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San Diego and The Pacific Theater:
Consolidated Aircraft Corporation Holds the Home Front

By

Natalie Nakamura

But in spite of its size, its importance and its expansion, the Navy is not the chief reason for the San Diego boom. That reason is the aircraft industry, of which the biggest local producer is Consolidated. Until slightly more than a year ago Consolidated was making a small number of big flying boats for the Navy. Now it has a backlog, from the U.S. and England, of over $684,000,000 worth of airplane orders, and its planes, rolling out at a rate of one a day, are daily flying for the British Navy, bombing Germany for the R.A.F., or patrolling the Atlantic for the U.S.—“Boom Town: San Diego,” Life, July 28, 1941.¹

Chaplain Kenneth G. Stack, born and raised in San Diego, suffered an unusual bout of homesickness at his post “somewhere in the South Seas.” Deployed in early 1942, Stack was part of the American spearhead in the Pacific. On a march through the jungle with his fellow marines, he heard a hum, and soon a roar, that caught his full attention. “I saw a B-24,” he wrote to his seminary mentor in San Diego. “He spotted us, wiggled his wings and kept on...The thought struck me that you were probably hearing the same sound in your office so many thousand miles away.”²

Back in Stack’s hometown, residents were familiar with the roar of airplanes produced by Consolidated Aircraft Corporation. By 1944, thirty-six percent of

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the county’s working population operated the assembly lines at Lindbergh Field, turning out military aircraft such as the B-24 Liberator at the rate of eight per day. As the second largest employer in San Diego County after the Navy, the company offers a lens into the history of San Diego’s wartime experience. Consolidated Aircraft not only made its name as an exporter of patrol and heavy bombers, but also facilitated the creation of a shared regional identity among its workers.

Consolidating a War Asset

“The way to stay in business with the Army and Navy,” Major Reuben H. Fleet, founder of Consolidated Aircraft, imparted to his associates, “is to give them your best without any holding back. Sometimes we gave them what was best before they knew it themselves.” Fleet reached the rank of major in the Army Signal Corps Aviation Section, predecessor of the Army Air Forces of World War II. In the spring of 1917, he trained on a base later known as Naval Air Station, North Island. Just as the military appreciated the city’s temperate climate and accommodating people, Fleet recognized how it “was not difficult to understand why the War Department had selected San Diego for the Aviation Section’s pilot training school.”

Fleet founded Consolidated Aircraft Corporation in May 1923, a year after retiring from military service. An amalgam of his personal investments and the
Gallaudet Engineering Company, Fleet’s aircraft wielded a portfolio of blueprints from the Dayton-Wright Airplane Company. Proceeds from the U.S. Army’s first purchase—the PT-1 Trusty—allowed the company to move to Buffalo, New York, where a skilled labor pool had congregated during World War I. In the late 1920s, the Navy sought a flying boat design with long distance patrol capabilities. Frozen waters on the Buffalo plant’s neighboring Lake Erie and Niagara River hindered testing of patrol plane experimental models, causing Fleet to look for a new and more temperate home.6

Fleet scoured the Florida coasts and looked at Seattle, Los Angeles, and Long Beach before heading south to San Diego, where he had earned his wings. In November 1927, San Diegans had passed a $650,000 bond to develop an airport, Lindbergh Field, on the tidal flats adjacent to San Diego Bay.7 Fleet embraced the qualities of the bay to test flying boats such as the new Model 28 patrol bomber, later known as the PBY Catalina.8 It also seemed fitting for the production of the Catalina to begin where aviation pioneer Glenn Curtiss had made the first hydroplane flight twenty-five years earlier.9

On May 29, 1933, Consolidated’s board of directors passed a resolution that authorized a conditional fifty-year lease with the City of San Diego at Lindbergh Field.10 The company made the transcontinental move by train with 311 select employees. At the time of the plant’s dedication ceremony on October 20, 1935,
the company had grown to 874 employees. Given the backlog of orders from the Army, Navy, and foreign militaries, Fleet projected another 2,000 new hires within the next six months.\textsuperscript{11}

The initial factory covered 247,000 square feet of continuous flow along the Pacific Coast Highway and included an unfinished parking lot and landing field that, at the time, were nothing more than grassy lanes. At their open house, company officials welcomed 30,000 curious visitors through Building One where the production of patrol bombers would begin in October 1936. Another Navy order prompted the expansion of the factory, which included outdoor assembly areas where workers completed overflow manufactures in the mild San Diego air. In 1938, federal investment added another 450,000 square feet of building space.\textsuperscript{12} Consolidated employed 3,700 people by August of that year.\textsuperscript{13}

In December 1939, the Navy’s Bureau of Aeronautics awarded to Consolidated its largest and most expensive order since World War I in a contract for two hundred PBY-5s. This $20 million contract necessitated greater factory floor space, and the construction of Buildings Two and Three began in the spring of 1940. The federal government’s Emergency Plant Facilities resources also financed a parts plant in Coronado, a mile from the home factory.\textsuperscript{14}

Congestion in the city necessitated the creation of subcontracting plants across
the state of California. Feeder shops, or what editors of the company newspaper fondly referred to as “Little Convairs,” popped up at Laguna Beach, Corona del Mar, Riverside, and Anaheim. By 1943, San Diego assembly lines produced B-24s with parts from almost one hundred different plants. By the end of the war, eleven local feeder shops employed 1,700 workers who constructed bulkheads, upholstery, electrical harnesses, and Plexiglas moldings—all of which were shipped to Lindbergh Field for final assembly. War Production Board-military-labor-industry cooperative conferences inspired design changes that translated to greater efficiency and labor productivity.

Federal guidance, and in some cases, direct intervention, was deemed necessary for peak production. Douglas Aircraft managed the Tulsa factory, and Ford Automotive operated the plant in Willow Run for the production of B-24 Liberators. This seemingly free flow of information in the form of educational contracts, guided by the government, made many business magnates such as Fleet worry about the end of free enterprise under such “bureaucratic supervision.” For example, Consolidated was obligated to give Ford Motor Company the secret heat-treatment methods for Liberators’ aluminum skin. Unable to replicate the process, Ford’s airplanes leaked fuel, which reduced operational range and scarred Fleet’s good design in the eyes of the U.S. Army Air Forces.

Consolidated responded to President Roosevelt’s May 1940 call for 50,000 planes...
by further expanding the plant. At the cost of $3 million, another 650,000 square feet brought the site total to 1.5 million square feet of workspace, not including the outdoor 1.2 million square feet for assembly and final fitting.19 The patriotic trills of the Consolidated Glee Club and Orchestra’s opening acts accompanied the dedication of an entirely new plant, which locals greeted with enthusiasm. The occasion’s program informed those present that “Today, less than five years from its inception, we have the largest integrated covered and uncovered aircraft plant in America, designed and built especially for the construction of modern aircraft.”20

On March 17, 1943, Consolidated merged with Vultee Aircraft of Los Angeles, which created the conglomerate Convair.21 By that time, ten states boasted facilities under Consolidated’s guidance, which included thirteen manufacturing, modification, research, and operating divisions and maximum employment of over 100,000 workers in December 1943. That same year, Consolidated workers produced 10,496 aircraft. They built a total of 28,004 airplanes over the course of the war, not including the spare parts production of the equivalent of 5,000 planes. In early 1944, the War Production Board cited Convair and its subsidiary shops as the world’s largest airplane manufacturer. In that year alone, Convair
delivered “over 12 percent by number and over 16 percent by weight of all aircraft built in the United States.” By the end of the war, Convair was the fourth greatest recipient of wartime contracts (in dollar value), behind General Motors, Curtiss-Wright, and Ford Automotive.

The San Diego plant became the integral heart of the machine. In January 1944 alone, workers constructed 253 B-24s and 74 PBYs. Journalist Alistair Cooke, reporter for the BBC, described the scene of “throbbing industrialism” on the coast:

I came into San Diego, and fronting the ocean was the low, vast plant of Consolidated Aircraft, the ominous flat roofs stretching a mile or more down to the sea, with only a dull glow coming from the blackened windows and at the fence gates high, hooded sodium lights. Tramping in the semi-darkness all around were groups of men and women in overalls, banging the frame-doors of diners and lunch-counters. From inside the buildings and mingling with the gentle wash of the waves was a low sort of roar. It was an actual effort to recall the day’s ride, the mountain background to this throbbing industrialism.

**Setting the Plants to Full Speed Ahead**

Camouflage over buildings and materials, October 6, 1943. ©SDHC 84:15213-5.
In the summer of 1943, an English teacher and an art teacher sacrificed their vacations to work the Consolidated swing shift. With no prior experience in manufacturing, Constance Bowman and Clara Marie Allen found themselves assigned to Minor Installations on the B-24. In his orientation speech, their first supervisor emphasized, “

‘We’re war workers,’ he said, capitalizing the words with his voice, ‘and we’re proud of it. No matter what people on the outside say, we’re on the inside and we’re proud of it.’ He said several times, aggressively, that we were proud of it, for in wartime San Diego there are only three kinds of people: the service people, the civilians, and the aircraft workers.”

The two teachers were at first skeptical of the narrative and the ongoing attempts to persuade the new hires of their importance to the cause, but were soon converted.

The company’s shifts demonstrated the growing demands of the foreign war. Before July 1940, the firm instituted a one-shift 40-hour week. Following Pearl Harbor, the company altered its schedule to a two-shift, 53-hour week and,
two months later, instituted a three-shift, 48-hour week that maintained peak production.27 The hours were long and the days repetitive. For many, the end of their shifts inconveniently fell around midnight. “The truth of the matter,” Bowman and Allen wrote,

was that most people on the Swing Shift ate all the time .... Another vicious cycle was trying to get the grease out of our clothes, the metal dust out of our hair, and the dirt out of our nails so that we could go to work and get more grease on our clothes, more metal dust in our hair, and more dirt under our nails .... That was the Swing Shift for you! Sleep. Eat. Work. Wash. Sleep. Eat. Work. Wash.28

While soldiers fought on the battlefronts with conventional weapons, war workers faced the rigors of home-front industrialization at their posts on the assembly lines.

**Women in the Work Force**

The urgency of finding more women in the workforce to staff the processes grew increasingly desperate as the war progressed. In July 1941, women trickled, then flooded, into the ranks until they reached 42 percent of the workforce in May 1944. Part-time workers made up about 1.2 percent of the total employment, and some military personnel worked on a casual basis.29 One day when the labor pool
San Diego and the Pacific Theater

ran deep, approximately 1,200 individuals were hired at once. Consolidated’s Western District Supervisor forwarded expectations throughout the company from the Under Secretary of War, demanding four goals, specifically, at the opening of 1942:

1. It is essential that our procurement be put into highest gear at once. All steps must be taken to increase the speed with which contracts are let and speed up maximum production of ammunition.

2. All officers and civilian employees should be required to work as many additional hours each day as is necessary to get the day’s work done.

3. You are directed to take all necessary steps to boost munitions manufacture to the highest possible level.

4. You are requested to report promptly to me any delays outside of your control in the procurement procedure.

Although defense-related industries benefited from deferments, necessary workers still could be drafted. With an 88.7 percent annual turnover rate, Consolidated suffered the effects of a protracted foreign war. Manpower commissioners from Los Angeles frequently traveled south to assess the local situation and assist San Diego’s U.S. Employment Service. As the labor market problem grew more acute, “the company considered practically no one as unemployable.”

Serious manpower shortages continued well into 1944 when James L. Kelley, division manager, announced: “We will fail to meet schedules for production of Liberator bombers, for the first time in 18 months if absenteeism does not stop and if workers continue to quit their jobs.” He attributed the problem to war weariness, young men joining the military, and other workers retiring with their earnings. Kelley stated, “Today we have fewer people in the division than at any time since Pearl Harbor.”

The Industrial Relations Department reported in early 1944 that the prior month saw 72,554 workdays lost to absenteeism. Women led men in absenteeism for reasons such as illness or injury, family and personal issues, medical-dental services, and seeing their military spouses. Some could not handle the stresses and demands of the industrial setting, despite the perquisites that came with
their jobs. When Bowman fell into the assembly line routine, she described the exhausting reality:

For every [safety belt] holder I had installed, I had squatted, kneeled, bent, and sat on the floor. I had gritted my teeth, clutched my motor, and pushed as hard as I could push. I had stubbed my toes, cracked my shins, and knocked my head three times on the metal sill above the safety belt holders. I had broken my fingernails, I had cut my fingers, and once I had almost bitten through my tongue, which in moments of stress I stick out and curl around my right check [sic].

In response to the attendance problem, the company had introduced a health care system. Built at Plant One, the two-story “hospital” promised first aid units, emergency organizations, laboratories, physical exam rooms, and food evaluations. Fifty registered nurses aided the company by determining who was actually sick. To make sure all employees could afford the services, Consolidated collaborated with Aetna Life Insurance Company to provide a hospitalization insurance plan effective on June 30, 1942. Eighty-five percent of all employees took advantage of the benefit.

In September 1941, at the Office of Production Management’s bequest, Fleet had hired forty women to help construct B-24s as an experiment. Their careers began at the Covering and Upholstering department where they worked the sewing machines to create the bomber interior. By 1942, women moved from clerk positions to the factory floors, demonstrating their “natural ability … toward such masculine work” without previous training. That same year, two women earned positions in the engineering department as draftswomen, making freehand drawings for service manuals and engineering diagrams. Myra Ford, a parts runner, gave the impression that she got the job done. Described as using her “winning smile and twinkling brown eyes, to say nothing of a ‘gifted tongue,’” her trade entailed “bring[ing] back the goods, whether it’s rivets or rudders.” Women proved necessary to the war effort, though were largely contained in acceptable roles and particular departments such as Inspection. Their work set the stage for the “Double-V” committees of the 1940s—victory on the battlefield against the Axis and victory at home against prejudice and discrimination.

Hard times and difficult hours necessitated company-funded support, especially for women employees who shouldered the heavy burdens of the home front. Female counselors catered to the women of all departments in all divisions, including workers at the feeder shops and vocational schools. Bowman and Allen
described their Women’s Counselor as “an exotic creature … She tried to impress her gentility upon our little group by talking in such a low voice that nobody but C.M. and me in the front row could hear her.” With their androgynous uniforms, Bowman and Allen had come to resent “women who could wear skirts to work.” Their counselor “warned us not to try to do a full day’s work at home before we came to work; she told us about a special exercise devised by the company to relieve cramps; and she said that we would be allowed to work while pregnant if we had the permission of our own doctors.” Other services offered to the general working population of the factories were counseling and guidance for President Roosevelt’s Social Security Pay-Go system and state income tax returns.

President Franklin Roosevelt’s Executive Order 8802 had banned hiring discrimination in June 1941. Roosevelt’s Columbus Day Speech of 1942 reinforced the message: employers who discriminated against women and minorities impeded the war effort against foreign military dictatorships. The War Manpower Commission stated that black employees at Consolidated numbered about 800 in early 1943; total employment at the company reached nearly one hundred thousand. By 1945, the city’s black population had doubled from 2 to 4.5 percent. John P. Davis, secretary of the National Negro Congress, estimated that there were seventy thousand skilled African American craftsmen available for hire in the shipbuilding and aircraft industries. In his letter to Senator Harry S. Truman, however, Davis quoted W. Gerard Tuttle, the manager of industrial relations at Consolidated, who claimed the company supported the policy of “Caucasians only.” Vultee Aircraft, meanwhile, openly admitted to hiring no African Americans.

