

Bulletin

California State Library Foundation

Number 77

Spring 2004





Bulletin

California State Library Foundation
Spring 2004
Number //

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The *Bulletin* is included as a membership benefit to Foundation members and those individuals contributing \$40.00 or more annually to Foundation Programs. Membership rates are:

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TABLE of CONTENTS

MAILBOX CUISINE: KATHLEEN J. STRANDBERG'S

COOKERY BOOKLET COLLECTION

By M. Patricia Morris 3

MEMORIES OF A SURVIVOR FROM THE SINKING OF THE
USS YMS-350, JULY 2, 1944

By Mead B. Kibbey 13

THE LOSS OF YMS-350: AS SEEN FROM HMML 137

By Brendan A. Maher 20

1930 U. S. CENSUS NOW AT SUTRO LIBRARY

By Peter Dolgenos 25

CENSUS RESOURCES IN THE CALIFORNIA HISTORY ROOM

By Catherine Hanson-Tracy 30

FOUNDATION NOTES

Two New Board Members Elected 31

Overland Trails Exhibit & Reception 31

Foundation Acquires Rare Mother Lode Newspaper 32

Saving Paintings from Damage 33

New California Photography Book Published 33

RECENT CONTRIBUTORS 35

FRONT COVER:

California State Library: 2-11; 32-33; back cover. Meade B. Kibbey: front cover, 12-14; 16-17; 19, 21. Mary Mueller: 31. U. S. Census Bureau: 24, 26, 28. Windgate Press: 32. Scans by M. Anthony Martinez.

BACK COVER:

Hold the Flavor is one of the many examples discussed in M. Patricia Morris' article concerning Kathleen J. Strandberg's Cookery Booklet Collection.

PHOTO CREDITS:

California State Library, Mead B. Kibbey, Windgate Press, and Mary Mueller.

DESIGN:

Lisette McConnell, *L2Design.net*

The BULLETIN is indexed in LIBRARY LITERATURE.

Mailbox Cuisine: Kathleen J. Strandberg's Cookery Booklet Collection

By M. Patricia Morris

What all we have to eat? If you are a busy cook, you may have asked this question a thousand times or more. To provide well-balanced, appealing meals for yourself and others, no doubt you are on the lookout for new recipes and menu ideas. There are so many options available today. You can watch chefs on television, read the newspaper food sections, and search websites advertised on packages of food. Or, following the example of generations of American cooks, you can write for those recipe collections that food companies offer to showcase their products.

In December 2001, the California State Library acquired an extraordinary collection of these cookery booklets. The booklets represent the professional and personal interest of the late Kathleen J. Strandberg. Mrs. Strandberg, who was a dietitian and homemaker, gathered and organized them. Her daughter, Lynn Strandberg of San Francisco, generously gave the booklets to the California State Library. The great majority promotes specific products of food processing and agricultural businesses. Also well represented in the collection are government publications, especially leaflets from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University of California. Many of the publications are from health and pharmaceutical companies and associations.

With a total of 647 booklets in all, the collection spans nearly 100 years. The oldest is a fragile little booklet only 4 inches by 2 ½ inches and 34 pages long. It is missing its cover and first four



In this 1943 booklet, World War II homemakers learn how to bake with "patriotic results" by using Swans Down Cake Flour in recipes that require little or no shortening, sugar, or eggs.

pages. Published in 1879, this dainty booklet features recipes using Hanford's None Such Baking Powder. Two cookery booklets apparently share the honors for being the most recent: *The Perfect Coffee Book* by General Foods Corporation and *Cooking with Herbs* by The Reader's Digest Association, both published in 1978.

The Strandberg booklets will become part of the California History Section's cookbook collection. Why does the Library acquire cookbooks? Gary

M. Patricia Morris is an independent scholar and copy editor of the Bulletin. For many years she worked in the Cultural Resources Division of the California Department of Parks.



All about Garnishes published by EKCO Housewares Company in 1966 describes the functions of kitchen tools from potato mashers to pastry brushes.

Kurutz, Curator of Special Collections, will tell you they are far more than just compilations of recipes. When asked the about the acquisition of the Strandberg collection, Kurutz said, "The Library already has an outstanding collection of cookbooks and booklets. "Moreover," he said, "cookbooks provide a good understanding of our social past, particularly with respect to women. The books often illustrate the products of California's agricultural industries like Sunkist Growers, and many of the booklets have wonderful illustrations and are excellent examples of commercial art."

As Gary Kurutz intimated, the kitchen is a good place to observe social change. These cookery booklets, indeed, offer intriguing insights into the changing roles of women in the home and society as a whole. One of the earlier booklets in

the collection, *Desserts of the World*, published by Genesee Pure Food Co. in 1909, describes the expectations of the woman as homemaker:

Whether woman has always been privileged to prepare man's food for him or not, and to persuade him to eat, is a point on which history furnishes unsatisfactory information.

One thing is certain: for the woman who spends hours every day over a modern cook stove, there are some delightful moments when she prepares, away from the heat and discomfort, the simple, beautiful and delicious Jell-O desserts.

By 1937 women had gained the vote, and advances in kitchen equipment and food technologies had liberated them from many time-consuming tasks. Their role in the home was shifting from support for the male breadwinner to one of greater equality. In *Cutting Remarks* (1937), a booklet written by Julia Lee Wright for the Homemakers' Bureau in Oakland, California, Mr. Wright sheds light on this transformation in roles:

THE LAST STAND

They take our jobs, they drive our cars, they play our games, they manage the family's finances, they pick out our hats and they choose our friends; but they can't take one thing away from us . . . Carving! It's the last stand of the American male, and he ought to do a good job of it, if only to assert what's left of his independence . . .

And it is to help men feel like men again that this little book is dedicated by a man who has been through it all and knows the glow that comes over one when he shows his carving skill to the family or guests.

[signed] Mr. Wright

Take a peek in the kitchen thirty-three years later. Now, according to a cookery booklet

published by General Mills, Inc., you may very well find both men and women cooking together. The introduction to *Cooking for Two by Two: Recipes from Betty Crocker* reflects the changes in attitudes and roles that had taken place in the home by the 1970s:

COUPLES WHO COOK TOGETHER

Find fun and companionship while they learn to know and enjoy good food. Many men are super-shoppers and, given a little wifely praise, yours may shine as the family chef!

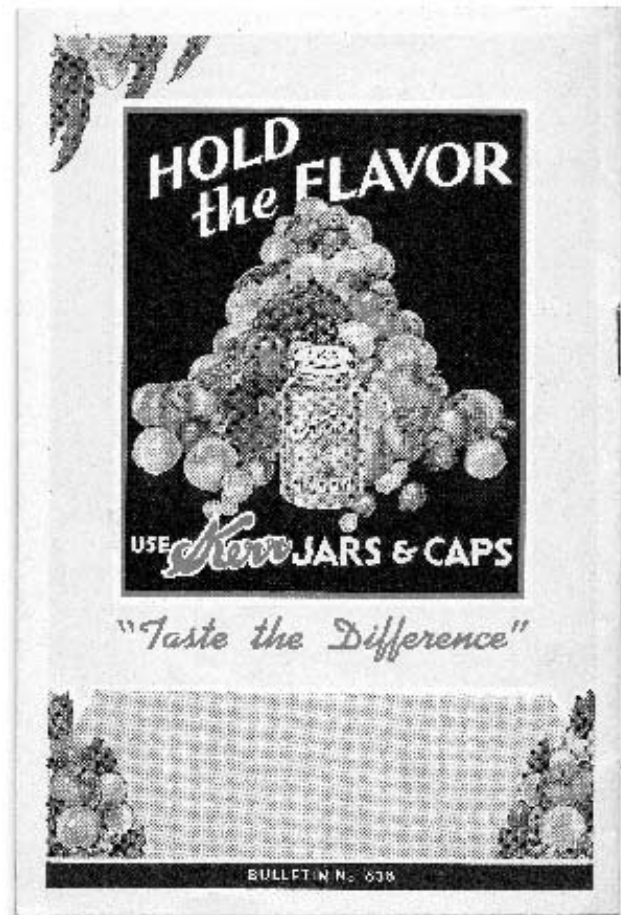
If you're a bride with a job outside your home, it's fair to share both the work and the wealth. For a healthy, happy marriage, begin the day with a real breakfast. Remember your Basic Four Food Groups: Meats, Cereals, Milk, Vegetables and Fruits—serve some of each every day of the week.

Chances are, you won't be meeting for lunch, so dinner's a candlelit date. Here are a few menus to start out off right— with easy, interesting recipes for "Him" and "Her."

Happy cooking – the two of you!

[signed] Betty Crocker

Mrs. Strandberg's path in life very much reflected the social changes that were taking place during the twentieth century. She was a homemaker, a college graduate, and a professional dietitian who worked outside of the home. Born Kathleen House on December 6, 1913, she grew up on a farm near Orosi, California just east of Fresno. In the early 1930s, she earned a degree in chemistry from Fresno State Teachers College. She then went on to graduate study at Scripps Clinic in La Jolla. She became a dietitian and worked at the University of California San Francisco Hospital, as well as other institutions during the course of her career. In 1940 she married Egon Strandberg and raised two daughters. Education was always



Kathleen Strandberg, a prize-winning canner, included many booklets on the subject in her collection. Pictured here is the back cover of Your Guide to Home Canning published by Kerr Glass Mfg. Corp. in 1938.

important to her. She taught vocational food classes at Capuchino High School in San Bruno, served as a PTA president, and eventually served two terms on the San Carlos School Board.

According to Lynn Strandberg, her mother's cookery booklets represented a life-long personal and professional interest in food and cooking. Several family members who were excellent cooks, including her mother, influenced Kathleen. An aunt on her mother's side, Mary Cornett, also collected cookbooks. Lynn believes that her mother inherited most of the booklets dated before 1930 from her Aunt Mary. Over the years Kathleen continued to augment the collection, acquiring books in time of peace and also in time of war.

The wartime booklets comprise one of the most fascinating areas of the collection. A listing of them shows five categorized as World War I (1914–1918) and twenty-one categorized as World War II (1941–1945) publications. Many of them were distributed by the U.S. government, but many of them were produced by American food companies. They provide a glimpse of life on the home front when everyone in the nation was expected to aid in the war effort through rationing and conservation.

One example of these wartime publications is *Selected Recipes for Wartimes*, copyright 1918 by Calumet Baking Powder Co. Maude Marie Costello, dietitian for the American Red Cross, states in the introduction:

In the case of Foods we are not asked to starve ourselves, but to be reasonable, eat plenty, but wisely and without waste. Ours has been a country of plenty, and we have been inclined to be wasteful; but if every one does not only his or her bit, but “their all,” the great problems of conservation will be met.

The booklet contains recipes with such titles as Calumet War Cake; Calumet Economy Cake; Eggless, Butterless, Milkless Cake; and, Conservation (Left Over) Soup. It provides information about substitutes for foods that are scarce or needed in the war effort. The homemaker learns that barley or corn flours can be substituted in various proportions for wheat flour; molasses, maple sugar, corn syrup, honey, dates, raisins, and other items can be substituted for sugar; and butter can be replaced with vegetable fats, nut butter, and oleo margarine.

