

California State Library Foundation

# Bulletin

Number 81

2005





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**Front Cover:** A glorious golden poppy. Hand-colored lithograph by Violet Nakashima.

**Back Cover:** An advertising calendar issued for 1905 using the golden poppy.

**Illustrations/Photos:** Page 3, Reed Kaestner and Molly Miles; pages 4-5, California State Library (CSL); page 6, Molly Miles; page 7, CSL; pages 8-12, CSL; pages 13-15, Dr. Carole Talan; pages 17-21, CSL; page 23, Windgate Press; and page 24, Vickie J. Lockhart. Scans by M. Anthony Martinez.

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**California State Library Foundation**  
1225 8th Street, Suite 345, Sacramento, CA 95814  
tel: 916.447.6331  
web: [www.csldn.org](http://www.csldn.org)  
email: [cslf3@juno.com](mailto:cslf3@juno.com)

# A Life Uncovered: The Kezia Darwin Benton Curtis Quilt

By Molly Miles

EDITOR'S NOTE. Author Molly Miles originally wrote a version of this article for Volume 20 of *Uncoverings* published in 1999 by the American Quilt Study Group. In August 2004, she came to the California History Section of the Library to research its Bradner and Kezia Curtis manuscript collection. Upon her visit, she kindly presented the Library with two copies of *Uncoverings* with her article about the quilt. Seeing the relationship between the quilt and collection, I asked her to contribute an article to the *Bulletin* on the fascinating story of this pioneer family.



 In 1991, while visiting the Monterey Bay area, I noticed a quilt draped over a table in an antique shop. What caught my eye was not needlework but penmanship. A white rectangle with inked handwriting was in the center of each pieced block. The inscriptions looked as if the same hand had written on each rectangle. I read people's names, towns and dates. The top left block read "Commenced 1849 by Kezia D. Benton."\* This quilt was signed by its maker! I purchased the quilt because I was sure it had a story to tell. (page 3/quilt photo)

The subsequent years of research lead me to conclude this signature quilt is not a practical household item. Instead, it is a document. Kezia Darwin Benton Curtis compiled on fifty-six squares a memoir of her youth, her courageous ocean voyage, and her new life as a California pioneer. (page 3/quilt diagram)

*Molly Miles lives in Lake Oswego, Oregon where she is active in quilt organizations. She received a BFA in textiles from the California College of Arts and Crafts and has pursued a career in textiles as an artist and quiltmaker. She has exhibited her quilts in galleries in California and Pennsylvania.*

## A GIRLHOOD IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

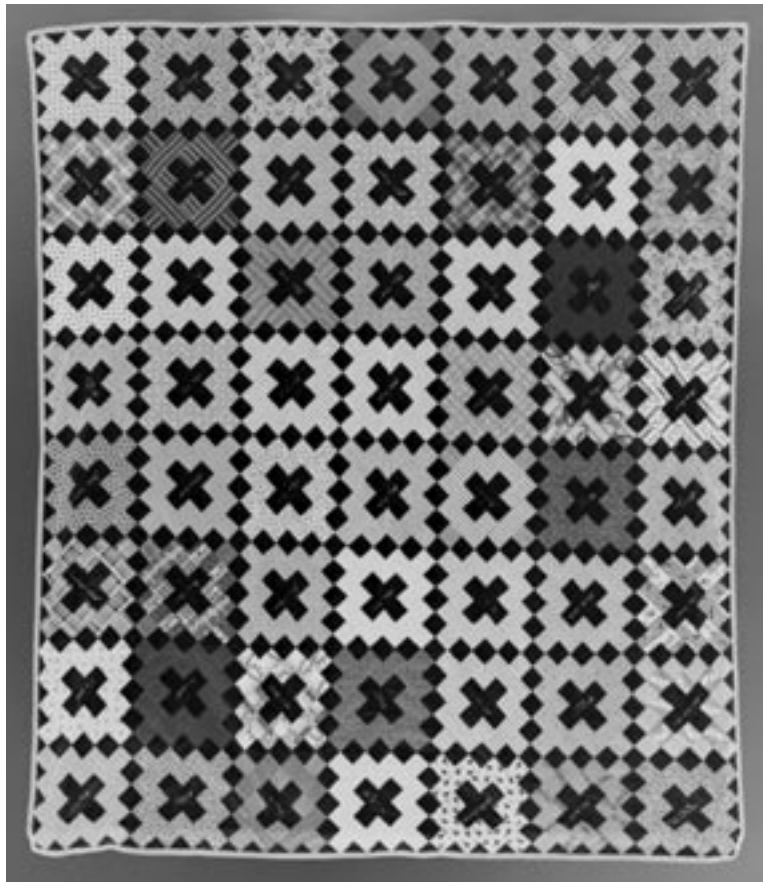
Kezia's story begins in the rolling uplands of the Mohawk River valley. Inscribed on the quilt is the town Canajoharie that lies along the south bank of the Mohawk. Here Kezia was born December 20, 1822. She was the second child and second daughter born to Hylan and Cynthia Benton. (see page 6/genealogy diagram)

On her quilt Kezia placed her own father and mother in the two center blocks. Her father, Hylan Benton (1799–1882), is identified as "Father Benton." He became established as a farmer raising livestock and grain. Kezia's mother, Cynthia Hodge Benton (1795–1849), is identified on the quilt as "Mother Benton." In 1820, Cynthia Hodge married Hylan Benton in Canajoharie and together they raised a family of seven children.

Kezia created blocks for each of her siblings. "Myra Benton" (1821–1904) is Kezia's older sister. In the early 1840s she mar-



\*Note. Quotation marks are used to denote inked inscriptions on the quilt, to distinguish them from the actual people and places discussed in this paper. Also, the correct spelling for "Canajoharrie" is Canajoharie. The correct spelling for "Holly" is Holley.



Album quilt, 73" x 83," ca. 1849 to 1876, made by Kezia Darwin Benton Curtis (1822–1924). Collection of the author. Photograph by Reed Kaestner.

Commenced 1849 by Kezia D Benton	Fred Burton	Martha Slingerland	New York City 1849	Theresa 1848	Canajoharrie 1849	Nancy Garlock
Kate Casler Burton	Shipmate Europea	Mother's Last Apron	California 1869	Aunt Phillipa	Stockton 1872	Sarah Smith
Mrs. Brewster	Lucretia Mallette	H. Curtis	Milton Benton	Byron E. Benton	Harriet Alvord	Jemima Slingerland
Shipmate Josie	Watertown 1844	Daniel Seeber	Father Benton	Myra Benton	Sabrina Curtis	Jennie Ennis
Martha Brewster	Mary Hill	Bradner Curtis	Mother Benton	H. D. Benton	Little Willis	Shipmate Annie
Ship Washington Irving Stewardess	Cortland 1848	Mary Curtis	Hylan Benton	Cynthia Benton	Jane Curtis	Dr. Sherman
Mrs. Ennis	Valparaiso April 1851	Olivia Dygart	Janette Champlin	Benton Seeber	Home Circle	Thy Friend Eliza
Remodeled at Stockton 1876	Sarah Brewster	Mrs. Sherman	Holly NY 1850	Ship Steward	Albany NY 1850	Judah Bowers

Diagram of inked inscriptions and their placement on the Curtis quilt. Illustration by the author.

ried "Daniel Seeber." Of their six children, only their first child, "Benton Seeber," born in 1842, is recorded on the quilt. Kezia's three brothers are placed around the center. "Byron E. Benton" (1825–1905), "Hylan Benton" (1828–1909) and "Milton J. Benton" (1830–1903). Mary, sixth child born to Hylan and Cynthia Benton, is absent on Kezia's quilt, probably because she died in infancy around 1836. Kezia's youngest sibling is "Cynthia Benton" (1837–1917).

Kezia attended Canajoharie Academy during her early school years. The block "Cortland 1848" suggests Kezia may have continued her studies at Cortland Academy in Homer, Cortland County, New York to become a teacher. Perhaps her education was cut short when she was called home to care for her family.

A year of changes was ahead for Kezia as the block "Canajoharie 1849" suggests. Her mother had become ill and Kezia was the only available daughter to care for her. By including in her quilt a block made with fabric from her "Mother's Last Apron," Kezia would always have with her the bittersweet memories of her mother's final days. Cynthia Hodge Benton died of an undetermined illness on August 3, 1849.

