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**Front Cover:** Adapted from a flyer advertising ticket sales for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park. Photo courtesy David Marshall.

**Back Cover:** The Arco de Porvenir or Arch of the Future featured a spectacular rainbow of colored lights reflected in a lagoon gracing the Plaza del Pacífico. It was designed by lighting expert H. O. Davis who was inspired by the fantasy paintings of artist Maxfield Parrish. Postcard courtesy David Marshall.

**Cover Design:** Allen Wynar
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Early in 2010 the San Diego Historical Society will make a dramatic change. We will begin operating as the San Diego History Center. The idea of changing our name has been under discussion for many years, but without resolution. In the meantime, a whole family of overlapping names has mushroomed up somewhat organically around us – and it has become confusing.

Officially we are the San Diego Historical Society, but our signage and printed materials refer to us just as often as the Museum of San Diego History or the San Diego Historical Society Museum. Over the years our library has become the additional beneficiary of a plethora of titles including: Research Library, Research Archives; Photo Services; or Booth Historical Photo Archives. In addition, there is the not so little problem that when most people see our acronym – SDHS – the first thing they usually say is, “That stands for San Diego High School!”

Recently our organization created a new Advisory Committee made up of distinguished San Diegans: Malin Burnham, Timothy M. Considine, Kim Fletcher, Fran Golden, Yvonne Larsen, David Malcolm, Jack Monger, Mary Walshok, and Stephen B. Williams. They have been asked to provide the Board and staff with fresh perspectives as to how our organization can better serve the community. One of the Advisory Committee’s first recommendations was that we change our name to something that sounds more inviting and inclusive than “historical society,” which sounds exclusive. They underscored that we need a name that is more in keeping with our goal of becoming a more dynamic and popular organization. The Board and I agreed wholeheartedly.

Not surprisingly, similar reasoning has inspired distinguished historical organizations all over the country to update their names over the past twenty years. Among the many communities now served by “history centers” rather than “historical societies” are: Atlanta (GA); Knoxville (TN); Cedar Rapids (IA); Frankfurt (KY); St. Paul (MN); Orlando (FL); Pittsburgh (PA); and Tampa Bay (FL).

Operating under the more visitor-friendly name, San Diego History Center, will enable us to do a much more effective job of marketing and promotion. Making sure that we use the new name consistently will also help clear up some of the current confusion over whether the San Diego Historical Society and the Museum of San Diego History are in fact one and the same. We will still retain the name as the San Diego Historical Society, our founding organization, in official documents.

The change of name will not be cosmetic alone. New and more exciting exhibitions, programs, and publications will follow in the years ahead and culminate in the complete modernization of all our visitor experiences in time for the 2015 centennial of the Panama-California Exposition.

We look forward to serving you, and counting on your support, as we become the San Diego History Center! Please note that the Serra Museum will be reopening to the general public in 2010.
San Diego’s 1935-1936 Exposition: A Pictorial Essay

By

David Marshall and Iris Engstrand

The Official Guide to San Diego’s ambitious California Pacific International Exposition began with unparalleled optimism, declaring that it was “Built Upon a Glorious Past Dedicated to a Glorious Future.” Designed to counteract problems of the Depression that were felt nationwide, the celebration, called “America’s Exposition,” represented “not the short ten months that have gone into its building, but the four hundred years that have seen California reach the heights. . . . Perhaps it is wiser to say that this Exposition is not so much a dedication to yesterday, today or tomorrow, but rather a toast, a god-speed to the continuation of an epic that will be written as the years march on.”

San Diego architect Richard S. Requa built upon the original 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition by designing and supervising construction of many new buildings, some modern and some recalling the ancient styles of the Americas. San Diego was fortunate to receive the first funds allocated by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to an American city in order to create whole new areas of the park. Architect Bertram Goodhue’s remaining 1915-1916 Spanish colonial revival structures were incorporated into the plan as well as the newer Fine Arts Gallery/Museum of Art (1926) and Natural History Museum (1933) designed by William Templeton Johnson. G. Aubrey Davidson, president of the 1915-1916 Exposition, became chairman of the board of directors and Frank G. Belcher of the Spreckels Companies was named president. Oscar W. Cotton chaired the fund-raising campaign that topped its goal of $500,000 by $200,000—totaling a mid-Depression figure of $700,000.

The second exposition, quite unlike the first, featured some controversial exhibits and unusual sideshow entertainment—a nudist colony called Zoro Gardens, Alpha, a silver robot with a walking counterpart, a Midget Village, an Old Globe Shakespearean Theater and spectacular lighting shows. Three internationally famous gardens—one patterned after the Casa del Rey Moro (House of the Moorish King) Garden in Ronda, Spain, another duplicating that adjoining the Alcázar in Sevilla, Spain, and a third from a patio garden in Guadalajara, Mexico—were also reproduced. Federal funding made it possible to construct a new permanent building copied from the Mayan Palace of Governors in Uxmal, Yucatan. Located

David Marshall, AIA, is author of San Diego’s Balboa Park, a 2007 edition in Arcadia Publishing’s Postcard History Series. Marshall, an architect specializing in historic preservation, has a personal collection of over 5,000 postcards as well as dozens of pamphlets, guidebooks and collectibles from both world expositions in Balboa Park. Except as noted, all illustrations in this article are from his private collection. Iris Engstrand, professor of history and author of several local works including San Diego: California’s Cornerstone (2005), is co-editor of The Journal of San Diego History.
to the south of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, it is today’s San Diego Hall of Champions. Edsel Ford, who had visited the park in 1915-1916, also sponsored a building and test track to promote Ford’s latest models.

The statue “Woman of Tehuantepec” by Donal Hord, a well-known San Diego sculptor of the 1930s, graces the patio of the House of Hospitality. Located nearby in the garden between that building and the Casa de Balboa is a unique tile fountain called the Persian Water Rug Fountain that was conceived by Richard Requa. Other subtle 1935 details can be found throughout the park. As Exposition President Frank Belcher wrote: “Here in Southern California we have a rich heritage from the gracious days of the Spanish Dons. Hospitality has always been a keynote in our lives.”

The 1935 fair continued for a second season when President Franklin D. Roosevelt pressed a gold telegraph key in the White House on January 1, 1936, to turn on the exposition’s lights. “When the final numbers were tallied, the 1935-1936 event counted 6.7 million visitors – almost double the total of the 1915-1916 exposition. The buildings from both expositions now make up a National Historic Landmark District which is perhaps the most intact exposition site remaining in the nation.” The year 2010 marks the 75th anniversary of this remarkable exposition and Balboa Park remains the nation’s largest urban cultural park.

NOTES

2. Ibid.
The Shell Information Service Headquarters on the grounds across from the Spanish Village supplied travel brochures and featured a large animated, highway map. The 34,000 filling stations across the country gave away informational material to those driving to San Diego.

The Old Globe Theatre built for the 1935 Exposition was modeled after an Elizabethan theater built in London in 1599. The Theatre burned to the ground in March 1978 and was replaced by a similar structure, re-opening in 1982. Images courtesy David Marshall.
The modern Ford Building dominated the southern promontory of the Park. To the left was the Ford Music Bowl, today’s Starlight Bowl, where symphonic, choral and organ music were presented for visitors. The name Ford appeared in red neon on all four sides of the rotunda.

The foreground of the Ford Building featured the Firestone Singing Fountain with special lighting effects. The building today houses the San Diego Air and Space Museum. All color images are from the Postcard and Ephemera Collection of David Marshall, AIA.
The House of Hospitality, remodeled by Richard Requa, utilized the center portion of the 1915 Foreign Arts Building to make possible a patio patterned after the Convent of Guadalajara in Mexico. Donal Hord sculpted the “Woman of Tehuantepec” that sits atop the central fountain. Requa also added a second floor with specialty rooms and arcades that overlooked the central patio.

Night lighting effects on the Café of the World, House of Hospitality and Statue of El Cid by Anna Hyatt Huntington in the Plaza del Pacífico. The Official Guide exclaimed that “The lighting experts of America’s Exposition have created the world’s greatest nocturnal spectacle in the illuminations.”
The Laguna de Espejo (Reflecting Pool) looking south with the House of Hospitality on the right. On the left, today’s Casa de Balboa, known in 1935 as the Palace of Better Housing houses the Museum of Photographic Arts, the Model Railroad Museum and the San Diego Historical Society with its History Center.

The Botanical Building and Conservatory with reflecting pool in the foreground. The botanical garden contained lilies, begonias, fuchsias, aralias, and many varieties of choice ferns. The plants “harmonized” with the large groves of eucalyptus and palm trees in the park.
The Standard Oil Building located at the north end of the Plaza de America featured the 108-foot “Tower to the Sun” inspired by pre-Columbian palaces in Yucatan and central Mexico. Standard Oil supplied visitors with material about the National Parks in the West.

The California State Building was built to the north of the Ford Building and featured four large murals illustrating various phases in California’s history. It became the San Diego Automotive Museum in 1988.
Cabrillo Cactus Garden. This garden was located adjacent to the Cabrillo bridge at a time when only a small two-lane road ran through the park under the bridge. It can still be seen today.

A night photo showing the Arch of the Future and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion reflecting their multi-colored lighting in the lagoon built within the Plaza del Pacifico. This area today is a parking lot in front of the San Diego Museum of Art. The House of Hospitality is on the left. "Painting with light rather than flooding with light, is the motif, so that Balboa Park stands out in all its natural beauty for the night visitors to the fair," claimed the postcard publishers.
The Hollywood Motion Picture Hall of Fame featured a collection of mementos and exhibits from the earliest motion picture productions of the 1920s to the “latest” of the mid-1930s. There was an authentic sound stage and a children’s puppet theater.

An “Odditorium” was built on the midway to house Ripley’s Believe It or Not exhibits. They were generally strange and in some cases—unbelievable.
A postcard in “natural color” shows Zoro Gardens—the nudist colony located between today’s Casa de Balboa and the Fleet Science Center—as an attraction at America’s Exposition in Balboa Park 1935-1936. The reverse side contained the official seal of the California Pacific International Exposition.

The Palace of Travel, Transportation and Water is on the right. Special “aurora borealis” lights atop the Spreckels Organ Pavilion display the fantasy night lighting effects.
Alpha the Robot was invented and built by Professor Harry May and performed feats that were almost human. It could stand up, sit down, answer questions, and smoke cigarettes. The 2,000 lb. chrome-plated giant was a hit attraction. Inset: Alpha’s “man-in-a-suit” as a monster robot who carries off Zorine from Zoro Gardens 1935. ©SDHS #80-8387-52.
Burlesque queen Sally Rand was featured in 1936 much to the dismay of “official” nudists. Born Helen Harriet Beck, she was named Sally Rand by Cecil B. deMille who was inspired by a Rand McNally Atlas. She also appeared in the 1933-1934 Chicago World’s Fair and in 1939-1940 at the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco. ©SDHS Union-Tribune Collection #82-46-2.
The Brandegees: Leading Botanists in San Diego

Nancy Carol Carter

The most renowned botanical couple of nineteenth-century America lived in San Diego from 1894 until 1906. They were early settlers in Bankers Hill, initially constructing a brick herbarium to house the world’s best private collection of plant specimens from the western United States and Mexico. They lived in a tent until their treasured plant collection was properly protected, then built a house connected to the herbarium. Around their home they established San Diego’s first botanical garden: a collection of rare and exotic plants that impressed both amateur and professional gardeners. Botanists and plant experts from around the world knew of this garden and traveled to San Diego to study its plants. Irving Gill later modified the site to serve as The Bishop’s School day campus. Today the property is home to the Self Realization Center of San Diego.

Katharine Brandegee (1844-1920) and Townshend Stith Brandegee (1843-1925) are credited with important and lasting contributions to North American science. Among other accomplishments, they furthered the maturation of the Pacific coast scientific community. Katharine Brandegee especially was prominent as a systematic botanist who pushed back against the assumed superiority of the East Coast scientists, personified in Asa Gray, Professor of Botany at Harvard University from 1842 until 1873 and founder of the Harvard Botanic Garden and Harvard Herbarium. Although they held Gray in high esteem and generally agreed with his scientific principles, the Brandegees eventually claimed a superior ability to classify and appropriately name the plants they had collected and observed. Aware of delays and impatient with the imprecision of more distant
classification work, they resisted the tradition of submitting new species to Gray or other East Coast scientists for botanical description. They became expert taxonomists who described and defended their science in West Coast journals. During their lifetimes, the Brandegees published a combined total of 159 scientific papers. Their example inspired other Pacific Coast botanists to greater confidence in their own field experience and the value of botanically describing plants within the context of the unique and geographically contiguous plant life of the west.

Separate Lives: Mary Katharine Layne Curran

Mary Katharine Layne’s early years provided no hint of future eminence in American science, according to one biography. The second of ten children, she was born in Tennessee. Her early childhood was unsettled as the family gradually migrated westward. Her parents resisted Brigham Young’s Mormon proselytizing during a brief residence in Salt Lake City, and eventually reached California. Mary Katharine’s restless father, Marshall Bolling Layne, settled his family on a farm near Folsom, a gold rush town north east of Sacramento. He taught school and had worked as a miller, but was not a good provider for his ever-growing family. He was called “high tempered” and difficult, but his oldest daughter later recalled him as “an impractical genius.”

Although Mary Katharine—known as Katharine or Kate—received a spotty early education, she became a teacher. She complained to her sister that she earned barely enough to feed herself. In 1866, when twenty-two years old, she wed the local constable, Irish-born Hugh Curran. Eight years later she was a widow. Little is known about this first marriage, but it was said to be troubled and difficult due to the alcoholism that caused Curran’s death.

The loss of her husband was a significant juncture in Katherine Curran’s life. One year later, the young widow moved to San Francisco and entered medical school. The formerly private Toland Medical College had been deeded to the University of California Regents in 1873 to become the Medical Department of the University. In September 1874, the regents adopted a resolution stating that, “young women offering themselves for admission and passing the required examination must be received to all the privileges of the Medical Department.”

There is no account describing Katharine Curran’s experience as a medical student, but the difficulties and inhospitable treatment meted out to the woman pioneers in professional schools are well documented. One University of California medical student of the time described her “reluctant admission, the Dean’s incitement of male students to harass her, and the advice of one instructor to have her ovaries removed if she wanted to continue in medical school.” Regardless of whether she was subject to similar pressures, Katharine Curran earned an M.D. degree in 1878.

During medical school, Katharine Curran found that the required pharmacological classes fed her long-term interest in natural history. In the nineteenth century, natural plant materials were the source of most medicines, so the study of medicinal substances, the materia medica, included a heavy dose of botany. Her instructor was Hans Herman Behr from the university’s Department of Pharmacology.

Dr. Behr was the product of a classical German education and had lived in
Australia, Asia, and South America before settling in San Francisco in 1851 to practice medicine. He became associated with the University of California and was drawn by his interest in the natural sciences to the California Academy of Sciences (originally the California Academy of Natural Sciences). He joined the Academy in 1854, injecting a valuable level of scientific training, linguistic skill, and world experience into the newly formed learned society. While easily one of the most rigorously trained scientists associated with the Academy, his kindly nature and generosity in sharing knowledge won him friends and acolytes. He warmed to the interest, intelligence, and diligence of Katherine Curran and trained her in the botanical work that would fill her life for the next fifty years.
While still a medical student, Katharine was introduced to activities at the California Academy of Sciences. She was interested in birds and insects, but Dr. Behr steered her to the herbarium—a collection of dried specimen plants used as the basic reference source for those who describe, name, and classify plants. The more examples of plants, the better, but plant taxonomists can do their work only if herbarium specimens are properly organized. The Academy was minimally staffed and the collection’s value was diminished by a backlog of unclassified plant material. When Katharine found she had time on her hands due to the difficulty of establishing a medical practice in San Francisco, she kept busy at the Academy of Sciences, working with Albert Kellogg, a founder of the Academy and curator of the herbarium. She devoted more time to field work, having made her first botanical collecting trips with other medical students in Dr. Behr’s classes. She enjoyed the outings and learned that observing plants as they grow in nature and recording characteristics not evident in a dried specimen can lead to better taxonomy and more reliable science.

The Academy was very open to the participation of women, having adopted a resolution at its 1853 founding approving “the aid of females in every department of natural history” and “earnestly inviting their cooperation.” Katharine Curran officially joined the Academy in 1879 and, when Kellogg retired in 1883, she was appointed to the Curatorship of Botany. If there was resistance to placing a woman in this important position, it melted in the face of strong support from her distinguished mentors, Drs. Behr and Kellogg. Although many nineteenth-century women were interested in botany, few found gainful employment in the field. Upon assuming her position, Katharine became the second woman in the entire country to be employed professionally in botany.

Despite her prior volunteer work, she described the herbarium as being “in a shocking condition” and once in charge turned her considerable energy to its improvement. She also worried that the reputation and impact of the Academy were in decline due to a decade-long stagnation of the publications program. The work of the Academy was unsung and California botanical species were not being scientifically published, unless sent out to other institutions.

Curran established and singlehandedly produced the Bulletin of the California Academy of Sciences, taking up the scholarly writing and editorial work that she continued for the rest of her life. Called the “acting editor” because the Academy could not admit to giving a woman editorial control of its scientific journal, she created a “credible West Coast vehicle for the naming of new species, a process that had previously been routed through the Eastern hegemony of Asa Gray at Harvard.” A revived Academy publication program gave western botanists a means of publishing their findings more quickly and aided the cause of scientific independence. This desire for liberation was motivated by different schools of thought. Some wanted to escape the influence of Darwinian thinking that had gained acceptance at most East Coast scientific institutions. Others, especially the active field collectors like herself, held many eastern classifications of California flora in contempt and simply wanted better science.

At the Academy, Katharine had won the respect of powerful men, moved into a top position, and demonstrated initiative and leadership. She became a commanding force and immersed herself in Academy affairs, thereby defying the pattern described by one historian in which early women scientists avoided institutional
involvements that might get them labeled as troublemakers. This research finds women shying away from competitive activities that celebrate individual achievement, such as research and writing. Instead, women scientists in institutional settings are said to have “kept a relatively low profile” while focusing on outreach and networking.22 Katharine, however, was unafraid of taking risks and did not fear competitive involvement.