One senses the gravity of the situation during World War II in *Rationing . . . Why and How* (1942). Produced by the Office of Price Administration, it explains rationing in this way: “It is a community plan for dividing fairly the supplies we have among all who need them. . . . to share when supplies are scarce—to sacrifice, if necessary, but sacrifice together, when the country’s welfare demands it.”

Not only was it important to conserve food during these times of national crisis, but also equipment. Extending the life of household equipment is the main subject of *How To Make Your Refrigerator Last Longer*, a pamphlet prepared by the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture and issued jointly with the Office of Price Administration (1942). “It’s up to you Mr. and Mrs. Homemaker!” the pamphlet says, “The machines, metals, factories and labor that were making refrigerators and other household articles must now produce tanks, guns, engines . . . to win the war. It’s now up to you to make what you have last.”

It was essential to keep food supplies flowing to the troops, but it was also in the best interest of



Dozens of food companies and products familiar to American shoppers are represented in the Strandberg Collection. Post Grape-Nuts, featured in this 1968 General Foods Corporation publication, is just one example.



The liberated “Miss Dine-About-Town” shown on the cover of this 1938 booklet, does not cook, but rather reports on the Minute Tapioca recipes she has enjoyed at social functions.

the nation to have a strong and healthy populace. *Vitamins from Farm to You* (1942), *Victory Lunch Boxes* (1942), and *When You Eat Out* (1942) all promote healthy eating for the men, women, and children at home. Readers are asked in *When You Eat Out*, “Are you one of the millions who eat out—one, two, or three times a day?” The answer is, “You can help yourself to health, energy, and good cheer, and help the Nation better, too, if you eat the right food to keep fit.”

When the wars ended Americans could return to more peaceful pursuits and American businesses to the sales of their products in more normal times. Sales is the key word. Most of the publications in the Strandberg cookery booklet collection are advertising tools. Through the

distribution of these booklets, available free or at a nominal cost, food companies aim to foster goodwill, promote product recognition, and increase sales. For example, in 1897, the Charles A. Vogeler Company of Baltimore, Maryland printed “millions of copies” of its *Good Things . . . Cookery Book and Book of Comfort and Health* with the expressed intention of placing the booklets in “every household in America.”

The New York Receipt Book (1883) even secured the endorsement of one of the most renowned promoters of all time. The booklet was published by the Dr. Wei De Meyer Company to advertise the firm’s Catarrh Cure and Centaur Liniment Cure, “a powerful pain reliever and household remedy for rheumatism, sprains, wounds, burns, bruises and lameness upon the human family and domestic animals.” This letter appears in the booklet by none other than P. T. Barnum:

Among my vast troop of teamsters, equestrians, horses, camels, and elephants, there are always some which are lame, wounded, galled and strained. My doctors and veterinaries all assure me that nothing has proved so prompt and officious a remedy for men and animals as Centaur Liniment. If you could secure me a live Centaur, I will give you my check for \$100,000.

[signed] P. T. Barnum

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, many companies in the United States began to market packaged goods under brand names. Prior to that time products from sugar to beans, from butter to candles were sold in local stores from bulk containers. Familiar brand names of American food manufacturers call out to you in the Strandberg Collection, names like National Biscuit Company, Kellogg Company, Pet Milk Company, Carnation Company, Del Monte Company, Wesson Oil and Snowdrift Company, Lever Brothers Company, General Foods Corporation, Kraft, The Quaker Oats Company, Libby, McNeill & Libby to list just a few.



“La Belle Chocolatière,” who graces this beautifully illustrated 1923 cookery booklet, is promoting the chocolate products of Walter Baker & Co., Ltd.

Housewives and others, of course, were motivated to send away for these booklets for the recipes. To ensure that the recipients would actually open them and try the recipes, the publishers outdid themselves to make sure the booklets were attractive and the products appealing. Many of these booklets are beautifully designed and illustrated. One of the most stunning booklets in the collection was produced in color and copyrighted by Walter Baker & Co., Ltd. of Dorchester, Massachusetts in 1923. The cover illustration features a young woman wearing a lace cap. She has an exquisite complexion and is carefully carrying a tray with a delicious-looking chocolate beverage on it. The young woman, “La Belle Chocolatière,” was the trademark for Walter Baker & Co., Ltd. and was the creation of noted Swiss painter Jean-Etienne Liotard (1702–1790). All the other illustrations in the booklet that depict Baker’s chocolate products and desserts are executed with similar distinction, including a bird’s-eye view of the chocolate company’s mills.

Equally impressive is the commercial art in *Desserts of the World* published by The Genesee Pure Food Co. in 1909. The booklet’s theme centers around Jell-O as a refreshing dessert alternative for the peoples of the world. Consequently, the illustrations portray exotic settings — the East Indies, Hawaii, Prussia, France, etc. The drawings are brightly colored, reminding one of the vivid hues of Jell-O’s various flavors. Incidentally, Lynn Strandberg did not know why her mother collected so many gelatin booklets, but it is one of the largest sections in the collection, containing at least thirty-two booklets.

Later on color photography became the dominant tool for illustration. Now advertisers tempted the cook with mouth-watering, irresistible, full-color pictures of how the recipes looked when prepared. *The Avocado Bravo* produced by The California Avocado Advisory Board in 1957 and *Fleischmann’s New Treasury of Yeast Baking*, issued in 1968 by Standard Brands Incorporated, are just two examples of the impressive use of photographs in the Strandberg cookery booklets.

Occasionally the charm of the artwork is not beauty, but humor. *The New Way To Cook Is with Karo!* uses the light-hearted approach to cooking. On page twenty-nine, a cartoon-style chef hangs



Fleischmann’s New Treasury of Yeast Baking introduces “Rapidmix” a new development in baking that allows the cook to produce delectable breads without the bother of dissolving yeast in warm water.



48 Tasty Recipes Made with Sunshine Pimientos promises a “thrilling new taste experience” for all those who cook with them.

by his knees from a trapeze clutching—guess what?—a pineapple upside down cake.

Illustrations frequently appeal to a user’s desire for self-improvement—the desire to be successful, efficient, up-to-date, or accepted in society. Sometimes the message is that success can be achieved through association with a dynamic product. For example, *48 Tasty Recipes Made with Sunshine Pimientos* (Pomona Products Co., 1934) shows a sophisticated, attractive couple on the front cover. They are in evening dress and seated at a table with a white linen tablecloth. In the foreground are two large, delectable red pimientos. The diners project a glamour any homemaker might envy. Inside the booklet, the text reinforces the message that pimientos can enhance your lifestyle. “In this book,” the introduction states, “will be found a thrilling new taste experience for all those who have not learned the subtle flavor of *Sunshine Pimientos*. The smartest foods, whether freshly

cooked or leftovers, take on a new richness as well as a more glamorous appearance by the use of ‘Sunshine Pimientos,’ an important flavor-giving ingredient.”

Sunshine Pimiento demonstrates that words as well as images are important factors in persuading the grocery shopper to favor one product over another. Brer Rabbit, for example, promises to help the homemaker when he says in *Brer Rabbit’s Modern Recipes for Modern Living* (Penick & Ford, Ltd. ca 1940s): “Let my old plantation molasses help you with mealtime problems.” *Coconut Dishes That Everybody Loves* (G.F. Corp., 1931), a booklet featuring Baker’s Coconut, impresses the cook with enticing adjectives:

Like the fragrant palm groves and sunny tropic lands where it grows, Baker’s Coconut has a rare sweetness and inviting, delicious glamour, to add to every dish.

Use it for its own distinctive flavor, or combine it with other foods. . . . Sprinkle it in snowy shreds over favorite dishes, or toast it for a crisp, golden garnish. It’s a luscious treat in every form, and tremendously popular with everyone.

Reynolds Metal Company, in its pamphlet *Casual Cooking* (1954), promises the homemaker convenience. “For ease and convenience—as well as sheer good eating—you can’t beat the combination of Reynolds Wrap and a Reynolds Wrap Grill! Foods cooked in their own hot, savory natural juices—all the flavor is sealed in. And no kindling to gather—no firewood to collect—no pots, pans, or dishes to wash either—when you cook the modern Reynolds way.”

The majority of the Strandberg cookery booklets focus on a single type of food or food product—dates, tapioca, baking powder, Karo syrup, chocolate, or cheese. Some of these publications use history and/or legend to great effect in promoting a product. Sybil Henderson, for example, impresses potential date users in her publication *Fresh Date Cookbook* (1968) by telling about the origins of this nutritious food.

She writes: "Dates are one of the oldest fruits cultivated by man and are surrounded by mystery, legend and intrigue. Perhaps this is because they saved the lives of many wandering nomads of the desert, as these migrant tribes lived on diets of dates, milk and honey." In *Magic in Your Glass* (1966), the Wine Advisory Board tells this story about the beginnings of wine: "Six thousand years ago a Persian farmer squeezed a handful of ripe grapes into a gourd. When he came back a few days later to drink the juice, nature had given him wine. To the millions of us who now enjoy wine, it's pleasing to think that it happened this way."

Occasionally the spotlight in a cookery booklet focuses on the history of the company rather than the product. In *Hormel Invites You to Dine* (1939), we learn that George A. Hormel "outgrew his retail meat-market" because the demand for Hormel sausage and Hormel smoked meats was so great. "So in 1891, at Austin, Minnesota, he started in a humble way a little packing plant thinking that this consumer response to his product might carry him through the well-known difficulties of the day. . . . Hormel today manufactures more than 700 high quality meat and soup products, some of which are described in these pages."

In 1955 General Mills Inc. took a totally historic approach in its publication *Gold Medal Jubilee Select Recipes* by chronicling the development of Gold Medal Flour within the context of national events and changes in lifestyles. Spanning the period 1880–1955, "this treasury of recipes" is divided into decades. Introducing the representative recipes for each decade is a page that includes a woman's fashion picture, a significant invention of the age, a chronology of major events during the decade, a popular car, and a listing of the most popular songs. On page fifteen, *Gold Medal Jubilee Select Recipes* even entertains the reader with this tale about the origins of the waffle:

The first waffle dates back to the Crusades. There is a story of Lady Ermintrude who greeted her knight with some special oat cakes. However, he accidentally sat on a cake, smashing it flat and leaving its surface marked with the pattern of his



This page reveals a decision in 1955 by General Mills, Inc. to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Gold Medal Flour with a booklet that focused on the history of the product and the country.

armor. She feared the cake was ruined, but he ate it anyway with a firkin of Devon Butter. The indentations caught and held the butter, and Sir Giles was delighted. Afterward, he put on his armor every Friday night and sat on the cakes!

To build its cookbook collection, the California State Library has endeavored to acquire every cookbook published in California or with a California theme. California agricultural themes are plentiful, drawing upon the diversity of the country's number one state in agricultural production. In the Strandberg collection, one finds *The Story of California Oranges and Lemons by the Sunkist Growers* (1936), *Apple Cider Recipes* (1968) by S. Martinelli & Company of Watsonville, and *How Ten Food Editors Serve California Limas* (ca 1930s). There are six recipe



California boasts the largest raisin-growing region in the world. This array of raisin dishes forms the back cover of a 1940s publication issued by Sun-Maid Raisin Growers.

collections alone published by the Wine Advisory Board in San Francisco, California, including one with the joyful title *Magic in Your Glass* (1966). These are only a few among many cookery booklets in the Strandberg collection that boast of California's bounty.