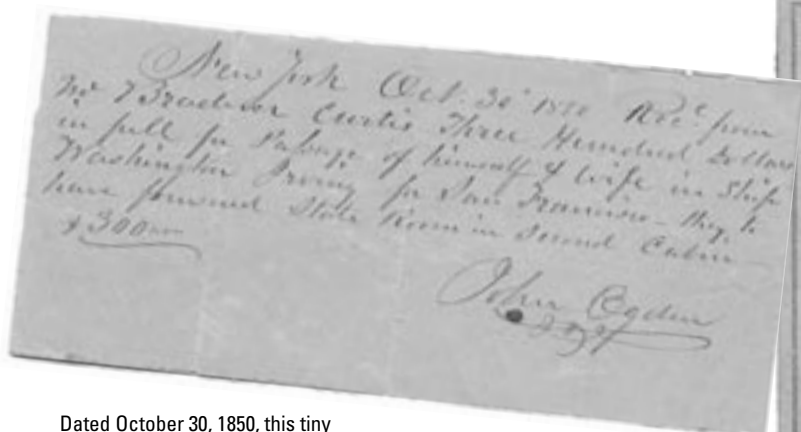
According to custom, after her mother's death, Kezia was free to marry. "Commenced 1849 by Kezia D. Benton" would indi-

cate preparations for her marriage to Bradner Curtis on September 23, 1849. One source states that the two met while at the Cortland Academy. It is more likely they first knew of each other as cousins. Kezia's father, Hylan Benton, and Bradner's mother, Clarissa Benton Curtis, were brother and sister. Kezia's pending marriage would be an occasion to make a quilt and an opportunity to record the members of her family and those of her betrothed's.

Bradner Curtis was born January 9, 1825 in Williamson, Wayne County, New York. He was the second of nine children born to Alpheus and Clarissa Curtis. On the quilt Kezia remembers some of Bradner's family members: aunt "Mary Curtis," uncle "H [Hiram] Curtis," and sisters "Jane Curtis" and "Sabrina Curtis." Sabrina later married Kezia's brother Byron E. Benton in 1854.

Kezia placed names of friends and neighbors throughout her quilt. Remembered in the blocks "Dr. Sherman" and "Mrs. Sherman" are Jonathan and Catherine Sherman, neighbors who lived two houses away from Kezia's parents in 1850. As a physician living so close to the Benton's, Dr. Sherman may have attended Cynthia Benton in her final illness and brought comfort to her family.

The block "Home Circle" indicates the importance of friend-



Dated October 30, 1850, this tiny slip of paper is the receipt of payment for ship's passage from New York to San Francisco for Bradner and Kezia Curtis.



Elegantly presented, this pin preserves a miniature portrait of Bradner Curtis.



Carte de visite photograph of the quiltmaker and her husband.

ship for Kezia. The term refers to a popular phrase used in hymns, poems, and stories during the mid-nineteenth century. It conveys the religious idea of an unbroken circle; even though some family members may move away, the family remains united through faith. Home Circle also refers to a group of friends who meet to do religious or charitable work, such as packing boxes for missionaries, raising funds for a town's library, or making clothes for the poor. Fourteen blocks have individual names of women, perhaps indicating that Kezia commemorated their work together in Home Circle or longed to rejoin the Home Circle with her friends. The surnames of these women include Dygert, Mallette, Seeber, and Slingerland, names that have long been established in the Canajoharie area and are still found there today.

Some place and date inscriptions seem to record visits to relatives. The blocks "Theresa 1848" and "Watertown 1844" illustrate the earliest of these journeys. Both towns are in Jefferson County, New York, where her older sister Myra Benton Seeber lived. The block "Albany N Y 1850" may record a visit to her father's relatives who lived in that area.

"Holly N Y 1850" signifies the first home for the recently married couple. Here Bradner was employed by his uncle as a plow-maker before sailing to California.

#### THE SEA VOYAGE TO CALIFORNIA

"TAKE NOTICE. Ho! FOR California!" reads a January 16, 1849, broadside sign from Canajoharie, New York. Even before Bradner married Kezia, interest in "forming a company to pro-



Tuesday March 4<sup>th</sup> Lat 54° 00"  
 About five this morning we came in sight of land on the West of Cape Horn, it was a small rocky island; still land looks good in almost any position. So is pleasant they are shaking out the sails and we are in hopes of doing better to day. The land we saw this morning was the small island of Diego Ramirez west of the Horn.

Wednesday March 5<sup>th</sup> Lat  
 Nothing of importance has happened today except the Captain had a fray with one of the sailors high words and even blows, but all is quiet now.

Thursday March 6<sup>th</sup>  
 To day we have all one quart of water a piece out of which we have to find for our tea and coffee and to cook our victuals. Had to lay off last night on account of squalls.

Friday March 7<sup>th</sup>  
 The sea is very rough to day, the weather rough and rather foggy. They just spread a sail to the wind and to sea. Have tilted it to pieces so much for Cape Horn which is not distant.

Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> Lat  
 We passed the ship about noon this day homeward bound, cold but pleasant wind heavy.

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> and Monday 10<sup>th</sup> nothing important happened, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> land again in sight we were in hopes to weather it, but could not had to tack and make more southerly west.

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> pleasant all day at evening the wind rises heavy in the night it blows a gale carrying away two or three sails, one of the water casks broke loose and broke down the steps that led to the quarter deck.

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> Lat  
 The Carpenter Second Mate and five or six of the sailors are sick, the consequence of exposure to wet and cold while rounding the Horn. The sailors being sick renders it necessary for the passengers to render a hand, they worked a good part of the day yesterday and last night they were called upon the night to help reef the sails they at the time blowing a gale. Carried away one of the fore sails.

Friday March 14<sup>th</sup> Lat  
 Rather unpleasant this morning and not much progress passengers still helping.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> Lat  
 Some of the sailors looked in the afternoon two weeks in sight giving me some direction with aid and but a short way from us. So looks pleasant to see life around.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> Lat 53° 25' Int  
 Four weeks ago to day we entered the straits of Lemaire head winds over since until to day we hoisted main royal & did Cape Horn a dieu with fair wind for Valparaiso.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> Lat 35° 30'  
 Yesterday in the afternoon the mate caught a penguin it is an aquatic bird entirely webbed with short wings like fins it acts awkward out of water. This forenoon we came close upon a whale she lay with reefed sails trying out the blubber of a whale. This is the second we have seen since we entered the Pacific Ocean.

Diary entry for April 1, 1851 mentioning Kezia and Bradner's first encounter with a penguin.

ceed to California and mining for GOLD" was circulating in the Northeast. The young couple must have decided their opportunities were better sought in the West. Kezia may have been supportive because two of her brothers had already journeyed to California.

Like most of their fellow Easterners heading to the gold fields, Kezia and Bradner chose the rigorous sea voyage around Cape Horn instead of the perilous overland route by covered wagon. On December 8, 1850, Kezia and Bradner Curtis sailed with the three-masted packet ship *Washington Irving* on a voyage that was to last 209 days.

During their voyage, Kezia and Bradner twice crossed the equator and navigated the iceberg-strewn waters around Cape Horn. Their trip is well documented in a diary the Curtises

maintained which is preserved in the California History Room of the California State Library. For the first entry, dated December 8, 1850, Bradner writes, "Leaving port Wind west NW blowing a heavy gale had a small offseeing catps & stranger Evening found us anchord at the narrows the steamer not being able to tow us out." In another early entry dated Sunday, January 19, 1851, Bradner recounts "last evening Kezia & my self were able for the second time to walk the deck together." Their diary records other details of a 19<sup>th</sup> century sea voyage: passing ships; daily weather; latitude; storms; sighting of land; islands and rocks; even a minor mutiny by some of the crew. Bradner fished frequently, and one day, not far from the coast off Rio de Janeiro, he notes he "caught a shark and the heart pulsated one hour and 25 minutes after it was taken out and cut open."

