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# *Sourisseau Academy*

*Smith-Layton Archive presents:*

## **Alice Iola Hare and the Gardens of the Heart's Delight**

by April Halberstadt

*Les Amis (The Friends)*

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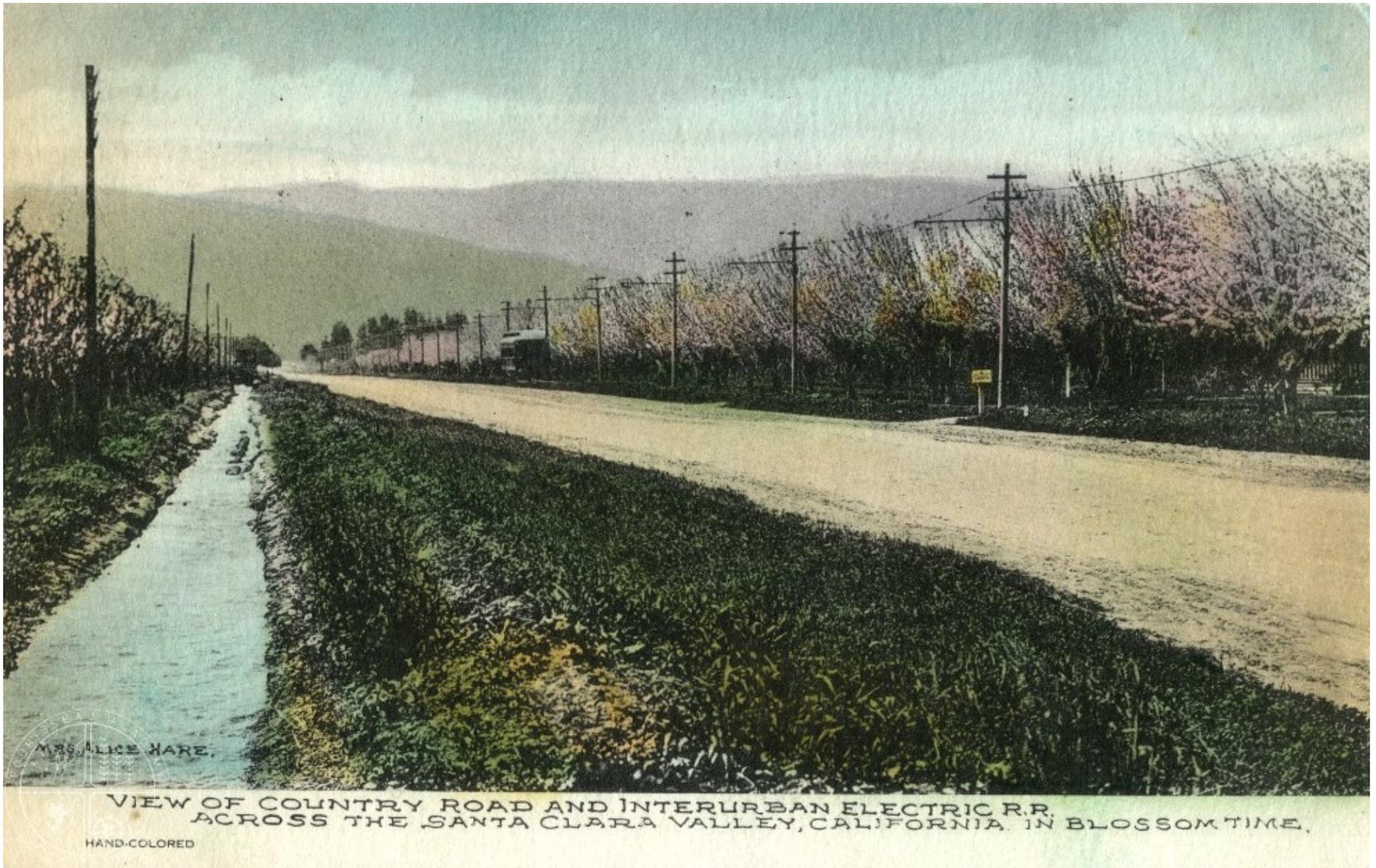
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[113] **View of the Santa Clara Valley in the Hills between Saratoga and Los Gatos.** Mrs. Alice Iola Hare (1859-1942) was a Santa Clara photographer who made systematic studies of her community. Born in Pennsylvania in 1859, she came to the town of Santa Clara in 1895 with her husband, James W. Hare and her three sons. Her images of California began to appear around 1900. One famous series of her photographs shows scenes along the Peninsular Interurban Railway.