Not all of the booklets in the collection, however, were generated by food producers or manufacturers. Some came from companies that produce appliances, cookware, utensils, or cooking aids. *Getting the Most Out of Foods* by Corning Glass Works (ca 1930s) is a compilation of recipes to be cooked in Pyrex ovenware. Kelvinator, Division of Nash-Kelvinator Corporation (ca 1944), created a recipe booklet in which every dish requires chilling or storing in a Kelvinator refrigerator. One of the most entertaining of these "equipment" booklets is *All about Garnishes* prepared by EKCO Housewares Company in 1966. The booklet describes and illustrates in color everything from peelers to

mincer-choppers from grapefruit knives to pastry cutter-crimpers. EKCO boasts in the introduction, "We make just about every kitchen tool, gadget, beater, opener, strainer, mixing bowl, knife, pot and pan you could possibly need to cook with and make meal-time preparation run smoothly."

In contrast, government publications in the collection provide a public service instead of advertising a product. Such entities as the United States Department of Agriculture and the University of California College of Agriculture produced plain, straightforward, informative publications. Common topics found in the collection's government publications are food safety and preservation techniques, such as freezing, pickling, and home canning. Kathleen Strandberg, herself, was an expert home canner. She assembled eighteen titles in the category "Canning & Food Preservation," published both by government agencies and businesses. According to Lynn Strandberg, her mother canned the best apricots she has ever tasted. In the mid-1950s Kathleen won blue ribbons at the San Mateo County Fair for some of her canning entries.

Kathleen Strandberg's professional interest in diet and nutrition is reflected in the collection as well. In a category entitled "Special Diet," there are twenty-three listings for publications that deal with low calorie and low sodium diets, feeding sick patients, diets for diabetics, and diets for people at risk from heart disease, among other health-related topics. The publishers of the "Special Diet" booklets are mostly pharmaceutical companies and associations like the American Dietetic Association and the American Heart Association. A few of these booklets were published by The Scripps Metabolic Clinic. For the layman, probably the most appealing item in this category is *A Collection of Recipes Used in Stanford University Hospital* (1933). Authored by Lottie B. Sloan and Imogene Calderwood, this compilation is filled with gourmet recipes that lucky patients enjoyed at that time. If you weren't too sick, you might be offered Rhubarb Bavaroise, Charlotte Style, a dessert made with gelatine, rhubarb, orange marmalade, cream, and lady fingers.

While preparing this article, I described the Strandberg Collection to a friend. Her face lit up, and she asked, "Does it have a little booklet in it that has coconut frosted-birthday cake recipes cut in the shape of animals?" I replied, "As a matter of fact, it does!" It is a collection that invites exploration for the pleasure of it. I have my own favorite: *Canadian Cuisine: Native Foods and Some Mouth-watering Ways To Prepare Them*. This leaflet was published by the Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Ottawa, Canada, in 1967. I like it for its beautiful graphic design, romantically titled recipes, and one startling recipe. Each chapter in the leaflet is devoted to a different province. Under the Province of Alberta are "Medicine Hat Dandelion Wine" and "Sweetgrass Buffalo and Beer Pie," which speak to me of a colorful and faraway place. When I turned to the section on Newfoundland, I found a recipe for "Port aux Basque Flipper Pie." "What kind of flippers?" I asked myself. The pamphlet explained: "During April and May the flippers of young harp seals are used to make pie. Many organizations have flipper pie suppers where pies several feet in diameter and holding 15 to 20 pounds of seal meat and gallons of vegetables are served."

Lynn Strandberg said that her mother was a person who was very well organized and good at labeling and filing. Indeed, Kathleen Strandberg maintained her mammoth cookery booklet collection in mint condition and near-perfect order. The booklets were kept in the shipping envelopes or placed in plain manila envelopes. Kathleen listed the titles on the outside in red pencil along with a date. She indicated a general category in the upper right hand corner, categories like soups, poultry, salads, breads, etc. Under each title, she summarized the types of recipes: beverages, breads, main dishes, vegetables, desserts.

Booklets in the collection are in the process of being individually catalogued. You may view them in the California History Room of the California State Library, but they do not circulate.

If one were to choose a single booklet in the collection that captures the nature of cooking in California and the nation, it might be *How To Be Worldly . . . (without leaving your kitchen)*,

published in 1964 by Contadina Division, Carnation Company, Los Angeles, California. It features Italian, Mexican and Creole cooking, as well as American cooking. The booklet states:

We've been called breezy and boisterous, automated and always in a hurry. We have shiny push-button ranges, convenience foods and short-cuts.

Some say we have no traditions in food! They say we're just as old-fashioned as home-made apple pie. We think new!

We've built our own traditions in this jet age. We've accepted ideas from around the world. We've expanded our horizons to include foods from other countries, then adapted them to our own plentiful year-round supplies. Our world of foods runs the gamut from special dinners with beautiful linen, wine, and crystal shining by candlelight to the backyard Bar-B-Que! ■■



The stunning use of colored photographs sharpens the appetite for avocados in this 1975 booklet produced by the California Avocado Advisory Board.

Memories of a Survivor from the Sinking of the *USS YMS-350*, July 2, 1944

By Mead B. Kibbey

*F*irst a little background information on our ship and myself: The *USS YMS-350* (Yard Mine Sweeper) was a small (136 feet long and 300 tons) wooden minesweeper that had been launched in Florida 298 days before. In it, we had been in tropical storms off Florida, crossed the North Atlantic on convoy duty, fought off German E-boats while towing in the English Channel, swept mines off Omaha Beach hours before the first D-Day landings, we rescued American soldiers from a sinking LCT (Landing Craft, Tank) as battleships fired over us at German artillery positions, and watched the *USS Osprey* strike a mine and sink near us. Through it all, our ship had been like a strong and dependable friend, always saving the lives of others and sheltering those who served in her. Even in death she maintained a sort of dignity with her oil-soaked flag still flying as her broken hull sank stern-first into the sea off Cherbourg.

I was a Lieutenant Junior Grade in the Naval Reserve qualified for deck and engineering duty and served as the ship's executive officer throughout its short life. In 1938, as a freshman at UC Berkeley, I had entered the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps and later graduated with a BS in Mechanical Engineering majoring in Naval Architecture. Although only 22 years old at the time of the sinking, I had been involved with ships and the Navy for 6 years. The oldest man on our ship was 30.

*Mead B. Kibbey is a member of the Foundation's board of directors and author of several important books on California photography and Sacramento history. His article originally appeared in the Summer 2003 issue of *The Silent Defenders*, a journal published by the Naval Warfare Association. The Library actively solicits experiences of California veterans for its special collections.*

In late June 1944, the port of Cherbourg had become of great interest and potential value to the Allies because storms had ruined the artificial ports established off the beaches during the Normandy invasion. The port, and particularly its relatively shallow northern approaches, was very heavily mined, which rendered it useless to Allied Armies, even though they occupied the city and were working on the local forts. On the morning of July 2, 1944, we had joined a large Allied Naval effort to sweep channels to the harbor and during these sweeps we were a little threatened by German cannon fire. This threat was kept "little" by a number of large ships



Mead Kibbey, Lt.(jg) USNR, C. O. USS YMS 435, Seattle, 15 Mar. 1945

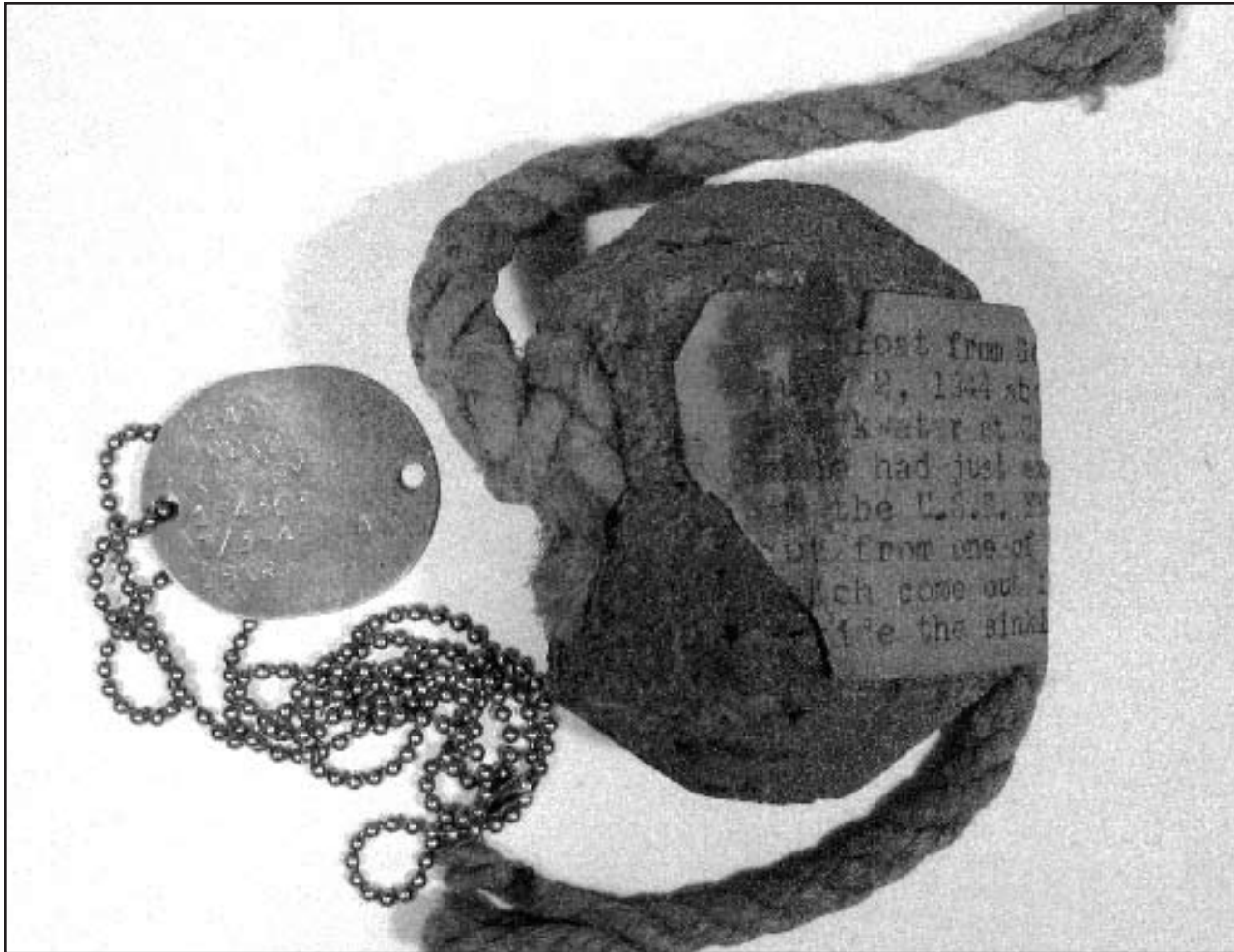


GERMAN COASTAL GUN BUNKER BEHIND OMAHA BEACH

PHOTO TAKEN ON JUNE 13, 2001 BY MEAD KIBBEY

This bunker protected a cannon of about six-inch caliber that could train approximately 135 degrees from left to right, and elevated for firing miles over the beach out to sea. The bunker was built of heavily reinforced concrete with a dome-shaped cover over ten feet thick. Living space for its crew and ammunition storage areas were located in the same structure. The small dents and nicks show it had been hit by hundreds of small fragments without being destroyed. It was one of a line of similar positions located about one half mile behind the beach cliffs, where observers, connected by underground telephone lines to the guns, could transmit target information.

