Hubert Howe Bancroft: Businessman, Husband, Father

On April 30th, 1886, Hubert Howe Bancroft's large book store and publishing firm in San Francisco was destroyed by fire. At the time, Bancroft and his wife, Matilda, were residing in San Diego where they were building a new house on their ranch at Spring Valley. Even as the fire was in progress, he was notified by telegraph of the disaster and that night took the train to San Francisco to manage salvage operations.

The catastrophe and the resultant separation from his wife stimulated Bancroft to begin a voluminous series of letters to Matilda in which he kept her informed, sometimes twice daily, of the details of financial matters in San Francisco and in which he gave instructions concerning building supplies and details of the construction which she was overseeing in San Diego. These letters, remarkably rich in detail and giving a very clear picture of business activities, domestic architecture, and the building trades in California at that time, are among a group of one thousand family letters written during the period from 1882 to 1918, which have recently been presented to The Bancroft Library by his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Griffing Bancroft, of La Jolla.

Much of the information is the sort of everyday, homely detail that would ordinar-
ily be attended to less formally than in writ-
ing. The peculiar circumstances of the sepa-
ration and the need to carry out a sub-
stantial building project at a distance re-
quired that Bancroft record instructions on how the house was to be painted inside and out, what types of materials were to be used, what types of brushes, what types of colors could be had, and the like. Further, because San Francisco was the main source of supply for many of the necessary building materials, he frequently noted prices and quantities. Typical of such valuable detail is his descrip-
tion of interior house paint available from Whittier Fuller (predecessor of today's Fuller O'Brien) in a letter written on May 7th:

I enclose colors [of] Rubber Paint at $1.05.
The kind they quoted at 75c is of inferior quality which they would not recom-
end. If the shades on this card do not suit you, they say they will match any color you may send.

The earliest of these letters from San Francisco is dated May 4th and its tone, and that of several shortly following, is gloomy. But by May 8th Bancroft had begun to reorganize his holdings and was able to "clean up from the store lot & insurance some $2,000 or $3,000 clear, so with library, farm & things at somewhat inflated values I shall be still worth half a million or a mil-

ion." And he urges Matilda to "hold up your head." Whether his optimism could be sustained will require closer scrutiny of the letters that follow.

A few days later, on May 17th, Bancroft wrote to his son, Johnny (Griffing), and in commenting on the fire he reported:

I lost a good deal by the fire, but I have enough left so that we will not be poor. We will work and save all we can however, so that some day we can go round the world and see every thing and have a good time. But we are hardly ready to go yet, as you children are not old enough. I shall have to be away from you now for some time, and you must continue to help your mother all you can, as you always have done.

Such letters of fatherly advice recur through-
out the collection.

The desire to travel abroad remained con-

cstant for Bancroft. When Griffing was later attending prep school in New England his father described what he felt the family would gain by traveling together to Europe for a stay of about two years. Evidently Griffing was less than enthusiastic about severing ties, for each of his father's sub-
sequent letters contains still additional rea-

tions justifying the proposed excursion. What is particularly informative about such corre-

spondence is the glimpse it gives us of the values which Bancroft held with regard to the significance of exposure to European culture.

"A Real Proper Poet"

Marie de La Veaga Welch

In a letter written on November 5th, 1936, Marie Welch reminded James D. Hart of their meeting, about a year earlier, at a party given by Sara Bard Field, at which he had expressed interest in obtaining worksheets of one of her poems. Having composed a poem shortly after the party, she now pro-

posed sending him her drafts, even though they seemed to her "like and hand artichoke leaves." She admitted in a second letter to Mr. Hart, undated but perhaps later than the 1956 one, thinking it lovely of The Ban-
croft Library to want her worksheets, but stated that she had discarded many of them.

However, within the last three years I have been going through old unpublished mss.—
an appalling lot of it—including a gaunt but well preserved mouse. . . . As a re-

sult I have now only poems in which I still want to work and some note-books. . . . Working sheets of my poems I can-

not keep, as I use the fountain pen ex-
cessively and the result is some 5 or 6
8 by 11 scratch pages to each lyric line. . . .

