VI. Culture and Society

WORLDS OF LEISURE, WORLDS OF GRACE
Recreation, Entertainment, and the Arts in the California Experience

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In the century and a half that has elapsed since its admission into the United States, California has exerted an increasingly powerful psychological influence on the national culture. As destination, inspiration, and location of a host of cultural and recreational activities and creative individuals during the last one hundred fifty years, the Golden State has drawn the attention of the nation and world. Today, a rich documentary record about these activities and individuals resides in California’s libraries, museums, and archives. The thousands of letters, diaries, and other manuscripts that comprise this record illuminate the evolution of the arts, recreation, and entertainment in California and their burgeoning impact both within the state and beyond its borders.

Even before the region’s absorption into the American republic, California’s remarkable array of natural settings challenged, provoked, and seduced the intellects and emotions of inhabitants and visitors alike, until extolling the aesthetic and spiritual benefits of the state’s spectacular natural landscapes became one of the unifying themes of California history. As Kevin Starr has noted in describing the landscape encountered by newcomers, “It was not a subtle drama, but a bold confrontation of flatland, mountain and valley.” After the American conquest, the first great influx of population, arriving in the wake of the 1848 gold discovery, held the spectacular contrasts of topography in low esteem, seeking only to overcome the geographic obstacles thrown in its path to fortune. Only the participants in what Starr has characterized as the “literary tourism” that began in the 1850s spoke with the same enthusiasm about California’s scenic magnificence that others reserved for its mineral wealth.

Such enthusiastic reactions to California’s natural wonders contrasted with the general indifference or hostility of most Euro-Americans toward untamed nature. Among a growing number of upper-class Americans, however, the passionate descriptions by those articulate excursionists of California’s scenic splendor struck a responsive chord. Influenced by evolving aesthetic standards that emphasized the beauty inherent in wild places, these Americans grew increasingly sympathetic to favorable descriptions of untrammeled landscapes. In time, more and more of them succumbed to appeals intended to lure them out to the undeveloped West as tourists. Transcontinental railroads, in search of passengers, and western entrepreneurs, seeking patrons or investors, collaborated in this new advertising venture.

With its abundance of scenic wonders, California rapidly assumed a role as one of the most attractive destinations for the burgeoning tourism industry. By the 1870s, Charles Nordhoff, author of one of the leading guidebooks for California-bound tourists, could proclaim that “certainly in no part of the continent is pleasure-traveling so exquisite and unalloyed a pleasure as in California.” Within a decade, the Boston firm of Raymond & Whitcomb was dispatching all-expense-paid, escorted parties of tourists on three-week expeditions across the great expanses of the Far West to California to see this terrestrial paradise for themselves. Once there, most of them chose to make the pilgrimage to one particularly Edenic corner: the Yosemite Valley.

Although a familiar haunt for centuries to many of the Indian inhabitants of the southern Sierra Nevada, Yosemite Valley had only been glimpsed on occasion by wandering Euro-American fur trappers and prospectors before 1850. Only in the spring of 1851 did the first sustained Euro-American contact commence. Yosemite’s first tourists proved to be a party of California militiamen who entered the valley in 1851 chasing an Indian band that had rejected relocation to reservation land out of the mountains. While a small population of Indians would persist in the valley through the nineteenth century, they effectively had been dispossessed as its masters within a very few years.
As this process of dispossession had unfolded, word about the valley’s stunning visual richness began to spread as well. Before the end of the 1850s, thanks in large part to the labors of the astute English-born promoter James Mason Hutchings, the Yosemite was already being integrated into a different American cultural world view. Hutchings, who had conducted the first party of recreational visitors into the valley in 1855, also had brought the first artist, Thomas Ayres, and wrote one of the first widely circulated descriptions of its beauty. In less than ten years, travel to the valley began to lose its exotic dimension, while the valley’s reputation penetrated deeper and deeper into the popular imagination. The emphasis placed upon the natural glories of Yosemite in the travel literature of the 1860s and 1870s soon made it synonymous with California itself.

As this fascination with the beauty of spectacular natural places held an ever firmer grip on the public’s consciousness, it is not surprising, therefore, to find in one 1882 traveler’s diary the rhapsodic proclamation that she had realized “one of the greatest desires of my life, a trip to the Yosemite Valley.” That year, Amy Bridges, a young woman from Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and several other members of her family set out by train as part of a Raymond & Whitcomb transcontinental excursion. Intrigued or awed by much of the unfamiliar scenery unfolding beyond the passenger-car window, she seemed to fall most fully under the spell of this one special destination: “How often have I longed to see this far famed spot and when a child, planned how I should visit this beautiful valley.” Delivered to Madera by the railroad from San Francisco and then consigned to a stagecoach for the rest of the trip, Miss Bridges endured the long journey with good humored but barely restrained eagerness. Descending at last into the valley, she suddenly found her dream take physical form as the coach slipped out of the mist to encounter “a beautiful rainbow and the blue sky...above us [and] the sun...bright behind us. Oh, it was glorious.” Lodged in the celebrated “Big Tree Room” of the Cedar Cottage at the Yosemite Falls Hotel, she and her companions, “sat and warmed ourselves and listened to the adventures of those
who had spent a day or two [in the valley already].” For the next three days, the duration of the side trip allowed for by the Raymond & Whitcomb schedule, her party toured the sights. Ever the brash enthusiast, she confessed to her diary that upon viewing the reflection in Mirror Lake, “I was so overjoyed I couldn’t help prancing about a little when no one was looking.” Riding up to the summit of Glacier Point, she observed with wonder that “as we went further up the view grew more beautiful, every bend added some fresh charm.” Summoning up with great zeal her expedition through the valley, she admitted at one point that “I have called everything beautiful and grand, I know no other adjectives for this.”

Thus, like so many other visitors to the valley in the early era of Yosemite tourism, she found herself overwhelmed by the emotional impact of the experience of wild, scenic nature.

Bursting with delight over this exposure to unspoiled nature, Miss Bridges and her family nonetheless had chosen to indulge as travelers in the insulated comfort promised by Raymond & Whitcomb to their patrons. The company’s tour books assured the curious (or anxious) reader that “Every comfort and luxury attainable will be provided, and every effort will be made to render the journey enjoyable to the participants.” Whether tourists were going to San Francisco, the Yosemite, British Columbia, or the far north of Alaska, the operators promised them that, through the agency of the tour conductor, they “will be relieved of the many petty cares and annoyances inseparable from ordinary travel. Thus the traveler will be left to the fullest enjoyment of the journey.”

