1. Joshua Sweeney
2. Julia Scripps (Mrs. James M.)
3. James S. Booth
4. Ellen Browning Scripps
5. Howard "Ernie" Scripps
6. James E. Scripps
7. William E. Scripps
8. Harriet Messinger Scripps (Mrs. James E.)
9. Anna Scripps Whitcomb (Mrs. Edgar B.)
10. George G. Booth
11. Grace Ellen Booth Wallace
12. Ellen Warren Scripps Booth
13. Catherine Elizabeth Scripps Southwick (Mrs. William D.)
14. Sarah Clarke Scripps (Mrs. George W.)
15. James Scripps Southwick
16. Jesse Scripps Weiss
17. Grace Messinger Scripps
18. Sarah Adele Scripps
19. Jessie Adelaide Scripps
20. George C. Scripps
21. Helen Mayarie Southwick
22. George Washington Scripps
23. Winifred Scripps Ellis (Mrs. G.O.)
24. William A. Scripps
25. Anna Adelaide Scripps (Mrs. George E.)
26. Baby of Anna and George C. Scripps
27. George H. Scripps
29. Frederick W. Kellogg
30. Linnie Scripps (Mrs. Ernest)
31. Florence May Scripps Kellogg
32. Ernest O’Hearn Scripps
33. Ambrosia Scripps (Mrs. William A.)
34. Georgie Scripps, son of Anna and George C. Scripps
35. Hans Bagby
36. Elizabeth Sweeney (Mrs. John S., Sr.)
37. John S. Sweeney, Jr.
38. John S. Sweeney, Sr.
39. Mary Margaret Sweeney
Publication of The Journal of San Diego History is underwritten by a major grant from the Quest for Truth Foundation, established by the late James G. Scripps. Additional support is provided by “The Journal of San Diego Fund” of the San Diego Foundation and private donors.

The San Diego History Center is a museum, education center, and research library founded as the San Diego Historical Society in 1928. Its activities are supported by: the City of San Diego’s Commission for Arts and Culture; the County of San Diego; individuals; foundations; corporations; fund raising events; membership dues; admissions; shop sales; and rights and reproduction fees.

Articles appearing in The Journal of San Diego History are abstracted and indexed in Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life.


Front Cover: Center, Ellen B. Scripps, ca. 1891, Courtesy of Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College. Clockwise from upper left: Ellen B. Scripps and Will Scripps playing chess, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College; Fifth Street, San Diego, ca. 1890 ©SDHC #1501; La Jolla Cove, ca. 1894 ©SDHC Archives, Douglas Gunn, Picturesque San Diego (Chicago, 1887); sketch of South Moulton Villa I, Guest Book, 1897-1915, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College; E.W. Scripps with fish at Miramar, ca. 1907-10, Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, Ohio University Libraries.

Back Cover: The Scripps family gathered in Detroit to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of William Scripps’ arrival in the United States in 1791. Twenty-nine lineal descendants and their spouses were photographed on the steps of George G. Booth’s residence on Trumbull Ave., Detroit, June 29, 1891. ©SDHC #14393.

Cover Design: Allen Wynar
THE JOURNAL OF
SAN DIEGO
HISTORY

IRIS H. W. ENGSTRAND
MOLLY McCLAIN
Editors

THEODORE STRATHMAN
DAVID MILLER
Review Editors

Published since 1955 by the
SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1649 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego, California 92101
ISSN 0022-4383
Published quarterly by the San Diego History Center at 1649 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego, California 92101.

A $60.00 annual membership in the San Diego History Center includes subscription to The Journal of San Diego History and the SDHC Times. Back issues are available at www.sandiegohistory.org.

Articles and book reviews for publication consideration, as well as editorial correspondence, should be addressed to the Editors, The Journal of San Diego History, Department of History, University of San Diego, 5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92110

All article submissons should be computer generated and double-spaced with endnotes, and follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Authors should submit three copies of their manuscript, plus an electronic copy, in MS Word or in rich text format (RTF).

The San Diego History Center assumes no responsibility for the statements or opinions of the authors or reviewers.

©2010 by the San Diego History Center
ISSN 0022-4383
Periodicals postage paid at San Diego, CA
Publication No. 331-870
(619) 232-6203
www.sandiegohistory.org

Note: For a change of address, please call (619) 232-6203 ext. 102 or email Jessica.Schmidt@sandiegohistory.org.
ARTICLES

The Scripps Family’s San Diego Experiment
Molly McClain
1

Naming Balboa Park: Correcting the Record
Nancy Carol Carter
31

The Removal of the Indians of El Capitan to Viejas: Confrontation and Change in San Diego
Indian Affairs in the 1930s
Tanis C. Thorne
43

The San Diego Coal Company: An Early Mormon Enterprise on Point Loma
Bradley Hill
67

BOOK REVIEWS
85
The Scripps Family’s San Diego Experiment

By

Molly McClain

Ellen Browning Scripps (1836-1932) and her brother Edward Wyllis (“E.W.”) Scripps (1854-1926) made their newspaper fortune in the expanding industrial cities of the Midwest—Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and St. Louis—but they spent much of it in San Diego, California. In the early years of the twentieth century, they contributed substantial sums of money to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the Scripps Memorial Hospital, the La Jolla Recreational Center, the San Diego Natural History Museum, the San Diego Zoo, and The Bishop’s School in La Jolla, among other organizations. They both invested in Miramar, a vast ranch located on the arid, chaparral-covered mesa now known as Scripps Ranch.

What brought the Scripps to California? And why did they stay? In the 1890s, San Diego was still reeling from the effects of an economic depression caused by railroad overbuilding, bank failures, and the collapse of the real estate market. E.W. described the city as, “a busted, broken-down boom town...probably more difficult of access than any other spot in the whole country.” Ellen, meanwhile, found a “rude, rough pioneer element,” noting that even prominent men in the city spoke in a “language of slang, short epithets, and ‘wag.’” They discovered in rural Southern California, however, both a retreat from civilization and a place where they could heal family rifts and prevent divisions caused by the rapid acquisition of wealth. They did not move to San Diego to make a fortune but to give one away.

San Diego’s development coincided with the anti-modernist movement that swept through Europe and America in the late nineteenth century. Urban life—fast-paced, individualistic, and profit-driven—had been a source of anxiety for centuries, particularly among the landowning classes. By the 1880s, however, doubts about modernity became widespread. Industrial advances, together with the rapid expansion of cities, caused people to think anew about the world they had built. T.J. Jackson Lears described the process by which people “began to recognize that the triumph of modern culture had not produced greater autonomy (which was the official claim) but rather had promoted a spreading sense of moral impotence and spiritual sterility—a feeling that life had become not only over-civilized but also curiously unreal.” They sought regeneration and renewal in a variety of different ways: sojourns into the wilderness, shows of military virtue,

Molly McClain is an associate professor in the department of history at the University of San Diego and co-editor of The Journal of San Diego History. She is the author of “The Bishop’s School, 1909-2009,” in the Fall 2008 issue of this Journal. This article forms part of a forthcoming biography of Ellen Browning Scripps. Special thanks to Judy Harvey Sahak, Dorran Boyle, Colin Fisher, Scripps College, the La Jolla Historical Society, and the San Diego History Center.
exploration (and exploitation) of native cultures, psychological study, aesthetic production, and experimental urban planning.  

San Diego offered newcomers the opportunity to build a different kind of city, one with “geraniums” instead of “smokestacks” as George W. Marston promised in his 1917 campaign for mayor. Property owners drew on the aesthetic philosophy of John Ruskin and adopted new approaches to urban planning such as the Garden City and City Beautiful movements. Utopian novels as different as Looking Backward (1888) and William Morris’ News From Nowhere (1890) informed debates about the future of the city, as did dystopian accounts of the rise of an urban proletariat and the decline of American industry. It was here that E.W. and Ellen Browning Scripps reconsidered their future as capitalists and experimented with a new way of life.

The Scripps family wealth was derived from the industrial advances that made possible a revolution in printing and circulating newspapers; it also depended on the urbanization and industrialization of the Midwest. In 1873, James E. Scripps and his brothers founded The Evening News in Detroit, at that time a port on the route of cargo vessels carrying goods between Lake Erie and the Upper Lakes. The nation’s largest supplier of railroad cars, the city also supported industries such as iron and steel, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals, and cigar manufacturing. Scripps newspapers expanded its working class readership by moving into existing and developing markets such as Cleveland, Cincinnati, Buffalo, and St. Louis.

Ellen, who grew up with her brothers and sisters on a farm in Rushville,
Illinois, worked on the *News* as a copyeditor and journalist. Her younger brother E.W. helped found the *Cleveland Press*, *Cincinnati Post*, and *St. Louis Chronicle*. In the late 1880s, the latter’s attempt to seize control of the Scripps Publishing Company failed, resulting in a divisive lawsuit and a break with his brother James. E.W. was sufficiently depressed about his prospects to begin looking around for other opportunities. He later wrote, “I did not wish to come to California for money. I wanted to get as far away from the detestable temper as possible.”

Ellen and E.W. Scripps began to reflect on their roles as industrialists following the publication of a controversial novel, *Looking Backward: 2000-1887*, by Edward Bellamy. The author characterized the nineteenth century as time when “riches debauched one class with idleness of mind and body, while poverty sapped the vitality of the masses by overwork, bad food, and pestilent homes.” He, like others, saw the uneasy relationship between labor and capital as a harbinger of change. His protagonist, a young Boston gentleman, goes to sleep in 1887 and wakes up more than one hundred years later at a time when individuals have put aside their self-interest in order to work for the good of the whole. Tenements and smokestacks disappear to be replaced by tree-lined streets, parks, and public buildings of “a colossal size and architectural grandeur.” Everyone feels him or herself to be a member of an “industrial army” working for “one great business corporation,” the state. The result, according to Bellamy, was the end of poverty and great wealth, “the solidarity of the race and the brotherhood of man.”

E.W., an ardent capitalist, was startled by Bellamy’s critique of modern society. He wrote to his sister, “By the way, I have read that book of Bellamy, *Looking Backward.* I was surprised to find myself thoroughly absorbed and interested in it. When you read it, did you not feel that you were being attacked and justly attacked for your selfishness and your folly? Did you not feel your own hands dripping with the blood of your murdered victims? I did. I feel now that I am doing altogether wrong. I have not yet decided whether I can do entirely right but I am sure I can do a great deal better than I am and I am going to try.” He was particularly struck by the fact that “there are poor widows and orphans in Cleveland and Detroit who are such because our companies have been too mean to furnish healthful work rooms and merited salaries sufficient to feed and clothe them properly.” More than one person had died in the service of the paper, “and my only wonder was that the number was not greater considering the terrible condition of the old press office” in Cleveland.
Ellen was not particularly concerned about the poor—in fact, she had a horror of beggars—but she disapproved of monopolists and the accumulation of vast wealth. She once asked E.W. why he did not consider separating his business interests from those of their brother James: “It may seem a pity to your ambitions to check in its mid-career a business which promises magnificent growth and results. But, after all, what is it we are doing but amassing money and becoming monopolists? I see that Carnegie in the North American is discussing the duties of a monied man. He has amassed $20,000,000. The question of benefitting mankind should have been considered and solved at a time and in a way that should have prevented his becoming a millionaire.”

At the same time, Ellen shared E.W.’s belief that philanthropy should not lead to dependency but should go towards organizations and institutions that aimed to improve society. She understood all too well the emotional dynamics created by wealth and poverty within a family—and by extension the human family—and believed that money could and should help people take steps towards self-sufficiency. On occasion, family tensions caused her to imagine escaping to a distant desert island, “where the air that I breathe will not be tainted, nor my ears polluted with the foul smell and sound of money, and the baseness of spirit it engenders.” She thought that only one member of the family, her older sister Elizabeth, remained “uncontaminated by the vile thing” and, as a result, preserved her “independence and moral tone.”

California offered both Ellen and E.W. a chance to escape, albeit briefly, from the business of making money. They had considered a trip as early as 1885—“We ought to cross the country some time,” the latter wrote. Instead, they decided to travel through Mexico with James and his family in 1885-86. They visited cities on Mexico’s Pacific Coast and, once back in the United States, traveled as far west as Albuquerque and Las Vegas. It was not until their sister Annie headed to California that the Scripps family found an excuse to leave for the Golden State.

Annie Scripps went to California in 1887 in search of a remedy—both spiritual and physical—for crippling rheumatoid arthritis. She found a home at the Remedial Institute and School of Philosophy, also known as the New Order of Life, in Alameda. One of many utopian communities founded in late nineteenth-century California, it offered “a life of brotherly love” guided by the pseudo-scientific principles of its founder, Dr. Horace Bowen. Annie spoke highly of her experience, writing to her brother that the “principles that have been inculcated in my soul’s consciousness” had blessed her. “You are a businessman,” she wrote, “and,
of course, this to you may seem soaring or theoretical but to me it is living truth, the carrying out of my soul’s connections. I feel that I am just where my God has placed me having used my very weakness as you term it for the further development of my soul.”

Ellen and E.W., however, remained concerned about their sister’s welfare, particularly as they had taken on financial responsibility for her care. In 1889, the latter intended to travel to California to investigate the situation but, instead, remained in Ohio while his wife recovered from diphtheria. Ellen, having recently returned from Europe, packed her trunks and, at the end of 1889, headed to San Francisco with her brother Fred.

Ellen arrived in Alameda on January 1, 1890, after a ten-day train journey from Chicago. She found the San Joaquin Valley to be disappointing: “I had pictured to myself as a smiling, fertile valley with trees and running water.” Instead, she found “a great level stretch of ground extending all around to the horizon” with few fences and even fewer houses. She saw tents belonging to workmen and a few stations, little more than shanties, “chiefly saloons and billiard rooms.” Oakland also surprised her: “Where are the palatial houses, the beautiful gardens, the avenues of trees I expected to see? Behold a country town set on a marsh, low one-story buildings basely painted and adorned with gingerbread carvings around the porch awnings, muddy streets, shabby sidewalks.”

She spent a month with her sister while Fred decamped for nearby Byron Hot Springs for the treatment of rheumatic symptoms. “I advocate his going,” she told E.W., “not because I apprehend any particular virtue resides in the springs, but because this ‘atmosphere’ is too light and elevated for his grosser spirit.” She could not imagine him attending theosophical lectures on karma and reincarnation or listening to Dr. Bowen’s strictures on the “molecular remedy” for disease. Annie, however, seemed remarkably happy even if physically frail. She considered Alameda to be her “Paradise” and looked “better contented and in serener mood than ever before,” according to Ellen.

Seeing little reason to remain in northern California, Ellen and Fred traveled south to San Diego to visit their cousins, Hans and Fanny Bagby. The latter worked as a journalist for several Scripps papers before joining the staff of the San Diego Sun. They arrived on February 15, 1890, took rooms at the Horton House, and set about viewing the city. They crossed by ferry to Coronado and spent their first morning wandering around the hotel grounds. A few days later, they went
to La Jolla to gather seashells and mosses. Ellen noted in her diary, “Found a few fine specimens also starfish, black mussels, and various other kinds of shells. The rocks here are undermined with caves washed out of the softer parts of the rocks by the action of the waves.”21 She traveled to Pacific Beach, Old Town, Point Loma, Linda Vista, the City Park (later Balboa Park), the San Diego Mission, National City, Tijuana, the Sweetwater Dam, and Fallbrook. She also visited Mission Gorge where a cousin, Lida Scripps, had a ranch.22

Ellen received a great deal of attention from San Diegans as a result of her connection to the Evening News and the Scripps Publishing Company, “the fame of which I found had preceded me.” Her cousin Fanny also advertised her arrival in a typically “effusive” fashion with the result that she found herself “more of a lioness than was agreeable to one of my pacific nature. I could have had, had I chosen it, entrée to the best circles of the city.”23

Among the more notable San Diegans that she encountered were National City founder Frank Kimball, Captain John Dillingham, and Father Antonio Ubach, “who inscribed his name in a copy of Ramona that I had bought.”24 She toured a section of Balboa Park and described efforts to “beautify” the area, noting that local women had “put out seats and a sort of pagoda of rough wood called a ‘summer house.’ An Indian encampment of a few families is still in the ground.”25 She also visited the homes of several local authors, including Rose Hartwick Thorpe, and met landowner Lorenzo Soto who told her that he was a Peruvian descendant of the Incas who had arrived in California in 1849.26
Like many visitors to California, Ellen noted the effects of the speculative real estate boom of the 1880s. In fact, she knew many families from her hometown of Rushville, Illinois, who had moved to Southern California, invested in real estate, and lost thousands of dollars. She was surprised by their continued belief in the virtues of the West. One acquaintance told her, “People can make money faster in the East...but for sun, comfort, and enjoyment of living give me California!” A Methodist minister named Stevenson who had preached in Rushville continued to boost investment opportunities in Monrovia, an agricultural community located to the east of Pasadena: “He was one of the biggest boomers of the lot. Affects to regard Monrovia as a Paradise and is trying to inveigle his friends into this Garden of Eden.” She added, “Methodist preachers take to the real estate business as readily as a duck to water. I wonder what connection there is between preaching the gospel and skimming one’s neighbors!”

Although she was wary of boosters, she did see opportunity in San Diego. She told E.W., “This town went up with the boom but fell flat with its death, I should judge. However, there is plenty of land and water here, and there should be a steady growth towards prosperity.”

Her brother Fred, meanwhile, was captivated by San Diego’s warm, dry climate. He had endured a serious illness—either malaria or rheumatic fever—in the early 1880s and, like his sister Annie, suffered from aching and swollen joints. Moreover, he had failed in several businesses, most notably the management of the family farm, and was looking for a fresh start. Ellen told E.W., “He is strongly disposed to settle here. He gives as the main reason his health. The climate agrees with him. His rheumatism he has scarcely felt.” She supported his plan to buy property in San Diego; in fact, she offered to take up the mortgage herself. “I believe the pur-

La Jolla Cove, ca. 1887, with a wooden ladder leading from the cliff to the beach. At this time, La Jolla had summer visitors but few permanent residents. The subdivision and sale of La Jolla Park by Frank T. Botsford in 1887 marks the beginning of La Jolla’s history as a community. ©SDHC Archives, Douglas Gunn, Picturesque San Diego (Chicago, 1887).
chase of good land is a perfectly safe investment here,” she wrote, “Every year demonstrates more and more the fruit growing capacities of the soil and climate.” She, too, was affected by California’s mild winter: “The sun is very hot, and vegetation is like ours of summer. People were bathing in the sea today. Open windows are a luxury. Green peas and other summer ‘garden sauce’ has become monotonous. The sky is as blue and cloudless as that of Southern Italy; the dust 10 inches deep.”

Before they left California, Ellen and Fred planned to purchase 160 acres of land on the Linda Vista mesa, not far from a railroad flag-stop. The deal was complicated by the fact that the wholesale grocery firm, Klauber & Levi, owned half the property known as the Douglas Tract, but they remained committed to the idea. Fred felt that his health improved remarkably in California, “a condition that could be only attributable to the climate.” Ellen, meanwhile, remained willing to invest “a few thousands,” as she put it.

After her trip to California, Ellen found Detroit to be “dull and depressing.” She felt detached from the real business of the city—making and spending money—and in need of a change. She hoped that her brother George would go to California with Fred, thinking that if he spent a year there, even a winter, “he will never return to Detroit to live.” George, instead, headed to Colorado in an attempt to recover from a recurring illness that left him looking “pale and haggard.” She remained in Detroit until July, helping her brothers look for evidence in a lawsuit brought by their former partner, John Sweeney. She visited her stepmother in Rushville and spent a month in the Riverside Sanitarium in Hamilton, Ohio, to get treatment for inflammation in her knee.

Since Fred continued to pursue the idea of buying land in San Diego, E.W. decided to make a visit in November 1890. He felt financially responsible for indigent members of the family—“Ma,” Annie, Jennie, and Fred—and wanted to ensure that they spent money in ways that he approved. Ellen accompanied her brother as far as Alameda but did not return to San Diego. Instead, she stayed with her sister Annie who still suffered debilitating episodes of arthritis.

E.W. arrived in San Diego wearing the traditional costume of a caballero, presumably thinking it appropriate attire for a would-be landowner in the former Mexican California. The San Diego Union reported, “Mr. Frederick Tudor Scripps (1850-1936), n.d. In 1893, he married twenty-one-year-old Sarah Emma Jessop whose family owned a tract of land near Miramar Ranch. Her father Joseph E. Jessop (1851-1932), a jeweler, emigrated from Lancashire, England, to the United States in 1890. He worked with Fred to build Surr dam at Miramar Ranch, completed in 1894. ©SDHC Box 2000/61.
Scripps is a conspicuous figure in his Ranchero’s costume—broad hat, blue velvet suit and varnished top boots drawn over the trousers.”37 Local elites appeared to be taken aback by this display of eccentricity for he attributed his “cordial and even flattering reception” not to his wealth or newspaper connections but to the words of an old acquaintance: “I overheard him telling a knot of men—viz., ‘That all the Scrippses were villainous but that I was also a white man.’”38

E.W.’s self-presentation revealed his interest in what historians describe as the “Spanish fantasy heritage” created by nineteenth-century immigrants to California.39 By reimagining themselves as upper-class Spanish dons, Anglos inserted themselves at the top of the social hierarchy created after the U.S. conquest of Mexican territory in 1846-48. They also created stereotypes that rendered neutral their former enemies: the poor but proud gentleman, the indolent Indian laborer asleep under his sombrero, and the flirtatious and opportunistic señorita. Having transformed an old way of life, Americans did their best to hold on to what remained of Spanish and Mexican culture, restoring missions, preserving neighborhoods such as Old Town in San Diego, even reinventing traditions such as the Mexican fiesta that appealed to tourists. This was hardly just a California phenomenon; the re-appropriation and commoditization of indigenous cultures took place all over the world.40 In California, however, there was an added bias in favor of the “white” and civilized Spaniard with European blood in his veins as opposed to the poorer, darker Indian or Mestizo.

Like most of their contemporaries, E.W. and Ellen were race and class conscious but they did not find the Spanish to be superior to the indigenous people of Mexico. In fact, their travel experience gave them the opposite opinion. Having taken several trips through Spain, Ellen viewed it as neither picturesque nor prosperous. She noted the ruinous decay of cities like Burgos with their dark, narrow and deserted streets, “old tumble-down houses,” and beggars whose rags and tatters covered “decrepit” and “malformed” bodies. She saw fields of dry and stunted Indian corn, empty factories and mills, and peasants who wore “a hang-dog air.” In fact, she gave one of her Evening News articles the following subheading: “Spanish Character and Manners: A Lazy, Thriftless People with No Ambition for Improvement.” She considered the country to be at “the back ranks of civilization” and wondered at the American mania for traveling there.41

Mexico, on the other hand, appeared to be a progressive, modern state, newly freed from its corrupt imperial rulers. On the road from Puebla in 1885, the Scripps saw evidence of rural prosperity: large haciendas “looking more like some factory establishment” with hundreds of employees and huge herds of sheep, cattle, and horses. Ellen wrote approvingly of the “industry and prosperity” of the region, “Everywhere work is going on—plowing, manuring, threshing, and other agricultural pursuits.”42 In Orizaba, a city in the Mexican state of Veracruz, she observed, “Cleanliness is one thing that we notice everywhere....The cheap print dresses that the women wear are fresh with soap and starch. No one seems to be lounging about. Everyone is busy. The peeps we get into the interior of the houses, even of the poorer sort, show models of comfort and neatness. Not only the sidewalks but the streets are kept clean by constant sweeping.”43

California promised to be more like Mexico than Spain: a modern, agricultural state with a new ruling class. E.W. recognized that the state was sold as a land of opportunity where a small farmer could sustain his family by growing cash crops
like figs, oranges, and olives, but he did not think this to be economically feasible. Instead, he believed that commercial landowners in Southern California, like their counterparts in Mexico and Latin America, would control vast amounts of property because of the large amount of capital required to build irrigation systems. He thought that land was a good investment, particularly if the “‘free trade’ we have all been howling about and shouting for” came to pass. He told his sister that a decline in the profitability of manufactured goods would lead people to invest in property in the West and South. “The rich of the next American generation will be the same as the rich of England are today, the holders of large tracts of agricultural lands,” he opined.

E.W. and Ellen returned home late in 1890, having agreed to purchase 400 acres of land, formerly part of the ex-Mission San Diego. In 1890 and 1891, the Scripps bought two tracts of 160 acres, the Douglas Tract and another owned by Freeman & Gay, as well as an 80-acre tract belonging to Louise Vollmer. They jointly paid $5,500 for the property and allowed their brother Fred a small allowance to purchase farm equipment and other necessary supplies. The latter, having sold his 180-acre tract south of Rushville to Ellen, returned to California and started work on a dam to provide irrigation for future citrus groves.

In February 1891, brothers E.W. and Will Scripps took their wives and mother to Southern California. They thought that San Diego would be an excellent home for the elderly Mrs. Scripps and, possibly, Annie if the latter could be persuaded to leave the Remedial Institute. They set up camp at Fred’s ranch before a torrent of rain caused them to take refuge with neighbors. The storm was so bad that railway tracks washed away, roads became waterlogged, their tents blew over, and all their personal effects were soaked with water. E.W.’s wife Nackie loved Los Angeles and was far more critical of San Diego, particularly the mesa on which her husband considered building a house. E.W. told Ellen, “From the first view of the desert wilderness,
Nackie’s face drew out a foot long and she declared that she would not let her children live so far away from a doctor and so near a rattlesnake.”51 At that time, it took thirty-five minutes from the ranch to the railway station and the same amount of time to town. Los Angeles, meanwhile, required “two-hours hard driving,” one by carriage and the other by rail.52 She also may have been discomfited by the fact that one of E.W.’s first loves, cousin Lida with her “honey blonde hair,” lived only a few miles away.53 Will’s wife Broie, meanwhile, seemed to think, “It would be a difficult thing to find a worse hole than San Diego.”54

E.W., however, was delighted with the area. He spurned Ellen’s suggestion that he find another piece of land so that Fred could work the ranch independently. He felt that he would never find such an “ideal place of abode.” He wrote, “There is just enough of mountain background—just enough of sea foreground, just enough of level plain around and just enough of hill and hollow on the spot to suit a man whose aspirations are dreams and whose present comfort demands ease without plain flatness.”55 Fred, in turn, thought that his brother’s enthusiasm gave him license to spend more money than he had been allocated for the purpose of developing a large, commercial ranch.

In August 1891, E.W. and his brothers began building a ranch house on a wide, flat-top ridge overlooking the Linda Vista mesa. It was named Miramar (in Spanish, “sea view”) after Emperor Maximilian I’s palace on the Adriatic Coast, later replicated at Chapultepec in Mexico City.56 E.W. decided to imitate the Italianate structure with its crenellated towers, Romanesque windows, and promenade on the roof. However, he modified the plan by adopting the structural footprint of a villa or rancho with four one-story wings around a central courtyard.
The west wing, built in 1891, contained a primitive kitchen, dining room, and several bedrooms. There was little furniture. Tablecloths and napkins “were kept piled up on top of a barrel, collecting dust” while hats and coats went on the floor. At 15 feet-wide and 108 feet in length, the flat roof, or azotea, was an experiment that had to be replaced with a sturdier structure the following year. Annie, observing the leaks and falling plaster, did not think that any roof could bear her brother’s “constant promenading.” The south wing of the house, including a tower, was completed in 1892. “You have no idea what a tremendous effect the new wing produces,” E.W. wrote, “From the south and west, the house looks like a palace indeed.” By the summer of 1893, the compound had an east wing with another tower room and considerably more furniture. By the time the house was completed in 1898, it had forty-nine rooms—most with their own fireplace—running water, and a telephone line.

