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Back Cover: Red Cross nurses at San Francisco headquarters, 1918. See article
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Illustrations and Photo Credits: Pages 2–11, Private Collection of Gary E. Strong;
pp. 12–15, Government Publications Section, California State Library; pp. 16–21,
California History Section; pp. 22–31, Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement

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A Book’s Nature

The Book Arts of Peter & Donna Thomas

By Gary E. Strong
Building a representative collection of books created by Donna and Peter Thomas has engaged me over the last thirty-plus years. Their creative work has been a constant joy as a collector of artists’ books and examples of the book arts. As Peter has mastered his papermaking skills and Donna her art, their books represent a significant contribution to California book arts. Beginning as The Good Book Press in 1977, they transitioned to the imprint of Peter and Donna Thomas around 1990. Their early work is highlighted by William Everson’s *The Poet Is Dead: A Memorial for Robinson Jeffers* (1987). Title and linocut by Tom Killion. Inspired by Everson, they would later create *The Tarantella Rose* and *The Alder*. Throughout the years, they produced many books, and many of them, inspired by Glen Dawson, were miniature books. All were created and printed on Peter’s hand-made paper; the topics were often reflective of their passion for nature, music, and exploration. They often drew from the inspiration of naturalists, particularly John Muir. They would explore the craft of papermaking, traveling to mills, gathering samples, and doing research. Peter’s *Papermaking in the Philippines* is an important contribution to the field of papermaking.

The Thomases celebrated forty years of making books in 2017-18. I sought out the possibility of sharing selections from my collection with the University of Idaho Special Collections. Together we curated an exhibition, *(A Book’s Nature | Artist Books by Peter and Donna Thomas)*, of their work in the fall of 2019. I wanted to inspire faculty and students to appreciate the book arts. It was an eye opener for the University of Idaho book community. The library arranged for numerous presentations and engagements during the Thomases October visit to the campus.

As I bring the treasures back home and find places for them once again on my shelves, I am inspired to share a bit about Donna’s “one-of-a-kind” books represented in the exhibit, plus one recently acquired during their visit to our home in Potlatch, Idaho, in October. In some small way this allows the art and the description of these unique books to be shared with a broader audience.

Each of the books herein listed include original watercolors by Donna Thomas and the locations where they were painted have been listed where noted. Each could easily stand alone on the wall of a California museum, but housed as they are along with text, they create a unique artistic experience for one who follows through the pages of each book. Donna gives one a truly inspiring appreciation for the nature she has represented. While I am listing the original artwork included in each book, some books have drawn maps and in some or all, the calligraphy is artwork in its own right.

*Gary E. Strong is the founder of the California State Library Foundation. He is now retired and lives near Potlatch, Idaho but is still active in bibliophilic and local history circles. Before retirement, Strong held positions as University Librarian and Director of the University Library at the University of California, Los Angeles (2003–2012); Director of the Queens Borough Public Library in New York City (1994–2003), and State Librarian of California (1980–1994). In addition, he is a true bibliophile and has avidly collected the works of California fine presses.*

*When Strong served as State Librarian, the State Library added a number of books designed and printed by Peter and Donna Thomas. They are available for research in the California History Section.*
HETCH HETCHY VALLEY – A GRAND LANDSCAPE GARDEN | Quotes by John Muir. 13 pages. Five original watercolors. 11 x 14 cm. Housed in a clamshell box with spine and front labels. [2011]

Colophon: Donna Thomas: painting, binding, calligraphy | basket designs of Yos. Miwok |

Original watercolors
• Wapama Falls and Hetch Hetchy
• Kolana Rock
• Rancheria Falls
• Tiltill Valley
• O’Shaughnessy Dam

“John Muir’s fight to save Hetch Hetchy Valley in the ‘people’s park’ of Yosemite began in 1903. Quotes from this book are from The Yosemite published in 1912. Sadly, the battle was lost and the valley was flooded in 1923. Still, Muir inspired the environmental conservation movement worldwide.”
SIERRA NEVADA | by Anne Stevenson |
(for Margaret Elvin, 1963) | Peter & Donna Thomas, 2011 | Santa Cruz, Calif. 16 pages. 
Eleven original watercolors. 15 x 21 cm. 
Housed in a clamshell box with original watercolor of Mt. Henry ‘08 on the cover. 
This is an accordion book.

Colophon: The watercolors in this book were painted by Donna Thomas in the Sierra Nevada between 2004 and 2011. Peter Thomas made the cotton rag paper with inclusions of sedge and blackberry fibers from their garden.

This poem is used with permission from Bloodaxe Books. It is from Anne Stevenson, Poems 1955-2005. Published by Bloodaxe Books in 2005. Copyright ©1994 by Anne Stevenson.

Original Watercolors:
• Mt. Henry, ’08. (Cover)
• Silver Peak, Silver Divide, J. Muir Wilderness. Aug. 2011
• Lodgepole & Jeffrey Pines, Emigrant Wilderness July 2011
• Potholes, S. Fork San Joaquin, J. Muir Wilderness Aug. 2011
• Three small watercolors: Kalmia | Mariposa Lilly | Sky Lupine
• Deer Lake, Emigrant Wilderness. 2011
• Pinecrest Lake, Stanislaus Nat. Forest. July 2011
• Upper Indian Lake, Sierra National Forest. Aug. 2011
• Small watercolor | Larkspur
PLEDGE TO THE WIND | Everett Ruess | with additional thoughts of Ruess | by Wallace Stegner & Edward Abbey. 12 pages. Seven original watercolors. 27 x 23.5 cm. Housed in a clamshell box with paper label on front. This is an accordion book.


Original Watercolors:
Note to the reader: DST – Donna S. Thomas
• May Lake | DST ’15 | Mounted on front cover
• Rosemarie Meadow & Bear Creek | DST ’13
• Bear Creek Watershed | DST ’14
• Mt. Hooper, Rose Lake, Sierra National Forest | DST ’14
• Neall Lake | DST ’13
• Seven Gables | DST ’14
• Relief Valley, Emigrant Wilderness | DST ’13

SPRING IN THE VALLEY | Mary Austin | 11 pages. Four watercolors. 24 x 31 cm. Housed in a clamshell box with paper label on the front.

Colophon: Mary Hunter Austin (Sept. 9, 1868 – August 13, 1934) lived for a time near Mono Lake, on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada.

Donna painted on-site these watercolors at Mono Lake. She wrote out the text on Peter’s handmade paper and bound this book. The snakeskin on the cover is from a gopher snake found on the side of the road near Yosemite in the Sierra Nevada, tanned by Donna | Santa Cruz * CA * 2016.
“For book artists these are exciting times. Because of the computer, the book is being set free for the first time since the invention of the printing press, from servitude to information.”