Lodged within the Huntington Library’s extensive holdings of manuscript and printed Californiana, the Bridges diary and the 1884 Raymond & Whitcomb tour book represent only two examples of a much greater body of writings on the tourist’s experience of the Golden State and the larger transformation of American culture in the nineteenth century. Other manuscript diaries kept by Raymond & Whitcomb excursionists (including a second one kept by Amy Bridges in 1887) and by other tourists describe earlier or later transcontinental travels, trips along the Pacific Coast, or voyages to Yosemite. The library also possesses a splendid body of printed works, beginning with such early travel books as Nordhoff’s California for Travelers and Settlers, George Crofutt’s New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide (Chicago, 1878), A. L. Bancroft’s tourist guide, Yosemite, San Francisco and Around the Bay (San Francisco, 1871), John Conway’s Tourist’s Guide from the Yosemite Valley to Eagle Peak, for the Spring and Summer of 1879 (San Francisco, 1879), and W.E. Dennison’s Information for the Use of Yosemite Visitors (Sacramento, 1886), as well as such renowned volumes as Josiah Dwight Whitney’s The Yosemite Book (published in 1868 by Julius Bien in New York under the auspices of the California Geological Survey), and James M. Hutchings’s Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California (San Francisco, 1860). Of a more ephemeral nature but of equal significance as documentary sources about the history of recreational California are the hundreds
of broadsides, posters, trade cards, pamphlets, brochures, and post cards promoting everything from Leidig’s Hotel or the Cosmopolitan Saloon in Yosemite Valley to the Mount Lowe Scenic Railway or Cawston’s Ostrich Farm in southern California.

In addition to travelers like Amy Bridges who remarked upon the natural wonders of the Golden State, California’s authors have also recorded their own perceptions of its unique landscapes. Authors as diverse as John Muir, Mary Austin, Robinson Jeffers, Joan Didion, and Wallace Stegner have portrayed the land itself, along with the stories of the people who inhabit it. Although he is known more for his Klondike and South Seas adventures and the novels and tales based on them, Jack London must be added to this list for his evocation of the California lands he loved.

Despite the popular perception of Jack London as the perpetual wanderer/adventurer, he not only spent much of his youth and young manhood in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay area, he also lived for much of the last decade of his life on his Beauty Ranch in the Sonoma hills near Glen Ellen. Why did he acquire the hundreds of acres that comprised the ranch by the time of his death, and what did the land mean to him? How did he operate the ranch while still traveling and writing vast quantities of fiction?

By 1905, London had reached a crossroads in his life and career. Just thirty years old, he was already a famous and successful author. He had a solid and lengthy list of published stories to his credit, and two of his best-known novels, The Call of the Wild and The Sea Wolf, had just been published in 1903, to immediate popular success and critical acclaim. However, success seemed hollow in light of the failures of his personal life. By 1904, his first wife, Bessie, had filed for divorce, and, although London had fallen in love with Charmian, whom he would later marry, he was not free yet. To escape the pressures of his situation, he fled to Japan to cover the Russo-Japanese War as a correspondent. To these factors were added his experiences in 1902 in England, where the hellish poverty of London’s East End (experiences published in The People of the Abyss) fueled his desire to leave city life for nature’s peace in the countryside.

Driven by these experiences, Jack London searched for just the right parcel of California land to match his dreams. When he had found it in the early summer of 1905, he wrote to his editor George Brett at Macmillan to describe the land and to plead for the funds to complete the purchase: “Now I’ll tell you what I have done and what I want. I have found the land I want, and have closed the deal by paying $500.00, binding the bargain for a few days, when I must pay the balance, $6,500.00. There are 130 acres in the place, and they are 130 acres of the most beautiful, primitive land to be found anywhere in California. There are great redwoods on it, some of them thousands of years old—in fact, the redwoods are as fine and magnificent as any to be found anywhere outside the tourist groves. Also there are great firs, tan-bark oaks, maples, live-oaks, white-oaks, black-oaks, madrone and manzanita galore. There are canyons, several streams of water, many springs, etc., etc. In fact, it is impossible to really describe the place. All I can say is this—I have been over California off and on all my life, for the last two months I have been riding all over these hills, looking for just such a place, and I must say that I have never seen anything like it.”

From this idyllic description, it is clear that London saw the land as a place of beauty, peace, and escape. The depth to which he felt newly drawn to the land is also evident in his writing at the time. The story he completed just as he was buying the ranch, “All Gold Canyon,” contains some of his most beautiful descriptions of the pastoral landscape. If he felt powerless to describe adequately his ranch land to Brett, he lyrically captured the canyon in the opening of the story: “It was the green heart of the canyon, where the walls swerved back from the rigid plain and relieved their harshness of line by making a little sheltered nook and filling it to the brim with sweetness and roundness and softness. Here all things rested. Even the narrow stream ceased its turbulent downrush long enough to form a quiet pool…On one side, beginning at the very lip of the pool, was a tiny meadow, a cool, resilient surface of green that extended to the base of the frowning wall. Beyond the pool a gentle slope of earth ran up and up to meet the opposing wall. Fine grass covered the slope—grass that was spangled with flowers, with here and there patches of color, orange and purple and golden.”

Later works would continue and expand on London’s view of the unspoiled land as idyllic and redemptive, in particular his agrarian novels, Burning Daylight and The Valley of the Moon. However, he did not stop with merely an appreciation of the land and its beauty. He went further, holding the conviction that the land was to be improved and made fruitful in order to benefit humanity. He believed that, if the land were treated well and used wisely and with restraint, its bounty would bring about an end to the world’s hunger and economic problems. Thus, once London began to devote himself fully to the ranch in the last five years of his life, he did so with
a commitment to restoring the worn-out land and making it rich enough to support the people who would return to it. He often articulated this vision to family and friends, including George Brett, to whom he wrote, "It is dreadfully hard for me to get my friends to understand just what the ranch means to me...From a utilitarian standpoint I hope to do two things with the ranch: (1) To leave the land better for my having been; (2) and to enable thirty or forty families to live happily on ground that was so impoverished that an average of three farmers went bankrupt on each of the five ranches I have run together."  

