

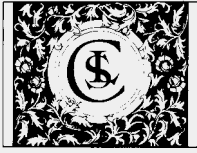
California State Library Foundation

# Bulletin

Number 83

2006





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**Front Cover:** The frontispiece of *The Led-Horse Claim* by Mary Hallock Foote.

**Back Cover:** Noted Western writer and artist Mary Hallock Foote, ca. 1880. This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

**Illustrations/Photos:** Pages 2-8, California State Library; pages 9-11, Mary Swisher; pages 12-22, California State Library; and page 23, Windgate Press

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MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.

Mary Hallock Foote, ca. 1895. Reproduced  
from the *Land of Sunshine* (April 1898).

# A Brief Look at the Literary Life of Mary Hallock Foote

By Sands Hall

Mary Hallock Foote enjoyed an extensive career, from the 1870s through the 1920s, as a popular and well-reviewed author: numerous essays, three collections of stories, and twelve novels. She was also a celebrated illustrator, and any discussion of her as a literary artist must begin with her training and ability as a fine one. Her flair for description, her awareness of shadow and light, even the beguiling tone of the narratives flowing from her writer's pen are directly tied to a talent and early training with her artist's pencil.

In an early section of her *Reminiscences, A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West*, Foote describes her "Quaker Beginnings": her remarkable family, the art and literature that permeated her childhood, the luminaries, such as Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass, that visited her family's Milton, New York home. An early artistic flair led to her admission, in 1864, when she was just seventeen, to the Cooper Union School of Design in New York. And it was in Cooper Union's heady atmosphere of oil paint and inspiration that Helena deKay "dawned" on Mary's life, "like a rosepink winter sunrise."<sup>1</sup>

"Helena's people belonged to the old aristocracy of New York," Foote writes, "My people belonged to nothing except the Society of Friends ... By spring we sat together at anatomy lessons lectures and Friday composition class and scribbled quotations and remarks to each other in the margins of our notebooks."<sup>2</sup> Those "remarks to each other" ripened into over five hundred exchanges of letters; and, when Helena married Richard Gilder, helped launch Mary into a second and unexpected career. In addition to being "one of the most brilliant literary figures of the oncoming generation... poet, critic, reformer, public personality,"<sup>3</sup> Gilder was, most importantly, editor of *Scribners* and then of *Century Magazine*. Thus, through her artistic career, Foote came to know the man who would be essential to her literary one.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Last year, I heard Sands Hall's superb presentation at the Empire Mine in Grass Valley on Mary Hallock Foote for a program hosted by the Nevada County Library. Ms. Hall not only agreed to have her talk published in the *Bulletin* but also generously agreed to expand on the subject of "MHF."

Sands Hall is an extraordinary writer, actress, and director living in the historic mining town of Nevada City, not far from Mary Hallock Foote's Grass Valley. She has an MFA in Fiction and an MFA in Theatre Arts, both from University of Iowa. She works as a freelance editor and writer and teaches for the University of California, Davis Extension Programs; Iowa Summer Writing Festival; and the Squaw Valley Community of Writers. In addition, she has written one novel *Catching Heaven* and two plays, *Little Women* and *Fair Use*. The latter is an exploration of the controversy surrounding Wallace Stegner's use of Foote's life and writing in his *Angle of Repose*. Last, Ms. Hall is an Affiliate Artist with the Foothill Theatre Company, for which she acts, writes, and directs.

But in the 1870s Mary was settled on a career in the fine arts and even before she matriculated was receiving commissions: illustrations for novels and for children's stories, covers of magazines. She was in touch with the Alcotts, Longfellow, Bret Harte. Through these heady years she was courted by the brilliant engineer, Arthur deWint Foote, and in 1876, against the expectations of family and friends, particularly Helena, she married him, and moved to California, where he was Resident Engineer of the New Almaden Quicksilver Mine.

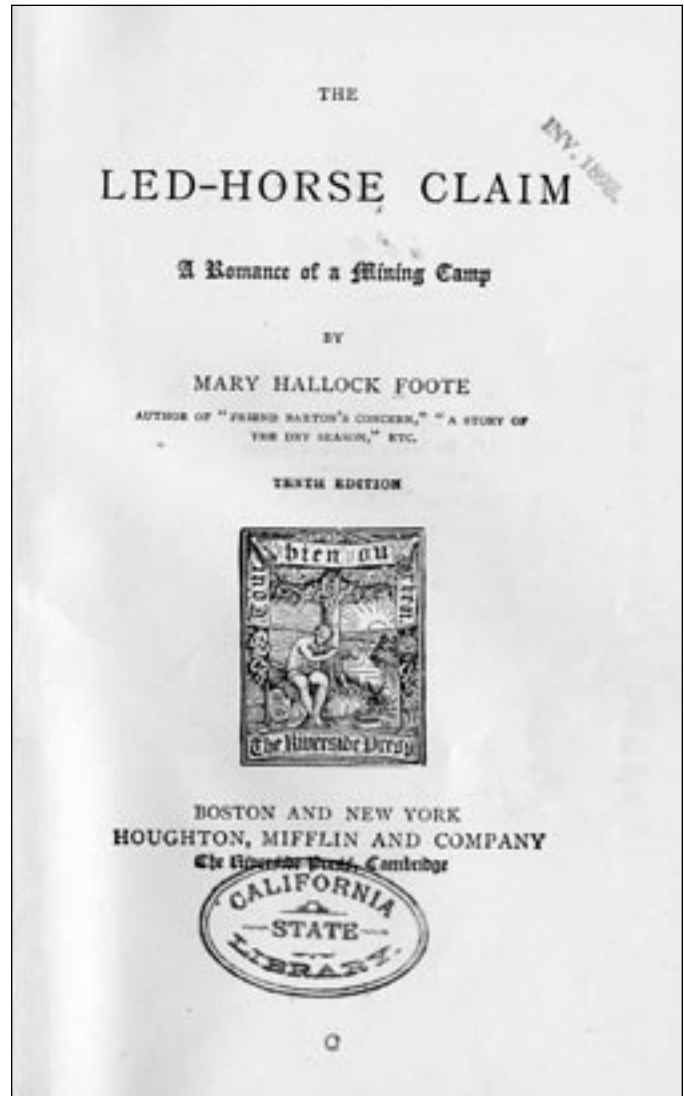
In New Almaden Mary finished illustrating a stunning edition of *The Scarlet Letter* (drawing directly onto wooden blocks that were then shipped east to be engraved), birthed her first child, and wrote to Helena, as she would for fifty years, in letters charged with detail and descriptions of the wholly different landscape and society she now occupied. Helena shared Mary's letters with her husband, who suggested Mary write an essay for publication. The voice they'd come to appreciate was perhaps stifled in her effort to write "seriously"; Gilder augmented the essay with excerpts from her letters. Illustrated by the author, "A California Mining Camp" appeared in the February 1878 edition of *Scribners*.

Thus began Foote's literary career, a career that became essential to the family's survival, as Arthur, a principled man, often departed work of questionable integrity. He left the New Almaden job, taking work in Deadwood, Wyoming, and then in Leadville, Colorado, a silver camp that "was booming at an altitude of 10,000 feet, close to the ridgeline of the continent,"<sup>4</sup> Foote writes, employing the sort of metaphor that makes her such a spectacular scenic writer. She joined Arthur there, and in their famous "cabin on the ditch" they hosted some of the nation's foremost writers, scientists, and engineers. In Leadville, encouraged by Gilder, she began her first novel, *The Led-Horse Claim*.

In 1881 the Leadville job evaporated and Mary and Arthur journeyed to Mexico.<sup>5</sup> Although a hoped-for opportunity with Morelia's silver mines did not materialize, Mary celebrated Mexico in an avidly-consumed series of illustrations and articles published in *Century*. Still in pursuit of employment, Arthur then headed to Idaho, while Mary stayed in Milton, rewriting the last chapters of *The Led-Horse Claim*. In a remark that illustrates the importance she placed on Gilder's opinion, Foote writes:

I ended the story at Leadville as I believe it would have ended; the young pair would, in the order of things as they were, never have seen each other again. But my publisher wouldn't hear of that! I had to make a happy ending. I think a literary artist would have refused to do it.<sup>6</sup>

Even as she admits that she gave into an expectation to perpetuate the East's romantic perceptions of the West, Foote offers



Title page for the tenth edition of *The Led-Horse Claim*, Foote's first book.

a sense of her literary awareness and the artistry towards which she aspired, and which her later novels demonstrate.