[114] **Tree of Roses, Garden City of San Jose.** Mrs. Hare received a reasonable measure of notice in her time. She lived in the town of Santa Clara and may have first taken up photography because her oldest son John was a newspaper photographer. One image by Mrs. Hare illustrated an article in the January 1905 edition of *Sunset* magazine entitled *Where Roses Grow on Trees*. Many of her postcards featured spectacular rose bushes, demonstrating the impressive specimens grown by local gardeners.



[115] **Country Road and Interurban Railroad, 1908.** The Peninsular Interurban Railway line to Saratoga was opened in 1903, offering a spectacular springtime experience for both residents and tourists. This vista along Saratoga Avenue was a favorite view along the electric rail line, which ran in a large loop from downtown San Jose to Los Gatos, across the foothills to Saratoga and then back down this road into San Jose.



The Trestle on the Interurban Electric R. R. between Saratoga and Los Gatos, Cal.

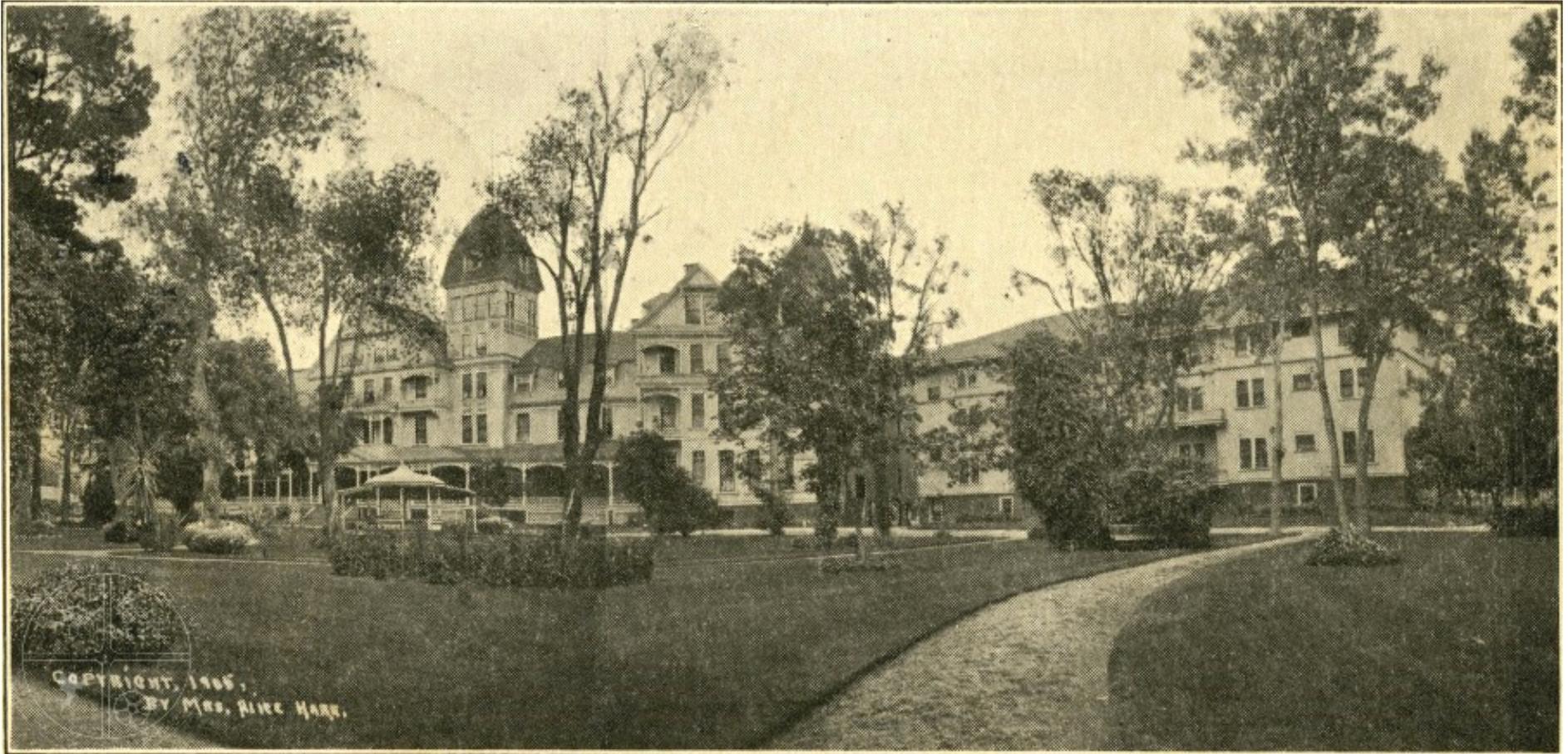
[116] **The trestle on the Interurban Railway.** Many of Mrs. Hare's images appeared on postcards and are now avidly collected. This scene of an Interurban car on the trestle had many editions, showing the car in various colors. The trestle no longer exists. Highway 9 was realigned and the trestle, once located near Austin Way, was removed.