Union Negotiations

Fleet and his union negotiators made efforts to maintain cordial relations between capital and labor despite the 1937 unionization of plant workers by the International Association of Machinists (IAM), a subsidiary of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). After the union demanded a 10 percent wage increase, Fleet signed off on the increased
pay rates with relatively painless collective bargaining agreements. Industrial peace, however, did not last. In June 1938, the IAM Local 1125 demanded another 10 percent wage increase. Fleet denied their request, citing the Vinson-Trammel Act that placed a ceiling of 10 percent company profits on military contracts. Afterwards, the chapter wrote a letter to the Navy’s Bureau of Aeronautics at the attention of Rear Admiral Ernest J. King, describing shoddy workmanship on PBys and asserting, “Navy inspectors need to be disaplined [sic] very urgently.”

In December 1940, negotiations resumed between capital and labor and quickly reached a consensus: management promised automatic increases from the starting wage rates until a base of 60 cents per hour was reached. From then on, additional raises could be earned by merit. Fleet was proud to have closed the deal within three weeks without a single missed day of work. He stated in a public relations campaign, “Our 50 hour work week, with two shifts, gives the lowest paid daytime beginner a weekly pay of $27.50 (with automatic raises to $33). It is enough to enable him to live in decency and comfort, permits him to have off Saturday and Sunday and recognizes the 40-hour work week with a penalty of 50% for the overtime necessitated by the national emergency.” In return, the 14,500 workers at the time would not strike or stop work for any reason. The San Diego Labor Leader reported on the completion of the Consolidated wage-review board on behalf of the AFL to determine whether pay injustices still existed. Before meeting with Fleet, an IAM representative announced, “Employees who feel that inequalities exist should contact the AFL shop committeemen in their
departments as soon as all wage increases won for employees through the AFL efforts have been made effective!” and reminded readers that “increases are constantly being won by the AFL for Consair men.”  

In June 1941, management and labor renewed their vows with another two-year agreement. Consolidated agreed to match pay rates of Lockheed-Vega, a ten-cent hourly increase, but failed to keep its promise, claiming it did not have the required $82 million to pay the extra wages. As a result, the IAM granted full sanction to the rallying employees who overwhelmingly voted to strike. The bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, however, tabled the shop-floor quarrel before the parties could arrive at an acceptable bargain.

While some workers managed to accrue savings, others fell short. Bowman and Allen sacrificed their summer tans to work at Consolidated, but found themselves disappointed when autumn cut short their time at the swing shift: “The dollars that we made this summer were not many. We added them up the night before we quit and C.M. said, looking glumly at the total, that anybody who thought we had been motivated by anything but patriotism in its purest form could just look at our pay-checks after the government got through with them.” Nevertheless, the fruits of their labors gave them satisfaction, just as the foreman had promised on orientation day. Bowman and Allen recalled, “We ate our sandwiches outside by the field where we could watch the finished Liberators warm up. From the first, we looked at them critically and proudly, much as a mother would look at her children.”

At Shift’s End: Out of the Plants and into the Home

The war disrupted life for all San Diegans. Soldiers, sailors, and war workers crowded the city’s streets, queued in long lines at restaurants and movie theaters, and overwhelmed every municipal resource. As the war progressed, the city made headlines in *Life* and *National Geographic* as the place where war mobilization and regional resources collided. Despite a steady income for the first time in their lives, many workers found little on which to spend their hard-earned money. Bowman recalled, “When I asked the clerk at the hardware store for a midget ratchet set, she looked at me curiously and said didn’t I know there was a war on.”

In 1942, *Consolidated News* explained to workers why automobiles had to be sacrificed for the war effort: “A four engine bomber, fully loaded, burns as much gas in one hour’s top-speed cruising as the average family auto burns in six months” and “rubber used to make garden hose[s] in the last three months of 1941 would have bullet-proofed gas tanks on 400 Consolidated bombers.”

Housing shortages, however, could not be rationalized. Between 1942 and
1945, the city’s population jumped 75 percent due to the presence of military and aircraft jobs. The influx of 1,500 workers per week overwhelmed the housing market. Before long, there was nowhere to live, and people slept in shifts in hotel rooms. Certain groups of people found it particularly hard to find housing. The Tolan Committee reported that between 75 and 80 percent of rentable houses would not accept children occupants, even though fines discouraged such discrimination. The city responded with temporary fixes, such as the Farm Security Administration renting of trailers for $7 a week. Single women also found it difficult to rent a private room and, as a result, often had to share space with other women workers. Some women led the lives of service personnel in transit, sleeping in hotel lobbies, city park benches, cars, and theaters that allowed such individuals to stay after the late show.

In 1940, Congress authorized the National Housing Agency to build the Linda Vista Housing Project for war workers. The Lanham Defense Housing Act made possible the construction of the country’s largest planned community located on the plateau northwest of Mission Valley. Using assembly-line techniques, workers erected streets of houses overnight. Linda Vista Road became the main axis for the community that would initially house 3,000 families. By 1942, the housing project promised an additional 6,000 new homes in a sprawling suburban overflow into the adjacent area of Chesterton.

Consolidated played a significant role in the leisure time of its employees, especially as many could not return to the comforts of a permanent home. Workers organized sports teams with names like “Anodize,” “Parts Plant,” “Navy Wing,” “Hull Uprights,” and “Colored Maintenance.” The Consolidated News and daily radio broadcasts reported biweekly the standings of the clubs, which included baseball, golf, bowling, tennis, basketball, and swimming. As the Southern California aircraft industry expanded, intercompany rivalries erupted. For example, Consolidated employees matched up against Los Angeles’s North American Aircraft on the tennis court. The company also organized family events such as “Beach Days” at Mission Beach with treasure hunts, beauty contests, and dancing accompanied by the Bud Lovell Orchestra, free of charge. On December 16, 1943, Consolidated hosted a crowded tour through the plants on what became known as “Family Day.” While such events emphasized normalcy, the war dominated both the leisure and labor lives of San Diegans.

Fruits of their Labors: The B-24 Liberator and the PBY Catalina

With the growing acceptance of the strategic bombing doctrine, which required long-range heavy bombers to take the war to the enemy’s homeland, Consolidated
stepped forward with its innovative B-24 Liberator design to supersede Boeing’s B-17 Flying Fortress. The B-24 model, with advanced flying range and modifiable structure, became the most manufactured combat airplane in U.S. history. In thirteen cities, modification centers managed by other aircraft and automotive plants ensured export-ready Liberators and Catalinas by the spring of 1941. The San Diego plant provided the location for final assembly of the airframe and its components, the nucleus of the network.73

Fleet’s engineers envisioned greater bomb stowage capacity than the B-17, better handling, and an innovative fuselage, hybridized with the past successes of the characteristic twin fin and rudder of the Model 31 seaplane.74 The Davis wing, built in a low-drag teardrop shape, provided lower drag than any wing designs already in use and represented a drastic advantage over its predecessors. The design was successful for the Model 31 flying boat model because it provided substantial lift, even at a small angle of attack and made takeoff and landing from the water more efficient.75 The high-lift airfoil wing provided greater flight range than the B-17.76 Additionally, the innovative tricycle landing gear enabled the Convair bomber to gain altitude several hundred yards shorter than the Flying Fortress. Utilizing stronger alloys Fleet referred to as duralumin, and a new sealant called “duprene,” the original design lacked fuel tanks: gasoline swished within the ribs of the wing tanks.77 Avoiding excess weight on the airframe allowed for extra flying time—a powerful selling point for both the Army Air Corps and the Navy.
The design allowed Consolidated to respond quickly to the USAF’s request for a new bomber in December 1938—within two months, the company signed a contract with the Army Air Forces for the production of Liberators in earnest.\(^78\)

Even the simplest of airplanes necessitated a minimum of 587,000 pieces, which meant that subcontracting was necessary.\(^79\) In 1942, the subject of rivets caught the attention of Consolidated’s Production Board. The procurement follow-up department outlined the need for 270,000 rivets for each Catalina flying boat produced and 340,000 rivets for a single Liberator. With the projected Plane Delivery Schedule in 1943 of 60 PBYs and 128 B-24s, the rivets required for such orders necessitated a 153 percent increase over the previous year’s numbers. Rivets were a hot commodity and the company’s Aircraft Production Board expressed concern that new sources of rivet supply “must be located” to maintain acceptable levels of output.\(^80\)

The B-24 Liberator went through multiple major model changes and designations from 1941 to the end of the war. Depending on the combat theater’s needs, different model numbers denoted varying armament installations such as the number of .50 caliber gun turrets and their placement, as well as engine and propeller upgrades. Modification centers across the United States produced the different model numbers, such as Fort Worth’s production of the C-87 “Liberator
San Diego and the Pacific Theater

Express,” a B-24D variant modified for the transport of personnel and cargo. The only model to be produced at all five Consolidated-Vultee plants—San Diego, Fort Worth, Willow Run, Tulsa, and Dallas—was the B-24J, of which 6,678 were built. The B-24J, introduced in August 1943, boasted a new autopilot and upgraded bombsight. It later supplemented the B-17’s nose to improve forward visibility, the best of two generations in one deadly machine. Modification continued even on the front lines, where mechanics refitted and revised according to varying mission needs. In the end, over twenty-five B-24 types flew sorties around the world, including test, transport, and Navy versions. The mass-produced, versatile design contributed to almost every theater in the war.

The operational requirements of the Liberator varied depending on where they were used. Over Europe, U.S. Army Air Forces worked in tandem with the British Royal Air Force, primarily making daylight precision raids. In the South Pacific, the B-24 replaced almost all B-17s because of its superior flying range. The first Liberator in combat arrived in Hawaii on December 5, 1941, and exploded in the crosshairs of Japanese fighter fire two days later on the runway of Hickham Field. Subsequent Liberators demonstrated greater combat efficiency, especially under the Navy’s direction. B-24s executed a variety of missions ranging from close-air support, anti-shipping and anti-submarine reconnaissance, to search-and-rescue, while additionally implementing traditional strategic and tactical bombing sorties. Liberators equipped with search radar intercepted Japanese shipping over the Pacific, and played roles as convoy escorts and U-boat hunters against German wolf packs in the Atlantic. On a typical mission over Europe or the Pacific, a ten-man crew flew a Liberator for a round trip of 2,500 miles over a span of nine hours. At the end of the journey, both the 6,000 to 8,000 pounds of bombs and 2,000 to 2,700 gallons of fuel were expended. Unlike over Europe, B-24s in the Pacific island-hopping venture flew near ground level, or just above small-arms fire and below anti-aircraft guns. Leigh Lights, wielding 500-million candlepower and mounted under the starboard wing, facilitated night missions.

Liberator operations in the Pacific began in earnest on November 16, 1943, in the attack on Bougainville (Solomon Islands) against the Japanese empire. Based in Darwin, Australia, Liberators demonstrated their strategic bombing abilities in the New Guinea campaign by disabling Borneo’s Balikpapan oil refineries, while Consolidated-made Catalinas flown by the Royal Australian Air Force sowed mines to wreak havoc on oil shipping lanes and picked up the crewmembers of downed B-24s. As the war continued, Liberators participated in the China-Burma-India “hump” missions, the recapture of the Philippines, and the invasion of Okinawa. At the end of 1944, more than six thousand operational Liberators
equipped forty-five air groups in the U.S. Army Air Forces.  

The commanding officer of the Middle East Air Force and later the 9th Air Force, Major General Lewis H. Brereton, lauded the B-24 bomber in a letter to the Commanding General of the USAAF, General Henry H. Arnold: “The B-24 will take a phenomenal amount of punishment from both ack ack and enemy fighter attacks … It is a magnificent hunk of a bomber, and I am going to write to Reuben Fleet and tell him so.” A modification of the Liberator, the PB4Y, was a hybridized heavy bomber and patrol boat that demonstrated a successful augmentation according to a specific theater’s needs. The Navy Department cited this class of Liberator as possessing “superior qualities” in the South Pacific on reconnaissance and scouting missions. As the “most valuable big patrol-bomber of the service,” the Japanese equivalent, Mitsubishi’s Betty, “simply could not stand up to the concentration of the superior fire-power of the Liberator.”  

Consolidated’s flying boat model, the PBY Catalina, was the first design produced at the automated assembly lines at the San Diego plants. The Catalina functioned efficiently in reconnaissance roles, hospital transport, and as small target bombers, which made it a popular model among almost every American ally in all theaters of the war. Winning their claim to fame in air-sea rescues, USN Catalina crews flew through the terrible weather conditions from the Aleutians all the way south to the campaign off Australia. Fondly referred to as “Dumbo,” the thick-winged Catalinas facilitated the saving of hundreds of downed Navy pilots floating in the Pacific or stranded on hostile beaches. During one of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific campaign, PBYs occupied a vital role in finding downed pilots off the shores of Midway Island.
Lightly armed, Catalinas operated effectively against individual enemy ships. Crews flew on the forefront of the lines supported by seaplane tenders. In what became known as Black Cat operations, fourteen Catalina squadrons sank 112,700 tons of merchant shipping and ten Imperial Japanese Navy warships from August 1943 to January 1944. In his memoirs, General George Kenney, commander of the Pacific Air Forces, wrote that fifty fighter pilots volunteered to fly escort to a B-24 bombing sortie to Balikpapan. The fighters were well aware their P-38s could not make the return trip for want of gas, but were willing to bail out “if I would just send six or seven rescue Catalinas out to meet them.” The pilots were utterly confident in the successful records of the Consolidated-made aircraft.

While the Consolidated News anticipated another PB4Y-2 contract for $45 million on February 8, 1945, the company foresaw that drastic cutbacks in the aircraft industry would be unavoidable in peacetime. Employment at Consolidated San Diego dropped from its peak of 45,000 workers in 1943 down to 3,760 in 1945. Still, the Consolidated labor force produced more aircraft than any other collective in the world.

Consolidated played an important part in San Diego’s civilian contribution to the war effort. The company alone employed 36 percent of wage earners in the city, many of whom made sacrifices on the assembly line and in their day-to-day...
lives. The B-24 Liberator—the most-produced heavy bomber model in U.S. history—helped ensure victory in the war. Consolidated, later known as Convair, laid the foundations for San Diego’s aerospace industry, stimulated federal investment, and fostered a regional wartime identity. “Some people complain about the airplane noises in San Diego,” Major Ruben H. Fleet, the company’s founder remarked, “but I sort of like it. The only time I look up is when I hear an engine missing.”

NOTES

4. At that time, of the Signal Corp’s seventy-three planes, thirty of them were located in San Diego. William Wagner, Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated Aircraft (Fallbrook, CA: Aero Publishers, 1976), 24. Wagner and his team conducted multiple oral histories with Fleet to complete his book.
5. Ibid., 41.
6. The Trusty brought reliability to the company’s reputation as a renowned designer and provider of training planes. The first airplane to land on the newly christened Lindbergh Field was a Consolidated Trusty, a model named for its most valued quality in a time when flight was a perilous undertaking. Bill Yenne, *Into the Sunset: The Convair Story* (Lyme, CT: Greenwich Publishing, 1995), 8-10; Katrina Pescador and Mark Aldrich, *Consolidated Aircraft Corporation* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2008), 17.

7. Ibid.

8. PBY stands for Patrol (P) Bomber (B), made by Consolidated (Y).


10. Fleet originally agreed to move his plant to the Los Angeles area when the city offered 22.5 acres near the municipal airport free of charge. San Diego aviation booster Thomas Bomar claimed the area was underwater during the winter, and Fleet subsequently switched gears. Wagner, *Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated*, 176.

11. Ibid.


15. Corona del Mar’s shop in particular employed two hundred people and was classified in the Electric Bench Department. Typically, suburbs popped up around the feeder shops because of the promise of jobs. “Assembly Lines to be ‘Fed’ by 3 New Shops,” *Consolidated News*, December 16, 1943.


18. Ibid., 226.

19. Ibid., 214.


21. The name “Convair” was not registered until 1954, though generally accepted in 1943. Employees also referred to Consolidated as “Consair” for short, even after the company merged with Vultee.