Finishing her first novel, nursing a second child, she hears from Arthur in Idaho, a letter that made her turn her face to the wall. He's had a vision: the building of a grand canal. "I had thought we were committed to deep mining," she writes, "and here we were turning our backs on the experience ... and beginning all over again in a new branch of engineering ... It was a desert to be reclaimed, a scheme so vast that millions would be needed to carry it through." Idaho "meant farewell art, gossip of the workshop ... friends ... all the old backgrounds receding hopelessly and forever,"<sup>8</sup> but Mary's sister Bessie and her husband joined them, making the transition palatable. "Another beginning," Mary writes Helena, "Beds and tables and chairs ... yearnings and gropings after beauty in the raw, new surround-

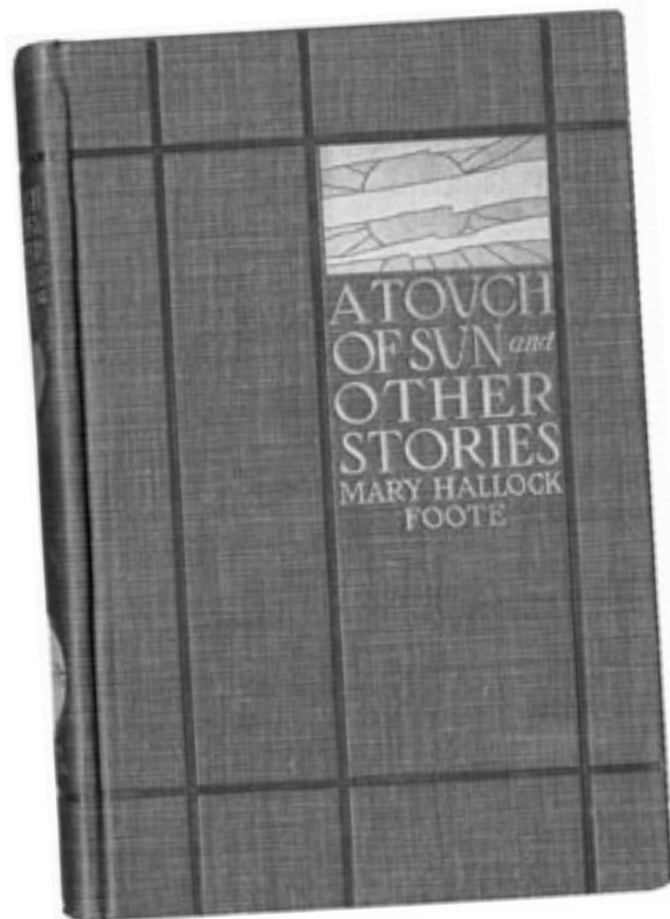




"Underground." The frontispiece of *The Led-Horse Claim*.

ings."<sup>9</sup> "But it is so good to find a resting place with a sister in it ... It is such a hopeful life out here ... I think I shall camp with A. in the Cañon for awhile."<sup>10</sup>

Camping trips, sunset gallops, excursions into wild geological territory—while Helena was having tea with Mrs. Roosevelt and dinner with Henry James, Mary took enormous pleasure in the options the West, and life with Arthur, offered. In an 1884 letter to Helena, she writes of hurtling down the Boise river at night: "The worst that could have happened was the boat might have struck a rock going with the force of that tremendous current and gone to pieces and we would have been obliged to walk home ten miles in wet clothes ..." <sup>11</sup> Mary knew such opportunities would be impossible in the staid East that nevertheless she longed for so deeply. This friction between what the West gave her and her anguish at "losing" her East, forms a line of ten-



The striking front cover of Foote's *A Touch of Sun*, 1903.

sion throughout most of her writing. The Gilders, looming in the background, represented all she'd left behind; they caused almost compulsive comparisons, especially during the Footes' harrowing decade in Idaho. Even as she was becoming known as a preeminent western writer, in the juxtaposition of East versus West, West came up lacking.

The success of *The Led-Horse Claim*, illustrated by the author, and serialized in *Century* before being published as a novel, led to other novels, which often paid for life in the Boise cañon as they waited for better news. Yet in spite of the wind, the poverty, and the lack of the kind of cultural society Foote craved, Idaho—and, later, memories of Idaho—offered opportunities to depict her West with words as evocatively as she did with charcoal lines. This is from her novel, *Edith Bonham*, published two decades after they left Idaho:

Eastward the plain that joins the mesa went back in desert land or ploughed land returned to desert; at night the mountain line withdrew and the whole earth disappeared as it were and the sky was paramount. Stars, millions of stars, and the great soaring path of the Milky Way amazingly white and sown with sparks of light defying the moon. The wind blew soft and steady ...<sup>12</sup>

She also has a ready eye for metaphors, supplied by camping gear, weather, landscape, and, as her husband and his assistants work on the Canal, engineering terms:

Often I thought of one of their phrases, 'the angle of repose,' which was too good to waste on rockslides and heaps of sand. Each one of us in the Cañon was slipping and crawling and grinding along seeking what to us was that angle, but we were not any of us ready for repose.<sup>13</sup>

Months turned into years with little progress made on the "Big Ditch." In the 1880s the country was in recession, and what few investments Arthur found did not hold. The birth of a second daughter, Agnes, was both a blessing and a burden in these difficult times. A double rainbow curved across the cañon the day of her birth: Agnes "was full of a mysterious lonely joy, as if the fairies of her birthnight still kept her company, and double rainbows that no one else could see stood in her dreaming skies ..."<sup>14</sup>

Bessie was forced to open a boarding house in Boise; Mary kept the family afloat with her pen: In 1890 came *The Last Assembly Ball*, and in 1892, *The Chosen Valley*. Both novels, against a realistic back-drop of Idaho and details of canal-building, with Foote's lovely work with scenic elements, present romantic love-interests that predictably win each other. Yet Foote's despair pulses in *The Chosen Valley's* penultimate lines: "Over the graves of the dead, and over the hearts of the living, presses the cruel expansion of our country's material progress: the prophets are confounded, the promise withdrawn, the people imagine a vain thing ..."<sup>15</sup> Eighteen ninety-four saw her (anti-union) novel about the mining uprising, *Coeur d'Alene*, as well as a volume of stories: *In Exile and Other Stories* (1894 was the nadir of the Canal's fortunes); in 1895 came another collection, *The Cup of Trembling*. These stories, written in a passion of need, were sold individually, then consolidated into volumes. In a letter to Rudyard Kipling regarding illustrations, Foote told him, disconsolately, that she was writing pot-boilers; which is "all right," he replied, "if it boils the pot."<sup>16</sup>

In spite of Arthur's heroic efforts, the Canal failed.<sup>17</sup> He was forced to accept arduous and poorly-paid jobs that took him far

*The Hanging of the Crane.*

23

For two alone, there in the hall,  
Is spread the table round and small;



Upon the polished silver shine  
The evening lamps, but, more divine,  
The light of love shines over all;

One of the many illustrations produced by Foote for Henry W. Longfellow's *The Hanging of the Crane*, 1881.

from his family. Mary and the children moved to Bessie's boarding house: "... My work in that room was blessed," Foote writes, "if it be blessed to 'sell'—the themes were the best that ever came to me ... if they (could have) ripened and settled ... I might have poured a purer wine. But quick sales were very needful at that time."<sup>18</sup>

Good news waited on the horizon in the form of James D. Hague, Arthur's brother-in-law, who was "risking everything he had ... on certain uncertain mining operations near Grass Valley, California ..."<sup>19</sup> It took time for Arthur's provisional assignment as superintendent of Hague's Northstar Mine to become a permanent position, but just as Mary finally began to enjoy a settled and prosperous life, she felt her work had become "old-fashioned." Again she demonstrates her literary perspicacity, understanding that the "romances" Gilder encouraged to write

Author's card in the Library's Biographical Card File filled out by Mary Foote when living in Grass Valley. The card records information on date and place of birth, parents, where educated, years spent in California, residence, and a listing of published works.

1906

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

**Foote**

Name in full, Mary Hallock Foote

Born at Milton, N. Y., on Nov. 19th, 1844.

Father, Nathaniel Hallock; Mother (maiden name in full) Jane Burling

Married If married, to whom? Arthur Dr. Wint Foote

Place, Milton, N. Y.; Date, February 9th 1876

Where educated, Poughkeepsie, N. Y. and New York City

Years spent in California, fourteen; Residences in State, New Almaden & Grass Valley, Santa Cruz, and

none; Pseudonyms, San Francisco

Present address, c/o North Star Mines, Grass Valley, Cal.

