

Eden

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At *Greystone*, Thieme created some standard Italianate features with formal and restrained planting. A more relaxed recent approach to this feature embraces plentiful planting and added garden art.

Eden

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Paul G. Thiene: Landscape Architect of California's Golden Age

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Above: Reflecting pool at Greystone, Beverly Hills. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons.



Paul G. Thiene: Landscape Architect of California's Golden Age

NANCY CAROL CARTER

Thiene traveled around the sprawling Panama-California Exposition grounds on horseback to supervise the multiple grounds crews who were transforming the virgin land of Balboa Park into the future proclaimed "garden fair." c. 1913.
Courtesy San Diego History Center



Introduction

As opening day of San Diego's 1915 Panama-California Exposition approached, Paul G. Thiene, landscape superintendent, completed a master list of all the plant species represented on the exposition grounds. This documentary summary of the plantings represented four years of intense work and a landscaping achievement in which he took life-long pride. The list filled twenty-four pages in the official exposition guidebook and included almost 600 different Latin botanical names, as well as the common plant name, place of origin, and a short description for each entry.¹ With the inclusion of this detailed information, exposition officials proclaimed their pride in the horticultural achievements of the Panama-California Exposition.

For Thiene, the young German immigrant who came to the United States in 1903 in search of landscaping opportunities, the exposition was an unimagined opportunity and challenge. He was charged with botanically transforming 340 undeveloped acres of coastal scrub at the heart of Balboa Park. With inspired designs and plant choices, Thiene turned the grounds into an alluring landscape that attracted and entranced visitors. Thiene's work at the exposition was a professional triumph, yet his role in creating

San Diego's extravagantly praised "garden fair" was almost lost to history.

Despite universal ovations for the exposition landscape, and contemporary recognition of Thiene's central role in creating it, neither of the 1916 books that became foundational texts on the Panama-California Exposition name a landscape designer or lead garden maker.² Exclusion from these books resulted in a marginalization of Thiene's role. Meanwhile, the transitory sources that had positively acknowledged Thiene's exposition work—trade journals, newspapers and popular periodicals published from 1913 through 1915—faded into oblivion. For most of the next century, Thiene was overlooked in writings on Balboa Park and the 1915 exposition,³ and his name all but disappeared from the historical record. His photograph at the San Diego History Center was labeled "unidentified."

This changed when the approaching centennial of the Panama-California Exposition renewed interest in the history of the 1915 fair and its transformation of Balboa Park. John Blocker, a San Diego horticultural historian, observed in 2013 that over the span of one hundred years no one had written a complete article about Thiene and his contribution to the landscape of Balboa Park. "I

4446. Formal Gardens and Citrus Grove from Southern Counties Building,
Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, Cal. 1915.



always believed,” Blocker wrote, “that someone trained [in landscape and garden design] installed the landscape for the Exposition and so far, Thiene is the only person I’ve found who fits the bill.”⁴

Blocker’s insight sparked new research. Thiene’s significant contributions to the exposition landscape were brought to light. Articles reintroducing Thiene and establishing his key role in Balboa Park history were published as the exposition centennial was observed in 2015.⁵ The preservation group, Save Our Heritage Organisation, included Thiene in an exhibit and book on designers of Balboa Park expositions.⁶ As the centennial celebrations concluded, the Balboa Park Committee of 100, a preservation and advocacy group, selected Thiene for its 2016 Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue Award, a posthumous recognition of builders and creators of the Panama-California Exposition.⁷ After a century of being relegated to obscurity, Thiene reclaimed his rightful place in the colorful and eventful story of Balboa Park.

Interest in Thiene expanded to his post-exposition career. He moved on from the San Diego exposition to become an acclaimed Southern California landscape architect. A fateful early design commission positioned him to rise in prominence during a golden age of Southern California estate building, a

period falling within the Country Place Era,⁸ which touched the turn of the twentieth century and ended soon after the disastrous 1929 financial crash. It was a time when large residential properties proclaimed affluence through their sheer size and the extravagance of their expansive, formally designed gardens. Thiene launched his private landscape practice as American landscape architects were coming into their own and when Southern California gardens reached a peak they were never again to attain.⁹

Earning a lasting reputation as one of the most influential California landscape architects of the early twentieth century, Thiene is recognized as a leading interpreter of the Italian style in the United States. But even with his acknowledged importance, Thiene’s story has not been accurately or fully told.¹⁰ In this essay, new research and fresh documentary sources¹¹ illuminate unstudied chapters of Thiene’s career, correct biographical misinformation, and expound on his private and professional life. This is the fullest account to date of the life and work of Thiene, an ambitious and hard-working immigrant who exploited his every talent and opportunity to become a leading landscape architect during Southern California’s Golden Age of estate building.

Above: Formal gardens at the Exposition’s Southern California Counties building were designed by Los Angeles horticulturist Francis Edward Gray, but Thiene oversaw planting and maintenance of the display. A model farm and citrus grove promoted the agricultural potential of Southern California.

Thiene's Early Years

Paul Georg Thiene entered the world in an area known as “the green heart of Germany” due to its thick forests and historic agricultural economy. His birthplace, Marksuhl, was a small municipality in the federal state of Thüringen. He was born on September 17, 1880, and later anglicized his middle name by adding an “e.” He had at least one sibling, Frederick, an older brother known as Fritz.¹² In a 1961 interview, Thiene stated that his father was a school superintendent in Marksuhl. He reported attending grade school at the nearby town of Dornburg and receiving a technical degree at Köstritz.¹³

The ancient German town of Köstritz (renamed Bad Köstritz in 1926) was known in Thiene's time for fine brewing and an English-style landscape park created in 1804 for a provincial noble. Köstritz was a town of commercial flower-growers, including the firms of Deegen,¹⁴ Sieckmann,¹⁵ Herger and Schade. These names stood for important breeding successes in dahlias, standard roses and multicolored foliage plants that were sold throughout Europe. Dahlias from Köstritz are still prized and receive recognition at international flower shows.

Köstritz also was home to a School of Horticulture, headed from 1886 to 1945 by Prof. Dr. Henry Settegast.¹⁶ Horticultural studies and garden making were well-established and highly valued in Germany by the late nineteenth century, and the “artistic nature garden” was regarded as a high German art.¹⁷ The Köstritz school, an internationally renowned educational institution, was Thüringen's most important academy for gardeners and horticultural technicians.¹⁸

This is the institution at which Thiene trained, although the one published description of his training seems implausible. The biographical research paper written by a student of landscape architecture at the University of California in 1962 reports that Thiene completed his technical degree by age ten and entered an apprenticeship.¹⁹



Based on Thiene's facility with written English, as demonstrated by hand-written and carefully corrected drafts of letters and later publications, a more complete education, whether in a formal setting or at home, can be inferred. One other source, a 1912 article that appears to be based on a personal interview with Thiene, mentions a horticultural internship in Germany of three years.²⁰ Thiene's immigration record shows that he was living in Dresden in 1903, immediately before leaving Germany. That city had a historic botanical garden, but there is no documentation of Thiene's internship or pre-immigration employment.

Beyond this sketchy record, little is known about Thiene's life in Germany or his training and formal education, but his interest in landscape design and the nature of his ambition suggest an education beyond basic practical training in propagation and other technical skills. At age twenty-three, thinking that landscape opportunities would



be greater in the United States, and perhaps influenced by an uncle who had settled in New Jersey, Thiene sailed from Bremen to New York, docking on October 1, 1903.²¹

Upon arrival, Thiene stated his occupation as “gardener” and his first destination as Newark, New Jersey. He had two relatives in Newark, Julius Gerlach and Christian Julius Gerlach. They apparently were maternal uncles who were brothers or cousins to each other.

Julius Gerlach was a naturalized citizen who had immigrated to the United States in 1865. He was a partner in Newark’s Begerow & Gerlach florist business, a well-established enterprise dating back to at least 1875. His age was fifty-five in the 1900 census.²² This uncle traveled back to Germany in 1878, 1896 and again in 1903, one year after retiring from business. Paul Thiene came to the United States just three months after Julius Gerlach returned from his 1903 visit to Germany.²³

The second uncle, Christian Julius Gerlach, was president of Newark Second-Hand Machinery Company, established in 1892 and incorporated in 1904 with a capital stock of \$500,000.²⁴ There is scant census information for the Gerlachs, but city directories show that Julius Gerlach and Christian Julius Gerlach shared a Broad Street home in Newark for a few years.²⁵

Thiene apparently considered his move to the United States a permanent relocation. He began the naturalization process within two years of immigrating, but his subsequent moves from state to state interrupted standard residency requirements. Almost nine years after arriving in the United States, he was naturalized as an American citizen in the San Diego courts on October 30, 1912.²⁶ Thiene settled into life in the United States for almost thirty years before traveling back to Europe and he never again lived in his native country.²⁷

Above: Thiene was born in the village of Marksuhl, Thüringen, in “the green heart” of Germany.

Thiene's Counterfactual Life

For most of his existence in the historical record, information about Thiene's life and career was incorrectly reported. A biographical statement was developed and repeated for decades, despite being inaccurate in most particulars. The flawed Thiene profile read:

Trained as a horticulturist in Germany; immigrated to the United States, 1898. Worked for Olmsted Brothers in Brookline, Massachusetts, 1898-1911. Sent by the firm with Lloyd Wright to establish a nursery for the Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1910. When the Olmsted firm withdrew, he became consulting landscape architect. In partnership with Wright, Los Angeles, 1914-16; in practice in his own firm, 1916-29—responsible for planting and office management. Practice was entirely residential.²⁸

Some sources correct Thiene's immigration date to 1903,²⁹ but most repeat other errors. Thiene did not work for the Olmsteds upon arriving in the United States. He was not sent to California by the firm. The date Thiene formed a partnership with Lloyd Wright (Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr., 1879-1935) was 1915, not 1914. Thiene's work as a landscape architect was not confined to plantings and office management and his practice was not "entirely residential."³⁰

How have landscape historians gone so far astray in summarizing Thiene's life and career? One factor is the dearth of published personal information about him. Another is that a key documentary source, a twenty-six page "biographical research paper" in the form of a hand-made book dated January 2, 1962, is faulty, even though it was based on a personal interview. This account was written by James J. Lucas, an enterprising University of California architectural student who sought Thiene out for an interview, presumably in 1961.³¹

Lucas' paper provides some otherwise unknown details about Thiene's early life, as well as being the original source of incorrect Thiene information, including an erroneous report of early employment with the Olmsteds. Lucas states that Thiene "went to work with Frederick Law Olmsted in Boston" and worked with Olmsted until 1910 when Thiene "took over the Panama-Calif. Exposition in San Diego." The senior Olmsted died two months before Thiene arrived on American shores, so Lucas is referencing Frederick

Law Olmsted, Jr., but the claim is in error. During the years in question, Thiene was not living in Massachusetts, as he resided in other states and worked in businesses having no connection to the Olmsteds. His only employment by the Olmsted firm was a few months in 1911, when he worked at the San Diego exposition nursery created and operated by the Olmsteds. Thiene's tenure with the firm was so short that even the extensive Olmsted business files have no record of him as an employee, although there is an information card in the Olmsted records listing Thiene as the superintendent of landscape at the San Diego exposition,³² a position he obtained after the Olmsteds terminated their contract in San Diego and left the exposition.

Researchers had no reason to question Lucas' report of Thiene's long record of Olmsted employment. It is curious, however, that this false career history became so ingrained while the true story was lost. Did Thiene dissemble, exaggerating his connection to the Olmsted firm? Or did he fail to correct a presumption made by others, willingly accepting the benefit of an exaggerated tie to the nation's most famous firm of landscape architects? We shall never know, but, until the Lucas interview, Paul Thiene is not on the record with an overt misrepresentation of his Olmsted association. At age eighty-one when interviewed by Lucas, Thiene's powers of recall may have eroded or, as with elsewhere in his biographical research paper, Lucas may have misreported.

Thiene's early years in the United States were far more challenging and less settled than the life described by Lucas and the standard biographical statement. To have immediately taken up a position with the well-established Olmsted Brothers would indeed have been a soft landing for a new immigrant interested in landscape work, but that was not Thiene's experience.

Lucas quotes Paul Thiene as saying that he first worked at "Danudles in Pennsylvania," but that "landscape opportunities looked more impressive." This wording suggests that "Danudles," if a horticultural enterprise, may have been a seed company, grower, florist or nursery operation. Extensive research and inquiries have not identified a concern called Danudles or any variations of that word. Lucas apparently misheard or misunderstood the business name.³³

When Thiene reached Newark in 1903, a logical place of employment would have been in his uncle's florist business or at the Henry A. Dreer Company, headquartered across the Delaware River in Philadelphia and with growing grounds in Riverton, New

Jersey. Dreer was a thriving seed, bulb, and flower business operating on 300 acres, with fourteen greenhouses and scores of employees. Established by immigrants in 1832, the company maintained close ties to Germany and presumably would have been a congenial landing spot for a German immigrant with horticultural training. The notion that Thiene found employment at Dreer's is speculative, but subsequent correspondence establishes that he did have a friendly relationship with a Dreer Company vice president who in one letter commented on Thiene's familiarity with Dreer's work in Riverton during the busy shipping season.³⁴

While no factual information about the earliest employment of Thiene in the United States has surfaced, he was on the move after about one year in Newark. He successively lived in San Francisco and then Portland, Oregon, before returning to the east coast for approximately one year. His last relocation was back to the west, where he permanently settled in Southern California.

A Troubled Stay in San Francisco

Thiene moved to San Francisco in late 1904, arriving in time to be listed in a 1905 San Francisco city directory with the profession of florist.³⁵ He filed his declaration of intention to become a United States citizen in the San Francisco courts in June 1905, indicating his expectation of settling in long enough to meet the residency requirements for naturalization.³⁶

His San Francisco residential address (1149 Polk Street) was the location of a florist shop operated from the 1870s by the French immigrant, John Pouyal. A few years earlier, Pouyal had advertised for "a gardener who understands raising cut flowers." A potential partnership or business buyout was offered to a qualified applicant.³⁷ Whether Thiene joined the Pouyal operation as a partner or with a plan of purchasing the business is unknown, but all future possibilities were cut short by a series of terrible events.

John Pouyal died in October 1904. His widow Maria and son Alfred continued the business, presumably with Thiene's assistance. In rapid succession, the surviving Pouyals died. Maria Pouyal passed away on August 14, 1905, at age 46. Just six months later her son, the 22-year-old Alfred, was also deceased.³⁸ A month after Alfred's death, on April 18, 1906, an early morning earthquake followed by more than fifty fires, reduced



much of San Francisco to rubble and ash. As the fires raged, areas of Polk Street were sacrificed to dynamite to create a fire line at the next street, the double-wide Van Ness Avenue. Twenty-five blocks of Polk Street, including the location of the Pouyal florist business and Thiene's listed home address, were blasted and burned.³⁹

No personal account exists, so it is not known if Thiene was still in San Francisco after Maria and Alfred Pouyal died. It is also not known if he experienced the earthquake, though that cataclysm seems the logical explanation for his departure from the place he had chosen to settle and seek citizenship. Thiene moved from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon.

Above: Founded by German immigrants, Dreer's nursery and seed company of Philadelphia and New Jersey was a likely employer upon Thiene's 1903 arrival in the United States. However, a Thiene association with the company is a surmise based on later correspondence.

Business in the City of Roses

The New York Office of Daniel W. Langton

In 1902 the Olmsted Brothers landscape firm was hired to create a new park system for Portland, Oregon, and to develop ground plans for an international exposition to be held in 1905, an event commemorating the over-wintering of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery on the Oregon coast 100 years earlier.⁴⁰ New research establishes that Thiene took up residence in Portland after this exposition, residing in the City of Roses for three or four years. Thiene is not linked with the Olmsted's Portland projects, but there is a possibility that he had prior connections with the nurserymen who became his Portland business partners.

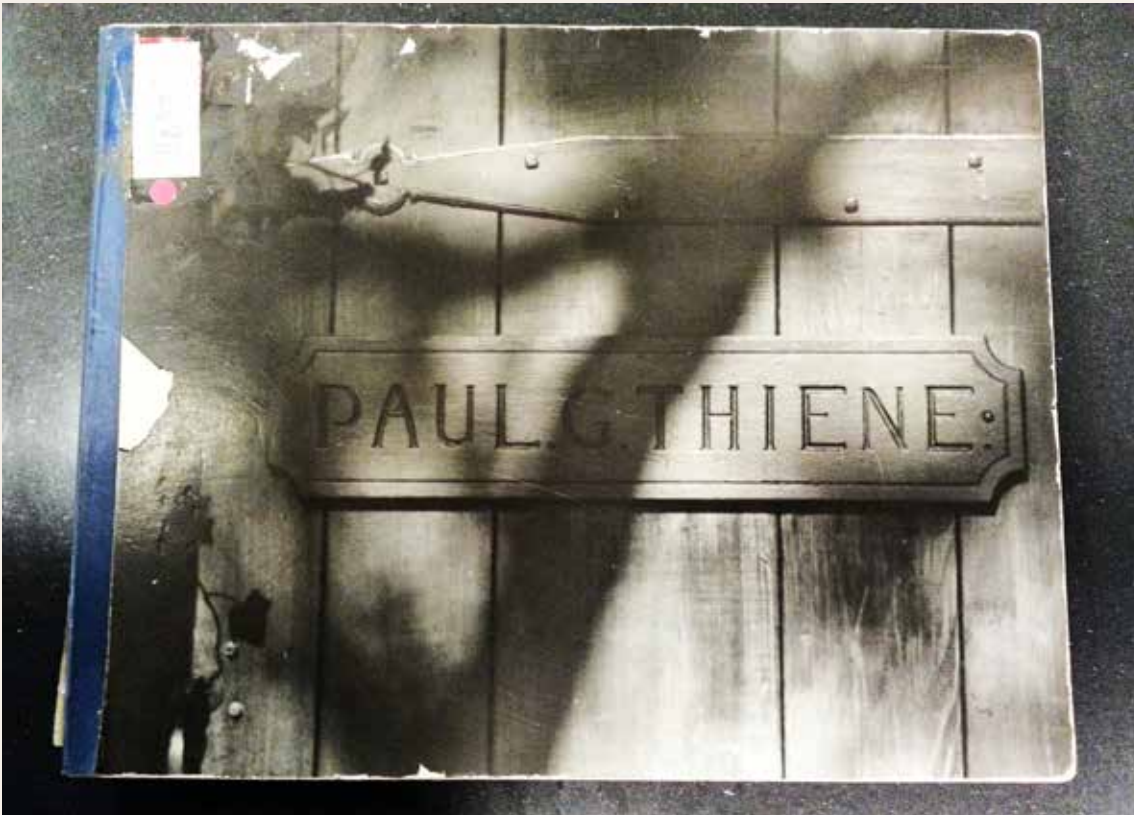
Portland had a well-established German-American community⁴¹ and Thiene joined with two of his countrymen in a landscape, florist and nursery business, the Montavilla Floral Company. Its origins were in Otto Griessel's 1905 purchase of ten acres of land in the Portland suburb of Montavilla.⁴² Late in 1906, Thiene, Griessel and Jakob Feser entered into a formal partnership agreement.⁴³ Thiene bought into the business with \$500, a capital contribution just one-third that of his partners. The talents he brought to the business were apparently valued as he was made a co-equal partner with the other investors. The venture is an early example of the entrepreneurial spirit so apparent in Thiene's career. Within two years, in August 1908, Thiene's partners bought out his interest at a profit, paying him \$720⁴⁴ for his original \$500 share. Renamed as the Mountain View Floral Company, the nursery continued as a Portland business for many years.

Thiene had arrived in Portland, probably after the San Francisco earthquake of April 1906, and is listed as a resident in the Portland city directories for the years 1907, 1908 and 1909.⁴⁵ But, by 1909 he was far from Portland, having returned to the East Coast early that year. He may have been summoned back to Newark after the death of one or both of the Gerlach uncles who died around this time.

By the spring of 1909, Thiene was working at the New York City practice of the well-established landscape architect Daniel W. Langton (1864-1909).⁴⁶ Langton had an office on Fifth Avenue and was a founder and charter member in 1899 of the American Society of Landscape Architects, along with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., John Charles Olmsted, Samuel Parsons, Jr. and seven others.⁴⁷ In the days before formal training was available or required, Langton had drifted into landscape architecture from a career as a consulting geologist and engineer.⁴⁸ He gained some early attention after co-creating, with art historian and landscape architect E. Hamilton Bell (1857-1929), a proposed redesign of New York City's Madison Square, submitted to the Architectural League exhibit of 1896 and favorably reviewed when published in the leading park and landscape journal of the day, *Garden and Forest*.⁴⁹

One of Langton's most important commissions was in 1905 at Drumthwacket, the Princeton, New Jersey estate of Moses Taylor Pyne, a wealthy industrialist and banker. Langton was retained to design Drumthwacket's entire property, including woods, ponds, lawns, paths, bowling green, lawn tennis court, and formal Italianate gardens. With New Jersey adaptations, the Italian gardens were modeled on the Villa Gamberaia in Settignano,⁵⁰ a landscape Edith Wharton described in detail in her 1904 book on Italian villas.⁵¹ Langton also designed and executed plans for the West Side Park in Jersey City and a park at Harrison, New Jersey. He secured private residential commissions in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.⁵²

How Thiene made the transition from a small Oregon florist and nursery business to a position with a leading New York City landscape architect is a mystery, although one hint is buried in Thiene's correspondence. When writing to Thiene in 1910, J. D. Eisele, a vice president at the Henry A. Dreer seed company in Philadelphia, called



Langton a “mutual friend.”⁵³ It is possible that Eisele helped Thiene secure a position with Langton when Thiene returned to the East Coast in late 1908 or early 1909.

Employment with Langton was a promising—but tragically blunted—career step. Langton assigned Thiene to oversee a landscape construction project at a Main Line estate in Wayne, Pennsylvania, outside Philadelphia. In Thiene’s correspondence, the property is identified only as “the Wilcox place.”⁵⁴ After six restless years, Paul Thiene was finally pursuing the kind of landscape work that had brought him to the United States. However, his new position ended abruptly on a June evening in 1909. The 45-year-old Daniel Langton returned to his New Jersey home at the end of the workday and consumed a bottle of potassium cyanide while sitting in his living room.⁵⁵ With Langton’s suicide, work on the Wilcox estate in Pennsylvania was halted, leaving Thiene with unpaid wages and no employment.⁵⁶

The nine months of Thiene’s life following Langton’s suicide are blank in the historical record, except for Thiene’s reapplication for United States citizenship filed in New York in September 1909,⁵⁷ one indication that he meant to settle for a period of time in the state. A financial windfall perhaps helped to change his plans. Thiene was named as a beneficiary of his deceased uncle’s will and received a partial disbursement of his inheritance.⁵⁸

Meanwhile, the small town of San Diego, California, began publicizing its plan to mount an exposition in 1915 to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal. Paul Thiene moved to San Diego, settling into the Old Town area in late February 1910. While there is no documentary evidence verifying that Thiene relocated to San Diego because of the upcoming exposition, there is equally no other known connection between Thiene and the remote Southern California border town. Thiene’s own correspondence sheds no light on why he made this move, but it is likely that he saw the exposition as a leading customer for the nursery business he planned to establish and perhaps expected the exposition to promote San Diego’s growth and prosperity, leading to new homes in need of landscape design and plantings.

It is tempting to postulate an Olmsted connection in Thiene’s moves, first to Portland and then to San Diego, because the Olmsted firm was hired to design expositions in both cities. But Thiene entered the private plant nursery business in each of these exposition towns, undoubtedly hoping, like many entrepreneurial vagabonds of the day, to profit from the economic stir of these large fairs. Thiene arrived in Portland in the year after the Lewis and Clark Exposition and in San Diego nine months before the Olmsteds were hired by the Panama-California Exposition Corporation.⁵⁹

Above: The cover of a handmade book by James J. Lucas displays a photograph, perhaps taken when Lucas interviewed Thiene at his Pasadena home in 1961. Courtesy Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.



San Diego: The Ill-fated Ramona Nursery

Thiene purchased a ten-acre tract of land in Old Town San Diego, closing the deal by March 1, 1910. He bought Block 423 near the original site of Father Junipero Serra's first Alta California mission. The \$4,500 acreage was north of Juan Street and bounded on the west by Taylor Street. Thiene paid \$1,000 down and committed to semi-annual payments of \$500.⁶⁰

On this "dandy" piece of land, as he described it, Thiene established the Ramona Nursery.⁶¹ The name capitalized on the ongoing popularity of Helen Hunt Jackson's novel and the popular tourist attraction near Thiene's property, the mythical "Ramona's Marriage Place."⁶² Thiene worked long days and corresponded energetically with plant wholesalers far and wide to build his nursery stock.⁶³ Locally, he marketed his business by introducing himself to some key citizens⁶⁴ and becoming involved in community

activities. Five months after arriving he actively participated in the rally to win support for a city bond issue that would help fund the planned exposition and improve Balboa Park. For the pre-rally parade, Thiene served as one of six aides to the Grand Marshall⁶⁵ and he created an "exceedingly well built" float representing the first ship that would pass through the Panama Canal.⁶⁶ He entered the 1910 autumn flower show of the San Diego Floral Association and won several prizes, earning a mention in the publications *California Garden*⁶⁷ and *American Florist*.⁶⁸ He acquired letterhead business stationery and splurged on an advertisement for his nursery in *California Garden* magazine.⁶⁹

Thiene lived modestly as a boarder with the widowed J. B. Hinton, an adventurous southwest stagecoach driver, blacksmith and early-day San Diego settler, who had sold Thiene the Old Town property. Thiene was joined in San Diego by his brother Fritz who came to the United States from Germany in 1909 and also boarded at Hinton's Taylor Street home.⁷⁰

Despite his hard work and the help of his brother, trade at Thiene's Ramona Nursery was tepid. The financial drain of establishing the business prompted anxiety-fueled appeals to his debtors requesting early

Sunset,
Main 2962

Ramona Nursery

P. O. Station
N. San Diego

Three Blocks Northeast of Ramona's Home—Paul G. Thiene, Proprietor.



San Diego's Historic Old Palms
One Block from Ramona Nursery

YOUR CHOICE OUT OF

Sixty-Four Good Varieties of Dahlias

We are already booking extensive orders for Dahlias. Recent introductions and varieties of special merit in Fancy Cactus Dahlias, Decorative Dahlias, Double Fancy Dahlias, Double Pompon Dahlias, Double Show Dahlias, Peony-Flowered Dahlias, Collerette Dahlias, Superb Quilled Dahlias.

Healthy Stock of Jacaranda Mimosifolia (blue flowers), Grevillea Robusta, Eucalyptus, Acacias, Conifers, etc., *grown in pots.*

General Collection of Choice Roses

Ferns for Fern Dishes in 2½-inch pots. Asparagus Sprengeri in
HANGING BASKETS AND PORCH BOXES

payment of money he was owed.⁷¹ Thiene contemplated the sale of his land and nursery business after just one year. In late February 1911, he wrote to a Los Angeles pottery company to cancel an order for clay flowerpots and mentioned that he may have found a buyer for his property. Pottery company owner J. A. Bauer, who had apparently visited the Ramona Nursery, advised Thiene to hold on, writing: "You have too nice a place to sell, as it ought to make you a good deal of money as the city grows."⁷²

As the financial pressure mounted, Thiene wrote to a San Francisco acquaintance about job prospects at the planned Panama-Pacific International Exposition, the federally supported rival of San Diego's Panama-California celebration, also planned for 1915. Replying from "The Ferneries," a wholesale florist business, Thiene's correspondent reported that planning was barely underway in San Francisco with neither a director general nor an exposition site yet selected.⁷³

In mid-March 1911, Thiene found employment as a sub-foreman at the Panama-California Exposition nursery in Balboa Park.⁷⁴ This nursery had been quickly established by the Olmsted landscape firm after signing a contract in

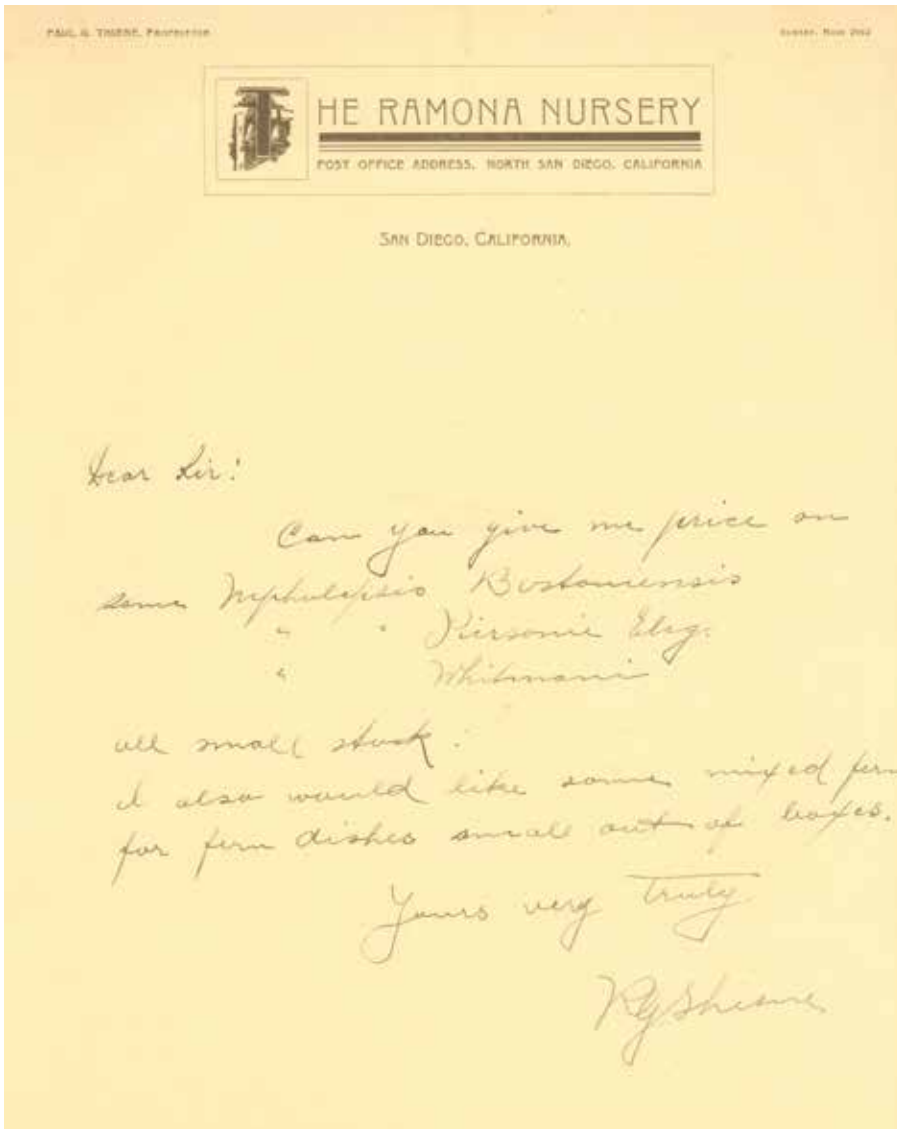
November 1910 to make improvements to Balboa Park and to plan and landscape the 1915 exposition grounds.⁷⁵ This is the only documented instance of Thiene becoming an Olmsted employee.⁷⁶

The local Olmsted project manager was Harold Hill Blossom (1879-1935), the first person to earn a master's degree in landscape architecture from Harvard University. He graduated in 1907 and worked for the Olmsted Brothers for twelve years, including service at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle.⁷⁷ Blossom set up an office in downtown San Diego's Timken Building and reported directly to an Olmsted associate, James Frederick (Fred) Dawson (1874-1941), who oversaw most Olmsted work in the western United States.⁷⁸

Speedy establishment of a San Diego exposition plant nursery was paramount for the Olmsted operation as it would take millions of plants to enhance the barren grounds of Balboa Park.⁷⁹ Trees needed to be planted quickly to gain as much size as possible before the exposition opened. Fred Dawson brought in James Cumming, a recommended and experienced landscape overseer, to supervise the exposition nursery and begin the practical work of preparing Balboa Park's land for cultivation. This vital

Opposite: Helen Hunt Jackson's romanticized novel *Ramona* spurred interest in Old Town San Diego's historic Casa de Estudillo, an adobe house that became fallaciously known as Ramona's marriage place. Concurrent with Thiene's 1910 arrival in San Diego, Casa de Estudillo was elaborately restored as a tourist attraction.

Above: Thiene lived in Old Town and purchased land for his nursery near the tourist attraction that inspired the name of his business. This advertisement ran in *California Garden*, a magazine launched by the San Diego Floral Association in 1909.