When a large financial bequest sowed division in the Academy, Curran jumped into the bitter power struggle as a matter of principle. She supported a “reform ticket” that championed science over personal aggrandizement (whatever that may have meant in the context of the one-million-dollar gift). Her faction voted out the long-term president and replaced the governing board of the Academy.23 Presumably she could have lost her job if the election had turned out differently. The toughness that underlay her unlikely rise in the world of science was openly revealed for the first of many times. Critics did not fail to notice.24

As Katharine Layne Curran passed her fortieth birthday, her life seemed at last settled after the unanticipated twists and turns of a childless marriage, an early widowhood, and a medical career that never prospered. She held an important position at the premier scientific institution in the western United States, won through talent, exertion, and daring unconventionality.25 She pursued a satisfying routine of herbarium work, scientific writing, production of the Academy Bulletin and botanical study and field collecting. Then Townshend Stith
Brandegee made his first visit to California. Katharine’s life was about to take another unexpected turn.

**Separate Lives: Townshend Stith Brandegee**

A candid assessment of T. S. Brandegee is found in the diaries of Richard Urquhart Goode, written during the 1883 Northern Transcontinental Survey. Brandegee was thirty-five years old and already a seasoned member of survey expeditions. While initially employed as a civil engineer, his long-term amateur interest in botany and well-received botanical publications had by 1883 gained him an appointment as botanist of this party. Goode wrote:

He is very quiet and reserved, not at all nervous or emotional, a little selfish, but always willing to adapt himself to his surroundings. You could not under any circumstances induce him to quarrel with you, but he always has his own opinions, which if they fail to chime in with the surroundings he keeps to himself and does not make a fuss when nothing is gained thereby. His appearance is by no means prepossessing but he has an open, honest face, is of medium height, and can stand a good deal of hard climbing and exposure, but avoids such on all occasions when it is not his duty to undergo them. He is rather careless in his dress and could under no circumstances be called a “dude.”

Many other descriptions refer to Brandegee as mild mannered and reserved, although Goode’s unexplained charge of selfishness is never repeated. Rather, Brandegee is usually called kindly, refined, and generous. In later life, his wife wrote to someone about to meet Brandegee for the first time, “I know you will like him, everyone does.” He also may be credited with a sardonic sense of humor as he once summarized his Civil War service with the line: “General Grant and I took Richmond.”

Brandegee was born February 16, 1843, in Berlin, Connecticut. His father was a doctor and a farmer with an interest in natural history. The young Townshend also studied the natural world and created his own collection of ferns while attended local schools. He did hard farm labor, including plowing with oxen. He enlisted in the Union Army at age nineteen and served two years. After the Civil War he studied engineering and botany at Yale University’s Sheffield Scientific School. During these college years, he botanized in the New Haven area, making significant finds of rare plants for the Connecticut botanical record.

One year after graduation, in 1871, Brandegee accepted a job as county surveyor and city engineer in Colorado. He continued to collect plants, sending ferns and other specimens back to Connecticut. Harvard botanist Asa Gray benefited from some of Brandegee’s finds. His recommendation resulted in Brandegee’s appointment as assistant topographer on the Hayden Survey. Thus began many years of surveying and botanical work across the West, from Santa Fe to Wyoming to Washington. Brandegee prepared forest maps of various western regions, combining his engineering training and expanding knowledge of western plant life. He collected samples of western timber for the American Museum of Natural History. This work brought him to California in the winter of 1886-87. When seeking...
specific rare trees on Santa Cruz Island off Santa Barbara, the unusual flora so peaked his interest that his career reached a turning point. Brandegee decided to move away from civil engineering and toward full-time work in botany.32

The California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco was on the West Coast itinerary of every nineteenth-century natural history enthusiast. Townshend Brandegee visited the Academy during this first California trip, making his way to the herbarium where he met Katharine Layne Curran, the knowledgeable curator of the collection. Curran, who had not traveled widely after her family settled in California, was most likely fascinated by the vast field experience in botanical collecting afforded Brandegee during his years of survey work. As the builder of a herbarium collection and an editor, she may have welcomed him as a source of interesting new botanical specimens and a potential author for the Academy Bulletin. These two natural history and botany enthusiasts shared common intellectual ground. Both were in their early forties, accomplished in their fields, and respected within the circles that knew their work. Yet, when they met, the most significant scientific endeavors of Katharine Layne Curran and Townshend Stith Brandegee lay ahead. They would accomplish this work as husband and wife.

**A Marriage of Hearts and Minds**

Very little is known about the courtship of Curran and Brandegee, but we do know that theirs was not merely a match of convenience. Their meeting sparked passion and romance, obvious enough to be considered by some contemporaries as unseemly for persons of their age. There is no better indication of the nature of this relationship than Katharine’s own words: the joyful confession of being “insanely
in love.”33

No similarly revealing personal declarations from Brandegee have come to light, but perhaps his decision to marry involved a combination of factors. Just as he was deciding to make botany his life work, he met an intelligent woman capable of sharing his interest and nurturing his development in the science. From Katharine he could learn more about the systematic arrangement of botanical collections and the exacting work of taxonomy. She could also be counted on as a companion in field work, having already proven herself as a collector. After years of bachelorhood, Brandegee’s decision to marry may also have been influenced by a timely inheritance. He received a legacy shortly after arriving in San Francisco that ensured his financial independence and ability to establish a home and support a wife.34

The couple made their plans and Katharine traveled to San Diego in 1889 to meet Brandegee’s ship that was returning from a California Academy of Sciences collecting trip on the Baja California peninsula. The West American Scientist reported: “Mr. T.S. Brandegee and Mrs. Mary K. Curran, both of San Francisco, surprised their friends by a quiet wedding on May 29 [1889]. They were married in San Diego by Rev. Dr. Noble. The Scientist offers them its heartiest congratulations.” The newlyweds enjoyed a honeymoon devoted to plant collecting, accomplished as they walked all the way from San Diego to San Francisco in the weeks after their wedding.35

The Brandegees established a home in San Francisco and retained their ties to the California Academy of Sciences. T.S. became a resident member of the Academy and joined its scientific expeditions. The bride experimented with the form of her name, eventually settling on Katharine Layne Brandegee. She remained busy at the Academy’s herbarium and founded a new private scientific journal called Zoe in 1890. Its cost was underwritten by T.S.’s inheritance and it carried his name to lend respectability. It was assumed that editorial control by a female would weaken credibility in the science world.36

In 1891 Katharine founded the California Botanical Club, the West Coast’s first general interest and amateur organization of a kind popular in the east.37 Meanwhile, she continued her botanical collecting trips, sometimes with her husband, but often on her own.38 Marriage did not cramp the field work of either spouse and they were not discouraged by the occasional shipwreck or broken bone.39 Katharine made extensive journeys into the Sierra by stage, on foot, and using the free railroad passes available to botanists after the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. She wrote to her husband, “Tomorrow I leave on the stage for the Giant Forest where I will be for nearly a week. Then I try to get higher with a packer guide and finally fetch up across country to Mineral King. It may be 3 or 4
weeks before I reach there.” In other letters she wrote to her husband, “I am going this morning to be camped alone at an altitude of 10,000 feet on Mt. Silliman” and “there are numerous bears in these mountains, many mountain lions, and an occasional gray wolf.”

A year after their marriage, the Brandegees met Alice Eastwood, a young Colorado school teacher and amateur botanist. Eastwood sought out T.S. Brandegee while on a California plant-hunting excursion. She knew his work on the Hayden Survey in Colorado and from the masthead of *Zoe*. Alice Eastwood wanted to become a botanical writer. The Brandegees were drawn to Eastwood’s enthusiasm and seriousness of purpose. A few months later, they visited her in Denver and were impressed by the botanical acumen and technical skill evinced in her small herbarium. Eastwood spent part of the next year at the Academy of Sciences, sharing Katharine’s salary, then came to work full-time in San Francisco. She worked in the herbarium, wrote for the *Bulletin*, and later edited *Zoe*. Academy records detail Katharine Brandegee’s request made on December 5, 1892, that her full salary of $80 per month be paid to Alice Eastwood. The former would continue to serve as joint curator and “render such services as she could” without a salary. The Board of Trustees adopted a resolution stating that “the zeal and efficiency evinced by Mrs. Brandegee during the years of her labors in the herbarium had been such to merit our highest commendation.” While creating more time for her own scientific work, Katherine Brandegee had launched the career of Alice Eastwood who through both aptitude and longevity became one of America’s best-known botanists.

Once Alice Eastwood was on board at the Academy, Katharine Brandegee plowed deeper into her own interests and areas of strength, especially plant taxonomy: the finding, describing, identification, classification, and naming of plants. Through her rigorous training and substantial experience, she had developed strong ideas about the scientifically sound approach to this science. She disdained the egocentric drive of some botanists to publish new species just to get credit for a plant discovery. She was appalled when “new species” were published with inadequate or sloppy descriptive work, knowing that fuller research might show that the plant was simply a variation of an existing species. She was scornful of the pre-Darwin notion that a creator had set every living thing on earth in a fixed and final form, thereby foreclosing the possibility that a single species might develop variations due to climate and soil. Finally, in the never-ending taxonomy battle, she sided with the “lumpers” rather than the “splitters”; that is, she was more likely to see relationships among plants and classify broadly. She spent a certain amount of her field work seeking out intermediates that would dispose of proposed new species. As a lumpers, she tried to rein in the splitters by setting a high bar for the proclamation of a new species, but did not convince everyone. She once lamented that “Mr. Brandegee [has described a plant as a species] against my will.”

The Brandegee’s new journal, *Zoe*, was founded to further the independence of West Coast natural science and to speed up the publication of California botanical
finds. The established Botanical Gazette generously reviewed its first issue. Zoe was a forum for Katharine's brand of rigorous botanical science. Whatever constraint she had felt when writing in the Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences was now removed. The publication was her bully pulpit, used to encourage more exacting science and higher standards in the increasingly professionalized field of botany. She mercilessly dissected substandard botanical descriptions. She wrote ferocious criticisms and point-by-point refutations of bad science, as she perceived it. Her most brutal assault was on the work of Edward Lee Greene. He came to the San Francisco Bay Area as an Episcopal priest, but was a keen amateur botanist and worked with Katharine for a while in the Academy herbarium. By most accounts, he was ambitious, egotistical, and self-aggrandizing. He was also a rising star who won an appointment to teach botany at the University of California in 1885.

Greene was an outspoken critic of Darwin and a splitter who seemed to find a new species growing beside every rock. Katharine savaged his approach, saying, “This kind of botany was taught, probably, in the Middle Ages to which Mr. Greene properly belongs.” She condemned his lack of insight, accuracy, and judgment and said that his vague descriptions of so-called new species were “a disgrace to botany.” Greene did not defend his work in print, but referred to Katharine Brandegee as a “she devil.”

The high profile sword crossing of Greene and Katharine Brandegee was an intellectual conflict in which each contender had backers. Katharine won admiration for the power of her intellect and defense of high standards, but condemnation for her unladylike boldness and the personal nature of her attacks on Greene. The best explanation for her antipathy resides in Greene’s own acts of bad faith. In a clumsy effort to impress Harvard’s Asa Gray, Greene egotistically bragged to Gray that he was the botany curator at the Academy, with Katharine Brandegee as his assistant. After her hard-won achievement at the Academy, Greene’s self-serving lie—peddled to the leading botanist in America—must have been galling indeed. Moreover, when Greene was forced out of his Episcopal pastorate on moral grounds, he plotted unsuccessfully to push her out of the Academy and take over her position.

Katharine’s critiques published in Zoe secured her permanent place in the history of botany. According to one author, “The unvarnished criticism of what she viewed as botanical incompetence illustrate the intensity of the woman who brought much needed order and respectability to California botany.” Another writes, “Her mind was keen and her search into detail exhaustive.” A plant scientist observes simply: “She was the greatest woman botanist that ever lived.”

The Lure of Desert Plants

Neither of the Brandegees was again required to take up salaried work, but they pursued their science tirelessly. Once T.S. Brandegee turned to botany as a prime occupation, he specialized in the flora of Mexico and the Southwest. He joined an 1889 Academy of Sciences expedition to Magdalena Bay, Baja California, at his own expense. On this first of a series of major collecting trips to Mexico, Brandegee traveled some 600 miles by mule, and became the first plant collector to visit many parts of the Baja California interior. A scientific journal reported: “Messrs. T.S. Brandegee and Walter Bryant returned in May from an extensive trip through Lower California...Mr. Brandegee reported the collection of about thirty species of...
In April and May 1893 Brandegee traveled with five other naturalists to the Sierra San Pedro Mártir of northern Baja California and became the first botanist to explore the range. Later that year, in September and October, he made two trips from San José del Cabo into the mountains of the Cape region. Katharine joined him on the first trip, along with another scientist from the Academy. The San Francisco Chronicle reported on the venture, but missed the botanical aspect of the trip in its headline: “Off on an Odd Expedition: Two Men and a Woman Chasing after Snakes and Bugs.” Mrs. Brandegee reportedly, “rode astride of her mule, man fashion in the pantalooned suit that she took with her for the purpose. Her strong leather leggings were found to be a wise precaution for passing through the thorny cactus regions, the narrow defiles of the mountains or the washed out canyon trails.” Returning home on her own from this trip, Katharine was shipwrecked. Accounts of this incident report that T.S., upon hearing of the accident, first inquired about the fate of the plant specimens she was transporting.

Over the five-year span of his Mexico expeditions, T.S. Brandegee established himself as the leading authority on the flora of Baja California and the islands of the Sea of Cortez. He gained confidence as a botanist and, instead of sending his plants to other experts for botanical description, began to publish his own species. All told, he discovered and named some 225 plants of Baja California. Many others were later named from his collections.

To pursue this intense interest in the flora of Mexico more conveniently, the
Brandegees decided to abandon their well-established San Francisco life and move to San Diego. Considering distances, travel times, and the hazards of safely returning plant specimens to a clean and dry workroom, greater proximity to collection sites was advantageous. The Brandegees had used San Diego for embarkation to Baja California and it had been the scene of their wedding. Moreover, Katharine’s sister had settled in Ramona. One author suggests that Katharine also might have been ready to distance herself from Academy politics and to “practice her incipient leanings toward experimental systematics” in a year-round garden.

The journal Zoe showed a change of address to San Diego in its January 1894 issue and a March 1894 letter indicates that the Brandegees were in San Diego by that date. The next month, a deed was registered for T.S. Brandegee’s purchase of Block 350 of Horton’s Addition in San Diego. For the sum of $2,000 he acquired a spacious lot on First Avenue between Redwood and Quince Streets. The lot had an unobstructed view over San Diego Bay and sat in a mostly undeveloped area of town, known today as Bankers Hill. Both the Brandegees grew up on farms and may have considered the quiet, near-rural setting a welcome respite from San Francisco and an ideal place to pursue their work.

Despite the fact that the Brandegees now lived in close proximity to Mexico, T.S. made only one last collecting trip to Baja California after relocating to San Diego. In September 1902, Brandegee returned to the tip of the Baja California peninsula to explore many localities not visited previously. San Diego horticulturist and nursery owner Kate O. Sessions went with him by ship to San Jose del Cabo and by burro into the mountains. The explorers discovered a palm tree that had not yet been described or named for the botanical record. Sessions started back to San Diego about October 22, while Brandegee stayed on well into November.

T.S. may have decided to forgo the hardships of botanizing in Mexico after coming into contact with a relentless cactus collector, the German-born Carl Albert Purpus. Although holding a degree in pharmacy, Purpus collected plants as an occupation. With his brother, the head gardener of the Darmstadt Botanical Garden, he was dispatched to North America in the 1870s to collect for an arboretum. On his own he continued collecting plants in the Americas, marketing seed, pinecones, herbarium specimen, cactus, and anything else that would sell to institutions, commercial concerns or private collectors. While in California, he was referred to Katherine Brandegee for help in identifying plants he did not recognize. He introduced himself by letter, then sent a large number of plants to the Brandegees in San Diego. Katharine promptly responded with the correct botanical names. Purpus was so moved by this act of professional courtesy that he wrote: “I will not sell plants to You, but will be perfectly happy to make a collection for You of all plants You may desire on my tour next summer.” He apologized for his poor English, stating that he had never studied the language.

This was the beginning of a beautiful friendship and a productive partnership. The Brandegees invited Purpus to use their home in San Diego as a base for collecting trips to Mexico and the Southwest. They became his logistical support as he traveled and collected in remote areas of Mexico, as indicated by his letters requesting an emergency loan, thanking the Brandegees for sending him new shoes, asking for paper to dry specimens, and alerting them to plant shipments destined for San Diego. The Brandegees preserved his letters. They are a gold-mine of botanical information and open a window on the practical challenges of a
plant collector who might face bandits, revolution, and shipwreck.

Purpus supplied the Brandegees with every plant they wanted from his collecting trips, giving T.S. a continuing supply of new desert plants that he classified and named. While Purpus worked in Mexico, T.S. continued active field work closer to home. A San Diego newspaper reported on the success of an early week-long collecting trip near Julian and Brandegee recounted later in life that he had “carefully botanized San Diego County [and] the Cuyamaca Mountains.”

In San Diego: A Garden and a Life

Twenty-one years after the Brandegees left Southern California, Cornell University horticulturist Liberty Hyde Bailey was in San Diego studying palm trees, including *Erythea Brandegeei*, the palm that T.S. Brandegee and Kate O. Sessions introduced to the United States from their 1902 Baja California plant expedition. “My conception of the species,” Bailey wrote, “is further clarified by leaf specimens taken by me in 1927 from the top of a tree planted in a ravine by Brandegee on his old place in San Diego at the moment when the tree was being buried by the filling in of the canyon and consequent on the grading of the property by other owners.”