Miramar was more than just a house; it was a utopian experiment in family living that E.W. hoped would rank among “the most famous of dwelling places.” He wrote, “To make it a paradise all that is needed will be a little more spending money than we now have (which we will soon have), contentment in our hearts, and ability to compel to quietness those restless spirits who grumble because the country will not yield dollars as well as beauty.” He imagined a domestic space that would provide companionship and care for the elderly and infirm, a source of income for brothers who needed work, and “isolation and privacy” for individual families, including his own. He shared this vision with Ellen, considering it to be a “joint effort in philanthropy.” He was sure that his quarrelsome and often divided extended family would be able to live together in harmony if he could only organize the space in a sufficiently innovative way.

Social experiments of this kind were often predicated on the idea that environ-
ment affected physical and emotional health. In the nineteenth century, physicians thought that the stresses of modern industrial society created a “peculiar impoverishment of nerve force” that they characterized as neurasthenia. Symptoms included: headache; acute sensitivity to touch, light, or sound; inability to concentrate; drowsiness; a feeling of hopelessness; insomnia; and physical symptoms such as back pain. Neurologist George M. Beard called these “diseases of civilisation, and of modern civilization, and mainly of the nineteenth century, and of the United States.” Cures often required a change in patients’ physical environment. Some received a prescription for “absolute rest in bed, in quiet, if not darkened rooms” while others stimulated their nerves through physical activity, travel, electric therapy, and massage. Viennese neurologist Sigmund Freud offered a competing theory that took into account the power of the unconscious mind. In the 1880s, however, most American doctors believed that neurasthenia was caused by external factors that could be changed. As a result, people focused their attention on altering the environment in which they worked and lived.

E.W. and Ellen intended Miramar to foster a spirit of independence among its residents while, at the same time, providing dependent family members with a home and a way to make a living. Apartments and suites were intended to be large enough “to give each tenant room enough to practice all their idiosyncrasies without disturbing others.” Tower rooms offered isolation for those who needed to rest or read. Household expenses were divided evenly and all had to take “pot luck” when it came to choosing rooms. The house rules, meanwhile, were expressed in a constitution: “(1) no debts, (2) no speculation, (3) that it should be an agreeable home, (4) that mere agriculture should be the sole source of income from the investment.” By the time that the compound was finished in 1896, E.W. felt that he had successfully implemented his plan: “Miramar house has the advantages of a great amount of room—of isolation and privacy for most of its inmates, and very impressive exterior effect.” He continued, “Our place of residence and mode of living is so unique—so absolutely different from the customary—that no one can understand it and hence appreciate it.”
In theory, separate wings permitted family members to live and work in the same house without coming into constant contact—or conflict. E.W. told a dubious Ellen, “Fred would have his room or rooms and I would have mine...I will not interfere with him, his wife, his remnants, or his land, neither shall he interfere with mine.”70 In fact, they both thought they could reform Fred’s somewhat unscrupulous tendencies by giving him “honorable employment at a living salary so long as he wants it.”71

The reality of course, was different from the imagined plan. In the spring of 1892, Fred was indicted by a grand jury—though never brought to court—for having sexual relations with a fourteen-year-old girl, Mary Benoit, who lived in the neighborhood.72 This episode, combined with tensions over the management of the ranch, led to the kind of “differences and dissentions, unhappy ‘states of mind,’ and carping and criticism,” that had long characterized family relations.73 Annie and Fred complained to their mother about Will’s “overbearing” behavior as ranch manager; they also characterized the most recent wing of the house as a “perfect failure.” The former told E.W. that the dampness of her room contributed to her rheumatism, “in that sort of resigned, reproachful, martyr-to-her-brother’s-cruelty tone.” Fred harbored bitter feelings against E.W.; Annie thought that Fred could use more discipline, less indulgence; and E.W. was irritated by the “shabby, second-hand” furniture (including Ellen’s bedroom set) that Will had sent from Detroit to the ranch.74

Ellen and E.W. both feared that their experiment was a failure. The former wrote, “I am beginning to think that, after all,...it is ourselves not our circumstances that are responsible for the discord that exists among us. Are there any two of us as a family who could live happily and contentedly together?” She suspected that the family suffered from a “moral taint” that no utopian experiment could cure: “Let us hope that the next generations do not inherit it, for it is a nasty sort
of heritage to pass on to others. I feel sometimes as though I would like to go and bury myself in the desert, out of sight and hearing and knowledge of everybody I belong to!75 Nevertheless, she felt obliged to support her brother in his determination to create a family compound. She acknowledged the fact that Will and Fred needed a greater degree of independence than the ranch could provide. The former returned to his property in Altadena while the latter was helped to buy a 55-acre tract adjacent to Miramar. Ellen consoled E.W., “You call yourself a dead failure because everybody doesn’t slip into the grooves you cut for them, and all revolve in the same sphere without collision…I suppose you made some mistakes, but don’t give up because you haven’t found your material as pliable as you expected. I suppose the generation to come will rise up and call you blessed.”76

Miramar may have been a less-than-perfect social experiment but it changed E.W. for the better, or so he claimed. He shed his formal black suit and mustache, gained thirty pounds, grew a beard, and dressed in “last year’s clothes” and a crumpled old hat. He cursed his Scripps heritage, “the ability to make money and the necessity of doing so,” and harkened back to his maternal ancestor, Absalom Blair, who roamed “virgin forests” with “gun and rod, an ’expert fisherman,’ and a ‘crack shot,’ free from British rule and free from all other ambition than that of living as Nature’s friend rather than her master.”77 E.W. and his wife frequently traveled by horseback along canyons, across mesas and up mountains. Days were spent hunting and shooting quail, inspecting the ranch’s dams and cisterns, planting orchards, and wrangling with the Irrigation District. He reflected that
the family, too, was “greatly benefited by being here.” His sons John and Jim “seem to have at last developed from children into boys,” while his dog Duke was transformed: “From an aristocratic, exclusive, gentlemanly sort of dog, he has come down to being a common rough pub. He fights and licks Pablo and every other dog not more than double his size...He no longer poses as a beautiful statue, but rolls around in the dust and dirt, basking in the sunshine.”

Ellen, too, was changed by life in California. She began to feel more independent, both financially and emotionally. In the past, she had lived with other family members in either Detroit or Rushville, worked in the family business, took care of small children, and nursed relatives through illnesses and pregnancies. She always felt that she held an “anomalous position” within the family; she was not financially dependent on her brothers as she received dividends from most of the Scripps newspapers, but she was still an aging spinster without a home of her own. Around 1885 she expressed a feeling of “homelessness” to her brother James and several years later told E.W. that she no longer had the “freshness and vigor of mind” necessary to care for small children. After several winters spent in San Diego, however, she began to imagine a life of independence for herself. She was, after all, one of the proprietors of Miramar Ranch. Why should she not purchase land of her own?

In 1895, she began to consider buying a cottage in either La Jolla or Del Mar, having visited a seaside bungalow with her twenty-four-year-old niece, Floy Scripps Kellogg. The latter spent much of the winter in La Jolla while her two small daughters visited their grandfather Will at Miramar. Ellen noted, “Floy spent from last Wednesday till the following Sunday at La Jolla—and wasn’t anxious to get home then! She got quantities of abalones (I should think 100), limpets, starfish, sharks’ eggs, etc. also made many pleasant acquaintances,” including a Miss Spencer from Connecticut and the artist Anna Held who owned a few rustic cottages on the cliffs above Goldfish Point. Floy and her new friend arranged to rent a cottage, the Green Dragon, and invited Ellen to take tea with them. The latter wrote, “It is
rather shanty-like outside, but very cosy within. There is a very large, deep fireplace with a crane and pot and trivet.” It was so small, however, that she had to sit with her knees tucked under her in order to avoid knocking over the table. “They had 3 fires going—a wood fire in the big fireplace, a coal oil stove, and an alcohol lamp. We had fried potatoes and toast and tea (which accounted for the 3 fires) and canned salmon and nice bread and butter and plum jam (purloined of Miss Held’s store) and cake,” she wrote, “It was all so nice. I am thinking of having a cottage of my own.”

Ellen, like her niece, found that she enjoyed socializing with visitors to La Jolla. The town developed slowly after the real estate boom-and-bust of the late 1880s but the beauty of the scenery and the abundance of sea life continued to attract temporary residents. At the hotel, she met Mrs. Schneider, a naturalist, and admired her collection of over sixty different varieties of sea mosses, “all of which she has mounted beautifully, classified, and given their scientific names.” On one occasion, Mrs. U.S. Grant, Jr. and friends came out to stay in the Green Dragon. Lida and her friend vacated the cottage and Ellen helped them fill it with flowers for their arrival. She noted, “The chicories (wild cucumber) which grow thereabouts in abundance we used for draping the mantle, windows, etc., and we filled everything we could find with flowers—poppies, cyclamen, yellow violets, painted cup, etc., etc. They were really lovely and were greatly admired by the guests, who came in numbers during the day.”

Ellen began looking at property in February 1895 but she did not make a purchase until April 30, 1896, when she bought Lots 4 and 5 in Block 35 of La Jolla Park, a subdivision created by Frank Botsford. She commissioned the architects

Florence “Floy” M. Scripps Kellogg (1870-1958) in 1895. Ellen B. Scripps described her niece as “a ‘gadder’ par excellence” who loved La Jolla’s social life. The eldest daughter of William A. Scripps, she married Frederick William Kellogg in 1890. She and her husband purchased the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club in 1934. Courtesy of Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College.
Anton Reif and John Stannard to draw up plans for a large cottage on Prospect Street overlooking the ocean. While in Chicago, she had viewed a number of “modern” houses in Rogers Park, referring to the Queen Anne and Italianate styles popular in the late-Victorian period. She decided, however, that she preferred a simpler, “colonial style, if it can be suited…to the cottage size.” She told E.W., “I like its simplicity and unpretentiousness while it can be made as ornate as one chooses.” The architects worked with Will Scripps to design a two-story house with a south front in the Colonial Revival style and a north front in a modified Queen Anne style.

The side of the house facing Prospect Street was rectangular with a low-pitched, hipped roof topped by a railed rooftop platform and two chimneys. A wide entry porch with classical columns covered the front door. The north façade, meanwhile, was far more dramatic. A round tower jutted out from the northeast corner while a circular, columned...
porch extended from the opposite side.

In 1899, Scripps hired architectural partners Hebbard & Gill to make improvements. Irving Gill drew up plans for enlarging the kitchen and adding a one-story, flat-roofed wing on the east side of the house, replacing a porch. At his suggestion, Ellen repainted the house from yellow with white trim to “Poinsettia red” with green trim, perhaps to reflect an Arts & Crafts aesthetic. She also allowed nursery owner and horticulturalist Kate O. Sessions to redesign the garden, adding lawns, hedges, shrubbery, and a grouping of fifteen Stone Pines (Pinus pinea). 

Ellen named her new house “South Moulton Villa,” after her family’s home on South Moulton Street, London, where she had been born. The name suggested family continuity, better times, and pride in her English origins. A poem in her guest book read:

In Old South Moulton Street
In London, England. 6,000 miles away
Our Family, some sixty years ago

First saw the light of day

‘Absorbed in Retrospection,
The Mind in deep Reflection,
Is torn a good suggestion,
To ensure commemoration,’

To perpetuate the name, the place, and old associations, of past four generations,
Naming the Villa-by-the-Sea,
With name of Street, in memory sweet, 
South Moulton, joining B—.

Of Spanish names of true significance 
Of French with equal grace and meaning 
Many were given, and none accepted 
For with due Reverence for Birthplace 
Childhood-days, and Home and Recollection 
The name shall ever stand, for the Villa-by-the-Sea, 
In California Land

‘SOUTH MOULTON’90

Although Ellen had intended to build a private cottage where she could be free from the communal living arrangements at Miramar, she shared her home with her sisters, calling it “an ‘old maids’ establishment.”91 In August 1897 Annie moved from Miramar with her companion Miss Kaley and two nurses; she remained in La Jolla until her death in 1898. In November, Ellen and another sister Virginia (“Jenny”) arrived from Detroit to find the house largely completed. The latter threw herself into the social world of La Jolla, making numerous friends and planning a wide variety of activities. Ellen noted, “Jenny must live in the atmosphere of

action and thinks it is the life for everyone else.”\textsuperscript{92} She herself preferred peace and solitude, both of which were in short supply in early La Jolla.

Ellen gradually stepped out of her intimate family circle and began to acquire a large set of female acquaintances. The village had a growing population of summer and year-round residents, many of whom were unmarried women or widows. She remarked that in the early days, “It was a woman’s town.”\textsuperscript{93} She joined a women’s literary and current events club that later became the La Jolla Woman’s Club (1899). At the first meeting she attended, Eleanor Mills spoke on the subject of British imperialism in Africa, or “Cape to Cairo”; they subsequently discussed the troubles in South Africa that would lead to the Boer War.\textsuperscript{94} She became involved in the County Federation of Women’s Clubs and attended large conventions in San Diego. Ellen joined the Whist Club and the Ladies’ Aid Society and helped to organize the La Jolla Village Improvement Society, the Library Association of La Jolla, the Shakespeare Club, and the Parliamentary Law Club.\textsuperscript{95} She heard concerts at the Green Dragon colony, went to lectures, chaperoned dances at the Pavilion, picnicked at Del Mar and Pacific Beach, visited neighbors, took sightseeing trips, and invited friends to her cottage for dinner and conversation.

Ellen particularly enjoyed the rustic, seaside character of early La Jolla. In a speech given to the woman’s club, she described what the town had looked like in the early 1890s: “There were a few—a very few—little resident cottages scattered over slopes and levels, picturesque in their environment and their unpretentiousness.” People acted like neighbors, “with the house door always on the latch, and the glad hand always open to another’s clasp. And it didn’t take a very big house, or a classical program, or an elaborate menu to entertain as evening guests the whole community—men, women and children. For our literary tastes were not
hypocritical, nor were our appetites capricious; and we always had a ‘feast of reason and a flow of soul,’ even if it was of light weight.” She continued:

How we loved her [La Jolla], in those far off days, unvexed by city turmoil, untroubled by national and international problems! How we loved the sunshine that flooded the homes, glorious sunsets that empurpled the seas and bejeweled the hills, the white surf that lapped her feet, her own little mountain that crowned and fortressed her. How we loved her shell-strewn beaches, her unstable sand dunes, her legend-haunted caves, her rock-bound pools teeming with life and color, her wave-carved Cathedral Rock, even her dusty roads and grass grown foot paths which lured us to unexplored wonders of sea and land.96

Many early residents thought that the natural beauty and character of La Jolla were worth preserving. In 1907 Ellen hosted a meeting at her house where neighbors discussed efforts to preserve “simplicity of living in La Jolla and to discountenance expense of all sorts.”97 Ellen led by example, dressing modestly and often wearing cotton sunbonnets instead of elaborate hats. She appeared to Mary B. Ritter as “a small, inconspicuous, plainly dressed woman....The hat she wore when I first saw her was of several vintages past and she wore the same hat at least two or three years longer.”98 Her efforts must have made some impression for, according to one local author, La Jolla developed the reputation as a place “where you could wear out your old clothes!”99

As La Jolla grew from a small village into a popular seaside resort, Ellen worked to provide cultural resources that could help residents become healthier and better-informed citizens of the world. Women were crucial to California’s “growth machine,” as author Lee Simpson recently pointed out, shaping the plan and development of cities from the 1890s through World War II.100 Ellen and E.W. financed the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and donated land for Torrey Pines State Park. With her sister Virginia, Ellen supported the development of The Bishop’s School, a college preparatory school for girls. She opened her library and gardens to the public, collected Egyptian archeological artifacts to give to the San Diego Museum, and encouraged the development of Balboa Park. She donated land and money for the construction of public spaces such as the La Jolla Playground, Community Center, and Woman’s Club; she also funded the Scripps Memorial Hospital and a research center, the Metabolic Clinic in La Jolla.101

Interestingly, Ellen felt little affinity—or responsibility—for the cities where the Scripps family had earned its wealth. She responded negatively to an appeal for charity for the “teeming cities of Ohio, with their great industrial populations and thousands upon thousands of little children who are crowded in tenement houses.” She wrote briskly to her attorney, “Cleveland is a city of multimillionaires whose loyalty to their city should go a long way to mitigate the poverty and wretchedness of its congested quarters.” She excused her admitted “narrowness of vision” by repeating the adage, “Charity begins at home.”102 Her immediate concern was San Diego, a city that could be shaped into a utopia by the sea.

San Diego was an experiment for the Scripps family—a place where the damaging effects of individualism on both family and community could be lessened, if not relieved. E.W.’s personal ambition and pursuit of wealth had alienated him
from his brothers and caused him to feel ashamed of his “unmanly, unphilosophical, resentful, and even revengeful feelings” towards them. His solution was to take on the role of *pater familias*, building a family compound at Miramar where harmonious social relations could be brought about by the physical allocation of space. Ellen, meanwhile, had privileged self-expression over social activity for much of her life. In San Diego she invested, for the first time, in organizations dedicated to the good of society. “For as we get nearer to the end of life,” she wrote, “we see more clearly (and wonder at our former obtuseness) how the individual is but a part of the great whole, and of moment only so far as it helps to build up and form and perfect that whole.”

The Scripps family’s vision shaped the development of San Diego through the 1940s, if not longer. In the early twentieth century, residents developed and maintained civic institutions and public spaces that promoted health, social welfare, intellectual life, and cultural activity. Today, many civic leaders still share the Scripps’ utopian vision of San Diego as a sustainable paradise that both fosters a sense of community and transforms individual lives.
NOTES


3. Ellen Browning Scripps (hereafter EBS), February 17, 1890, *Diary, 1890*, Ellen Browning Scripps Collection (hereafter SC) 22/40, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “wag” as a mischievous, habitual joker.


7. Edward W. Scripps (hereafter EWS) to EBS, March 23, 1891, SC 2/34. In fact, E.W. considered naming the ranch, Dolly Blair Ranch, after his maternal grandmother, the daughter of Absalom and Martha Blair of Williamstown, MA. EBS Diary, March 23, 1891, SC 22/41; Scripps, *A Genealogical History*, 23.


9. EWS to EBS, West Chester, March 20, 1890, SC 2/32.


11. EBS to EWS, Detroit, December 19, 1890, SC 2/33. Ellen reminded her brother of the power of money when she wrote that if he needed domestic help, all he had to do was telegraph a few family members, “and—presto—there we are all settled as if for life; a modern application of the old myrrh of Aladdin’s Lamp. True, but after all, there must be a genius in the case—the genius of money.” EBS to EWS, Madrid, November 16, 1888, SC 2/29.

12. EWS to EBS, Cincinnati, September 6, 1885, SC 2/26.

13. In the early 1880s, Julia Anne “Annie” Scripps (1847-98) tried a cure offered by a female physician, Dr. Fairchild, and took several trips to Hannibal, Missouri, and Hot Springs, Arkansas. In 1885, she went to Milwaukee to live with Christian Scientists whom she much admired. In March
1886, Dr. Fairchild returned from Pasadena, California, with a partner of Dr. Bowen who offered classes on what Annie described as a “new theology” that accounted for the theory of evolution. She traveled to California in April 1887 and, later that year, took a trip to Europe and the Near East. Annie to EBS, Hannibal, MO, February 21, March 12, 1886, SC 3/38.

14. Annie to EWS, Alameda, February 4, 1892. Bowen founded “The Order of the New Life” at his Vineyard Sanatorium near Millville, New Jersey, and relocated to California following a financial scandal. Schaeclhln, The Newspaper Barons, 109-10. Ellen noted in her diary that members of the order “believe Dr. Bowen, the founder, to have received by the overpowering shadow of God a ‘germ’ by which he has developed into a teacher and leader above all. To quote Mr. Carpenter’s own word, ‘Jesus Christ was nothing to Dr. Bowen.’” She also wrote, “He has what he calls a molecular remedy which is supposed to cure all complaints.” EWS Diary, January 16, 17, 1890, SC 22/40.


16. EBS to EWS, Brussels, July 1, 1889; Lynton, August 29, 1889, SC 2/30.

17. Frederick Tudor Scripps (1850-1936), the third of five children born to James Mogg and Julia Osborn Scripps, occupied the role of the ‘problem’ sibling in the Scripps family. He never settled on a career, instead moving from one venture to another, losing money along the way. He reminded E.W. of their father who also had more enthusiasm than talent for business. In the mid-1880s, Fred ran up such large debts on the Rushville farm that creditors threatened to seize the property. Ellen and her brother George bailed him out against the advice of family members who thought, “Fred will never learn his lesson at this rate.” E.W., infuriated, later accused him of using Miramar’s credit to buy supplies for his own farm. Fred, meanwhile, claimed that E.W. had undermined his ability to borrow money in San Diego. In 1893, he married Sarah Emma Jessop (1872-1954), daughter of Joseph and Mary Jessop of Miramar, CA. They produced three children: Thomas Osborn Scripps, Julia Mary Scripps, and Annie Jessop Scripps. Joseph Jessop had a 40-acre plot adjoining the Miramar ranch at the southwest. He helped Fred to build the Surr Dam, completed in 1894. Scripps, A Genealogical History, 46; Annie to EWS, n.d., SC 27/48; EWS to EBS, May 1, 1885, SC 2/26; Annie to EBS, Rushville, April 10, 1885, SC 3/38; EWS to EBS, West Chester, August 27, 1892, SC 2/38; EWS to EBS, Miramar, November 4, 1892, SC 2/39; EWS to Fred, Miramar, January 25, 1916, SC 27/28; Map of Scripps Landholdings in Miramar Ranch, Patricia A. Schaeclhln/Scripps Family Research, Denison Library, Scripps College (hereafter PAS/SC) 42/50; “Dams Jessop Helped to Build,” San Diego Tribune, November 18, 1959.

18. EBS to Eliza Virginia Scripps, Alameda, January 1, 1890, SC 3/15.

19. EBS to EWS, Alameda, January 2, 1890, SC 2/32; EBS Diary, January 5, 17, 1890, SC 22/40. Ellen described Annie as “very gentle, patient, and quite a religious person” with an “intelligent face”; she thought her “the ablest of the lot.” Memoranda of Conference between J.C. Harper and Mary Jesse to EB, November 10, 1885, SC 2/40. Ellen described Annie as “the ablest of the lot.” November 10, 1885, SC 2/40. ANNIE TO EB, NOVEMBER 10, 1885, SC 2/40.

20. Mary Frances “Fanny” Bagby (1851-?) worked on both the Detroit Evening News and the St. Louis Chronicle before going to California to recover her health. She was the eldest daughter of John Courts and Mary Agnes (Scripps) Bagby, born in Rushville and educated at Knox College. She married Paul Blades, editor of the San Diego Union, in Pomona, California, on March 10, 1891. When the Sun was offered for sale in the spring of 1891, E. W. agreed to back the purchase of the paper by Blades and E.C. Hickman, perhaps as a wedding present. Her brother Edwin Hanson “Hans” Bagby (b. 1871) was selected by E.W. to manage the Los Angeles Record, a paper he founded in 1895. James E. Scripps, A Genealogical History of the Scripps Family and Its Various Alliances (Detroit: private printing, 1903), 34-35, 61, 76. In 1890, Ellen described Fanny as “the same person that she was ten years ago,” toned down a little by age and experience, but with a never failing fund of energy and industry. At the office before 8 every morning, and busy till 5 or 6 in the evening. I think she is appreciated very highly, but not nearly as much as she merits, for she does the only good work in the paper. She is cut out for a reporter; has the nose to smell out news; ears and eyes for observation and to pick up information, a suave tongue, and a steady pen. She is the body and soul of the Sun—which is after all only a country paper. She knows everybody and is universally liked. I don’t think, however, that she intends to cast in her lot with these barbarians. Her fame has gone out, and she has had various offers on Eastern papers. Has a standing offer on the New York World. I fancy her intention is to remain here until her health is firmly reestablished.” EBS to EWS, San Diego, February 21, 1890, EBS to EWS, February 21, 1890, SC 2/32.
21. EBS Diary, February 19, 1890, SC 22/40.
22. Eliza “Lida” Scripps (1855-?) was the daughter of William Hiler and Mary Caroline (Johnson) Scripps. William was a wealthy merchant and banker in Astoria, Illinois. Lida moved to California due to ill health. In 1891, E.W. wrote, “Lida Scripps, an invalid for the past two years, is well and seems happy out in her shanty.” Scripps, A Genealogical History, 30; EWS to EBS, San Diego, February 25, 1891, SC 2/34.
23. EBS to EWS, Los Angeles, March 14, 1890, SC 2/32.
24. Ellen wrote that Father Ubach was the inspiration for the character of Father Gaspar in Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona.* He inscribed his name in her copy of the novel: “Says the whole story is substantially true.” She noted: “He has 14 Indian charges in and among the mountains. Calls the people ‘my Indians’ and is very greatly attached to his work.” EBS Diary, March 3, 4, 1890, SC 22/40. She said that Captain Dillingham had been a ship master for twenty-five years “and has entered all the principal ports of the world and that, without any exception, the harbor of San Diego is the best he has ever seen.” EBS Diary, March 1, 1890, SC 22/40. For more information on Captain John Dillingham, see J. Henry Sears, *Brewster Ship Masters* (Yarmouthport: C.W. Swift, 1906), 28.
25. EBS Diary, February 22, 1890, SC 22/40.
26. EBS Diary, February 20, 21, 1890, SC 22/40. Ellen noted that Rose Hartwick Thorpe, “Lives with her husband and daughter at Pacific Beach. Came here for her health. Writes for several magazines. Is very pleasant, unassuming lady. The daughter displays great artistic skill.” EBS Diary, March 2, 1890, SC 22/40.
27. [EBS to EWS], [January 1890], SC 2/32.
28. EBS to EWS, San Diego, February 21, 1890, SC 2/32.
29. EBS to EWS, Los Angeles, March 14, 1890, SC 2/32.
30. EBS Diary, March 8, 1890, SC 22/40. Linda Vista was the railroad flag-stop closest to the Scripps Ranch.
32. EBS to EWS, Chicago, April 9, 1890, SC 2/32.
33. EBS to EWS, Los Angeles, March 14, 1890, SC 2/32.
34. EBS to EWS, Detroit, April 14, 1890, SC 2/32.
35. EBS to EWS, Detroit, April 18, 1890, SC 2/32.
36. EBS to EWS, Detroit, June 27, 1890, SC 2/32.
37. *San Diego Union*, November 28, 1891. He likely purchased this elaborate and costly outfit during his trip to Mexico six years earlier. In her diary, Ellen wrote: “The costume of the Mexican caballero is unique and picturesque (also costly)—a felt hat with enormous brim, high crown pinched in at the sides in 4 equal spaces & heavily trimmed with silver band, cord, binding and ornaments, costing often from $50 to $200; tight fitting trousers either of cloth or buckskin thickly ornamented on the outer seams of each leg with silver buttons & chains; a tight jacket of the same material, also heavily and profusely ornamented with silver; and the usual array of pistols silver mounted at the girdle.” EBS, Mexico Diary, March 9, 1885, SC 24/30.
38. EWS to EBS, San Diego, November 23, 1890, SC 2/33.
40. Historians have identified similar cases in Africa, Brazil, India, Ireland, Japan and Scotland as well as the American West. The British, for example, acknowledged their hold over Ireland by


42. EBS, Mexico Diary, February, 19, 1886, SC 24/30.

43. EBS, Diary, February 20, 1886, SC 24/30.

44. EWS to EBS, San Diego March 23, 1891, SC 2/34.

45. EWS to EBS, West Chester, August 16, 1888, SC 2/29.


47. Half of the 160-acre Douglas tract was conveyed to the Scripps by Klauber & Levi in 1892 and 1894. Miramar Ranch, 1903-12, SC 11/16.