Jack pursued his goal with the same vigor and single-minded purpose with which he attacked every endeavor in his life. Over several years, he bought seven ranches totaling about fourteen hundred acres, and he undertook to make his ranch into one of the premier enterprises in California. He acquired livestock, including fine horses, cows, goats, and a herd of prize pigs for which he built a giant "pig palace," naively designed for optimum hygiene and efficiency. He planted trees, crops, and grape vines according to scientific principles and his own good conservation sense. Even for someone of London's boundless energy, however, the ranch was too much to handle on top of his full regimen of writing—and the writing was necessary, not only to nurture Jack's spirit, but also in order to earn the money to sustain the not-yet-profitable ranch and to support the various family members who lived on the land. Therefore, Jack needed a manager, and he turned to his devoted stepsister Eliza London Shepard, appointing her ranch superintendent in 1911.  

From his boyhood years, Jack had felt a deep affection for Eliza, and she had reciprocated in material ways, as well as with her loyalty. When Jack struggled as a young man to support himself by writing, Eliza stepped in with money to pay his bills, and she staked him to his Klondike venture. Jack never forgot her generosity and seized every opportunity to repay her, including building a cottage on the ranch for her and her son.  

With Eliza at his right hand, Jack knew he had a reliable and loyal superintendent he could trust to carry out his plans and look out for his interests. This was especially important when he was away on his frequent trips and he left Eliza in charge of all ranch operations. The extensive correspondence between them attests both to Jack's exacting care in driving his ranch toward the excellence he demanded and to Eliza's practical and common sense attention to every detail. The letters brim with affection, humor, occasional irritation and, most of all, a tremendous amount of information about the business of operating and improving the ranch according to Jack's vision for the future.  

Over the years, as Jack implemented more of the scientific principles of farming he learned from reading and studying, and despite the derision of some
of the more traditional neighboring ranchers, he and Eliza began to see tangible results in the form of record crops and prize-winning livestock. By June 3, 1915, Eliza could write with much pride and satisfaction of the fine spring crops: “Will cut our hay during coming week; I wish that you were here to see it for it is the finest clean oat field that I have seen in the valley, or elsewhere. It is one solid field on the west side of road from town, right up to the LaMonte fence on [the] hill where Wiget said that we could never raise anything (he never plowed it) and on the easterly side it is just as good. Am enclosing pictures of oats, vetch and colts; some of them are not good but will keep trying for better ones. These will show that oats are higher than the fences; the vetch pictures will show height of vetch compared with one of men; will get better snaps of colts for you.”

Jack, replying on June 18, must have felt his dream for the ranch was beginning to become reality: “The photographs of the vetch and the colts were excitingly satisfying. We’re getting things to grow out of that ground, even if it has taken some time. And it is the things that grow out of the ground that make the colt.” Unfortunately, Jack did not live long enough to see whether the ranch could become all that he had idealistically hoped for, yet, with Eliza’s able help, he did begin to achieve some of the successes with the land that his grand vision had foreseen.

The stories of London’s agrarian dream, his writings, and his correspondence with his loyal and able stepsister Eliza can be found in the Jack London Collection housed in the Huntington Library. Several albums of photographs depict scenes from the ranch, showing animals, crops, ranch buildings and activities, and Jack and Charmian at play and work. There are manuscript and typewritten drafts of London’s pastoral stories, such as “All Gold Canyon,” as well as of his agrarian works Burning Daylight, The Valley of the Moon, and The Acorn-Planter. Jack’s own subject file, still arranged as he left it, contains pamphlets, offprints, and clippings about farming and ranching methods, and a series of scrapbooks contains clippings about the Londons and their ranch from local and distant newspapers. Finally, extensive series of correspondence to and from the Londons document every aspect of ranch life and business. A large subset of this correspondence holds the largely untold story of Eliza London Shepard. About eighty letters between Jack and Eliza deal primarily with the operating of the ranch, and other letters from Eliza yield more information about her. The collection is an extraordinarily rich archive of thirty thousand items documenting every facet of London’s life as author, journalist, war correspondent, sailor, rancher, and adventurer. This material holds research promise both for making new discoveries and for reinterpreting what is already known about London’s life and career.

By the end of the First World War, California’s natural wonders thus had exerted a powerful influence on many different commentators and on various aspects of Anglo-California’s emerging culture. Within another decade, the landscape and even the climate of the southern part of the state had come to dominate the newest American entertainment form, the motion picture. As part of a relocation from the East driven by a variety of reasons, the establishment of assorted production companies in the Los Angeles area allowed film makers to capitalize upon that locale’s extended periods of pleasant weather, diverse landscape, and remarkable natural lighting. It also afforded the movie Western, one of the fledgling industry’s most successful genres, a splendid array of “authentic” backdrops with which to entice audiences.

Following the Edison Company’s 1903 production, The Great Train Robbery, the most significant of the early Westerns, the film industry found continuing commercial success through frequent adaptations of episodes from a very extensive body of popular history and received wisdom. As one historian of the frontier has observed, the Western may be more dependent on pre-cinematic forms and conventions than any of its rivals. The West was already a mythologized space when the first moviemakers found it, and early Westerns built directly on the formulas, images and allegorizing traditions of the Wild West show and cheap literature. No other genre had pre-cinematic roots of comparable depth and density.

Drawing upon that vast fund of stories and images, film makers fell back on more and more western tales. By the 1920s, the Western represented between fifteen and thirty percent of the annual production of the industry.

Driven to new levels of production by the imperative of increasing audiences, the movie industry had already developed a voracious appetite for the written word when the devastating impact of sound technology threw film makers into an upheaval. In the wake of sound’s arrival, many new writers, especially from the ranks of playwrights and novelists from eastern cities, were brought west by the studios. Other writers, however, both transplanted and home-grown in California, also found the lures of prestige and financial reward offered by this new business too great to resist. As a community of scriptwriters and scenarists grew up around the studios, that community took on a life of its own and
embraced a wide range of individuals whose careers became deeply entangled with the industry. One such individual whose career coincided with the rise of the Western was a moderately successful novelist and short-story writer named Stuart N. Lake.

An ex-newspaperman and publicity agent who had relocated to San Diego from New York after service in World War I, Lake had begun promoting his stories to the studios in the 1920s. Struggling for recognition and acceptance in a highly competitive market, he made headway slowly, achieving his most durable success after the 1931 publication of *Wyatt Earp, Frontier Marshal*. Written with the assistance of the old lawman before his death in 1929 and subsequently with that of his widow, Josephine (Marcus) Earp, Lake’s fast-moving account propelled a relentlessly virtuous and heroic Earp through a series of sanguinary encounters with assorted villains. Though the biography blended large dollops of fiction with fact, its subject stirred up considerable interest among various studios, including Fox Film Corporation (predecessor of Twentieth Century-Fox), which bought the movie rights soon after publication. Fox’s subsequent production and 1934 release of *Frontier Marshal*, starring George O’Brien in the leading role, launched Lake’s busy and often frustrating involvement with Hollywood Westerns over the next two decades.

