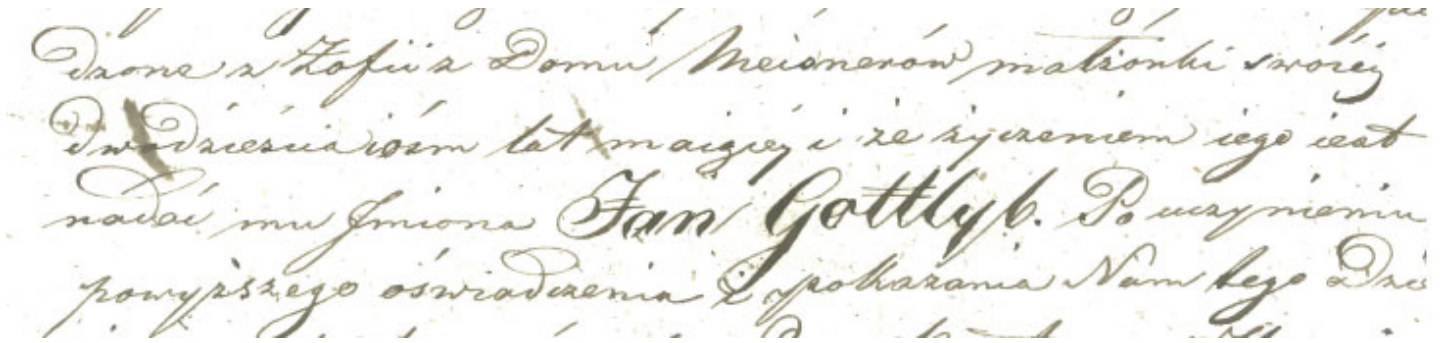


Jan [John or Johannes or Johann] Teofil [Theofilus or Theofil; in German "Gottlieb"] Strenzel or Strentzel or Strenzel or Stencil or Stenczel or Strentzell, Strensall, Strensel, etc.

Born **25 November 1813** (some documents report **29 November** or **2 November**), in **Lublin**, Poland [NOTE: While in "Pesth" Dr. Strentzel sometimes claimed that he was born in **Latoszyn**, presumably to protect his Lublin family. He fought against the Russians in Poland's 1830 Uprising and was an exile; his family was in danger of retribution].



W imię Ojczyzny i Domu Meisnerów matki swojej
W dniu 31 października 1890 roku
na cmentarzu w Alhambra Valley
począł się pogrzeb
pamiętnika Jan Gottlieb. Po uroczystościach
począł się pogrzeb i pochowanie
ciała jego

Died: 31 October 1890, Alhambra Valley [Martinez], Contra Costa County, California

Brother Henry (Henryk or Heinrich) born about 1817 in Lublin, Poland

The six children from the father of John Strenzel in Lublin were baptized in Lublin's **Evangelical Lutheran** church:

Johann Heinrich Christian (1810), **Johann Teofil [Polish] | Gottlieb [German]** (1813), **Heinrich** Christian (1817), Eduard (1818), Sophie/Zofia Emilie (1820) [remained in Lublin] and Emilie Jadwiga/Ludwika (1822). **3 survived to adulthood: John T., Henry C. and Sophie E.**

From the Internet:

"The baptism dates for Gottlieb (1813) and Heinrich (1817) correspond with the dates for **John** (1813) and his brother **Henry Christian** (1817) that are inscribed on their tombstones in California. John indicated in his biography that his mother and father had a large family."

"His parents were John (Jan or Johann) Strentzel, born in Pomerania in 1771 and Sophia (Zofia) Meizner, born in 1785 in Lublin. They were married in 1803 and became fairly well-to-do. His father owned an orchard and garden near town."

In 1838/39, when he was 25, he attended the **masters apothecary course** in **Budapest Medical School**. He passed his final exam (rygorosum) on the **10th of July 1839**. A day later he was awarded a diploma. (Prof. I. Kovacs via Roman Włodek)

1) The book of classification on the University

od Medicine (now: Semmelweis Ignác

Orvostudományi Egyetem): apothecary course

1838/39, Joannes (in Hungarian János) Stentzl, ←

25 years, born in Latocin in Galicia, son of Joannes - dealer

2) The book of apothecary masters: Joannes

Strenzel", 26 years, born in Latoszyn in Galcia

“Dr. Strentzel fled Poland after the 1830 Uprising to keep from being pressed into service in the Russian Army. He entered what is now Hungary. There he gathered information on the wine trade, and vineyard culture. He entered the **University of Pesth** and received a medical diploma.

“In 1840, he and his brother emigrated to the U.S., landing in New Orleans, thence moving to **Louisville, Kentucky**. They left there, for Texas, with the **Peterson [sic] Peters Colonization Company** and settled where Dallas is now located.”

“William S. Peters, the founder of the Peters colony of Texas, was born in England in 1779. He moved to North America in 1827 with his wife and six of his children. He worked in Canada as a military bandmaster and was forty-eight years old when he entered the United States. After a musical partnership ended between Peters and a William Browning, they traveled from Louisville Kentucky to England to find investors for what became known as the Peters Colony. It's not really known why Peters became interested in Texas. What is known is that he was and followed it up with an effort to find investors to make it happen. Peters eventually located the original twenty investors and they petitioned the Texas Republic to contract land to them which at first was to be a colony of Englishmen but the investors ended up being half American and half English. In response, the Republic of Texas through its Fifth Congress enacted a law on February 4, 1841, that authorized the president of the Republic of Texas to enter into an “empresario contract” with Peters and his associates.”

They remained there one year, then moved to **Lamar County** and purchased 500 acres of land.

“In 1849, when the California gold rush fever swept the country, the Strentzels joined a wagon train with other pioneers and headed for the “promised land” to seek their fortune. Their two small children journeyed with them. The wagon train left **Bonham, Texas** and included around 103 men, 9 women, and 25 children. The Strentzels had two children when they left **Honey Grove**, Louisa, age two, and Johnny, age ten months. Johnny would later die of diphtheria at age nine.”

Archiwum Parafii Ewangelicko-Augsburskiej w Lublinie

Biuletyn Informacyjny No 1/2001

Akta metrykalne Parafii w Lublinie - APLn/LUB/sp

Sygnatura Akt wg APL:

APLn/LUB/sp/1 Wykaz chrztów w Parafii Ewangelicko-Augsburskiej w Lublinie w latach 1810-67, s. 75

Wykaz

chrztów w Parafii Ewangelicko-Augsburskiej w Lublinie w latach 1810-67

Nr	Nazwisko	Imiona	Rok	Nr
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Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Church_of_the_Augsburg_Confession_in_Poland

2598	Strenzel	Johann Heinrich	1810	4	←
2599	Steinhauser	Katharine	1812	7	
2600	Strenzel	Gottlieb	1813	7	←
2601	Stryenski	Paul Johann	1814	6	
2602	Schiller	Elisabeth Theodore	1814	8	
2603	Seydel	Anne Karoline	1815	6	
2604	Szymanowski	Josef Andreas	1815	7	
2605	Szule	Paul	1816	7	
2606	Strenzel	Heinrich Christian	1817	3	←
2607	Strencel	Eduard	1818	1	←
2608	Strenzel	Sophie Emilie	1820	1	←
2609	Szwyłge	Karl Wilhelm	1820	2	
2610	Stuła	Melania	1820	5	
2611	Strenzel	Emilie Ludwige	1822	1	←

http://registry.lubgens.eu/viewpage.php?page_id=1052&par=195

Znalezione urodzenia / chrzty

NAZWISKO	IMIĘ, IMIONA	PARAFIA	AKT	ROK
Strenzel	Johann Heinrich	Lublin (ewangelicko-augs.)	4	1810
Strenzel	Gottlieb	Lublin (ewangelicko-augs.)	7	1813
Strenzel	Heinrich Christian	Lublin (ewangelicko-augs.)	3	1817
Strenzel	Sophie Emilie	Lublin (ewangelicko-augs.)	1	1820
Strenzel	Emilie Ludwige	Lublin (ewangelicko-augs.)	1	1822

1828-1831, pharmacist's assistant, Lublin

Jan Strenzel worked as a pharmacist's assistant from **Aug. 1, 1828 until June 26, 1831** for **Stefan Gąsiorowski** (Source: Research by Roman Włodek, Kraków)

Krok dalej, w kamienicy zwanej Klonowiczowską, czyli przy Rynku 2, miał swoją aptekę asesor farmacji pan Stefan Gąsiorowski. Mieściła się ona na rogu Rynku i Gnojenej. Kamienica ta, niegdyś własność teściów Sebastiana Klonowaci, w latach 1833-1861 pozostawała w rękach Stefana Gąsiorowskiego i jego żony Rozalii. wiedli tu oni żywot nader cnotliwy, o czym głosi tablica marmurowa pomieszczona na jednym z filarów w kościele św. Ducha.

(Stefan Gąsiorowski, aptekarz, obywatel m. Lublina, zmarł 3 maja 1864; Stefan Gąsiorowski)
Translation: A pharmacist, a citizen of Lublin, died May 3, 1864

1836 Letter to John Strentzel from Kollmann

<http://www.polishclubsf.org/KollmannToStrentzel.pdf>

1837 Letter RE Ludwik Wiemuth, friend of Strentzel from Lublin

<http://www.polishclubsf.org/1837.pdf>

1837-1838: Carl Gurtler to John Strentzel

<http://www.polishclubsf.org/GurtlerToStrentzel.pdf>

1837 Letter to Strentzel from John William Burchard
<http://www.polishclubsf.org/BurchardLetterToStrentzel.pdf>

University of Warsaw | **1839**: Medical degree, **University of Pesth, Hungary**

Date?: Herr **Johann Stentzel** die Realapotheker des Herrn Dül in Rohatyn, Galizien ??
Zeitschrift des allgemeinen Oesterreichischen Apotheker-Vereines, Volume 35

Letter to John Strentzel, dated June 1840
<http://www.polishClubSF.org/1840.pdf>

Arrived in 1840 in New Orleans; in 1849 in California; & betw. 1851 - 1853 to Alhambra, Martinez

tled down at an orchard property near Martinez, cultivated Muscat grapes and Bartlett pears, supervised Chinese laborers, and made a lot of money. Muir inherited a fruit ranch in Contra Costa County from his father-in-law, Dr. John Theophil **Strentzel** (Jan Teofil Strentzel), a political exile from Lublin, Poland. Before coming to America, **Strentzel** studied medicine and horticulture, two fields that made good use of surgical knives. Even more than Muir, **Strentzel** personifies the California Dream. He got off the boat at New Orleans in 1840 and proceeded to join a settlement company bound for Dallas. In Texas he married a woman from Tennessee named Louisiana. After the U.S.-Mexican War, **Strentzel** convinced his wife to move to California with their small daughter. The arduous overland journey through the Sonoran Desert almost killed Louisiana, who suffered from chronic ailments. Although the Strentzels arrived in 1849, they

To the Editors.

CAMP CALHOUN, Oct. 21, 1849.

Sirs: In compliance with the annexed resolutions, I have to request of you, in the name of the emigrants, to give our petition a place in the Washington Union.

It was designed that the resolutions should be left for other signatures; but an express man goes to San Diego in the morning, and I transmit this with the names of those only who attended the meeting.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

LEMARCUS WIATT.

At a meeting of the emigrants, held at Camp Calhoun, opposite the mouth of the Rio Gila, on 19th inst., (October,) when Dr. Stephen Kinzey was called to the chair, and Lemarcus Wiatt appointed secretary, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:

The undersigned, citizens of the United States, and emigrating to California, finding upon their arrival at this point unforeseen trouble, have met to-night at Camp Calhoun, and passed the following resolutions—viz:

Resolved, That, from the best information collected and observations made, this is the preferable point for the emigrants to cross the Colorado river.

Resolved, That, in consequence of the hostile and thieving disposition of the Indians at this place, who are well supplied with arms and ammunition, the establishment of a military post is of all importance for the protection and safety of the great flow of American emigrants; and we do, therefore, respectfully petition the government of the United States to establish said post, at as early a day as practicable, for the security of our fellow-countrymen who are following, and who are yet to emigrate, following this route.

Resolved, That we tender our sincere thanks to Lieut. C. J. Cents, commanding at this camp, for the kindness and attention he has extended to the emigrants; and also to the men (soldiers) of his command, who have voluntarily divided their rations with families in a suffering and distressed condition.

Resolved, That the secretary of this meeting furnish a copy of these resolutions to Gen. Riley, with a view and hope of a more speedy accomplishment of their object, and also a copy to some Washington city newspaper, with a request for its publication.

Resolved, That, in behalf of the emigrants, Lieut. C. J. Cents is requested to take charge of these resolutions, and forward them by the first opportunity to the Secretary of War—presenting them in the meantime to such emigrants as may be passing, with the view of obtaining other signatures.

Resolved, That this meeting now adjourn.

