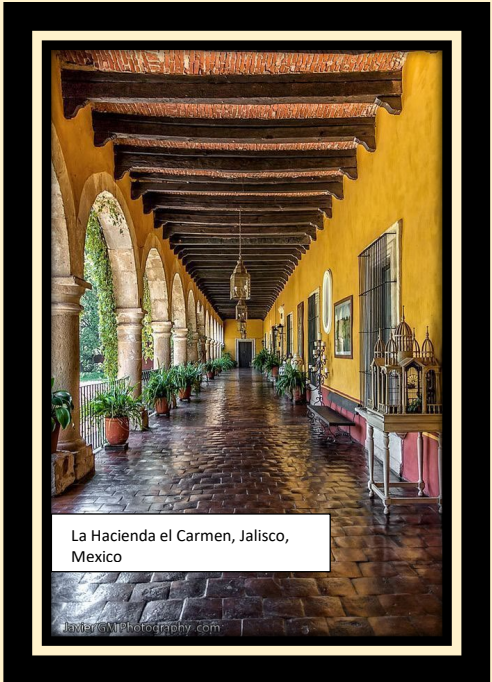


The Hacienda



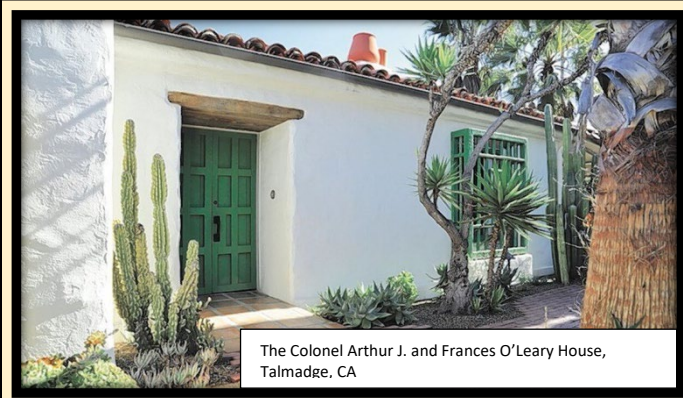
Haciendas date back to the 16th century when Spain arrived in The New World. Large and lavish homesteads were built on expansive rural agricultural parcels of land and bestowed upon Conquistadores and nobility, in exchange for military service or investment in the Spanish Crown. These feudal estates were built throughout Spanish speaking Central and South America, with the majority being built in modern-day Mexico. The haciendas provided various services to their surrounding communities - from mining and livestock, to agriculture, medical aid and hosting religious celebrations. The typical hacienda had a central manor that housed the Hacendado, and their family. Large shade terraces overlooking gardens provided a relaxing space for social gatherings. Hacienda designs included guest and servants' quarters, livestock stables, a church, as well as schools, all enclosed within a walled or fortified boundary for protection and privacy.

quarters, livestock stables, a church, as well as schools, all enclosed within a walled or fortified boundary for protection and privacy.

In the 1800's, the Spanish faced the Mexican Revolution and lost control of the region to include The American Southwest. As a means to encourage colonization of the northern territories, The Mexican government began issuing land grants to loyalists, with military families given preferential treatment. Spanish architectural design greatly influenced homesteads built in this period. Whether the home was built in a pueblo or on a rancho, the enclosed patio characteristic of hacienda architecture had more than esthetic



value. It shut out the livestock and wildlife, provided protection from the elements, and maintained privacy. The wide porch was also a necessity in design. It served both as a hall connecting the rooms of the house and doubled as an outdoor living room. It also served as an outdoor office for conducting business or a school for youth. But most importantly it was a communal area for social gatherings, much like the shade terraces of the Mexican haciendas. Red terracotta tiles were a common choice in roofing material and the walls were made of thick handmade adobe bricks covered in a whitewashed finish to keep the home cool on hot days.



The Colonel Arthur J. and Frances O'Leary House,
Talmadge, CA

At the turn of the twentieth century, architects and builders shifted their focus toward local history and regional heritage as a means of inspiration for their work. Across California, the centuries-old Spanish and Mexican heritage had a profound influence, with many homes built in the traditional Spanish colonial or Mexican hacienda styles. Locally, Richard Requa, an architect who was integral in designing Kensington, Rancho Santa Fe, and Ojai,

promoted the “Southern California Style,” of terracotta-roofed, stucco-finished homes. Cliff May, an eighth generation Californian, renowned architect and designer, is credited as “the father of the California ranch home.” May took inspiration from the historic adobe ranchos on modern-day Camp Pendleton where he spent much of his childhood. Finally, Master Builder A.L. Dennstedt often utilized the Spanish hacienda as a style for the majority of his early builds. The enclosed patios, wide porches and building materials associated with Spanish colonial and Mexican hacienda style have become a hallmark of California architecture. This architectural style and its embodiment of a rich Spanish and Mexican heritage undoubtedly sets Southern California apart from the rest of the nation and will continue to add to the desire of living in The Golden State.

Cameron E. Lindsay-Hewett, Vice President,
Talmadge Historical Society

References:

Colle, M. (1989) *Casa Mexicana: The architecture, design, and style of Mexico*. Tim Street-Porter.

Sunset Magazine. (1947) *Sunset: Western Ranch Houses*. Lane Publishing Co.

Thomas, H. et al. (1997) *Kensington Talmadge: 1910-1997*. Ellipsys International Publications inc.



The Edward W. and Gertrude A. Dennstedt House,