22. The difference between numbers and weight in percentage figures is because the company produced more heavy four-engine bombers than any other manufacturer. “Convair is World’s Largest Manufacturer of Airplanes: San Diego is Most Efficient Plant,” *Consolidated News*, January 20, 1944.

23. In 1936, Vultee Aviation founded itself as a military manufacturer. Its Downey plant utilized the moving assembly line characteristic of the automotive industry. Fleet sold his shares to Vultee in 1943, mostly over frustrations with the Navy Department, the federal government, and oppressive tax laws. This led to Fleet’s retirement from Consolidated in November 1944 to become President Roosevelt’s consultant on the aviation industry. John Wegg, *General Dynamics Aircraft and their Predecessors* (London: Putnam Aeronautical, 1990), 173.

24. War Plans Survey, Convair Papers.
27. War Plans Survey, Convair Papers.
30. War Plans Survey, Convair Papers.
31. Robert P. Patterson, Under Secretary of War to All A.C. Resident Representatives, Inspectors in Charge, Section Heads, District Office, memorandum, January 1, 1942, fol. B.36, Convair/General Dynamics’ Company Papers, San Diego Air & Space Museum, CA.
34. War Plans Survey, Convair Papers.
36. Ibid.
37. Bowman and Allen, Slacks and Calluses, 42.
39. “85% Enrolled in Hospital Plan,” Consolidated News, July 2, 1942. As an alternative strategy to avoid absenteeism, the company devised the Work-to-Win campaign, which offered cash incentives in exchange for a perfect attendance record, which amounted to $140,000 awarded to employees over the period of one year. Work-to-Win benefits not only padded the pockets of the workers, but lifted their morale as well. Lotteries for those who boasted perfect attendance records could win a worker $10,000 or more in 1943, and in 1944, loyal employees received silver Liberator trophies. Other methods of rewarding workers included the original suggestion awards. Manuel Torres, a major assembly interchangeability specialist, won $1,876 for suggesting subassembly of Liberator turbo-superchargers.
40. Pescador and Aldrich, Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, 59.
43. “She Gets there Fastest with the Most: Use of Feminine Wiles Great Production Aid, Says Myra Ford, Experimental’s Pretty ‘Chaser,’” Consolidated News, August 27, 1942.
46. Bowman and Allen, Slacks and Calluses, 16-17.
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51. In theory, profits were not guaranteed when dealing with federal government agreements, though military contracts assured steady work through the mobilization and war periods. Wagner, *Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated*, 230. On June 9, 1941, President Roosevelt intervened in the North American plant strike when picketers clashed with police by calling in the Army, which demonstrated what he believed needed to be a unified industry. For further discussion of unionization in California’s aircraft industry, see chapter five of Kevin Starr, *Embattled Dreams: California in War and Peace, 1940-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

52. “Consair Shop Committees to Thresh out Remaining Pay Inequalities,” *San Diego Labor Leader*, June 10, 1940.


54. Ibid., 236.


57. Ibid., 55.


61. Starr, *Embattled Dreams*, 152. As the local labor pool became insufficient to keep the planes flowing out of Consolidated, recruiters traveled beyond San Diego and even to the East Coast. As early as 1941, Fleet’s recruiters sought defense workers from the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys for factory workers.


67. At times, however, even those building the houses did not have their own places to stay. After 650 dormitories and demountable houses were erected for the construction workers, work on housing could begin. Killory, “Temporary Suburbs,” 38.

68. In spring 1943, the Congested Areas Subcommittee of the House Naval Affairs Committee completed a series of congressional investigations, and only reaffirmed the decision to build defense housing on remote sites despite almost unavoidable chaos in the future. And San Diego still asked for more housing, as the Chamber of Commerce begged the National Housing Agency for 5,000 more homes in July 1943. Some 4,500 workers, recruited from outside the city under the authority of the War Manpower Commission, needed places to stay. “New Dwellings For 6000 Begun at Linda Vista,” *Consolidated News*, June 25, 1942.

69. “47 Teams Join Softball League,” *Consolidated News*, April 9, 1942. Women’s teams were also prevalent and boasted their own meet programs.
71. “Consolidated’s Own Beach Day,” Consolidated News, August 20, 1942.
73. Pescador and Aldrich, Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, 58.
74. The Army signed Boeing to research the feasibility of flying fortresses, and the first B-17 design took wing in July 1935. The new Chief and later Commanding General of the Air Corps H. H. Arnold immediately spread enthusiasm about the B-17, but developed concerns that in the event of war, Boeing’s Seattle plant did not possess the production capabilities to mass-produce large quantities of aircraft. Wagner, Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated, 207, 228.
75. While the thickness of the wing made the design obsolete in the postwar era, the space allowed for greater fuel storage. K. C. Khurana, Aviation Management: Global Perspectives (New Delhi, India: Global India Publications, 2009), 49-50.
77. Ibid., 208-11.
78. Ibid., 55.
79. Starr, Embattled Dreams, 142-3.
81. All five plants were officially called the Liberator Production Pool. Wagner, Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated, 257.
82. Wegg, General Dynamics Aircraft, 85.
83. General Dynamics, Consolidated-Vultee Liberator: The Need, the Plane, the Crew, the Missions (San Diego: General Dynamics, 1989), 17.
84. Wagner, Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated, 265.
85. Pescador and Aldrich, Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, 78.
86. Yenne, Into the Sunset, 39.
87. General Dynamics, Consolidated-Vultee Liberator, 55.
88. Yenne, Into the Sunset, 25, 39-40. In the Battle of the Atlantic, Liberators equipped with microwave radar formed the backbone of antisubmarine forces. Of particular importance on the Liberator combat record is the participation in the Ploesti oil field raid over Romania in 1943. Wegg, General Dynamics Aircraft, 89.
92. Wagner, Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated, 259.
93. Pescador and Aldrich, Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, 64.
94. Yenne, Into the Sunset, 25.
95. General Dynamics, Consolidated-Vultee Liberator, 58.
Patriotism and Profit: San Diego’s Camp Kearny

By

John Martin

In the late summer of 1917, the cadence of marching feet, the reports of rifles, and the clatter of mounted soldiers shattered the solitude of the sage-and-chaparral covered Linda Vista mesa some ten miles north of downtown San Diego. The new sounds resonated from Camp Kearny, a World War I National Guard training camp. The Army had come to town.

San Diego, in 1917, experienced an economic downturn following the closing of the 1915-1916 fair. The war in Europe, however, changed this picture. As promised, President Woodrow Wilson kept the country on the periphery of the European conflict, but international events ended his idealistic hopes for nonintervention. In April, Wilson requested the Sixty-Fifth Congress to declare war on the Central Powers. For the Allied Powers, the declaration presented an infusion of fresh troops to break the stalemate on the Western Front; for the U. S. War Department it presented the challenge of mobilizing an entirely new army. For San Diego citizens, it represented the opportunity to do their patriotic duty of organizing and supporting war service organizations and boosting the local economy.

If America appeared psychologically prepared for war, the country stood materially unprepared. Public disinterest and government parsimony sent America to war with a Regular Army of about 128,000 men. The army ranked only the thirteenth most powerful in the world, just slightly ahead of Portugal. It was an army whose latest field experience was a punitive expedition into Mexico—one that did more to reveal the deficiencies of the American force than resolve the matter at hand. It was an army that needed to retrain the Regular Army troops

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and National Guardsmen, and completely train the new volunteers and draftees. Wilson tasked the War Department to do this with a training system one military historian called “uncertain and underdeveloped” at best. In the end, it fell to Secretary of War Newton D. Baker—an avowed pacifist—to resolve the dilemma.

A concerted national mobilization effort would provide the men, but the government still lacked the facilities to train a projected million-man army. The enormity of this task compelled Secretary Baker to create a civilian organization called the Committee on Emergency Construction (CEC) to oversee the undertaking, and assign New York City businessman William A. Starrett as chairman. Starrett and the CEC quickly determined that the size and logistical problems of creating a national training system placed the mission beyond the capabilities of the existing Army Quartermaster CoDivision. Accordingly, Baker and Starrett established the military-led Cantonment Division or Construction Division (CD) to handle the job and named Colonel Isaac W. Littell as head.
Starrett challenged Littell and the CD to complete construction of thirty-two “cantonments” within the $90,000,000 budget and to do so within sixteen weeks, by September 1917. To appreciate the scope of the project, imagine each facility as a city of twenty to thirty thousand people with paved roads, water and sewer systems, gas and electric connections serviced with storage warehouses, hospitals, bakeries, laundries, mess halls, barracks, storehouses, and assorted recreational facilities, plus parades grounds, and rifle and gunnery ranges. Littell had only months to make this a reality.4

Bringing the Training Facility to San Diego

Recognizing the economic impact of a military base in San Diego, the Chamber of Commerce, within a year after World War I began in Europe, campaigned for a camp. In late 1915, officials considered what they would need to offer the national government to pull off the scheme. The Chamber of Commerce queried California Senator John D. Works—a San Diego resident and a member of the Senate’s Committee on Expenditure of the War Department—about the anticipated increase in the size of the armed forces and the need for new camps. About the same time, San Diego’s opportunistic congressman William Kettner took time from his courtship of the Navy to prepare a bill for funding the establishment of an Army base in San Diego.5

In February 1916 Major Herbert R. Fay, San Diego’s ranking Army officer, returned from a ten-day trip to Los Angeles, Sacramento, and San Francisco in which he had lobbied for an “encampment” near San Diego for the Department of the West’s coming field maneuvers. He reported from his meeting with Colonel Eben Swift, Chief of Staff of the Department of the West, that the Army had considered Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego as potential sites. Fay laid the groundwork for a future proposal with a suggestion to Swift that San Diego, particularly Coronado Heights with its adequate water, forage, and convenient transportation facilities, made an “ideal” location for an encampment.6

No stranger to political opportunism, the Chamber of Commerce became
the driving force behind the campaign, instituting a comprehensive committee system to pursue the project. The original Committee at Large consisted of chairman Frank J. Belcher and members H. H. Jones, Charles S. Williams, John E. Roal, Frank P. Allen, Charles S. Hardy, O. W. Cotton, Col. Ed Fletcher, Col. H. R. Fay, G. Aubrey Davidson, Milton McRae, B. M. Wagner, William Steil, Mayor Louis J. Wilde and County Superintendent Joseph Foster. Soon, a plethora of sub-committees began to research the specifics for gaining the camp. The Chamber’s other standing committees included the San Diego Chamber of Commerce Committee, the Army Post Committee, the Land Committee, the Railroad Committee, the City Affairs Committee, the Merchant’s Association, and the Manufacturer’s Association of San Diego. With years of experience in pursuing federal-related civic projects, Chamber of Commerce directors knew the importance of due diligence and detailed preparation and proceeded accordingly.

Shortly before the United States entered World War I, Chamber of Commerce President Willet Dorland called a special executive meeting to discuss the situation. He asked General Franklin Bell to address the group and outline the government’s specific requirements for a camp in San Diego. Bell described the projected $7 million to $9 million economic impact of the base, after which the Chamber immediately appointed a new Army Base Committee consisting of Dorland, Frank P. Allen and Lane D. Webber. The Chamber of Commerce then called for “civic, commercial, and other interested organizations” in the city and county to name three delegates to attend a general conference scheduled on December 15, 1916. This meeting resulted in a seven-person Army and Navy Committee chaired by Melville Klauber.

As luck would have it, Mayor Wilde was an old friend of General Hunter Liggett, Commander of the Western Department, and the Army official designated to select the site for the California camp. When the government first considered bringing a training camp to California, Wilde and Liggett held several informal meetings, one of which included a visit to San Diego to inspect potential sites. A site called Linda Vista, north of Mission Valley, was based on the guarantee of San Diego Consolidated Gas and Electric to provide electricity. The mayor noted that his friend found the Linda Vista site very appealing.
At the time, Linda Vista was sparsely settled, with “vast stretches” of open land at the “very door of the city.” The community had a tiny railway station located on the line running north out of Rose Canyon at the top of the grade before heading down the long, winding slope into Soledad Canyon, today’s Sorrento Valley. Edward W. Scripps’s estate, Miramar, was located at the end of Murphy Canyon and between Carroll Canyon and San Clemente Canyon. When the Land Committee escorted General Liggett out to Linda Vista, he pronounced it the “finest” he had seen and generally a “bully camp site.”

Once President Woodrow Wilson confirmed the declaration of war, the city presented its plan. Mayor Wilde, representing both San Diego and the Army Base Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, wired a telegram to General W. Siebert in Los Angeles tendering San Diego’s proposal. The city offered a five-year lease of 8,000 acres of land at $1.00 per year—essentially a rent-free lease—plus additional land for an artillery range and other land if needed. Significantly, the agreement did not mention the recovery of any damages to the land after the army departed. The city promised to supply the camp with water, gas, electricity, and roads within the designated time frame. As Aubrey Davidson put it, “San
Diego’s offer was so complete that the department could not afford to turn it down.”

After some consideration, Siebert and his advising board of Army officers approved San Diego’s proposal—and the Linda Vista location—so long as the city could guarantee the availability of the land. The land committee immediately started talks with property owners in Linda Vista, including Colonel A. G. Gassen, Ed Fletcher, J.S. Mack, the City of San Diego, and The San Diego Land Company. Within days, chairman M.M. Moulton reported “excellent results” in acquiring the necessary land, for which the government would not pay “one cent.” The San Diego Sun applauded the Chamber’s preparation and the “whirlwind work of the land committee.”

Once the land was secured, Army officials accepted the city’s offer. On May 25, the Chamber of Commerce informed the mayor and several councilmen that the cantonment belonged to San Diego. Wilde called the decision the “biggest compliment to San Diego.” Dorland saw the announcement as undoubtedly the “biggest thing that has ever come to this part of the Southland,” while Davidson remarked that the city had entered “the biggest era of its history.” The San Diego Sun, meanwhile, proclaimed the camp to be the “very biggest single project” in city history. To solidify the deal, the Chamber dispatched a committee of three—Dorland, Belcher and H. H. Jones—to San Francisco to meet with Liggett, extend the city’s thanks, and iron out the details.

The camp meant good news for San Diego’s economy. The San Diego Union estimated that the thousands of soldiers taking liberty in the city would generate over a million dollars for local businesses monthly. The presence of families, visitors, and other “curiosity seekers and tourists”—combined with new jobs for local workers and profits for ranchers, merchants, and companies supplying goods and services—made the monetary consequences substantial. The Chamber of Commerce members congratulated themselves on their victory, describing it as the “consummation of a continuous effort extending over the past two years.” They boasted that the organization had again “demonstrated its great usefulness to the community.”

Congressman Kettner described the Linda Vista encampment as the “hardest
proposition to put over” during his term in Congress, particularly given the fierce competition waged by Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce had sent lobbyists to Washington D.C. to persuade the Western Department to award its city the training facility. The editor of the Los Angeles Times self-righteously posited that the influence of nearby Tijuana, laden with “gamblers, prostitutes, opium fiends and white slavers,” would exert a negative influence on the young soldiers, while Los Angeles with fewer “bars and dens of vice” than any city its size, was the “ideal location.” At one point, the dispute between San Diego and Los Angeles became so heated that the War Department announced it was becoming “disinclined to locate cantonments in areas showing such bitter rivalry.” Littell sent a telegram to Kettner warning there might be “no camp in California” if the cities could not resolve their dispute.

Amid the celebrations, influential businessman and Chamber mainstay Julius Wangenheim took a moment to chide city leaders for losing sight of their true purpose for securing the facility. He beseeched them to relax the “rather mercenary spirit” they had exhibited and to focus less on the profitability of the camp and more on the patriotic nature of the endeavor. He suggested the directors needed to “study what we can do for the Army rather than what the Army can do for us.” His noble ideals, however, were swept aside in the race to acquire government contracts.
Building and Mobilizing Camp Kearny

The Army referred to the Regular Army training facilities as cantonments and the National Guard units as camps, a fact ignored by officials and members of the public who freely interchanged the terms. The major distinction between the two centered on the type of housing units offered: cantonments contained wooden barracks while camps had canvas “mushroom” tents with a wooden platform for a floor.