[117] **Snow White Poppies, 1905.** Santa Clara County was the home of many commercial nurseries and seed farms, businesses growing plants to be used for seed for home gardeners. This field of white poppies divides pink and lavender sweet peas, favorites of home gardeners. One of the largest local growers was the Kimberlin Seed Company of Santa Clara. Mrs. Hare made many images of fruit and flower businesses.



[118] **A Productive Cactus Plant, c1910.** This spectacular *Opuntia* cactus is a local relic from Spanish colonial days, when *Californios* planted rows of cacti to serve as fencing. The pads and the fruit of the *Opuntia* are edible. Commonly known as *nopales*, they are still used as animal fodder, for medicinal purposes and in Mexican cuisine. Not a native plant, this specimen may have been introduced in the 1770s.



[119] **Hotel Vendome and Annex (ecspc\_1166)** Santa Clara Valley promoted several spectacular gardens for the enjoyment of visitors. One of the largest local gardens was the grounds of San Jose's premiere visitor destination, the Hotel Vendome. The garden of the Vendome was designed by famous horticulturist, John McLaren, known for his creation of Golden Gate Park. Tourists were certain to send a post card of this view to envious friends back east.



[120] **St. James Park in winter.** As Mrs. Hare became more adept at photography, she began to choose subjects that would make good postcards. This image of the lush winter landscaping in St. James Park was just the sort of view that a visitor would choose to mail back home. The scenic park was initially designed by William O'Donnell and then improvements were made by Rudolph Ulrich in 1887. The Alice Hare images were used to guide landscape designers when the vintage landscape was restored in the 1990s.