—Peter Thomas
could the two of you somehow made it work, would you be happier, a bird calling from somewhere and when you've gone far enough

TRAIL | by Jay Leeming | Illustration, binding: Donna Thomas | Handmade paper: Peter Thomas | Santa Cruz 2019. Twenty-seven watercolors. 28 x 34 cm. Housed in a clamshell box with paper label on front. This is an accordion book.

Colophon: I met Jay a few years ago at the Poetry Festival in Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite, where he shared this poem. The watercolors were painted on site around the Sierra Nevada, with the small ones specifically painted along the John Muir Trail and used for the edition book Landscapes of the John Muir Trail, published in 2002 by P & D Thomas. – Donna.

Stitched leather on the cover is deer, tanned by Donna.

Original Watercolors:
- Unnamed.
- Vernal Falls | Day 1 elev. 5044’ | Merced River
- Sunrise Lake | Day 2 elev. 9427’ | Early evening
- Half Dome | Day 2 elev. 8836’ | from Sunrise Creek
- Cathedral Peak | Day 3 elev. 10,911’ | from upper Cathedral Lake
- Mt. Lyell | Day 5 elev. 13,114’ | from Lyell Canyon
- Thousand Island Lake | Day 6 elev. 9833’ | Banner Peak
- Mt. Ritter & Banner Peak | Day 6 elev. 13,143’, 12,936’ | Garnet Lake
- Cathedral Peak | DST ’13
- Devil’s Postpile | Day 8 elev. 7600’ | from the base
- Silver Divide | Day 9 elev. 10,600’ | from Duck Creek
- Lake of the Lone Indian | Day 11 elev. 10,200’ | Silver Divide
- Unnamed | DST ’13
- Mono Creek | Day 12 elev. 7,750’ | near Quail Meadows
- Bear Creek | Day 14 elev. 9,040’ | at Bear Creek Trail junction
- Marie Lake | Day 15 elev. 10,570’ | from Selden Pass
- Bleyney Hot Spring | Day 17 elev. 7,600’ | South Fork San Joaquin
- Unnamed | DST
- McClure Meadow | Day 18 elev. 9,650’ | Evolution Creek
- Mt. Huxley | Day 19 elev. 13,086’ | Sapphire Lake
- Upper Palisade Lake inlet | Day 21 elev. 20,880’ | looking east
- The Palisades | Day 22, elev. 14,000’+ | from Mather Pass
- Painted Lady | Day 23 elev. 12,119’ | Rae Lakes
- Mt. Stanford | Day 25 elev. 13,973’ | from Bubb’s Creek
- Unnamed | DST
- Timberline Lake | Day 27 elev. 11,907’ | Mt. Whitney
- Mt. Whitney | Day 29 elev. 14,495’ | from Whitney Portal
BELIEVE IN THE BEAUTY | Pop-up with watercolor. 13 x 13 cm. Housed in a clamshell box with paper label on spine and cover.

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams [Eleanor Roosevelt.

One-of-a-kind | 2007 | Peter & Donna Thomas
An Observation and Endnote

To try to define the work of Peter and Donna Thomas is almost impossible for me. There are some eighty examples of their work in my personal collection, each treasured and enjoyed. There are miniatures, books that explore structure, and large size fine press, and artists’ books along with an art piece that is a book which one separates from the frame.

In building my collection, I have found new additions by seeing them at book fairs or by visiting the Thomases’ studio. Unfortunately, the collection does not include any of their accordion or ukulele books which expose the musical side of this truly renaissance couple.

Their adventures as “Wandering Book Artists” have been documented in their blogs and a collection of broadsides from one year of their ten-year intermittent trek across the United States. With their tiny home, they have traveled West to East and back again four times covering some 70,000 miles. We were honored to be at the end of their “wandering” and able to mount the exhibit with the University of Idaho Special Collections. One will always remember their stay in Potlatch and Moscow with the papermaking demonstration in front of the library in the snow!

For More Information


“For book artists these are exciting times. Because of the computer, the book is being set free for the first time since the invention of the printing press, from servitude to information.” Page 21.

“The fine press book exists to support and reveal the text. The artist book values concept over craftsmanship. The text may be illustration, and it may have a personal or indecipherable meaning. Emphasis is given to visual impact; structure rather than function is often the prime consideration.” Page 22.


“... book artists must develop an aesthetic vocabulary to use for the books. Most artists have not been taught how to look at a book as an art object. Art cannot be discussed without common words and meanings. What is a book? It is everything, the physical materials, the structure and the ideas it contains. What is art? There are no simple answers.” Page 11.

“To be art, a book must be made without function as a primary goal. But this does not mean that it should be fragile, or sloppy, or filled with meaningless words. One must not confuse function with craft. Function is utility, while craft is technique. An art work must have craftsmanship that equals or exceeds its aesthetic content for a work to be a real success.” Page 13.


“I had as my goal to be able to make paper and bind books as they did in the 16th century. I don’t know how I actually learned to make books. Mostly it was just doing it, being prodded on by the childhood memory of my neighbor saying again and again, ‘If you are going to something, do it right.’” Page 11.

ENDNOTES


2. Donna completed her first one-of-a-kind book in 1986 and by 2015 had completed three hundred twenty-nine. During their visit to us in October 2019, she had five on hand she had just completed.

3. In 2009, they built their own tiny home on wheels. Since then the Thomases have taken their traveling home with them when they travel across the country selling their artists’ books, teaching book arts workshops, and talking about making books as art.

4. They visited the Junior-Senior High School Music Program in Potlatch and entertained a full house of eager students who love music and are inspired by art.
Meatless Tuesdays and Wheatless Wednesdays

Food Rationing in World War I
By Laura Kellen

World War I ended on November 11, 1918 when Germany signed the armistice agreement, signaling the end of the war. It ended the largest and bloodiest conflict in American history; 1.2 million troops of the American Expeditionary Force had participated. One of the greatest challenges of the war was feeding such a large military force, yet no American soldier ever went hungry. American troops, unlike their German enemy and their French and British allies, were the best-fed troops of World War I.