STEPHEN KINZEY, Chairman.

LEMARCUS WIATT, Secretary.

Young E. Brown, James Marron, Wm. Michler, Louis Wolf, Wm. G. Evans, Alex. Cribbs, David Freeman, James Harrison, J. Sounel, George Steinegrandt, W. Creutzfeldt, David Shipley, John Strentzel, Henry Strentzel, A. Emmert, Chas. de Quirini, C. W. Buchel.

choice of joining the Russian army or exiling himself in some foreign land. Like thousands of his countrymen he chose the latter course, and his first thoughts were of America. He landed in New Orleans, stopping but a short time, and then pushed westward to Texas with the Peterson Colony that was formed in Louisville, Ky. In 1840 he built his cabin on land now the site of Dallas, Texas; and after several years spent on the Trinity River he purchased a homestead in Lamar County and practiced medicine and surgery for several years.

On December 31, 1843, Dr. Strentzel was united in marriage with Miss Louisiana Erwin, daughter of a prominent Kentuckian who had moved into Tennessee and later into Texas. The glowing reports of the wonderful Pacific Coast region so fired Dr. Strentzel's enthusiasm that he caught the fever of the Forty-niners and with a company of thirty-five persons set out across the plains, leaving his Texas home on March 22, 1849. For 800 miles the little party had to fight their way through an unknown country, as no pathfinder up to that time had blazed a trail to El Paso. The party suffered from lack of water many times, and upon reaching El Paso Mrs. Strentzel was taken ill from the effects of drinking alkaline water on the desert. They spent July 4, 1849, in El Paso, where the party broke up, some returning to their homes, some remaining in El Paso, and the remainder coming on to California. The trip of these last took them through the Apache Indian country. The Strentzels and party floated down and across the Rio Grande River above El Paso on a raft, and then by easy stages made their way westward. After crossing the Colorado River they struck out across the Mojave Desert and weary and worn arrived in San Diego, the gateway into California for their little band of Argonauts.

Dr. Strentzel had intended taking a boat at this port for San Francisco, but he was unable to sell his horses for what he deemed them to be worth and hence decided to take the trail overland. This brought him through the great San Joaquin Valley, and when he got to the Tuolumne River they were so thoroughly in love with the country that they decided they would remain. He established a store and ferry about two miles south of La Grange, which he conducted for two years. It is said that one day Dr. Strentzel would entertain John C. Fremont or General Miller and other noted personages of those days, and the next he might act as host to a band of desperadoes who were plundering the countryside. As a result of the hardships Mrs. Strentzel had undergone, her health was greatly impaired and for three years she was confined to her bed, requiring her husband's almost constant attention, in consequence of which he gave up his business to take care of his wife. He bought 600 acres of land along the Merced River below Snelling and took up cattle raising and ranching until the floods of the winter swept away the work of years in a single night, flooded his home, and subjected him to exposure from which he never fully recovered. As soon as he was able to travel, Dr. Strentzel left the Merced River country for good.

1843: Marriage, 31 Dec 1843 – Fannin County, Texas
Marriage of John T. Strentzel and Louisiana Erwin

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
PIONEER RECORD

Feb. 1936

Strentzel, John Theophil

Name in full John Theophil Strentzel

Place of birth Lublin, Poland.

Date of birth Nov. 29, 1813

Parents
 Father John Strentzel (b. 1771, Pomerania)
 Mother (maiden name in full) Sophia Meizner (1775, Lublin)

Married 1843
 If married, to whom Louisiana Erwin (b. Oct. 31, 1821, Tennessee)

Date of marriage ~~1842~~ Dec. 31, 1843

Place of marriage Texas.

OVER

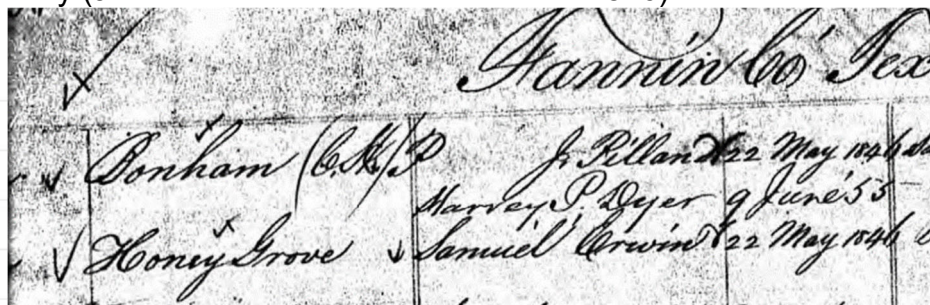
Name: John Strentzel
State: TX
County: Fannin County
Township: No Township Listed
Year: 1843
Database: TX Tax List Index, 1840-1849

Population

In 1844, Lamar County probably had a population between 2,500 and 3,000, not counting the Negro slaves. No census was taken until 1850 after Texas had become a state.

1846: Henry **naturalized**, Texas territory (John was also naturalized in TX in 1846)

NAME:	Henry Strintzel
STATE:	TX
COUNTY:	Lamar County
TOWNSHIP:	No Township Listed
YEAR:	1846
RECORD TYPE:	Tax list
PAGE:	NPN
DATABASE:	TX Tax List Index, 1840-1849



1847: Birth of **Louisa [aka Louie] Elizabeth Wanda Strentzel**
daughter Louisa Wanda was born on July 6, 1847, in Honey Grove, Texas.

1848: Marriage of John's brother, Henry, to **E. Denton**

NAME:	H. Strentzel
MARRIAGE DATE:	29 Jun 1848
MARRIAGE PLACE:	Lamar, Texas, USA
SPOUSE:	E. Denton
SOURCE:	Texas Marriages, 1814-1909

22 May 1848: Birth of John William Erwin Burchard Strentzel

Letter from John Strentzel to William (Wilhelm) Burchard
<http://www.PolishClubSF.org/Strentzel1848toBurchard.pdf>

1849

March 22, 1849: To California

LOUISIANA STRENTZEL The **Strentzels**, with their two-year-old daughter Louise and infant son John, left Texas for California on March 22, 1849, arriving in San Diego ...

"Strentzel was forced into exile after the Polish revolution of 1830. In 1840 he emigrated to the United States of America, settling in Texas. It was there, in 1843, that he married his wife, Louisiana Erwin. In 1849 he made his way west to California, eventually settling in the state's central valley, along the Merced river. Illness and flooding of his home along that river forced him to move again, this time settling in the Alhambra Valley, a bucolic valley located just south of the city of Martinez, California. He purchased twenty acres, called for his family, and set about establishing a long-dreamed of horticultural business. Years later, he was recognized as a foremost expert on California's budding horticultural industry."

Lived in Tuolumne and Merced Rivers | [Tuolumne River near La Grange] Continued to own land in Texas
"They settled finally on the Tuolumne River, a mile or two below what is now **La Grange**"

1850 Census

Name:	Henry Stansell						
Age:	30						
Birth Year:	abt 1820						
Birthplace:	Texas						
Home in 1850:	Township 5, Tuolumne, California, USA						
Gender:	Male						
	<table><tr><td>Name</td><td>Age</td></tr><tr><td>Louisa Stansell</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>John Stansell</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	Name	Age	Louisa Stansell	6	John Stansell	3
Name	Age						
Louisa Stansell	6						
John Stansell	3						

1851

Name: Lottie Strentzel
Birth Date: 29 Apr 1851
Death Date: 31 Aug 1851
Cemetery: Muir-Strentzel Hanna Cemetery
Burial or Cremation Place: Martinez, Contra Costa County, California, USA

Lottie Strentzel: April 29 1851 – August 31, 1851, daughter of John and Louisiana Strentzel

[NOTE: Lottie died (and was buried?) in Martinez in 1851; John Strentzel is listed, in 1850, as a member of the Society of California Pioneers]

They settled finally on the Tuolumne River, a mile or two below what is now La Grange, put up tents, established a ferry, hotel, and store to accommodate travelers between Mariposa and Stockton. In this and still another venture in the great river valleys their gains were wiped out by floods. With health considerably impaired by their privations, they went to Benicia, where they were fortunate enough to meet a former neighbor from Texas who told them about the Contra Costa.

[Old California Houses: Portraits and Stories](#)

John Strentzel established a ferry, hotel, and general merchandise store at La Grange

1854 tax rolls, Fannin Co., TX (John and Henry Strentzel)

320 60	Ans Strentzel	320	8	"	"	"	"
120 60	Smith	320	"	Delme	"	"	"
1280 640	Thos Riley	1280	2	M. Sulphur	Hunt	"	"
476 476	Hein of Benson	440	3	Handbury	Lamar	Lamar	"
320 160	Henry Strentzel	320	"	Sulphur	Hunt	Hunt	"

1855 tax rolls, Fannin Co., TX

320 320	John Strentzel		
120 120	Smith		
1280 640	S. Riley		
476 476	Hein of Benson		
320 160	H. Strentzel		

1855 tax rolls, Fannin Co., TX

320 320	John Strentzel	320	"	S. Sulphur	"	"	"
120 120	Smith			Delme	"	"	"
1280 640	S. Riley	1280		M. Sulphur	"	"	"
476 476	Hein of Benson	440		Handbury	Lamar	Lamar	"
320 160	H. Strentzel	320		Sulphur	Hunt	Hunt	"

1857 Death of the son of John and Louisiana Strentzel; died from diptheria in Martinez

Last Name	First Name	Event*	Day	Month	Year	Publication Date			Wife	Husband	Mother	Father	Locaton of Event
Strentzel	John Irwin (sic) Burchard	d	26	Sep	1857	20	Sep	1857			Strentzel, Louisa	Strentzel, John	Alhambra Valley, near Martinez

Name: John Erwin Strentzel (John William Erwin Burchard Strentzel)

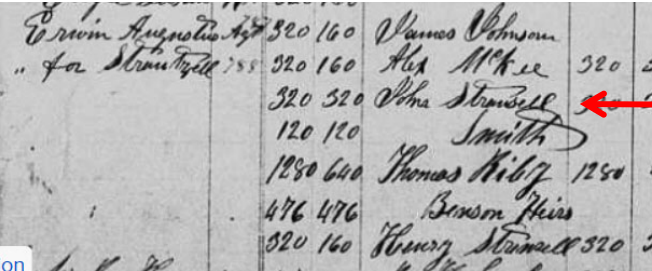
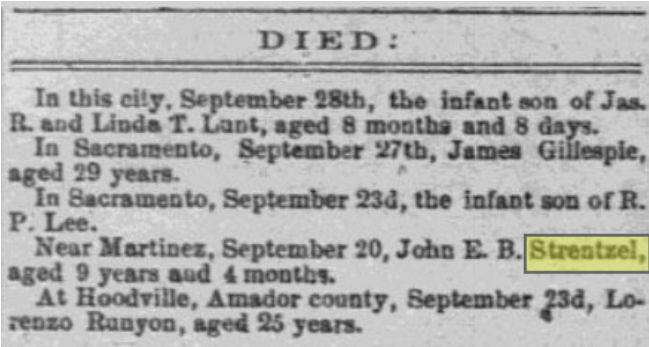
Event Type: Burial

Event Date: 1857

Event Place: Martinez, Contra Costa, California, United States of America

Birth Date: 22 May 1848

Death Date: 20 Sep 1857



TEXAS tax rolls

STRENTZEL, JOHN ERWIN BURCHARD, In Alhambra Valley, near Martinez, Sept. 20, 1857, John Erwin Burchard, the only son of John and Louisiana Strentzel, aged 9 years and 4 months

The next vineyard that came more immediately under our notice was that of Jno. Strentzel, about a half a mile above Barber's. Soil similar in every respect. S. is a **Polander**, perfectly conversant with the culture and management of the vine as practised in many countries in Europe. He also discards the entire theory and practice of setting vines in vineyards a year or more old, preferring slips in all cases; nevertheless, he always keeps vines one or two years old in nursery rows to supply those who may choose to buy such plants, but never sets them in his own annually increasing acres of vineyard.

He prefers and uses cuttings thirty inches in length, with two buds only above ground; he sets them inclined to that degree that the bottom of a thirty inch slip shall be two feet beneath the surface to the bottom; so that the theory of many that long cuttings are rather detrimental than otherwise, seems not to hold good in this locality, as all who have here experimented with cuttings give preference to the long cutting; and if we can judge of its vitality from the growth made the first year from its cutting, it may well be considered an established rule of practice here. We found upon examination that a large majority of the slips set last Spring, have made a growth of over four feet in length, and not a few of them bore grapes; and this upon land not irrigated, but upon river bottom.