This is a sad epitaph for San Diego’s first botanical garden. In another time and place heroic efforts might have been undertaken to preserve the valuable and unique plant collection assembled by the Brandegees. That one palm tree disappearing into canyon fill was justification enough. It was growing at the home of the botanist who led the expedition on which the tree was discovered. That same botanist described the tree for science as a new species and, along with Kate O. Sessions, introduced the tree into cultivation in the United States. In 1902, the Brandegee garden was compared with the Missouri Botanical Garden as a place where important investigations could be made on “the living type collections of cacti.”

As with any botanical garden, the Brandegees incorporated a herbarium and greenhouse. The bulk of the plants were grown for the purpose of studying and documenting them for classification. As “ardent exponents of the principles of evolution,” the Brandegees kept many plants gathered from a wide variety of environments under observation for years. Many of the plants were assumed to be new species, but the Brandegees would not publish them until they had found how those plants behaved in another environment. One author noted, “They made every effort to trace all variants and get their real relationship.”

The Brandegees also planted a garden they could enjoy. A large hammock hung among the plants and Katharine kept a pet guinea fowl and tamed birds to eat from her hand. One visiting botanist described the garden as “a botanical paradise, rare flowers blooming on all sides, mockingbirds, quail calling, and other native songbirds making the air musical with song.” Another description remarks on the “delightful site on a mesa overlooking the town...[and the] spacious botanical garden filled with rare natives.”

The longest and most intimate description of the Brandegees’ San Diego garden is found in an obscure and short-lived British publication, *Cactus Journal*. The editor, F.A. Walton, wrote a first-hand account based on his visit to San Diego in 1899:
The garden of Mr. and Mrs. Brandegee, at San Diego, was well worth seeing. It was almost a wild garden, being situated upon the mesa, or high land overlooking the sea...Mr. and Mrs. Brandegee are enthusiastic botanists, and have built a magnificent herbarium, where they spend most of their time. The wild land round the herbarium is full of interesting plants that are growing in a state of nature, while being studied and described in all their various conditions. I saw a few plants of most of the Californian Cacti, and Mrs. Brandegee has preserved specimens of all the kinds she can get. In some cases where the plants are very rare, I asked how she could so destroy such beauties. She replied that her specimens would be there to refer to at any time, with all its descriptions and particulars, whereas if the plant had been left growing, or sent to some botanical gardens, it would probably have died some time, and all trace have been lost.76

Walton continued his account by describing Brandegee as “a born explorer” who divided his time between deserts and mountains, “bringing home plants and seeds to be studied at leisure by himself and his wife.” He believed that the Brandegees were doing “good work in this world” because they lived in a house surrounded by a garden and were able to study “both plant and animal life at their leisure.” When Walton visited them, he was impressed by T.S. Brandegee’s relationship with a nesting humming bird that did not move when approached by visitors. Walton concluded by noting:

Dr. C.A. Purpus was helping them to classify some of their vast collection, and was quite enthusiastic in his praise of the thorough way in which they did their work. I know when he and I were on the desert or mountain, and we saw any kind of plant he did not know, he would say, ‘Ah! I don’t know this; I will take a piece back for Mrs. Brandegee, perhaps it will be new to her.’77

The Brandegees welcomed visiting plant enthusiasts and botanists during their years in San Diego and established local community ties as well.78 T.S. is first listed as a member of the City Board of Education in 1897. He apparently served through the next few years. His April 1903 school board election victory is included in the newspaper account of the Republican Ticket’s “usual clean sweep.”79

The Brandegees made the acquaintance of local nursery owner and horticulturist Kate O. Sessions. Alice Eastwood knew all three and may have made an introduction. A few months after their arrival San Diego, the Brandegees bought a cinnamon tree, five fuchsias, and a variety of other plants from Sessions’ nursery.
Plants named for T. S. Brandegee

Photo #: P01831 Photographer: Reid Moran Collector: n/a Date: 06 April 1952 Collector No.: 3692 Accession Number: -1 Plant: Echinocereus brandegeei Family: Cactaceae State: Baja California Sur Locality: Isla Partida, Espiritu Santo. Photo courtesy San Diego Natural History Museum, Botany Department.

Plants named for T. S. Brandegee

Photo #: P02191 Photographer: George Lindsay Collector: n/a Date: 13 May 1962 Collector No.: 3063 Accession Number: -1 Plant: Mammillaria brandegeei Family: Cactaceae State: Baja California Sur Locality: San Ignacio, 15.2 mi S. Photo courtesy San Diego Natural History Museum, Botany Department.
business. Sessions accompanied T.S. on one of his Baja California explorations and there is a record of her presenting the Brandegees with one of the first three fern pine trees brought to San Diego.

Sessions most likely convinced T.S. to become involved in the development of San Diego’s City Park. He served with her on the Park Improvement Committee in 1904. Additionally, he brought both his areas of expertise to the aid of professional park designer Samuel Parsons, helping with “engineering problems...and the selection of plants to be grown in the park.” Brandegee was called “the best informed authority on the flora of Southern California and Lower California,” and “a civil engineer of ability and experience.” When the San Diego Union featured park development stories in its January 1, 1903, issue, T.S. contributed an article describing the many kinds of plants that could transform the look of City Park.

Katharine and Sessions were professional women, not too distant in age, who both shared a strong interest in plant science. The degree of friendship they developed, however, is a matter of conjecture. The letters that they wrote from San Diego to Alice Eastwood—letters that might have shed light on their relationship and provided details about the Brandegees’ years in San Diego—were lost in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Like Sessions, Katharine certainly was indifferent to housekeeping and dressed for comfort. One visitor described finding her in old leather slippers and a loose Mother Hubbard dress with her graying hair streaming casually down. When plant hunting in the back country, she was once mistaken for an impoverished wanderer and given a free glass of beer by a kindly saloon-keeper. Katharine told this story with amused delight. In contrast, she found it embarrassing to be the guest at an elaborate reception in Salt Lake City. She was modest and self-effacing. She liked people and got along well with a variety of personalities, but she preferred to be free of social conventions and free to do her work.

Despite her demonstrated adaptability, Katharine did not settle well in San Diego. She felt cut off in the sleepy small town and missed the robust libraries and intellectual climate of San Francisco, “the vortex of botanical activity in the West.” The secluded garden and herbarium, while supporting an undistracted life of the mind, may have eventually felt too isolated after her years of being at the cutting edge of West Coast science and in the thick of Academy life, whatever the toll of institutional politics. She worked hard on the breeding and care of the plants in her garden but this, too, became tiresome, as indicated by her refusal of a gift of plants for a new garden in Northern California. She hoped never again to have a garden, but “henceforth forever to live in my trunk.” Often she did not feel well and blamed the San Diego climate, although her illnesses were more likely associated with a long-term health affliction. Despite her vigor and robustness, she suffered from diabetes for much of her life. She sometimes had to cancel travel plans and once collapsed and nearly died in St. Louis while attempting a cross-country trip. A connection between diet and diabetes had been made, but insulin treatment was not developed during Katharine’s lifetime, so the ill effects of the disease could not be controlled. No matter what was going on in their lives during the San Diego years, the Brandegees never stopped working. Katharine wrote to a colleague, “About 2,000 sheets have been put into the herbarium since I came back...there are at least 10,000 sheets out of the herbarium and as soon as they are in place I am going to take a whole day off and read a novel.” The years of diligence and informed collecting had an epic payoff: the Brandegees created the
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richest private herbaria ever assembled in the United States and much of the work was accomplished in San Diego.

Giving All

As they approached their sixties, the Brandegees began to plan their future and, most importantly to them both, the future of their herbarium. They decided to leave San Diego and return to Northern California, and to parlay their most valuable asset—the herbarium—into a retirement plan. They transferred their collection to the University of California at Berkeley where it would be permanently housed and maintained, and remain perpetually useful to botanical researchers. Their new life looked remarkably similar to their old one for they planned to work in the herbarium every day for the rest of their lives.

The Brandegee gift was big news for the university and for the science world. The University of California Chronicle reported:

Mr. and Mrs. T.S. Brandegee of San Diego have donated their entire botanical collections and library to the University of California. As a result of this gift, the facilities for botanical research at the University are practically doubled, as it now possesses the most complete representation extant of our Pacific Coast flora. [The Brandegees] have for many years given practically their full time to the scientific study of Western American plants...the collection of Asperifoliae...probably cannot be excelled in any collection. The botanical library which comes to the University by this gift is of great value...[and] adds many rare books to the library.94

The magazine Science called the Brandegees’ herbarium, “One of the most important in the west since it contains something over 100,000 sheets of carefully selected plants, mostly representative of the Mexican flora...and of the flora of California and neighboring states. It contains the sole remaining duplicate types of many species, the originals of which were lost in the recent [San Francisco earthquake and fire] that destroyed so large a portion of the California Academy of Sciences....Mr. and Mrs. Brandegee will continue their studies at the university, where Mr. Brandegee has been appointed honorary curator of the herbarium.”95

Negotiations with the University had been slow and, in some respects, disappointing. The Brandegees knew the value of their herbarium. Its acquisition was a one-time opportunity for the Berkeley campus that would add 76,000 specimens and immediately propel its botanical collection into world-class status.96 Still, the financially tight University did not make the transfer an easy one. Katharine opened negotiations with an offer to transfer to the Regents of the University, “the whole herbarium and library for $100 per month for the rest of their lives.” She received an enthusiastic response from William Albert Setchell, Chair of the Department of Botany, but he warned Katharine that the university would never agree to an annuity. He suggested that the Brandegeess propose a lump sum for the sale of the herbarium. The process went on for four long years before Setchell acknowledged receipt of the deed of gift executed by the Brandegees.97

The worn-down and aging Brandegees may have conceded everything to finally close this deal, but the terms of the arrangement are murky. The herbarium
transfer is always called a ‘gift’ or ‘donation’ in university literature. The Brandegees were required to bear the cost of shipping the collection, as Sætell claimed institutional poverty. Very late in the process the Brandegees were asked, “Wonder what you intend to do about living, you know I suppose of the scarcity of houses for sale or rent in Berkeley?” Katharine Brandegee was not given the same honorary curator title awarded T.S., although she may have turned down such an offer.

The saving element of the entire transaction came in the form of a kindly young graduate student assigned to the herbarium. Harvey Monroe Hall was charged with shepherding the gift agreement through the university bureaucracy and coordinating the physical transfer of the collection from San Diego to Berkeley. Hall and Katharine Brandegee already had an established correspondence dating back a few years, with friendly and informal letters about plant identification and possible contributions to Zoe. Hall generally exhibited tact and solicitousness in his difficult liaison role and adopted a good humored, bantering style in his letters to the Brandegees, who must have been demoralized by the entire enterprise.

Just before the Brandegees were to undertake a cumbersome move from San Diego to Berkeley, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake struck. They were already traveling back and forth a good deal and T.S. was apparently in Berkeley at the time of the earthquake, while Katharine had been delayed in San Diego. The town of Berkeley and the university campus were not severely damaged. Before the end of the year, the Brandegees were settled (perhaps in a university cottage) and working each day at the herbarium. They continued collecting trips in

Brandegee herbarium interior. Photo courtesy The University of California and Jepson Herbaria, University of California, Berkeley.
California and Nevada. “I am going to walk from Placerville to Truckee,” Katharine wrote in 1908 when she was sixty-four years old, “I am unusually strong and well.”

About this time, Katharine was struck with an especially bad case of wanderlust. She proposed that they visit Carl Purpus in Mexico or go to Europe. “Perhaps I may yet get Mr. Brandegee across the pond,” she wrote to Alice Eastwood. Alternatively, she urged T.S. to follow up on some palm research by botanizing in Chile. Despite her importuning, their travels after relocating to Berkeley were all domestic. Katharine was able to make a long-delayed trip to the East Coast to study early type specimens of California plants. When at home, the Brandegees worked every day at the herbarium. A younger botanist who knew them only during the Berkeley years found that the Brandegees had “the same indomitable love of arduous critical thinking that characterized them in earlier life.”

Their unlikely romance endured. Late in life they were described as “completely in love and entirely devoted to each other.” They continued their companionable togetherness and their independent scientific work until illness and death overcame them. Katharine died in 1920 at age seventy-five. The eighty-two-year-old T.S. followed her in 1925.

The story of the Brandegees and their important work has been an unfortunate omission from the history of San Diego. The region should claim these eminent scientists as their own and celebrate the mutual benefits derived from the years that Katherine and Townshend Stith Brandegee made their home in Bankers Hill overlooking San Diego Bay and the ocean beyond.

2. The Brandegees had a different attitude from the anti-Gray posture adopted by Edward Lee Greene who disagreed with Gray on the application of Darwinian thought to botany and resisted the Linnaean nomenclature that gained acceptance in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Robert P. McIntosh, “Edward Lee Greene: The Man,” in Frank N. Egerton, ed., *Landmarks of Botanical History. Edward Lee Greene* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), 38. A new plant must be botanically “described” or “published” according to certain detailed standards to win scientific acceptance. Preserved specimens of described plants are then deposited in a herbarium on “sheets,” open to inspection by others. It was traditional for most new species to be sent to Asa Gray at Harvard for evaluation and approval and Gray delegated a good deal of the work to Sereno Watson. Approval was not guaranteed, the process was slow, and the final result was often short on important descriptive information on growth habits, habitat, range, and other significant factors. James L. Reveal, “Botanical Explorations in the American West—1889-1989: An Essay on the Last Century of a Floristic Frontier,” *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 78, no. 1 (1991), 73.


4. Christopher K. Frazier, “The Botanical Brandegees and Their Eponyms,” *The New Mexico Botanist* 16 (December 6, 2000), 3. As Asa Gray aged, he was said to be increasingly rigid and controlling, such an impediment to the publication of new species that it riled western scientists. Reveal, “Botanical Explorations in the American West,” 73.


11. The California College of Pharmacy was founded in 1872 in San Francisco. Dr. Hans Herman Behr was named Professor of Botany. In the next year, the College affiliated with the University of California. Although Behr never moved to the new Berkeley campus, the Regents granted him the title Emeritus Professor of Botany in 1894. Lincoln Constance, *Botany at Berkeley: The First Hundred Years* (Berkeley: Botany Department, University of California, 1978), 2.


13. California Academy of Sciences, *Dr. Hans Herman Behr* (San Francisco: The Academy, 1903), 4-6.


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Counties, taking items of interest back to the Academy of Sciences. “Mrs. Curran was a very close student and observer.”

18. Rush, “On Her Terms,” 24. The other was Elizabeth Gertrude Knight (Britton), a teacher in natural science at Normal College in New York City, later Hunter College.
23. A full account of this controversy can be found in Ertter, “The Flowering of Natural History Institutions,” 67.
24. Willis Linn Jepson saw Katharine Curran as scheming and vindictive, contending that ten years of Academy dissension, from 1875-85, were “engineered” by her. Joseph Ewan, “San Francisco as a Mecca for Nineteenth Century Naturalists,” in *A Century of Progress in the Natural Sciences 1853-1953* (San Francisco: California Academy of Science, 1955), 33.
25. This achievement is placed in perspective by Margaret W. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 59, pointing out that most paid employment for women in nineteenth century botany was as illustrators or for piece-work, not fully functioning scientists.
27. Katharine Brandegee (KB) to Francesco Franceschi, February 24, 1904, Francesco Franceschi Papers 1904-1918, BANC MSS 70/11c, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
29. Brandegee served in the First Regiment of the Connecticut Artillery, Company G. His service in an artillery unit may have contributed to his deafness in later life. It was said that his increasing deafness “isolated him more and more after he came to live in California.” Ewan, “San Francisco as a Mecca,” 33.


33. One friend claimed to be embarrassed by their displays of affection while all three were out botanizing (Beidleman, *California's Frontier Naturalists*, 431) while Marcus Jones, who today would be labeled a sexist, wrote: “It was surely a droll affair, a most intensely masculine woman desperately in love with the most retiring and effeminate man, and both of them dead in earnest about it, the man too with other women buzzing around him.” Jones, *Contributions to Western Botany*, 17. Katharine’s confession of love was in a letter written to an unidentified sister, most likely to Susan Layne Stockton of Ramona. Jones, “Katherine [sic] Brandegee, Part II,” 51.


35. [News], *West American Scientist* 6, no. 45 (July 1889): 82; Jaeger, *Son of the Living Desert*, 47. This honeymoon walk is reported in multiple sources, but never with logistical details. It is unknown whether they camped or took a pack mule or exactly how they managed to carry the preservation materials and species collected.

36. Five volumes of *Zoe* were published from 1890 to 1908. It began as a monthly, then adopted a more manageable quarterly publication schedule, with the last numbers trickling off the press over a period of years. Although it felt safest to list T.S. as the editor, Katharine and Alice Eastwood accomplished the editorial work and each eventually received credit as the editor of one or more volumes of the journal. Despite Katharine Brandegee’s exceptional rise, this was an era when sexual discrimination actively suppressed the achievement of women scientists. Rudolph, “Women in Nineteenth Century American Botany,” 1346.

37. A new Assistant in Botany at the University of California could not resist a snide characterization of the club as a gathering of many “ladies who are interested in ferns and flowers;” but admitted that some well known botanists were involved and that there was value in educating more people for the work of collecting and exploration. Willis L. Jepson, “Botanic Clubs in California,” *Botanical Gazette* 16, no. 10 (October 1891), 296-97. In some sources, the founding of the club is dated to 1892, but since Jepson wrote his critique late in 1891, that seems to be the correct year.


39. Katharine Brandegee was on a vessel that ran onto rocks near San Pedro in heavy fog. On another occasion, she broke her leg while collecting plants in the mountains and had to be carried many miles over rough trails before reaching medical attention. Edmund C. Jaeger, “Bold Kate Brandegee,” *Calico Print* (March 1953), 8. T.S. Brandegee did not actually experience a shipwreck, but was dangerously close to it when strong surf rolled the revenue cutter assigned to land him and a companion on San Clemente Island where he was collecting for the Smithsonian. “At San Clemente: Experiences of Two Naturalists in Search of Specimens,” *San Diego Union*, September 2, 1894, 5:4.


