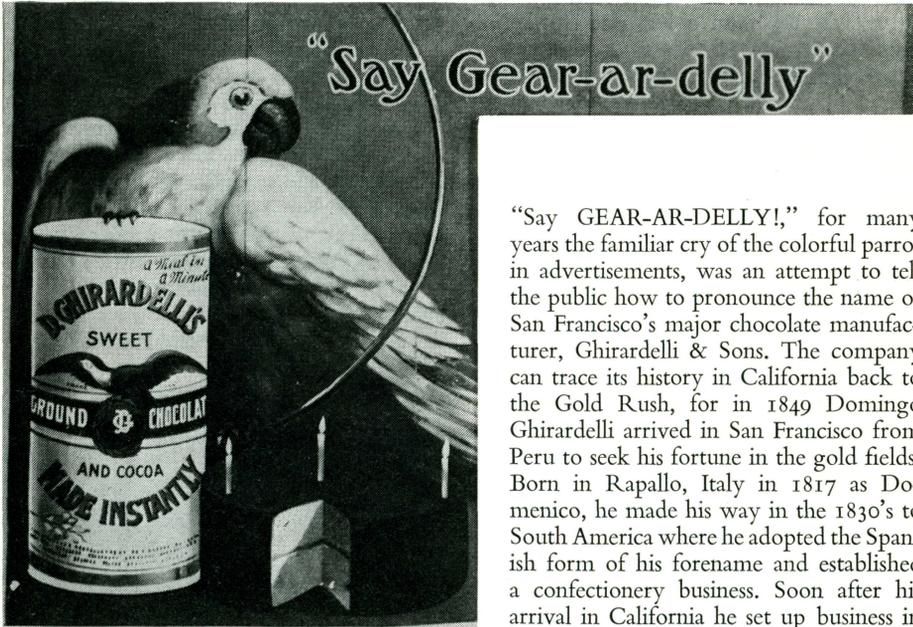


# BANCROFTIANA

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"Say GEAR-AR-DELLY!" for many years the familiar cry of the colorful parrot in advertisements, was an attempt to tell the public how to pronounce the name of San Francisco's major chocolate manufacturer, Ghirardelli & Sons. The company can trace its history in California back to the Gold Rush, for in 1849 Domingo Ghirardelli arrived in San Francisco from Peru to seek his fortune in the gold fields. Born in Rapallo, Italy in 1817 as Domenico, he made his way in the 1830's to South America where he adopted the Spanish form of his forename and established a confectionery business. Soon after his arrival in California he set up business in Stockton and San Francisco, and by 1856

his firm was known as Ghirardelli's California Chocolate Manufactory.

Although the sharp fluctuation in the California economy sometimes harmed Ghirardelli's business, the company eventually prospered and by 1885 was importing four hundred fifty thousand pounds of cocoa beans a year. Indeed, although the firm also ground spices and sold coffee, spirits, and wine, chocolate was far and away its major line over the years. In 1892, Domingo retired, leaving the business in the hands of his sons. The following year, to gain more space, the company purchased the historic Pioneer Woolen Mill building, and the block on which it stood, an area of two-and-one-half acres bounded by Beach, Polk, Larkin and North Point streets.

The company continued to flourish in the twentieth century, limiting its products to chocolate and mustard. As business expanded, Ghirardelli & Sons added new buildings, all designed by William Mooser, Jr., son of the architect of the original mill building, constructed in 1862. These included the Cocoa Building in 1900, the Chocolate and Mustard Buildings in 1911, the Power House in 1915, and, finally, the Clock Tower and the Apartment Building, both in 1916. These structures, of red brick with white detailing, had a style of sufficient uniformity to identify them as part of an integrated architectural complex. The Clock Tower was patterned after Chateau de Blois in France and the overall appearance of the buildings was decidedly European.