Having spent a number of years shepherding his prose into print, Lake brought a fairly high and well-entrenched opinion of his own abilities to any project. Moreover, he continued to promote storylines of all sorts to his friends and acquaintances at the studios, including scenarios about Revolutionary War hero Francis Marion, champion prize-fighter John L. Sullivan, and abolitionist John Brown. However, in the wake of *Wyatt Earp’s* continuing success, Lake focused his time and energy on selling his Westerns to Hollywood. In doing so, Lake routinely highlighted the qualities of “zeal and enthusiasm” that he always brought to his writing, as well as to his consistently successful publishing record. Proclaiming on one occasion that “I can’t reconcile myself to the belief that entertainment is not to be considered as an opportunity for real achievement,” he assured studio representatives that he could supply material far superior to that regularly produced in Hollywood.41 Beyond any other ability or talent, however, Lake emphasized his knowledge of the Old West and his skill in translating it into the written word.

Making his case to a reluctant Paramount Studios after a rejection of the *Wyatt Earp* biography, Lake described himself as “a writer who knows something about, and has a ‘feel’ for the West as it truly was,” qualities that they might find of use for “future possibilities.” More succinctly, in characterizing the Earp biography to Dudley Nichols at Fox, he noted that “it carries authenticity,” a trait that he would repeatedly claim for all his proposals.17 On learning in 1945 of plans for a second remake of Fox’s *Frontier Marshal* (a project that eventually evolved into John Ford’s classic *My Darling Clementine*), Lake bombarded his contacts at Fox with letters urging his own involvement in the film, based upon his confident assertions that “I have more materials in my files than the amount published in the biography and I am one of two living persons who knows what actually happened in Tombstone.” Again and again, as Lake made clear to every one of his correspondents in the industry, he described himself as the expert to be consulted about the Old West: “Suffice it to say I know the details.”18

However many or few details of western history Lake actually possessed, he had sufficient skills as a writer to bring him some success in Hollywood following the 1931 publication of *Wyatt Earp*. During the two decades thereafter, he sold the rights to that book and to a subsequent book, *Wells Fargo* (produced in 1937 as a movie under the same title with Joel McCrea), the rights to a *Saturday Evening Post* story, “Vinegarron and the Jersey Lily” (which became the 1940 film *The Westerner* starring Walter Brennan and Gary Cooper), and the rights to a story that became the basis for the 1951 Jimmy Stewart film *Winchester ’73*. *Wyatt Earp* had been produced three times (twice as *Frontier Marshal* and once as *My Darling Clementine*) and had contributed significant story elements to the 1953 picture, *Powder River*. Unfortunately, despite such achievements, Lake’s more ambitious plans and schemes met with repeated disappointment and rejection, especially in response to his frequent offers to collaborate more closely as a writer or technical adviser during the production phase. Lake learned in time that he had fallen prey to problems that afflicted most writers connected in one way or another with the motion picture industry.

As Lake himself came to realize, the studio system’s management of writers alienated many of them from the process. Writing in 1938 to an acquaintance at Columbia Pictures, he dourly commented on the fate of several of his proposals accepted by major studios:

In each case I was called “for conference” on a projected picture, and suggested possibilities in the customary, long-drawn discussions, and in each case went away to “await call.” You know the answers—studio writers assigned to develop and my “calls” never came.19
Even the highly-paid and very successful writers the industry brought west, such as Stephen Vincent Benét, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Maxwell Anderson, routinely discovered a lack of the creative independence that had characterized their careers in other settings. The assembly-line nature of most moviemaking, dictated by the industry's need to keep costs low and production high, angered and embittered many writers when they found their concepts and their prose subject to wholesale alteration by "collaborators" and "script doctors" assigned without their consent by the studios. "Writers have no executive authority and never have much choice in regard to collaborations," successful Hollywood writer Dudley Nichols observed ruefully to Lake about Fox Film Corporation's plans for the first version of Frontier Marshal.20

In the same letter to Lake, Nichols also commented sadly on the other debilitating challenge that confronted most writers: the relentless pressure to turn out products that conformed to the familiar standards of the Western genre that audiences had come to expect. In trying to warn Lake about Fox's plans for the film, Nichols wrote that "my only anxiety about Wyatt Earp is that it might not be screened in the spirit of the book...so many factors of a commercial nature enter into the making of pictures that it is only rarely that a fine substantial book finds its way to the screen intact."21 Crediting the "money making basis" of the "whole Hollywood system" with exerting a dominant influence on the process, he remarked that "unfortunately the books I like most are seldom best sellers, and the pictures I like most are seldom box office hits." Subsequent letters to Lake from Nichols and from Julian Johnson at Fox informed him, in Johnson's words, that "it is not the big epic that your book was" and that, as Nichols put it, "from what I hear it is just a Western of the type that is turned out in the garret every week."22

Like many of his peers, Lake found such limitations on the employment of his creative energies frustrating on many fronts. Extraordinarily confident of his knowledge of the West and of his ability as a writer, he predicted exceptional results for any project he proposed. Eager for the work, he always had new scripts and plots to sell to any studio that would listen. Beyond the wounds he suffered to his pocketbook and his professional pride, however, Lake regretted his frequent failure to realize his personal vision of American history in the movies made from his writings.

Addressing Carl Laemmle of Universal Pictures in a 1931 letter, he made his case that his Earp biography was "corking fine picture material, the common

Wyatt Earp, 1926. Stuart Lake initiated his correspondence with Earp a year after this image was taken. His popular biography of Earp was published in 1931, two years after the legendary gunfighter's death. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*
Elsewhere in the extensive holdings of the Huntington, numerous resources running the gamut from stage and screen through radio and television support the study of that industry in twentieth-century California. A recent addition of correspondence and legal documents to the papers of Jack London in the Huntington Library, for example, discusses that author’s tempestuous relationship in the 1910s with production companies attempting to film The Sea Wolf, while the papers of writers Zoe Akins and Sonya Levien include many interesting letters about their years of writing for the studios in the 1930s and 1940s. The hundreds of scripts (many written by John Meston) for the series Gunsmoke during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s follow the transition of that extraordinarily popular Western from radio to television. The files of programs, playbills, scrapbooks, and posters from the Pasadena Playhouse and the 600-plus scripts from the Mark Taper Forum (representing the Taper’s productions since 1967) capture the development of the theater at two landmark southern California venues. Through these papers and related collections at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Warner Brothers, and the American Film Institute, researchers may glimpse some of the forces at work in establishing Los Angeles as a leading center for many forms of popular entertainment.