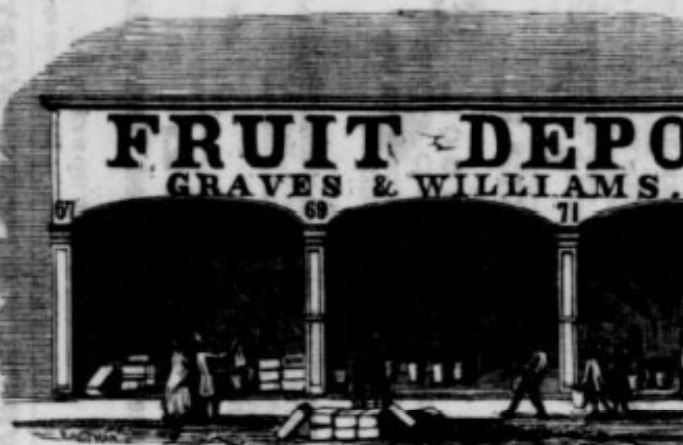
S.'s vineyard contains ten thousand vines, seven of which are in bearing. He plants eight feet by eight; considers six by six too close for this country; would do very well in an European soil and climate, but is satisfied a different practice is required here. He also, like Barber, abandons the use of all support for his vines after the second year from the slip. Experiment has proved to his entire satisfaction that the grapes are better the nearer they are grown to the surface of the ground, and by allowing the vines to spread over the surface, the ground is kept moist under its shade, and the fruit is also kept from the sun, an essential requisite to its fullest perfection; he therefore considers stakes or any artificial support to the vine not only of no benefit, but positively detrimental.

S. finds no difficulty in converting the California or Mission grape, such as he raises, into very good raisins, and our own trial of bunch after bunch entirely satisfied us on that point; we know them to be excellent, and like other raisins, will keep any desired length of time. Both soil and climate of this valley seem perfectly adapted to the successful culture of the grape, but not to this alone; for here we find the finest fig trees we have ever seen, and that never fail to bear abundantly. Pomegranates succeed equally well, and as late as Christmas were in perfect eating condition and of exquisite flavor. Strentzel is one of the amateur as well as practical fruit culturists of beautiful Alhambra valley, and being among the first who gave their attention to fruit growing in that locality, his experiments and results are entitled to consideration.—*California Cultivist*.

FRUIT
AND
GENERAL COMMISSION MERCHANTS,
Nos. 67, 69 and 71 Merchant street,
Opposite Washington Market. SAN FRANCISCO.

REFERENCES:

N. Greene Curtis, Esq., C. W. Ross, Esq., W. W. Stewart, Esq., Sacramento; George C. Young, Esq., James Gilchrist, Esq., Napa; Wm. McPherson Hill, Esq., D. D. Davidson, Esq., Sonoma; John Lucas, Esq., San Rafael; Dr. R. E. Cobb, L. B. Randall, Esq., Contra Costa; Rev. A. H. Myers, Dr. H. Hall, Daniel L. Perkins, Esq., Alameda; Wm. Blackburn, Esq., J. P. Plinkham, Santa Cruz; Peter H. Burnett, Esq., Marquis Williams, Esq., Col. W. W. McCoy, C. T. Ryland, Esq., L. Prevost, Esq., E. W. Case, Esq., Santa Clara; Dr. J. Strenzel, H. Bush, Esq., Martinez; John Rowland, Esq., Los Angeles; F. W. Macendrey & Co., John Stone & Co., San Francisco.



1860

Name: John Strentzell
Age in 1860: 47
Birth Year: abt 1813
Birthplace: Poland
Home in 1860: Township 1, Contra Costa, California
Gender: Male
Post Office: Martinez and San Pablo
Value of real estate: [View Image](#)

	Name	Age
Household Members:	John Strentzell	47
	Louisa E Strentzell	38
	Louisa Strentzell	13

John Strentzell	47	m		Harmer
Louisa E "	38	f		
Louisa "	13	f		
William Chitaur	28	m		Lab
Alexander Floyd	24	m		"
Michael McDonald	22	m		"
Henry Strentzell	40	m		Harmer

MÁRTINEZ WINE.—Dr. Jno. **Strentzel**,
 of Martinez, Contra Costa county, besides
 marketing a large quantity of grapes, will
 manufacture a thousand gallons of wine
 from this year's crop. He has the largest
 vineyard in the county, according to the
 Gazette.

Marysville Daily Appeal 1860

THE PAINT DISCOVERIES IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY.—The *Contra Costa Gazette* remarks:

The locality of our native paints is only about two miles from the town of Martinez. The paint deposits are found on the banks of El Hambre creek, at the foot of a high hill, between the houses of Dr. J. Strentzel and M. L. Barber, and on the land of the latter gentleman. They lie in ledges extending into the earth under the hill, the out-croppings of which alone are visible on the surface of the ground near the aforesaid creek. These ledges vary from 10 to 20 feet in width, and are of unknown length and indefinite depth; perhaps miles in extent. At least four of the principal or primary colors have been found contained in the earths dug out of these ledges, viz.: red, yellow, green and blue. Here are some of the varieties:

1. *Terra Sienna*, a ferruginous ochre, a native of Sienna in Sicily, whence its name, an article indispensable with all painters, and never heretofore found in America.
2. *Lazulite*, a light bluish mineral, the base of all the ultra marines, and indispensable to the manufacture of paints.
3. *French Yellow*, a very pure article, commonly found in France, whence it is imported for use in the arts.
4. *Siense*, the primary color for all manufacture of fine green paints, found in abundance here like that generally imported from Prussia.
5. *Venetian Red*, a very fine article superior to that which is imported from Venice for use in our country.
6. *Wacke*, a soft variety of basalt, of great value for its use to protect against fire and water. Dr. Hough has satisfied himself by experiment that this article, rightly mixed and used, forms a hard crust that will resist the progress of both fire and water beyond anything yet discovered. It contains three different shades of color, each shade pleasing to the eye and taste, so as to be of great beauty as well as benefit. The water proof and fire-proof or salamander like uses to which this invaluable paint may be put, promises to bring it into great demand so soon as it becomes well known to the public, by actual testing of its qualities. A steam engine and mill for crushing and

1863: Letter to the Polish Committee from John Strentzel

THE CAUSE OF POLAND.—The following letter was recently addressed to the Polish Committee in San Francisco:

ALHAMBRA (near Martinez), Nov. 7, 1863.

To the Polish Committee—Gentlemen: From notices in the papers, I perceive that you are again busy in collecting contributions for our suffering brethren. The rigors of a northern Winter are already upon them; every day's delay freezes the heart's blood of many a patriot; let each hundred dollars collected be immediately dispatched on the wings of lightning to the Central Committee. Each hundred dollars will procure fifty kozuchs (sheep skin coats)—each kozuch a ransom for a life. Inclosed please find an order for one hundred dollars, on Gale & Co., for the Polish Committee.

Yours, very truly,

DR. STRENTZEL.

CALIFORNIA RAISINS.—Dr. Strentzel, of Martinez, has made a quantity of fine raisins from different sorts of grapes, such as Chasselas, Rose of Peru, and Muscat of Alexandria. If the foreign grapes were not so scarce and high priced, the business of curing them for raisins would soon be an important one in this State, where it can be easily followed.

U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918

NAME: H Strentzel
RESIDENCE: 1863 - California

TAX LISTS

Henry Strentzel, San Francisco (324 Dupont, San Francisco)

J. Strentzel. No. 324 Dupont - Manufacture

We also had the pleasure to enjoy at dinner the doctor's wines, and if all our Wine-makers would take a lesson of Dr. **Strentzel**, they would have purer and better wines, and the credit of our State for pure wines would stand much higher.

According to the California State Agricultural Society, an exhibit was made by **Dr. J. Strentzel** at the **1863 state fair**. ... The names of the Hungarian **Haraszthy** and of his son, **Arpad**, are inseparably linked with the California grape and wine ...

1864: Membership List, **Polish Society of California** (in San Francisco)

Strentzel, Jan, Dr.	Martinez	Kingdom of Poland
Strentzel, Henryk	Martinez	Kingdom of Poland

U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918

NAME: J Strentzel
RESIDENCE: 1864 - California

TAX LISTS

1865: death of Henry Christian Strentzel (born 1817 in Lublin, Poland)

Henry Christian Strentzel

Memorial

Photos

Flowers

[Learn about upgrading this memorial...](#)

Birth: unknown
Death: Sep. 3, 1865

Burial:
[Muir-Strentzel Hanna Cemetery](#)
Martinez
Contra Costa County
California, USA



In San Francisco, Sept. 8th, An Ho, aged 29 years,
At **Alhambra**, near Martinez, Contra Costa county,
Sept. 3d, **HENRY** CHRISTIAN STENTZEL, aged 45 years.

There is no reason in the world why our markets should not be abundantly supplied all the year round, if due attention was paid to setting out *new* beds every year by our growers, we could have regularly our first, second and third crops.— Our neighbors at Stockton are feasting on second crop of Peaches, and we have received the *second* crop of Grapes from the Alhambra Gardens of Dr. **Strenzel**, of a delicious kind. So too, second crop of Pears and Apples, only adopt the right system and the right culture. We can show fruit trees in our own little garden, in this city, now in bloom, and the Lawton *Blackberry* ripe also.

1867

127	Simpson, Thomas.....	30	Michigan.....	Saddler.....	Facinedo.....	May 31, 1867
143	Strentzel, John.....	54	Poland.....	Farmer.....	Martinez.....	1846, Texas, Admission of Terr'y May 6, 1867

Simpson, Thomas.....	30	Michigan.....	Saddler.....	Facinedo.....	May 31, 1867
Strenzel, John.....	54	Poland.....	Farmer.....	Martinez.....	1846, Texas, Admission Ter May 6, 1867
Stewart, James.....	25	Ireland.....	Farmer.....	Rodeo Valley.....	Oct. 29, '64. San Francisco, Dist. May 13, 1867

Strentzel, John ... age 54 in 1867 ... native of Poland ... Rec. No. 55124

FOR SALE.

1,000 ACRES OF LAND, BELOW THE
Strait of Carquena, adjoining the Rancho del
Pinto, on the route of the Great Island and Vallecjo
Railroad. Also, one of the finest orchards and vineyards
in the State. Title U. S. patent. Address DR. **STRENTZEL**,
in Martinez.

1869

DOMESTIC SILK PRODUCT.—The Contra Costa Gazette of September 18th has the following:

Mrs. Sellers has the honor of being the first exhibitor of silk cocoons of county production, and the samples from two varieties of worms, shown at the Fair, must secure general admiration for their remarkable size and beauty, and the more, as indicating the source of future independence and wealth which is within reach of every rural household within our State, the climate of which affords such unrivaled advantages for the production of this world-wide wanted fiber.

The cocoons exhibited by Mrs. Sellers were raised a few miles east of Antioch, where Sellers has a plantation of several thousand mulberry trees, which, next year, will afford food for a million or more silkworms. These cocoons, the first fruits of our domestic silk culture, are very appropriately placed in the Fair beside the beautiful floral memorial and wreath to the simple and great bearded Prevost, which the appreciative consideration of Dr. John and Miss Strentzel had prompted them to make the central ornament of the fine pomological show from the Alhambra orchards and vineyards.

1870

Name: John Strenzel
Age in 1870: 57
Birth Year: abt 1813
Birthplace: Poland
Home in 1870: San Pablo, Contra Costa, California
Race: White
Gender: Male
Post Office: Martinez

	Name	Age
Household Members:	John Strenzel	57
	Louisiana Strenzel	48
	Louisa Strenzel	24

1871

Name: John Strentzel
Residence Year: 1871
Residence Place: Alameda, California, USA
Occupation: Farmer
Publication Title: Alameda and Contra Costa Counties Directory, for 1871-72

Strentzel John, farmer, Martinez.

June 1871

1868.

1871.

TUOLUMNE REUNION.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL PICNIC

.....OF THE.....

Tuolumne Reunion Association

.....WILL BE HELD AT.....

BENT'S PARK, MARTINEZ,

.....ON.....

SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1871.

THE COMMITTEE HAVE ENGAGED THE First Regiment Band, A. Walcott, Leader, and left nothing undone to make this Picnic even more enjoyable than on former occasions. All former residents of Tuolumne County and their invited guests are cordially requested to throw business aside for that day and be in attendance. "No proxies accepted."

The California Pacific Railroad Co.'s steamer ANTELOPE will leave Broadway wharf, San Francisco, on the morning of June 17th, at 8:30 o'clock, on the arrival of the Oakland and Alameda ferry-boats' second trip.

The steamer AMELIA will also leave Broadway wharf at 10 A. M. sharp, touching at Mare Island, Vallejo and Benicia, arriving at 1 P. M. of that day.

Tickets purchased for the occasion will be good for the round trip, passage by either of the above mentioned steamers.

Tickets for the trip, including admission to the Park, \$1; children from 8 to 14 years, 50 cents; under 8 years old, free. To be obtained of any member of the Committee.

Officers and Committee.