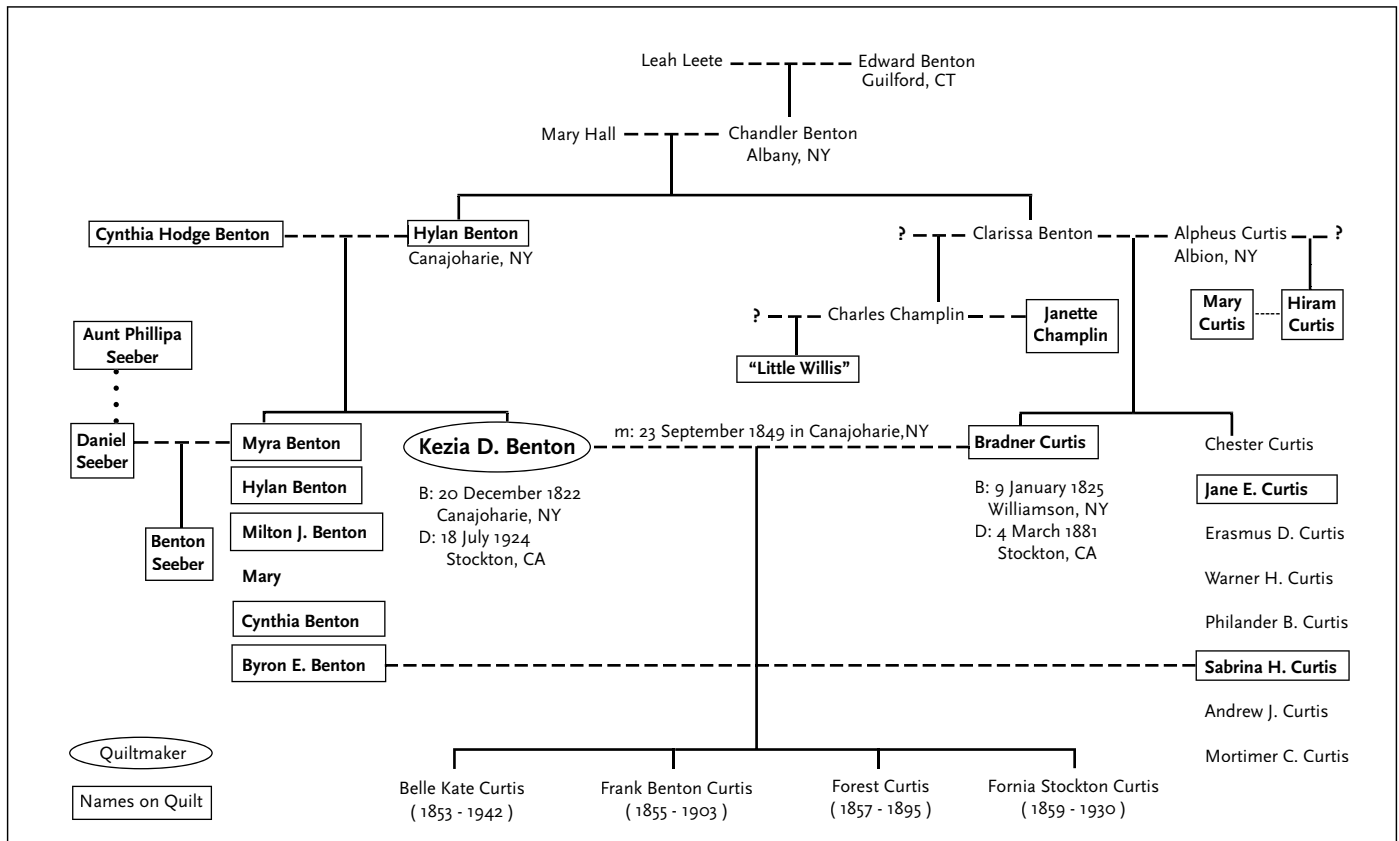


Diagram of the Benton and Curtis genealogy. Quiltmaker is indicated by an oval. Family members included on the quilt are indicated in boxes.  
Illustration by the author.

Passing through Tierra del Fuego on Saturday, February 22nd, Kezia wrote “human beings” appeared “large and wore a blanket of some sort, they seemed to dance or flap their blanket then kneel with raised hands as if in the act of worship.” Kezia continues this entry with “They hallooed after us, and their voices sounded like a person lost in woods. Some thought they were shipwrecked persons, but most of the passengers thought they were natives.”

After they rounded Cape Horn, the second mate and several of the sailors fell sick due to exposure. As a result, the captain pressed the passengers into service, and they worked a “good part of the day yeasterday and last night they were called up in the night to help reef the Sails the wind at the time blowing a gale. Carried away one of the jib sails.” Nearing Valparaiso, the Curtises were introduced to a strange new creature when “the mate caught a penguin, it is an aquatic bird entirely webbed with short wings like fins, it acts awkward out of water.” (page 5/April 1, 1851 diary entry)

It was common practice on these voyages to make a stop somewhere in South America, either on the Atlantic side in Rio de Janeiro or on the Pacific side after rounding the Horn. Stopping to make repairs and to gather provisions of fruits and vegetables

was the key to a safe and scurvy-free voyage. Kezia recorded on her quilt what must have been an exotic port of call, the month spent by the *Washington Irving* in “Valparaiso April 1851.”

Shared experiences with her fellow travelers during the long and arduous sea journey must have impressed the young voyager. Kezia acknowledges three shipmates on her quilt: “Shipmate Annie,” “Shipmate Europea,” and “Shipmate Josie.” The Louis J. Rasmussen’s *San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists* does not reveal an exact match to names on these blocks. The lengthy voyage, and perhaps the assistance she received, caused Kezia to commemorate some of the crew members in the blocks “Ship Washington Irving Stewardess” and “Ship Steward.” The diary reflects their appreciation for the help they received from one such “Ship Steward,” who is identified only by the name “Ned.” Unfortunately, the actual names of these and other crew members will remain unknown because the original records of this voyage were destroyed in a maritime building fire.

#### IN THE CALIFORNIA MINES

Kezia and Bradner arrived in San Francisco on July 1, 1851. The diary reveals they stayed at a boarding house for the next 10 days. Exploring the nearby country, the Curtises were taken

aback by what Kezia described as its “sandy and barren” terrain. The final entry in the diary, Thursday, July 10, 1851, reads “left San Francisco for Stockton in Company with B. E. Benton.” Kezia’s brother Byron escorted the new emigrants into the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas.

While Bradner pursued mining, building one of the first sluiceways on the creek at Columbia, Kezia took over the task of operating the trading camp. One documented activity was selling her baked goods. The Library’s California History Room has in its collection Kezia’s “receipt” (i.e. recipe) book, which is discussed further in M. Patricia Morris’ accompanying article.

The first of four children, Belle Kate (1854–1942), was born in Tuttletown, Tuolumne County. It is said that she was the first white child born in the Sonora mining area. Kezia and her family stayed in the Sonora area until about 1854. During this time, they earned enough money to purchase land in the San Joaquin Valley. Kezia’s quilt reflects a nearly two-decade lapse in her memoir after her arrival in California. Her busy life as a miner’s wife, a mother, and eventually a farmer’s wife surely explains why she did not return to the quilt for so many years.

#### A LIFE OF FARMING IN THE WEST

In 1854, Kezia and Bradner moved permanently to Stockton, California, where they purchased a 320-acre ranch. By 1859, Kezia and Bradner’s daughter, Belle Kate, had three brothers, all of whom were born in Stockton. Frank B. Curtis (1855–1903); Forest Curtis (1857–1895); and Fornia Stockton Curtis (1859–1930). It is reasonable to conclude that the couple named their youngest boy for their newly adopted home state and city, Fornia, being derived from Cali-FORNIA, and the middle name for Stockton, California. Kezia did not add her children to her quilt, indicating that the quilt mainly commemorates Kezia’s life in New York and her journey west.

Only two other blocks in the quilt mention her life in California. The block, “California 1869,” does not appear to be connected to any significant historical event. It may have been inspired by the completion of the transcontinental railroad that year. Or, it is possible the block indicates the family’s move from the ranch to the city of Stockton, which took place between 1860 and 1870. The block “Remodeled at Stockton 1876” represents the final chapter of this memoir of Kezia’s life. Perhaps the nation’s Centennial in 1876 inspired Kezia to bring her decades-long story to an end. By this time their children were grown, and Kezia and Bradner had become comfortable farmers. Kezia also had the time to sew the fifty-six blocks into the quilt she had planned long ago.

After her husband’s death in 1881, Kezia remained in Stockton. She lived with her daughter, Belle Kate, and next door to



Grave of Bradner and Kezia Curtis at the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Sonora, California.

her son Fornia, on Center Street. At the age of 101, Kezia died at home on July 18, 1924. Her obituary in the *Stockton Daily Independent* honored her as one of the founding pioneers of her community. Kezia is buried, with her husband Bradner, in a family crypt made from Sierra Nevada granite in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Sonora. They rest in the place where Kezia and Bradner Curtis began a long and successful life together in California. ❀



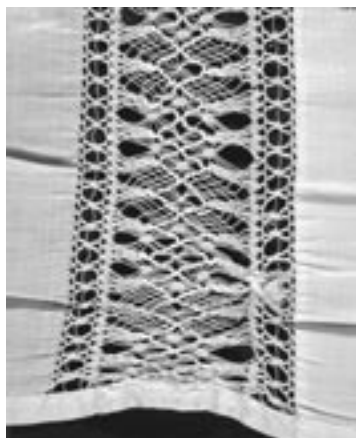
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# Worth Remembering: Kezia's Personal Recipe Collection

By M. Patricia Morris



Kezia's beautiful white apron is spotless indicating that she did not use it for her serious cooking. Shown here is a detail of her apron with its intricate lace work.



