CHAPTER 1

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# Remnants of a Failed Utopia: Reconstructing Runnymede's Agricultural Landscape

Until World War II, the Santa Clara Valley south of San Francisco, California, was a rural landscape of small farming villages, truck gardens, and orchards. Since the war, spiraling populations and the growth of the high-tech industry have transformed Santa Clara Valley into Silicon Valley, a landscape dense in residential subdivisions, commercial strips, and industrial parks. Yet occasional hints of the area's agricultural past still remain, hemmed in by fast food restaurants and tract houses.

One of the area's greatest concentrations of agricultural remnants survives in East Palo Alto, a city adjacent to Palo Alto and minutes from Stanford University but separated from them by vast physical, cultural, and economic barriers. Today East Palo Alto is known to outsiders primarily for the gang violence and drug activity that is heavily, and sometimes sensationally, covered by the local media. But during the early 1910s and 1920s, East Palo Alto was the site of Runnymede—also known as the Charles Weeks Poultry Colony after its founder—an agricultural utopia that drew over a thousand settlers from all over the United States.

Although Runnymede's small ranches became intertwined with later construction, the settlement's original structure continued to shape the area as it was transformed into a flower-growing center during the Depression, and then into the postwar suburban community of East Palo Alto. Woven into East Palo Alto's contemporary fabric are the distinctive architectural and spatial signs of the culturally and economically diverse groups that have made their homes in the area over the past century, each altering a landscape defined by a previous generation. In East Palo Alto today, the remnants of Runnymede—its street grid, spacious lots, and agricultural structures—have become a hotly contested issue in the multicultural community the city has become.

In this chapter, we will explore how East Palo Alto's landscape has been transformed, physically and conceptually, by successive generations with different and sometimes competing cultural values. Beginning with the conditions that gave rise to the distinctive configuration of Runnymede's landscape, we will consider the area's transformation in the context of dynamic cultural processes: how the landscape represents and shapes social relations even as it is reconfigured by them; how the template established early in the century at Runnymede has facilitated certain kinds of development while inhibiting others; how the landscape has functioned as a vehicle for the assertion of status and the construction of identity. Fundamental to these questions is the catalytic tension between rural and suburban values that has persisted in East Palo Alto throughout the course of the twentieth century. To explore these issues, we will couple a reading of the buildings and landscape with the consideration of promotional literature, archival materials, newspaper articles, and interviews.[1]

## *Runnymede*

Charles Weeks, an entrepreneur with a reformer's zeal, founded Runnymede in 1916.[2] At its peak, the colony's small farms, with their "garden homes," tankhouses, and chicken coops laid out on narrow one-acre lots, gave form to contemporary ideas about scientific farming, cooperative living, and individual enterprise. As one of a collection of similar settlements, most of which have all but vanished, Runnymede's residual landscape provides an important conduit to one aspect of the larger back-to-the-land movement that gathered momentum in the early twentieth century.

After experimenting on his own to develop an innovative method of chicken raising, Weeks dreamed of establishing an agricultural cooperative of independent, intensively cultivated one-acre poultry farms. His goal was to provide an alternative to the moral and physical unhealthiness of urban living and the monotony of assembly-line labor. In a 1917 newspaper article he explained his views: "Man has wandered from his natural life to the artificial life of cities and has suffered therefrom. It takes only a little garden soil to make an abundant living with independence, health, and freedom. Why should men work long, weary hours in unhealthy places all the days of their lives for a mere subsistence when this fuller, more abundant way of living is so natural and practical?"[3]

As he formulated his ideas, Charles Weeks was inspired by William E. Smythe, an influential writer and social critic who had settled in San Diego in 1901.[4] Like many progressive reformers, Smythe feared the destabilizing effects of urbanization and industrialism on personal and family life. As an alternative, he advocated channeling urban populations into planned rural settlements of small family farms, each less than ten acres. These would be irrigated by a network of canals crisscrossing the arid western states to transform the desert into a series of oases of fertile soil and abundant produce. Families, each tilling their own small parcel of land, would work cooperatively with their neighbors to form both social and economic bonds. To boost yields and gain financial independence, they would also share information on the latest scientific methods and agricultural technologies.

Smythe, with Weeks soon following, rode the crest of a growing back-to-the-land movement that gained momentum even as increasing numbers of people were leaving farms and small towns for the city. Particularly well known was Bolton Hall, a Wall Street lawyer, whose book *A Little Land and a Living* (1908) paralleled Smythe's views on relocating people from the city onto small farms that would be intensively cultivated to achieve financial independence.[5] Advocates of the small farm favored it for several reasons. The breakup of large landholdings into smaller, more affordable slices was a strike for democracy, they said, for it made land ownership accessible to those of more limited means. On the new small

farm, each family could till the land independently, employing no one, and being employed by no one.[6] And the small farm provided the ideal alternative for the city's overflowing population.

William Smythe's ideas soon formed the basis of what came to be known as the "Little Landers' movement," whose colonies dotted the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, particularly in California.[7] He established his first settlements at New Plymouth, Idaho, in 1895 and San Ysidro, California, in 1908.[8] Each venture was planned to combine suburban comforts with rural independence and closeness to nature. To dispel the popular impression of farming as an isolated and backward pursuit, Smythe emphasized the collegial and cultivated social relations in Little Landers' colonies. His vision attracted widespread attention. The *Craftsman* advocated the Little Landers' concept as an answer to contemporary ills. When Smythe founded the magazine *Little Lands in America* to promote his views, Bay Area architect Bernard Maybeck published a series of "Maybeck Homes for Little Lands."[9] And President Wilson's secretary of the interior, Franklin Lane, consulted Smythe about his plan to resettle World War I veterans in soldier homestead colonies.

Drawn by Smythe's ideas, Charles Weeks visited the settlement at San Ysidro in the early 1910s and returned to the Bay Area to search for an appropriate place to start his own colony of small farms.[10] He realized that a successful small holding would require an abundant water supply, excellent soil, and proximity to urban markets. The site he selected for Runnymede stood on the shores of San Francisco Bay just two miles east of the gates of Stanford University, adjacent to the booming college town of Palo Alto, and only one hour by train to San Francisco. The area's rich, loamy soil could support a variety of crops, and its high water table made the drilling of wells for irrigation an easy task. In a region where there is a bewildering variety of microclimates, the site enjoyed mild temperatures and a particular abundance of sunshine. Once Weeks had pinpointed the appropriate location, he teamed up with Peter Faber, a large landowner who subdivided his acreage into one-acre farms, and sold them off as new settlers arrived.[11] In effect, Weeks functioned as a cross between an entrepreneurial real estate developer and a social visionary.

