce the price to the grower, and put the coin in the coffers of the railroad companies.”¹⁸⁸ As late as 1926, W.J. Spillman of the U.S. Department of Agriculture commented on the shipment of citrus fruit by rail, stating that “In the citrus industry at the present time the element of cost of transportation of the total paid by the

¹⁸⁵ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 102. The Mussel Slough incident has long fascinated scholars of the Golden State, including railroad historians and literary analysts of author Frank Norris’s classic novel, *The Octopus*, a fictionalized account of the battle that lionizes squatters and demonizes the railroad. Orsi presents the most multifaceted picture of the battle.

¹⁸⁶ One exception to this rule occurred in September of 1900 at the Riverside Republican County Convention. Most delegates backed a candidate from Corona, whose nomination was single-handedly defeated when an agent of the Santa Fe, A.P. Maginnis, worked feverishly to block it for some purpose unknown to the citizens of Riverside. Miller to J.A. Muir, FMHC, folder A190-500.I.A.5.

¹⁸⁷ H.E. Erdman, “The Development and Significance of California Cooperatives, 1900-1915,” *Agricultural History* 32, no. 3(July 1958): 180.

¹⁸⁸ Untitled article, *Citrograph*, September 24, 1887, p. 7.

consumer is in the excess of twenty per cent.” As a result, Spillman bleakly postulated that such rates, “[a]s applied to the California situation,” could even “menace the very existence of the industry.”¹⁸⁹ Railroad moguls clearly felt no moral pangs about taking advantage of some of their most frequent and high-paying customers in the citrus industry.

Charles C. Teague, a prominent citrus agriculturalist in Santa Paula in Ventura County, summed up many of the problems that orchardists faced well into the twentieth century. According to Charles Teague, “in the year of 1936 there originated in California for railroad haul 370,000 cars of agricultural products. Most of these moved under refrigeration into interstate commerce, an average haul of approximately 2,200 miles. Freight costs are already high, the total transportation bill for this tonnage aggregating over 100 million dollars,” not including refrigeration costs.¹⁹⁰

In the early decades of the California citrus industry, growers exercised little influence over the sale of their products. Typically, they hired shipping agents to pick oranges, pack them for transport by rail, and sell them. Unscrupulous agents had no qualms about cheating orange growers by offering the lowest prices for their goods.¹⁹¹ Charles Teague purported that early distribution of oranges was “a very precarious business, and no one engaged in it was making money. This was true when there were

¹⁸⁹ Spillman to Herbert Webber, Webber Papers, box 10, folder 11.

¹⁹⁰ Charles C. Teague, “Train Limits Bill S-69 Now before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce for Consideration and Report,” Charles C. Teague Papers, box 2, folder 3, Bancroft Library. Hereafter cited as Teague Papers.

¹⁹¹ Merlo and Sunkist Growers, Inc., *Heritage of Gold*, 6, 10.

only 10,000 car loads of oranges shipped from California, where the shipment now aggregates 40,000 to 50,000 car loads.”¹⁹² P.J. Dreher, one of the prime movers behind citrus cooperatives, complained of the domination of jobbers in “the fruit trade in the eastern states,” because of whom “A few growers received very meagre returns for their crop while the large majority of growers not only received nothing but in addition had to pay charges billed to them for marketing their crop.”¹⁹³ Moreover, “The grower had to guarantee the packer and shipper against loss, either of freight, packing or profitwise [*sic*] if the shipper sustained it, but there was no guarantee to the grower even for his picking and hauling which he agreed to do in the contract.”¹⁹⁴

Due in part to these hardships, citrus producers in the Southland, including industry leaders based in Riverside, rallied to oppose what they perceived as tyrannical practices imposed by the Southern Pacific. Ironically, in 1885 Stanford and Alban Towne, general manager of the Central Pacific, organized growers’ meetings across the state and promised lower shipping rates if farmers would pack “entire trains carrying green fruit, contracted regularly and in advance by farm cooperatives,” stated historian Richard Orsi.¹⁹⁵ As early as 1887, James De Barth Shorb, a major promoter of Southern California during the boom, led the Orange Growers’ Protective Association of Southern

¹⁹² Statement of Charles C. Teague, Teague Papers, box 2, folder 1

¹⁹³ P.J. Dreher, “Early History of Cooperative Marketing of Citrus Fruit,” *Pomona Valley Historian* 3, no. 4 (October 1967): 139. Dreher originally published the article in the *California Citrograph* in 1916.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 320-21.

California. The endeavor fell apart without addressing the major problems that had prompted growers to originally organize.¹⁹⁶

The idea of cooperative associations hibernated until the early 1890s when another economic panic struck the nation. Blaming middlemen who sold their produce after it had been shipped by rail, citrus growers across Southern California began to discuss an organization to protect their economic and political interests.¹⁹⁷ Dreher commented that during “the season of 1892-1893 (one year before the Exchange was organized,” growers in eastern Los Angeles County formed the Claremont, California, Fruit Growers Organization to pack and market its own crops.¹⁹⁸ Demonstrating their propensity to organize along cooperative lines, rather than typical agricultural ones, T.H.B. Chamblin organized the fruit growers and bankers of Riverside into the Pachappa Orange Growers Association in 1893. This entity formed an alliance with the Frank B. Devine Packing House to ensure proper packing of oranges onto the trains that carried produce east.¹⁹⁹

This successful venture prompted orange growers across Southern California to combine their interests and form the Southern California Fruit Exchange. Later renamed the California Fruit Growers Exchange, this organization promptly took control of the industry and gained fame by using the popular Sunkist brand to create a national

¹⁹⁶ Dumke, *The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California*, 14.

¹⁹⁷ Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 83-5.

¹⁹⁸ Dreher, ““Early History,” 142.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 88, 21.

following for oranges grown in the Southland.²⁰⁰ “The California Fruit Growers Exchange,” exhorted Teague, “is the largest of our cooperative grower marketing organizations, and is famous throughout the world as a model of what can be done by farmers in cooperative marketing.”²⁰¹ According to one of its advertisements, the Exchange prided itself on providing accurate market information to members and offered cheap marketing and low supply costs.²⁰² One of its most important goals was to secure fairer treatment from exploitative railroads.

The California Fruit Growers Exchange followed a strict hierarchical structure that benefitted growers. At the local level, growers allied to form a Packing House Association to pack their goods into boxes before transferring them to railroad freight cars. “To join,” the California Fruit Growers Exchange explained, “growers were expected to sign a contract to turn over all their crops to the association within the timeframe specific by the contract. The grower would then receive a standardized compensation” for oranges or lemons set by the board of directors. Regionally, packinghouses joined together to form a district exchange, which “usually served between 1 and 20 local packinghouses.” Its board of directors consisted of members from local associations. At the apex of this structure presided the Central Exchange of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, leading 25 district exchanges.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 88-95.

²⁰¹ Statement of Charles C. Teague, Teague Papers, box 2, folder 1.

²⁰² “Citrus Growers” advertisement placed by Sunkist in *Imperial Valley Grower Nsp.*, October 2, 1930, Teague Papers, box 2.

²⁰³ Organizational Chart of California Fruit Growers Exchange, Citrus File, Ellingwood Room.

The California Fruit Growers Exchange was not the only cooperative citrus marketing association in the Southland. In 1906, growers from the Inland Empire banded together to form the Mutual Orange Distributors of San Bernardino County to pack their own fruit.²⁰⁴ Two years later, Mutual Orange Distributors relocated to Redlands, one of the wealthiest cities in the orange belt of Southern California.²⁰⁵ In *Citrus Leaves*, its official periodical, Mutual Orange Distributors characterized itself as one of California's "two leading non-profit, co-operative marketing associations." Using its Pure Gold brand, Mutual Orange Distributors built up a national following for itself in the early-twentieth century, although it never became large enough to truly rival the California Fruit Growers Exchange.²⁰⁶ As in the case of that organization, Mutual Orange Distributors' board of directors consisted of member growers.²⁰⁷

By the early-twentieth century, public opinion aided orange growers in their quest to limit the power of entities such as the Southern Pacific over the Golden State. Taking significant action to curb railroads' influence over politics and the state's economy was a new venture, but rhetoric against the railroads had long simmered in California. During the late 1860s, when the Big Four began constructing the Central Pacific, their lack of significant progress led Californians to label the venture the "Dutch Flat swindle,"

²⁰⁴ "Mutual Orange Companies Centralize under One Head," *San Francisco Call*, August 11, 1906, p. 5.

²⁰⁵ Phil Brigandi, "Citrus Industry," *Orange Public Library*, <http://www.cityoforange.org/localhistory/citrus/citrus-03.htm>.

²⁰⁶ Ronald Tobey, Charles Wetherell, Kevin Hallaran, and Buffie Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House: An Architectural and Technological History, 1898-1940* (Riverside: Laboratory for Historical Research, Department of History, University of California, Riverside, 1991), 45-6.

²⁰⁷ "These Independents," *Citrus Leaves*, June 1, 1921, p. 5.

referring to an area near Sacramento through which the railroad needed to pass in order to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains.²⁰⁸ Too, governors Henry Haight and Newton Booth had demonstrated their opposition to railroad subsidies in their campaigns and during their respective administrations in the 1860s and 1870s.²⁰⁹ Progressive candidate Hiram Johnson's 1910 gubernatorial victory marked the final, most important triumph of popular opinion over the railroads, as he had been elected on a promise to "kick the Southern Pacific out of politics."²¹⁰

Within a few years of its inception, the California Fruit Growers Exchange capitalized on public anti-railroad sentiments. Through its political arm, the Citrus Protective League, the Exchange won two cases against the Southern Pacific argued before Supreme Court in 1914 and preserved the preexisting lemon shipping rate and the right to pre-cool and ice citrus products in refrigerated cars.²¹¹ The Southern Pacific might have been able to achieve victory over citrus growers even as late as the 1890s. However, the arrival of the competitive Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, rising sentiments disfavoring the perceived monopoly of the Southern Pacific, and the ever-increasing power of citrus growers overlapped to deal significant blows to the once invincible corporate empire. The organization of cooperatives altered the economic

²⁰⁸ Lewis, *The Big Four*, 42.

²⁰⁹ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 29-31.

²¹⁰ Lewis, *The Big Four*, 411-2.

²¹¹ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 302-4.

power structure of Southern California, and paved the way for railroaders and citrus growers to redefine the region within the context of modernity.

By the 1880s, citrus agriculture had taken its first steps to becoming defining features of Southern California, largely thanks to railroads. Besides the service of providing access to distant markets, railroads bolstered the growth of the orange empire in critical ways. The Santa Fe, for instance, became part owner of Santa Ana Valley Irrigating Company by 1906, funding the use of water for citrus agriculture in Orange County.²¹² As with Chaffey's Ontario water company, customers of the Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company had to own stock in to receive water.²¹³

However, the citrus industry also faced challenges on the road to commercial prosperity. When Thomas Garey wrote his influential tract on oranges in the 1880s, he commented that "It was my intention to write a chapter on the history of orange culture in Southern California, but the want of reliable historical data does not justify the attempt."²¹⁴ Citrus history had only just begun in the 1880s, when Garey wrote these words, but he and numerous other proponents envisioned a bright future for it. "The superiority of this fruit," Garey continued, "grown in a dry climate like ours, in its solidity and keeping qualities, and our ability to transport our fruit around the world, if necessary, without material loss, more than compensate for the extra labor in its

²¹² Annual Report of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company, Coast Line, to the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of California, for the Year ending June 30, 1906, PUC.

²¹³ Book of By-Laws of the Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company, Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company Collection, box 2784, California State Library. Hereafter cited as SAVIC.

²¹⁴ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 5-6.

production.” Garey also posited the superiority of growers located in California over other orange-producers. “If ours is a more laborious lot than that of others, let us be thankful that a healthful and invigorating climate vouchsafes unto us the physical ability for the task we have voluntarily taken upon ourselves – that of establishing and building up the choicest fruit-producing region in the world.”²¹⁵

In Garey’s early tract, water, fruit, transportation, commercial success, and empire wove together to prefigure a bright future for the Southland. In that author’s words, “here, in Southern California, I prefer the month of February in which to transplant in some sheltered locations in the foot-hills.”²¹⁶ Garey’s capitalization of Southern California is noteworthy, demonstrating the degree to which he conflated citrus agriculture and regional identity in the 1880s. This association would only strengthen over time as production increased and as relations with railroads stabilized.

Packers expressed great appreciation for railroad employees who handled their products carefully. Archie Smith, manager of the San Marino Growers Packing Association, once heaped praise upon the Southern Pacific. “The writer realizes that you never know whether your patrons are receiving satisfactory services at the hands of your employees” Smith wrote, perhaps referencing earlier difficulties between the Southern Pacific Railroad and orange growers with regard to poor handling of fruit. “But I wish to state that the services rendered” by Southern Pacific employees have “been handled with

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 52-3.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

such care that I feel it my duty to express my personal appreciation of the same.”²¹⁷

However, even as railroad employees learned how to handle fruits, other factors began to take a serious toll on the production of oranges and lemons in Southern California.

Orchardists in California faced a potentially devastating enemy in the form of the cottony-cushion scale, an insect that infested American groves starting in the late 1860s.

By the late-nineteenth century, citriculturalists began to use fumigation to minimize the impact of this devastating pest.²¹⁸ The Redlands *Citrograph* suggested that boxes and wrappers, when “infected,” should be burned to prevent the spread of scale. It staunchly proclaimed “Eternal vigilance” as “the price of immunity from the scale bug.”²¹⁹

Cottony-cushion scale devastated orange groves in the 1880s, requiring orchardists to seek biological solutions to prevent crop devastation. Albert Koebele, an entomologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, developed the most workable solution to the problem by enlisting insects in the war on the cottony-cushion scale.²²⁰ Growers followed this suggestion and found an eager ally in the Australian ladybug, a predator of the cottony scale that reclaimed the citrus industry during its nativity.²²¹ As historian Jared

²¹⁷ Archie Smith to W.H. Whalen, June 28, 1915, HEH, box San Marino Packing House 5/93-5/97, folder 4.

²¹⁸ Lawton, “A Brief History of Citrus in Southern California,” 11.

²¹⁹ “Look Out for Scale Bugs,” *Citrograph*, August 6, 1887, p. 6.

²²⁰ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 246-7.

²²¹ Dumke, *The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California*, 261.

Farmer explained, this nearly disastrous episode convinced orchardists to invest in scientific solutions to their problems.²²²

Realizing the potential for oranges to redefine the image of Southern California, the state's government became heavily involved in the industry. In the first decade of the twentieth century, to prevent a repeat of the cottony-cushion scale episode, the state government began to inspect groves and quarantine sick plants.²²³ The state legislature passed various laws to regulate the agricultural sector of the economy, culminating in the establishment of the modern California Department of Agriculture in 1919.²²⁴ The California Department of Agriculture regularly conducted inspections to ensure that only the highest-quality fruits, including oranges, went from California by rail to eastern markets.²²⁵ It often induced quarantines on the importation of new citrus stocks from abroad to prevent the introduction of pests to the Southland.²²⁶ Thanks to the success of oranges and lemons from the Southland in eastern markets by the dawn of the twentieth century, the state government involved itself in the regulation of these products to guarantee fruit quality at the market. It worked closely with the California Fruit Growers Exchange to prevent producers from glutting the market, thus keeping orange prices

²²² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 246-7.

²²³ Untitled history of California State Department of Agriculture, p. 3, folder F3741:1, Department of Agriculture Records, California State Archives.

²²⁴ Charles R. Kinsley, "Agricultural California," p. 2, in folder F 3741:5, Department of Agriculture Records.

²²⁵ Merle Hussong, "Department of Agriculture," *The California State Employee* 14, no. 6 (September 1945): 9.

²²⁶ George Compere to Alexander Craw, December 17, 1902 [?], folder F3741:6, Department of Agriculture Records.

stable.²²⁷ In other words, the government had a vested interest in preserving the reputation of California citriculture, demonstrating the degree to which oranges and the Golden State had become synonymous.

The greatest investment in the fruit industry by the state government of California came in the form of the Citrus Experiment Station. Thanks to the success of its cooperation with the Southern Pacific Railroad, the University of California realized the lucrative possibilities of promoting orange agriculture. As early as 1890, the University of California had chartered an agricultural experiment station for the Southland, based in the citrus town of Pomona.²²⁸ This gesture fell short of what orange growers wanted to build: namely, an experiment station devoted solely to the cultivation of citrus fruits.²²⁹ Just as they had cooperated to form the California Fruit Growers Exchange, the orange orchardists of Southern California rallied together to convince the state legislature and the University of California of the need for scientific organization. Under the leadership of John Henry Reed, the orange capitalists of Riverside formed a Horticultural Club in 1895 to promote a citrus experiment station.²³⁰ By 1904, thanks to Reed's leadership and lobbying of the state legislature, the state government passed a bill allowing for the

²²⁷ Paul S. Armstrong, "Thoughtful Summary of Condition of the California Citrus Industry," *California Citrograph* (January 1937), 108.

²²⁸ Harry W. Lawton, "John Henry Reed and the Founding of the Citrus Experiment Station," in Esther H. Klotz, Lawton, and Joan H. Hall, eds., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area*, rev. ed. (Riverside, CA: Riverside Museum Press, 1989), 44-5.

²²⁹ Richard C. Sawyer, *To Make a Spotless Orange: Biological Control in California* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1996), 27.

²³⁰ Lawton, "John Henry Reed," 46.

creation of an experiment station in Riverside.²³¹ Chartered by the regents of the University of California in 1907, the Citrus Experiment Station opened on the slopes of Mt. Rubidoux in Riverside, California, to promote scientific solutions to agricultural problems.²³² G. Harold Powell of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, a major leader of the citrus industry, championed the nomination of Herbert Webber as head of the new Citrus Experiment Station. A former professor from Cornell University and members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Webber was exceptionally well-positioned to lead this new institution.²³³

Growers and newspapermen had clamored for a station located within the orange belt of Southern California, so it is understandable at the consternation that arose among them when outsiders raised the possibility of relocating the site. “As editor of a newspaper published in the known citrus belt,” the editor of the *Claremont Courier* railed to Governor Hiram Johnson, “I protest vigorously against the location of the proposed experimental station at San Fernando on the ground that the station is going away from a known citrus region into an untried citrus region and that great damage to the citrus industry may be the result.”²³⁴ The Chamber of Commerce of Colton agreed, condemning

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

²³² Lawton, “A Brief History of Citrus,” 11. By 1961, the entity had broadened its focus, and was rechristened the Citrus Research Center and Agricultural Experiment Station. The presence of this facility in Riverside laid the groundwork for the University of California to open a campus in that city in 1954.

²³³ Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 124-6.

²³⁴ Telegram from Colton Chamber of Commerce to Hiram Johnson, November 18, 1914, Johnson Papers, box 42, folder Riverside Citrus Experiment Station Papers, 1914. As Moses notes, the San Fernando Valley syndicate of Harrison G. Otis, which had raked in obscene profits during the construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, had attempted to remove the station. See Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 51.

the “removal [of the] Citrus Station to San Fernando,” where “interests of growers cannot be as well served” as they could in Riverside.²³⁵ Thanks to this groundswell of support for Riverside, the Board of Regents of the University of California officially voted against removal of the station to San Fernando.²³⁶

At the Citrus Experiment Station, Webber and his colleagues curated an extensive biological archive upon which to experiment so as to further enrich Southern California. “In pursuance” of establishing a large collection, “the Citrus Experiment Station has gradually assembled the important citrus varieties and species from all parts of the world for growing and testing, a total of some 1200 sorts.”²³⁷ The Citrus Experiment Station not only developed solutions to scientific problems in the agricultural sector of California, but also worked closely with growers to ensure their continued prosperity. The Farm Advisory Staff of Ventura County lauded the Citrus Experiment Station for the advances it had brought to agriculture in California by the early-twentieth century. Beginning in 1925, the staff reported, the Citrus Experiment Station provided improvements in the fertilization of citrus groves. “Much money has been wasted in the fertilization of citrus trees through the application of those materials which are not needed. As a result of educational efforts” by the Station, “most of the citrus growers have come to a general recognition of the importance of the application of nitrogen and the value of organic

²³⁵ Telegram from *Claremont Courier* to Hiram Johnson, November 18, 1914, Johnson Papers, box 42 folder Riverside Citrus Experiment Station Papers, 1914.

²³⁶ Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 127-8.

²³⁷ Herbert J. Webber, “Project No. 194. A Study of the Varieties of the Citrus Fruits and Their Relatives,” Webber Papers, box 12, folder 5. Webber had assembled this collection by June 1933.

material” on their properties. Resultantly, fertilization costs in Ventura County fell from a range of \$40-\$100 per acre to \$20-\$30 per acre.²³⁸

J. Eliot Coit, a prominent horticulturalist, credited a number of agencies for the success of the scientific community that had evolved around citrus agriculture in California by the opening of the twentieth century. In addition to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which had provided Eliza Tibbets with her first Washington Navel oranges, Coit praised the University of California and its statewide Agricultural Experiment Station, “whose endeavor has been to increase knowledge through scientific investigations and disseminate this new information through free lectures and pamphlets.” Finally, he praised the University for “operating for months at a time free demonstration trains on the railroads.”²³⁹ The demonstration trains that the Southern Pacific Railroad and University of California had run across the Midwest by the close of the nineteenth century germinated and bloomed into the Citrus Experiment Station. Railroads, boosterism, and science once again colluded to recreate Southern California as a product of industrial and agricultural modernity. This gave growers in the Golden State an advantage over producers located in other centers of citrus production.

Southern California faced competition in the citrus industry from a handful of other regions, ones that seemingly had advantages over the Golden State. In the early years of citrus production in Southern California, Garey predicted a dreary future. “There are a great number of orange groves in Southern California; the yield of all the trees of

²³⁸ Farm Advisor Staff of Ventura County, *A Quarter-Century of Progress in Agriculture in Ventura County*, p. 9, Teague Papers, box 100.

²³⁹ Coit, *Citrus Fruits*, 11.

the citrus family is very great. The demand for oranges along the Pacific coast is far below the production, and the exportation of oranges to the East will never be a lucrative business for California, on account of the great distance by rail, as all the Eastern States can procure their oranges at a lesser cost from Florida and Louisiana.”²⁴⁰ As California’s rail network diversified, however, other observers exhibited a more positive outlook. “Our good neighbors in Florida never get through harping on their superiority over California in orange growing because they do not have to irrigate and we do, and also the terrible expensiveness of irrigation,” reported the *Citrograph*. “They say that the enormous expense of irrigation makes orange growing in South California anything but profitable. A change seems coming o’er the spirit of their dream – at least some of the most advanced and long-headed of them.”²⁴¹

In its earliest years, orange and lemon growers in California had to carve brand loyalty in American markets dominated by products grown in Florida and Italy. Ever the optimists, orange growers from the Southland extended gratitude to the rail lines of the Golden State for facilitating commercial success, which allowed growers to overshadow those other regions. As the *Riverside Press* gleefully exposed, Californians could ship oranges to Atlantic states at far cheaper rates than their competitors in the Sunshine State. Californians could ship Washington Navel oranges to Chicago and expect returns of \$6 to \$7 per box, while Floridians could only earn \$4 for their oranges.²⁴² One newspaper in

²⁴⁰ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 203.

²⁴¹ “Irrigation in Florida,” *Citrograph*, July 16, 1887, p. 8.

²⁴² Article from *Riverside Press*, reprinted in *Citrograph*, September 24, 1887, p. 2.

Florida complained that exhibits of California orange “held in Chicago” in 1885 “did more to divert travel and immigration from Florida to that State than all of the combined efforts of railroads and tourists’ agencies,” which was cost-prohibitive to the Sunshine State.²⁴³ Scipio Craig of the Redlands *Citrograph* echoed Floridians’ conclusions, but noted that “it has taken a big fight to bring” railroads to Southern California.²⁴⁴ Indeed, citriculturalists often had to entice transportation executives with bribes to establish railroad service. Importantly, historian Iris H. Wilson notes that Joseph Wolfskill, a commercial orange grower in Los Angeles, “gave fourteen acres to the Southern Pacific Railroad in order to bring its services to” Los Angeles.²⁴⁵ The *Citrograph* had earlier explained that “The transcontinental lines make special efforts to get California’s fruits to the eastern markets in the best possible condition. They are interested in having the producers realize as much money as possible out of their shipments, because large profits mean increased products to transport. Large exports of marketable products result in attracting people and money to the state or section which produces them.”²⁴⁶ Rather than any intrinsic characteristic that made their oranges superior to those produced in the east, the railroads that serviced California orchardists allowed them to overcome Floridian producers.

²⁴³ Article from *Orange County, Florida, Reporter*, reprinted as “Jesso,” *Citrograph*, September 3, 1887, p. 5.

²⁴⁴ “Another Florida Growl,” *Citrograph*, September 3, 1887, p. 1.

²⁴⁵ Engstrand, *William Wolfskill*, 215.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Italians similarly lost their foothold in American markets as a result of production in California. Initially, growers in the Mediterranean had shown little fear of the nascent citrus industry of California. However, as the orange empire spread across the Southland, domestic production of oranges in the United States eclipsed demand, completely negating the need for Americans to conduct foreign trade to acquire oranges and lemons.²⁴⁷ One newspaper remarked that Americans “are looking to California as the state to furnish them with trainloads of oranges, and now the Italian government declares that California is the only place on the green earth that they need fear as a competitor in raising citrus fruits.”²⁴⁸ Although Italian growers outpaced their competitors from California in the realm of lemon production in the 1880s, they simply could not match the output of orchardists in San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and Riverside counties in the realm of oranges.²⁴⁹ Even Italian officials had to pronounce California oranges “very good,” and could simply stand by and watch as Californians gained greater control over markets in the eastern United States.²⁵⁰

For their part, agriculturalists in California professed utter devotion to the superiority of their product, and took advantage of every opportunity to proselytize consumers using this belief. One eulogizer of the California citrus industry publicized the remarks of a jobber based in New York, who commented that “The California oranges,

²⁴⁷ Article from *New York Mail and Express*, reprinted in *Citrograph*, September 17, 1887.

²⁴⁸ Article from *Riverside Press*, reprinted as “Rough on Florida” in *Citrograph*, September 3, 1887, p. 3.

²⁴⁹ “The Oranges and Lemons of California,” *Citrograph*, August 27, 1887, p. 6.

²⁵⁰ *San Francisco Chronicle* article, reprinted as “Oranges and Lemons,” *Citrograph*, September 3, 1887, p. 2.

alone of all products, sold not only at a good price, but realized a profit for shippers, when all foreign oranges were disposed of at the lower prices on record and at tremendous losses to owners. No single product of the earth has made the marvelous stride in popular favor, increase in demand and consumption, which marks the record of this week's sale of California oranges."²⁵¹ The *Southern Californian*, published at Lordsburg in cooperation with the Santa Fe Railroad, claimed that "Men who are in the orange business, and don't care much for the oranges as a rule, say that they cannot resist the Navel" with its "superior taste."²⁵² For the decades that oranges held sway over Southern California, growers fervently proclaimed the superiority of their produce over that of Florida and Italy.

As rail lines extended across the United States, orange growers found no shortage of eager consumers to buy their goods. In the Midwest, cities such as Chicago eagerly welcomed Navel oranges from California as they offloaded at the city's rail depots. Kansans, the *Southern Californian* reported, "appreciate a first class orange and the delight which they manifest creates a new enthusiasm and arouses every latent feeling, for happiness is something contagious."²⁵³ Oranges grown in California thus affectively commodified the Golden State and all the positive sentiments it entailed to Americans. As early as the 1890s, Californians confidently predicted that they would soon conquer

²⁵¹ Tisdale, "Redlands," 221.

²⁵² "The Navel in New York," *Southern Californian*, April 24, 1890, p. 2.

²⁵³ "Rambled in the East," *Southern Californian*, May 1, 1890, p. 4. The Santa Fe Railroad played a strong role in this booster publication.

the coveted New York market.²⁵⁴ Demand for oranges grown in California so intensified that the California Fruit Growers Exchange successfully marketed its product in faraway Philadelphia shortly after the organization's formation.²⁵⁵ The California Fruit Growers Exchange even succeeded in sending its product across the Atlantic Ocean. According to the *Pomona Weekly Times*, in 1893 "The Claremont Fruit Growers Association started a carload of choice Navel oranges via the Santa Fe for England." The fruits eventually made it to none other than Queen Victoria, who "was delighted with their handsome appearance and flavor."²⁵⁶ Other powerful individuals closer to the orange empire endorsed citrus products from Riverside, drawing more attention to Southern California's agricultural bounty.

One important recognition of the Riverside's importance occurred in 1903 when President Theodore Roosevelt visited the city. In addition to recognizing Riverside's economic importance, Roosevelt had received a letter from Jacob Riis, the famed photojournalist, who had lauded the city's welcoming climate and convivial atmosphere. Roosevelt stayed at the Mission Inn in May 1903, and replanted one of Eliza Tibbets's orange trees in the court of the hotel. Roosevelt's visit served as the thematic, if not economic, culmination of Riverside's ascendance to commercial centrality within Southern California. Acting as the bookend opposite the city's 1870s colonial establishment, the president's visit conferred upon Riverside a sense of national social

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ Dreher, "Early History," 142.

²⁵⁶ Article from *Pomona Weekly Times*, April 15, 1893, reprinted in Dreher, "Early History," 142-4.

and economic recognition, one that would not have been possible without the help of railroads. Indeed, Roosevelt arrived in and departed from Riverside by train.²⁵⁷ Although this gesture is mainly a symbolic one, it nonetheless stands as a testament to the central role railroads played in the rise of Riverside and much of Southern California on the American economic and political landscape in the early-twentieth century.

By 1900, Southern California had radically revised its economic prospects. Railroads, the dominant form of domestic industrial transport in the United States by that time, offered vital connections linking the Southland with Northern California as well as the rest of the country. Additionally, droughts in the 1860s and the ensuing cattle die-offs forced Southern Californians to turn away from their historic economic cornerstone to new industries. In conjunction with this quest for economic survival came the establishment of Riverside, a small colony then located in San Bernardino County, created by a group of wealthy easterners for the purpose of promoting agriculture in the sunny, welcoming climate of Southern California. The Washington Navel orange, introduced to the city in the early 1870s, had transformed into the city's major financial source by the turn of the century, and spread across much of the Southland, including the San Bernardino and San Gabriel Valleys. Direct links with the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Railroads allowed growers to ship goods directly from Riverside to the sprawling markets of eastern America, rather than forcing them to send goods to Los Angeles or nearby San Bernardino.

²⁵⁷ Klotz, *Riverside*, 1, 6.

The patriotism of these two elements of society in California reverberated for decades. Citrus agriculture and railroads carried the Golden State through some of the most trying periods in American history. Despite the economic hardships imposed by the Great Depression, California orange producers managed to grow and ship more fruit than ever before in the state's history. According to one account, in January 1937, Californians shipped 49,000 carloads of oranges, albeit at lower prices than they would have achieved before the Great Depression.²⁵⁸ During the Second World War, as Americans toiled feverishly to out-produce the Axis powers across the globe, the Golden State continued shipping "its booming fruit trains, charging over the mighty Sierra Nevadas" using the Southern Pacific.²⁵⁹ The Santa Fe provided desperately needed supplies to war production facilities in Southern California.²⁶⁰ The twin developments of citrus agriculture and railroads in Southern California rejuvenated the region's economy for decades from the late-nineteenth to the early-twentieth century, and helped the Southland outgrow the popular perception that it consisted solely of rancho empires owned by elites. Instead, by 1900, the region had become an agricultural center and perhaps the dominant contributor to the state's economic well-being.

²⁵⁸ Research Committee, Simon J. Lubin Society, "A Preliminary Report on the Economic Structure of Calif. Agriculture," Federal Writers' Project Source Material on Migratory Labor, District no. 8, carton 4, folder NF 1 Report - Farm Tenancy Com. by Lubin Society, Bancroft Library. Hereafter FWP.

²⁵⁹ S. Kip Farrington, Jr., *Railroads at War* (New York, NY: Coward-McCann, 1944), 43.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

Chapter Three

Gridiron Garden: Railroads, Citrus, and the Techno-Agricultural Landscape of the Southland

The two routes [of the Southern Pacific Railroad], Sunset and Golden State, merge and plunge westward . . . From Tucson, it is down the valley of the Gila to Yuma, with squaws selling trinkets on the station platform. Soon appear the Colorado River; Salton Sea; Palm Springs and the girls in their sun tans; Beaumont Summit, where desert gives way to almonds, apricots, peaches, grapes; the orange groves and real-estate signs of the San Gabriel Valley; and the Union Station of Los Angeles, located amid palm trees and patios like a movie set.

--Neill Compton Wilson and Frank J. Taylor¹

Henry E. Huntington, ever the opportunist, had a vision for Southern California. When his uncle, Collis P. Huntington of the Southern Pacific Railroad, brought his nephew from his position as manager of various rail lines in the eastern United States to California, the Southland had only begun to reap the benefits of shipping carload upon carload, train upon train, of oranges across North America. Aside from this fledgling industry, the region had yet to develop the technological infrastructure or large-scale capitalist system that characterized San Francisco, without a doubt California's greatest metropolis by 1900. Huntington, however, saw promise in the unused resources of Southern California, particularly its San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire, the fertile orange growing belt that stretched across western San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Thanks to the actions of corporate developers such as Henry Huntington, transportation systems imposed a physical order on Southern California in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth. As the *San Francisco Bulletin* reported in the heyday of Huntington's activities, the capitalist hoped

¹ Wilson and Taylor, *Southern Pacific*, 82.

“To Gridiron the South.” The newspaper explained his ultimate goal: to “connect Riverside with Los Angeles by an electric road and also Redlands with Los Angeles. The passenger travel between these two growing points and Los Angeles is enormous, and each of these towns has two railroads entering it.” The author of the article focused his attention on two of the most important orange growing districts of Southern California, Redlands and Riverside, which, as the previous chapter argued, relied on competitive railroad lines to ship produce to markets. He continued:

It is not a very direct road from Los Angeles to Redlands and there is a constant race between the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe to make time into Redlands from Los Angeles.

Indeed, the fastest time in the State made by any railroad train is by the Redlands flyer. The Southern Pacific intend [*sic*] to cut down the time by building a direct road into Redlands.

This will have to be done to save themselves from the aggressions of the electric line which is bound to cut rates and run cars more frequently than can the railroad cars.²

The *San Francisco Bulletin* reified the concept of railroads in Southern California as critical factors that defined the region’s economic identity. Rails indeed “gridironed” various orange growing metropolises across Southern California by 1900, facilitating the growth of businesses such as orange-packing houses along mainlines. Similarly, rail transportation, particularly Huntington’s Pacific Electric Railway, stimulated the adoption of electricity by Southern Californians. At packinghouses, the important sites where orange groves disgorged their fruits into the welcoming arms of the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, and Pacific Electric, the gardens that Eliza Tibbets’s Navel orange trees had spawned by the late-nineteenth century overlapped with the machine-driven

² “To Gridiron the South,” *San Francisco Bulletin*, in HEH, box 38/2, folder 5.

environment that had grown across Southern California since the first rail connection between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Railroads represented a mechanical intrusion on the natural landscape of Southern California. As Richard White explicated in his history of American railroads, “A railroad train in motion was a snorting, smoking, roaring thing; for all the beauty of its movement, it was an assault on the human senses,” belching smoke that blotted out the sun and blue skies of the West.³ To many Californians, oranges seemingly presented a much more natural connection to the landscape. However, in truth, the Valencia and Washington Navels that dominated the manmade gardens of California by the late-nineteenth century were just as artificial as the rail lines. Jared Farmer, author of an exhaustive survey of California’s arboreal history, points out that citrus fruits are not native to California. In their efforts to cash in on the orange craze that swept across the Golden State, many growers displaced natural plants with budded citrus trees, fundamentally altering ecological systems south of the Tehachapi Mountains. Unlike natural trees, citrus plants are often built. Orchardists who hoped to establish their own orange groves often purchased orange buds and grafted them onto various rootstocks, crudely building new trees.⁴ The gardens of Southern California, as much as the rail lines that serviced the orange growing districts, exemplified man’s control of natural resources, rather than a natural feature of the landscape.

³ White, *Railroaded*, 141.

⁴ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 225.

Orange production required the use of quite a few natural resources and the utter transformation of Southern California's formerly pastoral countryside. By the early-twentieth century, orange growers relied increasingly on oil and electricity for their commercial activities. As Huntington's streetcars expanded across the Los Angeles Basin and Inland Empire to service orange cities, they brought power lines with them.⁵ From 1900 to 1909, orange associations began to adopt electrical machinery in their packinghouses.⁶ In addition to powering lights, motors paved the way for the use of electrified machines such as fruit sizers, fans, and conveyor belts.⁷ Finally, orchard heaters, and later diesel railroad cars, required large quantities of oil to prevent frost from claiming California's citrus crop. Building new power plants for electric cars, erecting electric lines to service the needs of railways and orange packers, and purchasing enough oil to heat the citrus groves of the Southland all resulted in significant changes to Southern California, often at the expense of the natural environment.

Even more important to the orange growers' project to master nature and cultivate the fruits of supposed paradise was control of water. One of the most critical utilities for any agricultural commodity, water for citrus-growing left an enormous imprint on the landscape of Southern California. Although native peoples and Spaniards had used channels for irrigation prior to the advent of citrus, orchardists undertook even greater water projects to service their groves. Many orchardists preferred to control their sources of water locally, rather than handing power over to larger commercial interests in Los

⁵ "Huntington's Innovations," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, August 27, 1903, in HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 42.

⁶ Tobey, Wetherell, Hallaran, and Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House*, 42-3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 43-4, 64.

Angeles. Growers based in Riverside, for instance, resisted the influence of the Metropolitan Water District. Instead, they built their own water systems. Perhaps the most important was the Gage Canal in Riverside. Established in the 1880s, this canal, brainchild of Irishman and Canadian immigrant Thomas Gage, delivered enough water to Riverside to make orange growing commercially viable by the 1880s.⁸ One of the most influential utilities magnates in the orange industry of California, George Chaffey of the city of Ontario in western San Bernardino County, exemplified the influence of citrus orchardists in Southern California's physical development. Altering the landscape with cement pipes to deliver water to local growers, Chaffey organized the Mutual Water Company to guide urban expansion.⁹ By maintaining control of irrigation projects, the citrus agriculturalists of Southern California not only marshaled one of their most precious resources under local organizations, but they also shaped the use of land according to their commercial needs.

Thanks to the orange groves and rail lines that crisscrossed the Southland by the early-twentieth century, denizens of Southern California had conceived of and made real a landscape where the gardens of heavenly fruit existed naturally alongside railroads and the industrial economy they created, a sort of machine-serviced garden. Railroad builders laid steel tracks through the orange groves of Southern California, which created a sense of geographic order defined by industrial growth by installing a gridded structure stretching across the entire region. The machine shops they developed in Southern

⁸ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 51.

⁹ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 233; Laszlo, *Citrus*, 72-3.

California introduced mechanical methods of production that spurred industrialization. Furthermore, the gridiron structure guided development of the orange empire long after citrus agriculture retreated as a dominant economic force and other forms of transportation eclipsed railroads. Thus, beyond the crucial injection of economic potential, citrus growing and railroad transportation overlapped to recreate the landscape of Southern California as an industrial-agricultural hybrid that defined its regional identity and physical contours as a gridiron garden. Railroads also redefined Californians' relationship to the rest of the United States.

The introduction of industrial transport to Southern California fundamentally altered the way residents interacted with the world around them. Railroad transport shortened the amount of time necessary to travel among various regions or cities in the West. Railroads allowed Americans to travel greater distances than ever before in a fraction of the time that wagon trails or steamboats required, thereby flattening space and changing Americans' conceptions of time.¹⁰ As historian William Deverell remarked, the railroad forced Americans to drastically reconsider their conceptions of time and space. It allowed travelers, for example, to recreate the journeys of Lewis and Clark, reaching the Pacific Coast from the eastern United States in a fraction of the time it had originally taken the Corps of Discovery.¹¹ The railroad connected regions of the West that had previously been difficult to reach. In 1879, the Southern Pacific Railroad, building its Sunset Route from Los Angeles to Louisiana, opened passenger traffic from California east of Yuma,

¹⁰ White, *Railroaded*, 141.

¹¹ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 26.

an important city on the Golden State's border with Arizona along the Colorado River.¹² This ended the isolation that had separated Los Angeles from the rest of the American West.

The Southern Pacific owned vast tracts of lands on the trans-Mississippi frontier. Prior to the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869, the federal government of the United States had granted large tracts of land across the nation to railroad corporations to divest as those companies saw fit. Land grants from the federal government to the Central Pacific Railroad totaled 12 million acres of land, an area greater in size than the state of Maryland.¹³ Although historians provide different figures for the exact amount of land the Southern Pacific Railroad owned in the western United States, the total falls between 8 and 12 million acres.¹⁴ As late as 1919, the Southern Pacific owned upward of 2,600,000 acres of land in Southern California.¹⁵ The railroad used these critical assets to influence the development of Southern California.

Precise figures notwithstanding, by the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe lines still owned vast hectares of prime land that farmers could use to produce crops such as Washington Navel oranges. During and after the boom of the 1880s, the Southern Pacific bought even more tracts in Southern California

¹² News release from T.H. Goodman, January 31, 1879, CPH, s. IV, r. 1.

¹³ White, *Railroaded*, 157, 24.

¹⁴ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 73.

¹⁵ Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1944), 17.

to develop and sell at a profit.¹⁶ On orders from Collis P. Huntington, land agents of the Southern Pacific purchased land in such wealthy orange growing districts as Pasadena.¹⁷ The two major railroads of Southern California often competed to buy up as much land as they could before competitors had the chance to do so. In 1898, J.A. Muir, who worked with Huntington at the Southern Pacific and at the Los Angeles Railway Company, wrote to Henry Huntington that private interests in the city of Los Angeles had attempted to close a deal with a competing railroad.¹⁸ “They have [made an] offer of [\$]6000,” Muir wrote, “and they promised answer by two o’clock this afternoon. This property is being purchased for SANTA FE and should not be allowed to go to them. If you want the property can you not give me margin of 5000 to trade on. It looks as if SANTA FE propose to use this for passenger depot purposes in view of having changed their line that crosses Macy street recently.”¹⁹ As it had been since the 1880s, Southern California remained an important economic battleground between railroad corporations, thanks greatly to the promise of capitalizing on the lucrative citrus industry.

Thanks to the federal government’s benevolent view of transcontinental railroads in the 1860s, the Southern Pacific controlled vast swaths of territory across the Southland. During the 1870s, Congress granted the Southern Pacific Railroad rights of way and control of adjacent land in areas of San Bernardino County, and the railroad purchased

¹⁶ J.A. Muir to C.E. Graham, October 29, 1901, HEH Correspondence, box 156.

¹⁷ Muir to Collis P. Huntington, May 23, 1877, HEH Correspondence, box 156.

¹⁸ Muir to Graham, October 29, 1901, HEH Correspondence, Box 156.

¹⁹ Muir to Henry E. Huntington, October 19, 1898, HEH Correspondence, Box 156.

even more land to develop.²⁰ A significant portion of these lands broke away to form Riverside County in 1893. Eager to cash in on the expansion of agriculture in the state, the Southern Pacific used much of the land it purchased in the Inland Empire to pave the way for the coming of the citrus industry. When purchasing land in Riverside County during the 1890s, legal agreements between the Southern Pacific and its customers carefully deeded the railroad “all the water and water rights appertaining to [. . .] land” that the company acquired.²¹ As the Associates shifted their capital and resources from the Central Pacific to the Southern Pacific, a close examination of their corporate land records shows they transferred vast quantities of real estate to enable the line to grow across California.²²

The Southern Pacific set aside parcels of land all across Southern California for numerous purposes. In many instances, it only bought land to maintain a right of way, “To be used for the construction, operation and maintenance of a R[ailwa]y. operated by steam or electric Motor and for no other purpose.”²³ It aided the growth of communication in the Southland by erecting telegraph lines in orange cities such as San

²⁰ Record of land sale from United States of America to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, volume 35.

²¹ Record of land sale from J.A. Muir & Wife to Southern Pacific Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 35.

²² Record of land sale from Southern Pacific Company to Central Pacific Railway Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38.

²³ Record of land sale from E.G. Brown et al. to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38.

Bernardino and Colton.²⁴ The company set aside other plots to build engine and car houses, and in many instances promised to establish lines through and depots in certain communities within a few years of purchase.²⁵ Most importantly, however, it aided the growth of the citrus industry by providing railroad connections to would-be growers across Southern California. It purchased from fruit growers such as the Duarte-Monrovia Fruit Exchange in the San Gabriel Valley, as well as the Scottish-Californian Orange & Vineyard Co. to promote the establishment of packinghouses along the Southern Pacific's tracks.²⁶ Numerous purchases contained language allowing land sellers to maintain control of citrus groves. "The first parties" of agreements with the Southern Pacific "may cultivate fruit trees and green crops upon such portions of the right of way hereby granted as is not required for the construction and operation of a R.R. to be constructed on said premises above described."²⁷ Similarly, advertisements of the Southern Pacific Railroad loudly proclaimed "HANDSOME PROFITS" from the orange industry of Southern California in advertisements circulated around the nation.²⁸ Although "the right to cultivate and grow fruit trees and green crops upon said right of way hereby granted may

²⁴ Record of land sale from City of Colton to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38.

²⁵ Record of land sale from E.G. Brown et al. to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38; Record of land sale from L.J. Rose & Company, Ltd. to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 23.

²⁶ Record of land sale from Scottish-California Orange & Vineyard Co. Ltd. to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 23; record of land sale from George Reughton to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 23.

²⁷ Record of land sale from James W. Fulton & wife of Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 23.

²⁸ Clipping of Southern Pacific Railroad Company advertisement for land in Southern California by Jerome Madden, CPH, s. I, r. 10.

be terminated at any time” by the Southern Pacific, on the whole the railroad promoted the establishment of orange groves across Southern California.²⁹

The Southern Pacific envisioned grand plans for California’s agricultural bounty, even before 1900. As Collis Huntington once wrote to his nephew Henry, “What I think we ought to do in California is to preserve our fruit in the best possible manner and then send as much of it as can be marketed there to Western Europe, which I think will be a very large amount.” Huntington claimed to have the growers’ best interest at heart, espousing that “This business is very important and I hope it will be fostered and everything done that can be done to pay the producers a good profit.”³⁰ The railroad clearly hoped to bolster the growth of oranges and lemons in Southern California, most likely with the goal of enriching itself in the process by shipping these fruits to markets across the United States. Nonetheless, this does not diminish the fact that the Southern Pacific played a significant role in the greening of the Southland as orange and lemon trees became fixtures of the landscape.

In numerous cases, the Southern Pacific bought land from orange growing cities. It purchased land from the Ontario Land and Improvement Company in the early-twentieth century, after the city of Ontario had proven itself a model of citrus production.³¹ Similarly, it acquired land from the Bear Valley Irrigation Company in the final decade

²⁹ Record of land sale from Crawford P. Teague to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v.23.

³⁰ Collis P. Huntington to Henry E. Huntington, August 15, 1892, HEH Correspondence, box 64.

³¹ Record of land sale from Ontario Land & Improvement Company to Southern Pacific Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38.

of the nineteenth century, purchasing land in the Redlands area after it had successfully started to irrigate.³² Perhaps most significantly, the Southern Pacific bought land in Los Angeles from Joseph Wolfskill, a pioneer of citrus agriculture in California.³³ Before it could sell these properties at a handsome profit, however, the railroad had to invest in preparing the land for orange and lemon orchardists.