Napoleon was reported to have said that “an army marches on its stomach.” If that’s true, then American soldiers must have owed some sense of victory to their bellies. How did American soldiers stay well-fed while serving overseas? When America entered the war, the federal government responded by orchestrating an enormous informational effort to make sure that the army got enough food. Not just any food, either. The army was well-supplied with meat, bread, potatoes, and even luxuries like coffee, tea, and jam. These government publicity efforts were successful in getting food for the army because it made the American public believe that sacrificing their consumption of staple foods was crucial to the war effort. An American citizen voluntarily changing his or her eating habits was as important to the war effort as a young man stepping forward to serve on the front lines.

America entered World War I on April 6, 1917. Wasting little time, the U.S. Food Administration was established on August 10, 1917. The creation of this new federal agency elevated American food production and preservation to a national priority. The

Laura Kellen is a reference librarian in the State Library’s Information Services Section. In addition, she generously trains guide dogs for the visually impaired. As a hobby, she enjoys hunting for historical items at yard sales and swap meets.
“Be Patriotic: Sign Your Country’s Pledge to Save the Food.” (1917) This dramatic color poster was created by pulp fiction illustrator Paul Stahr and published by W.F. Powers Co. Part of the World War Poster Collection, U.S. Government.

Be Patriotic
sign your country’s pledge to save the food

U.S. Food Administration
are touched? We shall see." The reality of food restriction became significantly more challenging for the American public once Hoover announced that “no foods or feeds shall be used for the production of distilled spirits for beverages.” Liquor was prohibited from being imported, and any supply or stock of liquor that was found could be confiscated by the government. Not only did the government place restrictions on liquor, it now had complete control over the supply and distribution of all food, feed, and fuel, as well as any machinery that was necessary for food production.

The government had the ability to restrict food through rationing and regulations, but the ultimate goal of the U.S. Food Administration was to get the average citizen to willingly change his or her eating and drinking habits. In order to do so, the government needed the individual citizen to see his or her sacrifice at the dinner table as being on par with the sacrifice made by a distant soldier serving overseas. How could the government accomplish this?

Propaganda. The government propaganda of World War I was used as a tool to help Americans see food preservation and production as critical to winning the war. Government propaganda painted food conservation as the most common and accessible way for citizens to express their loyalty and patriotism. To that end, food conservation shouldn’t be viewed by the public as an inconvenience. It should be seen as a civic virtue! The proliferation of posters, pamphlets, canning demonstrations, gardening classes, and government-sponsored recipes that could be made without meat, sugar, and wheat helped Americans to reframe their eating habits as a patriotic exercise. Soldiers may have been fighting overseas, but the real war was being won in the American kitchen. Government posters made the message clear with the slogan: “Food Will Win the War.”

Posters with this slogan and similar admonishments such as “Wheat is needed for the allies – waste nothing” and “Victory is a question of stamina – send the wheat, meat, fats, sugar – the fuel for fighters” were plastered throughout communities, urging citizens to change their eating habits in order to free up food to be shipped to soldiers. Fruits and vegetables took on a special significance, as they were too fragile to be shipped overseas and therefore were ideal for local consumption. The government urged all Americans to publically demonstrate their patriotism by becoming “soldiers of the soil.” Liberty Garden programs (which were rebranded as Victory Gardens for World War II) sprung up all over America. Gardens were planted in homes, in community lots, at workplaces, and at schools throughout the country. In elementary schools across the nation, students raised tons of potatoes through the United States School Garden Army Program. Local food boards were
established to teach canning classes and assist citizens in preserving their own food. A wartime pamphlet admonished: “Everyone in cities and towns with vacant land can produce some food . . . by growing vegetables for your household you will release food for someone else that would have been sold to you.”

Citizens were urged to think of themselves as individually responsible for winning the war by eating less. If the answer to winning the war was to send more food overseas, then every man, woman, and child could be a part of the solution by assisting with food production, consumption, and conservation. Government posters assured citizens that every time they made a choice to engage in food preservation, they were contributing to a military victory. As one wartime food guide bluntly stated: “Substitute the Beef you do not eat for the Rifle you cannot carry.”

Did the propaganda work? It certainly did. In addition to eating more fruits and vegetables, Americans adopted new recipes that could be made without sugar, wheat, or meat. Citizens participated in “Meatless Tuesdays and Wheatless Wednesdays.” Split peas and dried beans were substituted for meat. Corn syrup, honey, and molasses replaced sugar. Bread was made with potatoes. With food now freed up for the war effort, ships on the East Coast were loaded with: “Maine potatoes, beef and pork from the Chicago stockyards, Dakota wheat, and dried fruits from Oregon and California.” The ships sailed to Europe, where the food was distributed to Allied troops, mess halls, field kitchens, and frontline trenches.

Once the food arrived, soldiers ate hearty portions. A soldier’s daily ration, according to the 1916 Manual of Military Cooking, was as follows: “Meat 1 lb., Bread 1 lb., Vegetables 6 oz., Sugar 3 oz., Potatoes 1 lb., Jam 2 oz., Butter 2 oz., Bacon 2 oz., Beans, Rice, Oatmeal or Flour 2 oz., Cheese 1 oz., Milk Powder 1 oz., Salt 1/2 oz., Split Peas 1/2 oz., Tea 1/4 oz., Coffee 1/4 oz., Pepper 1/36 oz. (Prunes can be drawn in lieu of jam.) Rations tended to vary, but American soldiers enjoyed fresh beef, canned meat, bacon, and white bread. American soldiers were guaranteed a total of four pounds of food per day, or approximately 5,000 calories. This was in stark contrast to the British and French troops, who ate far less, and the Germans, who were nearly starving. In Belgium, France, and eastern Europe, there was hardly any meat available, and citizens were subject to strict, involuntary rationing.

Did full stomachs guarantee a wartime victory? American citizens believed that it did. The overwhelmingly positive and voluntary response to food restriction is telling. Not only did the wartime food effort lead to soldiers receiving generous meals overseas, it also led to a sense of pride and civic engagement. Preserving and producing food led to a feeling of national unity during wartime; citizens were praised extravagantly for their efforts. As one wartime guide stated: “The woman who can find time to preserve food which would otherwise be wasted, and who will sell or give away the surplus above what is required for her own family, will be doing a real patriotic work.” Soldiers may be sacrificing on the front, but the sacrifices of the ordinary American citizen – going without meat, wheat, sugar, fat, and liquor – helped win the war, too.

World War I Recipe: Wartime Chocolate Cake

Boil 2 tbsp. cocoa, yolk of 1 egg, well beaten, and 1/2 cup water; cool and add 1 cup granulated sugar, 1/2 cup sweet milk, 1 1/2 cups flour, 1 tsp. baking powder, 1/2 tsp. baking soda dissolved in 1 tbsp. boiling water, white of 1 egg, beaten stiff, pinch of salt. Flavor with vanilla. Bake in two layers.