Mead Kibbey, executive officer on the minesweeper YMS-350, recalls, "When we swept mines in darkness just before the invasion, these guns did not fire at us, and after the landing craft appeared, they concentrated their fire on them. This fire was quickly answered by the five-inch guns of our destroyers near the beach, and soon after by fire from the main batteries of cruisers and battleships a mile or two out. Their projectiles sounded like freight cars passing over us. We could also see dive-bombers attacking these bunkers."



FLOAT FROM ONE LINE TO SNAG MINE

Snag mines were dropped to the bottom and detonated by a slight pull (said to be about twenty-five lbs.) on any one of about ten or twenty rope lines attached to the mine. These lines were considerably longer than the water depth and had cork floats attached to them. They spread out like an octopus on the surface, were difficult to see because both the lines and floats were dyed green, and became tangled with the hull of any passing ship.

On July 2, 1944 a mine exploded under the stern of the USS YMS-350. Within two minutes, the ship turned on its side and started to sink by the stern. John Hamilton, Electrician's Mate Third Class and the executive officer, Lt.(jg) Mead Kibbey, climbed over the rail and sat on the starboard side of the hull in their life jackets waiting for the ship to sink out from under them. Just then, they noticed a length of snag line floating next to their feet and Kibbey took out his pocketknife and cut off one of the floats and a bit of the line. He saved the float. It is pictured here next to his "dog tag" to give an idea of size.

The ship sank a minute later, and Hamilton and Kibbey swam about fifty yards to a British Motor Minesweeper (HMML 137) commanded by Lt. Brendan Maher RNVR. Years later in a conversation with Lt.(jg) Kibbey, Lt. Maher mentioned that after they entered the port of Cherbourg, they encountered many more snag mines. They "swept" these using advanced technology employing two men in a rowboat who would tie a long line to one of the snag mine floats, carefully pay out the line as they rowed about 150 yards away. At that point, one would continue rowing while the other gave a huge pull on the line and a plume of water and mud would shoot up as the mine detonated!

that fired big guns over us at any muzzle flashes they could see on the shore. We kept an eye on the concrete forts, but as the day wore on, the Germans seemed to realize that shooting at us was not a very safe proposition. As far as I know, no minesweepers fired their three-inch guns possibly because their flashes might have appealed to the target-hungry big guys further out. By 4:00 p.m., we had seen a large number of mines "lifted" and some minesweepers damaged in the process. In addition, a very heavy tidal crosscurrent had developed, setting us toward the shore.

Minesweeping is somewhat like towing a heavy rake at the end of several hundred feet of wire. We had sweep cables out on both sides slowing us to around six knots, but in still water the ship would have maintained a course over the bottom corresponding to the compass bearing being steered. In a variable three to five knot tidal crosscurrent, the ship had to steer a course from 20 to 45 degrees away from its actual direction along the bottom, and this made accurate determination of the ship's position extremely difficult. All the sweepers were acutely aware of the pressing need to open the port so that heavy equipment and supplies could reach our troops, and we all crowded the edge to sweep the largest possible area in each successive pass. If it had been a clearance sweep around an operating harbor, we would have confined sweeping to periods of slack water. At Cherbourg the *USS YMS-350* kept sweeping when mines were exploding close astern, and when under less urgent conditions, we would have turned out to sea or even cut our sweep lines.

In preparation for the invasion in early June, we had obtained storage space ashore in England and placed some of our extra clothing and valuables there. A couple of weeks later we returned for more supplies and ammunition and, figuring that the possibility of being sunk was reduced, we brought the stored material back aboard. Despite this feeling of confidence, I took a small baking powder can, soldered on two lugs for a neck sling and kept a roll of black electrician's tape with it to make the lid watertight. The can was filled with rolls of exposed 35m/m film of the invasion and

several little bundles of crew members' money and photos. It was kept in the middle of the wardroom table at all times with the idea that if we sank, one of the officers could put the sling around his neck before abandoning the ship.

I had been aft looking at the floats at the outer ends of the sweeping cables, and taking pictures of the explosions. I then went up on the bridge to check our charted location. I was wearing a good kapok-filled Navy life jacket (as we all did) and bent over the chart table facing aft, when there was a deep roaring explosion. I was thrown against the overhead and then fell stunned to the deck amid broken glass and small equipment. I regained consciousness almost immediately, but found the helmsman on top of me. I told him to get off me to no avail and after rolling from under him, I realized that, although he was wearing a helmet, he apparently had broken his neck when he hit the overhead standing up and was dead. Within about twenty seconds, I stood up, saw we were not moving forward, so steering was unnecessary, and then looked aft from the port over the chart table. The ship was still level with a few feet of the stern and the depth charge racks in place, but forward of that almost to the king post was a huge hole filled with water. The heavy minesweeping winches apparently had gone up and then dropped through the hull. I later learned that fifteen of the crew had been blown overboard and of our crew of thirty, ten were seriously wounded and nine killed or missing.

The Commanding Officer, Lt.(jg) George Hammer, with Yeoman Ron Alexander, was placing classified documents in weighted bags and throwing them overboard with the lead covered code books. Our gunnery officer went aft along the narrow remaining deck with a gunner's mate to be sure the depth charges were set on "Safe," and would not explode under survivors in the water as the ship sank. It appeared the bulkhead between the aft and forward engine rooms was holding, and the ship might be saved if the generators and bilge pumps in the forward space could be started. I went down there with Ensign Steve Petro and Electrician's Mate John Hamilton, but we quickly realized that the bulkhead was



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL

The medal was ordinarily given for meritorious acts involving saving lives in non-combat circumstances and is apparently quite rare. To Mead Kibbey, swimming around in the vicinity of a sinking ship with depth charges attached, surrounded by unexploded mines, while battleships and cruisers lobbed shells overhead into enemy forts it seemed like a very combative environment at the time. Medals of any kind were seldom if ever given to minesweeping people. In his research Kibbey discovered only two: one for the Pacific and this one in Europe. When told of his citation Kibbey said, "I was like Cleopatra who said as she met Mark Anthony, "I'm not prone to argue."

A few weeks after the sinking of the USS YMS-350, as Lt.(jg)Kibbey was about to take command of the USS YMS-435 he received a letter signed by Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, commencing with the words:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL to

LIEUTENANT MEAD BROKAW KIBBEY
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE
for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For heroic conduct in effecting the rescue of two men serving with him on board the USS YMS-350, when that vessel was sunk off the Coast of France, on July 2, 1944."

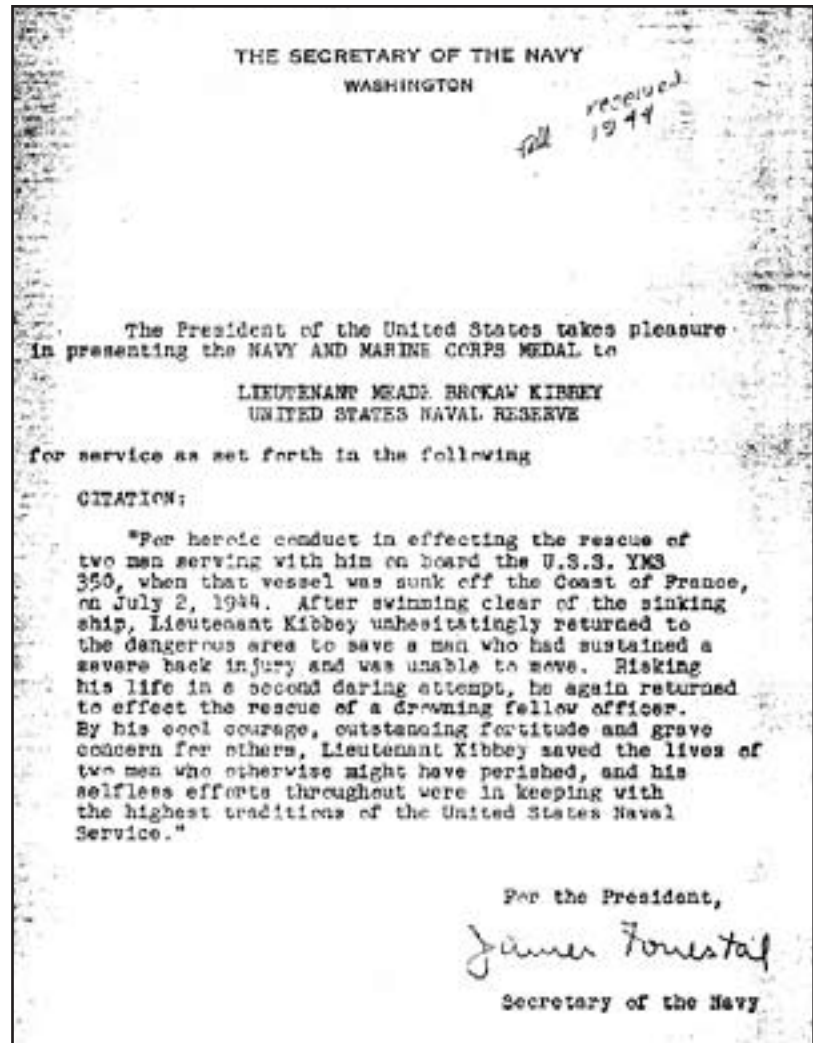
Kibbey observed, "In the fifty-nine years since I got this citation, I have never met anyone else who received the Navy and Marine Corps Medal in WW II."

leaking heavily and as the ship began heeling to port, we scrambled up on deck again. By this time, perhaps three minutes after the explosion, we could hear crockery and other items crashing inside the hull, and because both Hamilton and I had slight injuries, we crawled over the starboard gunwale opposite the wardroom and sat on the side of the ship waiting for it to sink out from under us. The cause of our destruction became apparent when we noticed a long strand of half inch flaxen line with two-inch cork floats about a foot apart, floating next to the hull. This was a detonating line from a snag mine which the Germans planted to wrap around any projection on a passing minesweeper. I quickly got out my pocketknife and cut off about six inches of the line and one of the floats and saved it in my life jacket thinking it would be of great interest to the Navy. When I later got back to Washington they were very polite, but seemed to know all about snag mines and suggested I might like to keep it as a souvenir.

We had often heard stories of the suction of a sinking ship pulling survivors under and we agreed that when we could feel the water reach our waists, we would take and hold deep breaths, giving us added buoyancy to bring us to the surface. The stories must have been about far larger ships because the *YMS-350* slowly went down by the stern and deposited us gently in the sea with our deep breaths unneeded. As we swam away, our eyes began burning from the diesel fuel on the surface and we could see that we were about equidistant from an American PT boat and a small British Motor Minesweeper. The latter vessel had rigged a climbing net over the side and was helping our people aboard, but the real deciding factor in setting our course was when I pointed out to Hamilton that British ships carried RUM for their crew, and might share some with rescued survivors. We turned back to take a last look at our sinking faithful friend and I sadly

realized that in the wild final moments, I had left the watertight can full of film and little treasures on the wardroom table where it still may be.

