

Citrus Roots

Preserving Citrus Heritage Foundation

In this year's January/February issue, we referred to the heritage behind the Sunkist trademark as really being the bedrock supporting that value within the trade name. Very recently, I received the annual report from Reliance Steel & Aluminum Co. The theme of the report was "Our history tells the story of our future." That says it all. The California packers of citrus would add value to their name if they rooted it to their heritage. – Richard Barker

Buy our books, crate labels, make a cash contribution ...Or give to Citrus Roots Foundation your crate labels, books, citrus memorabilia ...you will save FED and CA taxes to the full extent allowed.

Our website is a reference center
www.citrusroots.com

Our "Mission" is to elevate the awareness of California citrus heritage through publications, education, and artistic work.

We are proud of our accomplishments as a volunteer organization, which means each donated dollar works for you at 100% [for we have no salaries, wages, rent, etc.]. All donations are tax deductible for income tax purposes to the full extent allowed by law.

Citrus Roots – Preserving Citrus Heritage Foundation

**P.O. Box 4038, Balboa, CA 92661 USA
501(c)(3) EIN 43-2102497**

The views of the writer may not be the same as this foundation.

The Building Boom of 1925-26 caused a relinquishment of citrus acreage

Richard H. Barker

Real estate or building cycles occur at intervals of between 18 to 20 years, as we discussed when we examined the Boom of 1887. The Bungalow Boom was around 1906, and the Boom of 1925-26 began to strengthen in 1921. It is the Boom of 1925-26 which we will presently address, along with how it affected the California citrus industry.

The real estate bubble on the East Coast began around 1921 and deflated around 1926. The housing prices commenced to turn down in 1926 and led to a rise in foreclosures. In the Midwest, heavy mortgages were placed during WW I in expectation of continued high prices on farm commodities, though the postwar collapse of agricultural goods caused widespread foreclosures. On the West Coast, residential property rose steadily, though when the stock market crashed in 1929, values fell and foreclosures on residential property peaked in 1933-34 and did not recover until WW II.

We are very fortunate to have as our source the working papers of the legendary Harold J. Ryan, Commissioner of Horticulture for Los Angeles County. (He held this position for decades.) This study was dated August 12, 1927, and the manuscript was originally written for "Citrus Leaves," a monthly paper devoted to the citrus industry and cooperative activities of the Pacific Coast.

Mr. Ryan commenced with an explanation of the aggregation of the County of Los Angeles citrus in 1927 with in excess of 50,000 bearing acres (90%) and the remaining 10% mainly in young Valencias. The breakdown was bearing Valencias totaling 22,809 acres and navels about 30% less, or 16,359 acres; lemons were about half of the Valencia total or 11,898, and seedlings and grapefruit accounted for only 1,234 acres.

As to this 1927 study, Mr. Ryan chose to start his description of the Los Angeles County citrus growing region with a solid block of about 30,000 acres beginning north of Puente

