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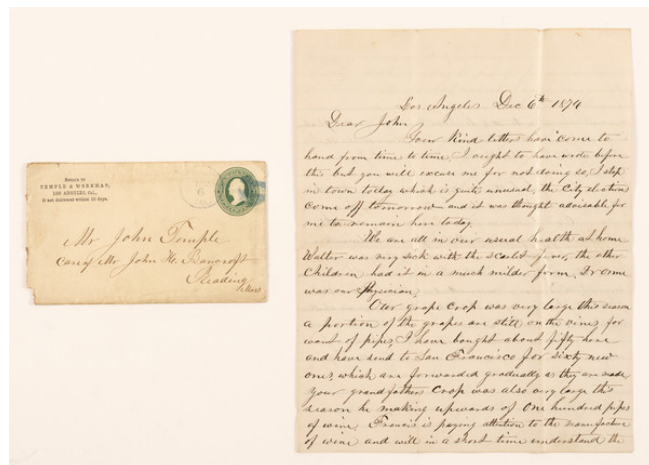
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(Los Angeles Winemaking) [Original letter written from Los Angeles by Francis P. F. Temple to his son John Temple, describing the grape harvest and wine production in Los Angeles, recent rapid growth of the town, increase in land prices, and the like]

Stock#: 92938
Map Maker: Temple - Workman Families /
Temple
Date: 1874
Place: Los Angeles
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: VG+
Size: 9.75 x 7.75 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Winemaking in Los Angeles in 1874

William "Don Julian" Workman's Bumper Crop of Grapes

"This country is settling up very rapidly, people are coming on every steamer..."

An original letter by a prominent pioneer of Los Angeles, Francis Pliny Fisk Temple, a member of the Temple-Workman family of Rancho La Puente, to his son John Harrison Temple.

The letter describes the rapid growth and development of Los Angeles, progress in agricultural crops, and contains an early mention of winemaking in Los Angeles. Temple reports that the supply of pipes to store the wine is insufficient. He makes reference to Francis, another son, being an avid student of wine production who will soon "understand the business as well as Mr. Lambourne." The younger Francis had recently returned to Los Angeles after a year or so of study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was supervising the wine operation on the Workman ranch.

Frederick Lambourn was Workman's English-born ranch foreman who also worked as a private tutor for the family. The letter also reports that grandfather (i.e. William "Don Julian" Workman (1799-1876), the patriarch of the Temple-Workman clan) had made over 100 pipes of wine in the present season. In little over a year (May 17, 1876) William Workman would commit suicide by a pistol shot to the head, destitute over the fallout of the family's financial difficulties: the morning of his death a receiver had come to take



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possession of his property.

A unique item of much interest for the history of Los Angeles, particularly to historians of wine in Southern California.

Winemaking in Los Angeles

Winemaking has a long history in Los Angeles, with the first vineyards planted by Spanish missionaries in the 18th century. By the 1870s, industrial wine production had begun in the city, marked by the establishment of wineries such as San Antonio and Kaspere Cohn. From the beginning the industry faced many challenges, including pests, drought - all before the advent of Prohibition. In a recent book on the history of wine in Los Angeles, Thomas Pinney points to the paucity of documentation about the early L.A. wine industry: "The trade has left hardly any material traces...No one writes about the tradition of Los Angeles winemaking, few local histories make anything of the subject, and most people have no idea that the region was once the main source of California wine...Yet Los Angeles is where it all began...California wine meant Los Angeles wine..."

Temple-Workman Families and Early Los Angeles

The Temple-Workman families played a significant role in the early history of Los Angeles and Southern California, primarily through their involvement in land development and related businesses, as well as through their familial connections with Spanish-speaking pioneers of Alta California. Family members enjoyed an impressive run of influence in the region, roughly from 1830 to 1930. They were successful in ranching, agriculture, real estate, construction, politics, oil and water development, banking, and social activism. The history of the Temple and Workman families serves, therefore, as the *sine qua non* for any serious historical study of the early development of Southern California.