Printed in: Recipes for Victory: Great War Food from the Front and Kitchens Back Home in Canada. (See footnotes for full citation)

ENDNOTES


Baird and Wranich, Recipes for Victory, p. 18.


Baird and Wranich, Recipes for Victory, p. 33.
Through the generosity of the late Mead B. and his wife Nancy T. Kibbey of Sacramento, the Foundation has received an incredible gift of 684 original stereographs of California and Nevada dating from the 1860s and 1870s. Stereographs (stereos) are double-image photographs mounted on cards designed to be placed in a viewer so the pictures can be seen three-dimensionally (3D). Mead Kibbey (1922–2018) was a prodigious and skilled collector of stereos for several decades. At the same time he was creating this collection, he developed a fascination with the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad over the Sierra Nevada during the 1860s. This passion led to a keen interest in the career of photographer Alfred A. Hart who was hired by the Central Pacific Railroad to photographically record the colossal task of laying railroad track from Sacramento to Promontory Point in Utah. Hart used a stereo camera and created an incredible visual record of 364 3D photographs covering the years 1864–1869.

Over the years Mead began collecting every possible Hart stereograph and became keenly interested in the life of this intrepid photographer. In so doing, Mead became the first to acquire every Hart view commissioned by the Central Pacific Railroad. No other collector or institution had all 364 views. Because of this passion, he gave numerous illustrated lectures on Hart’s life and his illustrious career. This also led Mead to write a well-researched and respected book published by the California State Library Foundation in 1995, The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist. In retracing Hart’s work for the railroad, he decided to retrace the photographer’s rugged path over the Sierra. Of course, being an expert and inventive photographer himself, Mead carried along his own homemade stereo camera. In writing the book on Hart, he was surprised to discover that when this heroic photographer died in 1908, his body was unceremoniously sold for medical purposes. To rectify this lack of a proper burial, Mead commissioned the creation of a granite monument in his memory that was installed at the historic Old City Cemetery in Sacramento. Through Mead’s direction the 2,000-pound memorial was carved in the shape of a stereo camera and he movingly dedicated the monument on the morning of August 21, 2017.

Having written the book and created the memorial, Mead generously donated his complete set of Hart stereos to the Foundation to be placed in the permanent collection of the California History Section of the State Library in December 2013.
have all been catalogued and digitized. In addition, it was his desire to give the remainder of his California stereo collection to the Foundation. This latest gift of 684 stereos superbly illustrates the transformation of California into an industrial and manufacturing economy supporting mushrooming cities and towns. Moreover, California, as documented by these stereos, created a transportation infrastructure that linked the state with the Orient and eastern United States. What adds further to the value of these 3D images is that many of California’s premier photographers from this time period are represented including C. E. Watkins, Eadweard Muybridge, Thomas Houseworth, J. J. Reilly, J. Pitcher Spooner, I. W. Taber, C. L. Pond, and, of course, Alfred A. Hart. In addition, the donation includes several superb examples by Charles Russell Savage, the celebrated Salt Lake City photographer.

Cave Rock on the road to Lake Tahoe. Photograph published by Lawrence & Houseworth, 1865.

Nancy and Mead Kibbey at the 1995 book signing celebration for his scholarly study of railroad photographer A. A. Hart. They are shown outside the Mead B. Kibbey Gallery in the State Library’s annex building. The gallery is located at the entrance of the California History Room.

“The Loop, Tehachapi Pass, S. P. R. R.” Stereograph by C. E. Watkins. In this view, Watkins recorded the Southern Pacific Railroad’s stupendous project of linking the Central Valley with Los Angeles by tunneling and laying track through and over the Tehachapi Mountains.
who captured with his stereo camera the Union Pacific Railroad’s effort in laying track from the Missouri River near the Iowa-Nebraska border westward to Promontory Point in Utah where it met the tracks of the Central Pacific. Those with downtown San Francisco galleries like Watkins, Taber, and Lawrence & Houseworth sold quantities of views to tourists and at national and international fairs. Before the television and motion picture age, families entertained themselves by looking through a viewer at stereos of scenic wonders like Yosemite Valley, mining towns, Indian villages, and California missions.

All-in-all, this gift represents a terrific addition to the State Library’s already extensive collection of stereographs making it one of the largest holdings of California stereographs in existence. To be sure, there will be some duplication, but each donated stereo will be compared with existing images for condition and the photographer’s logotype on the verso or rear of the photograph. Photographers occasionally changed addresses or partnered with others which necessitated a new design and helped with dating and tracing a photographer’s career. Many of these stereos came out in an era when copyright laws were not strictly enforced. C. E. Watkins, for example, acquired Hart’s negatives and published them under his own imprint. A competitor of Watkins, I. W. Taber took over Watkins’ negative collection and printed and sold the photographs under the name of Taber without giving any credit to the original creator. Most importantly, stereo expert Mead was able to identify the actual photographer and carefully wrote the correct name on the back of the stereo card.

As mentioned above, these pioneer cameramen superbly documented the growth of northern cities and towns. The Kibbey gift, for example, includes 109 views of San Francisco, seventy-five of Oakland and Berkeley, and 68 of Sacramento. Given today’s dense canyons of glass and steel skyscrapers with their crowded and noisy streets, it is pleasing to see San Francisco of 150 years ago with comely three and four-story business blocks and spacious residential areas like South Park. Several of the Sacramento stereos were taken from the rotunda of the State Capitol building, and they also show the great build-
The linking of California via ocean, river, and rail to world commerce is graphically told by these enterprising photographers. Stereographs showing ships being launched from a San Francisco or Oakland wharf, steamships chugging up the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers hauling passengers and supplies to the interior, and barges loaded with logs headed for sawmills illustrate how lively the waterways were in that era. Of particular note are two stereos documenting the launching of the ironclad monitor USS *Camanche* on November 14, 1864. Its purpose was to defend San Francisco Bay during the Civil War. Related to this is a photograph of the USS *Aquila* that transported from the east coast the prefabricated parts of the *Camanche*. Ironically, the *Aquila* sank at a San Francisco wharf exactly a year earlier on November 14, 1863, but fortunately, the contents of her hold survived, and the *Camanche* was assembled.