Above: Thiene engaged in a busy correspondence to build up stock at his Ramona Nursery. His letters demonstrate a solid command of English. Courtesy San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

work was delayed and mismanaged by an overwhelmed Cumming. Letters of concern were exchanged among Olmsted managers. Cumming “is completely dazed by the amount of work that needs to be done and shows no ability whatever” to plan out the work and supervise employees, Blossom wrote to Dawson.⁸⁰ After failed efforts to get him on track, Cumming was eased out.⁸¹

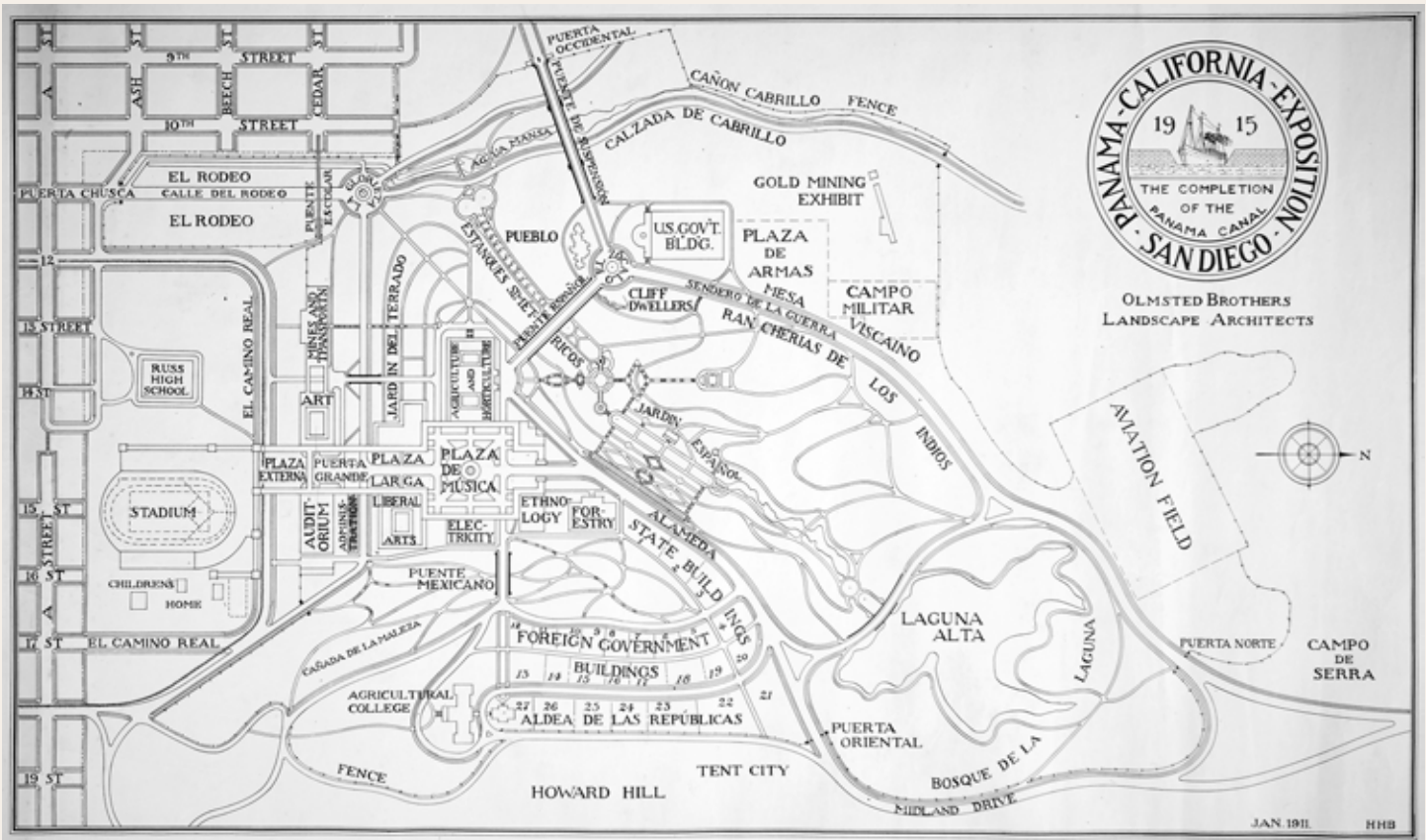
The Olmsted operation scrambled to find a new supervisor for the general planting of Balboa Park and to provide effective management at a nursery⁸² that was being inundated by donations as San Diego gardeners responded to an appeal from John Charles Olmsted. He had asked locals to provide plant cuttings to the exposition nursery, stating in a February 1911 newspaper announcement that he wanted one million plants.⁸³

Nursery operations began to hum with the arrival of an old Olmsted hand, William Asa Donald (1870-1925) who was urgently

dispatched to San Diego after Cummings’ dismissal.⁸⁴ The nursery was so busy that Fred Dawson planned to hire an assistant for Donald. In May 1911, Dawson wrote that the assistant job is “mightily important” and requires someone “sensitive to the art of propagation.” The right man would be hard to get, he said, because specialized training and experience were needed. Dawson promised to keep looking for a suitable candidate.⁸⁵ In fact, the “hard to find, specially trained” person Dawson envisioned was already employed at the exposition nursery. Paul Thiene’s training and skills were soon recognized and he was promoted to serve as William Donald’s assistant.

Meanwhile, Thiene’s Ramona Nursery business sputtered to an end. His large supply of pots was sold to the exposition nursery just one month after starting his new job.⁸⁶ With an assured nursery salary to rely upon, Thiene shrewdly retained ownership of the Old Town property, leasing it for other uses. He borrowed against the property in 1917 and retained the parcel until March 1923.⁸⁷

While the names of Lloyd Wright and Paul Thiene have for many years been incorrectly linked as Olmsted employees jointly sent to San Diego in late 1910 to establish the exposition nursery, only Wright was directed to California by the Olmsteds. Wright and Thiene met for the first time when Thiene became an exposition nursery employee in March 1911. For the young Lloyd Wright, at the time an aspiring landscape architect, the Panama-California Exposition was a plum assignment. His precise duties are unspecified in the record, but he arrived when there was an immediate need for his architectural drafting skills to create plans and drawings for the quickly expanding exposition nursery.



San Diego: The Panama- California Exposition

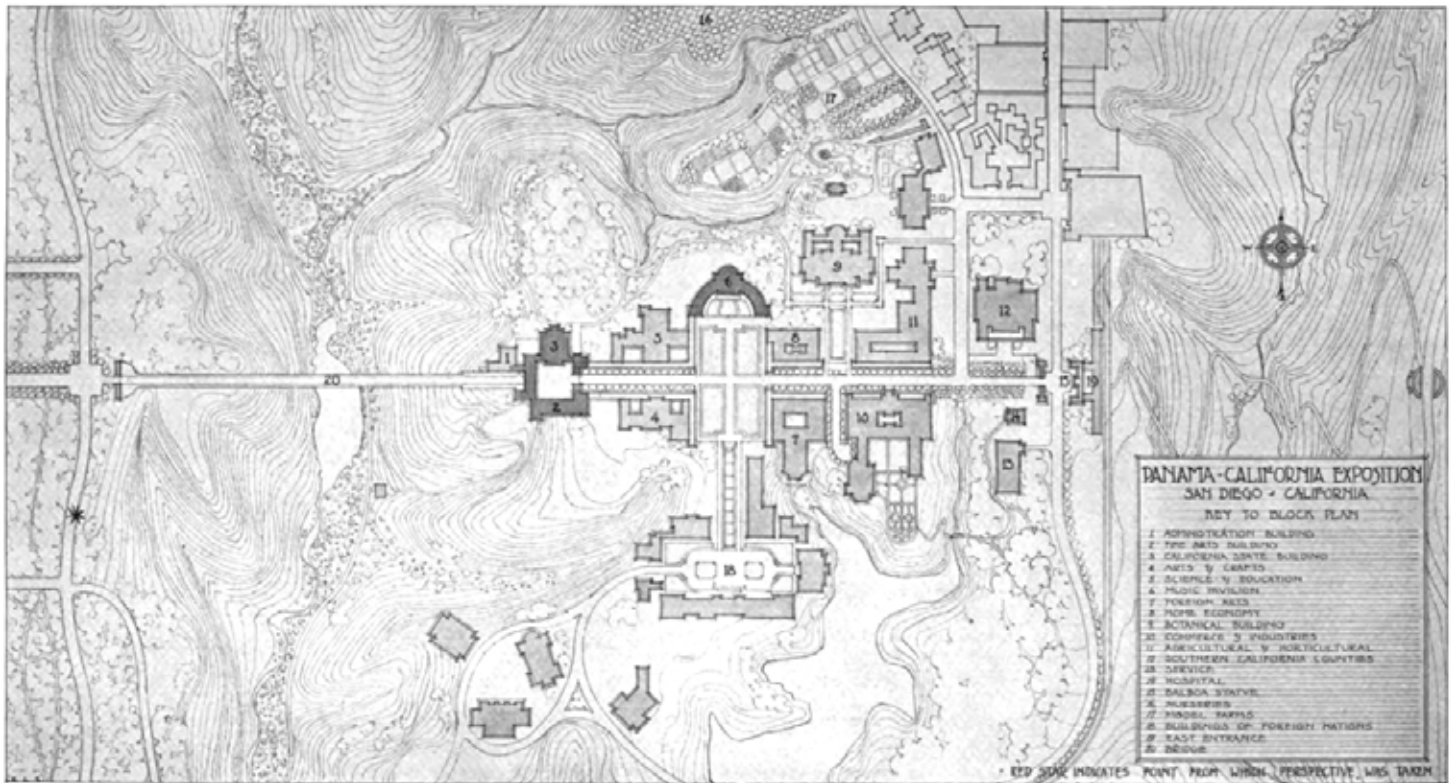
Ten months after signing on to San Diego's Panama-California Exposition, the Olmsteds resigned. On September 3, 1911, the firm quit in protest over a decision to locate the exposition buildings on Balboa Park's central mesa, rather than at the less intrusive placement specified in John Charles Olmsted's exposition plan.⁸⁸ He located the exposition at Balboa Park's southern boundary, near downtown San Diego. With long expertise in park design, the Olmsteds saw the relocation of the exposition as a disastrous planning error, believing it essential to retain the pastoral nature of the park rather than to insert roads and buildings at its center.

The abrupt resignation of the nation's top landscape firm hit San Diego like a thunderclap. Shocked exposition officials fruitlessly tried to convince the Olmsteds to reconsider. Frank P. Allen, Jr. (1881-1943), the Panama-California Exposition director of works, was held largely responsible as he had vigorously backed the decision that

drove out the Olmsteds. Mortified, Allen began a desperate search for a worthy successor to the famed landscape firm. Among his efforts was an attempt to lure Olmsted associate Fred Dawson into the top landscaping job at the exposition. Acceptance of this commission would have required Dawson to break with the Olmsted firm, a career step he had no intention of taking.⁸⁹

When unable to recruit a suitable replacement for the Olmsteds, Allen personally accepted responsibility for landscaping the exposition grounds. He named himself the one-person successor to the Olmsted firm and ostentatiously began a crash reading program on landscape design and horticulture.⁹⁰ Exactly how he planned to fold this immense new undertaking into his already jammed portfolio of responsibilities was left unexplained. It was Allen's job to fully manage construction and other preparations needed for the timely opening of the exposition. He also was doing architectural design and engineering work for some exposition structures, including the Cabrillo Bridge and the Commerce and Industries Building (at the location of today's Casa del Balboa). On top of these duties, Allen was constantly dealing with the roiling political and financial issues plaguing the exposition—problems that at times threatened to derail the entire enterprise. With the addition of landscape design and implementation

Above: John Charles Olmsted completed a Panama-California Exposition ground plan with the drafting assistance of Harold Hill Blossom in January 1911. His plan sited the exposition on the southeast perimeter of Balboa Park, near downtown San Diego. Courtesy San Diego Public Library, Panama-California Digital Archive.



Block plan, Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, Cal.

Above: Exposition architect Bertram Goodhue and director of works Frank P. Allen successfully lobbied to replace the Olmsted plan with one locating the exposition on the higher ground of Balboa Park's central mesa. When this alternative site was selected, the Olmsted firm ended its association with the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Bertram G. Goodhue, "Block Plan, Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, Cal.," From *The Architectural Review* (April 1914).

work, Allen had assumed more responsibilities than any one person could handle. Yet, several months later, when local banker Joseph W. Sefton, Jr., resigned as director-general of the exposition corporation, Allen took on that job too.⁹¹

As exposition promoters were reeling from the abrupt Olmsted departure, Paul Thiene surely wondered if this was another of the bad endings he had experienced as he tried to establish himself in the United States. During eight prior years, none of his efforts led to a lasting career foothold. He had moved back and forth across the country, willingly embracing new opportunities, but experiencing more setbacks and disappointments than successes. When hovering on the edge of financial disaster at his San Diego nursery business, a job with the Olmsteds at the exposition was his salvation. But after just seven months of employment, his future was again uncertain.

This time, subsequent developments went Thiene's way. The surprise resignation that left the Panama-California Exposition in need of horticultural and landscape talent occurred when Thiene was, for once, in the right place at the right time. He recognized the Olmsted departure as an opportunity for advancement and leapt at it. Four days after the well-publicized Olmsted resignation, he wrote a respectful letter to director of works Allen requesting a promotion in the event

that nursery supervisor William Donald left his post.⁹²

Along with other Olmsted employees in San Diego, Donald resigned and left town. He walked away with a good impression of Paul Thiene and his work. H. H. Blossom, the Olmsteds' onsite project manager wrote to the home office immediately after the firm's resignation: "Mr. Donald speaks a good word for Paul Thiene his assistant whom he thinks will be a valuable man for our work anywhere."⁹³ Presumably aware of this evaluation, Allen elevated Thiene to the position of superintendent of the exposition nursery. Having an in-house employee capable of assuming responsibility for nursery management solved an immediate challenge of the Olmsted departure. Without Thiene's convenient presence, the nursery operation may have faltered, putting at risk a substantial investment in plants and trees and delaying landscape improvements on the exposition grounds.

When promoted, Thiene took over the largest nursery in California.⁹⁴ It was a huge increase of responsibility, but Thiene proved ready to handle the work. When members of the San Diego Floral Association visited the exposition nursery in 1913, they found "an unlimited variety of plant life" in a "clean, healthy condition." Thiene was overseeing almost one million plants by that time and had "the task well in hand, and thoroughly



systematized. Every plant is accounted for on his books, and he can tell you just what it costs to propagate, fertilize, water, and carry the plant through to maturity.” The Floral Association concluded that the exposition nursery was being excellently managed by Thiene.⁹⁵

The competence Thiene demonstrated as head of the exposition nursery was soon deployed on a grander scale. Director of works Allen promoted him again and substantially broadened his responsibilities. Thiene was named superintendent of exposition landscape.⁹⁶ In addition to thirty nursery employees, Thiene was now directing the work of fifty to eighty field workers on the exposition grounds. He rode around on horseback to oversee the dispersed crews who were cultivating the soil and beginning to add new trees and plants.⁹⁷

Balboa Park’s virgin coastal chaparral, poor soil, and layers of clay hardpan challenged the most experienced Southern California horticulturists, but Thiene rapidly came up to speed on growing conditions outside the controlled realm of the nursery. Ten-mule teams were harnessed to plows and dynamite was frequently used to break up the obdurate planting grounds. Despite the difficult terrain, there was pressure to make rapid progress on landscaping, particularly to get trees planted. At the same time, landscape work had to be orchestrated so as

not to slow or hinder the multiple construction crews that were simultaneously erecting structures, building a bridge, and creating roads and trails on the exposition grounds.

There are no records describing how landscape design decisions were made or the share of the work attributable to Paul Thiene or Frank Allen,⁹⁸ but it is doubtful that Allen’s crash reading program prepared him to produce the highly regarded landscape designs of the Panama-California Exposition, or that he had mastered the selection and acquisition of plant material. As one historian observed, Allen did not know everything though he sometimes tried to convey that impression.⁹⁹ It appears that Allen quickly recognized that Thiene’s training and talent were at the level needed to design and supervise beautification of the exposition grounds. Allen undoubtedly stayed involved in the landscaping endeavor, particularly as the budget demands for the work were enormous, but promotions and a progressive delegation of responsibilities speak to Allen’s confidence in Thiene’s abilities and reliance.¹⁰⁰ In fact, Paul Thiene became the means by which Frank Allen—without hiring a substitute for the departed Olmsted—would fulfill his commitment to botanically transform the exposition grounds before opening day on January 1, 1915.

As superintendent of landscape, Thiene’s portfolio included planning, design and

Above: Creation of an Exposition nursery was a first priority for the Olmsted firm when hired in December 1910 to design the Panama-California Exposition and improve Balboa Park. Thiene at center right inspects newly imported New Zealand tree ferns. Courtesy San Diego History Center.



overseeing the practical work of beautifying hundreds of exposition acres. To acquire the variety of plants desired to demonstrate San Diego's fecundity, Thiene kept up a busy correspondence in search of specialty plants from nurseries and seed companies across the country and abroad.¹⁰¹ As his productivity was demonstrated, his workload was expanded by the assignment of ad hoc duties, many documented in exposition business records.¹⁰² He handled some matters that were only tangentially connected to his primary duties and others that were completely unrelated.

Director of works Allen called on Thiene to select the best type of glass for the greenhouse extending from the exposition's wooden Botanical Building.¹⁰³ He dispatched him to San Diego schools to talk with children about the pre-exposition "City Beautiful" campaign. Thiene distributed seeds and cuttings and urged students to improve the appearance of their school yards and homes.¹⁰⁴ He was asked to mobilize the exposition nursery staff to loan plants and help decorate for the San Diego Floral Association's 1912 Rose Show.¹⁰⁵ Thiene led special tours of the exposition grounds for privileged groups and individuals.¹⁰⁶ He was tasked with acquiring birds for an exposition aviary, a job requiring extensive correspondence¹⁰⁷ and licensing inquiries to the State Fish and Game Commission.¹⁰⁸ He was in correspondence with a Texas dealer of Mexican reptiles, parrots, and wild animals in an attempt to buy peacocks and other exotic birds.¹⁰⁹ Thiene also located and purchased tropical fish and their food¹¹⁰ and inquired

into the care and feeding of pigeons after being assigned the job of raising a large flock of them for the exposition.¹¹¹ When the president of the Panama-California Exposition wrote to the director of works about the unhealthy look of some peacocks on the exposition grounds, Frank Allen forwarded the letter to Thiene with a note in his distinctive green ink: "Paul attend to this."¹¹² Some of these extra assignments may have been irksome, but the cumulative effect was an enriched work experience that involved Thiene in small and large transactions and broadened his understanding of general business and financial and regulatory practices in the United States.

As superintendent of exposition landscape, Thiene swiftly put his imprint on the blank canvas of Balboa Park's exposition grounds. Outside observers touted Thiene's design talent as the earliest improvements got underway. A 1912 exposition preview in a florist trade journal singled out Thiene's role at the exposition nursery and in planting the grounds. The visiting journalist observed that the size and site of the exposition "presents enormous range for play of the imagination [as it offers] plateau, slope, canyon, valleys . . . and many sorts of soils, altitudes, and exposures."¹¹³ A newspaper article in 1914 reported that Paul Thiene, an expert landscape gardener, was turning the park into "one of the most beautiful gardens in the world."¹¹⁴ Another observed that the young and vigorous shrubs and trees on the exposition grounds were providing a "first glimpse of the wizardry of Paul G. Thiene." Every trip to the exposition site was "a new



revelation of beauty in the making”¹¹⁵ and Thiene was “a worker of magic.”¹¹⁶

One year in advance of opening day, exposition planners ordered Thiene to present a colorful, blooming flower display on January 1, 1915. This would be a living testament to San Diego’s mild winter climate. Thiene decided on a mass display of blooming poinsettias and early in 1914 asked the San Diego community to donate poinsettia cuttings to the exposition nursery. He offered to send staff out to take cuttings from the large bushy plants that grew all around town.¹¹⁷ The result was an opening day display of 10,000 blooming poinsettia shrubs that blazed with a bright red and yellow, driving home the climate message and signaling the official colors of the exposition, an echo of the flag of Spain.

From opening day onward, the landscaping of the exposition was generously praised, and Paul Thiene was spotlighted as its creator. A delegation of park superintendents from around the country visited San Diego after a national convention in San Francisco. They found the Panama-California Exposition to be an artistic and beautiful “masterpiece of landscape architecture.”¹¹⁸ A trade journal provided a detailed description of the “charms and the beauties” of the unique exposition landscape before turning to the thirty-five-year-old designer, “the man who has possibly worked harder than anyone else to produce these effects. Paul J. (sic) Thiene, a young man but a capable one, has worked long, hard and conscientiously.”¹¹⁹

The *Florists’ Exchange* published a

lengthy discussion of horticultural variety and beauty to be found at the exposition, along with a tribute to Thiene, “the man who did the entire landscape work... and to whose untiring efforts the robust and trim appearance of the tree and vine and lawn is largely due, while the natural and wild effects of the canyon and hillside, mesa and bottom land are additional evidence of his skill, judgment and taste for correct landscaping.”¹²⁰ The *Florists’ Review* credited Thiene with plantings that showed great taste and produced an effect that “induced visitors to fall in love” with the landscape.¹²¹ While not detracting from Thiene’s contributions, one writer emphasized the ideal growing conditions in San Diego. It was a setting that offered “the landscape architect an unrestricted opportunity to produce results.”¹²²

In the popular imagination, the exposition was a beloved wonderland. A writer claimed that “Aladdin with his lamp could not have wrought greater wonders . . . I wish to record my appreciation of the ability of the landscape artist whose labors transformed a desert into a bower of beauty...”¹²³ Whoever loves flowers and trees will find it hard to leave this exposition,” an enthralled *Sunset* contributor wrote, “never has there been such an exposition, one vast botanical garden, the finest, rarest specimens of plant life growing and thriving in open air.”¹²⁴ Captivated visitors and writers called upon every superlative in praising the landscape beauty of the Panama-California Exposition. Others simply declared that the gardens of the exposition were the product of a magic

Opposite: When Thiene assumed responsibility for the Panama-California Exposition nursery in 1911, it was the largest plant nursery in California. Courtesy San Diego History Center

Above: The Panama-California Exposition nursery produced an estimated two million plants and trees to beautify Balboa Park and the Exposition grounds. Courtesy San Diego History Center



Above: Thiene had the challenge of beautifying the Exposition grounds amid ongoing building construction. As scaffolding marks the future California Building, boxed trees are already set out for planting. The white cube is the completed Administration Building. The location of houses in the background is distorted as they stand far distant from the Exposition grounds. Courtesy San Diego History Center

wand; a paradise on earth; a new Eden.¹²⁵

As these several examples confirm, Thiene's design talent, organizational ability, and tireless work ethic were recognized in contemporary sources. He had thrown himself into the work and, in turn, gained enormously from the experience. San Diego's undeveloped mesas and canyons were both a proving ground and an unmatched education in the practicalities of designing and implementing large-scale landscape projects. Thiene collected first-hand knowledge of the trees, shrubs and flowers that could thrive in Southern California. He learned about sourcing and acquiring plant material from far-flung nurseries, dealing with budgets and accounting, mapping and installing irrigation systems, transplanting fully grown trees,

the operation of large grounds equipment, and the hiring and overseeing of multiple work crews. Equally important, the exposition attuned Thiene to working with top-flight architects and the array of wealthy, commanding personalities in the exposition corporation,¹²⁶ the kind of people who epitomized his future client list.

Work with the Panama-California Exposition changed Paul Thiene's life. The unqualified success of the exposition landscape fortified his confidence in pursuing a career in private landscape architecture practice. Most significantly, his exposition work won for Thiene the early commission that was a springboard into his future success.



A Bridge to the Golden Age

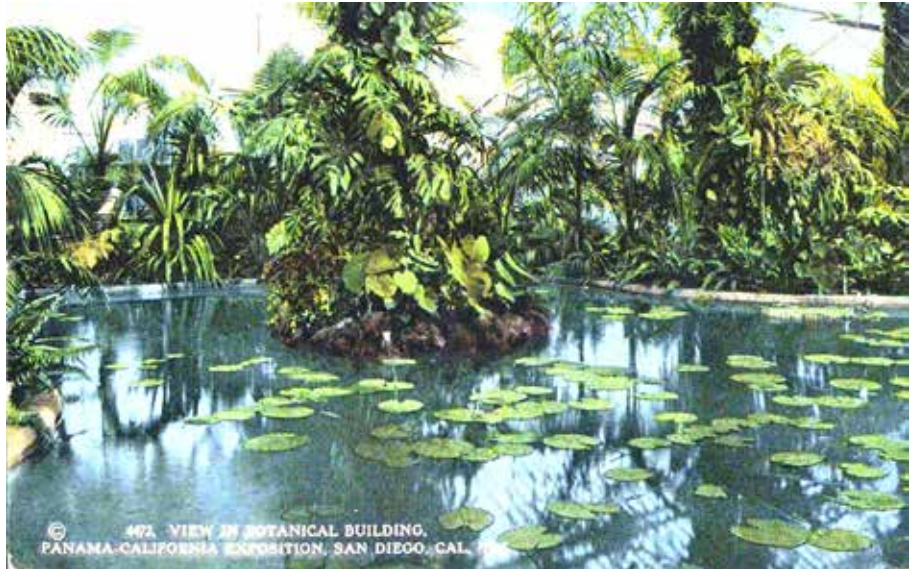
At the end of 1913, the City of San Diego sought to rein in expenses by bringing the exposition landscaping expenditures within Balboa Park under the authority of the Board of Park Commissioners (instead of the exposition corporation).¹²⁷ The immediate effect on Paul Thiene's level of authority and day-to-day work is unrecorded, but the development was a reminder that his exposition job was finite. In fact, Thiene's employment at the exposition continued through 1914 and into mid-1915,¹²⁸ but his transition to private practice and a life after the exposition was underway.

A first private commission came to Thiene from David Charles Collier (1871-1934) the exposition's director and president, who was a local real estate tycoon. Collier set

aside public park land in each of his land developments. In 1913 Thiene landscaped the eight-acre Collier Park, donated to the town of Ramona in east San Diego County.¹²⁹ Thiene was scheduled to speak at the park dedication ceremony, but for an unknown reason did not attend the 1915 event. He was said to have volunteered his landscape services, though as it was assigned by the top official of the exposition, he may not have felt he had a choice in taking on the work.¹³⁰

The next year, a leading San Diego architectural firm brought Thiene into a significant residential project,¹³¹ the A. H. Sweet House in the upscale San Diego neighborhood of Bankers Hill.¹³² Setting a pattern for much of his future landscape practice, Thiene worked closely on the gardens with the architects, in this instance, Richard Requa and Frank Mead. Thiene produced meticulous planting notes, a narrative on plant choices, and a blueprint keyed to the planting notes. These documents are the earliest existing records

Above: Thiene collected rare and exotic plants for the Exposition's Lath Palace, later known as the Botanical Building. Courtesy Balboa Park Committee of 100.



Above: A glass house extending from the redwood lath Botanical Building held the rarest of tropical plants and was centered with a lily pool. Vintage postcard, author's collection.

Opposite, top: Twin fountains flank the Botanical Building. Images from the 1915 *Official Views of the San Diego Panama-California Exposition*. Courtesy City of San Diego.

Opposite, middle: The Botanical Building lily pool reflects the apse of the Varied Industries Building. Images from the 1915 *Official Views of the San Diego Panama-California Exposition*. Courtesy City of San Diego.

Opposite, bottom: Thiene and his gardeners made extensive use of flowering vines to add greenery and color to the Exposition grounds. Images from the 1915 *Official Views of the San Diego Panama-California Exposition*. Courtesy City of San Diego.

labeled as the work of “Paul G. Thiene, Landscape Architect.”¹³³

The Sweet House was featured on five pages in a 1915 issue of *Architect and Engineer* (see page 30) with scant mention of the landscaping and no reference to Paul Thiene.¹³⁴ Likewise, Thiene received no credit within a 1915 *California Garden* magazine article lavishing praise on the Sweet landscape, a typical Spanish-California garden in which everything was planted “with thoughtfulness and care.” The grounds were planned with such a “discriminating hand” as to “prove a joy and inspiration to all admirers of the art of landscape gardening.”¹³⁵ The Sweet House remains a San Diego landmark and Thiene’s meticulous planting notes guided a 1996 restoration of the landscaping.¹³⁶

As Thiene’s exposition employment approached its inevitable end, these two private San Diego landscaping commissions were timely. However, he was already viewing the more populous city of Los Angeles as a better market for his private landscape practice. Good fortune intervened when Thiene was handed a gilt-edged ticket to his professional future. He was asked to landscape the grounds of a Pasadena home to be designed by the consulting architect of the Panama-California Exposition, the high-flying and internationally known Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue (1869-1924). The value of being linked with Goodhue at this point in Thiene’s career cannot be overstated. Not only was Goodhue a leading architect of national stature, but the connection was forged just as plaudits for the exposition architecture and grounds were becoming a swelling chorus.

Goodhue and Thiene were commissioned by New Jersey visitors to the 1915

Panama-California Exposition. Financier Herbert Coppel and his immensely wealthy wife, Georgia Estelle Myers Coppel, were so captivated by the look and feel of the San Diego fair that they chose both the exposition architect and landscape architect to create *Mi Sueño*, their Pasadena winter retreat.¹³⁷ Goodhue designed a 6,000-square-foot Moorish-accented Spanish Colonial Revival house with twenty-eight rooms. It was one of the largest homes yet constructed in Pasadena when it was completed in 1916. Paul Thiene lushly landscaped the surrounding grounds, almost five acres, to include neat lawns in Persian-inspired four-part divisions, a solidly constructed rose-entwined pergola and several water features, including a stepped and cascading rill emptying into a round pool in the lower garden.¹³⁸

Although based on the East Coast, Goodhue had worked in California before being hired by the San Diego exposition and the Coppells. In 1902 he accepted a commission to create a Montecito home for James Waldron Gillespie. The design process included a seven-month-long Gillespie and Goodhue reconnaissance trip to the Middle East and Mediterranean rim. Gillespie’s *El Fureidis* was built in 1905-06 and is called the first Mediterranean-style home in California, as the design fused Moorish, Italian and Spanish influences.¹³⁹ Goodhue’s reintroduction to California through the Panama-California Exposition led to other commissions, including designs for a Marine Corps training base in San Diego, planning for Pasadena’s California Institute of Technology, and the Los Angeles Central Library.

It is difficult to imagine other circumstances in which the well-established Goodhue and the aspirant Thiene would



have been jointly commissioned in 1915,¹⁴⁰ but on the strength of his exposition work, Thiene made a giant leap into the top tier of residential practice with the Coppell project. As a practical matter, Thiene probably worked more closely with Goodhue's California representative, Carleton Winslow (1876–1946), than with Goodhue himself. As at the exposition, the manically busy Goodhue relied on Winslow to handle onsite supervision of his California architectural work. Thiene and Winslow had many occasions to consult and cooperate as the exposition buildings and grounds were taking shape from 1912 through 1914. Their established working relationship perhaps eased any qualms Thiene may have had about tackling the Coppell project or working with the famously mercurial Goodhue.¹⁴¹

The Golden Age of Southern California estate building was beginning to stir and Thiene was in place with a major project already completed by 1916. Yet, the Coppell triumph was not the only string in Thiene's bow as he transitioned into private practice. He had a surprising number of important early commissions. Undoubtedly some of these are attributable to his association with the son of the most famous name in architecture.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr. (Lloyd Wright, 1890-1978) was a twenty-one-year-old Olmsted employee working at the San Diego exposition nursery when Paul Thiene was hired at the nursery in March 1911. Wright's life had been filled with uncertainty and chaos after his famous father fled to Europe with a lover in 1909, abandoning his wife and six children. The senior Wright insisted that Lloyd drop out of college to help create publishable images





This page, clockwise: Black acacia trees line El Prado, the Exposition's main walkway. These fast growing trees were used widely to achieve a mature landscape appearance on the freshly planted grounds.

Hundreds of palm species were sourced domestically and internationally to create the botanically important Palm Canyon. This rich palm collection attracted horticulturalists for decades.

Designed as a repose from the bustle of the Exposition, the peaceful Montezuma Garden was filled with colorful flowers and had a green surround of eucalyptus trees. Daily watering and overnight replacements kept the plantings looking fresh.