Now, some twenty years later, Marie Welch's daughter, Dr. Mariquita West of Los Gatos, has presented to The Bancroft Library not only her mother's extensive personal library containing a large number of books by con-
temporary poets, many of whom were her friends, but also an exciting collection of correspondence, diaries, notebooks and man-

scripts, minus the mouse, but including many "artichoke leaves," to document the life and work of the distinguished California poet, Marie de La Veaga Welch.

Born in 1905, Marie Welch and her sister grew up in comfortable surroundings in San Mateo and enjoyed vacations on the Mc-

Cloud River, where she first encountered the joys of fishing, a source and delight during her entire lifetime. Her love of animals which she wove through so many of her poems also stemmed from childhood. Writing was always a pleasure, though in earlier days she de-

essed herself, but never entirely. What is more keenly than the poet that aspect of nature that is red in tooth and claw'." He noted that this was "not 'cute'

poetry about animals, for no one realizes more keenly than the poet that aspect of nature which is red in tooth and claw."

With the lengthening of the Depression of the 1930's, her social conscience was awakened by the plight of the fruit-strikers and she was sympathetic to the Communist cause, though she commented that she could not accept the class struggle.
as an issue in itself. Active on behalf of Loyalist Spain, she also worked for the National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners. Among her new friends were Lincoln Steffens and his wife, Ella Winter, Anna Louise Strong, and Dorothy Ward Erskine. To Ella Winter she wrote:

As for me I decided that I'm neither a Radical or a Liberal or a Social Fascist — but just a poet — and I'll defend the Communists to my last breath, but have had my belly full of their burble. It is because I have felt how lovely things are — my things — the kind of world people can have, that I care.

One small notebook contains jottings from 1933 to 1938 of her thoughts on propaganda, communism, and revolutionary poetry, along with comments on visits from Max Eastman, Tom Mooney, and Warren Billings.

Among her new friends were Lincoln Stiffens and his wife, Ella Winter, Anna Louise Strong, and for Fremont Older in San Francisco, and thirteen soldiers were killed and forty-three more wounded. The band also attacked the settlement at White River Agency nearby, killing the agent, Nathan Meeker, and all of his employees. Meeker's wife, his daughter, and another white woman were taken into captivity, not to be released for several weeks.

This incident, like many similar ones that took place in the 1870's, was a despising gesture of defiance against the ceaseless and overwhelming encroachment of whites into the Indian world. It was part of a series of "Wars" that took place in many parts of the west during that decade: the Modoc War in northern California (1872); the Black Hills War, which saw the so-called Custer Massacre (1876); and the Nez Perce War (1877).

The result of the Ute hostility were predictable. The White River Utes and their neighbors the Uncompahgre Utes were branded as criminals, whether or not they had been involved in the massacre. Their treaty rights were cancelled, and they were moved from their homeland in Colorado to a reservation in Utah.

The Bancroft Library is pleased to announce that this important and little-known collection, acquired from the estate of Hubert Vischer, is now available for use in the Heller Reading Room.

The portfolio, made up of fifty drawings, mounted on uniform matting, and text sheets, divides into three distinct sections. The first group of thirty, "Missions of Upper California, 1850 to 1878," is introduced by a printed title page and includes an "index of the Franciscan Missions." Four of these original mission drawings are reproduced in the Bancroft's copy of Pictorial of California, including the exceptionally fine one of Mission San Luis Obispo, herein reproduced. This section also contains the originals for all the illustrations in the Library's copy of Missions of California which Vischer prepared in 1877.

Some years ago Francis P. Farquhar published an article, "Edward Vischer and his Pictorial of California," in which he praised the work of this Bavarian-born artist who had settled in San Francisco in 1849, mentioning particularly a "portfolio of original drawings of the Ruins of California Missions bequeathed by Edward Vischer to his son."
figures offering an imaginative reconstruction of important events in the history of California.

Six plates are contained in the third section of the portfolio, but there is no separate title page; however, its nature and origin are clearly described by Farquhar in his article:

During his last years Vischer renewed his relationship with General Vallejo. Vallejo had pencil drawings and ground plans made by competent draughtsmen and Vischer used the material for making reconstructed drawings. The drawings and data are preserved in an appendix-folio and form part of the portfolio of original drawings.