Aboard the rescue ship, *HMML 137*, we were given the anticipated refreshment and some blankets. Some of our dead and wounded were also aboard and assisted by their very experienced sick berth attendant (British pharmacist mate), we tried to comfort the survivors. I still remember calling his attention to one of our seriously wounded men, Melvin C. Inkle, Ships Cook, First Class USN. The pharmacist mate had passed him by although in touching Inkle's cheek, I felt warmth. The pharmacist said he'd check later, but in the North Sea service, he had learned that usually the bodies of living victims tried to conserve heat within, and their faces felt cold. In those who had recently died, the small capillaries



in the skin were open and the skin was warm. Unfortunately his experience was correct, and Inkle lies buried with two other crew members in the huge American military cemetery at Cambridge, England.

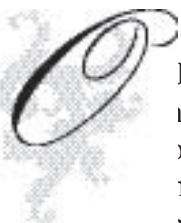
We were transferred to an American ship and taken to England where the officers went to a receiving facility, the enlisted survivors to Navy barracks, the wounded to hospitals, and the dead to a facility for thousands of servicemen killed in combat. Because our four officers had only oil-soaked clothes, we were given Army privates' uniforms with no insignia of any rank and, as I remember, a small advance against our pay as "walking-around-money." We had to wait a few days there and were then moved to Liverpool where we boarded a nearly empty troop-transport for the trip to New York. This ship normally carried three or four thousand soldiers, and on this return there were only about 200 passengers. The bunks were arranged five high, but we all slept in cabins for colonels and generals, and ate with the crew or in the wardroom, despite our weird uniforms.

The small 35mm camera (a Kodak Retina I) I had carried since 1939 was in another pocket of my life jacket and was soggy with oil and sea water. I placed it promptly in a can of fresh water and sent it from England to the Kodak factory in Rochester, New York with a letter explaining where it had been and why it needed an overhaul. Only a few weeks later, it was returned to me when I was at the Navy Department in Washington with Lt.(jg) Hammer writing reports and letters of condolence. The lengthy invoice from Kodak outlined repair items showing they had virtually rebuilt the camera, and on the back was the cost including return postage. The amount charged was Zero and below was a small note in feminine handwriting reading "You have done more for us than we can do for you. Thank you." In the fifty-nine years since I read those kind words, I have bought literally thousands of rolls of film and reams of photo paper, and every single package has borne the word "Kodak."

At about the same time of day as the sinking occurred, I returned to the site fifty-seven years later, on June 12, 2001, with my wife and five other family members. We were on a very large Pacific & Orient channel ferry going from Portsmouth to Cherbourg, and I spoke to a young officer to ask if I could borrow a chart to show my family where the *YMS-350* sank. He asked us to wait a moment while he went to the bridge. He came back a few minutes later and asked my daughter and me to come to the bridge to see the captain. He proved to be very interested and mentioned that over the years, he had brought tens of thousands of passengers to Cherbourg, but never one whose ship had sunk there in WW II. The charts were laid out on a table, and, because up to the moment of the sinking, we had been taking bearings on the entrance forts, I was able to show him almost the exact spot where it had occurred. He quickly found a small "X" representing the sunken wreck, and said it would only be a couple of minutes out of their usual route if I'd like to pass again over that point. He asked where we were all sitting and told us that the same young officer would come down shortly and take us out on a small balcony ordinarily used when docking the ship. The moment came, and as we stood outside we could see the captain on the bridge give our officer a signal that at that moment we were over the remains of the *USS YMS-350*. There was not a dry eye among us as we all thought of the Navy men who had died there in the service of their country so long ago. ■

The Loss of *YMS-350*: As Seen From *HMML 137*

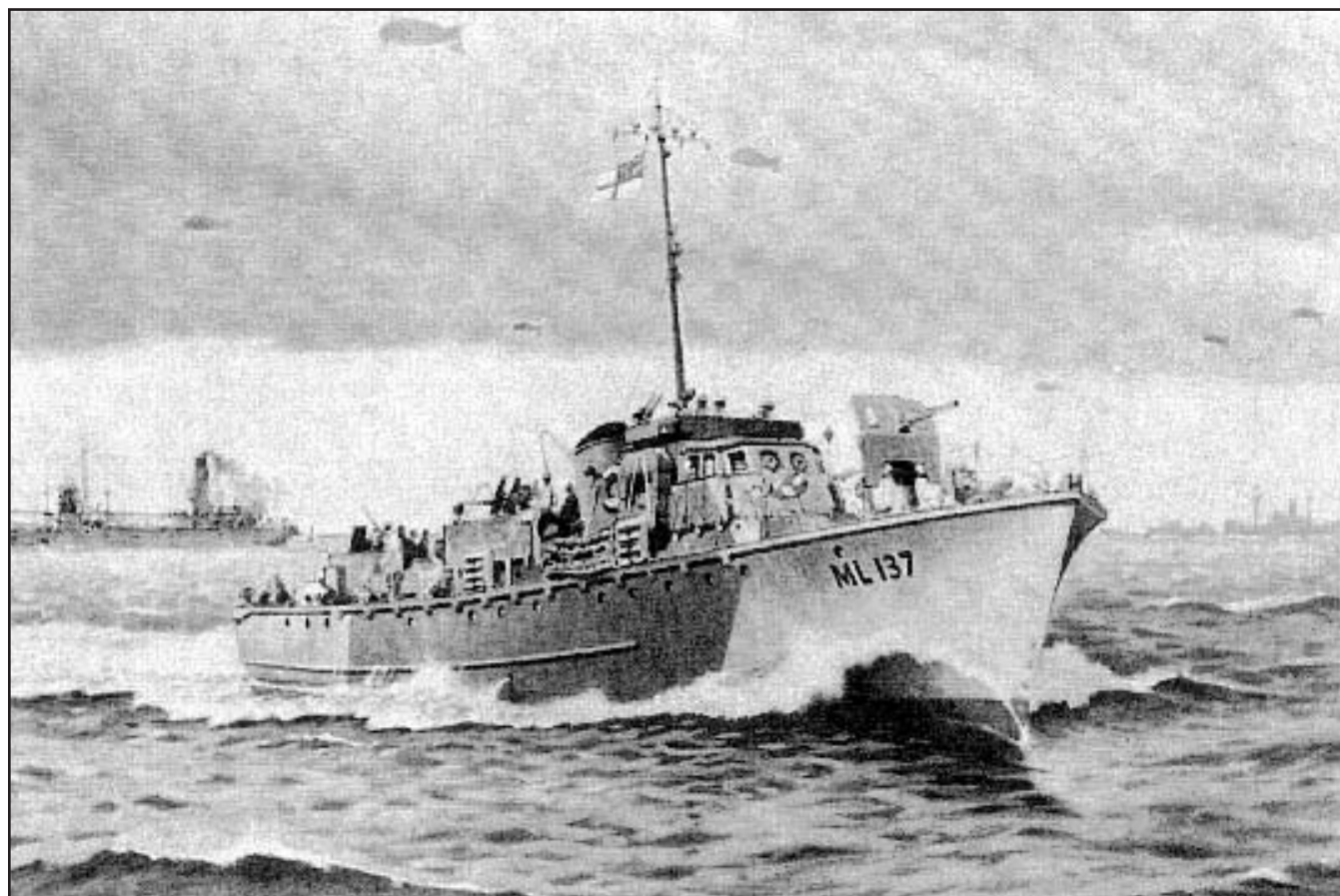
By *Brendan A. Maher, Lieutenant RNVR (ret'd)*



June 26, 1944 the German garrison at Cherbourg surrendered to the VII Corps of the U.S. Army, under the command of General J. Lawton Collins.

With the German surrender, the Allies had secured a major port through which to supply the land and air forces engaged in the liberation of Europe. Cherbourg harbor had been mined with every known type of mine: magnetic, acoustic,

pressure, and contact mines – with and without snag-lines. These had been laid throughout the inner harbor and in extensive minefields outside the great breakwater that protects the entrance. To clear these, Allied forces swept for eighty-five days before the approaches to the port were completely cleared. The task was urgent and time was of the essence. It was under these circumstances that the *HMML* (His Majesty's



Dr. Maher is currently an Edward C. Henderson Research Professor at Harvard University and has written several books in his field of expertise. He is also the author of the book A Passage to Sword Beach: Minesweeping in the Royal Navy.

Motor Launch) 137 of the British Royal Navy met *YMS-350* of the United State Navy.

ML 137 was a ship of the Fairmile "B" Type of Motor Launch. More than 500 of these had been built in the United Kingdom and Canada during the war. They were wooden-hulled, one hundred and twelve feet long, powered by twin gasoline motors, capable of a maximum speed of twenty knots. They carried a ship's company of two or three officers and fourteen to sixteen men. These vessels served in many theaters of war and in many capacities, including convoy escort, air-sea rescue, mine laying, and minesweeping. The twelve *MLs* of the Fifth Flotilla had been fitted out for wire-sweeping contact mines. The relatively shallow draft of an *ML* (4'9") rendered it especially suited to inshore sweeping. In the years leading up to the invasion of Normandy, the flotilla had been based in Dover. From Dover sweeping operations had been carried out in the Channel, and—when fog cover permitted—in close to the French coast. On D-Day itself, the flotilla led a sweep of the invasion channels, clearing the water to depths that would permit the fleet minesweepers to clear to the greater depth necessary for the assault craft that followed. *ML 137* and *141* led the sweeping of Channel 9 through which British troops would pass to land on Sword Beach.

On July 2, 1944 at 10:25 a.m., *MLs 137, 143, and 257* arrived outside the breakwater at Cherbourg, to await orders to begin sweeping. *ML 137* and *257* tied up alongside *143*, which had anchored. Hardly had the lines been secured when the dull shudder and boom of an exploding mine signaled the destruction of the British minesweeper *MMS 1019*. We were immediately under way at speed to rescue survivors. It was a melancholy scene. Litter and wreckage of all kinds was rising and falling on the oily surface of the water. Survivors were clinging to floating furniture, mess tables, oars, and packing cases, as a small boat from another minesweeper began to pick them up. Packages of cigarettes sodden with diesel oil lolled sluggishly about us while parts of uniforms, letters, photographs, and other personal belongings drifted out with the spreading patch of

oil. In the middle of the patch was one remaining survivor, his face and hair blackened with oil, shouting desperately "Help, help, for God's sake." We picked him up and took him to join the other survivors who were now safely aboard the minesweeper that had rescued them.

We returned to our mooring and passed the afternoon to a background of intermittent explosions from mines being swept by US minesweepers some distance away. Shortly after supper, I was standing at the top of the Wardroom companion ladder watching mines exploding astern of a *YMS*, when suddenly she began to heel over. An "S.O.S." flicked from the signal lantern on her bridge. As we and *ML 257* rushed to get under way to help, she began a slow graceful list to port, then to settle by the stern. We hove to as close as we could get, lowered the scrambling nets and began throwing life preservers over the side. On the upper works of the *YMS* I could see an officer methodically put documents into the lead-lined disposal bag, throw it carefully into the water and then, as the water level rose around him, start swimming in our direction. As the bow of the minesweeper rose steeply before the final plunge to the bottom, the pendant number "*YMS-350*" appeared large and clear. In a few seconds it had disappeared forever.