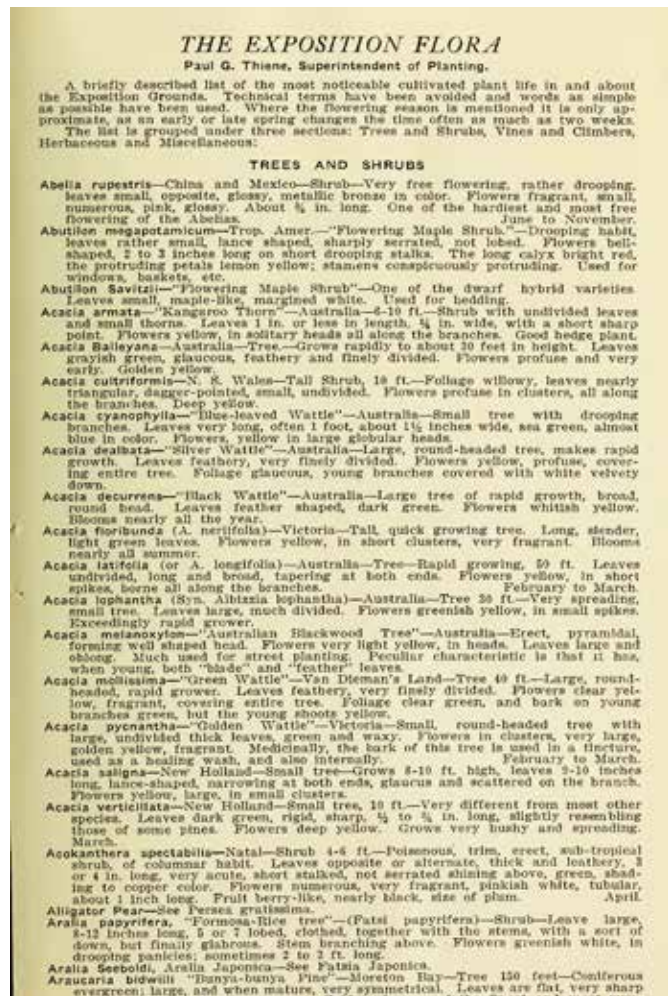
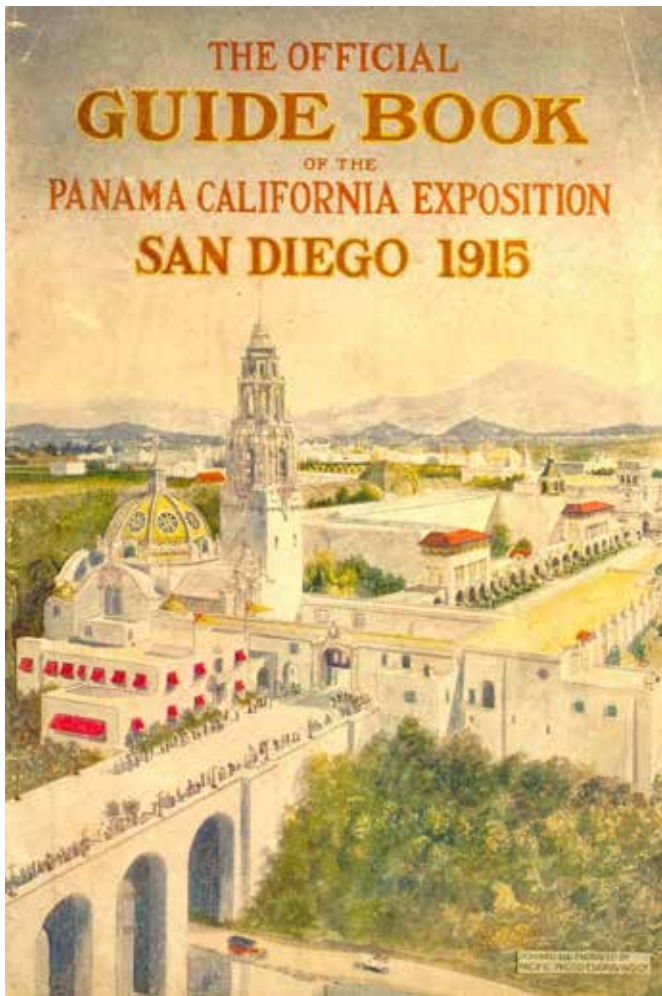
Architect Carlton Winslow's magnificent apse on the Varied Industries Building is reflected in the smaller Botanical Building pond.

All images: Courtesy Balboa Park Committee of 100.

of architectural designs created by Wright from 1893 to 1909. Lloyd obediently traveled to Europe and in difficult working conditions completed his share of drawings for the Wasmuth Portfolio, printed in Germany and the first publication of Wright's architectural work.¹⁴²

Before returning to the United States, Lloyd Wright traveled briefly in Europe, focusing on Italian gardens.¹⁴³ Accounts differ as to what he had been studying at the University of Wisconsin and whether he returned to college after being in Europe,¹⁴⁴ but he soon declared his intention to become a landscape architect. Within a short time and with the intercession of his father, Lloyd Wright took up a position with the Olmsted landscape firm (inaccurately described as an internship in some sources). He did drafting work and studied plants at Harvard's Arnold Arboretum and at the university herbarium. This position resulted in Wright's move to California late in 1910 as an Olmsted employee tasked with helping to establish a nursery for the San Diego exposition.¹⁴⁵

Wright's job with the Olmsted's evaporated



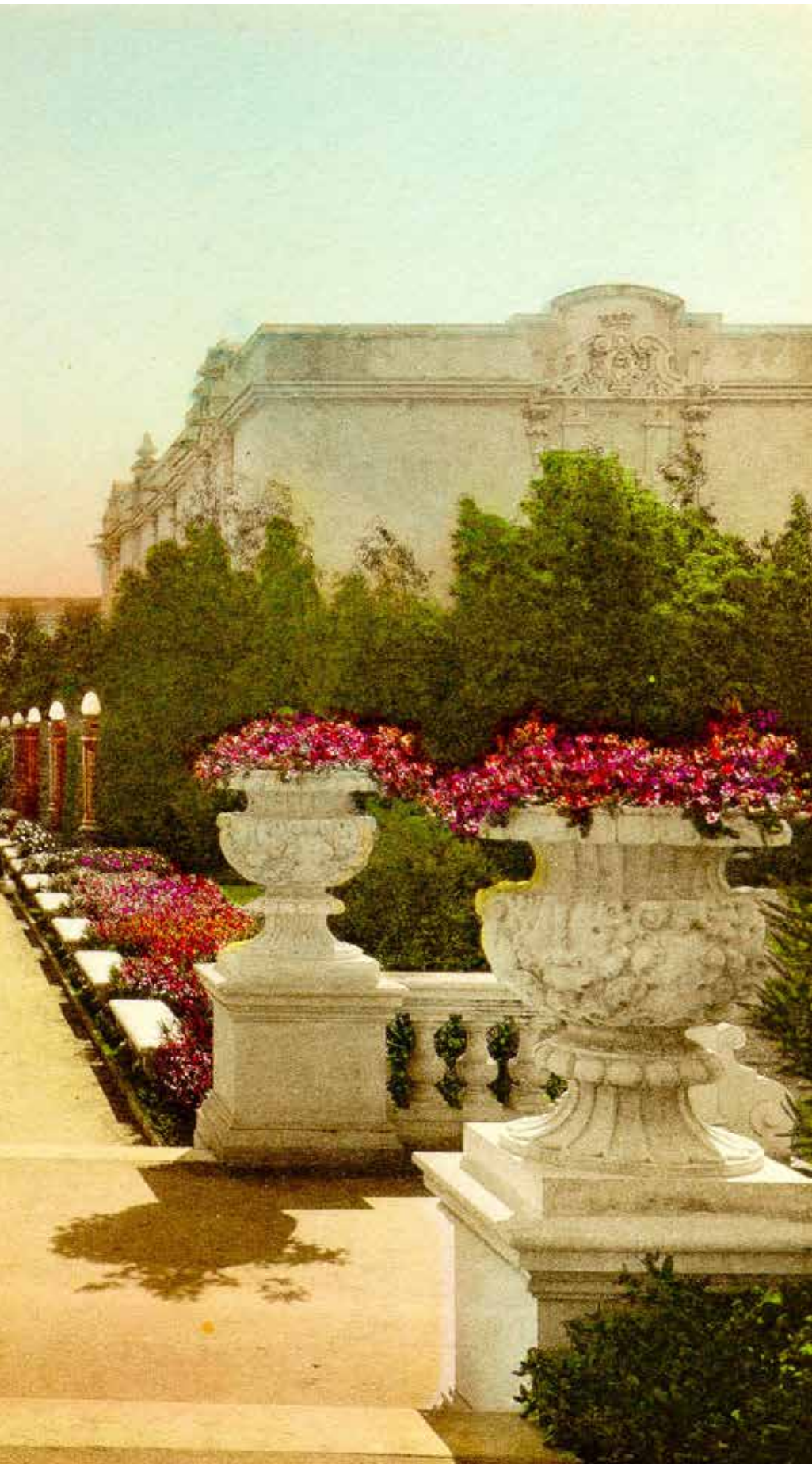
in early September 1911 when the firm resigned from the San Diego exposition. He remained in San Diego as an exposition nursery employee, reporting to the newly promoted Paul Thiene. Wright later described his work with the older and more experienced Thiene as “a valuable association.”¹⁴⁶

In late 1912 Lloyd Wright began working as a draftsman-delineator for San Diego architect Irving Gill who had trained along with the senior Frank Lloyd Wright in the Chicago office of Louis Sullivan. Gill, a disappointed candidate for the position of consulting architect at the Panama-California Exposition, secured commissions in the Los Angeles area and relocated his practice. Lloyd Wright moved with him, explaining to his father that the opportunity “will be the making of me.”¹⁴⁷ Wright, who had a fraught relationship with his hypercritical father, thrived under the benevolent supervision and encouragement of Irving Gill, who also provided the young man with a place to live.¹⁴⁸

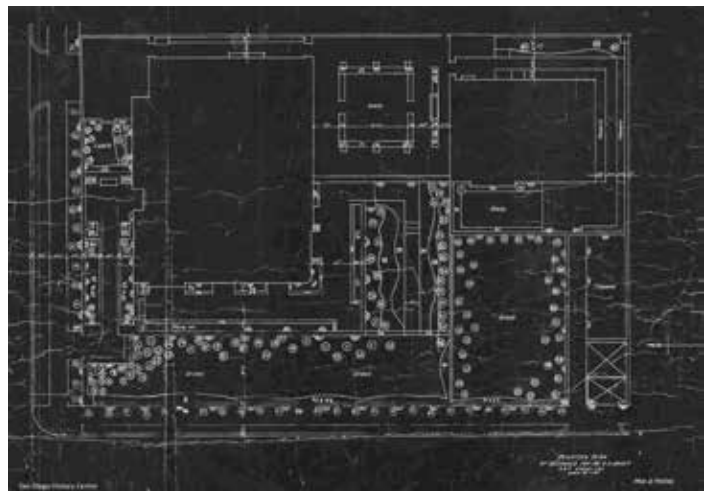
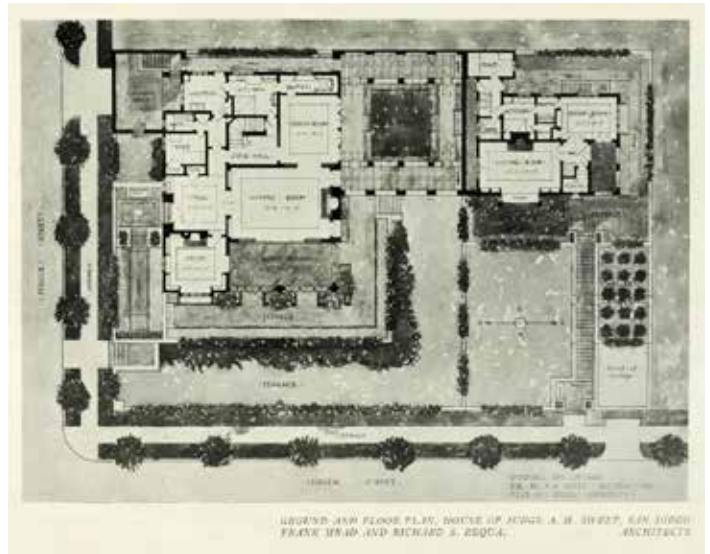
The exact date of Wright’s move to Los Angeles is unrecorded, but he was there by October 16, 1912, because, on that date,

Above: An edition of the Official Guide included Thiene’s 24-page list of plants on the exposition grounds—almost 600 species. It remains a useful record of plants present in San Diego by 1915. Courtesy Balboa Park Committee of 100.





A long lily pond leads the way to the Botanical Building.



Above, left: The official seal held the promise of a verdant tropical setting for San Diego's 1915 exposition.

Above, right: Mead & Requa, a leading San Diego architecture firm, commissioned Thiene in 1914 to landscape the A. H. Sweet house, still a landmark in San Diego's Bankers Hill neighborhood.

Bottom: Thiene's detailed owner's notes, landscape plan and blueprint planting key for the A. H. Sweet House are preserved at the San Diego History Center and are the earliest documents identified as the work of "Paul G. Thiene, Landscape Architect." Courtesy A. H. Sweet Collection, San Diego History Center Archives.

Opposite: *Mi Sueño*, the Pasadena winter retreat of Herbert and Georgia Coppel, was Thiene's first private commission in the Pasadena area. On five acres surrounding the large house designed by Bertram Goodhue in 1915, Thiene created a formal landscape inspired by Moorish and Italian traditions.

Paul Thiene sent a letter to Los Angeles addressed to Lloyd Wright in care of Irving Gill. Thiene offered Wright a fulltime job as a San Diego exposition landscape draftsman.¹⁴⁹ Wright did not accept the offer but continued working with Irving Gill on various assignments, including architecture and landscape plans for the newly created city of Torrance, an Olmsted project near Los Angeles.¹⁵⁰ When Gill's assignments ran thin, Wright picked up work from other architects¹⁵¹ and by the summer of 1915 he also was earning money as a designer of film sets for movie studios.¹⁵²

While still jobbing with various Los Angeles architects, Lloyd Wright established a private landscape architecture practice. He is one of just six people listing themselves as landscape architects in the *Los Angeles City Directory* of 1915.¹⁵³ Wright rented downtown office space in the newly constructed Marsh-Strong Building at Ninth and Spring Street.¹⁵⁴ Within the year, Thiene moved to Los Angeles to join Lloyd Wright in a landscape architecture partnership.







Opposite, top: The rose-entwined pergola built at the Coppel house exemplifies Thiene's Exposition experience informing his residential work. A dozen different pergolas decorated the Exposition grounds, providing experience with structural and plant choices for this garden feature.

Opposite, bottom: *Mi Sueño*, the Pasadena winter retreat of Herbert and Georgia Coppel, was Thiene's first private commission in the Pasadena area. On five acres surrounding the large house designed by Bertram Goodhue in 1915, Thiene created a formal landscape inspired by Moorish and Italian traditions.

Above: At the Coppel house, Thiene's first post-exposition project, a formal Italianate style is evident.

All images: Johnston, Frances Benjamin, photographer. "Mi Sueño," Herbert Coppel house, South Grand Avenue, Pasadena, California. California, 1917.



The Thiene-Wright Partnership

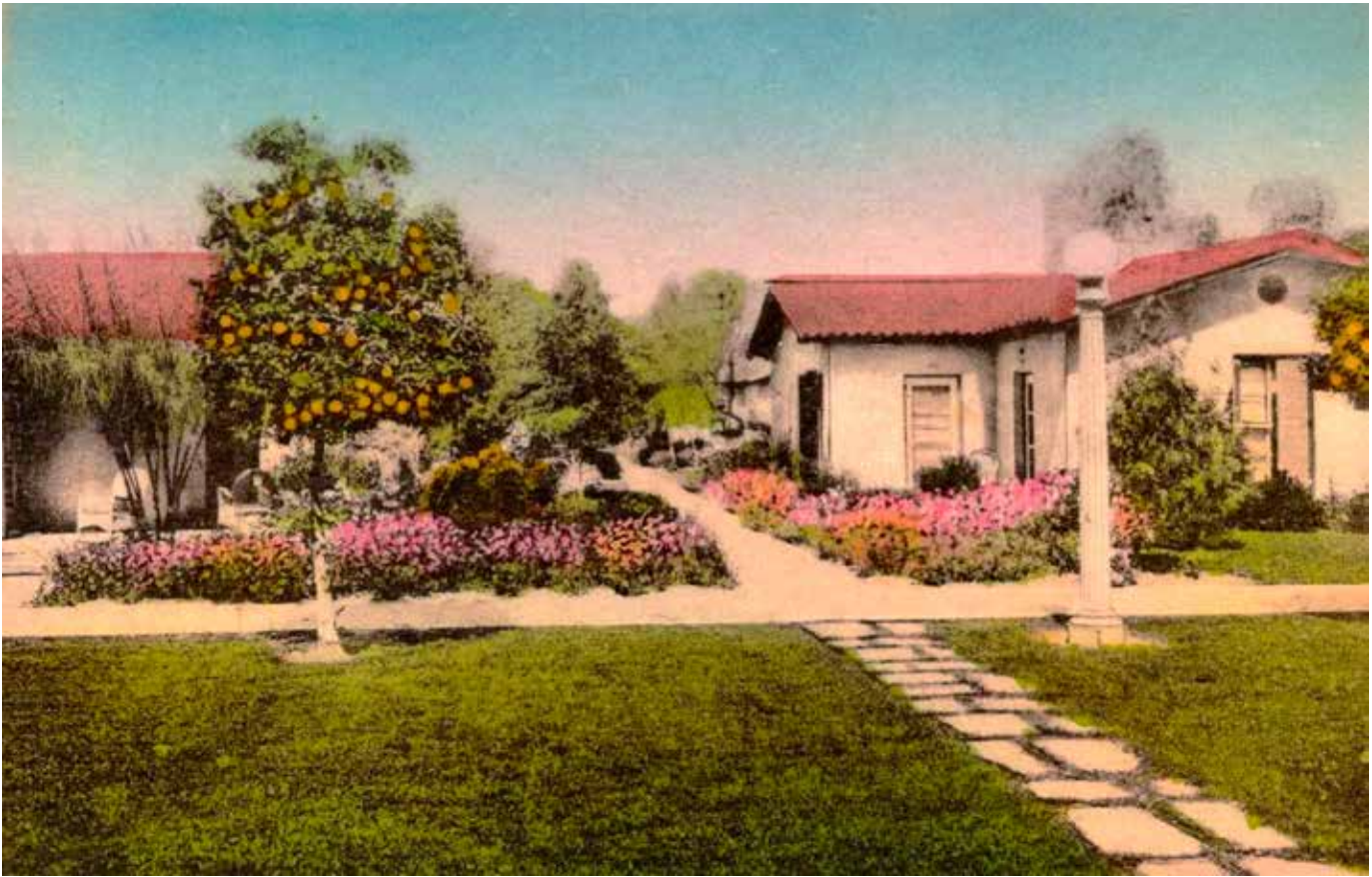
In the recollection of Lloyd Wright, his partnership with Paul Thiene was formed in the fall of 1915,¹⁵⁵ but it was probably agreed a few months earlier as Thiene's exposition job was winding down. Their arrangement was settled in time for both to be listed as landscape architects sharing an office in the Marsh & Strong Building in the 1916 *Los Angeles City Directory*.¹⁵⁶

Thiene had been Wright's supervisor at the exposition. He was ten years older and far more experienced in horticulture and landscape architecture. Wright contributed creativity in design and excellent drafting and delineation skills. Additionally, he had been in Los Angeles since 1912 and had developed valuable contacts with local architects. Above all, his name was a matchless asset for the new partnership.

Wright optimistically reported to his father that in one two-month period, an average of two new jobs per week had come into the office. Considering his slow start in Los Angeles, he said, this was "pretty good," but he was still "far from being in a stable or really satisfactory position financially."¹⁵⁷ The flow of work was helped along by supporters like the respected Louisville architect William J. Dodd who had settled in Los Angeles in 1913 and became a "major patron" of the Thiene-Wright practice, recommending them to his own clients.¹⁵⁸

Scant documentation from the partnership exists, but Wright identified their first joint commission as a site plan and landscape design for a resort development in Playa Del Rey on Santa Monica Bay (an unrealized project).¹⁵⁹

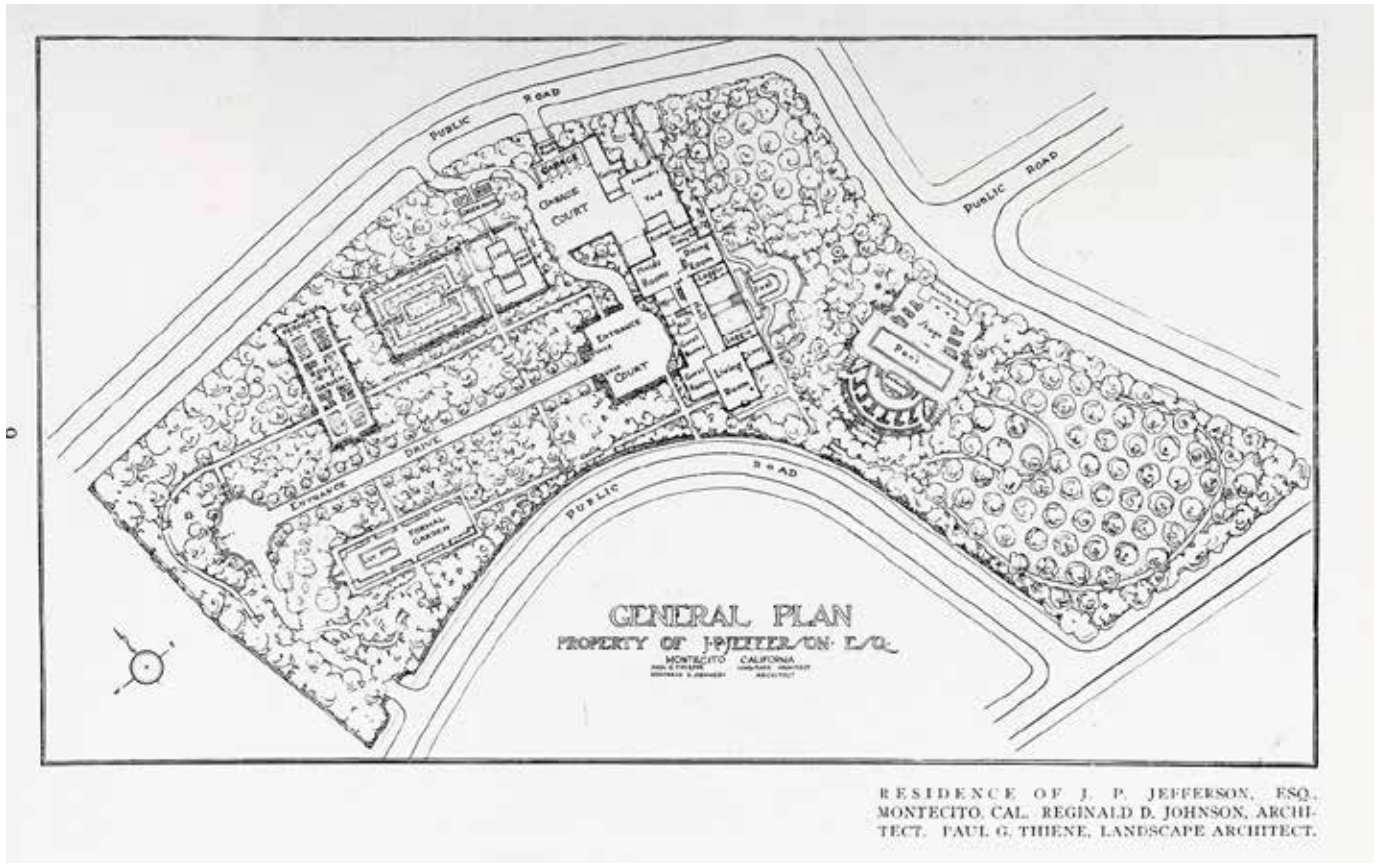
One of the best documented Thiene-Wright undertakings is Hancock Park—the public park encompassing the La Brea tar pits. Press attention was drawn by the wealthy client, oil baron George Allan Hancock, and by protracted political wrangling over the project. Just how this work came to the new partnership, and the reason for



Opposite, top: Hancock Park, encompassing the La Brea tar pits, was a 1916 project of the Wright-Thiene landscape architecture partnership. Commissioned by donor George Allan Hancock, acceptance of the park plan was a condition of his gift of this land to Los Angeles County. This aerial view shows a maturing green belt surrounding the park and a relatively quiet Wilshire Boulevard. Courtesy Miracle Mile Residential Association.

Opposite, bottom: A young Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr. (Lloyd Wright) arrived in San Diego in late 1910 as an Olmsted employee assigned to developing a Panama-California Exposition nursery. When the Olmsteds resigned and departed, Wright remained, later moving to Los Angeles and partnering with Thiene in a landscape architecture firm.

This page: The San Marcos Hotel in Chandler, Arizona, became Thiene's first out-of-state commercial commission in 1916. Working with architect Reginald D. Johnson, Thiene created a park-like semi-tropical landscape setting for an expansion of guest bungalows. Vintage photographs, author's collection.



Above: *Milaflores*, the Santa Barbara estate of John Percival and Mary Jefferson, was Thiene's first residential commission with architect Reginald D. Johnson. Once home to a country club, the crescent-shaped property was transformed into an elegant, wooded estate with Italianate terraces, clipped hedges, formal gardens, and water features. From *Architectural Record*, January 1922.

Opposite: *Milaflores*, the Jefferson estate, illustrates formality in Thiene's landscape designs. Centered on an axis running through the house from the front drive, a broad terrace steps down among generous plantings to a sunken pool and frolicking bacchante. From *Architectural Record*, January 1922.

Hancock's unswerving loyalty to Thiene and Wright, remain unknown, but this high-profile project garnered free and valuable publicity for their practice.

Before donating land from his La Brea Ranch to the County of Los Angeles for a public park, Hancock commissioned a design for the park from Thiene and Wright. The land was at the city's western edge and encompassed the "deathtrap of the ages," as the *Los Angeles Times* colorfully described the La Brea tar pits. Hancock's donation included thirty-two acres of land and a set of plans for "the most wonderful park in the world," designed by "Paul G. Thiene and his associate Frank Lloyd Wright," according to a December 1916 news story.¹⁶⁰ The park plan was published in the newspaper.¹⁶¹

Various work delays ensued, including two years of concentrated tar pit excavations. An announcement in *Southwest Builder and Contractor* eventually reported that the Hancock Park project received \$25,000 in Los Angeles County funding and was to include buildings "to house the curios and for sanitary purposes." Paul G. Thiene, landscape architect, Marsh-Strong Building, the announcement continued, was "preparing plans and specifications for the improvement of Hancock Park, corner of La Brea Avenue

and Wilshire Boulevard."¹⁶² Meanwhile, a grand jury recommended that the park land be returned to George Allan Hancock due to the expense of meeting the oilman's requirements for park development. It took a few years, but the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors stood by its decision to accept Hancock's gift of land and park planning documents to ensure public access to the unique site where bones of prehistoric Ice Age animals were trapped in tar pits.¹⁶³

Another 1916 commission brought Thiene into a landscaping project at the San Marcos Hotel,¹⁶⁴ the centerpiece of an Arizona town founded and eponymously named by Dr. Alexander J. Chandler. The town and hotel were designed by Arthur B. Benton (1858-1927), architect of Riverside's Mission Inn. Thiene was commissioned, along with Pasadena architect Reginald D. Johnson (1882-1952), to add a cluster of bungalows to the hotel grounds, complete with a new park and elaborate landscaping. An early promotional brochure described long vistas of lawn flanked by groups of semi-tropical shrubs and trees, along with quiet nooks with winter-blooming flowers and gracefully designed pergolas, draped with roses. There was a fountain and sparkling fishponds with waterlilies.¹⁶⁵ Thiene and Johnson viewed their work on



Top: At *Milaflores*, the Jefferson estate, Thiene planted a rich assortment of the plants he had already tested on the grounds of the San Diego exposition, layering flowers, shrubs, vines and trees in a generous display. From *House & Garden*, October 1922.

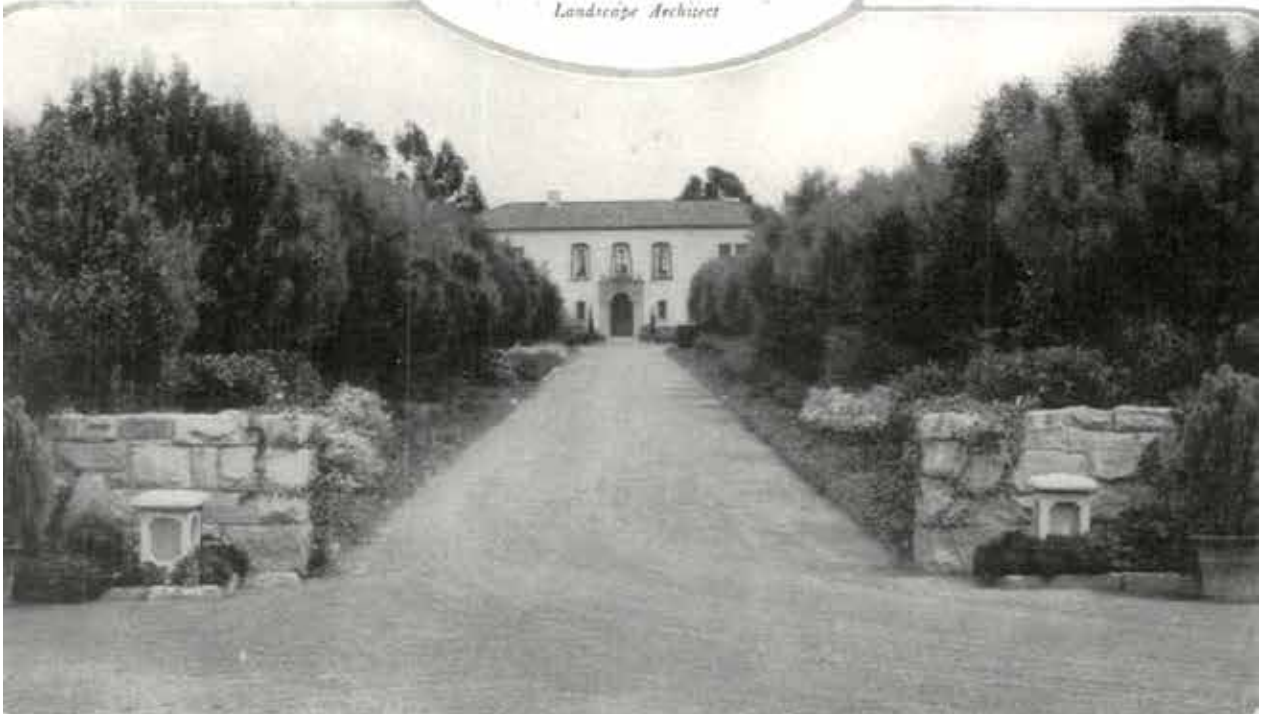
Bottom: *Milaflores*. A pathway leads into an enclosed garden, with reflecting pool at its center. From *California Gardens*, 1931.

Opposite: *Milaflores*, the Jefferson estate, won favorable recognition for Johnson and Thiene upon its completion in 1918. From *House & Garden*, October 1922.





IN A CALIFORNIA
GARDEN
PAUL G. THIENE
Landscape Architect



Opposite, top: The ambition of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company to build a residential subdivision for its Los Angeles workforce provided Thiene his largest commercial project. His 1920 layout and landscape design for the 80-acre Goodyear Gardens included apartment buildings, private bungalows, parks, and stores along tree-lined streets. From *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1919.