The War Department christened the Linda Vista facility “Camp Kearny” after Stephen Watts Kearny, commander of the Army of the West in the Mexican War.22 Congressmen Kettner had headed a local group that tried to buck the government mandate and use the name Camp San Diego. The dictates of the federal government, however, took precedent over local aspirations.

The spelling of the camp’s name became an immediate issue. For the first few months, the Army accepted Kearney with an “e,” as the correct spelling. When an official questioned the spelling, the camp contractor asked San Diego Postmaster J.R. Barrow to check. Barrow said yes, the “e” belonged, but P.C. Harris of the Adjunct General’s Office was not so sure. To resolve the issue, Harris ordered Captain G.A. Christenson of the camp’s Quartermaster Corps to contact the War Department and request “an official ruling.” An unnamed War Department official applied military logic and replied that because Army General Order #95 of July 18, 1917,
Camp Kearny tents, c. 1918. ©SDHC 81:9646.

Headquarters Company, 82nd Infantry, November 28, 1918. ©SDHC 1999/027.10.
used the spelling Kearny—with no “e”—that was the correct version. The Union proudly announced that “K-E-A-R-N-Y” was the way to “Spell OUR Camp.”

The government pressed for the rapid construction of the training facility and the city agreed. As soon as building began, area residents would get jobs and local businesses would make sales. The CEC selected the W.E. Hampton & Company of Los Angeles as the general contractor and listed the John Roberts Company of San Diego as the contractor to perform the work on “all additions, alterations, and repairs.” The Construction Division, meanwhile, produced a standard blueprint for construction, devised a staffing plan that conducted the planning and designing of work at the job site, and implemented an “advertise-fixed-price contracts” system in which each contractor would earn a maximum of $250,000.

In June 1917, the military construction contingent arrived with the first Corps of Engineers. Captain Christenson was the first uniformed soldier on hand while Lieutenant Charles S. Rogers, the head of the Quartermaster Construction Division, was the first officer on the scene. Colonel I.W. Greenbaugh, Captain O.C. Wyman, Major Charles H. Nichols and their flock of assistants followed close behind. With the construction principals on site and the labor force gathering, the Union optimistically proclaimed the “Cantonment Work Will be Begun Within 48 Hours.”

The enterprise accommodated virtually every available carpenter and laborer who wanted work. In mid-June, the work force stood at 750 men and, by early August, rose to over one thousand. Major Nichols noted that the project took only “fifteen days to clean up the labor market in San Diego,” causing Hampton to recruit additional laborers in Los Angeles. At one point the latter felt he might need to reach into San Francisco and Oakland to fill the ranks of his industrial Army. When more workers arrived, Hampton planned to institute a ten-hour day with two night shifts to get the work into “full swing.” To avoid lost time, the contractor built on-site bunkhouses so the men could eat, sleep, and walk to their jobs. In addition to the housing, the men received meals and a fair wage.

The construction progressed at a rapid pace. By August, workers had completed ten huge warehouses and foundations for hundreds of other buildings. The construction of a single 130 x 60 foot wooden warehouse in eight hours revealed their speed and efficiency. By breakfast, the workers had the land cleared and graded; by lunchtime, the flooring placed; and, before the end of day, the “last nail” driven in the roof. The workforce as a whole could build, on average, fifteen structures a day.

An agreement between Secretary of War Baker and union labor leader Samuel Gompers guaranteed no labor resistance if the contractors adhered to fair wages and working conditions; nevertheless, some problems occurred. At one point Hampton’s reticence to pay one group the prevailing union wage scale nearly
precipitated a massive walkout. The leaders of San Diego’s individual labor unions met with Hampton and Lieutenant Rogers to hash out the situation and, when Hampton balked, Rogers simply ordered the contractor to comply with the labor demands. With a fair wage and good conditions, the laborers worked a flexible workweek with some ten-hour days that paid overtime. The men worked on Sundays only if absolutely necessary, and if they chose to do so. Board and lodging cost only $1 per day and included transportation. By the end of September some four thousand workers swarmed over the construction site.\(^{28}\)

Another short-lived issue involved Mexican nationals working on the job. In September, a rumor circulated that the government would force Mexican citizens into the U.S. Army against their will and send them overseas to fight. Camp Commander General Frederick Strong quickly quelled that rumor. In a statement read in Spanish to the workers at their noon meal, Strong announced the idea as “absolutely false.” He said that those who spread the falsehood were “enemies of the United States” and wished to slow the progress of the camp. Satisfied, the Mexican contingent returned to their duties without delay and further disruption.\(^{29}\)
Contractor Hampton and his chief engineer J.B. Lippincott accepted local contractors from the start. Fred Heilbron won the contract for much of the heating and plumbing, while Hazard and Gould Company performed most of the initial grading and leveling. They also worked on the railway spur line. The Benson Lumber Company announced it had fifteen million feet of lumber available for immediate delivery; the McCormick Company had another ten to fourteen million available. Hampton used it all.

Local businesses rushed to profit from the presence of the soldiers. Major L.O. Matthews, Division Adjutant, estimated that he received at least one thousand requests for permits to do business on the camp—everything from peanut stands to automotive sales. To quell the chaos, he directed the officer in charge of the Post Exchange that no business would be allowed within five miles of the camp except barbershops.30

Fresh water presented an immediate challenge. When the city signed the contract with the government, its principal water source at the Lower Otay
Reservoir remained in shambles after the flood of 1916. In addition, the water from the San Diego River was polluted. City Manager Fred Lockwood decided to gather water from several city sources, including the Otay and Morena Reservoirs, Lake Murray, and Cuyamaca Lake, and cache it in the University Heights Reservoir. The water would then be channeled to a pumping station at the foot of Texas Street in Mission Valley for transfer to the camp’s fifteen million gallon earthen storage reservoir. Pipes took the water from the reservoir to a reinforced concrete tank for distribution within the camp. The city covered the initial cost of the water system with $20,000 from the general operating fund and eventually spent around $83,000 for the system. After treatment, the health officers of the Surgeon General labeled the camp’s water quality as “satisfactory.”

The installation of the camp sewage system paralleled the water line construction, and both met a major obstacle in the mesa’s impenetrable soil. The ground on the mesa consisted of a thin layer of topsoil above a “thick strata of cemented gravel as hard as concrete” which locals called “caliche.” Even with the concerted efforts of 1,200 laborers, the hardpan brought the trenching progress almost to a halt. Here, the Army engineers resorted to a proven standby—explosives. Workers placed six sticks of dynamite in holes spaced about fourteen inches apart. After the blast, which threw debris fifty feet high, shovel men stepped in and removed the loosened material. Because of the danger, the supervisors halted all work within one thousand feet of the trench blasting. Contractors applied the same excavation system to create the trenches and foxholes.
Dry soil created an unintended problem: dust. Major Nichols recorded that the movement of men, machines, and horses churned up immense clouds of dust that caused extreme difficulties for the laborers and often brought work to a standstill.33

The primitive sewage system functioned around two septic tanks, one larger tank located near the main camp and one smaller version adjacent to the hospital and remount station. The system lacked both a filtration system and contact beds, leading the health officers to qualify the system as “not always satisfactory.” Generally, the tanks discharged the “effluent … into the arroyos to the north and south on the camp” and into San Clemente Canyon. Health inspectors noted that in winter the system emitted little smell, but in the summer the “odor was very strong.” A civilian contractor removed the camps’ garbage and manure from the remount station daily. The official history of the 40th Division noted that, in terms of sanitation, the camp qualified as among the “finest group training areas” in the country, while the officers from the Surgeon General’s office deemed the situation satisfactory.34

Road construction projects carried special significance for the city. The Army
required about four miles of smooth permanent interior roadways for the safe efficient passage of motorized ambulances and fire fighting equipment—a project that the John Roberts Company completed for around fifty thousand dollars. In the end, contractors installed just under seventeen miles of road.

The city agreed to provide a road to the camp for transporting soldiers and materials, one the Army hoped would be a “modern highway” starting in Old Town and extending to within a half-mile of the southern edge of the camp. It also reworked several other streets, including the road running from the Santa Fe Depot at Linda Vista and the road from the camp’s main thoroughfare, Headquarters Street, to the county highway. It also paved a section between La Jolla and Torrey Pines. The city and county shared the cost for the new Silver Terrace Road, more often and mundanely called Camp Kearny Road, now Linda Vista Road, the major route between the city and the camp. The city also placed a new bridge across San Clemente Canyon to shorten the distance from downtown. To help ease the way for soldiers coming to town, the city organized “Kearny stages” with regular runs between the town and the camp and worked out an agreement with the railroad to conduct four daily runs between downtown and the Linda Vista depot.35

As the camp physically grew, the city coordinated the other necessary infrastructure projects. The San Diego Consolidated Gas and Electric Company installed gas mains and placed 450 poles and 37 miles of wire to bring electricity to the camp while the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company spent $70,000 on communication systems. The city also persuaded the Santa Fe Railway to extend a three-mile spur line from the Linda Vista depot out to the camp to allow the trains to transport supplies directly to the warehouses. The Santa Fe officials, however, stressed that they needed official confirmation from the Army before initiating work. To prompt the railway, the city contracted the Pioneer Truck Company to supply 100 laborers, 150 mules, and 10 “motor trucks” to assist with the construction. But delay followed delay and workers did not have the spur line and interior tracks in place until late September. Local workers shared in the $200,000 spent on the project.36

Not everything went according to plan in San Diego’s great military city. In late September a brush fire erupted and high Santa Ana winds pushed the flames beyond control and threatened the Gas and Electric Company’s construction camp to the north of the main camp. The camp’s Fire Marshal, Captain Courser, who the government hired from the San Diego Fire Department, rushed eleven truck loads of soldiers and 130 laborers armed with spades, water pails, and wet gunny sacks to the scene where they put out the blaze in about half an hour.

In addition, horses were in short supply, causing some trainees to suffer the
indignity of riding wooden barrel horses rather than the real thing. Unwanted spectators became another unexpected problem. Controlling the crowds that trooped out to the construction site to observe and comment on the biggest show in town developed into a serious nuisance. Every day, hundreds of sightseers swarmed over the camp, interfering with workers, clogging the roads, and slowing the movement of the trucks transporting building materials. While the Army and the contractors begged the sightseers to stay away and let the men do their work, the San Diego Sun blithely urged everyone to trek out to the construction site because it had to be seen to be believed. Despite the best efforts of the Army and contractors, the construction sideshow took on a life of its own and continued unabated for weeks.37

Amazingly, San Diego’s war suburb of nearly 1,200 buildings stood near completion by the end of August 1917. Workers had finished the warehouses, the post office, telegraph office, and the 1,000-bed hospital (destined to be the camp’s longest standing facility); readied the cavalry’s remount station for operation; put the water and sewerage system in place; and set and wired exterior electrical lighting poles. In a remarkably short time, the private contractors and
the Quartermaster Corps had transformed 8,000 brush-covered acres into the semblance of a “well regulated military city.”

The War Department designed each facility to serve a Pershing Division of 28,000 men. Designated a National Guard camp, Kearny received its first troops in early September, shortly after General Frederick S. Strong assumed command. Following his initial inspection, Strong laconically categorized the camp as more “suitable” than “could scarcely be imagined.” In September, five thousand National Guardsmen from Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and California reported for duty. Men from other camps and an influx of draftees brought the mean strength to approximately twenty-three thousand trainees. The soldiers organized as the 40th, or “Sunshine,” Division, so called for the division shoulder patch depicting a bright yellow sun on a blue field. The camp developed into a largely homogeneous group with few non-Anglo troops and just a handful of non-English speakers. The Commission of Immigration and Housing brought in Ms. Christina Krysto of Los Angeles to offer English reading and writing instruction to men deficient in those skills. Perhaps the most noted member of the 40th was actor Buster Keaton who trained for two weeks in July 1918 before being reassigned to Fort Mills. The most celebrated visitor was actress Mary Pickford who became the “godmother” for Battery “D” of the 145th Field Artillery unit.

The 40th division conducted training until departing from the camp in July 1918. Men endured typical army drilling and training activities as well as a variety of athletic endeavors. The camp had an athletic director, John R. Case, who organized sporting activities to offset the traditional training regime. The men participated in boxing along with the bayonet drills. Camp teams also competed against the other local Navy and Army bases in boxing, baseball, football, track and field, with a huge inter-service Olympics-like event held in Balboa Park culminating the athletic season. To prepare the men for long distance trekking, the drill masters took advantage of Southern California’s weather and hiked the men extensively around the county, including regular jaunts to Torrey Pines and multi-day bivouacs as far ranging as Lake Cuyamaca. The Construction Division also had plenty of opportunities to march on parade in front of Commanding General Strong and his staff before departing Camp Kearny and heading out for additional training prior to deployment to Europe.

The camps and cantonments constructed by the CD were like none before. Conceived in the waning days of the Progressive era, a time still imbued with the spirit of reform and idealism, the government felt obliged to minister to the moral welfare of the men as they trained to become combat soldiers. Along with the essential military buildings—warehouses, mess halls, hospitals—the camp teemed with the facilities catering to the trainees’ spiritual, personal, and moral concerns.
Service organizations filled the camp. The YMCA alone managed five buildings and two tents. The organization supplied the men with writing and reading materials, organized church services, constructed a 3,000 seat multi-use building for large events, and administered to the Hostess House where families and friends could visit with the soldiers. The last was a gift from La Jolla philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps. The Knights of the Columbus attended to the spiritual needs of Catholics with two separate buildings, while the Jewish Welfare Board did the same for Jewish soldiers. After an initial refusal, then a brief debate, the government also permitted the Freemasons a working space. The Red Cross managed the largest service building on the camp, and the American Library Association actively served alongside the Christian Science House and the Church Federation House. The War Department also constructed a Liberty Theater, operated by the Commission on Training Camp Activities, on every camp and cantonment. Kearny’s 3,000-seat house presented everything from training lectures to comedy reviews to boxing matches.

A unique space that camp residents called the Civic Center housed the civilian-controlled commercial and amusement elements of the camp. The Army’s Division Post Exchange administered the center which included a 125-seat restaurant; a lunch room seating sixty; three photographic galleries; two large billiard rooms, each containing thirty tables; a ten-lane bowling alley; a 1,100 seat theater with another 2,000-seat auditorium under construction; a tailor shop; soda fountain; grocery store and skating rink; the largest shooting gallery in America; a hat-cleaning and blocking service; and a special equipment store for officers. The camp planners designed the center to meet the varied material needs of thirty thousand men and, on completion, became the “largest mercantile establishment in Southern California.” The trainees appreciated these services but apparently considered the post office, which processed over 350,000 letters per month, by far the most important building.

To support the moral welfare of the trainees, the War Department created an agency called the Commission on Training Camp Activities that maintained a conspicuous presence at each facility. The Commission strived to make life normal for the soldiers and to keep the environs of the camps clean and wholesome, while suppressing “certain vicious conditions” associated with camp life. The Commission also created Post Exchanges and Soldiers Cooperative Stores and gave considerable attention to the “Control of Alcohol and Prostitution” near the camps. The Liberty Theater hosted many of these informative and mandatory lectures for the trainees.