[OVER.] Died in Boston, 1938 (San Francisco July 2, 1936)



"Cornishman 'Tramming' at Bush Tunnel." Illustration by Foote to accompany her article "A California Mining Camp," *Scribner's Monthly* (February 1878), 481.



were no longer to her public's taste (even less, perhaps—considering all she'd been through—to her own).

Nevertheless, in 1899 came a collection of stories for children, *The Little Fig Tree*; 1900 saw publication of *The Prodigal*; in 1902 came *The Desert and the Sown*, a novel that reverses the perspective maintained in her earlier ones: the West is now the place of possibility and hope, the East one of desiccated dreams.<sup>20</sup> In 1903 she published *Touch of the Sun & Other Stories*. The realism always nascent in her tales begins to shine; she begins to trust her voice—including a sense of humor—as well as her ability to tell a tale.

In 1904, at the age of eighteen, Agnes, the beloved fairy child, died of appendicitis. Even in the most troubling times Foote had managed to produce a story every few months and a novel every

year or two, but for six years following this tragedy, her pen was dry. But then came a piece of redemption.

"Most highly honored are those who, as the years pass, are found to have ... commanded a horizon far beyond the sight or understanding of masses of people," begins an article in a February, 1909 *Idaho Statesman*. "A quarter of a century ago Arthur Foote saw where water could be diverted; he saw where it could be stored and ... could see these lands peopled with thousands of prosperous families ...."<sup>21</sup> It took twenty-five years, and enormous investment from the government, but Arthur's Big Ditch opened.<sup>22</sup> While nothing Foote has written indicates that this news gave her heart to pick up her pen again, perhaps it's significant that 1910 gives us *The Royal Americans* and 1912, *A Picked Company*, two historical novels; in 1915 comes *The Valley Road*.

of every nation-  
de Cornish youths  
slim, swarthy Mex-  
ere Ignatio Enes-  
p," and the sisters  
silversmith), half  
hinese. A young  
ed the "oration."  
the German fore-  
enda dancing with  
he French butcher.  
very good for the  
ncello, two violins,  
and a flute. They



A GIRL OF THE MEXICAN CAMP.



"A Girl of the Mexican Camp." Illustration by Foote to accompany her article "A California Mining Camp," *Scribner's Monthly* (February 1878), 486.

"The Water-Carrier of the Mexican Camp." Illustration by Foote to accompany her article "A California Mining Camp," *Scribner's Monthly* (February 1878), 491.

Richard Gilder had died in 1909; in 1916 came the death of Helena.

Mary's letters to Helena include dozens of invitations, tacit and overt, for Helena to experience her life. The Gilders never visited. Not in Colorado, that frontier; nor in Boise, where the Footes lived for a decade; not even during their twenty-odd years in the Julia Morgan-designed Northstar House. The Gilders often sailed east, across the Atlantic, but never took a train west to visit their friend. Helena may have indicated her pride in Mary's literary success, but it is easy to imagine Mary's grief that her friends disapproved of her life and her choices, which was in this way communicated. Yet within a year of Helena's passing, Foote's paean to her, *Edith Bonham* (dedicated to "a perfect friend"), was on the shelves. The story must have been sitting

in Foote's veins, waiting for the opportunity to pour it onto the page. In it, Edith, the (first person) narrator, someone not unlike the artist-aristocrat, Helena, meets, at Cooper Union, Nanny, someone very like Mary from Milton. To Edith's dismay, Nanny moves to Idaho with her engineering husband, and then dies; Edith, (unmarried), comes to Idaho to look after their neglected children. After several years and plot twists, in what is perhaps the most romantic of all of Foote's romantic imaginings, the Helena character and the Arthur character discover they love each other—and choose to live their life in the West. In this way Foote manages to celebrate not only her friend, but her husband, as well as the West that (as she had with *The Desert and the Sown*) she begins to work into her fiction in acclamatory ways.

In her ultimate novel, *The Ground-Swell*, Foote waves a similar wand: creating Katherine, the narrator's daughter, may have been a way to give her own Agnes a longer life. Katherine, who lives and works in Manhattan, visits her parents while they are camping on a beach in Northern California. Her mother, Mrs. Cope, has to grapple with the notion that Katherine is a member of the "third sex," women who have decided not to marry or bear children, instead devoting their lives to social work. As Katherine tells her mother:

You've heard and seen what we're up to. If one woman in the course of her working life could help, say, one hundred other women to feed their babies better, so half of them wouldn't die and the other half grow up deficient in some way—there you'd have an average of three or four hundred better Americans to three or four the one woman might produce it she went in for babies of her own ..." <sup>23</sup>

The book was published in 1919, as the 19th Amendment was being ratified. By that time many women were realizing that what few rights they enjoyed as single women would disappear if they married. At the same time, the war in Europe, and work such as Jane Adams's *Hull House*, offered unconventional options that provided women with a sense of purpose. Foote was adamant in her disapproval of suffrage, a startling fact: it goes against perspectives with which, as a Quaker, she was raised; in addition, while before 1919 few eastern states had given women the vote, two-thirds of western states had done so. She was no doubt influenced by the Gilders: Richard published (and as editor, wrote) many articles against Woman Suffrage.<sup>24</sup> Yet Foote's novel focuses on Katherine, who resolutely disarms her mother's efforts to play matchmaker, and who dies in Europe nursing the War's wounded. There is anguish in Mrs. Cope's "coping" with this: "It was not enough for Katherine just to die, nursing wounded soldiers; she should have nursed living chil-



dren...,"<sup>25</sup> the novel's last sentence begins, and can be seen as a bitter denunciation of the new freedoms women are demanding. Yet Foote paints these women with a discerning and sympathetic eye, and Katherine, and the novel, can also be seen as a way of giving Agnes a life she might have had. Perhaps it is significant that Foote gives that daughter a life so different than her own, and so contrary to her professed beliefs; perhaps the novel is an effort to shake off a lasting influence of the Gilders.

That is speculation; still, there is a profound difference between these novels—*Desert and the Sown*, *Edith Bonham*, and *Ground-Swell*—and Foote's earlier ones: she does not shrink from tragedy, the endings are not "romantic," she uses first-person in two of them. But above all, they demonstrate a reversal of that earlier tension: she conveys the West as a place of growth and hope, while the East is a place of formality, even sterility.

In 1922, Foote began her *Reminiscences*; they remained unpublished in her lifetime. The Huntington Library brought them out in 1972, and they are currently in their sixth edition.

"These fragments of my past are presented merely as backgrounds and the figures upon them are placed by instinct in a selected light and seen from a certain point of view," Foote writes in her *Reminiscences*' final paragraph, thinking, to the end, as both a literary and a fine artist: "To that extent I suppose I am still the artist I tried to be, and the old romancer too."<sup>26</sup> ❀



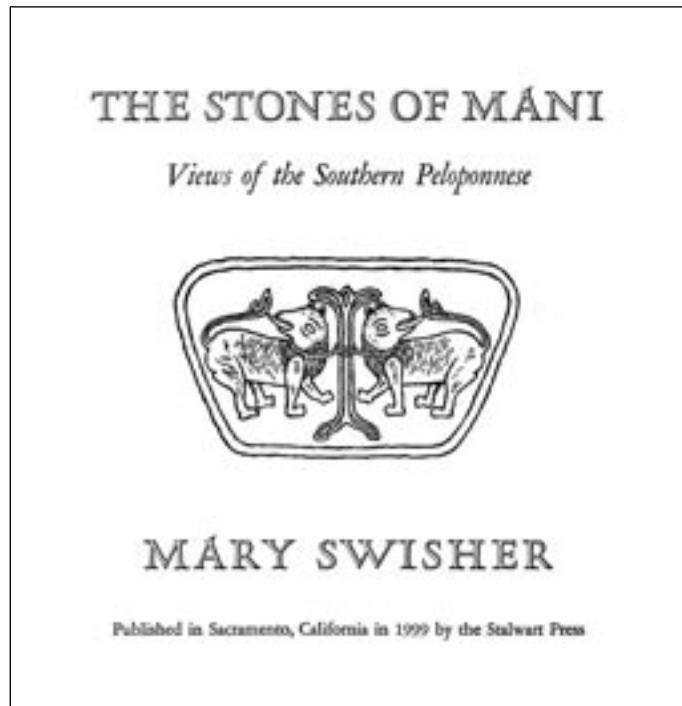
#### ENDNOTES

1. Mary Hallock Foote, ed. with an introduction by Rodman W. Paul, *A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West, the Reminiscences of Mary Hallock Foote* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1972), 97.
2. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 98.
3. Rodman Paul, editor, "Introduction," to *A Victorian Gentlewoman*, 8.
4. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 163.
5. The Footes' fascinating lives are necessarily abridged in this discussion; please see Foote's *Reminiscences* as well as the highly readable and illuminating biographies by Darlis Miller, *Mary Hallock Foote, Author-Illustrator of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), and Lee Ann Johnson, *Mary Hallock Foote* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980).
6. Paul, introduction in *Reminiscences*, 17.
7. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 264.
8. *Ibid.*, 265.
9. Letter from Mary Hallock Foote to Helena deKay Gilder, #269, May 19, 1883, from transcripts loaned by the Foote family and available through Stanford University Library's Department of Special Collections.
10. *Ibid.*, #263, May 8, (year missing, assume 1883).