Because the miniature quality of the mixed media drawings and the subtle beauty of the washes and scumbles of color are lost in black and white photographic copies, Edward Vischer has never received the critical attention which his original work so richly deserves. It is hoped that this portfolio, a "bequest from father to son," representing the entire span of his production in black and white photographic copies, will provide the basis for a new evaluation of Vischer as a pictorial artist.

For Women:

"An Especiall Bane"

"If a man beat an out-law, a traitor, a pagan, his villain, or his wife it is dispunishable, because by the Law Common these persons can have no action," explains the unknown author of The Lawes Resolutions of Womens Rights (London, 1632). This recent acquisition of The Bancroft Library, a gift of the Heller Charitable and Educational Fund, is an important document for the history of both civil law and the family. In the spirit of the present controversy over the Equal Rights Amendment this unique "methodical Collection of such Statutes and Customs, with the Cases, Opinions, Arguments and Points of Learning the Law, as doe properly Concerne Women" is a timely reminder of women's legalized inequality in the seventeenth century.

Modern audiences of The Taming of the Shrew may not remember that Petruchio has the legal right to beat Katherine and that Katherine owes him obedience according to Common and Divine Elizabethan law. The sympathetic author of The Lawes Resolutions, however, sides with Katherine when he advises the abused wife to "beat the husband againe" if she dares, since he also can hardly take action against her. Consonantly, he adds that a free woman who marries a villain is not answerable for his wrongs, her freedom "is not otherwise infringed then by subjection to her husband." A bondwoman, however, owes subjection to her lord and is in return protected (or abused) by him. Malvolio's courtship of Olivia seems even more preposterous in Elizabethan eyes, for if the lady of the manor marries her servant, she not only loses status, but must accept her former "foothstoole" as her "head and her Seignior." In pointing out that a woman's dignity changes with the title of her husband, but not vice versa, the author admits regretfully that "the dignity changeth meerely on the male side carrying the scepter of wedlocke."

Not only a woman's dignity, but also her rights depended on "the scepter of wedlocke." As a "feme sole" (a single woman) she could dispose of her own property and enter independently into business transactions as long as she was over fourteen and therefore under her father's guardianship; for land tenure transactions she had to be twenty-one. She also had to be economically autonomous. Since fathers could marry off their daughters at seven (the age of consent was twelve) and female fortunes were usually tied to marriage portions, the wealthy feme sole was rare or she was a widow who had been endowed in her husband's will. Such an inheritance depended entirely on the latter's good graces, for legally she was not his heir, but only entitled to be maintained by his heir. Unmarried women between the ages of twelve and forty who had no means of support could be forced into service or face imprisonment for vagrancy. Therefore, the advice of this work pertains largely to women's property before, during, and after marriage, and deals with the legality of her union, i.e. subjection. Divorce was difficult and always meant loss of her dowry and her children, over neither of which did she have control except by decree of her husband. He disposed of her rents from land tenants and of all her movable property including her dowry. Even jewelry was hers only to wear, not to keep, sell, or bequeath. Her children were hers to nurture and his to rule. Her person was his to govern, to maintain, and to protect. If a husband manifestly failed in his duty to keep a faithful wife properly fed, clothed, and housed, only then was he liable to the Law. If a woman's rights appear limited compared to a man's, she has Eve to blame, says the author:

Eve because she had helped to seduce her husband hath inflicted on her, an especially

bene. In sorrow shalt thou bring forth thy children, thy desires shall bee subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. See here the reason ... that women have no voyce in Parliament, they make no laws, they consent to none, they abrogate none. All of them are understood either married or to be married ... I know no remedy though some women can shift it well enough.

Although John Milton held more modern and, for his time, heretical views on marriage, reasoning that incompatibility should be grounds for divorce, he was a man of the century and believed that "Woman was created for Man, and not Man for Woman." In his Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (London, 1645) he proposes that divorce is the charitable way to atone for a mistake in judgment. Building his case with quotations from Scripture he writes:

Solomon saith, that a bad wife is to her husband as rottenness to his bones, a continual dropping. Better dwell in the corner of the house top, or in the wilderness, then with such a one ... The Spirit of God ... counsel the man rather to divorce then to live with such a colleague; and yet on the other side expresses nothing of the wives suffering with a bad husband.