Not to be outdone, the city fathers also took on the role of moral caretakers. City leaders, health officials, and military representatives met to discuss ways to
“prevent the social evil from getting a foothold in San Diego” and to keep “fallen women from plying their trade.” Mayor Wilde sponsored a resolution to ban dancing in local cafés that sold liquor and refused to allow the City Council to
adjourn until the body had settled the cabaret question to his satisfaction. The resolution permitted hotels with 100 rooms to maintain a ballroom, but required smaller cafes to construct a platform for entertainers and prohibit performers from mingling with the guests. The action strictly prohibited “games of chance and gambling” in the cafes and called for all bars within a half of a mile of the barracks to either close or move. The Army also determined not to allow any liquor outlets near the camp.41

Like any small city, the camp published a newspaper, “The Camp Kearny Weekly News,” while the “Trench and Camp” supplied the soldiers with local and national news. The latter had been founded by Virginia publisher John S. Bryan who conceived the idea of a weekly newspaper for soldiers, and worked through the National Works Council and YMCA to distribute four thousand advertisement-free papers at no cost to the soldiers at each training camp. Los Angeles Times publisher Harry Chandler volunteered and agreed to supply the Kearny edition of “Trench and Camp.” Working out of the YMCA building, volunteers selected an editor, organized a staff, and started the presses within a month. The San Diego Union also included a daily page called the “U.S. Service Page” filled with general military information and specifics about each installation in town.

Whether the trainees were novices at making war or “sturdy rookies,” as General John Pershing called them, they became experts in purchasing Liberty Bonds. Each battalion, regiment, and company competed to subscribe to the most bonds. The government tried to make it easy; soldiers could make an allotment from their monthly pay to spread out the payments. In mid-October 1918, the camp sponsored a special Liberty Day with the goal to push the camp Liberty Drive over one million dollars. On the first day over four hundred men purchased $78,800 worth of bonds—the largest single-day collection to that point. At the conclusion of the drive, 6,813 soldiers subscribed to $686,800 worth of bonds, with one sergeant topping the list with a $600 bond. The Hampton Company also entered the competition, creating teams of workers with prizes going to the winners. The construction workers entered the mania and purchased bonds in the amount of $202,000 over a three-day drive in late October; out of the approximately 2,800 workers 2,100 subscribed.42

The international influenza pandemic dominated the war years and descended on Camp Kearny. A report from the Surgeon General’s office noted that the camp suffered 187 deaths among enlisted men from disease in 1917, with the flu accounting for most. After the departure of the 40th Division, rumors spread throughout the city that an epidemic gripped the camp, a situation the camp medic labeled as “absolutely unfounded.” The flu did find its way into the camp and camp health officers closed down all the public assembly areas, quarantined
the trainees, and required the men to wear masks at all times. But by November 1918 both the war and the flu were over. At that point the two most pressing questions on the minds of the Kearny soldiers became, “When can we go to dances and shows and when do we go back to civilian clothes?”

With the end of the war, Camp Kearny, like most of the other National Guard camps, faded away with little fanfare. The city’s exhilaration over the armistice gave way to concern that the city’s cash cow was also about to disappear. Looking for ways to extend the camp’s life, leaders of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce met with new camp commander General Guy Carleton to discuss the possibility of converting the camp into a convalescent facility. For a short time, the camp became one of two demobilization centers on the West Coast. Nevertheless, by early 1919, only 3,500 men remained on site and workers had begun dismantling the ordinary buildings and salvaging wood, electrical, and gas fixtures.

Secretary Baker, on a visit to San Diego to inspect the camp, announced to the Union that he “highly favored” retaining the facility as a permanent site for the regular army. In 1920 the government improved the hospital but only 300 men inhabited the largely deserted grounds. In the summer of 1922, as 1,100 ROTC students arrived for training, the last vestige of the old camp—a wooden warehouse—disappeared under the hammers and crowbars of the salvage crews.

One interesting incident during demobilization involved the enigmatic Ed Fletcher. He and his neighbor Harry Whitney became the only San Diegans to make a claim against the government for damages sustained to the lands leased to the Army. Fletcher vowed he had a verbal agreement—probably with his friend General Strong—that called for the land to be returned in the same condition as it stood at the time of the lease. Admittedly, the two landowners allowed the Army to excavate six miles of trenches and dugouts and to place an artillery range on the land. Strong authorized an Army engineer—at government expense—to
conduct a survey, appraise the damages, and offer a cost of restoration. The Army Controller General rejected the $24,000 claim but Fletcher used his position in Congress to pursue the suit for another eight years before the government finally relented and issued him a check.44

The city by-passed the opportunity to regain the Linda Vista mesa and the government wisely retained ownership of most of the land. Aside from a failed attempt to establish a dirigible base there in 1920, the only activity came from military and civilian pilots who used the open space as an informal airport. The San Diego-based Ryan Company tested Lindbergh’s *Spirit of St. Louis* on the old parade ground in 1927 as it offered a perfect site for practicing tricky takeoffs and landings. After the disaster of the dirigible *USS Macon* in 1932, the site went quiet until 1936 when the Navy installed an asphalt landing strip suitable for light aircraft.45 In December 1939, the Navy acquired some adjacent lands and improved the field for the arrival of the First Marine Air Wing in August 1942. On February 20, 1943, the Navy commissioned the field as Naval Auxiliary Air Station, NAAS, Camp Kearny. That became the last formal use of the name Kearny for the area, but the legacy of the Camp Kearny site continued through the successive installations from the Marine Corps Air Depot to Marine Corps Air Depot Miramar to Naval Air Station Miramar to the present day Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

It is difficult to assess the precise effect the brief presence of Camp Kearny had on San Diego’s economy. Along with the naval training facility in Balboa Park and the expanding Army and Navy aviation installation on North Island, Camp Kearny certainly contributed to San Diego’s emerging economy. As the *Sun* averred, the physical presence of so many soldiers and sailors furnished “a big part of the city’s activities day and night” and turned the city into “One Great Military Camp.” San Diego’s wartime population almost doubled with the addition of the 75,000 transient guests, and their spending definitely supplemented the local economy. Despite the city’s cabaret ordinances, downtown San Diego became a hot spot.

By the end of 1917, the city had already experienced the leading edge of the Kettner-led military spending agenda. The *Union* noted that San Diego remained one of the few cities in America in which the government expended millions of dollars on military projects. Certainly local businesses and individuals profited. The government spent over $1 million in the construction phase, including at least $200,000 on labor and an equal monthly amount over the life of the camp for local goods and services. Conversely, the city and county combined to expend around $400,000 on the venture and gained nothing monetarily from the $1.00 per year lease fee, while the county tax rate increased over twenty cents in 1917. But the overall result proved positive.
The patriotic component of the camp’s existence is more easily appraised. San Diego’s citizens embraced the opportunity to express their patriotic fervor both through their spiritual enthusiasm and their support of the war related service programs. For example, the five Liberty Loan campaigns directed by Julius Wangenheim—programs described by The San Diego Union as the barometer of any city’s patriotism—proved to be some of the most successful in the United States. With a population of only 100,000, San Diego’s first four programs raised an average of $150 per individual, serving as a model for other cities. In Red Cross drives, War Saving Stamp campaigns, and United War Work Services, the people of San Diego repeatedly went “over the top.” San Diego clearly supported the war effort with generosity and enthusiasm.46

While the life of Camp Kearny proved fleeting, San Diego’s army experience presented the citizenry a chance to assuage their patriotic spirit and gave them a boost during tough economic times.

NOTES


20. Telegram, Littell to Kettner, June 7, 1917, in Kettner, Why It Was Done And How, 73-74.


23. “K-E-A-R-N-Y, That’s the way to Spell OUR Camp,” San Diego Union, September 5, 1917, 1. Interestingly in the following years the Army and the government indiscriminately used both spellings in reports.


27. To control the crush of applicants that quickly threatened to disrupt the work, Hampton ordered all interested applicants to register at the contractor’s downtown office in the American National Bank Building, rather than at the camp. Completion Report of Camp Kearney, Linda Vista, Cal, Charles H. Nichols, Major C. of E. Constructing Quartermaster, NARA, College Park, MD. Record Group #77, Box 148, Camp Kearny – California, 1917, 6 (hereinafter cited as Nichols Report); “Labor Market Combed For Men To Work at Camp,” San Diego Union, August 10, 1917, 5; “Camp Kearny Fast Assuming Form of Big Army of Workmen,” San Diego Union, August 16, 1917, 1, 6; “Camp Inspected by Gen. Liggett; Work Is Praised,” San Diego Union, August 20, 1917, 3.


31. The use of half steel, half wood-staved pipe raised some questions, but the Chamber Water Committee considered the use of wood pipe, which had only had a life span of five years, appropriate because it was cheap and readily available which translated into a faster installation time. Nichols Report, 8-9; “Spur Railroad Laid One Mile At Cantonment,” San Diego Union, July 9, 1917, 1; “Outside Water at Camp,” San Diego Sun, October 18, 1917; Annual Report of the Surgeon General, 1918 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), I:374 (hereinafter cited as ARSG).


33. Nichols Report, 12; ARSG, 1918, 1:374; Department of the Army, History of the Fortieth Sunshine Division (Los Angeles: C. S. Huston, 1920), 42.


38. CKWN, March 9, 1918, “Division Exchange,” 1; ARSG, 1917, 374.


42. “Soldiers To Aid In Liberty Loan,” San Diego Union, October 3, 1917, 6; “Plan Great Drive Today To Reach $1,000,000 Goal,” San Diego Evening Tribune, October 24, 1917, 6; “Camp Workmen Praised For Aid In Bonds Sales,” San Diego Evening Tribune, October 29, 1917, 6.

43. ARSG, 1918, 1:377; “Spanish Influenza AWOL Here, Said: No Quarantine Set,” CKWN, October 3, 1918, 1; “Complete Lift of Quarantine,” CKWN, November 21, 1918, 1.


45. The Navy had installed a airship mooring mast for its two 785-foot dirigibles, the USS Akron and the USS Macon on the old parade ground, which unfortunately precipitated a disaster when during the first docking of the Macon in May, strong winds pulled four Navy line tenders off the ground and two dropped to their deaths.

The 2012 Transit of Venus Observed at Real de Santa Ana, Baja California Sur, Mexico:
A Tribute to the XVIII Century Mexican Astronomer Joaquín Velázquez de León

By
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Introduction

A series of cultural and scientific activities were organized along the Baja California Peninsula both to observe the transit of Venus of June 5, 2012, and to commemorate the transit of June 3, 1769, by measuring the shadow of Venus from the same location. The events were coordinated by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and local authorities. Major celebrations took place in the central plaza of San José del Cabo, not far from where the combined French/Spanish expedition observed the transit in 1769, and a search was carried out to find the location of the previous effort. Upon finding clear evidence of the 1769 site, an observatory was built and the transit measured from where Joaquín Velázquez de León held his telescope in June 1769.

Finding the place was not an easy task because no information had been discovered to pinpoint the precise location. For instance, it is unclear how accurately Velázquez was able to describe the position indicated in his manuscript. The determination of the geographic longitude on land was based on reasonable
precision in 1769, but it is necessary to take into account that an error of one arcminute near the Tropic of Cancer is equivalent to 1.8 kilometers. According to Velázquez, he was able to determine the location of his observatory with a discrepancy of only a few arcseconds using a gnomon. Additionally, he made careful observations of Jupiter moon eclipses to determine time differences with respect to similar observations by the official observers in San José del Cabo.

Previous publications about the observations by Velázquez have reported that he built his observatory on the top of the highest hill west of Santa Ana and that the longitude of his observatory was 267° 49´ West of Hierro Island. Those authors quoted gave coordinates that translated to the Greenwich Meridian, reporting 110° 11´ W. We noticed, however, that this coordinate, as stated in a letter by Velázquez, does not refer to the location of the observatory, but to the longitude at the tip of the peninsula. Velázquez discussed on that page how previous maps of the region gave a longitude between 263 and 261 degrees counting from the Isla de Hierro, and how his careful observations from Santa Ana corrected the datum to 267° 49´.

A preliminary investigative trip to 110° 11´ W was made by members of the La Paz planetarium in early April 2012. The explorers reported that the highest elevation was at most 400 meters, and that it was impossible to find a location where the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Cortés both could be seen. We know today that the reported position is located almost 17 linear kilometers west of Velázquez’s observatory. We decided then to first identify the place where Real de Santa Ana once stood, and for this task, we contacted the office of the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (Comisión Nacional de Areas Protegidas, or CONANP) for South Baja California. They informed us that information existed about the location of the former mining offices at Real de Santa Ana: CONANP registries reported that the place was currently occupied by two small ranches: Rancho El Dátil and Rancho Santa Ana. The ranches were accessible from San Antonio de la Sierra, a small town located two hours from San José del Cabo.

The Historical Relevance of the 1769 Transit of Venus

German astronomer Johannes Kepler, the first astronomer in modern history to predict that the planet Venus would pass over the disc of the Sun in 1631, had previously enunciated the Laws of Planetary Motion. These laws allowed English
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astronomers Jeremiah Horrocs and William Crabtree to deduce that a second passing of Venus would occur eight years later, and that the next one would happen after 121.5 years. During the second half of the seventeenth century, formidable advances in celestial mechanics and astronomy were at the forefront of scientific knowledge. In just a few decades, research groups were created, specialized journals were founded, and meetings were organized for the exchange of the latest discoveries.

In 1716, Edmund Halley submitted a now famous proposal to the Royal Society in London outlining the significance of measuring the transits of 1761 and 1769. Precise observations of the phenomenon would allow astronomers to calculate the difference in position of the Sun from different locations on the Earth and then obtain the distance between the Earth and the Sun, a measurement required to determine precise geographical locations and produce accurate maps. Halley therefore recommended that various countries direct their efforts and resources to organizing expeditions to suitable areas around the globe to observe the transits, and later to compare measurements. More than one hundred astronomers were appointed to the task of organizing large, costly, and sometimes very dangerous trips to obtain data. The relevance of the project justified the generous funds provided by scientific societies that had been created just for that purpose. Nowadays, this endeavor may be comparable only to the construction of large-scale astronomical observatories, or planetary exploration by international consortiums. It is fair to say that the transit of Venus observations in 1761 and 1769 comprised the first large scale, international astronomical project in modern history.

The French-Spanish Expedition to Baja California in 1769

The French astronomer Abbot Jean-Baptiste Chappe d’Auteroche organized one such expedition to San José del Cabo in the southernmost region of the peninsula of Baja California. The trip was laden with misadventure from beginning to end. Chappe d’Auteroche was, without a doubt, a scientist with a determined outlook, having already conducted a complicated expedition to the Siberian steppe to observe the transit of 1761. His observations were successful, despite the fact that the Russian sky had been completely cloudy the previous night before the observation and cleared just a few hours before the event.
In 1765, Thomas Hornsby recommended that in order to avoid potential failures of observations performed in the southern hemisphere, new expeditions should be sent to the northern regions of the American continent. Chappe d’Auteroche, who had learned his lesson in 1761, decided that warmer and dryer climates would be more advantageous to measure the transit of 1769, so he selected the northern territories of New Spain. In order to organize the expedition, however, skillful diplomatic abilities were needed because of Spain’s political position aimed toward protecting its colonial territories. Because a petition by the Royal Society of London to send an expedition to observe the transit in New Spain had previously been rejected by Carlos III, the French were up against strong opposition when they requested the king’s permission for this new expedition. It was approved only after difficult negotiations. The key members of the expedition were Jean Pauly, engineer and royal geographer who acted as the main scientific advisor; instrument expert Jean Jacques Dubois, who was in charge of telescopes and clocks; and Jean Noël, a student from the Painting Academy, who was appointed to document the trip in a series of drawings.