11. *Ibid.*, #273, Aug. 19 1884.
12. Mary Hallock Foote, *Edith Bonham* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919), 170.
13. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 306.
14. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 301.
15. Mary Hallock Foote, *The Chosen Valley* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1892).
16. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 359.
17. Although this is a discussion of Mary's literary career, I think it important to include a thought about Arthur's engineering one: Arthur's lack of success, for so many years, is tragic. Yet early in his life he seems to have realized that making his money on the backs of other men—as an investor or even as superintendent—was not a notion with which his conscience could live. And so he turned to canal-building, which as he imagined it, would not be exploitative, but beneficial, bringing water to lands and people. Even when he eventually landed the job as Superintendent of the Northstar in Grass Valley, he resisted Hague's desire to use electricity in the mines, insisting that electricity, water, and men in the same environment was dangerous. Hague gave in to his notion and hydrology, although expensive, was used (sans electricity for many years) in the Northstar's mines.
18. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 336.
19. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 361.
20. Johnson, 156-7.
21. Paul, 377: From an article by D. W. Ross, state reclamation engineer, in the February 24th, 1909 issue of the Boise, *Idaho Statesman*. Paul adds, "About 3000 people were lined up along the banks of the canal to watch what was regarded as a great moment in the development of the Boise Valley."
22. A look at a map of Boise with its arterial New York Canal reveals the efficacy of Arthur's vision.
23. Mary Hallock Foote, *The Ground-Swell* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919), 195.
24. I.E.: "Suffrage ... never made a man more of a man, and we greatly fear its exercise would make woman less of a woman." Alexander Hyde, "The Co-Education of the Sexes," *Scribners*, 2 (September 1871): (To be fair, the article suggests co-education rather than suffrage). Other examples can be found in Clara Temple Leonard, "What Women Do Best," *Century*, 49 (January 1895); editorial in "The New Woman-Suffrage Movement," *Century*, 48, (July 1894); "Woman," *Century*, 41 (February 1891). See the website of *The Nineteenth Century in Print* (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpcoop/moahtml/snchome.html>).
25. *Ibid.*, 283.
26. Foote, *Reminiscences*, 400.

# The Stones of Mani

*Views of the Southern Peloponnese*  
*The Platinum-Palladium Photographs of Mary Swisher*



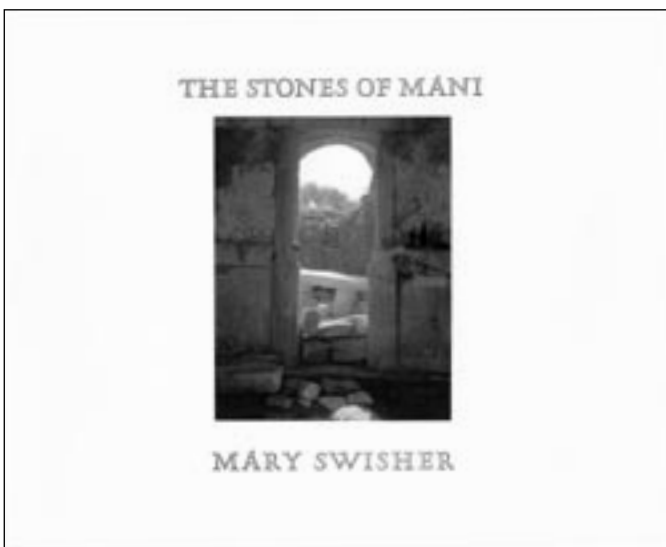
The gracefully designed title page for *The Stones of Mani*.

(In the words of author and photographer Mary Swisher): *From 1984 to the present I have returned often to the province of Laconia in the Peloponnese of Greece. Laconia is the site of ancient Sparta and Mani, a peninsula extending into the Aegean Sea from the southern part of the Peloponnese. For my book I have photographed deep in the Mani peninsula a landscape of war towers, threshing rings and Byzantine churches. I have attempted to create a series of austere and straightforward photographs contemplating the stark beauty of the countryside, where classical Greek, Roman, and Turkish fragments of earlier ages survive. I have selected twelve of my most meditative and penetrating photographs for this production, choosing those which represent the fleeting light and enduring stones which are for me among the most distinctive features of Mani. During my trips to the area I have regularly kept journals. From these I have selected some of my most significant impressions and memories for the text of the 65 page book which accompanies my photographs.*

Mary Swisher, as both writer and photographer, presents her work in two parts, a portfolio for her twelve signed photographs and a book for her accounts of her experiences and reminiscences. What brings this combination into the realm of the artist's book is her use of the long-forgotten and only recently revived platinum-palladium technique for generating her prints. This method was first used in the 19th century by photographers such as Fredrick H. Evans to create his famous prints of English cathedrals. The platinum-palladium print is characterized by great beauty, lustrous depth, and archival endurance. Platinum-palladium printing takes infinite patience with attention to chemistry, humidity, and flawless paper. *The Stones of Mani* is also a project in fine letterpress printing and bookbinding. Assisting Mary were the other members of the Stalwart Press. Robert Dickover, the printer, used hand-set Garamond and



Above: The complete *Stones of Mani* with its handsome slipcase, text volume, and portfolio of platinum-palladium photographs by Mary Swisher.



Left: Prospectus for *The Stones of Mani*. The photograph is of *Trissakia Church*, near Tsopakas, 1987.

Hadriano Stonecut types in the printing of the book and other parts of the project. L.J. Dillon, a hand bookbinder, employed a natural German Rohhalbleinen linen fabric to bind the portfolio and book and the slipcase she designed to hold the two parts.

The binding of the book is stitched in the Greek key design, using natural linen thread. Rachel Stonecipher, the press's artist, created the drawing and ornaments decorating the printed sections. The decorations are taken from photographs of stone carvings. Mani's 11th century Church of Metamorphosis is the source of the drawing of the lions on the title page and the cross motif on the text pages.



Episcopi Church, 1990.



Spirit House, Gardenistssa, 1992.

The text and supporting pages are printed in black ink on Rives Heavyweight paper. The decorations and drawings are printed in blue ink. Hahnemuhle Aegean Blue Bugra paper is the choice for the endpapers, labels, and portfolio detail.

As yet there are few photographers working with the platinum-palladium technique. The expensive materials required and the great difficulty of obtaining the results desired by most photographic artists are discouraging. *The Stones of Mani* offers the viewer the opportunity of seeing photographs produced by this technique at its best in a context of fine printing and bookbinding.



Alonia, 1990. "This threshing ring is in the haunted village of Palermo."

EDITORS NOTE: This article is a review of Sacramento photographer Mary Swisher's magnificent portfolio that first appeared in Joseph D'Ambrosio's periodical, *Artists' Book* (Spring 2005). The reason it is reproduced here is that *The Stones of Mani* has a direct connection to the California State Library and its Preservation Office. Every week talented volunteers like Mary Swisher come to this department not only to help preserve Library materials but also to enjoy its camaraderie. Out of this love of books, fine printing, elegant binding, and fine photography came the genesis for this remarkable portfolio. Swisher, of course, had the idea based on her extensive travels in Greece and conceived of making a limited edition portfolio of platinum photographs. However, Swisher needed to find someone to print the text in letterpress and another to produce a binding in keeping with her brilliant images. She did not have to look any further than her volunteer colleagues in the Preservation Department. Robert Dickover, an outstanding printer and proprietor of the Stawart Press, and L. J. Dillon, a gifted hand bookbinder, both agreed to lend their considerable expertise to this publishing project. The Library was able to acquire copy number three and thus added a magnificent treasure produced by three talented Sacramentans. ❀



# Honoring a Lifetime of Achievement: The Notable Career of Librarian and Historian Richard H. Dillon

By Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.