To increase the value of such lands in Southern California, the Southern Pacific undertook a broad development program. At the forefront of this movement was the Pacific Improvement Company, tasked by its parent company, the Southern Pacific Railroad, with taming the landscape to pave the way for the development of industry, irrigation, and agriculture in the far West. While the Associates, including Charles Crocker and Collis P. Huntington, notoriously used the Pacific Improvement Company to enrich themselves, in undertook a variety of programs to modernize California, many of which benefited orange growers.³⁴ Under the leadership of William Mahl, the Pacific Improvement Company financed urban development, mining, streetcar systems, and utilities for the Southern Pacific.³⁵

By the end of the nineteenth century, as the previous chapter explored, the Southern Pacific faced staunch opposition from a competitive transcontinental line, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad. This corporation similarly viewed Southern California's

³² Record of land sale from Bear Valley Irrigation Company to Southern Pacific Railroad Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38.

³³ Record of land sale from Joseph W. Wolfskill et al [*sic*] to Southern Pacific Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 31.

³⁴ Lewis, *The Big Four*, 49; Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 199-202.

³⁵ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 30.

untouched lands a potentially lucrative. By 1885, the Santa Fe Railroad had reached San Bernardino, deep within the heart of orange country, which had been central in that line's effort to challenge the Southern Pacific's dominance in Southern California. One newspaperman in San Bernardino wrote as early as 1879 that officials of the Santa Fe "are here as an investigating committee, and upon their report future action will be taken by their company, and it is for the purpose of making an intelligent report that they are staying among us so long and making so studious an examination of the counties of Southern California."³⁶

Immediately, residents of towns near San Bernardino began to clamor for rail connections to their cities. Before the end of the 1880s, the young city of Redlands had lured the Santa Fe into yet another orange growing district.³⁷ From there, the Santa Fe railroad built to Mentone, then doubled back to San Bernardino, creating a large loop in that valley.³⁸ In the early-twentieth century, historians John Brown and James Boyd explain that by 1893, "the 'loop' around the San Bernardino Valley was completed, thus finishing the famous 'kite-shaped' track by which passengers could travel from Los Angeles through the San Gabriel Valley to San Bernardino and thence to Redlands, and, returning by the loop, cross the track at San Bernardino and thence to Los Angeles via the

³⁶ Reprinted in Brown and Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, 97.

³⁷ Kay Beattie, "The Kite Shaped Track," Highland Area Historical Society Home Page, n.d., <http://www.highlandhistory.org/The%20Kite%20Shaped%20Track.php>.

³⁸ Nita Hiltner, "A Look Back," *The Press Enterprise*, September 17, 2011, <http://www.pe.com/articles/san-599812-redlands-loop.html>.

Santa Ana Valley, or vice versa.”³⁹ Two writers, penning a wistful tract on “The Old Kite Route” during the rationing days of World War II, waxed philosophic about how shortages of rubber and oil forced more commuters to travel by rail, “goin’ ‘round the kite” that stretched 158 miles from Los Angeles “through the heart of the famous Orange Belt” to San Bernardino and Redlands. “Here,” they recalled fondly, “was a real loop-the-loop scenic thrill in the general shape of a kite. The principal loop, of course, was the Los Angeles San-Bernardino sector ‘goin’ and comin’,’ like to halves of a somewhat squashed apple.”⁴⁰ Even before citrus became a dominant economic force in Southern California by the 1890s, the Santa Fe Railroad had laid a significant amount of track across the future orange belt.

Not to be outdone by the Southern Pacific, the Santa Fe Railroad also found ways to commercially exploit the land of Southern California. Bringing Americans to the Southland in countless numbers, the Santa Fe praised its California Limited, which carried passengers from Chicago to Los Angeles from 1892 to 1896. “Our train of luxury,” wrote one booster for the company, “is limited to seven cars, it is brilliantly lighted by electricity generated from the axles of the moving car, it is evenly heated throughout in cool weather and ventilated by a new process which renews the air several times every hour.”⁴¹ As in the case of the Southern Pacific, the Santa Fe touted Southern

³⁹ Brown and Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, 98.

⁴⁰ Frank P. Dontovan, Jr., and Philip Horton, “The Old Kite Route,” Railroads – Local File, Ellingwood Room.

⁴¹ Leo Lomeli, “History of the Santa Fe Railway in Southern California and Through La Verne in 1887,” p. 6, History Collection, box 46, Special Collections and Archives, Wilson Library, University of La Verne, La Verne, California. Hereafter cited as ULV History Collection and Wilson Library, respectively.

California as a land that required improvement. In 1906, the company purchased 9,000 acres in San Diego County that it named Rancho Santa Fe. After unsuccessfully attempting to plant eucalyptus trees to use as lumber for railroad ties, the Santa Fe eventually sold the land to a developer named Ed Fletcher, who tempted the rail line with promises of starting a ranch for citrus and avocado. He promised the company would profit from shipping these crops.⁴² The Santa Fe Land and Improvement Company, a development agency attached to the transcontinental railroad, later reacquired control of the area from Fletcher and blended Spanish, Mexican, and even native architectural styles to attract settlers to the community.⁴³ The Santa Fe Railroad subscribed to the same ethos as the Southern Pacific: namely, that the benevolent human touch, epitomized by bringing new land into production or erecting new buildings, could only exercise a positive influence on the Southland. In and around Rancho Santa Fe, wealthy growers, including famed actor Douglas Fairbanks, built luxurious homes for themselves, and packed fruit for the San Diego County Fruit Exchange to send across the nation using the Santa Fe Railroad.⁴⁴

The Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads brought far more to Southern California than locomotives and steel track. Their efforts led to the proliferation of steel as a fixture of the region. “The Southern Pacific during the past month has distributed 500,000 ties in Southern California,” reported the *San Diego Union*, “and as soon as the

⁴² Phoebe Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 161-3.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 164-5.

⁴⁴ “Rancho Santa Fe to Ship 70 Cars of Citrus This Season,” *California Citrograph*, (July 1930), 302.

rails can be secured will place rail and tie together. It looks as if they were preparing for a big effort. Several train loads of rails have already arrived.”⁴⁵ Collis Huntington of the Southern Pacific bought only the very best for his lines across the United States, purchasing directly from Andrew Carnegie, the internationally famed capitalist.⁴⁶ The Southern Pacific prided itself on using “iron and steel” of “American manufacture and of the best quality.”⁴⁷ Steel tracks replaced the footpaths that the Cahuillas, Serranos, and other natives had used for centuries, and transported fruit from California to distant markets using the most efficient means available.

Maintaining their grasp on transportation required railroads to call forth an industrial infrastructure to service trains and to meet the needs of large-scale clients such as orange orchardists. In 1903, reported the *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, the Southern Pacific completed its gargantuan shops in Los Angeles alongside the river named for the city. The facility cost \$3 million, a princely sum for the early-twentieth century.⁴⁸ Shops, depots, and stations became recognizable features of Southern California’s landscape following the boom of the 1880s. Such facilities had turntables to build trains headed

⁴⁵ Quoted in *Citrograph*, August 6, 1887, p. 5.

⁴⁶ Collis P. Huntington to Andrew Carnegie, June 26, 1890, CPH, s. II, r. 26. Huntington also matched the affluent Carnegie ego for ego, once complaining that the last batch of steel received for one railroad line was “altogether too soft and is wearing away very fast.”

⁴⁷ *Southern Pacific R.R. Col. (Branch.): Report of Commissioners on 3rd Section*, p. 2, SP Collection.

⁴⁸ “Finishing Southern Pacific’s Three-Million Dollar Shops,” *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, November 8, 1903, HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 44.

across the United States, repair equipment for damaged locomotives and cars, paint and machine shops, and blacksmithing facilities.⁴⁹

Logistically, railroads were enormous enterprises that required constant influxes of capital and material improvements. Locomotives, for instance, were enormous vehicles compared to the stagecoaches or horses that had traversed the American West before the building of the Central Pacific and Southern Pacific. A single locomotive that Collis P. Huntington purchased in 1884 for his lines, an eight-wheeled behemoth clocking in at 79,000 pounds, could hold up to 2,750 gallons of material.⁵⁰ A single such mechanical conveyance could cost more than \$7,000, a titanic sum in the nineteenth century.⁵¹ Sparing no expense, the Associates also bought sleeping cars from George M. Pullman, president of the Pullman Palace Car Company and purveyor of some of the finest railroad passenger cars in the United States.⁵² In December 1900, the Pacific System of the Southern Pacific Railroad purchased 24 dining cars, 25 passenger cars, 25 tourist cars, and 27 freight cars and cabooses. It maintained 17 station buildings and 18 station grounds, as well as six docks and wharves. Finally, it had 30 machine shops, 21 turntables, and seven engine houses and stops.⁵³ Importantly, citrus growers inadvertently underwrote the cost of many of these purchases and improvements to the transportation

⁴⁹ "Huntington's Great Shops, *Los Angeles Daily Times*, October 11, 1903, in HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 43.

⁵⁰ Schenectady Locomotive Works, Specification of Two Eight Wheeled Locomotive Engines, September 20, 1884 CPH, s. IV, r. 1 I.

⁵¹ Collis P. Huntington to Alban N. Towne, January 31, 1889, CPH, s. II, 3. 28.

⁵² Collis P. Huntington to George M. Pullman, August 16 [year obscured], CPH, s. II, r. 27.

⁵³ "Expenditures for Betterments and Additions for the Month of December 1900. Pacific System," HEH, box 11/3 (1), folder 4.

infrastructure of Southern California. As the account books of the Southern Pacific for that month noted, “transcontinental tonnage Eastbound shows increase of 26%, principally, copper matter, oranges, lemons, [and] Hawaiian sugar.”⁵⁴ From the early decades of citrus ranching in the Southland, railroad transportation benefitted as much from working with orange and lemon growers as those agriculturalists did from the transportation provided by the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific.

The construction and maintenance of this vast network required the use of enormous amounts of materials from across the United States. Lumber, for instance, represented a crucial resource to the Southern Pacific. In addition to using it for railroad ties, the Southern Pacific purchased vast quantities of lumber to build station houses and depots. In the 1890s, while developing Santa Monica into a harbor, Collis P. Huntington purchased lumber to build wharves.⁵⁵ The Salt Lake Route to Riverside used cement to construct a large bridge in that city. Boosters proudly labeled the structure the longest cement edifice yet erected in the world by the early-twentieth century.⁵⁶ Perhaps most crucially, the railroads required large quantities of steel to extend new tracks to the citrus districts. Some of Southern California’s most profitable orange districts were located far from Los Angeles, where the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe vied for power during the boom years of the late 1880s. Such far-flung regions necessitated the purchase of tons of

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Collis P. Huntington to Henry E. Huntington, June 22, 1892, HEH Correspondence, box 64.

⁵⁶ Salt Lake Bridge postcard, Riverside County, Bridge, Salt Lake Route File, California Postcard Collection, California State Library, Sacramento, California. Lyman confirms this claim in “From the City of Angels to the City of Saints,” 91.

steel to satisfy the clamor among orange growers for lines to service their groves.⁵⁷ While such projects financially benefitted lumber, coal, steel, and cement companies in California, they required large expenditures of capital by the railroads. In order to pay for such enterprises, systems such as the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe had to establish as much track as possible to provide more freight to as many customers in Southern California as possible.

Railroaders may have been moved chiefly by considerations of traffic profits when building new lines across the orange empire, but their activities caused other major changes to the landscape. Before clearing a new roadbed, the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe sent surveyors to determine where the railroad tracks would be prepared and what land would needed to be graded. After preparing the roadbed, railroad companies then purchased steel rails in sufficient quantities. Engineers carved tunnels through mountains and foothills to provide connections between the Southland and its various markets, bringing ranges such as the San Gabriel Mountains to heel by the use of steam power. The Big Four in control of the Southern Pacific used Chinese workers to blast the San Fernando Tunnel through San Fernando Pass, bypassing the San Gabriel Mountains that had stymied travelers for generations.⁵⁸ Bridges over canyons and waterways such as the Santa Ana River signified even greater exercises of human agency over the landscape of Southern California. As early as 1887, the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific had

⁵⁷ "Railroad Racket," *Citrograph*, July 30, 1887, p. 10.

⁵⁸ Petty and Mullaly, *The Southern Pacific in Los Angeles*, 17; Alan Pollack, "1876: Southern Pacific Tunnels Through," *San Gabriel Valley History*, July-August 2010, <http://www.scvhistory.com/scvhistory/pollack0710tunnel.html>.

reached far enough into the interior of the Golden State “that East San Bernardino Valley” had become “literally gridironed with roads.” Whatever districts of the orange empire the railroads touched enjoyed soaring land values.⁵⁹

The creation of rail networks across Southern California in the closing decades of the nineteenth century resulted in the establishment of new cities, many of them dedicated to the citrus industry. In 1887, at the height of the rate war between the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe and the ensuing financial boom, thirteen new towns came into existence along the Atchison line from San Bernardino to Los Angeles.⁶⁰ The denizens of these new towns, particularly newspapermen, expressed great appreciation for the various projects that the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe. The *Ontario Record*, published in the town of the same name, declared that the city “is coming for some big benefits from [railroads’] extensive improvements.” The paper praised the Southern Pacific for its efforts “to put in a switch along the narrow gauge [*sic*] track so that freight can be transferred with very slight expense.”⁶¹ Just as railroad executives courted the orange growing towns for the freight revenue such municipalities offered, orchardists wanted to maintain a constructive, beneficial relationship with the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe lines to raise property values and improve the land.

Prior to the boom, the Santa Fe took significant steps to break the Southern Pacific’s monopoly on long-range transportation in the Golden State, but following the

⁵⁹ “Railroad Racket,” *Citrograph*, August 6, 1887, p. 10.

⁶⁰ Lomeli, “History of the Santa Fe Railway,” 4.

⁶¹ “Hammer and Saw,” *Ontario Record*, June 6, 1888, Railroads-Local File, Ellingwood Room.

boom of 1887, the feverish pace of expansion only accelerated. As the two lines battled for economic supremacy in the Southland during the 1880s and 1890s, they laid the groundwork for an industrial infrastructure. According to a newspaper in the affluent orange growing town of Redlands, “Work on the Riverside, Santa Ana and Los Angeles Railroad,” part of the Santa Fe’s network, “is sailing along. For the last three days the workmen have been laying 6000 feet of track a day. Next week it is expected to get the track to Santa Ana. Than [sic] the whole force will be thrown to the road southward. It is expected to reach Oceanside by October 1st,” from which point the Santa Fe could transport goods to the major trade hub of San Diego.⁶² As if in response to this intrusion in the orange empire, the Southern Pacific retaliated with new tracks to Riverside, Chino, and Pomona.⁶³ Notably, the six cities to which the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific built track enumerated in these articles all engaged in citrus agriculture, revealing railroaders’ desire to access as many orange and lemon growing districts as possible.

Extension of the two competitive transcontinental railroads across Southern California resulted in the land boom of 1887. Glenn Dumke, foremost historian of the boom of the 1880s, noted that low railroad fares brought new settlers to Los Angeles in droves. In 1887, almost \$100,000,000 worth of land changed hands in Los Angeles County alone.⁶⁴ Initially, residents of the Southland found every reason to be optimistic about the boom. “This is no ephemeral boom,” a prominent newspaper in Redlands

⁶² “A.T. & S.F.R.R. Notes,” *Citrograph*, August 13, 1887, p. 6.

⁶³ Untitled article, *Citrograph*, August 13, 1887, p. 6.

⁶⁴ Dumke, *The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California*, 9, 17.

explained, “but simply a hegira of cyclone-stricken, frost-bitten denizens of the East who desire to spend the remainder of their days in peace, prosperity and quietude.”⁶⁵ The same paper thanked the Santa Fe for linking Los Angeles to “the most important valleys,” those devoted to citriculture, the San Gabriel and the San Bernardino. Cities appeared along the tracks, important “shipping and distribution points” through which goods flowed on their way to the railroad.⁶⁶ “The railroads have been liberal purchasers of land and heavy subscribers to all new improvements,” one newspaper accurately reflected.⁶⁷ In the words Glenn Dumke, “Where once the ‘cattle of the plain’ had grazed in silence over rich acres, now the American citizen built his trolley lines, founded his banks, and irrigated his orange groves. The boom was the final step in the process of making California truly American,” a period during which citrus and railroads integrated the Southland into the Union.⁶⁸

Eventually, the boom that the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe had midwived declined. Early historian J.M. Guinn, writing of the boom in 1890, wrote that “hosts of dupes who put their faith in the profuse promises of real estate agents” lost everything.⁶⁹ In 1888, banks began to reverse their earlier policy of easily lending.⁷⁰ Speculation

⁶⁵ “The Town of Redlands,” *Citrograph*, July 16, 1887, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Richard Harold Smith, “Towns Along the Tracks: Railroad Strategy and Town Promotion in the San Joaquin Valley, California” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1976), 1.

⁶⁷ “Cause of South California’s Boom,” *Citrograph*, July 16, 1887, p. 8.

⁶⁸ Dumke, *The Boom of the Eighties*, 276.

⁶⁹ J.M. Guinn, “The Great Real Estate Boom of 1887,” *Historical Society of Southern California, Los Angeles (1890)* 1, no. 5 (1890): 13.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 259.

caused land values to fall.⁷¹ As one historian noted, by 1889 “the bubble burst and many lost everything they owned, but out of it all came thousands of acres of flourishing farms, beautiful orange groves and foothills full of prosperous towns.”⁷² While the land boom eventually subsided, dozens of new citrus towns, and two major railroads to service them, remained.

The collapse of the boom caused the two transcontinental lines to reach an accord and forestall further damaging competition. Edward Ripley, president of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad in the 1890s, wrote to Henry E. Huntington, vice president of the Southern Pacific, to fully codify this agreement. “It is possible that” the Southland, Ripley explained, “may at some time in the future demand of us better facilities, including more construction” of additional tracks, “though I think we have already so overdone the matter that this latter will not be necessary for many years; but if it is, it should be done by mutual understanding, and with a view of maintaining the same relative positions as now exist.” Ripley attached to his letter a color-coded map of Southern California. The map showed territory stretching east to west from Ventura to San Bernardino Counties, and north to south from the upper reaches of Los Angeles County to San Diego along the Mexican border. The territory delineated in this agreement encapsulated almost the entirety of the citrus empire of Southern California. Rather than plotting to undermine each other, the “two roads in the territory south of the

⁷¹ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 244.

⁷² Lomeli, “History of the Santa Fe Railway,” 5.

Tehachapi” Mountains agreed to share orange and lemon traffic in the region.⁷³ By the 1890s, as Ripley’s letter showed, concerns over controlling as much citrus freight as possible affected not only the business calculations of major transcontinental networks, but their decisions to spread machine ships and tracks across the expansive, expanding gardens of Southern California.



Figure 3.1. Ripley's Map of Railroads in Southern California, ca. 1896. Courtesy of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads had to share traffic with a new manifestation of rail transportation. Electric streetcars began to move across Southern California by the 1880s. The establishment of this new variety of rail transportation necessitated further developments to the industrial infrastructure. Poles and wires installed in the orange growing towns of Southern

⁷³ E.P. Ripley to Henry E. Huntington, May 13, 1896, HEH Correspondence, box 172.

California sent electric current to power facilities stationed across the Southland. Electric batteries installed on streetcars allowed them to move without the intrusion of poles and wires.⁷⁴ Although they typically carried passengers, under duress they could move freight across their lines.⁷⁵ However, electric streetcars' most important contribution to Southern California, as this chapter will later explain, was their ability to facilitate the emergence of a regional identity. This process also depended on the region's emergence as a hub for citrus agriculture.

The Southland of the Golden State, described traveler Hugh Erichson in the *Detroit Commercial Advertiser* in 1890, had become a vast network of gardens. Traveling "to the south of the land of gold," specifically taking "the Santa Fe route," travelers from the east wound through deserts, where they might glimpse an occasional coyote from their steamy train cars.⁷⁶ The desolation of New Mexico and Arizona gave way, with "a sense of relief," to "the thrifty green and magnificent scenery of San Bernardino Valley." Exploration "of this glorious region" revealed that "the south easily leads in raising semi-tropical fruits, no finer oranges being produced anywhere than the 'Navels' at Riverside." In Erichson's benevolent panegyric, Southern California, which became a veritable

⁷⁴ "The Electric Railway," *Ontario Observer*, September 15, 1888, Railroads-Local File, Ellingwood Room.

⁷⁵ William Barham, "PE Freight Run," *Trains* (May 1946): 40-1.

⁷⁶ Reprinted as "The Golden Hesperides," *Southern Californian*, July 3, 1890, p. 1. Travelers who experienced the luxury of Pullman cars could expect better conditions.

garden blanketed with oranges, the mythic Golden Apples of the Hesperides, could share with the mining districts of the Sierra Nevadas claim to the title of Golden State.⁷⁷

The rapidly proliferating citrus groves of Southern California often followed the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe as those corporations laid tracks. Orange growers appealed to the corporate sensibilities of railroad executives and exercised a tangible influence on where the tracks would extend, determining the spread of industry across Southern California. The constant scramble between the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific to build new lines revealed their desire to profit from the traffic that agriculturalists generated by the late-nineteenth century. “I thought,” Collis Huntington once opined, that “our interests coincided with that of the fruit growers in having the Eastern markets take all the fruit they will absorb at paying prices; and that a steady supply would be better than a fitful one.”⁷⁸ Huntington expressed a definitive interest in “the development in Southern California, and particularly in respect to the increase in the fruit crop.”⁷⁹ In 1887, developer Isaac Lord purchased a tract of land in the San Gabriel Valley and corresponded with the Santa Fe Railroad to establish a line through his town site. The railroad acquiesced to his proposal, and his city, named Lordsburg for the influence he bore on its establishment, thrived as the self-named “heart of the Orange

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*; Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 243-4. As Douglas Sackman notes, “To find and control . . . golden oranges was a Herculean task – the eleventh, to be exact, in which” Hercules, son of the Greek god Zeus, had to abscond with “these fruits, the gift of Gaia . . . from the Hesperides, the goddesses of an island to the west (as California citrus growers took great delight in pointing out).” See Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 19.

⁷⁸ Collis P. Huntington to J.C. Stubbs, February 23, 1888, CPH, s. II, r. 28.

⁷⁹ Collis P. Huntington to W.H. Mills, January 27, 1891, CPH, s. II, r. 28.

Empire” by the turn of the twentieth century.⁸⁰ Citrus growers thus directed the steel tracks that girded much of Southern California by opening of the twentieth century.

Orchardists did their best to stay as close to the railroad tracks as they could. As with towns in many regions across the western United States, proximity to railroads often determined economic livelihood. They clustered as closely to the tracks as possible, given that railroads often inflated property values and allowed producers to ship commodities to distant markets.⁸¹ In the San Gabriel Valley, during the boom of 1887, when the city of Claremont first formed, growers staggered their packing houses along the main line of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe.⁸² Countless orange growers, such as Henry Dalton of Azusa, negotiated with the Southern Pacific to guarantee the railroad its right of way through the groves.⁸³ Frank Miller, hotelier of Riverside’s famed Mission Inn, echoed the sentiments of many Californians when he wrote to Henry Huntington concerning the relationship of railroads to the prosperity of cities in the Southland. “The future locally is encouraging, especially so, as the Salt Lake Railway will be opened at this point in a couple of months,” Miller wrote to Huntington in 1903. Riverside, birthplace of the Washington Navel orange industry, “will be on the main line of this road. The completion of your [electric streetcar] line from Los Angeles will be a still further guarantee of the

⁸⁰ Norman Eicher Ramseyer, “A History of Lordsburg California” (master’s thesis, University of Southern California, 1937), 47-58.

⁸¹ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 13-4.

⁸² Kristine Kennedy, “In Claremont No one Railing against Return to 19th-Century Roots,” *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*, July 6, 1992, B-1.

⁸³ Abstract of Title of Rancho Azusa, p. 21, AFCC, box 1, folder 3, Huntington Library.

prosperity of the hotel business.”⁸⁴ Railroads, particularly in the early decades of the California citrus industry, significantly influenced how and where orange growing cities would expand.

Railroads in Southern California even impacted cultural conceptions of the landscape. Various towns proudly defined themselves by their relationship to transportation facilities. A booster publication circulated in the city of Covina in 1896, for instance, romanticized the city, which was “situated twenty-two miles east of Los Angeles on the Southern Pacific [R]ailway, nestled in the midst of luxurious orange and lemons groves, in the very center of the most productive and beautiful valley in Southern California, the San Gabriel.”⁸⁵ Notably, carloads became one of the most important forms of measuring a citrus town’s productive capacity. The *Riverside Press*, for instance, proudly reported in 1887 that its eponymous city shipped between 800 and 1,000 train cars filled with orange crates in that season.⁸⁶ When the California Fruit Growers Exchange triumphantly announced in 1912 that it had shipped 13,250,000 crates from the Golden State, it used the measure of 34,000 carloads sent over the rails to further qualify its success.⁸⁷ In the early years of the citrus industry in Southern California, agriculturalists operated in a realm defined by rails and car shipments. However, more natural factors also contribute to the success of citrus agriculture in the region south of the Tehachapi.

⁸⁴ Frank A. Miller to Henry E. Huntington, December 5, 1903, HEH Correspondence, box 154.

⁸⁵ “Covina,” *Covina Argus*, December 25, 1896, p. 1.

⁸⁶ “Local Briefs,” *Citrograph*, September 10, 1887, p. 10.

⁸⁷ Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 323.

Southern California's climate seemed ideal for establishing vast fields devoted to growing oranges and lemons. John E. Baur, a historian of health seekers drawn to California by its sunshine, offered a classic interpretation of the Golden State's grasp on the imagination. Scientists in the late-nineteenth century, Baur found, explained that the coastal mountain ranges of Southern California shielded the region from coastal storms, while the islands of the Santa Barbara Channel prevented fog from blanketing the Southland, as it did San Francisco Bay.⁸⁸ As early as the 1870s, Baur notes, boosters referred to the San Gabriel Valley as the "Great Orange Belt and Sanitarium," and that growing the golden fruits of Eden allowed easterners to overcome vicious maladies such as chronic lung conditions.⁸⁹ Other facets of the environment, however, required substantial development before would-be growers could reap the profits of orange- or lemon-growing.

The very act of establishing an orange or lemon grove necessitated alterations to the land. J. Eliot Coit, in a tract on citrus fruits in California, described what actions growers took to pave the way for planting citrus trees. Coit advised growers to "dig the old trees out by the roots, being careful to get out all the large roots to a depth of several feet," in order to make way for citrus trees.⁹⁰ Just as Anglo-Americans had ventured to California and displaced its previous denizens to annex it into the United States, so too did they remove species native to California in their endeavors to plant commercial groves. As if

⁸⁸ Baur, *The Health Seekers of Southern California*, 5-6.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 116-7.

⁹⁰ Coit, *Citrus Fruits*, 145.

that did not cause enough ecological damage, orchardists further scarred the environment before reconstituting the land as orange groves. Once prospective growers had removed trees, Coit advised that they level the land using scrapers.

Once they had removed natural obstacles, growers could begin the process of planting orange or lemon trees. Coit encouraged growers to use level ground wherever possible. He suggested planting orange trees in straight rows across the land, but also explained that other systems, such as triangular, square, and hexagonal plantings, also dotted the citrus-growing regions of Southern California.⁹¹ Using spades, growers defaced the land by digging holes in which to plant their trees. In instances where hardpan or stone stymied their efforts, many orchardists simply planted sticks of dynamite to make the land more pliable to their commercial agricultural endeavors by blowing away hard layers “in order that the water and roots may get through.”⁹²

In order to satisfy their desire to profit from the citrus industry in California, orchardists reimagined the natural order of the landscape and revived the Southland as an enormous orange garden. As a nonnative species, the citrus tree had to be constructed through a process called grafting, wherein growers would bud desired types of citrus, such as the Washington Navel orange, onto a different rootstock.⁹³ Many trees had cuttings from the parent Navel orange trees that Eliza and Luther Tibbets had introduced in the 1870s. Thus, orange growers essentially planted clones of the first Navel orange

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 156.

⁹³ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 225; David Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 96.

trees across California, turning the landscape into an enormous construct, not the natural garden that appeared in boosters accounts.⁹⁴ Orchardists in Southern California thus began to demonstrate control over the landscape by destroying native species to grow oranges. As the citrus arboreal population of California soared from 30,000 in 1870, before the introduction of the Washington Navel variety, to 10 million by 1920, modified trees dominated the landscape, the product of human tampering rather than natural growth.

Additionally, growers had to irrigate and heat their crops, which caused them to further bend the environment to their will. Given Southern California's aridity, orchardists experimented with various methods of pumping water into their orange groves. Initially, citrus cities such as Riverside and Pasadena relied on simple ditches or sluices to deliver water to their crops.⁹⁵ Later large water projects such as the Gage Canal brought water to orange cities in the Southland. American citrus agriculturalists did not introduce irrigation to the Southland. Native peoples of the Colorado River area, notably the Quechans and the Mojaves, diverted water to feed their crops.⁹⁶ Many historians have given more credit to the Spanish missionary expeditions of the eighteenth century, which introduced widespread agriculture and irrigation across Alta California. Under the direction of Franciscan missionaries from 1769 to 1821, native peoples dug ditches to

⁹⁴ Ortlieb and Economy, *Creating an Orange Utopia*, 61-2. For more information on California citrus and boosterism, see chapter 5.

⁹⁵ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 88.

⁹⁶ Norris Hundley, Jr., *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water – A History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 21.

water the missions of Southern California, including the first orange groves.⁹⁷

Agriculturalists during the Spanish and Mexican eras of California history, as well as early Anglos, simply dug ditches and built viaducts to distribute their water, but nature often vexed their efforts when weeds and silt caused water to accumulate. Growers later switched to wooden flumes, “which answered well until they rotted out,” J. Eliot Coit explained.⁹⁸

Solving the problem of irrigating Southern California to expand the orange empire required creative thinking, as well as a significant measure of disregard for the environment. As many Americans pointed out, orange growers of the late-nineteenth century seemed to possess a unique genius that allowed them to reach the apex of hydrological control. In the words of renowned booster Charles F. Lummis:

To us of the United States, the Southwest is mother of irrigation. The Moors, indeed, brought the art to Spain. The Spaniard, an irrigator at home, found his brown neighbors in the New World equally advanced in this art; and naturally irrigation went on wherever he settled or they remained. But though it is an art of Spain, it is just as much an art of the Southwest – for New Mexico invented it quite independently of the unguessed Old World. It was introduced to California, of course, from Mexico; and by the Spanish population here was taught to the Yankee newcomer, who had generally never heard of such a thing before.

Thanks to the lack of rainfall, Lummis continued, Southern Californians had no choice but to bend the waterscape to their will to nourish oranges and lemons. “No other land in the world, by the way, ever *created* so much water as California. We wished to irrigate,” Lummis grandiosely concluded, “but our streams – in the South, where we irrigate most – were timid and far between. Never mind – if brooks were scarce, we found out how to

⁹⁷ “A Central Californian Visits South California and Tells What He Sees,” *Citrograph*, July 16, 1887, p. 2.

⁹⁸ Coit, *Citrus Fruits*, 193.

*make brooks.*⁹⁹ Lummis credited American denizens of the Southland for the establishment of artesian wells and the erection of large dams. This industriousness on the part of growers in California, he indicated, outpaced residents of the eastern United States, whose agriculturalists could count on abundant rainfall.¹⁰⁰ By the 1890s, this ethos of controlling the waterscape of Southern California consolidated human shaping of the environment.

By the late-nineteenth century, the state legislature of California took powerful steps that paved the way for the development of sophisticated water projects. In 1887, the year the boom erupted in Southern California, state senator C.C. Wright of Modesto introduced and the legislature passed the Wright Act, which “empowered local communities to form irrigation districts that could tax, issue revenue bonds, acquired land by *eminent domain*, and divert river water to dry lands for irrigation and or/flood control,” explained historian Kevin Starr.¹⁰¹ For decades following the passage of this act, control of water sources would remain firmly in the grasp of irrigators. It benefited citrus growers such as those in Riverside by allowing them to retain local control of their water sources.

Citrus agriculture depended on geography inasmuch as growers needed to locate their groves near sources of water for irrigation. Indeed, John W. North and the original Riverside colonists had chosen to locate their town on the banks of the Santa Ana River

⁹⁹ Charles F. Lummis, “The Magic Rivulet,” *Land of Sunshine* 8, no. 1 (December 1897): 7-9.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰¹ Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California through the 1920s* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), 14.

to assure a constant and close supply of freshwater. As more growers settled in Riverside and surrounding regions, however, the need for water intensified. Farmers had to settle farther away from the river itself, and the first canals built by the original colonists failed to meet the increased demand for water. The private Riverside Land and Irrigating Company, owned by the colony founders, operated under the riparian rights doctrine established by the Spanish Empire during its reign over California.¹⁰² According to riparian rights, the first settlers to establish irrigation along the banks of a river had the first right to water. By the late-nineteenth century, due to the influx of new capitalist farmers into Southern California, unrest culminated in the passage of the Wright Irrigation District Act of 1887. This decision placed the control of water rights in the districts it created across the Golden State in the hands of local figures, rather than centralizing a bureaucracy directed from Sacramento.¹⁰³ In Riverside, as in districts across the state, control rested with prominent officials from within the district who used water as they saw fit.

Upon passage of the Wright Irrigation District Act, orange growers in Southern California took the lead in various projects to irrigate the ever-increasing number of citrus farms. In the new town of Ontario, located in western San Bernardino County, Canadian-born engineer George Chaffey designed an oft-imitated water distribution system that made use of concrete pipes designed to prevent the loss of water during transit. Ontario soon achieved prominence in California, primarily through the example

¹⁰² Tom Patterson, *A Colony for California: Riverside's First Hundred Years*, 2nd ed. (Riverside, CA: The Museum Press of the Riverside Museum Associates, 1996), 67.

¹⁰³ Hundley, Jr., *The Great Thirst*, 103.

Chaffey had set with his community planning and centralizing water authority under the control of a small set of overseers (in this case, Chaffey himself had bought the water rights used to irrigate Ontario).¹⁰⁴ Railroads, particularly the Southern Pacific, played a role in the reshaping of the waterscape of the western United States. Following passage of the Wright Act, the Southern Pacific helped various districts across California begin to irrigate, exercising a particularly strong influence over the financing of such projects.¹⁰⁵ By the early decades of the twentieth century, the line remained active in American water politics with its participation in the mammoth Truckee-Carson Project, using water from the Truckee and Caron rivers to irrigate desert land near Reno, Nevada.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, in the Southland, the Southern Pacific Railroad exercised a hand in shaping the waterscape in order to meet the needs of the expanding citrus industry. When purchasing land in Riverside County during the 1890s, for instance, the railroad agreed to “provide a pipe line or culvert through and across” any land it acquired “so that water for irrigation purposes may be conveyed from land.”¹⁰⁷

Similarly, Matthew Gage of Ontario, who moved to Riverside in the early 1880s, consolidated various land and canal holdings during that decade. With loans from the Riverside Banking Company, he began work on the Gage Canal, which first brought

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 106-7.

¹⁰⁵ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 217.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 238. For a superb account of one of the most important interventions by a railroad into American environmental politics and irrigation, see Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, chapter 10.

¹⁰⁷ Record of land sale from Elizabeth R. Campbell to Southern Pacific Company, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 38.

water to the city in 1887 from the nearby San Bernardino Valley.¹⁰⁸ Although potential growers needed to buy land along the canal and purchase company stock in exchange for irrigation, the Gage Canal nonetheless stabilized the amount of water in Riverside, particularly after Gage purchased the lands formerly owned by the Riverside Land and Irrigating Company in 1887.¹⁰⁹ By the turn of the century, largely due to the efforts of orange growers such as Chaffey and Gage, Southern Californians had begun to reconstruct their views on the use of water and could satisfy their irrigational needs for the time being.

Oranges, like all fruits, require water to grow. Depending on the condition of the soil used, oranges in Southern California require a 48-hour supply of water every three to five weeks.¹¹⁰ To guarantee that their trees received adequate watering, growers replaced the wooden flumes of the nineteenth century with cement pipes, which fed the liquid into furrows a few feet from the trees.¹¹¹ To fund such projects, local businessmen in various communities of Southern California often pooled their money for the construction of dams and canals. Investors divided water proportionate to the amounts of their investments.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Patterson, *A Colony for California*, 179-81; W.W. Robinson, *Southern California Local History*, ed. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. (Los Angeles: Historical Society of Southern California, 1993), 344.

¹⁰⁹ Patterson, *A Colony for California*, 179-85.

¹¹⁰ Keeler, "The Rise and Fall of the Empire," 5.

¹¹¹ Coit, *Citrus Fruits*, 194, 197.

¹¹² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 232.

Irrigators shared an ideology with citrus agriculturalists and railroaders: namely, that human intervention lent value to the land. The Huntington Land and Improvement Company, organized by Henry Huntington to promote industry and agriculture in Southern California, furnished pipes carrying precious water to orange and lemon growers in the Los Angeles area.¹¹³ Major water projects allowed the orange empire of California to flourish. The Gage Canal continuously expanded after its construction to service more growers as the community spread across the Inland Empire. George Chaffey's Mutual Water Company provided similar services in Ontario.

Orchardists prided themselves on their ability to raise the productive capacity of the landscape. The *Ontario Observer* made the lofty claim that Chaffey's colony "possessed under pressure, the purest of mountain water, and its supply is practically unlimited."¹¹⁴ "Many instances may be cited in Southern California," exhorted the *Covina Argus*, "where the returns obtained by bringing water unto the thirsty land is [*sic*] marvelous. Lands worth from \$10 to \$15 an acre have, by the expenditure of from \$20 to \$25 an acre in the construction of irrigation works, become worth \$250 and upwards. Such lands set out to citrus trees have within ten years of planting sold for \$1000 an acre."¹¹⁵ The *Riverside Enterprise* seconded this appraisal, noting that water could easily inflate the value of orange growing land, and that, once fruit trees reached bearing age, they would

¹¹³ Huntington Land and Improvement Company Auditor's Report A, HEH, 1/AA (A), p. 28.

¹¹⁴ "Ontario's Attractions," *Ontario Observer*, September 15, 1888, Railroads File, Ellingwood Room.

¹¹⁵ "Irrigation," *Covina Argus*, 1898, n.p., ULV History Collection, box H6, folder Covina (City), Ca – "Covina Argus Dec. 1898."

easily cover the costs of establishing irrigational systems.¹¹⁶ Aside from reaffirming the citrus industry of Southern California as an activity that favored wealthier investors, the *Argus* echoed orchardists' conception that the irrigated landscape they had spent so much to create demonstrated the uplifting qualities of their chosen profession.

Dams also appeared in Southern California, much to the delight of citrus growers. In the San Bernardino Mountains, engineers raised the Bear Valley Dam. Reaching a height of 120 feet, one newspaper in Southern California estimated that "The reservoir when completed will contain 20,000,000,000 cubic feet of water, which is equal to 41,660 acre feet of water; an acre foot of water being enough water to cover an acre of land a foot deep. An acre foot of water, when used for irrigation, will irrigate an acre of land on a basis of one inch to eight acres. Therefore the capacity of the reservoir would be to irrigate 461,660 acres on a basis of 1 inch to 8 acres." Growers only used half the amount of water the reservoir provided, but still had enough water to irrigate 250,000 acres.¹¹⁷

The struggle to irrigate the American West became national in scope by the early-twentieth century. To prevent flooding of the Colorado River and fully harness its productive capacity, Representative Phil Swing of Imperial Valley and Senator Hiram Johnson, both from California, introduced to Congress a bill that eventually resulted in the creation of Boulder Dam.¹¹⁸ California historian Kevin Starr notes that Swing and

¹¹⁶ Article from *Riverside Enterprise*, reprinted as "It is an Actual Increase," *Citrograph*, September 10, 1887, p. 15.

¹¹⁷ "The Bear Valley Dams," *Southern Californian*, January 1, 1891, p. 1

¹¹⁸ Following the waning of the Great Depression, the project reverted to its original name of Hoover Dam.

Johnson's constant stewardship of the bill through Congress and "Six years of setbacks and struggle" represented a triumph for Southern California at the national level.¹¹⁹

Agribusiness interests in Southern California demonstrated tangible appreciation for politicians who supported the construction of major water projects. C. C. Young rode into the governorship of the Golden State upon endorsing water for the Southland via the Boulder Dam and All-American Canal.¹²⁰ Indeed, the official Republican Party platform of California included a ringing endorsement of Johnson and Swing for sponsoring the project to begin with, "which, when passed, will develop an exceedingly rich empire and provide homes and industrial opportunities for millions of people in California and other states concerned in the Boulder [C]anyon project."¹²¹

Beyond using their clout to support candidates for office, citrus irrigators gladly used their water to spread electricity across Southern California. The San Gabriel Electric Company furnished power to customers in the orange growing cities of Azusa and Covina using water from the San Gabriel River. By 1898, it had dug 23,000 feet of

¹¹⁹ Starr, *Material Dreams*, 158.

¹²⁰ "Divided Opinions," C.C. Young Newspaper Clippings, box 1806, folder Los Angeles County, Glendora Gleaner, 1925-1926, "Young-for-Governor Club Is Organized by Local Voters," C.C. Young Newspaper Clippings, box 1806, folder Los Angeles County, Glendale Press, 1926, California State Library. Hereafter cited as Young Clippings. Other newspapers lambasted Young for only supporting the project once he entered the race for governor of California in 1926. His gubernatorial opponent, Rex B. Goodcell, claimed that "no one has ever heard of Mr. Young ever displaying any notable activity in behalf of the measure and the people of Southern California until he decided to enter the race for governor." Water, then, became pivotal to the politics of Southern California by the early-twentieth century. "Answer to Young," Young Clippings, box 1806, folder Los Angeles County, Glendale News 1927.

¹²¹ Untitled column by Fred J. Wilson, box 1806, folder Los Angeles County. Glendale Press, 1926, Young Clippings.

tunnels and installed 8,000 feet of pipes to power its water works.¹²² As orange growers expanded their empire, material construction, electricity, and agriculture intertwined to reconstruct the face of Southern California.

Ironically, an overabundance of water proved just as ruinous to Southern California as a lack. Floods devastated rail lines across the Southland. One had badly damaged the Santa Fe track during that company's feverish race across the Golden State in the 1880s.¹²³ "The road" from San Diego, reported one newspaper:

had hardly been completed to San Bernardino when there came the flood year of 1883-84, second only in violence to that of 1862. The eastern engineers had refused to believe that their carefully planned grades and bridges could be harmed by the innocent-appearing little stream of the Temecula Cañon, and as a result some fifteen miles of track was completely destroyed, while many washouts occurred at other points.¹²⁴

Similarly, reported the *Southern Californian*, a large storm in March 1891 proved highly injurious to the Southern Pacific, which "was badly washed out. The expensive repairs" to that line "in Soledad [C]anyon are completely ruined."¹²⁵ A flood in 1916 even deposited large amounts of silt on stately Euclid Avenue.¹²⁶ Indeed, the Colorado River, the mightiest to touch the Golden State, habitually problematized agriculture for residents of the Southland.

¹²² "The Electric Power Works," *Covina Argus*, 1898, n.p., ULV History Collection, box H6, folder "Covina (City), Ca – Covina Argus Dec. 1898."

¹²³ See the discussion of the California Southern Railroad in chapter 2.

¹²⁴ Brown and Boyd, *History of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties*, 97.

¹²⁵ "Wreck and Ruin," *Southern Californian*, March 5, 1891, p. 1.

¹²⁶ "Photographs: Flood and Damages by Storm in 1916 between Los Angeles, Calif. and Yuma, Arizona," SPED b-28, SP Collection.



Figure 3.2. Silt deposits on Euclid Avenue following a flood. Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, California.

The struggle for irrigation in the Imperial Valley of Southern California perhaps best epitomized railroads' ability to revivify land for agricultural purposes. Before the irrigation of this region in southeastern California, the Imperial Valley was "a soul-repelling desert, imprisoned by mountains, and essentially devoid of human life," described historian Donovan Hofsommer.¹²⁷ In the 1890s, Charles R. Rockwood, a former railroad engineer working for the Southern Pacific in Yuma, Arizona, formed the California Development Company and given the valley its presumptuous name.¹²⁸ By 1900, Rockwood enlisted George Chaffey to assist him in his project to construct an Imperial Canal.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Hofsommer, *The Southern Pacific*, 32.

¹²⁸ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 227.

¹²⁹ Starr, *Material Dreams*, 22-4.

Although seemingly a success at first, the California Development Company's canal soon devastated the Imperial Valley. Poor understanding of the Colorado River's habitual tendency to flood overwhelmed cuts on the canal. The California Development Company made three cuts into its canal to prevent flooding, but in May 1904 a volume of water that far exceeded the average flow overpowered the last gate and began to flood the surrounding area.¹³⁰ One contemporary described the wrath of the Colorado River:

The cut rapidly deepened, and the speed of the water greatly increased. The Imperial Canal at once overflowed. An ancient canyon, once the bed of a primeval river, was filled to the top; it overflowed and water spread over many square miles of land. Onward went the flood with ever-increasing impetus, downhill everywhere... [I]t hurried on faster than the speed of any mill-race, over the rim of the sink, washing out ancient oceanic debris, shells and remains; it covered up the vast expanse of salt, submerged the great buildings of the salt works and the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad, and poured into the lowest depths, 287 feet lower than the waves of the Pacific, just on the other side of the San Jacinto Mountains.¹³¹

Floodwaters soon entered the Salton Sink, transforming it into a large inland sea. By 1906, approximately 400 square miles around the newly formed Salton Sea had flooded.¹³²

The Southern Pacific's devastating losses on the Colorado River and in the Imperial Valley garnered E.H. Harriman's personal attention. The mogul, who had replaced the deceased Collis P. Huntington as head of the Southern Pacific by 1905, resolved to tame the river and restore the Imperial Valley. Ignoring advice from Epes Randolph, president of the Southern Pacific, to simply raise tracks above the river and abandon the Imperial

¹³⁰ Edgar L. Larkin, "A Thousand Men Against a River," *The World's Work* 13, no. 5 (March 1907): 8606; Wilson and Taylor, *Southern Pacific*, 141.

¹³¹ Larkin, "A Thousand Men Against a River," 8609.

¹³² Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 228.

Valley, Harriman began a years-long struggle to bring the Colorado under control.¹³³ From 1906 to 1907, under Harriman's direction and at the behest of President Theodore Roosevelt, the Southern Pacific poured carloads of dirt and rock into the river to prevent future flooding.¹³⁴ Using 1,500 workers and spending over \$1.6 million, Harriman succeeded in redirecting the Colorado and relieving the beleaguered Imperial Valley in 1907.¹³⁵ The Salton Sea remained in place, but communities in the area found ways to take advantage of this new resource.¹³⁶

Agriculturalists benefitted from the Southern Pacific's victory. Citrus growers in California had looked to the Imperial Valley for years before the completion of Boulder Dam guaranteed an adequate supply of water. "The Imperial [V]alley," one journalist commented in 1910, "offers a great many advantages over other districts in the growing of citrus fruits. The principal advantages" included "their early ripening, high color and very fine shipping qualities," as well as the steady supply of sunshine.¹³⁷ By the mid-twentieth century, the Imperial Valley had begun to share in the agricultural prosperity of Southern California. Much of this existed in the form of grapefruit, a relative latecomer to

¹³³ Hofsommer, *The Southern Pacific*, 32; George Kennan, *The Salton Sea: An Account of Harriman's Fight with the Colorado River* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 55. Incredibly, Harriman dealt with the Colorado River disaster while also trying to minimize the damage wrought by the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 on California's largest city.

¹³⁴ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 230-1.

¹³⁵ Starr, *Material Dreams*, 40.

¹³⁶ P. Laflin, "The Salton Sea: California's Overlooked Treasure," *The Periscope*, Coachella Valley Historical Society, 1995, 17-21.