48. EBS to EWS, Detroit, December 23, 1890, SC 2/33. They paid $2,240 for one 160-acre parcel; $2,080 for another, and $1040 for an 80-acre plot.

49. EBS Diary, January 3, 15, May 27, 1890, SC 22/41.

50. William A. “Will” Scripps (1838-1914) was the fourth of six children born to James Mogg Scripps and Ellen Mary Saunders Scripps. He married Ambrosia “Broie” Sutherland, née Antisdell (1847-94), in 1869. He worked in Detroit on the *News* before settling in Altadena, California, in 1891. In 1895, he married Katharine Pierce, a neighbor of the Scripps family at Miramar. Scripps, *A Genealogical History*, 45.

51. EWS to EBS, February 25, 1891, SC 2/34. Ellen was surprised that Nackie was so enthusiastic about Los Angeles. She wrote, “I much prefer San Diego.” EBS to EWS, February 21, 1891, SC 2/34.

52. EWS to EBS, San Diego, March 10, 13, 1891, SC 2/34.

53. As a young man, E.W. had wanted to marry Lida but her parents objected due to the fact that they were first cousins. He felt that they objected to his poverty, not his close relation. Schaelchlin, *The Newspaper Barons*, 91.

54. EBS to EWS, West Chester, March 17, 1891, SC 2/34.

55. EWS to EBS, San Diego, March 10, 1891, SC 2/34. E.W. wrote, “Another good thing to report is the finding of a dead level beautiful road over the mesa to the cliffs above the ocean from which most superb views are had of the sea and parts of the coast. The view of La Jolla point from those hills as seen in the evening is enchanting. But that which pleases me about it all is that it is just such a short easy ride as we can make in an hour or less with a good horse—to see the sun set of an evening and get back before the twilight goes out.” He planned to create “a real tropical garden” around the house. EWS to EBS, Miramar, November 4, 1892, SC 2/39.

56. In 1888, Ellen visited a site outside Barcelona called “Miramar” that commanded a “beautiful

57. EBS to EWS, Detroit, September 12, 1892, SC 2/38.  

58. Fanny Bagby, visiting in November, found the view to be “surpassingly fine” and penned a brief description for the San Diego Union. [Fanny Bagby] to Nackie, San Diego, November 5, 1891, Ohio University Library 3.1 Box 1-6; San Diego Union, November 19, 1891. E.W. claimed that that the roof had not been properly prepared for asphalt with tar and felt building paper. “I am going to keep that flat roof for promenade if it doubles the cost of building.” EWS to EBS, West Chester, May 15, 1892, SC 2/37.  

59. Annie to EBS, Miramar, May 3, 1892, OU 3.1, Box 1-7. Ellen corresponded with her brother about the architecture of Miramar, reminding him that he could build a roof sturdy enough to walk on, “Do you remember the Spanish roofs? They were subject to continual trafficking. I remember in some cases that the laundry work was done on the hotel roofs, heavy tubs and machinery used, and almost constant walking on them.” She suggested that a promenade might be constructed with the mixture of plaster, cement, and hemp that was being used to construct buildings at the World’s Columbian Exposition, or the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair. EBS to EWS, Rushville, May 17, 1892, SC 2/37.  

60. EWS to EBS, Miramar, November 4, 1892, SC 2/39.  

61. EWS to Nackie, Miramar, June 1893, Ohio University 1.2, box 2-8. He wrote, “Oh, but it is so beautiful just to look out over the yellow brown—the distant hills—the white and red cliffs towards Del Mar.”  

62. EWS to EBS, October 15, 1912, SC 11/16.  

63. E.W. laid out a simple constitution, claiming that Fred did not abide by it: “(1) no debts, (2) no speculation, (3) that it should be an agreeable home, (4) that mere agriculture should be the sole source of income from the investment.” EWS to EBS, West Chester, June 12, 1892, SC 2/27.  


66. EWS to EBS, West Chester, June 12, 1892, SC 2/27.  

67. EWS to EBS, Miramar, November 4, 1892, SC 2/39.  

68. EWS to EBS, West Chester, June 12, 1892, SC 2/27.  

69. EWS to EBS, Miramar, June 26, 1896, SC 2/44.  

70. EWS to EBS, West Chester, June 12, 1892, SC 2/27.  

71. EWS to EBS, West Chester, June 22, 1892, SC 2/27.  

72. Benoit’s father, meanwhile, was arrested, tried, and sentenced to ten years in prison for statutory rape. Court documents contain vivid descriptions of domestic abuse. Fred appears to have been one of several neighborhood men who used Benoit as a prostitute. Details about the case can be found in S/SC 39/126-128; and California Supreme Court and San Diego County Appellate Court Briefs, The People of the State of California vs. Charles Benoit, Folder 9:11247, June 1892. E.C. Hickman, co-owner of the Sun, told E.W. that he had taken it upon himself to make sure that papers for the prosecution conveniently disappeared; as a result, Fred was never brought to trial. E.W. told his sister that he had forwarded $584, noting, “I don’t know who gets the money or anything else about its use...It is too bad that I should have had to be drawn into such a matter.
But had there been a trial I suppose I would have had to bear the expense and trouble and I am glad to get off so easily.” Trimble, *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*, 167; EWS to EBS, West Chester, July 1892, SC 2/37.

73. EBS to EWS, Detroit, November 14, 1892, SC 2/39.

74. EWS to EBS, Miramar, November 4, 1892, SC 2/39.

75. EBS to EWS, Detroit, November 8, 1892, SC 2/39.

76. EBS to EWS, November 18, 1892, SC 2/39. Ellen and E.W. bought land owned by Fred in Arkansas, enabling him to purchase 55 acres adjacent to Miramar. EWS to EBS, October 15, 1912, SC 11/16.

77. EWS to EBS, San Diego, March 23, 1891, SC 2/34. In fact, E.W. considered naming the ranch, Dolly Blair Ranch, after his maternal grandmother, the daughter of Absalom and Martha Blair of Williamstown, MA. EBS Diary, March 23, 1891, SC 22/41; Scripps, *A Genealogical History*, 23.

78. EWS to EBS, Miramar, June 26, 1896, SC 2/44; EWS to EBS, Miramar, November 4, 1892, SC 2/39.

79. EBS to EWS, Detroit, September 13, 1891, SC 2/36.

80. JES to EBS, October 4, 1885, transcript, SC 25/3.

81. EBS to VS, Miramar, February 24, 1895, SC 3/15. Ellen wrote, “Floy is a ‘gadder’ par excellence. She has no idea of going home in April unless obliged to.” EBS to VS, Miramar, March 9, 1895, SC 3/15.

82. EBS to VS, Miramar, February 20, 1895, SC 3/15. She noted that Mr. Schneider was taking a year’s leave-of-absence from Champaign Industrial University after a twenty-two year career as a German professor. For the Scripps’ interest in ocean life, see: Helen Raitt and Beatrice Moulton, *Scripps Institution of Oceanography: First Fifty Years* ([Los Angeles]: W. Ritchie Press, [1967]); Elizabeth N. Shor, “How the Scripps Institution Came to San Diego,” *JSDH* 27, no. 3 (Summer 1981): 161-173; Abraham J. Shragge and Kay Dietze, “Character, Vision and Creativity: The Extraordinary Confluence of Forces that Gave Rise to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography,” *JSDH* 49, no. 2 (2003): 71-86.


84. She paid Botsford $800 for the lots and, by the end of 1897, spent nearly $8,000 on construction and $1,400 on “inside expenses.” Accounting Diaries, 1894-97, SC 6/24.

85. EBS, Diary, November 22, 29, 1896, December 1, 31, 1896, SC 22/47. Anton Reif was a German-trained architect who had partnered with A. W. Delaine and Domenick P. Benson, successively, from 1887 to 1890. John B. Stannard (1852-1942) began working as an architect in San Diego in 1887 and is best known for the Louis Bank of Commerce Building. Stannard and Reif worked together on the Albert Morse Block (1896) located at 740-744 Market Street in downtown San Diego. Raymond S. Brandes, *San Diego Architects, 1868-1939* (San Diego: University of San Diego, 1991), 146-47, 167-68; City of San Diego and Marie Burke Lia & Associates, “East Village Combined Historical Surveys 2005” (January 2005), Table 4. In May 1896, Ellen noted in her diary, “Saw an architect about building at La Jolla—Stannard, who drew rough plans instructive to me.” She later wrote, “Mr. Stannard, architect, drove out and talked on plan for La Jolla cottage” and “‘Will and self spent the day in town, chiefly with Stannard and Reid, the architects.” EBS, Diary, May 20, November 29, December 1, 1896, SC 22/47.

86. EBS to EWS, Chicago, Chicago, June 18, 1896, SC 2/44.

87. Will Scripps supervised the construction of South Moulton Villa as Ellen was in Europe from May-October 1897. There appear to have been problems with construction for, in March 1898, builders Edmund C. Thorpe & John Kennedy brought “a jack and crew” to raise the house three-quarters of an inch “where it had settled.” Thorpe continued to do work on the house, installing bookcases and folding doors, among other things. EBS Diary, March 31, 1898, SC 23/2.

88. EBS, Diary, July 6, August 19, September 27, October 15, 1899, SC 23/3; “Week at La Jolla,” *San Diego Union*, November 12, 19, 1899. William S. Hebbard and Irving J. Gill were partners between 1896 and 1907. In 1898, the firm designed a number of Shingle-style homes for residents of

89. Sessions supplied the first plants to South Moulton Villa. In March 1897, Ellen wrote in her diary: “Will and self spent the day at La Jolla. Building going on all right. Met Miss Sessions there and made some arrangements for planting.” EBS, Diary, March 13, 1897, SC 23/1. On a visit in July 1899 she “interested herself in suggesting various plantings.” She later sent plans for the improvement of the grounds. EBS Diary, March 29, 1898, SC 23/2; EBS Diary, July 7, 26, 1899, SC 23/3; “At the Seaside: La Jolla Notes of Interest,” San Diego Union, November 26, 1899. The newspaper article suggested that Sessions had planted fifteen Torrey Pines (Pinus torreyana) “grown from seed brought by Miss Scripps from Italy. These Roman pines are noted for the beauty of their growth, which assumes an umbrella form as they grow older. Their fruit is the nut so popular in the confections and dainty dishes of Italy.” In fact, the author is referring to the Italian Stone Pine or the Umbrella Pine, Pinus pinea.


91. EBS to EWS, Chicago, July 11, 1895, SC 2/43. Ellen’s older sister Elizabeth (Scripps) Sharp moved to San Diego in 1900 with her daughter Mary Billmeyer after the death of the latter’s husband. She lived nearby, in a poor state of health, until her death in 1914. EBS Diary, October 11, 1900, SC 23/4.

92. EBS to EWS, Palomar, August 31, 1901, SC 2/47. Virginia occupied the neighboring Wisteria Cottage (1904) before returning to her home in Rushville in 1915. Thereafter, she visited frequently, often spending the winter and the summer months in San Diego.

93. EBS, “La Jolla Then and Now” [ca. 1911], SC 22/19.

94. Ibid.

95. Dr. John Mills Boal served as the first president of the La Jolla Village Improvement Society founded in 1899; Ellen Browning Scripps and Mr. Flint were on the board of directors. EBS Diary, March 5, 1899, SC 23/3. The Library Association was founded following Florence Sawyer’s gift of the Reading Room to the City of San Diego in 1899. EBS, Diary, May 27, August 26, 1899, SC 23/3; Susan Self, “The History of the La Jolla Art Association,” The La Jolla Art Association (2002), http://www.lajollaart.org/about_ljaa/historyljaa.pdf (accessed January 5, 2010).

96. EBS, “La Jolla Then and Now.”

97. Ellen noted, “Professor Ritter [of the Scripps Institute] opposed the organization of any society for this purpose as impractical and spoke strongly about common sense and individualism.” EBS, Diary, January 14, 1907, SC 23/11.


99. Howard S. F. Randolph, La Jolla Year by Year (La Jolla: The Library Association of La Jolla, 1955), 128.


102. EBS to J. C. Harper, La Jolla, July 19, 1914, SC 1/89.

103. EWS to EBS, San Diego, February 25, 1891, SC 2/34.

104. EBS to EWS, Detroit, June 17, 1890, SC 2/32.
Naming Balboa Park: Correcting the Record
By
Nancy Carol Carter

A contest was held to give City Park a name worthy of the elaborate fair being built there. Apparently, a Mrs. Harriet Phillips of the San Diego Club and Pioneer Society suggested the name, “Balboa Park.”¹ – The Journal of San Diego History, 1979

The name of “City Park” was changed to “Balboa Park” in 1910, the result of a citywide naming contest. The winner, Mrs. Harriet Phillips, chose the name because the Park offered a wide view of the Pacific Ocean and explorer Vasco Nuñez de Balboa was the first European to sight the Pacific Ocean (from the coast of Panama).² – Balboa Park Website, 2010

The most frequently told story about the naming of Balboa Park is false. In the popular narrative, a citywide contest was held in 1910 to find a more distinctive name for San Diego’s City Park. Mrs. Harriet Phillips won the contest by suggesting “Balboa Park.”³ This version of the renaming of City Park appeared in an unsigned San Diego Union newspaper article in 1918.⁴ Despite its inaccuracy, the story was included in a popular book on the history of Balboa Park published in 1969 and incorporated into a 1979 article on the park.⁵ It is not the real story, but with few exceptions is repeated in every subsequent account of park history and all tourist guidebooks.⁶ It is even found on the official San Diego city website and the Balboa Park website.

Reliance on faulty newspaper reporting done in 1918 has denied generations of San Diegans a true history of how their treasured urban park came to be named after Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. The facts are these: park officials did not hold a contest to select a new name for City Park. There was an unofficial contest sponsored by a newspaper. Harriet Phillips did not win that contest. The winner of the newspaper contest did not propose the name Balboa Park. There is simply no truth to the story that Balboa Park got its name as the result of a contest. Neither is there any contemporaneous information singling out Harriet Phillips from the scores of other San Diegans who suggested names for the park.⁷ She may have put forth

Nancy Carol Carter, former Director of the Legal Research Center and a Professor of Law at the University of San Diego, holds the M.S. (History), M.L.S. and J.D. degrees. She is the author of “The Brandegees: Leading Botanists in San Diego,” in the Fall 2009 issue of this Journal. She created and maintains a Native American web site chronicling events affecting the original inhabitants of San Diego County (www.sandiego.edu/nativeamerican).
delayed their decision for months. When the new name was finally announced, newspaper headlines shouted in capital letters: “WE DO NOT WANT BALBOA! WHY SHOULDN’T THE PEOPLE OF SAN DIEGO NAME THEIR OWN PARK?” The Sun also ridiculed the name by printing disparaging biographical accounts of Vasco Núñez de Balboa that emphasized his history as a stowaway and manner of death: “He was executed by the Spanish for treason. And now one of the great parks of America has been named in his honor.” In fact, Balboa’s “treason” was actually a politically motivated charge trumped up by a rival. Those who disliked the new name questioned the authority of the Park Commission to make the decision, demanding intervention by the City Council and a special election.

The version of history in which City Park received a new name in a smoothly orchestrated civic exercise is just not true. The real story is untidy. It is political, press driven, and populated with a cast of concerned, humorous, cranky, and engaged citizens of San Diego.

**No Better Time**

The idea of adopting a more distinctive name for City Park was not new in 1910, though San Diego had maintained the status quo for more than forty years. Impetus to make the name change arrived with the decision to stage the Panama-California Exposition. City Park needed a more alluring and suitable name. Samuel
Parsons, the New York landscape architect who had been hired in 1902 to professionally design City Park grounds and to create a master plan for its development, put the matter squarely on the table. As an early step in exposition planning, Parsons was brought back to San Diego in 1910 to assess progress on the master plan he had submitted five years earlier and to report to the Park Commissioners. At the end of his report, Parsons wrote:

The importance of adopting a name for the park has impressed me with renewed force...To call it the “city park” means nothing...Some name that is distinctive, euphonious and that suits Southern California is what is wanted. There has been much discussion and many names have been suggested... Why not meet the question fairly now and settle it? There can be no better time. I would suggest the name of “Cabrillo Park.”

Parsons was reporting to the Park Commissioners, Thomas O’Hallaran, Senator Leroy A. Wright and Judge Moses A. Luce, who, according to newspaper accounts, planned to give the name suggestion their “early consideration.” While Parsons obviously favored a change from “City Park,” we do not know if he felt strongly about his Cabrillo suggestion, or just offered a specific proposal to stimulate discussion.

The San Diego Sun editorialized that Parsons was right: it was time for the park to be given a name that could convey “a sort of personality.” While there were other names that could be chosen, “we all will have to concede that Cabrillo park would be a good name, carrying a proper significance. The park commissioners would not be going wrong if they resolved to name it Cabrillo Park.”

The Commissioners discussed renaming the park at their next meeting. O’Hallaran was ready to accept the name Cabrillo, but neither Wright nor Luce liked it. Wright favored naming the park after its ardent advocate and benefactor, George W. Marston. He also thought Horton Park (after city father Alonzo Horton) or Sierra Park would be good names. Judge Luce favored a descriptive name like Ocean View or Bay View or a Spanish name suggestive of the same, but conceded that the “view” names were already “used much.” Wright suggested that they all think of names and resume the discussion at their next meeting. O’Hallaran convinced Wright and Luce that the public should be consulted. With these actions, the Commissioners presaged four long months of irresolute discussion. From all accounts, the Commissioners approached this decision with care and detachment, avoiding the

Moses A. Luce, pictured here ca. 1911-15, served as one of the park commissioners responsible for renaming City Park. After serving with distinction in the Civil War, he moved to San Diego in 1873. He served as judge of the County Court of San Diego and founded the law firm Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps. ©SDHC #91:18564-1728.
acrimony that burst through the public discourse on a new park name.15

Meet the Press

Whether out of genuine civic interest or as a gambit to improve newspaper sales, the San Diego Sun campaigned for public involvement in naming the park. Motivations may be inferred from commentary in “Under the Peppers in the Park.” This light-handed editorial page column reported the imagined conversations of two typical San Diego tourists, the observant Ohio and Nebraska. Ohio thought it might be a good thing “if people got het up” over the selection of a name for the park because it would beneficially increase public interest in the park. Ohio spoke against a geographical name like Silver Gate, and proposed Junípero Park, leaving off “Serra” in the interest of brevity.16

Commissioner Leroy A. Wright, a founding member of the San Diego Historical Society, was an attorney in San Diego. He served as State Senator from the 27th and 40th Districts between 1907 and 1913. Photo ca. 1916. ©SDHC, Union-Tribune Collection, UT #3667.
The _Sun_ sparked public interest by announcing a contest for the best letter suggesting a new park name. The prize was $5. Readers were urged to rush their entries so that the Park Commissioners could profit from public suggestions at their next meeting. Letters poured in, according to the paper, with half of them suggesting the name Silver Gate. This term was unofficially attached to the San Diego Bay entrance in the nineteenth century. Proponents asserted that Silver Gate Park would be easy to remember as it established a southern twin of San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park.

Next in popularity were the names Horton or Pacific Park. One person wanted to memorialize the 60 sailors killed when their navy gunship exploded in San Diego Bay in 1905 by naming the park after the USS Bennington. “Spanish names are pretty,” wrote the contestant, but only have local value. Another correspondent warned to avoid Spanish names entirely because no one could pronounce them. His examples included La Jolla and El Cajon. Why not name the park St. James, the English translation of San Diego? Letters soon showed more variety, with Ramona, Hermosa, Buena Vista, Exposition, and Fremont being suggested. One letter stated that President Theodore Roosevelt should get the honor because he was building the Panama Canal.

Days later the _Sun_ reported that Silver Gate and Horton were still leading in a flood of suggestions that now included more presidential names: Washington, Grant, and Lincoln had joined the list, along with Panama, Paradise, Sun, and Sunset. Two popular favorites were melded into Horton’s Sunset Park. “View” names abounded: Bay View, Ocean View (so easy to remember), Grand View (or should it
be Grandview? Or simply Grand Park?). San Diego could signal its ideal weather with the name Climatic Park, wrote one booster. Another suggestion favoring “Peoples’ Gardens” was decades ahead of trends. Mrs. C.A. Mallette won the newspaper contest. Her letter pointed out that the popular favorite, Silver Gate, sounded secondary to Golden Gate Park. She collected the $5 prize by proposing that City Park become San Diego Park.

The Sun’s readers must have been disappointed when the Park Commissioners met and again delayed a decision. New ideas kept popping up. At that very meeting “Miramar” was proposed and received a favorable reception. In fact, this was the first time that all three commissioners agreed on a name. But they were “loath to take quick action” because names were still being suggested by the public. A likely explanation is that the commissioners were overwhelmed by the plethora of names proposed and flummoxed when it came to processing the public input they had sought.

The characters Ohio and Nebraska from “Under the Peppers” were holding out for a personal name, but conceded that Miramar was a tolerable choice. A Sun reader disagreed, complaining that no one could spell or pronounce Miramar, or know its meaning. Grand View was better—very easy to spell, say, and comprehend. Another writer rejected Miramar as lacking a national character, “when what was wanted was a name familiar to everyone from Maine to Alaska.”

Occasionally this dialog exposed a social fault line. Some proposed names were castigated as highfalutin and of appeal only to a snobbish minority. An acerbic reply to this line of complaint mocked: “The most striking feature of the suggested park names is the good taste and originality exhibited. In making a choice of this sort, the first and greatest virtue is absolute mediocrity and a careful avoidance of anything characteristic—a danger particularly in this country of Spanish traditions.” Easy pronunciation seems to be a prime requisite. “Horton Park” is probably within the educational reaches of most and “has the added virtue of being as musical as the gurgle of a croup-stricken pullet.” Joking aside, the letter concludes, “Cabrillo Park is a good choice.” It was recommended by the park expert, it has a pleasant sound and it celebrates the history and character of San Diego.

While the Sun was busy inflaming interest in the park name, the rival San Diego Union newspaper distanced itself from the commotion, perhaps out of deference to park commissioner Wright, a former city editor with the paper. The Union reported actions of the Park Commission with respectful patience, although stories and
editorials about the choice of a new name for the park also appeared. One long piece explained that Alonzo Horton had not given City Park to San Diego. This was in response to calls and letters to the Union suggesting that the park be named after the person who “donated” it to the city. The Union’s editorial alter ego “Yorick” commented on the many names offered to challenge Parson’s suggestion of Cabrillo Park (“it is wonderful what a torrent of ideas can be made to flow from an original thought”). He poked fun at those suggesting Ocean View and Bay View. Such generic names could be used in thousands of locations around the globe and had no particular San Diego significance. Yorick weighed the pros and cons of naming the park after a living person (George Marston had been mentioned) but eventually endorsed Parson’s suggestion of Cabrillo Park.

Balboa Park is Born

Four months after agreeing to do so, the park commissioners finally adopted a new name for City Park. They were nudged into action by the building and grounds committee of the exposition at a joint meeting on October 27, 1910. The Sun wrote: “While members of the building and grounds committee of the Panama California exposition were conferring with the members of the city park commission Thursday afternoon, the importance of naming the park without more ado was realized again...there was a marked tendency among all present to get together and agree upon something no matter what.” The “dove of peace came down and the sobriquet ‘Balboa’ was chosen from the hundreds that had been offered.” Horton, Silver Gate and Cabrillo were considered, but “someone suggested” that the memory of Balboa, “who beat the real estate men to the Pacific Ocean,” should be forever perpetuated. One of the park commissioners later wrote that the names Darien, Pacific, and Del Mar were among those discussed at this decisive October meeting.

These newspaper stories were published the day after Balboa Park was named. The Sun makes no mention of Harriet Phillips or of a park-naming contest. The same is true for the Union. The choice, it said, was “made after a dozen illustrious or poeti-
cal names had been advanced, all of which had yielded, one by one, to the points of fitness embodied in the name of that daring explorer,” Balboa. The name was not chosen until every phase of the question had been exhaustively discussed and the decision was unanimous. 30 Several more paragraphs are devoted to the importance of giving the park a new name and the appropriateness of this choice. While the San Diego Union was all contentment, the Sun was about to turn on the park commissioners.

Initially, the Sun, through commentary by its imaginary tourists Ohio and Nebraska, gave its qualified approval to the Commission’s action. They liked the choice of a personal name, rather than the descriptive Silver Gate or Sunset Park, and hoped that San Diegans would feel a friendly connection and take a more personal interest in the park. “Balboa is a bilious sort of name,” they concluded, but “he deserves some credit for discovering the Pacific Ocean.”31 The Sun changed its tune when the Park Commission began to rename specific areas of the park. Abandoning restraint, the newspaper launched a strident attack, positioning itself as the voice of the people raised against an out-of-control Park Commission. The choice of names was criticized and the authority of the commissioners to change names in the park was questioned. When the Park Commission gave Pound Canyon the “pretentious” new name Cabrillo Canyon, the Sun ripped into the “christenings” being done without consulting the public who would have to live with “these pet names” forever. 32 The Sun now loathed City Park’s new name:

Not satisfied with forcing the poor old city park to be until the end of the world may set her free, the most unmusical, unattractive appellation “Balboa,” the city park commissioners...are again at it. Who said Balboa was the best name for city park? Many declare it is about as poor a name as could have been selected. Perhaps seven out of ten say they will never call the park by that name. Many names were suggested by Sun readers. Many of these were good and were agreed upon by numerous citizens. Few suggested Balboa. 33

Close on the heels of this barrage, the “Sunbeams” column in the newspaper printed the WE DO NOT WANT BALBOA headline and resurrected the name Silver Gate. “Many will agree that Silver Gate beats Balboa. In fact the great majority has complained that there are few names not preferable to Balboa.”34 This generated more letters from the public. “I want to register my protest against saddling the city park with such an ugly name as Balboa, it is a hard, harsh sounding name. Why not Junipero Serra [or] some good United States name? Central Park is good enough for New York City.” Another letter demanded that the name City Park be reinstated. “Let those who want Balboa move to Mexico...the name would be very appropriate in that country.”35 Criticism devolved to silliness at times: if the people had named the city park instead of three appointed park commissioners, a Sun columnist wrote, it would not have been cursed with a name that sounds like “Bell Boy.”36

Discontent also took a practical turn. The City Council was asked to intercede on behalf of citizens unhappy with the work of the Park Commission. A champion for the cause was found in Councilman John L. Sehon who concurred that, “Balboa is not a popular name for the park.”37 He thought that the council should have seen to naming the park before delegating its oversight to an appointed commission. “We should name our babies before we lend them out,” he said.
The council was asked to select ten of the most suitable names for the park and place them on a special election ballot. “This would give all the voters a chance to help christen the big play grounds.” The name selected would be used by the people in speaking of “their park,” instead of Balboa as decided by the three commissioners.39

However vociferous, these were last gasps in the active campaign against the Park Commissioners’ selection of the name Balboa Park. Efforts at political maneuvering through the City Council or the ballot box came to naught. In advance of some of the harshest criticism, the Park Commission had formally confirmed the “Balboa Park” name on November 1, 1910, and settled in to endure the slings and arrows of those who would have preferred a different name.40 Most city leaders stayed clear of the fray, refusing to shelter under the San Diego Sun’s populist mantle or perhaps ignoring the press all together. Some may have drawn comfort from the Union’s stolid and rarely wavering approval. In time, the critics toned down because they were ignored. San Diego city leaders had their eyes fixed firmly on the future. The controversy over naming City Park was but a minnow amid the large fish they had to fry. They were bringing the Panama-California Exposition to life. It would open in 1915 and it would open in a place called Balboa Park.