The French-Spanish expedition left Paris for the port of Le Havre-de-Grâce on September 18, 1768. They stopped first at the Port of Cádiz, Spain, where they were detained for weeks. Their departure was finally permitted in mid-November 1768 under the condition that Vicente Doz, an experienced astronomer, and Salvador de Medina, both qualified officers from the Spanish navy would join the expedition. They reached the coast of Veracruz on May 6, 1769. After a
long and uncomfortable journey, the expedition reached Mexico City, where they presented credentials to the Viceroy. After lengthy interviews, they continued to San Blas, Nayarit, where they crossed the Sea of Cortés.

Chappe and his men finally reached San José del Cabo on May 18, 1769, with only a few days left to prepare their instruments for the observations. In addition, they received the frightening news that an outbreak of fever (possibly yellow fever, also known as *matlazahuatl* disease, or black vomit) had killed many natives in the area. In order to save time, Chappe decided that the expedition should stay in the area and immediately start observing the stars to establish their geographical position. This decision, crucial to achieve the objectives of the expedition, turned out to be fatal because Chappe d’Auteroche and almost his entire crew lost their lives to the disease. Only Pauly, Noël and Doz returned to Europe.

**Joaquín Velázquez de León: an Astronomer from New Spain**

An important addition to the arrival of the French-Spanish expedition in Baja California was the entrance of the Mexican astronomer Joaquín Velázquez de León into the historic scenario. Velázquez de León, one of the driving forces of the scientific movement in New Spain during the second half of the eighteenth century, was born in 1732 into a family of long-standing mining tradition at the hacienda of Acevedocla in the district of Sultepec in the state of Mexico. Velázquez began his career studying law and in time attained a broad knowledge of mathematics, chemistry, geology, physics, natural history and poetry.

From 1765 on, he directed efforts to enhance the mining activities in New Spain, which caught the attention of José de Gálvez, the royal emissary sent there to apply the administrative reforms by Carlos III. Gálvez invited Velázquez to accompany him to Baja California and organize its mining activities there. They arrived on the peninsula in 1768 and quickly established their headquarters in Real de Santa Ana, the first non-religious settlement in the peninsula. Velázquez remained there for almost three years, during which time he performed numerous astronomical and geographical measurements that were essential to correct the scale of the maps from New Spain. He also described the local natural resources and made other scientific studies, but it is without a doubt that the observations of the transit of Venus in 1769 became one of the most important and transcendental achievements of his life.

**The Observations of Velázquez de León in Baja California**

As soon as Velázquez learned that a French-Spanish expedition had arrived
in the peninsula to observe the Venus transit, he communicated his interest to join and help them with such an important task. The European group suggested that he stay in Santa Ana and measure the transit there: “in case we miss ours because of clouds; and even if this was not the case, it would be beneficial none the less to practice the observation from two different posts.” Without knowing it at the time, this answer would save the life of Velázquez, because he avoided contact with the epidemic that killed almost the entire expedition of the French Academy.

In his report to Viceroy de Croix, Velázquez wrote that because Santa Ana was located at the foothills of a mountain that elevated westward, covering the view of the Sun much before it set in the horizon, he decided to establish his observatory on the highest summit west from Santa Ana, where “without losing sight of the Sea of Cortés and the Cerralvo inlet at the North Northeast [he] could see the sun set in the Pacific Ocean.” Velázquez calculated the geographic position of his
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After the transit, he made more observations with instruments of the late Chappe to determine the longitude of his observatory: “I have found the difference of longitude between the Royal Observatory in Paris and the post from which I observed to be 7 hours 29 minutes 33 seconds east.” From this observatory, Joaquín Velázquez de León measured the transit of Venus in June 1769 and sent his results to the survivors of the French-Spanish team, who took them to France to be compared and published with the rest taken around the world.

The 2012 Expedition to Rancho El Dátil

The commission assigned by UNAM to find the Observatory of Velázquez de León was formed by Carlos Román and Xavier López-Medellín. We traveled to San José del Cabo on June 3, and made a first trip to San Antonio on the fourth of June. We arrived at the area with hopes of reaching the highest peak near El Dátil, indicated by satellite images. Our first approach was to start off from San Antonio, traveling south to a small, active mine called “La Testera.” The chief engineer told us that it was theoretically possible to reach the highest hill from the mine, and that it was indeed linearly closer, but the slope from there was too steep. He recommended instead that we take the simplest approach: return to the highway and take the detour to San Antonio de la Sierra toward Rancho El
Dátil. By mid-afternoon, we arrived at El Dátil where we were kindly received by Francisco Salvatierra, one of the current owners, who showed us the landscape from his backyard. We immediately identified the highest hill, straight west from his ranch. After engaging in a long but amiable negotiation, we settled upon an arrangement for Salvatierra to guide us to the top of the hill. Since he had only one mule, he would ride it, carrying the telescope and tripod, while we would walk with the rest of the equipment and provisions, which we now had to limit as much as possible.

In the early morning of June 5, we returned to El Dátil and met Francisco’s wife, Manuela Cota Rivera, present legal owner of El Dátil. She explained that the main building at El Dátil, an old adobe house, was in fact the ancient warehouse of Real de Santa Ana where, by orders from José de Galvez himself, provisions, goods, and materials were concentrated and distributed to the mining camps in the region. Some other barely discernible ruins of a church and smaller buildings in the area were evidence of former prosperous times in the area.19

We started the journey to the top of the highest hill just before 9 a.m. with a relatively easy walk following a dry brook covered with riparian vegetation until the hill started to become fairly steep. After a four-kilometer walk, López-Medellín climbed to the first visible elevation, from where he saw the Island of Cerralvo, but
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not the Pacific Ocean because there was a higher hill blocking the view. Román and Salvatierra joined him to climb the next hill, and reached the summit at 11:30 a.m. At the top, we clearly saw the Island of Cerralvo and the Bahía de la Ventana to the east. To the west we saw the cloud line above the Pacific Ocean. El Dátil and Santa Ana ranches were also visible down toward the northeast.

A small, roughly circular area, nearly seven meters in diameter, was clear from trees and bushes. Since the rest of the mountain was completely covered with short bushes and trees, we ventured to speculate that Velázquez de León himself may have ordered the clearing of vegetation in order to install his observatory in 1769. Today, because the clearing is used by cattle as a resting place, and because the extreme dryness of the region has kept it from being repopulated by vegetation, we could still see the clearing. The altitude of the hill is 912 meters and our GPS device marked the location at 23h 42m 28s, 110° 02´40.5´´ W. The location of three microwave antennae in the vicinity allowed us to have good reception for cell phones. We called our colleagues in San José del Cabo to let them know we had reached the place: we were standing in the very same place where Velázquez de León observed the transit of Venus 243 years before in 1769.

Observations of the Transit of Venus 2012

Former warehouse at the Real de Minas de Santa Ana, currently the house of Manuela Cota and Francisco Salvatierra, owners of Rancho El Dátil.
Observations of Joaquin Velázquez de Leon from Real de Santa Ana, June 3, 1769. Museo Naval, Ministerio de Marina, Madrid, Spain.

According to previous estimations, the first contact of Venus with the Sun was to occur at 16:02:24 local time. We set a Meade ETX-70 portable telescope with a 70 mm aperture and a 350 mm focal distance. On this instrument we mounted a homemade “solar funnel” in order to project the disc of the Sun over a high contrast plastic screen. The plastic material slightly reduced the sharpness of the image when projected over the screen. It allowed, however, a comfortable observation of the Sun without having to constantly look through an ocular. This device was similar to others used in observations by the public in Baja California. We also filmed the observation with a video camera. The video did not allow a clear recognition of the first contact at the estimated time, but we noticed the start of the immersion at 16:03:02, when a small notch was visible in the disc of the Sun. The second contact was affected by the “drop effect” described by the eighteenth-century observers, and we had to wait to observe a “slice of light” between the edges of the disks of Venus and the Sun, as described by Velázquez in his journal. We registered complete immersion of Venus at 16:20:20, less than half a minute after the estimated hour for the contact at 16:19:55. Even though our instrumentation was not optimal, it was a very
Photographs by Carlos Román and Xavier López atop the 912m observatory hill showing (above), on the horizon, the Bahía de la Ventana and Isla de Cerralvo, towards Northwest; and (below) cloud profile over the Pacific Ocean towards West.
reasonable option given the complicated access route to the site. Moreover, our setting was probably not much different than the one used in 1769. It allowed us to mark the ephemeris by eye, as Velázquez did, with similar precision of less than a minute. The main goal of our expedition was not to measure the transit precisely, but to locate the observatory and to witness the same phenomenon 243 years after Velázquez. Once that mission was accomplished, we packed up the equipment and returned to El Dátil sometime after 16:45.

**Discussion**

There is a significant difference between the coordinates of the Velázquez de León observatory cited by Higgins, Engstrand and Westfall, and those recorded by our GPS on the summit of the highest hill west of El Dátil. We consider that the confusion resulted from a slight misread of Velázquez de León’s original manuscripts: the Mexican astronomer did not reference the coordinates of his observatory with respect to the *Isla de Hierro* meridian. On page 16 of his manuscript, he reports it with respect to the Royal Observatory in Paris, as described above. To use the meridian at Hierro would make sense, as it was the one used by the Spaniards in the colonial territories. The observations of the transit of Venus reported by Velázquez de León are referred to Paris, however, because they were to be reported to the French Academy and added to the list of measurements taken in 1769 across the globe.

The letter from Velázquez to Viceroy Marques de Croix states a longitude of

*A photograph indicating the path we followed to the 912m western hill, which we believe to be the location at which Joaquín Velázquez de León made his observations of the transit of Venus.*
“7 hours 29 minutes 33 seconds west.” This measurement made by Velázquez is equivalent to 112° 23′ 13.2″ W from Greenwich, and if we consider that the current longitude of the Royal Observatory in Paris is 02° 20′ 11.42″ W, then the difference is 110° 03′ 01.7″. Our GPS recorded a longitude of 110° 02′ 40.5″ W from Greenwich atop the hill west of El Dátil, which represents a difference of 21.2″ giving an uncertainty of 300 to 700 lineal meters, which is perfectly reasonable within the typical error in determining a meridian on land with a gnomon.

We conclude therefore, that we succeeded in our mission of observing the transit of Venus of 2012 at the same site where Mexican astronomer Joaquín Velázquez de León completed his observations of the same phenomenon in 1769. History can, indeed, repeat itself.

NOTES

1. The Transit of Venus was observed by many in San Diego on June 5, 2012, through personal telescopes and by those provided by the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center in Balboa Park. The transit was observed from various other areas throughout San Diego County.

2. His complete surname is sometimes written as Velázquez Cárdenas y León or Velázquez Cárdenas de León (Doyce B. Nunis, editor, The 1769 Transit of Venus. The Baja California Observations of Jean-Baptiste Chappe d’Auteroche, Vicente de Doz and Joaquín Velázquez Cárdenas de León. Translations by James Donahue, Maynard J. Geiger and Iris Wilson Engstrand. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (Los Angeles: Dawson’s Book Shop, 1982). The scientist
signed his own manuscript as Velázquez de León. He is listed as having descended from Diego de Velázquez (1599-1660), Governor of Cuba during the early period of the conquest.

3. A gnomon is the part of a sundial that casts a shadow.


11. Thomas Hornsby, a British astronomer and mathematician, was a fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; see Westfall, *The 1769 Transit of Venus*, p. 238.


EXHIBIT REVIEWS

The San Diego History Center and The San Diego Museum of Art

Charles Reiffel: An American Post-Impressionist,
opened November 10, 2012.


Reviewed by Molly McClain, Professor, Department of History, University of San Diego.

Charles Reiffel, described by some critics as the “American van Gogh,” produced emotionally expressive images of San Diego’s backcountry and waterfront. To celebrate the 150th anniversary of his birth, the San Diego History Center (SDHC) and the San Diego Museum of Art (SDMA) have collaborated to produce a comprehensive exhibit of his works ranging from sketches and lithographs to paintings and murals. The show reveals the career of an artist who developed a regional response to the challenge of modernism.

Bram Dijkstra and Ariel Plotek co-curate the exhibition that opened in November 2012 and continues through February and March 2013. Their catalogue, Charles Reiffel: An American Post-Impressionist, places the artist’s work in art historical context. Dijkstra, a scholar and collector who bought his first Reiffel painting about thirty years ago, writes, “Some of his paintings done on the West Coast are phenomenal—some of the best painting done in the country in the first half of the century,” he explains, “But he did not get the attention of the East Coast that he deserved.”

Charles Reiffel (1862-1942) began his career.
as a lithographer in Cincinnati, Ohio, producing theatrical posters, playbills, and other commercial designs. After two trips to Europe, he started working in watercolors and oil. He experimented with a variety of different styles before adopting Tonalism around 1907. In works such as Early Winter (ca. 1909) and Railway Yards—Winter Evening (1910) he used dark colors and heavy atmospheres to suggest the threat to nature by industrial and urban development. He, like many of his fellow artists, “saw the Luminists’ glowing tones, which symbolized the soul’s immersion in nature, fading into the darkness of lost faith.”

Reiffel and his wife Elizabeth moved frequently—from Cincinnati to Buffalo, New York, to Silvermine, Connecticut—seemingly unable to remain in one place for any length of time. He joined the New Canaan Art Club and founded the Silvermine Guild of Artists during his time in Fairfield County’s leading art colony. His wife, meanwhile, suffered from a manic-depressive disorder that grew worse over time.

In 1913, Reiffel attended the International Exhibition of Modern Art in New York, known as the Armory Show, where he saw works by avant garde European artists such as Cézanne, Gauguin, van Gogh, Picasso, and Duchamp. Inspired by their use of bright color and bold lines, Reiffel used “commanding verticals and electric hues” in paintings such as Autumn Design (ca. 1922). Like other post-impressionists, he came to believe that artists had a duty “to distill the essential truths of the natural world into works of art that would bring viewers closer to reality, to the ‘immanence of God in nature,’” Dijkstra wrote.

The New York art establishment welcomed Reiffel’s bright new palette. Critic Charles Caffin praised his handling of oil paint in Silvermine Valley (ca. 1914) while artist Robert Henri invited him to send the work to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. Reiffel exhibited his work at the Corcoran Gallery, the Art Association of Indianapolis, the Toledo Museum of Art, New York’s National Academy of Design, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Rhode Island School of Design, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, among other venues, and won a number of prestigious awards.

Reiffel continued to experiment with emotional effect. He placed figures in his landscapes to contrast wilderness and civilization in the manner of Childe Hassam. His Nymphs of the Sea (ca. 1923), for example, shows “a bevy of pale-skinned nymphs cavort or sit among Reiffel’s signature rocks and trees.” His best works, however, are partially abstracted landscapes that express “the elemental passions of the earth.”

The artist left the New York art scene at the height of his career, moving to California in 1926. He and his wife settled in San Diego, enchanted by its chaparral, oak trees, and rock-strewn hills. By 1927, he had painted landscapes
depicting Grossmont, Mount Helix, El Cajon, the Cuyamacas, Alpine, Banner Gorge, and the San Felipe Valley. In San Diego’s east county, Dijkstra explains, “The membranes of the region’s primal earth were right there on the surface, waiting to be captured by the broad horizontal strokes and vermicelli verticals of Reiffel’s brush.”

Reiffel quickly made friends among San Diego artists as he had “great charm and a personality that appealed to everybody,” recalled artist Leda Klauber. He showed his paintings alongside California plein air artists Maurice Braun, Alson Clark, Charles A. Fries, Alfred R. Mitchell, and William Wendt, among others, and exhibited his work up and down the coast of California. West Coast critics praised Reiffel. Arthur Millier, writing in the Los Angeles Times, described him as “one of the greatest living American landscape painters,” adding that his lyrical evocation of the landscape struck “a new note in California art.” In his paintings, “mountains, trees, houses…share in a continuous flowing movement. Nothing is static.” The land had a life force of its own.