¹³⁷ "Citrus Fruits in the Imperial Valley," *Pacific Rural Press*, June 4, 1910, 445.

the citrus landscape of California, since it only arrived in 1890.¹³⁸ The Imperial Valley exported approximately \$1,200,000 in agricultural products in 1907. The figure surpassed \$500,000,000 by 1916, wrote one Imperial booster in the 1910s.¹³⁹ While citrus fruits never accounted for a majority of the region's goods, in 1945 growers from the Imperial Valley did ship 328 cars of grapefruit by rail, as well as truck.¹⁴⁰ Across the rest of the Southland, though, the crop thrived.

The products of the Industrial Revolution also began to appear in the orange empire as early as the 1880s, including mechanisms to distribute water to groves in the orange empire. During that period, growers installed some of the first sprinklers and levees in Southern California.¹⁴¹ Many groves began to replace ditches with underground water, distributed, in the words of one newspaper, "under ground [*sic*] and at a high pressure in iron and cement pipes" as early as the 1880s.¹⁴² Even in its earliest years, the citrus industry of California combined agriculture with industrial developments, modernizing Southern California by melding these two prime movers of human civilization.

To prevent damage by winds and to maximize their profits, many citrus orchardists called upon other plant species. One agriculturalist from the Citrus

¹³⁸ Josephine Kingsbury Jacobs, "Sunkist Advertising" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1966), 2.

¹³⁹ Kennan, *The Salton Sea*, 105-6.

¹⁴⁰ Merle Hussong to George K. York, February 26, 1946, Department of Agriculture Records, folder F3741:2, California State Archives, Sacramento, California.

¹⁴¹ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 33.

¹⁴² "Ontario Attractions," *Ontario Observer*, September 15, 1888, Ellingwood Room.

Experiment Station of the University of California advised using other species of trees as winds breaks to protect oranges and lemons. Wind, he cautioned, could leave marks on the fruit or blow away healthy soil. To avoid such consequences, he advised the use of cypresses, eucalypts, cedars, or native species of pine.¹⁴³ Furthermore, intercropping, the introduction of new crops, could also aid in the creation of a profitable orange or lemon grove. This crop diversification allowed growers to increase their profit margins. Certain commodities, such as alfalfa, had the added benefit of rejuvenating nutrients in the soil, which ultimately benefit citrus trees.¹⁴⁴ Other plant species, whether used as windbreaks or intercrops, further demonstrated the human ability to reshape Southern California as one enormous garden.

Surprisingly, given California's climate, orange growers had to install orchard heaters in the groves to prevent citrus fruits from freezing. While California largely sidestepped the punitive frosts that ravaged Floridian crops, occasional freezes took a burdensome toll on growers. Southern California did enjoy a Mediterranean climate, but nature periodically bedeviled growers with northers. These strong winds from the northeast, sometimes called Santa Anas, blew dry air during the winter, which could chill oranges and lemons in the Southland.¹⁴⁵ Orchardists devised solutions to these problems in the late-nineteenth century. In 1897, explained J.S. Armstrong of Armstrong Nurseries,

¹⁴³ Coit, *Citrus Fruits*, 37-8. This "solution" could give rise to other problems, since lines of trees use as windbreaks could prevent "atmospheric drainage" and lead to frost in the orange groves, or consume nutrient-rich soil, thus denying oranges and lemons the necessary nourishment for growth.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹⁴⁵ Tom Patterson, "The Great Freeze of 1913," in Klotz, Lawton, and Hall, eds., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area*, 56.

“trees escaped injury from frost because I had taken the precaution to cover the trees with corn stalks. I had to trim a part of the tops so as to cover them well but” he found this preferable to letting “them frozen off.”¹⁴⁶

The long-term solution to freezing temperatures came in the form of orchard heaters, oil-burning devices that allowed citrus growers to further deface the natural landscape of Southern California. Orchard heaters were, in essence, oil-powered heaters that growers lit at night to keep their oranges warm.¹⁴⁷ Growers theorized that the smoke from these devices would blanket trees to regulate their temperatures. By 1915, the California Fruit Growers Exchange had encouraged growers to install one million of these orchard heaters, or smudge pots, in the groves of Southern California. Two years earlier, during a particularly brutal frost, the Santa Fe Railroad had shipped two special trains with thirty cars containing 100,000 smudge pots to the Citrus Protective League in Southern California, even offering a lower freight rate to help protect the orange crop.¹⁴⁸ Four years prior to the freeze of 1913, growers shipped 2.3 million boxes of oranges and lemons from Riverside County by rail. This plummeted to 334,800 boxes thanks to the freeze of 1913, which devastated orange growing cities and the surrounding communities.¹⁴⁹ Orange growers in the Golden State often appealed directly to rail executives business sensibilities when asking for oil. “A loss of fruit by frost,” one citrus

¹⁴⁶ J.S. Armstrong to G.W. Randall, December 25, 1897, Randall Papers, carton 1, file Correspondence 1897.

¹⁴⁷ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 97.

¹⁴⁸ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 295-6.

¹⁴⁹ Patterson, “The Great Freeze of 1913,” 56.

association gently explained to the executive of a rail line, “not only effects [*sic*] the grower, it effects the Railway who would otherwise have shipped the fruit,” as well as “the people of the community all of whom are vitally concerned with the prosperity of the local fruit industry.”¹⁵⁰

While smudge pots saved many orange crops from destruction following their introduction on the 1910s, they also wrought catastrophic damage on California’s landscape. The enormous clouds of obsidian vapor they emitted blanketed the Southland, resulting in the smudge from which the orchard heaters had taken their nickname.¹⁵¹ The countless simple metal heaters blackened the skies of the American Eden. Inhaling the polluted air of the orange empire caused health problems for a number of Californians.¹⁵² By the 1930s, a debate raged between proponents and detractors of smudge pots. Opponents of the orchard heating system pointed to the deteriorating visibility in Southern California, citing the fact that an enormous smudge cloud hovered over San Pedro Bay in January 1922 and halted sea traffic.¹⁵³

To blunt the environmental impact of smudge pots, orange growers attempted to refine the devices. Charles Teague, president of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, complained that, despite their success in confronting low temperatures in 1937, that year’s freeze had revealed citrus growers’ technological inadequacy. “The thing that

¹⁵⁰ W.B. Temple to T.L. Wagenbach, November 9, 1948, Church of the Brethren Collection, box B12B, folder “Pacific Electric Railway Co.,” Special Collections and Archives, Wilson Library. Collection hereafter cited as COB.

¹⁵¹ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 97.

¹⁵² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 299-301.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 297.

stands out above all else,” according to Teague, “is the great need of speedy action in developing a better type of heater. What is needed is a smokeless heater that will burn the types and grades of oil now commonly used without leaving a residue” on the fruit that would render oranges and lemons unattractive to eastern consumers.¹⁵⁴ As if in response, in La Verne, I.L. Noggle developed a smokeless orchard heater with a “special top fitted on the stack” to redistribute heat downward, keeping smoke out of the sky.¹⁵⁵

Despite Noggle’s innovation, orange growers continued to use traditional smudge pots en masse, as during the major freeze of 1937. In that year, orchardists spent \$7 million purchasing approximately 90 million gallons of crude oil, which railroads distributed across the orange empire to prevent freezing.¹⁵⁶ Given the proximity of citrus groves and packing houses to the various rail lines of Southern California, an executive of the San Dimas Lemon Association in the eastern San Gabriel Valley stated to the general manager in the Pacific Electric Railway, the delivery of oil to orchard heaters “could not possibly have been done nor could it be done now, in anyway except by rail delivery.”¹⁵⁷ The problem only subsided when the use of smudge pots was prohibited in 1947.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Charles C. Teague, “Statement by C.C. Teague at Conference of Exchange Orchard Heating Committee with Representatives of the University of California and United States Weather Bureau,” March 2, 1937, Teague Papers, box 2, folder 3.

¹⁵⁵ “Devices Produces Smokeless Gas Flame,” in untitled periodical, ULV History Collection, box 5, file “Citrus Industry – History.”

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 301-3.

¹⁵⁷ Temple to Wagenbach, November 9, 1948, COB, box B12B, file “Pacific Electric Railway Co.”

¹⁵⁸ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 97.

The consumption of large quantities of oil represented another hallmark of the citrus industry in Southern California that impacted the landscape, leading to further human control over the environment. The oil industry became a major component of California's industrial output by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1892, Edward L. Doheny discovered oil in the Southland, establishing it as a major industry. The region even earned the name "Oilderado" by the 1920s, linking it to old Spanish fantasies of gold in Alta California.¹⁵⁹ Charles Collins Teague, owner of the famed Limoneira orchard in Santa Paula, California, and a major figure within the California Fruit Growers Exchange, was one of the first large-scale growers to promote the use of oil for orchard heating. Many growers followed Teague's model, raising the prices of their crops in the process.¹⁶⁰ Citrus producers formed a sort close relationship with the oil barons of Southern California, and thanks to the prevalence of orchard heaters, soon became major consumers of petroleum.¹⁶¹ By the early-twentieth century, the Arlington Heights Fruit Company, a British-owned operation centered in a wealthy district of Riverside, used oil pipes and faucets to distribute the crucial liquid through its groves to 44,000 fire pots.¹⁶²

When citrus agriculture became a widespread commercial activity in the 1890s, few growers foresaw that the activity would become a highly industrialized segment of the economy of California. Thomas Garey, a prolific botanist in the Southland, authored

¹⁵⁹ Highland, *Greetings from Southern California*, 92.

¹⁶⁰ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 296.

¹⁶¹ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 325-6.

¹⁶² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 297.

one of the most insightful tracts on citrus agriculture in the early 1880s. According to Garey, picking oranges required human hands, not the advanced industrial equipment that Midwestern growers relied upon by the end of the nineteenth century, such as mechanical reapers that harvested America's Great Plains.¹⁶³ Until approximately 1900, human bodies toiled without mechanical aid in the vast fields of Southern California, as well as the packinghouses along railroad tracks that dotted the mainlines of the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads.¹⁶⁴ Machines only abetted this labor at the outset of the twentieth century.

Citriculturalists in Southern California seized new technologies and scientific developments as much as possible to benefit their commercial endeavors. They relied extensively on the chemical developments of the Industrial Revolution to keep pests in check. Fumigation of crops became a staple of the industry in the twentieth century. Undertaken to prevent the spread of insect pests from Florida and other agricultural areas, orange and lemon growers would often spread tent-like covers over their trees and spray hydrocyanic gas to obliterate bugs.¹⁶⁵ To keep fruits from freezing, growers adopted the use of orchard heaters, which burned oil and covered trees with a layer of smoke. Reviewing the financial records of a typical orange association reveals the use of automobiles, electrical currents, and oil to bring oranges and lemons from the fields to

¹⁶³ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 98-9.

¹⁶⁴ Tobey, Wetherell, Hallaran, and Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House*, 42-3.

¹⁶⁵ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 285-6.

packinghouses.¹⁶⁶ While never as industrialized as rail transportation, the citrus industry participated in the mechanization of Southern California. The placement of industrial packinghouses and orange groves close to railroads also defined geographic patterns of urban expansion in new towns, particularly the burgeoning city of Ontario.

The establishment of a landscape based on the intersection of industrial transportation and agriculture directly impacted the municipal development of communities across Southern California. In particular, the development of electrical and water systems forever altered the region. In 1878, engineer George Chaffey moved from Ontario, Canada, to Southern California. He first settled in Riverside, where he resided in the same community as irrigator Matthew Gage.¹⁶⁷ Fascinated by the transformations to the landscape that orange growing had spurred by the late-nineteenth century, Chaffey knew that orange growing communities could only succeed if they could control sufficient supplies of water. Simultaneously, his son, George Chaffey Jr., an electrical engineer, convinced him of the importance of utilities to municipal development.¹⁶⁸ Arriving in Southern California before the feverish boom of 1887, the Chaffeys capitalized on the relatively limited development of the region to build an empire based on utilities. George Chaffey, Sr. laid the groundwork for his success in San Bernardino County. In 1881, Chaffey purchased the land that formed his Etiwanda Colony from

¹⁶⁶ La Verne Orange Association Regular Meeting Minutes from 1913-1925, pp. 301-2, unsorted material in Special Collections and Archives, Wilson Library.

¹⁶⁷ J.A. Alexander, *The Life of George Chaffey: A Story of Irrigation Beginnings in California and Australia* (Melbourne, Australia: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1928), 30.

¹⁶⁸ Betty Richards, "The Chaffeys: Saga of a Southern California Family, Part I," *Pomona Valley Historian*, 7, no. 3 (July 1971): 25. Chaffey Jr. installed the first electric light and power system in Los Angeles.

Captain J.S. Garcia. The following year, he surveyed the land, divided it into blocks, and laid cement pipes to provide water to potential citrus orchardists.¹⁶⁹

Chaffey and his brother, William, revolutionized land ownership Southern California with their various development plans. First, they created a water company wherein “the ownership of water” was “represented by shares of stock in the corporation.”¹⁷⁰ The Chaffeys’ Mutual Water Company provided one share of stock in that entity for each acre that buyers purchased in Etiwanda, thereby linking ownership of the land to water rights.¹⁷¹ Selling land and water to citrus growers allowed Chaffey to build a hydroelectric power plant and make the first electrically-lit house west of the Rocky Mountains.¹⁷²

Following the success of their venture in Etiwanda, George and William Chaffey aimed to develop an even larger and more successful colony. They achieved this goal when they formed the Ontario Model Colony, named for their old provincial home in Canada. Formed from land that the Chaffeys purchased from Garcia in 1882, the Ontario Model Colony stretched south from the base of San Antonio Canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains, which provided an ample water supply to local agriculturalists.¹⁷³ This serendipitous geographical layout also allowed Chaffey to harness gravity to distribute

¹⁶⁹ Alexander, *Life of George Chaffey*, 33. As Richards explains, Chaffey borrowed the name Etiwanda from “An Indian chief” and “family friend” of the Chaffeys in Canada.

¹⁷⁰ Richards, “The Chaffeys,” 36.

¹⁷¹ Alexander, *Life of George Chaffey*, 35-6.

¹⁷² Richards, “The Chaffeys,” 38.

¹⁷³ Alexander, *Life of George Chaffey*, 45.

water, rather than having to rely on pumps.¹⁷⁴ However, Chaffey's vision of Ontario, California, as a model colony for producing citrus fruits extended far beyond control of water.

As an engineer, Chaffey appreciated mathematical precision and order. He revolutionized the layout of California's orange empire by extending these scientific principles to urban development. The centerpiece of Chaffey's creation of geographic order was Euclid Avenue. Chaffey once clarified that "The determination of the name 'Euclid Avenue' was a personal thing altogether. When I was in grammar school I took the head of the class in geometry. Euclid was my favorite, so that is how it was named."¹⁷⁵ This devotion to a major mathematician of the ancient world translated into highly effective urban development. The major thoroughfare of the Ontario Model Colony, Euclid Avenue, in the words of a promotional advertisement placed by the Chaffey's, "extends from Railroad to mountain a distance of seven miles, and for nearly the entire distance it is lined with four rows of shade trees, including the Fan Palms, Australian Fern, Pepper, and Eucalyptus."¹⁷⁶ A horse-drawn railcar carried tourists and citizens the seven miles north and south along Euclid Avenue to a station of the Southern Pacific Railroad and a strategically placed fountain that visualized Ontario's terrific water supply.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Richards, "The Chaffey's," 39.

¹⁷⁵ Peggy Ziegler, "Pepper Tree Furor Has Oddly Rooted History," *Ontario Daily Report*, November 6, 1975, Euclid Avenue File, Ellingwood Room.

¹⁷⁶ "Euclid Avenue" advertisement, Euclid Avenue File, Ellingwood Room.

¹⁷⁷ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 233.

In their efforts to sell Ontario, promoters relied heavily on idealized conceptions of the naturalized landscape, yet paradoxically also praised Chaffey's imposition of human order onto it. "The tract of land which has been christened Ontario," explained publisher Luther M. Holt in 1883, "extends for a distance of six and a half miles from the mountains on the north to the railroad on the south; it slopes gently to the south and is as smooth a tract as can be found in the state for one of its size." He likened the "sandy, gravelly loam" soil to that of Pasadena, San Gabriel, Cucamonga, Pomona, and Duarte, all similarly engaged in orange agriculture by the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁸ Critically, "The town of Ontario has been laid out on the railroad," which allowed the Chaffey brothers to "erect a fine brick building for a depot and the railroad company promises to supply a station agent and telegraph operator as soon as the building is ready for occupancy."¹⁷⁹ Holt promised "A system of electric lights" to illuminate Euclid, powered by Ontario's water supply.

At the center of Holt's admittedly idealistic tract stood the premise that Ontario in 1883 had all the necessary ingredients to become a successful citrus town. Holt compared the city favorably against Pasadena and Riverside, which he characterized as arid.¹⁸⁰ Holt then offered the increasingly popular tenet of human development of the landscape as the major object lesson of Ontario's development, positing it as the central element that would allow the town to outpace its older neighbors. Euclid Avenue, "200 feet wide,

¹⁷⁸ L.M. Holt, "The Model Colony," reprinted in *Pomona Valley Historian* 4, no. 1 (January 1968): 1-14.

¹⁷⁹ Holt, "The Model Colony," 4.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2. Formerly based in Riverside, Holt had a realistic grasp of that town's waterscape.

seven miles long, and shaded by four rows of tropical trees,” realized more effectively than any other burg in Southern California humanity’s ability to reshape the landscape to its needs.¹⁸¹ The “waters of San Antonio Canyon” only became useful after measurement and allotment by the Chaffeys, “when they are emptied into the reservoir” and directed to the parched orange groves, and when used to produce electrical energy to power a proposed cable street railway.¹⁸²



Figure 3.3. Euclid Avenue, Ontario. Note the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks at the bottom of the image, a major referent for communities such as Chaffey’s Ontario. Courtesy of the Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario Public Library, Ontario, California.

In this booster’s conception of Ontario, one of the most successful commercial citrus districts in the orange empire, transportation and nature conspired to produce

¹⁸¹ “Ontario’s Attractions,” *Ontario Observer*, September 15, 1888, Ellingwood Room, Railroads File.

¹⁸² Holt, “The Model Colony,” 8, 12.

Euclid Avenue, a major thoroughfare that demonstrated the city's ability to control water and distribute electrical power. Scholar Pierre Laszlo cast Chaffey's Ontario as the progenitor of Southern California's gridded landscape, underlining the engineer's use of the Southern Pacific Railroad as a terminus of Euclid Avenue and focusing on the role of the railway that ran up and down the thoroughfare.¹⁸³ However, this ignores Chaffey's use of natural elements, brought to heel by human ingenuity and industrialization, in positioning the Ontario Model Colony in the vanguard of orange growing cities. When *Sunset*, a publication of the Southern Pacific Railroad, touted the benefits of living in Ontario, the author specifically confronted the impact of human activities on the environment. While "much Nature did for Ontario in the beginning," she noted, "man has laid no unfriendly hand upon it. Rather the opposite, for to-day the land is lovelier far than when men first came across the great waste of sage and greasewood and cactus, which they knew needed only water to transform it into one vast garden."¹⁸⁴ By the turn of the century, the landscape had become simply a canvas upon which enterprising industrialists and agriculturalists might create their own society, redirecting natural resources such as water while implementing new elements, namely rail lines and imported plants. Even the seemingly natural components of the orange empire, such as the trees lining Euclid Avenue, represented human intrusion. Chaffey and many town-builders who followed him in Southern California established geographical order by using railroads and arboreal specimens to redefine the landscape as they wished.

¹⁸³ Laszlo, *Citrus*, 73.

¹⁸⁴ Bertha H. Smith, "A City of Ten-Acre Lots: Something about the Orange Grove Prosperity of Ontario, California," *Sunset* 19, no. 1 (May-October 1907): 66.

Chaffey's life showed that grids formed by intersecting streets and railways imposed order on one of the most important citrus towns in Southern California. Cities throughout the Southland centered their communities on the tracks and built outward from there. Euclid Avenue maintained a special place in the heart of promoters. "Ontario is famous for her double driveway, which is without a rival in the wide, wide world," claimed the *Ontario Observer* in 1888.¹⁸⁵ In Riverside, the regal venue of Victoria Avenue formed the backbone of one of the wealthiest orange cities in the citrus belt. Magnolia Avenue, a graded street planted with trees, similarly provided physical order and a central thoroughfare from which to expand the city.¹⁸⁶ This expansion often entailed the erection of new citrus packinghouses and specialized railcars to service them.

Packinghouses provided further order to the landscape of the orange empire. They became the sites where citrus and railroads met, a lynchpin of the orange and lemon industries. In the citrus industry of Southern California, orange growers typically created cooperatives such as the Southern California Fruit Exchange, or its successor, the California Fruit Growers Exchange, pooling their funds to erect packinghouses directly on the mainlines of the Santa Fe or the Southern Pacific.¹⁸⁷ At these packinghouses, workers sorted oranges by their quality and size, placing them into wooden crates for transportation based on the grade of the fruit. Until approximately 1900, packing houses did not use machinery, relying mainly on human hands to complete work. However,

¹⁸⁵ "Ontario's Attractions," *Ontario Observer*, September 15, 1888, Railroads File, Ellingwood Room.

¹⁸⁶ Brown and Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, 300.

¹⁸⁷ Harvey Lynn, "Founding of the California Fruit Growers Exchange," in Klotz, Lawton, and Hall, ed., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area*, 21.

starting in the twentieth century, packers began to use electrical power to operate fruit washers, conveyors, sizers, sorters, dryers, and other varieties of machinery.¹⁸⁸ Two machinists based in Riverside, George Stebler and Fred Parker, provided many of the industrial advancements that more and more packinghouses adopted in the opening decades of the twentieth century.¹⁸⁹

Even more than citrus orchardists, packinghouse managers purchased industrially manufactured goods. They relied on automobiles to move goods from field to packinghouse by the 1910s. Furthermore, they paid agencies such as the Pacific Land & Improvement Company for improving land, bought petroleum from Standard Oil and electricity from the General Electric Company, and patronized garages to service their automobiles. Chemically, they purchased from businesses such as the Pacific Ammonia & Chemical Company to acquire fertilizer. Finally, reflecting the advancement of communications around 1900, many packinghouses plugged into the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company's network.¹⁹⁰

Orange- and lemon-packers made use of heavy machinery to maximize productivity. An entire industry developed around providing supplies to the packinghouses of the Southland. In Riverside, two dueling firms competed for supremacy in this endeavor. George Parker and his Parker Machine Works battled against California

¹⁸⁸ Tobey, Wetherell, Hallaran, and Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House*, 42-4, 46-7, 49.

¹⁸⁹ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 103.

¹⁹⁰ George G. Stone, "Financing the Orange Industry in California," *Pomona Valley Historian* 2, no. 4 (October 1966): 162, 164.

Iron Works, owned by Fred Stebler.¹⁹¹ In the words of citrus historian H. Vincent Moses, these two companies built “machinery to handle and process fruit, from grove to refrigerator car.”¹⁹² These two innovators, before their enterprises merged into the Stelber-Parker Company, sold Orange Box Makers, crate ladders, and fruit driers to prepare fruit for transportation by preventing infestation and sorting items into boxes to place aboard railroad cars.¹⁹³ Stebler-Parker clamp trucks physically moved boxes into refrigerator cars.¹⁹⁴ Thanks to the incorporation of technology developed at the birthplace of the orange empire, citrus packing became firmly ensconced as an industrial activity by the early-twentieth century.

Industrialized packinghouses operated directly on the railroad tracks of cities across Southern California. The Covina *Argus*, a booster publication published in Covina, California, during the 1890s, once boasted that a packinghouse in the San Gabriel Valley was “one of the most complete and convenient in Southern California.” This “two-story building,” which measured 68 by 80 feet, had a “basement [. . .] devoted to box making, labeling and storage purposes; the upper room is lofty and well ventilated and provided with car tracks and all the modern conveniences.”¹⁹⁵ Moreover, at packinghouses, workers sheathed citrus fruits in the trappings of industrial modernity before shipping them across the country. Charles Teague of Santa Paula introduced some of the materials

¹⁹¹ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 253-4.

¹⁹² Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 105.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 105-6; Archie Smith to Parker Machine Works, June 18, 1905, HEH, box 5/93-5/97.

¹⁹⁴ Huntington Land & Improvement Company payment book, HEH, 1/F/4, p. 482.

¹⁹⁵ “Co-Operative Fruit Marketing,” *The Covina Argus*, December 25, 1896, p. 18.

necessary for packing fruit. “The cost of packing oranges,” he once wrote, depended on the prices of orange boxes, nails, and paper in which to wrap the delicate fruits produced in California. He calculated the price of packing a single orange at 35 cents, not including the cost of freight.¹⁹⁶ In addition to placing oranges and lemons in industrially manufactured boxes, packinghouses required many types of industrial machines. Orange presses required carefully designed springs and rollers to operate properly.¹⁹⁷ Finally, once oranges had been sorted and placed into boxes, workers hauled them onto trains, the epitome of the Industrial Revolution in America, to send goods rolling across the United States.

Citrus packers had to overcome a significant challenge when transporting their oranges and lemons to faraway markets: the problem of keeping fruit cool. When the first oranges to travel by rail from Southern California for the eastern United States left the historic Wolfskill property in 1877, railroad workers had to replace the ice used to cool the fruit eleven times during the transcontinental shipment.¹⁹⁸ In the early decades of citrus agriculture, California growers relied upon ventilated cars to reduce fruit spoilage during rail transit.¹⁹⁹ However, as cooling technology improved in the late-nineteenth century, true refrigerator cars began to appear as early as the 1880s. Prominent newspapers such as the *Citrograph*, published in the affluent city of Redlands, touted the

¹⁹⁶ Charles C. Teague to Guy L. Hardison, March 16 [date obscured], Teague Papers, box 1, folder 11.

¹⁹⁷ Charles C. Teague to H.D. Blakeslee, April 18, 1902, Teague Papers, box 1, folder 11.

¹⁹⁸ George Keeler, “The Rise and Fall of the Empire,” *La Verne Magazine* 1, no. 4 (June 1977): 5.

¹⁹⁹ “Cold Storage for Fruits,” *Citrograph*, September 24, 1887, p. 14.

benefits of cold storage for transcontinental trips to major cities such as Chicago. The *Citrograph* referred to fruits shipped on cooled cars as “superior,” better able to preserve the renowned taste of California products.²⁰⁰ By 1889, refrigerator cars kept California oranges at a comfortable 40 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit during transit. Such cars extended the markets of California orange growers, which in turned spurred them to devote more land to the cultivation of citrus.²⁰¹

Once the Santa Fe Railroad came to California, it courted the citrus growing communities of the Golden State. In an effort to attract orchardists to its line, the railroad established the Santa Fe Refrigerator Despatch in 1884. With eight ice refrigerator cars and 25 ventilated fruit cars, the Santa Fe helped facilitate the boom of the 1880s that aided in the proliferation of citrus trees across Southern California.²⁰² These figures climbed to 1,032 ice refrigerator cars and 538 ventilated cars by 1900.²⁰³ Icing facilities, such as a plant at San Bernardino, gave the Santa Fe an indispensable edge in its quest to corner the transportation of oranges.²⁰⁴

Although it had entered Southern California almost a decade before its first competitor, the Southern Pacific lagged in the development of iced refrigerator cars. It took a large investment of capital and political will to match the Santa Fe’s development

²⁰⁰ “Benefits of Cold Storage,” *Citrograph*, October 15, 1887, p. 13; Merlo and Sunkist Growers, Inc., *Heritage of Gold*, 4.

²⁰¹ “Cold Storage for Fruits,” *Citrograph*, September 24, 1887, p. 14.

²⁰² John H. White, *The Great Yellow Fleet: A History of American Railroad Refrigerator Cars* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1986), 150.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ G. Harold Powell, *The Decay of Oranges While in Transit from California* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin* No. 123, 1908), 57.

of refrigerator cars. In 1906, E.H. Harriman, the new owner of the Southern Pacific who had seized control of a number of railroads across the United States, took steps to realize Collis P. Huntington's dream of working closely with fruit growers in California. That year, Harriman formed the Pacific Fruit Express, a joint venture between the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads, both of which he owned.²⁰⁵ He purchased over 6,000 new refrigerator cars for the Pacific Fruit Express, and created new and acquired existing icing facilities across Southern California.²⁰⁶

Harriman's numerous icing stations across Southern California and the West preserved oranges and lemons for their transcontinental journeys. Within the orange empire itself, the Pacific Fruit Express built a plant in Colton, a city established by the Southern Pacific in the 1870s.²⁰⁷ Los Angeles similarly enjoyed an icing plant, with Southern Pacific tracks servicing the Los Angeles Ice & Cold Storage Company.²⁰⁸ Brawley in the Imperial Valley also had an icing facility. The largest was located at Roseville, California, in Placer County.²⁰⁹ These icing facilities, as historian Richard Orsi explains, paved the way for mass marketing of perishable commodities from the Far West.²¹⁰ Without the establishment of industrial icing plants to keep oranges and lemons

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 330.

²⁰⁷ Description of Colton Ice Plant, October 1920s [full date obscured], Pacific Fruit Express Records, Personnel Records, box 1, folder California Colton, CSRM. Hereafter cited as PFE Records.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*; description of Los Angeles Ice Plant, October 16, 1920s [full date obscured], PFE Records, Facilities, box 10, folder California Los Angeles.

²⁰⁹ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 330.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 329.

cool on their journeys east, the California orange empire would not have enjoyed lucrative commercial success.

The practice of refrigerated shipping had all but become an art by the 1910s. The Pacific Fruit Express repeatedly tested the ventilation in its cars for decades after its establishment. It installed electrical thermometers on cars heading from California to Illinois, taking the temperatures of cars as they passed through some of the warmest, most desolate badlands of North America. Despite outside temperatures rising, as California fruits traveled through Nevada, Oregon, Nebraska, Iowa, and Illinois, and even New York, temperatures remained cool enough to keep fruit from perishing on the transcontinental journey.²¹¹

The Santa Fe Refrigerator Despatch and the Pacific Fruit Express had all but perfected iced transportation by 1910. In 1903, the two companies supplied 23,000 refrigerator cars to California's fruit growers. The supply had to expand as more and more Californians brought new citrus trees into bearing. "While there was no serious shortage on this year's output of cars, still the companies were pretty well pressed, and it is a matter of some serious concern to both grower and shipper that next season's vast yield should be anticipated and the necessary transportation facilities provided," explained the *Los Angeles Herald*.²¹² The use of iced refrigerator cars typified the close cooperation between citrus growers and railroad executives in Southern California.

²¹¹ Pacific Fruit Express Co. Refrigeration Test No. 30, PFE Records, Series 7, Subject Files, folder Reports on Test Trips No. 30 Fruit Calif-Illinois-NY, 1924.

²¹² "Banner Citrus Fruit Season," *Los Angeles Herald*, August 15, 1903, HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 41.

One insider in the railroad industry, Henry E. Huntington, played a particularly large role in the physical development of the orange empire. Prior to 1900, Huntington's professional life had prepared him to guide the emergence of Southern California as the citrus capital of the United States. Born to Solon and Harriet Saunders Huntington in Otsego County, New York, in 1850, Henry Huntington had close ties to his uncle, Collis P. Huntington of the fabled Associates. On his uncle's request, Henry Huntington took up management of a sawmill in St. Albans, West Virginia, in 1871, contributing to the infrastructure and transcontinental activities of the Southern Pacific. Shortly thereafter, he ascended the corporate ladders of various rail lines in Ohio and Kentucky. As a result of Henry Huntington's abilities to manage smaller railroad, his uncle offered him an executive position in the Southern Pacific Railroad. Henry accepted, and at Collis's behest he and his family moved to San Francisco, California, in 1892, where he joined the railroad, first as assistant to the president and later as vice president. The two Huntingtons worked together closely for the rest of Collis's life.²¹³

While in San Francisco, Henry Huntington refined his business interests. He worked regularly with the Pacific Improvement Company, a land developer and offshoot of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Just as importantly, he took control of the Market Street Railway in the city by the bay, an intra-urban electric passenger line. Finally, Huntington and his uncle corresponded with numerous land agents in Southern California who advised what tracts to purchase in the Los Angeles area, the San Gabriel Valley, and

²¹³ "From Clerk to Millionaire," *Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 1927, HEH, box 38/2, folder 1.

other regions of the Southland.²¹⁴ Henry spent the rest of his life developing Southern California using the skills he honed as a railroad executive.

In August 1900, Collis P. Huntington passed away. This event drastically altered the trajectory of Henry's life. He received a bequeathal of \$30 million from his deceased uncle, a herculean sum that allowed him to sell his shares in the Southern Pacific to E.H. Harriman and retire from the transcontinental railroad community. For years, Henry had desired to develop Southern California, which at that time had not mechanized to the same degree as the industrial eastern United States. He used this new fortune to heavily invest in transportation and land improvement in Southern California.

At the beginning of his forays into the Southland, Henry Huntington partnered with Isaias W. Hellman, a banker in Los Angeles. This financial giant helped steer Huntington into the realm of electric streetcars around Los Angeles.²¹⁵ During his time in San Francisco, Huntington had managed the Temple Street Railway in Los Angeles and gained an understanding of the major differences between a transcontinental line and interurban streetcars. Hellman helped Huntington acquire various streetcar interests around Los Angeles, which the railroad executive consolidated into the Los Angeles Railway Company.²¹⁶ Huntington once boasted of his trolley system's ability to transport

²¹⁴ Muir to Collis P. Huntington, November 20, 1888, HEH Correspondence, box 156.

²¹⁵ Henry E. Huntington to Isaias W. Hellman, August 2, 1901, HEH Correspondence, box 46.

²¹⁶ Isaias W. Hellman to Henry E. Huntington, July 20, 1901, HEH Correspondence, box 46.

passengers from Los Angeles to Riverside, a distance of approximately sixty miles, in one hour and twenty minutes.²¹⁷

After moving to Los Angeles, Henry Huntington immersed himself in Southern California's infrastructure as the owner and president of a plethora of various organizations. He organized the Huntington Land and Improvement Company to modernize large tracts of undeveloped land. He used some of this land for ranching and citrus agriculture, but he devoted most of his attention to paving the way for electric streetcars. Huntington drew upon his experiences with the electric trolley lines of San Francisco when purchasing the Los Angeles Railway Company in 1898. In 1901 he organized and then served as president of the Pacific Electric Railway. As with steam-powered railroads, Huntington's electric enterprises relied on a technological network to support his so-called Big Red Cars. According to one official of the Temple Street Railway of Los Angeles, repair work for that line in 1901 cost \$1,000 for repairing cars and dummies, \$150 for engine work, \$700 for new yokes for the road, and \$2,000 for roadbed. Most expensive of all was the need to repair the electric cables, amounting to \$6,000.²¹⁸

Huntington used this system to expand the mass transit system of Southern California outward from Los Angeles to the San Gabriel and San Fernando Valleys and the Pacific coast. His lines even reached the cities of Riverside and San Bernardino at the heart of the Inland Empire. By consolidating the Los Angeles Railway lines and a

²¹⁷ Untitled article, *Los Angeles Daily Times*, October 11, 1903, HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 43.

²¹⁸ E.T. Wright to Isaias W. Hellman, September 9, 1901, HEH Correspondence, box 183.

number of other small systems in the Southland, Huntington developed a vast electric streetcar network that carried Southern Californians from coastal communities such as Santa Monica and Redondo Beach as far east as Redlands. He communicated regularly with Frank Miller, a leading entrepreneur and hotel operator in Riverside, where Huntington financed the reconstruction of the Glenwood Mission Inn and provided necessary capital for the development of an electric road in that city. Henry Huntington seemed to have an inherent talent for the finance and construction of railroad lines. Even as early as his dealings with the Market Street Railway in San Francisco during the 1890s, Collis P. Huntington wrote to his nephew about electric trolleys that “Your ideas are much better than mine on this.”

Huntington saw the landscape of Southern California as a natural resource he could cultivate into a commodity, one that citrus agriculture and railroading would transform into a luxurious realm of oranges. “On June 19th 1900 [*sic*], there had been shipped from California this season, 16,232 carloads of oranges,” Henry Huntington wrote to his uncle shortly before the latter’s passing, “as against 9,803 cars same date last year. I think that next year we will without doubt, have over 20,000 carloads.”²¹⁹ Young Huntington, as the newspapers of Southern California called him in the opening decades of the twentieth century, aimed to capitalize on the increasing commodification of oranges in the Golden State. As historian William B. Friedrichs has argued, Huntington’s Pacific Electric Railway accounted for only one third of his scheme for the Southland. In 1902, Huntington incorporated the Huntington Land and Improvement Company to

²¹⁹ Henry E. Huntington to Collis P. Huntington, June 22, 1900, HEH Correspondence, box 118.

develop his various landholdings in California. As early as the 1890s, Huntington had tasked land agents of the Southern Pacific to purchase desirable land for him.²²⁰

Subsequently, he developed irrigation systems and power lines before selling the newly developed land at a tidy profit.

To solidify his control of utilities, Huntington established the Pacific Light and Power Company to furnish electricity to the growing population of Southern California.²²¹ As the *Los Angeles Times* explained in the 1920s, decades after Huntington began to experiment in Southern California, “Along with his acquisition of and extension of railroad lines and trolley systems, Mr. Huntington acquired real estate. Wherever his transportation lines touched realty values soared. And he naturally bought in advance of the price increases.” After organizing his Pacific Land and Improvement Company, Huntington “became the greatest single landowner in the State.”²²² Huntington sold these lands to orange growers at a fabulous profit. By furnishing them with rail transportation, he provided valuable market connections, while the irrigation systems and power sources he introduced facilitated the spread of industrial packinghouses, mechanizing the landscape and turning the orange industry into a power-driven sector of the economy of California.

Huntington used his interlocking operations to shape the landscape of Southern California to fit his vision of urban expansion, one that close reflected the visionary

²²⁰ J.A. Muir to C.E. Graham, October 29, 1901, HEH Correspondence, box 156.

²²¹ William B. Friedrichs, *Henry E. Huntington and the Creation of Southern California* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992), 6-7.

²²² “From Clerk to Millionaire,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 1927, HEH, box 38/2, folder 1.

influence that George Chaffey had formulated decades before the advent of the Pacific Electric. Huntington, however, was only one Californian among many who impacted the reconstruction of the Southland from 1880 to 1950. Many other orange growers, railroaders, and laborers in both industries shaped this transformation. In the process, their actions fostered the composition of a distinct regional image for California as an Orange Empire served by steam and electric railroads. Working with countless citrus growers across the region, they turned Southern California into an industrial agricultural heartland, where steam-driven and electric machines existed in tandem with the countless acres of Washington Navel and Valencia oranges, striking a tenuous balance between industry and nature in the Southland that defined the region in the early-twentieth centuries. One train man with the Pacific Electric, moving through the orange city of La Verne in the San Gabriel Valley, once gleefully exclaimed that his car passed “so close to the orange groves that it seems as though we could pick fruit from the caboose steps.”²²³

Huntington further developed the infrastructure of Southern California as creator and president of the Pacific Light and Power Company, organized in 1902.²²⁴ He also controlled its subsidiaries, the Huntington-Redondo Company, the Redondo Improvement Company, the Redondo Water Company, and the San Gabriel Valley Water Company. Through the Pacific Light and Power Company, Huntington delivered electricity across his empire in Southern California to light and power the Southland. Finally, again echoing Chaffey’s development of Ontario, Huntington irrigated the

²²³ Barham, “PE Freight Run,” 44.

²²⁴ Friedrichs, *Henry E Huntington*, 7.

orange empire. He installed water pipes to his ranches to grow oranges, lemons, limes. He even purchased land from the famed Wolfskill tract to grow citrus.²²⁵ Irrigation pipes increased the value of his holdings, allowing him to sell land at a profit.²²⁶

Huntington's most important contribution to Southern California was knitting it together using the Pacific Electric Railway, a streetcar system that stitched together Orange County, the Inland Empire, the San Gabriel Valley, and Los Angeles, the most productive citrus districts of the Southland, uniting the region as a single entity.²²⁷ In 1910, Huntington divested himself the Pacific Electric and other lines, selling them to the Southern Pacific. The following year, during an event that newspapers deemed the Great Merger, the Southern Pacific consolidated the Pacific Electric Railway, the Los Angeles Inter-Urban Railway, the San Bernardino Valley Traction, and the Riverside and Arlington railroads, among others, into a single new Pacific Electric Railway Company.²²⁸

As early as 1900, electricity had become a defining feature of the orange empire. Henry Huntington introduced this form of power to the region when he laid the Riverside and Arlington Railway through the city of Riverside.²²⁹ Frank Miller, a close business associate of Huntington's in the Riverside area, helped establish the power station for this

²²⁵ Huntington Land and Improvement Company Auditor's Report A, HEH 1/AA (A), p. 316.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ "Harriman's Combination the Winner," *The Call*, April 19, 1905, HEH, box 16/4/(4), folder 39.

²²⁸ "Great Merger," unidentified periodical, p. 16, "HEH -P.E.," Files of Alan Jutzi, Huntington Library.

²²⁹ Frank Miller to Henry E. Huntington, December 7, 1901, HEH Correspondence, box 154.

endeavor.²³⁰ The *Riverside Press* heaped praise upon Huntington for his development of the city. “It was his money that made possible the construction of the electric road, and it was his financial assistance and generous help in other ways that brought us our beautiful tourist hotel,” the Mission Inn, “of which we are so proud. There is, therefore, every obligation on the part of Riverside to treat Mr. Huntington generously, for he has done more for Riverside than any other city in Southern California, outside of Los Angeles.”²³¹ The *Press* continued, noting that “He already has franchises for important extensions of his electric system in this city and to Corona, and it is undoubtedly his purpose to connect Riverside with the inter-urban system that is being built from Los Angeles.”²³² With the electric poles of the Riverside and Arlington came power and new forms of communication. In the early decades after it arrived in Southern California, the Southern Pacific Railroad invested in improved communication by laying telegraph lines across the Golden State.²³³ Henry Huntington continued this trend when developing his land holdings. Wherever the Riverside and Arlington line extended, for instance, it brought electric poles to operate its cars, transmitting electricity through one of the most citrus important cities in Southern California.²³⁴ In addition to increased market access, then,

²³⁰ Epes Randolph to Gibson, Bicknell, Trask, Dunn & Crutchers, January 13, 1904, HEH Correspondence, box 165.

²³¹ “The Power Settlement,” *Riverside Press*, undated, HEH Correspondence, box 172.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ Report of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company of California to the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of California, June 30, 1893, PUC.

²³⁴ City of Riverside to Riverside and Arlington Railway, 12/1/1901, HEH Correspondence, box 172.

steam and electric railroads also offered new forms of communication to the orange empire.

To remain ahead of the technological curve, orange orchardists in Southern California also made use of radio communication. Initially, growers used systems of flags and fire whistles to alert workers in the groves to fire up orchard heaters and prevent frost, one in which railroads played a major role. Critically, remarked Floyd D. Young, “blasts of locomotive whistles on passing trains gave listening farmers the forecaster’s idea of weather to come.”²³⁵ Young, a meteorologist with the U.S. Weather Bureau who specialized in forecasting, implemented a telephone Fruit-Frost Service, using the most advanced form of communication to warn orange growers of approaching freezes.²³⁶ Prior to the use of radio, growers had used a telephone system to warn of incoming inclement weather. However, in 1922, a “great freeze” put the lie to this system’s effectiveness. When growers who subscribed to the service received calls of the coming freeze, they used telephones to warn their neighbors and called suppliers for more heating equipment, snarling phone lines to the point of rendering them useless.²³⁷

To correct this problem, Young switched to radio. In 1930, he partnered with KNX to broadcast weather news from Pomona, a citrus city in eastern Los Angeles County. KNX soon became part of the national Columbia Broadcasting System, which

²³⁵ Floyd Young, “Frost Warnings in the Early Days,” *Pomona Valley Historian* 5, no. 4 (October 1969): 171.

²³⁶ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 297.

²³⁷ Young, “Frost Warnings,” 171.

allowed it to reach a larger audience.²³⁸ Thanks to his efforts, Young shamelessly claimed, growers lost fewer crops to the whims of California's weather. Moreover, "The railroads, which obtain a large share of their annual revenue from citrus shipments, together with their employees, were benefited [*sic*] directly through the saving of the crop. Railroads alone were paid nearly \$29,000,000 in freight and refrigeration costs for the moving of last winter's crop to market, despite" damage wrought by frost.²³⁹ As always, the connection between technological development, the citrus industry, land use, and railroading remained decisive. However, one additional factor complicated the relationships among citrus agriculture, the railroads, and the landscape of Southern California.

Citrus had found its natural home in Southern California, Scipio Craig of Redlands believed, and he used his newspaper, *The Citrograph*, to draw national attention to this point of view. "A correspondent in San Francisco who is enthusiastic over THE CITROGRAPH and Southern California generally, suggests that 'If ever the state of California be divided how would the name 'Citrusia' do for the Southern portion?'" explained the publisher of the Redlands newspaper. By way of response, he boldly proclaimed "'South California' is good enough for us. We have been calling it that for more than ten years," since the 1870s.²⁴⁰ Even when boom had only started to reshape the Golden State, and citriculture had recently started to gain traction, oranges had

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 172.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 173-4.

²⁴⁰ Untitled article, *Citrograph*, August 6, 1887, p. 6.

already become fixed as a defining feature of the landscape and regional identity in Southern California.

The long-lasting ramifications of girding California's orange empire with rails went far beyond laying tracks and growing oranges. Rather, these activities entailed the formulation of a new psychological view of the land. The projection of the orange empire entailed planting gardens to transform California into an earthly paradise. Citrus agriculturalists had truly planted a massive garden, stretching acre upon acre across entire counties, as the nineteenth century faded. "By 1882 there were more than half a million citrus trees in California, almost half of which were in Riverside," commented historian Lee M.A. Simpson.²⁴¹ Five years later, according to the *Riverside Press*, "The assessors' report shows that there are 983,423 orange trees in the state, of which number 729,865 are in Los Angeles county, and 214,537 in San Bernardino county [*sic*]." Additionally, "Something [was] wrong with San Bernardino county figures for Riverside," which did not split to form its own county until 1893. In one estimate, Riverside:

has over a quarter of a million orange trees in orchard, and there are over half a million orange tree in this county in orchard. There are, according to the reports, 5773 orange trees in San Diego county, and 4864 in Santa Barbara county, and 500 in Ventura county, leaving a total of 27,890 for the northern citrus belt. As there are about 100 trees to the acre. Central and Northern California now have about 280 acres set to orange orchards.²⁴²

²⁴¹ Simpson, *Selling the City*, 94.

²⁴² Article from *Riverside Press*, reprinted as "Something Wrong With the Figures," *Citrograph*, September 15, 1887, p. 5.

The Southland became synonymous with colorful flora by the early-twentieth century. The Huntington Land and Improvement Company, for instance, planted lippia to brighten the landscape and make it more attractive to potential buyers.²⁴³

The impact of locomotion on California was far from universally positive. Decades before car culture dominated Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and the other cities of Southern California, railroads produced the first air pollution in the region. Steam locomotives required more power to climb steeper grades in Southern California. At one three-percent grade in Covina, California, steam locomotives had to work so hard to travel uphill that the uproarious blasts from their smokestacks cracked residents' windows.²⁴⁴ Requiring bituminous coal to run, they trailed clouds of smoke high into the atmosphere and polluted vast swaths of the American West, including Southern California.²⁴⁵ In the twentieth century, oil-burning locomotives replaced the iconic steam-powered machines of the nineteenth century. Both major lines that wended across Southern California, the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific, had experimented with oil-powered engines since the 1880s, and had adopted a handful of oil locomotives in the 1894. Before the twentieth century, the unreliability of this power source, and its potentially catastrophic combustive properties, prevented managers from rapidly

²⁴³ George S. Patton to Henry E. Huntington, January 4, 1905, HEH Correspondence, box 169.