By the 1930s, therefore, as Stuart Lake’s experience demonstrates, the movie studios had evolved into a successful industry that dominated American popular culture from its base in southern California. During the early decades of the twentieth century, which marked Hollywood’s rise to prominence, however, other significant cultural institutions took on new life in the Golden State, especially in the burgeoning community of Los Angeles. The performing arts in particular struggled to reach a new level of professionalism and public acceptance.

At least since the eighteenth century, many a fledgling North American settlement had aspired to demonstrate that it had outgrown its adolescence by emphasizing the sophisticated and cosmopolitan cultural life it supported. By the late nineteenth century, such aspirations certainly affected the development of various cities along the Pacific Coast and continued to influence them well into the twentieth century. Opera houses, concert halls, and theaters appeared in many western communities, led by San Francisco in the wake of the Gold Rush and followed by other mining-boom towns.24

In the same pattern followed by like-minded individuals in other communities, prominent civic leaders in Los Angeles tried to plant such institutions in their city’s soil for various reasons. As Kevin Starr has noted, “in a city and region of people from elsewhere, with few highly developed civic institutions, music and music-related pageantry...provided an important bond among people struggling to reassert themselves in new surroundings.”25 At the same time, other Angelinos drew a sense of civic pride and distinction from the presence of temples of the performing arts. Fortunately, to nurture the seedlings that would bear such fruit, Los Angeles enjoyed the services of a remarkable cultivator of the arts, Lynden Ellesworth Behymer.

Of Dutch ancestry and midwestern upbringing, Behymer arrived in southern California during the fabled “boom of the eighties.” Once established there, he found employment for his exceptional promotional skills and his unlimited appreciation for music and the arts. With an eye to the potential audience reflected in the continuing growth of Los Angeles’s population, he increasingly promoted musical and theatrical events through the 1890s. By 1900, when he had become the manager of both the Los Angeles Symphony and the Women’s Symphony, he was widely recognized as southern California’s premier impresario. Energetic, enthusiastic, and inventive as a promoter, Behymer developed a reputation as an unrelenting advocate of fine music, celebrated performers, and his own considerable abilities. In one dynamic personality, Behymer incorporated a ceaseless pursuit of the best artists in every field of musical performance with an equally unwavering commitment to his own financial success.26

To thus satisfy his own needs and the desires of his customers, he invested much time and effort in trying to gauge the evolving tastes of his audiences. Despite his most careful evaluation of the market, however, he could never predict with absolute certainty the reactions of the crowd, as demonstrated well by the erratic reception given to Behymer’s forays into the world of grand opera. An artistic form redolent of aristocratic European settings and a sophisticated appreciation of vocal and instrumental performance, opera had made sporadic appearances on the Pacific Coast since the early years of gold-rush San Francisco. By 1900, however, it had found precious few permanent footholds in the region when Behymer brought the Maurice Grau Metropolitan Opera to Los Angeles for three performances.

Subsequent appearances by it and by other touring companies during the next two decades met with modest financial success one season and financial
catastrophe in the very next year. Nonetheless, Behymer continued to cater to a core of opera devotees before and after World War I, drawing from, among other sources, the opera associations based in Chicago and San Francisco. Even in the wake of the Great Depression of the 1930s, Behymer inaugurated yet another operatic venture, a short series of performances in Los Angeles by the San Francisco Opera in 1937. Buoyed by its success, Behymer proposed another season for the autumn of 1938.

In setting out once again to sell opera to the artistically inclined residents of southern California, Behymer wrote glowingly of a season ‘which brings to our community for the first time, such a classic as ‘Elektra’; for the second time, ‘Pelleas & Melisande’; and ‘Coq d’Or’ for the first time in Rimsky-Korsakov’s original opera concept’ all filled with “the greatest artists for their respective roles” drawn from the great opera houses of Europe and South America. Such artists would be presented locally by Behymer’s organization under the auspices of the San Francisco Opera, “whose standards are not surpassed, if equalled, by those of any other opera company in the world,” chosen “with the utmost care by Director Gaetano Merola.” All these elements, when taken together, according to Behymer, would contribute to a season that would solidify Los Angeles’s position as “The Musical Mecca of the West.”

Even as he offered such lyrical praise of the forthcoming program’s musical quality, however, Behymer also put into motion an aggressive and wide-ranging subscription campaign. Throughout the summer of 1938, Behymer proved a very “Busy ‘Bee’” indeed, sending off hundreds of letters to season-ticket holders, underwriters, and guarantors from the 1937 season, trying to secure their patronage for the upcoming series. Such letters circulated among a host of individuals prominent in the arts, entertainment, education, and commerce, using many different appeals to the various constituencies. Addressing one motion picture studio executive, for example, he wrote that “members of the Motion Picture Colony have always been noted as patrons of the musical arts, and especially as devotees of Grand Opera.” In a different letter, he observed that “the season of 1937 was a great success, artistically, socially, and commercially for the local business men.” Letterheads bore long lists of well-known southern Californians, from educators Rufus Von Kleinsmid and Robert G. Sproul and movie moguls Jack Warner and Louis B. Mayer, to civic leaders John Anson Ford, Ezra Scatteredgood, and Joseph Scott. Behymer’s special call for underwriters and guarantors to insure the season against financial loss stated that our great objective is to give an annual season of excellent opera to the citizens and the visitors in the Southwest, but we cannot do it alone. We must ask the cooperation of those citizens in Los Angeles who are interested in the cultural activities of life to join in guaranteeing such a season.

Behymer’s salesmanship began, of course, with the most obvious constituency, those individuals who had purchased season tickets in 1937, trying to ensure their patronage for the 1938 performances. Other letters solicited endorsements of the season by politicians such as Mayor Fletcher Bowron (just installed after the recall election that had turned out Frank Shaw) or announced with great triumph the decision of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to contribute $2,500 toward the season’s advertising costs, “in token of the national advertising given the County not only as ‘The Musical Mecca of the West’ but as a good place to make one’s home.”