The general public, however, did not appreciate the raw emotion in his work, preferring other artists’ carefully composed versions of the same scenes. In a recent interview, Dijkstra stated, “He painted to express to others that there was this powerful, emotional, Godlike quality in the backcountry of San Diego. That scared off a lot of people. It’s so raw, it’s so fierce, and he would have said, ‘Yeah, that’s how nature is. This is what you’re living with; you’re living with something that is alive.’” As a result, Reiffel’s paintings languished without buyers before and after the stock market crash of 1929.

Reiffel might have abandoned his career during the Great Depression but for the establishment of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) that threw a lifeline to struggling artists. In return for a small weekly stipend, Reiffel produced some of his most celebrated works, including Road in the Cuyamacas (1933-34), now in the Smithsonian American Art Museum. In 1936, he painted two large murals for San Diego High School’s Russ Auditorium, San Diego Harbor and San Diego Backcountry, which remain on permanent display at SDHC. He painted Point Loma and Farm Landscape (1937) for the auditorium of Memorial Junior High School and, later, a series of paintings depicting the history of San Diego for the City Council Chambers at the Civic Center.

Reiffel continued to send his paintings to various expositions, “often rubbing elbows with a much younger and far more ‘modernist’ crowd of artists.” He experimented with wax crayons and became intrigued by the potential for the expression of emotion in even the most abstract paintings. Although most of his late works continued to depict nature in a realistic manner, a few like Backcountry Scene (1928) show an “almost electric intensity” and the beginnings of abstraction.
Dijkstra wrote, “In a very real sense, he was an Abstract Expressionist before his time.”

Living in extreme poverty, Reiffel returned in some of his last works to the Tonalist style that he had adopted as a younger man. Now, however, the darkness had become personal. In The Street at Night—San Diego (1939), a figure “finds himself alone in a world no longer his, a world whose warmth seems to be receding into the distance, even as the figure, which it is tempting to read as the artist himself, continues to forge ahead.” Reiffel died in March 1942 at seventy-nine years of age.

The exhibit’s catalogue, Charles Reiffel: An American Post-Impressionist, argues convincingly that Reiffel should be considered a Post-Impressionist who elevated subjective experience over objective reality. It reconsiders the aims of American plein air painters in light of recent scholarship, suggesting that their “inward-looking regionalism” was, in fact, an important part of the modernist project. Plotek writes, “It was in this context of increased heterodoxy and rejection of imported styles in favor of those born of the land that Reiffel sought to carve his own niche within the American scene.”

This is the first monographic exhibit of Reiffel’s work since the retrospective held at the Fine Arts Gallery (now SDMA) and the Indianapolis Museum of Art in 1942-43. This exhibit in San Diego, planned by former curators Derrick Cartwright (SDMA) and David Kahn (SDHC), has been realized by the directors and staff of both institutions. Keith Colestock, meanwhile, lent his extensive research materials on Reiffel and provided, in the catalogue, an exhibition history.

Essential to the success of the exhibition are collectors like the Dijkstras, Estelle and Jim Milch, Sharon and Albert Cutri, Colestock and others who began buying Reiffel’s works before they received widespread recognition as masterpieces of twentieth-century art. The Milchs explain that they bought Reiffel’s works at a time when “lots of kids were getting rid of Grandma’s landscape paintings, and they were selling them for a song.” The colors and the energy caught their eye. The Cutris also responded to the artist’s “fluid, organic style.”

For the first time in decades, Reiffel’s works emerge from private collections to take their place among the most inspiring works produced by early twentieth-century California artists. SDMA’s exhibit runs through February 10, 2013, while SDHC’s show concludes on March 10, 2013.

51. La Jolla Shores, 1931. Private collection.

77. In the Street, ca. 1938. The County of San Diego.
Exhibit Reviews

NOTES

3. Ibid., 34, 89.
4. Ibid., 39.
5. Ibid., 48.
6. Ibid., 51.
9. “Reiffel: No, You Don’t Know Him.”
10. Dijkstra and Plotek, eds., Charles Reiffel, 58.
11. Ibid., 61.
12. Ibid., 13.
13. Ibid., 173.
Jack London, Photographer


Reviewed by Craig Carlson, Lecturer, School of Art Design & Art History, San Diego State University.

If Jack London had a calling card it probably would have been emblazoned with the photojournalistic code “f/8 and be there.” f/8 is the aperture in a lens with the greatest optical sharpness, and – like Henri Cartier-Bresson would do with his career – London had an acute awareness of being at the right place at the right conflicts of his time. The camera (as opposed to the sensationalist yellow journalism being simultaneously practiced during the turn of the twentieth century) is the great truth detector. Photographs never lie; people do.

To situate London’s work as a photographer, one must understand that he was an early pioneer during the early 1900s using the first hand-held cameras and flexible roll film (made for amateur use) as opposed to the heavy, large glass plate cameras (tripod required) often used by professional photographers of the era. Film emulsions and lenses were slow to collect light and a steady hand was needed to shoot dynamic, changing events in the streets (later called “spot news” by photographers).

London certainly had the “right stuff” to be a photojournalist. One requirement was not minding working around starving orphaned children or with open saddle sores, or for that matter, being arrested for taking a snapshot of a Japanese blacksmith during the Russo-Japanese War. One also needed an ability to tolerate the obligatory boredom. What matters with Jack London’s photography is not his style, but the very content of his photographs. I agree with Philip Adam on the notion that making photographs is a two-step process: first looking for and understanding your subject, and then seeing it with the camera eye.

Adam lent his hand in the darkroom and made the prints from London’s vintage negatives for the beautifully printed volume that bears the same name as this exhibit. I assume there were some difficult nights for Adam while printing London’s out-of-focus and often under- and overexposed negatives. However, by far the most difficult part must have been staring into the abyss of human suffering that scored most of London’s early photojournalism bound for content in American papers and his imagined self-published books.

Arriving in England in 1902 en route to cover the Boer War for the Hearst
newspapers (only to find out the war had ended), he stayed on in the nation’s capital to experience the impoverished citizens of London’s East End. Photographers are voyeurs at heart and London’s early work in the East End shows how the progressive movement (London’s political left) had moved on from the issue of slavery to England’s workhouses of the early 20th century.

London’s camera accompanied him and his wife, Charmian, to the South Pacific on his custom built ship, *The Snark*. The content of these photographs changed dramatically from street documentary (London’s East End) and war reportage (Russo-Japanese War) to a much lighter, vacation-snapshot style. These particular photographs are those of a tourist with an ethnographic gaze, where photographer and South Pacific islanders are strangers in a primitive headhunter, non-white world. On a trip to an island market, Charmian is photographed packing a small caliber side arm. London, hoping to use the photograph for publication, must later defend the snapshot of his wife to publishers who do not believe the photograph is of good taste for western consumption. London reprimanded his publisher, explaining that his photographs and his writings have only one purpose: to reveal the truth. By the end of his written rant, he shouts to his publisher that, “he [London] is glad he is in the South Pacific; and his publisher in North America.”

Another example of London’s desire to present an unvarnished account of the South Seas for western consumption is a beautiful, full-length portrait of “Nature Man” Ernest Darling. Darling as described by London “was an inspiring though defeated figure.” Darling’s portrait, if covered only to reveal his face, reminds me of a “hippie” type figure of the late sixties and early seventies. I am sure Darling would have been as comfortable walking around “Haight-Ashbury” in San Francisco as he was on the South Pacific island of Tahiti in 1907.

The exhibit of fifty of London’s photographs was successfully presented by the Maritime Museum of San Diego in the lower hold of *The Star of India*. The digital prints made for the exhibit have more contrast and are a bit sharper than the prints reproduced in the book. London’s camera work as professionally hung made it possible for viewers to understand how “f/8 and being there” is the essence of the craft of photography.
BOOK REVIEWS


Reviewed by Vladimir Guerrero, Independent Scholar, Davis, CA.

When a perceptive, meticulous, and highly educated narrator bears witness to a significant period or event, researchers can inherit a rich description of a time and place in history. Such is the case of Pedro Font, an intellectual friar more suited to the cloister than the rigors of missionary life on New Spain’s northern frontier. And such is the journal Font kept during 1775-1776 as chaplain of an expedition led by Juan Bautista de Anza from Sonora to the Bay of San Francisco. Font’s legacy is a time-capsule of the day-to-day life of the expedition, the route followed, the terrain and tribes encountered, the leadership (both Spanish and indigenous), as well as of the men, women, and children migrating to establish one of the first European settlements in Alta California. And the journal, drafted in the field and carefully reworked after his return to Sonora, is a narrative of conflicting personalities and contrasting societies captured by a rigorous observer and polished by the hand of a master storyteller.

Despite of the eighteenth-century language and occasional touches of pedantic erudition, Font’s journal in Spanish, and Brown’s English version, can be read and enjoyed by today’s reader as an epic story of the frontier. But for researchers interested in the period it is much more. It is an indispensable source of material on the Spanish era and on the Spanish-indigenous relationship far from the metropolis. It is also the story of the origins and migration of the people known as the Californios.

As part of their duties, frontier commanders and chaplains were required to keep journals of the daily progress and events of an expedition. These narratives typically consisted of short factual entries on the route and duration of travel, weather conditions, morale of the troops, availability of water and forage, condition of the animals, and so forth. Multiple reports provided the authorities with better information than a single observer because some would be lost in transit and some were so poorly written as to be of limited value. Font’s scholarly grammar and immaculate penmanship made his journal the exception. His writing reflected his powers of observation and mastery of expression. Surpassing the requirements he kept a journal that, in addition to the facts, included a personal element by describing the leaders, soldiers, and families in transit. Upon returning to Sonora
this draft journal was Font’s source material for his official report and for an extensive narrative whose intended audience was undetermined.

Font’s official report, the short journal, was published in a bilingual Spanish-English edition in 1913. The long final version, a “literary monument” according to Brown, was published in English in 1930. But the extensive field text, buried in the archives of the Franciscan order in Rome, first came to light as part of a compilation of early California material published in 1998. It was this work that led Brown to study the original manuscripts which included extensive inter-linear and marginal entries by their author. Comparing the raw material with the final versions would reveal the author’s creative process and a far more complete picture of the expedition, the period, and the frontier society than the official documents.

To effect the comparison, Brown used the field text with “the multitude of additions, corrections and deletions that the author worked through” as the base, and superimposed on it the changes from the final versions (p. 71). The product was a composite (and repetitive) document, color coded according to source. These almost 400 pages of meticulous scholarship were combined into a “unified translation of … Font’s various versions of his account” which, accompanied by an excellent introduction and comprehensive footnotes, resulted in the present work (p. 71).

Brown’s edition of Font’s journal is now the definitive work on this period of late eighteenth-century Sonora and the pre-American Southwest—an extremely readable composite narrative that can be enjoyed by an interested layman or the most demanding historian.


Reviewed by Arnoldo De León, Professor, Department of History, Angelo State University.

This work aims to accomplish at least three goals: to determine how Hispanic settlers and Indians fleshed out their respective identities during the mission era; to discover the self-perceptions held by pre-1848 California inhabitants; and to explain how scholars have viewed identity in borderlands history. In pursuing these objectives, the editor divided the collection into four parts, with
the first three sections focusing on the numerous ways various players expressed their identity or how they perceived themselves as products of the California environment. The fourth section situates these issues of identity within the larger field of Borderlands studies.

The various groups within California defined themselves and others in different and dynamic ways. Junípero Serra, for one, considered himself a product of Iberia and sought to shape Indian neophytes under his care into becoming Spanish and Christian beings. But not all missionaries viewed their charges as did Serra. A second generation (1790s-early 1800s) administered to the missions as Church representatives working with people they considered able to manage daily affairs. Indians adopted their own identity. In her study on Pablo Tac, Lisbeth Haas notes that despite Tac’s European education and scholarly accomplishments, his upbringing in California trumped European influences, for his writings reveal his identification with the tribe to which he belonged. He felt more of a Luiseño than a Spaniard. In the mission complex, different Indian groups acquired divergent identities, as in the case of choristers who achieved an elite status and thus differentiated themselves from the greater neophyte population.

Meanwhile, the native Californios (i.e., the Spanish/Mexican population) of Alta California during the 1830s, forged a self-conceptualization of their own. Californios rejected political leaders assigned to the region by the central government in Mexico. They identified themselves as “white, cultured, and civilized” and characterized the arriving appointees as “dark-skinned, uncivilized, and criminal” (p. 142). Indeed, many of the Californios had (since the colonial era) regarded themselves as “Spaniards.” DNA evidence, argue John R. Johnson and Joseph G. Lorenz in their contribution to the book, bears out their makeup as mestizos, yet as “gente de razón” (“people of reason”) these mixed-bloods identified themselves as Spaniards.

Part Four on historiography explains how the academic community has treated the subject of identity over time. Driven by a desire to see Spain receive due credit for founding pioneer settlements in North America and the need to acquire financial support from the Native Sons of the Golden West (which granted fellowship monies), the noted historian Herbert E. Bolton viewed California history as one of Spanish splendor before the 1840s and then of Anglo American progress in the wake of the War with Mexico and the 1849 gold rush. Identity, finds David J. Weber, did not attract borderlands scholars until about the 1970s. Recent scholarship depicts it as changing according to circumstances and as a social construction wherein historical subjects personalize themselves vis-à-vis others. A survey of the scholarship on the Far North (written by Spanish authors from circa the sixteenth to the nineteenth century) finds a correlation between
historical topics and an author’s professional or ethnic identity. Naval officers wrote about naval expeditions or sea battles, for example, and members of religious orders concentrated on the missions.

In the Introduction editor Steven W. Hackel notifies readers that the investigation of identity in borderlands studies has recent origins. The collection, therefore, serves as a contribution to these new interests, especially as they apply to Spanish/Mexican California. It is useful for the insights the essays offer, the different perspectives they give on their respective topic, as well as the cross-section of subjects they cover: Indians, missionaries, soldiers, and settlers.

*Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America.* By Erika Lee and Judy Young. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Bibliography, illustrations, index, and notes. xxv + 394 pp. $27.95 cloth. $21.95 paper.

Reviewed by David Miller, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of San Diego.

Whereas most Americans are familiar with the triumphant narrative of American immigration history embodied in New York’s Ellis Island, few are aware of the West Coast point of entry for twentieth-century immigrants, San Francisco’s Angel Island Immigration Station. And while some declare it the “Ellis Island of the West,” historians Erika Lee and Judy Yung argue that it was in fact very different than its eastern counterpart. Angel Island sat at a global crossroads and served as the point of entry for immigrants from numerous countries. This makes it the ideal subject of not just a history of Asian or Western immigration, but of the entirety of United States immigration history. Lee and Yung argue that Angel Island’s history is about the “ongoing struggle to define what it means to be an American” and is, at its heart, American history (pp. 21, xx).

The Introduction and first chapter establish the context of Asian immigration, especially how it differed from European immigration in terms of exclusion and naturalization. By 1882, federal law prohibited entry to most Chinese immigrants and completely banned naturalization. This necessitated the construction of a physical place to allow immigration officials to oversee the execution of these laws. This is where Angel Island diverged from Ellis Island.

Lee and Yung note at least three important differences between the two that all revolve around the central fact that Ellis Island processed primarily European immigrants while Angel Island’s main population were Asian. The first difference
was one of exclusion versus restriction. Angel Island was designed to keep particular immigrant groups out while Ellis Island served more as a processing center facilitating entry into America. After its 1910 opening in the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act, officials at Angel Island regulated and managed the new exclusion laws where the burden on the immigrant was to demonstrate they had a legal right to enter the country. The second difference involved a prohibition to naturalization as opposed to a facilitation of the naturalization process. Once through Angel Island, Asian immigrants at various times could not become citizens, a fate spared Ellis Island’s European population. And third, as a result of these differences, the length of stay varied greatly from weeks and months on Angel Island to hours or days on Ellis Island. As a consequence, Angel Island can be understood as a detention center characterized as much by human tragedy as by resilience. Held the longest, it was the Chinese for example who found solace and catharsis by etching expressive poetry on the facility’s walls.