Below: Accomplished Los Angeles architects Sumner Hunt and Silas Reese Burns were hired to design the housing contemplated in Thiene's plan for Goodyear Gardens.

a joint visit to the hotel in April 1917.¹⁶⁶ A magnet for the Hollywood set and wealthy northern snowbirds, the San Marcos Hotel was Thiene's first out-of-state commercial commission. In Chandler's local history, Thiene's name remains linked with the historic hotel.¹⁶⁷

Although Thiene and Wright were still cooperating on some projects, Lloyd Wright apparently was uninvolved in this Arizona work. In the literature, some confusion has resulted from a failure to distinguish the San Marcos Hotel from a subsequent, but unrealized project called San Marcos-in-the-Desert, a collaboration between Frank Lloyd Wright, Sr. and Dr. Chandler. The senior Wright created designs for San Marcos-in-the-Desert in 1927 and Lloyd Wright produced much-praised architectural renderings of the designs, but the economic disruptions following the 1929 stock market crash doomed the project.¹⁶⁸

The Thiene-Wright partnership was amicable and loose-knit. Each undertook separate projects in addition to their joint work and they sporadically dabbled in each other's private projects. Some latter-day uncertainties on attribution result from this informal working arrangement. As examples, both the John L. Severance and Benjamin R. Meyer estate landscape designs are attributed to Paul Thiene and his is the only name on the plot plans and in most published articles about the two estates. Yet, it is possible to find Lloyd Wright mentioned as a participant in both projects.¹⁶⁹

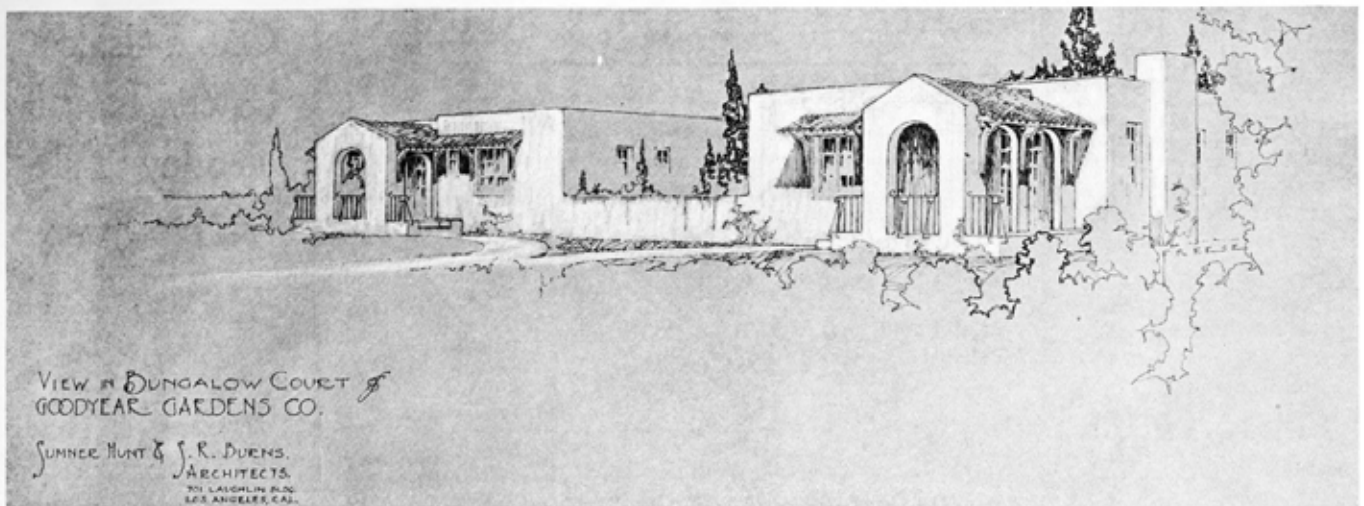
Within the partnership, Thiene was more intensely focused on building a landscape architecture practice. He had sound business sense¹⁷⁰ and superior knowledge of California plants and growing conditions. Wright was brimming with creativity and had connections that well-served the partnership, but he was unsettled and not fully committed to a landscape practice. Wright was thinking about leaving California and he was increasingly drawn to architecture. He continued to take assignments from various architects and was particularly influenced by his association with William J. Dodd. Wright's attention to the Thiene partnership was further diluted by his lucrative sideline of designing sets for movie studios.¹⁷¹

With the idea of possibly relocating to New York City, Wright left Los Angeles in late 1918 for an extended trip.¹⁷² His departure dissolved the landscape architecture partnership, but Thiene and Wright remained friendly and occasionally worked together after Wright's return to Los Angeles.¹⁷³ In 1919, Frank Lloyd Wright, Sr., who was building the Imperial Hotel in Japan, directed his son to attend to a neglected Los Angeles project of the senior Wright's firm. Lloyd Wright and another Wright representative took up work at *Hollyhock House*, part of the Olive Hill arts center project.¹⁷⁴ This work settled Lloyd Wright back into Los Angeles where he opened his own architectural practice in 1921.¹⁷⁵

Plan of Development for Beautiful "Goodyear Gardens."



Ultimately 898 modern homes of distinctive design and brick and hollow-tile construction will be erected for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company's employees on an eighty-acre tract at the old Ascot Park site, which will be transformed into a park of surpassing beauty. Architects Hunt & Burns prepared the house plans and Paul Thieme the landscape arrangement.



CONCRETE HOUSES FOR GOODYEAR GARDENS

Mr. Sumner Hunt, in carrying out the ideas of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, has reserved for each individual who buys a home in Goodyear Gardens the pleasure of living in the house of his own individual dream. Uniformity of architecture will not lower this residence section to the dead level of mediocrity. Every man who comes to California with an idea in his head as to the kind of a home he wants to build, will here find opportunity to choose the design planned by a prominent architect.

Concrete as material, with hints of tile roof here and there, will be used in some hundreds of houses, and thus unify the beautiful suburb which Goodyear Gardens is destined to be.

When Edison conceived the idea of a concrete

house built economically, he started a splendid idea. But it has so far failed of general acceptance because the first houses were too ugly to live in.

Here all the good qualities which Edison saw in the concrete house, fireproof, earthquake proof, and sanitary, are expressed in a variety of styles and the good proportions which only the trained architect knows how to co-ordinate. Here, too, the man who has dreamed of a New England or a Dutch Colonial house may have it, and one whose ideal is in the Spanish or Mediterranean style may have that. Fortunate, indeed, are the dwellers in this Garden City, and fortunate also the lovers of civic beauty who pass by its pleasant, planted streets.

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Solo: Greater Opportunities in Landscape

Thiene rented separate office space in the Marsh-Strong Building in 1918 to carry on a solo landscape architecture practice.¹⁷⁶ He entered this career phase in a strong posture, benefitting from an association with the gilded names of Olmsted and Wright and the lingering praise accorded his San Diego exposition landscape design. At the same time, favorable notice flowed from his early projects with prominent architects Bertram Goodhue (*Mi Sueño*, the Coppell's Pasadena estate) and Reginald D. Johnson (the San Marcos Hotel). Newspaper coverage of two shared commissions with Lloyd Wright, Playa del Rey (1915-16) and Hancock Park (1916-17), further boosted Thiene's name recognition.

Assuredly, valuable connections and prime opportunities bolstered Thiene's new practice, but he deserves full credit for making his own success. His next project solidified his professional reputation and further fueled his career. It was his

first residential collaboration with architect Reginald D. Johnson and an unusual assignment: the conversion of an abandoned Santa Barbara country club into *Miraflores*, an eighteen-acre residential estate for Mr. and Mrs. John Percival Jefferson.

Johnson's design transformed the institutional club house into a classic Mediterranean revival house. Paul Thiene surrounded it with Italianate terraces and formal gardens with clipped hedges, reflecting pools, statuary, a rose garden, a cutting garden, ponds, pergolas, and a greenhouse. An allée of shaped black acacia trees lined the long, straight entrance road, recalling a similar feature along El Prado, the main thoroughfare of the Panama-California Exposition. *Miraflores* was completed by 1918 and won accolades for Johnson and Thiene. The American Institute of Architects recognized the project with a Gold Medal (the first awarded to a Southern California architect) and *Architectural Record* called the garden "unusually attractive."¹⁷⁷

Over the years, *Miraflores* was a showcase garden of Montecito. It appeared in early books and is one of twenty-four gardens in the Santa Barbara area represented in the Garden Club of America's "Slide Library of Notable American Parks and Gardens"



This spread: At the Wellington Stanley Morse house in Pasadena's San Rafael Heights, Thiene teamed with architect Reginald D. Johnson, who shared an appreciation for the Italian style. Completed in 1919, the extensive gardens demonstrated Thiene's versatility and client responsiveness. Courtesy Frances Benjamin Johnson Collection, Library of Congress.



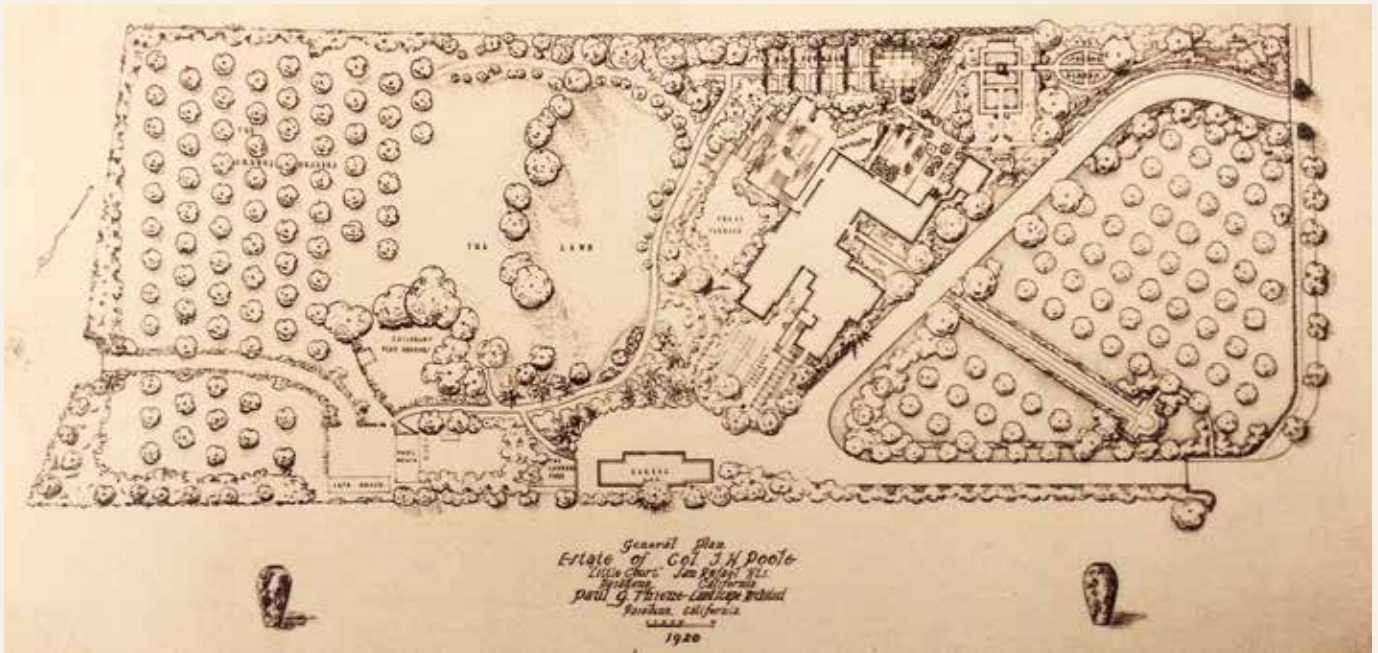




This spread: William G. Mather, a wealthy Cleveland industrialist, engaged architect Charles A. Platt and landscapers Warren Manning and Ellen Biddle Shipman to create his acclaimed mansion on Lake Erie. In Pasadena, Mather selected architect Myron Hunt and Thiene to design his house and gardens in San Rafael Heights. The work began in 1919. Courtesy Frederick W. Martin Collection, California State Library.







Above: In 1920 Col. John Hudson Poole, military hero and philanthropist, engaged Thiene to landscape the extensive grounds of Little Court, his San Rafael Heights estate in Pasadena. Thiene buffered the house with orchards at each end of the rectangular lot, added formal gardens, and addressed the problem of uneven terrain with multiple well-planted terraces climbing a steep hill.

at the Smithsonian Institution.¹⁷⁸ John Percival Jefferson died in 1934, but his widow remained on the estate until her death in 1950. The grounds are today part of the Music Academy of the West.

After his full immersion into Italian-inspired garden design at *Miraflores*, Thiene took on a very different commission. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company hired him to create a layout and landscape plan for Goodyear Gardens, a planned housing development with parks and other amenities for employees of a Los Angeles tire factory, scheduled to open in 1920.

Trade papers reported that factory buildings would occupy ten acres “adjoining Goodyear Gardens, for which plans were prepared by Paul Thiene, landscape architect.” The project called for \$3,000,000 in construction, including stores, apartment buildings, a rooming house and the initial construction of 60 bungalows.¹⁷⁹ The *Los Angeles Times* wrote in 1919: “No phase of the physical development of the great

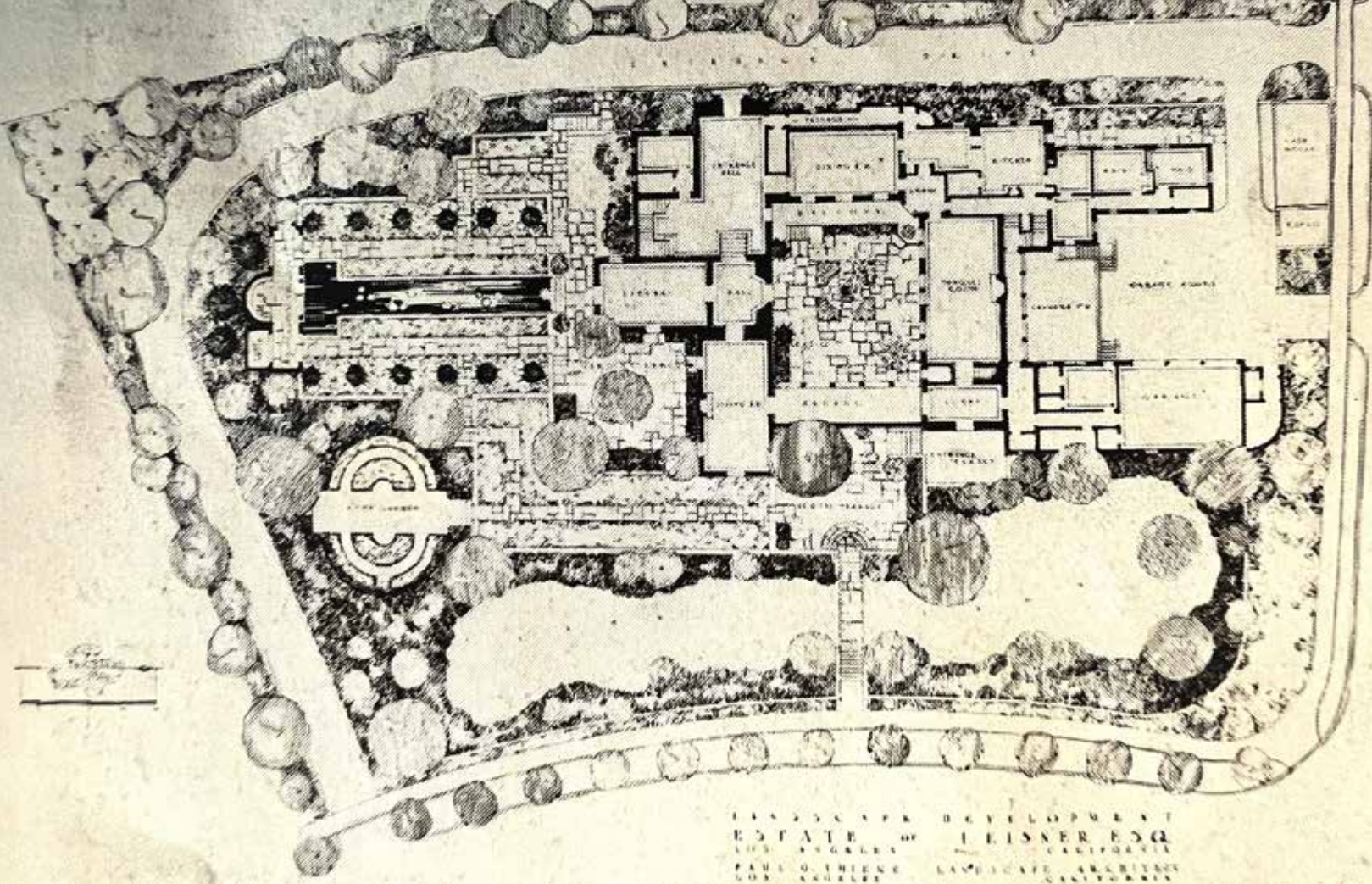
Goodyear enterprise now going forward at high speed in the southeast section of Los Angeles is of greater interest to the company itself or the general public” than Goodyear Gardens.¹⁸⁰

Thiene’s practice received useful publicity from this commercial project, but in the end, Thiene’s larger landscape design was shelved and fewer than fifty of the planned houses were built. Today these structures are in the designated Goodyear Gardens Historic District of Southeast Los Angeles.¹⁸¹

In 1919 Thiene left downtown Los Angeles, moving his home and business to Pasadena where a handful of other landscape architects had established themselves.¹⁸² After settling into his new location, Thiene progressed from strength to strength in a robust landscape architecture practice, gaining contemporary acclaim and cementing his reputation as one of the leading landscape architects of California’s golden age.



“Approaching the residence of Mr. J. Eisner, Los Angeles, from the street, one finds an expanse of solid wall; but the architectural proportions are so fine, the landscaping so lovely, that the effect is far from forbidding.” Photo and caption from *American Landscape Architect*, November 1929.



Thiene's California Design Style

Above and opposite, top: "The estate of Mr. J. Eisner in Los Angeles is a remarkable example of how the effect of space and variety of gardening can be produced on a city lot by skillful planning and planting. The plan should be carefully studied to appreciate the relationship between the various garden features and the house. A large paved central court is a striking feature; from the library one looks down a long, narrow lily pool to a pergola-sheltered isidra." Photo and caption from *American Landscape Architect*, November 1929.

Opposite, bottom: "The library terrace and the lily pool connecting. Flower beds bordering the pool constitute a somewhat unusual feature, tending to emphasize its length and the cool blue-green mirror that it forms." Photo and caption from *American Landscape Architect*, November 1929.

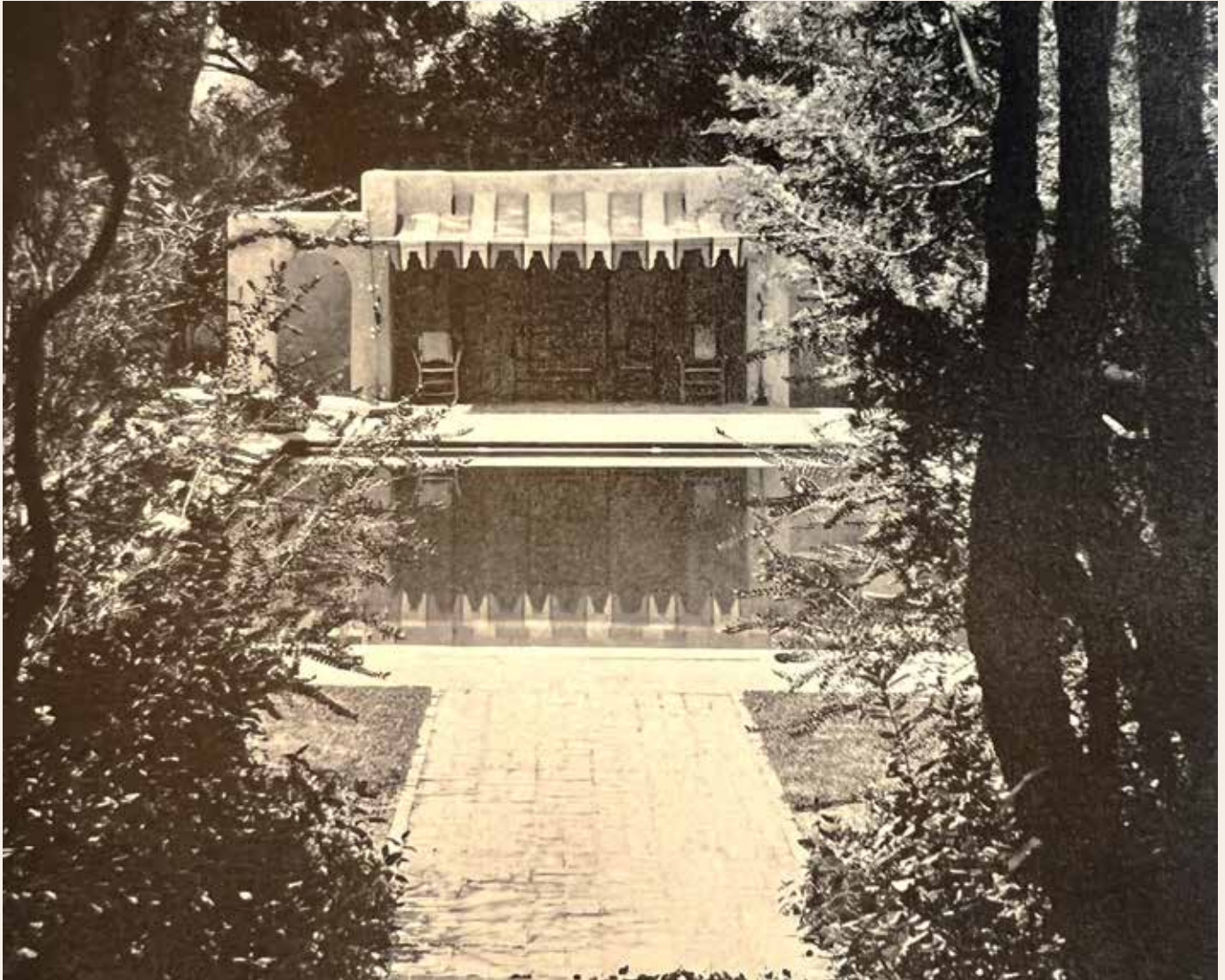
From his Panama-California Exposition work, Thiene carried away a lasting lesson: when landscaping in Southern California, generous supplies of money and water can produce spectacular results.¹⁸³ The exposition's relatively deep pockets, and the expectation that its landscape should be exuberant and showy, meshed nicely with the aim of promoters to demonstrate that almost any plant in the world would flourish in Southern California. With this agenda from exposition planners and his own limited experience with arid growing conditions, it is unsurprising that Thiene's landscape for the 1915 exposition exhibited none of the environmental sophistication expressed in the work of local San Diego horticulturist Kate O. Sessions or in the developing ideas of the Olmsted firm as they expanded their practice in the American west and sought to celebrate the natural environment by creating sustainable landscapes that respected

climatic conditions and placed a new reliance on native plants.¹⁸⁴

Thiene was hired at the exposition one year after arriving in San Diego. Previously, he had lived in places with very different climates and rainfall: northern Europe, the eastern seaboard of the United States, San Francisco, and Portland, Oregon. The climate of Southern California surely challenged his developed horticultural assumptions, while the diversity of available plant materials presented exciting design vistas, including year-around color and lush green screening.

The exposition provided an educational transition period. These four years exposed Thiene to a more diverse array of exotic plants than most landscape architects might encounter in their entire career. In the horticultural laboratory of the exposition grounds, Thiene observed the suitability and viability of these different plants and learned about the quenchless demand for water made by many. The exposition called upon Thiene to create outsized designs in varied physical settings: around multiple buildings having different purposes, along numerous roads and pathways, and on challenging virgin terrain ranging from level ground to deeply scored canyons. At the exposition,





Above: Located on the axis of the library, this swimming pool is designed to serve also as a reflection pool. In the garden of Mr. W. S. Morse, Pasadena.

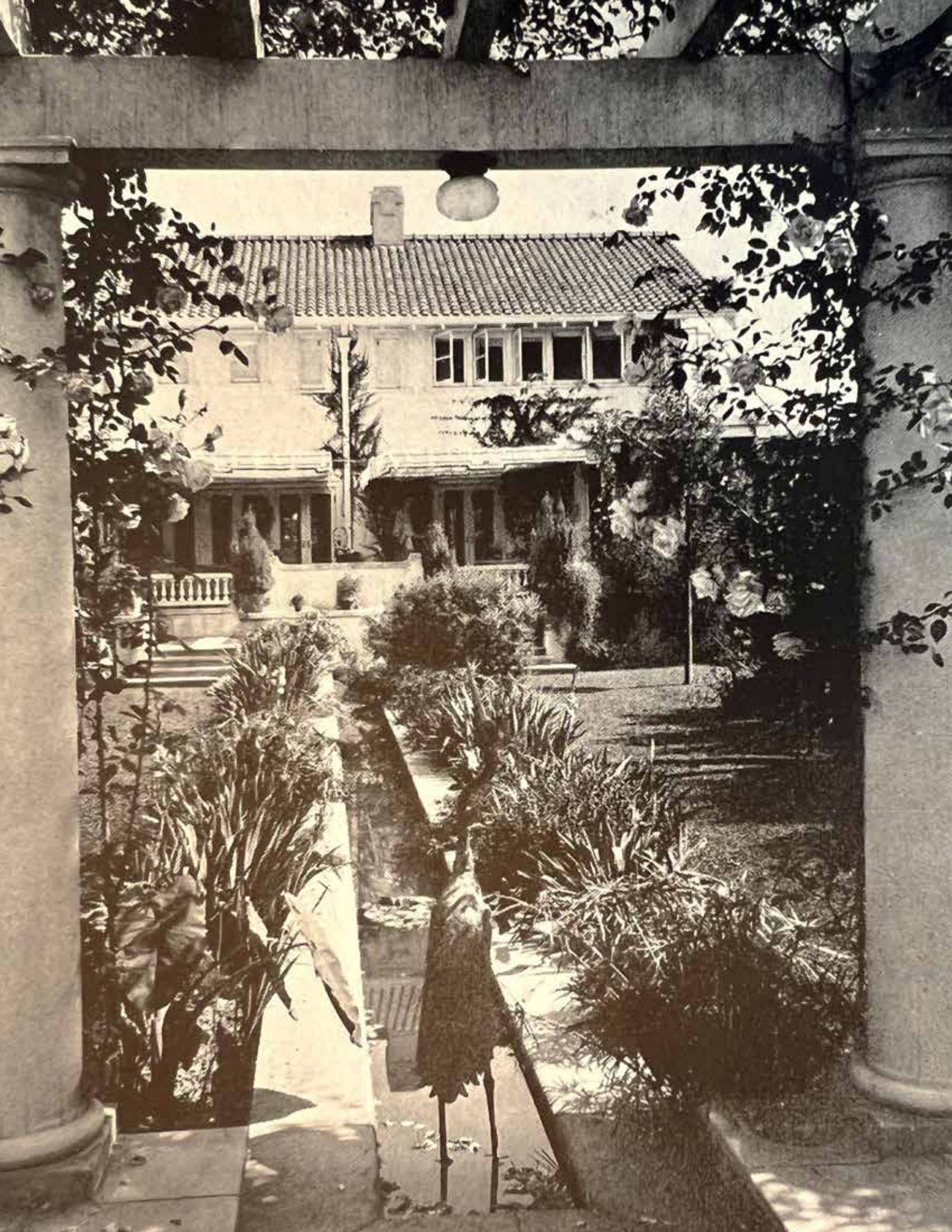
Opposite: Even a long, narrow garden may have a pool designed that requires little space and is in keeping with the settings. Photographs and original captions on this page from *American Landscape Architect*, October 1929.

Thiene grappled with the classic design challenges of the landscape architect, but on a large scale,¹⁸⁵ including how design responds to topography and soils, design in relation to plant materials and climate, design in response to associated architecture, and design in response to client requirements.

Lessons from the exposition are clearly seen in Thiene's later landscape designs. He learned which trees and shrubs grow rapidly and made use of this knowledge to raise green privacy screens around properties and to densely line long driveways to both offer an enclosing welcome and build anticipation in the approach. He learned how to make a relatively quick landscape effect on virgin plots. His success in handling difficult hillside sites, such as that encountered at the Benjamin R. Meyer property, flowed directly from planting the rugged canyons walls of Balboa Park. By creating numerous placements of grouped plants around exposition buildings, Thiene developed patterns

of aesthetically pleasing plant combinations that could viably be maintained together. The many pergolas and rooftop planting boxes at the exposition offered a graduate course in cultivating vines—ones that satisfactorily climbed and bloomed to decorate a pergola or bare wall and those that artistically trailed from above. Roses were used to entwine pergola columns at the exposition, providing Thiene with practical knowledge of the climbers that best performed with this decorative garden feature.

After the exposition, Thiene's embrace of the Italian landscape style was respectful of Southern California's Mediterranean climate. Italian gardens often incorporate a great deal of hardscape, use decoratively placed potted plants and limit turf and flowers. But Thiene necessarily stretched the Italian ideal when responding to client demands for green lawns and in the use of water as a garden adornment. While the Italian style calls for judicious water use, Thiene chose to make



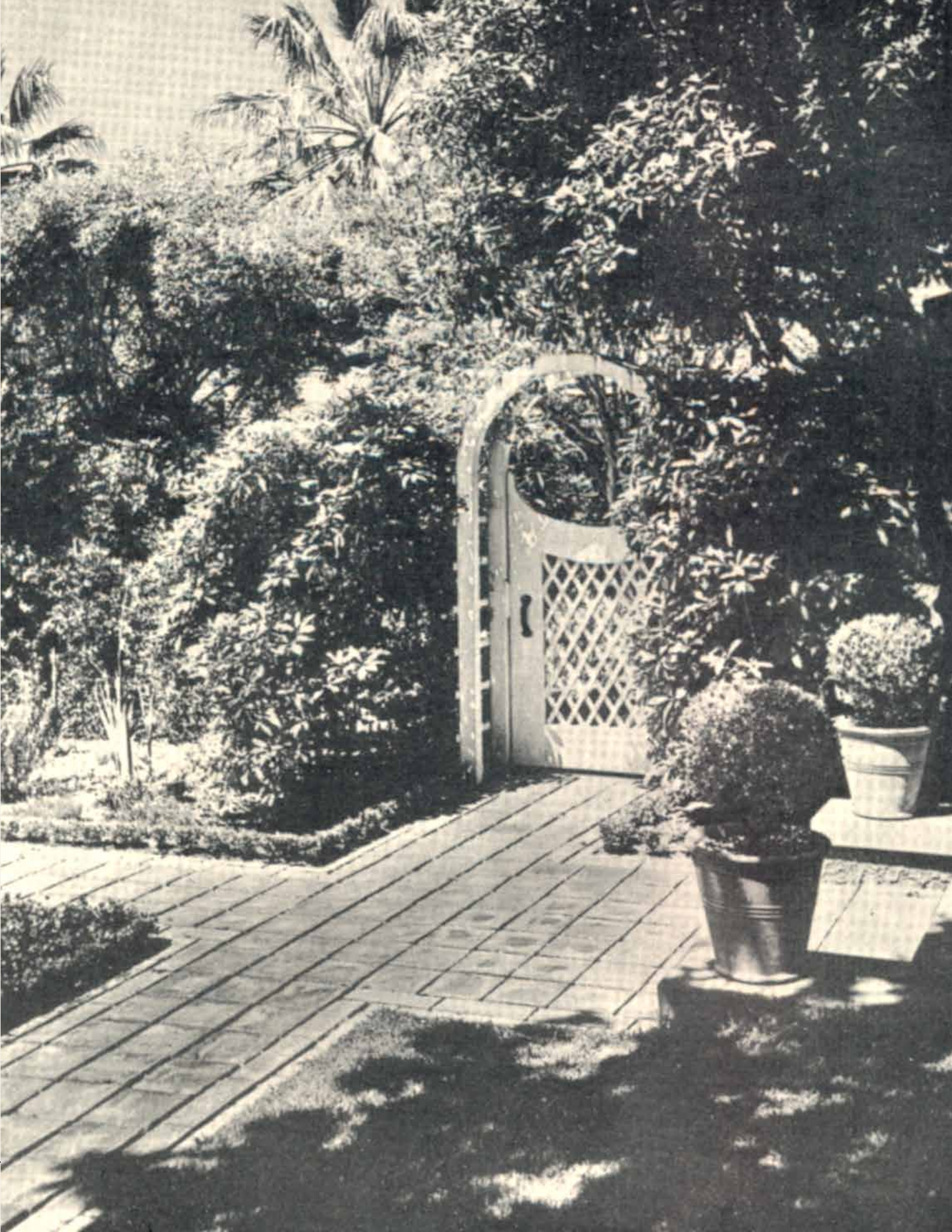
Right: Garden of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Allison, Pasadena. Allison and Allison, architects. William M. Clarke, photographer. Photograph and caption from *California Gardens*.

abundant use of water in site designs exactly because it was a scarce, and therefore prized, commodity in Southern California. He never became water-wise as the term is understood in the twenty-first century, but he did claim to use water economically.¹⁸⁶ He provided on-off switches for artificial waterfalls and engineered elaborate water recycling systems on his larger projects. When Thiene's landscape practice was at its apex in the 1920s, such economies were neither demanded nor particularly prized as it was popularly believed that the Los Angeles region had resolved its water problems.¹⁸⁷ Additionally, the water issue for private landscapes was mitigated by access to groundwater. Home-owners of the period were perfectly free to drill wells, tapping into the groundwater basins formed by the still viable Los Angeles aquifer.¹⁸⁸ Some of Thiene's elaborate water features depended on well water.

By current Southern California landscape standards, Thiene's passion for garden water features is ecologically outmoded, but his mix of native and adapted exotic plants, generous use of hardscape, naturalistic plant groupings, preservation of existing orchards and groves when possible and his

determined enhancement of the tree count all comport with contemporary sensibilities.

Thiene is grouped with the nation's most talented landscape architects working in the Italian style,¹⁸⁹ but as with most landscape architects who serve many clients, his work cannot be easily pigeon-holed or viewed as pure paradigms of style. If a client built an old-world manor house, Thiene was perfectly capable of dressing it with a sweeping green English lawn, as at *Greystone*, the Doheny estate in Beverly Hills. Likewise, he could ease away from Italian formalism to cater to a client's taste for a more naturalistic presentation, as demonstrated by his award-winning H. A. Fuller garden in San Rafael Heights, Pasadena. David C. Sreatfield, in his seminal book on California gardens, uses Thiene's landscapes to exemplify three separate design trends. The A. H. Sweet Garden in San Diego is included in the chapter on Arts and Crafts gardens. The John L. Severance garden in San Marino is part of Sreatfield's look at imported styles that melded into "Mediterranean" and Thiene's work on the Isidor Eisner estate in Los Angeles' Hancock Park is identified as an exemplar of a developing regionalism in landscape design.¹⁹⁰





Above: Garden of Mrs. Eldridge M. Fowler, Chino. Myron Hunt, architect. Photograph from *California Gardens*.