EDITOR'S NOTE: California State Library Foundation board member and noted historian Dr. J. S. Holliday organized a grand dinner at the World Trade Club at San Francisco's Embarcadero to celebrate the illustrious career of Sutro Librarian emeritus, Richard H. Dillon. Dillon worked for the Sutro Library Branch of the California State Library from 1950 to 1979 and authored scores of books and articles on California and Western history. The Foundation was one of the sponsors of the event. Held on November 4, 2005, over 150 friends of Richard Dillon came to the dinner. Lively presentations were made by Holliday, Russ Pearce, Robert J. Chandler, Gary F. Kurutz, and by the honoree himself. However, the engaging and sometime irreverent remarks of Dillon's son, Brian, brought the house down. It was a memorable conclusion to a rousing, inspiring evening in honor of one of California's finest librarians and narrative historians. The Foundation is grateful to Dr. Dillon for permission to publish his talk.

*Dr. Brian Dillon, embracing his father's love of history and antiquities, is a consulting archaeologist and accomplished writer residing in the Los Angeles area.*



All of you here tonight know Richard H. Dillon as one of the leading literary figures of California and even of those smaller states lying out there, east of Nevada somewhere. I know him, and I have always loved and respected him more than any other man on the planet, as my father and as my children's grandfather. So, tonight, my comments about my dad take the form of something of a generational sandwich, placing him firmly in the normal historical context of what produced him, and what he himself has produced.

Richard Hugh Dillon was born at home in Sausalito over eighty years ago, the youngest of four sons, collectively known



Pondering a reference letter, the Sutro Librarian is flanked by a beautiful set of Bancroft's Works.

as the *Dillon Gang*. There is not yet a brass plaque on the wall of 508 Johnson Street, but there will be some day. Two of the Dillon boys, Bill and Gene, were Red Irish, the other two, including my Dad and my Uncle Jack, were Black Irish. He grew up in a household where history was not only "*on the hoof*," but also underfoot. One Irish grandfather was a California gold miner who kept his gold-dust poke in his pocket wrapped up in a handkerchief for more than twenty years after the rush had ended. This was his good luck talisman. Then, like a good Irishman, when he married a woman twenty years his junior, he had his own wedding ring made from that gold. The other Irish grandfather was the only one of four brothers who volunteered for the

Union Army who managed to survive the Civil War. All three older brothers were killed in action; only he, the youngest, was spared, after leaving a leg on the battlefield.

Dick Dillon grew up in the shadow of his father, my grandfather, William Tarleton Dervin, a legendary figure of nearly Old Testament stature. Dervin was a soldier's soldier, who spoke four languages, and was both married and buried at the San Francisco Presidio. W. T. Dervin was seven years old when Custer bit the big one at the Little Bighorn, and lived to see Hitler march into the Sudetenland. My father's father fought in Cuba and Puerto Rico during the Spanish American War, then went to the Philippines to serve on Luzon during the Aguinaldo insurrection. He then went on to China with the Manila garrison during the Boxer Rebellion. Mustered out of the US Army, Dick Dillon's dad then moved on to South Africa, where he fought as an Irish-American volunteer with the Boers against the British. Long before the 1916 Easter Rebellion in Dublin, my grandfather W. T. Dervin was happily shooting at Englishmen on the dark continent. Somewhere along the line, probably in South Africa, he changed his name to Dillon; otherwise we would be honoring Richard Hugh *Dervin* tonight.

Returning to San Francisco around 1903 after the Boer defeat, William T. Dillon re-upped in the US Army, and was given credit for time previously served under a different name by his own old regimental sergeant, himself an Irish deserter from the British Army. This luminary, obviously my grandfather's mentor, had gone over to the Mahdi's side during the first Sudanese War, and was probably on his own second or third false last name. With such support from the Irish non-commissioned US Army Mafia, Sergeant Dillon shortly became a pillar of the San Francisco Presidio's military establishment. He led a detachment during the '06 earthquake and fire, heading up a dynamite section, and then was posted to Fort Baker on the Marin side, where he met and married Alice Mabel Burke, my grandmother, a local Sausalito Belle.

My father's father became regimental sergeant and served with a horse artillery detachment on the Mexican border during the early revolutionary years. Then he was promoted from the ranks and sent on to France in an advance party of the British Expeditionary Force in 1917. He covered himself in glory, and was awarded numerous medals by every allied nation (Belgium and Russia included) except for England, which was not then in the habit of giving Irishmen anything *atall*, *atall*. In going through his medals, for example, upon translating the citation for the *Croix de Guerre* he was awarded by the French government, we find that he alone manned the guns and managed to shoot down a German airplane that was bombing a French munitions dump he was simply visiting after all of the French



Sutro Librarian Dillon drawing a sword in his office. Note the Phi Beta Kappa key on his necktie.

troops ran away. And from this we also see that not much has changed in the French Army since 1918 either. My father's father was then gassed by the Germans, rose to the temporary rank of colonel, and retired with the permanent rank of captain, quite possibly the only US Army Mustang who had fought on no fewer than four continents under two different names over the space of only twenty years.

Captain Dillon returned to Sausalito, where he lived out his remaining years as the local war hero, and became the secretary of the Sausalito Historical Society. So, perhaps here we see the first glimmer of the historical "bug" that bit the Dillon family so hard, the history affliction reaching endemic proportions only one generation later. During the late 1920s and early '30s Captain Dillon fought against the Golden Gate Bridge, saying that if built, it would be the ruination of Northern California: boy was he right. Dick Dillon's oldest brother Bill went into the FBI after graduating at the top of his Berkeley Boalt Hall Class; his next oldest brother Jack was drafted into the Army as a private but wanting to outdo his old man, managed to rise to the permanent rank of full bird colonel in just six years; and his next oldest brother Gene went into the Navy after a stint at Berkeley—but, my dad's ambitions were literary, not military.

Dick Dillon was a precocious writer from early childhood. His first literary effort was at age eleven—it was a dog story that won

a prize from a San Francisco newspaper. The remuneration was a knockoff of the popular Jack London canine novels. By the time he got to Tamalpais High School, my father was writing a column for the school newspaper called "Rumah Hassit" and was known by the teenage nickname of "Duke Lopez" the latter *apellido* in honor of his Black Irish good looks and his interest both in the Spanish language and in the Mexican movie starlets of the time. Dad entered Berkeley at age seventeen in the fall of 1941, the third of the four Dillon boys to do so, and, of course, all three of them attending Berkeley long before the Communist takeover.

Richard H. Dillon got drafted right out of Berkeley at age nineteen, and became immediately known as "the Perfessor" by the illiterate hillbillies who made up the bulk of his fellow sufferers in olive drab. Unlike his war hero father and older brother Jack, Dick Dillon was an inept soldier, and passed from assignment to assignment, each time descending the ladder of military prestige, until he came to refer to himself as "Hitler's Secret Weapon." The Army, in fact, had to create a wholly new official Military Occupation Specialty for him: that of "C.F.," or, "Cannon Fodder."

Sent into combat in France in 1944, my dad managed to get himself hit by a German mortar shell not too many miles from where his own father had been gassed by the Germans during the previous war. So, I am going to be the first Dillon in three

generations that won't be caught dead anywhere near France for fear that some German will take a potshot at me. But Dick Dillon managed to keep both his legs, unlike his own wounded-in-the-Civil War grandfather almost exactly eighty years to the day earlier. Patched up and returned to action, Dad then fought his way across France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. He fought for truth, justice, the American way, but especially, he fought for *souvenirs*.

Richard H. Dillon looted his way across Germany, sending home scads of documents, maps, inflation money, postcards and other printed materials, the kinds of things that most other G.I.s ignored. We have a dated postcard from every single day he spent in WWII, some with *Der Fuhrer's Face* on the front, others showing a wide range of photographic topics. So, UCLA is going to have to find another few shelf-feet to accommodate his wartime postcard correspondence. Dad traded his booze and cigarette rations to his fellow troopers in exchange for the documents they could scrounge for him, becoming famous as just about the only soldier in the US Army that would rather read than drink.

At one point Dick Dillon was called onto the mat of his C.O.'s office, where a diminutive German Civilian was nervously twisting his hat in his hands and my father's C.O. demanded:

*"Dillon, do you have this man's undertaker's license?"*

Dad was the only logical suspect within the entire US Army of occupation.

Richard H. Dillon came limping back from the war with a Purple Heart and the dizzying rank of private first class: His widowed mother gave him only one night of rest in Sausalito, then sent him back across the Bay to register for the new semester at Berkeley, which was due to begin on Monday, after just one weekend at home. My dad met my mom, also a librarian, but not an historian, at Berkeley, and they were married in 1950.