Not surprisingly, Mead collected many photographs of the Central Pacific Railroad taken or published by others than Hart. These provide a wonderful tour as they show the completed railroad from its terminus at the Oakland wharves up to Sacramento with its extensive railyards, to picturesque looking passenger and freight stations at Newcastle and Dutch Flat and then over the Sierra. They are breathtaking to look at in 3D as the tracks wound through Emigrant Gap, Cape Horn, and Bloomer Cut. Several depict such engineering feats of wonder as the trestle bridges at Newcastle, Long Ravine, and Truckee. Along the way, the hydraulic mining works caught the attention of these photographers as they recorded...
Marriott's dream of displacing the recently completed Transcontinental Railroad never materialized in part because of the economic panic of 1870 and design flaws. Nonetheless this dual-image stereo preserves a fascinating story in the Golden State’s innovative attempts to defy gravity.

This invaluable gift from Mead and Nancy Kibbey will be transferred from the Foundation to the permanent collection of the State Library’s California History Section for cataloging and digitization.* True to form, Mead placed each stereograph in an archival sleeve and laboriously created an inventory with full identification of each image. His devotion to accurate documentation will no doubt be of valuable assistance to Library catalogers. The Foundation is particularly grateful to Mead and Nancy’s daughters, Elizabeth Kibbey Gosnell, Muffy Kibbey Tolmie, and Joanie Kibbey Capurso for implementing the wishes of her dear parents.

* The California History Room of the State Library does make available stereograph viewers so that researchers may see the image in 3D as the photographers originally intended.

ENDNOTES

1. “Stereograph” refers to pairs of nearly, but never exactly, identical photographs about 3 inches square mounted on a card 7 inches long and 3 to 4 inches wide. When viewed through two wedge-shaped lenses, these stereographs fill the observer’s field of vision with a three-dimensional image of the original scene. Mead B. Kibbey, The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist, Edited by Peter E. Palmquist (Sacramento: The California State Library Foundation, 1996), Note 5, p. 16.

2. The work of creating this pictorial record by Hart is astonishing considering the photographic technology of the 1860s. Keep in mind this was an era when the negatives were made of glass requiring the operator or assistant to carefully coat the plate with chemicals before removing the lens cap and recording the scene. Also, their cameras were mounted on non-folding tripods and there was no means of adjusting the angle except by moving the tripod. Following exposure and replacing the lens cap, the photographer removed the negative from the camera in a lightproof container to be taken to a portable darkroom and fixed. When the photographer and his horse-drawn wagon of equipment and chemicals returned to his business, it was there that the negatives were printed and mounted on stiff cardboard mounts.


7. The following presents a superb overview of not only Lawrence & Houseworth but also stereo photography in California during that decade: Points of Interest, California Views 1860–1870: The Lawrence & Houseworth Albums. Foreword by Gary F. Kurutz; Introduction by Peter E. Palmquist (San Francisco: Published by the Berkeley Hills Press in Conjunction with the Society of California Pioneers), 2002.

**Loans, Land, and Labor**

The Farm Security Administration’s Reappropriation of Japanese American Farms

*By Michelle Trujillo*

**AUTHOR’S INTRODUCTION**

I would like to thank the California State Library Foundation for selecting me as one of the first Mead B. Kibbey California State Library Fellowship recipients. The award provided the opportunity for me to prioritize research and access records that I would have otherwise “some day” carved out the time to investigate. In addition, I am so appreciative of the staff at the California State Library who were always patient, helpful, and informative during my visits. The information I found in the Library’s records has provided rich sources for further investigations into the logistics and rhetoric of Japanese American exclusion that resonate sharply in 2020. My purpose in this research is to ally with other voices in illuminating California’s history of both freedom and oppression and in learning how to own and discuss our conflicted history.

My interest in World War II Japanese exclusion is personal and partially based on privileged ignorance. I grew up a stone’s throw from the Sacramento “Assembly” Center located in Walerga in the Foothill Farms area, but had no idea it existed until about 2015. I felt betrayed by my public school curriculum that never told me about this important setting. Nearly 5,000 of Sacramento’s Japanese Americans were detained there for fifty-two days until June 1942, when the large permanent camps of Tule Lake and Manzanar were ready to receive detainees. People were born, died, and married at the Walerga “Assembly” Center, and this was merely the beginning of their journey of incarceration and shame.

A family story also connects me to this part of World War II history. A few semesters into my public history master’s program, my dad told me that in the early 1940s, when he was one or two years old, he and his family lived and labored on a large Japanese-operated farm in the small town of Blanca located in southern Colorado’s Costilla County. After the Japanese farmer was evacuated, my dad and his family moved to Alamosa, Colorado, where he grew up; all of his family stories take place there, and I feel a deep connection to the place. My dad’s account landed like an origin story for me, and I cannot help but feel connected, tenuous though it may be, by the reverberations of the forced removal of Japanese Americans enabled by decades of racism and culminated by Executive Order 9066. Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, the executive order authorized the forced removal of Japanese immigrants and Japanese American citizens to incarceration camps during World War II.

Researching the Walerga temporary detention center invariably led to my learning about World War II exclusion in Florin, a town located about eight miles south of Sacramento, and close to where I currently live. Florin is evocative to me for how its landscape both hides and reveals its past. The developing suburban neighborhoods bit by bit smother the terrain captured by Marielle Tsukamoto’s words:

> Visualize if you can, the entire area from Highway 99 east to Bradshaw Road, south to at least Gerber Road and north to Elder Creek. That is what was once known as Florin . . . you would have found acres and acres of strawberry fields and vineyards. That was...

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Florin when it was known as the Strawberry Capital of California! Seeking details about Florin and the transformations of California’s landscapes, I focused on the Farm Security Administration (FSA) records found in the Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Records, 1930-1974 (bulk 1942-1946) housed on microfilm at the California State Library. While the records include information regarding Florin properties, they reveal a broader picture of prewar data analysis geared toward supporting the removal of Japanese farming families, and a public relations campaign that leveraged the medium of radio to shape popular rhetoric justifying removal of Japanese Americans and their families. I was hunting for details to illuminate the logistics that paved the way for the reappropriation of agricultural land. Was Japanese American disenfranchisement a motivating factor? Which agency administered the transfers? What sources of data informed the government as to acreages and population statistics of Japanese communities?

But my larger question was why oust productive farm operators who the data proved to be the backbone of segments of California agriculture, indeed the pride of California exports, especially at the great risk of losing crops and disrupting valuable harvests? In her memoir, We the People: A Story of Internment in America, Mary Tsukamoto asserts that much of the bigotry aimed at Japanese American farmers came from “many of whom were associated with the state’s leading industry, agriculture.”