The development of a regional style in Southern California is likewise a theme of architectural historian David Gebhard's commentary on landscapes in the practice of Johnson, Kaufmann, and Coate, Los Angeles architects credited with helping to create a sense of place in Southern California.¹⁹¹ Thiene completed multiple projects with both Reginald D. Johnson and Gordon B. Kaufmann, both of whom took an interest in the house and garden as a whole, sometimes working closely with Thiene on a site plan, but without becoming involved in the practical creation of gardens. Gebhard considers Thiene's formal Italian landscapes a fitting style for the architecture of Johnson and Kaufmann and illustrates his essay with Thiene's plot plans for the Benjamin R. Meyer and John Percival Jefferson estates.¹⁹²

If Thiene ever recorded any philosophical or theoretical observations on his design choices and the Italian style beyond brief comments to a student interviewer, they have

not come to light in this research. He told a landscape architecture student that Italian Renaissance gardens were his inspiration and that the most important measure of a garden was its “character.” He stressed the value of water in the garden along with a quantity of trees.¹⁹³ Thiene did write descriptively of his own work, but the articles he targeted to garden and home magazines did not include reflections on design theory. Yet, Thiene apparently had an appreciation of the history and artistry of his field. His scrapbooks at the University of California’s Environmental Design Archives are filled with clippings of formal landscape designs, many of which are Italian. At least one knowing observer, landscape and architecture critic Mable Urmy Seares, wrote of Thiene’s demonstrated knowledge of classic garden design.¹⁹⁴

How this awareness developed and what led Thiene to the Italian style is a matter of speculation. Exposure to design and landscape styles may have been a part of Thiene’s German horticultural education or a matter of self-education. His personal curiosity may have been sparked if he at some point became aware of the famous place sharing his name, Palazzo Thiene, an Italian Renaissance jewel in Vicenza (now a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Palazzo Thiene is one of the city residences appearing in Andrea Palladio’s *Four Books on Architecture*. Another possible exposure was during Thiene’s brief employment in New York City. His employer, landscape architect Daniel Langton, was a proponent of the Italian style who created one of the early Italian-influenced gardens on the East Coast.¹⁹⁵ But again, we do not know if the relatively short association with Langton shaped any of Thiene’s ideas on landscape design.

In California, Thiene’s first and most thorough design exposure was a close encounter

with the Southern California architecture of Bertram Goodhue. Thiene was at work in Balboa Park before a single building of the Goodhue-designed Panama-California Exposition was constructed. Then, over almost four years, he witnessed day-to-day progress on the realization of Goodhue’s vision of an ethereal Spanish village rising on a high mesa. The immense influence of Goodhue’s early California work is recognized in architect M. Brian Tichenor’s identification of three Goodhue projects as a synthesis of regional architectural identity. Tichenor names: (1) Goodhue’s *El Fuertis* designed for James Waldron Gillespie in Montecito; (2) the nearby Henry Dater House (later named *Val Verde*); and (3) the “amalgam” incorporated into San Diego’s exposition buildings, designs that became the “stylistic bellweather” for Southern California.¹⁹⁶

After the San Diego exposition was underway in 1915, Thiene experienced another close encounter with Goodhue’s design work after the two were jointly commissioned by exposition admirers Herbert and Georgia Coppel, to create *Mi Sueño*, a winter retreat in Pasadena. In that project, Thiene was, for the second time, surrounding the architecture of Goodhue with a fitting landscape.

Thiene is the only California landscape architect to have experienced such an intimate and extended interaction with Goodhue’s influential work. His unique five-year immersion in Goodhue’s Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean architecture surely was a foundation for the formal and historically rooted design tenets that characterize Thiene’s California design style.



Conclusion: The Thiene Practice

Above: A swimming pool in a tropical setting on the estate of Dr. Edwin Janss, Holmby Hills, California. Photograph and original caption from *American Landscape Architect*, October 1929.

Opposite: Arrival court with fountain on the estate of Mr. Edward Lowe, Montecito, California.

An institutional collection relating to Thiene's practice is held by the Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley. It consists of photographs and scrapbooks but has no office papers or financial records. When this fragmentary record is combined with information from other sources, a total of fifty-eight Thiene landscape projects can be documented. This collective information refutes the repeated description of Thiene's practice as "entirely residential." In fact, in addition to residential commissions, Paul Thiene designed parks, two commercial land developments and completed landscape plans for hotels, schools, recreation facilities and a museum.

From the time that his partnership with Lloyd Wright ended in 1918, Thiene directed a solo practice, moving his home and office from Los Angeles to Pasadena in 1919 where he remained for the rest of his life. As his practice became busy and lucrative, Thiene added staff to aid in design and to oversee

installations and maintenance. He had much to offer those new to the landscape profession. His commissions were challenging and upper echelon, he had a growing reputation as an interpreter of the Italian style, and his knowledge of Southern California plants and horticulture was thorough. On a practical level, he demonstrated how to operate a landscape practice as a sustainable, well-run business. Even after becoming well-established, he took on small projects. In 1923 Thiene personally appeared before the Santa Ana school board to propose landscaping in front of the town's new high school; he made a second appearance a few months later to present his plan for a sunken garden in the footprint of the dismantled old school building.²¹⁹ Thiene also completed landscaping projects at schools in Alhambra, Norwalk, and Santa Maria.²²⁰

Thiene's thriving practice provided such a successful training ground that it has been wryly dubbed "The Paul G. Thiene School of Landscape Design."²²¹ Indeed, most who gained experience with Thiene went on to attain notable professional reputations.²²²

Despite the radiant success of his practice and an outstanding catalog of work, Thiene's talent as a landscape designer was downplayed or casually scorned by some scholars



working before the internet gave fuller access to information about Thiene and his work. One dismissive account describes Thiene's role in his own practice as being responsible for office management and planting, as if Thiene busied himself with paperwork and installation while the hired help produced landscape magic.²²³

The apparent basis for these assessments is Thiene's employment of exceptionally talented designers in the mid-1920s. But the suggestion that Thiene could not be both a successful manager of design talent and a talent himself is a flawed interpretation that is ripe for reassessment. That judgment forgets that Thiene's central impetus in coming to the United States was a burning desire to work in landscape design and it wrongly marginalizes his talent by dismissing the record of design awards and plaudits Thiene accumulated on his way to a practice large enough to support employees.

The suggestion that Thiene was not closely involved in the design product of his practice runs contrary to his known penchant for dedicated work and attention to detail. Landscape architect Ralph D. Cornell observed Thiene's "Germanic precision and thoroughness and ability to organize" and described him in an oral history as "being ambitious and energetic and of considerable ability."²²⁴ Thiene would easily be recognized

today as a conscientious workaholic. It is inconceivable that he would have delegated away the overall design concepts and final look and feel of projects carrying the name of his practice.

Although Thiene had not attended one of the degree-granting landscape architecture programs that emerged in American universities after 1900, he was accepted as a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) in 1926. He and Ralph D. Cornell were the only California-based new members of the organization that year.²²⁵ Some sources mistakenly describe Thiene as a Fellow of ASLA, but he was not accorded that honor.²²⁶

Thiene completed projects in Arizona and New Mexico and stayed busy working with leading architects in the greater Los Angeles and Santa Barbara areas on a series of ever larger and more prestigious commissions during the 1920s. He was at the top of his form when the 1929 financial crash marked the beginning of the end of Southern California's Golden Age of estate building. The challenging and lucrative estate projects that had enriched Thiene's practice became rare as the economic depression deepened.

Thiene's last documented landscape design commission was in San Diego. While substantial, the project was by no means grand. Thiene created gardens at the Hildred

R. and Marion M. Peckham House, built in 1927 in the Point Loma neighborhood. The home was designed by San Diego architect William Templeton Johnson (1877-1957) and still stands on a large lot overlooking San Diego Bay.²²⁷ Returning to the city where he had gained valuable experience while landscaping areas of Balboa Park for the 1915 exposition was perhaps evocative for Thiene, as work in San Diego bookended his most active years as a landscape architect. Just as his exposition work in San Diego had won acclaim, his 1933 Peckham House landscape received an honor award from the San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.²²⁸ There are no descriptions of the original landscape work Thiene performed. The property, located at 2905 Nichols Street, was named a San Diego Historic Landmark in 2000.²²⁹

During the last four decades of his life, Paul Thiene dropped out of the public record. There are no discoverable news stories by or about him, and his work was not the subject of professional or academic writing. It is difficult to pin down a firm retirement date for him.²³⁰ When Thiene completed a military draft registration card in 1942, he listed his occupation as "retired."²³¹ Yet, in a later interview, he named 1951 as his retirement date.²³² The University of California Environmental Design Archives dates his retirement to 1951



Above: This diminutive reflection pool, nestling under the gigantic branches of a California live oak, proves a happy diversion from the broad expanse of lawn. Estate of Mr. W. L. Honnold, Bel-Air, California. Photographs and original captions from *American Landscape Architect*, October 1929.

Opposite: Paul Thiene's own Pasadena home on the Arroyo Secco was designed by architect Gordon B. Kaufmann, with whom Thiene shared multiple commissions, including the building of the Doheny estate, *Greystone*. Thiene preserved a large native oak at the back of his house and used one of his familiar patterns in setting out a grass panel, lined on each side by mirrored plantings and paths. The placement of potted plants around the fountain is seen in some of Thiene's professional work. While difficult to spot in the shadows, one of Thiene's young sons is enjoying a swing attached to the lowest branch of the giant oak.

in the finding aid created for the Thiene collection.²³³

Whenever he fully closed his practice, Thiene had apparently planned well. He enjoyed decades of a comfortable retirement, although details of his financial resources are completely lacking. He benefited enormously by being selected as the landscape architect for the Doheny estate, *Graystone*. That outsized project earned him the highest fees of his career and possibly the largest amount earned by any Southern California landscape architect on a single project to that date.

In retirement, Paul Thiene took up painting. References to handsome landscape sketches produced by Thiene appeared during the 1920s, but nothing is known about the art he produced in retirement. Thiene had sufficient involvement with the fine arts community to be listed in directories of California artists and in the standard reference, *Jacobson's Biographical Index of American Artists*.²³⁴

Thiene died in Pasadena on August 27, 1971. He was ninety-one years of age and so far removed from his glory years as a celebrated landscape architect that little notice was taken of his death. There was no acclaim for his Golden Age career or for his earlier contributions to San Diego horticulture through the celebrated beauty of the Panama-California Exposition grounds and

his compilation of "The Exhibition Flora," a priceless botanical record that remains the most complete listing of landscape plants found in San Diego as of 1915.²³⁵

For a century, Paul G. Thiene's name was all but lost in the local history of San Diego and Balboa Park. San Diego's decision to celebrate the centennial of its 1915 exposition and preliminary research published in *California Garden* magazine contributed to the rescue of Thiene from an undeserved obscurity. His illustrious career in Southern California landscape architecture was known, but largely unexplored. With this work, the fuller story and consequential place of Paul G. Thiene in landscape history now enters the record.



Author's Note: A forthcoming book will complete the Paul G. Thiene story with additional information on the contemporary reception of his work, his writings and family life, the impressive who's who of his professional associates, and a revised and enlarged project list more fully capturing the scope of the Thiene practice, all along with extensive bibliographic and documentary research information. Inquiries about the book may be directed to ncc@sandiego.edu.



Four Notable Thiene Landscapes

Four large-scale residential landscapes created by Thiene are among the most celebrated and memorable of the Golden Age in Southern California. They are the estates of Benjamin R. Meyer, John L. Severance, Milton E. Getz and E. L. Doheny, Jr. These are the best known among Thiene's catalog of work and are described here as examples of the heights his practice and influence reached during the 1920s.



On leveled ground far above the house, Thiene built Greystone's largest formal garden, a perfection of green lawns, clipped hedges, splashing fountains and blooming flowers, all surrounded by Italian balustrades. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.



Benjamin R. Meyer Estate, La Collina (Beverly Hills, 1920-24)

Benjamin R. Meyer was president of the Union Bank and Trust Company when he commissioned an architect and landscape architect to create *La Collina*, a Beverly Hills estate appropriate to his station in business and society. A large forecourt with fountain welcomed visitors to the imposing home. Inside, a long, arched hall made a grand statement while custom-designed hardware, light fixtures and furniture, hand painted wall art, lavish rugs and tapestries signaled wealth and taste.

Architect Gordon B. Kaufmann (1888-1949) with the firm Johnson, Kaufmann and Coate, designed the L-shaped house, the first of his projects with Thiene. When working on the *La Collina* estate, Thiene relied on his

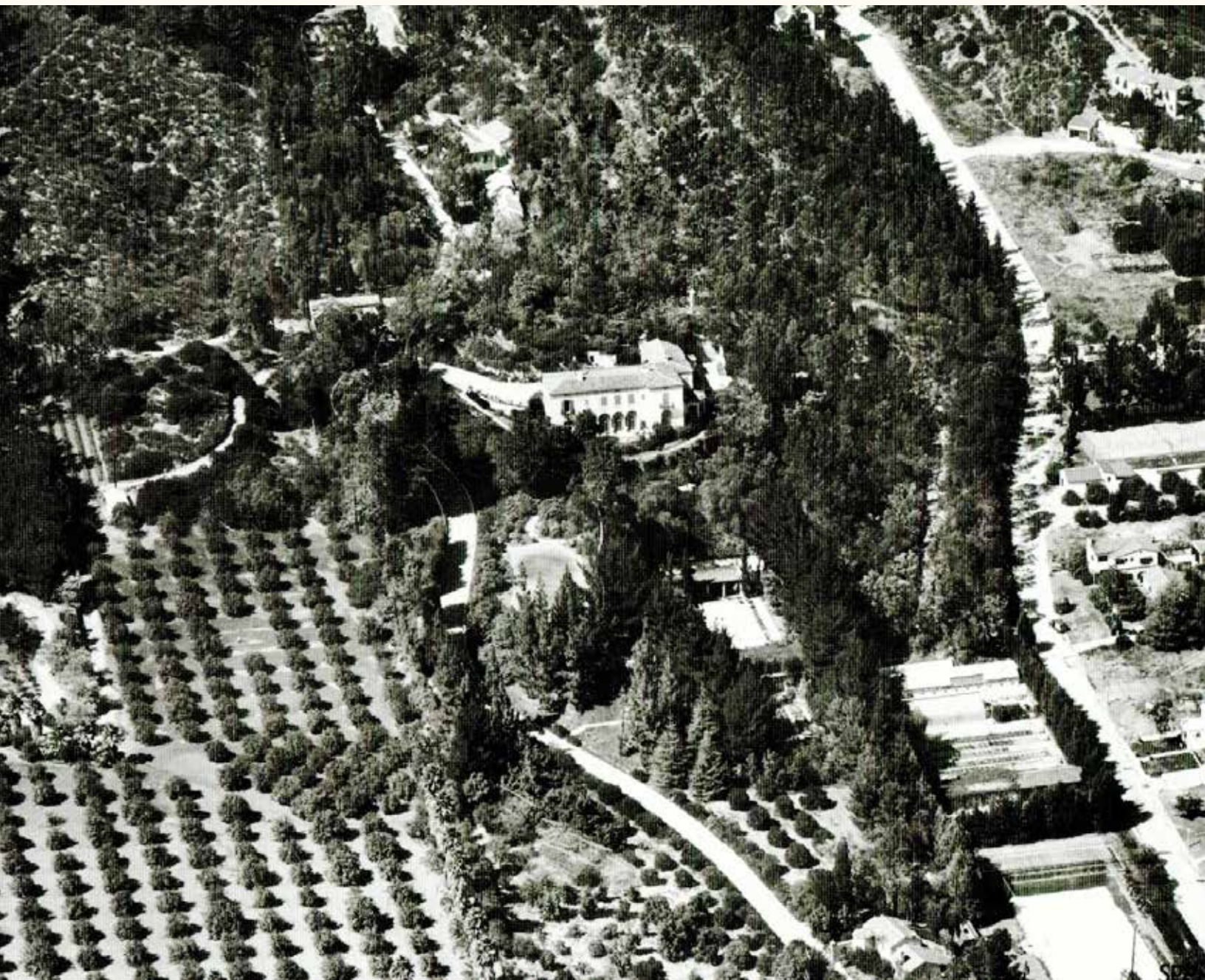
San Diego exposition experience in dealing with rugged terrain and problematic hillside planting. Meyer's narrow and unpromising lot of almost eight acres rose 215 feet in elevation from street level. Design and site preparation for the difficult property began in 1920, with construction occurring in 1923-24.

At *La Collina* Thiene created what was described as both an Italian garden and the perfect California landscape.¹⁹⁷ His design and installation were widely praised as setting the standard for the Mediterranean-style Southern California hillside garden. At this property Thiene preserved existing attributes, including an olive orchard and mature California pepper trees, and showed how mounds of earth, necessarily excavated to create a flat building surface for the house, could become landscaped terraces rising decoratively behind the structure.

Above the house, at the top of the elongated lot, there were stables, staff areas, and

a greenhouse, lath house, potting shed, and cut flower garden. Lower on the property a film screening building was constructed, complete with professional projection equipment and room for a crowd. Tunnels were built to connect some of the property levels.

Thiene turned the increasingly mandatory estate swimming pool into an especially attractive garden feature. On a lower terrace in front of the house, he built a Roman garden pavilion with dressing rooms and a shaded lounging area. The pool is easily mistaken for a decorative reflecting pond, exactly as intended. To further the illusion, it was surrounded with iris and other blooming plants.¹⁹⁸ A dense forest stretching up the hill to the house enfolded the pavilion and evoked the spirit of an Italian villa *bosco*. "Mr. Thiene has demonstrated every type of gardening here," one critic wrote, and has shown notable success "in the proper treatment of our California hills."¹⁹⁹



Kaufmann's work, like the site design, was praised as being particularly suited to the geographic and climatic setting. *La Collina* was one of the first Beverly Hills residential projects designed by a professional team of architect and landscape architect. The enthusiastic response to this project popularized the Mediterranean style and promoted the merits of hiring professional makers of houses and gardens. A landmark of good taste, *La Collina* was a model for other estates and in time became legendary as a representative of "a major turning point" in larger architecture and landscape trends.²⁰⁰

Over time the Meyer estate was subdivided to create multiple building lots and Thiene's long driveway became La Collina Drive, a city street. The main house and the gatehouse still stand. The house address is 1212 La Collina Drive, Beverly Hills. It was part of a \$9.69 million multi-property sale in 2004.

Opposite: *La Collina*, the estate of Benjamin R. Meyer in Beverly Hills, was created on a difficult building site that called on Thiene's experience in dealing with Balboa Park's rugged topography. The project extended from 1920 to 1924 and was Thiene's first work with architect Gordon B. Kaufmann. *La Collina* set the standard for the Southern California hillside garden.

Below: A quintessential Paul Thiene entry court at *La Collina* with a central fountain surrounded by an array of potte plants and flowers. Courtesy Library of Congress.



CALIFORNIA SOUTHLAND

Right: The estate of Benjamin R. Meyer was featured on the cover of *California Southland* in 1925, with a charming watercolor by Norman Kennedy.

Below: Benjamin R. Meyer's house at the top of the hillside overlooks the pool pavilion at his *La Collina* estate in Beverly Hills. Thiene was praised for demonstrating "every type of gardening" at *La Collina* as well as giving "proper treatment" to California's hillsides. Photograph from *California Gardens*.

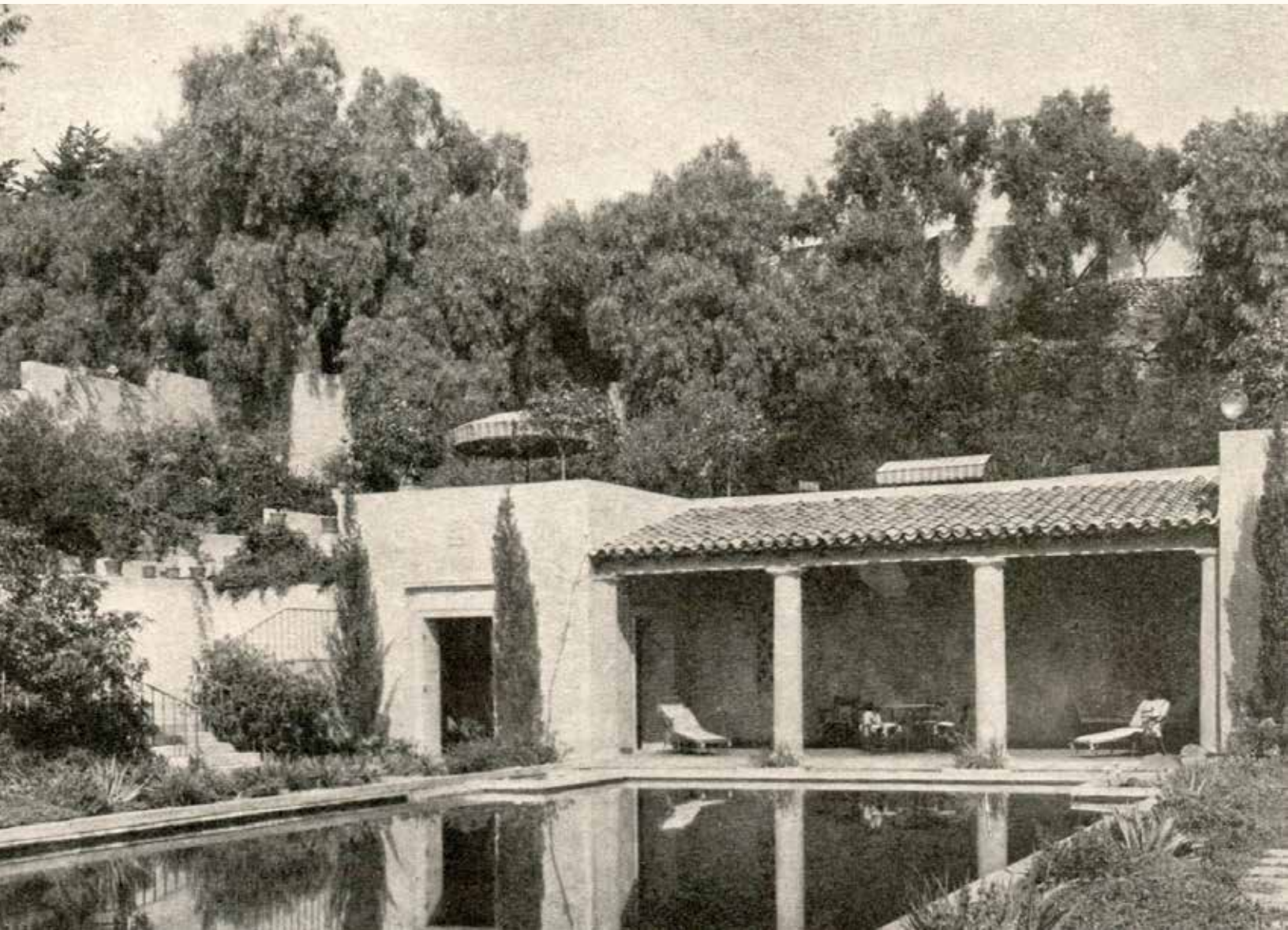


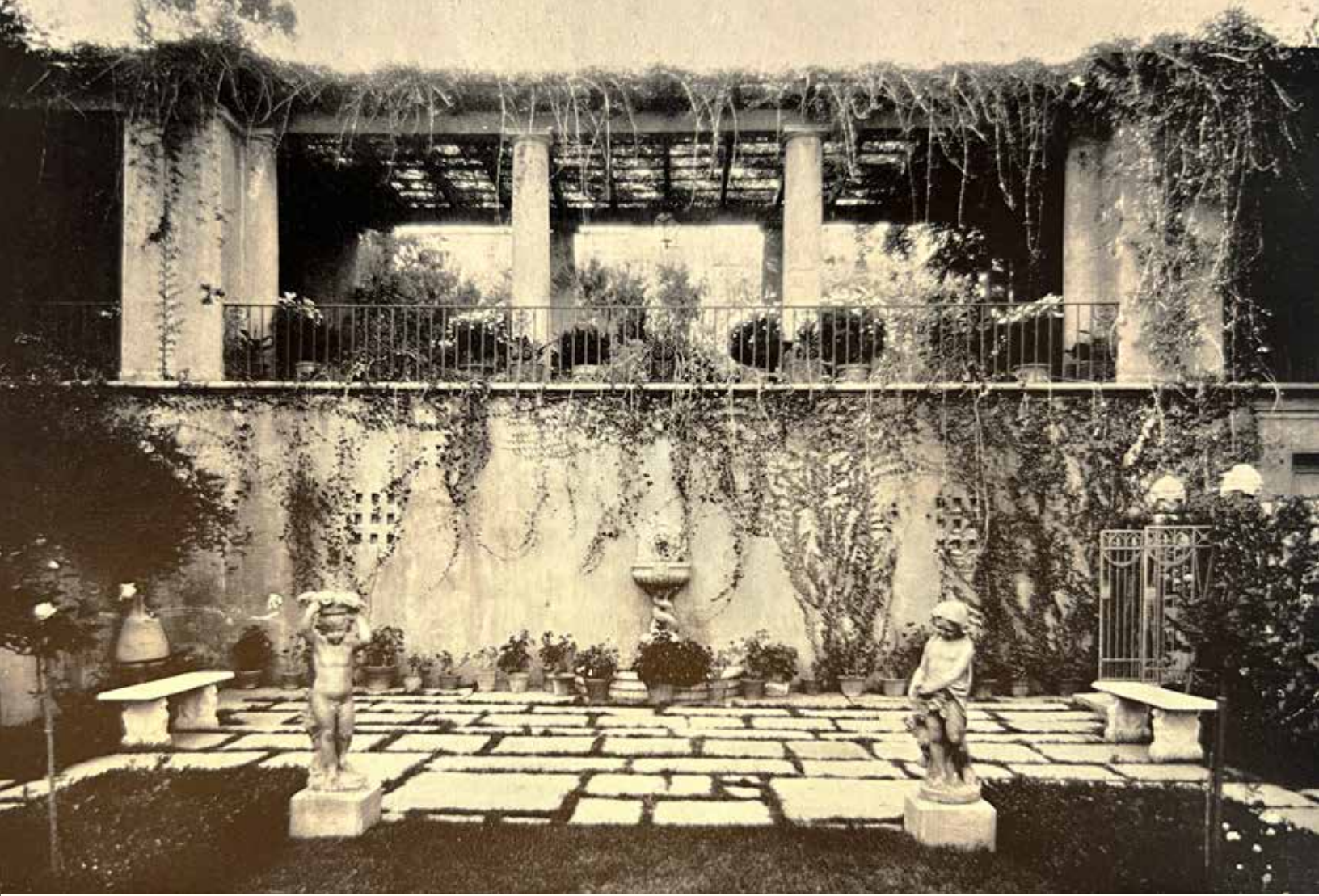
Portrait of the architect R. M. Schuyler, drawing of Norman R. Kennedy, of the firm of Johnson, Knudsen and Coyle, Architects, Beverly Hills, Calif. by Norman Kennedy.

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Above: A vine-covered pergola looks over a sunken garden. Photograph from *California Gardens*.



Left: Inspired by Roman reflecting ponds, the swimming pool at Benjamin R. Meyer's La Collina estate was built on a level below the house and surrounded with dense planting. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.



Inspired by Roman reflecting ponds, the swimming pool at Benjamin R. Meyer's La Collina estate was built on a level below the house and surrounded with dense planting. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

John L. Severance Estate, Westwood (San Marino, 1921–1922)

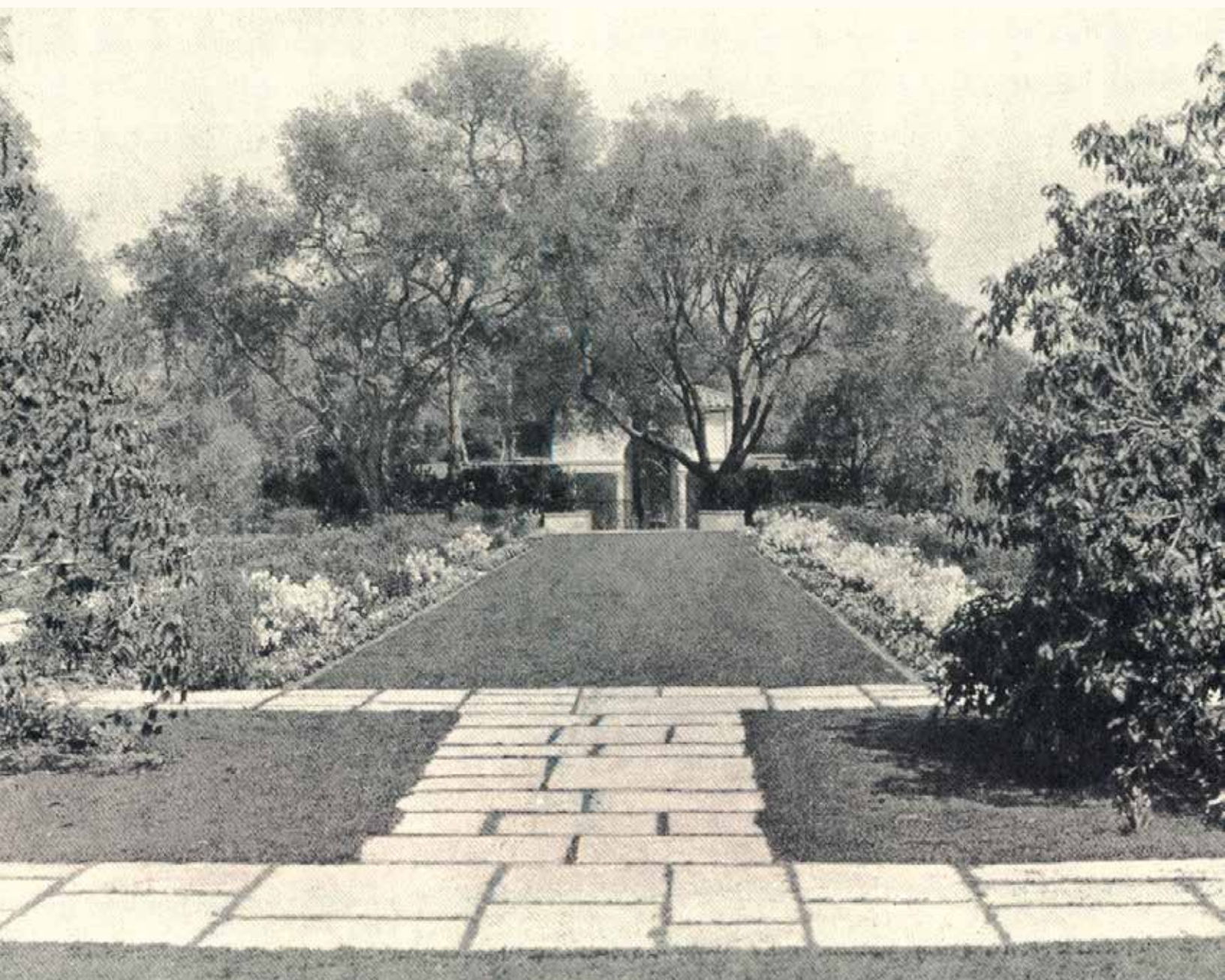
Thiene redesigned the grounds of *Westwood*, the property of a leading Ohio businessman and philanthropist, John Long Severance (1863-1936) who is still remembered for Severance Hall, an acoustical jewel box that is home to the Cleveland Orchestra. Severance also supported the Cleveland Museum of Art and was a financial patron of numerous other cultural and medical institutions. His California winter home was in the Oak Knoll area of San Marino.

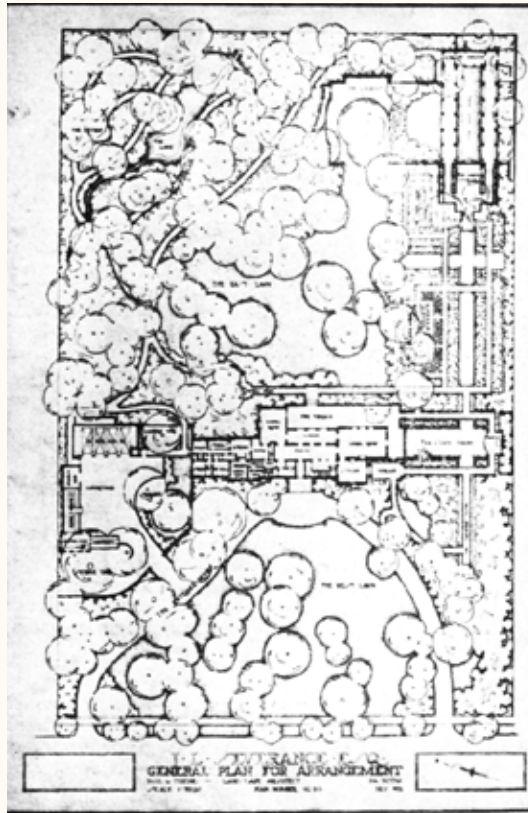
Working again with architect Reginald D. Johnson of the Jefferson *Miraflores* project, Thiene developed a plan for the *Westwood* grounds in 1921. The plan maintained the

site's large grove of native oak trees. Along the higher ground opposite the densest stand of oaks, Thiene aligned a series of formal gardens leading from the house and closely following one side of the property line. The first garden, immediately to one side of the house, was a flat panel of lawn edged on each side by wide floral borders and clipped hedges. The next gardens led to a peaceful pool of lilies on a lower terrace at a back corner of the property. Twin pergolas lined the pool which reflected a large pavilion modeled on the façade of the Pazzi Chapel, located within a cloister of Santa Croce in Florence.²⁰¹

From the pavilion, Thiene created meandering paths through the oaks, enhancing the route with dense informal plantings of tree fern, cycad, azalea, bird of paradise, clivia, camellia, and other shrubs and flowering plants.²⁰² The sound of softly flowing water amid the oaks was intended to draw strollers to an artificial brook that cascaded gently

Below: At John Strong Severance's *Westwood* estate in San Marino, Thiene led the way to other garden features with an inviting panel of grass bounded by wide flower borders and dual paving stone pathways.