In the meantime, crewmen of the *ML 137* had gone down the scrambling nets to help survivors to climb aboard. The first survivors were already aboard and been taken below, where they were wrapped in blankets and given a tot of Navy rum. Looking over the starboard side, I saw that a crewman, Ordinary Seaman Ring, was in the water at the foot of the net holding up a survivor who was injured and could not climb. Ring was using one arm to prevent the survivor from sinking and the other arm to hold onto the net himself. Clearly Ring was already tired and could not do any more than this. I went down the net to relieve him, bringing a rope to tie around the injured man so that he could be hauled up the net and aboard from above. The injured man was in great pain, and in fear that his time had come. As he shouted, "Jesus, I'm dying," I managed to get the rope around his waist, loop him into it with a bowline,

and gave the order to hoist him aboard. As he was hauled up the net, my own grip slackened, and I fell the rest of the way and submerged into the oily water. Coming back up to the surface, I was relieved to find that a cork life jacket does indeed work well. The pleasure of this discovery was dampened by the further discovery that my cap had floated off my head as I submerged and was now some distance away. It floated into the range of vision of the officer already mentioned, who was close to reaching the net. Politely declining any offer of assistance, he changed course for the cap, picked it up, and returning to the net, pitched it safely on board. I have it still.

Other survivors were being picked up by *ML* 257 and other ships in the vicinity, and we got under way at top speed to deliver ours to a U.S. warship that was standing off to seaward, where they could receive the care of the doctor and pharmacists mates. I did not record the name or pendant number of the ship, but from other reports, it may perhaps have been the minelayer *USS Miantinomoh* (CM 10), sunk two months later by a mine off Le Harve. I have looked at a photograph of the *Miantinomoh*, and it does not look at all familiar. It was a converted merchant ship, whereas the ship to which we delivered survivors looked more like a Destroyer Escort.

As we returned to the place of our original anchorage, daylight was already beginning to fail. The Commanding Officer (Lieutenant. L.J. Hutchins, Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve) decided that it would be worthwhile to return to the debris of *YMS-350* to see if by any chance there might be a remaining survivor, perhaps too seriously injured to have been able to call out. Very slowly and cautiously *ML 137* moved through the oil and floating debris, a crewman at the bow prodding every piece gently with a boat hook to see what might lie trapped beneath it. We were on the point of giving up when the boat hook turned up a floating life preserver barely visible just below the surface of the water. It rolled slowly over to reveal that it supported the body of a man who was totally submerged, possibly since the time of the explosion.

He was lifted on board and laid on the deck, face down. His pale face was streaked with oil. There was no sign of life, no pulse, no breathing, no movement. The C.O. set course for the U.S. warship, moving slowly through the minefield. On an impulse, perhaps, the C.O. began to exert repeated pressure on the man's back, leaning forward to push and backward to release. With each push oil and water spewed from the man's mouth. When Hutchins tired the First Lieutenant (Sub-Lieut. P. I. McDowell, RNVR) took over. He in turn was relieved by another crew member, and so on. Suddenly the man's body shuddered and he drew a breath. For a few seconds nothing happened. Then came another breath, and another, and another. Ignoring the minefield we turned up to top speed and set course for the U.S. warship still visible on the near horizon. A few minutes later our survivor was transferred to waiting hands and to the medical care that might help.

The following day we met the U.S. ship at sea and inquired about the fate of our survivor. The reply signal told us that he was still alive and breathing. The exigencies of the service took us to other areas and other minefields, including the clearance of Brest harbor by a joint United States Navy and Royal Navy force of minesweepers. There were YMSs there too, but we never encountered any of the survivors of *YMS-350* again. ■



LT. BRENDAN MAHER'S NORMANDY INVASION HAT

Lt. Brendan Maher RNVR wore this officer's hat as he commanded the British Motor Minesweeper HMML 137 during the Normandy Invasion and later, on July 2, 1944, when the seaward approaches to Cherbourg were being cleared of mines. Late in the afternoon of that day, he observed the USS YMS-350 being struck by a mine explosion under its stern and immediately went to rescue survivors. The YMS sank rapidly with many casualties, but a number of its crewmen reached the ML 137 and were assisted aboard. Some were so weakened that they were having great difficulty climbing the nets and Lt. Maher and one of his crew entered the water to help them up. After having several drinks of seawater laced with diesel fuel and getting the wounded aboard, Lt. Maher returned to the deck and sadly noted that his hat had fallen off and was floating away like a tiny boat.

The YMS's executive officer, Lt.(jg) Mead Kibbey USNR had been helping in the water and realized the importance of a naval officer's hat, particularly when it belonged to a commanding officer who had worn it through such perilous times. The hat was moving slowly, and Kibbey quickly overtook it, swam back, and tossed it to Lt. Maher. After an hour or two during which our dead comrades were identified and delivered to a special American ship, the rest of the crew members were placed on a ship bound for England. Lt. Maher returned to minesweeping off France and the surviving men of the YMS-350 returned to hospitals or further duty with the U.S. Navy, three of the officers to minesweepers in the Pacific and one to the East Coast.

Fifty-four years later Lt. Maher was nearing the end of an illustrious career as a Harvard University professor when he learned of Kibbey's location in California and gave him a telephone call. Maher mentioned they had rescued some survivors of the sinking, including one officer. Kibbey said that must have been a different British ship, because there were two officers in his group, but he did remember rescuing an officer's hat. Maher instantly replied, "That was MY HAT!"

When Lt. Maher retired the following year, his colleagues gave him the beautiful, inscribed naval officer's sea chest pictured here with his Invasion hat on top, still serviceable fifty-five years after its thwarted attempt to land in France alone.

EPILOGUE

*During the many years that have passed since then, I sometimes wondered what had happened to our unknown U.S. sailor. I hoped that he was still alive and wondered if he could have any idea of how he had been saved. I imagined that the last thing he would have known was the explosion that sank YMS-350 — and then a blank — and then coming back to consciousness in the sickbay of the ship to which we had delivered him. These speculations remained at the back of my mind until the publication of my book *A Passage to Sword Beach* by the U.S. Naval Institute. Shortly after it appeared, I began to receive letters from both sides of the Atlantic from former shipmates and others who had taken part in the various events described in the book. These stirred the hope that there might be survivors of the YMS-350 still alive, and some way to find out what had happened to them. Happening across an announcement of a reunion of veterans of YMSs that served in WW II, I found the phone number of the organizer. I called him. He put me in touch*

with several survivors. One of these was the Yeoman, Ronald Alexander, who helped with the attempt to identify the man who had come back to life. We concluded that it must have been Sterling D. Shaffer, Ships Cook Second Class. Following this lead and with the help of a member of the National Minesweepers Association, I finally learned, sadly, that Sterling Shaffer had lived only a few days after his rescue, becoming one of the ten men of YMS 350 who died while doing their hazardous duty. Through the same connections, I managed to find the executive officer, Lt.(jg) Mead Kibbey, a gallant officer who risked his own life to return to the wreckage twice to rescue men who were in danger of drowning. Having done that he then took the time to rescue my cap! He has his own story to tell of the bravery and selflessness of the fine ship's company of a fine ship. I raise my cap to him and his shipmates for their coolness and courage in mortal danger. ■■

1930 U.S. Census Now at Sutro Library

By Peter Dolgenos



Genealogists who are the most frequent users of the Sutro Library, California State Library's branch in San Francisco, have long found the United States Census perhaps their single most important research tool. Now the Sutro has further enhanced its patrons' research capabilities by acquiring the 1930 census—all 2,668 reels of it. While the statistical data compiled from

census records are published immediately, the actual records are not released for seventy years for privacy reasons.

A WIDE VARIETY OF QUESTIONS

Article I, Section 2 of the United States Constitution provides that "representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this



Census Bureau worker operates a Hollerith Pantograph machine.



Peter Dolgenos is a reference librarian at the California State Library's Sutro Library Branch in San Francisco.



An 1860 Saturday Evening Post drawing lampoons census marshals.

Union, according to their respective numbers.” In order to calculate the population of each state, the section further states, “The actual Enumeration [census] shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such manner as they shall by Law direct.” The U.S. was the first nation to conduct censuses on such a regular basis.

The earliest census records simply listed the number of people in each household, separating them by age, sex, and free or slave. Only the head of household—in those sexist days, usually the

husband/father—was named. Eighteen fifty was the first year when each inhabitant received a separate entry (except for slaves, where only the master’s name was given). And over the years, a wide variety of questions were added to the census form, covering such matters as marital status, ethnicity, citizenship, and health. (This process was lampooned in above figure.) By 1930, there were thirty-two separate questions on the form.

At some time after April 1, 1930 (the designated ‘census day’), the enumerators visited the Brooklyn, New York, home of the author’s great-



An enumerator asks questions of a woman who did not return her census form in 1930, as her 10 children look on.

grandfather, Henry Bierman. The census shows what they found. Henry owned his home, which was worth \$12,000, and he had a radio (radio broadcasting for entertainment had begun in the previous decade). He was male, white, 64 years old, and married—his first marriage had taken place at age 22. He was not a student but was able to read and write. He was born in Poland, and his father and mother had been born in Russia and Poland, respectively. (Poland had only become independent in 1918; in earlier censuses, Henry had given his birthplace as Austria.) His native tongue was Yiddish, but he was able to speak English. Henry had arrived in this country in 1883 and was a naturalized citizen.

Because Henry was retired, his occupation is given as “None” and the column headed “Whether actually at work yesterday or the last regular working day” was left blank. The latter question was especially important in 1930 because the country was sliding into the Great Depression. All but one of the heads of household on Henry’s block, however, were employed.

Finally, Henry had never served in the military. His neighbor Jack Kerner, however, had served in the World War (which was entered in the census form as “WW”). The war had not yet received the numeral “I,” because World War II hadn’t happened yet.

P624	HEAD OF FAMILY Presley Jessie D		E.D. 16	SHEET 29
COLOR W	AGE 34	BIRTHPLACE	VOL. 36	
COUNTY Lee		CITY		
OTHER MEMBERS OF FAMILY				
NAME		RELATIONSHIP	AGE	BIRTHPLACE
Minnie M		W	37	
Vester Lee		S	15	
Vernor E		S	14	
Dolter M		D	10	
Gladys E		D	7	
Nashville L		D	4 9/16	

FORM 10-636
1910 CENSUS INDEX - FAMILY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

A Soundex card for the Presley family.

All of this information was entered, according to a code, into a punched-card reader—a forerunner of the modern computer. This machine was invented by a Census Bureau employee, Herman Hollerith, and was first used in the 1890 enumeration. With his invention, Hollerith founded the Tabulating Machine Company in 1896. His company became part of IBM in 1924.

FINDING AIDS

Like all of the entries in the 1930 census, the entries for Brooklyn are arranged geographically, not by name. The entire nation was divided into “enumeration districts,” and there were 1,939 districts in Brooklyn alone. How, then, does one find the specific entry one wants? The Sutro has several finding aids to help the researcher.

The most commonly used index for 20th-century censuses was developed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930s, to assist people in preparing their Social Security applications. Instead of listing names alphabetically by last name, the WPA index uses a set of codes, called “Soundex,” based on the sound of the name. This is because, even as late as 1930, misspellings or multiple spellings of names were common, especially (but not exclusively) among recent immigrants. My own surname, Dolgenos, was spelled twenty-five different ways in censuses and other early records; all but two of the spellings translate to the Soundex code D425.