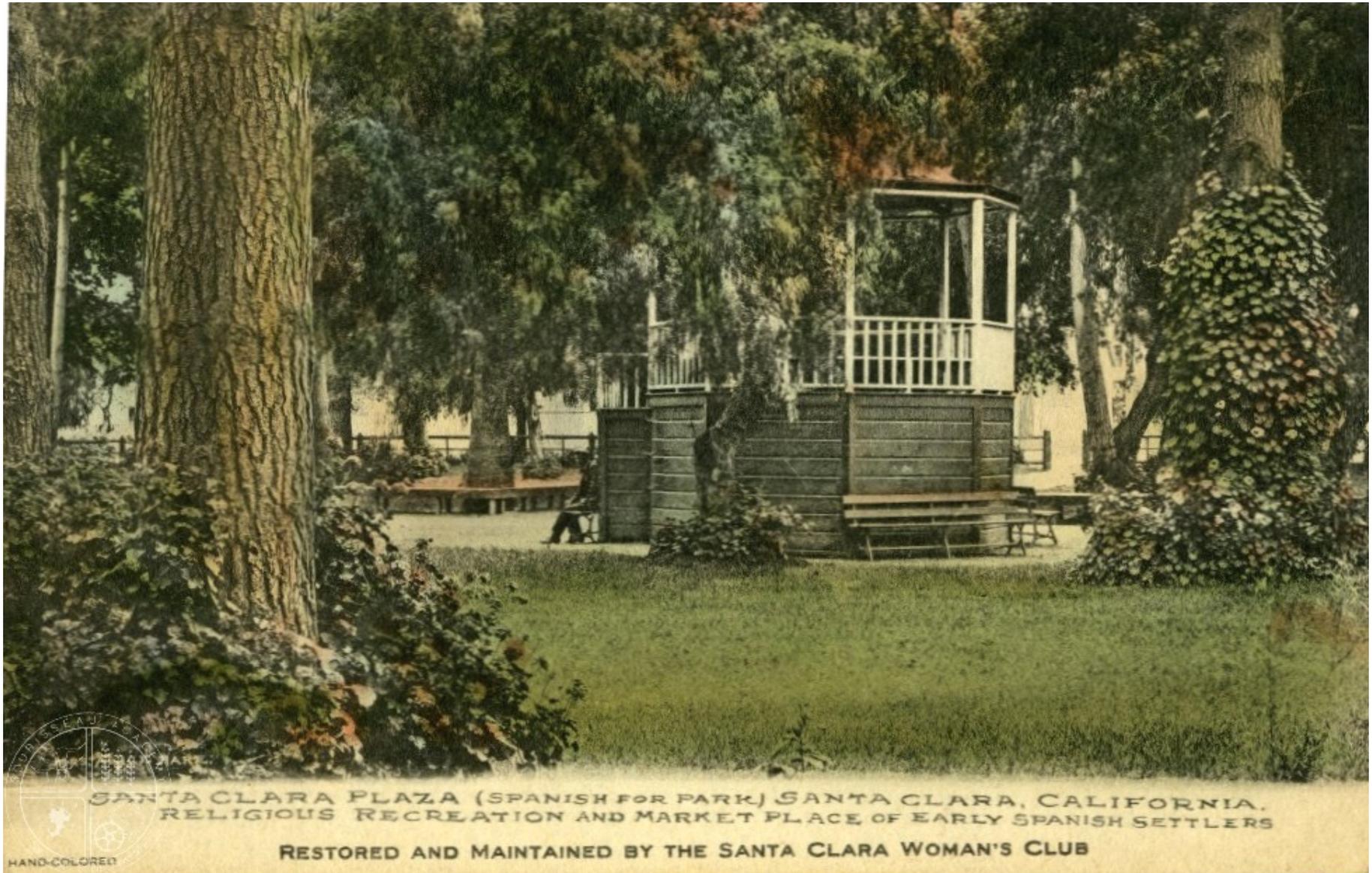


[121] **Glazenwood Roses, Santa Clara.** Mrs. Hare photographed roses and one of her most popular postcards shows a rose known at the time as *Beauty of Glazenwood*. This coppery-yellow climbing rose was very popular in San Jose and was known earlier as *Gold of Ophir* and *Fortune's Double Yellow*. It was a feature in the garden of the Honorable Craven P. Hester on The Alameda and became known locally as the *Hester Rose*.



[122] **Caladium or Elephant's Ears.** Gardeners in the Victorian era enjoyed the challenge of cultivating tender plants from exotic areas. This display of *Caladium*, commonly known as *Elephant's Ears* demonstrates the mild weather of Santa Clara Valley, as well as the superior soil. This plant was undoubtedly the envy of all who visited.