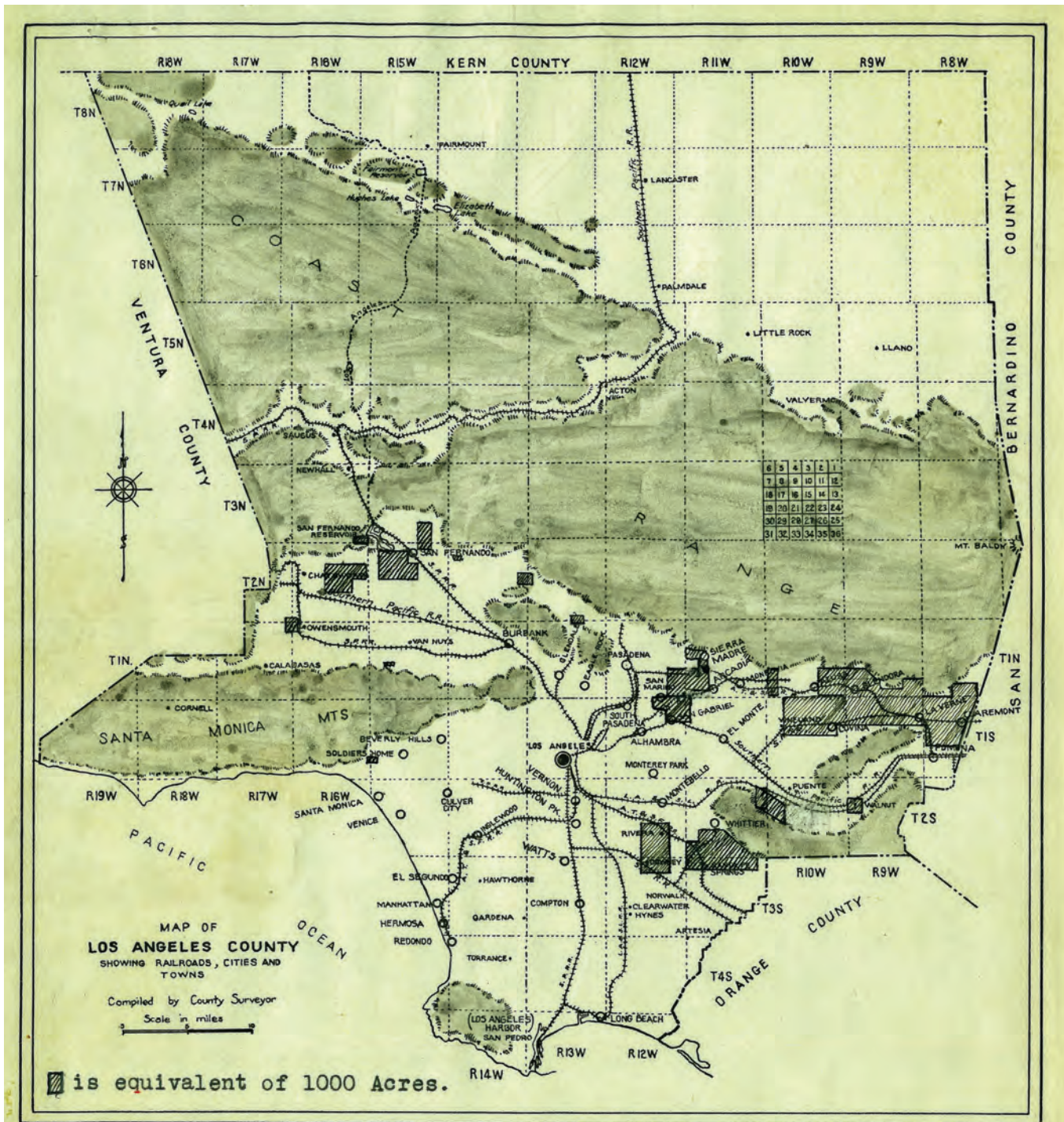
at Baldwin Park extending northeasterly to Azusa and then east along the foot of the San Gabriel Range 14 miles to the county line. He reported that through this area there was hardly a ten-acre parcel of level land that was not planted to citrus except where towns had risen.

Between Pomona and Puente along Valley Boulevard and in the North Whittier Heights district there were 3,600 acres, while south of the hills was a 10,000-acres block in the Whittier, Rivera, Downey district. This area had scattered plantings of walnuts.

The balance of the county citrus plantings were scattered from Monrovia and Pasadena through La Canada to San Fernando, Owensmouth, and Chatsworth.

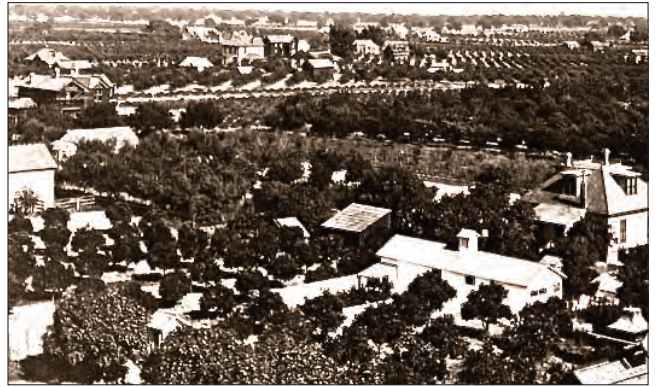
Practically all of the 6,000 acres lying in the Alhambra, Glendale, Sierra Madre, Monrovia quadrangle in 1927 were threatened with an early extinction by subdivision.

This completes the census by section of the county except, as Ryan stated, there were a few spots between Beverly Hills and Santa Monica that totaled 305 acres, and this area was soon to be subdivided the way of the old groves of



Citrus Acreage in 1926 Showing Extent by Townships and Approximate Location.

Photo album: Pasadena
**Now Orange Grove
Boulevard takes on a
new meaning...**



Pasadena 1910.



Circa 1923. Arroyo Seco Bridge, Pasadena.



Pasadena with developed orchards.



Pasadena 1886.



Pasadena 1882.



Pasadena Orange Growers Association 1894.