



## On My Mind These Days

By Glenn Lambdin

### **Saving a Part of Our Forgotten History: Part 3**

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[Part 2](#)

The last two weeks I have shared how I nominated the old City owned Christian Science church to the State Register of Historical Places. Last week I gave the history of the church at the local level while this week I am giving some of the California and national ties the church had in the Christian Science and New Thought movements.

#### State and National Historical Significance:

The history of the Christian Science and New Thought movements in California date to 1887, when Annie Rix Militz, a student and follower of Mary Baker Eddy's, headed west setting up Christian Science Homes throughout several of the major cities in California such as Berkley, San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Oakland. Oddly, Rix established a Home in Sierra Madre. At that time, unlike the larger major cities, Sierra Madre was not much of a town in that it was a new unincorporated settlement being established by Nathaniel Carter. Additionally, in 1894, not only did Rix establish a Christian Science Home in Sierra Madre, but she took up residence in Sierra Madre, developing a Christian Science community. Over a brief period of time, Rix's Christian Science theology, as did many of Eddy's follower's, evolved and changed. As dissention grew between these different factions, Mary Baker Eddy started suing them over the right to the use of the name, "Christian Science." In the 1890's, Annie Rix renamed the "Christian Science Homes" to "Homes of Truth" after Mary Baker Eddy won the exclusive legal right to the Christian Science name. Regardless of their differences, Rix continued developing the practice and establishing a religious science community in Sierra Madre, throughout California, and the U.S., setting up Homes of Truth in major west coast cities and throughout the U.S.. Annie Rix and her sister, Harriet, published their Master Mind Magazine in Sierra Madre from 1911 -1917. Annie Rix Militz, a Sierra Madrean and founder of the Homes of Truth, is considered one the "greats" of New Thought.

The Christian Science movement, with its roots deeply embedded in the New Thought Movement, was not only a spiritual movement which developed in the United States during the late 19th century, but can also be recognized as a component of The Woman's Movement and social reform in America with Sierra Madre playing it's role. During the time of Mary Baker Eddy's early years founding her religion, America was going through a social reorganization. The Civil War had recently ended solidifying the abolition of slavery while the Woman's Suffrage movement was gaining serious momentum in both the United States and England. In a time when women were not even allowed behind the pulpit or accepted in the medical healing profession, Mary Baker Eddy emerged as a leader within the Woman's movement. According to Wikipedia, "The New Thought Era was a feminist movement in that most of its teachers and students were women; and has been described as a form of feminist theology, with its churches and community centers mostly led by women, from the 1880s to today. "While she was not a feminist per se, Eddy acted outside of conventional gender roles by founding and leading a significant American denomination, and she did support some feminist causes such as women's suffrage and the right of women to hold property. In fact, she was praised by such figures as Clara Barton and Susan B. Anthony, who expressed some interest in her teaching as well."

Next week, I will explain my reason for nominating this property and how the property will be affected should the State place the property on their list of historical places.