²⁴⁴ Barham, "PE Freight Run," 40.

²⁴⁵ Schenectady Locomotive Works, Specification of Two Eight Wheeled Locomotive Engines, September 20, 1884 CPH, s. IV, r. 1 I.

replacing their steam-powered locomotives.²⁴⁶ Julius Kruttschnitt, manager of the Southern Pacific, made that line fully oil-powered in 1901.²⁴⁷ During and following the Second World War, the Southern Pacific switched to diesel engines and consumed oil in great amounts.²⁴⁸



Figure 3.4. A locomotive discharges smoke over Lordsburg, California. Courtesy of the Wilson Library, University of La Verne, La Verne, California.

Devoting more and more land to lemon and orange acreage similarly damaged the environment. The ecological devastation of smudge pots gave rise to health problems among unfortunate residents of Southern California with lung conditions. Smudge blackened houses in the orange empire, and accumulated in sufficient quantities on the

²⁴⁶ Petty and Mullaly, *The Southern Pacific in Los Angeles*, 84-5. A large oil explosion in Vallejo, California, in 1888 frightened the Southern Pacific into abandoning experimentation with this fuel for years.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

clothes of citrus workers to become flammable.²⁴⁹ Orange and lemon growers and packers were also a party to the destruction of native species. They cleared land of existing foliage to make way for citrus trees from the 1880s to the 1940s, and packers such as the Cucamonga Orange Exchange used wood from felled native pine trees for orange crates.²⁵⁰

The gridiron garden had become the defining feature of Southern California by the early decades of the twentieth century. Here the aesthetically pleasing but alien citrus agriculture imported during the late-nineteenth century resulted in the spread of lemon and orange trees. Rails, representing the triumph of American industry over space and landscape, intertwined almost naturally with citrus groves to become a dominant characteristic. Operating in tandem, citrus agriculture and railroads in Southern California introduced mechanical production and transportation, facilitated the rise of an industrial infrastructure, and guided the growth of utilities, particularly oil, electricity, and water. However, their influence was far from universally positive. Growers showed no qualms when uprooting older plants to make room for their groves. Locomotives and smudge pots jettisoned pollution into the skies above the Southland. Despite the ambiguous impact of these two industries on Southern California, they undeniably altered the landscape to suit their commercial desires, and reshaped the region's identity in the process.

²⁴⁹ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 303.

²⁵⁰ Pine Box Manufacturers Agency Bill of Sale, undated, Cucamonga Citrus Fruit Growers Association Papers, box 1, Huntington Library. Hereafter Cucamonga Papers.

Chapter Four

Labor in the Citrus and Railroad Industries

Although nearly all the citrus industry is in the hands of white owners a large part of the work of growing and harvesting the fruit is performed by Mexicans...In citrus packing plants, white, Mexican and Japanese women perform most of the work except the heavy trucking operations.

--Clifford M. Zierer¹

While capitalists provided the funding to destroy and radically recreate the landscape of Southern California in the late-nineteenth century, their projects would not have gone forward without legions of workers to realize the dream of the Southland as a railroad-serviced orange empire. Despite the low wages and often faced with indignity from members of higher social strata, railroad hands and laborers in the citrus groves and packinghouses of Southern California provided the work that allowed those industries to thrive by the early-twentieth century. Despite the superficial incongruity between laboring in the field or aboard a train laden with California's horticultural bounty, work in these two fields bore a striking number of similarities. Like the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe railroads, orange and lemon growers often recruited workers from racial minorities. These included the Chinese who built the first transcontinental railroad and Mexicans who had controlled the state prior to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Both industries also contributed significantly to the creation of a public culture that widely opposed organized labor from the 1890s to the 1930s.

Examining the work of Mexicans, Chinese, and Native Americans in Southern California reveals broader implications for study of race in the Golden State. Railroad

¹ Clifford M. Zierer, "The Citrus Fruit Industry of the Los Angeles Basin," *Economic Geography* 10, no. 1 (January 1934): 72-3.

and citrus work gave rise to limited opportunities born of difficult circumstances. Work in the citrus trade placed Native Americans in industrial niches in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and deconstructs the false paradigm of the Indians of California as pre-industrial peoples. Their labor in orange groves and mechanical packinghouses placed Native Americans at the very heart of fruit production in Southern California, particularly in the city of Riverside. Similarly, Chinese built up livelihoods for themselves as compradors, or men who negotiated contracts for their fellow Chinese to work in the groves and for the railroad companies that operated in the Southland. Ultimately, this chapter will use railroads and citrus agriculture as windows through which to contextualize the labor of various groups in Southern California, industrious peoples who deserve recognition for their roles in this history. As a recapitulation of the work involved in picking and packing oranges shows, laborers completed very few of their responsibilities with ease.

In the earliest decades of the citrus industry, workers sorted oranges and prepared them for transportation. Individual grove owners hired laborers, often Chinese, to separate oranges based on size and quality before placing them in boxes to prepare them for shipment by rail.² By the early-twentieth century, as growers formed cooperatives such as the California Fruit Growers Exchange, they hired workers through packinghouses.³ Picking oranges could be dangerous and physically gruesome. One worker discussed this fact in colorful terms. “The orange trees are full of thorny brush

² Paul G. Williamson, “Labor in the California Citrus Industry” (master’s thesis, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1940), 27-8.

³ Louis Reccow, “The Orange County Citrus Strikes of 1935-1936: The ‘Forgotten People’ in Revolt” (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1972), 5.

and raise hell with your clothes,” he complained. “If you get work in good groves where the trees are small and the oranges big you can eat pretty regular[ly]; if you get on big trees and little fruit you better start writing home for money for you’re going broke sure as hell.”⁴

In the early days of the citrus industry, white men, left jobless by the national panic of 1893, toiled in the citrus groves of Riverside, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino Counties. Crews consisting of dozens of workers collaborated to pack hundreds of oranges every day.⁵ In order to keep frost from consuming oranges (and profitability), owners relied on the use of smudge pots. Workers thus had to subject themselves to the smoky discharge of orchard heaters to perform their tasks. “Grimy and face-blackened,” one newspaper described these unfortunate men, “they worked day and night during most of last week trying to keep the frost out of their lush groves, tending to the smudge pots that covered the countryside with oily, black smoke.”⁶

More than any other agricultural sector in the late-nineteenth century, picking oranges and lemons required human labor. Thanks to the delicacy of the fruit, workers must remove oranges from trees by hand, rather than using machines that permeated wheat agriculture across the United States in the same period.⁷ To squeeze as much productivity as possible from workers, growers who owned the endless acres of trees

⁴ “Migratory Labor in California,” State Relief Administration, FWP, carton 36.

⁵ McBane, “The House that Lemons Built,” 95.

⁶ “Orange Crop Put at \$100,000,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 8, 1905, no page numbers. The page numbers for this article are not present on the archival preservation copy, but a reproduction of the article can be found in the Citrus Fruits + Industry File of the Ellingwood Room.

⁷ González, *Labor and Community*, 25.

often paid pickers by how many boxes they filled with oranges.⁸ Workers also cleared land to make way for orange trees, pruned trees, made furrows to maintain a constant water supply, and fumigated crops to kill various pests.⁹ As the twentieth century opened, fumigation became a common practice in the citrus industry. Placing canvas covers over the groves, workers sprayed groves with hydrocyanic acid gas at night to obliterate insects. Spraying during the day could cause a photochemical reaction that burned orange trees, to say nothing of workers.¹⁰

Despite their commercial success, by 1900 orange growers faced a major problem that threatened their commercial vitality. Oranges began to decay in transit, costing growers from the Golden State between \$500,000 and \$1,500,000 each year.¹¹ The culprit was a new infection, which growers referred to as blue mold. Growing across the fruit, this bacterium of the species *Penicillium* spread olive-green or blue spores on the fruit, making it look unattractive and discouraging jobbers from purchasing it.¹² Since this malady often occurred en route to eastern markets, it seemed only natural to blame transportation companies.

From the 1880s to the 1900s, growers often derided the Santa Fe or Southern Pacific for not providing properly ventilated or refrigerated cars. During transit, if not properly secured, oranges and lemons could be jostled around railcars. One notice of

⁸ Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 37-8.

⁹ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 141.

¹⁰ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 285-6; Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 141-2.

¹¹ MacCurdy, *The History of the California Fruit Growers Exchange*, 52.

¹² Powell, *The Decay of Oranges While in Transit from California*, 21.

damage to oranges grown by the San Marino Growers' Packing Association blasted the Chicago & Rock Island and Pacific Railroad for poorly handling the crop, noting that citrus fruits had been "Badly shifted, nearly all strips taken off top layer. One box" had been "pilfered" of half its contents, and another fell onto the floor of the car and spilled open.¹³ This made the purchase ropes and coupling to secure orange crates during transport a necessity, an incurred expense that packing associations did not appreciate.¹⁴

The argument for blaming railroads for poor handling of crops subsides by the early-twentieth century, as both rail lines produced more and more refrigerator cars to take oranges from California east. By the 1910s, the Santa Fe and the Pacific Fruit Express totally revolutionized their operations to cater to the needs of orange and lemon growers. In 1910, for instance, the Pacific Fruit Express could precool cars heading across the continent at the price of fifty cents per railcar.¹⁵ Azro Naftzger, onetime president and general manager of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, assuaged the concerns of many growers in 1903 when he remarked that "I have already had conferences with representatives of the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe and there need be no fear but the roads will be able to move the fruit on time," with 8,000 refrigerator cars between the two transcontinental lines.¹⁶ Railroads often paid growers for their losses, as

¹³ "Notice to Railroad of Damage to Fruit by Negligence of Railroad," Pacific Fruit Express car 621, HEH, box 5/77-83, folder 1.

¹⁴ Receipt from Parker Machine Works for San Marino Growers' Packing Association, July 8, 1910, HEH, box 5/77-83, folder 3. Parker's company was located on the Santa Fe Railroad in Riverside.

¹⁵ Archie Smith to H.D. Foy, April 26, 1910, HEH, box 5/66-83, folder 1.

¹⁶ "Banner Citrus Fruit Season," *Los Angeles Herald*, August 15, 1903, no page number, HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 41.

in the case of Pacific Fruit Express car 9504. Wrecked in an accident at Red Cliffs, Colorado, on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, this car carried fruit from Southern California that had been lost as a result of the crash. The packinghouse that shipped the fruit produced a bill of lading to the railroad company to receive the amount that the oranges would have received on the market at New York, the intended destination of car 9504.¹⁷ The railroads' commitment to preserving oranges in transit, as well as the wealth of growers, forced orchardists in the Southland to search elsewhere for the culprit causing their fruit spoilage.

As citrus growers had learned all too well during the cottony-cushion fiasco of the 1880s, scientific problems required scientific solutions. At the request of orange growers from Southern California, the U.S. Department of Agriculture sent G. Harold Powell, a pomologist with an education from Cornell University, to assess the problem of fruit decay.¹⁸ Powell's investigations revealed that a type of mold, the blue fungus, had caused the spoilage of fruits shipped from California. In many cases, this mold could only infect oranges when workers handled fruit carelessly. This could bruise or cut oranges, creating opportunities for infections such as blue mold fungus to enter the fruit.¹⁹ In his official report on, Powell explained his findings. "The most common type of injury" to fruits "was made by the point of the clippers in cutting the oranges from the trees. In some

¹⁷ C.J. Hicks to Archie Smith, n.d., HEH, box 5/77-83, folder 5. Based on this document's placement in the archives, it seems likely the accident occurred in 1911 or 1912.

¹⁸ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 8-9; Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 54. Powell's success, and the close relationship he formed with growers in Southern California, resulted in his appointment as General Manager of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, a position he held for a decade. Moses's dissertation remains the leading history of Powell's relationship with the orange industry.

¹⁹ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 254; MacCurdy, *The History of the California Fruit Growers Exchange*, 52.

cases deep gashes had been cut into the skin, in others the skin had been shaved or sliced off in areas varying in extent, while in still others the injury was so slight as to be hardly perceptible.” Much of this resulted from workers’ carelessness during picking, when they inadvertently damaged the fruit. “Other common forms of injury occurring in the groves,” Powell wrote, included “punctures and bruises from gravel and twigs in the bottom of the picking boxes and cuts in the skin caused by the finger nails of the pickers. Frequently bruises were found that could be traced to rough and careless work in loading and carting the fruit from the groves to the packing house and in unloading.”²⁰ Rather than charging railroads with outdated practices or asserting they lacked proper refrigerator cars, Powell declared that laborers, the men who picked oranges from the fields and those who packed them, bore responsibility for the costly spoilage of oranges. His findings had long-lasting ramifications for the citrus industry, particularly its laborers.

To curtail the blue mold epidemic, Powell induced growers to shift to a new model, dubbed the careful handling era or Powell Revolution by some historians.²¹ Thanks to Powell’s discovery that treating fruits roughly allowed infection during transportation by rail, citriculture required workers to develop a wide variety of skills, transforming the industry into “one of the world’s highest, if not its highest, specialized agricultural industries.”²² Laborers in the field learned to very carefully remove oranges

²⁰ Powell, *The Decay of Oranges While in Transit from California*, 21.

²¹ Tobey, Wetherell, Hallaran, and Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House*, 44-5.

²² “Citrus Growing and Packing Main Local Industry,” *Ontario Daily Report*, May 19, 1939, p. 2.

from trees by clipping the stems of the fruit, rather than simply oranges free and damaging the crop. Because fruit preservation required such care, packinghouses employed specialized crews to complete this work.²³ Careful handling prevented cuts to oranges that would allow blue mold to thrive. Powell appealed to growers' sense of profitability to facilitate the spread of this new method. He cleverly supported his own hypothesis by stating that "the highest net returns in the citrus industry have followed an increased cost to insure a more careful handling of the product."²⁴

Directly referencing the bottom line also garnered the attention of the railroads. The Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific both improved their refrigerator cars and icing stations to preserve oranges and lemons in transit from the Southland. The Santa Fe widely publicized this fact. "Some carriers, and especially the Santa Fe," one pamphleteer eagerly pointed out, "maintain separate departments of experts who have been especially trained in the handling of perishable freight."²⁵ The Santa Fe professed concern with orange decay during transit, "which was detrimental both to the shipper and the carriers."²⁶ The necessity of keeping fruit safe during railroad transportation thus shaped not only the packing process, but also railroad labor.

²³ Neptune Fogelberg and A.W. McKay, *The Citrus Industry and the California Fruit Growers Exchange System* (Washington, D.C.: Farm Credit Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, 1940), 45-6.

²⁴ Powell, *The Decay of Oranges while in Transit from California*, 29.

²⁵ Charles W. Workman, "The Transportation of Citrus Fruit from California," Fruit + Fruit Industry File, Ellingwood Room.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

By the early-twentieth century, picking oranges had become an industrialized activity. During this period, American manufactories began to adopt Henry Ford's assembly line model.²⁷ Simple machines such as Stebler-Parker clamp trucks allowed packers to easily transport oranges into refrigerator cars.²⁸ Rather than simply picking oranges and placing them in canvas bags, for instance, growers developed a "machine which will lift orange and lemon pickers by means of booms and stages into and completely around the tree." In packinghouses, workers operated machines that sorted and wrapped lemons and oranges.²⁹ In addition to developing the necessary agricultural knowledge to labor in the groves, then, workers in the citrus industry often became seasoned machinists. However, their fellow laborers in the railroad industry developed even more robust industrial skills.

Maintaining a rail line necessitated the employment of a vast array of skilled and semi-skilled laborers. From the executive such as the Big Four who ran the corporations to the section gangs who repaired tracks, employment by the railroad involved a wide variety of tasks that ran the full gamut of industrial work. Before they could even begin to lay track, workers surveyed the land to identify the most efficient routes that would tax engines as little as possible. Laborers often graded parts of hilly Southern California before they could begin construction.³⁰ Workers maintained cars, manned the enormous

²⁷ Tobey, Wetherell, Hallaran, and Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House*, 45-6.

²⁸ Stebler Parker Co. advertisement, *California Fruit News*, August 5, 1922, p. 11.

²⁹ "Citrus Handling Experiments Point to Future in Industry," *Ontario Daily Report*, June 20, 1949, no page numbers, Ellingwood Room, Citrus Fruits + Industry File.

³⁰ Huntington Land and Improvement Company Auditor's Report A, HEH 1/AA (A), p. 166.

shops to build or repair locomotives, installed new rails when tracks became too worn to function, and of course actually moved trains. They erected bridges and trusses, taming the landscape of Southern California. They laid signs warning passersby of railroad tracks and cattle guards.³¹

The industrial infrastructure that the railroads created required employees to work with all kinds of machinery. Telegraph operators sent messages along the line to update schedules and send critical information. Wharf employees loaded and unloaded goods from ships at harbor facilities that the railroads maintained.³² Carpenters and lumbermen, pipe fitters and firemen, car cleaners and machinists, blacksmiths and furnacemen, upholsterers and brass polishers all found steady work with railroads in Southern California.³³ Conductors, enginemen, and firemen ran the trains, while switchmen and flagmen directed them from the stations.³⁴ Their work forced them to remain abreast of the latest industrial developments. Workers at ice plants across Southern California kept oranges and lemons chilled as they voyaged across the continent.³⁵ By the mid-twentieth century, as the Santa Fe Railroad transitioned from steam- to diesel-powered

³¹ Annual Report of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company Coast Lines to the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of California for the Year Ending June 30, 1903, California State Archives, p. 43.

³² Annual Report of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company of California to the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of California for the Year Ending December 31, 1888, California State Archives, p. 6.

³³ C.E. Donnatin to Henry E. Huntington, January 10, 1903, HEH Correspondence, box 165.

³⁴ Annual Report of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company Coast Lines to the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of California for the Year Ending June 30, 1903, California State Archives, p. 59.

³⁵ Employee record of Glenn Wallace Armstrong, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad Collection, Personnel Records: Coast Lines, box 1, CSRM. Hereafter cited as Santa Fe Collection.

locomotives, its shops in Southern California remained among the most important in its transcontinental system. San Bernardino was home to the largest diesel locomotive facility on the Santa Fe line, equipped, in the words scholar Thomas Best, with facilities to “handle all traction motor and diesel engine rebuilding.”³⁶

In many cases, not following directions or acting carelessly on the job could result in derailments, collisions, or even death.³⁷ Railroads severely reprimanded employees for such actions. Even an action as simple as failing to have his watch checked so that it lined up with the company’s official timetables resulted in one brakeman who worked between Los Angeles and San Bernardino receiving demerits.³⁸ The Santa Fe terminated the employment of one man “For his responsibility in the matter of a delay of several minutes to a train on account of failure to respond promptly to a call, going back to sleep after having signed call book,” his role in causing two engines to collide, and failing to detect overheated wheels on a car, which made it “necessary to set [the] car out.”³⁹

Train travel had become extraordinarily complex by the time the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe came to the Golden State. Crisscrossing tracks from these systems were further complicated by the introduction of Henry Huntington’s Pacific Electric across the orange empire. To ease the difficulties of trains crossing various tracks, builders installed switches to notify conductors when to stop for another train or when to go. To this end,

³⁶ Thomas Doniphan Best, “The Role of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway System in the Economic Development of Southwestern United States: 1859-1954” (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1959), 110.

³⁷ Employee record of R.V. Adams, Santa Fe Collection, Personnel Records: Coast Lines, box 1.

³⁸ Employee record of Warnie Loith Angel, Santa Fe Collection, Personnel Records: Coast Lines, box 1.

³⁹ Employee record of David Albright, Santa Fe Collection, Personnel Records: Coast Lines, box 1.

conductors used staff boxes. A former trainman of the Pacific Electric described the use of this system to guide the flow of rail traffic. “Before a train enters a staff operated section” of track, “the conductor works a pin up through the groove to the top of the box” that controlled traffic. “If the block is unoccupied, the pin may then be released by turning a dial. This locks the machine and also the one at the other end of the protected section,” preserving the train’s right-of-way.⁴⁰ Waiting for other trains to cross the tracks, particularly heavily-laden ones, could require a great deal of patience. During the Second World War, when much of Southern California became an immense production facility for the armed forces, trains could carry well in excess of 100 cars, requiring multiple locomotives, often pulled by combinations of steam, diesel, and electric engines.⁴¹

Violent and nonviolent confrontations involving railroad endangered railroad workers. As the Santa Fe Railroad built across the Southwest, it became embroiled in conflict with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad in southeastern Colorado.⁴² At Colton in 1883, its California Southern line almost came to blows when it had to cross the tracks of the Southern Pacific. The Octopus coerced the sheriff to remove the railroad switch that the California Southern planned to use to hop the Southern Pacific tracks. Undeterred, workers for the Santa Fe network simply stole the device back and completed their work. Tensions between the two sides almost erupted into violence,

⁴⁰ Barham, “PE Freight Run,” 41.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴² Marshall, *Santa Fe*, 128.

averted by the state government's campaign to control the Southern Pacific.⁴³ Almost twenty years later, in 1901, citizens of Pomona in the heart of the orange empire pelted workers from a Southern Pacific crew who had been sent to lay new track without the city's permission.⁴⁴

Electric and steam railroad workers commonly altercated. Workers risked the wrath of competitors when instructed to remove another company's tracks. During the extension of one electric system in 1903, "The four points of attack" by the Los Angeles Railway Company in the City of Angels "were Jefferson and Main streets and the terminals of the Maple [A]venue and the San Pedro [S]treet trolley lines at the Southern Pacific track," as well as "the terminus of the Central [A]venue line at the Santa Fé track on Slauson [A]venue. At each of these points men and materials were unloaded, under cover of darkness, to extend the trolley tracks across the Southern Pacific track and right of way."⁴⁵ Henry Huntington's men removed steel rails laid by competitors, risking public antagonism as well as reprisals from steam railroads. Huntington's Pacific Electric and the Santa Fe Railroad repeatedly clashed as the former line extended into the Inland Empire. Workers from either line, often Mexicans, followed order to tear out the lines of competitors, often nocturnally to avoid attention.⁴⁶ "There was surprise and indignation

⁴³ Bryant, *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway*, 98-9.

⁴⁴ Joe Blackstock, "The Railroad Takes on Pomona in the Area's Fight of the Century, and Loses," *The Daily Report*, January 3, 2000, p. A-3.

⁴⁵ Untitled article, *Los Angeles Daily Times*, March 21, 1903, no page numbers, HEH, box 16/4/(4), folder 39.

⁴⁶ Joe Blackstock, "Dueling Rail Builders Waged War a Century Ago," *The Daily Bulletin*, June 4, 2013, no page number, Ellingwood Room, Railroads-Local File.

last night, when a band of cholos” came to “Jefferson and Main [S]treets with wagon-loads of rails and ties, which they unloaded and then proceeded to tear up the asphalt, in order to put in a double-track crossing over the Southern Pacific Railroad.”⁴⁷

Even after the completion of tracks, railroads remained lethal entities, much to the chagrin of workers. Workers blasted the San Fernando Tunnel into existence by 1876, using explosives to carve out a thoroughfare almost one and a quarter miles in length.⁴⁸ They risked severe injury from dynamite. Brakemen stood atop trains, moving from car to car to activate the breaks, always careful to duck under tunnels when the train descended into the earth at points such as the San Fernando Tunnel.⁴⁹ Passersby and passengers were not immune from violence inflicted by railroads. One unfortunate woman in Los Angeles lodged her foot into a railroad switch in 1912. “Before she could extricate it a train killed her,” the *Los Angeles Herald* mourned.⁵⁰ In September 1906, the Los Angeles Railway paid out \$3,900 for injuries resulting from collisions with trains from the Southern Pacific, defective equipment, derailed cars, and horses that it struck.⁵¹ This danger continued into the twentieth century, well after the railroads had grown familiar with common problems that resulted in bodily harm to workers. In Northern

⁴⁷ Untitled article, *Los Angeles Daily Times*, March 21, 1903, no page numbers, HEH, box 16/4/(4), folder 39.

⁴⁸ Stuart Daggett, *Chapters on the History of the Southern Pacific* (New York, NY: The Ronald Press Company, 1922), 130-1.

⁴⁹ Reinhardt, ed., *Workin' on the Railroad*, 84; Employee record of Alver Clifton Abbott, Santa Fe Collection, Personnel Records: Coast Lines, box 1.

⁵⁰ “Chinese Asks for \$25,000 for Death of His Wife,” *Los Angeles Herald*, September 27, 1912, p. 15.

⁵¹ “Explanation of Amounts Paid in Settlement of Claims for the Month of September, 1906,” Claims Department, Los Angeles Railway Company, HEH, box 16/4/1, folder 2.

California, east of Clio, a truss collapsed as a train run by the Southern Pacific crossed the bridge in 1931. This resulted in the loss of fruits grown by the California Fruit Exchange and the hospitalization of forty workers.⁵² Finally, robberies occurred on railroads across the United States. On the Santa Fe, a robber shot and killed an express mail worker during the journey from Oceanside to Santa Ana in Orange County in 1925. The railroad promised a reward of \$1,000 to anyone with information on the crime, but never located the culprit.⁵³

The constant, looming threat of bodily harm did not prevent railroad workers from performing awe-inspiring tasks. They braved nature's wrath in 1906, during E.H. Harriman's campaign against the Colorado River. In December of that year, Epes Randolph, one of Harriman's closest assistants, personally directed the efforts to redirect the flow of the river.⁵⁴ "Around him," one publication recalled, "Indian, Mexican and Irish laborers pushed huge rocks from 60-ton, side-dumping freight cars called 'battleships,'" or railroad cars loaded with material to divert the river.⁵⁵ Using rock and rubble to construct inadvertent dams on the Colorado, the workers under Randolph's direction fought "to save the Imperial Valley of California from complete destruction by

⁵² Department of Industrial Relations, Industrial Accident Commission Accident Report, MS 49, CSRM. This organization should not be confused with the California Fruit Growers Exchange, also known as Sunkist.

⁵³ Reward poster, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company, and explanatory note by Don Meadows, ULV History Collection.

⁵⁴ See chapter three for an account of the canal system on the Colorado River that fed water to the Imperial Valley.

⁵⁵ Nat McKelvey, "The Indomitable Epes Randolph," *Trains*, July 1950, 44.

floodwaters.”⁵⁶ Their efforts preserved a crucial center of agricultural production. Eventually, they preserved Imperial Valley’s reputation as “one of the world’s great producers of citrus fruits,” and prevented it from succumbing to a deluge that would have reduced it to “a great freshwater lake.”⁵⁷ As land agents of the railroads and citrus builders attempted to reconstitute the landscape of Southern California as a productive region to enrich themselves, railroad workers made their desires a reality. However, fully understanding the labor frontier of Southern California requires a close examination of the men and women who performed that work, along with the hardships they faced.

Countless Chinese Americans participated in the citrus and railroad industries in Southern California. Many Chinese originally spent their life savings journeying to North America during the Gold Rush. They referred to California as Gold Mountain, and hoped to improve their lives by discovering a fortune in minerals.⁵⁸ Like the vast majority of miners who ventured to California, most Chinese sojourners did not amass obscene wealth, and had to find work in other industries to support themselves.⁵⁹ One of the first industrialists in California to recognize the labor potential of the Chinese population was Edwin Crocker, brother of Charles Crocker of the Central Pacific Railroad. The Crockers brought Chinese in large numbers into the fold as one of the most important labor pools for the Associates. The Chinese, who often worked together in gangs, built the first

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Tzu Kuei Yen, “Chinese Workers and the First Transcontinental Railroad of the United States” (Ph.D. diss., St. John’s University, 1977), 8-9.

⁵⁹ Harry W. Lawton, “The Pilgrims from Gom-Benn: Migratory Origins of the Chinese in the San Bernardino Valley,” in Great Basin Foundation, ed., *Wong Ho Leun*, 143-5.

transcontinental railroad from Sacramento to Promontory, Utah. Many succumbed to the physical hardships of the job. Harsh winters in the Sierra Nevada Mountains took a significant toll, and demolition work for the railroad also imperiled the lives of Chinese workers. Often working shifts that lasted twelve hours, Chinese laborers handled dynamite that could trigger avalanches in the High Sierras.⁶⁰ Although many Californians found Asian immigrants culturally inassimilable, Edwin Crocker expressed gratitude for the “poor, despised class of laborers called the Chinese” at the ceremony to mark completion of the first transcontinental railroad at Promontory.⁶¹

As the Associates and William Barstow Strong competed to lay tracks in Southern California, they relied on Chinese builders to stitch steel rails across the orange empire. As an itinerant labor force, the Chinese of California blasted the San Fernando Tunnel into existence, connecting Los Angeles to San Francisco. They built north from National City when the Santa Fe line, through its California Southern subsidiary, created its own railroad network in the Golden State.⁶² Without the extensive and often dangerous labor performed by the Chinese, the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe lines that serviced the Southland by the 1880s simply would not have existed.

Thanks to the perceived racial differences of this racial group and labor difficulties, Californians lobbied Congress to pass the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The first of its

⁶⁰ Yen, “Chinese Workers,” 129; Starr, *California*, 118.

⁶¹ Quoted in Thomas W. Chinn, H. Mark Lai, and Philip P. Choy, eds., *A History of the Chinese in California: A Syllabus* (San Francisco, CA: Chinese Historical Society of America, 1969), 43-5, 46; Lewis, *The Big Four*, 69-71. Richard White characterized Edwin as a capable businessmen, and Charles as “the far less able brother.” See White, *Railroaded*, 18.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 47.

kind to do so, this legislation forbade the entry of Chinese into the United States for a decade.⁶³ However, the Chinese Exclusion Act did not remove emigrants from the Middle Kingdom who had already come to California. Many of them continued to search for jobs in the Golden State. Some remained in the railroad industry as workers, while a number ended up in the citrus industry of Southern California.⁶⁴ Because the Chinese had grown oranges for centuries prior to their immigration to the United States, they were extensively familiar with the particularities of the genus *Citrus*.⁶⁵ They became so intertwined with agriculture that some observers compared the Chinese to enslaved African Americans in the cotton industry of the South.⁶⁶ Chinese generally received better pay in the orange-picking industry of Southern California than they did in other sectors of the economy, but they continued to face prejudice.⁶⁷ Most vividly, in the 1930s, as businesspeople in Los Angeles clamored for a Union Station to link all the major transcontinental routes in the city, they displaced the city's Chinatown to make way for the rail terminal.⁶⁸ Chinese developed the infrastructure of the orange empire by

⁶³ Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 1.

⁶⁴ Untitled article from *Chicago Tribune*, reprinted as "Scarcity of Fruit in the East," *Redlands Citrograph*, August 27, 1887, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Harry W. Lawton and Lewis G. Weathers, "The Origins of Citrus Research in California," in Walter Reuther, E. Clair Calavan, and Glenn E. Carman, eds., *The Citrus Industry*, v. 5 (Oakland, CA: Publications, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of California, 1989), 291.

⁶⁶ Clara Huber Engle, "The Orange County Citrus Strike, 1936: Historical Analysis and Social Conflict" (master's thesis, California State University, Fullerton, 1975), 10.

⁶⁷ Paul Wormser, "Chinese Agricultural Labor in the Citrus Belt of Inland Southern California," in Great Basin Foundation, ed., *Wong Ho Leun*, 178.

⁶⁸ Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 59.

working to water projects, such the Gage Canal from the San Bernardino Mountains to Riverside.⁶⁹ They worked for the Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company digging sluices for growers in the 1890s.⁷⁰

Importantly, the Chinese did far more than perform menial labor in Southern California. As recent histories have argued, some Chinese broke into the middle class thanks to their work in the citrus and railroad industries. Chinese immigrants formed the Six Companies to help newcomers acclimate to life in California in the years after the Gold Rush.⁷¹ The pomologist Lue Gim Gong developed a new strain of orange, which growers in California and Florida cultivated.⁷² Middlemen, or compradors, earned respectable sums by organizing southern Chinese immigrants from Guangdong province and selling their labor to growers on a contract basis.⁷³ Famed Chinese contractor Ah Quin followed this model when he organized hundreds of laborers to build the California Southern Railroad.⁷⁴ In Riverside, Sam Ho and Chen Duey used the contract labor system to recruit orange-pickers in large enough quantities to satisfy the needs of the

⁶⁹ Harry W. Lawton, "Riverside's First Boom and the Chinatown of the Eighties," in Great Basin Foundation, ed., *Wong Ho Leun*, 36-7.

⁷⁰ Record of Events, SAVIC, box 2790. At least one worker, Ah Lin, was denoted by the denigrating prefix of "Chinaman." "Applications for Water," SAVIC, box 2784.

⁷¹ Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*, 8-10.

⁷² Chinn, Lai, and Choy, *A History of the Chinese in California*, viii-ix.

⁷³ Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 344-8.

⁷⁴ Andrew Griego, ed., "Rebuilding the California Southern Railroad: The Account of a Chinese Labor Contractor, 1884," *The Journal of San Diego History* 25, no. 4 (Fall 1979): <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/79fall/railroad.htm>.

expanding orange empire.⁷⁵ The role of Chinese contractors in the labor market of Southern California reveals the degree of agency this population had by the 1890s. Just as the railroad industry provided jobs that gave the Chinese an economic foothold in California, this crucial laboring population in the Golden State took advantage of the citrus industry to earn respectable livings.

Restricting the flow of Chinese into California did not curtail immigration by members of other nationalities. Labor disputes between growers and Chinese, who occasionally struck for higher wages, led orchardists from the Golden State to agitate in favor of other Asian groups, including Japanese, Indians, Koreans, and Filipinos.⁷⁶ By the turn of the twentieth century, more Asian groups started to enter the United States in large numbers, and settled in Southern California as citrus laborers. Japanese men succeeded Chinese immigrants, journeying to the United States, and became the dominant force in the citrus industry starting around 1900.⁷⁷ Later, Koreans began to displace Chinese laborers as a major force for the railroads in citrus towns such as Redlands and Riverside.⁷⁸ Koreans, Japanese, and Filipinos flooded into the United States, finding jobs in the citrus industry.⁷⁹ Immigrants from the Philippine Islands,

⁷⁵ Lawton, "Riverside's First Boom," 44-5.

⁷⁶ Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1989), 29, 148-9.

⁷⁷ Margo McBane, "The Role of Gender in Citrus Employment: A Case Study of Recruitment, Labor, and Housing Patterns at the Limoneira Company, 1893 to 1940," *California History* 74, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 71. As McBane notes, this agreement limited male immigration, but left the door open for Japanese women to enter the United States until the enactment of further restrictions in 1921.

⁷⁸ Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 273.

⁷⁹ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 263-4.

which the United States had liberated from Spanish control in 1898 and subsequently conquered, picked oranges in the Southland.⁸⁰ In the groves and packinghouses, they joined denizens of Alta California who had inhabited the region for generations.

Following their efforts to exclude Asian immigrants, the growers and railroad lines of Southern California found no shortage of able-bodied workers. Italians, who had grown citrus fruits for centuries, came to the United States in large numbers by the 1890s, working in the groves of Southern California.⁸¹ An even larger body of labor already occupied the state of California. Logically enough, growers turned to the Mexican American population to pick and pack oranges. As a result of the rapid influx of Americans during California's successful bid for statehood, many Mexicans lost their land and the resultant wealth it provided. In many cases, citrus growers purchased large tracts of land from old Californio families. Sensing that white invaders would overwhelm them, many Californios wisely sold their land, rather than allowing squatters to take it from them. At Azusa, Henry Dalton acquired land that had previously belonged to Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar, Californios who had received their land in a grant from Governor Juan Alvarado during the Mexican period.⁸² Orange growers often amassed some of the largest tracts of land in Southern California. The Irvine Company

⁸⁰ Wormser, "Chinese Agricultural Labor," 189-91. For a minutely detailed history of the relationship between the United States and the Philippines, see David J. Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2007), 16-29; "Filipino Camp rules and Regulations," no date, Papers of the San Dimas Lemon Association, Wilson Library.

⁸¹ José M. Alamillo, *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 38.

⁸² Old Azusa Abstract, AFCC, box 1, folder 2. The same document also shows Dalton grant the Southern Pacific Railroad a right of way across his property. The Californios who previously resided on Dalton's land therefore missed the opportunities provided by the railroad.

reigned supreme as the largest landowner in Orange County.⁸³ The railroad also purchased land from Californios across the Southland. At Lordsburg in the San Gabriel Valley, for instance, the Palomares clan sold its ownings to the Southern Pacific so that it could compete against the Santa Fe in a vital citrus-growing district.⁸⁴

At the close of the nineteenth century, the Mexican population of California had been reduced to wage labor in the citrus and railroad industries alongside the Chinese. Known as *traqueros*, Mexican American railway workers became a crucial part of the operations of the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific in California.⁸⁵ The Santa Fe Railroad, for instance, became one of the predominant employers of Mexicans in the United States by 1910.⁸⁶ The Riverside and Arlington Railway in the heart of orange country employed Mexican workers to lay and maintain track in the first decade of the twentieth century.⁸⁷ They could earn anywhere from \$5.25 to \$10 every two weeks in this industry.⁸⁸ In addition to laying tracks, Mexicans laid power lines and facilitated the

⁸³ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 267.

⁸⁴ Record of land sale from Lugarda A. Palomares to Southern Pacific Railroad, SP Collection, Land Department, v. 23.

⁸⁵ Jeffrey Marco Garcilazos, *Traqueros: Mexican Railroad Workers in the United States, 1870 to 1930* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2012), 6.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁸⁷ Riverside and Arlington Railway Company Account Book, 1902-1905, HEH, p. 40.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

electrification of the Golden State.⁸⁹ Their pay lagged behind that of white employees, further demonstrating the racial hierarchy of labor in Southern California.⁹⁰

Mexicans made an ever greater impact in the orange groves. From the earliest decades of the citrus industry, even before the great boom of 1887, Mexican Americans labored in a variety of ways that enriched growers and Southern California as a whole. George Chaffey, whose colonial venture at Ontario spawned numerous imitators, shared one particularly amusing incident involving a Hispanic laborer securing the water supply for this orange growing colony.

Andrew Rubio, a great big Mexican, was given the job of watching the water. He went up there [to the San Gabriel Mountains] and found a man sitting on this little diversion dam with a rifle. He asked him what he was doing. The man said he was turning it (the water) down to Pomona and proposed to keep it there. Rubio took a board from the fence and beat him with it, told him to go and never return and he never did.⁹¹

Mexicans who worked in the citrus industry earned the nickname *naranjeros*, from the Spanish word *naranja*, or orange. They often lived in Jimtowns, segregated communities separated them from whites by placing Mexicans on the opposite side of the railroad tracks.⁹² Railroads performed a cultural function by delineating such working-class neighborhoods from those occupied by whites. Typically, middle- and upper-class white residents occupied suburbs, with less well-to-do neighborhoods established in downtown

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁹¹ Ziegler, "Pepper Tree Furor," *Ontario Daily Report*, November 6, 1975, Euclid Avenue File, Ellingwood Room.

⁹² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 264.

areas directly along railroad lines, giving rise to the phrase “the wrong side of the tracks.”⁹³

Work in orange groves was not as intense as in the cotton industry or other agricultural sectors. Thanks to the overlapping ripening seasons of the Valencia and Washington Navel oranges, *naranjeros* could usually count on year-round employment.⁹⁴ After the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, migrant laborers from south of California’s border fled the chaos of their home country for some semblance of economic stability in the United States, and accounted for an even larger proportion of laborers in the citrus industry, which happily accepted them.⁹⁵ They replaced the Chinese as the numerically dominant group of agricultural laborers in the Golden State by the 1920s. Growers perceived Mexican workers as ideal, thanks largely to their conception that they possessed the ideal physical endurance to labor in the fields as well as the reality of Mexican Americans having few economic opportunities outside the agricultural sector.⁹⁶

The entry of the United States into conflict against Japan and Germany during World War II had unforeseen ramifications on the laboring Mexican population of the Southland. As white workers vacated the orange groves to join the armed forces in their global war against the Axis Powers, members of the California Fruit Growers Exchange pleaded with the government of the United States to make it easier for them to acquire

⁹³ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 26.

⁹⁴ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 265-6.

⁹⁵ González, *Labor and Community*, 6-7; Burgess and Gonzales, *Redlands*, 54.

⁹⁶ Daniels, *Bitter Harvest*, 63, 67.

Mexican workers. Charles Teague, a well-respected lemon grower from Ventura County and the president of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, became one of the most vocal proponents of the movement to import Mexican laborers to the United States. As the most visible face of citrus cooperatives in California for decades prior to the Second World War, Teague had a higher standing in the orange and lemon growing communities of Southern California than any of his peers. Rising to join the Farm Security Administration during the Great Depression, he ascended to the national stage, promoting cooperative agriculture along the lines of that practiced by Sunkist. When the bombing of Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II, Teague wasted no time making good use of his bully pulpit to convince the federal government to provide workers for the American agricultural sector, including the Golden State's citrus industry.

The draft significantly diminished the labor pool in California, forcing the government to seek creative solutions to the problem of the state's shortage of agricultural laborers.⁹⁷ Counterproductively, the government removed Japanese Americans from the labor pool of Southern California with its internment program. Under Executive Order 9066, President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the American military to remove Japanese Americans from supposed war areas. Given California's relative proximity to Hawaii, where the war had begun for the United States, the military wasted no time gathering the Japanese population of the Golden State and removing it to internment camps in the interior of the country.⁹⁸ Teague and growers based in California

⁹⁷ "The Farm Labor Program for 1943," Teague Papers, box 58.

⁹⁸ David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), 752-4.

did not appreciate the removal of Japanese Americans, albeit more for commercial than moral or political reasons. “While the labor situation is serious throughout the nation,” one memorandum from the Department of Agriculture critiqued, “it is acute in the western states because of” the government’s “withdrawal of some 125,000 Japanese,” who worked with “specialty crops” such as oranges.⁹⁹

By 1942, Teague’s protests started to reach the ears of receptive government officials. Governor Earl Warren of California, for instance, took Teague’s advice to heart. Sharing Teague’s “gravely concerned” attitude “over the labor shortage and the fear of labor shortages that are primarily responsible for the lag in food production that has developed,” Warren empowered the chief of Sunkist to act on behalf of the Golden State at the federal level. Cloaked in the raiment of patriotism, Teague and his allies framed the shortage of labor in the context of producing enough food to feed Americans overseas, fighting in the Pacific and North Africa in 1942. Warren designated Teague “as my personal representative to contact Secretary of Agriculture [Claude] Wickard, War Manpower Commissioner [Paul] McNutt, and such other Federal Agencies as may be necessary for immediate relief of the California farm manpower shortage.”¹⁰⁰

Bolstered by Warren’s support, Teague spent much of his time in Washington, D.C., trying to convince his fellow government administrators of the necessity of bringing laborers into the United States during wartime. To solve California’s labor problem, Teague looked south. To guarantee “the quick mobilization and distribution of a

⁹⁹ “The Farm Labor Program for 1943,” Teague Papers, 1943.

¹⁰⁰ Earl Warren to Charles C. Teague, March 13, 1943, Teague Papers, box 58.

labor supply that will insure the planting, culture, and harvesting of essential crops on important producing lands of California,” Teague proposed the importation of Mexicans to the United States.¹⁰¹ “A large supply of labor is available in Mexico. This labor must be brought into the States and handled in a way that is workable and practicable,” he believed¹⁰²

Mexicans and Mexican Americans had fared poorly in the 1930s. Transported to railway stations across the Southwest, Mexicans and Mexican Americans had been forced across the border aboard trains, out of the United States, due to the atrocious job market of the Great Depression. Others voluntarily joined them in an effort to abandon the climate of fear and hopelessness that gripped the United States.¹⁰³ Teague’s proposal represented nothing short of a total reversal of American policy toward Mexicans during the 1930s. Mexico and the United States settled on an agreement in 1942 that allowed Mexicans to enter the Southwest on temporary work contracts to work on the railroads and in the agricultural industry.¹⁰⁴ The following year, the Congress passed a resolution to fund “the recruiting, training, and placement of workers needed for the production and harvesting of agricultural commodities essential to the prosecution of the war.”¹⁰⁵ This

¹⁰¹ Charles C. Teague, “Memorandum on the Agricultural Labor Situation in California,” Teague Papers, box 58.

¹⁰² Charles C. Teague, “The Farm Labor Program for 1943,” Teague Papers, box 58.

¹⁰³ John Mack Faragher, Mari Jo Buhle, Daniel Czitrom, and Susan H. Armitage, *Out of Many: A History of the American People*, brief 6th ed. (Boston, MA: Prentice Hall, 2012), 639, 643.

¹⁰⁴ Garcia, “Ambassadors in Overalls,” 33.

¹⁰⁵ House Joint Resolution 96, Teague Papers, box 58.

agreement became popularly known as the bracero program, and it directly benefitted California growers and railroad lines.

The arrival of the braceros merited tremendous fanfare from the citrus industry of Southern California. The Second World War launched a patriotic fervor that resulted in solidarity among the nations of the Western Hemisphere.¹⁰⁶ As the war continued and more American men entered military service, voluntarily or involuntarily, the railroads translated the bracero agreement into reality. Lines such as the Southern Pacific transported Mexican nationals across the border, depositing them in the Southwest to occupy the critical rail and agricultural sectors that proved so important to the home front. If the braceros represented an ideal solution to the problem of agricultural worker shortages during the war, the railroads proved themselves a vital link in the process of stabilizing the labor market in the wartime citrus industry. On the journey north from the Southern Pacific's route to Mexico City, the railroad provided "tamales, tortillas, [chili] con carne, and other Mexican foods" to the future braceros, one Sunkist official explained.¹⁰⁷ In February 1944, when the Allies nursed aspirations of liberating Paris from the grip of the Third Reich and storming Leyte Gulf to reclaim the Philippines, the Southern Pacific quietly brought into the Southland "850 nationals, all of whom will be employed in [the] California citrus industry. About 150 men left the train at San Bernardino to be assigned to that area and Redlands and Riverside," still three of the most

¹⁰⁶ Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 419-20.

¹⁰⁷ "JOC" to Charles C. Teague, March 16, 1943, Teague Papers, box 58, folder Labor.

important cities of the orange empire.¹⁰⁸ The Southern Pacific aid Sunkist in its hour of greatest peril, and greased the wheels of the American war machine while doing so.

Once in the United States, Mexican nationals made the best they could of the tumultuous circumstances of California during the war. Tenacious, diligent workers, many of them were “extremely anxious to send part of their earnings to their families as soon as they have worked one pay period in this country,” commented one Sunkist administrator.¹⁰⁹ Mario Perez, the son of bracero Gregorio Perez, fondly remembered his time at Limoneira, Teague’s plantation in Ventura County. Perez recalled how “in the wee hours of the morning” a horn and the clarion call “the lemons are freezing!” would summon braceros from their slumber to light smudge pots and save precious citrus fruits.¹¹⁰ While Mexicans earned meager wages for all the hardships they endured, the citrus industry would not have retained its handsome profits if not for the endeavors of Perez and his comrades.

Braceros also participated in the railroad industry. After the United States and Mexico signed the bilateral agreement that allowed Mexican nationals into the Southwest, the Southern Pacific Railroad pleaded with the federal government for 5,000 such employees. The government initially rejected this request. However, in the spring of 1943, by which time the Southern Pacific had recruited from every possible domestic

¹⁰⁸ “400 Nationals Arrive to Work Citrus Industry,” *The Daily Report*, February 21, 1944, p. 1. The same issue carried a feature on the capture of German soldiers by Allied forces during the war. Interestingly, California orange growers happily put German and Italian prisoners of war to work picking oranges. See Williamson, “Labor in the California Citrus Industry,” 62-3.