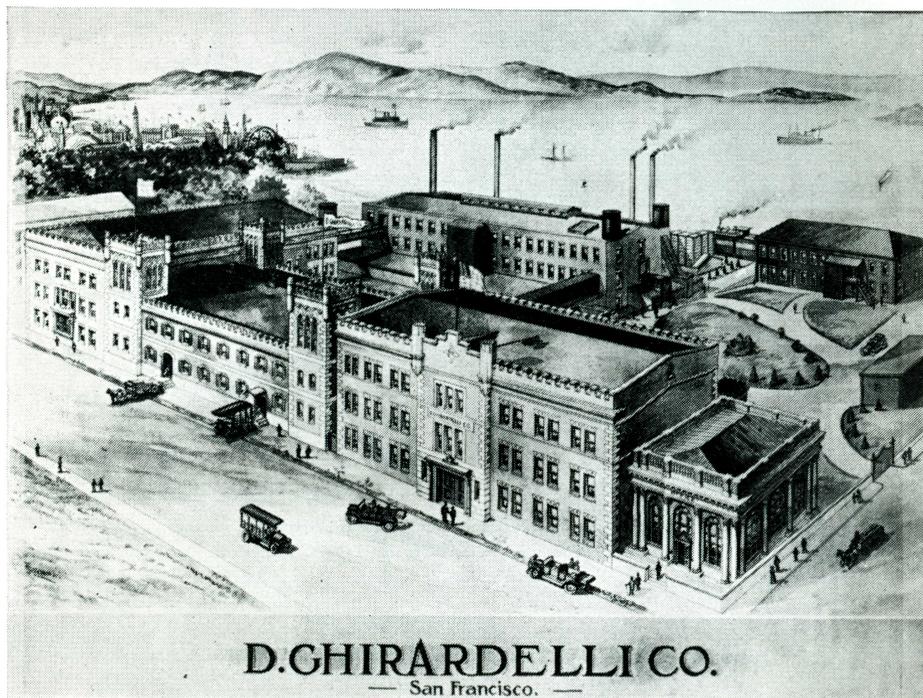
By the 1950's the Ghirardelli family had begun to consider offering the property for sale. In 1962 Mrs. William P. Roth (whose oral history memoir is discussed elsewhere in this issue) and her son William Matson Roth purchased the block to develop it into an elaborate complex for shops, restaurants, and an entertainment center. They formed the Ghirardelli Center Development Company and solicited design concepts from many of the prominent architects of the Bay Area. William W. Wurster, former Dean of Berkeley's School of Architecture, was retained as the master designer and by mid-1963 the property, now named Ghirardelli Square, was undergoing major renovation, new construction, and landscaping. Ghirardelli & Sons occupied a portion of the block until the company was bought by the Golden Grain Company in 1967 and moved to new quarters in San Leandro.

The brilliance of William Matson Roth's vision in developing Ghirardelli Square is hard to overestimate. From the beginning he recognized the unique architectural distinction and character of the block and intended to preserve the original old brick buildings as

part of an urban center which would be graced by open landscaping to provide a festive mood. So unusual was the Roths' intention that strikingly different approaches were offered by the various architects who submitted proposals.

Last year, when Mr. Roth sold Ghirardelli Square to a new group of investors, he presented the files of photographs, memoranda, drawings, publicity releases, promotional brochures, newspaper clippings, sketches and drawings of the project to The Bancroft Library. The collection includes numerous scrapbooks in addition to manuscript records, and provides an opportunity for research into the development of a major urban commercial center which itself started a major trend in preservation and renewal: Quincy Market in Boston, Harbor Square in Vancouver, and Covent Garden in London, to name only three followers. The rich connections with California history and the significance of Ghirardelli Square in modern California life assure that this collection will attract scholarly use.

P.E.H.



A 1915 view of the Ghirardelli factory, with a portion of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in left background.