Of course, wanting to be just like Dad in every way, when the time came, I managed to meet my own wife at Berkeley too. But, truth being stranger than fiction, I had met my wife-to-be one time earlier, in the children's reading room of the Honolulu Public Library when the family spent a summer in Hawaii while Dad was teaching at the University of Hawaii. The crabby, eight-year-old Hakka Chinese girl with a bad Chawan haircut who "shushed" me in 1962 is now a reference librarian at the Los Angeles Public Library and has just celebrated her first thirty years of life within the Dillon clan: our two teenage children both want to become historians. So, look what you started, Dad.

But I digress. My father, and his wife of some fifty-five years, Barbara Allester Sutherland, settled in Mill Valley shortly before I was born, and long before Marin County officially changed its



Left: A contemplative Sutro Librarian holds a large folio accompanied by the marble bust of that great book collector, Adolph Sutro.

Below: Antiquarian bookseller Robert Hawley, poet and writer Volker Eisele, and Richard Dillon enjoying the vineyards of Northern California.







Seated in front of the Sutro Library safe, Dillon holds one of the Library's great treasures, the First Folio Shakespeare.

name to *Hot tubistan*. I was named after Alvaro Obregon, that other Irish president of Mexico, because dad was finishing up his MA thesis on him at the time of my birth. Growing up as the son of a famous historian gave me a somewhat different childhood than that of my fellows. While other kids' dads played ball with their five-year-old sons, my dad played Pancho Villa versus Pershing with me, dressing me up in serape and burnt-cork moustache, teaching me to wriggle through the tall grass as I snuck up on the unsuspecting Yanquis, and correcting my pronunciation when I yelled out "*¡Maten Los Gringos!*" like a good Villista should.

**M**y dad created a means of communication all his own: the *Lingua Franca* spoken in the Dillon house was a weird mix of English, Spanish, Irish sayings, and even Hawaiian. Any non-relative, or even female relative, who ever survived a Christmas or Thanksgiving dinner with the Dillons would liken the event to being captured and then released by a deafening herd of incomprehensible, bellowing, bull buffalos. This may be why my own wife and daughter are not present here tonight: both said they had to work, but per-



In the Renaissance Room when the Sutro Library was at the University of San Francisco, Dillon inspects an antiphonal. Note the bust of Adolph Sutro in the foreground and the ancient Hebrew scrolls on the shelves.

haps in reality they didn't want to risk the potential permanent hearing loss and possible mental diminution resulting from sitting at a table predominantly populated by male Dillons.

My own childhood in the '50s and '60s was an endless procession of field trips to libraries, historical societies, high mountain passes, or crumbling adobe forts in the desert, tagging along behind my Dad all over our beloved California and other western states. All three of us Dillon boys, the "new" Dillon gang, have fond memories of barfing away in the back of the family station wagon, or being forced to run behind the car on backwoods two-lane blacktops when the internecine intravehicular strife became more than mom and dad could bear. This disciplinary measure worked only until we kids simply began to take off cross-country, leaving the old folks stranded in the car while we played with sheep skulls in old barns, and so forth and so on.

Some of my father's most productive years as a writer during the middle and late '60s were spent battling a crippling handicap—no, not his old war wounds—but his own three wild Irish sons. Dad had vast reserves of patience and forbearance, putting up with three out-of-control, long-haired, redneck hippies under his own roof. And of course, you have to be from North-



Dillon plowing through files in his office when the Sutro Library was located at the San Francisco Public Library in the Civic Center.

ern California to truly understand this seeming contradiction. I am sorry to say, that all of us took Dad for granted, as if he were simply an ordinary mortal. I was by far the worst.

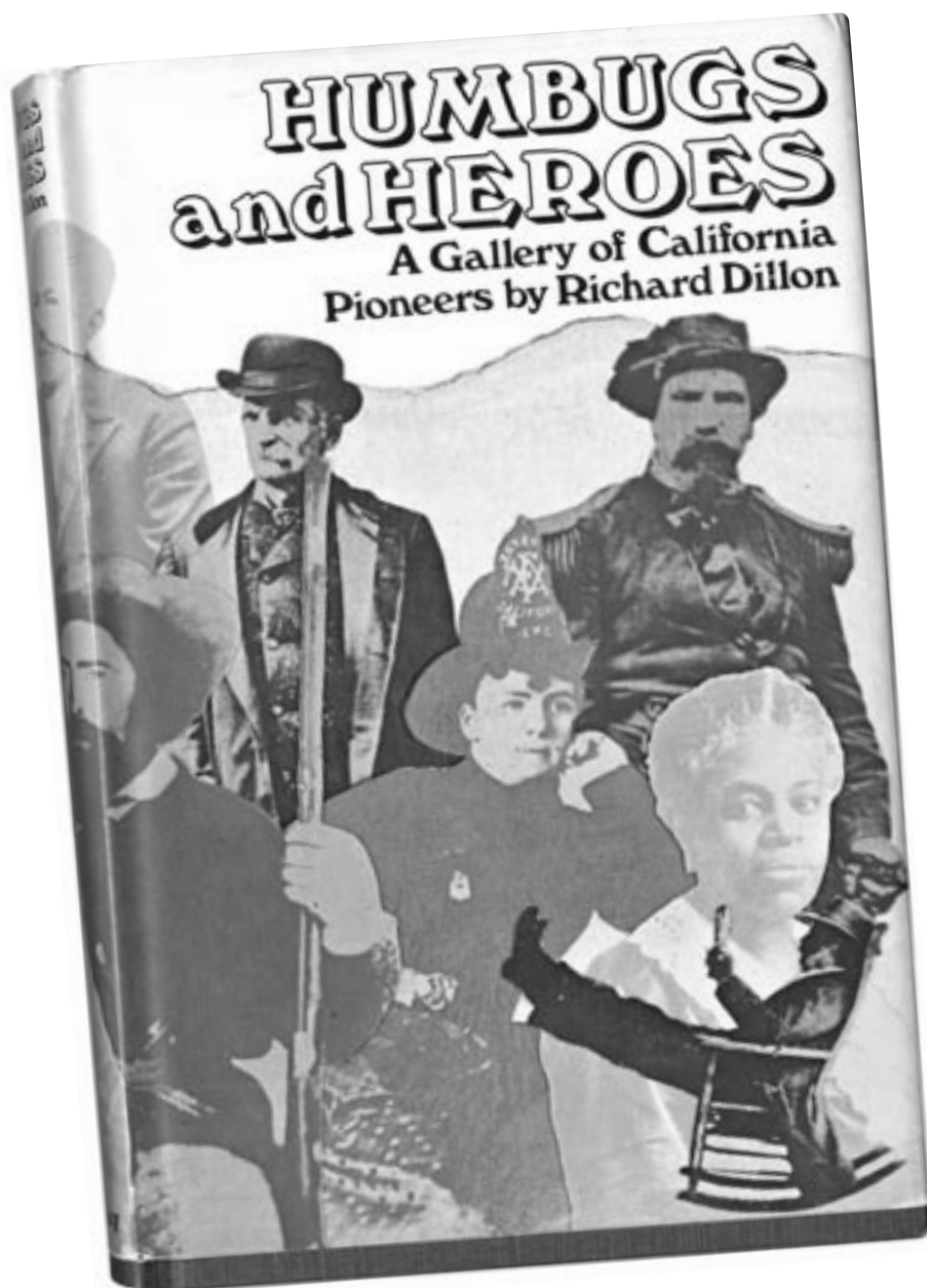
I'm an archaeologist, not an historian, and I make no apologies to any students of the more recent past, but compared to historians, archaeologists give the impression that they were raised by a pack of wild dogs. I am certainly no less guilty of this than any other prehistorian, but please don't blame my parents: my rough edges are my own creation, not theirs. I would like to apologize to my father and to my long-suffering mom now for all of the trouble I caused them as a child and especially as a teenager. You cannot put pen to paper when you are cruising the Haight-Ashbury in 1967, looking for your recalcitrant eldest son. So, I would also like to apologize to all of my father's fans here tonight for cutting into his literary productivity and possibly even diminishing the number of pages actually published by periodically diverting him into parental disciplinary mode when he would have much rather been writing.