¹⁰⁹ M.R. Howard to H.A. Thomas, Jr., Teague Papers, box 58.

¹¹⁰ Mario Perez, “The Lemons are Freezing!,” in Bracero History Archive, accessed September 21, 2015, Item #3229, <http://braceroarchive.org/items/show/3229>.

labor pool, the government shifted its position and allowed the railroad to employ 3,000 Mexican laborers.¹¹¹ By the end of the year, 6,000 Mexicans worked on the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, and Western Pacific railroads.¹¹²

In all, 300,000 Mexicans toiled in the United States during the Second World War. Not only did they keep the railroads running in this critical period, filled to the brim with oranges packed by *naranjeros* in the Southland, but they also demonstrated the possibility of overcoming the negative history imposed on Mexican Americans.¹¹³ The bracero program outlasted the war, continuing until 1964.¹¹⁴ The longevity of the program solidified Mexicans as the dominant component of the agricultural labor force of California. The braceros silenced the already fading echoes of manifest destiny, their bravery and stoic labor pointing toward a more racially inclusive California.

Native Americans joined Mexicans as laborers in the citrus industry of Southern California. Although existing accounts typify the Indians of the Golden State as either pre-agricultural gatherers or agricultural novitiates under the watchful eyes of Spanish friars and American federal agents, native peoples played important roles in the industrial orange sector of California around the turn of the twentieth century. At first, the arrival of railroads and large populations of white Americans in Southern California devastated native Indian economies. After the Gold Rush and California's rapid entry into the Union

¹¹¹ Farrington, *Railroad at War*, 40-1.

¹¹² Ernesto Galarza, *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story* (Charlotte, NC: McNally & Loftin, Publishers, 1964), 54.

¹¹³ Faragher, Buhle, Czitrom, and Armitage, *Out of Many*, 762-3.

¹¹⁴ Matt Garcia, "Ambassadors in Overalls," *Boom: A Journal of California* 1, no. 4 (Winter 2011): 34.

during the 1840s and 1850s, white denizens of the Golden State clearly perceived Indians as sub-humans, enemies to enslave or conquer. Whites in Southern California used any available provocation, from military attacks by well-organized Paiute warriors to simple thievery, to justify retaliatory violence against Indian populations.¹¹⁵ Anthropologist Robert F. Heizer estimated that between the discovery of gold in California in 1848 and 1870, 50,000 Indians died of starvation, disease, and widespread homicide perpetrated by Anglo-American miners.¹¹⁶ Euro-American ranches and mines displaced native peoples from their home, constructing new irrigation systems and relying on plants to sustain ranchos and incoming American settlers. Diverting water and eliminating traditional dietary sources all but completely hobbled Native American communities in the 1850s and 1860s by coopting key economic resources.¹¹⁷ Steel rails replaced the footpaths of Native Americans, restricting Indian movement. One elder of the Chemehuevi people lamented that the Southern Pacific “destroyed” water sources near Twenty-Nine Palms.¹¹⁸ This put Native Americans in the unenviable position of deciding to either face poverty on reservations or act as wage laborers, as they had during the Mexican era.¹¹⁹

Railroads subjugated native peoples through their very existence. Government land grants signed away land that had belonged to Indians for generations without

¹¹⁵ Lindsay, *Murder State*, 173.

¹¹⁶ Robert F. Heizer, “Introduction,” xiv.

¹¹⁷ Lindsay, *Murder State*, 177.

¹¹⁸ Trafzer, *A Chemehuevi Song*, 169.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 140, 176-7.

consulting tribal governments. The Southern Pacific Railroad received territory in bounteous Imperial County around the city of Yuma, but the Quechans who had lived on the banks of the Colorado around this frontier town had no say in the acquisition of their land by a private corporation.¹²⁰ Indeed, the Southern Pacific ran across the Yuma Indian Reservation.¹²¹ Adding insult to injury, working for the railroad was often the economic opportunity for native peoples in Southern California.¹²² The Cahuillas helped unite the states by laboring in the transcontinental railroad industry. In the 1870s, as the Southern Pacific began to build toward Los Angeles and to extend its new Sunset Route to Louisiana, it cut through territory that the Cahuilla had inhabited for countless generations. Thanks to the generous land grant policy of the federal government, Indians such as the Cahuillas lost land to the railroads without any legal means to defend their ancestral territories.¹²³ As the Southern Pacific passed through settlements it called Indio and Indian Wells, the native peoples it displaced made the best of their circumstances by going to work for the railroad.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Record of land sale by Act of Congress to Southern Pacific Railroad, SP, Land Records, v. 14.

¹²¹ Record of land sale by Yuma Indian Reservation to Southern Pacific Railroad, SP, Land Records, v. 14.

¹²² Trafzer, *A Chemehuevi Song*, 170.

¹²³ Denise Goolsby, "Southern Pacific Railroad Made Path through the Wild," *The Desert Sun*, August 24, 2014, <http://www.desertsun.com/story/life/2014/08/24/southern-pacific-railroad-history-coachella-valley/14446763/>.

¹²⁴ Patricia B. Laflin, *Indio* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 7. At least once, Cahuilla railroad laborers came into conflict with Chinese workers during the construction of the Southern Pacific's Sunset Route. *San Bernardino Times*, February 22, 1877, as cited in Lawton, "A Selected Chronological History," 66.

Native Americans made an even greater impact in the citrus industry of California. The transformation of Riverside into a wealthy city involved cultural shifts that affected Native Americans. As historian Nathan Gonzalez has argued, Southern California promoters relied on a Spanish fantasy past to promote the region by attempting to characterize Indian inhabitants as happy, productive laborers under the watchful eyes of Spanish padres or Californio ranchers. In Riverside, hotel operator and city magnate Frank Miller opened his New Glenwood Hotel (later renamed the Mission Inn) as an architectural homage to the Franciscan institutions built through the blood and sweat of Indians in the eighteenth century.¹²⁵ As historian Maurice Hodgen explained, Miller consciously selected the design as a method to promote romantic notions of California's past, but also as a reflection of national fascination with California history.¹²⁶

Orange growers in Riverside recognized the benefits of recruiting Native Americans as a cheap labor force. Early in Riverside's history, during the 1870s, the Cahuillas built the first irrigation canals from the Santa Ana River to feed the expanding groves.¹²⁷ They did most of the work in the earliest orange orchards in San Bernardino County, and some remained as orange pickers through the 1910s.¹²⁸ To a certain degree, orange growers shared the goals of assimilation-minded whites across the country, who

¹²⁵ Nathan Gonzales, "Riverside, Tourism, and the Indian: Frank A. Miller and the Creation of Sherman Institute," *Southern California Quarterly* 84, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 2002): 193-4.

¹²⁶ Maurice Hodgen, "Riverside's Mission Inn: The Beginning of a Landmark," *Southern California Quarterly* 90, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 33. Hodgen argued that this fascination was best epitomized through the California State Building at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, which drew considerable attention from visitors.

¹²⁷ Lawton, "A Brief History of Citrus," 10.

¹²⁸ McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 54-5.

hoped to introduce agriculture among native peoples with the goal of integrating them as full political and economic participants of the United States.

In addition to reservations across the country, citizens of the United States also launched boarding schools for Native American youths to indoctrinate them in the ways of white culture.¹²⁹ The first Indian school in Southern California opened at Perris, along the California Southern Railroad, before moving to Riverside just a few miles away. In the estimation of recent historians, it seems likely that the orange growers who supported Miller's bid to move the Indian school to Riverside wanted to establish a cheap source of local labor. As historian Nathan Gonzales commented, local businesses benefitted from the nascent Indian school.¹³⁰ Sherman Institute, as the school in Riverside was named, provided technical training to native peoples from across the American Southwest.¹³¹

As records at the National Archives at Riverside show, Indian students from the Sherman Institute actively engaged in the orange empire and its infrastructure. Historian Kevin Whalen argued that students used the system to learn valuable professional skills. Despite "difficult and sometimes overwhelming challenges to young Native Americans," the Sherman outing program also offered Indian students the tools to achieve "equal status within mainstream society."¹³² Records kept by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and

¹²⁹ Quoted in Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, "Introduction: Origin and Development of the American Indian Boarding School System," in Trafzer, Keller, and Sisquoc, eds., *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 1.

¹³⁰ Gonzales, "Riverside, Tourism, and the Indian," 219-20.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 470.

¹³² Kevin Whalen, "Labored Learning: The Outing System and Sherman Institute, 1902-1930," 130, in Trafzer, Gilbert, and Sisquoc, eds., *The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue*, 129-30.

the U.S. Department of the Interior detail the experience of Sherman students in the outing system. However, many of the records carry with them the biases and assumptions of the white administrators who composed the documents. Many of the records were designed to demonstrate the beneficent influence of Anglo-American ideals upon native students. Removing this layer of meaning from the documents, however, can reveal the productive agency of Native Americans in California during its industrial age. Archival theorist Ann Laura Stoler has articulated the notion of an archival grain, wherein readers simply absorb information presented from official sources such as Superintendent Hall or the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, the ability to read “upper class” or privileged sources “upside down” allows scholars to reinterpret documents from the perspectives of previously marginalized historical actors.¹³³ Following this archival epistemology, while Sherman students had no hand in creating the records that detailed their labors, readers can nonetheless discern a degree of agency among Native American pupils who worked in the orange groves and packinghouses of Riverside.

A close reading of the records relating to Sherman students’ work shows that Native Americans in Southern California performed crucial functions in the realm of citrus agriculture. Sherman students worked in and around the citrus groves. They often labored from May through August, during the summer months when school did not demand as much of their attention. Much of the money native students netted went to the Indian outing agents who organized these ventures. Although Josa Mariano earned

¹³³ Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance,” *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2 (March 2002): 99.

\$28.15 for his agricultural work, for instance, the Indian agent who helped place him achieve this position, Fred Long, earned \$56.00.¹³⁴ This regulation did not prevent students from the Sherman Institute from participating en masse in the outing program. Jason De Villa, Dick Kwihoya, and Francis Giesdorff picked oranges for Ms. M.B. Gaylords on Magnolia Avenue in Riverside. They received 15 cents for each orange tree they picked.¹³⁵ Lyman Van Wickle Brown, one of Riverside's most prominent entrepreneurs, used Eddie Thomas, Francisco Asidro, and Jose Candelario to ranch and work in his orange groves.¹³⁶ Other citrus agriculturalists in the city, such as the Hubertys family, payed Homer Talos and Lena Yellowfoot two and a half cents per box of oranges picked.¹³⁷

Despite the compensation they received, Native American student workers endured difficult physical conditions. As citrus historian Douglas Sackman explicated, orange picking was a daunting, physically arduous task for laborers in the Golden State. In addition to exposure for hours on end, workers often lacked gloves or protective equipment to shield themselves from thorns.¹³⁸ Students such as De Villa and Giesdorff repeatedly ascended and descended ladders to remove oranges from trees, carefully depositing them into sacks so as not to bruise the fruits and diminish their market value. Finally, they placed oranges in boxes before turning them over to their comrades in

¹³⁴ "U.S. Indian Service," 1912.

¹³⁵ "U.S. Indian Service," 1912.

¹³⁶ "Outing Boys 1913."

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 125.

packinghouses.¹³⁹ Orange exchange houses and packing venues repeatedly inspected the oranges that native workers picked to guarantee that field hands did not damage the fruits or cut long stems when removing Navels from trees.¹⁴⁰ Despite difficult conditions, Native Americans financially benefited from the California citrus industry as wage laborers, earning respectable livings while away from school. While gathering oranges to ship to markets across the continent constituted critical work for the citrus industry in Southern California, Indians also participated in this crucial sector in other ways.

Native American students from the Sherman Institute worked at citrus packinghouses. In May 1914, for example, Johnie Leo washed oranges at the San Jacinto Packinghouse in the wealthy Arlington district of Riverside, as did his peers King More, Jake Coffegrounds, and Amos Lomekatehia.¹⁴¹ L.J. Klotz, a former packinghouse worker in Riverside, described the general functions that students such as Leo and his comrades would have performed. After cleaning oranges in washing machines, packinghouse workers blasted fruits with warm air to dry them before placing them on grading belts to determine the quality, or grade, of the fruit.¹⁴² After washing and grading fruit, Lomekatehia or Coffegrounds would then wrap each orange in a piece of tissue paper

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 144-5.

¹⁴⁰ "Inspection Report: Highgrove Fruit Exchange" fruit condition report, in NA, PSR, RG 75, box 115.

¹⁴¹ "Sherman Institute, Boys Outings, 1914," in Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NA, PSR, RG 75, box 116.

¹⁴² L.J. Klotz, "California Citrus Packinghouse Practices, 1910-'14," in Klotz, Lawton, and Hall, eds., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area*, 39. In the early-twentieth century, citrus packinghouses in California used three grades for oranges: fancy, choice, and standard. Although female graders worked in packinghouses, the Sherman records consulted for this project do not mention female students in this industry.

before placing it in a wooden box for shipment. The packing process concluded when workers loaded the wooden crates onto refrigerated railroad cars. After trains departed, Klotz related, their goods would reach auction markets in the eastern United States in 14 to 20 days.¹⁴³ Sherman students such as Johnie Leo and Amos Lomekatehia thus played a direct, pivotal role in the prosperity of Southern California by preparing oranges for shipment to markets across the country, paving the way for the wealth that returned to the Southland as a result of bountiful industry. Moreover, in addition to agricultural labor, Sherman students who worked at packinghouses such as the San Jacinto site partook in industry and operated heavy machinery, which benefited them as they entered other industries.

Close reading of the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and pressing against the archival grain reveals that Native Americans from the Sherman Institute made irrigation in Riverside a reality, including the maintenance and expansion of the Gage Canal. Indians performed labor in a variety of irrigational projects. Henry Harris, for example, dug a ditch for grower Elijah Dawkins.¹⁴⁴ The Gage Canal Company also employed Harris as a cement layer.¹⁴⁵ Numerous other Sherman students, such as James Watson, Henry Martin, Henry Penny, and Andrew Jones, found steady employment with the Gage Canal Company in the 1910s.¹⁴⁶ Other Native Americans created the necessary

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁴⁴ "Outing Boys 1913."

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

ingredient for expanding this industrial canal: cement. The Riverside Portland Cement Company regularly made use of Sherman students in multiple capacities. Harold Gashyeseva and Beresto Levey bailed hay for the company, while Joe Kie worked as a blacksmith.¹⁴⁷ Frank White, a Native American whom the Portland Cement Company employed as a teamster, most likely transported the company's product to the Gage Canal Company.¹⁴⁸ While students from the Sherman Institute never gained fame or fortune by making or laying cement¹⁴⁹, their work nonetheless brought water to groves in the area around Riverside.

Native American students in Riverside also manned machines and participated in industries apart from the orange sector of Southern California. Sherman outing agent Fred Long recorded that a student named Fred Arkia worked as a "machine helper" at the Riverside Portland Cement Company.¹⁵⁰ Amos Komakatchya printed for the Press Printing Company in Riverside.¹⁵¹ Tangential to the region's orange industry, James Hona found employment with Parker Machine Works in the city. Established by George Parker in the early decades of Riverside's existence, this company produced industrial

¹⁴⁷ "U.S. Indian Service," 1912; "Outing Boys 1913."

¹⁴⁸ "U.S. Indian Service," 1912.

¹⁴⁹ Records detailing the experience of Josiah Joaquin from the Sherman Institute reveal that he received \$10 per day when he worked at the Riverside County Hospital, but only 25 cents per hour from the Gage Canal Company when laying cement. "Outing Boys 1913."

¹⁵⁰ H.D. Robb to Fred Long, July 17, 1915, and "Boys Outings, Sherman Inst., 1915," in Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NA, PSR, RG 75, Box 116. Hereafter cited as "Boys Outings, Sherman Inst., 1915."

¹⁵¹ "Boys Outings, Sherman Inst., 1915."

agricultural equipment for packinghouses.¹⁵² While working for this company, Hona would have built nail machines and Orange Box Makers, as well as orchard heaters to prevent oranges from suffering frost damage.¹⁵³ Finally, the Pacific Light and Power Company made use of Josa Lewis, Jose Burrell, and Jose Joaquin in a crucial component of the industrial infrastructure of Southern California.¹⁵⁴ Vicenta Philips worked as a private electrician.¹⁵⁵ Students from the Sherman Institute successfully used the process of mechanization in the Southland to improve their lots.¹⁵⁶ Indian employment in this industry demonstrated the capability of native peoples in the Golden State to take advantage of economic opportunities and to participate in the establishment and maintenance of an industrial infrastructure.

A handful of Native Americans on the reservations of Southern California also grew citrus fruits. In a report to the Office of Indian Affairs, Ellis remarked that in 1932, natives under the auspices of the Mission Indian Agency grew 424 tons of apricots, 13.75 tons of figs, and 2.5 tons of oranges.¹⁵⁷ In 1941, a representative of the Atchison, Topeka

¹⁵² Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 103. Moses offers a compelling, insightful exploration into the inventions of Parker Machine Works and its perpetual rival, the California Iron Works, operated by Fred Stebler.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁵⁴ William B. Friedrichs, *Henry E. Huntington*, 110.

¹⁵⁵ "Outing Boys 1913."

¹⁵⁶ Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 218.

¹⁵⁷ C.L. Ellis to Division of Extension and Industry of the Office of Indian Affairs, "Annual Report of Extension Workers," December 1, 1932," Mission Indian Agency, Central Classified Files, 1920-1953, in Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NA, PSR, RG 75, box 6 folder "[052] Annual Report of Division of Extension & Industry Mission Agency 1932. The mission Indian Agency oversaw native peoples in Riverside, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Santa Barbara Counties.

and Santa Fe Railway System wrote to the superintendent of the Mission Indian Agency inquiring into the economic conditions of the Indians of Pala. He asked to what degree the natives relied upon the government for financial support, no doubt so as to acquire information to design promotional material that portrayed Native American settlements as tourist attractions.¹⁵⁸ Dady, the superintendent, responded that “The Indians support themselves by farming and stock raising and working for owners of nearby ranches.” Importantly, “Some citrus trees are raised, particularly oranges. Most of the families have small subsistence gardens.”¹⁵⁹

The labor of one final native student from the Sherman Institute illustrates the importance of Indians to the orange industry in California. Seno Lubo picked oranges from John Burnham on Magnolia Avenue in May 1914.¹⁶⁰ One of the Washington Navel orange trees owned by Eliza Tibbets now resides on this street in Riverside.¹⁶¹ This so-called parent Navel orange tree provided buds to countless growers across the Southland, effectively defibrillating the region’s flagging economy in the 1880s and 1890s. Lubo and other Native American farm hands thus directly occupied the heart of historical citrus territory in Southern California. These students, at least in part, claimed one of the most important cities in the region as Indian country, further demonstrating the importance of

¹⁵⁸ E.G. Ryder to John W. Dady, May 9, 1941, Mission Indian Agency, Central Classified Files, 1920-1953, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NA, PSR, RG 75, box 6. The Santa Fe Railroad consistently commodified Native Americans to promote the Golden State, as discussed in chapter 5.

¹⁵⁹ Dady to Ryder, May 27, 1941, Mission Indian Agency, Central Classified Files, 1930-1953, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NA, PSR, RG 75, box 6.

¹⁶⁰ “Sherman Institute, Boys Outings, 1914.”

¹⁶¹ Chester N. Roistacher, “The Parent Navel Orange Tree: A Brief History of a Remarkable Tree, Part 2 – Its Decline and Recovery,” *Victoria AveNews* 20, no. 1 (March 2012): 2.

Nicolas Rosenthal's conceptual shift toward telling the stories of native peoples in urban spaces.¹⁶² Placing the Indians of the Golden State within narratives of citrus and industrial history complicates the narrative of white progress by showing how Native Americans became crucial to economic development in Southern California.

Women and girls also participated in the conquest of Southern California's orange empire, and even in the railroad industry in that region. Wealthy women in Redlands and Riverside bought and managed orange groves.¹⁶³ One newspaper survey of female ownership of citrus groves "found that among them confidence is high, hope for better markets is high, and (perhaps the reason for the foregoing) skill in management is strongly in evidence."¹⁶⁴ However, women's roles in the citrus industry went well beyond ownership. Women commonly worked in packinghouses of Southern California. Labor agreements between the United States and Mexico in the early decades of the twentieth century cemented Mexicans as the dominant citrus packing force by the beginning of World War I. By the 1920s, however, the United States increased its demands to restrict immigration, opening the door for white women to enter the industry. By the beginning of the 1930s, female packers had all but eclipsed Mexicans.¹⁶⁵ Their skilled labor consisted of separating oranges based on quality and wrapping oranges in tissue.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² See Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*.

¹⁶³ Simpson, *Selling the City*, 18-9.

¹⁶⁴ "Valley Women Succeed as Citrus Growers is Statement of Packer," *Ontario Daily Report*, April 21, 1933, p. 5.

¹⁶⁵ Tobey, Wetherell, Hallaran, and Hollis, *The National Orange Company Packing House*, 93-4.

¹⁶⁶ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 102.

Femininity and Mexican heritage were not mutually exclusive. Mexican women who came of age during the Great Depression contributed to family income through wage labor in citrus packinghouses and made preliminary steps into the public sphere.¹⁶⁷



Figure 4.1. Men and women pack oranges at a packinghouse affiliated with the California Fruit Growers Exchange in Riverside. Courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

Female participation in the citrus industry of Southern California continued into the dark days of the Second World War. One newspaper in Ontario implored women and girls to pack oranges in the stead of their husbands who had joined the war overseas. “The recent imposition of Mexican nationals,” it stated, referencing the bracero program, “has stepped up the harvest of oranges and lemons and created an urgent need for

¹⁶⁷ Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 187.

packing house workers.” Resultantly, “Women who can pack oranges but who are not now working at that trade would be doing a real service” to the war effort “by returning to the packing houses. Women who have never worked before will also be used the younger women [*sic*] to learn packing and older women to work as washers and graders.”¹⁶⁸ Female packinghouse labor thus became an exercise in wartime patriotism.

Women had a few opportunities to work for the railroad. President Edward Ripley of the Santa Fe instructed Mexican immigrants to the United States to bring their wives in order to mirror “Mexican patriarchal relations” at home.¹⁶⁹ The Santa Fe went so far as to provide boxcars on land that the railroad owned as houses for immigrant families.¹⁷⁰ The work of Fred Harvey deserves special mention for its gendered implications. This British restaurateur established a chain of restaurants at stations along the Santa Fe Railroad’s tracks across the Southwest, called Harvey Houses. He attached dining cars to the Santa Fe, providing fine cuisine to passengers.¹⁷¹ His waitresses, the famed Harvey Girls, provided friendly service to travelers across the United States, including Southern California.¹⁷² One Harvey House enthusiast in Devore, California, at the base of the Cajon Pass, lyricized about the Harvey Girls:

Harvey Houses, don’t you savvy; clean across the old Mojave,
On the Santa Fe they’ve strung ’em like a string of Indian beads,
We all couldn’t eat without ’em but the slickest things about ’em,

¹⁶⁸ “Packing Houses Need 200 Women,” *Ontario Daily Report*, May 5, 1943, p. 1.

¹⁶⁹ Garcilazo, *Traqueros*, 44.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁷¹ Marshall, *Santa Fe*, 111.

¹⁷² Armitage, *Operations Santa Fe*, 151; McAfee, *California’s Railroad Era*, 220.

Is the Harvey skirts that hustle up the feeds.¹⁷³

The Harvey Girls' work contributed to Californians' belief in the Santa Fe as a benevolent entity. However, even Harvey Girls shared in the labor discontent that seized many workers in the Southland around the turn of the century.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the socioeconomic upheavals of the Industrial Revolution brought the first labor unions of the United States into violent existence. Railroad employees formed various unions to protect their interests. The Order of Railway Conductors, for instance, had a lodge in San Bernardino, on the line of the Santa Fe Railroad.¹⁷⁴ As one of the largest sectors of the American economy by the 1890s, it came as no surprise when the transcontinental railroad industry suffered through rather sizable strikes. The largest erupted at the Pullman Palace Car Company's works outside Chicago in 1894. Led by Eugene V. Debs of the American Railway Union (ARU), workers walked off the job at George Pullman's luxury train car manufactory. Across the United States, railroad workers refused to work on trains carrying Pullman cars.¹⁷⁵ Despite the scale of the strike, the national government sided with Pullman and the railroad companies who lost business due to ARU's boycott. This set a precedent for the suppression of organized networks of labor across the United States, which affected the orange empire and the railways that serviced it.

¹⁷³ As cited in Marshall, *Santa Fe*, 101.

¹⁷⁴ James H. Ducker, *Men of the Steel Rails: Workers on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, 1869-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 152.

¹⁷⁵ White, *Railroaded*, 430.

California, home to an extensive network of rails by the 1890s, became a battleground between union employees and railroad corporations. The Santa Fe Railroad fired workers who refused to haul Pullman cars, prompting the ARU's strike to spread to Los Angeles. The Pullman Strike crippled both systems that serviced the orange empire.¹⁷⁶ The federal government answered by sending federal troops to keep the peace in the city.¹⁷⁷ Eventually, President Grover Cleveland called upon federal troops to break the strike, citing the fact that the shutdown of the nation's rail system had curtailed the delivery of mail, thus concerning the national government. Newspapers claimed that "the federal authorities had entered into a combine with the Pullman interests to break up" meetings among railroad workers.¹⁷⁸ Unions across the country predictably voiced contempt for Cleveland, federal troops, and railroad corporations, but the Pullman strike crumbled by the end of July 1894.¹⁷⁹ While the violence in California did not match that of Chicago during the Pullman strike, the entire episode soured not only the railroads on organized labor, but also many segments of society in the Golden State.¹⁸⁰

Partly as a result of the union upheaval engineered by railroad employees in the final decades of the nineteenth century, both the railroad and citrus agriculture industries of Southern California developed an intolerance of organized labor that lasted for decades. This view was by no means limited to these two industries. Many businessmen

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 446.

¹⁷⁷ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 80.

¹⁷⁸ "Excitement at Pullman," *Los Angeles Herald*, July 10, 1894, 2.

¹⁷⁹ "Cleveland Condemned," *Los Angeles Herald*, July 30, 1894, 2.

¹⁸⁰ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 88.

shared a vehemently anti-union bent. In Southern California during the early-twentieth century, the most powerful advocate of quashing union activity was Harrison Gray Otis, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*. Otis, like many pro-businessmen in the United States during his time, favored the open shop, or not forcing laborers to join unions when hired for industrial work. He used his newspaper to rally public opinion against labor organization, using strongly condemnatory language to this end. “On the all-important labor issue,” he once wrote to Henry E. Huntington, unions bore responsibility for “menacing the industrial peace of the country, retarding business progress, and bringing loss and suffering not only to great interests, but also to thousands of individual citizens.”¹⁸¹

Huntington, who spent years connecting various parts of the Southland’s orange empire through the Pacific Electric and Los Angeles Railways, shared Otis’s view on the question of labor organization. He forbade his employees from forming unions, punishing those who violated his edict. The *Los Angeles Express* detailed instances of those who failed to follow Huntington’s directions losing their jobs with the Los Angeles Railway Company.¹⁸² Newspapers regularly tarred labor strikes as hampering Huntington’s productive effort to stretch rails across the Southland. The *Times* gleefully condemned strikes as failures due to low turnout. At one point, during a strike by workers of the Los

¹⁸¹ Harrison Gray Otis to Henry E. Huntington, November 18, 1903, HEH Correspondence, box 165.

¹⁸² “Railway Drops Union Men,” *Los Angeles Express*, October 7, 1903, no page number, HEH box 16/3/(3), folder 43.

Angeles Railway Company in April 1903, only 12 of 764 employees walked away from their posts, and did not interrupt commuter car service as planned.¹⁸³

Huntington refused to bow before pressure from unions. Epes Randolph, manager of the Pacific Electric system, declared that “Mr. Huntington proposes to run his own affairs and can in no manner accept union dictation” from “peons,” and that he “is disposed to pay good wages.” “We are paying our men from 22½ cents to 25 cents an hour; they average 23½ cents, or from \$70 to \$75 a month.” For these men, “Ten hours is a working day. The Pacific [E]lectric and the Los Angeles [R]ailway [C]ompany have a combined payroll of 5000 men.”¹⁸⁴ The *Los Angeles Herald* eagerly gave voice to workers who praised Huntington’s conduct toward his employees. “The treatment that I have received has always been of the best,” motorman Vernon Hunt commented to the *Herald*. “Mr. Huntington raised our pay without our having to ask for it, and whenever we have any grievance or any request to make, we can go to Mr. [J.A.] Muir or Mr. Huntington and receive attention.”¹⁸⁵ Such articles suggested that the benevolence of capitalists such as Huntington precluded the need for laborers to organize.

This did not prevent Huntington and his executives from decrying unionism when it arose. Epes Randolph demeaned laborers’ efforts to organize a “cholo union,” and

¹⁸³ “Another Defeat for Trouble-Promoters,” *Los Angeles Daily Times*, April 30, 1903, no page number, HEH, box 16/3/(3), folder 39.

¹⁸⁴ “Electrics to Azusa, *Los Angeles Herald*, February 11, 1903, HEH, box 16/4/(3), folder 39.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

claimed that only one tenth of its members, if even that many, spoke English.¹⁸⁶ Mexican women also joined their husbands during strikes against Huntington and the Pacific Electric, confronting strikebreakers, or scabs.¹⁸⁷ Randolph's comments demonstrate the ease with which rail lines conflated race and social unrest by the early-twentieth century. Blaming Mexican American workers for difficulties became a common solution. In one instance, newspapers blasted the carelessness of a "poor cholo workman," which resulted in Huntington's network going "out of business for an hour." Resultantly, "there were no cars running anywhere in their proper places."¹⁸⁸ Mexican American labor unrest, such newspaper reports seemed to suggest, threatened to upset the geographic order that railways had imposed on Southern California.

Newspapers consistently cast rabble-rousing labor organizers as villains in Southern California. One prominent union proponent, Harry C. Knox of San Francisco, organized an electric streetcar strike in the City of Angels in 1903. The *Times* pointed out that prior to his venture in Los Angeles, "Knox was arrested on July 15, 1894 for complicity in wrecking a Southern [P]acific train near Sacramento, and charged with murder at Woodland, July 17, 1894." After his incarceration, Knox escaped from San Quentin.¹⁸⁹ Public indignation over Knox's agitation in Los Angeles boiled into a riot,

¹⁸⁶ "Peons' Fool Strike is Broken, Track-Laying Kept Up All Night," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, April 25, 1903, p. 1. Garcilazo discusses the racialized nomenclature of Mexican unions in the early-twentieth century in *Traqueros*, 129.

¹⁸⁷ Garcilazo, *Traqueros*, 83.

¹⁸⁸ "The Bundle Girl Thought It a Jag," *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, November 8, 1903, no page number, HEH, box 16/3/(3), folder 44.

¹⁸⁹ Untitled article, *Los Angeles Daily Times*, May 1, 1903, p. 1.

culminating with members of the public chasing him down. While Californians may have found the business practices of the railroads vile at times, they clearly reserved even greater disregard for labor upstarts who seemed bent on destroying the new order railroads had introduced.

The transcontinental lines showed similar distaste for organized workers. The Southern Pacific proved this by refusing to give in to its workers during the Pullman Strike. The Santa Fe had also suffered considerably in the wake of the uprising of 1894, leaving the company inclined not to parley with organized workers. This included its Harvey House girls, who on at least one instance struck, E.J. Agneu, in 1907. Agneu's employee record severely reprimanded him. "Discharged 9 1907," it read, "and should not be given any further encouragement for service on [account] of being responsible for inducing all of the night Harvey House girls" at Needles to strike. Subsequently, they left their posts and "went to the Needles hotel and caused a considerable disturbance."¹⁹⁰ The following year, Mexican workers struck the Santa Fe in Colton to replace a foreman. This erupted into a physical altercation between two *traqueros* and the white foreman, ending with the arrest of Mexican workers.¹⁹¹ Harrison Gray Otis applauded the Santa Fe for its intolerance of organized labor and its "determination" to commit to a policy of "standing fast [which] will, in my belief, win."¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Employee record of E.J. Agneu, Santa Fe Collection, Personnel Records: Coast Lines, box 1.

¹⁹¹ Garcilazo, *Traqueros*, 92.

¹⁹² Harrison Gray Otis to Henry E. Huntington, April 25, 1904, HEH Correspondence, box 165.

Labor organizers shared Otis's zeal, if not his perspective of their activities. In Southern California, the most prominent outgrowth of the labor movement to was the International Workers of the World (IWW), or the so-called Wobblies. More radical in outlook than other labor organizations, the IWW adhered to a strict Marxist doctrine.¹⁹³ The organization gained a significant following among Mexican American orange and lemon pickers, who joined to agitate for better wages. Local growers and newspapers did not appreciate disruptions to the citrus industry, especially following the ascent of a communist system in Russia.¹⁹⁴ White growers smeared Mexican Americans citrus laborers in the IWW as "Bolsheviks," likening them to the dominant political group in Moscow. In 1919 in Azusa, for instance, seven Mexican Americans in the San Gabriel Valley received jail sentences for "disturbing the peace" by proselytizing in favor of organizing orange pickers and striking the local groves. One newspaper in the area damned them as trouble-makers of the IWW and "Bolsheviks."¹⁹⁵ This strange conflation of Mexican identity with bolshevism reveals the degree to which capitalists in the Southland identified these two undesirable elements of society, and viewed unionism as a ploy to empower subjugated laborers. The newspaper importantly included the caveat

¹⁹³ Engle, "The Orange County Citrus Strike," 62.

¹⁹⁴ J.M. Roberts, *The Penguin History of the Twentieth Century: The History of the World, 1901 to the Present* (London, UK: Penguin Books, 1999), 256-8.

¹⁹⁵ "Azusa Agitators are Quickly Convicted," *Covina Argus*, March 7, 1919, no page numbers, ULV History Collection, box H6, folder Covina (City), CA – "Covina Argus" 7 Mar 1919.

that most Mexicans “have not been inclined to strike, being satisfied with the wage they are getting, which nets them between \$3 and \$4 a day.”¹⁹⁶

The anti-labor attitude that saturated Southern California since the days of the Pullman Strike continued for decades. Not until the 1930s and the onset of the Great Depression did Americans begin to sympathize with the plight of the working class. The clearest manifestation of this sympathy came in the form of Upton Sinclair and his would-be political resolution. A famed journalist whose novel, *The Jungle*, had catapulted him onto the national stage for its scathing critiques of unsanitary meatpacking practices, Sinclair ran for governor of California in 1934. He secured the Democratic Party’s nomination despite his history as an avowed socialist.¹⁹⁷ His campaign to End Poverty in California (EPIC) earned widespread support throughout the Golden State. He blasted growers for creating a class of dependent working-class minorities, including Mexican and Japanese pickers and packers essentially held in poverty by growers such as the large landowners of Sunkist.¹⁹⁸

More conservative elements in the state, including the California Fruit Growers Exchange, mobilized to combat Sinclair’s utopian dreams. Among them, Charles C. Teague publicly excoriated Sinclair’s plan as mad, one that would undermine the wealth that the orange industry brought to the state. Teague found powerful supporters in the form of the *Los Angeles Times* and the various news outlets controlled by media titan

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 185.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 200.

William Randolph Hearst.¹⁹⁹ The influential film industry, led by mogul Louis B. Mayer of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, bankrolled incumbent Republican governor Robert Merriam.²⁰⁰ Opponents labeled Sinclair a socialist and a Bolshevik, detracting from his appealing image to voters in California.²⁰¹ Sunkist and its allies overwhelmed EPIC, and Merriam defeated Sinclair at the polls.²⁰² However, Sinclair's loss did not end agitation among orange workers in the Southland.

Events unfolding on the national stage during the Great Depression altered the labor landscape across the United States, including Southern California. In 1935, Congress passed the Wagner Act, or National Labor Relations Act. This landmark legislation protected workers' right to organize, created the National Labor Relations Board to aid unions, and forbade private entities from discriminating against employees who joined unions.²⁰³ Citrus laborers in the Golden State pressed their advantage using the Wagner Act. While the language of the act specifically exempted agricultural laborers from its protections, orange and lemon packinghouses, sites that had industrialized by the 1930s, presented a special case and a potential exception to the rule. Under the aegis of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the major skilled trade union in the United

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 187, 205.

²⁰⁰ Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 225-6. For a strong analysis of Hollywood's impact on the failure of the EPIC platform, see Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 1988), 311-5.

²⁰¹ Upton Sinclair, *I, Candidate for Governor: And How I Got Licked* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994 [1934]), 178.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 220.

²⁰³ Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 290.

States, workers in California formed the Citrus Packing House Employees' Union. In 1938, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of packers in their efforts to organize, protecting laborers in the Santa Cruz Packing Company from their employers' wrath.²⁰⁴

Owners protested against all attempts at organization, citing packinghouses as agricultural in nature, rather than industrial.²⁰⁵ "Organized labor leaders, in their eagerness to organize agriculture, seem willing to starve their own members to accomplish their objectives," scoffed Teague.²⁰⁶ They received aid from powerful allies, including railroads. By 1937, one periodical noted, the Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, and Union Pacific all donated to state chambers of commerce and industrial associations to limit the powers of unions.²⁰⁷ The Southern Pacific contributed to the Merriam campaign during Sinclair's bid for the governorship of California, an effective repudiation of the EPIC plan and its support for farm cooperatives that would have empowered organized labor.²⁰⁸

The Congress of Industrial Organizations, a nationwide pan-union that emerged in the 1930s, sent organizers into orange towns of the Southland such as Ontario in an

²⁰⁴ McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 278.

²⁰⁵ "Citrus Labor Case Sept. 21," *Los Angeles Examiner*, September 10, 1937, in Federal Writers Project Scrapbook Volume Twenty, FWP, carton 4. Hereafter FWP Scrapbook.

²⁰⁶ Address by Charles C. Teague at the State-Wide Meeting of the California State Chamber of Commerce, Agriculture and Industry, Teague Papers, box 58.

²⁰⁷ "Partial Listing of Contributions by Public Utilities Corporations to the State Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Associations, and the Associated Farmers, 1934-1937," *The Rural Observer* 1, no. 9 (September-October 1938): 5.

²⁰⁸ David Mark, *Going Dirty: The Art of Negative Campaigning*, updated ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 26.

effort to promote packinghouse unionism.²⁰⁹ To cut into the profits of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, workers under the Union of Producers, Drivers and Employees who transported fruit made use of the picket, a hallmark of organized labor. During one such demonstration in 1937, “Pickets prevented the auctioning today of citrus fruits at the local sales plant of the California Fruit Growers Exchange,” with workers demanding recognition of their union.²¹⁰

Unions intertwined the complex matrices of race and labor in the citrus industry. In one citrus strike at Santa Paula, for instance, while whites took charge of the labor movement, Mexicans made up the majority of strikers.²¹¹ “Nearly all are Mexicans,” the *Los Angeles Times* reported, and one of the ringleaders, Frank Herrera, was also Hispanic.²¹² Management of the Santa Paula Orange and Mupu Citrus associations held firm in the face of this walkout, offering workers only 25 cents per hour, and five cents for each box they picked over the baseline of 45.²¹³ Orange growers refused to cave before the demands for increased wages, demonstrating their continued grasp over the livelihoods of workers, particularly the Mexican migratory labor force.

The largest labor revolt in the orange empire erupted in 1936 and engulfed the majority of Orange County. For decades, workers had clamored for higher wages,

²⁰⁹ “Form Ontario Citrus Union,” *Western Worker*, September 13, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

²¹⁰ “Citrus Shortage Facing South in Plant Picketing,” *Berkeley Gazette*, June 15, 1937, FWP Scrapbook; “Citrus Picketing Halts L.A. Sales,” *San Diego Union*, June 26, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

²¹¹ “Strikers Picket Citrus Plant at Santa Paula,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 13, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

²¹² “Fruit Picker Strike Begun,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

²¹³ “Orange Pickers Return to Jobs,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

particularly during the difficult days of the Great Depression. These protests became institutionalized as pickers and packers developed unions.²¹⁴ To more effectively outline their grievances, *naranjeros* formed the Confederación de Uniones Obreros Mexicanos (CUCOM). Mexican pickers faced off against the Associated Farmers, a powerful agribusiness collective designed to preserve the status quo and quash unions.²¹⁵ By July, CUCOM's strike had spread across Orange and Los Angeles Counties. One pro-labor periodical seethed over the plight of *naranjeros*, some 200 of whom had "been jailed and held on the flimsiest of charges, while in several instances strikers and sympathizers have been beaten into unconsciousness by the hired thugs recruited from the strikebreaking agencies of Los Angeles."²¹⁶ The Associated Farmers did not hesitate to use violence to enforce their agenda. Heavily armed guards patrolled the groves to protect strikebreakers from picketing Mexicans. Picketers responded in kind by attacking strikebreakers, or "scabs."²¹⁷ Judges levied overly punitive bails against jailed pickers that they could not hope to pay.²¹⁸ Thanks to intervention by the Mexican government and Harry Chandler, owner of the *Los Angeles Times*, orchardists and workers achieved an uneasy truce by July 1936. Wages increased in some cases, but orchardists refused to recognize unions.²¹⁹

²¹⁴ Williamson, "Labor in the California Citrus Industry," 118.

²¹⁵ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 220.

²¹⁶ "Orange Strikers Face Terror in Wage Fight," *Unemployed Leader*, July 1936, FWP Scrapbook.

²¹⁷ Reccow, "The Orange County Citrus Strikes of 1935-1936," 175.

²¹⁸ McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 250-1. McWilliams deemed the entire episode an exercise in Fascism by growers, and rechristened the California Fruit Growers Exchange "Gunkist Oranges."

²¹⁹ Reccow, "The Orange County Citrus Strikes of 1935-1936," 173.

Growers and packers responded tepidly to this massive strike. While some packinghouses raised wages from five and a half cents per box to seven cents per box, they often refused to rehire workers who had struck.²²⁰ Most critically, laborers' right to organize remained elusive: growers and packers would not bargain collectively with their employees.²²¹ The failed strike largely mirrored trends within the citrus industry across Southern California during the 1930s, when workers made uneven gains. While the strike at Santa Paula failed, a similar walkout in Ventura successfully convinced the Fillmore Lemon Association to guarantee workers a wage of 28 cents per hour and a nine-hour workday.²²² Related industries also tested the limits of the National Labor Relations Act. In Redlands, truckers formed the Citrus Belt Draymen's Association under the AFL to lobby for better wages and "more liberal overtime" payments.²²³

Railroads and orange growers cast a wide shadow over the laboring population of Southern California by 1940. The legacy of the Pullman strike, coupled with the brutal gubernatorial race of 1934 and barbaric confrontations in the groves of Orange County two years later, left a visible scar on the psyche of Southern California. Violence from the 1890s to the 1930s biased public opinion strongly against the plight of working-class orange pickers and railroad hands. While farmhands found a few champions during the Depression years, particularly the ever-outspoken journalist and historian Carey

²²⁰ "State Police Live Royally; Guards Hired," *Western Worker*, September 17, 1936, FWP Scrapbook.

²²¹ Engle, "The Orange County Citrus Strike," 146.

²²² "Ventura Lemon Pickers Win," *Western Worker*, March 22, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

²²³ "Citrus Truck Row Looms," *Los Angeles Times*, December 14, 1937, FWP Scrapbook.

McWilliams, they made few long-term gains. Despite the success of the National Labor Relations Act in protecting industrialized employees in other parts of the United States, Southern Californians retained a belief in the supremacy of the open shop well into the twentieth century.

The coming of the Second World War required a renegotiation of California's racial landscape. The romanticized view of workers involved in railroads and citrus agriculture necessitated at least a superficial acceptance of Mexican labor in the Southland.²²⁴ As the continuation of the agreement between Mexico and the United States until the 1960s shows, the success of the bracero program enshrined Hispanic labor as a necessary component of agriculture in Southern California.²²⁵ By the 1940s, even the most zealous anti-labor elements in the region realized that work turned the proverbial wheel of domestic wartime production. Thankless section hands kept the railroads running as traffic became overburdened thanks to the development of factories in the American West during the war. One railroad observer could hardly contain his enthusiasm for workers when he praised the "Men and women of the Santa Fe," who "have contributed enormously to the success of the war job on this great railroad of the West – from the humble Navajo or Mexican section hand to the executive on the high

²²⁴ This largely applied to the Mexican nationals who came to work in the agriculture and railroad sectors in the Southwest, rather than native urban populations. For a brief discussion of Mexican American difficulties in Southern California during the Second World War, see Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 770, and Ricardo Griswold del Castillo, "The Los Angeles Zoot-Suit Riots: Latin America Responds," in Gordon Morris Bakken, ed., *California History*, 173-190.

²²⁵ Garcia, "Ambassadors in Overalls," 34.

carpet.”²²⁶ After Pearl Harbor, “Railroad men everywhere were quick to accept the challenge.” From “A telegraph operator in Cajon Pass” to “a Mexican section hand on the Mohave,” workers across Southern California sweated and bled in the name of the war effort.²²⁷

This panegyric did not erase the difficulties associated with work in California during the global conflagration. Despite a perceptible shift toward the appreciation of laborers, work on the railroad and in the orange groves remained physically arduous during the Second World War and beyond. The federal government also used strong-arm tactics to support businesses during the conflict, threatening workers who struck with the draft and keeping owners in line with promises of federal intervention in private corporate affairs in instances where laborers and companies could not settle their difficulties through negotiation.²²⁸ Most appallingly, Japanese Americans faced internment in camps hundreds of miles from their homes on the Pacific Coast, demonstrating the persistence of racism as a force for government policy in California and at the federal level. The conception of the Southland as an all-inclusive environment during the conflict was largely a fabrication. The romanticism that permeated the railroad and citrus agriculture industries, as the final chapter will show, exercised a powerful grasp over the popular imagination, both in Southern California and the nation beyond.

²²⁶ Farrington, *Railroads at War*, 90.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

²²⁸ William L. O’Neill, *A Democracy at War: America’s Fight at Home and Abroad in World War II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 203-4.

Chapter Five

Railroad and Citrus Booster Material in Southern California

The greatest citrus fruit section of the earth lies eastward from Los Angeles. The easiest way to see this wonderful fruit and flower garden of the interior of Southern California is over the Inside Track of the Southern Pacific, a round trip journey of one hundred and fifty miles, reaching the great orange growing districts and their cities quickly and to best advantage.

--Southern Pacific Company advertisement¹

As the late-nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, Southern California enjoyed a robust culture of promotion thanks to citrus agricultural cooperatives and railroad advertisers. White boosters who had immigrated to the Southland after statehood in 1850 praised the area for its beneficial Mediterranean climate, romantic history, and economic potential. Squarely at the center of this large constellation of booster entities stood citrus agriculturalists and transcontinental railroad companies. Citrus and railroad boosters relied on a wide variety of promotional material to stimulate eager consumer audiences across North America. These two powerful industries worked in tandem to create a shared lexicon of imagery and terminology in Southern California around the turn of the twentieth century. Both, for example, portrayed California as an American paradise, often invoking its Mediterranean weather in their publications and imagery. As citrus historian Douglas Sackman noted, the powerful California Fruit Growers Exchange, a cooperative entity that handled most of the state's citrus products by the early-twentieth century, adopted its nationally-recognized Sunkist brand to reinforce

¹ *The Inside Track: The Way Through the Wonderful Fruit and Flower Garden of Southern California* (San Francisco: Passenger Department, Southern Pacific Company, 1907), 3.

popular conceptions of California oranges as fruits grown lovingly from a land the sun blessed with its warm, life-giving rays.²

The Southern Pacific Railroad played a similar role with its promotional literature and images of Southern California. It published numerous brochures and periodicals, particularly its famed *Sunset* magazine starting in 1898, to share with national audiences its conception of California's romantic history and wonderful climate, which facilitated good health. Advertisements from the Southern Pacific and articles in *Sunset* encouraged immigrants to the Southland to practice citrus agriculture, reinforcing the prominence of that industry and inextricably linking it to the popular image of the Golden State. For their part, orange cultivators spread publications and images that depicted Southern California as a sort of Paradise on Earth, a manmade successor to the Garden of Eden. As the shared reliance on the sun's power in the Golden State demonstrates, railroaders and citrus agriculturalists worked in tandem to convince American audiences of the innumerable benefits of a life in the orange empire of Southern California.