41. “Meetings: Speaker: Carol Green Wilson, Date: January 23, 1953,” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (June 1953), 182. Wilson interviewed Eastwood for the story of her life.
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42. On January 18, 1892, the business records of the California Academy of Science stated: “Council reports that they have acquired the services of Miss Alice Eastwood for the term of six months at a salary of $50 per month to mount the plants in the herbarium.” Theodore Henry Hittell’s The California Academy of Sciences: A Narrative History: 1853-1906, ed., rev., enlg. Alan E. Leviton and Michele L. Aldrich (San Francisco: California Academy of Sciences, 1997), 334.


44. Theodore Henry Hittell’s The California Academy of Sciences, 337-38.

45. Eastwood worked until age ninety, retiring from the Academy of Sciences in 1949. Beidleman, California’s Frontier Naturalists, 431.


47. KB to Harvey Monroe Hall, January 1, 1901, Harvey Monroe Hall Papers, 1859-1991, BANC MSS C-B 908, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

48. [News], Botanical Gazette 15, no. 5 (May 1890), 125. According to one interpretation, Katharine Brandegee’s aim was to “make the work of western botanists acceptable by eastern standards.” Marcia Myers Bonta, Women in the Field: America’s Pioneering Women Naturalists (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 91.

49. Beidleman, California’s Frontier Naturalists, 379-80.


51. Beidleman, California’s Frontier Naturalists, 430. Time has served Greene well in that some of his dubious species have proven to be true. Rogers McVaugh, “Edward Lee Greene: An Appraisal of His Contributions to Botany,” in Edward Lee Greene, Landmarks of Botanical History, 61.

52. Whether Greene actually held an official appointment at the Academy is unclear, but he may have been called an assistant curator. One unsubstantiated account suggested that Katharine Curran attacked Greene out of spite because he had not returned her love interest in him. Ewan. Bibliographic Miscellany, 772-89. An elderly scientist who knew the facts was outraged by this unrequited love theory which he considered a ridiculous suggestion. Albert W.C. Herre, “Katherine [sic] Brandegee. A Reply to a Fantasy by J. Ewan,” (published by the author, University of Washington, 1960); Greene’s treachery is described in Beidleman, California’s Frontier Naturalists, 430; and he had other critics: Frank S. Crosswhite and Carol D. Crosswhite, “The Plant Collecting Brandegees, With Emphasis on Katharine Brandegee as a Liberated Woman Scientist of Early California,” Desert Plants 7, no. 3 (1985):137-39. Katharine Brandegee was not the only Greene critic who could not resist a personal bias in writing about him. Botanist Marcus E. Jones called Greene “a pest, a botanical crook and a cur” whose botanical leaflets were so poorly done that it made [Jones] feel like “committing murder.” Rogers McVaugh, “Edward Lee Greene: An Appraisal of His Contribution to Botany,” 54-55. Jones also called Greene a “reprobate” who indulged in “egotistical self-praise.” Jones, “Katherine (sic) Brandegee, Part II,” 70.


54. Setchell, “Townshend Stith Brandegee and Mary Katharine (Layne) (Curran) Brandegee,” 166.

55. Jones, Contributions to Western Botany, 17. Many contemporaries and later observers thought that Katharine Brandegee was completely equipped to write a flora of California and occasionally express disappointment that she did not do so. One suggestion is that her perfectionism was—for the purposes of such a large project—a fatal flaw that kept her from tackling this career capstone. Peter Wild, “Kate Brandegee: Rebel with a Fatal Flaw,” Wildflower 14, no. 4 (Autumn 1998), 42-44.

56. [News], West American Scientist 6, no. 45 (July 1889), 82. Field notes are important because botanists want to know not only that a plant is found in one location, but how far and wide the same plant can flourish and whether it develops significant variations under different growing conditions. Before global positioning satellites pinpointed locations, descriptive field notes recorded geographical landmarks. Years after his Baja California trips, plant scientists returned to the field notes of T.S. Brandegee to help them locate specimens. Unfortunately, clear and complete field
notes were not a Brandegee strength, as revealed in: Reid Moran, “Brandegee’s Tarweed and the True Story of Its Recovery,” Environmental Southwest 440 (January 1972): 3-6.


62. “The Brandegee Herbarium and Library,”*University Record, The Graduates* [no vol., no date, unpaged], Brandegee Papers, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco. Brandegee had become intensely interested in the Mexican flora and took up residence in San Diego “in order to study more conveniently.” Katharine Brandegee’s sister Susan married a Mr. Stockton and had nine children. Jones, *Contributions to Western Botany*, 12.


64. Francesco Franceschi to KB, March 3, 1894, Brandegee Collection, University & Jepson Herbaria, University of California, Berkeley.

65. County of San Diego [California], Deed Book 229, “Frank B. Yoakum et. al. to Townshend S. Brandegee [April 26, 1894, deed of sale for First Avenue property].” The Brandegees arrived in San Diego before this purchase, but their temporary living arrangements are unknown.

66. Reid Moran, “The Mexican Itineraries of T.S. Brandegee,” *Madroño* 11, no. 6 (May 9, 1952), 258. This trip was dated by Kate O. Sessions late in her life as having occurred in 1900, but records of plant finds indicate that it was 1902.


69. “Collecting Botanical Specimens,” *San Diego Union*, June 25, 1894, 5:3; Townshend Stith Brandegee, “Autobiographical Notes,” written at the request of Mrs. Carlotta Case Hall, August. 1931 [typescript], Townshend Stith Brandegee Papers, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco.


71. William Trehase, “Some Botanical Gardens: The Missouri Botanical Garden,” *Plant World* 5, no. 1 (January 1902), 3. Marcus E. Jones later wrote that the Brandegee’s “place was sold to the city for a botanical park but fell into neglect,” but no documentation supporting this claim has come to light. Jones, “Katherine [sic] Brandegee, Part I,” 41. Students enrolled in the Bishop’s day school that eventually occupied the Brandegee property were sometimes sent out to study the exotic plantings and occasionally gathered under the shade of a tree for an outdoor class. “There were all kinds of strange and beautiful things in the Brandegee gardens,” a former student recalled. Alice Heynemann (1895-1974), interviewed September 16, 1972, Oral History Collection, San Diego Historical Society.
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72. The garden and herbarium are described in various accounts and captured in photographs, but only Carl A. Purpus mentions the greenhouse. CAP to KB, January 16, 1898.


74. Jones, Contributions to Western Botany, 18.

75. Beidleman, California’s Frontier Naturalists, 432.


77. Ibid.

78. “Townshend Stith Brandegee,” Science 61, no. 1583 (May 1, 1925), 464. Visitors came to study plants and also contributed to the variety in the garden. When asked to identify a plant for Santa Barbara horticulturist Francesco Franceschi, Katharine Brandegee wrote, “We have this Tithonia in our own garden, Abrahams brought it from Guatemala.” KB to Francesco Franceschi, February 24, 1904, Franceschi Papers, Bancroft Library.

79. “City Board of Education,” San Diego City and County Directory, 1897; Brandegee got 102 votes in his precinct while his closest rival received 63 votes. “The Usual Clean Sweep by the Republican Ticket,” San Diego Union, April 8, 1903, 6:1-6. A final count increased his vote tally to 224 votes. “Mayor Frary For Another Two Years,” San Diego Evening Tribune, April 8, 1903, 3.

80. CAP to KB, February 11, 1901 and July 6, 1902, Collected Purpus Letters.

81. Invoice for items sold to T.C. Brandegee from the San Diego Nursery, Brandegee Papers, University & Jepson Herbaria, University of California, Berkeley.


86. Alice Eastwood’s San Francisco home burned to the ground and her office was destroyed when the California Academy of Science building collapsed then burned.


88. Jaeger, Son of the Living Desert, 49.

89. While Katharine was in Salt Lake City studying plants collected by Marcus E. Jones, the wife of one of T.S.’s Yale classmates became aware of her presence and organized an elaborate reception with all the local celebrities. In Jones’ account, Katharine “dolled herself up as much as she could for the occasion…and she was lionized very much.” She kept her temper and was polite to all “but it was intensely disagreeable to her and she breathed a great sigh of relief” when it was over. She had no sense of how others viewed her achievements. “I was very much amused at her absolute self-abnegation.” Jones, “Katherine [sic] Brandegee, Part I,” 45.


91. KB to Francesco Franceschi, September 19, 1906, Brandegee Papers, University & Jepson Herbaria.

92. KB to Harvey Monroe Hall (Hall) (undated but annotated “Rec’d April 1, 1902.”), Brandegee Papers, University & Jepson Herbaria. Brandegee wrote that her “work has been put back at least six months by circumstances beyond my control,” most likely a reference to health problems. Purpus, obviously responding to reports of Katharine’s illnesses, often inquired after her. CAP to TSB, August 1, 1903; June 24, 1905; March 8, 1906, Collected Purpus Letters. Katharine’s St. Louis
collapse is recounted in Beidleman, *California’s Frontier Naturalists*, 433.

93. KB to Hall, Spring 1901, Harvey Monroe Hall Papers, Bancroft Library.

94. “The Brandegee Herbarium and Library,” [Reprinted from the University of California *Chronicle* 9, no. 1 (January 1907)], *University Record The Graduates*, University of California, 73-75. Townshend Stith Brandegee Papers, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco.


97. The contents of this offer from the Brandegees to the University are reported in Ertter, “People, Plants, and Politics,” 239. The reply and eventual transfer document were from William A. Setchell (WAS), to KB, January 19, 1901 and September 5, 1906, Brandegee Papers, University & Jepson Herbaria.

98. The final written agreement could not be located, although a document specifying terms surely resides somewhere in University files. Compensation may have included residence at University Cottage No. 2 where the Brandegees were living in 1908, although no documentation on the campus cottages could be located in the University archives. The address was found on a letter. Secretary to the President to TSB, September 8, 1908, University of California (System) Office of the President, Records, Alphabetical Files, 1885-1913, CU-5 Series I, Box 20, Folder 164, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. The importance of the gift is described in university literature, along with a short biography of each of the Brandegees and the promise that every opportunity would be offered Mr. and Mrs. Brandegee to continue their studies without interruption. The only list of the important books that were a part of the donation is found in ‘Gifts to the University: The Brandegee Herbarium and Library,” *University of California Chronicle, An Official Record, Volume IX* (Berkeley: The University Press, 1907), 73-76.

99. Shipping costs, Setchell to KB, September 5, 1906, and housing, Hall to KB, September 1, 1906, Brandegee Papers, University & Jepson Herbaria. Botany Department Chair Setchell stated that Katharine Brandegee “sought no official recognition or personal commendation.” Setchell, “Townshend Stith Brandegee and Mary Katharine,” 167-68.


101. Purpose wrote that he was “very glad to hear that you have arrived in Berkeley.” CAP to TSB, April 10, 1906; and “I was so glad to hear from Mr. Brandegee that you escaped that frightful disaster in San Francisco,” CAP to KB, May 1, 1906, Brandegee Papers, University and Jepson Herbaria.


103. KB to Alice Eastwood, August 18, 1911, Alice Eastwood Papers, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco; KB to Francesco Franceschi, September 20, 1905, Franchesci Papers, Bancroft Library.


James Wood Coffroth (1872-1943): West Coast Promoter of Boxing, Horse Racing and Tourism

Joel Levanetz

James Wood Coffroth, a legendary sports promoter and entrepreneur in San Diego during the early decades of the twentieth century, left his mark in history but not in local prominence. In 1916, Coffroth capitalized on the flood of tourists to the Panama California International Exposition in Balboa Park by opening a racetrack just over the international border in Tijuana, Mexico. The Tijuana Jockey Club would become a major tourist destination in the 1920s. Nicknamed “Sunny Jim,” Coffroth was instrumental in bringing the Star of India, one of San Diego’s most famous landmarks, to the harbor in 1926.

While he spent his early career as a boxing promoter in San Francisco, James Coffroth became significant enough in San Diego local annals to inspire an effort by his sister to build a park in his name. In 1944, Flora Coffroth Hughes offered an undeveloped lot at the southeast corner of Chatsworth Boulevard and Homer Street in Loma Portal to the city. She told a San Diego Tribune reporter, “My brother loved the beauties of nature and made a garden spot out of the once-barren land...He supervised in the planting of pepper trees, elms, cypress, and sycamores, and numerous flowering shrubs.” The park was never built with the result that San Diego history has forgotten one of its most influential promoters and sportsmen.

James Wood Coffroth, born in Sacramento on September 12, 1872, followed a pace for achievement in the family set by his father. The senior James W. Coffroth, a native of Pennsylvania, moved with his family to Sonora, California, around 1850. A printer, he worked for the Sonora Herald before being elected to the California Assembly from Tuolumne County in 1852 and, subsequently, to the State Senate. As a member of the Democratic Party, he stood for election to the U.S. House of Representatives. According to his obituary in the New York Times, he “possessed the elements of popularity in a wonderful degree; few men had so many personal friends, and perhaps no member of his party exerted a greater influence

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in directing its affairs. He became one of the ablest and most successful lawyers in his district.” On October 9, 1872, less than a month after the birth of his son, he died as a result of a “hemorrhage of the lungs.” Although this date marked the end of one man’s unique story, it served as the opening chapter of his son’s own remarkable tale, a narrative that would distinguish him in the history of international athletic promotion.

As a young man, James Coffroth worked in northern California, following in the footsteps of his father. According to a 1912 article in Baseball Magazine, Coffroth worked as “an office boy for a firm of local lawyers, and he finally developed into one of the best stenographers on the Pacific Coast.” He also pursued the study of law, eventually attaining the position of secretary for the San Francisco Supreme Court. Like his father, he was a “bright, intelligent man” whose unassuming manner attracted people. An interviewer described him as “a very interesting conversationalist, extremely cordial, and has an unlimited number of friends.”

Coffroth displayed an early interest in sport. He was a member of The Olympic Club in San Francisco, home to James J. Corbett, the heavyweight-boxing champion from 1892 to 1897. The club supported teams in a variety of sports, including cycling, football, and boxing. In 1895, the 23-year-old Coffroth and other members of The Olympic Club Cycling Team garnered attention from the Los Angeles Times when they undertook a bicycle tour down the California coast. The periodical related, “Messrs, J. W. Coffroth and W. H. Stinson of San Francisco are spending several days here, having come south a-wheel as far as Santa Barbara.” During the course of the trip, he gained the nickname, “Helpless.” A reporter found this ironic because the young man proved quite capable of taking care of himself. He wrote, “This morning Mr. Coffroth...dropped his watch off the end of the wharf while he
was gazing at the mermaids sporting below. Donning his bathing suit, ‘Helpless’ leaped off the end of the wharf, dived down sixteen feet to the bottom and recovered the watch, being under water just thirty seconds.” The feat was “so gracefully accomplished” that it “placed ‘Helpless’ in the attitude of a hero to the admiring throng who witnessed it.”

Following an education in law, Coffroth was introduced to the sport that would soon capture his attention. In the late 1890s, while still in his twenties, Coffroth traveled to the East Coast. There, he witnessed sparring matches between athletes whose popularity was growing with that of the sport.

In 1896, Coffroth partnered with the established New York promoter, James C. “Big Jim” Kennedy, a move that began his career as a sportsman. Kennedy had worked as a newspaper man before becoming what The New York Times described as “one of the leading promoters of big sporting events in this country.” He and his partners Patrick Powers and James Brady promoted the six-day bicycle races at Madison Square Garden, among other events. The former manager of the Seaside Athletic Club in Coney Island, Kennedy also handled the careers of prominent boxers such as ex-lightweight champion Frank Erne and Buffalo middleweight Al Weinig.

Prize fighting blossomed in California after 1899 when the state began to allow athletic clubs to stage boxing “exhibitions.” State statutes had prohibited the sport since 1872. In a political environment of increasing conservatism, boxing was deemed an unacceptable sport. In order to ban the activity in all of its forms, authorities redefined the punishable act in 1893 to cover matches, “with or without gloves.”

Coffroth worked with Kennedy to lure big-name boxers to San Francisco. They offered generous cash guarantees to legends such as James John “Gentleman Jim” Corbett, James J. “The Boilermaker” Jeffries, and Bob “The Freckled Wonder” Fitzsimmons. On November 15, 1901, Coffroth, together with Kennedy and others, staged one of his first notable boxing matches in the ring of the Twentieth Century Athletic Club in San Francisco. The sparring match, filmed by the Edison Manufacturing Company, featured World Heavyweight Champion Jeffries who defended his title against Gus Ruhlin.
“The Akron Giant.” Novelist Jack London, then an unknown journalist, covered the match for the *San Francisco Examiner*. It proved to be quite a spectacle, with Jeffries knocking out Ruhlin in the sixth round. Jeffries would later come out of retirement to face Jack Johnson, the first African American heavyweight champion, as “The Great White Hope.”

After 1903, Coffroth managed to avoid San Francisco County’s strict standards with regard to pugilistic events by moving his base of operations to San Mateo County. He managed to obtain a license to hold “sparring exhibitions” at the Sickles Street Arena in Daly City, located only fifty feet from the San Francisco county line. Historian Samuel C. Chandler wrote, “It is said that from this location Coffroth could secure protection from San Francisco police while operating under San Mateo County regulations.”