## Français en Californie

Vous ne pouvez pas vous faire une idée de ce qu'est ce pays. Tout ce que vous avez lu dans le livre des Mille à une nuits n'approche en rien de ce que l'on voit ici: l'or est partout.

So stated J. du Jay de Rosay, engineer for the Compagnie des Mines d'Or in the July 1850 issue of *Le Mineur*, a monthly publication of the Compagnie Franco-Californienne des Mines d'Or in Paris. A set of this publication, containing numbers one through forty-one (June 1850–October 1853), has just been purchased by The Bancroft Library with income from its Peter and Rosell Harvey Memorial Fund. Although a set is listed as being at the Bibliothèque Nationale, no other copy of this title is known to exist in the United States.

France, along with much of western Europe, found itself depressed and unstable following the revolution of 1848, and a sizeable number of Frenchmen were willing to leave their homes to find a new life in the Shangri-La depicted in such publications as *Le Mineur*. The Compagnie Franco-Californienne des Mines d'Or was one of many speculative enterprises organized to further French participation in the Gold Rush, and its ship, *Louis*, set forth from Le Havre on September 4th, 1850, with about one hundred men, arriving in San Francisco on February 6th, 1851.

During the long voyage, however, a certain amount of disaffection had arisen among the men; the company representative already in San Francisco, Xavier van de Castele, felt he had no choice but to release the men from their obligations to the company. Various reasons are cited, the principal among them being that the work at the placers was not amenable to mechanization, that there was great difficulty in securing adequate transportation to the placers, and that the funds provided by the society were insufficient to cover the necessary expenditures. Castele also pointed out that no company such as this had survived in California, and to expect men to forward their earnings to a company several thousand miles away, "c'est vouloir réaliser une utopie, un rêve."

In the meantime Castele advised that merchandise rather than money be sent from France; he was certain that specific items, un-

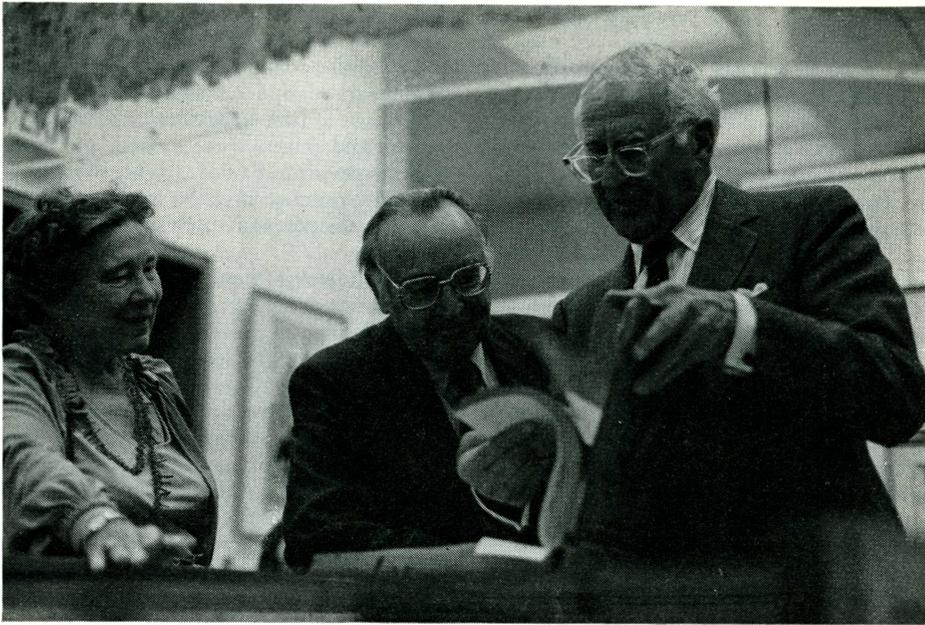
fortunately not listed in the paper, could gain a profit of three hundred percent in San Francisco. He also arranged a twenty-year lease on a mine in Mariposa County, on Sherlocks Creek, east of Bear Valley on the south side of the Merced River. And, at last!, the stamp mill shipped from France arrived, although in the early spring of 1852 the roads were in no shape to transport such machinery to Sherlocks Creek.