Like cooks through the ages, Kezia Benton Curtis collected recipes worth remembering. She kept a little brown booklet filled with them. On the inside cover, she wrote the title "Kezia's Receipt Book." Receipt was the way recipe was spelled in her day.<sup>1</sup> The cookbook tells us a lot about Kezia and how she lived, while at the same time, it raises many intriguing questions.

Kezia Benton Curtis and her husband Bradner were Gold Rush pioneers who sailed from New York to California around Cape Horn in 1850. Their journal of the voyage, several photographs, a ship passage receipt, two silver spoons and other items reside in the Bradner and Kezia Curtis Collection manuscript box in the State Library's California History Room. Kezia's receipt book can be found there too. According to Gary Kurutz, Curator of Special Collections, Kezia's receipt book may be the oldest in the State Library's sizeable California cookbook collection.<sup>2</sup> It may also be unique within the collection in that it is a personal, handwritten collection of recipes.

The little booklet is modest in size at  $1\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$  inches with a leather cover and industrially-lined, blue and cream-colored pages.<sup>3</sup> Across the middle of the front page is a ragged, raised, white paper strip, perhaps the remnant of a label. It has the look of wear about it that comes from age and repeated use over a long time.

When did Kezia first begin entering recipes in it? How long did she continue to add recipes? The only date in the booklet — "5 month 23<sup>rd</sup> day. 1881" — is associated with a notation about a prescription. By this time, Bradner had died, and Kezia was living in the city of Stockton. There is also a newspaper clipping for "Mrs. Lincoln's Celery Soup," pasted to the back cover, which places part of the cookbook's usage in the 1860s or later, but the newspaper article itself is undated. With these clues, we can only say with certainty that Kezia's receipt book was compiled and used in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.



*Independent historian and freelance writer M. Patricia Morris is a frequent contributor to the Bulletin.*

### Floating Island

Set a quart of milk to boil, then stir it into the beaten yolk of six eggs; flavor with lemon or rose, and sweeten to taste; whip whites of the eggs to a strong froth. When the custard is thick, put it into a deep dish, and heap the frothed eggs upon it. Serve Cold.

### Graham Cake.

1 cup sugar, <sup>1 cup milk</sup> 1/2 cup butter, 3/4 cup flour, 1 teaspoon soda, 2 of Cream tartar, nutmeg, to suit the taste.

Receipt for making No 6  
Take an ounce of African pepper, one pound of powdered myrrh, and a gallon of fourth proof brandy. Put these into a stone jug and boil it half an hour in a Kettle of water, the jug to be uncorked.

### Receipt for making Hair Dye.

Take Sugar of lead one drachm  
Sae Sulphur two drachms  
Rose water four ounces,  
Soft water will do as well.

Demonstrating her versatility, Kezia's handwritten recipe book is open to recipes for a "Floating Island," graham cake, and hair dye.

Where did Kezia get her recipes? With the exception of two recipes clipped from newspapers, all the recipes in the booklet were handwritten and entered by several different people. Comparing Kezia's handwriting in the trip journal with the handwriting in the receipt book, it is evident that she wrote down most of the recipes herself. The others were no doubt acquired from family and friends. Curiously the source of only one of these handwritten recipes is identified. An entry for golden cake is signed "Cynthia." We will probably never know who "Cynthia" was, although Kezia had two family members with the name Cynthia: her mother and sister.

When Kezia and Bradner arrived in California in 1851, they settled in a place called Mormon Gulch located near Tuttletown in Tuolumne County, where two of her brothers had already established themselves. According to a biographical entry in George Tinkham's *History of San Joaquin County* published in 1922, Bradner set up a trading camp there. When he began to

turn his attention to mining, Kezia took charge. She reportedly began to bake pies and pastries and did a brisk business selling them to miners and Indians.<sup>4</sup>

Kezia was not the only woman in the mining camps to discover that she could easily separate a hungry miner from his gold with a plump biscuit or an aromatic pie. As JoAnn Levy wrote in *They Saw the Elephant: Women in the California Gold Rush*, "With a little initiative and minimal equipment, women often were in business for themselves and earning as much, and often more than the average miner."

Did Kezia refer to her personal recipe booklet while serving up her baked goods at the trading camp? We don't know. Of the eighty-six entries in the booklet there are only three pie recipes: sugar pie, orange, and chicken pie. No doubt the pies and other items she baked depended on the availability of ingredients and the preferences of her customers.

What Kezia's receipt book lacks in pies, it makes up for in



The two spoons shown here are engraved with the initials "KBD" for Kezia Benton Curtis.



cakes. Its cake recipes outnumber all other types of desserts and nondesserts as well. While there are 20 recipes for items such as beef loaf, egg soup, tomato preserves, yeast, and powder of milk, there are 31 recipes for cheap cake, soft cake, silver and gold cake, tea cake, etc., and just 9 recipes for other kinds of desserts. Every recipe is made from scratch and every recipe is written in a kind of shorthand, as though for someone already so practiced in the kitchen that only the ingredients that make a recipe distinctive need be given. The details of preparation were not necessary. Take for example this recipe:

#### DELICATE CAKE

One coffee-cup of sugar, one coffee-cup of flour, one half cup of butter, whites of four eggs; grate in the rind of a lemon.

There are no instructions for the order or methods of mixing ingredients together. There was no advice on the temperature at which the cake should be cooked, not even in general terms such as a "cool, moderate, or hot" oven or the duration of the cooking time. This would be at a time when wood and coal-burning stoves were widely used in the United States.

For most of their married life Bradner and Kezia lived in a rural setting. They earned enough money during their three years in the mines to purchase a 320-acre ranch just north of Stockton, where they raised a family of four children, one girl and three boys. In mid-nineteenth century, according to Laura Schenone in her book, *A Thousand Years over a Hot Stove*, "The family home was slowly ceasing to be the center of the family economy as industrialism arrived and factory jobs began to replace farm life."<sup>5</sup> People living on farms were moving in

increasing numbers to cities where men went to work in factories or entered commerce to earn a living and women took full charge of the household. The Curtises did not appear to be part of this economic transformation.

Kezia's receipt book reveals just how self-reliant and resourceful a wife and mother in mid-nineteenth century, rural America had to be to ensure the health and well being of her family. Alongside recipes for coconut pudding and fig marmalade are instructions for preparing medicines, brewing beer, and manufacturing cleaning solutions, cosmetics, and other useful products.

When there was no professional medical help nearby, the pioneer homemaker had to cope the best she could when a family member was injured or fell ill. Kezia's receipt book contains remedies for some of most dreaded diseases of the era: diphtheria, smallpox, and scarlet fever. The following is one example of these therapies:

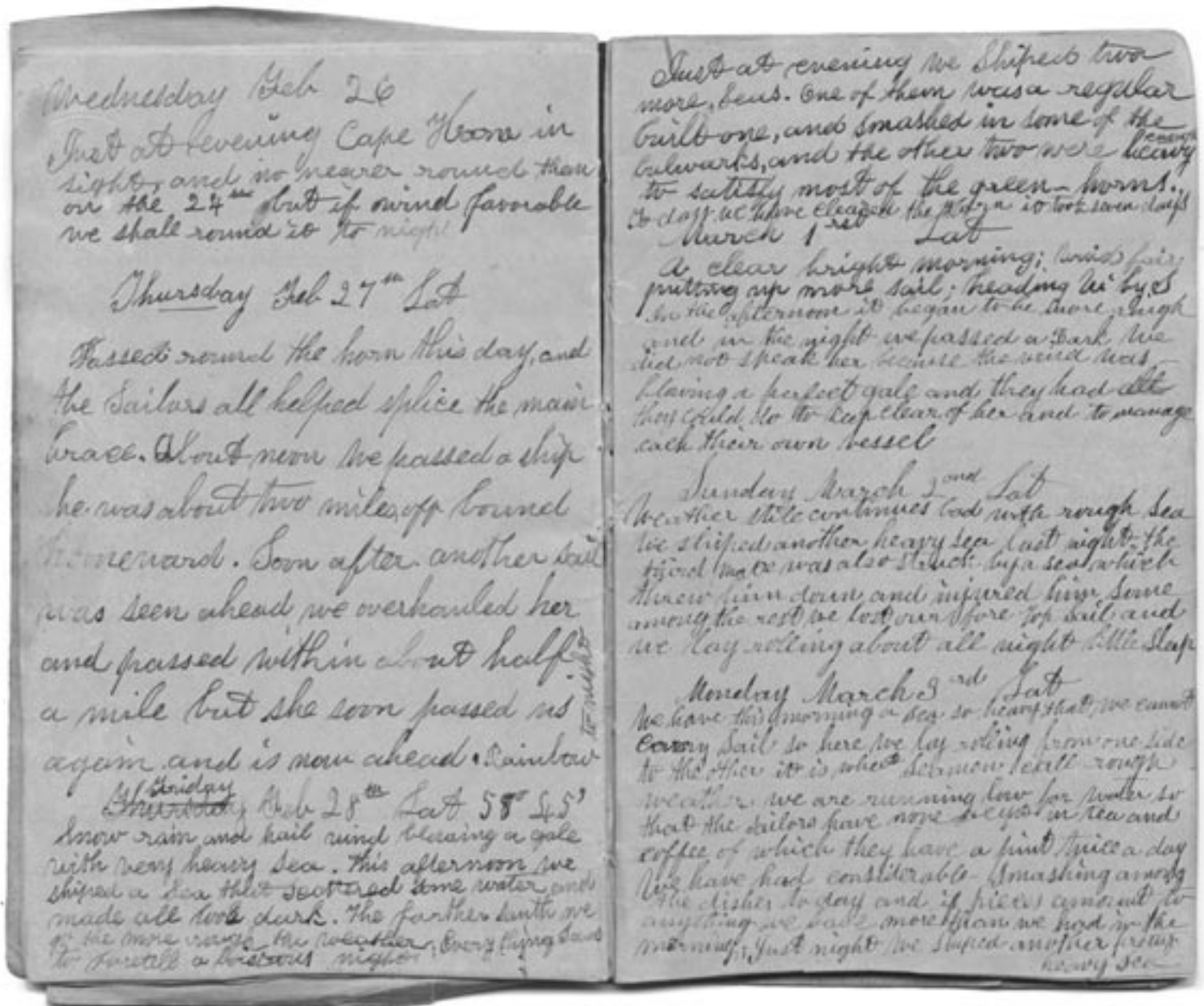
#### DIPHTHERIA [SIC]

An equal quantity of salt, and ashes in a bag dipped in hot vinegar, and applied to the throat every fifteen minutes. The throat to be gargled with hot water, and cayenne pepper. This is said to be, an infallible cure if speedily applied.

Fortunately, not all health problems mentioned in the booklet are as dire. Here are solutions for two of life's annoying problems:

#### WORTH REMEMBERING

A small quantity of vinegar will generally destroy, immediately, any insect that may find its way into the stomach, and a little salad oil will kill any insect that may enter the ear.



The diary of Kezia Darwin Benton Curtis on the voyage with her husband, Bradner Curtis is open to the dates of February 26-27, 1851, just as their ship rounded Cape Horn.

The receipt booklet shows that with a little guidance, the versatile pioneer could make just about whatever was needed:

#### TOOTH POWDER

Equal quantities of oris root prepared chalk and Peruvian Bark, well mixed.

#### GRAFTING WAX

Take four parts of resin, two of beeswax and one of tallow; melt the whole together; pour the composition in cold water; pull it as for candy.

When the various crises had passed and necessities had been taken care of, Kezia could turn her attention to personal groom-

ing by mixing up her own hair dye and deodorant. This is one of the two recipes in the booklet for fragrances:

#### LAVENDER WATER

Take six drachms [also known as a dram equal to 1/8 of an ounce] oil garden Lavender, add 1 drachm oil orange, 2 drops oil cinnamon, 8 drops Otto Rose, mix with pint and a half of Proof Spirits.

We may not know where or when Kezia obtained the recipes in her book. We may not know the span of years in which she used her book or which recipes were her favorites. Nonetheless, the little book gives us a vivid picture of the life and work of homemakers in mid-nineteenth century rural America. ❀



Kezia Darwin Benton Curtis (1822-1924).

#### NOTES

1. Recipe was typically spelled "receipt" during the period that Kezia Benton Curtis compiled her receipt book. Today, recipe is the more common spelling in the United States. I have not researched at what point the change in usage occurred. However, a search of the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* revealed that even today the first definition of receipt is "recipe."
2. The State Library's California cookbook collection includes cookbooks that have either been published in the state, are about California cooking, or illuminate a particular aspect of California living.
3. Interestingly, the shipboard journal and Kezia's receipt booklet have the same dimensions, although the cookery booklet is slightly thicker. They are made of the same materials, except the journal has only blue pages, while the receipt book has cream and blue colored pages. Their appearance suggests that they were obtained from the same source at the same time.
4. Tinkham, George H., *History of San Joaquin County California with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1923), 381.
5. Root, Waverley Lewis and Richard de Rochement, *Eating in America: A History* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1976), 177.

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# California Celebrates 20 Years of Library Literacy Services

By Dr. Carole Talan

On Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup> 2004, at the San Jose Fairmont Hotel, nearly 530 librarians, library literacy professionals, adult learners, and literacy supporters gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of public library literacy services in California. The evening was the climax of a daylong staff development and training meeting for local library literacy staff from all over the state and an inspiring opening for the 2004 California Library Association Annual Conference.

## HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY LITERACY

Public library-based literacy services were created by the California State Library in 1984 under the direction of California State Librarian Gary E. Strong using federal LSCA (Library Services and Construction Act) grants awarded to twenty-seven local public libraries. Within less than a year of its initiation, the State Legislature established state funding under the California Library Services Act to provide resources to continue and expand these greatly needed, highly successful and visible services. Public library literacy services in California have since grown to encompass 106 library jurisdictions and serve over 300 communities in the state.

First known as the California Literacy Campaign (CLC), these library services filled a unique and needed niche by focusing adult literacy instruction on the highly underserved low literacy, English speaking adults in the state. The CLC was designed not to compete with the ESL (English as a Second Language) services provided by adult schools and community colleges, but to reach the hard to reach and serve adults who speak English (even if as a second language) but are unable to function at a literacy level that allows them to achieve their goals in life.

In 1987 Senator Bill Baker sponsored a successful bipartisan bill to fund new library literacy programs for five years. Initially only adult one-on-one and small group literacy instruction was offered. However, in 1988 state funding was secured to add family literacy services (through the Families For Literacy or FFL program) and in 1990 California became the first state in the nation to enact ongoing legislative support for public library literacy services.



Noted author and guest speaker Isabel Allende charmed the audience.



Dr. Carole Talan recently retired as California State Library Literacy Consultant and is the author of *Founding and Funding Family Literacy Programs* (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1999).





State Librarian Susan Hildreth enthusiastically opened the festivities at the San Jose Fairmont Hotel.



Honoree and television personality Huell Howser regaled the audience with his inimitable humor and warmth.



Dr Kevin Starr accepts award from Oakland Public Library adult learner Rosonia Willoughby.



Susan Clark, founder of *Easy Reader Voter Guide*, accepts award from Commerce Public Library adult learner Annabelle Palacio

In 1998 mobile library literacy services (MLLS) were added through a large grant from California's First Five Commission (a program designed to prepare children for school). Eleven vehicles initially provided outreach to rural and under-served areas of the state. Today seventeen are plying the backroads and inner cities bringing library and literacy services to hard to reach areas. Then in 2000, services to limited English proficiency school age children and their families were established through state funding for the English Language Literacy Intensive (ELLI) program. Today, over 100,000 adults and children receive literacy instruction through one or more of the CLLS components annually.

Adult literacy services remain at the core of all that the CLLS does. This is essential, because it is recognized that the adult parent or caregiver is the first and most important teacher of the child. And, in homes where the adult has limited literacy, the child's literacy is twice as likely to suffer as those of his/her peers.

Although initially established and led for ten years by State Librarian Gary Strong, the California Literacy Campaign (as it was first called) was nurtured and expanded over the course of the next ten years by State Librarian Dr. Kevin Starr. Dr. Starr also officially moved the "campaign" to a fully integrated library literacy service and changed the name to California Library Literacy Services in 2002 to reflect this official new status. Another milestone was achieved in 2004 when in partnership

with National City Public Library, Literacyworks, and Wal\*Mart, the State Library secured AmeriCorps funds and recruited over 1,200 new volunteers for library literacy programs.

Through the years a number of publications and films have been created by the California State Library literacy staff and/or contractors to help support the work of local library literacy. Most of these are available through the California State Library Foundation.