Trumpeting the slogan "One Acre and Independence," Charles Weeks promoted his vision of self-sufficiency and personal initiative combined with economic cooperation and community spirit through a variety of books, pamphlets, and articles, and he ran ads in periodicals that reached people throughout the country.[12] He even set up a network of recruiters who acted as his agents. Locally, he circulated a float bearing a model one-acre farm. His advertising played upon the rural fantasies nourished by the myriad popular publications that glorified life in the country and suburb.[13] While many periodicals featured country life as only the wealthy could enjoy it, at Runnymede, according to Weeks, anyone of moderate means could find country happiness—and financial independence, too. There, Weeks said, a person could be the "creator of his own poetical paradise . . . surrounded by opulence and luxuries grown from the rich, well-watered soil." Runnymede's settlers would be "Contented People who realize that all that is worth while in life can be secured right in the home garden . . ." and who "get joy in the freedom out in the fresh air with the blue sky overhead" and a "little bit of heaven around their feet."[14]

Weeks's version of the California dream attracted a variety of people. In 1917 he reported: "Lawyers, doctors, ministers, professors, farmers, in fact people from every calling settle here, bent on one purpose—that of making a garden home. . . . This one purpose creates a bond of sympathy between all the neighbors until they are one large family."[15] Weeks delighted in telling of people who had given up the daily grind at their desks for a

healthy life in the country, but the colony also attracted a variety of craftspeople who had always made a living by their hands. Many settlers were elderly couples who were persuaded by Weeks's promise of independence and leisure in a quiet rural setting paired with the cultural amenities of the city nearby.[16] In his promotional efforts, Weeks targeted World War I veterans, advocating an army to till the soil using technology for peace rather than war.[17] Poultry farming was also considered an appropriate endeavor for the independent woman,[18] and the names of many single women appear in the early ranks of property owners.[19]

Weeks's advertising made it clear that he wanted to populate Runnymede with prosperous middle-class people who had already been successful in their previous lives. The settlers, all of whom were of European ancestry, paid cash for the whole cost of their properties. Credit was unavailable. "This secures the settler absolutely," Weeks stated in 1917, "and attracts a prosperous class of people. The class of people at Runnymede is far above average, making social conditions enticing to all who visit the colony."[20] Weeks's vision of utopia was essentially bourgeois and exclusive. This would become problematic several decades later.

Within five years, Runnymede had attracted twelve hundred people drawn from all over the country, and it had become one of the largest poultry producers in the United States. When new colonists first arrived, they convened at Charles Weeks's own ranch to be trained in what Weeks modestly called the "Charles Weeks Poultry System." Central to his approach was a belief in the efficacy of new scientific methods and efficiency engineering in maximizing farm output. He also stressed the combination of community cooperation and individual enterprise. While each family had its own small farm, members of the colony purchased supplies, maintained shared warehouse and social facilities, marketed their produce as a group, and met on a monthly basis to vote on Runnymede's business matters.[21]

The structure of Runnymede's landscape gave form to Charles Weeks's dream of combining the best features of rural and suburban life to create a suburb of efficient small farms that facilitated both community and independence. Having come from a large midwestern farm, Weeks remembered how lonely farm life could be when families were separated by vast tracts of land. At Runnymede, he envisioned a farming community that put neighbors in close proximity to one another. Well-maintained streets were laid out in a grid lined with long, narrow one-acre lots, their short ends fronting the street. Runnymede's settlers then constructed small cottages or bungalows—"garden homes"—toward the front of their lots, leaving space for neat, unfenced front yards with sidewalks leading up to their front doors. Though the lots were extraordinarily deep, their frontages were similar to those found in other suburban areas with houses of comparable size. With this layout, Runnymede, when seen from the street, had the potential to resemble the neighborhoods of bungalows that had sprung up in the nearby suburbs of Palo Alto and Menlo Park.

Though the front yard was conceptualized as conventionally suburban, the rest of the lot was designed to support an efficient, independent agricultural enterprise (fig. 1.1). Adjacent to most houses stood a tankhouse that stored water from each farm's individual well, and along the sides of the back of each property stretched at least one long, narrow structure to house the chickens. The remaining space was devoted to gardens that were intensively cultivated to provide fruits and vegetables for the family and greens for the chickens. In an era when the efficient use of resources was highly touted, not an inch was wasted in the production of poultry and produce.

The small farm, merged with the bourgeois suburb, abetted social and cultural life as well as the use of cooperative facilities. Though many of the colonists settled on two to five acres of land rather than one—which meant that the houses

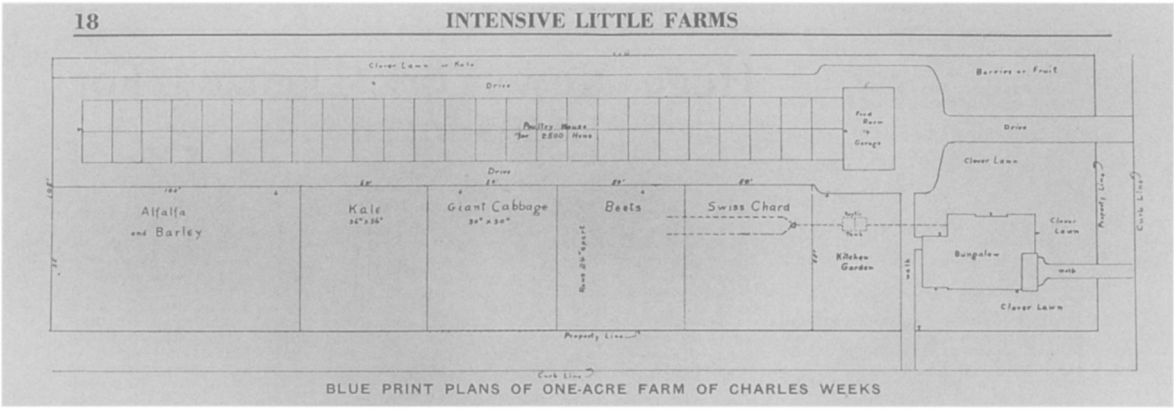


Fig. 1.1. A Model Acre. From Charles Weeks, "The Model Acre," *One Acre and Independence* (Oct. 1922): 9.

were more widely spaced than Weeks had first intended—Runnymede's families lived close enough to one another to exchange information and share a common delivery truck that could move easily from farm to farm, picking up produce to take it to market. All farmers also had ready access to the community warehouse, which was located on a railroad spur at the eastern edge of the colony.

Unlike many utopian or separatist colonies, however, Runnymede was laid out with no focal point—either architectural or spatial—to reify group consciousness. Point Loma, a Theosophist colony begun in 1897 near San Diego, featured a monumental domed temple around which the community's layout and activities orbited. The Socialist town Llano del Rio, begun near Los Angeles in 1914, had a community hotel. Runnymede, on the other hand, was first laid out as an uninterrupted grid with no predefined common spaces. If the community had a focal point, it was Charles Weeks's own ranch, a much larger enterprise separated from the colony proper by a meandering creek. Only after Runnymede was already established did Charles Weeks realize that the colonists needed their own area for social and cultural life, so he set aside some space for a small community center and a school.

The common architectural features of Runnymede's long, thin parcels, embodying the colonists' shared acceptance of the Weeks poultry gospel, contributed to a sense of community identity and cohesiveness and distinguished theirs from other nearby farms. Tankhouses and poultry houses, familiar agricultural buildings adapted to Weeks's model of farming, were the key structures in the Weeks system of independent farms and the most salient landmarks in Runnymede's landscape (fig. 1.2).