I never really comprehended how prolific, how versatile, and how broadly published my dad was until, around twenty years ago, I was making one of my regular trips down to Central Amer-

ica so as to do archaeology. After seventy-two non-stop hours on the road, we pulled my pickup truck over in Guatemala City at the only twenty-four hour Pancake House known to be open at 1 a.m. For that matter, the only restaurant of any kind in all of Central America open at 1 a.m. While waiting to be seated, my two UCLA students and I rifled through the pile of tattered, coverless, and spine-broken paperback books and magazines in Spanish, English, German, French, and Japanese that were lying on the waiting bench. The first publication of any kind in English I found just happened to be a monthly magazine on the "Old West," and, you guessed it, the lead article just happened to be on the Modoc War, written by yep, you guessed it, dear old dad: I of course jumped up, and yelled out to the few startled nocturnal diners—"¡Atención! ¡Mucha Atención! ¡Otro Éxito de mi Viejo Padre, El Grán Sabio!" Then I ran out onto the darkened streets of Guatemala City, waving the tattered publication triumphantly.

My father's greatest virtue amongst the many that he is master of: drive, dedication, persistence, imagination, and so forth and so on, would have to be that sixth sense that so few people over history have ever had and so few have even understood—that would of course, be his sense of humor. The patented Dick Dil-

*My father is by far,  
the smartest and the  
best-read man I ever met.  
He so far overshadows  
every other intellectual,  
academic, and scholarly  
influence in my life.*



In constant use by libraries throughout the state, *Humbugs and Heroes* is an example of the prodigious scholarship in Dillon's work.

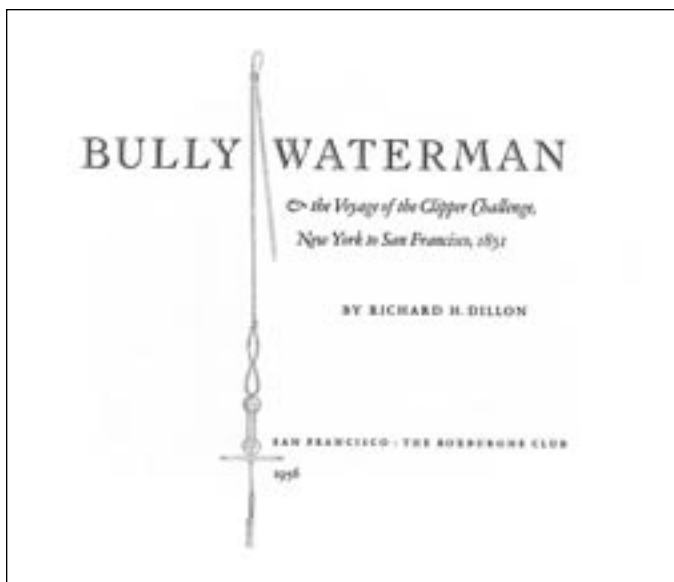
lon horselaugh, once heard, is never forgotten, and his unique and wonderful sense of humor, I believe, is as much a gift to all of us as any of his books have been.

Alistair Cooke used to say that: "*Some Drink Deep from the Fountain of Knowledge—but most only Gargle.*" And, unfortunately, most of us, in fact, are surrounded by such garglers.

But, Richard H. Dillon is a very deep drinker indeed, if you can forgive my mangled metaphor. My father is by far, the smartest and the best-read man I ever met. He so far overshadows every other intellectual, academic, and scholarly influence in my life,

that he routinely makes me feel like a kindergartner by comparison. I am so immensely proud of my father, and know that I don't make a pimple on my old man's posterior. I am proud to say that everything I am, I owe to him.

In closing, I would like to thank Jim Holliday and Russ Pearce for their extreme generosity and kindness in organizing this event. I would also like to thank all of the institutions represented, and each and every one of you that came here tonight so as to honor the most admirable man I have ever known—my own father, Richard H. Dillon. ❀



Above: *Bully Waterman*, published in 1956, was the first of many books by librarian and historian Richard H. Dillon.

Below: Demonstrating the value and popularity of his writing, the cover of *The Bay Area Bookman* shown here was in its third edition when published in 1961.



## MAJOR WORKS BY RICHARD H. DILLON

(In Chronological Order)

*Bully Waterman & the Voyage of the Clipper Challenge, New York to San Francisco, 1851.* San Francisco: The Roxburghe Club, 1956.

*The Anatomy of a Library.* [Sacramento: California State Library, 1957?]

*Embarcadero.* New York, Coward-McCann [1959].

*Shanghaiing Days.* New York : Coward-McCann, 1961.

*The Hatchet Men: the Story of the Tong Wars in San Francisco's Chinatown.* New York: Coward-McCann, 1962.

*J. Ross Browne, Confidential Agent in Old California.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press [1965].

*Meriwether Lewis; a Biography.* New York: Coward-McCann, 1965.

*The Legend of Grizzly Adams: California's Greatest Mountain Man.* New York: Coward-McCann, 1966.

*Fool's Gold: the Decline and Fall of Captain John Sutter of California.* New York: Coward-McCann, 1967.

*Wells, Fargo Detective: the Biography of James B. Hume.* New York: Coward-McCann, 1969.

*Humbugs and Heroes: a Gallery of California Pioneers.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday 1970.

*Burnt-out Fires: California's Modoc Indian War.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973.

*Exploring the Mother Lode Country.* Pasadena: Ward Ritchie Press, ca. 1974.

*Siskiyou Trail: the Hudson's Bay Company Route to California.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975.

*Images of Chinatown: Louis J. Stellman's Chinatown Photographs.* San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1976.

*We Have Met the Enemy: Oliver Hazard Perry, Wilderness Commodore.* New York: McGraw-Hill, ca. 1978.

*High Steel: Building the Bridges across San Francisco Bay.* Millbrae, Calif.: Celestial Arts, ca. 1979.

*Great Expectations: the Story of Benicia.* [Benicia, Calif.]: Benicia Heritage Book, Inc., ca 1980.

*Delta Country.* Novato, CA: Presidio Press, ca. 1982.

*North American Indian Wars.* New York, NY: Facts on File, Inc., ca. 1983.

*San Francisco: Adventurers and Visionaries.* Tulsa, Okla.: Continental Heritage Press, ca. 1983.

*Iron Men: California's Industrial Pioneers, Peter, James and Michael Donahue.* Point Richmond, Calif.: Candela Press, ca. 1984.

*North Beach: the Italian Heart of San Francisco.* Novato, CA: Presidio Press, ca. 1985.

*Texas Argonauts: Isaac H. Duval and the California Gold Rush.* San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1987.

*Napa Valley Heyday.* San Francisco: Book Club of California, 2004.



# California State Library Receives Major Donation of Fine Printing Ephemera

By Robert Dickover



*Robert Dickover is a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, frequent contributor to the Bulletin, and an expert on fine printing in California.*

Last year John Borden, a San Francisco resident well known in the world of rare books, donated his collection of ephemera, consisting of more than 1,000 items, to the California State Library. The word ephemera is derived from a Greek word meaning "lasting a day." In actuality the quality of printing of some ephemera or their value as historical references is of such a degree as to insure their being of permanent importance. Every major collection of printed matter includes some ephemera; in fine printing collections the term ephemera is applied to small items ranging from single sheets to small pamphlets. The larger pieces of ephemera are primarily bound in soft covers, but occasionally an item of ephemera appears in hard covers.

All of the major California fine printers are represented in Borden's donation of ephemera. There are 33 items from the Allen Press. All of these were printed on the hand press, of which the Allens were among the great masters. There are several items from San Francisco's celebrated Grabhorn Press. Andrew Hoyem, one of the world's outstanding contemporary

fine printers, is represented in the collection in all phases of his career from its beginnings in the Auerhahn Press, through his partnership with Robert Grabhorn (Grabhorn-Hoyem), and into his career since 1975 with his Arion Press.

Borden's donation includes at least five items from more than 30 printers, most of them regarded as distinguished professional practitioners of the black art. There are also examples of the diligent efforts of inspired amateur printers, who are recognized for many other contributions to the bibliophilic enterprise. The Hart Press of James D. Hart, longtime Professor of English and Director of the Bancroft Library at UC, Berkeley, has a number of well-executed items in the collection as do the Press of the Golden Key of retired electronics company executive Donald Fleming and the Nova Press of accountant and eminent bibliographer William Barlow, Jr.

Borden considers the core of his donation to be the keepsakes given at the annual joint meetings of the Zamorano and Roxburghe Clubs from 1955 into the 1990's. The Roxburghe Club is an organization of bibliophiles of all stripes, founded in San

*This is a true, full and unvarnished account  
of what future generations of philatelists will  
undoubtedly refer to (in hushed tones) as the*

## TRAGEDY OF COLOMA



## The Zamorano Club OF LOS ANGELES & The Roxburghe Club OF SAN FRANCISCO 11th Joint Meeting

Trafalgar Room  
Trader Vic's  
September 9, 1972

The illustrations in this article are examples of the skillful work of John Borden's In-Time Press.