Following the death of his mentor James Kennedy in 1904, Coffroth moved to establish his hold on the business of boxing promotion in the San Francisco Bay area. Northern San Mateo County soon became overrun with boxing enthusiasts all crowding in to see the next big match. Given the location of the venue, such a congregation invited the attention of both the San Francisco and Daly City authorities. As a way to meet demand and avoid the dual policing at the county line, Coffroth began another arena in nearby Colma. Between the two rings, Coffroth solidified his place in boxing history by staging bouts that included “The Michigan Assassin” Stanley Ketchell, “The Galveston Giant” Jack Johnson, Oscar “Battling” Nelson and Jimmy Britt. Journalists covering Coffroth’s success noted that even the weather seemed to support his good fortune, claiming that although
it may have been raining the morning of a fight, the skies would usually clear in time for the event. That, along with his resilient optimism, garnered him the name “Sunny Jim” Coffroth.15

James Coffroth’s success as a promoter was recognized nearly a century after his debut. A recent article in the San Francisco Chronicle noted, “From 1900-1910, there were 10 world title fights in New York State and six in England, birthplace of the modern game. During the same span, California hosted 60, and more than half of those—in all seven weight divisions of the time—were in the Bay Area.” Echoing the sentiments of many observers at the time, this article continued, “The guy holding the money bags...was the nation’s first large-scale promoter, James W. ‘Sunny Jim’ Coffroth.”16

As the years progressed and Coffroth’s professional profile developed, not everything remained sunny for the sportsman. Perhaps the initial blow to his career came on March 1, 1906. That evening, during a bantamweight championship bout, Harry Tenny was laid unconscious by challenger Frankie Neil. The following morning, the former champion was declared dead. Charged with manslaughter, the boxing opponent and all of the event promoters, including Coffroth, were forced to surrender themselves to the local police. Coffroth was not convicted but his arrest signaled a shift
Further damaging the image of the sport was the Grand Jury indictment of local political power broker Abe Ruef on charges of extortion in 1906. Ruef, a lawyer and politician, was tied to the development of San Francisco’s boxing interests as he provided permits for matches. In 1902 he had used his influence as “boss,” or leader, of the Latin Quarter to elect Eugene Schmitz, the Union Labor party candidate, as mayor of San Francisco. When the corruption in the mayor’s office came to light, Ruef’s behind-the-scenes dealings were exposed. He faced over sixty-five indictments on charges that included bribing the Board of Supervisors, granting a franchise to the United Railroads, and taking money from the San Francisco Gas and Electric Company in an effort to increase the gas rate. He was also charged with allowing an elite group of boxing promoters to secure permits for their events within the city of San Francisco. Among the names listed in the article as members of the “fight trust” was James Wood Coffroth.

While Coffroth experienced no legal ramifications from his dealings with Ruef, his reputation was tarnished and his relationship with city officials strained. The effects of these tensions became apparent in December 1909. Coffroth was positioning himself to host one of the largest fights of his career, a heavyweight championship bout between Jim Jeffries and Jack Johnson. A New York Times article noted that while the State of California did not place a restriction on the number of rounds allowed during a boxing contest, the municipality of San Francisco limited the number to twenty. The article reported, “It is well known that since his connection with the so-called ‘fight trust’ during the Schmitz-Ruef regime, Coffroth has been unable to obtain a permit to conduct a fight within the city limits of San Francisco.” Making matters worse, that same month, while Coffroth was attending a conference between the potential opponents Jeffries and Johnson, the newspaper...
announced that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors was considering a petition to revoke Coffroth’s permit to hold prizefights. Once a refuge from the restrictive boxing policies of San Francisco, Colma and Daly City were now threatening to end Coffroth’s sparring contests.20

San Mateo County officials also began to have second thoughts about the sport of boxing. They were responding to a nation-wide reform movement that sought to ban the sport entirely. One journalist suggested that legislators heard only their constituents, members of “the Onward and Upward Societies, to whom boxing seems in the same category as bullfighting, beaver baiting, cockfighting, or dog fighting,” not working class people.21 In 1912, district attorney Joseph J. Bullock refused to permit an upcoming fight between Joe Thomas and Billy Papke. The New York Times reported, “The Papke-Thomas bout was to have been held at Colma next Saturday, and had been widely advertised. Cofforoth [sic] today received word from District Attorney Bullock negativing the idea, the latter stating emphatically that the Board of Supervisors had no authority to grant a permit for such a contest.” Moreover, he ordered law enforcement to arrest any fighters arriving at the Colma arena. He also extended this threat to any future boxing matches that Coffroth might attempt. The article suggested that this action, “practically wipes Colma off the fight map.”22

The amount of public scrutiny experienced by Coffroth in late 1909 and early 1910 might have caused him to assume a low profile and avoid media attention. Instead, he did just the opposite. In early February 1910, Coffroth captured headlines by betting a London boxing promoter that he could race from Liverpool, England, to San Francisco in fewer than ten days. The wager arose when Coffroth, staying in London after having toured Europe, received a letter in the company of Eugene Corri of the National Sporting Club of London. Corri was impressed that the mail had made its way from the western United States to the United Kingdom in just twelve days. Coffroth remarked, “That’s nothing. I can go to San Francisco in ten days.”23 Between Eugene Corri and several other interested men, the wager increased to $2,000 by the time Coffroth departed England. The rules of the bet were simple. Using standard means of transportation, Coffroth had to arrive in San Francisco by midnight on February 8 or forfeit $2,000.

Whether to distract the media from criticism regarding his business operations or to drum up publicity for upcoming fights, Coffroth managed to garner favorable

Tijuana Race Track ca. 1916. Photo courtesy José Casteñeda Rico, Baja California.
attention with his race back to the bay. Sports fans kept their eyes fixed on newspaper headlines to learn the latest developments. Despite having arrived in New York on the *Mauretania* four hours before expected, there remained a great deal of land still to cross and much could go wrong. Headlines read: “Coffroth Loses Two Hours” and “Coffroth Picking Up Lost Time.”24 On February 9, the results of the $2,000 wager were published for those following the contest. The author noted, “Coming overland, wherever it happened that the through train stopped, there was an ovation for Coffroth.”25 It was in this atmosphere of enthusiasm that Coffroth reached San Francisco on February 8 at 9:35 p.m. With less than two and a half hours to spare, the legendary promoter won the wager and secured his place in sporting history.

Despite the publicity, Coffroth was unable to win the bid to promote the much-anticipated heavyweight championship between Jeffries and Johnson, even though he offered the enormous sum of $100,000. Instead, a competitor, George Lewis “Tex” Rickard, gained the privilege with a promise of $120,000 in gold. “The Fight of the Century” was held in Reno, Nevada, on July 4, 1910.26 While this was a matchup between two boxing legends, the significance of the fight went beyond physical competition. Attesting to the racial implications surrounding the contest, Jeffries remarked, “I am going into this fight for the sole purpose of proving that a white man is better than a Negro.”27 Rickard went on to become the leading promoter of boxing in the United States during the 1920s, working with Jack Dempsey and his manager Jack Kearns.

Coffroth began to pull out of promotion work in the San Francisco area after California voters, in 1914, approved an amendment that effectively banned professional boxing.28 The legislation allowed for ‘amateur’ matches to a maximum of four rounds and limited the value of a prize to $25 per boxer. Coffroth knew that the sport could not thrive under such restrictions and turned his eye south to Tijuana, Mexico. He recalled the early days of his career when he established an
arena just beyond San Francisco’s jurisdiction and hoped to do the same in Mexico. Unlike many cities in California, Tijuana remained unmolested by reformist ideals. There, prostitution, drinking and gambling were not illegal.

In 1915, Coffroth visited Tijuana to explore the possibilities of a boxing arena. Because the sport did not offer enough security to foreign investors, he turned to horseracing. The San Diego Sun of November 25, 1915, announced that Coffroth, a former boxing promoter, had been elected president of the Lower California Jockey Club. Together with other affluent investors like Baron H. Long and the Spreckels Companies, Coffroth started to build a racetrack in Tijuana within view of the international border. According to the San Diego Union, the complex opened on New Year’s Day in 1916 to a crowd of over 6,500 horseracing enthusiasts. Despite the inclement weather, the headline boasted, “Tijuana Race Track Opens with Blazing Crown of Success.” Two new railway lines brought spectators from San Diego to Tijuana, one of which carried guests directly to the racetrack. Coffroth and his associates expected strong attendance at the sporting events because, at this time, San Diego was hosting the Panama California International Exposition (1915-16), drawing thousands of tourists from around the country.

Like many of Coffroth’s previous achievements, the rewards were accompanied by enormous challenges. In the case of his racetrack venture, Coffroth’s first obstacle was a natural disaster. Just weeks after his stadium had opened, one of the worst storms in recorded history pummeled the region. The Tijuana River Valley flooded, taking lives and destroying buildings, including the racetrack. Under the headline “One Hundred Dead, Two More Valleys Flooded,” a Los Angeles Times article reported on January 30, 1916, “The Tia Juana race track is gone.”

After the waters had subsided, Coffroth began rebuilding his racetrack on higher ground. It flourished for about six months and, along with the nearby Casino Monte Carlo, hosted such visitors as Charles Chaplin, Barney Oldfield, Jack Pickford and Mabel Normand. He soon realized, however, that he would not be able to attract business due to the war in Europe. After the United States entered
World War I in April 1917, immigration officials secured the country from foreign invasion by closing the U.S.-Mexico border to tourists or any other visitor without business affairs in either country. Having lost his customer base, Coffroth made temporary concessions, sending his horses to stables on the East Coast in 1918.35

Coffroth tried to contribute to the war effort through his work as a boxing promoter. The United War Work Campaign invited him to New York in 1918 and appointed him co-chairman of the boxing committee. The New York Times reported, “Coffroth plans to bring together all the best known boxers and will hold shows all over the country, including Madison Square Garden, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and all the cities throughout the South and West.”36 Nevertheless, members of the Executive Committee changed their minds after John D. Rockefeller reported that “protests against boxing as a means of aiding the war fund had been received from ministers in all sections of the country.”37 The committee passed a resolution indicating that boxing was acceptable only in army camps and naval stations and should not be part of a charitable effort. According to a newspaper report, “This action has placed Coffroth, who came here from San Francisco at the request of the Sports Committee, in an embarrassing position. He has enlisted the services of boxers and promoters in all parts of the country and had a movement underway which would have resulted in the greatest demonstration of pugilistic activity ever known in this country.”38

Coffroth returned to the racetrack in Tijuana. His timing was impressive. The war officially ended on November 11, 1918, and restrictions on tourism below the border were loosened. Equally important was the beginning of Prohibition. On October 28, 1919, Congress passed the Volstead Act, reinforcing the prohibition of alcohol in the country. Two days prior to this legislative decision, The New York
James Wood Coffroth

The Times announced Coffroth’s plans to hold a winter season of horse racing at his venue in Mexico. The combination of fewer international travel restrictions, along with the accessibility of otherwise illegal alcohol, guaranteed the renewed success of Coffroth’s racetrack.

Coffroth presided over The Jockey Club in Tijuana, transforming it into a destination sought by tourists and celebrities alike. As the club’s President, he saw to it that the operation of the track was carried out effectively. Referring to him as “the directing genius of thoroughbred horse racing at Tijuana,” a New York Times article credits Coffroth with renegotiating travel restrictions that barred tourism to Baja California. Also, along with promoting his venue, Coffroth made his track appealing to enthusiasts by courting well-known horses. To do this, he offered extravagant purses to the winners of the races.

Tijuana attracted thousands of visitors during the 1920s. Sporting enthusiasts, gamblers, and revelers were all drawn to this once-quiet border town. With its lax restrictions and growing number of businesses accommodating to tourists, Tijuana became a focal point. However, this attention was not always positive. One journalist writing for Time magazine described the scene unfavorably, noting, “For Tiajuana [sic], as exotic as it may sound to the dry and fevered U.S. fancy, is nothing but a couple of dirty streets of barrooms. It is almost epic in its drabness.” Despite the author’s dismal portrayal, he went on to illustrate a frenzied atmosphere with “crowded tables” and “horses from famed Eastern and Southern stables” where the winning horse “earned $110,000, the largest annual turf stake in the world.”

Due to his investments at the Tijuana racetrack, Coffroth’s wealth grew. As a result, Coffroth readily lent himself to charitable causes that he deemed worthy. Jerry MacMullen, a man whose activities around San Diego included “author, reporter, sailor, [and] historian,” brought one such opportunity to Coffroth’s attention. In 1926, after reading a newspaper article about the efforts of a group in
New York to convert an old sailing ship into a maritime museum, MacMullen resolved that the citizens of San Diego should do the same. Following a meeting with other members of the San Diego Yacht Club, it was apparent that while the enthusiasm to accomplish the goal was present, the money needed to do so was not. MacMullen later explained, “So I wrote letters… and found out that we could have the Santa Clara for $7,500; we could have the Star of India for $9,000; we could have the Star of France for $12,000; we could have the Dunsyre for $15,000.” Once the group had decided that the Star of India would be the best ship for them, it was a matter of securing the funds.

MacMullen’s father, James MacMullen, reluctantly approached Coffroth about funding the purchase of the Star of India. The two men had become close acquaintances while in San Francisco. MacMullen explained:

Much against his will, my father did go over to see his friend Jimmy Coffroth and he told him about the screwballs who wanted to buy an old sailing ship for a museum in San Diego. Coffroth didn’t seem to think it was too bad an idea. ‘But,’ he said, ‘you know Jim, there is only one way that I can think of your getting that $9,000; because money, you know is tight; people don’t have too much of it.’ My dad said, ‘What’s that?’ [Coffroth] pulled open the desk, leaned over and got out his checkbook and wrote a check for $9,000! So that is how we got the Star of India.

In early 1929, at the age of 56, Coffroth retired, taking his profits and leaving the business of promoting for his home on Point Loma. His acquaintances later “credited his phenomenal luck with the timing of his retirement… six months before the stock market crash that swept so many fortunes before it.” Although he no longer raced from London to grab national headlines, “Sunny Jim” did not sit idly by during the fourteen years that remained. Instead, he used his golden years to travel and entertain friends from his past.
When James Wood Coffroth passed away on February 6, 1943, major newspapers recalled his exceptional contribution to the sporting world, often in stirring memorials. The United Press referred to him as a “pioneer sports figure” who “was probably the most successful promoter boxing and horse racing ever knew.”

Unfortunately, the Point Loma park planned to honor his memory was never built. Today, over a century after the ‘Dean of Sports Promoters’ first made his presence known, signs of his lasting impression can be found in San Diego at the Star of India and in boxing circles around the world.

NOTES

1. San Diego Tribune, December 1, 1944. Today, a single-family home is built on the southeastern corner of Chatsworth and Homer.


5. Ibid, 54.


7. Los Angeles Times, June 23, 1895.


16. Ibid.


33. “One Hundred Dead, Two More Valleys Flooded,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 1916. Known as the “rainmaker,” Charles Hatfield claimed to be able cause precipitation using a secret mixture of chemicals. In 1915, the San Diego City Council commissioned Hatfield to use his technique to fill the local reservoirs. Not long after reaching an agreement with Hatfield, San Diego experienced devastating floods.


35. “Many Horses Go From San Diego to Other Tracks,” *San Diego Union*, February 24, 1918.


38. Ibid.


40. Ibid.


42. Ibid.


44. Ibid.


46. Ibid.
Felipa Osuna: “The Oldest Resident of Old Town in 1878”

Translated and Edited by Rose Marie Beebe and Robert Senkewicz

Introduction

After speaking with Juana Machado, another San Diego Californiana, Thomas Savage interviewed Felipa Osuna. Her ancestry symbolized the close-knit and interrelated nature of many members of the Californio community. Her maternal grandmother was María Feliciana de Arballo, the widow whose behavior on the second Anza expedition had so upset Father Pedro Font. María Feliciana was also the maternal grandparent of Josefita Carrillo, whom Henry Cerruti had interviewed more than two years previously. Felipa Osuna's paternal grandparents were Juan Ismerio de Osuna and María Ignacia Alvarado. They were also the paternal grandparents of Miguel Avila, whose widow, María Inocenta Pico, Savage himself would interview in less than three months’ time.

Juan Ismerio de Osuna had been a member of the presidio company at Loreto, in Baja California, and was a member of the Portolá expedition in 1769. After the expedition he returned to Baja California, where he continued in the military. In 1774, Governor Felipe de Barri sent him as a special courier with some important reports he wished to send to Mexico City. He went to Alta California in the 1770s and served at the San Diego presidio and with the mission guard at San Gabriel. He died at that mission in 1790. In 1806 Juan María Osuna, son of Juan Ismerio de Osuna and María Ignacia Alvarado, married Juliana Josefa López, daughter of Francisco López and María Feliciana de Arballo, at Mission San Diego. Their second child, María Felipa de Jesús Catarina Osuna, was born in 1809. In 1834, Felipa Osuna married Juan María Marrón, a seaman and trader who had settled in San Diego around 1821. At least three children survived into adulthood.

Felipa Osuna's husband and father were both very involved in public life in the San Diego area. They were both involved in the movement against Governor Victoria in 1831. Her father received Rancho San Dieguito in the early 1830s. Her husband served as regidor, elector, and juez suplente before 1845, when he was made administrator of the former mission of San Luis Rey. He was chosen alcalde of San Diego in 1846. Juan María Marrón was granted Rancho Agua Hedionda, just south and east of present-day Carlsbad, in the 1830s. Marrón began living there in 1839 or 1840. J. J. Warner testified that the rancho “had an adobe house, corrals,
cultivated fields, and a respectable stock of cattle and horses.” His family normally stayed there for the summer and fall and returned to San Diego in the winter. Marrón died on September 11, 1853. After the death of her husband, Felipa Osuna continued to live both at the rancho and in the city. She made frequent trips to Agua Hedionda throughout the 1850s. In the 1870s, Judge Benjamin Hayes called her the oldest resident of Old Town.

When Savage began his interview with Felipa Osuna, he seemed to want her to talk about her father and her husband. She gave him very brief descriptions of their careers. But as she was describing her husband’s tenure as administrator of the ex-mission of San Luis Rey, she began to defend his reputation against those who claimed that he was one of those who had despoiled the mission property for personal gain. She even cited a source—the mission inventory—as evidence for her judgment. Then she spent a great deal of time describing the final years of Father José María Zalvidea, who had spent forty years as a missionary in California. More than thirty years after his death, she was still very protective of him; she tended to attribute his more bizarre behavior to exhaustion resulting from his constant penances and his years of selfless dedication.

Felipa Osuna’s remembrance of Father Zalvidea’s death at San Luis Rey led her into a set of reminiscences about the war, since American troops had occupied the former mission in early 1847. Many Californios found themselves quite conflicted about how to react to the American invasion, and Felipa Osuna’s testimony offered a sharp illustration of the cross-currents that affected portions of the Californio community. On the one hand, she proudly remembered how she had hidden José Matías Moreno, Pío Pico’s secretary, from the Americans. Yet she was also bitter about the way in which the Californio forces had appropriated the one hundred head of cattle that Father Zalvidea had given her. She and her husband were accused by some of being on the side of the invaders, and her account
of those tension-filled months of late 1846 and early 1847 vividly captures the divisions within the community as the Americans were assuming control of the land.