The above illustration shows the Soundex card for the family of Jessie Presley, who was living in Lee County, Mississippi. The card lists all



In 1930, an enumerator would go wherever needed to get answers to his or her questions.

of Jessie's family members—including his son Vernon, who in 1935 would father future rock star Elvis. By taking down the county, enumeration district (E.D.) and sheet number from the Soundex card, one can easily find this soon-to-be famous family in the Census.

The 1930 Soundex, however, only covers ten states (all in the South) and parts of two others. To find my great-grandfather Henry Bierman, therefore, I used another finding aid at the Sutro—a street index to enumeration districts in large cities. This can be used in conjunction with the Sutro's extensive collection of city directories from throughout the United States. There was no Brooklyn directory in 1930, so I used the 1933 directory, which told me that Henry lived at 3817 Laurel Avenue (the same house where my father, who was born in 1931, grew up). The street index showed that Laurel Avenue was in enumeration district 24-1459.

For smaller cities and towns and rural areas, the Sutro has enumeration district maps. I knew that another ancestor, Clark Crecelius, lived in Leavenworth, Crawford County, Indiana. A look at a hard-to-read map showed me that Leavenworth was in enumeration district 13-3.

A complete index to the 1930 census is on the Web at www.ancestry.com. One must pay a fee to use it. The Sutro does not have access to [ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), but patrons may use it at many

public libraries, or at any of the Family History Centers run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons).

SUTRO HAS ALL CURRENTLY AVAILABLE CENSUSES

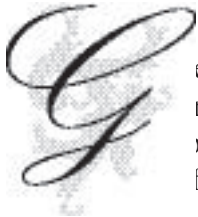
With the acquisition of the 1930 census, the Sutro now has all of the currently available U.S. censuses, beginning with the first one in 1790. The early census records (1790 through 1830) for some states are missing. Almost all of the 1890 census was destroyed in a fire in Washington, D.C., in 1921, but the Sutro has part of a census of Union Army veterans and their widows which was also taken in 1890.

The Sutro also has indexes covering most states in most census years. In addition to 1930, the major exception is 1910—twenty-one states were Soundexed for that year, and the Sutro has indexes covering five others. Most of the Sutro's indexes for years up to 1870 are in paper form; starting in 1880, the indexes are mostly on microfilm and use the Soundex system. The Sutro also has an every-name index to the 1880 census on CD-ROM (the same index is now available online, at www.familysearch.org).

In addition to the census and city directories, genealogical resources at the Sutro include family histories, city and county histories, and some passenger lists for immigrant ships. The library does not own vital records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates (these are kept by state or local government offices), but it does have some indexes to these records, mostly for the Eastern states. The library is located at 480 Winston Drive in San Francisco, close to Stonestown Mall. It is open from 10 to 5, Monday through Friday. ■

Census Resources in the California History Room

By Catherine Hanson-Tracy



ealogists who are specifically looking for their Golden State ancestors can find copies of California census records at the California History Room in Sacramento.

The first federal census conducted in California was taken in 1850, while the Gold Rush was in full swing. Adventurers were pouring into the state, and they were very mobile in their search for the next payday. As a result, the accuracy of the count was questionable. Also, records for the counties of Contra Costa, San Francisco, and Santa Clara were lost or destroyed.

To obtain a more reliable picture of the population, the State of California conducted its own census in 1852, the only one in the state's history. The original census is housed at the State Archives, but it is available on microfilm in the California History Room. Because the microfilm is difficult to read, the Daughters of the American Revolution of California created a transcription of the census, as well as an index. The California Room has both print and microfilm copies of these documents.

The California Room also has the California reels of the federal censuses for 1850-1880 and 1900-1930, along with print indexes for 1850-1870 and Soundex for 1880-1920.

Unfortunately, California is not one of the states that has a Soundex for the 1930 census. However, the California History Room has several tools to assist with the search, and we have developed a tip sheet to walk researchers through the process. Our rich collection of city directories and telephone directories can provide ancestor addresses. Our

historical map collection can provide cross-street information. Web sites that help identify enumeration districts are bookmarked on our Internet access computers. Enumeration district maps and enumeration district descriptions are available on microfilm. And California Room staff members are happy to offer assistance in the use of these tools. ■

California Book Fund

The membership was most supportive in our appeal for contributions to the Library's California book collection during this time of limited state funding. In particular, the Foundation wishes to acknowledge the generous donations of Janet Feil, Gary E. Strong, Jay Cunningham, and Thomas E. Vinson.

Members, in renewing their membership, may also designate their dues for the California book fund or any other Library department. To keep our California history collection strong, your benevolence is encouraged.

Catherine Hanson-Tracy is a reference librarian in the California History Room of the State Library.



Foundation Notes

Two New Board Members Elected

Thomas E. Vinson and Donald J. Hagerty were elected to the Board of Directors at the Foundation's December 5 meeting. Both bring much enthusiasm for the Library and its varied programs and services.

Mr. Vinson, a resident of Piedmont, worked for many years in banking holding various executive positions. Most recently, he served as vice president and managing director of SEI Trust Company in San Francisco. Mr. Vinson used his financial acumen to assist a number of charitable and nonprofit organizations, including the Lincoln Child Center, Old St. Mary's Church, and Oakland Museum Association. Now retired from banking, he devotes his time to pursuing his interests in California history, railroads, museums, art, and photography. He is a docent at the Oakland Museum of California and is an active member of the Society of California Pioneers, California Historical Society, Friends of the Oakland Public Library, and Nevada Historical Society.

Donald J. Hagerty has long been a friend and promoter of the Library and has been instrumental in enhancing the Library's fine arts collections. Through his efforts, the Foundation received a donation of a spectacular Maynard Dixon four-panel mural and a stunning Dixon painting entitled *Allegory*. In addition, Mr. Hagerty has contributed articles to the *Bulletin*. He retired in 1993 from the University of California, Davis where he served as an academic administrator and lecturer in the American Studies Program. He now works as an independent scholar and as a consultant on the art and culture of the American West. He has written many books and articles including *Desert Dreams: The Art and Life of Maynard Dixon*; *Holding Ground: The Art of Gary Ernest Smith*; and *Canyon de Chelly: One Hundred Years of Painting and Photography*. He has also curated numerous exhibitions on Western art for such varied places as the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, and the John Natsoulas Gallery in Davis.



Westward Ho: Documenting the Western Overland Trail

A SPECIAL EXHIBITION AT THE CALIFORNIA STATE
LIBRARY SUPPORTED BY THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA
TRAILS ASSOCIATION

The year 2004 marks the bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, the greatest and most important overland expedition in United States history. To commemorate that historic journey and the gift of the earliest published account of the expedition, the California State Library has created a special display devoted to overland travel to California and the West Coast from 1804 to 1870. In addition, this display celebrates the designation of the California History Section as the West Coast repository of the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) Western Overland Trails Collection. To further acknowledge this support and publicize the exhibit, the Foundation hosted a reception on January 22 in the Mead B. Kibbey Exhibit Gallery, and the many who came enjoyed a superb talk by noted historian Dr. J. S. Holliday.

The growing overland trails collection started in 2002 and consists of published and unpublished materials donated by members of OCTA to the Library including diaries, journals, letters, reminiscences, newspaper accounts, biographies, guidebooks, maps, secondary sources, and reference works relating the nineteenth century western overland migration. Founded in 1982 and headquartered in Independence, Missouri, OCTA is a nonprofit history organization dedicated to the identification, preservation, and interpretation of western overland trails and sites.



OCTA Library Committee members at the Foundation hosted reception. They are from left to right: Don Buck, Dick Brock, Dick Davis, Tom Hunt, and Charlie Little.

The display features several examples from the permanent collection of rare books, manuscript letters and diaries, maps, and prints. Highlights include a first edition of Patrick Gass' *A Journal of the Voyages and Travels of a Corps of Discovery* (1807), the first published account of Lewis & Clark in book form donated to the Library by Dr. Roger Larson of Fresno. In addition, Judge Runston G. Maino of La Jolla donated from his mother's estate a very rare first edition of Zebulon Pike's *An Account of the Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi* dating from 1810. The emphasis of the Library's exhibition covers the 1840-1860 time period including the famed Bidwell-Bartleson expedition of 1841, Donner Party of 1846, and the California Gold Rush. Noteworthy items on display include the actual book used by John Bidwell to guide the first overland emigration from the eastern United States; the original manuscript overland diary of P. B. Reading dating from 1843; a handwritten relief roll for the Donner Party signed by Edward M. Kern; Gold Rush manuscript diaries and letters; the only surviving copy of the Pony Express edition of the *St. Joseph Gazette* that was carried on the first Pony Express ride in 1860; and an ambrotype from around 1860 of Rock Creek Station, Nebraska, a stage and Pony Express station made famous by Wild Bill Hickok.

At this time several hundred titles have been donated to the OCTA Collection, 358 of which are now listed on the Library's Web catalog: www.lib.state.ca.us (Click on "Main Catalog", "Special Resources," scroll to "OCTA"). All parties to this literary venture visualize the OCTA Collection becoming the foundation of a leading research facility in the West focusing on the western emigrant trails and related emigrant experiences.

Foundation Acquires Rare Mother Lode Newspaper for Library

Through the use of discretionary funds and the generosity of Mead B. Kibbey, the Foundation purchased at auction a fine run of the *Tuolumne Courier* for the Library's California History Section. This acquisition represents an important addition to the Library's outstanding collection of Gold Rush era newspapers. Published in Columbia, the *Tuolumne Courier* presents an unrivaled record of that famous Gold Rush town known as the "Queen of the Southern Mines" and Tuolumne County as a whole. The lot consists of 123 issues of the *Tuolumne Courier* beginning on June 20, 1857 (Volume I, Number 1) and ending on November 11, 1865 and includes the entire first year of this weekly. Originally, published by J. C. Duchow, J. B. Urmey, and W. A. Duchow, the inaugural number included a prospectus stating the aims of the paper:

We wish to make the *Courier* the local *news* paper of Tuolumne County, and to herald abroad through its ravines and gulches, everything of moment and interest transpiring in the community, — hence the name we have selected for our journal. While we shall advocate strict morality, we do not believe in eternal gravity, and a long-faced, still, cold and formal manner of pursuing the journey of life.

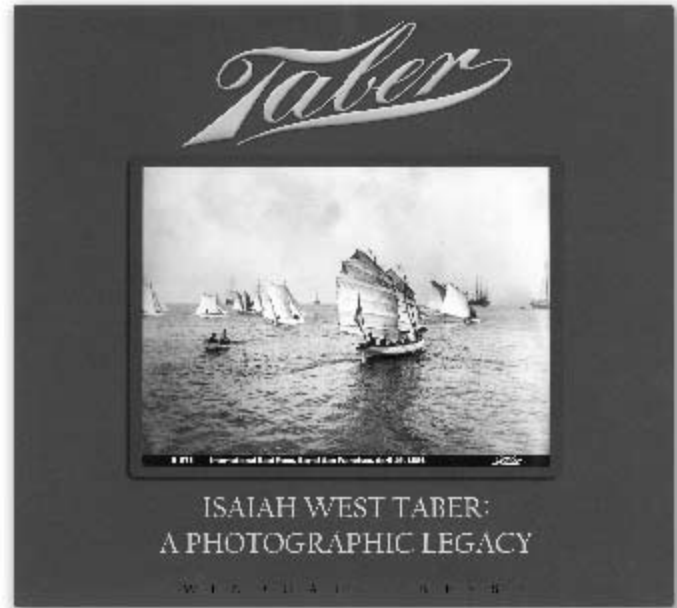


The publishers went on to add, “[We wish] to aid in developing the vast mineral and agricultural resources of our county, and to advocate everything calculated to improve, elevate and benefit the community.”