Hon. J. M. Cavis, President, Stockton; Hon. Fred. Lux, Vice-President, Custom-house, San Francisco; Wm. H. Ford, Geo. W. Bailey, Dr. J. Strentzel, O. Wolcott, Hon. O. W. Lander, John T. Triney, and Dr. K. W. Taylor, of Martinez; Gen. Geo. S. Evans, J. H. Olive, and Hon. Otis Perrin, of Stockton; Dr. D. M. Baldwin, Elon Jones, and W. G. Dinsmore, Oakland; F. Boehmer, Alameda; Wm. H. Lamb, Vallejo; B. Harter, Petaluma; C. E. McCusker, Chairman Committee of Arrangements, No. 848 Market street, San Francisco; Rev. O. P. Fitzgerald, 240 Montgomery street; Thornton Wesley, 143 Fourth street; Z. H. Cunningham, 653 Howard street; C. C. P. Severance, 451 Stevenson street; C. H. Chamberlain, 506 Jackson street, up-stairs; H. Harter, Kimball's Factory, Fourth and Bryant streets; E. G. Lyons, 506 and 510 Jackson street; L. Jacobi, 26 Kearny street.

L. P. McCARTY, Secretary.
Office S. F. Package Express Co.,
No. 274 Montgomery street.

C. E. McCUSKER,
Chairman of Committee of Arrangements.
Je2-td

1873, Boston, American Pomological Association

der, Gov. Washburn, Mayor Pierce, the Presidents of several state societies, and others; essays by Prof. Asa Gray, Dr. J. Strentzel, and Messrs. P. T. Quin, C. M.

The young German, Charles Bomegard, at Dr. Strentzel's, whose skull was fractured in the murderous assault of the Indian, Soto, with a grubbing hoe, lately, near Martinez, still lingers alive but delirious, and with little chance of recovery.

— Dr. **Strentzel**, says the *Contra Costa Gazette*, has laid on our table a magnificent lot of oranges and lemons from the Alhambra grove, that furnishes the most convincing evidence of the adaptation of our locality to the growth of these splendid tropical evergreens and the perfection of their fruits.

California we are glad to know made her mark by the fine collection of specimens from the "Alhambra Gardens," of Dr. J. **Strentzel** of Martinez. In the report we find the following *Twelve Varieties of Fruits and Nuts, and one of Wine*, viz., San Gabriel Oranges, large Mandarin and Sandwich Island do., raised from seed. Seedling Lemons, Pomegranates, Coes Golden Drop Plums, Muscat Raisins, Olives, Japanese Chesnuts, Hard and Soft Shell Almonds, English Walnuts and the *Alhambra Ausbruch Wine*.

A RAILROAD FOR MARTINEZ—A project is on foot to construct a narrow-gauge road from Livermore to Martinez. A meeting was recently held at Danville to promote this object. Sufficient capital was subscribed on the spot to show that the people who came together meant business. From Martinez to Livermore is thirty-five miles, and the grade is easy the whole distance; there will not be a single deep cut, no marsh to fill up or pile over, and only two or three bridges on the whole route. This road will bring into communication with the outside world one of the most fertile and picturesque valleys in the State, and open another route for the trade and productions of Livermore valley. Especially will it be a very desirable and cheap route to get grain to the sea-board. Daniel Inman, A. Baker and George May, of Livermore; Baldwin, of Limerick; Charles Wood, of Danville; W. W. Cameron, of Green Valley; John Larkey, of Walnut creek, and Lafayette Fish and Dr. **Strentzel**, of Martinez, were appointed a committee to complete the organization of the company. This committee will meet at Danville Saturday, October 24th, at 1 P. M.—[Vallejo Chronicle, October 10th.]

The **Vicente Martinez adobe** came to Dr. **Strentzel** in 1874 as he prospered and bought more land. This structure, a two-story adobe house, was built in 1848 or 1849 by Don Vicente Martinez

1875: **Society of California Pioneers**

CALIFORNIA PIONEERS.

Proceedings of a Regular Meeting of the Society Last Evening

A Regular meeting of the Society of California Pioneers was held last evening. The Acting President elect, Peter Dean, took the chair, and delivered his salutatory address. The gentlemen reviewed the proceedings of last year, spoke hopefully of the future prospects of the Society, and offered various suggestions for its guidance.

The following named gentlemen were elected members of the Society; Odillo W. Turney, Horatio Paul, George G. Peters, Charles De S. Bolce, William Minnis, George Meyer, Isaac B. Pine, August Tanfer, James DuBois, William Ranney, John **Strentzel**, J. P. Hicky, James E. Blethen, Silas M. Collins and Thos. A. Harris.

1875: Grange party:

it was in **grapes** that this feast was most notable, there being over sixty varieties on the tables. One contributor alone, **Dr. John Strentzel**, of the **Alhambra** vineyard, near Martinez, Contra Costa county, produced forty-five varieties.... **Dr. Strentzel, proprietor of the Alhambra vineyard**, near Martinez, Contra Costa county, forty-five varieties of **grapes, pomegranates and almonds**

University of California, College of Agriculture, 1875

LECTURERS INVITED FOR THE CURRENT YEAR.

C. E. BESSEY, *Economic Botany*.
H. N. BOLANDER, *Forestry*.
W. H. BREWER, *Stock Breeding*.
HORACE DAVIS, *Wheat*.
W. B. EWER, *History of California Agriculture*.
HENRY EDWARDS, *Insects Injurious to Vegetation*.
W. P. GIBBONS, M. D., *Local Field Botany*.
H. W. HARKNESS, M. D., *Lower Forms of Vegetable Life*.
J. STRENTZEL, M. D., *Orange Culture*.
J. W. A. WRIGHT, *Cotton Culture*.
A. KELLOGG, M. D., *Local Field Botany*.
R. E. C. STEARNS, *Eucalyptus Tree*.

a joy and a wonder to go over this farm with the enthusiastic Doctor, to *taste* as well as see his wondrous productions, and learn of his great success. Here in the same field I found growing, apples, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, cherries, dates, figs, oranges, lemons, pomegranates, walnuts, almonds, and—well, almost anything you can name. And added to all this, are some forty acres of grape vines, in magnificent bearing. Many, if not all these fruits, the Doctor assured me, could be raised with good success, if not

LUSCIOUS GRAPES —Dr. J. **Strentzel**, of the Alhambra fruit ranch, near Martinez, will please accept the thanks of the RURAL PRESS for a box of splendid grapes, made up of several choice varieties, among which were some of his small, white, seedless grapes. + Our readers are conversant with our opinion of the doctor's fruit; and it is, therefore, only necessary that we assure them that these grapes were in his usual style—giving evidence of extreme thoroughness in everything.

Oranges in California.

Dr. Strentzel, who is a pioneer in orange culture, has eighty acres in the choicest of fruits—oranges, lemons, pomegranates, almonds, cherries, prunes, pears, peaches, quinces, apples and grapes. We saw oranges, lemons, and pomegranates in all stages—from the blossom to ripe fruit on the same trees. The doctor has the orange growing thick and tall around his rancho, as a wind-break. The proprietor gave us much valuable information on orange culture. We have space for some suggestions. They will need a protection of brush, old snakes, etc, for several

years; should be made to branch at the ground to protect the stand from the sun; have abundance of water; plant close to shade the ground—say from fifteen to eighteen feet apart. Plants raised in the house never do any good in the open ground. Better plant the seed in open ground, water well, and protect with brush, etc. He says the cold of our winter nights don't hurt oranges, it is the morning sun. He also says they have to protect oranges from the winter's sun in Italy. His fruit was delicious, oranges never better, his wife a charming lady, and his daughter a floral culturist.—*Pacific Rural Press*.

OVERLAND ARRIVALS TO-NIGHT.

CARLIN, Nev., December 17th.—Following is a list of passengers passing Carlin, to arrive in Oakland, Monday evening, December 18th:

M B Callahan, Salt Lake; S S Craven and family, New York; Alfred Elkan, Germany; J W Jackson, Wisconsin; Mrs Hart and child, California; Mrs M Strentzel, Miss L W Strentzel, Alhambra, Cal; Mrs Granger, Salt Lake; A B Oran, New York; A S Merchant, San Francisco; E C Male and De Cursitorp, England; T Kollzeretoff, Prussia; G D Buckley, Erie, Pa; Dr Robert Taylor, New York; H P Gregory, J P Dusenbury and wife, Oakland; Miss C C Nichols, Chicago; Mrs G H Hallott and child, San Francisco; F A Parker, Massachusetts; Miss F S Montgomery, San Jose; E G Griffford and wife, California; Willie Simme and mother, San Francisco; E Schroeder, Miss M Hendricks, Iowa, Major Ed Devine, Massachusetts; W Kimbry, San Francisco; H Peters, Dixon, Cal; W Jaimson, Michigan; U Kreider, Oregon; John T Baker, Nevada; Geo Center, Scotland; L Wilsoy, Sacramento.

1877: To the Polish Committee from John Strentzel

To the Polish Committee:

GENTLEMEN—From notices in the papers, I perceive that you are again busy in collecting contributions for our suffering brethren. The rigors of a northern Winter are already upon them; every day's delay freezes the heart's blood of many a patriot; let each hundred dollars collected be immediately dispatched on the wings of lightning to the Central Committee. Each hundred dollars will procure fifty kozuch's (sheep-skin coats)—each kozuch a ransom for life. Enclosed please find an order for one hundred dollars, on Messrs. Gale & Co., for the Polish Committee.

Yours, very truly,

DR. STRENTZEL.

Even before John Muir's light streamed afar, the Alhambra Valley knew many pilgrims and visitors. Dr. John Strentzel, pioneer settler who became Muir's father-in-law, was a Pole exiled from his native soil by the Russians. To the Strentzel ranch in the Valley came the roving Henry Sienkiewicz, author of "Quo Vadis?" Under the Strentzel roof Helena Modjeska spent a number of weeks polishing up her English before she ventured on the American stage. *Stockton Daily Evening Record, April 22, 1936, p. 26.*

A compassionate man, who was proud of his Polish heritage, Strentzel is said to have hosted three exiles from his homeland. At the ranch in Alhambra Valley, Count Bozenta, and his wife, Madame Modjeska, a Shakespearian actress, and Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of Quo Vadis, are said to have found refuge.

Martinez News Gazette,
February 16, 1993, p. 2

**Strentzel
hosted
Modjeska and
Sienkiewicz**

But the family interests ranged far beyond this local setting. Family connections of both Dr. and Mrs. Strentzel brought distinguished visitors often to their home. It was here that Madam Helena Modjeska gained her first knowledge of the English tongue and that Henryk Sienkiewicz also used to come to stay.

CHERRIES.—Dr. John Strentzel, owner of the famous Alhambra orchard at Martinez, does not recover from the attacks of generosity which visit him each time the fruit ripens, and again we render thanks for a liberal bestowal of fine cherries which made glad our whole establishment.

1879: Strentzel eulogy for a colleague at the Grange

At the meeting of Alhambra Grange, Nov. 1st, 1879, Dr. John Strentzel, Worthy Master, delivered the following address, which the Grange request may be published in the RURAL PRESS.

Sisters and Brothers: One of the brightest and most valuable members of our Grange departed this life on the 24th ultimo—our beloved sister, Carrie A. Colby—the Worthy Lecturer of Alhambra Grange. Short as was her stay in our midst, and lessened in its efficiency by sickness, all had the opportunity to fully appreciate her character for goodness, her unceasing desire to alleviate suffering, and to develop and advance to a higher sphere all the best interests of humanity.

The Grange was an inviting field for her labor and she worked most assiduously and unremittingly to promote the welfare of the Order, consecrating herself especially to the service of our sisterhood.

Well deserved praise and gratitude follow her name wherever heard.

Mourning friends consigned the mortal remains with tender care to a flower-wreathed grave. How consoling the thought that her unencumbered spirit was met on the threshold of immortality by angelic friends, and that, henceforth, her aspirations to do good, unchecked by time or space, will permit her to be an ever-living presence hovering over our brotherhood, guarding and extending its influence, and inspiring all with devotion to the noble work before us.

Peace to her ashes. In our hearts is an abiding memory of her faithful life on earth.

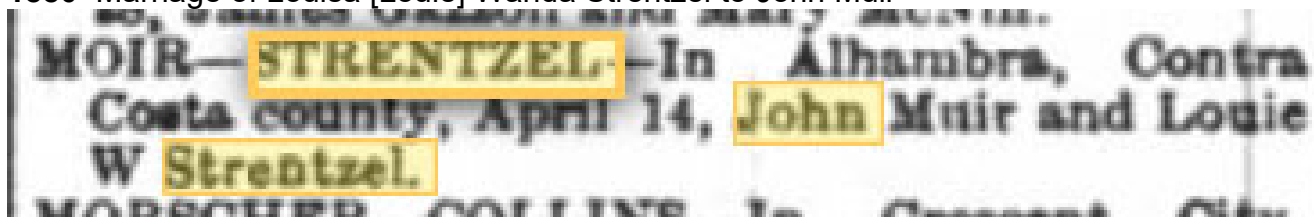
Pacific Rural Press, Volume 18, Number 8, 23 August 1879

Grange Re-unions.