Soon, however, there was another small setback for the company: the racial troubles between American and foreign miners, upon which Castele reported after making a trip to Mariposa County. Toward the end of the run of *Le Mineur*, he dwelt more and more on the various difficulties at the mine and the problem of maintaining an adequate water supply. Castele had to admit that the amount of gold to be found was not what had been hoped.

Along with the news of the company are found other interesting reports on California affairs, many dealing with mining of course, but also including shipping news, passenger lists, statistical tables, as well as "nouvelles diverses" with helpful facts for the prospective immigrant. B. Lunel published several series of articles: "Des richesses zoologiques, botaniques et minéralogiques de la Nouvelle Californie," "Histoire des naturels de la Californie," and "Histoire des missions de la Californie" being the most extensive. There are vivid accounts of the 1851 fires in San Francisco, and, for some unknown reason, an article on "la chasse aux crocodiles" in India and a series on Anglo-Indian relations.

In the fall of 1851, the Compagnie Franco-Californienne des Mines d'Or merged with the Société Aurifère, hoping thereby to bolster the sagging fortunes of both organizations. The Société Aurifère had a sizeable property near Santa Rosa which Castele hoped to develop, believing that farming would provide a sounder financial footing for the shaky enterprise. Unfortunately, we are unable to see what was reported to the shareholders at the company's demise, as the Bancroft's file of *Le Mineur* lacks the last issue. Even so, we are fortunate to acquire this rare publication with its wealth of information on conditions in California and with its detailed account of a French company's fortunes.

W.R.



Jessamyn West, Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, and James D. Hart in the Library's Administrative Offices following the Annual Meeting. (Photograph by Peter Mustell)

## 35th Annual Meeting

Recalling that by the age of four she already wanted to be a writer and soon, thereafter, was photographed standing before the family's bookcase which contained the collected works of E. P. Roe, Jessamyn West spoke before a large and enthusiastic audience in Wheeler Auditorium on Sunday afternoon, May 23d. At once serious and humorous—her talk was interrupted many times by laughter—Miss West noted that her first story was published in *New Masses* and ended with a reminder that language is the one thing which makes us human beings, as distinct from other creatures. Following her remarks, the Friends and their friends adjourned to the Bancroft's Gallery for the opening of a new exhibition, "California 50 Years Ago: The 1930s," which will remain on view through October 8th.

The 35th Annual Meeting, under the chairmanship of Henry K. Evers, included greetings from Vice President William B. Fretter, speaking for President Saxon, and from Dean of the Graduate Division William A. Shack, speaking for Chancellor Heyman. University Librarian

Joseph A. Rosenthal briefly recounted recent developments in the General Library, and the Bancroft's Director, James D. Hart, spoke of a few of the many gifts which have come to the Library during the past year; he also called attention to this year's Keepsake, a first edition by Jessamyn West, *The Story of a Story & Three Stories*.

Following the Treasurer's Report and the report of the Nominating Committee, the membership unanimously elected Herbert E. Stansbury, an alumnus of the Class of 1947, to the seat on the Council being vacated by John R. May, who has served two consecutive terms, and reelected to a second term Mrs. Richard P. Hafner, Jr., A. Lindley Cotton, James E. O'Brien, and Norman Philbrick.

Former Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, whose gubernatorial papers are held by the Library, was presented with the first copy of his memoir, *Years of Growth, 1939-1966: Law Enforcement, Politics, and the Governor's Office*, completed by the Bancroft's Regional Oral History Office as part of the documentation of the administrations of Earl Warren, Goodwin J. Knight, and Brown.