As Felipa Osuna described the condition of her house during the war, she was reminded of her role in thwarting the Indian attack in San Diego, of which Juana Machado had earlier spoken to Savage. Felipa Osuna’s memories of the episode were mixed. While she was gratified that the attack had been prevented, she was greatly troubled by the violent retribution which some soldiers exacted against Indians living in the pueblo. Since she had been one of the informants against the Indians, she felt personally responsible for the summary executions of some Indians that had taken place then.

In his introduction to his interview with Felipa Osuna, Savage wrote, “Her memory is at fault upon many events that occurred in her earlier years. For that reason I gave up the hope I had entertained of getting much information from her on local matters.” That judgment was too harsh, and it indicated that Savage could be too focused on politics and battles to appreciate what he was hearing from the women he interviewed. Felipa Osuna’s testimonio was extremely valuable, recalling in a unique fashion the tensions, conflicts, and uncertainties that were so prominent a part of life in Mexican California in the 1830s and 1840s. California was economically opening to the world in that period, but indigenous peoples hostile to the Mexican presence were regaining ever more control of the southern boundaries. Relations between the peripheral territory of Alta California and the
metropolis of Mexico City were strained. Some Californians wanted to strengthen ties to the Mexican Republic, of which California was a part, while others desired to emulate Texas and become independent of Mexico. Still others believed that a viable future demanded some sort of affiliation with a European power or with the United States. Felipa Osuna’s testimonio captured California life in all of that tension and uncertainty.

**Recollections of Doña Felipa Osuna de Marrón, Native of San Diego, Where She Currently Lives, with Various Original Documents from the Private Files of This Same Señora, Who Gave Them to the Bancroft Library, 1878**

_This lady has been a widow 25 years, resides in San Diego, and is connected with most of the old families of the place, either by blood or marriage._

_She seems quite intelligent, but is entirely unable to remember dates, and her memory is at fault upon many events that occurred in her earlier years. For that reason I gave up the hope I had entertained of getting much information from her on local matters._

_She was very happy to learn that Mr. Bancroft was engaged upon a history of her native country from its earliest days and desired me to express to him her best wishes for his success._

_Thos. Savage_  
_North San Diego (old town)_  
_January 26, 1878_

_Madame Marrón told me that all her husband’s papers on public matters were burnt, that she had only such as relating to their real estate._

_I, Felipa Osuna de Marrón, was born at the old presidio of San Diego on May 1, 1809. My father was Juan María Osuna and my mother was Juliana López. My father was a soldier and a corporal of the San Diego company and served for many years. After his retirement, he established his residence in San Diego. Over a period of years he held the posts of regidor, síndico, alcalde, and justice of the peace. He had the satisfaction of earning the high regard of his peers. He died when he was about sixty years old._

_When I was about twenty years old, I married Juan María Marrón, a rancher. He also held positions in public office in San Diego and was the district elector. Finally, the government appointed him administrator of Mission San Luis Rey. Unfortunately, when he took over the mission, it was already in very bad shape. There were barely any agricultural fields left at the mission and there was very little in the storehouses. This was clear from the inventory that Don José Joaquín Ortega gave Marrón. Ortega was Marrón’s predecessor. The sad truth is that when Marrón was the mission administrator he did not receive any wages, yet he personally had to maintain the mission and the missionary, Father José María Zalvidea. For this reason, Father Zalvidea was so grateful to me and my husband. The Father had seen how José Joaquín Ortega was embezzling, and he continually reprimanded him for that in no uncertain terms. He even said that Señor Ortega had taken tables, planks, benches, and everything else that was in the storehouses._

_Because of statements like this, Señor Ortega and others were in the habit of saying that Father Zalvidea was crazy. In fact, whenever somebody came to visit, and even when he was by himself, Father Zalvidea would burst forth with those denunciations of Ortega._
Father Zalvidea would have moments of spiritual intensity. He could be heard speaking with the devil. He would then stamp his foot heavily on the ground and shout, “Go away, Satan. You are not going to upset me. You cannot have power over me.” This went on continuously, day and night, in the mission plaza, in the corridors, or in his own room.

During the final moments of Father Zalvidea’s life, Father Vicente Pascual Oliva, Doña Isidora Pico, Don Juan Avila, Doña Apolinaria Lorenzana, and many others came to the [San Luis Rey] mission to take Father Zalvidea to Mission San Juan Capistrano in a carreta that was very well-lined. When he found out that they were coming for him, he said, “Come on now, come on now. Yes, Lord, they are coming for me, but I cannot go because I am dying like a good soldier. I hear confessions and baptize here. What will this place be like without a Father?” Father Oliva and Doña Apolinaria told him that it was not possible for him to stay there. He was reluctant, but in the end, they decided that they would take him against his will the next morning. They paid no attention to what he was saying. He told them that I was taking very good care of him and that I had been like a mother to him. There was nothing he lacked. He said he did not want them to move him from there. He also said that everything he had in his trunks would be mine when he died. He had a little bit of money and a silver shell. They did not give me anything that was in the trunks. But before he died, he had given me the cows. When the American forces came, Californio troops ate all the cows. They did not leave me a single one.

Doña Apolinaria and I discussed the situation and I told her that Father Zalvidea was very weak and would not endure the trip. But since they were determined to take him the following morning, it would be wise to give him the last rites that evening, just in case. I said the same thing to Father Oliva, and they gave him the last rites.
That night, Father Zalvidea sent everybody out of his room. Doña Apolinaria thought that he would be able to travel, because he seemed so happy. His eyes were lively and he did not look like a man who was about to die. In the early morning the page came and informed us that he had just gone in to see Father Zalvidea and found him dead. That is what really happened. Father Zalvidea was so revered by everyone. Before he was buried, everybody cut off a little piece of his habit or his cord. He was practically left without any habit at all.

He had given me a large crucifix and another small one, and an image of the Virgen del Pilar. I still have these items. He also gave me a gold reliquary that he kept at the head of his bed. I left it there and somebody stole it from me. He was buried the next day after Mass on the left-hand side of the altar. His predecessor, Father Francisco, was buried on the other side. After the burial, people came on behalf of the Fathers and demanded that I turn over the one hundred cows, but the Californio soldiers had already eaten them. Even if I had them, I would not have turned them over.

Mission San Luis Rey was sold by Governor Pico to José Antonio Pico and José Antonio Cota. In 1846, José Antonio Pico came and told my husband that he was now the administrator and that the mission was his. My husband told him, “Well, I will hand over the mission to you just as I received it.” Pico did not take it and left for Pala. Later, Don Juan Forster came to take possession of the mission in the name of the buyers, right when Frémont’s troops were approaching. Forster left my husband in charge of the mission so he could manage it for the owners.

Magdalena Baca, the wife of Lieutenant José Antonio Pico, would tell me, “This mission is now mine.” I answered her, “Mi-a-u (meow) says the cat. The people who are going to own the mission are already coming from over there.” [Lt. Col. John C.] Frémont entered the mission with troops at about one or two o’clock in the afternoon and left the following morning. My husband was at his rancho, Agua Hedionda, so the Americans decided to wait for him. I was so frightened, but they were not disrespectful to me at all. They did not ask me for anything. After my husband arrived, the Americans did a thorough check of the mission and then left to set up camp by El Chorro.

When those troops arrived, Don José Matías Moreno was having an afternoon snack with me. Don José was the secretary for the governor’s office. Moreno had told me that my cousin, Pío Pico, was fleeing and was hiding at Santa Margarita. I left Don Matías seated in the sala and casually went over to the door. All of a sudden I saw the entire mission surrounded and the corridor filled with armed foreigners. Very agitated, I shouted, “My dear Don Matías, the entire place is filled with armed men. They surely are coming for you.” He said he did indeed think they were coming for him. He was very frightened and said, “God help José Matías Moreno ca, 1860s. © SDHS 1261.
me. Where can I hide?” He wanted to hide in one of the large cupboards in the last room, but I told him not to, because they would easily find him there. The situation was very tense and there was no time to ponder. Don Juan Rowland was on his way with the troops. I did not want to leave until Don Matías was well hidden. I came up with an idea. He could pretend to be sick. First he would have to get undressed, tie a rag around his head, and then climb into bed in a nearby room.

When Don Juan Rowland asked me about the administrator, I said that he had gone to our rancho and would return shortly. Rowland saw that I was shaking, so he approached me and told me not to be afraid, nothing was going to happen to me. He then told me that they had come to the mission in search of the governor and his secretary. I told them they could not enter the mission without my husband being there. Rowland told me that they had no intention of showing any disrespect and would not enter. Then I said, “Well, if you want to come in, you can search the whole house. You will only find a nephew of mine who is sick in bed,” and I pointed to the room. The bed was at the entrance to the room. After my husband arrived and had taken off his spurs, they searched the house. Very quickly and in a low voice I told my husband what I had said to Rowland about my “nephew” so that he would be forewarned. They went in, walked around the room, and looked at the “sick person.” They did not suspect him to be the secretary. Aside from that search, they did not do anything else.

If Don Matías Moreno had hidden himself where he had suggested, they would have caught him the minute they searched the cupboards. When they were unable to open the door of an upstairs storage area, because the key was lost, they knocked down the door. They thought that the secretary was in there, but they realized they had made a mistake. That night they camped by El Chorro.

After the men who had conducted the search left, Don Matías got up and sent for Don Santiago Emilio Argüello, who was with the Americans. Argüello was a friend of his. I could not understand why he did something so crazy. As soon as I discovered that he had sent that message, I became very angry and told him to saddle up and leave immediately. And he did just that. He left on a magnificent horse that my husband had. He mounted the horse and had barely gotten through the back gate of the mission when a party arrived with Santiago Emilio Argüello and Captain Gillespie in the lead. They wanted to see Moreno, but we said that he had already left. Gillespie became very angry with my husband and made him leave the mission. They sent search parties out in all directions but they were not able to catch Don Matías. He later told me that he watched his pursuers from a vantage point where he could not be detected. He knew that Pío Pico was hiding at Santa Margarita and went there to meet up with him. Later, they were able to go to Baja California.
I never suspected that the Americans would have been looking for Don Matías Moreno or we would not have been so careless. He was within an inch of being caught.

Very shortly after, my husband and I went back to our rancho.

My husband never got involved in the intrigues of those times.

When the Americans took San Diego, my husband brought me here. When the Californio forces under the command of Leonardo Cota and José Alipaz were around these parts, my husband went to the rancho and left me behind here. The Californios seized him and wanted to make him go with them to fight against the Americans. San Diego was full of Americans. Don Miguel Pedrorena, Don Santiago Emilio Argüello, Don Pedro C. Carrillo, and others had sided with the Americans. We, the women, all left our homes and gathered together at the Estudillo home. The Californios were coming down from the small fort they had erected on the hill. I wanted to go and be with my husband, but he had to obtain permission from Alipaz and Cota to come and take me away from there. That is why we raised a white flag at the house. Alipaz and Cota told Marrón that he would not be seized by the Americans because he was on good terms with Pedrorena, Argüello, and Carrillo. Those at the Estudillo home allowed him to enter because the Californios saw me waving a white flag. After he entered, I felt bad because Pedrorena and a party of Americans went out to receive him. They seized his horse and weapons and took him to the barracks. Since he was delayed here for a number of days and had not returned to the Californios’ camp with me, they believed he had gone over to the American side and became very angry with him. The delay was because he had not been able to obtain the safe-conduct pass from the commodore.

We were very anxious to go and reunite with our countrymen. I was very afraid of the Americans because they were undisciplined troops. We finally managed to leave under our word of honor that we would not take up arms against the United States. They gave us a safe-conduct pass and wherever we met up with American troops, we showed them the paper and they let us pass. My husband, our children,
and I traveled on foot. We thought that we would be welcomed at the mission by our countrymen but discovered that they were furious with Marrón and even wanted to shoot him. The Californios had taken all of the horses from our rancho. They made us go on foot to Agua Hedionda. I stayed there. They took my husband and all of the non-Indian servants with them. They accused my husband of sending messages to the Americans, which is something that had never occurred to him. He was in great danger of being killed by them.

In the end, my husband pretended to be very ill, so they allowed him to go back to the rancho to recover. All of the Californio forces in the area would come early in the morning and take our cattle. That is how we lost a large part of our cattle and the cattle that Father Zalvidea had given me. During the time they kept my husband prisoner, the Indians helped me gather a good deal of corn, beans, and a large amount of grain, and we hid everything in chamizales. That is how we were able to have food to eat when the war ended.

The accusations that Marrón and I were allied with the Americans did not cease. My husband was upset that his countrymen would treat him this way and that they were making off with all his possessions. So, soon after the battle of San Pascual, my husband wrote a letter to the commodore and asked him if he could return to San Diego. The commodore responded and told him he could come back and so could anyone else for that matter. Everyone would be welcomed and no one would be harmed.

My children went about recovering what few cattle remained. The Californios thought my children were doing this for them! One day, around three or four o'clock in the afternoon, we left the rancho with two carretas loaded with birds and anything else we could gather up. We also had a flock of lambs and some cattle that we were trying to hurry along. We traveled on foot, while others went on horseback or in carretas. We traveled all night along the beach and arrived at Teco-lote at dawn as the cornet was sounding reveille in the plaza. My husband waved a white flag and they immediately came to receive us and allowed us to enter. The flock of lambs and the cattle stayed behind. The commodore provided my husband with some men to help him bring the animals in. Commodore Stockton always showed my husband great kindness.

The Americans were stunned when they saw the lances carried by some of the
men who came with my husband. These were men who had fought in the battle of
San Pascual. Among them were Jesús Machado and my brother, Leandro Osuna.9
My brother was the person who killed Captain Antonio, the man who attacked
Andrés Pico.10 The bandolier of my brother’s lance was bloodstained. I saw that the
Americans appeared to be angry with him and were making hostile gestures. I
feared that we were going to have trouble, but they did not do anything to us. Two
days later, the cattle arrived and the Americans were very happy. My countrymen
were in for a huge disappointment the day after we left the rancho. When they
came for cattle, as usual, there was not a single soul at the rancho except for the
Indians. The doors were closed, so they knocked them down and did other dam-
age. They took whatever they could find of value, but they did not dare follow us,
because they believed that the commodore had sent an escort to accompany Mar-
rón to San Diego. Some of the Californios would come as far as the little hill, but
they were not bold enough to go any farther than that.

The Californios always went to the little hill to shout shameless remarks and
spew threats. Frequently, some of them would enter San Diego at night. One day,
they fired a shot from the small fort. Pedrorena and I were headed to my home and
the shot just missed Pedrorena’s leg as it flew. He reacted by taking off his hat and
bowing to the Californios.

The Americans had the house in which I am currently living completely sur-
rrounded by trenches and embrasures. Some of Frémont’s men were mercenaries,
and one day they robbed our home. Robberies became almost commonplace until
the commodore arrived to begin his march to Los Angeles. We were then well pro-
tected and received daily rations.

On December 29, 1846, Commodore [Robert] Stockton, General [Stephan Watts] w,
and a respectable force left San Diego for Los Angeles. There were no longer
any Californio troops in these parts. We stayed in San Diego and divided our time
between here and the rancho.

The commodore bought all the cattle, sheep (about one thousand), and other
things that we had brought from the rancho. He paid for everything in cash. The
only things they still owed us for were the twenty-five good horses that Gillespie
took and a few other items my husband forgot to list on his claim. After I was wid-
owed, I received a payment order from the government for the twenty-five horses. A
man took it from me to collect the money and never brought the money back to me.

One day, when I was in this same house, I saw that some Indians were talk-
ing to my gardener, a Diegueño Indian named Juan. I already had been noticing
that every afternoon other Indians would come and speak with him. Since I
understood the Indian language, I took great care to find out what they were talk-
ing about on that particular day. They did not have the slightest idea that I could
understand them, so they spoke frankly. They began by saying that they had for-
mulated a plan to rob Captain Fitch’s store and kill Lawrence Hatwell. Then they
planned to take Fitch’s wife and me with them. Captain Fitch was away on a trip
and he had asked my husband and me to spend the nights at his house during
that time. The Indians who were engaged in that conversation with my gardener
were two Indians from the Fitch home and a fellow named Juan Antonio who was
a cook at the Estudillo home. From their various conversations, I discovered that
they had *jaras* prepared at the old presidio. After they finally had said when they
would put their plan into action, I thought I should warn my husband and alert
Señora Fitch. The plan was for the Indians to enter the Fitch home in the evening
when she was kneading bread. They would kill Hatwell, rob the store, and take
both of us out through the back door to the horses they would have ready and
waiting.

After I warned my husband, he notified Hatwell but told him that he did not
know if it was true or not. At nightfall, I went to the Fitch home. It was already
dark when Josefa Carrillo de Fitch began to knead bread in the dining room. Two
tall, strong Indians came and stood right in the doorway as if to block the path.
Hatwell and my husband were prepared and they went and grabbed them. The
Indians did not put up a fight.

Very early the next morning, Alférez Macedonio González arrived in the pueblo
with some armed men. One of the men was José María Soto. They set out to look
for the Indians but as soon as the Indi-

ans began to get suspicious, they realized
that they had no place to hide. González
seized the two Indians from the Fitch
home and Juan Antonio, the Indian from
the Estudillo home. My Indian had left
very early to look for firewood, and he
was never seen again. There was another
Indian, named Carrancio, and I believe
a few others. I do not know exactly how
many were shot. I only know about the
three main players. They were taken to
the *juzgado*. From what they said in their
statements, they appeared to be guilty.
Macedonio González ordered that they
be shot right then and there. This was the
same place where Kearny’s dragoons who

![Josefa Bandini Carillo ©SDHS #16700-3.](image)
died at San Pascual were later buried. Many more were captured, but not all were sentenced to death. I know that one Indian from the Bandini home was set free, but he suffered for the rest of his life until he died.