Included are such publications as the *F.A.T.H.E.R.S. Curriculum* (for incarcerated parents), the *P.A.R.E.N.T.S. Curriculum Guide* (for parents with low literacy skills), the *Easy Reader Voter Guide* (first produced in 1994 to aid low literacy adults with voting but continuing today as the *Easy Voter Guide* for national and state elections), *Key to Community* (a guide to help adult learners get involved in their communities), *Honoring Diversity* (a curriculum that helps staff and tutors understand and address the diverse learning styles of adult learners), and *Making Sense of Learning Difficulties, Disabilities and Differences* (a resource guide for staff and tutors).

Four highly successful documentary short films have been produced also. These include *Families For Literacy* (a film describing the various components and experiences of FFL families), *Enrique's Story* (an award winning film and video featuring one adult learner's literacy story), *Adult Learners Leading the Way* (a documentary film of the 1999 statewide Adult Learner Confer-

ence), and *Literacy* (a recently completed film highlighting the stories of four very diverse library literacy adult learners).

#### NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATION

The November 12th celebration was special in many ways. New California State Librarian Susan Hildreth opened the evening and welcomed those attending. John Zickefoose an adult learner and Corona Public Library employee, introduced noted television personality Huell Howser who served as honorary guest host and provided his personal touch of humor and warmth to the evening. The entire event was co-hosted by yours truly, a recently retired California State Library Literacy Consultant, and local Santa Fe Springs Public Library Literacy Coordinator Jerry Edwards.

Renowned author Isabel Allende was the special guest speaker. Her interview and discussion was enlightening, humorous and delightful. After her presentation she was recognized with a *Champion of Literacy Award* for the literacy work of her foundation the Isabel Allende Foundation. A song based on her book *Paula* that had been selected for the Chapter One CD of SIBL (Songs Inspired by Literature) was performed by New York-based singer/songwriter Marta Gomez.

California State Librarian Emeritus Dr. Kevin Starr was recognized by the California Library Association with a special plaque and commendation for his work as State Librarian. Dr. Starr also received a *Champion of Literacy Award* from the CLLS for his many contributions to library literacy in the state. Oakland Public Librarian Leslie McGinnis received the 2004 Librarian in Support of Literacy Award, and Anne Campbell, Library Director at National City Public Library, was named runner up.

A new documentary short film featuring four adult learners who entered CLLS programs ten or more years ago premiered.

Sixteen of the seventeen adult learners from throughout the state who had been nominated for inclusion in the film were present and were introduced with short clips from their initial interviews. They were each brought up on stage to be thanked by the audience. It was very moving to see all sixteen standing upon the stage and receiving a standing ovation from the audience.

The new film, titled simply *Literacy*, beautifully and movingly tells in ten minutes the stories of four of these adult learners and how a library literacy program profoundly changed their lives. The learners featured are diverse in age, ethnicity and gender. The stage was decorated with four large banners, each featuring one of the adults from the film and the simple phrase, "A Library Changed My Life."

A number of corporations and organizations that have supported library literacy in California were recognized and given *Champion of Literacy Awards*. These were appropriately presented by CLLS adult learners and included awards to SBC, Wal\*Mart, Barnes & Noble, California Library Association, California Center for the Book, California State Library Foundation, Literacyworks, California Literacy, Inc, and Pro-Literacy Worldwide. Also receiving individual awards were Huell Howser, Debra Pardes (founder of SIBL and Artists for Literacy) and Susan Clark (founder of the *Easy Reader Voter Guide*).

Former California State Library literacy staff Carmela Ruby, Al Bennett, Paul Kiley and myself, as well as long time CLLS supporter, writer and trainer Marti Lane, were introduced. The evening, quite literally, ended with a song. Deborah Pardes, founder and director of Artists for Literacy and the SIBL (Songs Inspired By Literature) Project (both of which were initially supported with funding from the California State Library), sang her own original work inspired by literature. ❀



Adult learners interviewed for the film *Literacy* enjoy the applause of the attendees.

# Golden Poppies and Scarlet Monkeys: An Exhibition Celebrating California Wildflowers

By Gary F. Kurutz

*“California, with her wonderfully varied climate and topography,  
has a flora correspondingly rich and varied, probably not surpassed  
by any region of like area in the Northern Hemisphere.”*

—Mary Elizabeth Parsons, author of *The Wild Flowers of California*

“Golden Poppies and Scarlet Monkeys,” the current exhibit in the Mead B. Kibbey Gallery of the Library & Courts II Building, celebrates California wildflowers with a “bouquet” of original watercolors, prints, volumes of pressed flowers, rare books, fine press publications, and ephemera. On display for the spring and summer months, the exhibition calls attention to the many ways in which the wondrous bounty of the state’s wildflowers have been portrayed since first observed and described by European explorers.

Not surprisingly, the golden poppy dominates the exhibition. The State Legislature adopted the poppy as the official state flower in 1903 and it symbolizes the pride of the Golden State as much as the grizzly bear on the state flag. California has always been associated with gold, be it the golden nuggets found at Coloma in 1848, or the orchards of golden oranges in San Bernardino and Butte counties, or the black gold of Kern County oil. It only seems natural that this golden flower represent the state. As if by magic, its auriferous blossoms may be seen blooming in some part of the state throughout the whole year. German naturalist Adelbert von Chamisso gave the flower its scientific name (*Eschscholtzia californica*) in 1816. He named it in honor of Johann Friederich Eschscholtz, the surgeon of the Russian exploratory and scientific expedition led by Otto von Kotzebue. April 6 is *California Poppy Day* and two years ago the Native Daughters of the Golden West issued a special packet of golden poppy seeds to mark its centennial as the California State Flower.



Gary F. Kurutz is Curator of Special Collections for the California State Library.

The golden poppy, sometimes called *copa de oro* or cup of gold, continues to inspire a wide variety of paintings, books, and ephemera. Virtually every artist represented in the exhibition produced a portrait of the golden flower, and of course, writers and poets composed hymns of praise in its honor. For example, Emory Evans Smith in his delightful book *The Golden Poppy* (1902) wrote:

Vast fields of Golden Poppies have ever been one of the strong and peculiar features of California scenery. This gladsome beauty of this peerless flower has brought renown to the land of its birth. Perhaps no flower in the whole range of Western flora has been so seductive in its charms to the artist as the California poppy.

Smith’s book is a fund of information on the history and lore of the state flower. Reflecting pride in this “peerless flower,” the exhibit includes playing cards, calendars, postcards, books, promotional brochures, trade catalogs, a citrus crate label, and even a vintage beer tray, all employing the poppy motif.

While paying homage to the golden poppy, the exhibit gave us the opportunity to show off two little-known collections in the California History Section of original watercolors by wildflower artists A. R. Valentien (1862–1925) and Cornelia Cunningham (1852–1915). Valentien is the most recognized of the two as evidenced by a recent large format book and a major exhibition of his work at the San Diego Museum of Natural History. The State Library had the good fortune of acquiring a fine collection of Valentien’s work in 1919 while he was at the height of his artistic power. At the behest of then State Librarian Milton Ferguson, Valentien also dutifully filled out a biographical card



*Nicotiana glabra*  
"Tree Tobacco"



*Phacelia grandiflora*  
"Large-flowered Phacelia"



A. R. Valentien. Studio portrait, 1919.

*Nicotiana Glabra* or "Tree Tobacco." *Phacelia Grandiflora* or "Large Flowered Phacelia." Watercolors by A. R. Valentien.

for the California History Section's files on California artists and sent a beautiful studio portrait. Wisely, too, the Library saved Ferguson's correspondence with the artist.

Born in Cincinnati, Ohio with the original family name of Valentine, Albert Valentien did not receive formal training as a botanist or plant illustrator. Nonetheless, his paintings display exquisite detail and accuracy. At the age of sixteen, he used his talents to decorate chinaware and worked for the famous arts and crafts studio, Rockwood Pottery. Albert and his wife Anna Marie (also an accomplished artist) visited San Diego in 1903, loved what they saw, and moved there permanently in 1908. Valentien enjoyed the patronage of Miss Ellen B. Scripps, the well-known San Diego philanthropist. She commissioned the largest body of his work that included over 1,500 botanical species. In addition to his plant portraits, Valentien operated a suc-

cessful pottery in San Diego, and his craftsman style ceramic ware is highly prized. After his death in 1925, his collection became the property of the San Diego Society of Natural History in 1933.