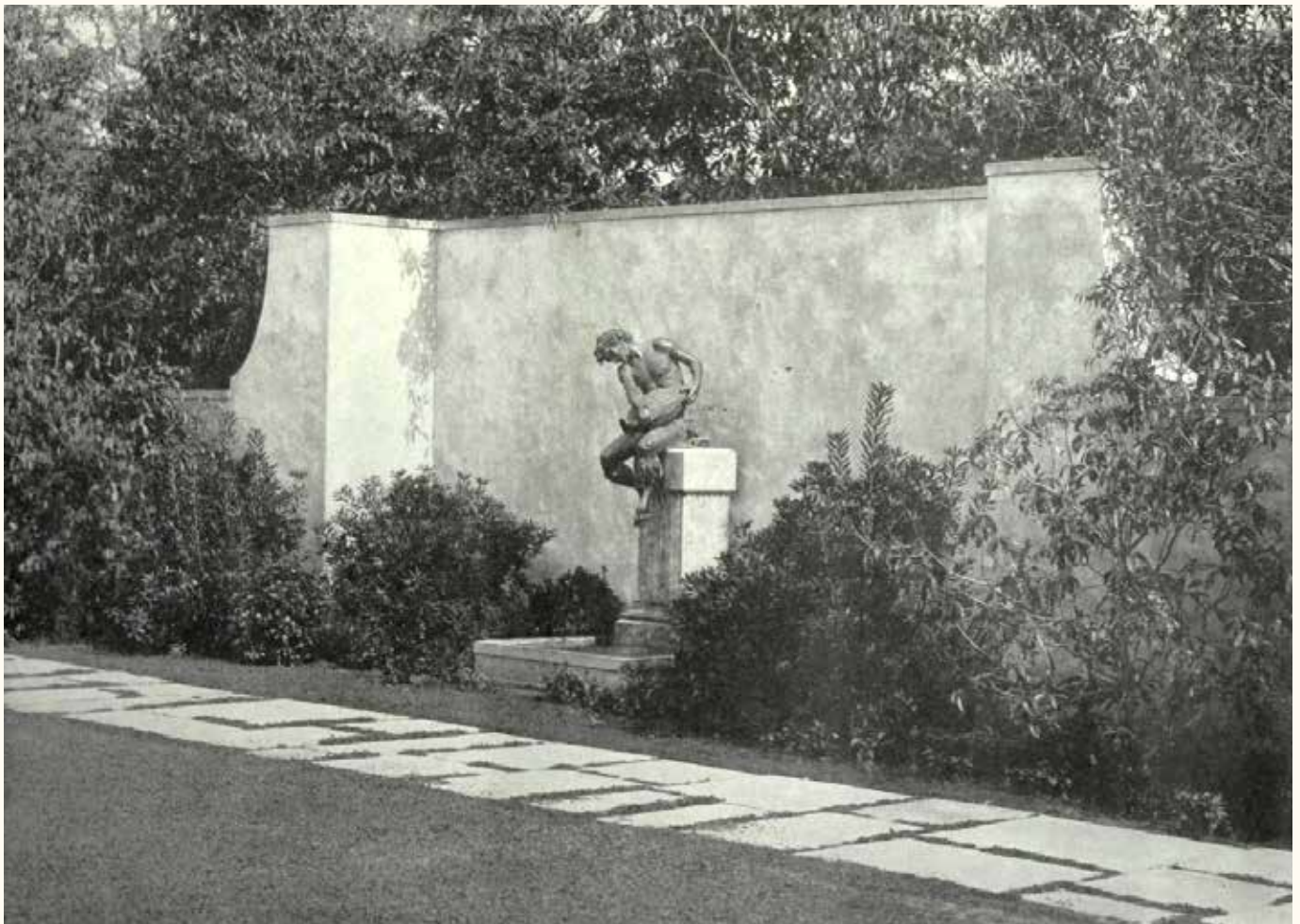


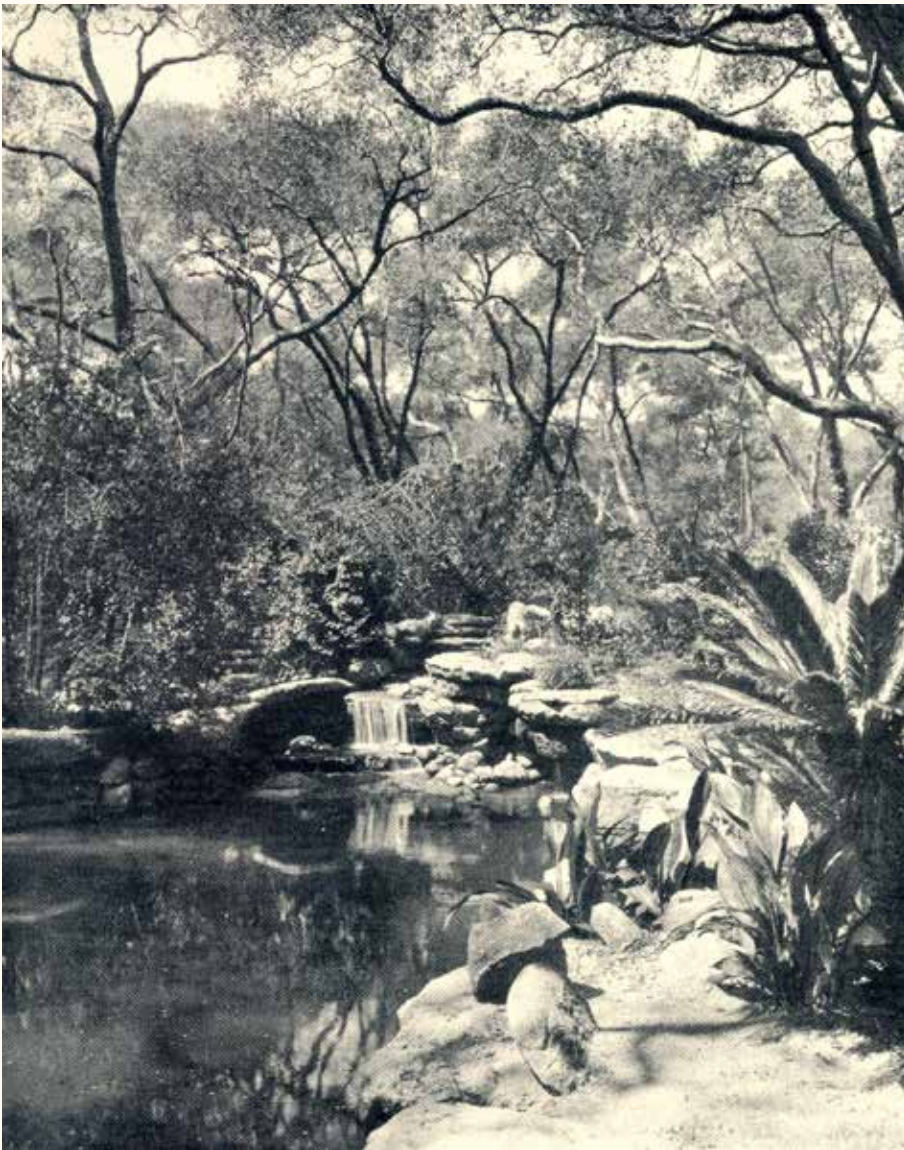


over artfully positioned stones to feed a shady lake, man-made in a naturalistic style and surrounded with plants. Garden gnomes might be expected to come to life around this picture-perfect, storybook water feature of the richly planted and beautiful Severance garden.

At a show of more than one thousand exhibits by Los Angeles architects in 1922, the work of Johnson and Thiene on the Severance property commanded an “honor award.” Separately, Thiene won in the landscape category for projects larger than one acre.²⁰³ *California Southland*, writing about the *Westwood* project simply stated: “This garden by Paul Thiene is a genuine work of art.”²⁰⁴

In 1957 a new house replaced the Severance home on the five-plus acres of the former *Westwood* estate at 1100 Oak Grove Avenue, San Marino, California. Aerial views of the property in 2023 show that elements of Thiene’s original landscape design have been preserved. The elongated formal gardens along the property line are clearly recognizable as are the twin pergolas lining the pool in its original location. A substantial area of the grounds is still populated with native oak trees.





Opposite, top: Ohio businessman and philanthropist John Strong Severance engaged Thiene in 1921 to redesign the oak strewn grounds of Westwood, his San Marino estate. The plan maintained a dense grove of native trees and placed formal garden features along the opposite property line. Thiene's landscaping at *Westwood* was praised as a genuine work of art and it won a 1922 architecture award in Los Angeles. Photographs from *California Southland*, January 1921.

Opposite, bottom: At John Strong Severance's *Westwood* estate in San Marino, Thiene led the way to other garden features with an inviting panel of grass bounded by wide flower borders and dual paving stone pathways. Photographs from *California Southland*, January 1921.

Above: Like a prize awaiting discovery, a lily pool flanked by twin pergolas is the last of a series of garden features along a property line at *Westwood*, the John Strong Severance estate in San Marino. For design inspiration on the large pavilion at one end of the pool, Thiene looked to Pazzi Chapel in Florence, Italy. Photographs from *California Southland*, January 1921.

Left: The five-acre *Westwood* estate of John Strong Severance in San Marino was home to many native oak trees, enhanced by Thiene with understory planting and winding pathways leading to a carefully constructed, but naturalistic lake, complete with a decorous cascade fed by an artificial brook. Photograph from *California Gardens*.

Milton E. Getz Estate, Beverly House (Beverly Hills, 1926–1928)

Below: Banking executive Milton E. Getz commissioned the well-regarded team of architect Gordon B. Kaufmann and landscape architect Thiene in 1926 to design a house and grounds on eight acres in Beverly Hills. For landscape features close to the symmetrical H-shaped house, Thiene established a central axis from front to back. He placed an elongated pool in the arrival court, aligned directly with the front door. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

Opposite page: At the Milton E. Getz estate in Beverly Hills, Thiene's central design axis ran indivisibly through the house, crossed the crazy-paved patio and, on a lower terrace, determined the placement of a center aligned wall fountain feeding a tiled pool and reflecting pond. Top: Photograph from *California Gardens*. Bottom: From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

Executive Milton E. Getz propelled the Union Bank and Trust Company into one of the most successful businesses in Southern California. He purchased an 8.25-acre Beverly Hills lot in 1926 upon which to build a home that reflected his wealth and success. The oddly shaped lot was three blocks from Sunset Boulevard and close to other lavish new homes, including *La Collina*, the estate of his brother-in-law, Benjamin R. Meyer. Getz consulted the architectural firm of Johnson, Kaufmann and Coate, tenants in his downtown Union Bank building, and Gordon Kaufmann was selected to design the house. Thiene was commissioned to handle the landscape design, reassembling the team that won lavish praise for the *La Collina* project.²⁰⁵

Kaufmann designed an H-shaped residence of 37,000 square feet, taking as his inspiration the Italian and French villas lining the Riviera. The exterior was terracotta colored stucco. Inside there were

murals, decorative ceilings, great fireplaces, French doors, floor-to-ceiling windows and paneled and carved wood. A barrel-vaulted ceiling in the ballroom, also used as a screening room, rose two floors, as did the handsome, wood-paneled Italianate library where a cantilevered gallery of books ran along three walls. Mrs. Getz, the former Estell Cohn, was a recognized rare book collector.

Thiene's landscape matched the grandeur of the house. The layout of the property again demonstrated the skill of Thiene and Kaufmann in making advantageous use of a difficult site. The Getz lot had five sides. The longest side gently curved up from Beverly Drive to the top of the lot. The upper part of the property was shaped like a wide triangle. The house was built on this high ground far above the street. The longest possible approach drive was created and lined on each side with dense tree plantings. The drive followed the long side of the property line and curved up into the peak of the triangle before turning back toward the front entrance court of the house. At 800 feet in length, it was described as one of the longest private driveways in Los Angeles.





Thiene established an axis straight through the middle of the house and centered formal landscape features at the front and back. In an entry court framed by the front wings of the house, he installed a fountain sitting within an elongated oval reflecting pool aligned with the front door. Restrained planting softened the stone and stucco surroundings. This water feature was a modest introduction to the elaborate Italian-inspired installation that dropped away from the terrace loggia at the back of the house. On the central axis, Thiene created a long and wide shallowly stepped cascade fed by a pool next to the house. Water made its way in gentle falls to a lower basin. The cascade was lined at each side with a wide border of mixed plants and twin stairways. The watercourse, plant borders and stairs were then enclosed within a double row of mature *Washingtonia robusta* palms, all retaining their rustling skirts of old fronds.²⁰⁶ In Italy the plant choice surely would have been stately cypress trees, but in Southern

California, tall palms were called upon to lend a suggestion of established grandeur to this new house.

On each side of this spectacular feature, Thiene installed formal gardens. Down the hill and closer to Beverly Drive, he built a retreat for swimming and enjoying the sun, interposing it into an existing orchard. The pool was a long oval with some extra curves, giving it an unusual shape. It may, in fact, be the first biomorphic-shaped swimming pool in California.²⁰⁷ A large flat lawn next to the pool invited sunbathing or a game of croquet. Across the lawn, a semicircular pergola shielded a row of ten dressing rooms. A distinctive stone walkway surrounded it all and led into each side of the pergola. This pool area was accorded its own page in a 1929 issue of *Architectural Digest*.²⁰⁸

As had been the case with *La Collina*, the work of Thiene and Kaufmann at the Getz Estate won extravagant praise. The house was featured in *Architectural Digest* in 1929,²⁰⁹ but fame for this property was



in its infancy. The house and grounds were purchased by actress Marion Davies in 1946 and the estate was renamed *Beverly House*. She lived there with William Randolph Hearst until his death in 1951. Davies stayed on in the house until her own passing in 1961.²¹⁰ Meanwhile, John and Jackie Kennedy honeymooned at the home in 1953 and Kennedy had presidential campaign offices there in 1960.

Although the grounds were subdivided in the 1960s and Paul Theine's landscape was lamentably altered, the house and its reduced acreage gained added fame as a film location, notably for "The Godfather" and "The Body Guard." It was a location for Beyoncé's 2020 visual album "Black Is King."

The property now includes just over three and one-half acres at 1011 N. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California. When offered for sale over the years, the very high listing prices—once \$196 million—have made news. In 2021 the property was sold for \$63.1 million in a real estate auction forced by a bankruptcy.²¹¹

Opposite: Thiene's glorious landscape statement at the Milton E. Getz estate in Beverly Hills was designed on a central axis, established at the front of the house. As the land falls away behind the house, Thiene's shallow, stepped cascade delivers water to a lower pool. Steps, paths and flower borders line the cascade, along with rows of stately palms meant to add a sense of established grandeur to this new garden. Photograph from *California Gardens*.

Below: Amid an orchard downhill from the main house on the Milton E. Getz Beverly Hills estate, a large inviting pool awaits bathers. It is believed to be the first biomorphic-shaped pool in California. Paved pathways lead to the circular pergola that offers some privacy to the dressing rooms. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.



Doheny Estate, Greystone (Beverly Hills, 1926-1928)

Mexican and California oil made Los Angeles resident Edward Laurence Doheny (1856-1935) one of the wealthiest men in the United States by the early twentieth century. Seeking a country retreat, he quietly bought up ten different lots of land several miles west of Los Angeles in sleepy Beverly Hills. By 1914, Doheny had assembled a ranch of 429 acres. In that same year, his only surviving child, "Ned," Edward Laurence Doheny, Jr. (1893-1929), married and began a family that grew to five children by 1926.

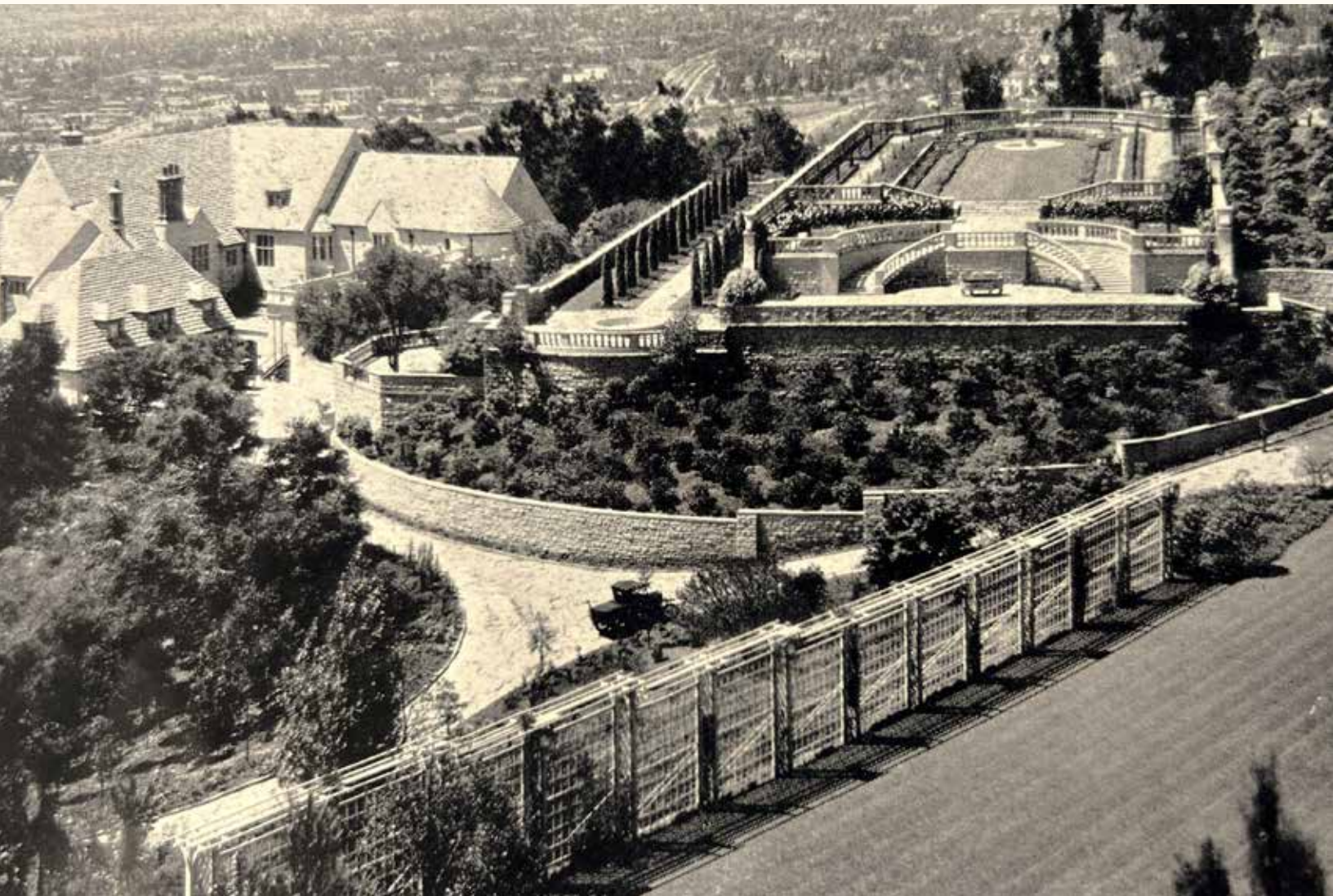
The senior Dohenys decided to build a new home on the ranch for their son and his family. Mrs. Carrie Doheny admired *La Collina*, the house built for Benjamin R. Meyer. Although the Dohenys did not want to repeat the Mediterranean styling of the Meyer house, they commissioned the same professionals who had created it, architect Gordon Kaufmann, now working independently and in constant demand, and landscape architect Paul G. Thiene.

Kaufmann designed a fifty-five-room,

Tudor-style residence of 46,000 square feet sitting amid nineteen acres of opulently landscaped grounds. When completed in 1928 it was the most expensive home built in California to that date. Inside, distinctive handcrafted stairways rose from checkered marble floors, walls were paneled, and the fireplaces oversized. Dazzling chandeliers hung from carved and coffered ceilings. The Indiana limestone used to clad the house and applied to massive retaining walls on the property inspired the name *Greystone*. Ownership of the house and landscaped grounds, along with the remaining 410 acres of the Doheny Ranch, was transferred by his parents to Ned Doheny for the token sum of \$10.

Projected to 2023 dollars, *Greystone* was a \$54,652,800 project. Offered the proverbial free hand and full purse, Thiene did not shy away from the opportunity presented. Landscape architect Alfred C. Kuehl,²¹² then working as a designer for Thiene, later said "the sky was the limit," on the Doheny place. When Kuehl asked what the clients might want, Thiene reputedly said "give them everything."²¹³ And, indeed, a multitude of landscape features were created on the rough canyon-riven acres surrounding

Below: The oil-rich Edward Lawrence Doheny quietly accumulated more than 400 acres in sleepy Beverly Hills and used some of the land to build a new home for his son's growing family. Architect Gordon B. Kaufmann and Thiene were commissioned to design the house and grounds. When completed in 1928, Greystone, named after its imported Indian limestone, was the most expensive house ever built in California. Credit From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.





Above: At *Greystone*, Thiene created some standard Italianate features with formal and restrained planting. A more relaxed recent approach to this feature embraces plentiful planting and added garden art. Credit Courtesy Susan Rosewood, Wikimedia Commons.



the mansion. The total cost of landscaping was listed in a 1929 report as more than \$600,000. Paul Thiene earned fees of \$114,017 for landscaping the residence and several thousand dollars more for his work around outbuildings, pools, pavilions, tennis courts, and other estate structures. In all, Thiene earned the 2023 equivalent of almost \$2 million dollars for his work at Greystone.

Thiene described *Greystone's* gardens in the August 1929 issue of *American Landscape Architect* by leading readers on an imaginary tour of the estate. More than twenty images illustrate his article detailing features of the garden in which "the minutest detail has not been overlooked."²¹⁴ Thiene described the initial preparation of the site as a huge undertaking. Due to poor soil and layers of hardpan, Thiene employed dynamite as an essential landscaping tool at *Greystone*, much as he had years before in Balboa Park when developing the San Diego exposition grounds. So much earth had to be moved that an adjacent canyon was purchased to hold all the transferred soil. When filled, the canyon's new flat surface became a meadow playground used by the Doheny children.

Thiene gamely refers to making an "old

English garden" for the Tudor-style house without calling attention to the Italianate bones plainly on view. In keeping with the notion of a landscape appropriate for an English Tudor-style home, Thiene leveled a sloping area in front of the house for a sweeping grass lawn of five acres. Garden art was imported from England. Two water features close to the house were formal and restrained. The entry court was decorated with a simple circular fountain surrounded by low plantings. At one side of the house a long reflecting lily pond was fed by a decorative fountain. Farther up the rising land, the largest of the formal terrace gardens was laid out. It has neat lawns, clipped hedges, flower borders and a large fountain. The balustrades are Italian style as is the twin curved stairways that move off this level to a lower garden where another fountain introduces a long allée of Italian cypress trees running parallel to the tall retaining wall of the upper terrace.²¹⁵

The multiple levels and terraces of the grounds received landscape treatment suitable to their use as stables, tennis courts, swimming pool, rose garden, cutting garden, orchid house, guest house, entry gates, and service buildings. There was extensive

Opposite: *Greystone* was built among hills and canyons. The site required massive amounts of earthmoving and fill, but Thiene also tamed the land and created garden space with the use of tall and sturdy retaining walls. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

Below: On leveled ground far above the house, Thiene built *Greystone's* largest formal garden, a perfection of green lawns, clipped hedges, splashing fountains and blooming flowers, all surrounded by Italian balustrades. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

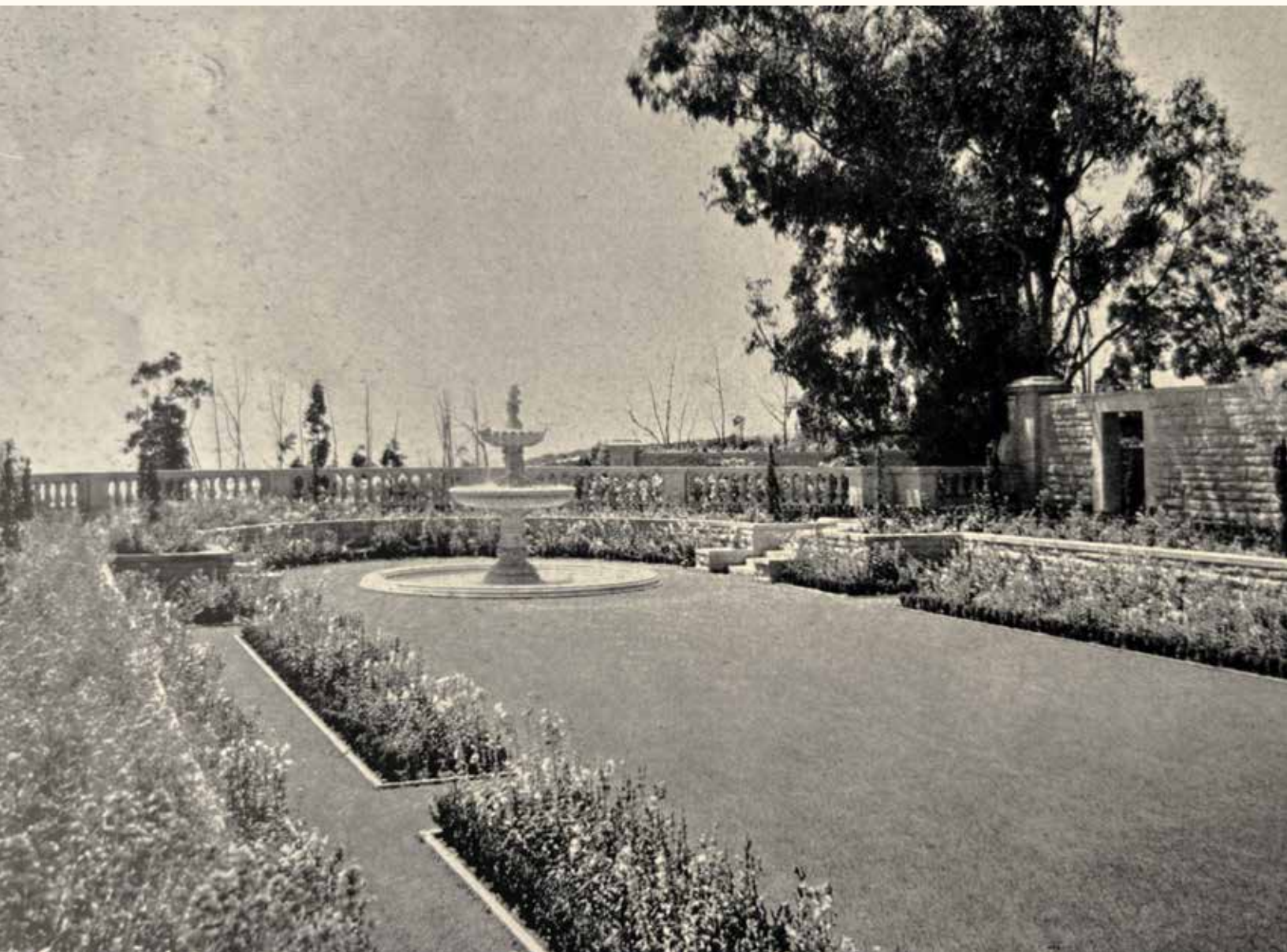


outdoor lighting and a private water supply with an extensive and up-to-date irrigation system. Thiene created two artificial lakes (one fully stocked with trout), two brooks and two waterfalls, one of which cascaded eighty feet down a hillside, spilling over carefully placed hand-hewn stone slabs. The cascade operated with an on-off switch. Thiene's characteristic dense tree planting was used to camouflage or enhance, as the situation demanded, and was particularly effective in shrouding the naturalistic artificial lakes in a forest setting. Numerous mature specimen trees were transplanted onto the property and one hillside was planted with peaches, almonds and genestra for soft spring color. A staff of ten workers cared for the gardens once they were completed.²¹⁶

In addition to its public notoriety for ostentation, *Greystone* is associated with a tragic scandal and unresolved mystery. On February 16, 1929, just months after settling into the new house, Ned Doheny and his secretary, Hugh Plunkett, were found fatally shot in a guest bedroom. Which of them

committed murder and which suicide is an ongoing subject of speculation. Three years later, Ned's widow, Lucy Doheny, married investment banker Leigh McMaster Battson. They raised her children at *Greystone*, remaining until 1955 when the house and ranch land were sold to real estate developer Paul Trousdale. With his persuasion, the City of Beverly Hills annexed the property and Trousdale created 532 lots on the former ranch land.²¹⁷

Greystone mansion and sixteen surrounding acres were sold to a wealthy Chicago buyer who eventually decided to demolish the house and subdivide the property. The City of Beverly Hills prevented the destruction of *Greystone* by purchasing it in 1965. From 1969 until 1982 the American Film Institute occupied the house. The estate became a city park on September 16, 1971. In 1976 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Today the property is open to the public and may be rented for weddings and other events. Dozens of movies and television shows have been filmed there.



The house and grounds have received extensive refurbishment in recent years, led by the City of Beverly Hills and a nonprofit organization, Friends of Greystone.²¹⁸ Although most of Thiene's sumptuous water installations are gone, those garden features that have been retained and restored faithfully represent Thiene's original design intent and are rare publicly accessible examples of his work. *Greystone* is located at 905 Loma Vista Drive, Beverly Hills.

With this commission for the Doheny family, Paul G. Thiene reached the pinnacle of his career in terms of financial reward and project prestige. He was the landscape architect for the most expensive home ever built in California to that date and had been selected by a family wealthy enough to hire any landscape architect in the world. Yet, the Doheny estate and the three other notable projects described here are only highlights of Thiene's busy and broad-ranging practice.

Opposite: On leveled ground far above the house, Thiene built *Greystone's* largest formal garden, a perfection of green lawns, clipped hedges, splashing fountains and blooming flowers, all surrounded by Italian balustrades. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

Below: Cypress alley. One level below the Italianate garden is a long Italian cypress alley with flagstone path. Courtesy Susan Rosewood, Wikimedia Commons.



Opposite: Among the many water features Thiene installed at the Doheny's *Greystone* estate, one of the most dazzling was this cascading waterfall, tumbling 80 feet down a hillside though carefully placed hand-hewn stone slabs. From *American Landscape Architect*, August 1929.