Dr. John Strentzel, W. M. of Alhambra Grange, has issued the following circular: You are aware, through the agency of the *California Patron*, of the proposed convention of Grangers, from the counties of Sacramento, San Joaquin, Alameda, Solano, Santa Clara, Napa and Contra Costa, to be held in Martinez, on the 22d and 23d of August, to deliberate upon means conducive to "the good of the Order." The proposition was duly considered and approved by the Alhambra Grange at their regular meeting on July 19th. The Alhambra Grange offers all the required aid for making the sojourn of the delegates pleasant and harmonious, and have appointed Bros. Tom Griffin, James Kelley and Henry Raap to act as a Reception Committee, and all the sisters to grace the harvest feast. In communicating the resolution of the Alhambra Grange, I cannot omit to call your attention to the facilities offered by railroad and waterways, making Martinez a most acceptable point by converging travel routes, besides being a central location for the establishment of grain depots for the bay and river counties, for which both shores of the Carquinez straits are by nature constituted and best adapted for the trade, thus establishing a market for their produce nearer home, with superior advantage for transacting said business. All Patrons of Husbandry are most heartily invited to attend.

Cherries. —**Dr. John Strentzel**, owner of the famous **Alhambra orchard at Martinez**, does not recover from the attacks of generosity which visit him each time the fruit ripens, and again we render thanks for a liberal bestowal of fine cherries which made glad our whole establishment.

1880 Marriage of Louisa [Louie] Wanda Strentzel to John Muir



Strentzel, Louie Wanda ... married in 1880 to Muir, John ... 1880M-4090

"In **1880**, Strentzel's good friend and companion, John Muir, married Strentzel's daughter, Louisa [Louie] Wanda Strenzel. In 1882, **Dr. Strentzel constructed a 10,000 square foot home** on a knoll above his vast orchards; John and Louisa Wanda Strentzel Muir moved into the home after Dr. Strentzel's death in October 1890, and it is now preserved by the National Park Service as the John Muir National Historic Site."

Louisa Strentzel, who owned a small fruit farm in Martinez, just northeast of San Francisco Bay. Louisa must have been a remarkably patient and tolerant woman. Muir never really settled down to domestic life, periodically slipping off to the mountains, sometimes taking one or both of the couple's daughters with him.

For nearly a decade after returning to society in 1878, Muir cultivated a large orchard with his wife, horticulturist **Louisa Strentzel** Muir, in Martinez, California. Thereafter, the livelihood from their fruit trees enabled him to devote his energies entirely to conservation and writing. Combined with the efforts of journalist Robert Underwood Johnson, two of Muir's articles on the beauty of the natural landscape and the importance of protecting wilderness areas led to passage of a bill in 1890 that established the Yosemite and Sequoia national parks, albeit still controlled by the State of California.

1880 census:

Name:	John Strentzel
Age:	66
Birth Year:	abt 1814
Birthplace:	Poland
Home in 1880:	Township 1, Contra Costa , California
Race:	White
Relation to Head of House:	Self (Head)
Marital Status:	Married
Spouse's Name:	Lousiana [Erwin] Strentzel
Father's Birthplace:	Poland
Mother's Birthplace:	Poland
Occupation:	Horticulturist

[John Strentzel](#)
[Lousiana Strentzel](#)
[Lousiwarda Muir](#)
[John Muir](#)

66
58
33
42

One of the most highly ornamented and systematically cultivated farms in the State belongs to Dr. Strentzel, a **Polander**, on the Alhambra. The doctor is now near 67 years of age, and yet one of the most useful and active business men in the county. His wife is said to be dangerously ill. His friends will rejoice with him if she recovers.

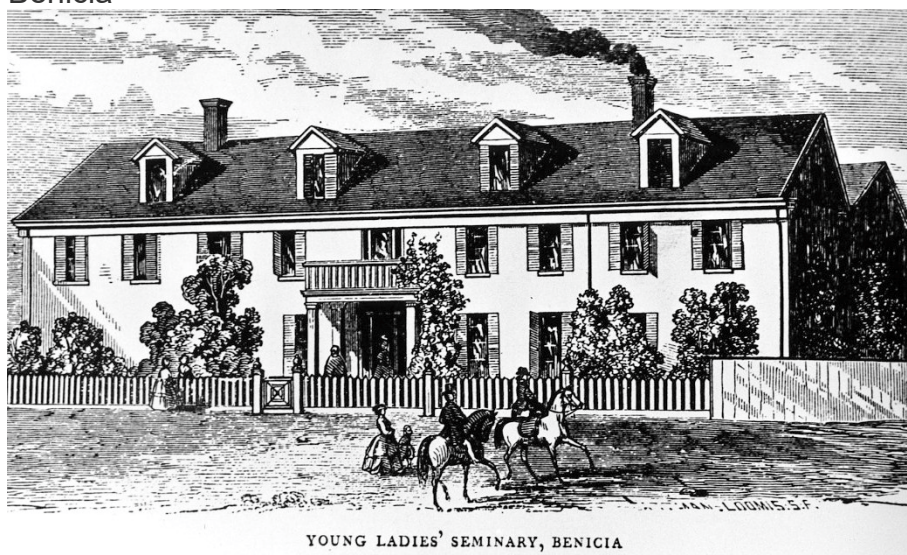
<http://www.polishclubsf.org/Bielawski1880LetterToStrentzel.pdf>

Jose Manuel
Bunsill, Jr.
Refos a Mchussel
Benson Henry
Russo Anna
Schulte Richard
Christian George
Strentzel John
Wolleschack Henry
Ischi Thomas

Miss Louie Wanda **Strentzel**, now arrived at mature womanhood, was not only the pride of the family, but was known widely for the grace with which she dispensed the generous hospitality of the **Strentzel** household. She had received her education in the Atkins Seminary for Young Ladies at **Benicia** and, according to her father, was "passionately fond of flowers and music." Among her admiring friends was Mrs. Carr, who at various times had vainly tried to bring about a meeting between Miss **Strentzel** and Mr. Muir. "You see how I am snubbed in trying to get John Muir to accompany me to your house this week," wrote Mrs. Carr in April, 1875. Mount Shasta was in opposition at the time, and easily won the choice.

stock, \$200,000; subscribed, \$100,000.
Strentzel Hall Association. Principal place of business, Valona, Contra Costa County. Directors—John Muir, Martinez; F. George, W. Helm, G. Peters and A. W. Beam, Valona. Capital stock, \$3,250; subscribed, \$2,535.
Bank of Hemet. Place of business

Atkins Seminary for Young Ladies, Benicia



A certificate awarded in **1880** to Dr. John T. Strenzel on the **50th anniversary of the Polish struggle for national independence in the November Uprising** against the Russian Empire (1830-1831). Dr. Strenzel received this honor for his patriotic struggle to liberate partitioned Poland in a war also known as the Polish–Russian War of 1830–31 (the **November Uprising** or the Cadets' Uprising):



1881

25 March 1881: Birth of **Annie Wanda Muir**, daughter of Louisiana Strentzel and John Muir

1881 John Strentzel, Officer **Society of California Pioneers**

SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS.—Organized August, 1850. · Rooms, 808 Montgomery street.

The expressed objects of the society are to collect and preserve information connected with the early settlement and subsequent conquest of the country, and to perpetuate the memory of those whose sagacity, energy and enterprise induced them to settle in the wilderness and become the founders of a new State. All who were in California prior to the first day of January, 1850, are eligible to membership. Any who have rendered distinguished or important services to the society or State, may be admitted as honorary members. The roll of the society embraces the names of over twenty-three hundred members. Regular meetings of the society take place on the first Monday of each month. Annual election of officers on the seventh day of July, the anniversary of the conquest of California, and of the raising of the American flag on its soil. Annual celebration on the ninth of September, the anniversary of the admission of California into the Union. The Society is possessed of a library, an excellent cabinet of minerals, relics of early times, and various other objects of interest.

Officers.—Joseph G. Eastland, President; R. P. Johnson, San Francisco, Samuel Purdy, San Francisco, John Strentzel, Martinez, Henry M. Naglee, San José, and Alexander Campbell, Oakland, Vice-Presidents; Ferdinand Vassault, Secretary; Howard Havens, Treasurer; William Huefner, Marshal.



Society of California Pioneers

1882

San Francisco 5. grudnia. Rocznica powstania 1830 r. obchodzoną była w San Francisco 29go listopada br. wspólnym skromnym obiadem, na który zgromadziło się 24 rodaków. Obecnego weterana z r. 1830, R. K. Piotrowskiego, jednogłośnie prezesem obchodu obrano. Aleksander Bednawski, również weteran tego powstania, mieszkający w San Francisco, w skutek przypadku, który go 21. lipca spotkał, na obchodzie nie mógł być obecnym. Przyczynę nieobecności serdecznym listem do zgromadzonych wyjaśnił. Również w Kalifornii mieszkający weterani: Fran. Wojciechowski, Wł. Lutnicki i dr J. Strentzel, wiekiem, chorobą i oddaleniem przeszkodzeni, osobistego udziału w obchodzie wziąć nie mogli.

Prezes dnia, R. K. Piotrowski, rozpoczął obchód stosownym przemówieniem, a w czasie obchodu z kolei przemawiali Z. Brodowski, A. Elgass, L. Reichert, C. Mayer, J. Pandler, który swój na tę uroczystość ułożony poemat odczytał, p. Antoni Czarnecki wybornie wydeklamował utwór z Marji Malczewskiego.

Jak lat poprzednich, tak i na tym obchodzie obecni przyczynili się dobrowolnym datkiem na materialne poparcie Muzeum Narodowego w Rapperswilu na r. 1882.

Rough translation

December 5. **Anniversary of 1830.** Celebrated in San Francisco 29th November. Modest dinner for the group brought together members and

veterans of the 1830 Uprising. RK Piotrowski

was chosen unanimously to be president of the meeting. **Alexander Bednawski**, also a veteran of the uprising living in San Francisco, ... met with an accident on July 21... could not be present. He sent a heartfelt letter to the accumulated guests in which he explained his absence. Other living veterans in California: **Franciszek**

Wojciechowski [Francis Mitchel], **Władysław**

Lutnicki and **Dr. J. Strentzel**. Age, disease and distance prevented their personal participation.

President of the day, RK Piotrowski started the event with an appropriate speech, and during the evening speeches in turn were given by:

Zbigniew Brodowski, Aleksander Elgass,

L. Reichert,* C. Meyer. J. Paudler read a poem

for the ceremony and **Antoni Czarnecki** read a paragraph of **Marja Malczewska**. As in previous

years, those present contributed a voluntary donation to support the **National Museum in Rapperswil** for 1882.

*Ludwig [Lewis] Reichert

Dr. Strentzel – veteran of the 1830 Uprising. Unable to attend the annual commemoration honoring veterans of the Polish November Uprising.

Strentzel (Muir) House constructed:

<http://www.polishclubsf.org/John%20Muir's%20father%20in%20law%20was%20a%20Polish%2049er.pdf>

1882: 16 December

The Alhambra Celebration (written by J Strentzel)

<http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=PRP18821216.2.11.1&srpos=1&div=none&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22Strent+zel%22-----1>

1883

The big house in Martinez where John Muir did most of his writing, was built in 1883 by Dr. John **Strentzel**, Muir's father-in-law. The family home was originally part of a 2,600-acre ranch, planted to fruit trees and vineyards. Almost nine acres remain as part of the historic site, and they are cultivated in a small orchard and vineyard, much as they were in Muir's day.

1885

Dr. John Strentzel of Martinez has a method of shipping grapes in carbonized bran, and the arrival at Louisville in good condition of shipments made from his vineyard, to test the method, has induced inquiries concerning the preparation. Dr. Strentzel says: "Take a good quality of bran, sifting out the fine particles, and toast the residuum as roasting coffee; when cool it is ready for use to fill the space between grapes or any other fruit when packed in a box. This roasted bran should be kept in a close vessel for future use. Previously I used cork dust, the coarse particles of it breaking the skin of the grapes or cherries and imparting a bad flavor, thus proving undesirable. Finely cut wheat straw or chaff is also good for packing apples or peaches; still any kind of green fruit keeps best with ventilation, without filling the interstices with anything beyond confining the fruit to prevent its moving by the motion when in transitu."