Milton's wife deserted him after a few months of marriage, then returned to him with father and sisters as live-in company. Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce and Milton's pamphlets in defense against vehement criticism belong to a group of essays and plays in The Bancroft Library which relate to the legal condition of women in the seventeenth century.

A Puritan marriage manual by Thomas Hill illustrates how the American colonists must have perceived the ideal partnership. Conjugall Counsell (London, 1653) prescribes affection as the most important ingredient for conjugal happiness. Therefore, the Puritan suitor strives to obtain the love of his future bride — with her father's permission. Yet it is duty which governs the behavior of man and wife. Each has been commandments to live by. The husband is responsible for educating and uplifting his wife with his good example, for bearing with
her infirmities, maintaining her bodily sus­
tenance, protecting her from injury, pre­
venting her from idleness, and for keeping her from sin by all means including physical punishment if everything else fails. The wife and "meet helper" in turn is charged to obey and support her husband cheerfully, respectfully, and industriously, and to take care of house and children and all of his needs in health and infancy. Besides her corre­
pondence on Moody is included in this acquisi­tion. Mr. Moody has also presented manu­script of several subsequent books, notably the continuations of his memoirs, Man of the Family (1941) and The Fields of Home (1953), and his voluminous cor­

The Moody family left their New Hamp­shire farm hoping to find the climate of the western plains and the Rockies more con­genial for Ralph's father. They settled on a "gloriously described ranch" near Fort Lo­gan, Colorado, which turned out to be noth­ing but a piece of ground — no fences, no livestock, no crops, and only one ramshackle building that had been moved out from Denver. But the Moodys were hardy people who took natural and economic obstacles in their stride, and the ranch became a home. School days, rodeos, tornadoes, fights over irrigation ditch, the endless seasonal ac­tivities on a farm-ranch make up the sub­stance of Moody's first book.

With the failure of the farm and the death of Moody's father, Ralph became the "man of the family" and somewhat later the group returned to "the fields of home." New En­

tland, where Ralph completed his grammar school education and worked on his maternal grandfather's farm in Maine. After the first World War he became a rancher and cattle trader and then settled in Kansas City, Mis­
souri as an officer of the B/G Restaurant chain, later becoming manager of that firm's business in California. In 1948 he enrolled in a writing course in a San Francisco evening school. "From the time I was old enough to read a story I'd wanted to write one, but had never tried, too conscious of my lack of education." This initial foray led to the com­pletion of the manuscript of Little Britches.

Following his autobiographical series, Moody turned his attention to historical sub­jects, relating primarily to the West, for he had early been lure to follow both the wagon tracks still visible on the plains and the cowboys on their rounds. He found an­other niche in the young teen-age reading audience with such works as Wells Fargo (1961), Old Trails West (1963), and Stage­coaches West (1967) — books based on facts which he had accumulated through years of reading. For young readers he also wrote biographies of Kit Carson, Geronimo, and the great race-horse, Seabiscuit. On a quite different level, he wrote a Bohemian Club Grove Play, Valley of the Moon, produced in 1966.

The three boxes and four cartons of mate­rials comprising the Ralph Moody Papers well document the publishing career of this versatile author who has defined his goal in writing as leaving "a record of the rural way of life in this country during the early part of the twentieth century, and to point up the values of that era which I feel that we, as a people, are letting slip away from us."

Noble Friends

A significant sampling of major benefactors to the University of California is the theme of the current exhibition housed in the Li­brary's Joseph Cummings Rowell Case. Consisting of photographs and documents from the University Archives, Noble Friends recognizes and acknowledges the ongoing financial contributions from private individ­uals which have sustained this public insti­tution for more than a century.

It was but half a dozen years after the University had settled into its two buildings on the Berkeley campus that the pressing need for a gymnasium was filled, in 1879, by A. K. P. Harmon's construction of an octagonal building just inside the Telegraph Avenue entrance. This was to be the first of many such gifts of structures, which have included the Bacon Art and Library Build­ing, later Bacon Hall, opened in 1881 to house the expanding collections of books and to afford students first-hand experience with paintings and sculptures representa­
she also established the Museum of Anthropology, giving to it the vast collections which she had accumulated through personally-financed expeditions to the Mediterranean and to South America. Other treasures, including Egyptian papyri and illuminated manuscripts, now repose in The Bancroft Library. She endowed scholarships for undergraduate women and sponsored living groups near the campus, entertained the Senior classes at her Pleasanton hacienda, supplied money for medical laboratories at the San Francisco campus, and by the time of her death in 1919 had given more material aid to the University than had the State itself.