The tankhouse that stood next to most of Runnymede's garden homes was the center of the small farm's irrigation system (fig. 1.3). Weeks believed that one of the most important keys to independence was an abundant, low-cost water supply. According to Weeks, "Independence as regards water is of the highest importance for the California farmer and the very essential of success."[22] Runnymede's tankhouses were sturdy two-story structures, rectilinear or slightly tapered in outline. Their heavy framing, enclosed and reinforced with a protective siding, supported an elevated water tank resting on a platform that was slightly arched to allow for rainwater run-off. The elevated reservoirs, most of which were left exposed, provided a gravity-induced pressure system for the farm family's needs. Similar tankhouses are still sprinkled throughout the Santa Clara Valley, stretching down to Gilroy, south of San José.[23]

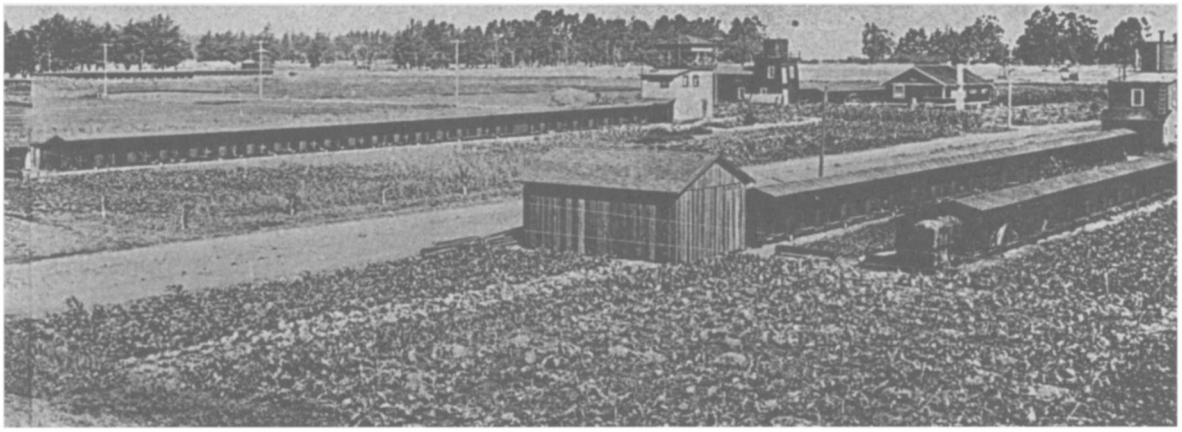

Fig. 1.2. Bird's-Eye View of Runnymede. Courtesy of the Palo Alto Historical Association.

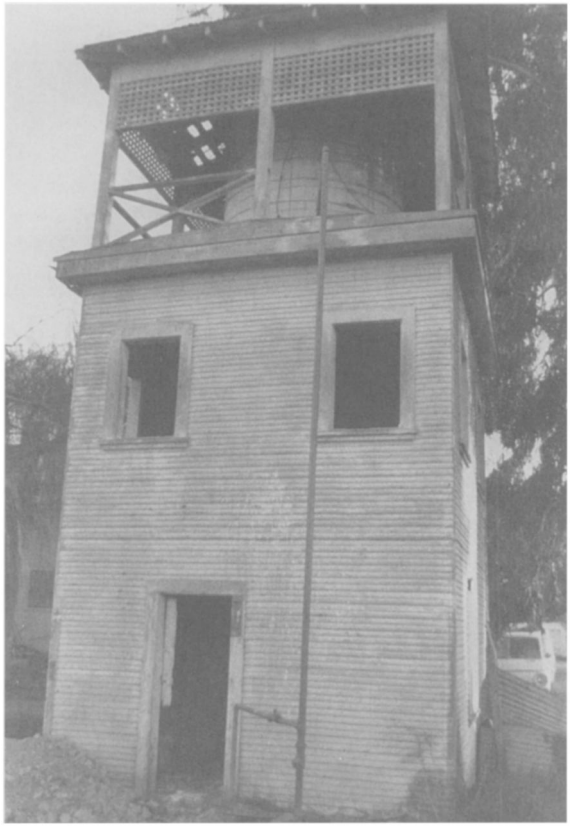

Fig. 1.3. Runnymede Tankhouse. Courtesy of the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society. Photograph by Trevor Burrowes.

The tankhouse formed the mechanical heart of the Little Lands farm. Arterial networks of electrical wires connected the tankhouse to surrounding buildings. Outside each tankhouse, a centrifugal pump run by a five horse-power electric motor pumped 250 to 400 gallons per minute, circulating water to the farmhouse, gardens, and poultry houses. Many of the mechanisms that made intensive farming on one acre feasible and comfortable were centered around the tankhouse. In addition to the pump, the pump's motor could also power other useful machinery such as feed cutters and washing machines. Electricity put new labor-saving devices as well as efficient farm machinery within the reach of the Runnymede rancher. For an agricultural community, this must have seemed a real step forward at a time when electricity was still an urban and suburban amenity unavailable in many rural areas.[24]

The tankhouse became a vivid symbol of the Little Landers' farms' factory-like efficiency, modernity, and independence. It represented the irrigation proponent's notion that in the West it could be possible for the individual to gain greater control of the land and enjoy higher yields and more consistency through irrigation than through the unpredictable rainfall on which farm-

ers depended in the East.[25] In Runnymede's flat terrain, tankhouses also became landmarks, distinguishing one property from another. They varied in form and embellishment according to individual taste. Some farmers, such as Henry Bertram, painted their tankhouses to match the color schemes of their houses. One particularly well-to-do colonist, Arnold E. Martinelli, flanked his tankhouse with two garages, incorporating it into a symmetrical, formal complex to complement the large house he erected in front of it. Others distinguished their tankhouses by adding pyramidal roofs and railings around the tanks to form sheltered observation decks. From there, they could survey their land and the surrounding small farms stretching toward the Bay. When viewed from inside or out, tankhouses underscored the Runnymede landowner's independent status and command of territory.

While tankhouses became vertical markers for the individual farms, the long, narrow poultry houses stretched horizontally across the landscape, defining boundaries between properties (See fig. 1.2.). Weeks developed these unusual structures to maximize egg production and minimize land use and labor. All poultry farmers in Runnymede adopted Charles Weeks's method of poultry raising. Weeks shunned the traditional free range system, which required a large farmyard for a sizable flock. Instead, Weeks's poultry houses confined groups of twenty to twenty-five birds in coops measuring eight by eight feet. Though the enclosed method of chicken raising has come into question in recent years, early in the century it seemed a revolutionary step. Among the first to develop this concept was a man named Philo from Elmira, New York, who published a pamphlet that explained how to keep chickens in small pens. The pamphlet's sale made Philo a wealthy man, as thousands of people put chicken coops on the backs of city lots, in suburban backyards, and even on the roofs of tall buildings. With these rooftop roosts, Philo helped to bring rural pursuits to the city, while Weeks hoped to transfer city amenities to the country.[26]

The small coop's potential for combining intensive poultry raising with suburban life intrigued Charles Weeks, who maximized efficiency by lining up the pens in poultry houses that grew to be as much as 240 feet long. Their shape fit well on Runnymede's lots, which may have been structured to accommodate them, and their design made it possible for them to be tended by one family, or even one individual. The open front of each house was designed to maximize illumination by the sun. In the winter, electric lights supplemented sunlight to give the chickens "longer working hours." Water flowed automatically from well to coop, and shallow feeding troughs ran along the outside of each house, enabling the farmer, with no wasted motion, to walk along and fill the trough in one clean sweep. The linear course of the assembly line was thus incorporated into an agricultural setting imbued with Taylorized notions of efficiency.[27]

The length and number of poultry houses on a given property were also a tangible measure of a given farmer's prosperity. These "neat systematic poultry houses," as Weeks called them, could hold up to 1,000 chickens that could easily be tended by a single family or even an individual. Weeks estimated that the sale of the eggs yielded by 250 chickens would be enough to support one person, while 1,000 chickens could meet the basic needs of a family of four. Additional chickens yielded money in the bank. Weekly reports in the *Runnymede News* reinforced status distinctions by publicly indicating how many eggs each rancher in Runnymede had produced. Any Runnymede colonist could have calculated the number of chickens owned by neighbors by surveying the length and number of their coops. More chicken coops signified more eggs and more money and gave the family more voting shares and more power in the community. And Charles Weeks had the most of all.