Endnotes

- 1 Paul G. Thiene, "Exposition Flora," *The Official Guide Book of the Panama-California Exposition San Diego 1915*, 55-79. A regional garden publication informed its readers that Thiene would supply them with a copy of his plant list at cost (twenty-five cents). "Tales of a Traveler—San Diego Exposition," *Pacific Garden* 8, no. 8 (July 1915), 5-6.
- 2 Carleton Monroe Winslow, et al., *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1916); Eugen Neuhaus, *The San Diego Garden Fair* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1916). Despite the titles of these books, both provide scant descriptions of the exposition gardens and neither names an exposition landscape architect. In a single mention in the Winslow book, Paul Thiene is credited on page 130 with planting the exposition's Botanical Building. No individual is credited with the exposition landscape in Neuhaus' book and Thiene's name does not appear.
- 3 Robert L. Horn of Harlan Batholomew & Associates wrote a history of Balboa Park when his planning firm was commissioned to create a park master plan. It was serialized in issues of *California Garden* (50, no. 4; 51, nos. 1-4; 52, no. 1, 1959-61). Gregory Montes published a three-part history of Balboa Park's earliest years in the *Journal of San Diego History* (23, no. 2; 25, no. 1; 28, no. 1, 1977-82), but ends his story in 1911, just as Thiene was hired at the park exposition nursery. Richard Amero wrote on many aspects of the park's history, compiled a voluminous archive of Balboa Park information (now housed at the San Diego History Center Research Library), and published one book on the exposition. Thiene's name appears a few times in Amero's works, but with scant elaboration. Richard Amero, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition*, ed. Michael Kelly. (Charleston: The History Press, 2013), 55. A later work mentions Thiene only as someone assisting Frank P. Allen, Jr. at the 1915 exposition but does include Thiene's name in the book index. Roger M. Showley, *Balboa Park A Millennium History* (Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp., 2000), 58. Some authors were uncertain about who created the exposition landscape. The son of exposition architect Carleton Winslow enigmatically wrote that Frank P. Allen, Jr., the director of works to whom Thiene reported, was "credited with much of the planting and landscaping as distinct from the general landscape design."
- 4 John Blocker, "Paul Thiene," email to Nancy Carol Carter, December 16, 2013.
- 5 Nancy Carol Carter, "Balboa Park: The Lasting Influence of the Panama-California Exposition of 1915," *Pacific Horticulture* 76, no. 1 (Winter 2015), 29-34; Nancy Carol Carter, "Balboa Park Transformed: The Panama-California Exposition Landscape," *Journal of San Diego History* 61, no. 1 (Winter 2015), 279-298; Nancy Carol Carter, "The Accidental Landscapers of San Diego's 1915 Panama-California Exposition," *Eden* 18, no. 3 (2015), 3-9.
- 6 Nancy Carol Carter, "Introduction to Exposition Landscapes," in *Balboa Park Exposition Designers 1915-1935*, ed. Martina Schimitschek (San Diego: Our Heritage Press, 2015), vii-x. This book was published in conjunction with the exhibition, "Balboa Park: Exposition Designers 1915-1935, The Making of the Dream City," mounted at the Marston House Museum and Gardens in Balboa Park by Save Our Heritage Organisation, San Diego.
- 7 Balboa Park Committee of One Hundred, "Board of Directors Minutes of Annual Meeting, Friday, May 27, 2016." <https://c100.org/bod/minutes/2016-05-27.pdf> (accessed June 1, 2018). The award was presented at a May 27, 2016, luncheon to a granddaughter of Paul G. Thiene, Maya Redwitz, attending with her husband Tom Redwitz both of Laguna Beach.
- 8 "Country Place Era," The Cultural Landscape Foundation, <https://www.tclf.org/category/defined-landscape-types/garden-and-estate/country-place-era-gardenCountry Place Era Garden>, accessed April 7, 2023. Robin Karson wrote about landscapes of the era and their creators in *A Genius for Place: American Landscape of the Country Place Era* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).
- 9 Victoria Padilla, *Southern California Gardens* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 106.
- 10 The one institutional documentary collection of Thiene materials is limited to photographs and scrapbooks. No personal or business papers are included. Paul Thiene Collection, (1962-1), Environmental Design Archives. College of Environmental Design. University of California, Berkeley. Berkeley, California
- 11 Private and personal papers belonging to Thiene were originally found in an unprocessed collection of municipal documents from the period of the Panama-California Exposition. That collection, located at the San Diego Public Library, was subsequently processed and transferred to the San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 12 Frederick "Fritz" Thiene was born August 26, 1877, three years before his younger brother Paul. Six years after Paul Thiene came to the United States, Fritz followed, arriving in New York on November 30, 1909. He lived with Paul in San Diego in 1910. After becoming a supervisor at the Panama-California Exposition, Paul secured a job for his brother at the exposition nursery. The 1920 Census of the United States counted a Fred Thiene of the right age living as a lodger in Los Angeles and working as a gardener for a "moving picture company." The 1930 Census lists Fred Thiene in San Francisco, noting that he was single, living as a lodger and working as a gardener. Fritz died under mysterious circumstances in San Francisco on June 23, 1933. The funeral record includes an instruction to "mail copy of inquest to Brother."
- 13 James J. Lucas, "Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper," Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962 [5]. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- 14 Christian Deegen (1797-1888) established a commercial dahlia growing business in 1824, thereby founding "a dahlia dynasty in Köstritz that remains unrivaled to this day. While his own nursery no longer exists, no fewer than thirteen nurseries call Bad Köstritz home." Martin Král, *Of Dahlia Myths and Aztec Mythology—the Dahlia in History*. Seattle, 2014, 16, www.pugetsounddahlias.org/DahliaMyth (accessed November 23, 2015).
- 15 Johann Sieckmann, a former estate head gardener with long experience in growing dahlias, became Deegen's first rival, opening his dahlia hybridizing business in Köstritz in 1836. Král, *Of Dahlia Myths*.
- 16 A 1914 United States government document lists Dr. Henry Settegast from the Köstritz Agricultural Institute as an official nursery stock inspector for Germany, appointed to comply with U.S. import requirements under the Plant Quarantine Act of August 20, 1912. "List of Countries Which Now Maintain Nursery Stock Inspection, with List of Official Inspectors of Such Countries and Wording of Official Seals," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Horticultural Board, Service and Regulatory Announcements, August 1914, No. 7 (September 25, 1914).
- 17 The development of "natural" gardens in Germany after the 18th century is traced in Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, *Nature and Ideology Natural Garden Design in the Twentieth Century*, in Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection. Vol. 18 Washington, D.C. (1997) (available as a .pdf document in 2003, www.doaks.org/etexts.html). See also, G. Groning and J. Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Changes in the Philosophy of Garden Architecture in the 20th Century and Their Impact upon the Social and Spatial Environment," *Journal of Garden History* 9 no. 2 (1989), 54.
- 18 "Town of Bad Köstritz (English)," <http://www.stadt-bad-koestritz.de/cms/%2Fstadtportrait%2Fenglish.htm/> (accessed March 20, 2015).
- 19 James J. Lucas, "Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper," Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962, [5]. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- 20 "Floriculture in San Diego," *Florists' Review* 31, no. 785 (December 12, 1912), 47.
- 21 "New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957," digital image s.v. "Paul Thiene," arriving in New York aboard the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* arriving from Bremen, Germany, October 1, 1903, *Ancestry.com*.
- 22 1900 United States Census, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey, digital image s.v. "Julius Gerlach," *Ancestry.com*.
- 23 Julius Gerlach, born 1845, a resident of Newark, New Jersey, departed Hamburg on August 29, 1903, arriving in New York. Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1850-1934, digital image s.v. "Julius Gerlach," *Ancestry.com*. Thiene followed in October 1903. Julius Gerlach died on March 9, 1908, at age 63 while vacationing in St. Augustine, Florida. His funeral was held at his home, 841 Broad Street in Newark. "Funeral of Julius Gerlach," *Star and Newark Advertiser*, March 10, 1908, 12.
- 24 The company bought and sold industrial equipment, equipped new plants and held industrial liquidation sales. *Newark, the City of Industry: Facts and Figures Concerning the Metropolis of New Jersey*. Newark: Board of Trade, 1912, 133. Paul Thiene would eventually have occasion to communicate with his uncle's friends, business partners and estate executors, Abram P. Morris and Christian Abhe.
- 25 The address of the shared home was 944 Broad Street in Newark. *Newark, 1908 New Jersey City Directory*, digital image s.v. "Julius Gerlach," *Ancestry.com*.
- 26 Thiene's naturalization in San Diego Superior Court in 1912 was almost exactly nine years after his arrival in the United States. Frank Sessions, brother of horticulturist Kate O. Sessions, presented an affidavit attesting to Thiene's length of residency in California and good moral character. The naturalization form Thiene completed has some minor inconsistencies with the record of his immigration date and port of arrival. Naturalization Record in the Superior Court of San Diego, California, 1883-1958, "U.S. Naturalization Records - Original Documents, 1795-1972," digital image s.v. "Paul Thiene," *Ancestry.com*.
- 27 Thiene's Mediterranean cruise and plans to spend five months visiting gardens in Holland, Germany, France, Italy and England were announced in the newspaper. "P.G. Thiene to Sail," *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 1931, 18. Thiene's return date is established by his New York arrival from an English port was on June 12, 1931, he is listed as age 50. "New York Passenger List, 1920-1957," digital image s.v. "Paul Thiene," *Ancestry.com*.
- 28 When versions of the incorrect information were printed in two standard sources, it became widespread and accepted. "Biographies of Designers," in David C. Streetfield, *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 262; "Paul G. Thiene," in Winifred Starr Dobyns (1931) *California Gardens* reprint with a new intro. by Carol Greentree (Santa Barbara: Allen A. Knoll, 1996), 229.
- 29 The University of California, Berkeley, accepted the Thiene archive in 1962 and processed the collection in 1998. The Biographical Note included in the finding documents corrects the date of Thiene's immigration to the United States (1903, not 1898) but repeats other biographical errors. Paul G. Thiene Collection, (1962-1), Environmental Design Archives. College of Environmental Design. University of California, Berkeley.
- 30 The immigration date is correct and there is no claim that Thiene was sent to San Diego by the Olmsted Brothers in Charles A. Birnbaum and Stephanie S. Foell, *Shaping the American Landscape: New Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design Project* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 347.
- 31 James J. Lucas, "Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper," Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- 32 Only one reference to Thiene is present in the client and employee card files preserved at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, Massachusetts. It lists Paul G. Thiene as Superintendent of Horticulture at the Panama-California Exposition. Michele Clark, "Paul Thiene," email to Nancy Carol Carter, Apr. 2, 2014.
- Thiene was living in other states and engaged in other businesses during the time that he was said to be working in Boston with the Olmsteds.
- 33 James J. Lucas, "Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper," Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962, [5]. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley. Extensive research on the name "Danuldes" and variants of that spelling have not identified any Pennsylvania or New Jersey



business. An inquiry to the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie Mellon University turned up no leads. Lucas apparently misunderstood. Thiene, in his German-accented English may have said that he worked with "the uncles," meaning Julius and Christian Gerlach with whom he stayed upon arrival in the United States.

34 J. D. Eisele, a vice president at the Dreer seed company replied to Thiene's letter of March 28, 1910, posted from San Diego. Letter, J. D. Eisele to Paul G. Thiene, 4 April 1910, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

35 "Paul Theine (sic), Florist" is listed with a residence address of 1149 Polk Street, San Francisco. U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995, digital image s.v. "Theine," *Ancestry.com*.

36 "U.S. Naturalization Records, 1840-1957," digital image s.v. "Paul Thiene," *Ancestry.com*.

37 "Help Wanted," *San Francisco Call*, September 13, 1899, 10.

38 "Deaths—Marie Pouyal," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 14, 1905, 11; "Deaths—Alfred Pouyal," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 14, 1906, 6.

39 "Earthquake and Fire Map of the City and County of San Francisco California. Drawn and Published by Burnite & Bates Engineers & Draftsman," Barry Lawrence Ruderman Map Collection, Stanford University, <https://exhibits.stanford.edu/ruderman/catalog/kh807rw4514> (accessed May 5, 2021).

40 Mike Francis, "William Hawkins 'Legacy of the Olmsted Brothers in Portland' Traces City's Appreciation for Outdoor Spaces," *The Oregonian*, October 15, 2014 http://www.oregonlive.com/books/index.ssf/2014/10/the_legacy_of_the_olmsted_broth.html (accessed March 13, 2015).

41 By 1871 Portland had a General German Aid Society that provided benevolent services and welcomed new arrivals with German origins. German American Society [Portland, Oregon], <https://www.germanamerican.org/hist> (accessed April 14, 2021).

42 "Real Estate Transactions," *Morning Oregonian*, December 19, 1905, 15, <https://newspaperarchive.com/portland-morning-oregonian-dec-19-1905> (accessed April 14, 2021).

43 This agreement formalized the business relationship of Jakob Feser, Otto Griessel and Paul Thiene all of Montavilla, Oregon. All were equal partners in ownership and profit share, though the capital contributions varied: Feser (\$5,000), Griessel (\$1,500) and Thiene (\$500). The partnership owned a ten-acre tract of land and conducted business as florists, landscape gardeners and nurserymen. The partners agreed to devote all their compensated work to the partnership and set terms for any partner wishing to leave the business. [Montavilla Floral Company Business Agreement], 8 November 1906, Box 300871, File 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

44 Paul Thiene sold out to his two partners in the Montavilla Floral Company (renamed by 1908 as the Mountain View Floral Company). He agreed to a non-compete clause prohibiting him from entering a like business in the city of Portland, Oregon, for one year and received the \$720 payout for his one-third interest in the business. The Mountain View Floral Company was located at East 72nd and Mill Street, Portland. [Montavilla Floral Company Partnership Termination Agreement], 10 August 1908, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners., Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

45 "U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989," Portland [Oregon] City Directory, 1907, 1908, 1909, digital image s.v. "Paul Thiene," *Ancestry.com*.

46 Langton was born and educated in Alabama, lived in West Virginia, then opened a New York City office as a

consulting geologist and engineer. He is sometimes identified as "Langdon," the spelling used before he adopted an ancestral family "t" in place of the "d." Langton developed an interest in landscape architecture and "gradually drifted into" the work, "rising to eminence in the profession." Working from Manhattan, he obtained commissions stretching from Long Island to New Jersey to Pennsylvania. He designed and executed the large West Side Park in Jersey City and a park at Harrison, New Jersey. Langton was profited by a friend in the field of geology after his death. Eugene Allen Smith, "Memoir of Daniel W. Langton, Jr.," *Bulletin of the Geological Society of America* 21, no. 1 (March 1910), 13-16. There is also a memorial resolution on file at the American Society of Landscape Architects noting Langton's status as an original member. Board of Trustees, American Society of Landscape Architects, "Resolution of June 28, 1909," cited in Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 388.

47 "Landscape Artists Organize," *New York Times*, April 7, 1899, 6.

48 Allen Smith, "Memoir of Daniel W. Langton, Jr.," *Bulletin of the Geological Society of America* 21, no. 1 (March 1910), 13-16.

49 M. G. Van Rennselaer, "Proposed Plan for Madison Square, New York City," *Garden and Forest* 9, no. 424 (April 8, 1896), 142-144.

50 Drumthwacket is now the official residence of the governor of New Jersey and is maintained as a historical property. "Drumthwacket," <https://drumthwacket.org>, accessed September 7, 2018. See also, Mac K. Griswold, Eleanor Weller and Helen E. Rollins, *The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners, Private Estates, 1890-1940* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 124. In discussing the emergence of an exceptionally wealthy class of Americans in the nineteenth century who could build European-level stately homes, the authors provide the example of Langton's client, Moses Taylor Pyne, who upset established Princeton residents with his *nouveau riche* ostentation. Langton's elaborate work on the Pyne estate was enhanced with imported peacocks and an aviary. Pyne's garden was captured in one of the early photography collections of Frances Benjamin Johnston and Mattie Edwards Hewitt. Sam Watters, "Biography of Frances Benjamin Johnson," Cultural Landscape Foundation, <http://www.tclf.org> (accessed July 14, 2014).

51 Wharton described the Villa Gamberaia garden in detail because it combined (page 46): ". . . almost every typical excellence of the old Italian garden: free circulation of sunlight and air about the house; abundance of water; easy access to dense shade; sheltered walks with different points of view; variety of effect produced by the skillful use of different levels; and, finally, breadth and simplicity of composition." She also admired the subdivision of spaces. Edith Wharton, *Italian Villas and Their Gardens* (New York: The Century Co., 1904, repr. New York: Da Capo Press, 1988), 41-48.

52 Allen Smith, "Memoir of Daniel W. Langton, Jr.," *Bulletin of the Geological Society of America* 21, no. 1 (March 1910), 13-16.

53 "I was wondering what had become of you after the death of our mutual friend, Mr. Langton," Eisele wrote. Letter, J. D. Eisele to Paul G. Thiene, 4 April 1910, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive. In 1919 Thiene's friend J. D. Eisele became president of the Henry A. Dreer seed business.

54 This may have been the home of G. C. Wilcox near Wayne, Pennsylvania. As president of the Suburban Title & Trust Bank Wilcox made news several years later when his bank failed during the Great Depression. "Ex-Banker Flees Crowd," *New York Times*, April 14, 1932, 11.

55 "Artist Langton a Suicide," *New York Times*, June 22,

1909, 16.

56 Almost one year later, Thiene was still trying to collect unpaid earnings from Langton's widow, according to a copy of a letter he wrote and presumably mailed. In a respectful tone, he asked for \$116, the amount previously approved by the Langton family's estate attorney. Whether he ever received payment is unknown. Draft letter, Paul G. Thiene to Berenice Langton, 16 May 1910, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

57 "U.S. Naturalization Records, 1840-1957," digital image s.v. "Paul Thiene," *Ancestry.com*.

58 A death record for Christian Julius Gerlach has not been located, but a copy of his will and related letters was left by Thiene among other San Diego Parks Commission documents. Last Will and Testament of Christian Julius Gerlach, 15 June 1900, Box 300870, Folder 6, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

59 The Olmsteds were selected to design the San Diego exposition in November 1910. "Committee Selects Olmsted to Plan Park and Fair," *San Diego Union*, November 10, 1910, 9.

60 The purchase was concluded one year before the title was officially transferred. San Diego County Recorder. *Deed Book* [Ownership transfer, Block 423 Old Town, 29 March 1911], San Diego, California, 1911, 514.

61 Thiene wrote about the purchase terms of his property and his need for money in an undated draft of a 1910 letter. Requesting early payment of money he was owed under the terms of his New Jersey uncle's will. Undated draft letter, Paul G. Thiene to Abram P. Morris, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

62 The popularity of Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 romantic novel *Ramona* was exploited by the marketing of a historic adobe building in Old Town San Diego as "*Ramona's* Wedding Place." Thiene apparently thought the name association would benefit his business and signal his nursery's location.

63 In 1910, Thiene corresponded with nurseries from Los Angeles to Germany in pursuit of nursery stock, as established by reply letters to Thiene at his *Ramona* Nursery in Old Town San Diego. [Various business letters], Box 300870, Folder 6, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

64 In a copy of one letter, Thiene states that he is writing "on the recommendation of Miss A. M. Rainford." Alice Rainford was a protégé of horticulturist Kate O. Sessions who became a prominent San Diego businesswoman after purchasing Sessions' florist business. Copy of letter, Paul G. Thiene to H. N. Gage, 1 April 1910, Box 300870, Folder 6, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

65 R. W. Connolly, "Monster Rally to End Campaign for Greater City," *San Diego Union*, August 8, 1910, 7.

66 Robert E. Connolly, "Thousands Pack City Streets and Cheer Speakers at Final Bond Campaign," *San Diego Union*, August 9, 1910, 7.

67 Thiene's first place prize was for the largest and best collection of dahlias. "Fourth Fall Floral Exhibit Great Success," *California Garden* 2, no. 5 (November 1910), 4; "Talking About Our Friends," *California Garden* 2:6 (December 1910), 13.

68 "San Diego Floral Exhibition," *American Florist* 35, no. 1171 (November 12, 1910), 781.

69 Thiene's half-page advertisement for the *Ramona* Nursery appeared in *California Garden* 2, no. 6 (December 1910),

17. The editorial staff of *California Garden* added an illustration of two palm trees growing near Thiene's nursery. (These "Serra palms" planted in 1769 as the site of the first Franciscan mission, were a revered San Diego landmark.) Letter, G. T. Keene to Paul G. Thiene, 28 November 1910, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

70 Fritz Thiene's arrival year is stated in his declaration of intention to seek American citizenship, issued March 21, 1917, by the federal court in Los Angeles. "U.S., Naturalization Records - Original Documents, 1795-1972 (World Archives Project), digital image s.v. "Fritz Thiene," *Ancestry.com*; his residence in Old Town San Diego is recorded in the 1910 United States Census, San Diego, San Diego County, California, digital image s. v., "Thiene." *Ancestry.com*.

71 Thiene was an heir to the estate of Christian Julius Gerlach, his New Jersey uncle. Gerlach's will allowed his executor to purchase the Gerlach business and pay off the heirs in installments. Undated draft letter, Paul G. Thiene to Abram B. Morris, Box 300871, Folder 1-26, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

72 Copy of letter, Paul G. Thiene to J. A. Bauer Pottery Company, 22, February 1911; Letter, J. A. Bauer to Paul G. Thiene, 23 February 1911, replying to Thiene's effort to cancel an order for flowerpots, Box 300870, Folder 6, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

73 It is possible that Thiene was inquiring about San Francisco employment on behalf of his brother Fritz, rather than seeking personal options. Letter, H. Plath to Thiene, 27 March 1911, Box 300870, Folder 6, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

74 Paul Thiene was employed at the Panama-California Exposition nursery before March 18, 1911, when he was mentioned in Olmsted business correspondence. Letter, Harold Hill Blossom to James Frederick Dawson, 18 March 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

75 The Olmsteds constructed a heated green house and potting shed in Balboa Park during January and February 1911. [Typed document listing expenses], 27 February 1911, Box 300871, Folder 1-27, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive. By March 3, 1911, the nursery also had an office, storage and tool house, a lath house and hot beds. Open land had been plowed, tons of manure had been acquired, and a fence was under construction. "Report of Labor Cost on Park Improvement during the months of January and February and until March 3, 1911," 7 March 1911, Box 300870, Folder 4, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

76 The Olmsted business archive has no record of Thiene's employment in 1911. Michele Clark. Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts, email to Nancy Carol Carter, Apr. 2, 2014. Thiene's hiring at the exposition nursery is confirmed in multiple other sources, including Olmsted employee letters and the San Diego newspapers.

77 Blossom established a private landscape practice in 1919. "H. H. Blossom Dead; Landscape Designer," *New York Times*, December 4, 1935, 23. Blossom's long letters while in residence in San Diego, usually reporting to James Frederick Dawson, are filled with details of plant purchases and nursery stock and often contain gossipy news of exposition politics and San Diego personalities.

78 James Frederick Dawson became the first Associate Member of the Olmsted Brothers firm in 1906 and a Full Member in 1922, spending his entire career working on Olmsted projects across the western United States and internationally. "James Dawson, 67, Landscape Expert,"

New York Times, April 25, 1941, 19.

79 The local newspaper touted the "modern and complete" nursery installed by the Olmsteds. "Tree Planting at Balboa Park is Being Rushed," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), March 1, 1911, 3.

80 Letter, Harold Hill Blossom to James Frederick Dawson, Mar. 16, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress. Having personally recruited Cumming after carefully checking out his previous employment, Dawson was puzzled by this inconvenient personnel issue. Letter, James Frederick Dawson to Harold Hill Blossom, March 23, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

81 Letter, James Frederick Dawson to Harold Hill Blossom, March 24, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

82 Even John Charles Olmsted got involved because Frank P. Allen, Jr., the exposition director of works was pushing hard for the Olmsteds to get the landscaping work underway. Frank Sessions, brother of San Diego horticulturist Kate O. Sessions, was considered for the job but was not put in charge. Letter, John Charles Olmsted to James Fred Dawson, March 16, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress. Frank Sessions did work with the exposition ground crews, specializing in overseeing the removal of large trees donated by local homeowners and their moving and subsequent replanting on the exposition grounds.

83 "Seeks Plants for Expo Grounds," *San Diego Union and Daily Bee*, February 9, 1911, 9; "1,000,000 Plants are Wanted by Artist Olmsted," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), February 10, 1911, 7. The exposition nursery was just established and both John Charles Olmsted and Olmsted firm partner James Frederick Dawson were in San Diego on February 10, 1911, when Olmsted made his dramatic appeal to San Diego gardeners, carried by both newspapers.

84 The experience and propagating skills of Donald were lauded in several San Diego newspaper articles after his arrival. Donald is "a serious Scotsman" who has won horticultural prizes in England one reported. "Model Nursery is Thriving in Park," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), February 23, 1911, 3. Donald was previously head gardener for William Tiffany on Long Island, New York, managing a staff of 125 according to "Exposition Architect Goes North," *San Diego Union*, April 9, 1911, 25. Donald has 94,000 cuttings thriving in the exposition nursery according to "Plants in Exposition Nursery," *San Diego Union*, April 11, 1911, 5.

85 Letter, James Frederick Dawson to Harold Hill Blossom, March 24, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

86 Letter, Harold Hill Blossom to James Frederick Dawson, April 14, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

87 After two months of exposition nursery employment, Thiene's bank balance stood at \$217.96 (a purchasing power of about \$7010 in 2025). Letter, Merchants National Bank of San Diego to Paul G. Thiene, 20 May 1911, Box 300870, Folder 1, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive; San Diego County Recorder, [Ownership transfer, Block 423 Old Town, March 7, 1923], *Deed Book*, San Diego, California, 1923, 931.

88 "Olmsted Resigns; Opposed to New Site Chosen for Exposition," *San Diego Union*, September 10, 1911, 8.

89 Letter, Frank P. Allen, Jr. to J. F. Dawson, October 16, 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

90 The Olmsteds were contracted to make improvements to Balboa Park as well as to design and landscape the exposition grounds. When the Olmsteds resigned, these responsibilities were separated. Allen took responsibility for the exposition ground only; the San Diego Park Commission hired John Morley as a new San Diego park superintendent. With solid experience from the public parks of Los Angeles, he is known to have advised Allen and Thiene on some of their exposition improvements, but Morley initially had authority over areas of Balboa Park falling outside the exposition grounds. Morley served as superintendent of parks from 1911 to 1939.

91 "Joseph W. Sefton, Jr. Resigns," *San Diego Union*, August 17, 1912, II-11.

92 Letter, Paul G. Thiene to Frank P. Allen, Jr., 7 September 1911, Box 300871, Folder 1-27, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

93 Harold Hill Blossom to Olmsted Brothers Firm, 3 September 1911, Job #4051, Records of the Olmsted Associates, 1863-1971 [microfilm], Manuscript Room, Library of Congress. This letter may be read as further evidence that the Olmsted organization did not know Thiene from earlier employment. Veteran Olmsted employees William Donald, H. H. Blossom and Fred Dawson regarded Thiene as a San Diego discovery.

94 The caption of a full-page photograph of the exposition nursery claimed that, at 100 acres, it was "the largest nursery in the State of California." "The San Diego Exposition," *Out West* 4, no. 4 (October 1912), 263.

95 "Visit to Exposition Nurseries," *California Garden* 5, no. 2 (August 1913) 7, 8.

96 The exact date that Thiene became superintendent of landscape is unknown, but it was sometime after August 1912 and before mid-1913. Thiene is still addressed as Nursery Superintendent in this Panama-California Exposition correspondence. Letter, Frank P. Allen, Jr. to P. G. Thiene, 28 August 1912, Box 300871, Folder 1-20, Balboa Park Commission (San Diego), Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

97 "Exposition Garden Spots are to be Perpetuated," *San Diego Union and Daily Bee*, February 15, 1914, 6.

98 A single official body of correspondence and records for the Panama-California Exposition that might document landscape design plans and decisions does not exist.

99 Richard Amero, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition*, ed. Michael Kelly (Charleston: The History Press, 2013), 55.

100 Exposition correspondence files show Allen assigning all manner of tasks to Thiene with the air of the busy executive with a trustworthy subordinate. Thiene's last job title before moving on from the exposition was Superintendent of Horticulture, reporting to the Board of Park Commissioners. That is how he identified himself in a letter to a sweet pea grower in 1915. A favorable comment on flower seeds supplied to the exposition was quoted in a seed catalog. Ant. C. Zvolanek, "List of Winter Orchid and Other Sweet Peas," Lompoc, Calif., 1915.

101 Thiene corresponded with nurseries across California, acquiring sweet peas from Lompoc, wild flowers from Theodore Payne in Los Angeles, kudzu vines from Fresno, subtropical fruit trees from Altadena, chrysanthemums and various rare plants from Domoto Brothers in Oakland, and palms from the Kentia Nurseries in Santa Barbara. Nationwide, he sought lilies of the valley in Chicago and St. Louis, narcissus from Philadelphia, roses from Little Rock, Arkansas, pansies from Portland, Oregon, and begonias from Denver. He was in touch with the Fruitland Nurseries in Augusta, Georgia, and he bought a mushroom exhibit from the Falmouth Mushroom Cellars, Inc. in Massachusetts. This correspondence and many other examples are in Box 300871, Folders 1-26, 1-27, 1-28, 1-30 and 1-31,

- San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 102 D. C. "Charlie" Collier, who helped organize the exposition and served as director-general, called Thiene "the best ever" according to correspondence from a sitting congressman. Letter, William Kettner to Paul G. Thieme (sic), March 4, 1914, Box 300871, Folder 1-31, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 103 Thiene located suppliers, including Sharp, Partridge & Company of Chicago, and corresponded on the various types of glass available for use in a greenhouse. Letter, W. French to P. G. Thiene, December 3, 1913, Box 300871, Folder 1-30, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 104 "Exposition," *Canebreak Herald* (Uniontown, Alabama), May 15, 1914, 4. This obscure newspaper printed a press release from the Panama-California Exposition Company that proclaimed: "The school children of San Diego are enlisted joyfully in the 'City Beautiful' campaign" preceding the 1915 exposition.
- 105 "Mrs. Hearst's Gardens Will Supply Flowers," *San Diego Union*, May 2, 1912, 10.
- 106 An example was the conference of Southern California Arboricultural Association which included in its 1915 program an inspection of the planting of the exposition grounds under the direction of Paul Thiene. "Tree Experts Meet," *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1915, 1-11.
- 107 An inquiry to a Los Angeles importer, L. M. Ginder's Birdland, resulted in several letters back and forth. Letter, P. G. Thiene to L. M. Ginder, March 4, 1914, Box 300871, Folder 1-31, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, City Clerk, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 108 Paul G. Thiene to California State Fish & Game Commission, October 21, 1914, Box 300871, Folder 1-31, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 109 Letter, W. Odell to P. G. Thiene, June 12, 1914, Box 300871, Folder 1-31, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 110 Thiene was once alerted to the shipment of 230 fish on the evening train from Los Angeles to San Diego. [Night Letter], E. O. Sturtevant to P. G. Thiene September 22, 1914, Box 300871, Folder 1-32, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 111 Letter, Superintendent of Horticulture [Paul G. Thiene] to John Brenton, Los Angeles Pigeon Show, February 14, 1914; and Letter, Paul G. Thiene to U.S.D.A. Bureau of Animal Industry, November 30, 1914 (requesting bulletins on the care and feeding of pigeons), Box 300871, Folder 1-32, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive. The 2,500 pigeons Thiene raised were a visitor favorite, appearing in many photographs and being fed grain sold in small bags. "Nine Tons of Grain Fed Pigeons by Tourists," *San Diego Union*, July 20, 1915, 8.
- 112 The peacocks appeared to be suffering from "rather an acute case of piles," according to the exposition president. G. A. Davidson to Frank P. Allen, Jr., November 19, 1914, Box 300871, Folder 1-22, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 113 The article identifies Thiene as "superintendent of nurseries and planting" at the San Diego exposition and comments on the challenge of moving and planting large trees on the grounds. "Floriculture in San Diego," *Florists' Review* 31, no. 785 (December 12, 1912), 47.
- 114 "Once Barren Waste Now Alive with Color," *San Diego Union*, February 15, 1914, 6. A full-length photograph of Thiene ran with this article.
- 115 "Dream City Assuming Reality at Expo Grounds," *San Diego Union*, May 31, 1914, 38.
- 116 "Exposition Garden Spots are to be Perpetuated," *San Diego Union and Daily Bee*, February 15, 1914, 6.
- 117 "Work to be Rushed by Counties at Expo," *San Diego Union*, January 25, 1914, 15. The small hybrid potted poinsettias sold today as a holiday plant were not yet developed.
- 118 These experts were also assessing the work of Park Superintendent John Morley, hired after the 1911 Olmsted Brothers exodus. Morley was to landscape Balboa Park lands falling outside the exposition grounds. Fifteen park superintendents, from cities in New York, Michigan, Colorado, Minnesota and other states, sent a letter to the San Diego Board of Park Commissioners. Hermann W. Merkel, et al. to J. J. Forward, September 4, 1915, Box 300871, Folder 1-24, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 119 H. R. Richards, "San Diego Exposition," *American Florist* 44, no. 1406 (May 15, 1915), 866-68.
- 120 "Horticulture at the San Diego Exposition," *The Florists' Exchange*, XL, no. 6 (August 7, 1915) California Supplement, XV-XVI.
- 121 "The San Diego Exposition," *The Florists' Review*, 36, nos. 923-936 (September 16, 1915), 20.
- 122 Walter V. Woehlke, "Nueva España by the Silver Gate," *Sunset* 33, no. 6 (December 1914), 1130-1132.
- 123 "Tales of a Traveler—San Diego Exposition," *Pacific Garden* 8, no. 8 (July 1915), 5-6.
- 124 Walter V. Woehlke, "Nueva España by the Silver Gate," *Sunset* 33, no. 6 (December 1914), 1127, 1130.
- 125 The exposition spawned a publishing boomlet of new books and articles in publications like *Colliers*, *Overland Monthly*, and of course the local papers. A news writer rhapsodized over the lushness of planting, blooming flowers and "velvet lawns," giving all the credit to Frank P. Allen, Jr. W. C. Getty, "Exposition Tribute to Master Builder," *San Diego Union*, November 29, 1914, 1:8. An eccentric publication praising the exposition landscape and the marvels of California was produced in a special edition to invite President Woodrow Wilson to visit San Diego. F. Weber Benton, *Simi-Tropic California The Garden of the World, 2d ed.* [President Wilson Invitation Edition 1915] (Los Angeles: Benton Publishing Company, 1915). A flowery tribute to the exposition landscape appears in George Wharton James, *Exposition Memories Panama-California Exposition, San Diego 1916* (Pasadena: Radiant Life Press: 1917). "A carefully trained wilderness of tropical plants delights the eye," Bensel Smythe wrote in "The Fair at San Diego," *Review of Reviews* (May 1915) 88. The best descriptions of the gardens are found in Carleton Monroe Winslow, *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1916); and Eugen Neuhaus, *The San Diego Garden Fair* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1916).
- 126 A prominent San Bernardino County official's son had been given an exposition nursery job at the behest of the exposition company's general manager. Upon receiving a demand for a report on the son's work, Thiene wrote a tactful letter praising the young man's excellent progress. Letter, Paul G. Thiene to H. D. Sibley, Box 300871, Folder 1-30, September 30, 1913, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 127 Letter, Secretary of the Board of Park Commissions to E. J. Belcher, Chairman of the Executive Board, Panama-California Exposition, December 31, 1913, Box 300871, Folder 1-21, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.
- 128 No documentary record specifying the end date of Thiene's exposition employment has been found.
- 129 *Ramona's* Collier Park was created on land donated by attorney and real estate developer D. C. "Charlie" Collier in 1913. Richard L. Carrico, *Ramona* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 99. Today the park is the oldest in the San Diego County Park System. Some accounts give the park size as ten acres.
- 130 "Back Country Day Draws 5000: Oratory Rings at Collier Park Dedication," *San Diego Union*, August 28, 1915, 9.
- 131 Architects Frank Mead and Richard Requa commissioned Thiene to landscape the A. H. Sweet House, in San Diego's Bankers Hill neighborhood at 435 W. Spruce Street, in 1914.
- 132 Sweet was a prominent lawyer who served as the District Attorney. "District Attorney Adelbert H. Sweet Retires from Office," *San Diego Union*, January 1, 1899, 2.
- 133 Thiene's preparatory notes for the owner state: "Careful study of the peculiarities in architecture of your residence has compelled me to exercise the utmost care in selection of plant material, as to size of plants and foliage, color of same and that of the flowers, as well as the flowering season." The plant list fills 16-pages. "Landscape Plan and Planting Key for Residence of A. H. Sweet, Corner of Spruce and Curlew Streets. San Diego, California," Typescript and Blueprint. A. H. Sweet Collection, San Diego History Center Archives, [1914?].
- 134 "Unique Country House at San Diego, Cal.," *Architect and Engineer* 43, no. 3 (December 1915), 73-77.
- 135 Ruth Ingersoll Robinson, "Floral Society Notes," *California Garden* 7, no. 2 (August 1915), 11. See also, Carol Olten, "A House and Garden that Time Forgot," *San Diego Union*, May 13, 1986, C-1.
- 136 In addition to Thiene's documents, archived receipts from San Diego horticulturist and nursery owner Kate O. Sessions document much of the original plant stock. Sessions also had an unspecified involvement in creating the home's walled east garden. Karen C. Wilson, "Villa's Garden Grandeur Springs from Illustrious Designers," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, March 31, 1996, H17. A landscape historian later observed that in San Diego the art of garden design "languished after the departures of Kate Sessions and Paul Thiene." Jere Stuart French, *The California Garden and the Landscape Architects Who Shaped It* (Washington: D.C.: Landscape Architecture Foundation, 1993), 206.
- 137 The selection of Thiene for this prestigious project is an added reinforcement of the contemporary understanding that it was Thiene, not Frank P. Allen, Jr., who was responsible for landscaping the exposition grounds.
- 138 Goodhue biographies discuss his California commissions and the Coppel project: Richard Oliver, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue (New York, N.Y.: The Architectural History Foundation, 1983), 40, 154-56; and Romy Wyllie, Bertram Goodhue: His Life and Residential Architecture (New York: Norton, 2007), 110. A 1915 plan for the 4.6-acre Coppel home and grounds listing Paul G. Thiene as landscape architect is reproduced in Wyllie on page 119.
- 139 Wade Graham, *American Eden: From Monticello to Central Park to Our Backyards* (New York: Harper, 2011), 225. Gillespie's home was said to have "reexpressed in California that curious and romantic composite style so generally met on the Iberian Peninsula. He himself describes the place most appropriately as 'Mediterranean.'" Porter Garnett, *Stately Homes of California* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1915), 55. The Gillespie garden was one of those featured in "Notable Houses and Gardens Chosen Recently Among Others in a Competition for Better Architecture . . . Community Arts Association of Santa Barbara, California," *House Beautiful* 57, no. 5 (May 1925), 517.
- 140 Goodhue may have met Thiene on one of his flying

trips to San Diego, but it is unlikely. Goodhue did, however, notice and care about the exposition landscape which he thought would have more appeal for many visitors than his buildings. Easterners will want to see the "semi-tropical luxuriance" of San Diego, Goodhue remarked, predicting that the landscaping for the exposition would compare favorably with Italy's best gardens. "Balboa Park to be Most Remarkable in North America," *San Diego Union*, May 17, 1912, 7.

