

Lost Wineries and Vineyards of Fremont, California By Jill Singleton

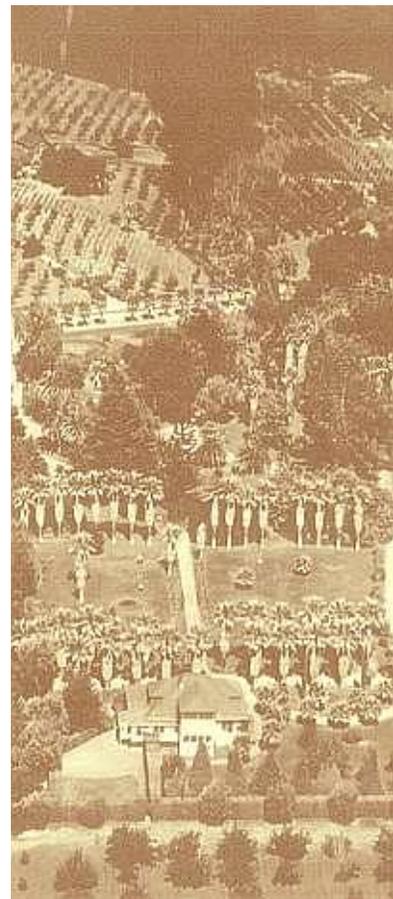
Away from the coastal fog and wind, and close by a major market, this area of Alameda County was ideal for vineyards and wine production. The history began with the Spanish Missionaries in 1797, and continued until 1996, when the last winery moved out.

Acreage devoted to vineyards, and wine production, increased until the 1890's when a phylloxera infestation killed many of the original vines. Faced with the cost of replacing the vines with resistant varieties, many of the vineyards were converted to growing other fruit or sold for non-agricultural use. The earthquake of 1906, further diminished production as the Gallegos/Palmdale Winery was destroyed, and Prohibition in the 1920's stopped production completely (though temporarily) until 1933. Finally, Fremont's urban growth, since 1960, put an end to production as former vineyards were converted to housing.



1. Gallegos Winery, Irvington

- Mission San Jose first vineyards (1797 – 1836)
- E.L. Beard purchases 30,000 acres of Mission San Jose Land Grant with John Horner (1850)
- They sell \$16,000 worth of grapes in 1851 and Beard buys out Horner
- Beard plants new vineyards (1851 – 1881)
- Juan Gallegos of Costa Rica purchases estate (1881 - 1892)
- Gallegos Winery built and new varietals planted (1884)
- Gallegos in-law Carlos Montelegre purchases the winery and forms the Palmdale Company 1892
- Palmdale Co. vintages 1892 and 1893
- In 1893 the Palmdale Company held 600 acres in vineyards, had a total annual production of 2,400 tons of grapes and held 1,250,000 gallons in cooperage
- Palmdale becomes member of California Wine Association (CWA) 1894, vintages produced 1894 - 1899
- Winery leased to CWA for the 1900 vintage



- Henry Lachman of CWA purchases Palmdale winery and garden estate 1905. The estate is sold in 1927.
- Great Earthquake 1906; Palmdale winery demolished and the oak cooperage sold to CWA
- Sisters of the Holy Family purchased the estate in 1948. They host an annual Los Posadas visit every December and host other events when the estate gardens with its palm allees, olives and flowering specimens may be visited.
- The Palmdale Winery ruins and its remnant palm landscape may be viewed in the Irvington District of Fremont, at the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Osgood Road.