William Workman, a native of England, arrived in Los Angeles in 1841 as part of the Workman-Rowland Party, considered the first overland party of Americans to settle in Los Angeles. This group of migrants left Santa Fe via the Old Spanish Trail route. Through hard work and business acumen, Workman became one of the city's most successful entrepreneurs. He co-owned a store, served as a judge, and invested in real estate. His son-in-law, Francis Pliny Fisk Temple, the writer of the present letter, also made a name for himself as a landowner and businessman, becoming one of the largest landowners in the area.

Jonathan Temple, Francis Temple's father, was another important figure in early Los Angeles history. He arrived in the city in 1828, also before it was a part of the United States, and helped establish the first



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American colony in Southern California. He was also a successful businessman and owned much of the land that would later become downtown Los Angeles.

In addition to their land holdings, the Temple-Workman family also had important familial connections with Spanish-speaking pioneers of Alta California. Francis P. F. Temple's wife, Antonia Margarita Workman, was the daughter of William Workman and a member of one of the oldest and most respected Spanish-speaking families in the area. Another family member, Gregorio de Ajuria, was a Basque immigrant who became a prominent merchant and landowner in Los Angeles.

Overall, the Temple-Workman family played a vital part in the development of Los Angeles and Southern California. Their business ventures and land holdings helped shape the city's growth, aided by their connections with early settlers which gave them a unique influence on the region's history and culture.

Excerpt of the text of the letter:

Los Angeles, Dec. 6, 1874

Dear John,

...I stopped in town today which is quite unusual, the City elections come off tomorrow and it was thought advisable for me to remain here today.

We are all in our usual health at home. Walter was very sick with the scarlet fever, the other children had it in a much milder form, Dr Orme was our Physician.

Our grape crop was very large this season a portion of the grapes are still on the vines for want of pipes. I have bought about fifty here and have sent to San Francisco for sixty new ones, which are forwarded gradually as they are made, your grandfathers crop was also very large this season he making upwards of one hundred pipes of wine. Francis is paying attention to the manufacture of wine and will in a short time understand the business as well as Mr. Lambourne.

Walter is going to put in five hundred acres of wheat at the old sheep and wheat ranch, your grandfather give him permission to do so. I think that Federic furnishes him with the money to do the work and will share with Walter the proceeds from the crop.

The season has opened very favorably so far we have had a number of very good rains, and the grass



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is getting so that stock can feed upon it.

This country is settling up very rapidly, people are coming on every steamer, there is quite a demand for land for agricultural purposes, prices are advancing rapidly.

I hope that William has arrived safe in England, we have not had a letter from him since he left New York he left on the 4th, he wrote me the day previous. I trust the trip will be very beneficial to him, besides being a source of pleasure.

You will remember me kindly to your uncle and aunt Bancroft, Uncle Seth, Uncle & Aunt Sanborn, and all our relations, hoping this will find you all well. I remain your affte. father.

F. P. F. Temple

P.S. I intended to have sent you a draft when I wrote you, but as today is Sunday cannot do so. I shall write you shortly again, and will forward you some money. You had better write you mother. I think she would be pleased to receive a letter from you. Our business is increasing every month, we have a young man with us from Milwaukee who came highly recommended, so that now we have three persons in the bank besides Thomas and myself. Thomas is more attentive than he was in times past, after you get through your studies we shall want you to assist us.

We had a visit from Mr. Stetson a few days ago, he was well and arrived home with his family safe.

Rarity

Original documents relating to wine production in Los Angeles from the 1870s are very rare in the market, especially so when penned by such an important early resident as Francis P. F. Temple.

Detailed Condition:

Folded lettersheet. [3] pages of neat manuscript text. With original mailing envelope with printed return address "Temple & Workman / Los Angeles, Cal." and Los Angeles, Cal. cancellation dated Dec. 6. [1874]. Condition is excellent.