Figure 1. Five separate Florin agricultural properties ranging from twenty to eighty acres of grapes and strawberries and their extant crops, buildings, and farm machinery remained to be transferred by May 16, 1942.
Indeed, a majority of Florin’s white farmers supported the 1913 Alien Land Act in order to keep a rein on Japanese competition nearly thirty years before internment.1

Lieutenant General Delos Emmons, the military commander in Hawaii, in contrast to forced removal, opted to maintain Japanese Americans as free citizens to allow for their assistance in the war effort. This, even with Hawaii being located 3,000 miles closer to Japan.6 In addition, the June 3–6, 1942 Battle of Midway obliterated Japan’s navy and neutralized them as a threat to the West Coast and therefore rendered moot the argument of the West Coast as a military area.7 Thus, it was clearly arguable at the time that mass removal could in fact hinder America’s war effort.

Just as Executive Order 9066 was written carefully enough to allow for the discrimination of Japanese Americans but with the “common understanding” of its discriminatory purpose, a similar powerful weaving of connotation and denotation was at play during the U.S. government’s operations to replace Japanese American farmers with “American” ones.8 Exclusion was not an anomaly for Japanese regarding land ownership, especially after the passage of the 1913 and 1920 Alien Land Act, because marginalization and dehumanization had existed in the everyday just as it had for decades. Japanese sacrificed, worked tirelessly, and organized for better wages enough to make forays beyond farm labor and into farm management, and this step into the capitalist class was a perceived threat to white farm operators.9 Indeed, Tolan Committee witnesses countered the purported wide-scale support of removal. They felt it was not a national security issue but rather the “chamber of commerce, Associated Farmers, and the newspapers notorious as spokesmen for reactionary interests” who were pushing for Japanese American removal to neutralize them as competitors.10 The arrival of World War II provided the opportunity to reappropriate Japanese farming concerns—under the guise of the
exigencies of war—by methodically plucking Japanese agricultural workers and their families out of their livelihoods, much like countless precious Florin strawberries had been, right from the stem.

Farm Security Administration
The Farm Security Administration (FSA) originated in 1937 and provided similar financial assistance to corporate operations and individual farmers as did its predecessor, the Resettlement Administration (RA, 1935–1937). RA was a New Deal program that, among other functions, supplied loans to struggling farming families. One FSA memo even referred to the financial aid as "rehabilitation" loans, as was the designation for Resettlement Agency loans. During World War II, the FSA worked in concert with the Wartime Civil Control Authority (WCCA) to force Japanese Americans off their land with the utmost urgency. According to FSA and WCCA memos, beginning in March 1942 the U.S. government was seeking to replace Japanese operators with "American farmers" despite the official memos' own admissions that most of the agricultural operations were titled to Nisei citizens (see Figure 3). Laurence L. Hewes, the FSA regional director, was conferred his authority from the Secretary of Agriculture who in turn took orders from the Secretary of the Treasury. Director Hewes's charge was "fair disposal and continued productivity" in part, due to the power to freeze farm production.

But in his haste to meet the short evacuation timeline imposed by the U.S. Army, Hewes recruited large commercial operations such as Bank of America, the California State Chamber of Commerce, and other agricultural organizations to take over large swaths of acreage rather than prioritizing small, individual farmers. According to an April 5, 1942 letter titled "Tolan Committee," Hewes's strategy and "usual lack of judgment" was called out as an attempt to "look good in the eyes of the Army" and avoid a negative response from the military. Witnesses appearing before the Tolan Committee, including lawyers, Christian ministers, and educators, made pleas for justice on behalf of Japanese Americans. They warned about the ample opportunists exploiting these American citizens amidst the chaos of removal. Apparently, Hewes's hurried solutions countered the Tolan Committee and its many witnesses' admonitions, including that of California Attorney General Earl Warren.
Deploying Data

Statistics the FSA culled from the 1940 U.S. Census of Agriculture provided a clear picture of Japanese and Japanese American agricultural communities, where they lived, what and how much they produced and contributed to California’s economy. Sacramento’s areas were distinguished as townships: American, Brighton, Center, Georgiana, Granite, Lee, Sacramento, San Joaquin. Florin sat on the dividing line between Brighton to the north and San Joaquin township to the south.


Between December 19–24, 1941, Agricultural Extension Specialist in Truck Crops P. A. Minges, and Crop Reporting Service representative Carl Schiller, completed a survey of farm advisers in Yolo, Fresno, Tulare, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, Imperial, Orange, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Monterey Counties and produced a related report. The report outlined advisers’ opinions on the willingness of Japanese farmers to cooperate as well as Japanese attitudes and intentions in the face of impending removal. It included projected crop values and percentages of Japanese-grown products that estimated 90 percent of strawberries at the value of over $2 million (see toward the bottom of the table in Figure 6).

Importantly, the report cited public sentiment as the main factor that would most negatively influence Japanese farmers’ ability to obtain financing for crops, hire laborers, and lease land. In providing reasons why Japanese should be removed from their production operations, Minges and Schiller observed that East Coast markets would reject food produced by Japanese farmers. While it is not clear to which competitors the report refers, Minges and Schiller worried agricultural rivals would “sieze [sic] this opportunity to cut in on California produce.”
Minges's and Schiller's conclusions assumed negative impacts toward Japanese business endeavors throughout the duration of the United States' conflict with Japan. This argument fed into rhetoric fueling Japanese exclusion as if it was in their best interest due to the inevitability of harmful impacts related to negative public opinion. Their conclusions also supported the fact that white-owned agricultural operations stood to benefit from the Japanese American losses.

Schiller and Minges's report promotes stereotypes of Japanese "deviousness" and inability to assimilate and includes the rhetoric that jobs were taken from white Americans. It also reveals the opportunistic intent to "wrest control" of Japanese assets:

Whether the [Japanese] methods of gaining control have been devious or not does not seem to matter. Americans would like to get back into this type of business. When the federal freezing regulations went through, some people thought this was a good opportunity to wrest control from the Japanese, but they were disappointed when the assets were released.

The 1940 U.S. Census of Agriculture and standard census were lynchpins in Hewes' expeditious reappropriation of Japanese property in 1942. Both 1940 censuses provided a range of detailed data that outlined a precise picture of the Japanese population that included Japanese land ownership versus tenancy, value of farm products and machinery, and size of farms. A special report titled "Value of Farm Products by Color and Tenure of Operator" was included in the 1940 census that did not accompany the two previous or two following censuses.