Runnymede was set up as a cooperative, yet individualism, competition, and private enterprise formed its foundation and were expressed in its landscape. Runnymede's settlers fled the city, yet industrial values were incorporated into the management of the independent farm-factory. These values also permeated contemporary theories in home economics literature, which constructed the housewife as a businesswoman/domestic scientist engaged in the management of the home/laboratory. While in the traditional suburb the realms of home and factory had been sundered in the modern industrial world, in Runnymede they were expected to be conjoined. In Runnymede, the middle-class family labored together on a site of production with home at its center. The colony's promotional literature showed images of men and women working side by side, their neat "garden homes" hovering in the background. Alice Weeks, Charles Weeks's wife, wrote that "the small farm is so closely related to the 'center' of the home that you feel the atmosphere of the home life when you step your foot upon the soil of the small holding."[28] Even as industrial ideas infiltrated its agricultural environment, at Runnymede the work environment was also domesticated. Yet, as it sought to eradicate polarities between urban and rural, domestic and industrial, Runnymede espoused the values of the industrial world its colonists sought to escape but not to subvert.

Charles Weeks envisioned a future in which every city would have a suburb of little garden farms within commuting distance so that families could live a "wholesome life" close to nature. This was not to be. A variety of social, economic and spatial factors combined to break up the colony by the 1930s. In the early 1920s, Charles Weeks turned his attention to Owensmouth, a new colony he founded near Los Angeles. Runnymede lost its dynamic leader and its economic and ideological heart when Weeks vacated and sold his land, which contained the demonstration farm that showed new arrivals the stunning possibilities of the Weeks poultry method. There are hints that many of the original colonists found poultry raising, even according to the Weeks method, a more arduous task than they had imagined. Land changed hands rapidly. Fluctuating produce prices, tainted water, and finally the Depression made it increasingly difficult for the colonists to meet their needs on such small holdings. Once Weeks was gone and his poultry method was questioned, there was little to bind Runnymede's independent farms together. Runnymede's landscape as it appeared in the early 1920s did little to uphold Weeks's original vision of a unified suburban community. Because so many colonists actually settled on more than one acre, Runnymede's streets appeared too loosely strung to acquire the suburban density Weeks had desired. The gaps in the streetscape also detracted from the suburban atmosphere by revealing the spaces of production beside and behind the houses. This violated a fundamental tenet of suburbia—that spaces of production, if present at all, should be kept well hidden. At its demise, Runnymede's fragmented landscape was still fundamentally rural, with a patchy suburban veneer.[29]

### *The Blossoming of Floriculture*

The tension between rural and suburban values in Runnymede's landscape intensified as Runnymede's ranchers sold out or turned to new endeavors, new people moved in, and the area became known as East Palo Alto. By the late 1920s, new period revival houses had gone up on many of Runnymede's empty lots, while new and more densely developed subdivisions began to encroach upon the colony's boundaries. We are told that East Palo Alto residents considered these more classically suburban developments to be of higher status than Runnymede, which retained its bucolic atmosphere. Yet, even as development quickened during this period, East Palo Alto as a whole retained a predominantly rural character, espe-

cially compared with nearby suburbs such as Palo Alto and Menlo Park. In the early 1930s, East Palo Alto received a blow when the new Bayshore Highway plunged through its business district, cutting most of the community off from the other suburbs on the San Francisco Peninsula. This bifurcation crystallized the distinction between rural East Palo Alto, seen as something of a boondocks, and its more suburban neighbors on the other side of the highway.[30]

Compared with neighboring cities that were undergoing more rapid residential expansion, widespread agricultural activity continued in East Palo Alto well into the postwar era. Runnymede's grid of deep one-acre lots proved to be highly adaptable to new purposes.[31] Beginning in the 1930s, Italian and Japanese flower growers began to insert long greenhouses onto lots that once supported intensive chicken farming (fig. 1.4).[32] Compared with the low, enclosed wooden poultry houses nearby, most of the greenhouses were light, open skeletal structures of thin wooden (or, eventually, metal) posts with fixed translucent panels laid within simple sashwork. Roofs were gabled, often with vents along the ridge line and side walls.

Most of East Palo Alto's flower growers specialized in chrysanthemums, carnations, or lilies, which they shipped in refrigerated "flower trains"

Fig. 1.4. Runnymede Tankhouse with Later Greenhouses. Photo by Katherine Solomonson.

to eastern markets. The two largest Italian growers, Frank J. Siry and Frank "Lucky" Podesta, purchased extensive acreages in East Palo Alto in 1946 and hemmed in the Runnymede area with their long rows of greenhouses.[33] Before the war, due to discriminatory property laws, Japanese floriculturists, on the other hand, generally established themselves as tenant farmers.[34] Their businesses were abruptly disrupted when they were evacuated to the wartime internment camp at Heart Mountain, Wyoming, in May 1942.[35] Following the war, Asian-American families purchased land in East Palo Alto to establish truck farming, bonsai, or floriculture enterprises.

Floriculturists adapted well to the Runnymede landscape. The long, thin lots subdivided to accommodate the Weeks Poultry System were perfectly suited for the similarly proportioned glazed sheds. The greenhouses—around two hundred feet in length—stretched as long as the deteriorating poultry houses that stood next to many of them, but they were considerably wider.[36] Several greenhouses, many of them in rows behind Weeks-era bungalows, took up most of a one-acre property. This was agriculture every bit as intensive as in Charles Weeks's colony. Since setback laws prohibited the growers from erecting greenhouses in their front yards, as some would have wished, suburban values continued to inform the conception of the streetscape.

As in the Weeks colony, social, economic, and ethnic distinctions could be read in the agricultural structures erected after the war. Albert and Sally Nakai and Tsuruko and Don Nakanishi were particularly helpful in explaining these distinctions to us.[37] Like poultry houses, the size and number of greenhouses immediately communicated the grower's relative prosperity. So, too, did distinctions in materials. Prosperous growers of the 1940s could afford fully glazed two-hundred-foot houses, while less well-to-do farmers erected smaller sheds covered in cheaper, translucent polyethylene. The plastic was far less desirable, for it cracked easily

and needed frequent replacement. In the 1950s, sheds composed of prefabricated metal skeletons replaced wood-framed structures. At first, these were within the reach of only the wealthiest growers with the means to switch systems.