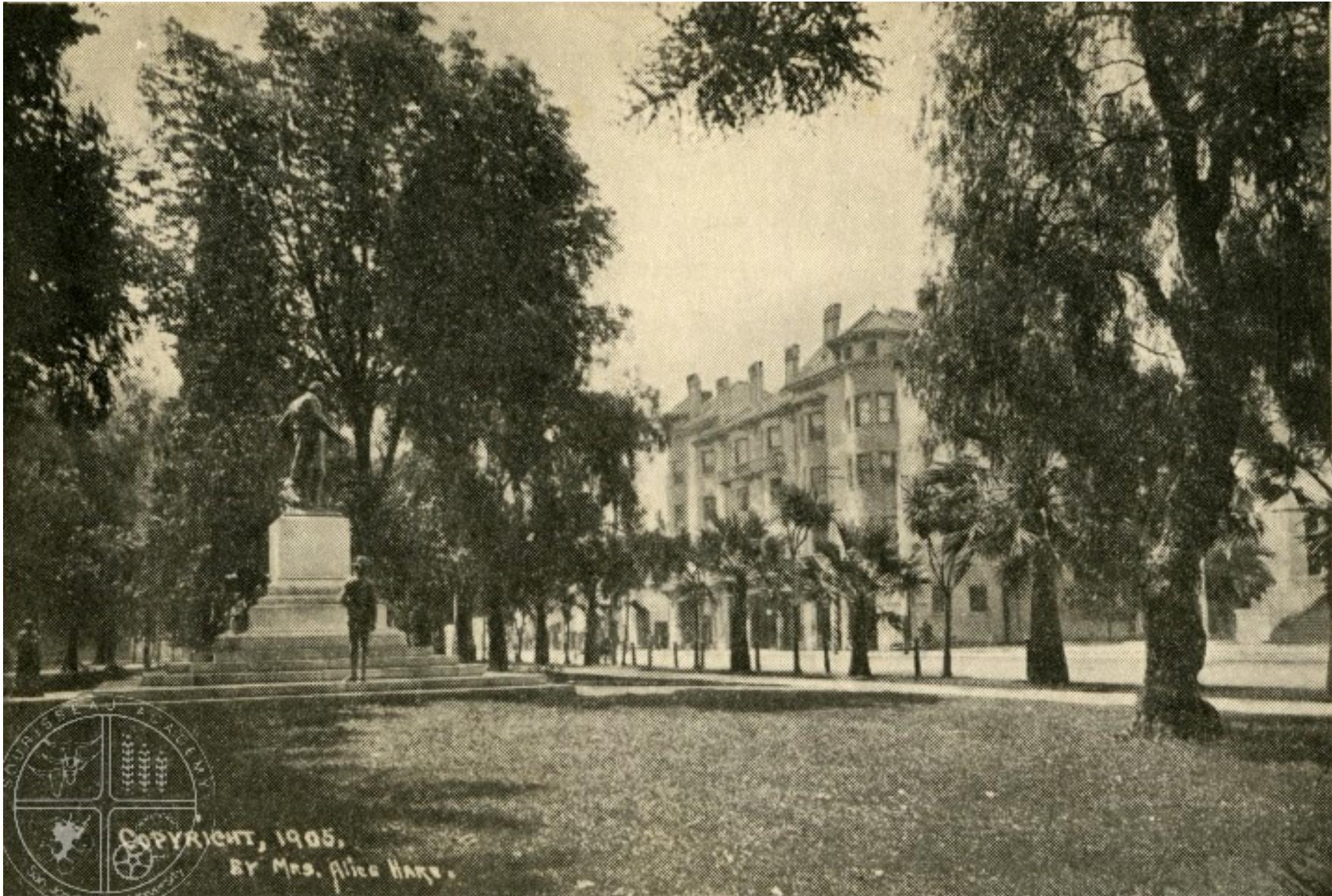
October 2017



[123] **Santa Clara Plaza.** Mrs. Hare was a member of the Santa Clara Woman's Club and took an active interest in her community and its activities. She was also known as a writer and respected in her time, although biographic notes say she did not seem to make a lot of money from her work. The Hare family grew to include four sons, and they made Santa Clara their home for fifteen years. This image shows the Plaza of their home town, a favored location for concerts and gatherings. Mrs. Hare understood the importance of promoting her town and was known to support civic improvement projects through her work as a "club woman," according to a news article of the time.



[124] **Covered Summer House.** Several cultural customs were emerging and converging when Alice Hare began her photographic career. The Kodak box camera appeared in 1888, making amateur photography possible. The little "Brownie" appeared in 1900. The custom of sending postal cards was becoming a common practice, and Alice Hare selected images that would appeal to the women who were the major buyers of postal cards. Finally, the "safety bicycle" appeared in the 1890s, making it possible for women to take a camera and find scenic views for their artistic endeavors. Santa Clara Valley had wonderful views for the dedicated amateur.



[125] **St. James Hotel and McKinley Monument.** St. James Park and the McKinley Statue became iconic tourist destinations after the assassination death of the President. Just a short walk from the railroad station and the popular Vendome Hotel, the monument was located in St. James Park. McKinley was the first sitting President to visit San Jose. His sudden death, shortly after his visit, touched the San Jose community. The local woman's clubs helped raise money for the statue.

October 2017



Veranda built around a Great Rose Bush, Santa Clara, Cal.

[126] **Veranda Built Around a Great Rose Bush.** As an active community member in the small town of Santa Clara, Mrs. Hare had access to the gardens of many of her neighbors. She was the mother of four sons and probably became familiar with photographic processes through her son's occupation. In addition to her photography of local gardens, Mrs. Hare made an important photography series of the early adobe structures of San Jose and Santa Clara.



[127] **View of Unidentified Woman on Poplar Lined Road.** It is probable that this lovely image is the one that brought Mrs. Hare an award for her work. It is noted that a photograph titled *A Country Lane* appeared in *Camera Craft* magazine in 1908 and took third prize in the January competition.