**Setting the Record Straight**

It is time to correct the record by eradicating the unsubstantiated tale that has long described the naming of Balboa Park. All mentions of a naming contest won by Mrs. Harriet Phillips should be relegated to the genre of “colorful myth.” There is no reason to perpetuate it. The real story is easily encapsulated:

City Park became “Balboa Park” in 1910 to provide a more distinctive and memorable name for the home of the Panama-California Exposition, opening in 1915. Many San Diegans proposed new names for City Park and engaged in the lively discussion preceding the Park Commission’s decision to honor Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, the Spanish explorer who in Panama scaled a Darien peak and became the first European to sight the Pacific Ocean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names Proposed for City Park in 1910:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balboa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buena Vista</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabrillo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES

1. Gregory Montes, “From Parsons to Balboa,” The Journal of San Diego History 25, no. 1 (Winter 1979), 16. The first sentence of this statement inaccurately cites to Leroy A. Wright, “Writer Traces Pueblo Titles Back to 1789 in History of Local Park,” San Diego Union, March 17, 1935: II2, 1. There is no mention of a contest in this authoritative newspaper account, authored by one of the three Park Commissioners who changed the name of City Park. Rather, it explains that there was “ever increasing interest in the controversy as to what name should be selected” and that “Balboa” was selected after “a dozen illustrious or poetical names had been advanced.” The second sentence from Montes is cited without author, title, or page number to an article in the San Diego Union, May 27, 1916. The author attributes the article to an entry in the Thomas O’Hallaran Scrapbook (p. 36) in the collection of the California Room, San Diego Central Public Library. The citation cannot be verified in that source as Montes saw it because page 36 has been cut from the scrapbook, along with several nearby pages. The May 27, 1916, issue of the San Diego Union has no articles on the naming of Balboa Park and no mention of Harriet Phillips. There is a high likelihood that the citation is incorrect and that Montes actually read “History of Balboa Park Interwoven With That of City,” San Diego Union, May 27, 1918, 4-4-6 (Note the date 1918, not 1916). This unsigned article states, “The name ‘Balboa’ was given the park about the year 1910 after a contest had been conducted for the purpose. It is said that Mrs. Harriett (sic) Phillips, a member of the San Diego Club and Pioneer Society, suggested the name “Balboa.” This one paragraph hedged with its slippery “it is said” language appears to be the font from which all subsequent misinformation about the naming of Balboa Park flows.


3. Harriet Wallace Phillips was a charter member of the San Diego Club and a member of the Pioneer Society, having arrived in San Diego in the 1870s. She was elected to the San Diego Library Board in 1895 and resided on Fourth Avenue at the time of her death in 1918. Her husband George K. Phillips predeceased her, having become wealthy in the mining business, then falling on hard times. “Phillips,” Biographical Files, San Diego Historical Society Archives; San Diego Union, April 3, 1895, 51.

4. “History of Balboa Park Interwoven With That of City,” San Diego Union, May 27, 1918, 4-4-6. This information has been incorrectly cited to Wright, “Writer Traces Pueblo Titles.” However this article does not discuss a contest or mention Harriet Phillips.

5. “In order to find a suitable name, a contest was held…the winner was Mrs. Harriett Phillips, member of the Pioneer Society and the San Diego Club, with her suggestion of Balboa.” Florence Christman. The Romance of Balboa Park (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1969), 37. Christman apparently had not used 1910 original sources because she incorrectly lists the names of two of the three park commissioners. In the fourth and most recent edition of the book, published in 1985, the naming contest is discussed on page 33; Montes, “From Parsons to Balboa,” 1.


7. Harriet Phillips is not mentioned in any of the general newspaper articles on naming the park, nor in the accounts written by two people present at the meeting when the name “Balboa Park” was selected. Park Commissioner Leroy A. Wright discussed the naming of the park in his 1935 article “Writer Traces Pueblo Titles.” George Marston was at the meeting as a member of the Exposition Building and Grounds Committee, but he does not speak to the naming of Balboa Park in his “History of San Diego City Parks,” in Carl H. Heilbron, History of San Diego County (San Diego: San Diego Press Club, 1936), 153-174.

8. In criticizing the Park Commission selection of a name, the Sun commented that among the public ideas for renaming City Park, “few suggested Balboa.” This does indicate that the name was in play and suggested by multiple sources rather than being a unique contribution of Harriet Phillips. “Christening Bee Indulged in by Park Commissioners,” San Diego Sun, November 30, 1910, 1:2-3. It is possible that Phillips directly suggested “Balboa” to one of the Park Commissioners or those meeting with the Commission and was informally credited by herself or another with providing the new name of City Park, but no record of her direct involvement could be documented in the current research.
9. A Board of San Diego Park Commissioners was first appointed on April 17, 1905, marking the transition of City Park improvement activities from the private efforts of the Park Improvement Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to a governmental responsibility of the city. “First Park Board Named Last Night,” *San Diego Union*, April 18, 1905, 3:1-2.

10. “When Balboa Came West,” *San Diego Sun*, December 5, 1910, 4:2-3. This unfavorable account was assembled “from research at the San Diego free library.” Samuel Eliot Morison wrote, “So, one day in 1517, Vasco Núñez de Balboa, as kindly, loyal, and competent a conquistador as ever brought the cross and banner of Castle overseas, was seized by order of Pedrárias, tried, and condemned to death on the charge of treason and murder. Next day he and four companions were beheaded in the public square and their bodies thrown to the vultures. Balboa was only forty-two years old.” Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages*, 1492-1616 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). See also, Octavio Mendez Pereira, *Balboa*, ed. Everett W. Hesse (New York: American Book Co., 1944).

11. Samuel Parsons, Jr. (1844-1923) was one of the most well known landscape architects in the early twentieth century. He was a protégé of Calvert Vaux who worked as superintendent of planting in Central Park and landscape architect of New York City Parks Department (1895-1911). He was a founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and served as its president from 1905-07. See: Samuel Parsons, Jr., *The Art of Landscape Architecture* (1915; Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009); Richard Amero, “Samuel Parsons Finds Xanadu in San Diego,” *The Journal of San Diego History* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 3-23.


13. O’Hallaran was originally from Missouri and had moved around the country before settling in San Diego in 1901. He worked in the real estate business and as a state inheritance tax appraiser in San Diego County. Wright came to San Diego in 1887 and worked as city editor of the *San Diego Union* and later purchased an interest in the *San Diego Sun*. He practiced law, was elected a state senator in 1905 and served as president of the San Diego Historical Society from 1930 to 1944. Luce was a Civil War veteran and Medal of Honor recipient who became a prominent lawyer and judge and a founder of the leading San Diego law firm Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps; “Name It Cabrillo Park, Says Parsons,” *San Diego Sun*, July 4, 1910, 1:4-5.


17. The term is attributed to Joaquin Miller who was said to have written a poem entitled “Silver Gate” during a visit to San Diego. In the 1880s the town of Calico near Barstow in the Mojave Desert had 500 operating silver mines. A Coronado ferry named *The Silver Gate* was launched on November 15, 1887. When taken out of service it was moored in Mission Bay. William E. Smythe who worked as superintendent of planting for the first day he and four companions were beheaded in the public square and their bodies thrown to the vultures. Balboa was only forty-two years old.” Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages*, 1492-1616 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). See also, Octavio Mendez Pereira, *Balboa*, ed. Everett W. Hesse (New York: American Book Co., 1944).


22. “Miramar” Favored by Commission as Name for City Park;” *San Diego Union*, July 13, 1910, 9:3; “Naming of Park is Up to People,” *San Diego Sun*, July 12, 1910, 2:1.

26. “Board Unable to Name 1400-Acre Park After Donor,” San Diego Union, July 15, 1910, 8:1. The park is a portion of the original pueblo lands and was owned by the city prior to coming of ‘Father’ Horton in 1861. History shows that park property was not given by an individual, but that the municipality has a state grant. A first official action toward reserving park land was February 15, 1868, when E.W. Morse presented a resolution to reserve two 160-acre tracts for a park. From this step the movement grew to a solid block of nine quarter sections of 1,440 acres.
33. Ibid.
34. “Sunbeams,” San Diego Sun, December 7, 1910, 8:3 (emphasis added).
35. “No Balboa Park for These Citizens” San Diego Sun, December 30, 1910, 4:4-5.
37. John L. Sehon had previously served as mayor of San Diego.
38. “Seek New Name For Park,” San Diego Sun, December 27, 1910, 1:4.

Photo courtesy of University of San Diego History Department archives.
The Removal of the Indians of El Capitan to Viejas: Confrontation and Change in San Diego Indian Affairs in the 1930s

By

Tanis C. Thorne

When the city of San Diego developed its water resources in the early twentieth century, the Indians of the Capitan Grande Reservation (also called “El Capitan”) were an important group of stakeholders. They lived along the San Diego River in the flood zone of the El Capitan Reservoir. The city had purchased their lands in 1919 and 1932 so that the dam could be built. In August 1933, however, a determined group of Indians delayed construction by refusing to permit their graveyard to be disturbed until the Department of the Interior agreed to purchase the Baron Long ranch as their new home. Mayor John Hammond urged John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to buy this “splendid” ranch for the Indians. But the stalemate dragged on into the late summer months of 1934 with no resolution in sight. An exasperated official in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) sought legal authority for the Department of the Interior to remove the Indians and their graveyard “with whatever degree of force the situation may require.”

The account of how this situation came to such an impasse—and how it was

Tanis C. Thorne is a Senior Lecturer and Director of Native American Minor, History Department, University of California, Irvine. For assistance with the map and photos, respectively, the author thanks Imre Sutton and Heather Ponchetti Daly. She credits Charles LeMenager for encouraging her to submit this article to The Journal of San Diego History. This article has benefited from the criticisms of the anonymous reviewers.
The Journal of San Diego History

ultimately resolved—remains an important, but little known, story. This essay will examine the controversy over the purchase of the Baron Long Ranch, now known as ‘Viejas.’ San Diego Indians demonstrated historical agency as they defended their vested rights to resources. The resistance of this small group of Capitan Grande Indians in the early 1930s is arguably a defining moment with long-term consequences for San Diego County’s political and economic landscape. Further, the controversy over the Baron Long ranch purchase provides a window into San Diego’s role in the complex issues convulsing local and national Indian politics in the 1920s and 1930s.

Background

Wrestling control of the water resources of the San Diego River—critical to the growth and prosperity of San Diego—was complicated. The city of San Diego had to contend with the vested water rights of the Cuyamaca Flume Company and local water districts.³ It also had to get consent from the Department of the Interior to use federal trust land since the Capitan Grande reservation was under its protection. The federal agency within Interior—the Office of Indian Affairs (or OIA, later renamed the Bureau of Indian Affairs or BIA)—served as guardian and land manager for Indian wards. Relinquishing federal trust land in this manner could set a precedent so the arrangement was carefully reviewed. Initially, federal officials opposed the dam project but, by 1916, they became convinced that the interests of two hundred Capitan Grande Indians should give way to the fast growing population of San Diego.⁴ In 1919, following enthusiastic testimony by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells, Congress passed the El Capitan Act (40 Stat 1206). This legislation transferred water rights and valuable acreage in the granite-walled San Diego River canyon to the city of San Diego.

The El Capitan Act specified that the Capitan Grande Indians would be relocated as a group and village life reconstituted.⁵ The Indian Office believed it was fulfilling its duty as guardian by bartering for an improved standard of living for the dispossessed. The city agreed to pay for removal and full rehabilitation of the Capitan Grande Indians, at a cost of $361,420. It also recognized

Ventura Paipa, leader and spokesperson, ca. 1905. Courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento.
that the consent of the Indians was needed for the surrender of these valuable resources. Commissioner Cato Sells repeatedly visited Capitan Grande to persuade the Indians that moving was in their best interests. Families under the leadership of Ramon Ames lived in the flood zone and held valuable water rights of forty miner’s inches to the San Diego River. They finally agreed. In return for their cooperation, Sells promised the Indians they could choose a property nearby for a new home.

While this resolution seemed to satisfy the BIA—and benefit both the city and the Indians—it masked two problems. First, a small faction of people living in the southernmost part of the flood zone under Ventura Paipa’s leadership steadily protested the land transfer from the late 1910s to the early 1930s. Second, there was another village within the reservation—the Conejos village along the San Diego River’s South Fork/Conejos Creek. The Department of the Interior did not solicit, nor obtain, the consent of this community to removal because the isolated village of Conejos was outside the dam’s flood zone. Later, city engineers decided that the Conejos people should also leave the reservation in order to ensure the purity of the city’s water source. Cattle, however, remained.

In 1932, the federal government promised the city it would gain the Conejos people’s voluntary consent to relocate; this was intended to secure the commitment of San Diegans to the El Capitan site. Construction of the dam had been held up for more than a decade by litigation brought by Ed Fletcher, the Cuyamaca Flume Company, and San Diego’s water districts. Since more money was needed to buy additional Capitan Grande acreage, cash-strapped San Diego taxpayers had begun to consider other reservoir sites in the 1920s and early 1930s. The 1932 amendment to the 1919 El Capitan Act approved of the transfer of additional reservation acreage; significantly, it also provided the Department of the Interior with discre-
tionary authority to distribute the city’s funds in order to rehabilitate all of the Capitan Grande people, not just those living in the flood zone whose move was compulsory.7

The ambiguities of 1916 to 1934 were fertile ground for intra-reservation factional divisions. The Ramon Ames group was surprised to learn that the San Diego relocation fund would have to be divided with the Los Conejos people. They were also dismayed when the BIA opposed the purchase of the property they had selected as their new home: the Barona Ranch northwest of Capitan Grande. John Collier of the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA) pressured the BIA to honor its promise. Fifty-seven people in the Ames group moved to Barona in 1932. The Paipa and La Chappa families adamantly refused to go to Barona; these thirteen individuals (later fourteen) forged an alliance with the Conejos community, demanding the purchase of Baron Long property in the Viejas Valley south of the Conejos village.

National and State Politics

The Capitan Grande Indian removals of the 1930s should be viewed on a larger geopolitical canvas that includes local, state, and national politics. The political struggle over the Baron Long Ranch was linked to the rise of the Mission Indian Federation and California Indian political activism over the California Claims case; the intense debate over the innovative California plan (aka the Swing-Johnson bill); Commissioner Henry Scattergood’s “scattering plan”; and finally the Depression-era crisis in federal Indian policies.

For California Indians, a powerful force had been unleashed in the 1920s like a bear awakened from hibernation. They were angered at the many acts of dispossession and abuse that had taken place since the mission era. John Collier observed that numerous acts of past theft, enslavement, and maltreatment were “present in their memories, emotions and continuing attitudes of mind.”8 Herman “Fermin”
Osuna retained the bitter memory of being egregiously robbed eighty years earlier when the Treaty of Santa Ysabel failed to be ratified by the U.S. Senate. When asked if he had any statement for a Senate investigating committee in July 1934, Osuna replied: “I want my home back...When the treaty was made my grandfather was given that place and they have chased me away from there.” Hope had also been awakened. For California Indians, there was now the possibility of justice and compensation in the future with the California Claims case.

The Mission Indian Federation, founded in 1919, was a grass-roots organization that used small donations from Indian people to lobby for compensation for Southern California Indians for their historic land and resource losses. In 1928, after years of agitation by Indians, the California Jurisdictional Act passed, allowing the state of California to sue the federal government on behalf of the Indians of California to recover damages. Indian occupancy rights had not been extinguished because the Senate failed to ratify the 1851-1852 treaties. California Indians demanded compensation for lands lost in the California Claims case. The federal Indian Office was the main political target, accused of holding Southern California Mission Agency Indians subordinate to its will as wards. “The Indian Bureau is a petrified, crystallized machine, indifferent to criticism, hostile to reforms, ambitious for authority, demanding increased appropriations and a rapidly expanding personnel,” charged Purl Willis, the Federation’s white counselor. The Federation wanted to abolish the BIA and to return to “home rule.” Winslow J. Couro, spokesman for the Santa Ysabel Band of Mission Indians, summarized the position of the
Federation members: “We only want a little of what we have left and then leave us alone. We don’t need superintendents, farmers, subagents, social workers, education executives and dozens of other employees.”

Southern California Indians and non-Indian reformers found common ground in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Critics assailed the federal Indian Office while the AIDA and other newly formed organizations demanded radical reform in the administration of Indian affairs. Momentum began building for settling the California Claims case and for the passage of the Swing-Johnson bill that would transfer criminal jurisdiction and administration of social services for Indians from the discredited BIA to county and state authorities—along with the federal funds to pay for these programs. In 1932, the Mission Indian Federation leadership invited John Collier, a prominent AIDA official, to speak at a meeting of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce. Collier sought the Federation’s endorsement as the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs and spoke approvingly of the Swing-Johnson “home rule” bill. In his Annual Report in 1931, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads applauded the “California Plan”—“an experimental method for decentralizing Indian affairs”—for its potential to gradually liberate Indians from government wardship.

Gauging the political winds, Commissioner Rhoads and his assistant Henry Scattergood saw the evacuation of Capitan Grande as an opportunity to implement the long-range goal of ending federal responsibility, beginning with Southern California’s Indian population. Rhoads asserted Southern California’s Mission Indians were “only slightly different from Mexican-American citizens in same communities” and “amalgamation into local communities is possible.” Scattergood embraced a plan introduced by San Diego Congressman Phil Swing for “scattering” at least some of the Capitan Grande Indians. Many San Diegans disliked the idea of having new federal trust reservations created in San Diego County because trust status meant exemption from county tax rolls and thus a heavier tax burden.

Barona Ranch, April 1899, owned by J.E. Wadham. ©SDHC #358.
The Removal of the Indians of El Capitan to Viejas

on non-Indians. The so-called “Scattergood suggestion” was dispersal: “ending of tribal life and location [of Indians] on individual plots of land near population centers.”

The Battle for Baron Long Ranch (or Viejas)

A stalemate developed in 1931-1932. Whereas the BIA promoted the scattering option and persisted in offering dozens of alternative properties for relocation in San Diego County to those Indians who did not move to Barona, a consensus steadily built among the Paipa/La Chappa coalition and the Conejos community for the purchase of Baron Long’s ranch.

Why did the BIA steadfastly refuse to buy the Baron Long ranch? A big stumbling block was the price: Baron Long asked $200,000 (later lowered to $125,000) for the 1,609-acre ranch. The Barona ranch cost $75,000 and had nearly four times the acreage. The large sum of money provided by San Diego—$361,420, plus payment for the additional 920 acres in 1932—suddenly seemed too small. To pay such an exorbitant price for the ranch would leave insufficient money for homes with indoor plumbing, irrigation systems, and other improvements to rehabilitate the remaining Indians to be removed from Capitan Grande. If the standard of living for the Conejos-Paipa group was not raised to a commensurable level to the Baronas, the moral justification for the federal guardian agreeing to relocate them was undermined.

There were, moreover, serious concerns among federal officials about whether the eroded Baron Long ranch had adequate water and agricultural land to promise self-sufficiency for the Indian population in the long term. Without the potential for prosperity, the termination of federal guardianship was illusory. The federal government clearly did not want to burden taxpayers with the costs of renovat-
ing the Baron Long ranch, nor place Indians where they would be condemned to poverty and dependency.

There was a political as well as an economic dimension of the problem. Much of the opposition to the purchase of Baron Long can be traced to the ongoing political struggle between the BIA and the Mission Indian Federation and, more specifically, between the BIA and Purl Willis, the Federation’s white counselor. Baron Long’s ranch was not the Indians’ choice, many believed, but rather Purl Willis’s choice. There were well-founded suspicions that Willis stood to gain personally by getting an estimated $7,500 commission from the seller, Baron Long. Allegedly, Willis was manipulating the Indians for his own political and personal gain. Willis’s many enemies did not want to be railroaded into buying a substandard, overpriced property by a racketeering minority under Willis’s command.17

At the time, most BIA personnel and reformers assumed that the Paipa group and the Conejos people were mere pawns in Willis’s schemes. Their assumption was both ethnocentric and simplistic. The relationship among Willis, the Federation’s Indian leadership, and the rank-and-file membership was dynamic and symbiotic. Much as Ramon Ames turned to the pressure group (the AIDA) for help to secure the Barona property when the Interior Department dragged its feet, the Paipa group needed the political clout of the Federation to support its bid for the Baron Long Ranch. All Mission Indians wanted to have compensation for lands surrendered in the 1852 Treaties of Temecula and Santa Ysabel, a cause that the Federation was fighting. Living on the razor’s edge of survival with minimal water rights and little arable land, many southern California Indians depended upon the Federation as a counterweight to the heavily paternalistic BIA and its unpopular and unworkable programs. Southern California’s Mission Indian Agency Indians moved in and out of Federation membership depending on whether or not they thought that the Federation was serving their goals.

Ventura Paipa, a Capitan Grande Indian, was an advocate for purchase of the Baron Long property. Born around 1879, he was the seventh child and fourth son in a large family. Since his family lived at Capitan Grande for upwards (perhaps considerably upwards) of eighty years, many of those buried at the graveyard in the southern end of the San Diego River canyon were his relatives. He strenuously and continuously opposed the disturbance of these graves. Paipa and his brothers also had homes and other structures, fences, stock, and crops in the flood zone.18 His personal experience with federal autocracy, betrayal, and hypocrisy crystallized into an ingrained cynicism of government motives and skepticism regarding government promises. A spokesperson and leader (and very much his own man), Paipa was a vocal opponent of the dam project from the idea’s inception in the 1910s. In the 1930s he pursued a policy of non-cooperation and became a major advocate for the purchase of the Baron Long ranch.

Politically, the Paipa and La Chappa families were stalwart Federation members. Juan Diego La Chappa, a Federation Captain, took a lead in enforcing Federation policy in 1925 when he charged a couple with adultery at Sycuan.19 The La Chappas and Paipas had relatives in the Los Conejos village. Ventura Paipa’s kinsman, Captain Felix Paipa of the Conejos band, was an important ally during the relocation struggle.20

The field notes of linguist John P. Harrington provide some suggestive evidence that cultural factors were in play in the political alignments at Capitan Grande.
Harrington’s notes indicate that the Paipas and La Chappas of Los Conejos were the best Indian speakers of the Tipaay (Southern Diegueño, or, Kumeyaay) dialect. All the Paipa family’s “witch stuff” had been inherited by Sylvester Paipa, older brother of Felix. When Sylvester died, Felix acquired a sacred object, the teaxor rock. As Felix did not want it, he passed it to Ventura Paipa who ritually manipulated it. These and other details in Harrington’s field notes indicate the La Chappas and Paipas were culturally conservative. For them, authority derived from both political skill and the ownership of sacred objects and esoteric ceremonial knowledge.21

The Paipa and Conejos groups remained unified on the relocation issue due to a combination of factors, including kinship ties, language, shared worldview, and the Federation’s political organizational work. They also remained together because they were attracted to, and familiar with, the Baron Long Ranch. A warm wintering zone and locale for seasonal work, the Viejas Valley was rich in memories for the Conejos people. Baron Long, a flamboyant and wealthy man, owned many properties in Southern California, including the Agua Caliente race track, the U.S. Grant Hotel in San Diego, and the 1,609-acre horse ranch in the Viejas Valley, described as a “showplace.” Baron Long pastured his racehorses here. It had a sportsman’s out-of-town clubhouse, an abundance of hay and alfalfa, and ten to twelve barns. The Paipa brothers, stock-raisers and horse-lovers, were attracted to the Baron Long property, particularly as one of their major financial assets was a large horse herd. Presumably, the Paipa family’s livelihood involved providing transportation to Indians and Mexicans traveling for social events (inter-tribal fiestas) and seasonal off-reservation work on non-Indian farms and ranches.

Baron Long’s Ranch was, in many respects, the ideal place for relocating the remaining Capitan Grande people. Congress validated the Capitan Grande people’s continued ownership of all the reservation lands not transferred to the city of San Diego for the dam: 14,473 acres.22 If the federal government purchased an additional strip of land between the ranch and the existing reservation, a land bridge would connect the two and provide Conejos stock raisers with access to an extensive grazing annex at their old home, as well as access to Capitan Grande’s other cultural and material resources.23
Purl Willis: The Man, The Motives

Purl Willis may or may not have manipulated the Capitan Grande people, but he certainly played a prominent role as in the Baron Long affair. In some circles, he was known as a friend to the Mission Indians, while in others he had a reputation as a scoundrel. These two views cannot be reconciled. What is indisputable is that he was an ambitious man who sought to position himself as the power broker between Southern California Indians and the federal government in the 1930s.

A key to understanding Willis’s character and ideology was the fact that his father was a Baptist minister while his older brother, Frank, was a prominent, successful, and ambitious Republican politician. Frank Willis served as a U.S. representative (1911-1915), as governor of Ohio (1915-1917), and as a U.S. senator (1921-1928). He died in 1928 while campaigning against Hoover for his party’s nomination for the presidency.

Purl Willis was a person of undoubted ability who had important political connections in Washington, D.C. He was also remarkably tenacious, making appearances at no less than 134 Congressional hearings on Indians from 1931 to 1957. Willis, like his northern counterpart Frederick Collett (white counselor of the Indian Board of Cooperation) inspired intense loyalty among many Indians. Willis’s enemies described him as a crook and a parasite who created divisions in the Southern California Indian population with his self-serving agitation.

Unquestionably, the Federation was a very divisive political organization, politicizing Indian communities in southern California and pitting Federation
and anti-Federation factions against one another. Like a colonized people fighting off a foreign power, the Federation used litigation and political violence to protest the BIA’s authority over them. In essence, two rival governments vied for power and legitimacy in Southern California: the BIA and the Mission Indian Federation. There was much bad blood between the BIA and the Federation, and they were evenly matched.  

Elected as deputy county treasurer of San Diego County in 1931, Willis found political opportunity in the bleakness and chaos of Depression-era Southern California. He built his career as an Indian expert and liaison after he was appointed by the San Diego Board of Supervisors as one of three members of a commission studying conditions of Indians on San Diego reservations. Unlike others who claimed that the poor conditions were sensational overblown, Willis was highly critical of the BIA. A lifelong Republican, Willis supported the transfer of BIA authority to state and counties agencies, first endorsing the Swing-Johnson bill (enacted into law as the Johnson-O’Malley Act) and later House Resolution 108 (the termination policy of the post-World War II era) and Public Law 280.

**Confrontational Politics, 1932-1933**

The BIA and the City of San Diego sought, first, to move the Paipa group and their graveyard from the flood zone, preferably without the use of force; and, second, to persuade the Conejos group to move away from Capitan Grande voluntarily, preferably as individual family groups severing their tribal ties. Federal bureaucrats, enmeshed in the social-engineering mentality of the age, assumed that the superior planning by intelligent, professional experts would neutralize the Federation’s influence. “Whether [the Paipa group] will move before it becomes

---

*El Capitan Dam, June 1955. ©SDHC #81:12430.*
necessary to move them by force,” wrote a Brookings Institute analyst “is a test of government ingenuity and intelligence.”