Reaching out beyond the mailroom, Behymer did not neglect the personal touch to tout the season as well. Various speakers, such as Carleton Smith, identified as Esquire’s music critic, were dispatched to heighten public anticipation. Behymer himself went campaigning on the musical hustings, compiling an impressive list of speaking engagements during September and October that included the Japan-American Society, the American Women’s Round Table, the Women’s University Club, the Hollywood Opera Reading Club, the Schubert Club, the Friday Morning Club, and the Ebell Club.

Behymer’s exhaustive labors certainly bore some notable fruit as the opening of the series in November drew nearer. By October 15, Behymer’s office was generating long lists of ticket holders, which included such names as Walt Disney, Edna May Oliver, Darryl Zanuck, Bing Crosby, Sigmund Romberg, Basil Rathbone, Ginger Rogers, Jeanette McDonald, and Olivia de Haviland. Although he would not have used the specific term, Behymer definitely possessed great faith in the efficacy of “star power” to help boost the fortunes of the series.

Immediately following the series’s conclusion, Behymer at first vigorously proclaimed its glorious accomplishments. Commenting proudly that the “consensus of opinion, expressed privately as well as in the press, marks this Opera Week as a milestone of musical progress,” he added with evident satisfaction that “Los Angeles has at last taken her place as a world music center.” Although admitting that he lacked the auditor’s report on the season’s financial outcome, he added that “[the] efforts and money invested in last week’s opera series are well justified by the national and international publicity for Los
Angeles County, accruing from these superb performances.33

As the final figures for the 1938 opera week were tallied, unhappily, Behymer found the results rather less satisfactory than he had first hoped. Perhaps the first storm warnings had arisen in an October 28 letter to Behymer from Victor H. Rossetti, president of the Farmers and Merchants Bank and chairman of the San Francisco Opera Company’s Los Angeles Committee. In it, Rossetti alerted Behymer that “I find it difficult to interest people in underwriting, particularly at this time, when they are confronted on all sides for political contributions, and now for Community Chest.” Rossetti continued ominously that “the resistance is quite concrete, and I am sure that you quite appreciate it.” Within a few weeks, as the auditor’s report came to hand, Behymer found that the Los Angeles program had lost over $23,000 in a season when the San Francisco Opera Company had run a loss of nearly $89,000.34

After such a dousing in red ink, Behymer had to devote much time over the next five months to explaining the losses and justifying the season’s costs to the irate guarantors and underwriters, who suddenly had to honor their pledges to make good the financial shortfalls. In letter after letter, Behymer addressed the dollars and cents question by citing the $34,000 spent by the San Francisco Opera on a whole raft of goods and services, including “Shrine [Auditorium] rentals, newspaper advertising, stage hands and stage equipment...loading and unloading, lighting effects...local stage bands...and many more items...,” all of which rebounded to the financial benefit of the local merchants. Behymer also regaled inquirers with a long list of reasons for the lackluster gate receipts, citing, among other distractions, the culmination of an exciting political campaign, the Armistice Day holiday, two weekend football games, and the Embassy Ball.35

Despite such efforts at expatiation, though, Behymer never retreated from his main argument that the intangible benefits of such artistic excellence far outweighed any deficiencies that might have affected the bottom line. Repeatedly Behymer asserted that “I think in discussing the opera season with Los Angeles citizens you will find nothing but respect and admiration for the artistic merits of the season.” Describing the opera week without reservation as “a fine undertaking,” he added that “such an Opera Company raises the prestige of our community, not only nationally but internationally.” Tackling the question of the deficit head-on, he argued that “One cannot live by bread alone, as we all know; and one cannot judge and weigh results by money alone.” Implicitly dismissing criticism of the season’s monetary losses, he claimed that “opera has never been given anywhere in the world for profit because there seldom is any. One may have a profit in a certain season, but by and large, opera is given for the ‘kick’ that music-lovers get out of it.”36

Acknowledging other criticisms of the program choices, Behymer defended the selection of the mod-

L.E. Behymer’s lifelong commitment to establishing classical music and opera in Los Angeles included two seasons that featured the San Francisco Opera Company. The 1938 season of six works, announced in this brochure from the Huntington’s extensive Behymer collection, included “La Boheme,” performed in Italian, and Wagner’s “Die Meistersinger,” in German. Courtesy Huntington Library.
ern works, whose gate receipts must have been meager. Choosing to interpret such lukewarm response as positively as possible, he flatly stated that “we did what every progressive organization worth its salt does...include operas of world importance, and high artistic merit, seldom or never given here.” To Behymer, the only justification required for the opera series was that “The reaction from cultured adults and the students has been one of gratitude and unbounded enthusiasm.” Judged by such criteria, the success of the 1938 opera series was evident if only the contributors could be convinced to “take the larger, longer view.”37

Throughout the winter, spring, and summer, Behymer beat this drum continually to answer pointed, if not hostile, questions from guarantors and contributors at many levels. In a March 1939 letter to the County Board of Supervisors explaining the obstacles confronted by the 1938 season, Behymer summed up his case on behalf of opera in Los Angeles:

During my half century as an impresario in this community, I can truthfully say I have never presented an operatic series of which I was prouder for its high artistic merit, great stars and all-round satisfaction given to subscribers....The encomiums of the local press, the comment of the national and international press which gave flattering attention to our city during the opera season, and the plaudits of those who attended, show conclusively that this engagement proved to be a great asset to Los Angeles.38

The Huntington’s Behymer Collection, replete with such incidents, testifies to Lynden Behymer’s critical role over five decades in directing much of the musical life of southern California and the Southwest at large through the dizzying pace of his activities. Shelves packed with playbills, programs, scrapbooks, and file boxes filled with letters, financial statements, and contracts document much of his fascinating career. To supplement the splendid resources available in the Behymer papers, other Huntington collections illuminate other aspects of musical performance in southern California through the 1930s and 1940s. The correspondence files of T. Percival Gerson, a founder of the Hollywood Bowl, include his involvement in various community and musical projects. On a much larger scale, the Ojai Festivals Collection portrays the inception and development of a major cultural series under its founding director, John L. J. Bauer, from 1946 until 1953.