East Palo Alto's greenhouses also marked ethnic distinctions. Japanese and Italian growers specialized in different kinds of flowers, and their greenhouses, as a consequence, looked markedly different. Japanese growers specialized in chrysanthemums, a royal and national symbol in Japan. To raise the delicate chrysanthemums, which could be damaged by overexposure to sunlight and wind, Japanese nurserymen clad large framed greenhouses, which lacked gables, in white cheesecloth. Each year East Palo Alto's Japanese growers would gather to help one another tack the cloth to the wooden posts, drawing together the Japanese community in cooperative labor for one family's benefit, an event reminiscent of a barn raising. The long cheesecloth houses, their walls flapping in the breeze, became a familiar, ghostly sight in East Palo Alto. Chrysanthemums blossom naturally during the autumn and winter. During the summer, Japanese growers draped a black, satiny material over the wooden frames to shield the chrysanthemums from the sun and to simulate the shorter days the flowers needed to bloom—a technique akin to, but opposite from, the use of electric lights to create "longer working hours" for the Weeks-era chickens. East Palo Alto's Italian growers were known for their lilies, which they timed to be ready for Easter. Their greenhouses could be distinguished by the thick coat of whitewash applied to the glass or plastic panes to protect the plants from the glaring sun.

These greenhouses, crowded into Runnymede's landscape, represented the significant social and economic changes that were occurring in the area. While Runnymede was visually unified by agricultural structures that represented a cooperative community and a shared approach to farming, the greenhouses disrupted the formerly homogeneous landscape with a tangible sign of Runnymede's breakdown and the area's ethnic as well as agricultural diversification. Runnymede's lots were designed for kitchen and flower gardens, poultry houses, a goat, and even a beehive—complementary activities that were carefully proportioned to provide everything a family might need to eat, plus some surplus for cash. The flower growers, on the other hand, covered Runnymede's lots with assembly lines of floriculture designed for the efficient production of a single crop geared primarily for the marketplace rather than self-consumption. Runnymede's small farms were expected to be tended by one family, without outside help—something that was also true of the smaller growers—but the larger growers, with their long lines of serially replicated greenhouses, had an expanded enterprise that required hired laborers.[38] The value of efficient production obtained on both the Weeks-era farm and the flower growers' greenhouses, but the goals and the way they were expressed differed significantly.

In the meantime, Runnymede's tankhouses, once such strong symbols of individual self-sufficiency, began to lose their meaning along with their function. As subdivisions established centralized water systems and as well water grew less dependably pure, tankhouses lost their reservoirs or were removed as space was needed for other purposes. With the demolition of many of the vertical tankhouses, East Palo Alto became a predominantly horizontal landscape. As Albert Nakai pointed out, the rows of greenhouses, interconnected and extending for one hundred to two hundred feet in each direction, made the area resemble an industrial district of low warehouses. While Runnymede's farmers embellished their tankhouses to signify personal ownership and independence, later growers seemed less interested in individualization. Self-sufficient irrigation met its end along with agricultural independence.

### *Postwar Developments*

After World War II, developers constructed subdivisions of low-cost tract houses around Runnymede. Though densely suburban, one of the area's largest subdivisions, Palo Alto Gardens, was laid out along meandering streets to evoke the agrarian landscape suggested by its name. (In contrast, Runnymede, founded on agrarian ideals, had been developed on a grid.) The new subdivisions had wide streets, designed for the automobile, that were finished with sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. As in Runnymede, front yards were open and unfenced, but the much smaller backyards were conceived as private spaces for leisure rather than production. In the meantime, Bayshore Highway was transformed into a freeway that literally and figuratively widened the gulf between East Palo Alto and its suburban neighbors.

Not long after the new neighborhoods were settled, local realtors assaulted East Palo Alto, the most isolated area on the San Francisco Peninsula, with a variety of block-busting techniques. They distributed pamphlets threatening the collapse of real estate values; they drove busloads of African Americans through the area; and they goaded existing residents to sell their houses and buy new ones in the new subdivisions farther south. As European-American residents struggled to maintain the status quo, East Palo Alto became one of the most explosive sites of desegregation in the San Francisco Bay Area. By the late 1960s the majority of the population had become African American. During the 1980s, the arrival of Latinos and Pacific Islanders transformed East Palo Alto into the multicultural community it is today. As Silicon Valley's fortunes skyrocketed, East Palo Alto's declined proportionately. The community has become the peninsula's chief source of drugs, and violent crime has soared. A local newspaper recently superimposed a "gangland map" over the area still structured by Runnymede's agricultural landscape.[39]

During Runnymede's peak, the area had been a wide-open landscape demarcated by poultry coops and punctuated by tankhouses. Recent events have turned East Palo Alto into a fortified suburb where various types of boundaries have been drawn and redrawn. Many of the deteriorating remnants of Runnymede stand behind high fences of wood, chain link, and razor wire. Elaborate wrought-iron grillwork fills the windows of some of Runnymede's "garden homes" and defines the edges of extended-family compounds. Waist-high chain-link fences mark the boundaries of front yards, both in Runnymede and the postwar subdivisions. East Palo Alto's greatest barricade is Highway 101, with its high sound walls and swiftly moving traffic, which cuts most of the city off from the more prosperous communities on the other side.

Today much of Runnymede's original configuration remains, defined by the distinctive long, thin lots and undeveloped backyards where some raise vegetables and even a few chickens. Pressure to develop available land on the San Francisco Peninsula intensified during the 1970s and 1980s as the computer industry burgeoned in Silicon Valley. Hoping to profit during the real-estate boom, developers began to eye the undeveloped space in the Runnymede area. While Runnymede's tight grid and deep lots proved highly adaptable to floriculture, they have lent themselves less easily to conventional higher-density suburban development, especially because much of the undeveloped space happens to be the deep backyards behind existing houses. The most common strategies have been to construct housing with no street frontage at the back of the lots or to bundle together several lots, which are then thrust through with a cul-de-sac. For example, Lonnie Bogan, the African-American developer of Mandela Estates and a resident of East Palo Alto, fit fourteen houses clustered around a cul-de-sac onto two and one-half acres (fig. 1.5). A high steel fence

with a locked gate barricades the compound from the rest of the city. The two-story dwellings take up almost all of each tiny lot, leaving little or no yard space for either recreation or cultivation. Bogan, whose goal was to establish a new model for East Palo Alto development, geared the tract to prosperous East Palo Altans who desired a protected enclave with the curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and street lights characteristic of many postwar suburban developments. Connection to the landscape, either economic or recreational, is minimized in favor of personal security and increased interior space. The development stands in marked contrast to the more rural atmosphere that persists in the Runnymede neighborhood. In an area that was once unified by common agricultural features, Mandela Estates' large houses, high fence, and manicured cul-de-sac become a shared, inward-turning symbol of success.[40]

While developers have been carving Runnymede's lots into new configurations, others have found new uses for the area's surviving agricultural structures. Today East Palo Alto has one of the greatest concentrations of tankhouses remaining in northern California. With their sturdy frames and small footprints, tankhouses have proven to be highly adaptable. Tankhouses in tourist destinations such as Mendocino and Sonoma Counties have been converted into shops or bed-and-breakfast rooms; one provides the focal point of a shopping mall. On the densely developed San Francisco Peninsula, tankhouses have become romantic reminders of the agricultural landscape that was devoured by Silicon Valley. In the city of Los Altos, for example, a tankhouse slated to be torn down for new development was removed to the civic center for restoration and display.[41] In East Palo Alto, on the other hand, tankhouses are generally valued more for their usefulness than their nostalgic appeal. Their owners have converted them into storage sheds or residences through a variety of additions and changes: porches and balconies, new rooms, vivid turquoise and pink paint (fig. 1.6). Runnymede's poultry houses are mostly gone, but a few survive as storage sheds or as components of the fences marking boundaries between lots. Near the deteriorating poultry houses are the skeletons of greenhouses, tangible signs of the flower industry's decline in the 1970s.[42] Most of East Palo Alto's small growers died off or were forced out of business when imports from Colombia began to drive California growers out of the market.