A table titled "Number of Japanese in Cities of Pacific Coast States Having Japanese Populations of 500 or More: 1940" shows data synthesized from the regular census. The table gives totals in different cities of "Native Born" and "Foreign Born" Japanese populations. Another table is titled "Number of Japanese Workers 14 Years of Age and Over in Pacific Coast States, Classified by Occupational Groups: 1940." Types of employment shown are for laborers, professional workers, clerical, domestic service, and farmers and farm managers. The highest percentage labor group was 17.2%, farm laborers and foremen. Closely following behind at 14.4% was also agriculturally related as farmers and farm managers. The next two groups of comparable proportion were non-agricultural jobs including clerical, sales, and "kindred" workers as well as proprietors, managers and "officials." This valuable census data provided the U.S. Army a framework to establish military zones, direct resources, and prioritize areas of Japanese American forced removal.
Figure 8. This FSA radio script excerpt refers to the forced evacuation as a “migration” and refers to the former Japanese American property as if it is land to be settled. 1942.

Figure 9. March 17, 1942. The Wartime Farm Adjustment Program, subsequently referred to as Food for Freedom, was announced. Six thousand farms were reported as available, but only one thousand parties had expressed interest shortly after the announcement of the Food for Freedom loan program.

Figure 10. March 27, 1942. “We’ll loan money to almost anyone who can farm the land properly.”
Food for Freedom

On March 17, 1942, Director Hewes announced the FSA’s Food for Freedom loan program. This scheme provided loans to corporations and individual farmers who applied to obtain the operations, machinery, and buildings (including homes) on the properties of soon-to-be detained Japanese Americans and their families. Food for Freedom was also the term that referred to the 1941 U.S. Army campaign to recruit public support of the war effort, to provide commodities the United States committed to allies, to subsistence for U.S. forces, and to assuage fears of stateside food shortages.18

An April 6, 1942 memo signed by Director Hewes announced the availability of a radio script to be used by field agents to disseminate data on remaining acreages to be had, while also shaping the rhetoric of Japanese removal by alluding to westward expansion and the settling of the West. Titled “Mobilization of Farmers on Evacuated Land,” the script refers to a Japanese “migration” which had created the need for land takeovers. The script does not reference Executive Order 9066, but instead only notes that the 93,000 people of Japanese descent are living in “vital military zones” and due to the war “they have got to be moved out — fast. . . . So it’s up to . . . . Farm Security to find American farmers who will move into these farms and keep them producing.”

A chronology of excerpted information mostly from FSA and WCCA official memos shows how quickly land was reappropriated as well as some of the measures taken to complete the job:

March 17, 1942. The Wartime Farm Adjustment Program, subsequently referred to as Food for Freedom, was announced. Six thousand farms were reported as available, but only one thousand parties had expressed interest shortly after the announcement of the Food for Freedom loan program.

March 27, 1942. “We’ll loan money to almost anyone who can farm the land properly.”

April 1942. Sixty-nine percent of California’s Japanese farms had been redistributed. Interested parties included corporations and land companies.

April 14, 1942. WCCA announced loans were now available to experienced Mexican and Filipino farmers (but must be naturalized or in the process of becoming so), because they are considered non-enemy aliens.

April 17, 1942. New regulations allowed the U.S. government to freeze farms and take over operations ostensibly to prevent Japanese American farmers from being financially victimized.

April 17, 1942. This example of a farm that was frozen by the WCCA served as a warning to other landlords contemplating unfair dealings.

May 12, 1942. Not even half of Sacramento’s Japanese farms had yet been transferred by the time most of California’s had changed hands.

From characterizing evacuation as a “migration” to “freezing” farms, to reappropriating legitimate Japanese farming operations and describing it as “one more
tough emergency job the American people have got to lick in this war,” the innocuous language of bureaucracy facilitated an abuse of power that disenfranchised Japanese Americans. The Farm Security Administration field agents registered, “supervise[d], and “referee[d]” land transfers and went on air at radio stations to market the program to the public and recruit “American” farmers.19 Information from the 1940 U.S. Census and 1940 U.S. Census of Agriculture was used to establish population density and distribution, land values, and economic contributions of California’s Japanese Americans in preparation for mass removal.

The Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Records, 1930-1974 (bulk 1942-1946) reveals a foundational fact about evacuation: removing Japanese American farmers also removed stiff competition. The records also teach how rhetoric can contort reality in order to justify illogical and unpopular government actions. Indeed, military intelligence and the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted surveillance even before the Pearl Harbor attack and concluded the absence of a threat by West Coast Japanese Americans.20 Executive Order 9066 provided a unique and long-sought opportunity to redistribute Japanese operations en masse camouflaged among the real exigencies of war that forced Japanese immigrants and citizens to again confront the difference between the posturing of American democracy and the reality of it.

POSTSCRIPT: The Continuing Resonance of the Walerga Assembly Center

The fact of the Walerga Assembly Center’s existence is fading from memory. Almost five thousand people of Japanese descent lived there for fifty-two days; life carries on despite its context. Between May 6 and June 26, 1942, beloved grandparents died early deaths. Couples married, fearing permanent separation. Mothers were forced to birth their babies in the inescapable heat of summer. These events were recorded in the camp newspaper, the Walerga Wasp, along with baseball tournament updates, dance announcements, and sing-along narratives. The purpose of camp newspapers was to assure the wider public that, despite the incarceration of innocent citizens, democracy was still alive and well within the confines of barbed wire and armed guards. It is doubtful documentation about suicide attempts and sexual assaults would have made it past the WRA (War Relocation Authority) camp manager who supervised the content of every Walerga Wasp issue.

As a site of memory, the only material hint at this tragic history comes from a historical marker located at Walerga Park titled “Lest We Forget.” To remember is to actively engage with history. Let the dialogue of past and present remind us of our power as citizens to defend against racism and bigotry. Let the lessons of experience and meaning evoke our own vulnerabilities and reliance on even the most marginalized of us. Let us, please, not forget the people of the Walerga Assembly Center.
2. Marielle Tsukamoto is Mary Tsukamoto’s daughter and was four years old when her family was evacuated from Florin in 1942. They were first taken to the Fresno Assembly Center and then to Jerome Relocation Camp in Arkansas. Mary Tsukamoto, the namesake of Mary Tsukamoto Elementary School in Elk Grove, was a teacher and activist who was instrumental in preserving Florin’s history and in creating the Japanese American Archival Collection (JAAC) housed at CSU Sacramento’s (CSUS) Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA). Mary Tsukamoto also worked to win redress for all Japanese Americans who suffered through the experience of unjust incarceration during World War II. Elizabeth Pinkerton, ed. History Happened Here: Stories of Sloughhouse, Sheldon, Franklin, Florin, Wilton, Laguna Creek, and Other Places in South Sacramento County, California, 1850–1900. (Elk Grove, 2002), 265–66.