The struggles of Lynden Behymer to bring opera to Los Angeles exemplify some of the difficulties encountered in establishing the arts in California during the first few decades of this century. Despite the setbacks he and other impresarios experienced, opera increasingly became part of the arts scene in Los Angeles. Similarly, ballet began to find a toehold in the cultural lives of Angelenos. By the 1920s, thirties, and forties, the dance studios of Bronislava Nijinska, Ruth St. Denis, and others offered scores of budding ballerinas the chance to learn classic dance. However, the world of ballet and “serious” dance was limited almost entirely to those with white skin. For African Americans and other minorities, opportunity was scarce or nonexistent. As ballet became more firmly established, people of color fought to shed the stereotyping by which society bound them rigidly to tap or jitterbug dancing. The struggles of one band of black dancers for opportunity, mirroring the changes in American society, are portrayed in the story of Joseph Rickard and the First Negro Classic Ballet.

In 1946 a young Los Angeles man named Joseph Rickard watched in anger as an African American mother and her daughter were turned away from a dance studio where they had sought ballet lessons for the little girl. The ballet instructor told them that blacks could not study classical dance and directed them to a tap-dance studio. The outraged Rickard, a Caucasian and himself a ballet dancer, vowed to do something about this injustice. Believing passionately that all who shared his love for dance should be able to enjoy it fully, he set about starting his own dance studio specifically for African American students. The resulting troupe of dancers, the First Negro Classic Ballet, took its place for just over a decade in the histories of the arts in Los Angeles and of dance in America—a place that is now being rediscovered through the papers of this long-forgotten man and his corps of dancers.

In the years after World War II and into the 1950s, American blacks enjoyed modestly expanded opportunities, resulting first from their extensive contributions in the armed services and the war effort in general, and later from desegregation initiatives during President Truman’s administration. African Americans began to make tentative steps into many areas of mainstream American life, including dance. By 1951, Janet Collins became the first black premier dancer in the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, and in 1954 the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo accepted its first black ballerina, Raven Wilkinson.39 But as she danced Giselle, The Nutcracker, and other classics, Wilkinson soon discovered the limits of the public’s acceptance of blacks. With her light skin, she was assumed by audiences to be white when she performed and traveled with the company. However, after the 1954 school desegregation decision, word of her race became public and the Ballet Russe’s subsequent tour through the Amer-
ican South was marked by theater cancellations, boycotts, and bomb threats.

Prior to the limited integration in the 1950s, African American dancers had been barred altogether from major ballet studios. In the 1920s, when ballet was a young dance form in the United States, aspiring dancers of color had no choice but to study either in segregated settings or as private students of prominent white teachers willing to take them. By the 1930s, black dancers began to emerge from their private and segregated schooling, and in 1937 a black ballet company, the American Negro Ballet, debuted in New York.

Founded by a German émigré, Baron Eugene von Grona, the group premiered on November 21 at Harlem’s Lafayette Theatre. Although its debut was a critical and popular success, the American Negro Ballet survived barely a year before its 1938 demise because of financial troubles combined with the difficulty of finding suitable theaters (other than vaudeville houses) that would accept the all-black group.

Barely a decade later, in Los Angeles, Joseph Rickard founded his First Negro Classic Ballet. Rickard (1918-1994), a native of Michigan, had made his way to Los Angeles in the 1930s to fulfill his long-held desire to study ballet. Accepted as a student of Bronislava Nijinska, he became a professional with the Ballet Russe in 1943. After he witnessed the dance studio’s rejection of the black child, Rickard applied his creative energies to setting up a ballet school and gathering students from the African American community. He found a deserted ballroom at Jefferson Boulevard and Normandie Avenue for his studio, and to finance the school he worked two jobs, in the mailroom at Paramount Studios and driving an ice cream truck. He also lived at the studio in order to save money. To attract students, Rickard placed ads in an African American newspaper, the Los Angeles Sentinel, and worked the streets handing out leaflets and promoting his studio through personal contact. He recruited Theodore Crum—who would become one of his most gifted dancers—when he happened upon the young man buying a recording of “Swan Lake.”

Along with Ted Crum, many of the dancers Rickard taught, since they had been barred from the opportunity open to Caucasian students, came to ballet late in life, some as many as ten years beyond the optimum starting age. In addition to those he recruited directly, some of Rickard’s adult students came to the studio initially merely to watch their children’s lessons and were then persuaded to join in. Indeed, Bernice Harrison, the mother whose little girl had been denied lessons, began studying along with her daughter and became the Classic Ballet’s prima ballerina. Beginning their training so late in life, the dancers could not achieve the technical ease and proficiency of younger students, but Rickard was particularly gifted in teaching older students, and, with his genius for choreographing dance sequences that relied on narrative and acting abilities rather than technique, he was able to emphasize the strengths of his performers.

Joseph Rickard also possessed a genius for attracting other gifted and dedicated individuals to his group. His girlfriend, Nancy Cappola, who worked in the garment district, designed and made the costumes. Claudio Wilson, an African American pianist and composer, played piano for rehearsals and performances and, one day, brought in his musical setting for “Harlot’s House,” an Oscar Wilde poem. Rickard created the choreography, and the resulting piece, “Streetlight,” became one of the Ballet’s most popular and frequently performed dances. Thereafter, Wilson and Rickard teamed to create original ballets, including their African American version of “Cinderella.” Rickard also persuaded Robert Usher, an art director at Paramount Studios, to design sets for the company. Usher, whose film work included sets for the Mae West movie, She Done Him Wrong, and the Hope-Crosby Road pictures, created stunning set drawings for “Cinderella” and other dances.

The Classic Ballet’s dancers brought to the group the same level of dedication and commitment as Rickard’s volunteer staff. Unlike their counterparts in white ballet companies, the black dancers could not devote themselves full-time to their dance studios. Rather, they worked as janitors, elevator operators, and housewives, and came to their lessons after a hard day on the job, many traveling long miles across town on a streetcar or bus before an evening of strenuous dancing. In addition, the dancers also helped with the making of costumes and the fabrication of sets for the grassroots company.

With the ballet studio launched and the dancers rapidly displaying mastery of their art, Rickard began to plan the group’s first recital. Held on October 19, 1947, at the Danish Auditorium on West 24th Street, the event was sponsored by the Los Angeles Sentinel, which publicized it (using the group’s first name, “Ballet Americana”) as “one of the outstanding performances of the season.” In its review of the recital, the Sentinel declared, “Sunday night marked the beginning of a new era in American Culture. The successful presentation of the Ballet Americana—the first time in history, so far as is known, that such a performance has been presented—opened an entire new field of expression to Negroes.”

There followed performances at the Sawtelle Vet-
erans’ Hospital, Hollywood High School, and other Los Angeles venues. By 1949, the company, now known as the First Negro Classic Ballet, was establishing its place in the arts scene in southern California. Its first professional performance, on November 19 in Santa Barbara’s Lobero Theatre, impressed both the audience and the dance reviewer, who praised the company for its “artistry,” “showmanship,” and “promise.”