At Capitan Grande, a reservation roll was being finalized to ascertain the number of shareholders and the exact amount of each person’s per capita share. The special agents that Scattergood had set to the task of persuading the Indians to scatter were optimistic. Once the exact value of each share was decided, some who were vacillating might be induced to purchase individual properties close to urban areas and employment. Special Agent Mary McGair was engaged in assessing preferences in July 1932.

Ventura Paipa and the Mission Indian Federation should be credited for an amazing political feat at this juncture: upending the BIA’s well-laid plans and turning the situation at Capitan Grande to their own advantage. Rather than being outsmarted or overpowered, the tiny Paipa-La Chappa group stood united. At a meeting at Conejos on December 29, 1932, a vote was taken of enrollees who wanted per capita shares of the Barona property. All were opposed. Two months later, in February 1933, those in Conejos joined in the petition with the Paipa group to purchase the Baron Long ranch, touting its advantages of nearly 900 acres of almost level farm land, farm machinery in good condition, barns and stables for houses and stock, electricity, and other modern conveniences. Adam Castillo later confessed that the captains, or village leaders, appended many of the signators’ names to the petition. With reason, the BIA clearly suspected that Willis, Federation President Adam Castillo, and the Federation Captains were misrepresenting the will of a few as that of the community as a whole.

In order to break the hold of the Federation, an important meeting was held at Los Conejos on March 5, 1933, with Castillo and thirty other Indians in attendance. Agent McGair declared that each person would get $2,474.80 for land, a new house, furniture, livestock, and other necessities, plus a share of the general reserve fund. When Castillo, instead, urged the purchase of the Baron Long ranch as a group, McGair downplayed this possibility. She cautioned that an engineer would have to study the property for its suitability. In addition, an official petition would need to be signed by all who wanted the property and all names on the petition cross-checked with the roll. Willis wanted the Baron Long property checked out immediately by his own engineer, implying the BIA engineers were biased. A notarized petition, formally requesting the purchase of Baron Long ranch, dated March 20, 1933, included the names of Adam Castillo and Vincente Albanez (two Federation leaders not enrolled at Capitan Grande), along with Felix Paipa for Los Conejos, Juan Diego La Chappa and Ventura Paipa for “El Capitan.”

Despite this demonstration of unity, the BIA and Indian Rights activists dug in their heels to oppose the purchase of the Baron Long ranch. They thought that its purchase would represent a political victory for the Federation, enhancing Willis’s reputation with Indians and further eroding the fragile authority of the BIA in southern California. Nickel-and-dime contributions by California Indians were pushing the California Claims bill through Congress. Together, Willis and Collett—the white counselors to the southern and northern grassroots Indian organizations—raised money to go to Washington, D.C., to lobby for the California Indians’ right to hire their own legal counsel. Opponents viewed both Collett and Willis as racketeers out to enrich themselves, men who were ominously positioning themselves as middlemen in the California Claims case settlement that
potentially involved millions of dollars. One federal employee publicly accused Willis of collecting $88,000 from the Mission Indians to enrich himself. The Baron Long’s ranch purchase was now a strategic asset in a larger struggle in which the stakes were large.34

In 1933, California Indians became better organized than ever before. At the same time, the BIA was extremely vulnerable, thus providing an opportunity for a minority to exercise unaccustomed power. The Old Guard BIA was in disgrace. The Federation’s membership was cresting to over half of the adults in the Mission Indian Agency. A Senate sub-committee was crisscrossing the nation, making several stops in Southern California, and lending a sympathetic ear to testimony from Indians about how and why the BIA had failed them. On its September 1932 tour, the Senators found disgraceful conditions on San Diego County’s Indian reservations. Different bills before Congress to settle the California Claims suit buoyed hopes of justice and financial compensation. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s newly appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, recognized the Federation as an organization legitimately representing Southern California Indians.35 The Swing-Johnson bill was still viable. Congressman Swing interviewed President Adam Castillo about the Federation’s goals in late 1932. The latter told him that the California Indians wanted per capita cash payouts in the settlement. Since Swing believed that Indians could not be trusted with this money, he decided that Willis or others should handle the money according to the outlines of the Swing-Johnson bill.36

Increasingly perceived as a self-interested outside agitator, Willis flexed his muscles and became more outspoken. Willis, Castillo, and the tough Federationists among the Cahuilla were defending the land rights of the Agua Caliente people against the civic leaders of Palm Springs in Riverside County.37 Meanwhile, at an explosive meeting in San Diego County in April 1933, Willis demanded to know...
why a commission of prominent white people had been established to oversee the transition from federal to state and county management of Indians, when the Indians themselves could manage their own affairs and elect their own representatives?38 Willis made a “scathing rebuke” of the San Diego Board of Supervisors, accusing them of “high-hat attitudes over their Indian serfs” who were “criminally neglected.”39

In May and July 1933, Willis wrote a long letter to Commissioner Collier, lobbying for the purchase of the Baron Long ranch. In this correspondence, he appears in his pivotal role in the El Capitan dam saga as the dealmaker or breaker. Willis claimed that BIA personnel were covertly trying to persuade people to accept individual allotments though they wanted “to stick together.” He charged that Mission Agency Superintendent Charles Ellis and Agent McGair were manipulating the enrollment to prevent the Baron Long Ranch from being “owned by the Federation.” He claimed that the ranch was an “ideal reservation” and threatened that the Los Conejos people would not leave their old lands if the Baron Long ranch was not purchased for them. To all appearances, a power-hungry Willis was creating his own bailiwick with his compliant lieutenants serving at his behest. The Federation’s enemies likened it to Tammany Hall, a political machine that survived by coercing loyalty and enriching its leaders.40

While the Interior Department went to great lengths to create equities among the displaced Capitan Grande peoples, it was charged with partiality. Willis outlined the argument that would be used against the BIA if it failed to comply with Federation demands: that they had worked to rehabilitate the mostly non-Federation Barona group and had ignored the needs of the Conejos people who are “most wholly members of the Federation.” He also attacked the Baronas for being selfish at the expense of the remaining Capitan Grande people who are “starving and dying” because Baron Long’s ranch was not purchased. Such artful exaggerations warned John Collier how dangerous Willis could be. He could damage Collier by making sensational claims, regardless of their basis in fact.41

Willis positioned himself as the one to break the deadlock at Capitan Grande. San Diego wanted the bodies in the graveyard moved and the Conejos/Paipa group out of the San Diego river watershed. The BIA wanted to avoid scandalous charges of neglect and partiality. The Paipas and Conejos wanted grazing land and a degree of independence. The Federation wanted political capital and a voice in southern California Indian affairs. As the price for his services, Willis sought to be appointed as superintendent of the Mission Indian Agency with recognized authority as intermediary.42

Collier, a political realist, realized that there was no viable alternative to buying the Baron Long property for all the reasons Willis outlined, even if Willis collected $7,500 on the sale. Collier’s advisors, allies, and subordinates, however, would not countenance the purchase of the ranch. One called the Baron Long Ranch a “white elephant.” Another agent cited the prohibitive costs to bring Baron Long up to the level of Barona: it would be “inadvisable and unbusiness-like for any one to seriously consider the purchase of this property” unless the purchaser will immediately sink $45,000 into erosion prevention.43

Facing a divisive and volatile situation, Collier chose a conservative course that alienated the California Indians and extended the stalemate at Capitan Grande for another fifteen months. First, he did not appoint Willis as the new superintendent
of the Mission Indian Agency; instead, he appointed John Dady to replace Superintendent Ellis on July 16, 1933. Second, he published an article in his magazine, *Indians at Work*, supporting the compromise worked out by California’s attorney general for a $6 million dollar settlement of the California Claims case.

Across the state, California Indians felt betrayed and suspected state and federal officials of conspiring in back-room deals to minimize the amount of the judgment. They were angry that the sum was so little, $6 million, or $250-$300 per capita of the 23,000 enrolled California Indians. They scented a conspiracy. They wanted their own lawyers and their day in court. Collier’s stand on the Claims bill weakened his credibility among California Indians.

When Dady became superintendent, a thwarted Willis furiously turned on Collier and did everything he could to make Superintendent Dady’s life miserable. A meeting of a “continental congress” of Southern California Indians convened to greet the new superintendent. An eyewitness reported that an announcement was made that “Dady’s appointment was only temporary and that he would soon be succeeded by Willis.” In Dady’s presence, the Indians chanted: “We want Willis. We want Willis.”

In August 1933, tensions were high in the Mission Agency. The original deadline of August 3 for the city taking possession of the San Diego canyon property came and went. The local BIA personnel and AIDA members remained resolutely opposed to the Baron Long purchase, though seventy-three shareholders signed up in favor of it. On August 6, 1933, there was fear of violence at the Mesa Grande fiesta, allegedly sparked by the dangerous political agitator Willis out to undermine the authority of the BIA in the Mission Indian Agency.

Commissioner Collier brokered a compromise by acceding to the demands of the remaining Capitan Grande Indians. In October 1933, the Conejos people repudiated the scattering plan; they wanted to continue to live together. The same month, Collier publicly endorsed a policy of dealing with Indians collectively, not as individuals:

> It should not be our policy to influence the Los Conejos Indians in the direction of choosing to live on separated parcels of land. And it should not be our policy to consult them only as individuals and not in [a] group.... Generally speaking, the isolation of Indians from one another has been a disastrous failure, as witness the allotment layout.... [W]herever the Los Conejos Band is to be located; it probably will be most successful if located in a colony.

At the same time, Mission Agency personnel assiduously searched for evidence for a criminal indictment against Willis. Investigators sought proof of manipulation of the Capitan Grande shareholders. Willis was suspected of “inciting Indians to disregard the authority of a Deputy Special Officer of our Service” at the Mesa Grande fiesta. In late 1933, J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Bureau of Investigation (later the FBI), launched an investigation into Willis’s life. Collett was also investigated. The FBI found that Willis had been convicted of forgery and had served five months in a reformatory in Ohio before relocating to California. In a marked reversal, Commissioner Collier publicly condemned Willis as a “racketeer” who had no legitimacy as a representative for California Indians.
Criminalizing Purl Willis and trying to break the Federation’s power damaged Collier’s standing among California Indians. Suppressing Willis and the Federation was politically costly, for Collier badly needed the Federation’s support for his Indian reorganization bill. In February 1934, the Federation unanimously requested that Dady be transferred and that Willis be named as his successor. This request was denied. In early 1934, Castillo and Willis traveled to Washington, D.C., to testify before the House Committee on Indian Affairs, protesting Collier’s attempt to suppress their activities. On this trip they first learned of the legislation Collier promoted allegedly for Indian “home rule.” Federationists saw the Howard-Wheeler, or Indian Reorganization, bill as another act of double-dealing by Collier, for it would perpetuate the oversight of California Indians by the BIA and extend Indian wardship into the unforeseeable future. While Collier moved to the left politically, the Mission Indian Federation affiliated with the right-wing national organization, the American Indian Federation, which characterized Collier’s new program as communist.

The Federation now worked to take down John Collier. Willis and Castillo immediately telegrammed to the Federation members in Southern California to oppose the Indian Reorganization Bill. Because of their stand, Willis and Castillo were gagged; the former was barred from traveling to certain reservations or attending meetings with Indians. In Southern California, the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) went down to resounding defeat. Dady, among others, blamed Willis for the near unanimous defeat of the IRA in Southern California: “The Baron Long group resoundingly turned down the Indian Reorganization Act,” he wrote.

Despite the desire by all stakeholders for resolution, the Baron Long controversy dragged on into the first few months of 1934. The city set a new deadline for taking possession of the dam site on the Capitan Grande reservation: November 1934. Apprehensive as the date neared for the waters to be released into the El Capitan Dam, a committee headed by Ventura Paipa hired attorneys to secure Baron Long ranch for them at a February 1934 tribal meeting. The search for alternative properties continued. Collier said it was the exorbitant price of Baron Long—not the alleged payoff Willis was to receive, nor political opposition to the Federation—that stalled the purchase of this property. Collier took an active part in a number of conferences with attorneys. A senate subcommittee met in San Diego in the summer of 1934 to ascertain the Conejos peoples’ true wishes. Ventura Paipa appealed to the senators, saying Baron Long must be purchased because, in ninety days, the Indians still residing at Capitan Grande would be homeless. The senators heard testimony vindicating and vilifying the Federation’s role in the deadlock. Willis pressed the issue. Some saw him as a sincere and honest advocate for Indians while others demanded that he be required to state under oath whether or not he would receive any commission on the Baron Long purchase. Stella Atwood, for example, saw the Baron Long petitioners as being in the “clutches” of Willis; the irritating problem of the ranch was “brought about deliberately by a set of racketeers who should be in prison.” Will Rogers, Chairman of House Committee on Indian Affairs, held hearings regarding the flooding of the Paipa family cemetery. According to Dady, Willis was discharged from his position as clerk in the County Treasurer’s office in San Diego in August 1934 because “we are informed [hearsay], he was such a nuisance and deceived his boss, the County Treasurer.”
A long-awaited accounting of the Capitan Grande relocation funds in August 1934 clarified what had happened in the course of the removal negotiations. There were a total number of 153 shareholders in the San Diego fund: 57 at Barona, 74 declared for Baron Long, and the remaining 23 either buying separate individualized properties or undeclared. The share of each was calculated equally at $2,523.65 in order to create a standard for how much to expend for individual properties.59

There was a great discrepancy between the projections of 1931 and the calculations of 1934. According to the early calculations, the 70 residents in the river valley constituted 46 percent (37 percent in the Ames group and 9 percent in the Paipa group) of the total. The 40 at Los Conejos constituted 26 percent, and the 41 (or 30 percent) living off-reservation were expected to buy off-reservation properties. The Paipa group (35 percent of the Capitan Grande residents) opted for Baron Long along with 68 percent of non-residents.60 The Baronas, then, ended up with a minority share of 37 percent and the Baron Long petitioners 51 per cent (when not required to move and still enjoying access to Capitan Grande). Instead, 12 percent of the anticipated 25 to 33 percent took individual properties.61

A September 1934 petition renewed the demand for purchasing the Baron Long property with Ventura Paipa’s name heading the list. The prolonged negotiations finally drew to an end. The press announced in early October 1934 that the ranch would be purchased.62 Long agreed to lower the price to $125,000 and the Indians’ attorney pressed for a purchase of the property to connect Long with Capitan Grande. Collier favored ending the impasse by conceding victory to the Federation. Because the Paipa group represented fourteen shares and its graveyard had to be moved immediately, the purchase of the Baron Long property was unavoidable, he argued. This “vexing question” of the grave removal left the BIA no choice. The requirements of the 1932 amendment had the BIA over a barrel. Indian consent was imperative; keeping the Los Conejos people on their present “sterile” reservation and providing for their improvement there was “wholly undesirable.” The Baron Long purchase was a lesser of two evils. Collier minimized the political damage to his defeated colleagues by explaining that Willis and Collett would take all the credit anyway: “We must not overrate their importance.”63

Negotiations at an October 3, 1934, meeting at Conejos finalized the compromise. Two documents, signed and forwarded to Washington and considered legal and definitive, laid out the conditions for the purchase of Baron Long. Because the $125,000 price of Baron Long’s ranch would leave inadequate sums to make the property self-supporting for the 73 (ultimately 78) shareholders, the Indians pledged to do many different types of work themselves: rebuilding the irrigation system, tearing down excess barns and fences, constructing the church, protecting land against erosion, plowing, and leveling community fields. The Viejas colonists demanded the same damages for property losses as the Barona people had received. A second petition, also dated October 3, gave permission to move the Capitan Grande village cemetery and was signed by most of those in the Paipa group.64 Ventura Paipa had so little trust in the federal government’s promises that he wanted to see the deed to the Baron Long property before he agreed to see the graves moved. Also attached was a petition requesting payment to attorneys, L.T. Eugene Ness of San Diego and Marion Butler of Washington, D.C.—hired the previous February by Ventura Paipa and fellow committeemen Sam Brown, Jack
Brown, Jesus and Felix Paipa—at the agreed rate of 7 percent: $8,750 based on the $125,000 purchase price of the Baron Long Ranch. Paipa, however, repudiated the lawyers’ demand, saying he did not want them paid anything.65

With the Mission Indian Federation’s support, the fight for Baron Long proved successful. The Conejos and Paipa coalition demanded and won a very high price for their cooperation: their use and ownership of over 14,000 acres at Capitan Grande not surrendered, a new reservation owned collectively, new homes and better economic prospects, and, potentially, a land bridge connecting their two trust properties. Though a majority share of the city’s fund had been promised the Barona people, the rolls had expanded to give the Baron Long petitioners the lion’s share of the San Diego fund.

**Removal to Viejas**

Superintendent Dady awarded the bid for removing the graveyard to Ramon Ames. The city of San Diego extended the deadline until November 10, 1934, to complete the evacuation.66 A tense situation developed because of delays in moving the bodies. The expedient of digging up the bodies and placing them in temporary storage in a funeral vault was proposed. When the Indians refused to make a decision until their advisors could be consulted, the city engineer threatened to go in with a steam shovel to remove the bodies. The Indians threatened violence if the graves were disturbed without their consent.67 Ventura Paipa became so emotional that he tried to block the excavation. Baron Long agreed to have a majority of the bodies moved immediately to his ranch; he deeded land to the Indians for a graveyard even if the real estate transaction fell through. The work began of transferring bodies there on November 13. Seventy-five bodies were moved at the cost of $20 each. Ventura Paipa dug the graves at the new locations. “It is understood,” wrote Fred Pyle, a hydraulic engineer in late November 1934, “that the three Indian families remaining in the El Capitan reservoir basin will be moved to Viejas Valley soon.”68 Accompanying the graves of their relatives, Paipa and others went directly to the Baron Long Ranch and set up residence in the barns. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes approved the purchase of the Baron Long ranch on May 28, 1935.69

The distrust, adversarial relationships and confrontational politics that prevailed before the removal carried over into the resettlement phase. The Viejas people had anticipated that they would have a strong voice in decision-making as well as adequate funds for rehabilitation in their new homes, but they were disappointed on both counts. During the winter of 1934-1935, when the legal title had not yet been transferred, Paipa and other militant Federationists in the pioneering group enjoyed a brief period of independence from the BIA. They took several initiatives—such as taking out a mortgage, buying farm equipment on credit, and slaughtering pigs—for which they were later reprimanded. The pigs, for example, were “government property,” not their own to handle as they wished.

Although the federal government was committed to building and furnishing homes and a church, developing domestic water, and buying livestock for all of Viejas people, it could only do this by tapping into federal Work’s Progress Administration and Emergency Conservation Work funds and coordinating efforts between different state, county, and federal agencies. The Viejas people attributed
the many delays to federal political retribution. As a result, shortage of funds, bureaucratic delays, and a disagreement over housing postponed the rehabilitation of the Viejas people.

Paipa proposed to recycle the lumber from the ranch’s barns to save money on building materials; in this way, only windows, doors, flooring, and roofing needed to be purchased. The residents would be paid for construction work and the balance of their funds could be distributed in cash among the Viejas people for their discretionary use in self-support and improvements. Dady’s vision was quite different: “Shacks …would not be permitted.” Working with the County planning department, Dady decided adobe was the most economical building material. He proposed that a plant for manufacturing roof, floor, and drain tiles be built at Viejas. In that way, the Viejas people would have a home industry that could support them after their homes were built. However, the Indians were biased against this form of construction due to bad experiences with adobe structures collapsing during earthquakes. “Apparently no real consideration has been given our desires,” complained Paipa. “We are, as you are aware, compelled to live in the old barns, etc., as we had to move out of Capitan valley,” he wrote on March 29, 1935.

Several months later, a committee headed by Ventura Paipa complained: “Here it is 1936, winter is upon us, and through unnecessary delay and lack of attention to our planning by the Bureau, we are facing a chance for a POOR CROP next year.” The summer passed, and there were no homes for families “still living in barns with little or no protection from the winter snows sure to come.”

In contrast to the relatively smooth and speedy resettlement of the Barona people, the resettlement at Viejas left many bitter memories in its wake. Tom Hyde, a Viejas elder who was a boy during the resettlement, recalled that Viejas colonists were forced to leave their homes at Conejos due to threats that they would be burned out. “Some of the shanties were set on fire,” he said. Many Viejas colonists lived for months or years in drafty barn structures. There was great suffering in the winter of 1936-37 because of heavy rains, snow, flooding, and unprecedented cold. Hyde said there was a high mortality rate due to emotional distress and pneumonia. “You talk about the trail of tears, we had it out here.”

The Viejas housing was not completed until 1938. In the end, the Indians’ preference for frame houses of recycled barn wood was respected but the $125,000 price tag for Viejas dug deeply into the per capita shares of the seventy-eight colonists. There was only money for relatively cheap one-, two-, and three-bedroom homes, far inferior in quality to the homes built for the Barona colonists.

Suspicion and conflict continued to mar the BIA’s relationship with the Viejas colonists. The Indians tried to broker what they needed by refusing to cooperate, but eventually had to go along with the BIA’s program in order to get federal employment. The Mission Indian Agency received $535,109 expended in ECW funds, 75 percent per capita more than among Indians nationally. Viejas and Palm Springs continued to be Willis’s power bases, but Collier treated Willis as a grafter. The hard-won battle to create the Viejas Reservation left a mixed legacy. Defying the stereotype of Indians as victims, the Paipa-Conejos coalition got what it demanded through skillful political maneuvering. The cost, however, was suffering, continued economic marginality, and residual ill-feelings towards the Barona colonists and the BIA. Ironically, dependency upon BIA assistance increased in the subsequent decades despite the determined drive for “home rule” and the BIA’s
official commitment to the same. The new home of the Capitan Grande Indians at Viejas did not provide its population with economic self-sufficiency or even measurable improvement in their standard of living until the advent of Indian gaming in California in the 1980s. Because they had relocated as a group to federal trust land after a hard-won struggle in the 1930s, the Viejas people capitalized on their quasi-sovereign status and limited immunity to state law, just as the Baronas did. Invaluable water rights to the San Diego River were lost, but the large Capitan Grande reservation—an anomalous reservation without Indians—continues to be owned collectively by the Barona and Viejas people as “successors in interest.” El Capitan stands as a mute witness to an important, but little known, episode in San Diego history.

The Blessing of the Cross Festival at the Barona Indian Reservation, August 15, 1952. ©SDHC, Union-Tribune Collection, UT #8248-232.


4. The city’s population doubled from 80,000 to 160,000 between 1921 and 1933. 

5. A full narrative of the history of the Capitan Grande reservation, 1850-1930, including the water rights struggle and the relocation of the Barona colonists, is to be found in the author’s manuscript, El Capitan (Malki Press, forthcoming). 

6. H.N. Savage, “Hydraulic Dam for San Diego,” Engineering News-Record 1, no. 2 (July 13, 1933), 34. Agreements between the San Diego city council and the Spring Valley, La Mesa, and Lemon Grove water districts were reached November 30, 1931. 

7. Amendment to the El Capitan Act, 1932, Senate hearing, subcommittee on public lands on S. 1715 (72-1) 99348-1907 CG-370 pt 1/4, pp. 5, 14-19, NA-I. The City of San Diego delivered the remaining sum due of $35,567.20 for 920 additional acres on November 8, 1933. 

8. John Collier, “The Mission Reservation,” Message to House Committee on Indian Affairs, 1934, Doc. 33473, Box 81, f. 20 John R. Haynes Collection (1241), Special Coll., UCLA. 

9. Osuna (of Santa Ysabel which is near Julian) quoted in “Survey into the Condition of Indians of the United States,” Senate Subcommittee Pursuant to Senate Resolution 79, 70th Congress, 2nd session (1928-1944), [Microfilm], 17304. 

10. Ibid, Survey, 21405. 

11. Winslow Couro to Superintendent Dady, April 16, 1938, Survey, (May 9, 1939), 21393-5, 21444. 

12. San Diego Tribune, August 22, 1932; Collier speaking at Chamber of Commerce with Willis, sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. H.R. Prather of the Indian Defense Association of La Jolla; Mission Indian Agency Cippings, RG-75, Mission Indian Agency, Box 24, NA-LN. 


17. Stella Atwood to Walter Woelke, October 30, 1934, 99348-1907 Capitan Grande-370, RG 75, NAI. 

18. Brothers Fruto Paipa (six years older than Ventura), Jesus (two years older), Simon (five years younger) and Victor (nine years younger) constituted the core of the “Paipa” group. Victor Paipa ultimately received $606 in compensation for his property losses, and the other brothers $456. “Ancient Tribal Ethics Present Problem to City in Moving Graves to build Capitan Dam,” San Diego Union, August 26, 1931. 

20. The thirteen persons (later fourteen) are identified as Felix and Thomas Gonzales; Rosa Lachappa; Joe Muller; Fruito (Tristo), Jesus, Venturo, and Victor Paipa; Maria (de Los Angeles) LaChappa (aka surname Paipa); Amelia (?); Juan Diego Lachappa, (aka Peña); Isabella Paipa (Romero) Peña (aka LaChappa); Prudencia (Gonzales) Romero Hyde; and Stephanie (Paipa) Wilkins. September 3, 1935 entry, in the folder 10: Baron Long Finance File, MIA, Box 29, NA-LN. Guadalupe Wysoke later joined this group.

21. Harrington was looking for the location of the source of “teaxor,” a form of gypsum. Harrington’s guide and source was Jim Coleman. Felix Paipa, Captain of the Conejos, was Coleman’s maternal half brother. I.P. Harrington Papers, Micro. Roll 169 (Dieguevo Fieldnotes, 1925-1932), Frames 494, 496, 547, 549, 329, 562, 468, 19, 59, 571, 578, 588, 590, 597, 598, 601, 602, 632, 634, 642, 741, 766.


23. The BIA indicated it was serious about fulfilling the Viejas people’s request for this land bridge up until 1935, but it was never done. There seems to have been some confusion in 1932 whether the Barona band would receive the lion’s share of the San Diego funds as compensation, their rights to the reservation being forfeit (as the lands they occupied and used had been purchased). The Conejos people’s compensation for moving was the retention of grazing rights on the lands in the Conejo Valley. Only later was it clarified that City of San Diego’s fund was to be exchanged more or less equitably and that use rights to the Capitan Grande Reservation were also equally shared by both Viejas and Barona. Willis to Collier, July 12, 1933, 99348 C-370; attorney L.T. Eugene Ness to Dady, September 27, 1934; Dady to “friend” Ventura Paipa, June 3, 1935. Dady makes a plea for cooperation on house construction, and then says “As you know, for some time I have been trying to have assigned to you the land between the Baron Long Ranch and the CG Rez in Sections 16, 17, 21 T 15S R 3E.”

24. E.g. Iowa Representative Ben Jensen’s positive construction of Willis in a speech in the House of Representatives, July 25, 1961, Congressional Record (87th Congress, 1st session).


30. McNair to CIA, ca. 1933, RG-75. 38926-36 Mission 053, Box 7, NA1.

31. Ellis to CIA, July 11, 1932, *idem*.

32. The signatures of heads of families are listed on the petition. Felix and Ralph Paipa head the list, followed by Ventura and Jesus Paipa, the Browns, the La Chappas, Hydes, Bomdillas, and Helmeappas. In the margins of the petition, there was a note to the effect that the individuals listed had not signed the document. El Capitan Indians to the Secretary of the Interior and CIA, February 16, 1933, 99348-1907 CG-370, RG75, NA1.