Despite their superficially benevolent nature when touting life in the Golden State, a number of historical California promotional materials generated by orange growers and railroad corporations relied on narratives of white dominance and progress. Promotional materials hesitated to accept supposedly uncivilized, alien peoples. A number of citrus boosters, for example, hearkened back to California's imagined golden age during the mission era, when padres used Indians to grow the first oranges in the Southland. In Riverside, heart of the orange empire, Frank Miller constructed the

² Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 89.

legendary Mission Inn in the early-twentieth century using Spanish Revival architecture. Miller used red tiles, bells, and multi-paned windows to mimic the Spanish missions of California, pioneering a new architectural style that had little resemblance to reality.³ Many other booster tools, including *Sunset* magazine and citrus labels produced for consumers across North America, echoed on Miller's lionization of Spaniards in the history of California. Railroads played a crucial role in circulating citrus crate labels across North America, allowing the historical narratives that citrus cooperatives had imagined in these images to permeate the national psyche by transporting the across the United States. Orange growers attempted to construct narratives of California's history that viewed the Spanish influence as positive, particularly for its institution of agriculture that Americans would later perfect, and which undergirded much of Southern California's wealth around the turn of the twentieth century.

The Native American, Chinese, and Mexican denizens of the Golden State, whose labor built the railroads and made the orange industry profitable, ironically fared much worse in promotional materials from those two industries. While glorifying missions and Spanish contact with Native Americans in the Golden State, pamphleteers and booster artists tended to marginalize the Mexican impact on history, depicting Californios as lazy rancheros prone to fiestas who abandoned the productive agricultural model established by their Spanish forefathers. Too, boosters, particular among them citrus lithographers, failed to distinguish among the native peoples of California, instead categorizing all indigenes under the totalizing demographic label of "Indian." Finally, California

³ Hodgen, "Riverside's Mission Inn," 33.

promoters, such as reporters for railroad periodicals, marginalized Chinese immigrants as backward-thinking figures incapable of comprehending western thought and culture. In their efforts to portray California as paradise on earth, railroad promoters and citrus agricultural boosters consigned nonwhites to the unenviable status of stereotyped “others.”

Boosters from the railroad and citrus industries, in other words, built their conception of California as Eden on a foundation of racially prejudiced thinking. This defined the process of racial formation in Southern California. Historians in the past have admirably deconstructed California booster material, and this chapter will build upon that historiography by emphasizing the particular role that citrus agriculturalists and railroad corporations played in popularizing the Golden State in the American imagination around the turn of the twentieth century. As it will show, citrus and railroad boosters in Southern California strongly emphasized themes of Anglo-American perfection and the idea of California as a vast garden in their materials, but often did so at the expense of the minorities whose labor made the orange empire and ran transcontinental trains. It relegated these individuals to the role of strangers in paradise. This process began long before Eliza Tibbets introduced the Washington Navel orange to Riverside.

The arrival of the railroad in Southern California in the 1870s ignited a fever of promotion in the region that lasted for decades. In order to draw as many tourists and settlers to the Golden State as possible, the Southern Pacific, and later the Santa Fe,

promoted the Southland as a natural settlement for agriculture.⁴ Following the feverish competition between the two lines in the 1880s and the rapid success of the citrus industry, boosters, as those who took part in the promotional blitz became known, oriented their discipline parochially. Orange cities competed with each other and with those in the eastern United States for the title of healthiest or most opulent in the Golden State. Boosters in Los Angeles and San Diego not only maligned Florida, the previous champion of the American citrus industry, but also hurled vitriol at each other.⁵ Historian John Baur characterized many such admen as unscrupulous hucksters, men and women who did not care whether the information they peddled to ignorant audiences reflected authentic conditions in California.⁶ However, regardless of whether they lived in Santa Barbara, Riverside, or Anaheim, boosters often shared similar tactics.

The promotion of cities in Southern California's orange empire became even more pressing in the 1880s following the collapse of the real estate boom of 1887. Economic difficulties persisted in the state until 1900.⁷ As Richard Orsi explained, this resulted in the institutionalization of booster materials, where professional organizations and advertisers replaced town newspapers and other local bodies. The Southern Pacific, he noted, greatly expanded its booster activities in the late 1880s and 1890s, creating new venues such as *Sunset* to convince national audiences of economic opportunities in

⁴ Tom Zimmerman, *Paradise Promoted: The Booster Campaign That Created Los Angeles, 1870-1930* (Santa Monica, CA: Angel City Press, 2008), 21-2.

⁵ Baur, *The Health Seekers of Southern California*, 15-7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 27-8

⁷ Richard J. Orsi, "Selling the Golden State: A Study of Boosterism in Nineteenth-Century California" (Ph.D. diss, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1973), 628.

Southern California.⁸ By the earliest decades of the twentieth century, municipal organizations, the Roman Catholic Church, and the California Fruit Growers Exchange all invested in the promotion of Southern California.

Historians have taken a distinct interest in the history of boosterism in California over the past half-century. Richard Orsi completed the definitive early study of the subject, tracing promotion from its roots from the 1850s to the turn of the twentieth century. Perhaps the most influential work in this realm, however, was Phoebe Kropp's *California Vieja*. In this seminal work, Kropp proposed that white American promoters used the Spanish fantasy past and the remnants of Californio society as a mechanism to secure control of the Golden States. However, California boosterism extended beyond the Spanish fantasy past. As the present chapter will show through a critical interrogation of promotional literature, depictions of industrial California and modern agriculture by people around the turn of the twentieth century abounded. Ultimately, railroads and citrus growers attempted to place themselves at the apex of history and to define modernity through their commercial and booster activities.

Southern California was a distinct entity in the conception of boosters in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. By that time, as Carey McWilliams argued, Southern California had become as “sharply defined, geographically and socially,” as any other region of the Golden State.⁹ “One does not need to share all the illusions of the boosters to believe,” McWilliams waxed philosophically, “that the most fantastic city in

⁸ *Ibid.*, 631.

⁹ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 3.

the world will one day exist in this region: a city embracing the entire region from the mountains to the sea.”¹⁰ One belief that these boosters shared, whether erroneous as McWilliams believed or not, was that only Southern California, serviced by its extensive rail network and Mediterranean climate, could establish the greatest orange empire the world had ever seen. As early as 1887 editor Scipio Craig of the Redlands *Citrograph* expressed his belief that San Francisco and the surrounding region lacked the agreeable climate of the Southland, and as a result had failed to succeed in growing oranges and lemons.¹¹ Partly as a result of commercial citrus agriculture, boosters seized upon the notion of Southern California as a truly distinct entity.

In Los Angeles, the informal capital of Southern California, the promotional industry found its greatest champion. In 1895, Charles Fletcher Lummis formed the Landmarks Club to preserve the missions and spread the gospel of Southern California.¹² Lummis published *The Land of Sunshine*, formerly a flagging journal issued by the city of Los Angeles that the booster transformed into a magazine that soon become one of the most widely-circulated booster periodicals in the United States.¹³ In one editorial, Lummis described that his periodical was “devoted wholly to the West.”¹⁴ Along with other boosters, such as historian and playwright John Steven McGroarty, Lummis shaped memory in the Southland by 1900, often prioritizing Spanish contributions to the region’s

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹¹ “The Northern Citrus Belt Boom,” *Citrograph*, September 17, 1887, p. 14.

¹² “The Landmarks Club,” *The Land of Sunshine* 7, no. 1 (June 1897): 26.

¹³ Kropp, *California Vieja*, 52.

¹⁴ “In the Lion’s Den,” *Land of Sunshine* 8, no. 4 (March 1898): 187, 189.

history.¹⁵ Thanks to Lummis's efforts to preserve the physical remnants of California's Hispanic legacy, denizens of the Southland preserved countless adobes from the Mexican era, as well as the original Spanish missions.¹⁶ Even as late as the 1930s, when the Great Depression afflicted millions of Americans, Angelenos took pride in their city with a lavish sesquicentennial and the Games of the X Olympiad. During that time, Los Angeles County remained the leading agricultural county in the United States, thanks to the citrus industry.¹⁷ Finally, Lummis influenced an entire generation of Southern Californians to define their home as a distinct cultural and economic entity with the Golden State. This tendency greatly influenced promotional activities of railroads and citrus orchardists.

Boosters found a useful tool to draw Americans to the Southland in the region's climate, which they packaged as a tonic for practically all maladies by the late-nineteenth century. As historian John Baur explored in his classic tome on California health-seekers, boosters relied on the lack of fog, perpetual warmth, and cool nights to sell the Southland as a healthful region to potential settlers.¹⁸ Even the plants seemed healthier in Southern California, botanist Thomas Garey explained. "Orange trees in California enjoy an enviable reputation for healthfulness. Perhaps in no other part of the world does the citrus family enjoy immunity from disease to such an extent as in our own beloved and golden

¹⁵ Michelle Marie Lorimer, "Reconstructing the Past: Historical Interpretations and Native Experiences at Contemporary California Missions" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Riverside, 2013), 2. As Lorimer shows, Lummis and his ilk rarely found native peoples of the Golden State worthy of mention, much less praise.

¹⁶ Simpson, *Selling the City*, 138.

¹⁷ Zimmerman, *Paradise Promoted*, 186-7.

¹⁸ Baur, *The Health Seekers of Southern California*, 5-7.

country.”¹⁹ Boosters often made patently exaggerated proclamations, including the claim that moving to California could cure all consumptive diseases. In reality, resettling in the orange empire did not lead to miraculous recoveries from tuberculosis, but beliefs in the superiority of California’s climate enticed immigrants nonetheless.²⁰ However, the history of Southern California served boosters even more effectively than the area’s climate.

Glorification of the Spanish fantasy past, hearkening back to European and Mexican control of Alta California, emerged by the 1890s as perhaps the centerpiece of California boosterism. Lummis had started his famed Landmarks Club in part to preserve the Franciscan missions in the state.²¹ Christine Sterling partnered with Harry Chandler of the *Los Angeles Times* to preserve Olvera Street as a relic of the origins of the City of Angels.²² The few Californio families who retained economic and political power in California took part in the project of glorifying their history. Reginaldo del Valle, of the prominent del Valle family of Rancho Camulos, participated in the founding of the Historical Society of Southern California and the Association for the Preservation of the Missions.²³

¹⁹ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 81.

²⁰ Baur, *The Health Seekers of Southern California*, 14-5. Even more startling is the claim boosters made that one Señora Eulalia Pérez, a California Indian, lived almost 150 years thanks to the Mediterranean climate of the Southland. See Baur, *The Health Seekers of Southern California*, 13.

²¹ Simpson, *Selling the City*, 138.

²² Kropp, *California Vieja*, 211, 220.

²³ Dydia DeLyser, *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 69-70.

In the typical booster conception of California history, progress flowed from natural creation of the land to white domination of nature in the form of agriculture. Introduced by the Spaniards and perfected by white citrus orchardists around the turn of the twentieth century, agriculture united productive humans with California itself, demonstrating the flow of historical power from the geological forces to dominant white figures. As cultural studies scholar Tony Bennett has demonstrated in his examination of museum arrangement, public historians such as the California boosters structured their in such ways as to demonstrate the triumph of the modern, white, industrial man, who inherited absolute control from nature itself and used history to create a “totalizing order of things and peoples.”²⁴ Local public histories excluded any discussion of the roles of native peoples from the progression of time, demonstrated the general booster tendency to rely on narratives that deified whites as the natural inheritors of the productive land and welcoming climate of Southern California and the concerted effort to portray Native Americans and Mexican Americans as non-agents in this process.

In the rare instances when Native Americans did appear in booster narratives, authors depicted them as economically inferior people who relied on benevolent white overseers to avoid falling into social and historical obscurity. American journalists criticized California Indians for practices such as polygamy.²⁵ Writers defined all California natives under the single banner of “Indian,” thus failing to recognize the cultural diversity of native California. Just as eighteenth-century natives relied on Spanish padres to discover

²⁴ Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 96.

²⁵ “The Buck Passed,” 28, “4th Annual Newport Harbor Edition,” August 1, 1930 supplement to *Newport News*, box 1, folder 13, CCHB.

the benefits of European civilization and agriculture, they continued to rely on white guidance in the form of paternal white social control in the twentieth century, to keep from regressing into supposedly barbarous forms of existence. Once again, booster culture demonstrated the necessity of subjugating Native Americans in the Golden State as a key component in the white project to rationalize the United States' control of California. Whites, not Indians, became the natural inheritors of Spanish citrus agriculture.

In the late-nineteenth century, white American immigrants from the eastern United States took advantage of California's ideal growing conditions and climate to establish a massive citrus industry in the southern part of the state. Spanish missionaries introduced citrus agriculture to the region in the early-nineteenth century, but never practiced it on a large scale.²⁶ Only the success of the Washington Navel and Valencia orange industries resulted in the widespread proliferation of citrus agriculture in Southern California. A vigorous booster culture helped propagate and expand the Southern California citrus industry. Numerous pamphleteers cited California's beneficial qualities in their works, such as the state's Mediterranean climate, circulating this information to national audiences. The city of Riverside advertised its position in the Southern Pacific Railroad's *Sunset* magazine as "the greatest orange growing district in the world," blessed with an "equable" temperature and ample sunshine, making "the place a paradise for invalids and sportsmen." More importantly, the city's "irrigation systems [were] among the very finest in arid America. The purity and amplitude of her domestic water

²⁶ Lawton, "A History of Citrus," 7.

supply are not excelled anywhere.”²⁷ Although the Riverside Chamber of Commerce, responsible for this widespread advertisement, exaggerated a number of claims, it nonetheless exemplified popular California booster desires to reformulate the Golden State as a paradise on earth, served by transcontinental railroads that connected it to the rest of the United States, bathed in perpetual sunlight, and blessed with a manmade Eden in the form of orange groves that covered the southern portion of the state. Indeed, one San Diego County pamphlet reported on the favorability of “cooler coast conditions” in “the formation of acid in the lemon, while the warmer days farther from the coast develop sugar in the orange.”²⁸

Almost from the earliest days of their industry, citrus agriculturalists characterized Southern California to their prospective customers as a vast garden, a paradise created by humans. As Douglas Sackman noted, boosters characterized California as the final frontier of North America, a promised land that fulfilled dreams of manifest destiny.²⁹ During the 1880s, Thomas Garey’s deterministic tract on orange growing in California echoed this sentiment. The nurseryman defined the orange empire as a “beloved and golden country.”³⁰ At Riverside, the capital of the orange empire, the conception of California as Eden founds its most powerful outlet at Mt. Rubidoux. At that site in 1907, the master promoter of Riverside, Frank Miller, raised a concrete cross at the

²⁷ “The Greatest Orange Growing District on Earth: Riverside, California” advertisement, *Sunset* 5, no. 2 (June 1900).

²⁸ San Diego County Board of Supervisors and Chamber of Commerce, “Orange Culture in San Diego County, California,” *Bulletin* no. 3, box 1, folder 3, CCHB.

²⁹ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 18.

³⁰ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 81.

summit, with such notable individuals as Harrison G. Otis, Harry Chandler, and Edward Ripley of the Santa Fe Railroad visited.³¹ Each Easter Sunday, one promotional pamphlet reported, visitors completed the ascent to the cross, a memorial to the mission system.³² From this site, visitors could view the impressive panorama of Riverside's citrus groves.

This garden, however, resulted from human innovation, American mastery of the landscape of the far Southwest. Seminal figures, particularly experimental botanists, received praise for facilitating the growth of agriculture in Southern California. Luther Burbank, for instance, enjoyed panegyrics in some of the most influential publishing outlets in California. One editor of *Sunset* praised Burbank for his tireless experimentation. "He has ventured to sport with Nature," the journalist, remarked, "to see how bright flowers could be made brighter; small blossoms, larger; imperfect fruits, perfect."³³ In the booster formulation of the Far West, nature, particularly plants, required a special human touch to become productive. Perhaps most importantly of all, boosters praised Burbank for his ability to monetize plants.³⁴ Edward J. Wickson, an agriculturalist with the University of California, idealized Burbank as a man of "respectable standing" and "a businessman."³⁵ Such tracts often skirted the fact that the plants that Burbank in his laboratory and Herbert J. Webber of the Citrus

³¹ Hartig, "Citrus Growers," 168. Incredibly, President William Howard Taft also made the ascent.

³² "Easter Dawn on Rubidoux," William H. Bull Collection, box 1145, folder 14, California State Library.

³³ *Sunset* clipping, Edward J. Wickson Papers, carton 1, folder Wickson, E.J. Writings – Luther Burbank, The Man, His Methods + His Achievements, Bancroft Library. Hereafter Wickson Papers.

³⁴ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 59.

³⁵ Edward J. Wickson, "Luther Burbank, Man, Methods and Achievements," Wickson Papers, carton 1, folder Wickson, E.J. Writings – Luther Burbank, The Man, His Methods + His Achievements, p. 13.

Experimentation created an entire industry of unnatural specimens, completely fabricated elements that did not naturally appear in the landscape of Southern California.

From the inception of the citrus industry in California, orange growers used their products to reshape popular conceptions of Southern California. Thomas Garey, the famed nurseryman who promoted citriculture for years, described oranges as “the handsome, symmetrical, electrifying Golden Glory of the Pacific slope.”³⁶ The orange often became a sort of cosmological symbol and a golden fruit. This allowed denizens of Southern California to use the vocabulary of gold that had characterized the great mineral rush to the state in the late 1840s. Booster Phil Hanna extolled the cultured orange growers of New England who raised oranges in Southern California as “represent[ing] substantial and permanent values.” These men “served to check and balance the excesses of the ‘49ers,” thus creating a more stable “rush” than the gold of the Sierra Madres had provided.³⁷ Historian Glen Gendzel viewed the Gold Rush as privileging the history of Northern California, and equated the citrus boom of the 1880s with the earlier mineral craze as a major “rush” in the Golden State.³⁸ Citrus historian David Boulé referred to the California Fruit Growers Exchange, which helped orange growers recover from the depression of 1893, as the creator of “California’s Real Gold Rush,” when the industry achieved profitability.³⁹

³⁶ Garey, *Orange Culture in California*, 7.

³⁷ Hanna, *California through Four Centuries*, 149.

³⁸ Glen Gendzel, “Not Just a Golden State: Three Anglo ‘Rushes’ in the Making of Southern California, 1880-1920,” *Southern California Quarterly* 90, no. 4 (Winter 2008-2009): 350, 362.

³⁹ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 49-51.

Sunkist indeed advertised California like no other entity in the state before or since. There seemed to be no end to the creativity manifested through Sunkist advertising. In its greatest coup, Sunkist turned to advertiser Don Francisco, who fabricated the “Drink an Orange” campaign. Following the discovery of vitamin C, advertisements from Sunkist suggested that consumption of oranges could prevent influenza.⁴⁰ Francisco circulated advertisement upon advertisement centralizing orange juice as a natural component of a healthy breakfast. As a result, the consumption of oranges in the United States sextupled.⁴¹ By developing byproducts such as orange juice, Sunkist also found a way to profit from culled oranges, or those deemed too unattractive or malformed to sell.⁴²

The Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe Railroads praised California oranges throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They ran campaigns across the Midwest such as the Southern Pacific’s California on Wheels during winter, with lecturers from State Board of Trade, sample oranges, and pamphlets for frozen farmers.⁴³ They promoted citrus fairs across Southern California, where designers from local fruit exchanges shaped oranges into engines, pyramids, and the like. At the World’s Fair at New Orleans in 1884, California oranges beat out Floridian products.⁴⁴ Another

⁴⁰ Sawyer, *To Make a Spotless Orange*, 33.

⁴¹ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 58; Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 256-7; Moses, “The Flying Wedge of Cooperation,” 392.

⁴² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 281-2.

⁴³ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 324.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 251.

tremendous success occurred in 1907, when the Southern Pacific and California Fruit Growers Exchange allied to promote citrus consumption in the Midwest. Under the leadership of E.H. Harriman and Francis Q. Story of CFGE, the Southern Pacific ran advertisements, organized lectures, and sent “California Fruit Special” trains to Iowa.⁴⁵

This concerted effort on the part of the Southern Pacific and Sunkist to depict Southern California as a paradise of oranges and sunshine, dubbed the “Oranges for Health, California for Wealth” campaign, resulted in the increased sales of oranges in Iowa and east of the Rocky Mountains, as well as the creation of a permanent advertising budget on the part of the California Fruit Growers Exchange.⁴⁶ Sunkist widened its advertising campaign in the following years to encompass other Midwestern states.⁴⁷ The Exchange deemed March 18 “Orange Day.” One newspaper blared that “Specialty advertising – hundreds of pages of it will be used during Orange Day week. Thousands of circulars mailed to the jobbing and retailing trade thruout [sic] the country have heralded ‘a real orange celebration on March 18th [sic]’ and suggested practical methods for conducting sales, arranging attractive display oranges and stimulating an increased demand for the king of citrus fruits.”⁴⁸ Such ventures resulted in handsome returns for the California Fruit Growers Exchange, and prompted the cooperative to experiment with further forms of promotion, ones that strongly resembled California boosterism.

⁴⁵ Hartig, “Citrus Growers,” 120-1.

⁴⁶ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 326; Hartig, “Citrus Growers,” 121.

⁴⁷ Sawyer, *To Make a Spotless Orange*, 33.

⁴⁸ “Every Family Will Know All About Orange Day,” *Ontario Daily Report*, March 11, 1916, pp. 1, 3.

Realizing the crucial significance of publication, members of the California citrus industry organized their own periodical. In May 1915, John R. Gabbert of Riverside had published a special issue of the Riverside *Enterprise* “devoted to the citrus industry,” his son recalled. He distributed this periodical to approximately 600 growers in the Golden State, who appreciated the effort and convinced Gabbert to publish a permanent periodical. Established in 1915, this venue, the *California Citrograph*, became the major publishing venue of orange, lemon, and grapefruit growers in California, particularly the Southland.⁴⁹ “Starting in the fall of 1915 as a magazine of practical information for growers of subtropical fruits,” recorded one author in the *California Citrograph*, it “met a very real need on the part of these industries and today holds an invaluable position, especially in the citrus industry.”⁵⁰ Not unlike Lummis’s periodical, the *California Citrograph* dubbed the Golden State a “Land of Sunshine and Wealth.” It used items from the same controlled vocabulary of the booster industry of California, equating the Gold Rush with the oil boom of the late-nineteenth century and the inestimable wealth produced through agriculture.⁵¹

Booster authors worked feverishly in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to construct popular conceptions of Southern California as a paradise. Myron Angel of San Luis Obispo County lauded the coastal region’s weather. The citrus

⁴⁹ John R. Gabbert, “The Founding of the California Citrograph,” in Klotz, Lawton, and Hall, eds., *A History of Citrus in the Riverside Area*, 44.

⁵⁰ “A Tribute to One Who Has Achieved in Citrus Work,” *The California Citrograph* 7, no. 4 (February 1922): 109.

⁵¹ “California the Wonder Producer,” *The California Citrograph*, 7, no. 3 (January 1922): 74.

industry depended on the climatic stability of Southern California. “The true character of the climate is shown by the range of temperature,” Angel explained. “Severe freezing occurs in Florida” citrus groves, “where orange trees are killed, and orange fruit is occasionally frozen at Los Angeles, but there are no such extremes of cold at San Luis Obispo.”⁵² At Riverside, Frank Miller used lavish letterhead to advertise his New Glenwood, also known as the Mission Inn. “Visit Riverside, The Largest Orange Growing District in the World, and See the Great Indian School, ‘Sherman Institute,’ on Magnolia Avenue,” the headline screamed.⁵³ According to California booster literature and imagery, especially that circulated by citrus interests such as local governments, private cooperatives, and the railroad companies that handled commercial agricultural traffic, the fruits of a new paradise beckoned.

In order to make their oranges stand out in markets dominated by southern European and Floridian citrus products, in the 1880s California citrus growers turned to lithographers and graphic artists to help advertise their products. In the late-nineteenth century, artists in the employ of the Schmidt Lithograph Company in San Francisco made vivid, colorful labels for citrus growers to place on the sides of wooden citrus crates shipped to markets across the country. By the mid-1920s, the Western Lithograph Company, based in Los Angeles, joined Schmidt as one of the leading companies with

⁵² Myron Angel, *Climate and Wealth of San Luis Obispo County California* (San Luis Obispo, 1898). Available through CCHB.

⁵³ Frank Miller to Henry E. Huntington, October 1, 1902, HEH Correspondence, box 154.

which citrus companies cooperatives in California worked.⁵⁴ Despite technological alterations that sped up label production and increased the number of labels in circulation, citrus crate artists tended to follow certain themes in their work. For example, the Schmidt and Western companies generated images glorifying California's Spanish fantasy past, producing colorful montages of missions and fiestas to popularize views of California as an idyllic paradise before the arrival of white Americans.⁵⁵

By the early decades of the twentieth century, citrus crate labels from Southern California had become important mechanisms to promote brand recognition. Images became ornate as technology improved, allowing lithographers to use many colors to create competitive, eye-catching labels.⁵⁶ "What better advertisement of a country can there be," an observer queried in the late 1880s, "than an established grade of fruit bearing the name of the community in which they are raised? See what the Riverside raisin and orange brands have done for that place," referring to the city's increasing prosperity.⁵⁷ At the Chaffey brothers' Model Colony,

A handsomely lithographed orange box label, bearing the name and an appropriate trade mark [*sic*] of Ontario, should be available at a reasonable price to all shippers of Ontario citrus fruits. Where known, Ontario oranges and lemons are regarded as the best produced, and to not only advertise the colony, but to increase the demand for them, should every box shipped bear the trade mark of Ontario.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Laurie Gordon and John Salkin, "'Eat Me and Grow Young!': Orange Crate Art in the Golden State," *California Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 53-55.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁵⁶ Emil O. Moeller to J.A. Beattie, November 21, 1897, Cucamonga Papers, box 1.

⁵⁷ "Our Fruit," *Citrograph*, October 29, 1887, p. 12.

⁵⁸ Untitled article, *Ontario Observer*, December 12, 1891, p. 5.

Fruit jobbers at eastern markets purchased the fruits in crates as workers unloaded them from railroad cars after the oranges and lemons made their transcontinental journeys.⁵⁹ Packers sorted oranges according to the grade of the fruit. Even in the Great Depression, historian David Hickman noted, as John Steinbeck chronicled the plight of migrant laborers in *The Grapes of Wrath*, citrus labels continued to visualize California as Eden.⁶⁰ The works of lithograph companies such as Western and Schmidt associated in the minds of consumers that the best labels always adorned the crates of the highest-quality products products.⁶¹

Additionally, citrus lithographers became fascinated with imagery of the American West, and particularly with Native Americans. However, artists tended to universalize native peoples. They obscured the physical and social diversity that characterized North American indigenes. In the words of citrus label historians Gordon McClelland and Jay Last, lithographs that portrayed Native Americans were “not especially true to life.”⁶² Lithographers often created stereotypical images of Native Americans on their labels, relying on buffalo headdresses, canoes, and bows and arrows to identify native peoples for popular audiences. Citrus lithographers did not focus on traits particular to California natives. Instead, the totalizing label of “Indian” minimized

⁵⁹ H.D. Foy to Archie Smith, February 29, 1910, HEH, box 5/77-83, folder 1.

⁶⁰ David Curtis Hickman, “Landscapes of Green and Gold: The Environmental Vision of the California Horticulturalists, 1849-1900” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Davis, 2011), 260.

⁶¹ Archie Smith to H.D. Foy, April 2, 1910, HEH, box 7/77-83, folder 1.

⁶² Gordon T. McClelland and Jay T. Last, *California Orange Box Labels: An Illustrated History* (Beverly Hills, CA: Hillcrest Press, 1985), 15-16.

and ignored specific cultural practices that existed across Native America's variegated landscape. For instance, the Redlands Heights Groves, Inc., based in city of the same name in the Southern California, established a Redlands Hopi Brand to ship its Sunkist oranges to eager eastern markets, using a group of Indians native to Arizona, rather than acknowledging the Cahuilla or Serrano peoples who inhabited the San Bernardino Valley before Spanish and American incursions.



Figure 5.1. “Redlands Hopi Brand” citrus crate label produced by the Union Lithograph Company. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library, Pomona, California.

Indeed, racialized depictions of ethnic minorities in the Golden State, particularly Chinese Americans, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans, permeated citrus labels. Citrus label historians Gordon McClelland and Jay Last commented that, even as late as the mid-twentieth century, just before lithographers stopped producing labels, racist images of African Americans, always depicted stereotypically as subservient and

mentally inferior to whites, endured.⁶³ However, despite the blatantly racist qualities visible in a number of labels, collectors of Californiana and Western American artifacts have held up citrus labels as critical examples of early California fine art. Entire clubs have formed to preserve these rapidly disappearing commodities. When citrus label production ceased in the 1950s, as the Citrus Label Society's website relates to visitors, "Thousands of citrus labels were destroyed, leaving just a few pieces of vintage art to remind the world of a uniquely American marketing tool." However, "[t]hose labels that have survived are collectibles."⁶⁴ The grassroots organizations that have formed to preserve these historical texts sadly fail to recognize the racial inscriptions and messages present in the labels and preserve them mainly for their aesthetic qualities.

Scholars have yet to recognize citrus labels as serious historic documents that illuminate socioeconomic conditions in the Golden State during the early-twentieth century. McClelland and Last correctly identified racist undertones in midcentury labels involving Native Americans and African Americans, but did not fully explore the ramifications of this racist imagery designed to promote consumption of oranges from California. To their credit, citrus label historians Laurie Gordon and John Salkin briefly reflected on the stereotyped depiction of Native Americans in citrus labels. Early-twentieth century label designers, they related, latched onto idea of Western Indians as hollering war whoops, such as "heap good" and "o-how-good" as stereotypical phrases, which they used as brand names for citrus cooperatives. The lithographers responsible for

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁶⁴ "Citrus Labels: Vintage Fruit of a Colorful Era," *Citrus Label Society*, n.d., <http://www.citruslabelsociety.com/aboutlabels.html>.

such labels ignored the cultures and societies of the native peoples who formerly occupied the lands of Southern California before they became citrus groves.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, Salkin and Gordon elsewhere exemplified California labels “not so much as relics of a bygone era” that can help modern audiences understand historical racist American mindsets, “but in their own right as a retrospective portfolio of an imaginative genre of American graphic art.”⁶⁶ This analysis ignores the ability to use citrus crate labels from California to fully understand boosters’ reliance on racial stereotypes to promote the Golden State around the turn of the twentieth century. In the typical California booster conception, Spaniards introduced important agricultural and social constructs and established an important infrastructure in the form of missions and the Camino Real that connected far-flung regions of the state. Americans successfully co-opted this structure and improved it, expanding agriculture in the Golden State and building a fantastic network of rail lines that linked different regions of California to each other and to Midwestern and eastern markets. Americans, in other words, perfected the infrastructure and society introduced by Spaniards in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and launched California into modernity.

Citrus label companies visually presented the same conceptions of the Golden State’s past as those exemplified in other booster publications. No citrus label better illustrates citrus label lithographers’ reliance on racially motivated historical constructions of California than the Mission Memories. The Western Lithograph

⁶⁵ Salkin and Gordon, “Eat Me and Grow Young!,” 68.

⁶⁶ John Salkin and Laurie Gordon, *Orange Crate Art* (New York, NY: Warner Books, 1976), 18.

Company designed this label for mass production on the Highland Citrus Association's crates in 1926. The image depicted on this label integrates many of the central visual elements on which lithographers relied when picturing the history of California. A crumbling mission occupies the center of the image, representing the long, slow decay of Hispanic California as a result of American conquest. However, even as the physical structure remains intact, the citrus lithographer chose not to include any Spanish, Mexican, or native Californians in the image. Only a ghostly shell, unpopulated by the earliest denizens of the Golden State, remains to commemorate centuries of Hispano-native interactions. The absence of Californios and native peoples speaks volumes about the citrus establishment's tendency to exclude people of color from the Golden State, relegating them to the realm of curiosities and stripping them of agency.

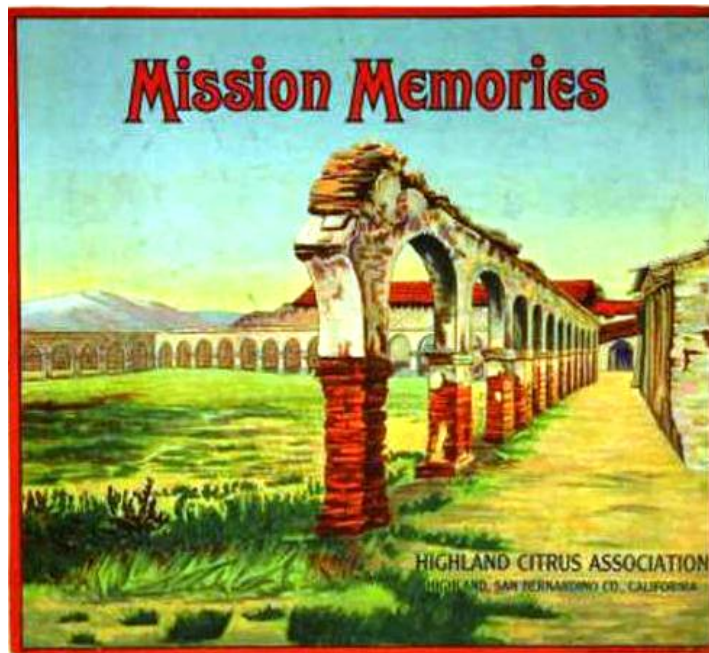


Figure 5.2. The Western Lithograph Company's "Mission Memories" brand citrus crate label produced in 1926. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

While Californians of Hispanic descent populated the margins of society as whites took control of the Golden State, the environment and idyllic image they created thrived, at least on citrus labels. The mission imagery and fantasized pastoral environment, created by early California boosters and maintained by the Western Lithograph Company, outlasted Hispanic dominance of the region. The physical infrastructure they created in the form of the mission system endured, albeit as a symbol of white progress over native ignorance and barbarism. Indeed, the term “Mission Memories” even connotes a positive construal of the past, one that sought to recall the glory days of Spanish rule over California. More importantly, the green field at the center of the mission in the image reminded viewers that the mission era acted as a prelude to the rise of citrus as a dominant economic factor in California by allowing Spaniards to bring the natural landscape of Southern California under control. In brief, while in circulation across the continent, this citrus label interpreted Spanish rule of California as an important step in the state’s gradual ascent to a bastion of industrial agriculture.

Aside from praising its economic achievements, early-twentieth century citrus lithographers eulogized the pastoral lifestyle of the Californio era. The Schmidt Lithograph Company’s undated Home of Ramona brand, used by the del Valle distributors in Camulos, proudly displayed the physical epitome of a ranch house as depicted in author Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona*. This book, meant to render the subjugation of Indians in California in a tragic light, became a bestseller and attracted denizens from across the United States to the southland. In her legendary novel depicting life in Mexican California, Jackson described the ranch of Señora Moreno, a ranchera:

one of the best specimens to be found in California of the representative house of the half barbaric, half elegant, wholly generous and free-handed life led there by Mexican men and women of degree in the early part of [the nineteenth] century, under the rule of the Spanish and Mexican viceroys, when the laws of the Indies were still the law of the land, and its old name, 'New Spain,' was an ever-present link and stimulus to the warmest memories and deepest patriotisms of its people.⁶⁷

Mexican dwellings, following the patterns established by trailblazing Spanish friars and pioneers in the eighteenth century, recalled the dawn of civilization in California, physically attesting to the Spaniards' enduring legacy. Jackson took advantage of every narrative opportunity to remind her readers that Californios had their Spanish forebears to thank for their carefree lifestyle. Señora Moreno's home, Jackson explained, formerly "belonged to the Bonaventura Mission, and lay along the coast at the mouth of the valley down which the little stream which ran past her house went to the sea; and it had been a great pride and delight to the Señora."⁶⁸ As Jackson's narrative shows, Spaniards used architecture to link humans to Alta California's environment.

The Home of Ramona Brand label produced during the heyday of white citrus agriculture visually epitomized Jackson's conceptions of Mexican California. Like the Mission Memories label, this image lacked human figures, instead focusing on mission architecture and its role in combatting the rugged California frontier. It visually reproduced Jackson's narrative for a transcontinental audience by allowing them to relive the Golden State's romantic Mexican past through a graphical reiteration of Jackson's tale. The house depicted in the image lay in the dirt, flanked by exotic trees and bushes.

⁶⁷ Helen Hunt Jackson, *Ramona* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 2005 [1884]), 13.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

Like much early California booster imagery, it constructed Southern California as a collage of social and physical environments, part desert and part chaparral, with clear skies and welcoming adobes to draw eastern Americans to the golden west. Despite the absence of human figures in this image, the lithographer clearly demonstrated the impact of European architecture over the rugged native landscape of the Golden State, as mentioned in Jackson's discussion of the Moreno ranch. The unpopulated images silently beckoned eastern Americans to California, taking advantage of the pioneering work of Californios in the state. As other crate labels posited, the path to modernity continued through orange agriculture.

The image lists Ulpiano del Valle as the proprietor of Ranch Camulos was Ulpiano del Valle.⁶⁹ The scion of a wealthy Californio family, del Valle was well aware of the national fervor surrounding *Ramona* by the turn of the twentieth century. Although *Ramona* was a fictional character, del Valle wisely capitalized on the popular conception that his orange growing ranch in Ventura County had served as the inspiration for the setting of Jackson's novel.⁷⁰ This was a rare instance where a Californio used the popular mechanism of orange crate labels for his own commercial purposes. It was far more common, however, for citrus labels to become mechanisms to appropriate Southern California's Spanish fantasy past for less benevolent outcomes.

⁶⁹ DeLyser, *Ramona Memories*, 79.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 83-4.

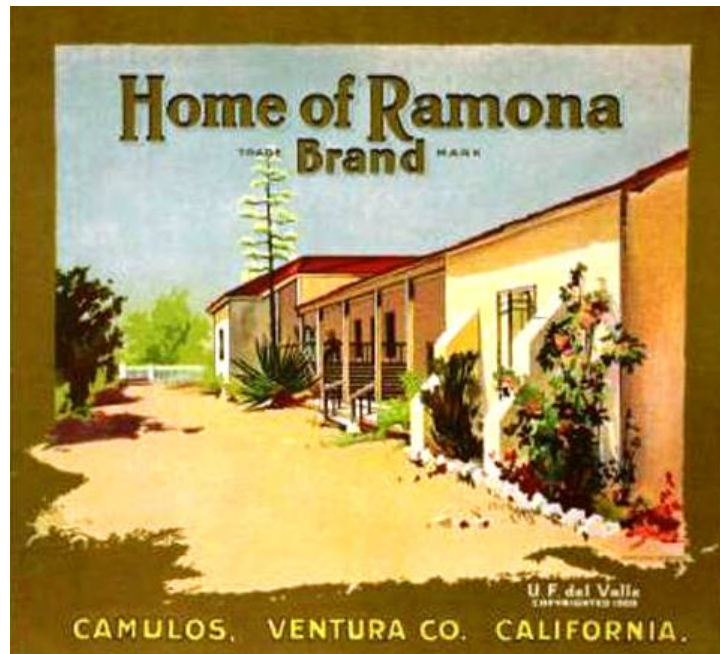


Figure 5.3. The Schmidt Lithograph Company's "Home of Ramona Brand" citrus crate label. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

When Latinos, especially Mexican Americans, appeared on California citrus crate labels, stereotypes surrounding their lifestyles and racial attributes abounded. The Paisano Brand, used by Riverside Growers Inc. in the 1930s, depicted a sombrero-wearing man with a darker complexion playing a guitar. Clad in multicolored garments and smoking a cigarette, his moustache, relaxed attitude, and even the name of the brand marked him as a Californio, something other than the normative Anglo-American of the Golden State.⁷¹ The image tacitly posited Latinos as a subservient class, integrating early-twentieth century Latinos into the Americanized Golden State as mythologized entertainers. As Glen Gendzel explained, early white California boosters often romanticized Mexican rule of California, emphasizing fiestas and the relaxing lifestyle

⁷¹ Lisbeth Haas defines "Paisana" as "An Educated Mission Indian Woman." See Haas, "San Juan Capistrano: A Rural Society in Transition to Citrus," *California History* 74, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 48.

Californios experienced. “There was peace and plenty” wrote John Steven McGroarty, a California booster and editorialist at the turn of the century, when citrus labels permeated the nation’s markets. For the Californios, “hospitality became a religion.” More importantly, “Song and laughter filled the sunny mornings. There was feasting and music, the storm of guitars and the click of castanets under the low hanging moons. Toil was easy and the burden of existence light.”⁷² Thus, in addition to constructing Mexican Americans in California as idyllic, even lazy pastoralists, boosters such as the citrus crate lithographers identified fiestas and music as integral parts of Mexican California’s culture and society, as exemplified through the Paisano Brand. Not only, then, did citrus crates emblazoned with this label sell delicious Washington Navel oranges, but they also allowed consumers in far-flung markets to consume racialized ideas and stereotypes of Mexican Americans in the Golden State.

⁷² Gendzel, “Not Just a Golden State,” 69.



Figure 5.4. “Paisano Brand” citrus crate label created by the Western Lithograph Company in 1935. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

Fiesta imagery and conceptions of Californios as a leisurely people saturated labels across the country. In the early 1920s, the Western Lithograph Company developed a Mission Play Brand for citrus crates. A colorful label used by the California Fruit Growers Exchange for its Sunkist oranges, this label visualized the famed Mission Play written by John McGroarty. Originally performed from 1912 to 1929, this historical pageant rivaled performances of *Ramona* in Hemet, California.⁷³ The label depicted a Mexican woman dancing in a mission setting to the music of two guitarists. Importantly, the illustrator situated two seated Native Americans in the label’s foreground, affirming their social and economic prostration in Alta California by the mid-nineteenth century. In all, the label reconstructed California missions in the Mexican era as sites of leisure and

⁷³ DeLyser, *Ramona Memories*, 117.

happiness. As McGroarty baldly explained of Mexico's control of the Golden State, "the romance of [Hispanic] California was the greatest era of all."⁷⁴

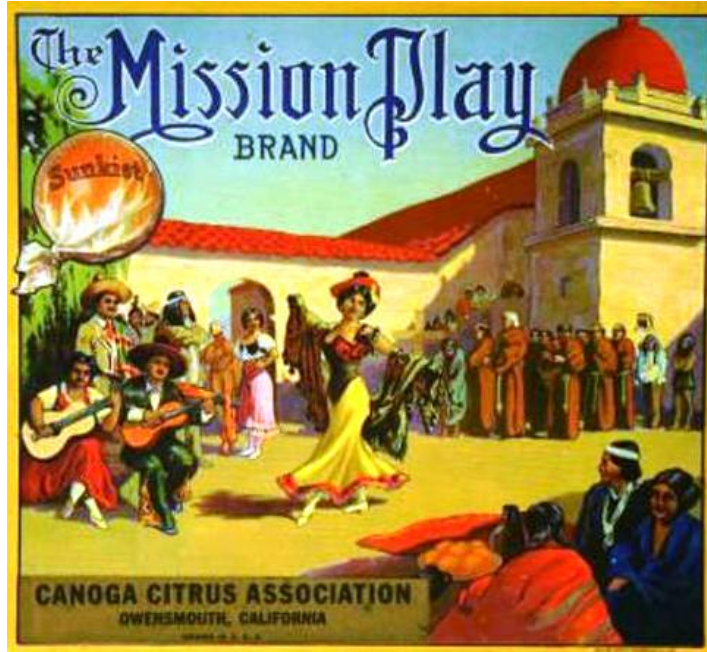


Figure 5.5. "The Mission Play Brand" citrus crate label created by the Western Lithograph Company in 1923. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

Despite the seemingly positive nature of McGroarty's statement, an underlying current of condescension permeated his works, as well as the Mission Play Brand citrus label. By denying that Mexican California enjoyed any of the "strenuous materialism and commercialism" that characterized the American period by the end of the nineteenth century, McGroarty implied that Mexicans abandoned the positive accomplishments of their Spanish ancestors.⁷⁵ His play identified the denizens of California as "Mexican Indian Neophytes," failing to distinguish between Mexicans and native peoples. Further

⁷⁴ John S. McGroarty, *California: Its History and Romance* (Los Angeles, CA: Grafton Publishing Company, 1911), 151.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 151-152.

characters included Junipero Serra and the “Savage Indians of San Diego.”⁷⁶ These “savage Indians” required “direction of the padres” to adopt adobe, use stone for building, and make bricks to erect the chain of missions along the coast of California.⁷⁷ His paternal tone, which focused on the supposed leisurely nature of Mexicans in California, supported the widespread nineteenth-century view of Mexicans as politically and socially inferior to whites. Booster believed that Mexican Americans required outside guidance and racial uplift, just as the Spanish padres had attempted to give native peoples a century earlier.

As mentioned previously, few academics have viewed the role of race in citrus labels critically⁷⁸, forcing scholars to turn to discussions of related material and visual culture to find meaning in these ethnically charged historical documents. Scholar Kenneth Goings provided such an examination in his work on the interaction between race and material culture in America. Goings analyzed the role of consumption in popular social formations of race in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focusing specifically on black collectibles that stereotyped African Americans. He argued that producers of racist black collectibles appropriated African American identity through stereotypes for consumer images and advertisements. The public thus consumed and even perpetuated the idea of racism because black figures in advertising images and products seemingly

⁷⁶ John Steven McGroarty, *The Mission Play: Second Season* (Los Angeles, CA: Grafton Publishing Company, no date), 23.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷⁸ One important exception is Henry Knight, “Savage Desert, American Garden: Citrus Labels and the Selling of California, 1877-1929,” *U.S. Studies Online: The BAAS Postgraduate Journal* 12 (Spring 2008), accessed March 8, 2013, <http://www.baas.ac.uk>.

served white consumers. Images of the Gold Dust Twins on washing powder serve as Goings' most convincing example of this argument. Sold under the slogan "Let the Gold Dust Twins Do Your Work," the brand portrayed African Americans as the servants of white consumers. "What better way to attract attention," asked Goings, "arouse humor, and provide the consumer with a sense of racial superiority than the stereotypical Old South/New South myth of the loyal, *happy* servant waiting to do the master's – now the consumer's – bidding?"⁷⁹ In this way, the Paisano Brand orange crate label similarly operated to place Mexican Americans into a subservient class below the white citrus growers and, more importantly, their consumers, and the performers in the Mission Play Brand image similarly musically performed their racial identities. The Latinos in these images wore their colorful garb, played their instruments, and danced for the pleasure of consumers, who purchased not only the orange within the crate on which the label appeared but, by accepting a label that reformulated California along racialized lines, participated in the social subjugation of Mexican Americans.

More importantly, purchasing California oranges and lemons based on racist labels allowed white eastern audiences to participate in manifest destiny. John Hughes elucidated this concept by describing the young American republic's "high moral sense and a conscious superiority over the Mexican people," as well as those of native peoples. This justified whites' attempts to provide democratic republicanism and uplift inferior ethnic groups.⁸⁰ This racist mindset justified the United States' military intervention that

⁷⁹ Kenneth W. Goings, *Mammy and Uncle Mose: Black Collectibles and American Stereotyping* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 11-12.