In 2003, the San Diego Natural History Museum in conjunction with the Irvine Museum published a sumptuous book devoted to the artist called *Plant Portraits: The Legacy of A. R. Valentien*. Margaret N. Dykens, one of the primary contributors to the book, offered this appraisal of his art:

While Valentien's plant portraits are botanically accurate, they are unusual in the sense that they never appear to be stiff, artificial, or "pressed" on the page. On the contrary, his masterful depictions of such species as the poppies and cacti have a marvelous spontaneity and fluidity of line about them.

Golden Stars or *Bloomeria Aurea*;  
Wall Flower or *Erysimum Asperum*;  
Baby Eyes or *Nemophila Aurila*.  
San Luis Obispo, 1884.  
Watercolor by Cornelia E. Cunningham.

Ruhstaller's Gilt Edge Lager Beer of  
Sacramento incorporated the golden poppy  
into its tray promoting the 1915 Panama Pacific  
International Exposition in San Francisco.



Cornelia Cunningham, the other artist highlighted in the display, spent most of her time roaming the fields of wildflowers in northern California. Born in Oregon, Cunningham came to California in the late 1860s. Beginning at the tender age of ten, she received formal education in art. She then studied under the guidance of such titans of California painting as Jules Tavernier and W. A. Coulter. The artist also studied botany and had a natural affinity for plant portraiture. With this enviable background, she taught art for many years and, as she put it, “quietly pursued my work for the deep love of it.” Cunningham lived primarily in the Santa Rosa, Dixon, and Antioch areas and no doubt the nearby rolling hills and fields motivated her to capture with brush and palette these glorious natural wonders. She did manage to explore beyond her home and went on painting trips up and down the state “traveling about with my indulgent husband.” Thoughtfully, she included with each plant portrait

the flower’s botanical and common name, place painted, and date. She recalled, “It was probably through a spirit of patriotism, a loyalty to my own beloved west, that I have thus tried to preserve in color her beautiful flora.”

Acquiring her lovely wildflower paintings for the Library, however, was not that easy. James L. Gillis, the State Librarian at the time and a powerful and persuasive man, contacted her in 1910 and offered \$850 to purchase a collection of her works. As documented by the correspondence in her biographical files, she politely but firmly turned him down, writing that the Library’s “offer was quite too small.” She also refused to sell paintings individually. Mrs. Cunningham pointed out: “As many of the floral plants and herbs of California are being driven out by cultivation for agricultural purposes, I realize that in a few years my collection will be a valuable acquisition to ANY library.” Gillis continued to haggle, and finally, sometime in 1913, the



Scarlet Thistle. San Luis Obispo County, 1884.  
Watercolor by Cornelia E. Cunningham.



Scarlet Monkey Flower & Common Monkey Flower. Placer County, 1902. Watercolor by Cornelia E. Cunningham.

Library obtained a portfolio of over 200 of her paintings for the then generous sum of \$1,500. Perhaps as a quid pro quo, the artist contacted several cultural organizations to assist Gillis in his campaign to acquire the downtown Sacramento property for the present Library & Courts Building.

Cornelia Cunningham died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage on April 5, 1915. A niece found her lying on the floor of her Antioch home. It was learned that her friends had gone off to participate in Contra Costa Day at the Panama Pacific International Exposition (world's fair) in San Francisco. Feeling lonely, Cornelia had invited her niece over for a visit but the two did not connect until too late. The *Antioch Ledger* provided the following assessment of her life and work:

Mrs. Cunningham was a woman of exceptional ability and well known among artists of California. She was an authority on wild flowers and had one of the best collec-

tions in the State. She was also a painter of wild flowers, her ability being recognized by leading artists and she was much in demand as a lecturer upon wild flowers.

While artists like Valentien and Cunningham took their palettes and easels into the field, others with a curiosity and appreciation for nature took up another method of preserving wildflowers: flower pressing. Carefully glued on thick paper and bound into albums, these collections of dried flowers are incredibly delicate, and it is amazing that they survive at all considering that the flowers and stems become brittle and can easily flake off the page. Found on display are several examples of this charming pastime. Around the late 1890s, a Miss E. C. Alexander created two albums and she carefully inscribed the scientific and common name below each flower. Remarkably, some of her pressed specimens still possess a hint of their original color. Another is a herbarium of Butte County wildflowers made by





This calendar from 1905 is a superb example of the ephemera inspired by the state's official flower.

Annie Lowrey in 1895 for the State Normal School at Chico. She included the Latin and common name as well as the date collected. Others used pressed flowers to further embellish a work of art. One of the choice examples of flower pressing is a group of watercolors done by the early California artist Robert Ogilby (1825–84) in the 1860s and 1870s depicting missions, ranchos, and natural scenery. Accompanying each of his paintings on display is one or more pressed flowers from the locality he painted.

California wildflowers are a natural subject for modern California book illustrators and fine presses. Without doubt, Henry Evans (1918–90) stands as the most famous and accomplished botanical illustrator from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Evans is represented in the display with his incomparable portfolio *California Native Wild Flowers*. Sold by subscription in 1980, the self-taught artist produced fifty copies and each portfolio came with a suite of forty prints made from linoleum blocks. Evans made his original life-size drawings in 1979 and 1980 and wrote extensive descriptions of each specimen including a history of the flower. From these drawings, he created his linoleum blocks and printed them with an 1852 Washington iron hand press. While creating one breathtaking print after another of columbines, snow flowers, and thistles, Evans was a true Californian writing: “From the viewpoint of the artist, I hasten to admit that I admire and favor the Golden Poppy beyond most other native plants.” His prints are possessed of



Poppies. Hand-colored lithograph by Violet Nakashima.

a brilliantly unique style and demonstrate a mastery of printing in color. He numbered, dated, and signed each print. After completing the portfolios, he destroyed the blocks. William Campbell Steere of the New York Botanical Garden wrote the following glowing summation of this extraordinary Californian:

In a surprising few years, Henry Evans has achieved a unique niche for himself as botanical illustrator, through his approach, methodology and style. No one else in modern times has successfully adapted the woodcut artistry of the herbals of the middle ages to our plants of today by the use of linoleum blocks instead of wood blocks. His style is unquestionably his own, and is at the same time both delicate in its details yet bold in its execution. His clear and harmonious colors are often set in startling contrasts, just as in nature.

Another impressive example of a California fine press interpretation of wildflowers was printed and designed by the late Vance Gerry of the Weatherbird Press called *Selected Shore Plants of Southern California*. Botanist Charles Leland Richardson wrote the text. Published in 1992, the Library has copy number two of a deluxe edition of only twenty numbered copies. Housed in a beautiful box and binding created by Allwyn O'Mara, the publication includes an extra suite of Gerry's color block prints and an original watercolor. Richardson beautifully summarized the uniqueness of these coastal flowering plants:



Poppies and Lupines, September 1982. Linoleum block print by Dr. Edmund Simpson.

Beyond wonder, the natural world also provides some ironies to the human mind. Coastal flowering plants are one of them. Flowers and oceans are not fond bedfellows. Plants, other than the sea weeds, are not particularly tolerant of the salt that defines the oceans' waters. So, plants here, at the border of the vast reservoirs of water that are the oceans, most resemble and are biologically closest to the plants of the most arid regions, the interior deserts.

Northern California physician and superb amateur letterpress printer Dr. Edmund E. Simpson (1912–1990) also enjoyed portraying California wildflowers as shown in the exhibit. A devoted member of the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, The Book Club of California, and Sacramento Book Collectors Club, Dr. Simpson, under the name of the Blackwood Press, created a number of beautiful color linoleum block prints. He also used his prints to make calendars. He gave many of these away as keepsakes to family and friends. Dr. Simpson took up fine printing in 1956 and used a Chandler & Price Platen Press to print his wildflower portraits. Although a printer by avocation, his artistry reached a remarkable level of achievement. The Library acquired a major collection of Blackwood Press prints, ephemera, and linoleum blocks shortly after the printer's death in Beaverton, Oregon. Donated by his children, the Simpson Collection also includes cases of type and his hand press. Dr. Simpson wrote the following fascinating explanation of how he made his prints:

The flowers are drawn from nature. The drawing is trans-

ferred by rubbing it onto previously soaped floor linoleum. One can draw directly onto the linoleum but it must be done backwards, since when printed the cut out flower will be reversed. The parts not wanted in the print are removed with cutting tools and the remaining piece of linoleum is tacked to a wooden block, which is locked into a frame, the chase, and is then ready for the press.

Printing inks are mixed for the desired color. Where colors are compatible, the entire flower, with leaves and stems, is printed. If colors are not compatible, separate blocks are needed for each color.