San Francisco in 1928, with a largely Northern California membership. The Zamorano Club, founded in 1927, is its Los Angeles and Southern California counterpart. These keepsakes are presented to the participants in the meetings of the clubs by other members, and they have generally been printed for the presenters by distinguished California printers.

Another major constituent of the Borden donation is the work of John Borden himself. His father, Dr. Fred Borden, was a man of many significant skills including printing. In his adulthood, Dr. Borden's interest turned to medicine, and he received his Doctor of Medicine degree from the Stanford University School of Medicine. By that time he had long been established in San Jose, and he pursued his practice of medicine there. He produced all of the printing associated with his practice of medicine and in the process trained his sons, John and Henry, as printers. Appropriately enough, the oldest item in the donated collection is a note head dated 1936, from the Borden Craft Shop of the Borden brothers, which identified them as "publishers of the Borden News Weekly" and stated that the first appearance of the

weekly was to be on September 20, 1936.

John Borden was in the armed forces in World War II. After graduating after the war from Kenyon College in Ohio and obtaining his M.B.A. from Columbia University, he became a stockbroker in New York City and later in San Francisco. There is an old adage that a printer never gets the ink out from under his fingernails. As a personification of the fascination with printing the adage indicates, Borden has had a printing press in his apartment until the last several years. His donation includes copies of a large number of invitations, Christmas cards, and other items he printed for himself or his friends on his table top press.

John Borden has made many contributions to the book world in a number of capacities. Among other things he has been a mainstay of the Book Club of California as a member of its board and as its treasurer. He indicated that he would prefer that his donation of his collection to the Library go unannounced. However, the breadth and quality of his gift is such that we must call attention to his generosity. It is a gem that will long be of value to students and collectors of fine printing.

# Foundation Notes

## Aimee Sgourakis Named Head of the California State Library's Braille and Talking Book Library.

By Sandra Swafford

Aimee Sgourakis was recently named Head of the California State Library's Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL). Her work in libraries began during her high school years when she served as a page at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh. After earning a Master's Degree in Library Science, she accepted a job at that same institution in their Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. She moved to Sacramento in 2000 and has been working at BTBL since then, most recently as Senior Librarian.

Ms. Sgourakis came to this new job at a critical time for BTBL because she was immediately involved in the switch to a new computer system for managing patron services as well as overseeing staff training for the new system. The changeover from the old system to the new one was made from October 26 to November 1, with only a short interruption of services. During the first week after the start-up, 18,000 books were circulated and despite occasional glitches, the new system is working well.

Her next task will be to fill two vacant positions in her staff. Then perhaps she will have time to address other plans she has for the program. "We can't just stay the same," she says. "We need to look at new ways of providing and improving our services."

Ms. Sgourakis would like to institute digital recording for the California book collection, which would vastly improve the



quality of the recordings. This change will involve new recording equipment and the training of Recording Program volunteers in how to use it. And since patrons are becoming more technologically sophisticated and like or expect to have a variety of options available to them, Sgourakis wants to investigate downloading recorded books in cooperation with other libraries. She would like to have on her staff a librarian knowledgeable about and capable of helping patrons operate equipment such as the Braille printer or the reading machines, which are available for their use in the Reading Room. Also, visually or physically handicapped people sometimes

don't find out about the services available to them, and she sees outreach as an ongoing and very important goal.

Ms. Sgourakis emphasized how important it has been to her to have such a "wonderful, patient and supportive staff" at BTBL. All of them have worked admirably together as she adjusts to her new role.



*Sandra Swafford is a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors and active volunteer in the Braille and Talking Book Library.*

## A Southern California Album

### New Windgate Press Book Available Through Foundation

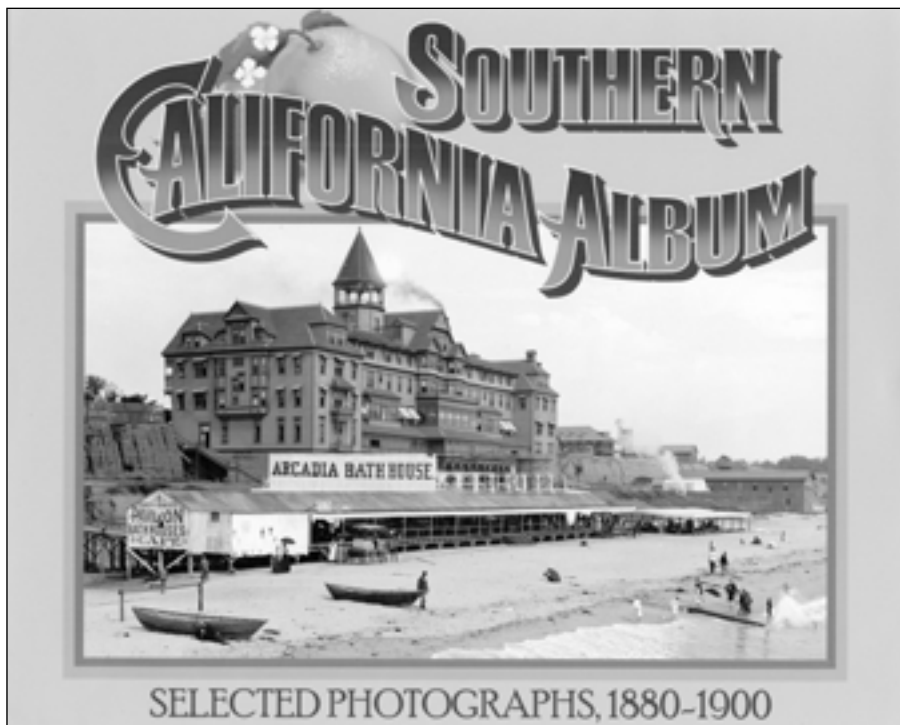
The Windgate Press of Sausalito, in collaboration with the California State Library, has published another spectacular pictorial, *A Southern California Album: Selected Photographs, 1880-1900*. Written and beautifully designed by Linda and Wayne Bonnett, the oblong volume features photographs from the Library's collection of historic photographs found in the California History Room. Many of the photographs published in the volume are from the William H. Fletcher Collection that was acquired on behalf of the Library by Mead B. Kibbey, a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors. Gary F. Kurutz, the Foundation's Executive Director and Curator of Special Collections, supplied a lengthy foreword profiling the Fletcher Collection. The publisher has provided the Foundation with fifty copies. Sales will directly benefit the Library's program to acquire, preserve, and make accessible its outstanding collection of photographs.

The following is from the dust jacket text:

Imagine Los Angeles with a population of only 11,000, no paved streets and no cars. Imagine that the entire population of Southern California from Santa Barbara to San Diego, would fill only half the seats of Dodger Stadium. Drawing on the documentary photographs of William H. Fletcher and others, *A Southern California Album* presents a revealing portrait of Los Angeles and Southern California, the look and feel of a region on the cusp of change. Over two hundred rare photographs from 1880 to 1900, many previously unpublished, record the early entrepreneurs and their dreams of grand parks, lavish resorts, and the beginnings of new towns and transportation systems. The photographs presented here recorded the

last vestiges of an earlier culture and captured a vast agricultural paradise, sparsely populated Southern California on its way to becoming an urban empire.

*A Southern California Album* sells for \$45 plus applicable sales tax and shipping. Copies may be purchased by contacting the Foundation at (916) 447-6331 or [cslf3@juno.com](mailto:cslf3@juno.com). For other titles available through the Foundation visit our website at [www.csldfn.org](http://www.csldfn.org).



## Jerry Kilbride – A Remembrance

By Jenny Hoye

Jerry Kilbride did not like to sit still. There was too much of life to see and experience. People to meet, places to go. Jerry lived his life in a way all of us, I think, wish that we could. That is, to the fullest, fully engaged, and meeting each moment with a sense of wonder and joyful anticipation. It was only after a more than ten-year battle with cancer that Jerry became still on November 3, 2005.

As a celebrated and award winning haiku poet, Jerry was deeply proud of having been one of the founders of the American Haiku Archives and bringing it to the California State Library. Jerry himself worked at the Library for five years until his health necessitated his move back to San Francisco where he had lived for most of the last 25 years.

I feel privileged to have been Jerry's friend for the last five years of his life. I will always remember and cherish the memories of his reading to me from his many writings. Jerry was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

A eulogy written by Dr. Kevin Starr, State Librarian Emeritus and himself a co-founder of the American Haiku Archives, will be printed in the next issue of the Bulletin.



*Jenny Hoye is a staff member in the Library's California History Section. She befriended Mr. Kilbride while he worked in the section, and visited him many times in San Francisco before his passing.*

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