The Classic Ballet, now a professional troupe represented in turn by booking agents Irwin Parnes and Mary Bran, performed in such Los Angeles theaters as the Assistance League Playhouse and the Philharmonic Auditorium, and toured California, earning the favor of its predominantly white audiences and garnering overwhelmingly enthusiastic reviews. While the majority of critics produced reviews bearing few or no traces of prejudice or condescension, others, clinging to racial stereotypes even as they praised the group’s artistry, viewed black ballet dancers as exotic novelties and evinced surprise that people of color could dance any style other than tap, boogie-woogie, the jitterbug, and other dances long associated with the black race. One San Francisco journalist, for example, began his review by stating, “Negro dancers are famous for the exciting cleverness and energy of their taps and boogie-woogie” before going on to praise the performers, and another wrote, “Color, rhythm and novelty were the outstanding elements in the Hollywood Negro Ballet [the name briefly used in 1952 by the First Negro Classic Ballet]...Rhythm is so inherent in the Negro race that it was not surprising to find even the less skilled members of the sextet right on the beat—with hands as well as feet.”

Similarly, a London journalist anticipated the Ballet’s arrival on international tour with an article, “Cinders in Sepia,” which referred to "Negro dancing as boogie-woogie, blues and frenzied throw backs to jungle rhythms” and asked, “Could there be a Negro Nijinsky? We may know, soon, when an all-coloured classic ballet crosses the Atlantic.”

Other insults, both deliberate and inadvertent, born of the prejudice of the time, had to be overcome by the dancers. A frequent difficulty for the black troupe when touring was the scarcity of hotels that would admit them. Tellingly, the same issue of the Santa Barbara News-Press that carried the publicity announcement about the Classic Ballet’s first professional performance also ran an article about the citizens who had offered to open their homes to the members of the company. In another revealing incident, the touring black dancers discovered on arriving in England that, despite their advance dispatch of the ballerinas’ toe-shoe measurements to London manufacturers, no shoes were ready for them—British shoemakers simply could not believe that blacks could dance en pointe.

Many reviewers, along with most audiences, were free of racial prejudice and responded with genuine pleasure and appreciation to the Ballet’s exciting dance sequences that were characterized by one critic as “an escape from stereotyped use of form” with “alive and never flagging performances,” and by another as “a refreshing and individual treatment of the classical dance...balanced with some of the more realistic styles.” The company, led by Graham Johnson, Bernice Harrison, James Truite, Theodore Crum, Donald Stinson, and Yvonne Miller, dazzled audiences with programs that usually included three components: modern conceptions of classics by such composers as Bach, Chopin, and Mendelssohn; contemporary Rickard-Wilson creations like “Cinderella” and “Streetlight”; and African American stories such as “Raisin’ Cane” (music by Claudio Wilson, choreography by Graham Johnson), a tale of sugar-cane croppers whose sequences included “Juba,” “Speakeasy,” and “Pas de jitters.”

In 1956, Rickard was approached by Edward Flemyng, who had just formed the New York Negro Ballet, with a proposal to merge the companies. The idea looked attractive, for Rickard was short of money but had a large, experienced troupe of dancers, while Flemyng lacked dancers but had the backing of a wealthy patron. The two began a collaboration, and, although Joseph Rickard remained in Los Angeles, many of the Los Angeles dancers moved to New York, where they gave several performances before embarking on a tour of the British Isles from August to November 1957. While on tour, the dancers received word that their patron had passed away, thus bringing to an end not only the tour but also the company itself.

During its ten-year life, the First Negro Classic Ballet played a crucial part in advancing the place of African Americans in American ballet. Although Joseph Rickard’s troupe was not the first black ballet corps, it built on the accomplishments of its predecessor, Baron von Grona’s American Negro Ballet. Rickard’s troupe advanced the cause further, for, to a greater extent than von Grona, he trained his dancers in the formal, classical techniques and customs, and, against great odds, he kept the group in existence for a decade. Both ballet companies set the stage for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, founded in 1968 by Arthur Mitchell. The high level of achievement in all three groups proved the ability and artistry of black dancers and enabled them increasingly to find acceptance in white companies.
The long-forgotten story of Joseph Rickard's contribution to the advancement of black ballet and to the arts in Los Angeles is found in the papers he donated to the Huntington Library shortly before his death in August 1994. The photographs, programs, publicity flyers, set designs, music scores, tape recordings, and clippings afford a rich resource that will further illuminate the history of a talented band of dancers and of the dedicated man in whose hands their dreams took wing and soared.

S
uch a brief compendium of anecdotes, of course, can only hint at the incredible scope and diversity of recreation, the arts, and entertainment in the Golden State. Many other archival collections, both at the Huntington Library and elsewhere in California, touch on the subjects previously mentioned and on others not yet identified. Just among the collections of the Huntington, interested researchers would discover equally intriguing materials on such topics as architecture, sports, and art collectors. The Myron Hunt Collection, for example, offers some insights into the early career of this important southern California architect, who heavily influenced early twentieth-century design in the region. Business papers of the Los Angeles Racing Association appear in the Anita Baldwin Collection, while the Henry Harbison Sinclair papers mix turn-of-the-century details about the Tournament of Roses Association and the California-to-Honolulu Yacht Races with his involvement in California electrical utilities. Fine printing and the graphic arts receive attention in the papers of San Francisco printer Edward DeWitt Taylor, while the papers of entrepreneurs Adolph Sutro and Henry E. Huntington illustrate the activities of two celebrated bibliophiles and the libraries that arose from their collecting. The papers of art collector Grace Nicholson, who built and disposed of two separate caches of American Indian and then Oriental art, include the history of

the building that became first the Pasadena Art Institute and later the Pacific Asia Museum. Other papers documenting the activities of collector and philanthropist Phoebe Apperson Hearst appear in the manuscript collection of her close friends Orrin and Janet Peck of San Francisco.

The collections described above represent only a miniscule portion of the archival resources addressing recreation, entertainment, and the arts that reside in the holdings of the Huntington Library and its sister institutions, small and large, across California. Through those holdings, interested researchers may gain greater understanding of California's literary, artistic, and cultural heritage. It is through this archival record that we can follow the Golden State's evolution into a pacesetter for trends throughout popular culture, here and abroad.

See notes beginning on page 108.

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