"Golden Poppies and Scarlet Monkeys" is rounded out by a number of books both rare and common devoted to the glories of California wildflowers. An ever-popular subject, publishers are constantly producing guidebooks on the subject. Worth noting are such classics as Mary Elizabeth Parson, *The Wild Flowers of California* (1930); Emma Homan Thayer, *Wild Flowers of the Pacific Coast* (1887); Edith S. Clements, *Flowers of Coast and Sierra* (1928); Emma Graham Clock, *Wild Flowers from the Mountains, Cañons and Valleys* (c. 1915), and Allen Chickering, *Wild Flowers around Soda Springs* (1928).

The exhibit was curated by yours truly and beautifully prepared and installed by Gerrilee Hafvenstein of the Library's Preservation Office. Catherine Hanson-Tracy of the Library's California History Section generously loaned to the exhibition a selection of silk flowers and golden poppy memorabilia. ❀

# Foundation Notes

## Election of Foundation Board Members and Officers

The Foundation enjoys a dedicated and enthusiastic Board of Directors. Its members contribute time and expertise, financial assistance, donations of collections, and encouragement to Library staff. At the board's last meeting on February 18, 2005, Allan Forbes, chairperson of the Nominating Committee presented the following names for re-appointment to a three-year term ending December 2007: Robert Dickover, Mead B. Kibbey, Sue T. Noack, Herbert J. Hunn, and Kenneth B. Noack, Jr. The board voted to do so. The Nominating Committee then recommended the following slate of officers for re-election: President, Kenneth B. Noack, Jr.; Vice President, George Basye; Treasurer, Thomas E. Vinson, and Secretary, Barbara Campbell. The board unanimously voted to elect the above named as officers. The Library and Foundation staff is most pleased by their willingness to continue and we look forward to a productive relationship.

## California Civil Liberties Public Education Project

One of the key roles of the Foundation is to serve as a fiscal agent for State Library projects. Recently, the Foundation agreed to assist the Library in putting on a major conference on the Internment of Japanese Americans held June 2-4, 2005, at the Radisson Miyako Hotel in San Francisco. The conference was organized by the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California and the Library's California Research Bureau supervised the meeting. The main goals of the conference were to (1) educate a diverse audience on the Japanese American experience as it relates to civil liberty violations, race, prejudice and the historical impact and significance of Japanese Americans in California; (2) deepen the understanding of the Japanese American experience during World War II; and (3) provide an opportunity to recognize and appreciate the untold stories and under-recognized experiences of Japanese in California.



## Foundation Directors Assist with Oakland Museum Visit

On April 7 and May 17, two busloads of members of the History Guild of the Oakland Museum of California came to the Library for a tour of its treasures. Board Director Donald J. Hagerty gave a captivating presentation on the many fine art treasures in the Library & Courts Building with a focus on its Maynard Dixon and Frank Van Sloan murals and its outstanding collection of framed paintings. Mr. Hagerty is the authority on Maynard Dixon having written books and articles on the famed California artist. In the Library & Courts II Building, Board Director Sandra Swafford gave a tour of the Braille and Talking Book Library describing its many services as well

as its splendid Gregory Kondos painting. Mead B. Kibbey also helped promote the Library and Foundation to those on the tour. Foundation Executive Director and Library Curator Gary Kurutz described the architectural features of both buildings and showed off Library rare book and California history treasures. The visitors also had an opportunity to see the newly opened *Golden Poppies and Scarlet Monkeys* wildflower exhibition. Anne Curran of the Oakland Museum organized the tour. Ms. Curran is an active member with the Museum's White Elephant Sale and has directed donations of important maps to the Library's California History Section.

## New Windgate Press Book Available through the Foundation

Our friends, Linda and Wayne Bonnett of the Windgate Press in Sausalito have produced another stunningly beautiful pictorial book, *Mt. Shasta Camera: The Photographs of Charles R. Miller*. Last year, the creative couple visited the California History Section to explore potential subjects for a new book of historical photographs and plowed through dozens of albums. Two oblong volumes of photographs caught their eye and led them on an unexpected but pleasurable publishing odyssey. Acquired from Foundation board member Mead B. Kibbey many years ago, the albums consist of 102 striking photographs of lumbering in and around Siskiyou County by McCloud photographer Charles R. Miller. The black and white images were of such power and beauty that the Bonnetts decided to explore publishing a book of Miller's views. Always thorough in their research, the Bonnetts wanted to know more about Miller and lumbering by not only tapping library resources but also by getting a sense of Miller's physical world. Consequently, they loaded up their Volvo and headed to Siskiyou County and the shadow of Mt. Shasta and retraced Miller's steps visiting towns, former mill and campsites, forests, rivers, and canyons. On the trail of Miller, they discovered a fine collection of his photographs at the Heritage Junction Museum in McCloud. In addition to the rich resources of this local museum, they researched the photographer and the history of the region at the Siskiyou County Museum, College



of the Siskiyou and Klamath County Museum. The result is a superb text by Wayne Bonnett providing a fine biography of Miller and a wonderful profile of McCloud and the lumbering business in the early 1900s. The photographs are reproduced from the State Library's albums and from the archive of the Heritage Junction Museum. The Bonnetts happily reported that locals are most enthusiastic about this handsome book that celebrates their heritage. In addition, railroad historians are finding the many photographs of logging trains a real delight.

Wayne Bonnett, in the dust jacket blurb, provides the following overview:

Charles Richard Miller, a young scenic photographer from Oregon, came to Northern California around 1900 and settled in the booming lumber camps around the base of Mt. Shasta. Within a few years he became one of the foremost photographers of the region, earning commissions from logging companies to record their activities, camps, and mill towns. He also photographed the private retreats along the McCloud River of wealthy San Franciscans such as William Randolph Hearst and Clarence Waterhouse. Miller's photographs with their rich texture and careful composition reflect the highest photo documentary traditions and speak eloquently of a moment in California history. His subjects included the logging railroads, steam locomotives, loggers and their families and the unique town of McCloud, Siskiyou County, one of California's few remaining intact former 'company' towns.

*Mt. Shasta Camera* is available for purchase through the Foundation. The cost of this beautiful hardcover book is \$45 plus sales tax and shipping. The Windgate Press supplied the Foundation with a number of copies and all sales through the Foundation will support the acquisition of books and historical photographs for the Library's California History Section.

## James M. Knox Donation of Genealogy Books to the Sutro Library

The Sutro Library is the very fortunate recipient of the personal genealogy library of James M. Knox. The late Mr. Knox was an ardent genealogist with professional skills, and his collection filled 74 boxes. In addition, Mr. Knox was Emeritus Curator of British and American History at the Green Library, Stanford University where he served for 26 years.

Forty-nine of the boxes were received on January 15, 2005. They contained 1,426 individual items, representing 878 titles. Mr. Knox's research interests focused on the states west of the Mississippi River, and the titles had a very strong emphasis on Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. There were smaller amounts of material for Illinois, Ohio, Tennessee, Ireland, and Scotland.

One of the more interesting items was not genealogical in nature, but of special interest to the Sutro Library. "British Wool and Sheep," published by the British Wool Marketing Board, contains photographs of every breed of sheep found in the United Kingdom today. That title is a perfect complement to the Sutro Library's collection of the papers of Sir Joseph Banks the head of the Royal Society from 1778-1820. Sir Joseph was very active in introducing merino sheep into England and, later, into Australia, and the Sutro holds a large number of his letters and other items dealing with wool and sheep of a variety of breeds. The illustrations in "British Sheep and Wool" will be a very useful adjunct to that collection.

Another 25 boxes were received at the Sutro on April 1, 2005, and are in the process of being inventoried.

The Knox donation is a substantial addition to the Sutro Library's holdings of genealogical material.

## Foundation Helps Bring Signage to Library & Courts II Building

Exterior signage of a building is an important and taken-for-granted aspect of way-finding and identification, especially when it comes to imposing government buildings open to the public. When the State Library expanded into its beautiful 900 N Street facility, the only clearly visible signage on the building read "Library & Courts II." Nowhere did it identify the building with the State of California or the California State Library. In fact, the word "California" was entirely omitted. It was just assumed. Moreover, the corner of the building at the busy intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> and N Streets merely gave the address. This omission troubled Foundation and Library staff for years. Finally, the Foundation commissioned Weidner Architectural Signage to rectify this omission. On March 28, workmen from the company climbed ladders and installed durable acrylic letters spelling the words "California State Library" over the address on the rounded corner of the building. Now motorists and pedestrians traveling across one of the busiest intersections in downtown Sacramento will clearly see that the large five story, grey building houses an important function: the California State Library.



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# The California Calendar for 1905.



JANUARY.						
Sa.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.	Fr.	Sa.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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