When I saw how much the Indians suffered, it caused me great sorrow knowing that I had informed against them. It distressed me greatly. The judge, Don José Antonio Estudillo, did not approve of the violent methods Macedonio used with the Indians. However, I must confess that the punishment produced a very beneficial effect, because after that, there were no more robberies by Indians in San Diego. Before that, we were on constant alert because there were always rumors that the Indians were coming to attack us.

One night the Indians attacked Pío Pico’s Rancho Jamul. His family had come to San Diego. The Indians killed the mayordomo, Juan Leiva, and other gente de razón. They took two young girls with them, Tomasa and Ramona, and nothing has ever been learned about their fate. Their mother appeared in San Diego, naked, with her little son Claro.

I do not remember when those events happened.

Felipa Osuna de Marrón
by Thomas Savage
North San Diego
January 26, 1878
Felipa Osuna: “The Oldest Resident of Old Town”

It was painful to see Macedonio’s people running after the Indians like a pack of hunting dogs. Some of the Indians were pulled out of their homes, others were lassoed as they tried to run away, terrified. One of the Indians came into my house and begged me to hide him, but his pursuers saw him go in and he was caught. I was so sorry that I had informed on the conspirators. The other women also felt sorry for the Indians and accused me of causing the whole thing. How could I have concealed a conspiracy against the lives, liberty, and possessions of so many people? They would have died. What would have been the fate of the women of San Diego if the Indians had seized them? It was confirmed that the Indians who were shot had been conspiring with the hostile Indians from the outside. They may have confessed to this, but I did not hear them say anything about it when they were talking in our garden.
NOTES


5. Land Case 238, Southern District (Agua Hedionda).


7. She was referring to Francisco González de Ibarra, who died in 1842.

8. Magdalena Baca said, “Ahora esta mission es mía.” Felipa Osuna de Marrón was mocking Baca by exaggerating the pronunciation of the word “mía” to make it sound like the “meow” or “miau” (Spanish) of a cat.


10. At the Battle of San Pasqual, Captain Benjamin D. Moore first shot at Andrés Pico, the Californio commander, but he missed. Moore then charged at Pico with his sword, but he was killed by the lances of several Californio soldiers who were near Pico. Lieutenant Thomas C. Hammond came to assist Moore, but he was also struck by a lance, and he died two hours later. See Neal Harlow, California Conquered: The Annexation of a Mexican Province (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 185.

This depiction of Andrés Pico at the former mission of San Fernando was drawn by Edward Vischer in 1865. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
Exhibit Review
Fabulous Fashions: San Diego Style

The San Diego Historical Society’s costume exhibit featuring *Fabulous Fashions: San Diego Style* opened on October 1, 2009, in the Museum of San Diego History to celebrate eighty years of remarkable dresses worn by outstanding San Diegans throughout the city’s history. An appreciative and stylish crowd viewed the exhibit designed by Timothy Long, Curator of Costumes at the Chicago History Museum, who created a magical setting with the support and expertise of the society’s curatorial staff. San Diego’s history was graphically presented with the life-size manikins expertly shaped to show off the elegant formal and casual wear of yesterday’s San Diego. Each article of clothing on exhibit was worn by a local San Diegan whose biographical sketch contributes to the story of “who was who” in the city’s past.

The San Diego Historical Society’s renowned costume collection includes more than 7,000 items, including clothing for women, men, and children together with accessories. The collection ranges from military uniforms to beachwear, from
Halloween costumes to formal wear. It documents the entire span of San Diego’s history. Highlights include late 18th and early 19th century items brought to California by the first settlers and an incredible array of elegant dresses and evening gowns dating from the Gilded Age of the 1870s to the present.

The Historical Society, which began to assemble material as soon as the organization was founded over 80 years ago, has made the costume collection one of San Diego’s greatest treasures. Today the Society’s holdings represent one of the largest historical costume collections on the West Coast. New material is constantly being added through the generosity and interest, of San Diegans. The exhibit will continue until April 1, 2010.

Because of the glamour associated with costumes, exhibitions featuring selections from the collection have been extremely popular. Costumes are also important historical documents; they chronicle changing tastes and values and help us understand our collective past. The San Diego Historical Society Costume Council, celebrating its twentieth year, helped preserve and share this important collection with the people of San Diego and the world. The Council, founded in
September 1989, was modeled after similar organizations at the Chicago History Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Houston Museum of Fine Arts. When the idea was introduced, a group of nearly fifty San Diego women and organizations stepped forward and contributed $1,000 each to get the organization started. A majority of these individuals remain involved with the Costume Council today. They are among those who are responsible for organizing the Costume Council’s 20th anniversary benefit Fabulous Fashions: San Diego Style. Many loaned dresses for the Society’s benefit gala on September 17 that helped support the exhibit and are also members of the Costume Council’s current Steering Committee. These include: Tommi Adelizzi, Claudia Allen, Chris Andrews, Elizabeth Bergen, Linda Canada, Fran Golden, Ann Jones, Bess Lambron, Yvonne Larsen, Lynn Mooney, Pat O’Connor, Kay Porter, Mary Sadler, Judy Smith, Linda Spuck, Janet Sutter, Joy Urich, Carolyn Waggoner, and Nell Waltz.

Over the years the Costume Council has raised funds to help preserve the collection and support major exhibitions such as Bustles to Bikinis, Zandra Rhodes, Scasai, and Arlene Fisch. In celebration of the Costume Council’s 20th anniversary, we would like to pay special tribute to those pioneers who included:

Alice Almeraz, Betty Bass, Mary Fair Berglund, Jeanne Brace, Kathleen Buymaster, Coolley Carley, Kathryn Colachis, Alice Cramer, Ruth Crawford, Martha Culbertson, Bea Epsten, Annette Ford, Martha Gafford, Anne Gilchrist, Ann Gottfredson, Dottie Mae Haggerty, Jody Honnen, Dorothy Johnston, Anne Jones, Pattie Laddner, Yvonne Larsen, Jeanne K. Lawrence, Karon Luce, Betty Mabee, Barbara McColl, Virginia Monday, Suzzi Moore, Beverley Muchnic, Kathryn Murphy, Neiman Marcus, Marie Olesen, Marilyn Pavel, Kay Porter, Lois Roon, Margaret Sell, Marsha Sewell, Maggie Silverman, Judith Smith, Mary Smyk, Jean Stern, Janet Sutter, Sally B. Thornton, Dixie Unruh, Barbara Walbridge, Dorene Whitney, D’Neane Wilkinson, Carolyn Yorston, Diana Young and Marilyn Young.

Costume Council Committee Members L to R (Back) Virginia Monday, Barbara ZoBell, Jeff Dunigan, Kate Adams. L to R (Front) Judy Smith, Katy Dessent. Photo by J. Dhein.

Reviewed by Brian I. Daniels, Departments of Anthropology and History, University of Pennsylvania.

Just Before Sunset is Lora L. Cline’s account of the Kwaaymii, a sub-tribe of southern California’s Kumeyaay. Originally published in 1984, this book is now in its third printing as the definitive account of the Native Americans from the Laguna Mountain region. However, the volume is not without its flaws.

Cline’s account of the Kwaaymii comes from her conversations with Tom Lucas, a Kwaaymii man who lived between 1903 and 1989. This book is his story as much as Cline’s. Lucas had a lifelong concern with preserving his culture, and worked with a number of anthropologists and local historians in the San Diego region. Readers interested in his life and views on the Kwaaymii should also consult Richard L. Carrico’s interview, “A Brief Glimpse of the Kumeyaay Past: An Interview with Tom Lucas, Kwaaymii, of Laguna Ranch” in the second issue of this journal’s 1983 volume.

Just Before Sunset is modeled upon the style of ethnography written by anthropologists at the beginning of the twentieth century. These conventions were popularized on the West Coast by Alfred L. Kroeber, the University of California, Berkeley anthropologist who authored the comprehensive Handbook of California Indians for the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1925. Cline provides a brief biographical sketch of Tom Lucas, and discusses, in turn, Kwaaymii economics, social customs, political organization, life events, legends, spirituality, and missionary contacts. These sections are highly idealized, abstract descriptions of what life might have been like for the Kwaaymii if they had remained untouched by a history that brought Spanish colonists, missionaries, Mexican settlers, and Americans into southern California.

However, the Kwaaymii have a history, and the world that Cline describes for the Kwaaymii in these pages is very different from the one lived by Tom Lucas. The eagle sacrifices, the Karuk dances, the seasonal migration into the high mountains, the Taakaayp puberty ceremony for boys, the council of headman, shaman, and elders: these were all things that Lucas had either heard about from others or remembered vaguely from his early childhood. The book is based upon memory culture – how Tom Lucas understood his tribe’s culture to be before the colonization of Alta California. Native American lifeways in southern California were changing for generations before Lucas’s birth, and in the twentieth century, Native Americans, like Lucas, made choices to cherish some cultural practices and forget others, as they began to participate in the American economic and political life of rural San Diego County. Lucas’s life was emblematic of these changes: he learned the traditional ways as a youngster, but went to an English-language public school. He worked as a rancher near his home, and found full-time employment in the building industry with the Civilian Conservation Corps on the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base and for the Hazard contracting firm. The world Cline describes
as the reality of authentic Kwaaymii culture did not exist for Lucas. Yet no one would doubt Lucas’s claim of having an authentic Kwaaymii identity.

Perhaps this book is most valuable for anyone searching for the treasured pieces of Kwaaymii culture that Lucas recounted to Cline. It should not be read literally for what it was like for Lucas to live as a Kwaaymii. What we do not get a sense of is how Lucas, or other Kumeyaay around him, actually survived as a Native American people. Absent are their struggles, their bureaucratic wrangling with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, their hopes of preserving a Kwaaymii cultural identity, and their experiences as indigenous people in American society. The photographs throughout the book reveal this contradiction. The images show Native Americans organizing for political rights in 1920, building and living in stone cabins, plowing on horseback, riding in the rodeo, grinding seeds in a stone mortar, and weaving baskets. What was life like for the Kwaaymii in these photographs? In recounting the way Cline imagines the Kwaaymii to have been, the book fails to tell the story of the way they actually were.

The book’s title, Just Before Sunset, gives the impression it was written at the twilight of the Kwaaymii, implying an end for a unique culture and outlook upon the world. But Lucas’s world had already changed; it was the task of his generation to preserve the notion of Kwaaymii identity and pass it on. Today, Lucas’s daughter, Carmen, a member of the Laguna Band of Mission Indians, advocates for the preservation of sacred Native American sites and burial grounds throughout southern California. She may not live as her ancestors did, but it is through her efforts, and the efforts of others like her, that the sun has not set upon the Kwaaymii.


Reviewed by Abraham Hoffman, Department of History, Los Angeles Valley College.

Teachers of California history now have the story of a second Mexican Californian woman whose life spanned most of the 19th century. Arcadia Bandini Stearns has long held a position of eminence in southern California: the city of Arcadia is named for her and her life story is included in numerous accounts of California’s transition from Mexican province to American state. The story of Juana Briones offers a northern California analog. Although she was not politically involved, she exercised considerable influence in the development of the San Francisco Bay Area and was well acquainted with some of the most notable figures in California’s history during her lifetime. While biographical details are scant, especially for Briones’s early years, Jeanne Farr McDonnell has combed numerous archives for information about a remarkable, if unremarked, woman.

Born in 1802, Juana Briones grew up in Branciforte, now an appendage of Santa Cruz. She lived in an environment of missions, presidios, and ranchos. Her marriage to Apolinaro Miranda produced numerous children and considerable grief, as her husband was abusive. Eventually the couple separated, and Juana demon-
strated she could function quite well without a husband. She acquired a reputation as a healer and midwife, successfully ran farms, dairies, and ranches, and participated fully in the early growth of San Francisco during the Gold Rush era. In fact, Juana Briones proved quite shrewd in her purchase and sale of strategically located real estate. She survived the challenges of land-hungry Anglos, and she lived to see her children and grandchildren become successful in the state’s growing economy. Juana Briones continued to be active in her business endeavors until her death in 1889.

McDonnell succeeds in providing a fresh perspective on California history as seen from the viewpoint of a Californio woman who lived through war, Gold Rush, technological innovations, and personal difficulties. The paucity of primary sources dealing with Briones’s life necessitated the writing of a book that is more about her life and times than purely biographical. McDonnell fills in the blanks with extended discussions of what was going on in California in Briones’s life, so the perspective includes Native Americans, Californios, Anglo businessmen and prospectors, and events that range from major to trivial (as in reporting the size of a prize-winning pumpkin). McDonnell has to resort here and there to “probably,” “possibly,” “may have,” and other conjectures, but she does so in a skillful style that keeps the narrative coherent. In telling the story of an ordinary woman who lived through extraordinary times, McDonnell has written a book that teachers and students of the state’s history will find entertaining as well as informative.


Reviewed by Raymond Starr, Professor Emeritus of History, San Diego State University.

San Diego State University language professor Leland Fetzer fell in love with the Cuyamacas soon after his arrival in San Diego in the 1960s. He hiked and visited the area and eventually built a cabin there. Inspired by his personal connection to the area, Fetzer started writing about the Cuyamacas, beginning with a very charming, very personal book, A Year in the Cuyamacas (1998). He later wrote A Good Camp: Gold Mines of Julian and the Cuyamacas (2002), as well as a detour away from the mountains, San Diego County Place Names A to Z (2005). Despite all this, he still had many questions about the Cuyamacas. As did many others, he saw the need for, as he put it, “a readable, documented history of the Cuyamacas, one arranged in chronological outline that traced a sequence of cause and effect, and one with enough details to give it heft” (p. xii). With The Cuyamacas: The Story of San Diego’s High Country, Professor Fetzer has admirably met that need.

Fetzer begins the book with the requisite physical description of the mountains, explaining their altitude, climate, flora, and fauna. He also describes the Native Americans who lived there before whites arrived, and who still have a role in the Cuyamacas. With that foundation, the author proceeds with a narrative account of the human history of the mountains since the Spanish arrived.
Fetzer starts this narrative with a detailed description of the early travelers – Spanish, American, and others – who traversed the mountains, beginning in 1772 with Pedro Fages. Given the scarcity of reliable records, Fetzer must engage in speculation about the routes taken by the various travelers, but his judgments are reasonable and believable. Unfortunately, the presentation is severely hampered by the lack of a map (or maps) showing the features mentioned in the narrative. The casual reader will find these chapters tedious; the scholar will find them a useful record of early travel through the area.

The next section details the early white settlement of the region, most of which came after the American accession of the area in 1848. Important economic activities in this period included ranching and land speculation, as well as mining, which really brought the first significant settlements. This section details the origins of Julian and Banner City and includes the social history of the communities. Especially after the 1880s, agriculture and ranching became important, as did land development, and some of the towns matured into more permanent settlements. White settlement meant increased contact and conflict with the Native Americans, which eventually involved the creation of numerous small Indian reservations in the Cuyamacas. Fetzer also discusses the development of water resources. This section is well done, and is one of the most important insofar as the history of the Cuyamacas intersects with that of the city of San Diego and its suburbs.

After 1910, life in the Cuyamacas was dominated by the impact of the automobile, which brought a series of roads, more platting of subdivisions, and an increase in resorts, second homes, and permanent settlement in the region. It has also, in more recent times, brought issues of population density, quality of life, protection of the environment, and scarcity of water into the mainstream of San Diego County politics and public policy. One of the most important steps in preserving the natural endowments of the mountain range came with the establishment of Cuyamaca State Park, as well as some other parks. This story is well told, as is the story of the series of destructive fires that culminated in the 2004 conflagration, which Fetzer rightly calls a “holocaust.”

In examining a range of topics, Fetzer creates a readable narrative based on solid research. He is a good story teller, and his ability to capture effectively in just a few sentences the personalities of the people involved makes the story interesting to read, and also often helps explain motivation of those involved. The research for the book has been prodigious; I can think of few sources he could have examined but did not. The ten page bibliography is a fantastic research tool for future scholars, and is by itself worth the price of the book.

This is an admirable book in which Leland Fetzer meets his objective of providing a readable narrative history of the Cuyamacas that helps interpret the region and how it has developed over time. Every scholar of the Cuyamacas, of San Diego regional history, or of California history must have this volume in his or her library. The thousands of Southern Californians who love and visit San Diego’s high country will want to read the book, and possibly carry it in their car when they travel to the Cuyamacas.

Reviewed by Deborah Lawrence, Associate Professor of English, Emeritus, California State University, Fullerton.

In the spring of 1849, Sarah Bayliss Royce traveled the California Trail to the goldfields of California with her husband and their two-year-old daughter. She kept a record of their overland journey and her early experiences in Gold Rush California. This diary was used as the basis for the memoir Royce wrote when she was sixty years old. Published posthumously in 1932 as A Frontier Lady, the narrative was written at the request of her son, the philosopher Josiah Royce, and not for publication. Jennifer Dawes Adkison’s recent edition of Royce’s narrative, entitled Across the Plains: Sarah Royce’s Western Narrative, restores several passages that were omitted from the previous edition, providing a more thorough text. This new printing is thus a welcome arrival for the casual reader and scholar alike.

Scholars of overland trails have long celebrated Royce’s narrative for its graphic descriptions of obstacles that overlanders faced – accidents, storms, Indian scares, cattle stampedes, and illness – as well as the difficulties of domestic life on the trail and the challenges of preserving a stable sense of family. Her text is also an invaluable source of information about life in early California: the Sacramento flood, one of San Francisco’s great fires, and life in the mining camps. In addition to the social dynamic and domestic details, her account chronicles the scenery of the California Trail. On July 26, for example, Royce’s group reached Independence Rock, and Royce was determined to ascend the landmark. Once atop the granite outcrop, she describes the landscape below with an enthusiastic eye and recalls how the view “fully paid for the labor” of the climb. Moreover, the western landscape Royce is passing through is a place for her to converse with God. In times of despair, she prays to God and believes she walks with him. At one point as she crosses the desert, Royce not only sees the biblical Hagar, but she imagines herself as Abraham’s outcast slave, wandering alone in the barren wastes.