Of particular note is that the August 29, 1857, issue was a reprint of the “extra” issued on August 26, with the headline “Columbia in Ashes.” A deadly fire swept through the main part of town killing five people and destroying many of the buildings along its historic Main Street. Fortunately, the newspaper office was located in the Parson’s fireproof building and survived. Another issue reported on the destruction of the town of Calaveritas by fire. Because of its location, the paper also provided several early descriptions of Yosemite and the great natural wonders surrounding the future national park. The paper is particularly valuable for its coverage of mining operations in the Southern Mines as well as reporting on mining throughout the Golden State. This run of the *Tuolumne Courier* came from the estate of Charles H. Segerstrom of Sonora. The Segerstrom’s were not only an important pioneer family, but also created an amazingly fine collection of rare books, manuscripts, newspapers, photographs, and other documentation on early Tuolumne County.

Saving Library Paintings from Damage

Dr. Kevin Starr’s office was shaken when the Library’s mammoth portrait of Joaquin Miller came crashing down to the floor. The picture wire holding the heavy, framed painting had snapped apparently suffering from metal fatigue. The oil painting itself escaped unscathed but, its ornate original frame suffered much damage. After carefully collecting bits and pieces of plaster and securing the painting, Library staff invited James Alkons, the noted art conservator, to inspect the damage and check the other paintings. He concluded that all the paintings in the State Librarian’s office suite needed to be rehung. Regretfully, during these stressful fiscal times, the Library does not have in its budget the funds to pay for this much-needed reinstallation. Consequently, the Foundation decided that these paintings were too significant and valuable to run the risk of further damage. When Mr. Alkons came to re-hang the paintings, he noted that three were already very close to falling off the wall. He replaced the old wire with a stainless steel aviation wire capable of supporting over 500 pounds. Now, staff working under the paintings feels much more secure about their own safety as well as the safety of these precious works of art.



New California Photography Book Published

The Foundation is pleased to announce the publication of a stunning new book by our friends at the Windgate Press, *Isaiah West Taber: A Photographic Legacy 1870 – 1900*. The handsome volume, illustrated with 200 photographs, features the collection in the State Library’s California History Section. Linda and Wayne Bonnett of the Windgate Press wrote the text and designed the book. It also includes an introduction by State Library Special Collections Curator Gary F. Kurutz. The dust jacket blurb states:

The name of Taber appeared in almost every California portrait album of the nineteenth century. Today, Isaiah West Taber is acknowledged as one of California’s outstanding photographers. His work appears in museums, libraries, historical collections, and is sought after by private collectors. Publisher as well as photographer, Taber produced over 30,000 scenic views of California and the West. *Taber: A Photographic Legacy* combines photographs with the story of Isaiah Taber himself, from his arrival in California during the gold rush, to the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, when all his glass negatives were lost.

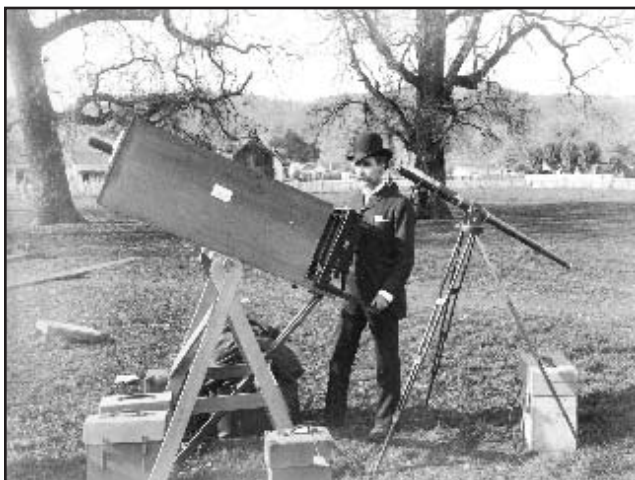
Regarded as perhaps the most famous California photographer of his day, Taber took or published some of the best images we have of the Golden State during the nineteenth century. In particular, his views of San Francisco are noteworthy for depicting its astonishing growth. The State Library possesses hundreds of his images ranging from individual portraits of famous Californians to large



I. W. Taber poses a subject in his London studio, 1897.

folio albums documenting California business and industry, the 1894 California Midwinter Fair, and Sutro Heights in San Francisco.

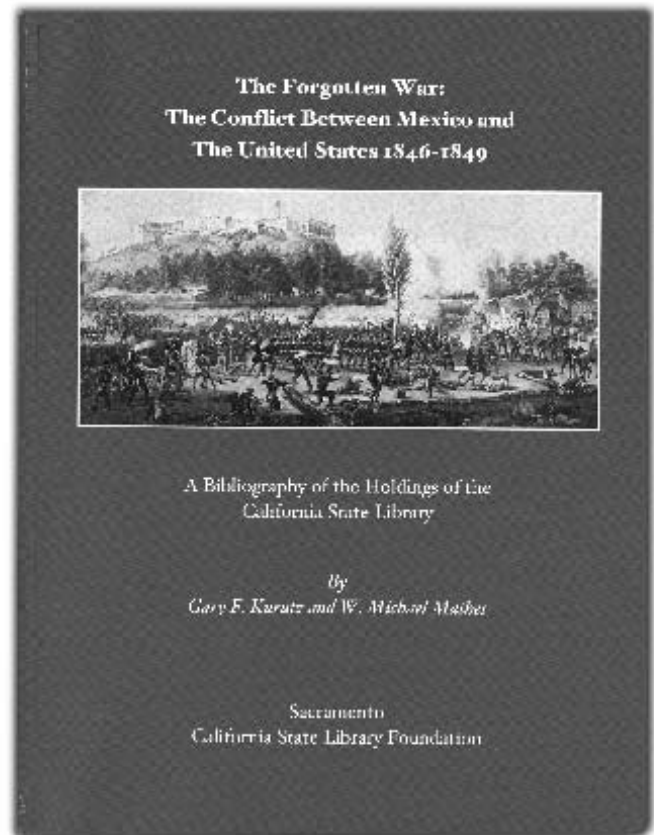
The State Library Foundation has been most fortunate to collaborate with the Windgate Press on several publications. The Sausalito publisher produces some of the most elegantly designed books in the country. Examples of Windgate Press books based on State Library resources include *The Architectural Terra Cotta of Gladding, McBean*; *California Pastoral*; and *California Calls You*.



Taber stands next to his special camera designed to photograph a solar eclipse, 1889.

Mexican War Bibliography Available

Late this spring, the Foundation published *The Forgotten War: The Conflict between Mexico and the United States, 1846-1849*. Two hundred and seven pages in length and fully illustrated, the publication features an extensive annotated bibliography by Dr. W. Michael Mathes of the Spanish language material held by the Sutro Library in San Francisco. Dr. Mathes is the Sutro Library's Honorary Curator of Mexicana and a highly acclaimed authority on the history of Mexico. His lucid commentary on the war and his descriptions of dozens of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, and manuscripts represents the first detailed bibliography published in California to emphasize the Mexican side. The publication is supplemented by an annotated checklist of the Library's extensive collection of nineteenth century English language books, pamphlets, manuscripts, prints, and sheet music by Gary F. Kurutz, Curator of Special Collections. The latter portion emphasizes the American viewpoint and the conquest of Alta California. Five hundred copies have been printed with a full-cover paper binding. The volume sells for \$25.00 a copy plus sales tax and shipping.





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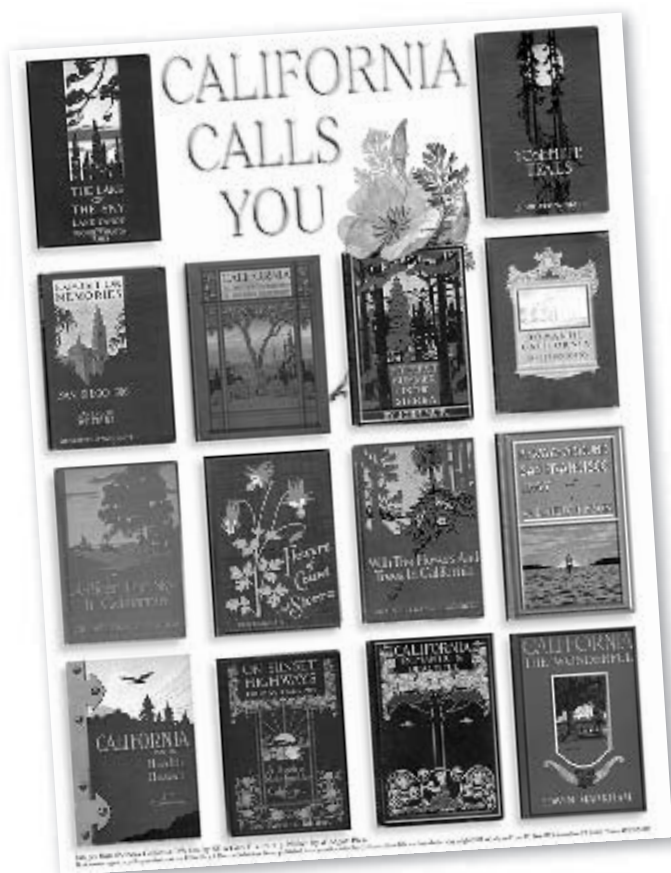
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Foundation Co-Publishes California Poster

California Calls You Poster is now available for purchase through the Foundation. The 24 x 18 inch poster, reproduced here, features historic pictorial bookbindings extolling California. The images first appeared in the award-winning book by KD and Gary Kurutz *California Calls You: The Art of Promoting the Golden State*. The Foundation co-published the poster with the Windgate Press of Sausalito. The poster sells for \$10.00 including standard shipping charges and sales tax.

Historic Prints of San Francisco Portfolio

The Windgate Press of Sausalito has made available to the Foundation copies of its latest publication: *San Francisco: Early Prints 1848-1900*. The spectacular, limited edition portfolio, published in collaboration with the Foundation, reproduces a number of rare prints from the State Library's collection. Proceeds from the sale of these copies will benefit the Library's California History Section.

San Francisco Early Prints: 1848-1900 is the result of a collaboration between print collector and dealer Kathleen Manning, the State Library, and Windgate Press. Recognizing that scarce early prints of San Francisco have become so expensive and difficult to obtain at any price, the collaborators decided to publish a group of the most desirable prints.

The lithographs and engravings selected for the publication are among the most sought-after images of San Francisco. Using cutting-edge technology, Windgate Press reproduced the subtle color nuances and natural aging present in the original images.

The cost of the portfolio is \$210.00 per set, plus sales tax and shipping (via UPS).



To purchase a copy, please contact the Foundation at:

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Fax: (916) 447-0125

Email: cslf3@juno.com