2. McIver Winery, Linda Vista, Mission San Jose

- Peak Vineyard purchased by Joseph Palmer, 1852
- 120 acres and cooperage of 40,000 gallons cellars hold 100,000 gallons by 1876
- Palmer Estate purchased by C.C. McIver and famous as Linda Vista by 1888 with a model country home and famed for its gardens and lemons, oranges, figs and palms. Here he hosted the poet Joaquin Miller.
- Seven first prizes for McIver wines at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1892. This wine is served exclusively by the Pullman Palace Car Company at this date
- 425 acres and 500,000 gallons cooperage in 1893
- McIver expanded to 1000 acres in the mid 1890's but the vines failed due to phylloxera, his home burned to the ground and his marriage ended.
- The McIver vineyards were not replaced and the McIver winery closed when the vintages had been sold

Subsequent history of the Linda Vista Estate in Mission San Jose

- By 1898 the entire vineyard property had reverted to McIvers' in-laws and was called the Stephens Ranch.
- Olive oil was crushed on site in 1908 and an irrigation dam for a prune orchard was built. Prunes were processed in the brick winery building.
- Blanche and Tom Witherly purchased the estate in 1922 and the site was known as Linda Vista Park for picnics, swimming and dancing – and the place of choice for the Washington High School annual 'Sneak Day'.
- E.E. Huddleson purchased the ranch in 1948 and it became a gentleman farmer's headquarters for an orchard and cattle operation
- Huddleson Ranch of 480 acres was purchased for Ohlone College using 1968 bond funds. Construction began in 1972, demolishing the winery, dairy and park buildings.
- The college grounds are accessible at the Anza Avenue entrance off Mission Boulevard in the Mission San Jose district of Fremont, and include some original structures, stately palms and an alameda of olive trees.

3. Williams Bros., Centerville

- Lee and Burdette Williams
- Fruit cannery and bottling plant
- Mid-twentieth century operation
- Prohibition was in place January 1920 to December 1933, when grape juice concentrate could be purchased for a head of household to make 200 gallons of wine a year for household consumption. Even after prohibition was long over, grape juice concentrate continued to be a popular product among home winemakers.
- The relocated and restored Southern Pacific train station that now serves Amtrak in the Centerville District of Fremont is near the approximate vicinity of the Williams Bros. cannery and bottling plant.

4. Weibel Winery, Warm Springs

- Leland Stanford Vineyard 1869 – 1893 is planted and managed by Leland's brother Josiah, 100 acres to start
- Camron-Stanford House on Lake Merritt is built 1876 and becomes the Josiah Stanford residence in the decades prior to 1910
- Josiah W. Stanford inherits in 1893 the 275-acre vineyard at Warm Springs producing 1,000 tons of grapes, and with 320,000 gallons of wine in cooperage. With his sisters, he owns another 35 acres producing 131 tons of grapes.
- Rudolf Weibel and son Fred Weibel immigrate to California and purchase the vineyard and winery in 1945. They start by purchasing grapes elsewhere and develop a custom champagne business grandson Fred Weibel Jr. relocates winery operations to Woodbridge, California in April 1996.



The original brick winery from the Stanford era still stands at the end of Stanford Lane in Fremont, near the Mission Peak Regional Park staging area, in the Warm Springs district of Fremont. The olive trees that formed an allee on Stanford Lane were relocated to Mission Boulevard when the vineyards became a subdivision.

1893 Vintage for Warm Springs, Mission San Jose, Irvington and Niles

Warm Springs

Acreage in vineyards:	850 acres
Crop production:	2,360 tons
Cooperage:	534,800 gallons

Mission San Jose and Irvington

Acreage in vineyards:	1,627 acres
Crop production:	5,092 tons
Cooperage:	2,058,800 gallons*

*Of this volume, 1,250,000 gallons was by the Palmdale Company. This company also purchased grapes from vineyards in the area that were too small to do their own crush.

Niles

Acreage in vineyards:	98 acres
Crop production:	431 tons
Cooperage:	2,000 gallons

Acreage of Vineyards in 1893

Palmdale Co.	600
C.C. McIver	425
J.W. Stanford	310
J.L. Beard	233
P. Devaux	90
J.A. Salz	80
C. Felton	55

There were 50 other vineyards located between Warm Springs and Niles in 1893, ranging from 1 to 42 acres in size.