⁸⁰ Sides, *Blood and Thunder*, 57.

led to the conquest of California, among many other western regions, in the 1840s. Citrus labels that negatively depicted Mexican Americans in California as dancers and performers thus held that such modes of living were all that members of this racial group could achieve without help from the United States, supposedly driven by divine will, superior intelligence, and a liberating spirit of democracy.⁸¹ Eastern and Midwestern Americans, by consuming citrus labels that upheld this traditional interpretation of western conquest, participated in the manifest destiny legend that helped the United States spread from sea to shining sea. These consumers took their places as rightful conquerors and subjugators of racially inferior Mexican Americans in a morally and economically superior republic, reconstituting the desire to dominate the American West as a reality through consumption of oranges taken from crates bearing racialized labels. The consumption of citrus labels by consumer audiences allowed whites to insert themselves into a grand American historical narrative, using stereotyped images of Mexican Americans as “others” against which to juxtapose themselves as modern, forward-thinking whites.

California booster projects vigorously advocated the subjugation of Asian Americans alongside Californios and native peoples. The “Mr. Pagoda” brand printed by the Western Lithograph Company in 1931 visually demonstrated this tendency. Depicting an extremely stereotyped Chinese American with yellow skin, highly caricatured eyes, and oriental garb, the figure for whom the label was named pointed to a panoramic view of citrus groves before a sunny mountain and declared the oranges grown therein “Welly,

⁸¹ Ken Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West*, 28.

welly good,” mocking Chinese Americans’ accents. This image posited “Mr. Pagoda” as an expert on the topic of citrus. After all, the orange did originate in East Asia, thereby making the stereotyped Chinese American in the image a potential expert on citrus fruits. Ed Ainsworth, a citrus historian writing for Sunkist Growers, Inc. in the mid-twentieth century, remarked on the orange’s East Asian origins. “Out of a perfumed garden in the mystic East a long time ago,” he remarked, oranges “were served with reverence in the Oriental palaces of Nabobs and Potentates.”⁸²

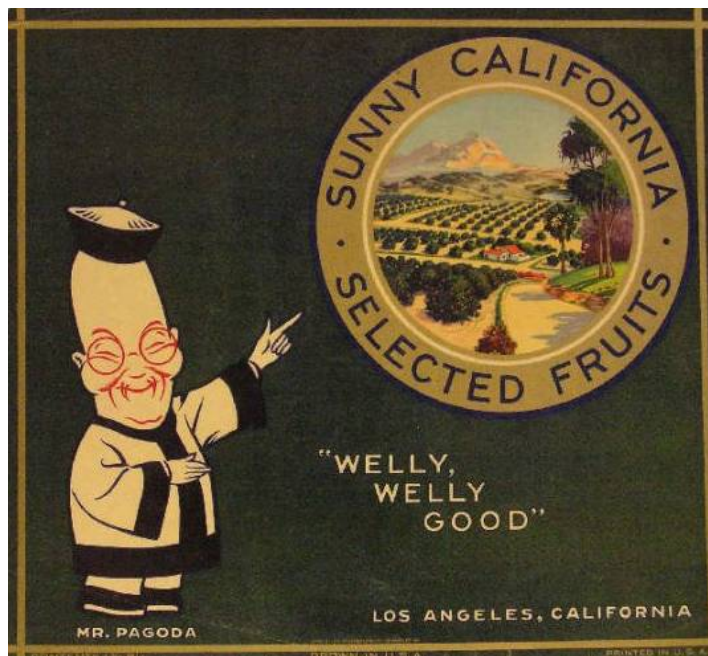


Figure 5.6. “Mr. Pagoda” brand citrus crate label, produced by the Western Lithograph Company in 1931. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

Ainsworth’s language revealed the popular California booster tendency to denigrate Asian Americans and demean them as backward-thinking peoples from a continent whose day in the sun of economic and political dominance had long since

⁸² Ed Ainsworth, *Journey with the Sun: The Story of Citrus in Its Western Pilgrimage* (Los Angeles, CA: Sunkist Growers, Inc., 1968), 1-2.

ended by the twentieth century. Many white boosters found their language, religious customs, and manner of dress alien, mocking the Chinese immigrants who had laid the rails that connected the Golden State to the rest of the nation. Indeed, even President Grover Cleveland deemed Chinese “assimilation with our people” an impossible task, “dangerous to our peace and welfare.”⁸³ One academic history written as late as the 1930s referenced a “chinaman [*sic*]” who packed the first crate of oranges produced in Lordsburg, California in the 1890s.⁸⁴

Additionally, publications circulated by railroads, such as the Pacific Electric Railway’s *The Spark*, negatively depicted Chinese Americans in images and textual pieces. One fictional short story published in *The Spark* in 1908 clearly demonstrated whites’ perceived sense of racial superiority over Chinese Americans. Titled “The Coat of Many Colors,” the tale focused on Ning Moon, a Chinese woman whose husband, Sue Chang, voyaged to the Golden State for its economic opportunities. Writing a letter to his wife and children, Sue Chang remarked:

In two months I behold my sacred family! After five years I return glad in my heart. . . . [N]o longer do I pray to Idols. China – my country, too slow – too dark. United States feel contempt. You not understand? I tell you some day [*sic*] day how white nation despise old foolish nation. United States say Chinese look all same monkey. I feel that shame long time; then “Reform Party” tell me cut off queue; dress like Merican man – not like women! long hair! those old garment. Now I feel happy! I send picture so you see.⁸⁵

⁸³ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 252.

⁸⁴ Ramseyer, “A History of Lordsburg California,” 47, 58. Lordsburg changed its name to La Verne in 1917 upon the death of city father Isaac Lord.

⁸⁵ Mary Stewart Daggett, “The Coat of Many Colors,” *The Spark* 1, no. 1 (September 1908): 28-9.

Sue Chang's dialogue, written by a white author, highlights a number of negative stereotypes that boosters from Southern California applied to Chinese immigrants. First, the author of the piece juxtaposed American phenotypes against East Asian ones by sublimating Chinese immigrants as "monkeys," to borrow from Sue Chang's parlance. Secondly, the author feminized Chinese men by drawing attention to the distinct manner of their clothes and the queue, or braided form of hair introduced during the early Manchu Qing dynasty.⁸⁶ Finally, despite Sue Chang's supposed Americanization, the author indicated through the use of Pidgin English that this Chinese man, even after undergoing western-oriented reform, would never possess the intelligence to fully understand the language. Just as the natives of California required the patient guidance of mission padres to achieve their full agricultural potential, so, too did Chinese immigrants need thought conditioning and cultural reform designed by whites to achieve a limited form of integration that would still place them beneath whites in the Golden State's racial hierarchy. Thus, in American and Canadian markets, California booster authors and lithographers used images of Asian Americans not only as racialized "others," but also as socially disruptive elements who required guidance from benevolent racial superiors.

Chinese Californians often found themselves at the mercy of ruthless editorialists who criticized Asian Americans for their cultural inferiority. The Redlands *Citrograph*, a leading publication in the orange belt, once observed that a Floridian newspaper published an editorial in favor of establishing a Chinese laundromat in a small town. The *Citrograph* rather alarmingly stated in response "Gracious! Here's a man who absolutely

⁸⁶ Ebrey, *History of China*, 221.

piners for a Chinaman. Send him a whole train load. California has him in a too disgusting abundance. Acquaintance with him develops disgust, and we long to be rid of him.”⁸⁷

Newspapers maligned Chinese as “Orientals” or “Crocker’s Pets,” referring to their invaluable labor in the railroad industry.⁸⁸ Organized workers in the Golden State largely deplored the Chinese, who worked for low wages and supposedly undercut white laborers’ ability to bargain collectively.⁸⁹ However, the Chinese were not the only targets of vitriol from Anglo Americans in the orange empire.

Beyond citrus labels, prominent packinghouses and cooperative associations published brochures, booklets, and other booster documents that denigrated California’s native peoples. In 1921, the Azusa Foot-hill Citrus Company based in the San Gabriel Valley published *Azusa Old and New*, a history booklet designed to glorify the role of citrus growers in the city for which the company was named. Before delving into the lasting native legacy of the region, the anonymous author briefly reflected that the village that occupied the site before European conquest, called Ashuksha-Vit, served as a home to a “local tribe of the Shoshonean Indians,” but “whether [they were] Gabrielenos [Tongva] or Serranos cannot actually be determined.”⁹⁰ Despite his laudable ability to

⁸⁷ Untitled article, *Citrograph*, October 1, 1887, p. 14.

⁸⁸ Rolle and Verge, *California*, 184.

⁸⁹ Harry W. Lawton, “Denis Kearney among the Orange Groves: The Beginnings of the Anti-Chinese Movement in the Citrus Belt (1876-1880),” in Great Basin Foundation, ed., *Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, Volume One: History* (San Diego, CA: Great Basin Foundation, 1987), 198-201. For a robust discussion of this theme, see Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*.

⁹⁰ Keith Vosburg and Azusa Foot-Hill Citrus Company, *Azusa Old and New, Being a True Recital of the Founding & Development of a California Community* (Azusa, CA: Azusa Foot-Hill Citrus Company, 1921), 9.

distinguish between different native ethnicities, the author continued his account of the first denizens of Azusa by degrading their society. “The local Indians,” he proclaimed, “practiced no agriculture, living upon small animals, roots, and what food could be gleaned from nature in a semiarid country – a condition of life necessarily leading to a seminomadic existence. At any rate, modern Azusa owes little to its first primitive inhabitants, save its name.”⁹¹

Ultimately, the Azusa Foot-hill Citrus Company, like the lithograph companies that worked with growers based in Southern California, consigned the first residents of Azusa to the distant past. By the early nineteenth century, “its inhabitants had probably been removed to the mission of San Gabriel, there to enjoy or suffer the usual fate of the California Indians when brought into contact with the blessings of civilization.”⁹² To his or her credit, the author acknowledged the awful fate that awaited many Native Americans at the Spanish missions. However, the language in this booklet characterized the deaths of native Californians as unfortunate, unintended, yet unavoidable consequence that accompanied the coming of European civilization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their uncivilized lifestyles, the author asserted, simply could not transition to the productive agricultural labor and civilizing Christianity that Spaniards brought to Alta California. The cover image reinforced this beneficial European patriarchal touch, portraying a Spanish friar dutifully supervising a toiling native as he tends to the fields near an adobe structure. After Europeans arrived in the future Golden

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹² *Ibid.*

State, the narrative completely eschewed any discussion of native peoples under Spanish, Mexican, or American control in Azusa. As with many other California booster materials discussed later, Indians simply disappeared as whites civilized the Golden State through agriculture and industry.

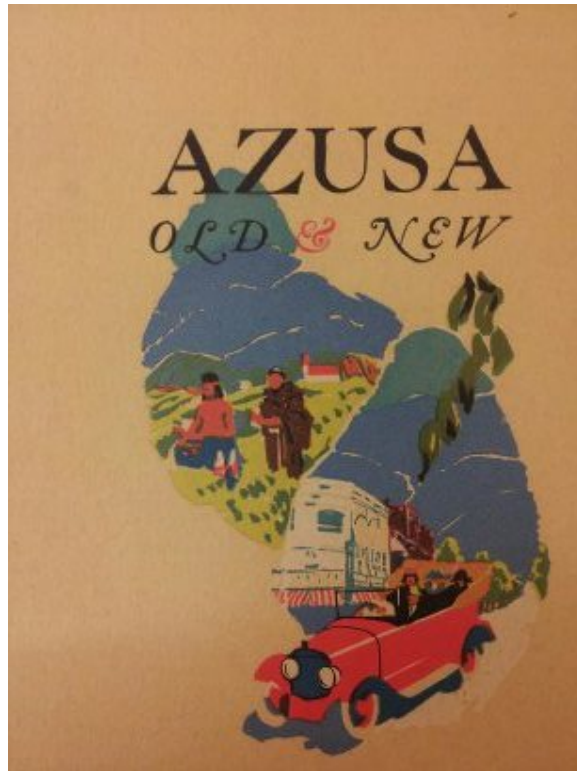


Figure 5.7. Cover of the Azusa Foot-Hill Citrus Company's *Azusa Old and New*. A faceless native labors in the field under the watchful eyes of a Franciscan padre. Azusa, CA: Azusa Foot-hill Citrus Company, 1921.

Municipal organizations in orange cities that published booster materials also relied on interpretations of California history that glorified white farmers, furthering the agenda started by citrus agriculturalists in the late-nineteenth century. In 1939, the City of Garden Grove released *The History of Garden Grove*, written by H.C. Head, “in conjunction with the celebration of the first annual ‘Grover[sic] Day’” that year. “In the beginning,” wrote Head in his best imitation of biblical prose, “the land comprising what

is now known as the Garden Grove district was part of the great alluvial fill since called the Santa Ana Valley and forming a large part of Orange County. That valley was caused by the slow rising through geologic ages of the ocean floor and the filling in of silt brought from the heights by streams, the chief builder being the River Santa Ana.”⁹³

While Head characterized natural forces such as the Santa Ana River as historical agents in the creation of California, he neglected to discuss any native peoples who populated the region, instead spending lengthy passages discussing the roles of Pedro Fages, a prominent Spanish explorer, and Abel Stearns, a wealthy Yankee landowner during the Mexican and American periods.⁹⁴ In the fever to promote Southern California’s orange empire, railroads often shared conceptions of racial formation with citrus agriculturalists and label lithographers.

One particular image from *Azusa Old and New* perfectly captures the central roles that citrus agriculture and railroads played in shaping turn-of-the-century California booster culture. The photograph focuses squarely on a Santa Fe train car, complete with that transcontinental line’s ubiquitous logo, stopped before an Azusa packinghouse complete with a large sign demonstrating to readers its affiliation with the California Fruit Growers Exchange and its Sunkist brand. The image demonstrates the unbreakable link between citrus and railroads as defining features of the cultural landscape, and the degree to which corporate symbology, such as that of Sunkist, had captured the American imagination by the early-twentieth century. California booster materials, led by

⁹³ H.C. Head, *The History of Garden Grove* (Garden, Grove, CA: Garden Grove News, 1939), 3-5.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

influential transcontinental railroad publications and widespread citrus crate labels and brochures, relied extensively on such imagery to shape American beliefs about California.



Figure 5.8. Railroad car at a Sunkist packinghouse. This image demonstrates the interconnectedness of railroads and citrus agriculture in Southern California by the early-twentieth century. Note the large sign proclaiming this packinghouse's affiliation with the Sunkist brand, as well as the Santa Fe Railroad's ubiquitous symbol on the side of the railcar. Reproduced from Vosburg and Azusa Foot-Hill Citrus Company, *Azusa Old and New*.

For American railroads, by the end of the nineteenth century, the horizons seemed endless. The Southern Pacific's train to the coast, the famed *Sunset Limited*, reflected railroaders' belief that imagination was the only limit to what the iron horse could accomplish.⁹⁵ Partly in order to achieve greater profitability, but also out of zeal to

⁹⁵ Orsi discusses this theme in greater detail in *Sunset Limited*, xiii.

Americanize the Far West, lines such as the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe railroads actively promoted the various industries of Southern California. Once the citrus industry displayed its economic staying power, railroads eagerly latched onto it and spent vast sums promoting it across the United States. “All California is proud of the grand results which have been accomplished in the southern counties of the State is demonstrating the value of that section for the production of ORANGES AND LEMONS, besides all other fruits of the semi-tropic and temperate zones,” the Southern Pacific proudly proclaimed in an advertisement for a citrus fair in Los Angeles. “The SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY feels a strong interest in this noble industry and by a great reduction of freight charges has largely increased the profits of growers and encouraged the extension of the enterprise.”⁹⁶ Speaking truth to power, the Southern Pacific advertised its “CHOICE FARMING and FRUIT and VINEYARD LANDS lying adjacent to the railroad” in citrus growing districts such as Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties.⁹⁷

The Santa Fe answered in kind. As the major connector between the Midwest and Southern California, this railroad portrayed the southwestern United States as an exotic paradise, with the Golden State as the last modernized region along the American frontier.⁹⁸ Similar to the Southern Pacific, the Santa Fe promoted citrus-growing regions. At the city of Corona, for instance, “On the Santa Fe’s Famous ‘Kite-Shaped Track,’” the

⁹⁶ “Southern Citrus Fair” advertisement, *The Morning Call*, December 23, 1890, no page number, SP, Series 7, Public Relations Scrapbook, 1888-1892. Hereafter PR Scrapbook.

⁹⁷ “Railroad Lands in California” advertisement, SP, Series 7, PR Scrapbook.

⁹⁸ Michael E. Zega, “Advertising the Southwest,” *Journal of the Southwest* 43, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 282.

Santa Fe boasted of the rich land set aside for orange- and lemon-ranching.⁹⁹ In 1922, the same line took great pride in “The California citrus industry,” which “during the past twelve months shipped 12,926,358 boxes of oranges and grapefruit and 4,054,771 boxes of lemons,” as reported by Sunkist. This netted growers \$71,366,464.¹⁰⁰ Such unmissable reports and advertisements, laid out in large fonts across entire pages so that readers could not miss them, spoke to the railroads’ commitment to boosting the citrus industry in the Southland.

The greatest manifestation of this commitment appeared in 1907, when the Southern Pacific published *The Inside Track: The Way Through the Wonderful Fruit and Flower Garden of Southern California*. The company designed this promotional piece to lure tourists onto trains of the Southern Pacific that ventured through the orange empire, called the Inside Track Flyer. The booklet used lush language to describe the Edenic landscape of the Southland. “Cities,” reported the pamphlet “orchard enclosed, are here and there, white embowered with green; sandy arroyos are crossed with a silver ribbon of water midway; long sloping benches covered with vines join in the picture.”¹⁰¹ It invited visitors to marvel over Euclid Avenue in Ontario, “two hundred feet wide, with double driveway, an electric railway between, all separated by rows of fine trees.”¹⁰² In the San Gabriel and San Bernardino valleys “are foothills on which orange orchards are

⁹⁹ Advertisement for city of Corona, *Santa Fe Employees’ Magazine* 4, no. 7 (June 1910): 108.

¹⁰⁰ “Along the Trail,” *Santa Fe Magazine* 17, no. 1 (December 1922): 71.

¹⁰¹ *Inside Track*, 7.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 12.

venturesomely arrayed with all the regularity of an army on parade.”¹⁰³ The beauty of citrus towns across Southern California became as much an advertising mechanism for railroads as it did for fruit cooperatives, an ideology that corporate figures shared with promoters.

Collis P. Huntington of the Southern Pacific long held the Southland in great esteem. Speaking of Southern California to a correspondent, Huntington fondly mentioned “Those breezes which blow across 5,000 miles of Pacific Ocean carry no malaria with them; and nowhere can be found more salubrious than the mountain slopes of Los Angeles County.”¹⁰⁴ This benevolent view of Southern California found expression in a wide variety of images and publications originated by the Southern Pacific. It distributed lush illustrations designed to entice easterners to the Southland across the United States. Painters such as William H. Bull found steady work with the Southern Pacific, depicting Southern California as paradise.¹⁰⁵ In perhaps Bull’s greatest contribution to boosterism in Southern California, an image titled “California for the Settler,” a verdant expanse stretches across the floor of a valley ringed by distant mountains. Cattle graze in the foreground as groves stretch across the image. Most importantly of all, oranges loom large at the top of Bull’s painting, cosmological harbingers of the Southland’s ascendance. At the bottom of the image, in small lettering dwarfed by the exquisite image, rests the name of the Southern Pacific. However, beyond their immediate

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰⁴ Collis P. Huntington to Blanton Duncan, August 12, 1889, CPH, s II, r. 28.

¹⁰⁵ Alfred Runte, “Promoting the Golden West: Advertising and the Railroad,” *California History* 70, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 62. As Runte explains, Bull’s works often graced the covers of *Sunset*. The William H. Bull Collection at the California State Library attests to this fact.

economic ramifications, such as allowing citrus growers to access transcontinental markets, railroads also exercised a powerful cultural influence over the people of the United States.



Figure 5.9. Bull's "California for the Settler." Courtesy of the California State Library, Sacramento, California.

By the mid-nineteenth century, railroads had revolutionized transportation and conceptions of space in the United States. More theoretically, scholars postulate that the advent of steam transportation across the nation discernibly altered the ways in which Americans idealized space and landscape. As Leo Marx noted, the railroad disrupted Americans' relationship to their natural environment.¹⁰⁶ In his recent examination of

¹⁰⁶ Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1964), 195. Marx further attempts to reconcile the relationship between the

photographs of the first transcontinental railroad, Glenn Willumson highlighted transportation executives' desire to visually demonstrate their ability to tame wild landscapes.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Wolfgang Schivelbusch proposed that railroads not only facilitated the spread of commodities and ideas, but they reduced the amount of time necessary to move between points on a map.¹⁰⁸ To passengers, railroad travel reduced the landscape to a blur of indistinct colors and placed their relationship to the physical environment in turmoil.¹⁰⁹ Remarkably, however, despite the displacement railroads wrought and their ability to reshape conceptions of space, in California they facilitated the growth of Marx's garden and abjured the desolation of Schivelbusch's landscape. As historian Richard White conceived, "The speed of [a] train determined the time of the journey and the experience of space" by the mid-nineteenth century. By allowing passengers to traverse space in a fraction of the time it would have taken covered wagons or even steamers to travel, railroads such as the Southern Pacific forced Americans to rethink how they conceived of the distances between different points of the country.¹¹⁰ Corporations such as the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe, then, transformed the way Americans traveled and thought about the nation as a unified whole.

railroad and the American landscape in "The Railroad-in-the-Landscape: An Iconological Reading of a Theme in American Art," in Susan Danly and Marx, eds., *The Railroad in American Art: Representations of Technological Change* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988), 183-208.

¹⁰⁷ Glenn Willumson, *Iron Muse: Photographing the Transcontinental Railroad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 80.

¹⁰⁸ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1977), 33, 197.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 54-5.

¹¹⁰ White, *Railroaded*, 141-143.

Nowhere did this new mode of thinking transform space more visibly than in California. Railroad connections became a way for Californians to measure the distance between points, but they also served as a litmus test to determine the modernity of any given point on the map. One brochure for the Hotel Northern in Los Angeles, for example, explained that “San Diego is 125 miles south of Los Angeles; has only one railroad, the Santa Fe; trains leave at 8 and 9 a.m. and 1, 3 and 11:50 pm, requiring 4 hours to make the trip.”¹¹¹ The brochure elucidated the relationship between citrus towns and the central transport hub of Los Angeles by using railroads, as well. “Covina is 2 miles from Los Angeles; Pomona, 34 miles; Ontario, 45; Colton, 58; Riverside, 65; San Bernardino, 68; Redlands, 77. These places are all located east of Los Angeles in the orange and lemon belt of Southern California, and are reached by electric and steam cars.”¹¹² Entities such as the Hotel Northern used railroads to measure the relationship between points on the map, relying on them as relational mechanisms to demonstrate railroads’ power to bridge space and conquer vast distances. In this way, boosterism transformed the railroads into cultural mechanisms of the citrus empire of Southern California. Moreover, documents such as this brochure demonstrated the connections between California’s numerous rail lines and its burgeoning citrus industry, economically and in their shared booster practices.¹¹³ As a result of the transcontinental railroads that crisscrossed the Golden State in the late-nineteenth century, Americans from the East and

¹¹¹ “Information about Southern California and Points of Interest,” published by Hotel Northern, Los Angeles, California, box 1, folder 8, CCHB.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ Jenkins, “Steel, Steam, and Citrus,” 34.

Midwest could immigrate to the Pacific Coast quite rapidly. Thus, the Southern Pacific, the Santa Fe, and other local and transcontinental lines innovated California's physical infrastructure and economy.¹¹⁴

The Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe reshaped California beyond simply laying rails. These companies published magazines and pamphlets for circulation among customer on rail lines across the American West in order to promote California, stimulating desire to travel to the state and, in turn, lining their pockets with the money of eager passengers. They promoted orange shows across the United States with the goal of increasing citrus freight and carrying more settlers to Southern California. In 1886, the Southern Pacific made much of its efforts to establish a citrus fair at Chicago, giving oranges from the golden state their first major venue to transfix national audiences.¹¹⁵ In the ensuing decades, the Southern Pacific facilitated more exhibitions at Chicago, and even at Paris in 1900.¹¹⁶

Members of the citrus industry took advantage of opportunities to display oranges. The city of San Bernardino began its annual National Orange Show in 1911. Both major rail lines in the Southland participated in this venue. The Santa Fe described the event as a competition where "all of the districts of San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties will marshal their most luscious of fruits in an effort" for the prize of best orange. Moreover, "The Santa Fe again will play a big part in

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 76.

¹¹⁶ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 35.

the National Orange Show this year. This railroad is vitally concerned in the citrus fruit industry, for the reason that the Santa Fe handles 60 percent of the state's . . . carloads of oranges and lemons that every year leave the growers for the markets of the east." At the National Orange Show, "From oranges and lemons the men of the big Santa Fe shops at San Bernardino will build their expensive exhibit," shaping fruits like topiary into various ornamental displays.¹¹⁷ At Anaheim, the Valencia Orange Show, which only ran for ten years, began in 1921.¹¹⁸ Additionally, according to historian William Deverell, the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific initiated massive booster campaigns designed to depict California as a new earthly paradise to as to draw Americans to the Golden State, preferably by use of the routes these companies had worked so hard to establish across the continent.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ "National Orange Show to be More Beautiful than Ever," *The Santa Fe Magazine* 10, no. 1 (December 1915): 45.

¹¹⁸ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 77, 84.

¹¹⁹ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 95-96.



Figure 5.10. Oranges and lemons shaped into a railroad locomotive. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Figure 5.11. More Orange artistry from the National Orange Show in San Bernardino. Courtesy of the California State Library.

However, as with the citrus labels used by Sunkist and its packinghouses across the Golden State, railroad booster material promoting California often relied on racist

constructions of ethnic minorities to reach a broad white audience. No railroad publication proved as effective at promoting the Golden State (or as long-lived) as *Sunset*. Established by the Southern Pacific in 1898 for distribution across its transcontinental rail system, *Sunset*'s vivid illustrations and articles espousing the western American landscape garnered this Southern Pacific booster mechanism a sizable audience across the Southwest. As California historian Kevin Starr once wrote, the tourist industry in the Golden State all but completely relied on such publications as *Sunset* to stimulate eastern interest. Additionally, eastern Americans similarly used railroad booster periodicals to expand their knowledge on the rapidly-developing western frontier.¹²⁰ Although the Southern Pacific sold the magazine in 1914, it continued to operate thereafter under the ownership of publisher William Lane and remained dedicated to promoting a western lifestyle across the continent.¹²¹

In addition to fulfilling a variety of booster functions, *Sunset* also acted as a soapbox to praise the industriousness of citrus orchardists. In 1911, Walter V. Woehlke, writing for *Sunset*, interviewed Ethan Allen Chase, a prominent grower in Riverside, California, who created the National Orange Company. As "one of the acknowledged leaders in California's great citrus industry," Woehlke praised Chase for his role in planting the vast Eden that seemed to engulf the Southland by the early decades of the

¹²⁰ Kevin Starr, "Sunset Magazine and the Phenomenon of the Far West," in *Sunset Magazine: A Century of Western Living, 1898-1998: Historical Portraits and Bibliography* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Libraries, 1998), 34.

¹²¹ Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 158, 161.

twentieth century.¹²² The booster culture that the Southern Pacific Railroad helped pioneer expanded beyond California's rail lines and began to create a wider public forum on the Golden State in which many parties, public and private, could participate.

The booster culture that *Sunset* propagated relied upon many of the themes developers utilized when altering the landscape of Southern California. Authors in *Sunset* described a landscape where the garden maintained by orange growers overlapped with the technological elements of the railroad industry. At Riverside, for instance, one author proclaimed, while "Nature's acres receded" by the turn of the twentieth centuries, they were replaced by "driveways, transcontinental railways and electric lines," providing "inducements varied enough to suit all sorts and conditions of men."¹²³ Most importantly, the wealthy capitalists of Riverside contributed to the development of the community. "Each year new orchards are planted," the author stated, "orchards both deciduous and citrus. Each year the trains are longer and more numerous which carry its products to the distant east. Each year hundreds of new homes spring into life and new enterprises are established."¹²⁴ The article almost overtly demonstrated that oranges, carried by the Southern Pacific to eastern markets, brought to the Southland the fabled prosperity that seemed to define the place.

As with many other booster organizations, the Southern Pacific, through *Sunset*, adhered to California historical narratives that upheld the importance of European

¹²² Walter V. Woehlke, "In the Orange Country," *Sunset* 26, no. 1 (March 1911): 251.

¹²³ Alia Aldrich Clarke, "In Orange Land – Riverside," *Sunset* 8, no. 1 (November 1901): 117. An explanatory note beneath the title of this article proudly explains to readers that the text originated from a competition by the Chamber of Commerce of Riverside, in which Clarke's essay won first place.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

explorers and denigrated Native Americans. One article published in 1906 heroically presented Juan Bautista de Anza's 1776 expedition through California, referring to the hardship he and his men experienced as they crossed deserts, rivers, and mountains, before they helped suppress a native uprising in San Diego. In this article, scheming natives spread rumors among the people of San Luis of de Anza's demise as a prelude to their "intention to kill all the Spaniards and seize all their property."¹²⁵ Ultimately, however, de Anza, a Spanish official and emissary of the king, arrived at San Luis, providing to its few Spanish residents "evidence of the paternal care of the king."¹²⁶ The author vilified native Californians by portraying them as upstarts, ingrates who failed to appreciate the social and political advancements offered by the benevolent Spaniards who brought agriculture to Alta California. These Indians required punishment and royal guidance in the form of de Anza's intervention to avoid regressing back to their pre-European lifestyles.¹²⁷

Promotion of California's supposed fantasy past extended beyond the state's borders, reaching the farthest corners of the United States, but it permeated the entire Southland itself, as well. Here, too, railroads proved instrumental in spreading idealized notions of the past. Under the Southern Pacific Railroad's direction after 1911, the Pacific Electric system followed booster patterns established by the citrus industry and its parent company when promoting its Southern California Red Car lines. In particular, pamphleteers in the employ of Pacific Electric glorified the missions of California as

¹²⁵ Zoeth S. Eldredge, "The Cienega of San Luis," *Sunset* 15, no. 1 (May 1905): 26-27.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

productive institutions in the state's history. One pamphlet from the Pacific Electric described the city of San Gabriel, home to a Spanish mission, as "still the religious center of the valley," which held "within its walls one of the best collections of relics to be found in the West. Books seared by years; frescos and other works of art that were the work of masters long, long since gone, done with the enthusiasm and loving care of the religious zeal," among other works.¹²⁸ The pamphlet's author neglected to mention the enslavement of native peoples or their roles in physically constructing the mission system. Instead, the mission's remains stood as a beacon of cultural excellence that Christianity and art, important facets of western culture, introduced to the Pacific rim of North America. Finally, the pamphlet mentions in passing that Pacific Electric riders could stop at the Sherman Indian School in Riverside, capital of the orange empire, as a stop on the way to the way "to the Glenwood Mission Inn, where the party is conducted through this unique hostelry."¹²⁹

Beyond this point, riders could progress by train through Colton on their way to the citricultural zenith of Smiley Heights in Redlands to admire the orange groves.¹³⁰ The Pacific Electric line thus positioned California history linearly along railway tracks, allowing visitors to behold the disappearing, increasingly Americanized natives of the Sherman Institute before momentarily resting at the Spanish-inspired Mission Inn and then progressing through cities dominated by the railroad and citrus industries. Thus, this particular Pacific Electric trip ended with visitors witnessing the triumph of white

¹²⁸ "Los Angeles Sightseeing Trips," Pacific Electric Railway, box 4, folder 13, CCHB.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

industry and agriculture in the Golden State as seen from the rails. Just as an article in *Sunset* or an image painted by the Western Lithograph Company might demonstrate the positive influence of the Spanish in California, so did this pamphlet arrange California history along a similar linear spatial trajectory that passed through primitive native culture and productive Spanish agriculture before terminating at the heights of white prosperity.¹³¹

Additional booster material circulated by the Pacific Electric revealed a continuous urge to recapture the glory of Spanish California through architecture such as Riverside's Mission Inn. One of this railway's pamphlets from the early-twentieth century boasted of the modern dining convenience of La Ramada, an "Old Adobe Spanish Restaurant" in the city of Glendale. This establishment perfectly captured the desire of California boosters to reclaim Spanish achievements and recast them as beacons of civilization worthy of white tourism in a modern age. "In La Ramada," boasted the Pacific Electric, "the rehabilitated hacienda of early days, with its beautiful park, and luxurious furnishings, one may eat the enchiladas and drink the wine of Spanish memory with a full enjoyment of all the senses."¹³² Just as a number of citrus crate labels reminded orange consumers across the continent that Spaniards laid the grounds for a productive agricultural society, so did the Pacific Electric use this brochure to appropriate an old Spanish adobe as a symbol of romanticized white progress and an idealized version of California history.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² "La Ramada (The Arbor): Old Adobe Spanish Restaurant," published by Pacific Electric Railway, box 4, folder 13, CCHB.

At almost all turns, then, the Pacific Electric attempted to identify Spanish elements in California's history as productive and modern while completely ignoring Mexican control of the state. Historian Anthea Hartig noted that many California boosters wished "to glorify the Spanish elements of [Southern California's] past and obscure the Mexican" legacy in their pamphlets and images.¹³³ Race theorists from the manifest destiny heyday of the mid-nineteenth century categorized Mexicans as the descendants of uncivilized native peoples and Spaniards, whom they deemed inferior to Anglo-Saxons of northern European stock. Indeed, eastern Americans even demeaned western native peoples as inferior to the Indians of the early United States, who at least organized themselves along political lines recognizable to followers of western traditions.¹³⁴ According to California boosters, Mexicans and native peoples of the Golden State were inferior to whites in every way, justifying American commercial and political dominance as expressed through citrus labels. However, the industrious padres of the mission age, who predated the lazy, idyllic Mexican rancheros depicted in McGroarty's *Mission Play*, introduced Christianity, agriculture, and civilization to Alta California, thereby affording themselves special place in the state's history.¹³⁵ Peoples who did not share these values rarely received positive attention from boosters in Southern California's railroad and citrus industries.

¹³³ Anthea Hartig, "'A Most Advantageous Spot on the Map': Promotion and Popular Culture," in William Deverell and Greg Hise, *A Companion to Los Angeles* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 302.

¹³⁴ Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West*, 24-25, 28-29.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 71.

Not all Southern Californians, boosters believed, should be allowed to experience the benefits of the paradise that eighteenth-century Spanish friars had introduced and American citrus agriculturalists in the nineteenth century had perfected. Beyond the demonization of Mexican Americans, railroad publications additionally marginalized Chinese immigrants, equating them with the past and comparing them unfavorably with industrious white growers. In the inaugural issue of the Pacific Electric's *The Spark*, writer John Young shared his belief that "Aesthetically Southern California is the garden spot of the world." A self-sufficient entity, "All of the garden truck consumed in Los Angeles with a population of approximately 300,000, is grown within a radius of fifty miles of the metropolis. The annual value of the products handled by the public market alone exceeds \$1,000,000."¹³⁶ Beyond his explicit praise for growers in California, Young continued his narrative by using Chinese immigrants as diametric opposites to progressive white Americans. Just "a few years" before the publication of *The Spark*, he stated, "the Chinese peddler was the 'truck king,' his business limited to local demands. Today great quantities of garden yield are shipped, and the Chink peddlers' business is now a five-cent toy counter in the Hamburger Department Store."¹³⁷ Just as white California relied on Mexican Americans as subservient performers, best exemplified by their perpetual association with song and dance on citrus labels, so did railroad boosters

¹³⁶ John Young, "Feeders," *The Spark* 1, no. 1 (September 1908): 52.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

negatively depict Chinese Americans as economically stagnant figures who deserved exclusion from the Golden State's orange empire.¹³⁸

The Santa Fe Railroad, California's second transcontinental line, also used booster materials to advertise the benefits of living in the far Southwest. Railroad agents George L. McDonough and M.M. Eshleman established the *Southern Californian*, a booster newspapers printed in Lordsburg, California, in the 1880s, to draw adventurous Americans to the Southland.¹³⁹ These publishers advertised the Southland's climate and health benefits, organized excursions using the Santa Fe route, and printed the testimonies of immigrants who enjoyed moving to the region.¹⁴⁰ McDonough and Eshleman often dangled the alluring carrot of financial success in the faces of potential émigrés to the region, proclaiming their desire "to help" potential settlers "develop the immense resources of this favored land."¹⁴¹

Despite its late entrance into the Golden State compared to the Southern Pacific, the Santa Fe Railroad similarly circulated booster material to draw large populations to this new paradise. The Santa Fe relied on California's original denizens as advertising mechanisms and commoditized goods in its advertisements and published material.¹⁴² As T.C. McLuhan related in her study of the Santa Fe's use of native peoples in promotional

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Ramseyer, "A History of Lordsburg," 22, 29.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁴¹ Article from *Southern Californian*, March 6, 1890, quoted in *Ibid.*

¹⁴² For more information on this line and the promotion of the Southwest, see Victoria Dye, *All Aboard for Santa Fe: Railway Promotion of the Southwest, 1890s to 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

materials, this transcontinental line promoted western Indians as the exemplars of “*natural* America,” supposedly less civilized than the industrious whites who built the railroad and united the distant corners of the continent.¹⁴³ The Santa Fe even organized famous so-called Indian Detours, taking its passengers to the pueblos of New Mexican and Arizonan native peoples who lived off the main line.¹⁴⁴ As the term “detour” indicated, the Santa Fe needed to take passengers out of their way to experience native life in the Southwest, momentarily removing them from the main railroad line that carried eastern Americans to the Golden State and instead allowing them to view socioeconomically inferior native peoples as performing commodities. California Indians rarely merited any sort of mention in promotional materials. As in the case of citrus crate labels, many California peoples faded before stereotypical images that white boosters circulated based on native peoples of the Great Plains. The Santa Fe Railroad, in its large display at the Panama-California Exposition, defined the peoples of the Southland as “primitive Diegeños,” “Naked desert Indians” and “‘mountain rats’ of the Mohave.”¹⁴⁵ This practice all but removed the Native Americans of California from boosters’ idealized history of the Golden State.

The Santa Fe, through its Indian Detours and advertisements that depicted the first denizens of the American West in colorful clothes for white audiences, ultimately reduced Native Americans to commodities around the turn of the century. The railroad

¹⁴³ T.C. McLuhan, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and the American Indian, 1890-1930* (New York, NY: Abrams, 1985), 16.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁴⁵ Kropp, *California Vieja*, 153.

profited from its reconstruction of Indians as relics of the past whose images could sell for a profit. Black studies scholar Patricia Turner, in her examination of the role of racist commodities in subjugating African Americans in the nineteenth century, remarked on the ease with which commercial entities can devolve minorities into purchasable things. The African American image became an investment tool controlled by white entrepreneurs for their enrichment in the nineteenth century, a practice that did not benefit blacks.¹⁴⁶ Stereotyped images of native peoples similarly enriched boosters in Southern California. Despite its supposedly benign treatment of native peoples, the Santa Fe relied on these ethnic groups to maintain its tourist industry in the Southwest and turned Indians into purchasable goods.

Although railroads and citrus cooperatives produced an unrivaled, voluminous corpus of booster literature and imagery in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, they did not by any means remain alone in the field of pro-California material in circulation across the United States. Municipal and local organizations, as well as private individuals, produced pamphlets to publicize certain regions of the Golden State. However, citrus label lithographers and railroad brochure designers heavily influenced these other boosters. Graphic design historian Jeremy Aynsley described that citrus labels suggested “California as both natural garden and cultivated orchard,” explicating to national audiences the progressive mindsets of white Californians. In Aynsley’s words, “these vibrant graphic images connected company trademarks to a forward-looking

¹⁴⁶ Patricia A. Turner, *Ceramic Uncles and Celluloid Mammies: Black Images and Their Influence on Culture* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 1994), 29-30.

aesthetic and subliminally linked the state with modernity.”¹⁴⁷ Aynsley cited *Sunset* as a pioneer in the establishment of a shared aesthetic of advertising in California in the early-twentieth century.¹⁴⁸ Thus, the visual language that citrus label lithographers and railroad pamphleteers developed around the turn of the twentieth century spread functioned as far more than eye-catching advertisements. These new forms of boosterism in California, particularly postcards, became staples of tourism to and settlement in the Southland.

The development of new media allowed visitors to the Golden State to circulate memories of their visits in new ways. Postcards with photographs gave tourists the opportunity to share their experiences in the Southland with friends and family. Advances of printing also allowed virtually limitless copying via industrial manufacturing, allowing the same image to fall into the hands of potentially thousands of Americans.¹⁴⁹ As commodities, these objects spread widely across the United States from such far-flung regions as Southern California.¹⁵⁰ The use of postcards and photographs also demonstrated the affluence of those who sent them, and the ease with which the landscape of the Southland became a cultural commodity.¹⁵¹

In Southern California, boosters used postcards as powerful weapons in the project to popularize the orange empire on the national stage. Numerous photographs

¹⁴⁷ Jeremy Aynsley, “Developing a Language of Vision: Graphic Design in California,” in Wendy Kaplan, ed., *Living in a Modern Way: California Design, 1930-1965* (Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2011), 266.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 265.

¹⁴⁹ Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West*, 113-4.

¹⁵⁰ Kropp, *California Vieja*, 14-5.

¹⁵¹ DeLyser, *Ramona Memories*, 57-8.

depicted the wonders of the landscape, including natural elements such as the mountains or artificial intrusions like orange groves. In one postcard, the San Gabriel Mountains towered over orange trees in full bloom. “One of the many beautiful sights to see in this state,” a tourist scrawled on the back of the postcard.¹⁵² “You don’t know oranges until you come to California,” another postcard blared in a rather sizable font.¹⁵³ Postcard after postcard depicted trains passing through the orange groves in the Southland, with passengers peering forth from the railcars or Red Cars in wonder at the beauty surrounding them.¹⁵⁴ Playfully deriding the denizens of frigid eastern states, the common refrain “I’ll eat oranges for you/If you’ll throw snowballs for me” festooned many postcards.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² May Smith to Laura J. Hood, June 1922, California Postcard Collection, Riverside County Drawer, California State Library. Hereafter cited as CPC.

¹⁵³ Unknown author to Hazel Mulligan, November 1914, CPC, San Bernardino County Drawer.

¹⁵⁴ Unknown author to Royal A Cottle, March 6, 1928, CPC, Los Angeles County Drawer.

¹⁵⁵ “Papa” to E.C. Eby, February 13, 1908, CPC, Los Angeles County Drawer.



Figure 5.12. California orange postcard. These tourist souvenirs posited the superiority of California citrus above the fruits of competitors such as Florida. Courtesy of the California State Library.

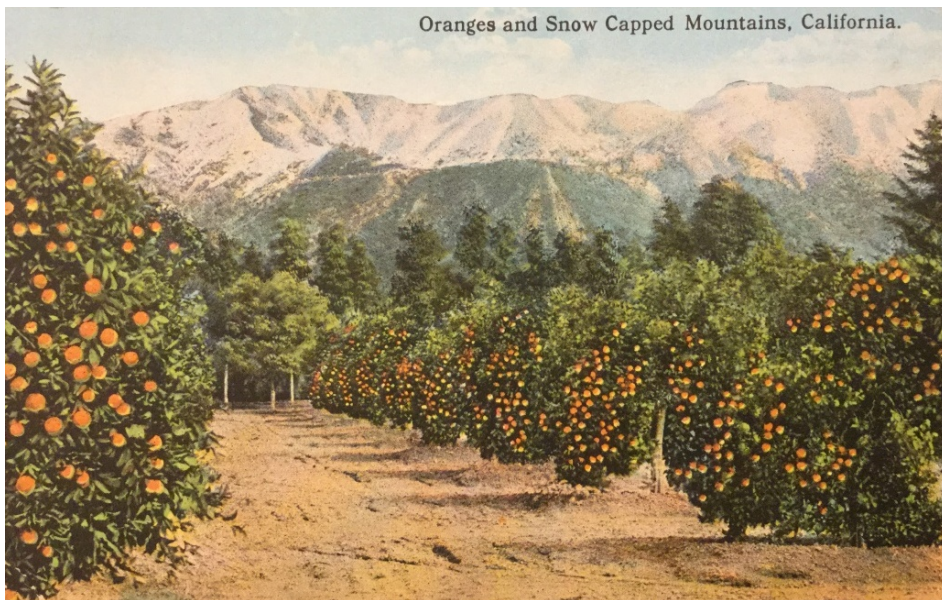


Figure 5.13. An orange grove at the foot of the mountains in the Southland. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Figure 5.14. A view of the orange empire. This postcard juxtaposes weather in Southern California with less forgiving eastern climes. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Figure 5.15. Railroad passengers enjoy the orange groves of Southern California.

These documents, however, often fell short of illustrating the full, complex social web that railroads and citrus agriculture had spun in Southern California. To their credit, many postcard companies snapped photographs of citrus workers, either picking oranges

in the field or preparing them for transit at packinghouses. However, they printed the documents decades before the advent of color photography, which meant that adding color involved tinting photographs by hand. Rather than allowing for the full variety of human skin tones, the artists who tinted photographs for use as postcards tended to color all laborers as Caucasian. In some cases, however, laborers of various ethnic origins did appear in postcards, demonstrating the uneasy process of negotiating racial fault lines in Southern California. In such rare cases, strangers carved out a place for themselves in paradise. In other instances, boosters found different ways of subjugating racial minorities, particularly at large expositions.



Figure 5.16. Faceless, whitewashed pickers in the orange groves of the Southland. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Figure 5.17. Riding through the groves. One of many examples of the orange groves becoming tourist sites along the rails in the Golden State. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Figure 5.18. A menagerie of orange pickers. The dress and tinting of laborers in this photograph suggest racial diversity in the orange groves of Southern California. Courtesy of the California State Library.

Boosters in Southern California often relied on fantastic reconstructions of the Golden State's history in their efforts to promote citrus to commercial audiences. In 1915, the city of San Diego hosted the Panama-California Exposition to celebrate the

completion of the Panama Canal. A major exercise in boosterism, the Panama-California Exposition afforded promoters the opportunity to highlight the Hispanic legacy of San Diego.¹⁵⁶ Organizers of the event wasted no time pointing to the Franciscan missionaries of the eighteenth century as the originators of agriculture in California. According to one pamphlet distributed to herald the event:

History and romance vie with each other in winning the hearts of the visitors, for San Diego stands as the beginning in California. History will tell you that here was planted the first wooden cross, followed by the first church, followed in turn by the first town. The Mission Fathers commenced the cultivation of the soil, producing the first palms, the first vine and the first olive tree.¹⁵⁷

Indians did appear at the exhibition, but always as subordinated subjects. The Santa Fe Railroad organized the largest display of Native American culture at the exposition. At ten acres, its Painted Desert reproduced, as best it could, the cultures of the Zuni, Navajo, and Apache of the southwestern United States. Although native peoples occupied the exhibit, Phoebe Kropp characterized this booster exercise as one that white railroad executives staged, thus allowing them to depict Indian cultures as they saw fit.¹⁵⁸ The Kumeyaay natives who built Mission San Diego did not appear in the display.

Further stabilizing the progressive historical narrative offered at the Panama-California Exposition, one pamphlet pointed out that Franciscan padres established California's first irrigation project in this city, centralizing the role of the Spanish Empire

¹⁵⁶ Kropp, *California Vieja*, 103.

¹⁵⁷ "Panama Canal Exposition, Entire Year 1915," box 1, folder 4, CCHB.