The book continues topically with each chapter detailing the experience of different immigrant groups: the Chinese, Japanese, South Asian, Korean, Russian and Jewish, Mexican, and Filipino. Each group arrived among different national and international contexts and their experience proceeded accordingly. For example, a major theme of Asian immigration, in particular the Chinese, was the role of the government (local, state, and federal) in creating and enforcing laws restricting entry, declaring many Asian groups “Aliens Ineligible for Citizenship,” and then limiting their rights. That new label “alien” had profound consequences not just for the immigrants at the time, but for the entirety of U.S. immigration policy. The effort to restrict Chinese immigration required the federal government to create a national immigration bureaucratic apparatus that invented the modern and politically charged concept of “illegal alien.”

Comparative analysis of the seven immigrant groups leads Lee and Yung to conclude that three factors defined the immigration process: race/nationality, gender, and class. These three factors could be a source of privilege or disadvantage for an immigrant. Of course, often times these categories merged, as in the case of female Chinese immigrants who endured the burden of proving they were not prostitutes, a long standing racial assumption about the Chinese based in part on previous and existing labor and marriage policies discouraging Chinese female immigration. Or in the case of Japanese men, the 1907 Gentlemen’s Agreement ensured that American officials would whisk the Japanese upper class through the process.

Fortunately for the reader, a potentially dry and tedious bureaucratic history comes to life through the richly detailed lived experiences of those processed at Angel Island. The authors resuscitate immigrant voices, place them at the center
of the narrative, and allow them to tell their own stories. The book concludes with an interesting social and cultural history of the facility itself, detailing how the abandoned (it closed in 1940) and dilapidated structures became a museum and place of historical memory through the work of local activists.

Today Angel Island sits in the middle of San Francisco Bay and its state park is a popular day trip for hikers, bicyclists, and the occasional curious visitor. But as Lee and Yung remind us in this definitive history, Angel Island is more than a collection of buildings from our nation’s past, it is the physical place where American immigration policy played out in the lives and on the bodies of thousands of immigrants for thirty years in a way radically different than the celebratory national narrative embodied by the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Accurately remembered, Lee and Yung tell us, this history raises an intriguing question: How can the United States be both “an inclusive nation of immigrants and an exclusive gatekeeping nation?” (p. 6). This is a question worth contemplating, and scholars of immigration, undergraduates, and lay audiences will find much food for thought in this book.


Reviewed by Ryan Jordan, Lecturer, Department of History, University of San Diego.

In *Changing and Remaining*, Stephen Cox tells the history of All Saints’ Episcopal Parish in Hillcrest. It is the oldest church in that neighborhood (from 1912), and the parish itself dates back to 1896 as a mission of St. Paul’s Parish. The Episcopalians take pride in being the oldest Protestant denomination in San Diego, and while much attention has been paid to the largest (and oldest) Episcopal parish, St. Paul’s, the parish of All Saints’ Church in Hillcrest also has a colorful history. Cox, a professor of literature at UC San Diego, details this history by meticulously reconstructing each rector’s tenure from church minutes, interviews, and archived correspondence.

The first parish church was erected amidst shrubs and vacant dirt streets. Over the years, the community survived indebtedness, competition from other churches, and squabbles among parishioners, rectors, and the vestry. The church also survived city efforts to tear down part of the church so as to widen Sixth
Avenue (the coming of the 163 freeway seems to have prevented this from ever occurring). Although the church has been in Hillcrest for over 100 years, most of those who have attended the church have come from out of the area – including congregants from as far away as Alpine, where several parishioners and at least one of the associate rectors lived. Without outside donations and other support, the parish would not have survived as it has. The book also details the architectural changes to the parish church through the years. This discussion makes the book of significant interest for students of San Diego’s material culture.

Theologically All Saints embraced Anglo-Catholicism more or less from its creation as a parish. Although it was theologically conservative, Cox maintains the parish was socially more moderate than others. Nonetheless, the parish for many years resisted the dominant liberalism of the American Episcopal Church. This is all the more interesting given the church’s location. While the neighborhood around All Saints became associated with the gay community and political progressivism by the late twentieth century, the parish was not supportive of female ordination or of modifications to the Book of Common Prayer.

One of the more dynamic and successful rectors, Paul Satrang, remained outspoken in his distaste for secular humanism and existentialism in the modern Episcopal church. Satrang’s successor upon his retirement in 1985, Steven McClaskey, seemed to go even further than Satrang in denouncing secular elements in late 20th century America. McClaskey actually removed his family from Hillcrest to Scripps Ranch – a telling example of what he thought of the neighborhood around All Saints. Even for a church that had never relied completely on Hillcrest for parishioners, this aloofness did not come without a cost: membership consistently declined in the years after 1990. Following McClaskey’s departure in 2002, the church has attempted to become a larger presence in its neighborhood through outreach efforts, realizing the need to minister to the people in its own backyard in order to stave off further contraction. Professor Cox ends his book with this note of optimism as the Episcopal Church remains engaged with changing definitions of church community both in the San Diego area and the nation at large.

Reviewed by Rich Schultz, Lecturer, Department of History & Political Science, San Diego City College.

It is no secret that in today’s consumer-driven times, the efforts of advertisers and marketers are unceremoniously yanking the Cinco de Mayo holiday from its rich historical roots. The complexities of history are often inconvenient for the profit motive, and stand in the way of attempts to position a beer or salty snack as the best choice for what one writer from Business Insider Magazine labeled as “America’s Favorite Mexican Drinking Day.” Of course, the risk of a narrative that pitches the Cinco de Mayo as an excuse to imbibe is that it strips the event of its deeper cultural significance. Fortunately, David Hayes-Bautista has assembled a meaningful exploration of the origins of this unique annual tradition of commemorating the Mexican military defeat of French forces in the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. The key to understanding the celebration, he argues, is recognizing that both the United States and Mexico were simultaneously involved in bloody conflicts that threatened to tear each country apart.

The French intervention in Mexico, aimed at collecting debts and rebuilding a lost colonial presence in the Americas, came about in part because of the collapse of the American political order following the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln. The French sought to exploit the division in American society and render meaningless the Monroe Doctrine by asserting claims in Mexico. Cutting deals with and making promises to the Confederacy was part of that strategy. For Mexicans in California, living on lands recently brought into the American fold as a result of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the French military campaign threatened the existence of the nation with which they still identified strongly. At the same time, the Confederate menace prompted ethnic Mexicans and the wider Spanish-speaking community – Latinos – to defend the Union side in the Civil War. In the process, these Latinos pointed to the Mexican victory at Puebla as a way to champion “the very American values of freedom and democracy” (p. 175). To rally behind the heroes of Puebla was to defend freedom, and by extension, the Union.

Hayes-Bautista is efficient in describing the conditions under which Latinos struggled in 1850s California. State legislators spun a web of codified discrimination – the Foreign Miners’ Tax and the “Greaser Act,” among others laws – to create a new political, economic, and social order. These new laws supported racism and anti-Mexican sentiment on the street. In this tense atmosphere, Latinos
monitored Mexico’s war with the French by way of newspaper accounts. These same newspapers carried the latest updates from Civil War battlefields. Here was a moment for Latinos both to demonstrate their public loyalty to the Union, and to celebrate their pride as *mexicanos* and/or their solidarity as Spanish-speakers in an increasingly Anglophone California. Public displays of celebration for the Cinco de Mayo amounted to loyalty, resistance, and Latino unity.

Analysis of Spanish-language newspapers is at the center of Hayes-Bautista’s work, and he uses these sources masterfully. Through bulletins from local social clubs, the *juntas patrióticas* (patriotic assemblies), we see the beginnings of the parades, speeches, songs, and 21-gun salutes to mark the Battle of Puebla. The juntas raised funds for the war effort in Mexico, defended the legal rights of Latinos in the United States, and provided relief for impoverished members of their local communities. Most important for Hayes-Bautista, the juntas developed a “summoning power” through the Cinco de Mayo ceremonies they planned, promoted, and staged in the early 1860s (p. 130-131). Shaping a public memory through the Cinco de Mayo festivities allowed the juntas to “harness the collective efforts of the Latino community towards specific ends” (p. 178). The men and women who organized Cinco de Mayo programs were always mindful to fly both the Mexican and American flags at their events. Speakers at the first Cinco de Mayo celebration, held a year after the battle itself, and five months after the Emancipation Proclamation took effect, referred to both the French invasion and to the importance of staying loyal to the Union cause. These Latino leaders were well aware of the threat of a Franco-Confederate alliance.

It is a testament to Hayes-Bautista’s prose that he leaves us wanting more about the developments he mentions briefly at the end of his book: the ways the Cinco de Mayo tradition evolved in the years following the capitulation of the French in 1867. How did Latinos mark the event through contradictory rounds of guest worker programs and forced deportations in the mid-twentieth century? How was the Cinco de Mayo put to new uses during the height of the Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s? Following NAFTA, how and why did corporations try to harness the energies of the Cinco de Mayo for their own profit? How has the Cinco de Mayo holiday served to build bridges between Latinos and the rest of American society? Whether those questions are taken up in greater detail by Hayes-Bautista or by subsequent scholars, he has with this book established a high standard for launching the conversation while providing an important contribution to the canons of American and Latino social and cultural history.

Reviewed by Jim Miller, Professor, Department of English, San Diego City College.

“Los Angeles is filled with ghosts,” we are told in the introduction to Laura Pulido, Laura Barraclough, and Wendy Chang’s A People’s Guide to Los Angeles, ghosts “not only of people, but also of places and buildings and ordinary and extraordinary moments and events that once filled them” (p. 4). And in the process of chasing those ghosts, the authors create a tool for what they call “alternative tourism” by giving us a guidebook that serves as a “political disruption of the way Los Angeles is commonly known and experienced.” If traditional guidebooks “contribute to inequality in places like Los Angeles by directing tourist and investment dollars towards some places and not others” and subsequently reinforcing an “individualist and masculinist” view of history, their guide aims to refocus our attention “on those people and places that are systematically left off the map” (p. 5).

After a brief but insightful discussion of the political significance of “rereading vernacular landscapes,” Pulido, Barraclough, and Chang outline their criteria for their selection process, informing the reader that to make it into A People’s Guide to Los Angeles, a place could not have already been designated as historically significant, could not be an established institution, and had to help them illustrate a diversity of geography, historical eras, etc. Their stated goal in proceeding in this fashion is “to inspire tourists, residents, and activists to seek out these places in order to reimagine themselves, their histories, their communities, and their ambitions for the world” (p. 13).

The rest of the book is divided into geographic sectors including North Los Angeles, the Greater Eastside and San Gabriel Valley, South Los Angeles, the Harbor and South Bay, the Westside, and the San Fernando Valley. These sections are followed by a series of “thematic tours” such as “Radical People of Color Movements of the Sixties and Seventies Tour” and the “Economic Restructuring and Globalization Tour.” The text itself is divided into brief numbered sections that give pithy descriptions of why particular sites are of interest, whether that be the parking lot that was the former home of the Black Panther Party in South Los Angeles, the former site of the General Motors plant in the San Fernando Valley, or a private home in the Eastside that is a “residential discrimination site.”

Interestingly the authors also pick existing places like “the California Club”
in downtown LA as landmarks of past with existing exclusionary practices and power brokering. Places like those and the currently restrictive park in San Marino make for interesting interrogations with the world as it is now. These stand side by side in the collection with the ghosts of old community papers and activist headquarters as well as the home of the occasional progressive writer.

Every site is noted by street address with directions if necessary and the entire book is generously illustrated with contemporary and historic photographs as well as sketches and graphics. Included along with the descriptions of the individual sites are “personal reflections” by various activists and community members commenting on everything from being a beach park ranger to participating in the Civil Rights Movement. The authors also include “nearby sites of interest,” “favorite neighborhood restaurants,” and selected readings to help users of the guide learn more about the sites. It is a rich, full, and fascinating alternative tour of Los Angeles that is sure to hold something of interest for just about anyone who is curious about the subterranean history and hidden current life of the city.

In my own work on San Diego, Los Angeles, and Oakland, I too have chased my share of ghosts. Hence I had great admiration for the authors’ significant accomplishment in putting together this guidebook. That said, perhaps it was a mistake to omit already recognized historical sites rather than reinterpreting them. This could have provided for an even richer dialogue between the booster history of the city and its unrecognized ghosts. The book is also very light on cultural and literary Los Angeles and the sections on the West side and the San Fernando Valley are considerably weaker than the rest of the book. One might also wish for a slightly less politically specific series of themed tours. As someone who has guided similar expeditions in San Diego, it helps to mix it up a little and provide more unexpected juxtapositions and contrasts of experience.

Still, all things considered, A People’s Guide to Los Angeles is a groundbreaking and important project. Anyone interested in getting a full picture of the cityscape of Los Angeles should read this book and begin the rewarding work of reimagining the way we remember and the way we live. It would be a good model for someone to pick up and apply to the back of the postcard that is San Diego.
**BOOK NOTES**


*Grave Matters: Excavating California’s Buried Past.* By Tony Platt. Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2011. Maps, illustrations, bibliography, notes, and index. xv + 237 pp. $18.95 paper. Tony Platt contributes to ongoing debates surrounding the disinterment of indigenous graves by focusing on the experiences of the Yurok people of northwestern California. Since the 1970s the Yuroks have attempted to protect indigenous interests in the face of archaeologists’ and anthropologists’ desire to excavate Indian remains.

*Pregnancy, Motherhood, and Choice in 20th Century Arizona.* By Mary S. Melcher. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012. Photographs, tables, bibliography, notes, and index. xii + 250 pp. $50.00 cloth. Public historian Mary Melcher investigates issues of childbirth, abortion, birth control, and infant mortality over the course of the last century. She explores topics such as the challenges posed by poverty and the lack of access to health care in the largely rural society of early-twentieth century Arizona and includes a chapter on Margaret Sanger’s efforts in the state’s birth control movement.

*The Southern Emigrant Trail through Riverside County.* By Anne J. Miller. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2012. Maps, photographs, appendices, notes, and index. vi + 100 pp. $34.95 paper. The Southern Emigrant Trail, a route into California based on Indian trails and the routes of missionaries and trappers, was pioneered by Kit Carson during the Mexican War and subsequently used by the Mormon Battalion and Gold Rush emigrants. Miller’s book provides an in-depth description of the portion of the trail in Riverside County, featuring maps, photographs, and anecdotes relating historical events that occurred along the route.
Thirty Explosive Years in Los Angeles County. By John Anson Ford. Introduction by Michael Adamson. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 2010 (reprint). Chart, map, photographs, and index. x1 + 232 pp. $29.95 paper. John Anson Ford served as a Los Angeles County Supervisor during a period of remarkable economic and population growth from the 1930s to the 1950s. His 1961 memoir, reprinted by the Huntington Library, chronicles Ford’s efforts to cope with the bureaucratic, environmental, and social problems that accompanied this growth. In addition to a new introduction by Michael Adamson, this volume features a listing of the John Anson Ford papers held at the Huntington Library.


UPCOMING EXHIBITION
Opening April 5, 2013

Bottled & Kegged, the History Center’s upcoming featured exhibition, will educate visitors about the region’s brewing history and provide context for how San Diego is making history in the craft brewing world.

Exhibit features:
• historic retrospective of San Diego’s brewing past and what the future holds
• brewing science
• interactive brewing, hop, and flavor stations
• educational programming for all ages
• 21 and over “History Happy Hours” with beers brewed specifically for these events

Related events include:
• Taste of San Diego Craft Brews
  February 16, 2013
• Makers of San Diego History Gala
  April 27, 2013

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