141 While the nature of the Winslow-Thiene personal relationship is unrecorded, it is interesting to note that Thiene's first son was named Carlton (spelled without Carleton Winslow's "e."). The record is silent on whether this was coincidental or a homage to Winslow.

142 The now famous publication contains plans and perspectives of buildings Wright designed between 1893 and 1909. Frank Lloyd Wright, *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1910). Erick Wright wrote that Frank Lloyd Wright, Sr. admired the drafting and rendering skills of F. L. Wright, Jr. who, from his teen years, worked in his father's architecture office. Erick Wright, "My Father, Lloyd Wright," *SD: Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 54.

143 Lloyd Wright traveled with Taylor Wolley, the other draftsman working on the Wasmuth Portfolio, exploring Italy and "devoting most of their time to exploring gardens rather than buildings." David Gebhard and Harriet Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 17. Another important source of Lloyd Wright biographical information is Bruce Goff, ed., "Special Issue: Architect Lloyd Wright—His Life and Work," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 2-84.

144 Lloyd Wright wrote that he went directly to the Arnold Arboretum internship after returning from Europe. Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr., "Biographical Notes of Lloyd Wright," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 84. His son, Erick Wright, states that Lloyd Wright returned to the University of Wisconsin to study horticulture for one more year after visiting Europe, then went to work for the Olmsted. Erick Wright, "My Father, Lloyd Wright," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979) 55. A third source states that Lloyd Wright was studying engineering and that he spent one more year at the University of Wisconsin after returning from Europe. Bruce Goff, "A Eulogy for Lloyd Wright," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 6. Yet another source states that Wright pursued "dual studies in Engineering and Agronomy" and did not return to college after being in Europe. David Gebhard and Harriette Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 16-17.

145 Bruce Goff, "A Eulogy for Lloyd Wright," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 7. A slightly different account of Lloyd Wright's association with both the Arboretum and the Olmsted firm states that he first worked at the Harvard Arboretum, then gained a position with Olmsted and Olmsted. This same account misstates the date that Wright was sent to the San Diego exposition as Fall 1911 (the Olmsted resigned from the exposition on September 2, 1911; Wright had already been on site for several months). David Gebhard and Harriette Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 18.

146 Esther McCoy, "Lloyd Wright," *Arts and Architecture* 83, no. 9 (October 1966), 23-24. In the special Lloyd Wright issue of *SD Space Design* (November 1979), Bruce Goff does not discuss the San Diego exposition or the Wright-Thiene landscape architecture practice in his biographical profile of Wright.

147 Lloyd Wright wrote to his father about Irving Gill: "He is a good sound man with ideas and ideals. He is, to say the least, appreciative of your work. ... I had a talk with him, a

fine talk. The upshot of it was that he would turn over all of his client's landscape work to me, give me a desk in his office, all the material and aids I needed with free reign to handle the matter as I saw fit. ... I have been in the work head over heels for the last week. I have already had two propositions handed me to lay out and handle and more in view. ... I wouldn't let the opportunity slip [by] me without giving it a good six months tryout for anything in the world. It will mean the making of me if I can hang on." Lloyd Wright to Frank Lloyd Wright, n.d., Frank Lloyd Wright Correspondence, The Getty Research Institute, reproduced in: John Crosse, "Irving Gill, Homer Laughlin and the Beginning of Modern Architecture in Los Angeles, Part II, 1911-1916," Southern California Architectural History Blog, <https://socialarchhistory.blogspot.it/2015/12/irving-gill-homer-laughlin-and.html> (accessed May 10, 2021).

148 Lloyd's brother John Lloyd Wright shared a high opinion of Gill, describing him as an "unsung hero" and "courageous creator" who made important contributions to architecture. But unlike Frank Lloyd Wright, Gill shied from publicity, living a "monk-like existence" that almost made him a hermit. John Lloyd Wright, *My Father, Frank Lloyd Wright* (New York: Dover Publications, 1992), 129-30.

149 "We are in need of a Landscape Draftsman and remember you are interested along those lines," Thiene wrote. Letter, Paul G. Thiene to Lloyd Wright, October 16, 1912, Box 300871, Folder 1-28, San Diego (City) Board of Park Commissioners, Correspondence, San Diego City Clerk's Archive.

150 "Torrance to Be One of the Most Beautiful Cities in World," *Torrance Herald*, February 6, 1914, 1. The city was described in detail in "Glimpses of Modern Industrial City of Torrance," *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1913, VI2. Lloyd Wright's experience with Gill is discussed in Gebhard and Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 19-23. A Southern California architectural history blog states that Gill turned selected Torrance landscaping projects over to Wright who enthusiastically worked on the park, street tree planting and strategically placed tree wind breaks during 1912-13. Wright also worked on projects in Laughlin Park and Riverside. He assisted Gill with landscape drawings for the Alice Lee and Katherine Teats houses on Albatross Street in San Diego and worked on a Gill commission from activist and socialite Ella Giles Sudday and her husband George for a house. John Crosse, "Southern California Architectural History" [Blog], <https://socialarchhistory.blogspot.com/2015/12/irving-gill-homer-laughlin-and.html> (accessed March 21, 2020). Wright's work on Torrance City Park is ascribed a later date, 1914-15, in "A Selected List of Building Projects of Lloyd Wright," *SD Design Space* 182 (November 1979) 73.

151 Wright was working with the architects and brothers Ross and Mott Montgomery in 1914 when this slightly confusing announcement was issued: "Architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr., landscape architect of Chicago, will establish an office in Los Angeles, being at present with Architects Montgomery & Montgomery, 805 Trust & Savings Building." "Personal," *Architect and Engineer of California* 36, no. 2 (March 1914), 113.

152 John Crosse, "Irving Gill, Homer Laughlin and the Beginning of Modern Architecture in Los Angeles, Part II, 1911-1916," Southern California Architectural History Blog, <https://socialarchhistory.blogspot.it/2015/12/irving-gill-homer-laughlin-and.html> (accessed May 10, 2021).

153 "Landscape Architects," *Los Angeles City Directory*, 1915, <https://archive.org/details/losangelescalifo1915losa/page/n4/mode/1up> (accessed November 12, 2017).

154 The Marsh & Strong Building, also known as the Apparel Mart Building, was designed by Fred Dorn and completed in 1914. Los Angeles Historic Resources Building List, Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council [\[dlanc.com/planning/projects/historic-resources-survey/historic-resources-building-list/Marsh & Strong Building\]\(http://dlanc.com/planning/projects/historic-resources-survey/historic-resources-building-list/Marsh%20&%20Strong%20Building\) \(accessed March 27, 2015\).](http://</p></div><div data-bbox=)

155 Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr., "Biographical Notes of Lloyd Wright," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 84.

156 "Landscape Architects," *Los Angeles City Directory* 1916, <https://archive.org/details/losangelescalifo1916losa/page/n4/mode/1up> (accessed November 12, 2017); the partnership also received a mention in Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 223.

157 Quoted in an architecture history blog citing "Letters from Lloyd Wright, to FLW, ca. August 1915 and February 1916. Copyright Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation 1990." John Crosse, "Irving Gill, Homer Laughlin and the Beginning of Modern Architecture in Los Angeles, Part II, 1911-1916," Southern California Architectural History Blog, <https://socialarchhistory.blogspot.it/2015/12/irving-gill-homer-laughlin-and.html> (accessed September 7, 2018).

158 Thomas S. Hinds, "The Blessing and the Curse: The Achievements of Lloyd Wright," in Alan Weintraub, *Lloyd Wright: The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998), 15.

159 This 1915-16 plan for the entire ocean resort community of Marina del Rey is described as the largest Thiene-Wright collaboration, but the records and drawings of these years of Wright's career are no longer in existence. Gebhard and Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 20. The project is listed as "Playa del Rey Site plan and landscaping (with Paul G. Thiene)" in "A Selected List of Building Projects of Lloyd Wright," *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979) 73. A failed harbor dredging program in the late nineteenth century resulted in the creation of Playa Del Rey Lagoon. The surrounding land became Playa Del Rey, subject to a larger development project in 1921. "Playa Del Rey History," <https://www.playadelrey.com/history.htm> (accessed May 7, 2021).

160 "Times Past, December 11, 1916: County Given Land for Hancock Park," *Los Angeles Times*, December 11, 2006.

161 "Deed To Hancock Park Is Given To County: Plans Made Public," *Los Angeles Times*, December 12, 1916, 11.

162 "Public Buildings," *Southwest Builder and Contractor* 50, no. 21 (November 23, 1917), 18.

163 "Urges Return of Park Deed," *Los Angeles Times*, December 3, 1918, II, 1, 5.

164 "Who's Doing It? Live Construction Wires," *Southwest Contractor and Manufacturer* 18, no. 16 (February 17, 1917), 11.

165 A Thiene biographical profile is included in an online encyclopedia of the Chandler city history: "Thiene, Paul G.," http://www.chandlerpedia.com/Browse_Chandlerpedia/People/People_A-Z/T/Thiene%2C_Paul_G. (accessed June 19, 2018).

166 A trade publication reported on Thiene's design of a park area and sunken gardens around eight new bungalows at the San Marcos Hotel. The same article named some famous guests of the hotel, including Christian Dior, Margaret Sanger and Herbert Hoover. "Bungalow Accommodation, Hotel San Marcos, Chandler, Ariz.," *Hotel/Motor Hotel Monthly* 24, no. 285 (December 1916), 61.

167 Thiene is included in the: "Timeline of the San Marcos Hotel," ChandlerPedia, <http://www.chandlerpedia.org/index.php?title> (accessed June 19, 2018).

168 Erick Wright, "My Father, Lloyd Wright," *SD: Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 55; Mike Butler, "Frank Lloyd Wright, A.J. Chandler Worked to Remake East Valley," *Tribune* (Mesa, Arizona), October 17, 2016,

https://www.eastvalleytribune.com/arizona/frank-loyd-wright-a-j-chandler-worked-to-remake-east-valley/article_c14d5506-948c-11e6-9caa-331cf7f116bb.html (accessed March 9, 2020).

169 Wright “possibly” contributed to Thiene’s work at the Pasadena estate of John L. Severance according to John Crosse, “Irving Gill, Homer Laughlin and the Beginning of Modern Architecture in Los Angeles, Part II, 1911-1916,” Southern California Architectural History Blog, <https://socialarchhistory.blogspot.it/2015/12/irving-gill-homer-laughlin-and.html> (accessed May 10, 2021). Another source states positively that Wright worked with Thiene on both the Benjamin Meyer and John L. Severance Estates. Gebhard and Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 20. This Gebhard and Von Breton work is cited by Streatfield as authority for the involvement of Wright in these Thiene projects. David C. Streatfield, “The Evolution of the California Landscape,” *Landscape Architecture Magazine* 67, no. 3 (May 1977), 239. A bibliography on Wright calls him a partner on the Meyer and Severance projects. Patrick Joseph Meehan: *Lloyd Wright, a Prairie School Architect*. Vance Bibliographies, issues 1-10, 1978, 7.

170 In one instance, Wright delayed in reporting work hours for billing. Thiene wrote to remind Wright of a prior request for an itemized time for services rendered on the Hancock Park plan. As I have previously explained I want to send in a bill to the County Supervisors, which however I cannot do until I have complete time data for their investigation. This must be settled by the First of Dec. and if I do not have your statement by that time will have to put in your time according to my judgment.” Letter, Paul G. Thiene to Lloyd Wright, November 12, 1917, Box 1, Folder 14, Lloyd Wright Papers, UCLA Library Special Collections, Young Research Library (Los Angeles, Calif.).

171 Wright worked on projects for Paramount Studios during 1917 and 1918. “A Selected List of Building and Projects of Lloyd Wright,” *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 73.

172 Gerhard and Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 35. Another source dates Wright’s move to New York as falling in 1917-18. Thomas S. Hinds, “The Blessing and the Curse: The Achievements of Lloyd Wright,” in Alan Weintraub, *Lloyd Wright: The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998), 16.

173 James J. Lucas, “Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper,” Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962, [6]. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley: Thiene and Wright completed some joint projects after dissolving their partnership and worked together as late as 1927-28 when Thiene landscaped a hotel and bungalows designed by Lloyd Wright at Lake Arrowhead. Gebhard and Von Breton, *Lloyd Wright Architect: 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition* (Santa Barbara: Standard Printing; University of California, 1971), 35.

174 Wade Graham explains that Rudolf Schindler, a Viennese architect who worked with Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago, was sent to Los Angeles to supervise the construction of the Olive Hill arts center in Hollywood, collaborating with Lloyd Wright on the project’s residential building, *Hollyhock House*. Wade Graham, *American Eden: From Monticello to Central Park to Our Backyards* (New York: Harper, 2011), 254-55.

175 Lloyd Wright began offering his services as an architect, working from an office on South Broadway in Los Angeles according to the *Los Angeles City Directories*, beginning in 1921. He completed his first important architectural commission in 1922, the Martha Taggart House, followed in 1923 by the Oasis Hotel in Palm Springs. Bruce Goff,

“Eulogy for Lloyd Wright,” *SD Space Design* 182 (November 1979), 7.

176 Thiene worked out of a fifth-floor office, according to the *Los Angeles City Directory* 1918, <https://calisphere.org/item/ed465f5d531de4c4763d5414a417a664/> (accessed December 5, 2017)

177 Johnson published an article on the Jefferson estate with photographs showing off Thiene’s work in the garden which, “although only three years old, gives promise of an unusually attractive development.” Reginald D. Johnson, “The Residence of J. P. Jefferson, Esq. Montecito, California,” *Architectural Record* 51, no. 280 (January 1922), 8-15.

178 “The History of Miraflores,” Music Academy of the West, <https://www.musicacademy.org/about-us/history/> (accessed May 21, 2021).

179 “Posey, Goodyear Housing Manager,” *Motor West* 32, no. 7 (January 15, 1920) 20. The Goodyear Gardens employee housing scheme is described in greater detail, but without the mention of Paul Thiene in “Goodyear California Plant Opened,” *The Rubber Age and Tire News* 7, no. 6 (June 25, 1920), 247.

180 “Goodyear Home Plan Approved,” *Los Angeles Times* (December 21, 1919), VI.

181 The historic district is located on East 59th Place between Avalon Boulevard and South San Pedro Street. A general description of the Goodyear Gardens project is found in: Ruth Wallach, *Los Angeles Residential Architecture: Modernism Meets Eclecticism* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2015), 127-131. A March 2012 survey of Los Angeles historic districts describes the 80 acres set aside for housing and reports that just 49 of the planned worker houses were built in what is now the Florence neighborhood of Southeast Los Angeles.” Los Angeles Department of City Planning, “Southeast Los Angeles Historic Districts, Planning Districts and Multi-Property Resources—March 2012. Goodyear Gardens Historic Districts,” www.preservation.lacity.org/files/SELAAppendixFinal3_12.pdf (accessed April 29, 2017).

182 A 1924 Pasadena business directory lists just six landscape architects: P.G. Thiene, Kathern Bashford, G. J. Chisholm, Helen Deusner, C. K. Fiedler and Florence Yoch. Thiene’s office was at 61 S. Raymond Street. *Thurston’s Residence & Business of Pasadena, Altadena and Lamanda Park*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Co., 1924.

183 The botanical wonderland at the 1915 Panama-California Exposition was achieved by spending today’s equivalent of ten million dollars. Landscape costs are itemized in an audit prepared by a certified public accountant. W. J. Paethorpe, *Report on the Panama California Exposition to April 30, 1916* (Los Angeles: W. J. Paethorpe [1916]), 7.

184 Christine Edstrom O’Hara, “The Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1915: The Olmsted Brothers’ Ecological Park Typology,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 70, no. 1 (2011), 64-81.

185 The term “landscape architect” existed but was not widely used when Thiene began his career. “Landscape gardener” or “landscape artist” were often used as descriptors. Common to all at this time was an understanding that knowledge of plants and horticulture ran parallel to design skills in the toolkit of a landscape architect. In later decades, some landscape architects eschewed knowledge of plants and gardening on the assumption that it elevated their status. Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land*. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 444.

186 Paul G. Thiene, “Water Gardens in California,” *Landscape Architecture* 29, no. 2 (January 1939), 60, 63.

187 The opening of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913 assured many that access to water was no longer a problem, although Los Angeles city planners knew better and continued to wage fierce water wars to expand supply sources.

188 Unlike the regulation of water taken from streams and lakes, California at that time had no laws regulating the extraction of groundwater. D. J. Waldie, “Water and Politics in Southeast L.A.,” <https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/beneath-our-feet-water-and-politics-in-southeast-la>, (accessed January 31, 2023).

189 Keith N. Morgan, “The Rise and Fall of the Italian Garden in America,” in *Masters of American Garden Design IV: Influences on American Garden Design: 1895 to 1940*, ed. Robin Karson (Proceedings of the Garden Conservancy Symposium Held March 11, 1994, at the Paine Webber Building in New York, New York). Garden Conservancy, [July 1995].

190 David C. Streatfield, *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 72, 112-13, 158-59. Developing regionalism in landscape design is given a broader perspective in Philip Pregill and Nancy Volkman, *Landscape in History: Design and Planning in the Eastern and Western Traditions*, 2nd ed., (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999) at pages 635-36: “. . . California Gardens were inspired by three principal historical styles, each of which had some cultural or environmental link to the region: Mediterranean precedents, both Italian and Spanish; Middle Eastern gardens, particularly the walled paradise garden of Persia; and Japanese gardens, first made popular through displays at various world’s fairs held in the late 1800s and early 1900s, especially those in San Francisco and San Diego. A consistent theme in these California Gardens was the use of regionally unique plant material.”

191 David Gebhard, “The Design of the Landscape in the Work of Reginald D. Johnson, Gordon B. Kaufmann and Roland E. Coate,” in *Johnson, Kaufmann, Coate: Partners in the California Style*, exhibit and book developed by Jay Belloli et al., essays by Lauren Weiss Bricker et al. (Claremont, CA: Scripps College; distributed by Capra Press, Santa Barbara, 1992), 56-69.

192 Gebhard, “The Design of the Landscape,” 60-64.

193 James J. Lucas, “Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper,” Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962, [7-8]. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.

194 “The Country Estate and the Work of Paul G. Thiene,” *California Southland*, No. 28 (April 1922), 11,16.

195 The work was at Drumthwacket in Princeton, New Jersey, when the estate was owned by Moses Taylor Pyne (1855-1921).

196 M. Brian Tichenor, “Introduction,” in Douglas Woods, *The California Casa*, photog. Melba Levick (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2012), 8-13, 10. While Tichenor describes historicism in the Southern California embrace of the Spanish style, Winter and Vertikoff had earlier offered a different twist: “[the popularity of the Spanish style] was based not so much on its relevance to California history as it was to the similarity of the Golden State’s climate and floral to that of southern Europe. Oleander, roses, bougainvillea, and cactus thrive in California as they do in the Mediterranean lands, and both regions even share the same kind of sunlight, especially in the afternoon.” Winter and Vertikoff, *The Architecture of Entertainment LA*, 58-60.

197 A physical description of the 7.75-acre site and its challenges is including in an article on the project, probably written by Thiene. Paul G. Thiene and Johnson, Kaufmann and Coates, “La Collina, Estate of B. R. Meyer, Esq., Beverly Hills, California,” *American Architect—The Architectural Review*, CXXIII, no. 2420 (May 23, 1923), 455-56.

198 Thiene wrote about this pool and it is pictured in Paul G. Thiene, “Water Features: Notes on Experience in *California Gardens*,” *Landscape Architecture* 18, no. 1 (October 1927), 43-51.

199 “A Gentleman’s Estate on Californian Hills,” *California Southland* (March 1925), 23-26.

- 200 "La Collina, Estate of Benjamin R. Meyer," <https://halfpuddinghalfsauce.blogspot.com/2015/03/la-collina-estate-of-benjamin-r-meyer.html> (accessed June 20, 2023).
- 201 The Severance estate plan was reproduced in an early study of Mediterranean influences on American architecture, along with photographs of the lily pool, the interior of the pavilion and steps into the garden. Rexford Newcomb, *Mediterranean Domestic Architecture in the United States* (Cleveland, Ohio: Jensen, 1928), fasc. ed. with new intro. by Marc Appleton (New York: Acanthus Press, 1999), 12-14.
- 202 Thiene is taken to task by landscape historian David Streatfield for not understanding the harm of introducing thirsty plants amid stands of live oaks. Overwatering of an oak induces a fungus that can be fatal to the tree, a danger not understood at the time. David C. Streatfield, *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 113.
- 203 "Los Angeles Architects' Work to be Exhibited in San Francisco," *Architect and Engineer* LXXII, no. 1 (January 1923), 133.
- 204 Theresa Homet Patterson, "Garden Pools in California," *California Southland* VII, no. 69 (September 1925), 274.
- 205 Descriptions of the Getz estate are derived from: "Getz, Milton Estate," State of California, The Resources Agency, Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resources Inventory, November 1986, <https://www.beverlyhills.org/cbfiles/storage/files/1147175078101402596/1011N.BeverlyDr.PDF> (assessed June 21, 2021); Sam Watters, *Houses of Los Angeles, Volume II, 1920-1935* (New York: Acanthus Press, 2007), 150-163; and "Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Milton E. Getz, Beverly Hills," *Architectural Digest* 7, no. 1 (1929), 103.
- 206 The palm trees and side plantings no longer exist. The cascade was restructured to empty into a large swimming pool of conventional design.
- 207 The pool may be viewed on the satellite view of an internet map search of 1011 N. Beverly Hills Drive, Beverly Hills, CA. Landscape historian Steven Keylon suggests that this may be the first of the freeform residential swimming pools that became popular in California. Steven Keylon, "Getz Estate," email to Nancy Carol Carter, May 22, 2021.
- 208 There is no text, only a photograph that distinctly shows the curvy pool, pergola and the stone walkway that surrounded the area. "Mr. and Mrs. Milton Getz Estate, Beverly Hills, Paul G. Thiene, Landscape Architect," *Architectural Digest* 7, no. 2 (1929) 50.
- 209 "Residence of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Doheny, Jr., Beverly Hills, Gordon B. Kaufmann, Architect, Paul G. Thiene, Landscape Architect," *Architectural Digest*, 7, no. 2 (1929), 4-5.
- 210 Davies paid \$120,000 for the property.
- 211 Jack Flemming, "Once Listed at \$196 million, the Famed Hearst Estate is Hitting the Auction Block," *Los Angeles Times*, August 20, 2021, <https://www.latimes.com/business/real-estate/story/2021-08-20/beverly-hills-hearst-estate-auction> (accessed June 27, 2023); Cari Beauchamp, "One of Hollywood's Most Storied Estates Gets a Second Act," *Town and Country* (August 20, 2022), <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/sporting/a40784827/beverly-estate-nicolas-berggruen-marion-davies-hearst-photos> (accessed June 27, 2023).
- 212 Kuehl was a young graduate of Iowa State University who had worked briefly in a landscape architecture practice before relocating to Pasadena and becoming Thiene's chief designer. "A. C. Kuehl Will Take Position in Pasadena, Calif.," *Daily Times* (Davenport, Iowa), August 27, 1921, 13.
- 213 The story of Thiene's instructions for *Greystone* was told by Alfred C. Kuehl to landscape historian David Streatfield during a February 1974 interview and is repeated in other accounts. David C. Streatfield, "The Evolution of the California Landscape," *Landscape Architecture Magazine* 67, no. 5 (September 1977), 417, 422; interview cited in endnote 24; Charles Lockwood and Peter V. Persic in "Mansion's History Rich, Tragic," *Los Angeles Times*, August 25, 1985, K17.
- 214 Paul G. Thiene, "An Old World Garden in a New World Setting," *American Landscape Architecture* 1 (August 1929): 9-27.
- 215 A photograph of the Italian cypress allée at *Greystone* was chosen for inclusion in the "Gardens" chapter of a book by Robert Winter and Alexander Vertikoff, *The Architecture of Entertainment LA in the Twenties* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2006), 102-03. The cypress allée was for a period of time replaced with eugenia trees (*Syzygium australe*). Some older photographs show the substitution, but the latest garden restoration at *Greystone* restored the long lines of Italian cypress trees next to the high retaining wall.
- 216 Paul G. Thiene, "An Old World Garden in a New World Setting," *American Landscape Architecture* 1 (August 1929): 9-27.
- 217 "History," Friends of *Greystone* website, <https://www.greystonemansion.org/history.html> (accessed April 30, 2021).
- 218 "History," Friends of *Greystone* website, <https://www.greystonemansion.org/history.html> (accessed April 30, 2021).
- 219 The school board hoped to make the school "the most beautiful in California." "School Board May Beautify Grounds," *Santa Ana Daily Evening Register*, August 8, 1923, 5; "Plans are Drawn for Sunken Garden," *Santa Ana Daily Evening Register*, October 10, 1923, 9.
- 220 "Landscape Architects, California," *The American School and University: A Yearbook, 5th Annual* (New York: American school Publishing Corp., 1930).
- 221 Steven Keylon, "The Glamorous Gardens of Tommy Tomson, Part One," *Eden* 18, no 4 (Fall 2015), 14.
- 222 Among the landscape architects who trained with Thiene were Fred Barlow, Jr. (1902-1953), Alfred C. Kuehl (1900-1969) and Tommy Tomson (1900-1986).
- 223 David C. Streatfield, *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 262.
- 224 "Interview of Ralph D. Cornell," Transcript, 1.9. Tape Number: Six, Side One, August 2, 1967, UCLA Library Center for Oral History Research, <https://oralhistory.library.ucla.edu/catalog/21198-zz0009023k>.
- 225 "A.S.L.A. Notes," *Landscape Architecture* 16, no. 3 (April 1926), 200.
- 226 Thiene was said to be a Fellow in the American Society of Landscape Architects in the finding aid accompanying his archives. "Biographical Note," Paul Thiene Collection, ca. 1915-1930, Collection Number: 1962-1, Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf629005rs/entire_text/ (accessed January 24, 2023). The Archivist and Technical Librarian at the American Society of Landscape Architects headquarters in Washington, D. C. found no record of Thiene's membership after 1941 and no record of Thiene being named a Fellow of ASLA. Ian C. Bucacink, "Paul G. Thiene," email to Nancy Carol Carter, 1 February 2019.
- 227 The Peckham House was designated as San Diego Historical Landmark #453 on December 20, 2000. "Historical Landmarks Designated by the San Diego Historical Resources Board." <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/planning/programs/historical/pdf/register120706.pdf> (accessed January 11, 2023).
- 228 "Honor Awards Are Voted by Architects," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), June 30, 1933, 23.
- 229 The Peckham House was designated as San Diego Historical Landmark #453 on December 20, 2000. "Historical Landmarks Designated by the San Diego Historical Resources Board." <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/planning/programs/historical/pdf/register120706.pdf> (accessed January 11, 2023).
- 230 Wade Graham wrote that some landscape architects continued their practices during the Great Depression of the 1930s while some "such as Paul Thiene, went out of business as the market for big estate gardens dried up." Wade Graham, *American Eden: From Monticello to Central Park to Our Backyards* (New York: Harper, 2011), 249. Jere Stewart French reported that after the depression dried up most work on large Mediterranean gardens, "Paul Thiene retired early." Jere Stewart French, *The California Garden and the Landscape Architects Who Shaped It* (Washington: D.C.: Landscape Architecture Foundation, 1993), 136.
- 231 "U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1940-1947," digital image s.v., "Paul G. Thiene," *Ancestry.com*.
- 232 James J. Lucas, "Paul G. Thiene: A Biographical Research Paper," Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, January 2, 1962, [4]. Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- 233 "Biographical Note," Paul Thiene Collection, ca. 1915-1930, Collection Number: 1962-1, Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf629005rs/entire_text/ (accessed January 24, 2023).
- 234 Edan Milton Hughes, *Artists in California, 1786-1940, 3d ed.* (Sacramento: Crocker Art Museum, 2002); *Jacobson's Biographical Index of American Artists* (n.p.: A J Publications, 2002).
- 235 Thiene's plant list was published in the *Official Guide Book of the Panama-California Exposition 1915*, 55-79.



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Front Cover: Paul George Thiene in Balboa Park, c. 1913. Courtesy San Diego History Center

Back cover: The San Marcos Hotel in Chandler, Arizona, became Thiene's first out-of-state commercial commission in 1916. Working with architect Reginald D. Johnson, Thiene created a park-like semi-tropical landscape setting for an expansion of guest bungalows.