Mr. Pohodoff, to whom Dr. Strentzel consigned his grapes, says, under date of October 8th: "Several of the bunches of Dr. Strentzel's grapes are still of tolerably good soundness. The Muscat bunch succumbed first. Chasselas Rose is a large bunch and some berries have arrived injured by pressure. Chasselas Fontainebleau keeps good still. The aspect of the bunches sent in bran was somewhat lessened in beauty by the bran having fixed itself in places where some exudation of juice had happened. Some few berries, probably of more advanced maturity than the bulk of the bunches, had to be taken off by force as they were a mixture of bran and juice dried up. The trial with bran in the box which was delayed so long in arriving, I do not consider a guiding one, and bran-packing is one of the pretty good ways of packing fresh grapes, but there ought to be better ways. There was the advantage of the probably decayed grapes which formed that mixture of juice, graine, pulp and skins with bran mixed and dried up, not having infected any grape near, and no rotting being perceptible on the berries. Bran seems to be a good preserver."

The beautifully located town of Martinez is having a prosperous growth. A new hotel of 60 rooms has recently been completed. Quite a number of fine residences have been built during the past year. Some of these are most

charmingly located on the hillsides overlooking the town and straits of Carquinez. Local manufactures and new industries are being introduced with success. A contract has been let for the immediate construction of a good road to Port Costa, which will furnish a fine drive and add much to the business advantages of Martinez.

We recently visited the residence of Dr. J. Strentzel, some two miles up the valley from the town. It is situated upon a gradually sloping knoll near the hillside, commanding the most charming panoramic views of any dwelling place we have ever seen. In front, the view extends down the richly cultivated valley to Martinez, taking in many handsome fields, rural homesteads and elegant suburban residences. Beyond this line the straits form an ever-varying marine view. The steamers and sailing vessels pass up from the Bay of San Francisco and return from the immense San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys on the great rivers named the same. Still beyond these straits is seen the city of Benicia, the near rolling hills and distant mountain ranges. On the east of Dr. Strentzel's residence, the view leads up the valley and presents many orchards and vineyards, some nestled in protecting nooks and others beautifully encircling the rounded hillsides.

Now that the vineyards, orchards, ornamental trees and shrubbery develop toward maturity, the outlook from the doctor's residence shows quite clearly the wisdom of his originally systematic and thoroughly planned design.

All is spread out in plain view with relative position to combine the whole into harmonizing scenery. Near the house is a large pond well stocked with carp, which feed and sport among the tule as naturally and thriftily as if in their native waters. The apricot trees on the hillside are markedly uniform in shape, size and thrift. His pear orchard is equally noticeable for similar features.

This place, the second which he has cultivated in the valley, is truly remarkable for its choice and valuable selections, and must be seen and well examined to be even half appreciated. Great credit is certainly due the doctor and his sensible wife for rare accomplishments in home building, and their plain, worthy life examples.

Wm. E. Christian vs. John Strentzel: Involving Claim to Lot 5 of Section 25 in Township 2, North Range 3. W., M.D.M. : Brief on Behalf of John Strentzel, on Appeal from the Decision of the Hon. Commissioner of the General Land Office, Rendered in Said Case on July 2nd, 1886

John Theophil **Strentzel**, M.D., was born in Poland in 1813. He was educated in Poland and Hungary and received his doctor's degree in Budapest and migrated to America in 1840, settling near the present city of Dallas, Texas. On December 31, 1843, he married **Louisiana Erwin** of Kentucky and on April 4, 1853, he arrived in Martinez where he subsequently acquired 20 acres two and a half miles south of the town. His wife, charmed with the location, but finding the Spanish term "Arroyo del Hambre" difficult to pronounce, named the place Alhambra valley.

There Dr. **Strentzel** began the propagation of fruits and vines. He set out the first pear orchard in central California and planted the first muscat vineyard in Contra Costa. Others followed and the industry spread to its present great proportions. The doctor also founded the first grange in the county, was a Republican in politics and a patron of husbandry.

Thus Alhambra valley was the cradle of fruit growing in Contra Costa. As the years rolled on, the industry spread to the other rich valleys of the county, gradually replacing the dominance of grain.

23 January 1886: Birth of **Helen L. Muir**, daughter of Louisiana Strentzel and John Muir

1890

<http://www.PolishClubSF.org/BednawskiToStrentzelEnglish1890.pdf>

Pioneer Association member: **J Strentzel**:

<http://files.usgwarchives.net/ca/sanfrancisco/history/1890/argonaut/memberso88gms.txt>

Members of the **Pioneer Association Of San Francisco** 1890

THE ARGONAUTS OF CALIFORNIA. 363

Strentzel, John, Dr. ... **died in Nov of 1890** ... age -- ... 1890D-6397



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OBITUARY.

DR. JOHN STRENTZEL.

Dr. John Strentzel died at his home near Martinez yesterday forenoon. Dr. Strentzel was one of the pioneers of Contra Costa County, and lived in Alhambra Valley, near Martinez, for many years. His only daughter is the wife of John Muir, the geologist. The doctor was an enterprising agriculturist. His grapes were celebrated in the infancy of the fruit industry in California. He was well known all over the State, and was an authority on all questions relating to fruit. He left a large estate.

Death of Dr. John Strentzel.

MARTINEZ, October 31st.—Dr. John Strentzel died at his home near here this forenoon. Dr. Strentzel was one of the pioneers of Contra Costa and has lived in Alhambra valley, near Martinez, for many years. His only daughter is the wife of John Muir, the geologist. The Doctor was an enterprising agriculturist. His grapes were celebrated in the infancy of the fruit industry in California. He was well known all over the State and was an authority on all questions relating to fruit.

JOHN T. STRENTZEL.

The pioneer fruit-grower in the State, John Theophile Strentzel, was buried at Martinez on the 3d inst. He was born in Lublin, Poland, November 29, 1813, and graduated as a physician in the University of Pesth, Hungary, in 1839. Soon after this he emigrated to Texas and practiced his profession until he came to California in 1849. He commenced practice in Tuolumne County, but owing to failing health was obliged to discontinue. He then devoted his attention to the cultivation of fruit, and purchased 500 acres of land in Alhambra Valley, adjoining the town of Martinez. He was obliged to purchase his stock at great expense, and experimented with over 1000 varieties of fruit, besides many kinds of ornamental and flowering trees, with a view of determining which were the best adapted to the climate of this State. He freely distributed grafts and cuttings to his friends and neighbors and soon became a recognized authority as a fruit-grower. He was a prominent member of many scientific and beneficial associations, and was ever ready to lend a helping hand to those who needed it. He left a widow and one daughter, who is the wife of John Muir.

THE LATE JOHN T. STRENTZEL.

A Sketch of the Pioneer Fruit-Grower of California—His Devotion to Horticulture.

John Theophile Strentzel, whose remains were interred at Martinez on Monday, November 3d, was born in Lublin, Poland, November 29, 1813. He entered the University of Warsaw at the time of the revolutionary disturbance and finding it expedient to remove on that account, he became a student and graduated, after taking a full course in the University of Pesth, in Hungary, as a physician in 1839. Soon after he emigrated to Texas, where he followed his profession for nine years. In 1849 he came to California and commenced practice in Tuolumne county, where, failing in health, and recognizing a definite object in life, he sought for a suitable locality for the cultivation of fruit. This he found in Alhambra Valley adjoining the town of Martinez, where he purchased 500 acres of unimproved land, on which he settled permanently with his wife. Here he became the true pioneer fruit-grower in the State, purchasing all his stock at great expense, experimenting with over one thousand varieties of fruit, beside many kinds of ornamental and flowering trees, with a view of determining which were best adapted to the climate of California. His extensive orchards of grapes and fruit have always been a model of scientific horticulture. He freely distributed grafts and cuttings to his friends and neighbors, and contributed the results of his labors to numerous publications and societies. This department of science occupied his special attention, and without the ambition of public fame he attained a wide and honorable reputation and became a recognized authority as a fruit-grower.

By persistent industry, he succeeded in amassing a moderate estate, although no distinct love of wealth became a factor in his character. On the contrary, he was ever ready to lend a helping hand to those who needed it. Bland and courteous in manner, considerate and kind in action and sociable in disposition, his circle of friends and his influence in public affairs enlarged with his growing years; and when he rendered the final account of life, at the ripe age of seventy-seven, his departure was sorrowfully honored by the community which surrounded his home, and his numerous friends at more distant points.

He was prominent in all public and humane enterprises, and an active member of many serene and other associations. He left a widow and one daughter, who is the wife of John Muir.

Pacific Rural Press

Temescal Grange.

At the meeting of Temescal Grange, Saturday, Nov. 1st, the sad news of the death of Dr. Strentzel, Master of Alhambra Grange, was announced and many feeling words of sorrow and sympathy were spoken by members. On motion memorial committee was appointed by the Worthy Master consisting of Brothers J. G. Lemmon and A. T. Dewey and Sister Nettie Jones to present resolutions for action of the

Grange at its next meeting,

Death of Dr. John Strentzel.— With deep regret we announce the death of Dr. John Strentzel of Martinez, which occurred at the close of last week. His life was filled with so much of public interest that we do not at-

tempt a hasty sketch

The Late Dr. Strentzel

Many California fruit growers who will assemble at Santa Cruz next week will mourn the departure of their honored friend and associate, Dr. John T. Strentzel, who died at his home in Alhambra Valley near Martinez, on Friday, Nov 1st. It was a sad coincidence that his old associates of the State Horticultural Society, in session in this city on that day, selected him as chairman of a committee to extend an invitation to the American Pomological

Society to hold their next meeting in this State.

Thus almost at the hour of his death his associates were placing upon him honors and responsibilities which during his long, active life he had accepted so quietly and discharged so well. During recent years, bodily infirmities have prevented him from many activities which he formerly pursued, and denied our younger fruit-growers the opportunity for acquaintance with him, but he never lost his interest in horticultural work and progress, and died in the harness full of years and honor,

John Theophile Strentzel was born in Lublin, Poland, November 29, 1813. He entered the University of Warsaw at the time of the revolutionary disturbance, but laid aside his tasks for ever in the patriot army, and after the dismemberment of his country, proceeded to Hungary, became a student, and after taking a full course in the University of Pesth, graduated as a physician in 1839, Soon after he emigrated to Texas, where he followed his profession for nine years. On the 31st of December, 1843, he was united in marriage to Miss Louisiana Erwin, a native of Tennessee, who for 47 years has been his devoted wife and life companion. Early in the spring of 1849, having had his attention called to the far-famed El Dorado, Dr. Strentzel and family joined a company, who had organized for the purpose of crossing the then trackless plains in an endeavor to reach California. On the 14th of April, 1850, Dr. Strentzel and family reached the Tuolumne river after an eventful journey of 13 months. They resided first about two miles from Le Grange, afterward on Merced

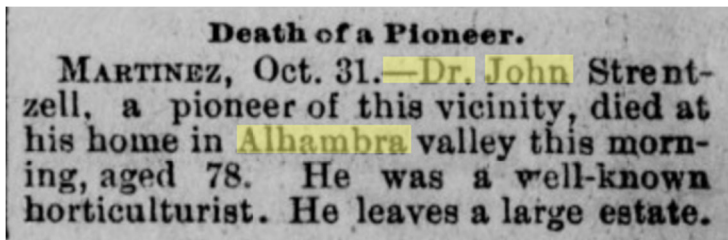
river, but in 1853 selected a permanent home in Alhambra valley, adjoining the town of Martinez, where he purchased 1500 acres of unimproved land. Here he became a pioneer fruit-grower, purchasing all the stock at ___ expense, experimenting with over 1000 varieties of fruit, besides many kinds of ornamental and flowering trees, with a view of determining which were best adapted to the climate of California. He was first to announce the success of citrus fruits in suitable locations in Northern California and the first to show a properly cured Muscat raisin at the State Fairs of California.

By persistent industry, he succeeded in amassing a moderate estate, although no distinct love of wealth became a factor in his character. On the contrary, he was ever ready to lend a helping hand to those who needed it. Bland and courteous in manner, considerate and kind in action and sociable in disposition, his circle of friends and his influence in public affairs enlarged with his growing years, and when he rendered the final account of life, at the ripe age of 77, his departure was sorrowfully honored by the community which surrounded his home and his numerous friends at more distant points. He was prominent in all public and humane enterprises, and an active member of many scientific and other associations.

In his family relations, Dr. Strentzel was exceedingly happy. His wife, whom he led to the altar 47 years ago, still lives to honor his name. Their daughter Louise, wife of John

Muir, the well-known geologist and litterateur,
has remained in the neighborhood of her
father's home and has cheered his declining
years.

The portrait which we present herewith,
though not as good as we desire, will recall his
venerable features to his old friends and sug-
gest to others the lineaments of one whom
they should long remember and honor as a
potent factor in California's horticultural progress-



“John Strentzel -- made California famous world over as a fruit-raising State”

History of the Pacific States of North America: California

By Hubert Howe Bancroft

Worthy of mention also among our leading agriculturists is John Theophil **Strentzel**, a native of Poland, where he was born Nov. 29, 1813. He came to New Orleans in 1840, and after some changes of residence and business, to Cal. by way of the plains in 1849-50, and established a ferry, hotel, and general merchandise store at **La Grange**. Later he engaged in farming and stock-raising on the Merced river, near Snelling's, afterward settling on his present homestead, near Martinez, where he is president of the Grangers' Business association and of the Gas and Electric Light co.