The personal writings of westering women such as Royce were largely overlooked until the 1970s, but the scholarly investigation of these narratives has increased over the last two decades. The research by historians like Lillian Schlissel, Sandra Myres, and Glenda Riley has drawn attention not only to women’s presence on the frontier, but to the ways women’s writings reveal a feminine perspective on the experience of western expansion. Indeed, as most recent trends in the field suggest, the attention currently being paid to the personal writings of frontier women has changed the way the history of the West is being written. Take Royce’s account as an example. Although the stereotype of life on the frontier emphasizes the isolated individual, Royce’s reminiscence serves to highlight the central role of women, not only as a part of the overland movement, but as players in the development of communities in frontier areas. Emphasizing a Christian woman’s responsibility to maintain the morality in the community, Royce notes, for instance, how some of the “respectable” women in San Francisco formed the Benevolent Society to change the town’s social atmosphere, especially its open acceptance of sexual immorality. According to Royce, the presence of “respectable”
women preserved the communal bonds of friendship and family in frontier areas.

Current scholarship is illuminating women’s nineteenth-century letters, diaries, and journals from a literary perspective. As a result, while early research on Royce focused on her text as a historical artifact, recent scholars have considered how Royce uses literary strategies for a specific rhetorical purpose to construct her own persona, to configure the trail west, and to dramatize her struggle to adapt to life on the frontier. Thus, the new edition of *Across the Plains* is not only timely, but the five restored passages, which vary in length from several lines to several pages, give professional scholars and interested non-academics alike a text that is closer to Royce’s original narrative. Additionally, the introduction offers an interesting discussion of Royce’s self-conscious construction of her text and the ways she authorizes her own writing. And, for readers not familiar with Royce, Adkison’s introduction places Royce in the context of her time and provides a discussion of Royce as a western writer. Unfortunately, however, Adkison provides very few explanatory notes for the memoir itself, forcing the inquisitive reader to look to outside sources. This is especially unfortunate for readers unfamiliar with the westward journey and Gold Rush California.

That flaw aside, this new edition of Royce’s narrative, *Across the Plains*, is a valuable contribution to western studies. Its publication is certainly welcome.


Reviewed by Timothy G. Lynch, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Maritime Policy and Management, The California Maritime Academy, California State University.

The story of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company is an important tale in the maritime history of the West Coast. From its founding in 1848, through the tumultuous years of the Gold Rush, and from its role as pioneer in trans-Pacific service and in the immigrant trade, the venerable company provides a window into many of the major transitions that marked the maritime industry and the region in which it operated. Yet for many years the story of Pacific Mail (and its subsequent iterations—Dollar and American President Lines) has been told as one divorced from the realities of the days in which it operated. This is unfortunate, since the company was a witness to, and transformative force in, many of the most relevant events in the maritime history of the American West Coast and of the Pacific Rim. As maritime archaeologist James Delgado testifies, this slim volume offers “the first in-depth look at the venerable Pacific Mail Steamship Company in more than fifty years.” While it is not the definitive treatment that one might expect, it is an enjoyable introduction to an important player in America’s maritime history.

The book is the sixth and latest in a series of historical monographs published by the Friends of the San Francisco Maritime Library and is largely based on the collections housed there. Intended as a primer on the Pacific Mail Steamship Company,
the volume offers no overarching theme and at times reads a bit too hagiographic, where a more critical analysis would be appreciated. The book relates how the line secured a mail subsidy from the federal government, capitalized on the Gold Rush to reinvent itself as a passenger line, competed with startups that vied for Argonauts’ business, and ultimately succumbed to the challenge of railroad transportation. At times, the volume reads less like a historical study and more like a technical manual: the reader learns of the size of various Pacific Mail vessels, the average speed, time of transit, cost of passage, and countless other details. At others, the authors (one a trained historian, the other an avid collector of Pacific Mail ephemera whose rich collections grace virtually every page of this contribution) provide tantalizing information about the role the line played in “Asiatic” immigration, or how maritime disasters involving the company led to important policy changes and increased federal regulations. Regrettably, these are left relatively undeveloped, and serve only to frustrate, rather than educate the reader. (Thankfully a more serious academic treatment of Pacific Mail can be found in Robert Eric Barde’s *Immigration at the Golden Gate: Passenger Ships, Exclusion and Angel Island* (2008).) I suspect a more critical view of Pacific Mail, even when warranted, was not pursued out of a feeling that such a treatment would not find a receptive audience among the maritime enthusiasts for whom this book is intended.

Despite its shortcomings, the book is an important contribution, and should serve as a touchstone for future study. If nothing else the impressive visual imagery that accompanies the narrative—scarcely a page goes by without a lithograph, sketch, or other embellishment, and there are often multiple images per page—makes for a stunning appreciation of maritime art that grew up around Pacific Mail. Perhaps asking for a treatment of the historical controversy and significance that also followed the company would be beyond the scope of such a thin tome, but it is the hope of this reviewer that subsequent narratives will fill in these gaps and add to our understanding of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.


Reviewed by Joshua Paddison, Visiting Assistant Professor, American Cultures Studies Program, Loyola Marymount University.

“It is in the blood,” explained California’s U.S. Senator John F. Miller in 1880, joining a chorus of public figures who insisted that Chinese immigrants could never assimilate to white Christian society nor shed their essential foreignness. Marked as racially inferior and irredeemably pegan, Chinese Americans by the Civil War had replaced Native Americans as the most despised and marginalized group in California. In *Driven Out*, Jean Pfaelzer, a professor of English at the University of Delaware, shows how often xenophobic rhetoric exploded into anti-Chinese riots, lynchings, arson, and expulsions. Although it is strange to call the story of California’s anti-Chinese movement “forgotten,” given previous works on the subject by Elmer Sandmeyer, Gunther Barth, Stuart Creighton Miller, Alexan-
der Saxton, Sucheng Chan, Charles McClain, Judy Yung, George Anthony Peffer, Yong Chen, Susan Lee Johnson, and others, Pfaelzer provides a vividly written overview of the subject for a general audience.

Pfaelzer’s eight chapters move chronologically from the Gold Rush to the turn of the twentieth century, showing how Chinese Californians struggled to overcome harsh discrimination, harassment, exploitation, and violence. Drawing on secondary sources as well as newspapers and government documents, Pfaelzer emphasizes Chinese Americans’ attempts to improve their lives by sending petitions to the state legislature, issuing appeals, challenging unjust laws through the court system, going out on strike, and buying and using firearms against hostile white mobs. Such strategies usually yielded limited returns given the prevalence and brutality of anti-Chinese sentiment in the state. Pfaelzer’s two best chapters shed new light on the forced expulsion of three hundred Chinese Americans from Eureka in 1885 and the use of anti-Chinese boycotts in Truckee in 1886, two incidents that were replicated throughout the American West. Pfaelzer does an admirable job of locating the anti-Chinese movement within the broader race relations of post-Civil War America, devoting space to how the Chinese fared compared to Native Americans, African Americans, and Mexican Americans. She is attentive to how notions of gender and sexuality shaped anti-Chinese rhetoric, noting that the Chinese man was feminized “because he was short, because he wore his hair in a queue, because he had less body hair than Caucasian men did, [and] because he lived among men” (p. 139).

Yet the book also has many flaws. While it would be unfair to judge Driven Out by the scholarly standards of an academic monograph, even a book aimed at a popular audience should be consistent in its footnoting and rigorous in its interrogation of primary sources. Too often, Pfaelzer provides no documentation for her assertions and presents quoted material without analysis or consideration of the biases of the source. As in her book’s subtitle, she tends towards exaggeration, claiming that the “entire purpose” of the 1878 Constitutional Convention was to give workingmen the “tools to purge the state of Chinese immigrants” (p. 145) and also that “history is still unaware” of court cases like Yick Wo v. Hopkins (p. 250). She vastly underestimates the extent of pro-Chinese sympathy that existed in California before 1880—in fact, nearly half of the testimony at a Congressional hearing held in San Francisco in 1876 supported Chinese immigration. She notes that Congregationalist minister C. A. Huntington supported civil rights for the Chinese in Eureka but seems unaware that dozens of other white ministers similarly did so throughout the state, most prominently Presbyterian William Speer and Methodist Otis Gibson. Most seriously, in her attempt to portray the Chinese as heroic victims, she often de-emphasizes their own sometimes nasty cultural prejudices. For example, when she quotes a well-known plea for civil rights written by Chinese merchant Lai Chun-Chuen in 1855, Pfaelzer omits a passage where he objected to being lumped into the same class as Indians, who “know nothing about the relations of society; they know no mutual respect; they wear neither clothes nor shoes; they live in wild places and in caves.... Can it be possible that we are classed as equals with this uncivilized race of men?”

The media attention Driven Out has received—named a top book of 2007 by the New York Times and the San Francisco Chronicle, featured on television and radio programs throughout the country, and now issued in paperback by the Univer-
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sity of California Press – is a testament to the author’s fine writing skills and the compelling human drama of her subject. The attention also suggests that Pfalzer’s story, largely known to historians, may still be generally unknown to the American public. For fighting racial amnesia, Driven Out deserves credit.

**Under the Perfect Sun—Roundtable**

Jason Araujo

“This is a delightful climate…”
-Upton Sinclair

I never thought I would see a roundtable discussion of the book, Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See.¹

The book seemed destined to remain a piece of fringe history, too critical of our beloved Xanadu to be taken seriously by San Diego’s mainstream history establishment. The traditional approach to San Diego’s history is more concerned with appeasing the public than challenging it. Hence its obscurity in contrast to better-known works published about cities such as San Francisco and Oakland (American Babylon, Imperial San Francisco, and No There There, among others).²

The Journal of San Diego History’s recent roundtable discussion of the book should inspire people to consider that San Diego’s history can be more than overwrought reflections on the beauty of the bay, romantic histories of the Park, and descriptions of its “quaint” Mexican past. As Rudy P. Guevarra expressed in his roundtable essay, this work was indeed a breath of fresh air and deserves serious attention and consideration by both local academics as well as by those in the larger field of Western American studies. Though we all know there is more to San Diego than meets the eye, few residents and onlookers know much about its past or its present. Kyle Ciani writes that as a young tourist visiting San Diego from Arizona, she and her family were completely unaware of the political, cultural, and social reality of the city. Residents may not be uninformed when it comes to local history and politics, but the facts that they do know are often slanted by a subtle ideological interpretation.

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman’s review of the book in the San Diego Union Tribune criticized it for being just that: ideological.³ This type of reaction was not only predictable; it was prescribed. Criticisms of the book existed long before it was ever published, as the historical consciousness of “America’s Finest City” derives its most precious reflections and vehement reactions from historical approaches that are mostly narrow and benignly facile. The “Local Interest” section at any corporate bookstore turns up more tools for tourists than for locals, a sad fact that should disappoint all San Diegans. If we learned anything from Under the Perfect Sun it is that there exists little toleration for upsetting the status quo. It seems,

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though, that a discussion such as this one might change the face of local history for all stakeholders, for the public at large as well as for historians, and point towards its continued significance for the future.

*Under the Perfect Sun* is admittedly ideological. The authors do not pretend to be authoritative or holistic, stating unequivocally, “This is a partisan book” (italics mine). I was not at all disappointed by the fact that this remained to be true throughout the work. It is not surprising, then, that the discussion quickly split into predictable, and rather boring, camps: on the one side, advocates for a more socially aware interpretation of San Diego’s diverse history; on the other, those who believe this sort of interpretation is unwarranted given that the authors ignored or distorted facts. Despite the bicameral nature of the academic debate it is clear from Mayhew’s rich work that there are urgent situations in San Diego that are beyond dichotomization and equivocation. Her work is the culmination of the theses presented in the two previous essays: there exists, today, a large part of the San Diego population that remains marginalized and hidden due to both the whitewashing of the past as well as a contemporary need to see a false image in the mirror, not a real one.

Cobbs Hoffman wonders why people continue to immigrate to San Diego when Mike Davis seems to insist that San Diego is a “pretty wretched place to live.” Are imbedded rhetorical questions really a form of criticism, cultural, academic, or otherwise? The contributors to *Under the Perfect Sun* hardly believe that San Diego is an undesirable place to live; in fact, they think that the city, beyond its professional tyrants and weak public servants, is brimming with hope. (I wonder if Cobbs Hoffman reached the final Percy Shelley quote in Miller’s essay regarding hope and moral obligation.) Certain critics claim that the authors’ attitude – perceived as cynical by more than one roundtable participant – towards San Diego can be used as criticism of both their work and their personal understanding of a city with which they are intimately familiar. If they truly were out to destroy San Diego’s reputation (there might be other obvious candidates), why spend precious time and energy to research and write a book? All three authors have been residents of San Diego for some time and are highly concerned about its future. All three are avid educators who push for more civic involvement (read: “activism”) in the city, not less.

Claims that such authors are radicals seeking to destroy the city’s image are exhausted and predictable. This accusation also comes at an intellectual price. To equate Marxism with John Kenneth Galbraith’s quote about communism, as quoted in Cobbs Hoffman’s review, only seems to further promote political agendas over intellectual rigor. (Who is being ideological here?) All of these distractions may even be a red herring, as Miller suggests, that diverts people from looking at what is really important in *Under the Perfect Sun*. After all, their politics are not a secret, nor is their push to make San Diego a more self-aware place. They want people to understand that the histories of San Diego, from the nineteenth century to the present, are not the last word on the subject. They also suggest that an oft-ignored plurality could, with more study and work, push San Diego’s intellectual and historical production to new prominence. Could San Diego be an imagined California archetype, a perfectly mellow blend of social and biological racism as well as a creeping anti-industrialism (real or imagined)? Does San Diego’s racial history connect with the larger historical narrative of northern Kearneyism, for example? Does San Diego embody these constantly oppositional political ideologies, irreconcilable
it seems, as it seeks to be considered a Protestant Eden to the Exodusters of the twenty-first century? These questions, and many interesting others implicitly suggested in their work, are worth exploring and should not be brushed to the side as unrealistic or unwarranted. Other cities have confronted these questions with rigor and civility. Miller offers the following remedy to the stagnant state of local history: “We need to stop thinking like we live in a small town.” This comment might also suggest an answer to Cobbs Hoffman’s question about the success of Davis’s essay being hinged on its ability to combat what she calls the “Los Angelization” of San Diego. It seems that all three authors wish to embrace, on some level, the cosmopolitanism of Los Angeles, not the inward retreat to a re-imagined idyll landscape. To ignore what the city is (the eighth largest in the United States) and opt for a romantic, “natural” return to the past is exactly what the authors attempt to argue against. This “grass-roots opposition” to preserve San Diego’s “natural heritage” all too often results in environments that are static and sanitized, more akin to theme parks than to public squares, a topic that is discussed on the very first page of Miller’s essay, “Just Another Day in Paradise?”

_Under the Perfect Sun_ may be an imperfect work but its authors do not consider themselves to be above analysis and scrutiny. In fact, they actively sought to spark a healthy and much-needed discussion. Their work challenged many local and state historians (myself included) to come to terms with historical events and individuals that few consider important, even if their stories were familiar. Scandals beginning with Alonzo E. Horton and continuing to C. Arnholt Smith and beyond might teach us a great deal about the city and those people who call it home. Just because these scandals may be familiar doesn’t mean that we critically understand them.

Davis, Mayhew, and Miller struggled to break the traditional narrative of San Diego’s past and took the first steps towards providing a new approach and vocabulary. Despite the criticisms of the book we might look to the overwhelmingly positive results: a generative discussion about a topic that deserves more scrutiny both regionally and nationally. May the stories that we tell about San Diego become stronger and wiser as a result.

**NOTES**

BOOK NOTES


*Historical Memories of the Japanese American Internment and the Struggle for Redress.* By Alice Yang Murray. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008. xv + 590 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. $65.00 cloth. This volume explores how various groups – including the War Relocation Authority, the Japanese American Citizens League, and those seeking Congressional redress – have offered competing interpretations of Japanese American internment since the 1940s.

*How Cities Won the West: Four Centuries of Urban Change in Western North America.* By Carl Abbott. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2008. x + 347 pp. Photographs, maps, and tables. $34.95 cloth. Carl Abbott, a leading historian of western urbanization, explores the role of cities in the development of the American West. The book examines urban places in Canada and the United States and suggests that since the middle of the twentieth century western cities have become trendsetters rather than simply copies of their eastern counterparts.

*Searching for Tamsen Donner.* (American Lives Series.) By Gabrielle Burton. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xii + 314 pp. Illustrations, maps, and bibliography. $26.95 cloth. Tamsen Donner was a member of the ill-fated Donner Party that set out for California from Springfield, Illinois in 1846. Although she was healthy enough to leave with a rescue party, Tamsen chose to remain at Truckee (now Donner) Lake with her husband and others too weak to travel. Her body was never found. In this book, Gabrielle Burton retraces Donner’s voyage from Springfield to the lakeside winter camp.

*Tuberculosis & the Politics of Exclusion: A History of Public Health & Migration to Los Angeles.* By Emily K. Abel. Piscataway, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2007. xii + 189 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. $68 cloth. $23.95 paper. This study investigates how Los Angeles public health officials frequently linked tuberculosis to “undesirable” groups like “Okies” and racial and ethnic minorities. These connections contributed to policies that limited the entry of such groups into California.

*The West the Railroads Made.* By Carlos A. Schwantes and James P. Ronda. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008. xx + 229 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. $39.95 cloth. Schwantes and Ronda assess the ways railroads created the American West. Not only did railroads play a critical role in shaping the landscapes and economy of the West, but they also transformed the region in the popular imagination by helping create the notion that it was a place of natural abundance in which personal fortunes could be made.
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Back Cover: The Arco de Porvenir or Arch of the Future featured a spectacular rainbow of colored lights reflected in a lagoon gracing the Plaza del Pacifico. It was designed by lighting expert H. O. Davis who was inspired by the fantasy paintings of artist Maxfield Parrish. Postcard courtesy David Marshall.

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