3. Early on, the Farm Security Administration entitled its program the Wartime Farm Adjustment Program. It soon discarded this name but retained the symbol WFA to identify certain activities, functions, and documents. mac.cdlib.org, accessed February 22, 2020, https://oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb009n99pi;N AAN=13030&doc.view=frames&chunk.id=div00005&toc.depth=1&toc.id=div00005&brand=oac4.

4. Mary Tsukamoto, Elizabeth Pinkerton, We the People: A Story of Internment in America. (United States, 1987), 52–53


“Wear a Gauze Mask:” Dealing with the 1918 Influenza Scourge

With the eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, worldwide media coverage has been nonstop. Television, the Internet, social networking, newspapers, and other sources seemingly have been issuing updates on the hour. Naturally, those with an interest in history cannot help but reflect on past health crises. A search of the Internet will provide links and citations to many books and articles. Perhaps the best-known scourge to attack California was the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic. Found in the State Library’s California History Section ephemera collection is a rare broadside titled *Influenza!* printed in large letters. Distributed by the California State Board of Health in Sacramento and prepared by the Massachusetts State Department of Health, the single sheet measures 12 1/2 x 9 inches. Thankfully, someone on the staff had foresight to preserve this flimsy circular in the Library’s permanent collection.

This broadside includes much practical information that applies to our current pandemic. It states, for example: “The counsel here set forth has been prepared after consultation with some of the ablest medical men in America. If you follow the dictates of this official bulletin, you will be doing your duty to your fellow man and to yourself.” Keep in mind, this advice sheet was distributed shortly after the horrors of World War I. In a two-column section titled “What to Do Until the Doctor Comes,” it recommended upon feeling a sudden chill to get into bed at once and do not let anyone else sleep in the same room. Similar to today’s recommendations, it stated: “Insist that whoever gives you water or food or enters the sick room for any other purpose shall wear a gauze mask . . . which should cover
Influenza!

How to Avoid It! How to Care for Those Who Have It!

The following suggestions of the California State Board of Health may prove of immeasurable value to any man or woman who will read, remember and act upon them in the present great emergency. The counsel here set forth has been prepared after consultation with some of the ablest medical men in America. If you will follow the dictates of this official bulletin, you will be doing your duty to your fellow man and to yourself.

What To Do Until the Doctor Comes

If you feel a sudden chill, followed by muscular pain, headache, backache, unusual tiredness and fever, go to bed at once.

See that there is enough bed clothing to keep you warm.

Open all windows in your bedroom and keep them open at all times, except in rainy weather.

Take medicine to open the bowels freely.

Take some nourishing food such as milk, egg and milk or broth every four hours.

Stay in bed until a physician tells you that it is safe to get up.

TO HOUSEHOLDERS

Keep out of the sick room unless attendance is necessary.

Do not handle articles coming from the sick room until they are boiled.

Allow no visitors, and do not go visiting.

Call a doctor for all inmates who show signs of beginning sickness.

The usual symptoms are: Inflamed and watery eyes, discharging nose, backache, headache, muscular pain, and fever.

Keep away from crowded places, such as "movies," theatres, street cars.

See to it that your children are kept warm and dry, both night and day.

Have sufficient fire in your home to dispense the dampness.

Open your windows at night. If cool weather prevails, add extra bed clothing.

TO WORKERS

Walk to work if possible.

Avoid the person who coughs or sneezes.

Wash your hands before eating.

Make full use of all available sunshine.

Do not use a common towel. It spreads disease.

Should you cough or sneeze, cover nose and mouth with a handkerchief.

Keep out of crowded places. Walk in the open air rather than go to crowded places of amusement.

Sleep is necessary for well-being—avoid over-exertion. Eat good, clean food.

Keep away from houses where there are cases of influenza.

If sick, no matter how slightly, see a physician.

If you have had influenza, stay in bed until your doctor says you can safely get up.

TO NURSES

Keep clean. Isolate your patients.

When in attendance upon patients, wear a mask which will cover both the nose and the mouth. When the mask is once in place, do not handle it.

Change the mask every two hours. Owing to the scarcity of gauze, boil for 5 minutes and rinse, then use the gauze again.

Wash your hands each time you come in contact with the patient. Use bichloride of mercury, 1-1000, or Liquor Cresol compound, 1-100, for hand disinfection.

Obtain at least seven hours' sleep in each twenty-four hours. Eat plenty of good, clean food.

Walk in the fresh air daily.

Sleep with your windows open.

Insist that the patient cough, sneeze or expectorate into clothes that may be disinfected or burned.

Boil all dishes. Keep patients warm.

For copies of this publication apply to

California State Board of Health, Sacramento

(Prepared by Massachusetts State Department of Health)
the nose and mouth. Remember that these
masks must be kept clean . . . and must be
boiled five minutes and thoroughly dried
every time they are taken off."

The bottom third of this handout consists
of three columns addressed to “Household-
ers,” “Workers,” and “Nurses.” Here are a few
of the practical examples. For householders,
it advised: “Keep out of the sick room, keep
away from crowded places, such as ‘mov-
ies,’ theatres, street cars,” and “open your
windows at night.” Concerning workers, it
recommended “walk to work if possible,
wash your hands before eating,” and “do
not use a common towel. It spreads dis-
 ease.” The Board of Health gave additional
instructions for nurses including: “Isolate
your patients,” “change the mask every two
hours,” “Insist that the patient cough, sneeze
or expectorate into cloths that may be dis-
infected or burned,” and “boil all dishes.”
All three categories stressed the need for
sound sleep, walking in fresh air, and eating
“good, clean food.”

The Government Publications Section
of the State Library also has a number of
pamphlet-size titles of suggestions and
precautions regarding the 1918 influenza
epidemic. The Library’s sizeable collections
of newspapers and periodicals from that
frightening time are loaded with firsthand
accounts describing the spread of the dis-
ease and statistics of those who became
sick or died.
The Epidemic Hits San Francisco

Among the amazing photographic treasures in the California History Section are two photograph albums created by Hamilton Henry Dobbin (1856–1930) of San Francisco.* He was a member of the San Francisco Police Department and witnessed many important events in the city's history including the horrifying 1918 influenza epidemic. Dobbin took twenty-two candid shots with his camera of San Franciscans dealing with crisis. The policeman mounted them in the albums and thankfully labeled each image in his own hand identifying the scene. Some of his captions have a slight touch of humor as they show fellow officers warning citizens to wear a mask. A good portion of these show brave women donning white masks helping their beloved and frightened San Franciscans.

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