34. Atwood to Collier, October 1, 1934, Records of the Office of the CIA: John Collier, RG75, Box 2, NA1.


36. *Survey* 15707 (September 27, 1932).


38. In March 1933 a Citizen committee of white “prominent people” was organized and headed by Sam Fox. Dr. Lesem was one member. They geared up to act as intermediary between Indians,
federal Indian Office [aka Bureau of Indian Affairs], and county public officials. They hoped to tap California Claims money ($5,000) to deal with disease on the reservations.


41. Willis to Collier, May 22, 1933 and July 12, 1933, 99348-1907 CG-370.

42. Ibid. The Federation had been charging Mission Agency Superintendent Ellis with incompetence for months, and his departure was imminent.

43. Stella Atwood to Collier, August 24, 1933, 99348-1907 CG-370.171; C.A. Engle to CIA, June 1933 report, Law 2/4 Federal Acts of Congress 1/2, 1920-53, Box 29 (171-209). RG75, MIA, NARA-LN. Three dams would cost $17,050; other costs for levees, etc. $45,000; houses $1,000 each for 25 colonized families; domestic water supply system $4,000; development of the irrigation system: $15,000; total including $150,000 for ranch purchase is $239,000. Sutton dissertation in LXIII table p. 287, lists Viejas as having the best grazing and Barona as poor grazing in the “acceptable range.”

44. *Survey*, p. 17337, 17288-17295; Haynes to Collier, February 13, 1933 and Collier to Mrs./Ms. White, February 17, 1933. Haynes Coll., Box 81 folder 15. Collier writes that there is no connection between Swing-Johnson bill and Claims, but then goes on to say $4-6 million is anticipated in the payout but Congress not inclined to do per capitas, so presumably some agency (the state of California?) would need to oversee this award fund.

45. Batten, President, California Indian Advisory Board, to Lynn Frazier February 27, 1934, 33247-1933 Mission 155 [part 1/3], RG75, NA1. *San Diego Union*, July 24, 1933.

46. Telegram from J.A. Moore to John Collier, August 6, 1933, quoted in Collier’s “Mission Reservation” report, 4.

47. Dady to Collier, October 16, 1933; Collier to Dady, October 18, 1933, MIA Box 299, folder: El Capitan Grande, RG 75, NA-LN.

48. Collier to Dady, October 19, 1933 (cc to Walter Woehlke), in idem.; Dady to Collier, October 16, 1933. RG75, 33247-1933 Mission –155 [part 2 of 3]; Telegram, Collier to Dady, Office of CIA, Box 2.

49. Susi Paipa Linton to Dady, September 27, 1934, 99348-1907 CG-370 part 9, 2/2.

50. Hoover was on the job on December 7, 1933. According to Collier’s memo of September 18, 1934, Willis was indicted February 16, 1906, for forgery in Ironton, Ohio and found guilty May 5. Appeal denied. Sentenced to State Reformatory until legally released. Appeal made to Circuit Court, granted; case not tried, sentence suspended. Report of Div. of Investigations dated October 13, 1934 supplied to Solicitor of Interior. Willis, then a Captain in National Guard, forced his name to a receipt for rent of an armory here. Report dated October 27-29, 1934, RG75, 33247-1933 Mission-155 part 1 of 3.


52. *Survey*, 15415 and ff.

53. Walter Woehlke to Collier, May 10, 1934, Records of the Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: John Collier Papers, Box 2, Baron Long Ranch folder. The current historiography on the Indian New Deal recognizes that Collier’s IRA promoted Indian self-determination, but it also perpetuated paternalism.


55. Ness and Butler to John Collier, received. February 23, 1936, 99348-1907 CG-370, Part 10 1/4. These were the same attorneys representing the Federation in the California Claims case.


57. Stella Atwood to Walter Woelke, October 30, 1934, 99348-1907 CG-370.
59. Dady to Collier, August 17, 1934, 99348-1934, CG-370. Of the grand total of $421,995.00, $144,729.10 was spent (primarily for the Barona colonists), and the $277,265.90 balance remained in the U.S. Treasury.
60. Twenty-three per cent of the Baron Long petitioners were non-residents in 1931.
63. Telegram, Collier to Dady, [October 1934], Office of CIA: Collier Papers, Box 2; Atwood to Collier, October 1, 1934; Dady to Collier, October 5, 1934, 99348-1907 CG-370 part 9 2/2; Conejos band petition to CIA, September 16, 1934, 99348-1907 CG-370 Part 10 1/2.
64. Dady to Collier, October 6, 1934 encloses petitions, 99348-1907 CG-370 part 9, 2/2.
65. Ventura Paipa to [?], March 18, 1936; Los Conejos petition to Harold Ickes, July 26, 1935, 99348-1907 CG, Part 10 1/1: February 12, 1934 document hired the attorneys; another dated February 14, 1934, is a petition from the elected and acting spokesman and committeemen: Ventura Paipa, Sam and Jack Brown, Jesus and Felix Paipa. A meeting October 19, 1934 at Los Conejos reviewed and approved the final list of shareholders.
66. Dady to Collier, October 18, 1934, 99348-1907 CG-370.
67. Fry to Dady, November 12, 1934, Box 299, folder: El Capitan.
68. Ibid.; Dady to Atwood, November 8, 1934, Box 1, File A--Miscellaneous 000, RG75, NA-LN; Pyle, Hydraulic Engineer, to Day, November 27, 1934.
69. A majority of Viejas enrollees lived elsewhere until the homes were completed: Conejos, San Diego, Johnstown, Descanso, and Campo.
70. Stella Atwood to Walter Woelke, BIA, October 30, 1934, 99348-1907 CG-370.
71. Baron Long Monthly Narrative Reports, 1935-37, loose copies, Box 290, RG 75, MIA, NA-LN.
72. Telegram from Jesus and Feliz Paipa, et al.,” late 1936, Baron Long Monthly Narrative Reports, 1935-1937, Box 290, RG 75, MIA, NA-LN.
74. Telegrams of protest to Collier and Congressmen from Capitan Grande Reservation committee (Jesus Paipa, Feliz, Paipa, Sam and Jack Brown) protest Dady’s “arbitrary” refusal to concede to their request, late March and April 12, 1936, and from the Agua Caliente Reservation Committee, Willie Marcus, Baisto Sol, Francisco and Albert Patencio. RG75, 9257-1936 Mission-056, NA1.
76. Collier to Will Rogers, March 6, 1936, Collier Papers, Records of the Office of the CIA.
77. Collier says Willis “is proved to have accepted payments of money from white parties …while purportedly representing the bands.” The BIA’s argument was that Willis’s ambitions were contrary to interests of the ward and therefore could not be financially rewarded. Baron Long petition, January 10, 1936 and Castillo and Willis to Collier March 20, 1936, 9257-1936 Mission-056, RG75, NA1.
78. Although Sutton’s 1965 dissertation described housing on both reservations as sub-standard, a 1975 study comparing the housing of Barona and Viejas reservations found 29.2 percent of it “excellent” at Barona and none at Viejas; 31.8 in good condition at Barona and 14.7 percent at Viejas, 17 percent fair at Barona, 26.8 percent at Viejas; 22 percent of the housing was in poor condition at Barona compared to 58.5 percent at Viejas. Barona-Viejas-Capitan Grande Indian Reservation Planning Studies; 2 vol. Barona and Viejas, CIPA/1032.34, Diversified Technology, Inc. San Diego, 1975.
The San Diego Coal Company:  
An Early Mormon Enterprise on Point Loma  

By  
Bradley Hill

The San Diego Coal Company went into business with modest fanfare—but with no lack of fervor—in November 1855. The company excavated a mine shaft on the western slope of Point Loma, about a mile and a half north of the Lighthouse. The mine consumed thousands of man-hours spent in earnest labor. It also consumed thousands of investor dollars. Near the close of its first year in business, the company was within a few vertical feet of exposing and exploiting a proven and potentially profitable coal reserve. Toward the end of the second year, however, the company’s activities came to an abrupt standstill, and most of the original entrepreneurs and laborers abandoned the operation.

Since then, historians, journalists, and even geologists have occasionally written about this mid-century mining episode. Their articles and papers usually focus on the mine itself, relying on scant contemporary documents and speculation to account for the actual men and motives that energized the original enterprise. Little has been written about the human drama that drove the digging. Today, 154 years since its incorporation, few people have even heard of the San Diego Coal Company. Many San Diegans, though, are aware of a folk legend about a “Mormon Mine” or “Mormon Well” somewhere on Point Loma.

One version of the legend holds that members of the Mormon Battalion initiated the mine while garrisoned in Old Town as early as 1847, just after the U.S. Mexican war ended in California. A more popular and fanciful version claims that an unidentified boy living in Utah had a revelation in a dream that

---

Bradley Lunt Hill is a retired intelligence senior chief petty officer, US Navy Reserve as well as a retired teacher in the Lemon Grove School district. He received a Master of Social Work at San Diego State University and is a member of the local congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The author wishes to especially thank the park rangers at the Cabrillo National Monument and others who assisted in this work.
coal could be found near the southernmost point of California’s Pacific coast. In response to this dream, members of the Mormon Church, officially The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), journeyed to San Diego. One variation of this version of the legend attests that they searched for the envisioned coal on Point Loma, but found none. Another version allows that coal was found, but that it was inferior in quality and therefore unprofitable. An alternate version tells how sizeable quantities were sold as fuel to coastal steamers before the hasty abandonment of the mine in 1857.

Legends often have their basis in threads of fact. This article identifies some of those threads that tell the story behind the legend. It also attempts to identify the men and motives behind the mine.

The Mormon Battalion Connection

The Mormon Battalion, consisting originally of about 500 members, marched from Iowa to California’s southern coast in support of General Stephen Watts Kearny’s Army of the West during the War with Mexico. The war was essentially over when the Battalion arrived in San Diego in January 1847 so the members of the Battalion served out their one-year enlistments performing garrison and civic duties in and around the coastal settlements of San Diego and Los Angeles. Ephraim Green was a member of Company B, which was assigned to San Diego. He would later claim to have noticed coal on the Point Loma Peninsula sometime prior to his discharge in July 1847.

Once mustered out of the U.S. Army, Green left San Diego to search for the main body of Latter-day Saints, which at that time had just arrived in the Salt Lake Valley.
He followed the California coast north to the San Francisco Bay Area and spent the winter of 1847-48 there, gathering funds and supplies for his journey east over the Sierra Nevada and on to Utah. He was one of the contract laborers working on John Sutter’s saw mill when gold was discovered in the mill race on January 24, 1848. Later that year he completed his arduous trek to Salt Lake.6

Some seven years later, in 1855, Green was again in California gathering provisions for another trek to Salt Lake Valley. He had been serving as a missionary in Hawaii, and was heading home after his release from that mission. This time he planned to follow the “Mormon Corridor,” departing from San Bernardino and following the route that traced through Las Vegas to Salt Lake.7 During his layover in San Bernardino, then a thriving Mormon colony, he mentioned the Point Loma coal to some of the colonists. A few of them became very enthusiastic about the possibilities for coal in the southern California region. They pressed Green to show them his find. Apostle Charles C. Rich, the ranking LDS official at the colony, approved the endeavor. As a result, Green, age 48, delayed his return to the Salt Lake Valley and to his family in order to offer his talents and leadership to the enterprise of prospecting for coal for the benefit of San Diego, San Bernardino, and the LDS Church.

Green led interested individuals to the site where he had first seen the coal. The mine that was opened to exploit that site was situated just north of where the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant is now.8

The Founders of the San Diego Coal Company

Three other men of the Mormon faith joined Green in forming the San Diego Coal Company. Those men were George Warren Sirrine and Harvey Chester (“H.C.”) Ladd, both in their mid thirties, and Seth Benjamin Tanner, age 28. One week after the first lighting of the then new Point Loma Lighthouse in November 1855, they petitioned the City of San Diego for a fifteen-year lease of forty acres on a western slope approximately a mile and a half north of the lighthouse. George Sirrine, a New Englander like his three associates on the company board, had arrived in San Francisco in 1846 aboard the ship Brooklyn.
under the leadership of Sam Brannan. He was one of 238 “Water Pioneers” sent to Yerba Buena by Brigham Young, president of the LDS Church. Their mission was to establish a cultural and financial base to support the land pioneers who would head west from Iowa the following year. Sirrine prospered as a gold miner and businessman in northern California, then ventured south to assess his prospects in other parts of the state. He had a reputation for his skills as a mechanic and millwright, as well as for his honesty. He is listed on the 1850 census as residing in San Diego, though he still had family and business interests in northern California. The following year Sirrine, one of the early developers of San Bernardino, became the person charged in 1851 to deliver thousands of dollars collected in the Bay Area toward the purchase of the Lugo Ranch, which would become the center of the San Bernardino Mormon Colony. He was a major financier of the Point Loma mine and participated with his labor and mechanical expertise.

H.C. Ladd and his family came west to Salt Lake Valley with a pioneer wagon train during the fall of 1852. He served briefly in the Mormon “Iron Mission” in southern Utah, where he may have gained some experience in coal mining. Ladd moved to San Diego in late 1853. Of the four principles in the San Diego Coal Company, he was the most committed to making California his permanent home, despite the untimely deaths of his wife and daughter in 1855 and 1857, respectively. Ladd was an energetic advocate for the economic development of San Diego and San Bernardino. Six days distant by wagon, San Bernardino had been part of San Diego County until 1853, when it became a separate county. The rapid colonization of San Bernardino in the early 1850s by the Mormons, many of whom were experienced farmers and tradesmen, had made it a potentially significant resource for food, timber, and skilled labor. Ladd lobbyed enthusiastically for strengthening the lines of communication between the two counties.

Ladd served in several elected and appointed civic positions in the city and county of San Diego. There is evidence that he experimented with agricultural cash crops, likely looking for ways to prosper personally, but possibly also looking for ways to encourage other people to move to this part of California. He was a bricklayer of record in the construction of at least the tower portion of the 1855 San Diego Lighthouse. Ladd was listed as a member of the Pioneer Association of San Francisco, an honorary society, in 1890. This suggests he took some satisfaction in his role as an early developer of the Golden State.

Seth Tanner also came to the Salt Lake Valley with a wagon train from the east. Once there, he served with Ephraim Green in the 1849 “Southern Expedition” that studied the native people, terrain and

Seth Tanner, Mormon scout, became a homesteader along the Little Colorado River, a prospector and miner within Grand Canyon, and in later years, a guide in northeastern Arizona. Grand Canyon Museum Collection, Catalog #GRCA 7060A.
resources of southern Utah, mapped the area, and noted its possibilities for future colonization. Young and adventurous, he proceeded from Salt Lake City on to the gold fields of northern California in 1850. There he did well as a miner and horse trader before relocating to San Bernardino. The youngest of the miners, he was known for his physical strength and his sense of adventure. He and George Sirrine would later gain enduring renown as early explorers and settlers in Arizona.

Through Green’s Diary entries, we gain an appreciation for the warm relationship between Ephraim Green and H.C. Ladd. They both resided in San Diego—maybe even in the same household—and had regular interaction with each other, while the other two partners spent much of their time in San Bernardino. We know little about how the four entrepreneurs interacted during their association with the Company. We get a glimpse from Green’s entry for Sunday, October 28, 1855, which places three of the partners together on what we would call today a team-building field trip. The short entry helps evoke the impression that these men got along well together. Green’s comments would have especially pleased Ladd the mason, if he read them: “This morning Bro Lad and Bro Taner and myself walked out and visited the lite house. this is a splendid building situated on point Loma in 27 degrees north latitude.”

Other individuals associated with the mining company included Frank Ames, cousin of San Diego Herald editor, John Judson Ames. Also associated with them was a “Mr. Parker,” apparently an experienced coal miner, who may have been one of the “practical colliers from England,” referred to by Dr. George R. Ghiselin in his 1882 historical report to the San Diego Union. This Mr. Parker might also have been the “Mr. Parkes” referred to in Ephraim Green’s diary, who became “Brother Parkes” during the course of his association with the miners. Members of the LDS Church commonly referred to each other as “brother” or “sister.”

Brother Ware appears in Green’s diary as a traveling companion during trips made for mine business, as do Brother Hanks and Brother W.M. Matthews. Reference is made in various sources to unnamed individuals and groups who were likely employed for specific tasks. For example, Cahuilla Indians from the San Bernardino area were evidently engaged as laborers.

The Motivation

The latter half of the nineteenth century was a period of great hope and speculation in San Diego. The whaling and leather industries were providing growth revenue for the community. New people with new ideas were streaming to this area of the nation’s newest state. Statehood itself was fostering a flurry of political and civic activity. Risk taking, including business venturing and prospecting for minerals, was not uncommon, and the weekly San Diego Herald optimistically promoted the exciting developments in the young municipality. Among the Point Loma miners, it is not hard to imagine that there existed at least a glimmer of hope for wonderful returns.

Coal could have put San Diego on the map in the mid-1850s. These were the waning years of the great California Gold Rush, and San Diego’s founding fathers were eager to exploit any resource that might help San Diego compete with her sister cities to the north. A local coal reserve would have reduced her dependence upon expensive coal shipped in from elsewhere. Further, readily available coal
would have made San Diego a lucrative coaling station for steamships and for the railroads that speculators hoped would eventually connect San Diego with Texas and the Mississippi River, while competing with San Francisco and Los Angeles for commerce and for transshipping revenue in California. 27

The Coal

California is not known for its coal reserves; if anything, it is noted for its scarcity of coal. Nonetheless, after the incorporation of the San Diego Coal Company, coal deposits were also reported in the Rose Canyon and Soledad areas. 28 More coal specimens were found near the tide line at Torrey Pines a few decades later. 29 It is not known what initially called Green’s attention to the presence of coal in 1847, except that his interest in 1855 was focused on the base of the cliffs north and west of the lighthouse. Whether he noticed specimens strewn on the beach, or outcroppings from the cliffs or among the intertidal rocks, he does not say. The Herald reported that several small veins of coal were visible in the cliff face itself. 30 Regardless of how he came to first notice the coal, even after the nine intervening years since leaving San Diego, it took Green just two days of searching before he was satisfied that he had found the right spot. There he began exploratory digging.

Green and at least one other person, likely Seth Tanner, initially made small lateral holes in the cliff using hand tools: “We have bin (sic) trying to drift in the bank in sum (sic) small way…” 31 Between the 1st and the 19th of November 1855, they accumulated “nearly a bushel” of coal, which they took to a local blacksmith for testing on the 20th. The results were favorable, and on the 21st, the four officers of the just-incorporated San Diego Coal Company began two days of haggling with

The mineshaft on Point Loma was “discovered” numerous times in the early twentieth century, 1954. ©SDHC OP #16635.
the “city of seers” (city officers) of San Diego: “We have labored all day today to bring them to terms and half of the knight (sic)…and found them rather hard in the mouth.”\textsuperscript{32} Negotiations ultimately resulted in a fifteen-year lease of forty acres “to open and work a Coal mine.”\textsuperscript{33}

The coal itself was of an acceptable quality for its intended purposes, and it offered hope for financial profit, according to analysis at the time.\textsuperscript{34} Subsequent professional analyses were conducted in 1882, and finally as late as 1964. Even with increasingly sophisticated standards of evaluation, the quality of the coal was felt to have merited the mining venture.\textsuperscript{35}

**The Mine Site**

Today there is limited access to the site of the mining operation. The area was graded for construction of the now-abandoned Convair Static Missile Site complex sometime prior to 1964, and the main shaft of the mine was reportedly filled in and sealed under a parking lot.\textsuperscript{36} The mine opening was on a bluff above the coastal cliffs, no more than 200 feet east of the high tide mark at the base of the cliffs.\textsuperscript{37} The elevation at the opening would have been roughly 100 feet above sea level.\textsuperscript{38}

Contemporary physical descriptions of the actual mine are lacking, so we rely on observations made by visitors many decades later.\textsuperscript{39} The mine entrance was a seven-by-nine foot rectangular hole sunk into the ground and shored with planking. The main shaft was 168 feet deep originally.\textsuperscript{40} In the 1930s a visitor reported the mine to be 125 feet deep, but water-filled.\textsuperscript{41} In 1947, the superintendent of Cabrillo National Monument, Donald Robinson, was able to descend forty feet, where he reportedly reached the “bottom.”\textsuperscript{42} At that point he found several lateral tunnels leading away from the main shaft. Additional reports on the lengths of these lateral tunnels gave estimates of about 75 feet for one, and several hundred feet for another that eventually angled downward and submerged in water.\textsuperscript{43}

Twentieth-century passers-by reported finding square-headed nails, timber
beams, belt buckles, carbide lamps, and rusted machinery scattered about. They also reported seeing a hollowed-out area in the brush where uneaten hay and grain for mules and horses had taken seed and were growing wild.44

Curiously, several common objects were not reported. Typical equipment usually associated with mines in the 1850s would include a forge for sharpening tools and mending broken equipment, and a wooden or metal locker for storing explosives. These objects were often mounted on stone or brick foundations, as were boilers and steam engines. There was no discussion of a forge or an explosives locker in the contemporary accounts, and later visitors did not mention seeing ruins of such stations, or any stone or brick foundations at all. Similarly, there was no mention of mining carts or rails for transporting discarded earth and stone along the laterals and away from the entrance. For that matter, no one commented on any excavated dirt and rock that would have accumulated in the vicinity. The company may have used alternative mining systems to cut costs or meet its particular needs, and perhaps these methods did not leave the usual traces. Given the availability of state-of-the-art mining technology and equipment throughout the state, this is unlikely. More likely, the equipment was sold or spirited off to other mining operations, down even to the bricks. It is also possible that these items were present, but were merely taken for granted and not mentioned.

**Mine Operations**

Having obtained the lease for the mining site, Green and Tanner set up camping tents above the cliffs, dug steps into the cliff side in order to facilitate movement of materials.45 They began boring a test hole near the high tide line with what Green called an “auger.” This auger may not have been the drill-like instrument of today that advances as it is continuously rotated. It was more likely a bit, fixed to a rod that could be hammered. As boring progressed, extension rods could be added. The device was used in conjunction with a gin pole, which is a simple tripod-like crane used for lifting. A heavy weight could be elevated and then dropped on the rod to drive the bit deeper. Archeologists Moriarty and Mahnken speculate that the men employed a steam driven “donkey engine” to do the work.46 Green’s record, sparse as it is, leaves open the possibility that much of the work might actually have been done by hand.

After nearly ninety days of drilling—omitting Sundays and any days lost for equipment repair—the test hole reached eighty-two feet in depth.47 Arriving at that depth on March 1, 1856, the drillers found evidence of a coal vein about four and a half feet thick. Confident that they now had a worthy target, they sold their boring device and commenced digging the main vertical shaft. They calculated that the shaft would need to be 190 feet deep to reach the wide coal seam.48 This estimate allowed for the increased elevation of the dig site and for the inland downward slant of Point Loma’s geological strata.49

The four original lessees collaborated in management of the mine, apportioning their time and expertise as they saw best. Undoubtedly they contracted supervisors to run the mine when they were not personally on site. The board members seem to have stayed active in their personal, professional and civic affairs while overseeing company matters. Srrine and Tanner were in San Bernardino much of the time. Ladd served in San Diego as justice of the peace and sat on the county
board of supervisors during portions of his tenure with the San Diego Coal Company. He was active in selling mine shares and in making personal real estate investments around San Diego. Ephraim Green did odd jobs in Old Town, served on jury duty, and helped Ladd considerably with his farming and home improvements. Green wrote that he had episodes of illness that incapacitated him for days at a time, and that workdays were lost while he nursed Brother Ladd through a critical illness following the death of Sister Ladd. Ladd recovered, and when the exploratory boring was finished in March 1856, it befell Ladd to supervise the digging of the actual mineshaft.

During the excavation of the shaft, Green made an extended trip to San Bernardino. There he considered withdrawing from the mining operation altogether and continuing on to Salt Lake: “I have put the coal minds (sic) into Bro Riches hands and I am agoing to return to the vally (sic).” Rich counseled him to return to “San-deago,” likely because of his work ethic and the spiritual example he provided to other Mormons involved in the operation. “…[P]eople in this place are not in no way inclined to be religious,” Green wrote one Sunday in his journal. Calling upon the same faith that sustained him while marching with the Battalion, exploring with the Southern Expedition, and proselytizing in the Hawaiian Mission, he obeyed Apostle Rich and returned to serve awhile longer with the San Diego Cool Company.

Between March 10 and May 20, Ladd’s crew had dug to 60 feet, employing blasting powder and hand tools to loosen the dirt and rock, and then engaging a bucket of some sort to extract it. There were two serious accidents involving this bucket. Toward the end of July, and again on August 30, the bucket fell clear down the shaft, injuring laborers on each occasion. The Company had engineered a homemade manual or horse-powered windlass to lift and lower the bucket. Why it failed on these occasions is unknown, except that it was due to “the breaking of some of the machinery.”

The exact number of miners, engineers, and laborers involved in the operation is not known, but would probably be measured in dozens over the two years of its existence, and surely included more than just Mormons. Investors may also have numbered in the dozens. Most of them would have been local, but interest in the mine did spread somewhat throughout California and parts of the southwest. H.C. Ladd began selling the first twenty public shares of Company stock in March 1856 for $100 each. The Herald reported that as of June 20, 1857, the company was solvent enough to promptly pay all its bills, suggesting that the board officers must have had an adequate pool of investors to augment their own personal contributions.
The Tide Turns

Ground water is the nemesis of many underground mining operations. By June 23, 1856, water seepage was already a problem at the Point Loma shaft. The work pace at the mine slowed and sometimes even stopped. Then it accelerated as a concerted effort was made to keep the shaft clear enough for digging. The Cahuilla laborers were enlisted in this effort.\(^{57}\) By the end of August, despite the water, the miners had reached the 160-foot mark.\(^{58}\)

At times, the work pace at the site was animated day and night, as when the Cahuilla Indians were contracted to help keep the shaft clear of water in July 1856, and when a large group of colonists from San Bernardino made a surge to man the operation in August 1857.\(^{59}\) At other times, the labor force was probably greatly reduced in response to situational setbacks. In June 1857, for instance, work was suspended for nearly a month “for want of good experienced miners.”\(^{60}\)

To vacate water from the shaft more effectively, the Company bought a pump, with associated steam engine and boiler, from an unnamed party in San Francisco. Because the Great California Gold Rush was in its decline, there were likely many surplus, abandoned, or faulty pieces of mining equipment available for purchase in northern California. Whether it was new, surplus, or abandoned, we do not know, but several sources inform us that there was something faulty about the purchase.

In the first place, the pump arrived late. It was expected by August 10. In fact, George Sirrine came down from San Bernardino on that date, expecting to find the apparatus in place and ready to be fired up.\(^{61}\) But it was not until the middle of October that the pump’s much-anticipated arrival in San Diego was noted in the Herald.\(^{62}\)

In the second place, the mass and dimensions of the machine, particularly its boiler, were incompatible with the wagons and roads of rustic San Diego and even-more-rustic Point Loma. It took nearly three months to get the boiler from the ship to the mine site. It was Seth Tanner, along with a man thought to be Frank Ames,
cousin of the *Herald* editor, who finally devised a way to muscle the equipment to its destination.63

Finally—and fatally for the San Diego Coal Company—the pump itself was faulty.64 Whether it was deficient, ill-matched to the task, or both, the pump did not keep the shaft sufficiently clear for the miners to advance safely in their labors, and months were lost before smaller replacement pumps were brought on line.65 It could be argued that if a successful pump had been brought on line earlier, coal extraction would have begun, and the momentum of production might have propelled the San Diego Coal Company through the events that led to its demise just a few months later.