Today, East Palo Altans are contending with different visions of the city's future development.


Fig. 1.5. Mandela Estates. Photo by Katherine Solomonson.

Fig. 1.6. Runnymede Tankhouse Transformed into a House. Photo by Katherine Solomonson.

With its diverse community, the remnants of the city's agricultural past have become highly charged symbols. One faction sees East Palo Alto's suburbanization and economic development as a sign of progress. To augment the city's tax base, they lobby hard for the demolition of Runnymede's older buildings to make way for revenue-producing commercial developments and subdivisions. They hold up as a model the postwar Palo Alto Gardens subdivision, with its newer tract houses, wide streets, curbs, and sidewalks—as opposed to Runnymede, with its older bungalows and cottages, narrow rutted streets, and deteriorating reminders of the agricultural past.[43] From this perspective, new developments such as Mandela Estates represent the level of comfort and security enjoyed by the inhabitants of the more prosperous suburbs nearby.

African-American critics of this type of dense infill development, however, have dryly characterized Mandela Estates as an ill-conceived effort to get out of the fields and into the plantation house. They belong to another faction, led primarily by African Americans, that wants to see East Palo Alto develop an identity distinct from the suburbs on the other side of the freeway. One group in particular, the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society, known as EPA HAS, has embraced the historic landscape and cooperative agrarian philosophy of Runnymede. One of EPA HAS's goals is to maintain and renovate Runnymede's remnants and to preserve the openness of the landscape for agricultural purposes. Inspired by the urban garden movement, EPA HAS espouses Weeks's ideas about intensive, independent farming on a small scale and his notions of cooperative marketing. Its goal is to seek the city's economic revitalization through agriculture. With the aid of EPA HAS and other groups, some of Runnymede's remaining one-acre lots have been transformed into private, community, and cooperative gardens that supply jobs and food for local consumption. Greenhouses are being reused for new agricultural collectives or individual produce businesses. Kitchen gardens, tended by African-American families, provide produce for the table, continuing agricultural traditions brought from the South.[44] Recently arrived Samoans have established taro gardens in their front yards, violating suburban conventions that relegate food crops to the back of the lot.

East Palo Alto's garden movement and the utopian vision that serves as its historical anchor have generated an increasing amount of publicity, providing a positive antidote to the emphasis on crime in the local news.[45] But this vision is not without its inherent tensions. Debates have erupted over a number of issues, including the Runnymede area's narrow streets, devoid of curbs and sidewalks. The nearby city of Atherton, one of San Francisco's wealthiest suburbs, has similar streets (but in better repair), which its residents enjoy as an evocation of country life. Yet, as Solomon Tucker pointed out at an EPA HAS meeting, a feature that means one thing in Atherton can mean something quite different in East Palo Alto. Many of East Palo Alto's African-American and Latino residents came from rural areas in the southern United States or Mexico. Some were attracted to the area because of its familiar semirural atmosphere, but for others the remnants of Runnymede's agricultural past, including its "unfinished" streets, are a reminder of an aspect of their own past that they prefer to leave behind.[46]

The idea of reviving the wide-open, expansive quality of Runnymede's early years also presents some difficulties (see fig. 1.2). The fences that segment East Palo Alto's landscape, especially those that bound front yards, detract from the image of suburbia that Weeks, as well as some contemporary East Palo Altans, find desirable. High fences of chain link, redwood, and wrought iron demarcate inward-looking compounds. They supplant the open, grassy suburban front yard—the individual home owner's contribution to the shared vision of the subdivision-as-park—with an assertion of individual identity as well as protection.

The lower fences surrounding many front yards may foster connection as well as separation; as James T. Rojas has observed in East Los Angeles that for Mexicans and Mexican Americans, fences often create individualized, semiprivate transitional spaces that recall the walled or fenced yards and courtyards associated with traditional Mexican houses, a recent memory for many East Palo Altans. In the "enacted environment," says Rojas, the fence may function as a social catalyst, defining a succession of spaces for interaction, even as it provides security.[47] Because of this, the proposal to remove fences in the Runnymede area in order to return to Weeks's original vision could work against a feature that contributes to social life in today's more diverse community.

The diversity of contemporary East Palo Alto versus the homogeneity of Weeks's conception of Runnymede is another important issue. According to EPA HAS, some have countered the group's proposals by pointing out that Runnymede's history and remnants are not directly related to the ethnic heritages of most of the people who now live in East Palo Alto. Since Runnymede was essentially bourgeois and exclusive and its colonists primarily white and of European descent, they suggest that the Runnymede plan may be inappropriate both as a planning model and as a vehicle for the construction of a new identity for East Palo Alto. The unified vision of Runnymede, based in an Anglo-American concept of suburbia combined with a new vision of agricultural life, belies the cultural divides that exist in East Palo Alto today.

EPA HAS, on the other hand, focuses on Runnymede's ideology and economic system rather than on ethnicity to discover values that may draw the community together. Trevor Burrowes, EPA HAS's president, suggests that the rural past that so many of the city's residents share—a past that cuts across ethnic boundaries—also connects them with East Palo Alto's historic landscape. Runnymede's landscape, and the cooperative ideals that informed it, could be revived to provide training, jobs, and sustenance for the city's residents, with the possibility of eventually transforming East Palo Alto into the produce capital of the Bay Area.[48] Agricultural metaphors are even beginning to inform discussions of East Palo Alto's future. Ruben Barrales, country supervisor for East Palo Alto's district, likened the need for planning decisions that acknowledge strength in variety to companionate gardening—the purposeful mix of different kinds of plants for healthy growth.[49]

The successive transformations of East Palo Alto's landscape raises the question of how recent arrivals to a given area may shape, enact, and be shaped by a landscape they have inherited but not created. In many cases, East Palo Alto's residents have responded to and adapted the landscape with little or no conscious engagement with the previous forces that shaped it. Members of EPA HAS, on the other hand, are making a conscious effort to develop a new connection with Runnymede's historic landscape. Despite contested meanings, members of EPA HAS and those who share their vision have embraced the water tower, the poultry house, and the one-acre lot as symbols of the agrarian, communitarian ideals they wish to revive, ideals which, they hope, will transcend class, ethnic, and economic boundaries to unite a factionalized community and forge a new sense of place. How the remnants of Runnymede can best be adapted to rekindle an earlier vision of unity while acknowledging current diversity remains to be seen.