La Grange:

http://legacy.yosemit Gazette.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=52:la-grange-california&catid=23:archives&Itemid=125

http://legacy.yosemit Gazette.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49:across-the-mojave-desert-to-san-diego&catid=23:archives&Itemid=125

1891 Pawlicki visit to Mrs.(Louisiana) Strentzel and Mrs. (Wanda) John Muir
(daughter of John **Strentzel**)

Mrs. Pawlicki, wife of **Dr. L. Pawlicki**, made a short tour recently through Napa county, where she left her sons, Casimir and Thadeus, pleasantly domiciled on a farm outside of Napa City. On her return she visited Mrs. Strentzel and Mrs. John Muir at their attractive residence near Martinez.

Mrs. Strentzel had come to Honey Grove in 1842, the year the town was founded, with her parents, who had been married in Tennessee by a justice of the peace named Davey Crockett. Her father was postmaster in Honey Grove and also served in other positions. She married her husband, John Strentzel, in 1843. He was an immigrant from Poland and was a medical doctor.

In 1849, the Strentzels and their two children left for California on a wagon train from Bonham. During their 13 months on the road, they survived Indian attacks, days without water and many hardships, including serious illnesses. They arrived in San Diego and gradually worked their way up the coast to what is now Maritimes, Calif. Their home is now a National Historic Landmark. He founded United Fruit and Vegetable Co. The Strentzel's daughter, Louisa, married naturalist John Muir, who became the founder of the Sierra Club and the National Park Service.

Valona was founded by Dr. John Strentzel, a fabulous man. An exiled Pole, he settled in 1853 on 20 acres of Canada del Hambre and immediately turned his ranch into orchards and vineyards. He is credited with planting the first pear orchard in Central California, and the first muscat grapes.

His wife Louisiana, indignant that such a fair valley should be called "Valley of Hunger," renamed it Alhambra Valley.

He Led the Way

How a revolution in Poland brought pear trees to Contra Costa county and furnished material for a number of interesting chapters in California history is told in the life of Dr. John Strentzel. A young Pole, raised to be a physician, he found himself confronted with a choice of joining the Russian army or exiling himself from his homeland. With his wife he came to America seventy-two years ago and settled in Contra Costa county. His daughter, Louise Wanda Strentzel, married John Muir, the naturalist. The story of this pioneer's struggles and his success in finding the "perfect home" was related recently by the editor of the Martinez Gazette. Strentzel came to the Pacific Coast in 1849 and found the journey a difficult one, the party suffering from

hunger and thirst. Illness contracted by the wife who was forced with the others to drink alkaline water, caused Strentzel to look for a place of ideal climate and, after a number of stops, he decided upon Contra Costa county. For a time, it is related, he had an inn and a store on the Tuolumne, where he entertained Colonel Fremont and General Miller one day and, on the next, acted as host to a band of rangers and desperadoes. When at last he settled at "Canada del Hambre" he said he realized his long cherished dream of a home, so on land he bought for fifty dollars an acre he established himself two miles south of Martinez. From all over the country he brought in trees and vines and planted the first pear orchard in this part of the State, an orchard of sixty varieties of pears. It is said he grew the first muscat grapes in California and his success caused many others to become horticulturists. The wife regained her health and the couple lived to an old age. Some of the trees he planted, more than seventy years ago, are still bearing fruit.

1897 (San Francisco)

Louisiana E. Strentzel to Helen Muir, undivided half of lot on NW corner of Mariposa and Utah streets, N 77 by W 100; grant.

Same to Wanda Muir, undivided half of lot on NE corner of Mariposa and Utah streets, E 100 by N 237; 6; grant.

Strentzel, Mrs. L. Erwin ... died in 1897 ... age 76 ... SF1897-10919

STRENTZEL—In Martinez, September 24, Mrs. L. E. Strentzel, wife of the late Dr. John Strentzel, and mother of Mrs. John Muir, aged 70 years.
Funeral this day (Monday), at 1 o'clock, from the family residence.

STRENTZEL—In Martinez, September 24, 1897, Mrs. L. E. Strentzel, aged 76 years.

Death of Mrs Strentzel

Mrs. L. E. Strentzel, widow of the late John Strentzel and mother of Mrs. John Muir, passed away at her home in Alhambra Valley, Contra Costa county, last week. She was seventy-six years of age. Mrs. Strentzel was a native of Tennessee and came to California in 1849. She moved to Contra Costa county with her husband and children in 1853.

1900 Census (John Muir and Mrs. Louie Strentzel Muir)

Muir, John	Head	WM	Apr 1838	62	20	2	2	Texas	Poland	England	England	1844	51	Ha.
Muir, Louie	Wife	WF	July 1846	53	19	5		California	Scotland	Texas				
Muir, Mauda A.	Daughter	WF	Mar 1881	19	5			California	Scotland	Texas				at school
Muir, Helen L.	Daughter	WF	Jan 1886	14	5			California	Scotland	Texas				
Ballouay, Sarah	Sister	WF	?	1836	64	4	3	Scotland	England	Scotland		1844	51	

Name: John Muir

Age: 62

Birth Date: Apr 1838

Birthplace: Scotland

Home in 1900: Alhambra, Contra Costa, California

Race: White

Immigration Year: 1849

Relation to Head of House: Head

Marital Status: Married

Spouse's Name: Louie W Muir

Marriage Year: 1880

Years Married: 20

Father's Birthplace: England

Mother's Birthplace: England

Occupation: [View on Image](#)

Neighbors: [View others on page](#)

Household Members:	Name	Age
	John Muir	62

Louie W Muir	53
Manda A Muir	19
Helen L Muir	14
Sarah Galloway	64 (sister of John Muir)

1901

<http://www.PolishClubSF.org/StrentzelPostcard1901.pdf>

tled down at an orchard property near Martinez, cultivated Muscat grapes and Bartlett pears, supervised Chinese laborers, and made a lot of money. Muir inherited a fruit ranch in Contra Costa County from his father-in-law, Dr. John Theophil Strentzel (Jan Teofil Strentzel), a political exile from Lublin, Poland. Before coming to America, Strentzel studied medicine and horticulture, two fields that made good use of surgical knives. Even more than Muir, Strentzel personifies the California Dream. He got off the boat at New Orleans in 1840 and proceeded to join a settlement company bound for Dallas. In Texas he married a woman from Tennessee named Louisiana.

1905



6 August 1905: Death of Louisiana Wanda Strentzel Muir

[Back](#)

WIFE OF NATURALIST DIES WITH PNEUMONIA

Librarian Lummis Receives Notifica-
tion of the Death of Mrs.
John Muir

Mrs. John Muir, wife of John Muir, the world famed naturalist and explorer, died at her home in Martinez, Cal., last Sunday morning of pneumonia.

1906: Marriage of Wanda Muir to Thomas Hanna

faith, have one each. The university of Pesth, the only one in Hungary, is richly endowed. The professors are in number 40 ; the students between 700 and 800. The branches taught comprise, as in the larger German universities, theology, law, medicine, philosophy, classics, and mathematics. Here are also a number of private teachers, and several establishments subsidiary to the university, such as a botanical garden, and, on the Buda side of the river, an observatory situ-

1910 Census

Name:	John Muir
Age in 1910:	71
Birth Year:	abt 1839
Birthplace:	Scotland
Home in 1910:	Township 1, Contra Costa, California
Race:	White
Immigration Year:	1849
Relation to Head of House:	Head
Marital Status:	Widowed
Father's Birthplace:	Scotland
Mother's Birthplace:	Scotland

[Article about Muir and Strentzel](#)

<http://www.polishclubsf.org/MuirStrentzel1916.pdf>

Pacific Rural Press

5 February 1916

Trees in Paradise: A California History - Page xxxiv



<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0393241270>

Jared Farmer - 2013 - Preview

Muir inherited a fruit ranch in Contra Costa County from his father-in-law, Dr. John Theophil Strentzel (**Jan Teofil Stren- zel**), a political exile from Lublin, Poland. Before coming to Amer- ica, Strentzel studied medicine and horticulture, two fields ...

Dr. Strentzel worked diligently to expand his estate from 20 to over 2,000 acres while his wife struggled to regain her health. He organized a local chapter of the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry and became Contra Costa County's leading horticulturist, a man recognized as one of the "builders of the commonwealth" by California's enterprising historian Hubert Howe Bancroft

Name: **Samuel Erwin** (father of Louisiana)

State: TX

County: Fannin County

Township: No Township Listed

Year: 1846

Record Type: Tax list

Page: NPN

Database: TX Tax List Index, 1840-1849

Name: Saml Erwin

Age: 65

Birth Year: abt 1785

Birthplace: Virginia

Home in 1850: Fannin, Texas, USA

Gender: Male

Family Number: 288

	Name	Age
Household Members:	Saml Erwin	65
	Sarah B Erwin	55
	A S Erwin	18

Samuel Erwin and Davy Crockett, old friends from Kentucky, were instrumental in the founding of Honey Grove, Fannin Co., TX.

Samuel Augustus Erwin has a large gravestone marker in Honey Grove, TX, stating: "Virginia-born Samuel Erwin was married in 1819 in Tennessee to Sally Rodgers Crisp (1795-1860), in a ceremony performed by local magistrate David Crockett. First settler in the Honey Grove area, Erwin arrived here in 1837 and surveyed land grants for other pioneers. A surveyor by profession, he platted the townsite for his friend B.S. Wolcott in 1848. He was the town's first postmaster and one of Fannin County's earliest Justices of the Peace."

Crockett Park Monument, same area, indicates that Honey Grove was named by Crockett, but he died before it could become a town. Old friend, Sam Erwin, continued on and became the founder. Monument reads in part, that Crockett traveled by riverboat, horseback and on foot, entering Texas along the Red River, camping at a site half a mile northeast of the park, he found wild bees and honey in hollow trees...and called the campsite a "Honey Grove". It is said that he told friends he would settle here later, but in a few weeks he died in cause of freedom, at the Alamo.

Since Muir ultimately married into the Strentzel family, its antecedents are of interest to the reader and may be sketched briefly in this connection. John Strentzel, born in Lublin, Poland, was a participant in the unsuccessful Polish revolution of 1830. To escape the bitter fate of being drafted into the victorious Russian army he fled to Upper Hungary where he obtained a practical knowledge of viticulture, and later was trained as a physician at the University of Buda-Pesth. Coming to the United States in 1840, he joined at Louisville, Kentucky, a party of pioneers known as Peters' Colonization Company,—and went with them to the Trinity River in Texas, where he built a cabin on the present site of the city of Dallas, then a wild Comanche country. When the colony failed and dispersed he removed to Lamar County in the same state, was married at Honeygrove to Louisiana Erwin, a native of Tennessee, and in 1849, with his wife and baby daughter, came across the plains from Texas to California as medical adviser to the Clarkesville "train" of pioneer immigrants. Not long afterwards he settled in the Alhambra Valley [According to the journal of Dr. Strentzel, this was not the original name of the valley. A company of Spanish soldiers, sent to chastise some Indians, was unable to obtain provisions there, and so named it, "Canada de la Hambre," or Valley of Hunger. "Mrs. Strentzel, on arriving here," writes her husband, "was displeased with the name, and, remembering Irving's glowing description of the Moorish paradise, decided to re-christen our home Alhambra." Ever since then the valley has borne this modification of the original name.] near Martinez, and became one of the earliest and most successful horticulturists of California.

SEE NEXT PAGE



Dr. John Strentzel was born in Lublin, Poland, November 29, 1813. His family was well to do, and able to provide a life of "being attended with all desirable comforts". At age six, he was sent to school along with the sons of officials and nobility. In 1830, he joined in an attempted overthrow of the Russian domination of Poland. When the revolution failed the following year, John Strentzel was forced to flee his homeland and move to Hungary. Here he gained knowledge of vineyard culture and the wine trade. He also began his medical studies at the University of Pesh, Hungary, and received his diploma in 1839.

Dr. Strentzel immigrated to the United States in 1840 and moved west to Texas where he settled and married Louisiana Erwin in 1843. Their first child, a daughter named Louisa (Louie), was born in 1846, and a son, John, in 1848. The family moved to California during the 1849 Gold Rush, enduring many harrowing experiences before settling along the Tuolumne River and establishing a ferry, a hotel and a general store. Later, they took up farming along the Merced River but lost the farm in a flood. A second daughter, Lotta, was born in 1851 but lived only four months.

Seeking a quieter life, the Strentzels moved to the Alhambra Valley near the town of Martinez, California, in 1853. The doctor bought 20 acres of land and used his Hungarian vineyard knowledge to begin experimenting with a wide variety of grapes, fruit and nut trees, as well as ornamental plantings. Importing seeds and cuttings from around the world, Dr. Strentzel employed new scientific methods in horticulture, exhibiting oranges and award-winning wines as early as 1861.