Another woman, though perhaps less well known than Mrs. Hearst, gave considerably of her wealth and energy to the University: Miss Annie Montague Alexander. A member of a prominent Hawaiian sugar family and herself an amateur naturalist and paleontologist, she endowed two of the campus' museums: Vertebrate Zoology and Paleontology. Still another woman, Mrs. Jane Krom Sather, donated those famous campus landmarks, the Campanile, or, more properly, Sather Tower, and Sather Gate, and also established professorships in History and in Classics as well as endowments for the purchase of library books.

Garret William McEnerney, the prominent San Francisco attorney whose term as Regent of the University lasted forty-one years, a near record, bequeathed an endowment of almost $2,500,000 which has been used to support the activities of the Committee for Arts and Lectures, to build the McEnerney Law Library in Boalt Hall, and, in part, to construct a dormitory and an auditorium. Funds to build the first dormitory for women, at the inception of World War II, came from Mrs. Rosalie Meyer Stern, whose daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Walter A. Haas, Sr., provided for the construction of the Strawberry Canyon Recreation Area. More recently, Mr. and Mrs. Haas and their close relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel E. Kosland, Sr., through the Levi Strauss Associates, have contributed funding for the remodeling and refurbishing of both the Faculty Club and the Women's Faculty Club.

One of The Bancroft Library's major components, the Mark Twain Papers, also represents an outstanding gift to the University of California. Consisting of the author's personal archives, including forty-five notebooks, three thousand original family letters, and six hundred literary manuscripts, the collection is a bequest of his daughter, Mrs. Clara Clemens Samson, who had originally deposited the papers at Berkeley in 1949.

Other benefactors included in the exhibition are Darius Ogden Mills, M. Theodore Kearney, Edward F. Searles, Ellen Browning Scripps, William Randolph Hearst, Charles Franklin Doe, and Adolph Sutro.

"A Warm Feeling for Berkeley"

Thirty-four years ago an article in the University's alumni magazine, California Monthly, referred to Donald H. McLaughlin as "scholar, engineer, scientist, businessman, diplomat;" to these one must add University Regent, a post to which he was appointed by Governor Earl Warren in 1951. He served until 1966, and was elected Chairman of the Board during the biennium 1956-1960. Much of Dr. McLaughlin's life as an undergraduate in the Class of 1914, as chief geologist for the Cerro de Pasco Copper Corporation in Peru in the early 1920's, as professor of mining engineering and geology at Harvard, as Dean of Berkeley's College of Engineering, and as Regent is touched upon in a memoir recently completed by the Bancroft's Regional Oral History Office.

Born in San Francisco in 1891, he lived there until the death of his father in 1898, after which he attended school, first in Oakland and then in Berkeley, where his mother had built a home on Euclid Avenue, just north of the campus. He recalls:

"That was a very nice place for a boy to grow up, with the hills to hike in and steep streets to coast on. Perhaps that's why I have such a warm feeling for Berkeley. He spent much time at the Pleasanton estate of Regent Phoebe Apperson Hearst, for whom his mother worked as secretary, and the memoir is rich in detail concerning life at the Hacienda del Pozo de Verona, affording an intimate glimpse of Mrs. Hearst as hostess and as friend. With her, Donald and his mother toured France and Italy in the fall and winter of 1906; on Capri they stayed with Richard Watson Tully, the California playwright, and then occupied the villa of Eliahu Veddler, the painter. His experiences by the time he entered the University of California in 1910 were by no means typical for a graduate of Berkeley High School.

After receiving his Bachelor's degree Donald McLaughlin matriculated at Harvard, earning his Master's in 1915 and his Ph.D. in 1917, and then served with the United States Army in France during World War I. His mining career in South America began soon afterward, and shortly he had full direction of Cerro de Pasco's geological department. At the age of thirty-four he became one of the youngest professors on the faculty at Harvard, where he remained until called back to Berkeley as Dean in 1941.