An additional blow to the company was the loss of one of its founders during the wait for the pump. Ephraim Green appears to have been focused on the functional rather than the speculative aspects of the mining venture. From his journal entries he seems also to have had a prevailing concern for his own spirituality and for the welfare of the men he worked with, and was likely a father figure within the company. By September 1856, however, he again departed for San Bernardino, and this time resumed his journey to Utah, having delivered on his commitment to get the mine going.66 His journal suggests that he was becoming discouraged with some aspects of the project, especially the delays, though one could assume that he was also increasingly anxious to reunite with his family in the (Salt Lake) Valley, as he referred to it. Brother Parker, the original project collier, journeyed with him. Although the company must have made adjustments to these two losses, it seems to have floundered a bit at this juncture.

As with many ventures, initial prospects for prosperity were very good for the San Diego Coal Company when balanced against the cost of the coaling operation and the motivation of the miners. In time, as we have seen, this balance evened up and then began to reverse itself. During the exploratory boring, equipment was destroyed or floated away with the tide.67 While digging the shaft, men were injured by falling objects. From time to time, illness led to down time for some of the miners, as did long waits for materials ordered from distant suppliers. Roads and conveyances, which had been suitable for the construction of the lighthouse, failed to support the larger machinery brought in for mining. Water constantly seeped into the lower levels of the shaft, inhibiting progress and posing a danger to personnel, and when at last the expensive pumps purchased in good faith did arrive, they failed to perform as promised.

All these challenges, however, were surmountable as long as enthusiasm and capital held out. Similar challenges had been overcome by the very successful coastal mining operations in Cornwall, England. Indeed, five months after the departures of Green and Parker, optimism reigned again in San Diego when George Sirrine was installed as chief engineer and the pumping situation finally appeared to be solved. The remaining miners were optimistic that the problem could be overcome.68 Nevertheless, exactly two years after its incorporation, when the San Diego Coal Company was within only twenty-three feet of reaching the wide coal seam that might have paid the bills, the *San Diego Herald* announced that there had been a change of heart among the hard-working Mormon miners, and that they, likely in company with their Cahuilla associates, were abandoning San Diego.69 By the middle of the following year, H.C. Ladd was the only original member of the board of directors remaining in San Diego. The company was sold to Frank Ames.70
The Exodus

The flight of the LDS mining contingency was in response to a directive from Brigham Young, the president of the LDS Church in Salt Lake. In early November 1857, the ecclesiastical leaders in San Bernardino received Young’s instructions to “forward the Saints to the (Utah) valleys as soon as possible in wisdom.”71 Young was, in effect, circling the wagons in anticipation of the potential threat posed by an army of 2,500 U.S. soldiers who were marching toward Utah from the east. “Johnston’s Army” was escorting federal appointees to replace LDS authorities then governing the Utah Territory.72

Not all of the San Bernardino colonists withdrew to Utah, but the exodus clearly depleted the work force and eliminated the bulk of investment capital for the coalmine. George Sirrine alone had invested $10,000 of his San Bernardino earnings in the mine.73 The miners’ devotion to their church and to their families was apparently more profound than their loyalty to an uncertain business venture.

Ames, the new owner, made considerable efforts to continue the project, but by the end of the year 1857 he was quoted in his cousin’s newspaper as saying in defeat, “we couldn’t lick the sea.”74

The Legacy

The mine and the men who first worked it were soon all but forgotten by most San Diegans, though the mine itself was reevaluated for possible reopening a quarter of a century later. The “Mormon Mine” has been revisited in the press from time to time as a quaint, if not quirky, anecdote in San Diego’s history.75 Typically, one of the versions of the legend is included for color. The terms “amusing” and “misguided” have appeared as epitaphs to the aspirations of the miners.

In reality, though, the San Diego Coal Company represented the enthusiasm, optimism, and industry that abounded in San Diego during California’s first decade of statehood, and was founded upon reasonable and scientific-based expectations. The investors, administrators, engineers, and laborers who devoted themselves to the endeavor are deserving of a dignified place in California’s history. It is probably fortunate that the mine was not actually more successful. Extensive mining on Point Loma might have altered negatively the natural ecology of the peninsula forever. Still, the operation was at the time a legitimate, earnest effort to ensure prosperity and a brighter future for early San Diego.

The “Revelation”

The earliest documentation of the revelation legend appears to be in H.C. Hopkins’ History of San Diego (1929). He begins the account by writing: “The story goes…” without attributing the story to any source.76 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does have a firm belief in personal revelation and in revelation to the world through prophets.77 Perhaps time has woven this belief into the fabric of the mine legend. It is also possible that Ephraim Green is the boy or man of the legend, since he provides the only firsthand documentation of the original discovery. His casual mention of the find, however, suggests it was a coincidental discovery rather than a divine manifestation.
NOTES

1. The Capitulation of Cahuenga signed by Andrés Pico and John C. Fremont ended the war in California on January 13, 1847, a year before the official treaty.


5. Ephraim Green, “Diary of Ephraim Green 1852-1856,” carbon copy of typescript available at the Church History Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT), 110. A digital copy of the original diary in Green’s hand can be found online through Brigham Young University: http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/u?/MMD,4872 (accessed March 28, 2010). The word “copied” has been pasted on the cover of the album. That most likely refers to the fact that a transcription has been made, or that the diary has been photographed for the online project.


9. Originally from Maine, Brannan brought the group of Mormons safely to San Francisco by sea and eventually opened a store at Sutter’s Mill. He became one of the first to publicize the discovery of gold and founded the California Star in January 1847, having brought a printing press with him on board the Brooklyn. He traveled throughout California and Mexico during his life and spent his last years in San Diego. He is buried at Mount Hope Cemetery.


15. San Diego Herald, May 12, 1855, 2-4 (sweet potatoes); San Diego Herald, September 1, 1855, 2-2 (tobacco).


21. Teva Tanner, direct descendent of Seth Tanner, interviewed by author, August and September, 2008.


25. Green, Diary, 117.


28. Ibid., 126, 130.


30. “The Coal Mines,” San Diego Herald, March 8, 1856. A black band can still be observed in a cliff face below the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant; however the author was unable to safely access it. Similar-appearing strata are accessible at Sunset Cliffs, about one and a half miles to the north. The material in these bands has the appearance of compressed sand, does not combust when heated at close range with a blow torch, and is probably not coal. It is still in question, then, as to whether Green was in some way attracted by black lines in a cliff face further to the south, or whether he came across the coal by some other method.

31. Green, Diary, 111-112.

32. Ibid.

33. Minutes of the Board of City Trustees for the City of San Diego, February 5, 1856.

34. San Diego Herald, November 24, 1855, 2:6.


36. Palmer, “Coal on Point Loma: Footnote to History”; Lockwood, “Mormons Mined Coal.” Challenging these reports is a 1974 newspaper article claiming that the mine opening was still exposed at the time of its printing. It includes a photograph, purportedly of the still-exposed mine entrance. Stone, “There’s Still Coal in That Mine on Point Loma.”

37. Estimates by later observers ranged between 100 to 200 feet.

38. Estimates by Green and by later observers ranged between 90 and 150 feet. Current measurements of the area show it to be in the neighborhood of 100 feet above sea level.

39. Some modifications to the site may have been made by groups that attempted to resurrect the operation in 1882 and 1891, but these are probably negligible, owing to the brief nature of their activities at the site.

40. Ghiselin, “Letter to the Editor.” Observation of planking was by J.L. Hilliard, as reported in “Dreams of Coal,” Ocean Beach News, April 9, 1947.


42. “Dreams of Coal;” Lockwood, “Mormons Mined Coal.” Lockwood said that Donald Robinson
reached the bottom of the shaft at forty feet, while Hilliard in the Ocean Beach News reported that water stood within thirty feet of the surface. It could be that Robinson’s “bottom” was actually the point at which he could not go any further because he reached water himself. Allowing for human error, a ten foot difference in estimating the distance is understandable. If the water level was that high above sea level, some of it might have been accumulated rain, or drainage from an aquifer closer to the surface.


44. Davidson, “Old ‘Well’ Hides Mormons’ Mine on Point Loma”; Lockwood, “Mormons Mined Coal.” Carbide lamps were not in use until after 1892, so these were probably left by later adventure seekers.

45. Green, Diary, 114. The cliffs have eroded considerably in the intervening years, so that these steps are no longer visible. Patrick L. Abbott and Thomas K. Rockwell, “Geologic History,” in Understanding the Life of Point Loma, ed. Rose Houk (San Diego: Cabrillo National Monument Foundation 2004), 25-28.

46. Moriarty and Mahnken, “Scientists Look at the Mine,” 23. Steam engines called “donkeys” had been in use for several decades prior to 1855 for shipboard and waterfront applications, as well as in mining. A logging version was patented in 1881. The engines were relatively small and portable compared to larger devices, but still weighed tons and would have been very difficult to lower down a 90-foot cliff.


48. Green, Diary, 117.

49. This incline is five to fifteen degrees to the northeast. Abbott and Rockwell, “Geologic History,” 16.

50. “Grantee Index to Official Records, Books 1-4 A-Z, 1848 thru 1889,” Index to Deeds – San Diego County, California, microfilm reel A-126, 206, maintained at the San Diego County Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk Office. H.C. Ladd obtained deeds to six recorded properties in San Diego; at least two of them were obtained during his mining days.

51. Green, Diary, 112.

52. Green, Diary, 121.

53. Green, Diary, 118.

54. Green, Diary, 111.

55. Green, Diary, 122; “The Coal Mines.”

56. San Diego Herald, March 1, 1856.

57. Palmer, “Coal on Point Loma: Footnote to History.”

58. Green, Diary, 122.


60. San Diego Herald, June 20, 1857.

61. Green, Diary, 122.

62. San Diego Herald, October 18, 1856.

63. Stone, “There’s Still Coal in that Mine on Point Loma.”

64. San Diego Herald, February 21, 1857, 1:2; Ghiselin, “Letter to the Editor.”


66. Green, Diary, 125.

67. Green, Diary, 115.


69. San Diego Herald, November 21, 1857.


74. Willis, “Point Loma Mine.”


History Day 2010

History Day is a national contest in which more than half a million students participate every year. Student entries go through a series of regional and state rounds, with the winners moving on to participate in a national contest. The annual History Day award ceremony for the County of San Diego took place at the Hall of Champions in Balboa Park on Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

The local contest is organized by the San Diego County Office of Education each year with students from grades 4 through 12 selecting, developing, and completing standards-based projects focusing on the year’s theme. The San Diego Historical Society has participated in providing judges and material for...

Dr. Iris Engstrand awards Gabby Baker, Oak Grove Middle School, Jamul-Dulzura District, the prize for “Blue Jeans: The Impact of Pants that Changed with each Generation.”

Primary Source Winners selected by the San Diego History Center. Front row left to right: Chris Alexander, Luke Pelessone, Jessica Warner, Mary Hansen, Aidan Ryan, and Max Mittleman; back row, left to right: Carson Scott and Marc Pelessone.
students for a number of years. During the 1980s, History Day was extended to Tijuana and entries were received from across the border. The award ceremony was held at the Casa de Cultura in alternating years, but finally border issues prevented its continuance. The Society's San Diego History Center was one of the sponsors of this year's ceremony.

The theme for History Day 2010 was Innovation In History, and the judges commented on the exceptionally high standards of the entries received. University of San Diego Professor Dr. Iris Engstrand served as guest speaker and presenter when the winners were announced. The San Diego History Center presented eight special awards in the category for Best Use Of Primary Sources. Winners next compete at the state level.
BOOK REVIEWS


Reviewed by Christian Gonzales, Department of History, University of California, San Diego.

With this book Richard Carrico has provided an accessible general history of San Diego County’s Native American peoples. This second edition includes new chapters focused on the period between 1880 and 1935. The wider chronological span allows Carrico to relate a more complete history that culminates with the resurgence of native communities in the twentieth century. In the opening chapter, Carrico uses archaeological data to reach far into pre-history and reconstruct native economies and social organization. The remainder of the volume follows the complicated story that unfolded as native and Euro-Americans confronted each other in San Diego. Carrico explores native relations with Missions San Diego and San Luis Rey, native social and economic change during the Mexican period, and native attempts to preserve lands after the United States took possession of California in 1848. Though he gives attention to many groups including Spanish and Mexican authorities, the Cahuilla, and the Cupeños, his greatest focus is on Kumeyaay and Luiseño relations with Americans.

Carrico argues that the Kumeyaay, Luiseños, Cupeños, and Cahuillas have maintained distinct identities and communities despite the historical experience of social marginalization and land loss. Through “revolt, appeasement, and cooperation” (p. x), natives negotiated and survived the onslaught of the Spanish, Mexicans, and Americans. Carrico explains that the mission system “sowed the seeds of destruction” through the disruption of native economies and the dislocation of Indian villages. The ensuing Mexican period further circumscribed native economic patterns, while the American era witnessed more intense attempts by California politicians and local Anglos to dispossess and disenfranchise Indians. Moreover, Carrico contends that through ineptitude and what he calls “benign neglect” the federal government abetted Indian land loss.

Indians, however, fought or accommodated the forces arrayed against them. Carrico shows that the 1775 Mission San Diego revolt, nineteenth-century Indian labor patterns, native leaders’ long struggles to secure reservations and native land titles, and the rise of Indian casinos in the twentieth century represent important manifestations of native agency. His endeavor to recount how Indians adapted to the destructive forces they faced captures well the perspectives of historic native peoples, and pays respect to the claims of contemporary San Diego County natives that they have a unique and important history.

Indeed, the most engaging parts of the book illuminate the historical actions of native people. Especially important are the discussions that reveal the varied strategies Indians employed to secure land rights and negotiate the upheavals caused by removal. For example, the San Pascual Kumeyaay leader Panto worked tirelessly from the mid 1830s to the early 1870s to defend Indian lands. He negotiated with Mexican officials and “met with a constant parade of American officials”
(p. 119) in service of this goal. The Luiseño leader Olegario was similarly relentless in defense of land. He negotiated with Anglos, pursued legal advice, and defied attempts to survey native lands. In 1875, he traveled to Washington, DC where he was able to secure an executive order from President Ulysses S. Grant that established reservations in San Diego. Carrico also poignantly explains how natives survived brutal forced removals. After a poignant account of the 1903 removal of the Cupeños from Warner’s Ranch, he explains that contemporary Cupeños still connect to their homeland through annual pilgrimages to the ranch’s sacred sites.

Such illustrations of the persistence of ethnic identity are unfortunately not accompanied by any deep discussion of native cultural change. An analysis of cultural change would have allowed Carrico to explore an intriguing aspect of the native experience, beyond efforts to protect lands. Also, Carrico often argues that Euro-American erosion of native land had the concomitant effect of straining native cultures. Without describing how cultures were strained, the book leaves the reader in the dark about a vitally important part of San Diego’s cultural history.

Carrico’s work strikes a good balance between tracing the actions and perspectives of specific groups, and cogently explaining how San Diego’s many peoples have lived with each other over the last two centuries. Indeed, because his story of native negotiation of the historical growth of Euro-American social, political, and economic power is well ensconced within the larger history of San Diego County, Carrico avoids the pitfall of becoming two dimensional. Rather, he analyzes the complex ways Indian leaders worked with local Anglos or negotiated with church, state, and federal officials to protect native interests. By distilling history in this way, Carrico has produced a volume with broad appeal and versatility. Strangers in a Stolen Land is appropriate for an undergraduate history course, but would also equally satisfy the interest of curious lay readers seeking knowledge of the history of San Diego’s Native American peoples.


Reviewed by Robert J. Chandler, Senior Research Historian, Wells Fargo Bank.

Barbara Voss, a Stanford professor, used thirteen years’ experience digging up the Presidio of San Francisco to illustrate how “archeology provides a broader and more inclusive perspective on the emergence of Californio identity” (p. 111). Studied analysis of human refuse brings “a persistent focus” and “long-term perspective on social life” (p. 121). Voss is the first scholar to be “substantively engaged with presidios as institutional sites for the cultural negotiation of colonial social identity” (p. 112). Her thesis is easily summarized: the evolution of the culture of the Presidio of San Francisco from 1776 to 1821 was a “transition from consta to Californio” (p. 7). That is, the settlers rose from the bottom of a racially-ranked society in Northern Mexico to become “People of Reason” in Alta California.

Captain Juan Bautista de Anza recruited settlers for Alta California mostly
from around Culiacán, Sinaloa, and Fuerte, Sonora, areas suffering from crop failures and Indian attack. Families making the long overland trek averaged four children, for the colony needed to perpetuate itself. On July 26, 1776, 193 men, women, children (about twice the number on the Mayflower in 1620) arrived at the bleak Presidio site, recently cleared of local inhabitants by intertribal war. The troops immediately set to work “to secure indigenous lands as colonized space” in an area surrounded by Indians (p. 147). Not surprisingly, securing these lands and establishing domination over local Native Americans involved exploitative labor relations, the creation of fortified spaces, and both the threat and practice of physical violence. “Colonial ethnogenesis,” Voss astutely observes, “can be understood only within this context of intercultural interaction, exploitation, and violence” (p. 47).

Furthermore, Voss perceptively notes, “the military settlers shaped a new land for themselves and shaped themselves to fit this new land” (p. 147). The first adjustment by these people of mixed Mexican Indian, African, and European heritage was to abandon the casta system that fixed social rank through an elaborate system of racial composure. When asked, settlers gave themselves better parental antecedents and after twenty years, ignored the stratifications altogether. Casta had no meaning in a small, isolated population. In place of the system of casta, the colonizing population created a new identity through everyday practices like building styles, fashion, and cuisine. In each of these instances, non-Indian residents of the presidio created a material culture that indicated their distinction from, as well as their domination over, the indigenous population.

Indeed, the material artifacts of presidio life reveal the emergence of a Californio identity while pointing to how Indians were marginalized through the process of ethnogenesis. “Each body of archeological evidence examined in this study,” Voss declares, “must be considered in light of the substantial number of paid, impressed, and captive Native Californians upon whose labor the colonists depended” (p. 82). Through the eighteenth century, it appears, ten Indians were always at work around the quadrangle, while in the nineteenth century, their numbers grew to thirty. Yet, colonists did not house these laborers among them, for Indians had been no friends in Mexico. Only ten of the 465,000 artifacts found were Indian.

In the third chapter, Voss details population but neglects to apply these numbers when analyzing artifacts. From 1776 to 1821, the Presidio of San Francisco averaged 140 people (half of whom were children) divided into 40 households, including thirty soldiers. Her generalized conclusions, therefore, rest on only seventy adults, and probably fewer. Two thirds of the troops were always away on detached duty, leaving women, who were without formal political power or military rank, in the majority.

The nature of this population invites questions. Captain Anza’s frontier soldiers began life as uneducated rural farmers and ranchers, not artisans. They were good at what they knew, but not at creating material culture. The Presidio went through three enlargements of the quadrangle, but due to poor clay from the site and lack of building skills, each adobe wall stood for only a few years. Homemade pottery exhibits the same low quality. For clothing, dishes, tools, and some food, the small colony depended on supply ships from Mexico. Their material culture came to them.
Throughout this study, Barbara Voss’s skill with archeological material leads to perceptive interpretations from a scanty record. Her ceramic and food analyses are keen, as is her “Landscape Portrait” (pp. 163-170) of Juana Briones, the subject of Jeanne McDonnell’s 2008 biography. Voss’s survey of anthropological ideology makes The Archeology of Ethnogenesis valuable as a class text, but for the general reader, John P. Langelier and Daniel B. Rosen’s 1996 history of the Presidio is a good adjunct.


Reviewed by Lawrence E. Babits, Professor and Director of Program in Maritime Studies, East Carolina University.

Gold Rush Port is an important text with the potential for classroom use. James Delgado effectively blends a theoretical approach and explanation while relating history and how historians have viewed the maritime world. In the process, he also shows how to manage cultural resources in an urban setting.

Delgado explicitly sees the ocean as the connection between points, not as a barrier. Thus, for Gold Rush San Francisco, the ocean is what made the port city possible. Given the length and irregularity of overland transportation in 1849, the regularity and predictability of rapid oceanic transport was the key to creating a worldwide network of suppliers and consumers linked to San Francisco. Delgado tests his assumptions against the Klondike gold rush town, Dawson City, which did not succeed as an entrepot, in large measure because it was not directly connected to the sea but was at the end of a long, intermittent route that ultimately caused it to wither. This concept that the ocean facilitates communication and is not an obstruction is one that many so-called maritime historians do not grasp. They need to read what Delgado has to say in his first three chapters.

Delgado sets standards to guide development of any waterfront or harbor. The failures and successes of development and historical/archaeological preservation are related without blame or hysteria in Chapter 6. His arguments make sense without attributing present shortcomings to past developments. Delgado’s theoretical premises are backed up by solid archaeological information derived from over thirty years of intermittent, site specific archaeology that he weaves together into a concrete, easily understood whole relating to San Francisco’s first ten years (1848-1858).

The text concentrates on four sites, the Niantic, the General Harrison, the Hoff Store, and Sansome Street. The Niantic was utilized as a storeship, then abandoned, and then “rediscovered” several times because planners repeatedly assumed that prior construction activity had destroyed the vessel. Here is an object lesson for non-archaeologists to consider when approving development without first testing the site.

The Hoff Store was on pilings adjacent to another storeship. The store burned in a catastrophic fire on 4 May 1851, and the resultant burial of the site sealed its contents for late twentieth century archaeologists to compare with the documen-
tary records. It was somewhat remarkable for its “stratigraphic and/or contextual integrity” (p. 129). Tightly dated to 1849-51, the site demonstrated the transformation to an urban center.

The third site was 343 Sansome Street, another structure associated with the 4 May 1851 fire. It was buried and then buried deeper under 1906 earthquake debris. Spatial distributions within the site allowed interpretation of storage areas, living quarters, and sales zones within the store.

The General Harrison was another storeship excavated in 2001. Not all the site could be excavated because it extended onto other property where mitigation of impact was not possible. There was mixing of materials from the 1851 and 1906 catastrophes in some places. A variety of excavation techniques were necessary due to the wet soil that created such good preservation. Comparing archaeological finds with newspaper advertisements made it possible to show how diverse the cargo points of origin were, demonstrating the connections San Francisco had to the wider maritime world.

Even though he concentrated on only four sites, Delgado has brought the waterfront back to life and given the artifacts a real context, the maritime world of mid-nineteenth century San Francisco. The final chapter is a very good summary of what was presented in the text and reinforces points made throughout.

Appendix 3 is an important addition that contains eleven pages of “reconstructed” cargo stored aboard the General Harrison from 1849 to 1851. This supports Delgado’s interpretation that the merchants brought in essential goods, such as food, clothing, and building materials, in great quantity, while alcohol and other luxuries were present in much smaller quantities. From this sort of data, Delgado shows that the merchants were working to establish a strong, or perhaps steady, economy, rather than going for a quick profit.

It is interesting that Delgado did not explore the types of ships that became storeships, although he did provide a listing of the age, size, and construction site for 104 of these vessels. Of the 86 vessels counted under construction date, 80 (90%) were built in 1840 or earlier, indicating that they were probably at the end of their active sailing careers. It is just as telling that only 7 vessels were built in 1820 or earlier, showing something of the age of vessels rounding the Horn.

The book will stand the test of time, both as history and as a guide for managing resources. It also deserves a place in the classroom for showing students the richness of harbor environments.

---


Reviewed by Benjamin R. Jordan, Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of History and Political Science, Christian Brothers University.

The typical biography of John Muir has focused on his wilderness wanderings, nature writings, and Yosemite National Park activism. By contrast, Donald Worster’s balanced examination of his long life sets the preservation champion
within the revealing context of Muir’s other three careers. First, young John was a promising and diligent inventor and engineer. His niche was improving efficiency in machines at lumber mills. Second, Muir’s desire to design machines and understand how they functioned paralleled his scientific study of nature’s inner workings via the disciplines of botany and geology (particularly glaciology). A scientist-engineer’s mindset and the need to support his many nature expeditions, writing projects, and wife and two daughters drove Muir’s third career as capitalist farmer. John married into a prospering farm family and spent much of his adult life expertly and scientifically managing a large fruit-exporting ranch in California. Worster demonstrates that Muir did not in principle oppose – and in many ways facilitated and depended on – industrialization, technology, capitalist agriculture, and human development of natural resources.

Worster’s primary arguments are that “Muir was a liberal, a democrat, and a conservationist,” and that liberal democracy, human rights, personal liberty, and social equality infused the nature conservation movement that Muir helped inspire (p. 6). The author provides convincing evidence that Muir can be called a liberal in terms of being open to new ideas or reforms – such as his belief that nature was benign and constantly changing beyond human control. Moreover, Muir’s criticisms of “commercialism” and his efforts to reform a modernizing society through government intervention shared much in common with other liberal reformers of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.

Worster argues that Muir did not fit neatly into either the preservation (which the author curiously and narrowly defines as “non-use of resources”) or conservation (“wise use of resources”) camp, but Worster generally refers to him as a conservationist (p. 308). What tied him to other conservationists of the period was their mutual rejection of wasteful or excessive exploitation of natural resources. Muir departed from many but not all fellow conservation travelers in stressing that nature was a spiritual and mental resource for humans as much as a source of material wealth, and that plants and animals had human-like awareness and emotions that undergirded their independent right to exist and thrive. Worster insists that Muir, contrary to popular belief, never defined wilderness as a pristine place with no trace of human presence. Muir’s affinity for “extraordinary” landscapes in which an over-civilized person could spiritually and mentally regenerate himself by studying nature’s beautiful transformations and his gradual rejection of ranching and dam-building in Yosemite National Park, though, complicate Worster’s claim. William Rollins’ explanation of “modernist” environmental activists who preferred clearly demarcated wilderness and civilized areas seems to fit Muir more than does William Cronon’s call for a wilderness that incorporates human labor.

Worster, in this reader’s opinion, too willingly defines Muir’s nature philosophy as being egalitarian or concerned with social equality. Worster does point out that Muir (worth a surprising four million present-day dollars at his death) failed to express awareness and criticism of the effects of capitalism, imperialism, and early globalization on the environment. Muir seemed most comfortable mingling with America’s rich and powerful capitalists, politicians, and intellectuals. Muir was less racist and sexist than the typical white man of his era; however, he rarely got his hands dirty fighting for the rights of women or the African Americans or Native Americans he encountered. Worster occasionally
cites key feminist and critical race studies perspectives on environmental history, but he fails to fully utilize them to rethink his characterizations of Muir and the conservation movement. Carolyn Merchant’s *Death of Nature* and Vera Norwood’s *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature*, missing from Worster’s bibliography, could shed intriguing feminist light on Muir’s scientific view of nature. The cited works of David Spence, Karl Jacoby, and Kevin DeLuca and Anne Demo suggest that Muir’s efforts to set aside extraordinary (formerly Native American) landscapes for the benefit of better-off park visitors was not really egalitarian or focused on “the pulling down of so many oppressive hierarchies that once plagued the world” (pp. 417 and 465). Current environmental justice activists might well consider Muir to be a villain as much as a hero.