Dr. Strentzel's fortunes increased over the years as demand for his produce grew. He bought additional land and planted large vineyards and orchards that included Muscat, Zinfandel and Tokay grapes, and over 50 varieties of pears. People came to view and write about the famous "Alhambra gardens" of Dr. Strentzel.

Eventually, Dr. Strentzel tried over 1,000 varieties of fruit trees and ornamentals, earning a solid reputation as a pioneer and authority on California horticulture. He contributed articles on his research to numerous publications, gave college lectures on agriculture, and helped establish and lead state and local Grange organizations to promote agricultural interests. He also found time to be a school trustee and president of the Martinez Gas and Electric Company.

The death of the Strentzel's son, John, in 1857, was a crushing blow to the family. Their only remaining child, Louie, received an extensive education and became a pianist of concert caliber. She was devoted to her parents, however, and chose to remain with them on their fruit ranch, helping them run their large and thriving business.



The Strentzels became acquainted with a well-known naturalist and aspiring writer named John Muir in 1874. Muir and the doctor were mutually impressed with each other and a warm friendship began. The Strentzels were delighted when Muir proposed to Louie in 1879. Dr. Strentzel gave the newlyweds 20 acres of land and the Strentzel home to live in when they were married the following year. At age 67, Dr. Strentzel gained the son he had always wanted.

In 1882, Dr. Strentzel built a 17-room mansion on a knoll overlooking his vast orchards, about a mile from his original home. John Muir took over as ranch manager, overseeing the 2,600 acre operation when the doctor's health began to fail. Capitalizing on cash crops already established by his father-in-law, Muir secured his own modest fortune over the next ten years, enabling him to resume his writing and conservation career later on.

Dr. Strentzel continued his horticultural work and practiced his medical skills whenever required. On one occasion he saved the life of a man who had been struck in the head with a pickaxe.

Strentzel never forgot his Polish heritage. He kept several scrapbooks on Polish achievements and entertained many Polish artists and writers, among who were **Henry Sienkiewicz**, author of *Quo Vadis*, and the famous Polish actress, **Madame Modjeska**. And in 1880, the government of Poland presented Dr. Strentzel with a document honoring him for his participation in the 1830 Polish National Uprising.

Perhaps Dr. Strentzel's last years can best be described in his own words. He wrote in a short autobiography: "My faithful companion (Louisiana) and I live very comfortably and quietly in our declining years. We have a commodious house with pleasant surroundings, in the midst of orchards and vineyards in full view of Martinez and Benicia...

www.nps.gov/jomu/learn/.../Dr-John-Strentzel.doc

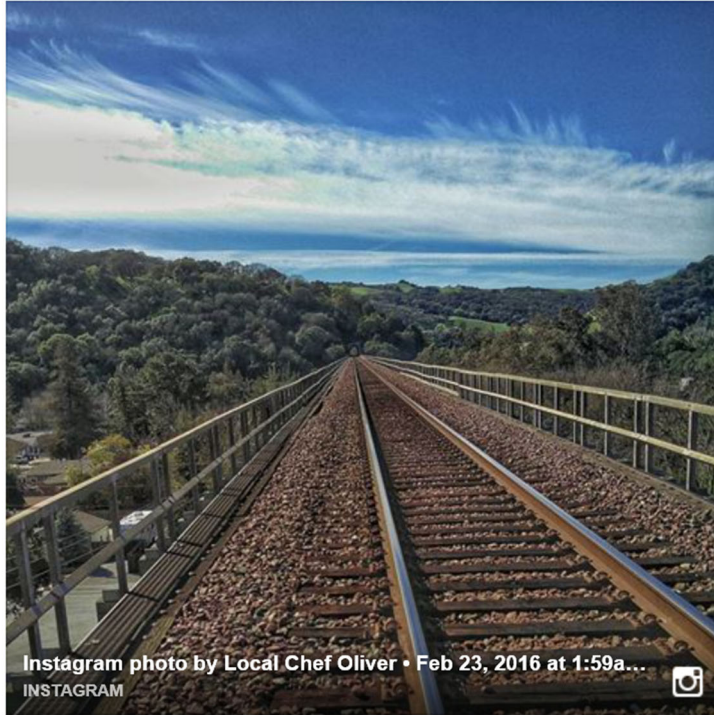




John Muir National Historic Site

28 mins · 🌐

Train tracks running between John Muir NHS and Mount Wanda. Muir was able to use this route to distribute fruit from the orchard.



Instagram photo by Local Chef Oliver • Feb 23, 2016 at 1:59a...

INSTAGRAM



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1866 Family Letter Found By Ray Erwin

The recent Founders' Week activities in Honey Grove and the historical marker dedication ceremonies honoring Samuel Erwin and Benjamin S. Walcott seemed to have stirred the memory of Ray Erwin as he recalled having read a letter written to his grandfather, Jack Erwin, back in 1866 from Jack's sister. A short search produced the well-preserved letter and Ray brought it out of hiding and with his permission it is being reprinted.

On January 24, 1848 gold was discovered in the American River at Sutters' Mill in California and the "Gold Rush" was on. It was not long before a group of men and women from the Honey Grove area and from the western part of Lamar county decided to form up a wagon train and head for California to seek their fortunes. Most of them were soon sorry that they had ever left home as the hardships of the wagon trains made life miserable for them and the dangers from the environment and from Indians were always to be reckoned with. Very few of the "goldrushers" struck it rich and for the most part the hardships and deprivations were enough to discourage anyone. Most of them that survived returned home some years later forever cured of the gold fever. Some of them, however, stuck it out and stayed in California and gave up the quest for gold by engaging in farming or by putting in orchards and vineyards. Such was the case for Dr. John Strentzel and his wife, the former Louisiana Louise Erwin, daughter of Samuel Erwin, Honey Grove's first settler. The Strentzels had joined up with a wagon train which formed here in 1849 and their original intention was to hunt for gold but that objective was soon abandoned. Instead Dr. Strentzel bought some land near Martinez, California and put in a fruit orchard and vineyard containing some fifty acres of fertile land. The Strentzels became pioneers in the development of the grape industry and in the development of orchards and eventually became very wealthy.

In December of 1866, Louise Strentzel wrote to her brother, Jack Erwin, here in Honey Grove and many things in her letter are extremely interesting. The letter was written on December 4th, just a short time before Christmas, and the Civil War had not been over very long. She writes of the terrible anxieties that they endured during this period of "sorrowful years" when they were always wondering if some dear friend back in Honey Grove or some relative might be among the casualty lists. She laments the fact that letters from home are few and far between. In fact, she had not heard from her brother Jack for some five anxious years and had received only one letter from her brother Samuel whom she called "Bud". Only one letter had arrived from her sister Margaret who had married Dr. Lynn DeSpain of Paris. The DeSpains were in Kentucky when they wrote.

Her letter expressed a strong love for her old home town and reflected a feeling of home sickness as she asked to be told of the "old landmarks and all of the new improvements and changes." She was anxious to be told of the old friends who had fallen in battle during the war or had died from exposure and disease. She wrote of the dangers of the hostile Indians as the immigrants continued to cross the plains on their way to California.

Louise writes of her daughter, Louisa, who had been in bad health for a long time and she vividly tells of the many diseases such as consumption, whooping cough, scarlet fever, bilious fever, putrid sore throat and others that everyone was subject to getting. Luckily chills and fever were missing in their area. She was not aware that the chills and fever were actually malaria and that only in the coastal areas was it common.

Daughter Louisa eventually recovered from her many illnesses and she married John Muir who was later to become the world renowned naturalist.

Louise's letter speaks of the excitement caused by the completion of the Trans-continental railroad which made travel from California back to the states possible and in her letter she expresses the hope that she and her family could ride back to Honey Grove as though it were an "excursion". It is not known whether or not the Strentzels did, in fact, make this excursion back home but we do know from later correspondence that brother Jack Erwin went to California to see the Strentzels but returned some time later.

— John B. Black

Alhambra, December 4, 1866

My Dear Brother:

Your letter dated the 14th of September has reached us, and I need not tell you how delighted we all were to receive a letter from you once more and such a long letter. We felt after reading it almost like we had seen you and had a good talk.

It has been more than five years since we received your last letter previous to the war. When I look back upon the terrible incidents of those long, dark, sorrowful years they seem to me now more like a dream than the fearful reality that they were. Although we in California were far away from the strife, and comparatively free from the hardships and trials of the war, still I think we suffered as much, and even more, from anxiety and suspense, than those who lived in the midst of the conflict, especially we who had friends in the South, and were unable to hear from them or know their fate. O, the sad hours that we spent during that long period as day after day we would read in the papers the terrible accounts of the battles as they occurred and with what dread would we look over the lists of the killed and wounded, fearing to see the name of some dear friend. There was scarcely an American in California who did not have friends and relatives engaged on one side or the other, and many had brothers in both armies fighting against each other. These were indeed troublous times, the like of which we hope and pray never to see again.

We have never yet received but one letter from Bud, and that was early last spring, one from Dr. D'Spain written while he was in Louisville, Kentucky, but none from Missouri altho' we have written to them repeatedly. I do not know what can be the matter we do not get letters from them. I suppose they certainly do write and their letters fail to reach us.

You say you have lately been back at Honey Grove. O Jack, how does the old home look now? Did it not make you feel sad to be there and think of the old times when we were all together? I want you to write to me all about it, tell me of the old landmarks and all of the new improvements and changes. Describe the town, how many people live there, what kind of buildings, who of the old friends are there, etc. Tell me about Bud's children, and the graves of father and mother. I think of so many questions that I would ask if I could see you.

Strenzel,

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HONEY GROVE SIGNAL-CITIZEN
THE LADONIA NEWS



Saga Of The Erwins 1842-1983

by Alma Braudrick

Margaret, 1st married Mr. Franklin Day. Their daughter, Alice, married Will Ryan. At a later date I will tell you who some of the other Ryan's married. Margaret's 2nd marriage was to Dr. DeSpain - for a time they lived in Paris.

Mr. Samuel's sons: A. J. (Jack) Erwin 1st married Eliza McKenzie, daughter of John McKenzie who in 1845 bought land from Dr. J. J. Nicholson that had grants of 2 half sections, this, where he settled we knew as the "Old Province" place - north 8th street. Later in '45 J. T. Allen bought the home of McKenzie. Mr. McKenzie was living in 1866. S. L. Erwin was the son of Jack and Eliza. He married Helen Long of Ladonia born Nov. 3, 1860 - died May 1943. Mr. S. L. died Oct. 18, 1931. Ivan Erwin was his son, he married Bertha Price, their 3 children, Ruth, Ivan Jr. and Alice.

Jack's 2nd marriage was to Minerva Curry - One son A. T. (Tom) was born 1863 - died 1943. Had 1 daughter Wynnoma Curtis, 2 sons: Jack T. and

BERKELEY, June 21.—Wanda, the eldest daughter of **John Muir**, was married very quietly yesterday at Martinez to Thomas Hanna, a civil engineer. Both the bride and groom are graduates of the University of California. Mrs. Hanna was a social favorite while at college and was a member of the Gamma Phi Beta Sorority. The marriage was the culmination of a romance begun a few years ago, while the two were at college. The ceremony was strikingly simple. There were no attendants, the bride merely being given away by her father, who signed the license as witness. Rev. Mr. Stoddard of Martinez, who is an old friend of John Muir, was the officiating clergyman. The young couple will live in one of the bay cities after their return from their honeymoon.

Author

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

1906

Muir, John

Name in full, *John Muir*

Born at *Dunbar, Scotland*, on *April 21*, 18*38*

Father, *Daniel Muir*; Mother (maiden name in full), *Anne Gilroy*

If married, to whom? *Louis Strentzel*

Place, *Martinez*; Date, _____

Where educated, *Dunbar Gram. School & Wis. State University*

Years spent in California, *38*; Residences in State, *Martinez*

Yosemite & Woodbury pseudonyms

Present address, *Martinez, California*

[OVER.] *Died Los Angeles Dec. 24, 1914*

MARTINEZ WINE.—Dr. Jno. **Strentzel**, of Martinez, Contra Costa county, besides marketing a large quantity of grapes, will manufacture a thousand gallons of wine from this year's crop. He has the largest vineyard in the county, according to the Gazette.

Worthy of mention also among our leading agriculturists is John Theophil **Strentzel**, a native of Poland, where he was born Nov. 29, 1813. He came to New Orleans in 1840, and after some changes of residence and business, to Cal. by way of the plains in 1849-50, and established a ferry, hotel, and general merchandise store at **La Grange**. Later he engaged in farming and stock-raising on the Merced river, near Snelling's, afterward settling on his present homestead, near Martinez, where he is president of the Grangers' Business association and of the Gas and Electric Light co.