¹⁵⁸ Kropp, *California Vieja*, 137, 141-3.

in Alta California.¹⁵⁹ “Once more across the stage,” an advertisement for the exposition by the Santa Fe Railroad wistfully remarked, “will march padres and peons, señoritas and cavaliers and all the sunny life of centuries ago.”¹⁶⁰ The pamphlet failed to account for native denizens of California or Mexicans in the nineteenth century, instead mentioning that “Here are to be found too, fruits and flowers of the semi-tropical zone – orange, lemon and olive orchards, and extensive vineyards; the poinsettia, the bougainvillea and other brilliant exotics.”¹⁶¹ The author subtly linked civilization in California, as introduced by Spaniards in the eighteenth century, to white ideas of agricultural modernity. The Model Farm, where exhibitors displayed California fruits and machines such as harvesters, conveyed the impression of a garden of groves wherein “modern machinery is doing the work of many men.”¹⁶² The Panama-California Exposition contained all the elements of boosterism in California. Railroads staged carefully controlled depictions of Native American culture, marketing Indians from outside the Golden State while ignoring indigenous peoples of the orange empire. Citrus orchardists took the opportunity to stress their stabilizing influence on the Southland. To observers who knew nothing about the history of California, it might seem that Chinese, Mexican, and Indians in the Southland were simply outliers who labored at the pleasure of whites.

¹⁵⁹ “Panama Canal Exposition, Entire Year 1915,” box 1, folder 4, CCHB.

¹⁶⁰ As cited in Kropp, *California Vieja*, 115.

¹⁶¹ “Panama Canal Exposition, Entire Year 1915,” box 1, folder 4, CCHB.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*; Kropp, *California Vieja*, 129.



Figure 5.19. The Model Orange Orchard at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego. Image from William M. McCarthy Photograph Collection. Courtesy of the California State Archives, Sacramento, California.

Booster materials from Golden State even forced minorities to perform for white consumer audiences at public venues, thus reifying their status as subservient. Historian William Deverell, in his examination of Los Angeles's troubled relationship with its Mexican history, discussed the role of the turn-of-the-century Los Angeles Fiesta, a parade that lasted for days and presented the eponymous city's history and its plethora of ethnic minorities.¹⁶³ As Deverell explained, the fiesta of 1896 featured a Mexican man purportedly 115 years in age. Exhibiting him to white audiences, Deverell contended, showed Angelenos that “the past was brown, [and] the future is white.”¹⁶⁴ Inserted into a pseudo-historically grounded event that glorified the “Anglo Saxon people riding the wave of the future alongside the Pacific” into California, this Mexican American, as a subject for display, performed as a curious, exotic “other” for white Angeleno

¹⁶³ William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 50.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 75.

audiences.¹⁶⁵ Citrus agriculturalists and railroad employees who boosted Southern California would have approved of this display.

Just as this man's skin marked him as an "other," a Mexican American whose race white boosters appropriated, so is the man shown in the "Paisano Brand" label used to demark Mexican Americans in the Golden State as relics of California's past, denizens of the crumbling adobe structures such as those depicted in the "Mission Memories" label. Boosters at the turn of the twentieth century propped up decrepit examples of pre-American Californians as racially exotic individuals, incapable of scaling the peak of cultural, political, and economic supremacy that whites had achieved through productive citrus agriculture and modern transportation. Minorities featured in the Los Angeles Fiesta, displayed on the citrus labels distributed by rails across the continent, and in the Santa Fe's Indian exhibitions performed their racial otherness as curious examples of California's romantic, racially inferior past.

From supposedly humorous portrayals of Chinese immigrants denouncing the backwardness of their own cultures to performing, subservient Mexican Americans in fiestas and on citrus crate labels, promoters of the Golden State publicly theorized the superiority of white capitalists above all others. Indeed, such boosters often reached back to California's supposed beginnings with the arrival of Junipero Serra and Gaspar de Portola in the eighteenth century in an attempt to glorify the state's Spanish past and link it to later Euro-American agricultural traditions in the region, ignoring the death and

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 77.

diseases that decimated native populations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries introduced by the same Spaniards who brought agriculture to Alta California.

Promoters of the Golden State ignored these historical complexities. Instead, boosters emphasized the tradition of agricultural progress and modernity that Spaniards introduced and that Americans later inherited and transformed into the colossal citrus industry that dominated the southern part of the state at the turn of the twentieth century. Railroads shared this conception of the history of Southern California. In addition to circulating citrus crate labels from the Southland to markets across North America, the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads wrote their own articles and designed their own illustrations designed to sell California as a white paradise.

One last citrus crate label, Chapman's Old Mission Brand citrus crate label captured the booster conception of the Golden State in a single image. Produced in 1938 for Charles E. Chapman, a grower based in Fullerton, this label displayed three mission padres examining a handful of oranges against the aesthetically appealing scenic backdrop of a mission surrounded by groves, which were in turn flanked by snow-capped purple mountains. The image directly linked Spanish agriculture to the Anglo-dominated citrus industry of the early-twentieth century. Such citrus agricultural materials shaped cultural interpretations of California across the United States by construing the land as a new paradise for industrious Americans. In addition, railroads such as the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe carried citrus crates emblazoned with this label across the continent. These publications, along with articles from *Sunset* magazine and other railroad periodicals reduced the role of natives, Mexican Americans, and Chinese

Americans in California history. Instead, boosters endorsed racial subjugation in Southern California and the tendency to portray these ethnic minorities as strangers in paradise for white growers and industrialists in the orange empire.

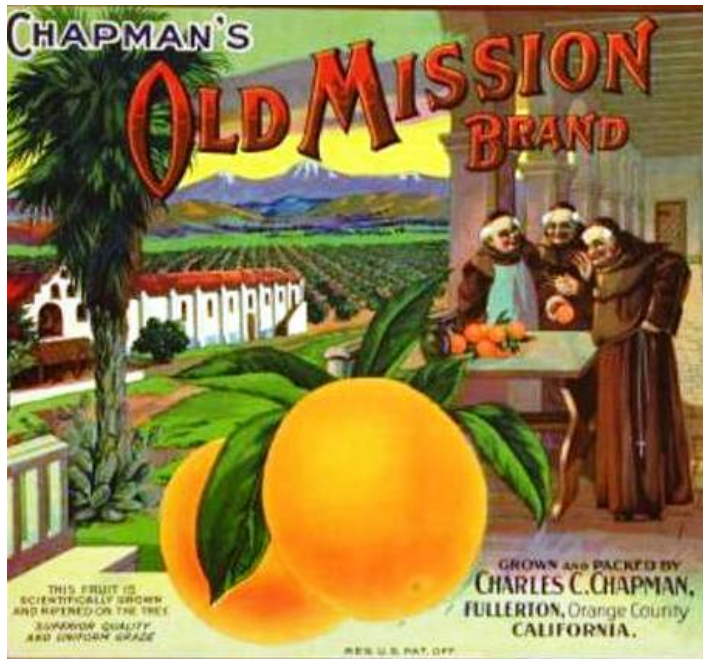


Figure 5.20. The Western Lithograph Company's "Chapman's Old Mission Brand" citrus crate label, created in 1938. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

Conclusion

Every surge in California's unprecedented growth has been triggered by or been accompanied by a concomitant surge in means of transportation. From *la carreta* to clipper ships to jet aircraft, the one with the greatest catalytic effect was the rail linkage.
--W.H. Hutchinson¹

Orange growers in Southern California had seemingly perfected their craft by the 1940s. Following World War II and the radical transformation of Southern California, the citrus empire reoriented itself. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, neither production nor consumption of oranges had diminished, but the war precipitated a vast upswing that lasted for years.² As late as 1959, while orange growers migrated north to the Central Valley, historian Robert Glass Cleland commented that the citrus industry retained its reputation as "the most widely publicized branch of California agriculture." Eight years earlier, "the orange crop, confined almost wholly to the Valencia and Washington Navel varieties, reached a total of approximately 38,300,000 boxes..."³ However, this orange production was not centered in the orange empire of old.

Thanks to wartime production, industry cast a much longer shadow than agriculture in Southern California as the nation emerged from the conflict. From 1941 to 1945, as Americans scrambled to build jets and battleships to revenge themselves upon the Japanese Empire, the Southland became an enormous staging ground. Lockheed, Douglass, Northrup, and other aviation corporations employed legions of Californians in

¹ W.H. Hutchinson, "Southern Pacific: Myth and Reality," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (December 1969): 333-4.

² Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 276.

³ Cleland, *From Wilderness to Empire*, 315.

plants across the Southland, churning out material to bring Japan to heel.⁴ Factories opened across Orange, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara counties, moving populations away from the orange empire for more productive employment.⁵ The population of Southern California climbed, increasing the need for housing. Developers paid orange growers for their land, removing trees to pave the way for suburban tracts.⁶ Two scholars estimated that, in the decade from 1945 to 1955, the amount of land devoted to the cultivation of citrus in Los Angeles and Orange counties declined by 43,000 acres.⁷ Surviving trees were often ravaged by disease, such as the mysterious *tristeza*, or quick decline, which first infested groves in 1939. Trees that suffered from *tristeza* would rapidly become ill and die. The cause of quick decline eluded scientists for years. It took researchers at the Citrus Experiment Station of the University of California, Riverside, seven years to identify the source of the disease as a virus, and only in the 1960s did pomologists and botanists in Southern California develop varieties of citrus that could resist *tristeza*.⁸ Symbolically, quick decline paralleled Southern California's abandonment of agriculture and newfound infatuation with subdivisions and industries following the Second World War, which paved the way for radical changes to the infrastructure.

⁴ Kevin Starr, *Golden Dreams: California in an Age of Abundance, 1950-1993* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 228.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Mike Davis, "How Eden Lost Its Garden," *Perspecta* 30 (1999): 65.

⁷ Paul S. Griffin and Ronald L. Chatham, "Population: A Challenge to California's Changing Citrus Industry," *Economic Geography* 34, no. 3 (July 1958): 272.

⁸ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 310. As Farmer explains, the Meyer variety of lemon was particularly susceptible, and growers attempted to relieve their malady by purging the citrus belt of this breed.

Sensing the major reorientation of the economy in Southern California during and after the war, railroads coped as best they could. As always, the Southern Pacific attempted to portray the American West as a land of boundless opportunity. In the 1950s, it circulated brochures that characterized western states from Louisiana to California as part of what the company called “the Golden Empire.”⁹ A broad, ill-defined phrase that less than subtly invoked the terminology of manifest destiny days, the Golden Empire referred to “a land of opportunity for industry” in the Far West. Not entirely dissimilar from the company’s earlier advertisements that stressed the agricultural potentiality of California, this promotional campaign appealed to businesspeople across the United States. Industrial activities that the Southern Pacific touted within this Golden Empire included the construction of shopping centers in Portland, Oregon, oil refineries in Louisiana, and the imposition of mechanized lettuce agriculture in the Salinas Valley of California.¹⁰

The Southern Pacific hoped to profit from the development of industry in the West. It offered site selection along its 14,000 miles of track in the western United States. “Over the past 30 years,” it claimed, perhaps spuriously, “an average of one new industry per day has settled along Southern Pacific lines.”¹¹ The railroad clearly aimed to use industry to replace citrus agriculture in Southern California, capitalizing on the increased need for traffic among manufacturers rather than growers. In the former orange empire, the Southern Pacific boasted of its service to General Motors in Warm Springs, Riverside

⁹ Southern Pacific Guide to Sites for Industry in the Golden Empire, SP Collection, Public Relations, box 5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

County.¹² It helped situate a sales and distribution center of the General Foods Corporation in Anaheim, Orange County.¹³ It developed industrial parks in Pomona and the area around Buena Park.¹⁴ However, as the twentieth century advanced, railroads found themselves left behind by economic factors that the atrophying tendrils of the Octopus could not grasp.

Even as railroads continued to carry citrus fruits to markets across the country, newer forms of transportation eclipsed them in Southern California. By the 1920s, the automobile had gained popularity in the United States. In California, this stemmed not only from the commercial appeal of the item, but also as a form of resistance to the Southern Pacific. As William Deverell noted, Hiram Johnson, a Progressive Republican who campaigned for governor of California on an anti-railroad platform in 1910, “astride his automobile steed,” finally displaced the Southern Pacific from California politics.¹⁵ The automobile industry gained prominence in the 1910s as the price of new vehicles fell to levels that made them affordable to consumers. In Southern California, particularly around Los Angeles, orange towns and cities that had previously accommodated railways reoriented themselves to privilege automobiles. Large new streets began to appear in the 1920s, beginning the decades-long process of displacing railroads.¹⁶ Congress facilitated

¹² *Ibid.* Ironically, automobiles overwhelmed railroads as the dominant form of transportation in Southern California decades prior to the Southern Pacific’s campaign to revitalize the Golden Empire.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Southern Pacific Guide to Sites for Industry in the Golden Empire, SP Collection, Public Relations, box 5. This is a different edition of the document cited in the preceding footnotes.

¹⁵ Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 174.

¹⁶ Starr, *Golden Dreams*, 246.

this process as early as 1916, provided money to states for the purpose of building highways for automotive use.¹⁷

Freeways became the dominant transportation corridors in Southern California by the mid-twentieth century, and allowed Californians to abandon the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, and Pacific Electric lines in droves. In 1938-9, the Automobile Club of California initiated a Traffic Survey to discern a possible route for a large highway to service Los Angeles. This resulted in the construction of the Arroyo Seco Parkway, the first modern freeway in the American West.¹⁸ Highway builders in Los Angeles soon constructed an entire network emanating from Los Angeles, forming such enormous corridors as the Santa Monica and San Diego freeways to move commodities and people out of the state by car, truck, or bus.¹⁹ California's highway networks radiated outward across the country to form an extensive freeway and highway system across America. Route 66, paved in the late 1930s, stretched across the United States to connect Los Angeles to Chicago, paralleling, as transportation historian Carlos Schwantes notes, the Santa Fe Railroad.²⁰

The coming of freeways also sealed the fate of the orange empire in Southern California. Subdivisions, towns created in the Southland around the turn of the twentieth

¹⁷ Carlos Arnaldo Schwantes, *Going Places: Transportation Redefines the Twentieth-Century West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 52.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 70. Freeways were named such because, unlike toll roads, travelers did not need to pay any fee to use them.

²⁰ Schwantes, *Going Places*, 30, 53. Schwantes argued that the success of railroads in discovering the best routes across the United States largely benefitted automobiles, but rarely lingers on the irony that railroads played in orchestrating their own demise.

century to grow oranges and lemons, replaced their crops to make way for new highways.²¹ In Orange County, groves receded as the Santa Ana Freeway connected the city of that name to the San Gabriel Valley in the north.²² A brief resurgence of the citrus industry along Interstate 215 in Riverside County ultimately proved ephemeral.²³ As subdivisions advanced, groves retreated north, to the fertile Central Valley of California, where agribusiness boomed.²⁴ By the early-twenty-first century, citrus agriculture remained a larger business than ever for the Golden State.²⁵ Sunkist retained its advertising edge throughout the twentieth century, touting the medicinal advantages of citrus products for decades following the Second World War.²⁶ By 1992, the eve of Sunkist's centennial, the cooperative consisted of 66 packinghouses, 20 district exchanges, two juicing plants, and 225,000 acres of productive land.²⁷ Almost none of this was centered in Southern California.

No development in the history of Southern California better symbolized the primacy of postwar urban development over the orange empire than the work of Walt Disney in the 1950s. After the war, this famed movie executive invested in the creation of an

²¹ Paul Jason Prescott Sandul, "Harvesting Suburbs: Recalling the Suburban Side of California's Agricultural Colonization" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2009), 29.

²² Rice, Bullough, Orsi, and Irwin, *The Elusive Eden*, 452.

²³ Farmer, *Trees in Paradise*, 313.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 313-4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 329.

²⁶ Jacobs, "Sunkist Advertising," 367.

²⁷ Merlo and Sunkist Growers, Inc., *Heritage of Gold*, 190. One of its juicing plants operated in Ontario, San Bernardino County.

amusement park, Disneyland. To realize his dream, Disney purchased a large tract in Anaheim, Orange County, upon which 4,000 Valencia orange trees constantly bore fruit. The filmmaker tore down the trees to build his idealized version of the United States.²⁸ Opened in 1955, Disneyland paid homage to one of Disney's greatest obsessions: railroads. A small passenger line bounded the former citrus groves of Disney's park in Anaheim, the last new line to be created in the former orange empire, ferrying visitors around Disneyland.²⁹ Disneyland represented its creator's efforts to consciously recreate the urbanized West in miniature.³⁰ If Disney's would-be utopia was any indication, in that version of the West, orange groves had become expendable, and railroads reduced to little more than curios of yesteryear, rather than major commercial thoroughfares.

Despite its romanticized history, eventually the Octopus dissolved. The Southern Pacific had begun to financially disintegrate by the 1980s. Following a failed attempt to merge with the Santa Fe in 1983, which the Interstate Commerce Commission had foiled, the Southern Pacific briefly joined the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad in 1988. Ultimately, the Octopus's onetime competitor, the Union Pacific Railroad, purchased it, and in 1996, the Southern Pacific Railroad ceased to exist.³¹ Many of its rights-of-way in the Los Angeles Basin went to the Metrolink, a commuter rail line that still connects San

²⁸ Neal Gabler, *Walt Disney: The Triumph of the American Imagination* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2006), 501.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 484-5. Disney appreciated the old orange empire, having courted his future wife Lillian by driving her through orange groves of Pomona and Riverside. *Ibid.*, 94.

³⁰ White, "It's Your Misfortune," 550-1; Starr, *California*, 240-1.

³¹ Mullaly and Petty, *The Southern Pacific in Los Angeles*, 252-6, 262.

Bernardino and Riverside to the City of Angels in the twenty-first century.³² The Santa Fe also suffered from lower profits by the 1960s. To remedy this situation, it diversified by investing in industry, particularly the oil sector.³³ It escaped the fate of the Southern Pacific, and continues to operate to this day, its trains plying the same routes across the Southland that it pioneered in the 1880s.

Railroads and citrus, however, remained vivid elements of the historicized landscape of Southern California for decades after the Second World War. W.H. Hutchinson, who spent his career analyzing the impact of railroads on the Golden State, concluded that the Southern Pacific had carved itself a mythic place in the narrative of California history. “It was shuttle and loom and warp and woof of history; the true catalytic agent between land, man, and growth in the Golden State.” The Southern Pacific was “the largest employer, largest landowner, and largest taxpayer in California,” ending the isolation of this Pacific state by connecting it to the eastern United States.³⁴ Scholars have never ceased to tout the railroad as a major force within western American history. Richard Orsi likened the impact of locomotion on California to the digital revolution and use of automobiles in the twentieth century.³⁵ Railroad stations across the Southland stood even as train travel diminished. Perhaps the site with the greatest traffic was Union Station in Los Angeles. Originally established in 1939, it almost fell before redevelopment plans in the late

³² *Ibid.*, 262.

³³ Bryant, *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway*, 360-4.

³⁴ Hutchinson, “Southern Pacific: Myth and Reality,” 326.

³⁵ Richard J. Orsi, “Railroads in the History of California and the Far West: An Introduction,” *California History* 70, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 4.

1980s, only to be saved, ironically, by a mild recession. It incorporated elements of newer forms of transportation in the early 1990s, and continues to operate as a commuter rail and bus hub in the early-twenty-first century.³⁶ Rail museums across the old orange empire, from San Dimas and Pomona to San Diego, remind residents of the role that this form of transportation played in the development of Southern California. Perhaps most importantly, the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento, California, houses the archival documentation on this form of transportation in the Golden State, including materials on the Central Pacific, Santa Fe, and Southern Pacific lines.³⁷

Relics of the orange empire have also preserved the role of citrus fruits in the history of California. Countless orange crates labels circulated around the country to attract jobbers to buy products from the Southland. “Today,” wrote David Boulé, a prominent collector of memorabilia of California citriculture, “California citrus labels are appreciated by serious collectors and the casually curious, both attracted by the exceptional artistry, whimsy, color, and dreamy perfection.”³⁸ Historical agents in and of themselves, these relics project benevolent conceptions of the citrus industry to contemporary Californians. Far from the original purpose of the labels, which was to momentarily attract consumers, they have become tools in the crusade to romanticize the history of Southern California. Memorializing the citrus industry, historian Douglas

³⁶ Holly Charmain Kane, “Arriving in Los Angeles: Railroad Depots as Gateway to the California Dream” (Master’s thesis, University of Southern California, 2007), 175.

³⁷ Blaine Peterson Lamb and Ellen Halteman Schwartz, “The Paper Trail of the Iron Horse: The California State Railroad Museum Library,” *California History* 70, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 104, 110.

³⁸ Boulé, *The Orange and the Dream of California*, 125.

Sackman wrote, involves recollecting “the social, cultural, and environmental strata of the citrus landscape, a landscape well masked by orange crate labels of Edenic California.”³⁹ Even if the orange and lemon trees have been bulldozed or transplanted, they, like the locomotives that roared across the tracks, retain a powerful grasp on the public imagination of Southern Californians.

While the orange empire of California has almost completely shifted north of Tehachapi, Cary McWilliams’s boundary line for the Southland, denizens of the region continue to glorify the twin industries of citrus agriculture and railroads in the 2010s. Across the San Gabriel and San Bernardino valleys, in old orange growing cities such as Pomona and Riverside, various murals, museums, and historic sites dedicated to preserving idealized versions of Southern California’s history stand as a testament to the public’s enduring fascination with the Octopus’s garden. Often located in old towns, where communities originally came into existence along the tracks of the Santa Fe or Southern Pacific, the undertones of these images reveal much about the surrounding communities. Many are painted on buildings in twenty-first-century shopping centers and major commercial thoroughfares. Victoria Gardens in Rancho Cucamonga, former home of the Cucamonga Fruit Growers Association, has a variety of such images.

³⁹ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 12, 296.



Figure C.1. Citrus crate label mural at Victoria Gardens shopping mall, Rancho Cucamonga, California. Citrus crate labels such as the one pictured here circulated images of California oranges and the railroads that shipped them, both recalled in this image and many others as constructive entities in the Southland's history. Photograph by author.

A number of scholars from the burgeoning realm of public history have charted the use of the past beyond academia. Among them, Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen deserve mention for their pioneering work. At public history sites, these academics argued, “Time frames shifted and merged; the air seemed saturated with their fluidity.”⁴⁰ Past and present converge in such spaces as the murals of Southern California, allowing onlookers to more directly interact with the past. After surveying Americans about their connections to the past, Rosenzweig and Thelen found that most citizens eschewed classroom learning and preferred to visit historic sites and museums.⁴¹ This holds

⁴⁰ Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), 5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 31.

particular relevance for murals located on the sides of major businesses that thousands of Californians across the Southland patronize daily. Far more than traditional methods of academic discourse, the act of seeing history in such public spaces engages audiences.

A number of scholars of the public sphere characterize the creation of public art as the physical manifestation of memory. Pierre Nora defined history as an “incomplete” and “problematic” reconstruction of the past. Memory, however, “life, borne by living societies founded in its name” and “in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting,” stood in stark contrast to academic history.⁴² “If history is objective in the coldest, hardest sense of the word,” theorized Kerwin Lee Klein, “memory is subjective in the warmest, most inviting sense of that word. In contrast with history, memory fairly vibrates with the fullness of Being.”⁴³ Public spaces in Southern California ultimately echo this concept, offering places of refuge and fond recollections of the orange and railroad age.

Public memorials and murals to the age of railroad transportation and citrus growing carry with them affective memories of the past. Scholar Erica Doss concisely defined affect as the physical manifestation of emotion.⁴⁴ As venues that allow visitors to manifest their feelings, monuments offer, in Klein’s opinion, a “a therapeutic alternative”

⁴² Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989): 8.

⁴³ Kerwin Lee Klein, “On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse,” *Representations* 69 (Winter 2000): 130.

⁴⁴ Erica Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 15.

to the absoluteness of history.⁴⁵ Cultural theorist Marita Sturken characterized practices such as tourism of historic spots as a way for citizens to emotionally invest in the perception of American innocence.⁴⁶ Applying Doss and Sturken's theories to the memorial landscape of Southern California reveals that communities perpetuate idealized representations of the orange empire and its railroads. Not only to trains and fruits permeate the historic sites of Southern California, but the memories of its residents, as well.

A closer look at some such murals will make the affective possibilities of public art more readily apparent. One mural commemorating the history of Riverside adroitly positioned citrus and railroads as related industries in that city's history. The so-called Gluck Gateway Mural, tucked beneath the convergence of Highway 60 and Interstate 215, lines the freeway underpass at University Avenue, connecting the University of California, Riverside, to the city of the same name. Funded by the Gluck Foundation, partnered with Caltrans and the City of Riverside, this mural depicts the history of the town from its Indian inhabitants to the early-twenty-first century.⁴⁷ Native American scholars Rupert and Jeannette Costo appear in the image, as does Alfred M. Boyce, onetime director of the Citrus Experiment Station, forerunner of the University's

⁴⁵ Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory," 146.

⁴⁶ Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 14-8.

⁴⁷ Sandy Van, "University Mural Lacks Ownership, Proper Upkeep," *Highlander*, June 24, 2014, <http://www.highlandernews.org/14156/university-mural-lacks-ownership-proper-upkeep/>.

Riverside campus.⁴⁸ Within the image itself, railroads and oranges enjoy privileged positions. Eliza Tibbets's first Navel orange tree appears in the mural, as does the Metrolink commuter rail line, representing the terminus of the work's historical trajectory.⁴⁹



Figure C.2. The Gluck Gateway Mural in Riverside, California. Notice the steam locomotive freighting cars laden with enormous oranges. Photograph by author.

While most students of the University of California, Riverside, have doubtless become immune to the memorial nature of the mural as they pass it dozens of times on their way to the University, its placement calls into question its relationship with the community. Located in a dingy, poorly lit underpass on the outskirts of campus, it hardly draws massive crowds. This location also does little to discourage vandalism on the image. Graffiti sadly coats the Gateway Mural, detracting from its historicity, and worse

⁴⁸ “Colorful History on the Walls Underneath Highway 60,” *UCR Today*, June 7, 2000 <http://newsroom.ucr.edu/509>.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

yet denoting a lack of appreciation for the work and the history it represents on the part of the community.⁵⁰ The disregard Riversiders seem to have for this public mural allows for the construction of a counter-narrative, one in which the decay of the past tells a story of its own.⁵¹ In Riverside, where the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe facilitated the Washington Navel orange industry's transformation into a fixture of Southern California's culture and economy, not only has the orange empire subsided and the Octopus disappeared, but the community has largely abandoned the historical narrative these elements once produced. Illustratively, delinquents have obscured this history through acts of vandalism. Contemporary Riverside's memory seems to have no place for citrus agriculture and railroads. Other cities in the orange empire of old have most wistful recollections of these elements of the past.

The city of La Verne, in eastern Los Angeles County, enjoys a more positive affective relationship with its memories of citrus agriculture and railroad transportation in Southern California. Murals coat countless buildings in the downtown section of this small city in the San Gabriel Valley. In one image along the Spanish-named Bonita Avenue, an old steam train powers through an orange grove. Its smoke gently billows behind it, dwarfed by the majestic peaks of the San Gabriel Mountains. The image lacks human inhabitants, instead positioning orange trees and locomotives as historical agents in and of themselves.

⁵⁰ Van, "University Mural Lacks Ownership."

⁵¹ I have borrowed this methodology from Caitlin DeSilvey, "Observed Decay: Telling Stories with Mutable Things," *Journal of Material Culture* 11, no. 3 (2006): 318-338. DeSilvey argued that the decay of historic sites and materials offers opportunities for scholars to formulate new narratives.



Figure C.3. Image of a steam train passing through groves in “Historic Old Town” La Verne. Photograph by author.

Other public murals in La Verne uphold the mythology of the Octopus’s garden. Along the operational tracks of the Santa Fe Railroad sits an old citrus packinghouse. Converted from its original use into space for a local institution of higher education, in recent decades the structure enjoyed special attention from its city. In 1992, decades after the citrus industry had left this building behind, a triad of local artists painted an acrylic mural titled “Scrapbook” on the side of this building for the public to enjoy.⁵² A series of images now lovingly adorns the side of the building. One image depicts the city’s original railroad depot from the 1880s. Another recreates an old pamphlet from the city’s early history, recalling La Verne as the “Heart of the Orange Empire.” In this image, seemingly endless acres of orange groves stretch out below the foothills of the San

⁵² “Public Art Data for Los Angeles, Southern California and Hawaii,” *Public Art in Public*, n.d., <http://www.publicartinpublicplaces.info/cities-l---m/La-Verne>.

Gabriel Mountains. Perhaps most impressively, the artists responsible for “Scrapbook” recreated an image of orange pickers in the groves, filling boxes with horticulturalist E.J. Wickson’s “King of California Fruit” destined for a packinghouse and ultimately rail shipment.



Figure C.4. “Scrapbook” on a converted citrus packinghouse in La Verne. Photograph by author.

A number of California history narratives intersect at this site. A new thoroughfare, Arrow Highway, parallels the Santa Fe Railroad in this portion of the San Gabriel Valley. As a number of local historians have noted, Spanish explorer Juan Bautista de Anza traversed the route that modern Arrow Highway follows, which already demarks this area as historic. In addition, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway established the tracks seen near the bottom of the image in the mid-1880s. These rails run parallel to Arrow Highway, and demonstrate the railroad’s emulation of de Anza’s route. Finally, the artists of “Scrapbook” completed this confluence of intersecting memories with painted reproductions of promotional photographs from the early-twentieth century

welcoming visitors to La Verne, the “Heart of the Orange Empire.” This mural indicates that citrus agriculture and railroading converge as a source of pride for this community, and the infrastructure these factors helped establish in the Southland around the turn of the twentieth century endures, at least in the public’s shared memory.



Figure C.5. Close-up of "Scrapbook." On the top left is an image of an old steam railroad depot, belonging either to the Santa Fe or the Southern Pacific. On the right, laborers diligently pick oranges and sort them into wooden crates labeled "LVOGA" for La Verne Orange Growers Association. On the bottom, the Lordsburg Hotel, an old inn located close to the tracks of the Santa Fe Railroad, lives again, despite its demolition in 1927. Photograph by author.

For all their romantic musings on the steam trains of yesteryear and the orange empire, these murals ignore the more complicated facets of history in Southern California. No smudge pots exhale putrid exhaust to pollute the endless azure firmament, perforated only by the snow-capped peaks of the San Gabriel Mountains. The Mexican

railway hands whom Henry Huntington and other executives insulted as *cholos* have been omitted from historical consideration. As always, Indians have also suffered from memorial erasure. No depictions of their pitiful reservation existences adorn the buildings of Southern California. Only great white men, railway agents, grove owners, and pristinely dressed women in packinghouses, populate these exclusive histories. In these public monuments, the historically ambiguous legacies of railroads and citrus agriculture disappear before the power of an idealized past. However, other agents, such as the orange trees contained in images of Southern California at the height of the citrus empire, reflect denizens' fascination with the fruits of the past.

In Riverside, California, along the prominent thoroughfare of Magnolia Avenue, resides the surviving parent orange tree that gave birth to the Washington Navel industry. Over the course of its life, this tree and its sibling nourished an entire nation with citrus fruits. Growers used them to propagate countless orange trees across Southern California. The parent trees also empowered institutionalized religious colonies in Southern California, and their very existence inspires devout citizens of Riverside to engage in municipal civil religion. The blessings of visitors from across the globe, including a powerful president of the United States, conferred a sense of American legitimacy on these prolific trees, and their presence reassured Riverside's citizens of their city's proud history, built on the economically productive capacity of a handful of humble plants. Even at the outset of the twenty-first century, the parent Washington Navel orange tree remains in the city of Riverside, reminding passersby of their storied city's economically glorious past.

By the time it arrived at Riverside in the 1870s, the parent Navel orange tree already possessed a regal pedigree. Ancient kings and emperors from East Asian had feasted upon the oranges of this tree's ancestors. Merchants carried saplings and seeds from these orange trees across the Silk Road through kingdoms in the Middle East to Europe. Legendary figures from throughout human history, ranging from Israel's King Solomon to Queen Isabella of Spain, enjoyed the fruits these trees produced.⁵³ Early modern explorers carried citrus trees into the Western Hemisphere during the Age of Discovery, particularly into warmer locales amenable to orange agriculture such as Mexico, where the agreeable climate nourished them and allowed them to prosper and evolve.⁵⁴

In Bahia, Brazil, Eurasian orange trees began to mutate. A variety of the Selecta breed of orange began to produce fruits containing smaller fruits nested within them. Scientists from the United States Department of Agriculture became aware of this phenomenon during the 1870s, and field workers sent sample trees of this variety to William Saunders in Washington, D.C.⁵⁵ Saunders, a botanist trained at Great Britain's unparalleled Kew Gardens, the premier global botanical establishment in the late-nineteenth century, gave two trees of this variety to Eliza Tibbets, a friend of his on her way to join her husband Luther at a new agricultural colony in Southern California.⁵⁶

⁵³ Ed Ainsworth, *Journey with the Sun: The Story of Citrus in Its Western Pilgrimage* (Los Angeles: Sunkist Growers, Inc., 1968), 1-2.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁵ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 18.

⁵⁶ Lazslo, *Citrus*, 36.

Thus did this breed of orange, named the Washington Navel because of its nesting fruits and brief stay in the capital of the United States, transplant itself to North America.⁵⁷

Eliza Tibbets's care for her seedlings had long-term benefits for California. Tibbets arrived in Riverside in the early 1870s. By the mid-1870s, Tibbets began to exhibit her trees and their fruits in citrus fairs, garnering awards and accolades from Riverside to Chicago in the process. Growers from across the Southland adopted the Navel orange as a result, and the citrus industry of California flourished.⁵⁸ Not content to exercise only a local influence, the two trees spread their fruits across the globe, to markets eager and willing to buy delicious California fruits.

The parent trees exerted influence across the continent as a testament to California's innately American nature. The California Mutual Packing Company, based in Riverside, created a citrus crate label celebrating the parent Navel orange tree for distribution to markets across the country. The image centered on one of the two Tibbets trees. The tree in the image, based on its real-life counterpart located near the original Tibbets homestead, is surrounded by the same palms touted by promoters of the city in the 1940s. In the illustration, the arboreal paragon bore fruit in, golden oranges that resembled miniaturized suns, almost tangible representations of the tree's ability to capture sunlight and transform it into an edible commodity that could bestow good health on consumers

⁵⁷ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 74.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

across the nation.⁵⁹ One parent orange tree fell into the hands of Frank Miller of the Mission Inn, one of Riverside's most beloved city fathers. In 1903, Miller invited President Theodore Roosevelt, in perhaps the city's most memorable historical episode, to replant this orange tree in the hotel's plaza. The parent trees' ability to draw a president to the very heart of the orange empire demonstrates the agency they possessed well into the twentieth century.⁶⁰



Figure C.6. "Parent Tree Brand" citrus crate label created by the Western Lithograph Company in 1916. Courtesy of the Pomona Public Library.

Eventually, the orange empire began to decline. The Navel orange tree in the Mission Inn's plaza passed away as a result of disease in 1921, replaced by an offspring obtained

⁵⁹ As Sackman explains, such thinking prompted the California Fruit Growers Exchange to adopt its famous Sunkist brand so as to promote their fruits as products channeled directly from the Golden State's excellent sunlight. Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 89.

⁶⁰ Jenkins, "Steel, Steam, and Citrus," 49.

from its surviving sibling.⁶¹ The surviving parent tree could only watch as its progeny vacated Southern California after the Second World War and the housing boom.⁶² Horrifyingly, the parent tree showed signs of infection by *Phytophthora gummosis*, the same plant virus that had ravaged Irish potato crops in the 1840s and killed the parent tree planted at the Mission Inn. After years of providing Southern California with economic vibrancy and nourishing an entire continent, the tree received aid from the people of Riverside. Led by Herbert Webber, a renowned botanist and director of the University of California Citrus Experiment Station, scientists successfully inarched the tree, surgically grafting parts from other citrus trees to the parent of the California Navel orange industry in 1918 and 1951. This prevented gummosis from claiming the tree's life.⁶³ The parent Navel orange tree remains at the intersection of Magnolia and Arlington avenues in Riverside. An old, scraggly bush, it continues to produce fruit. Although the citrus industry has largely abandoned Southern California, the tree stands as a testament to the enduring legacy and impact of the Washington Navel orange on Riverside and other historic citrus towns.

⁶¹ Moses, "The Flying Wedge of Cooperation," 77.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 295.

⁶³ Roistacher, "The Parent Navel Orange Tree," 2.



Figure C.7. The surviving parent Washington Navel orange tree in Riverside. Photograph by author.

The current status of the parent Washington Navel orange tree closely parallels the trajectory of Riverside's history over the course of the twentieth century. Just as mass industrialization reshaped Southern California in the mid-twentieth century, so, too did the parent Navel orange tree never regain the full glory as progenitor of an entire industry that had held prior to its infection. Its economic value diminished in the course of the twentieth century as housing and industry displaced its offspring, causing groves to give way to houses and factories. Nonetheless, citizens of Riverside demonstrated their enduring loyalty to the parent tree by twice saving its life, grafting parts of healthier trees to it. Although time and disease have stripped the parent Navel orange tree so lovingly

cared for by Eliza Tibbets of its former transcontinental economic might, it continues to enjoy a positive affective relationship with the people of Riverside and Southern California. A street sign proudly proclaims the tree's status as a historical landmark of the state of California. Reconstituted as a beloved, living historical object in the twenty-first century, the parent tree has used an emotional bond with the residents of the city its fruits built to sustain itself in an increasingly mechanized era. Other remnants of the orange empire reflect Southern Californians' infatuation with the citrus epoch of their history.

Beyond murals and Metrolink trains running on the old tracks of the Southern Pacific, the orange empire and the rail networks that serviced it permeate the very landscape of California. Remnants of the orange empire recall this fruitful period of the state's history. In the immediate vicinity of Riverside, two notable establishments, a state park and a museum, have institutionalized the roles of railroads and citrus agriculture in the Southland's memory. In the old capital of the orange empire, in particular the formerly wealthy Arlington district, the California Citrus State Historic Park (CCSHP) preserves the fabled era of orange and lemon groves in the Inland Empire.⁶⁴ A functional site, CCSHP still produces oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruits, kumquats, pomelos, and other citrus fruits in the twenty-first century.

Far more effective than the Gateway Mural, CCSHP successfully enshrined the myths surrounding the citrus industry of Southern California in the early-twentieth century. Here, history became a living, breathing entity in the form of a wide variety of

⁶⁴ Vincent Moses, "Historic Sites: California Citrus State Historic Park," *California History* 74, no. 1 (Spring 1995): frontispiece article.

citrus fruits grown across almost 400 acres.⁶⁵ Every day, docents scoured the park's trees, removing ripe fruits to use as displays in the visitor center. CCSHP's "Tour and Tastes" took visitors into the groves and allowed them to consume the commodities that enriched the Southland decades ago. Tourists who visited the groves during the winter, when the Washington Navel orange ripened, often return to their cars laden with bags of free oranges and lemons. These living components of California's history spread idealized, affective notions of the past differently than murals. Through the act of eating, CCSHP allows visitors to enjoy the lost orange empire.

The visitor center of CCSHP provided visitors a more traditional museological setting. Outside this center, display cases housed colorful citrus crate labels and advertisements from the successful "Oranges for Health" campaign in Iowa. Visitors proceeding into the center passed through a hallway adorned with photographs showing a variety of aspects of the citrus industry, including Korean American laborers in the trees. Artifacts such as old shoes and canvas bags allowed visitors to better understand the physical difficulties of harvesting oranges. Perhaps most importantly, a gift shop attached to the visitor center completed the commodification of memory at CCSHP. Purchasing popular history books and reproductions of citrus crate labels allowed tourists to participate in the perpetuation of the mythology surrounding the orange in California, embodying Sturken's musings on the commodification of history. Visitors could buy shirts and hats emblazoned with CCSHP's logo, or products made by local citrus producers.

⁶⁵ "California Citrus State Historic Park" brochure, California State Parks, 2009.

The imprint of railroading on the citrus industry was tangible in the exhibit space of CCSHP. In one mounted photographic print, a band from the Pacific Fruit Express played to honor citrus shipped over the Southern Pacific line from Colton. Promotional maps from the Santa Fe's Los Angeles Division glorified the "Citrus Belt" at its height, in 1948, as groves disappeared from Southern California. Miniature reproductions of ventilated and refrigerator cars and prints of crate labels at CCSHP immortalized the conceit of the railroad as the mechanism that allowed citrus agriculture to thrive. While CCSHP focused on citrus, it necessarily incorporated the railroad into its narrative, a fact the docents relished bringing to the attention of interested visitors.



Figure C.8. Map of the Citrus Belt circulated by the Santa Fe Railroad. Courtesy of the California Citrus State Historic Park, Riverside, California. As with the photograph in *Azusa Old and New* (see page 319), the corporate logos of Sunkist and the Santa Fe Railroad overlap to define the productive potential of Southern California.

The physical environment of the California Citrus State Historic Park also recalled the Riverside of yesteryear. Visitors touring the hilly expanse behind the visitor center experienced an impressive view of the groves stretching out to the north, with the distant San Bernardino Mountains completing the scenic backdrop. Palm trees delineated the roads running through the park and prevented visitors from becoming lost in the sea of trees. Docents referred to this panorama as a glimpse of Riverside as it appeared a century ago. The historic Gage Canal, which allowed growers to irrigate their crops starting in the 1880s, still provided liquid nourishment for the trees of CCSHP in the twenty-first century. Although it was fitted with cement pipes, steel grates, and machinery to regulate the flow of water to trees more specifically than growers could have done in 1915, this historic development to Riverside's infrastructure imbued CCSHP with the ability to tell visitors that the citrus legacy was still very much alive in Arlington.



Figure C.9. The Gage Canal as it flows through the California Citrus State Historic Park. Photograph by author.

The legacies of citrus and railroads also intermingled at Perris, California, south of Riverside along Interstate 215. Located on the periphery of historic citrus country, the Orange Empire Railway Museum embedded transcontinental and commuter lines in the memory of Southern California. The city of Perris, itself a railroad town located along the Santa Fe's historic California Southern route, seemed an ideal location for such a public history site.⁶⁶ This open-air museum contained functioning steam locomotives and electric cars from the Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, Los Angeles Railway, and Pacific Electric networks. One tourist brochure boasted that the museum housed “the West’s

⁶⁶ “Visitor’s Guide to Orange Empire Railway Museum,” Orange Empire Railway Museum, 2004. As this brochure notes, Perris was named for Fred T. Perris, chief engineer of the California Southern Railroad.

Largest collection of streetcars, interurban cars, locomotives, passenger cars, freight cars, and cabooses.”⁶⁷

Strolling through this museum confirmed this lofty claim. Tucked away in a secluded neighborhood of Perris, the Orange Empire Railway Museum effectively mythologized railroads by turning locomotives into living historical artifacts. Electric streetcars from the Los Angeles Railway, operating by Henry Huntington in the early-twentieth century, continuously rolled along the rails that formed the boundary of the museum. Cables hanging over the track allowed electric cars to function effectively, and recalled the complex technological infrastructure that accompanied the creation of commuter rails across the orange empire during its nativity. Cars created and operated by the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe still lumbered across the tracks at the museum, as did a Pullman car, the height of luxury travel in the United States in the nineteenth-century.

The variety of structures and functions that the museum performed gave visitors a strong sense of the complexity involved in running a rail line. In the functional machine shops, engine houses, and car houses into which curious visitors could venture, numerous steam and electric cars were set up with museum panels to explain the local routes the railroads serviced decades ago. Docents and volunteers restored paint, repaired breaks, and explained the origins of railroad cars from across the American West. Historic street signs and functioning crossing guards from the early-twentieth century give visitors a sense of the complexity of the developments that accompanied rail travel and kept them safe from trains crossing the tracks. Visitors could also enter cars and locomotives set

⁶⁷ “Ride Historic Trolleys & Trains at the Orange Empire Railway Museum,” Orange Empire Railway Museum, n.d.

aside for display. In the car houses, historic music played in an attempt to immerse visitors in the period when cars from the Pacific Electric ruled the Los Angeles Basin.

The Orange Empire Railway Museum, while not in the heart of citrus production in Southern California, nonetheless carried traces of orange and lemon production in the region. Visitors who entered the Pacific Electric cars might notice full-color advertisements for lemonade from Sunkist. The coach yard serviced refrigerator cars from the Pacific Fruit Express. Proudly bearing the seals of the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads, the yellow paint caused these cars to gleam in the sunlight of the Inland Empire. These traces of California's citrus heyday allowed the Orange Empire Railway Museum to live up to its name and, in conjunction with the interactive character of the site, intertwine citrus agriculture and railroading in the memory of Southern California's landscape.



Figure C.10. Sunkist advertisement in a Pacific Electric car.



Figure C.11. A refrigerator car of the Pacific Fruit Express.

As this introduction to the historic sites of Southern California shows, local citizens have used a variety of tactics to commemorate the citrus and railroad industries. Far from relinquishing these components of California history to scrapyards or compost piles, denizens of the Southland have taken railroad cars and orange trees and reconfigured them as productive historical artifacts. Open-air parks revivify these two economic sectors, complete with fruit-bearing trees and functioning locomotives. These artifacts further linger in the form of public art at commercial venues and historical downtowns close to the mainlines of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads.

Through such sites as the California Citrus State Historic Park and the Gluck Gateway Mural in Riverside, Southern Californians have rightfully characterized orange growing and railroading as related historical agents. As this study has shown, railroad executives, citrus orchardists, and laborers in both industries cooperated. Their actions permanently transformed the land, economy, and culture of Southern California in ways that few of them could have envisioned as the Southern Pacific first blasted the San Fernando Tunnel and Eliza Tibbets took her Washington Navel oranges to citrus fairs

across the country. Few could have guessed that orange and lemon packinghouses and the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific tracks would require advanced industrial equipment to maintain low temperatures for fruit during transit. Nor did they realize the massive amount of capital that shipping oranges and lemons by rail would return to the Southland.

Beyond the immediate impact of enriching wealthy migrants who came to California to reap the benefits of this new bounty, citrus agriculture and railroad transportation shaped cultural perceptions of California and solidified racial and social practices. Railroad corporations and citrus growers accelerated the process of dispossessing Californios and native peoples of their land. Furthermore, these groups, along with countless Asian immigrants during the late-nineteenth century, became institutionally impoverished through their dependence on employment by railroads and citriculturalists. Countless advertisements printed in periodicals such as the Southern Pacific Railroad's *Sunset* and the *California Citrograph* reconstituted the southern portion of the Golden State as a paradise for wealthy whites, a land of endless opportunity. They failed to confront the often detrimental environmental impact of locomotives and orchard heaters, and minimized the role of laborers in the reimagining of the Southland. For all the success they facilitated in Southern California, the citrus and railroad industries did not evenly distribute the wealth they returned to the Golden State, and rarely shaped the process of race relations in benevolent ways.

Unlike many of the public murals or museums commemorating the orange empire and its railways, this history has attempted to critically analyze the ambiguous effects of citriculture and industrialized transportation in Southern California during some of the

most important epochs in the area's history. The Southland hardly requires another eulogist to narrate its supposed triumphs from the 1870s to the 1950s. Rather, this study has aimed to complicate existing scholarship on the history of the Golden State. It has taken two seemingly disparate sectors of the economy and placed them in intimate conversation, recontextualizing existing historical narratives and bringing new developments to light. It has moved away from the tactic of centralizing Los Angeles and considered what Carey McWilliams called Southern California Country as a whole. By considering their impact on the economy, landscape, labor market, and popular culture, this study has shown how railroads and citrus agriculture become the prime social and economic movers in Southern California, for better or worse, from 1870 to 1950.

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