## Notes

1. Our research on Runnymede began with a historic resources inventory of East Palo Alto, California. This was initiated by the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society and sponsored by the San Mateo County Historical Association, which provided the funding. We would like to thank the San Mateo County Historical Association, especially its executive director, Mitchell Postel, for supporting our work, and the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society, especially its director, Trevor Burrowes, for their invaluable insights and assistance. Thanks also to Warren Bruland for his help with the figures. Our work contributes to the growing literature on the transformation of landscapes, the dynamic processes involved in shaping, reshaping, and imbuing them with new meaning. See, for example, Catherine W. Bishir, "Yuppies, Bubbas, and the Politics of Culture," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, III,* ed. Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1989), 8–15; Elizabeth Collins Cromley, "Modernizing—Or, 'You Never See a Screen Door on Affluent Homes,'" *Journal of American Culture* 5 (Summer 1982): 71–79; Howard Wight Marshall, "A Good Gridiron: The Vernacular Design of a Western Cow Town," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, II,* ed. Camille Wells, (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1986), 81–88; Margaret Purser, "All Roads Lead to Winnemucca: Local Road Systems and Community Material Culture in Nineteenth-century Nevada," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, III,* 120–34, emphasizes that material culture should be seen as an active factor in shaping human actions and their meanings rather than as a passive reflection.

2. Very little work has been done on the history of Runnymede or the configuration of its landscape. For a brief discussion, see Robert Hine, *California's Utopian Colonies* (San Marino, 1966). For a more fully developed view of Runnymede in the context of East Palo Alto's built environment from the nineteenth century into the 1980s, see Trevor Burrowes, "East Palo Alto: The Dark Horse, A Study of the Built Environment of East Palo Alto," an unpublished paper sponsored by the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society.

3. *Palo Alto Times,* Nov. 14, 1917, 4–5.

4. On William Smythe, see *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White Co., 1927), 17: 443–44. Smythe outlined his ideas in a number of influential journals and treatises that included a journal he founded called *The Irrigation Age*; "Real Utopias in the Arid West," *Atlantic Monthly* 79 (1897): 605–9; *The Conquest of Arid America* (1899; reprint, Seattle, 1969); *Constructive Democracy* (New York, 1905); *City Homes on Country Lanes* (New York: Macmillan, 1922).

5. Bolton Hall, *A Little Land and a Living* (New York: Arcadia Press, 1908), and *Three Acres and Liberty* (New York: Macmillan, 1907). On Bolton Hall, see Lee, 28, and Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), xvii n. 4. Schmitt draws a distinction between the coinciding back-to-the-land and back-to-nature movements, the latter of which was motivated by a quest for Arcadia rather than a means to make a living.

6. In the irrigated West in particular, some forwarded strong arguments against holdings so large that a family needed to hire outside labor because they believed that irrigation apparatus needed the skill and close attention that only the landowner could maintain. See Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 117–18.

7. On William Smythe and the Little Landers' movement, see Henry S. Anderson, "The Little Landers' Land Colonies: A Unique Agricultural Experiment in California," *Agricultural History* 5 (Oct. 1931): 139–50; Lawrence B. Lee, "The Little Landers Colony of San Ysidro," *Journal of San Diego History* 21 (Winter 1975): 26–51; Worster, *Rivers of Empire,* 118–25; Bruce Kamerling, "The Arts and Crafts Movement in San Diego," in *The Arts and Crafts Movement in California: Living the Good Life,* ed. Kenneth R. Trapp (New York and Oakland: Abbeville Press and the Oakland Museum, 1993), 212–14. Although some work has been done on the Little Landers' movement, no one has previously undertaken a close analysis of how the Little Landers' landscape represented and reinforced social relations.

8. Other Little Landers' colonies included those in Tehama County and Lassen, both founded in California before 1901; Los Terrenitos, founded in about 1912 and located in the Monta Vista Valley about seventeen miles from Los Angeles; Hayward Heath, established by 1916 near the town of Hayward in the San Francisco Bay Area; and Walden, near San Francisco.

9. See Kamerling, "Arts and Crafts Movement," 212 and fig. 166.

10. Smythe encouraged Weeks to form a colony based on his poultry-raising techniques, and when Weeks began his efforts to attract settlers, he gave talks illustrated with stereopticon slides to support the venture. Charles Weeks, "William E. Smythe Passes Away," *One Acre and Independence* 4 (Nov. 1922): 12; and Lee, "Little Landers Colony," 44.

11. Though Smythe helped them promote Runnymede, Weeks and Faber never went into partnership with him to make their settlement an official addition to the string of Little Landers' colonies with which Smythe had been directly involved. This may have been because Little Landers' colonies were currently under investigation for their viability and Runnymede's founders found it preferable to distance their venture somewhat from the Little Landers' movement. See Lee, "Little Landers Colony," 44.

12. Weeks outlined his ideas most thoroughly in a book entitled *Egg Farming in California* (San Francisco, n.d.) that features his head, inscribed in an egg, hovering over long rows of poultry houses. His monthly magazine, *One Acre and Independence,* discussed Runnymede's progress and reported on Weeks's subsequent venture, Owensmouth, which he founded in the early 1920s near Los Angeles. Both of these publications served to spread the word as well as to preach to the converted. *The Runnymede News,* which was aimed primarily at Runnymede's settlers, detailed the colony's activities. A variety of other promotional materials may be found in the Palo Alto Historical Association files at the Palo Alto Public Library.

13. Among these were *Country Life, Countryside, Suburban Life, Indoors and Out,* and *House Beautiful,* for example, as well as articles such as "From the Horrors of City Life: The Experience of a Dweller in Flats, in Boarding Houses, in Nineteen Feet of Baked Mud, and in Suburban Homes Who (the Illusion of City Life Gone) at Last Found Happiness in a Country Home." This article, by Thomas Dixon, a popular novelist, appeared in *World's Work* 4 (Oct. 1902): 2603–11. See Schmitt, *Back to Nature,* 27–32, on this and other publications that fostered back-to-nature enthusiasm.

14. *Egg Farming in California,* 113.

15. *Palo Alto Times,* Nov. 14, 1917, 4.

16. To show that he would not exploit the elderly, Peter Faber announced that he would "not permit any dear old lady with $500 or $600 to settle upon a stone pile at Runnymede and try to make a living upon it." *Palo Alto Times,* July 24, 1916, cited by Lee, "Little Landers Colony," 44. There had been some discouragement at San Ysidro, where some of the settlers found themselves trying to till inferior soil.

17. *Egg Farming in California*; Nettie K. Gravett, "The Disabled Veterans and the Garden Home," *One Acre and Independence* (Nov. 1922): 19.

18. *Santa Clara Valley* (Palo Alto, Times Publishing Company, 1911), 32, a promotional publication issued by the Palo Alto Woman's Club, gave a lengthy affirmative to the question, "Can women make a success of ranching in this valley?" Independent women had tilled small irrigated farms of as much as forty acres since the late nineteenth century. As early as 1878 Minnie Austin and three other women, all former schoolteachers, bought an irrigated farm near Fresno. Their neighbor was a Danish woman who raised raisins on her five-acre holding. See Worster, *Rivers of Empire,* 100–101. *Overland Monthly* 9 (1887): 624, reported: "The work of irrigation is so light that women who bought their twenty or forty acre tracts . . . enjoy guiding the small streams from furrow to furrow" (quoted in Worster, *Rivers of Empire,* 101). The role of independent women in the irrigated farming movement deserves further attention.