Worster’s biography is too long for undergraduates, but environmental historians and graduate students will profit from its fuller picture of Muir’s life and nature beliefs. The general reader will be enticed by Worster’s captivating narrative, which reads delightfully like a grand adventure through a range of distinct landscapes in the genre of Muir’s hero, Alexander von Humboldt. Feminist scholars and historians who focus on issues of race, though, may be left with the impression that Muir and his impacts on modern environmentalism remain elusive.


Reviewed by Theodore A. Strathman, Lecturer, Department of History, University of San Diego.

Scholars and lay readers who wish to understand the politics of the Colorado River and the historical origins of today’s water crises will welcome the new edition of Norris Hundley’s *Water and the West*. Hundley’s work is one of the founding texts of western water historiography and preceded by a decade important works like Donald Worster’s *Rivers of Empire* and Marc Reisner’s *Cadillac Desert*. This second edition features a new preface and epilogue that help place Hundley’s original work in the context of recent developments in western water politics.

The focal point of this book is the Colorado River Compact, the 1922 agreement among representatives of the seven states in the river’s drainage basin. Hundley describes the compact as the product of negotiations among a wide range of parties who recognized that interstate cooperation and compromise were necessary given competing interests and the uncertainties of western water law. Since the development of the river involved national, state, and local governments, one of Hundley’s key themes is the complex workings of federalism. While the compact has served as a model for other multi-party treaties, Hundley notes that the 1922 agreement could not prevent years of litigation and controversy that have continued to the present. One of the major problems with the
compact, he argues, is that its drafters believed that haste was necessary. Thus they based their allocations of water on incomplete data that proved to be inaccurate.

Drawing on an impressive array of primary sources, Hundley expertly traces the development of the key debates over the allocation of water. Several interests converged to promote the development of the river. Imperial Valley farmers, Reclamation Service engineers, private power companies, and Los Angeles city officials were among the earliest advocates. Meanwhile, upper basin states like Utah and Wyoming worried that California, given its large population and advanced economy, would utilize the lion’s share of the river’s flow before the less developed states could begin significant diversions. Upper basin states feared that the doctrine of prior appropriation (“first in time, first in right”) could effectively shut them out of significant Colorado water rights.

These factors helped inspire the idea for a compact among the basin states. Delegates failed to agree on how to divide the Colorado’s water until they broke the impasse by splitting the basin into two sections and apportioning water to each of these instead of making allocations to individual states. As Hundley notes, though, triumph for the delegates remained elusive, as ratification by the states proved to be more difficult than they had anticipated. The 1928 Boulder Canyon Act sidestepped Arizona’s continued reluctance to approve the agreement by allowing ratification of the compact by only six states, but conflict would continue in the courts for nearly forty years.

The new epilogue explores a number of developments in the Colorado River Basin since the 1960s. According to Hundley, by that time it was clear that the compact could not provide for unrestricted development in the basin. This reality was rendered even more apparent by the 1990s, when new data cast doubt on whether basin states could rely on their previous estimates of river flow. Furthermore, global warming threatens western water supplies. Such developments helped inspire agreements in 2007 among basin states that would allow the upper basin to release less water to the lower basin during periods of drought, thus suggesting that Arizona, California, and Nevada will have to “share the discomfort of water shortages” in the future (p. 313). Increasing pressures on Colorado River users have also led to conservation measures and the drive for water transfers. As Hundley observes, the long history of struggles over the Colorado suggests that any efforts to pursue new sources or renegotiate agreements of allocation are likely to involve decades of bargaining and litigation.

Hundley’s book is indispensable for those who wish to understand the complex legal and political foundation of Colorado River water usage. Some readers may find that Hundley’s book is overly celebratory of the development of water resources. While he does acknowledge that “perhaps too many” (p. xv) dams have been built on the Colorado and that water projects do bring environmental costs, the book does not seem to thoroughly question the perspective of its protagonists that development of the river was fundamentally good. Critics of urban and suburban development in the West (and those who find value in the region’s arid landscapes) may cringe at Hundley’s choice of words when he concludes that a “great deal of the West has been condemned to remain a desert” (p. x). This reservation aside, Water in the West still stands as an excellent piece of political history.

Reviewed by Robert W. Cherny, Professor of History, San Francisco State University.

Jesse Unruh was one of the most powerful forces in post-World War II California politics, a larger-than-life figure who transformed both the speakership of the state assembly and the legislature itself. Raised in poverty on a Texas sharecropper cotton farm, he used the GI Bill after the Second World War to acquire an education and then began a lifetime in politics, running unsuccessfully for the California assembly twice before gaining election in 1954. He became chair of the Committee on Finance in his second term, chair of the powerful Ways and Means Committee during his third term, and speaker in his fourth term, serving from 1961 to 1969. He lost elections for governor in 1970 and for mayor of Los Angeles in 1973, then was elected as state treasurer in 1974 and reelected until his death in 1987. During his heyday as speaker, he was undeniably the most powerful figure in the state next to the governor, which was as Unruh thought it should be.

Bill Boyarsky reported on state politics for the AP and for the Los Angeles Times beginning in 1961, just as Unruh began his tenure as speaker. His biography of Unruh is based in significant part on his own experiences with Unruh and the legislature, and on the experiences of others he knew as a Sacramento reporter, as well as research in the archives and interviews with participants. In a few places, the book reads more like a memoir than a typical biography.

Boyarsky gives us a good picture of this complex personality. Unruh's drive for power, according to Boyarsky, was fueled by an anger that was always near the surface, an anger over social injustice that went back to his poverty-stricken childhood. His commitment to social justice was coupled with a willingness to use government to solve society's problems, an attitude typical of many in the generation that came to political maturity during the New Deal and Second World War. To address social injustice, Unruh sought power, and he built a political organization that provided a model for later speakers. Before today's stringent reporting laws for political contributions, Unruh and his close associates collected large sums from lobbyists and interest groups and used it to support campaigns for the assembly so that many – probably the large majority – of the assembly's Democrats owed Unruh a political debt. His anger over social injustice led to such measures as the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, which transformed the state's role in commitment and care procedures for the mentally ill. His commitment to the role of the legislature in policy-making led to the creation of the full-time legislature with adequate pay and an adequate and professional staff. Under his leadership, legislative hearings became important ways of securing information to guide policy formation.

At the same time, Unruh was thin-skinned, never forgetting what he considered a slight, and given to snap decisions, some of which he later regretted. He was probably an alcoholic and definitely a womanizer at a time when the press did not pay much attention to such behavior. Always a political moderate, he anticipated that the Rumford Act would alienate working-class, white Democrats. As a centrist and cold warrior, he had little use for the liberals of the California Democratic

Boyarisky’s approach gives the book an episodic character that occasionally leaves important questions unanswered. Chapter 5 deals with Unruh's first term as an assembly member and provides a revealing picture of the nature of life for state legislators at that time – poorly paid, living away from their families, dependent on lobbyists for free meals and drinks, with lots of late-night carousing. In the next chapter, we read about the Unruh civil rights bill of 1959, when Unruh used his considerable power as chair of the Ways and Means Committee to push through the legislation – but we learn nothing about how Unruh gained that important committee position. The following chapter jumps to the Rumford Fair Housing Act of 1963, by which time Unruh was in his second term as speaker. Again, we learn nothing about how Unruh garnered the votes to put him into the speaker’s chair. This, however, is my most serious criticism of the book. Overall, it presents a well rounded and thoughtful portrait of one of California’s most important political figures of the past half-century and of the political world in which he operated.


Reviewed by Louise Nelson Dyble, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Sciences, Michigan Technological University.

With this exploration of three important suburban communities, Ann Forsyth has made a significant contribution to urban history and the history of planning. Her analysis of Irvine, California, Columbia, Maryland, and The Woodlands, Texas also provides a challenging and provocative resource for planning professionals, developers, and policy-makers. While her very sympathetic portrayal of these ambitious undertakings will no doubt inspire controversy, her insights and opinions are impeccably informed by thorough and thoughtful research.

Forsyth explores one of the rarest and most revealing of twentieth-century development enterprises: the wholesale creation of an entirely new community. These communities are the products of the “New Town” movement that emerged in a brief interlude during the 1960s when federal incentives, private investment capital, and cutting-edge planning theory converged. They were self-conscious efforts to design places accommodating all the needs of a community, from housing, to jobs, to commerce and recreation – and to do so in a way that countered the negative associations with “sprawl.”

While Forsyth provides the reader with a solid account of the historical context and precedents that informed these communities, she focuses her efforts on detailing their conception and execution. With sensitivity to the complexities of business administration and local politics, her book affords the reader with a view of the long process of negotiation and adaptation involved in large-scale development. In the process, she paints vivid and compelling portraits not only of the celebrated visionaries at the helm of these complex undertakings, but also
Irvine Ranch is the largest of the three communities that Forsyth studies, and its development also has the deepest historical roots. The transition of the ranch from a profitable agricultural enterprise to an ambitious “new community” and eventually the heart of a major city involved a wide variety of public and private agencies and institutions. The Irvine Foundation, formed in 1937, helped preserve the size of the holding even as public infrastructure investments made it highly desirable for development; Forsyth remarks that it “certainly would have developed eventually” (p. 61). When the Irvine Company (owned by the Foundation) hired architects William Pereira and Associates in 1959 and began developing designs for development in conjunction with ongoing plans for a new University of California campus, that eventuality became imminent. However, it was what happened after the decision to develop the property that is most interesting. Forsyth effectively portrays the stunning complexity of decision-making, from the initial planning in the 1960s to the marketing and construction of the early housing and facilities in the 1970s (“the place where urban sprawl ends”), to the sale of the company in 1977 and the diffusion of control over Irvine’s planning in the late 1980s. Tax policy and environmental regulations; local political and governmental developments; outside industrial and business interests; ideology—“transformation in perceptions of the land” (p. 99); and the personalities of the company’s constantly shifting leadership all significantly shaped the form and function of Irvine over time.

Forsyth traces the development of Columbia and The Woodlands in just as much detail. Columbia was the pet project of James Rouse, one of the most influential and successful commercial developers of the late twentieth century. Columbia reflected his personal dedication to the project and willingness to sacrifice profitability for the sake of its integrity as a planned community with social as well as economic purposes. The Woodlands, developed by oil mogul George Mitchell, was the most environmentally oriented of the three, designed to reconcile development with the sensitive ecology of an important natural watershed. It reflected the ideas of Ian McHarg, just one among several important thinkers who play a role in Forsyth’s story. The Woodlands also manifested some of the core evolving principles of environmental planning and landscape architecture.

At one level, Forsyth’s account of compromise and contingency in the process of development seems to belie her claim that these new communities represent coherent manifestations of planning and design. In particular, the reader wonders if the role of government, particularly in providing crucial infrastructure (especially highways), does not deserve more consideration. Yet in the end her argument is persuasive; while never fully or perfectly realized, the success of these communities does represent important evidence for the power of private sector initiative and comprehensive planning. Forsyth’s conclusions are hopeful: she portrays these new communities as the products of farsighted pioneers who contributed significantly to the goal of achieving more sustainable and livable suburbs and reining in the chaos of sprawl.

This is a challenging and dense book that is best appreciated by a reader already familiar with post-World War II suburban development and planning. It might have benefited from a judicious abridgement. Still, time invested in a close reading will pay off. The book is guaranteed to inspire heated discussion in graduate seminars and offers many thought-provoking insights to planning
and development professionals as well as urbanists across disciplines. Intrepid Southern California readers, most of whom deal with both the advantages and disadvantages of suburban communities on a daily basis, will find the ideas that inform them and the story of their conception and execution fascinating as well.

BOOK NOTES

_The California Deserts: An Ecological Rediscovery._ By Bruce M. Pavlik. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. xii + 365 pp. Illustrations, maps, charts, tables, bibliography, index. $27.50, paper. This volume explores the ecology of California’s three desert regions: the Great Basin, the Mojave, and the Sonoran. Bruce Pavlik examines how these regions gave rise to endemic species and considers the adaptations plant, animal, and human communities have made to these arid lands.

_The Chumash World at European Contact: Power, Trade, and Feasting among Complex Hunter-Gatherers._ By Lynn H. Gamble. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. xiv + 361 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. $49.95. Lynn Gamble, a professor of anthropology at the University of California Santa Barbara, focuses on social organization, economic practices, and politics among the Chumash of the Santa Barbara area.

_Everyone Had Cameras: Photography and Farmworkers in California, 1850–2000._ By Richard Steven Street. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2008. xvi + 719 pp. Photographs, notes, and index. $105 cloth, $34.95 paper. Professional photographer Richard Steven Street’s book examines both the historical evolution of photography pertaining to farm workers and how photographers shaped the public’s understanding of agricultural labor and the farm workers’ movement. He considers the work of well-known figures like Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange as well as the photography of countless amateurs who documented California agriculture.

_Making an American Festival: Chinese New Year in San Francisco’s Chinatown._ By Chiou-Ling Yeh. Berkeley, University of California Press, 2008. xiv + 315 pp. $60 cloth, $24.95 paper. This book uses Chinese New Year celebrations in San Francisco to explore the creation and expression of ethnic identity after the Second World War. Yeh suggests that during the Cold War the local Chinese community used these festivals to declare a patriotic American identity and proclaim opposition to the communist regime in China. By the 1970s and 1980s, though, Chinese New Year celebrations became contested ground, as some groups challenged the control of the Chinatown elite over the content and meaning of these festivals.

_New Deal Art in Arizona._ By Betsy Fahlman. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. xvi + 203 pp. $49.95 cloth. Photographs, map, notes, bibliography, and index. Betsy Fahlman examines photographs, paintings, and sculpture produced by various New Deal agencies. She considers both the way the New Deal created new opportunities for artists and how the work they produced helped shape the state’s identity.
Undermining Race: Ethnic Identities in Arizona Copper Camps, 1880-1920. By Phylis Cancilla Martinelli. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. xii + 225 pp. Map, table, photographs, notes, bibliography, and index. $50 cloth. This volume focuses on Italian immigrants in three copper camps. Martinelli explores how this group did not fit neatly into either a “white” or “non-white” category and how they thus complicated their employers’ efforts to use racial distinctions to maintain control over the labor force.

History Makers Celebration

Honoring Qualcomm Incorporated

for their outstanding achievements, creating history in their own time.
Saturday, June 5, 5:30pm-9:30pm

For more information call (619) 232-6203 ext. 103 or email Jane.Kretsch@SanDiegoHistory.org
Winter/Spring 2009: Vol. 55 Numbers 1 & 2
Before Qualcomm: Linkabit and the Origins of San Diego’s Telecom Industry by Joel West
The Beatles Live! At Balboa Stadium 1965 by Chuck Gunderson
Rita Sanchez: An Oral Interview by Rudy P. Guevarra, Jr.
Roundtable Discussion
Fossil Exhibition
Book Reviews

Summer 2009: Volume 55 Number 3
Charles C. Painter, Helen Hunt Jackson and Mission Indians of Southern California by Valerie Sherer Mathes and Phil Brigandi
Cassius Carter Centre Stage by Darlene Gould Davies
Scientific Excavations at Palomar Mountain’s Nate Harrison Site: The Historical Archaeology of a Legendary African-American Pioneer by Seth Mallios
Book Reviews
Book Notes

Fall 2009: Volume 55 Number 4
San Diego’s 1935-1936 Exposition: A Pictorial Essay by David Marshall and Iris Engstrand
The Brandegees: Leading Botanists in San Diego by Nancy Carol Carter
James Wood Coffroth (1872-1943): West Coast Promoter of Boxing, Horse Racing and Tourism by Joel Levanetz
Recollections of Doña Felipa Osuna de Marrón: The Oldest Resident of Old Town in 1878 by Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz
Book Reviews
Book Notes
Experience San Diego’s Unique and Diverse History All Year Long!

Become a member of the San Diego History Center!

With stunning collections, engaging public programs, and unique research opportunities, there has never been a better time to become a member!

Membership Benefits Include:

- Full-year subscription to the Journal of San Diego History, San Diego’s longest-running chronicle of local history
- Subscription to San Diego History Center newsletter, The TIMES
- Complimentary use of the History Center Library
- Complimentary admission to the History Center museums
- Free or discounted admission to special programs, events, exhibition previews, lectures and tours
- 10% discount at all San Diego History Center gift shops

San Diego History Center gift shops.

Yes, I want to join the San Diego History Center! Choose your membership level below*

☐ $60 Family / Household  ☐ $500 Curator’s Circle
☐ $100 Associate  ☐ $1,000 Director’s Circle
☐ $250 Scholar’s Circle

* Senior/Student rates are also available. Please contact SDHC for more information.

Name: __________________________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________________

City, State Zip: ______________________________

Phone: ______________________________

Email: _______________________________________________________________________

☐ Yes, I want to receive e-mail updates from San Diego History Center
SDHC does not release member information to any outside organization(s).

☐ I work for a matching gift company.

☐ I want to learn more about making a planned gift to San Diego History Center

Payment:

☐ Credit Card  ☐ Check (Please make payable to San Diego History Center)

CC: _____________ Exp: _____________

Signature: ____________________________ Date: _____________

Become a member online at www.sandiegohistory.org or mail this form to:

Membership Office • San Diego History Center • 1649 El Prado, Ste 3 • San Diego, CA 92101-1684

For additional information, call (619) 232-6203 x102 or membership@sandiegohistory.org

Your membership contribution, in excess of fair market value, is deductible according to IRS regulations. San Diego History Center is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.
Make your Celebration Historic

Planning a wedding or a special event?

The San Diego History Center and the Junipero Serra Museum are available for your special occasion. Have a memorable event for you and your guests at our beautiful and historic locations.

Please contact Tam Joslin, Event Coordinator at 619-232-6203 ext 109 or email her at tam.joslin@sandiegohistory.org to assist you.

www.sandiegohistory.org
Advertise in
The Journal of San Diego History

The Journal of San Diego History will accept advertisements suitable to its mission and readership. Circulation: Over 3,000 plus an estimated 1,000 pass-along.

Readership

The Journal of San Diego History is published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter, and is a benefit of membership in the San Diego History Center. It is also housed in over 150 university libraries and educational institutions. You can be confident that an ad for your product or service will reach receptive readers.

Advertising Rates

Single issue:
- Full Page (B/W), 5 x 8 inches – $525
- Half Page (B/W), horizontal, 5 x 4 inches – $250
- Quarter Page (B/W), 2.25 x 4 inches – $125
- Inside Back (B/W) – $800

Discount for multiple issues: 2 issues – 10%; 4 issues – 20%

Deadlines

Space reservations with copy proposal:
- January 15 for Spring Issue
- April 15 for Summer Issue
- July 15 for Fall Issue
- October 15 for Winter Issue

Ad Materials, print-ready:
- February 1 for Spring Issue
- May 1 for Summer Issue
- August 1 for Fall Issue
- November 1 for Winter Issue

Mechanical

Black & White
High resolution .pdf or .eps format preferred, at a resolution of 300 dpi, with all graphics and fonts embedded. Please include a proof. Or send originals (at size of finished ad or larger) to be scanned.

Contact

Iris Engstrand and Molly McClain, Editors, The Journal of San Diego History
Department of History, University of San Diego
5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492
jsdh@sandiego.edu (619) 260-4756
_JUNÍPERO SERRA MUSEUM_
Honors the first site of Mission San Diego de Alcalá and the Presidio of San Diego
National Historic Landmark
State Historic Landmark

Museum built in 1929 as headquarters for the San Diego Historical Society.

Padre Junipero Serra was born in Petra de Mallorca, Spain in 1713. He arrived in New Spain (Mexico) in 1749. After working in the missions of New Spain for twenty years, he led the expeditions to Alta California in 1769 and founded the first nine of the twenty-one California missions.

Cross first erected by the Order of Panama in 1913 from Presidio tiles.

For more information visit www.sandiegohistory.org
2727 Presidio Drive San Diego, CA 92103
Serra main: (619) 297-3258 · SD History Center main: (619) 232-6203
The Serra Museum was built through funds contributed by George Marston to commemorate the first site of San Diego Mission de Alcalá and the San Diego Presidio (fort). The building was dedicated on July 16, 1929. The museum, designed by William Templeton Johnson in the Mission Revival style, is frequently confused with the current site of the Mission San Diego de Alcalá six miles inland. The mission was moved in 1774, five years after its founding, to its current location in Mission Valley for better agricultural opportunities. The Presidio remained for its strategic vantage point.

Although the site represents the first mission and presidio in Alta California, it also includes Native American (Kumeyaay) history and information on San Diego in 1929 when the museum building was completed.

We have learned from archaeologists who excavated this site where the original buildings were located.

Museum Hours:
Saturday & Sunday 10-5
For school programs contact (619) 232-6203

Admission:
Adults $5  Senior $4
Student $4  Military $4
AAA $4  Children (6-17) $2
Children (under 6) .................. free
SDHC Members ...................... free

Photos by Dylan House

Presidio Sketch by Jack Williams

2727 Presidio Drive San Diego, CA 92103
Serra main: (619) 297-3258 · SD History Center main: (619) 232-6203
This guide was made possible through a donation from the University of San Diego.
The Journal of San Diego History

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
David Kahn

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OFFICERS
Robert F. Adelizzi, President
Hal Sadler, Past President
Arthur G. Peinado, Vice President
Woody Ledford, Treasurer
Helen Kinnaird, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS
James R. Dave
Sandy Dijkstra
Thompson Fetter
Thomas L. Goodman
Ann Hill
Lucy C. Jackson
Donna Long Knierim
William Lawrence
Polly Liew
Michael P. Morgan
Virginia Morrison
Ann Navarra
Sandy Perotti
John Sinnott
Marc Tarasuck
Nell Waltz
Margie Warner
Allan Wasserman

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Malin Burnham
Timothy M. Considine
Kim Fletcher
Fran Golden
Yvonne Larsen
David Malcolm
Jack Monger
Mary Walshok
Stephen B. Williams

CREDITS
Design and Layout
Allen Wynar

Printing
Crest Offset Printing

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS
Travis Degheri
Cynthia van Stralen
Joey Seymour

STAFF
Tammie Bennett, Interim Registrar
Trina Brewer, History Store Manager
Elizabeth A. Burress, Visitor Services Assistant
Heather J. Gach, School Programs Coordinator

Nyahthok Goldet, Museum Custodian
Tam Joslin, Special Events Coordinator
Jane Kenealy, Archivist
Jane A. Kretsch, Administrative Assistant
Chantal Lane, History Store Associate
Kevin McManus, Facilities Supervisor
Carol Myers, Photo Archivist
Rosa Petroulias, History Store Associate
Brian M. Rendon, Visitor Services Assistant
Aurora Sandoval, Business Manager
Jessica Schmidt, Membership Coordinator
Gabe Selak, Public Programs Manager
Joseph Seymour, Visitor Services Assistant
Madison M. Shelestak, Imaging Technician
Marinta Skupin, Director of Education
Christine E. Travers, Director of the Booth Historical Photograph Archives
Nicholas V. Vega, Director of Exhibitions

San Diego Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following members at the Director’s Circle level and above.
Robert and Tommi Adelizzi
Automobile Club of Southern California
Diane and David Canedo
Hugh and Patricia Carter
Ben and Nicole Clay
Mr. David C. Copley
Bram and Sandy Dijkstra
George and Martha Gafford
Audrey Geisel
Mary Louise Fletcher Glanz
Heritage Architecture & Planning
Mr. and Mrs. Webster Kinnaird
Donna and Louis Knierim
Woody and Carole Ledford
Dale and Lois Marriott
Peggy Matthews
Dan and Janice McKinnon
The Corky McMillin Companies
James and Estelle Milch
Douglas and Lynn Mooney
Brian and Rose Mooney
Michael P. Morgan
Mrs. Pam Palisoul
Virginia Napierski
Ann Navarra
Charlotte W. Nielsen
Barbara Orr and Mark Mercer
Philip and Pam Palisoul
Sandra Perlatti
Murray and Patty Rome
Donald and Lois Roon
Donna Sefton
Janet Sutter
Marc Tarasuck
John and Sally Thornton
West Rhodes & Roberts
Publication of The Journal of San Diego History is underwritten by a major grant from the Quest for Truth Foundation, established by the late James G. Scripps. Additional support is provided by “The Journal of San Diego Fund” of the San Diego Foundation and private donors.

The San Diego History Center is a museum, education center, and research library founded as the San Diego Historical Society in 1928. Its activities are supported by: the City of San Diego’s Commission for Arts and Culture; the County of San Diego; individuals; foundations; corporations; fund raising events; membership dues; admissions; shop sales; and rights and reproduction fees.

Articles appearing in The Journal of San Diego History are abstracted and indexed in Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life.


Front Cover: Center, Ellen B. Scripps, ca. 1891, Courtesy of Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College. Clockwise from upper left: Ellen B. Scripps and Will Scripps playing chess, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College; Fifth Street, San Diego, ca. 1890 ©SDHC #1501; La Jolla Cove, ca. 1894 ©SDHC Archives, Douglas Gunn, Picturesque San Diego (Chicago, 1887); sketch of South Moulton Villa I, Guest Book, 1897-1915, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College; E.W. Scripps with fish at Miramar, ca. 1907-10, Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, Ohio University Libraries.

Back Cover: The Scripps family gathered in Detroit to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of William Scripps’ arrival in the United States in 1791. Twenty-nine lineal descendants and their spouses were photographed on the steps of George G. Booth’s residence on Trumbull Ave., Detroit, June 29, 1891. ©SDHC #14393.

Cover Design: Allen Wynar

---

PRESERVE A SAN DIEGO TREASURE

Your $100 contribution will help to create an endowment for The Journal of San Diego History

Please make your check payable to The San Diego Foundation. Indicate on the bottom of your check that your donation is for The Journal of San Diego History Fund. The San Diego Foundation accepts contributions of $100 and up. Your contribution is tax-deductible.

The San Diego Foundation
2508 Historic Decatur Road, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92106

(619) 235-2300 or (858) 385-1595
info@sdfoundation.org
Joshua Sweeney  
Julia Scripps  
(Mrs. James M.)  
James S. Booth  
Ellen Browning Scripps  
Howard “Ernie” Scripps  
James E. Scripps  
William E. Scripps  
Harriet Messinger Scripps (Mrs. James E.)  
Anna Scripps Whitcomb  
(Mrs. Edgar B.)  
George G. Booth  
Grace Ellen Booth Wallace  
Ellen Warren Scripps Booth  
Catherine Elizabeth Scripps Southwick  
(Mrs. William D.)  
Sarah Clarke Scripps  
(Mrs. George W.)  
James Scripps Southwick  
Jesse Scripps Weiss  
Grace Messinger Scripps  
Sarah Adele Scripps  
Jessie Adelaide Scripps  
George C. Scripps  
Helen Maypri Southwick  
George Washington Scripps  
Winifred Scripps Ellis (Mrs. G.O.)  
William A. Scripps  
Anna Adelaide Scripps  
(Mrs. George L.)  
Baby of Anna and George C. Scripps  
George H. Scripps  
Harry Scripps (London, England)  
Frederick W. Kellogg  
Linnie Scripps (Mrs. Ernest)  
Florence May Scripps Kellogg  
Ernest O’Hearn Scripps  
Ambrosia Scripps  
(Mrs. William A.)  
Georgie Scripps, son of Anna and George C. Scripps  
Hans Bagby  
Elizabeth Sweeney (Mrs. John S., Sr.)  
John S. Sweeney, Jr.  
John S. Sweeney, Sr.  
Mary Margaret Sweeney  
The Journal of San Diego History