During his years as a Regent he was concerned with the development of the three new campuses; of Santa Cruz he notes the commanding setting with the view over Monterey Bay to the south and wonders "what Bernard Maybeck would have done with this superb site." When asked about the Irvine campus he had some misgivings about the smog, felt that the site was not as thrilling as Santa Cruz, and then remarked of his alma mater: "Oh, and Berkeley surely has one of the truly great sites in the world."

His comments about newer structures on that campus, however, tend to be acerbic.

At the University's 101st Commencement exercises held in California Memorial Stadium on June 13th, 1964, Regent McLaughlin delivered the principal address. He spoke of the qualities "that to me seem most important in an individual well prepared for life . . . responsibility, disciplined habits of mind, and imagination." In his Introduction to the memoir, Professor Charles Meyer quotes another remark of the Regent: "No generation is likely to be satisfied with what its predecessors have accomplished, but no one is entitled to be taken seriously until he has acquired an adequate understanding of the tremendous achievements of the past."

Both statements nicely define the intellectual stance of Donald McLaughlin.

The Works of Herbert Gold

It is difficult, as any harried graduate student can vouch, to track down everything in print by a living and very prolific writer. Nevertheless, this is precisely what Mr. James L. Henry has done with the work of the San Francisco novelist, short story writer, journalist, and essayist, Herbert Gold, and the Bancroft Library, profiting from the combination of Mr. Henry's knack for collecting and his exceptional generosity, has come into possession of the definitive collection of this author's work.

A book collector throughout his life, Mr. Henry is no stranger to the Bancroft, having sought out its resources for his bibliography of the California poet, George Sterling. His more recent interest in Herbert Gold led him to compile another complete bibliography that provides access to all of the writer's published work. He has succeeded marvelously in bringing together the
multifarious products of Gold's literary career; each item is in fine condition, most of the books are in their original dust jackets, and every publication has been signed by the author. Four years of scouring every book and magazine store in the Bay Area went into assembling this astonishingly complete collection, comprising ninety-eight cloth and paper bound volumes, and roughly one hundred and forty-one issues of various periodicals in which Gold published his work.

Herbert Gold is considered to be one of the important writers of fiction to emerge from the post-World War II generation of American authors. He has written a great deal, and with an extraordinary range. Earning both his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Columbia University he did not immediately fix on writing as his career. At first he wanted nothing more than to “teach philosophy and write philosophy and be a philosopher.” He had written some poetry and a few short stories while in the army, however, and nourished the idea that he would write for publication. What has followed that informal choice of a literary career has been nine novels, among which are *The Man Who Was Not With It* (1956), *Salt* (1963), and *Fathers* (1967), numerous short stories, fourteen of which are collected in the volume *Love and Like* (1960), and several books of essays. Besides publishing his own work he has edited two anthologies: *Fiction of the Fifties* (1959) and *First Person Singular: Essays for the Sixties* (1963). His literary achievements have been rewarded by an O. Henry Prize, an award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, Fulbright and Guggenheim Fellowships, a Ford Foundation Theater Fellowship to work at the San Francisco Actor’s Workshop, and a *Hudson Review* Fellowship, to name but a few.

The author himself was rather taken aback by Mr. Henry’s thoroughness and keenness in ferreting out rare and forgotten material. In one of the several meetings between the two, Mr. Henry gave the author copies of a number of magazine articles that Mr. Gold did not have in his own collection. Having gathered together all states of a particular work, Mr. Henry made textual comparisons and has provided, for the Library, lists of variations. His diligence has created a unique collection of an important modern writer, a collection which will prove to be invaluable to scholars of American fiction.

The Herbert Gold Collection is not the first instance of Mr. Henry’s generosity to The Bancroft Library. In his many years of working on the George Sterling bibliography he acquired, and later donated, one hundred and sixty-three letters, many manuscripts of poems, including a draft of Sterling’s first verse, as well as his own unpublished bibliography, all of which adds considerably to what was already the major collection of George Sterling manuscripts and printed books.

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*COUNCIL OF THE FRIENDS*  
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