19. Some of these women were joined by their husbands after World War I was over. Others were widows, and others were single women who embarked upon chicken ranching on their own. Information about Runnymede's settlers has been gleaned from *One Acre and Independence,* maps dating from 1922 and 1925 that inscribe the names of the owners on each plot, and city directories. Copies of these maps are in the collection of the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society, East Palo Alto, California.

20. "Runnymede is a Successful Colony," *Palo Alto Times,* Nov. 14, 1917, 4.

21. The cooperative aspects of Runnymede's organization reflected the influence of the contemporary formation of large citrus and walnut cooperatives in California.

22. *Palo Alto Times,* Nov. 14, 1917, 4.

23. For a typology of tankhouses, see Leon S. Pitman, "Domestic Tankhouses of Rural California," *Pioneer America* 8 (2) (1976): 84–97; and Allen G. Noble, *Wood, Brick, and Stone* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachu-

setts Press, 1984), 83–84. Also see Brian F. Terhorst, "The Changing Forms of Sonoma County Tankhouses," unpublished graduate seminar paper, Sonoma State Univ., Fall 1989. According to Terhorst, enclosed tankhouses—as opposed to water towers which have their structural elements left exposed—began to appear in the San Francisco Bay Area as early as the 1860s.

24. On rural electrification and labor-saving appliances, see Ann McCleary, "Domesticity and the Farm Woman: A Case Study of Women in Augusta County, Virginia 1850–1940," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, I,* ed. Camille Wells (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1987), 25–30; and Roger Miller, "Selling Mrs. Consumer: Advertising and the Creation of Suburban Socio-Spatial Relations, 1910–1930," *Antipode* 23 (July 1991): 263–301.

25. On the irrigation movement in California, see Worster, 99–118.

26. Weeks, *Egg Farming in California,* 43.

27. On Charles Weeks's poultry house design, see Weeks's own descriptions in *Egg Farming in California*; "The Model Acre," *One Acre and Independence* (Oct. 1922): 9; "Scientific and Artistic Poultry House for Intensive Egg Farming," *One Acre and Independence* (Nov. 1922): 1; and Thomas Stewart, "The Charles Weeks Poultry House," *One Acre and Independence* (Sept. 1922): 5–6, and (Nov. 1922): 5–6.

28. Alice J. Weeks, "The Place of the Woman in the 'Little Farm' Home," *One Acre and Independence* (Sept. 1922): 7.

29. According to David C. Streatfield, in the layout of early-twentieth-century bungalow gardens in California, the vegetable garden was consistently hidden at the back of the lot near the garage, screened by vines and shrubs. See "The Arts and Crafts Garden in California," in *The Arts and Crafts Movement in California,* 50. For an excellent study of the way architectural style and space diluted and in some ways contradicted the ideology underlying another agricultural colony, and may even have contributed to its failure, see Annmarie Adams, "Charterville and the Landscape of Social Reform," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, IV,* ed. Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1991), 138–45.

30. Insight into the suburban vs. rural images of East Palo Alto and its districts was provided by numerous interviews and newspaper articles. A Sept. 13, 1992, interview with Marjorie Wiley Jones, who lived in the Runnymede area during the 1930s, and a Sept. 4, 1993, interview with Mary Vitale MacLachlan, a former resident of Palo Alto Park, a 1920s East Palo Alto subdivision, were particularly helpful.

31. As Howard Wight Marshall has observed, though the grid may appear to be rigid, it is actually flexible, allowing for considerable variation. See "A Good Gridiron," 86–87.

32. During the first half of the twentieth century, flower growing was San Mateo County's largest industry. See Michael Svanenik, "When Flowers Were a Blooming Business," *San Mateo Times,* Mar. 24, 1989. On the cultivation of asters, see *Palo Alto Times,* Aug. 20, 1937.

33. On Podesta's arrival in East Palo Alto, see "Local Flower Industry at Easter Peak," *Palo Alto Times,* Apr. 7, 1950.

34. California's lawmakers passed alien land laws in 1913 and 1920 specifically to prohibit Japanese-born immigrants from owning property. See Timothy Lukes and Gary Y. Okahiro, *Japanese Legacy: Farming and Community Life in California's Santa Clara Valley* (Cupertino, Calif.: California History Center, 1985), 57–59. We have found that scattered Japanese families rented land and cash-farmed small holdings in the Runnymede area during the 1920s. In the early 1930s there were only one or two Chinese families in the East Palo Alto area. According to Henry Mock, a member of one of these families, his parents felt grateful that someone was willing to rent land to a Chinese farmer. Interview with Henry Mock, Aug. 27, 1992.

35. "144 Japanese Say Good-bye to Homes Here," *Palo Alto Times,* May 26, 1942.

36. Burrowes, "East Palo Alto," 10, has noted the formal similarity between the rows of poultry houses and the rows of greenhouses.

37. Detailed information about Japanese floriculture was given to us in the following interviews: Albert Nakai, June 11, 1993, July 9, 1993, and July 21, 1993; Sally Nakai, July 19, 1993; Tsuruko and Don Nakanishi, Aug. 24, 1993.

38. It should be noted that the smaller growers, who occupied only one acre in the Runnymede area, crammed as many greenhouses as they could onto their lots, but one family generally tended them all and also maintained a kitchen garden.

39. David Bank, "Nation's Homicide Capital: City of Courage, Fear, Hope," *San Jose Mercury News,* Jan. 31, 1993.

40. On Mandela Estates, see Shelby Grad, "Handsome Homes Arise in East P A," *San Jose Mercury News,* July 28, 1991; and Karen Liberatore, "Developer's Dream Inspired by Mandela," *San Francisco Chronicle,* Aug. 5, 1992.

41. See "Rescuing Old Water Tower: Los Altos' Agricultural Past to Go on View at Civic Center," *San Jose Mercury News, Peninsula Extra,* May 19, 1993.

42. According to Burrowes, "East Palo Alto," 12, the survival of a few nurseries in East Palo Alto is due primarily to the Williamson Preserve Act, which specifies that some agricultural land must be maintained in urban areas under certain conditions. Burrowes cites *East Palo Alto Community Plan EIR* (San Mateo County, Calif.: Department of Environmental Management, Planning and Development Division, 1981).

43. Burrowes, "East Palo Alto," 18.

44. Leroy Musgrave, presentation at East Palo Alto Planning Workshop, Mar. 27, 1993; interview with Mrs. Travis, May 3, 1993; conversations with Trevor Burrowes, director of the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society, during 1992 and 1993.

45. See, for example, Sibella Kraus, "East Palo Alto Begins to Reclaim Garden Heritage," *San Francisco Chronicle,* July 15, 1992.

46. Solomon Tucker, discussion at EPA HAS meeting, Aug. 26, 1992. Tucker was reflecting on feedback he had gotten from some of his neighbors.

47. James T. Rojas's discussion of Mexican and Mexican-American use of space in East Los Angeles concurs with our observations in East Palo Alto. See "The Enacted Environment of East Los Angeles," *Places* 8 (Spring 1993): 42–53.

48. The viability of these ideas has been suggested in an economic analysis sponsored by Urban Ecology.

49. Barrales's comments were delivered at the East Palo Alto Planning Workshop.