## "Auden's Funeral"

In its clean, presumably finished typescript, Stephen Spender's unpublished "Auden's Funeral" runs to but ninety lines, divided into five verse paragraphs whose double spacing occupies four leaves. Not a long poem, but that, of course, is a deceptive appearance. Poems by their nature contain volumes within narrow bounds and this one exists quite literally as a volume of leaves, both typed and handwritten, and a composition book filled with versions and revisions of its lines. It is the latest addition to the Bancroft's major collection of the manuscripts, papers, and printed books by Stephen Spender, the English poet and man of letters, one of the outstanding English poets of the generation that came to prominence in the 1930's.

To claim that this is an important poem rightly raises questions as to the context in which it is to be so considered. It belongs, obviously enough, to a genre of poetry that is very old and very well established in English literature, the poem memorializing the dead poet, of which some of the most notable examples are Milton's "Lycidas," Shelley's "Adonais," and Auden's own "In Memory of W. B. Yeats." While it is by no means another "Lycidas" or "Adonais," Spender's poem, in a very eloquent and yet restrained way, is the final word on a personal and literary friendship of considerable importance about which much has already been written, the fullest account of it being Spender's in his autobiography, *World Within World*.

Wystan Auden and Stephen Spender met during Spender's second year at Oxford. Spender was nineteen at the time and Auden, at twenty, was already a legendary character at the university, a supremely self-confident, magisterial presence, whose cleverness was everywhere acknowledged and who held the most definite opinions about everything in general and poetry in particular. He had been trained to be a scientist at Gresham's School before he went up to Oxford and had a penchant for reading modern psychology, especially the work of Freud, so that he assumed the role of analyst of anyone he allowed within his orbit. "Clinical detachment" was the name of Auden's game both in his early social life and in his early poetry.

Under Auden's tutelage Spender began to develop as a poet. Through Auden, Spender became part of the literary "shadow cabinet" selected and led by Auden, whose members also included Christopher Isherwood, to whom the elegy on Auden is dedicated. The association between Spender and Auden was so close that, during the summer of 1928 when Auden went down from Oxford, the younger poet put his leader's poetry into book form for the first time by amateurishly printing part of a thirty-seven page booklet bound in orange wrappers and titled simply *Poems* by W. H. Auden, while also producing a similar collection of his own work. As Isherwood later remarked, Spender was a poor typesetter and printer; he had to farm the rest of the Auden booklet out to the Holywell Press.

"Auden's Funeral" relates, with a short break in the narrative for a reverie about the relation between the young Auden and the young Spender (section III), the events of Auden's funeral on Thursday, October 4th, 1973 at Kirchstetten, Austria, where he had maintained a summer residence during his last years. Far from being melancholy in tone, the poem is good humored. When he addressed the Christ Church, Oxford memorial service for Auden on October 27th, 1973, Spender, referring to Auden's earlier, psychosomatic theories of illness, joked that Auden had precisely chosen his time to die, the point being that so confident a personality could have it no other way. This is the tack he takes in the poem too, but with a serious edge to the joke. In it Auden's death is the

... triumph of one  
Who has escaped from life-long colleagues  
roaring  
For him to join their throng. . . .

His death is "his last work done, / Word freed from world," the necessary act to give his poetry full meaning, to make it pure poetry. Auden had always insisted that his poetry was the only really important thing about him and had gone so far as to ask that his friends burn his letters to them in order to thwart biographers. In "Auden's Funeral" Spender gracefully recognizes that the most significant matter to the reader is Auden as Poetry, whether an Auden poem or Spender's poem about Auden.

In the third, and most poignant, section of the poem Spender makes clear that Auden's emphasis on poetic purity, which is, at once, a formal separateness and a paradigm of love, an enfolding isolation, has become part of him. He reminisces about Auden's influence upon him through an extended figure involving the occasion when he set type for Auden's first book of poems.

Ghost of a ghost, of you when young, you waken

In me my ghost when young, us both at Oxford.

You, the tow-haired undergraduate  
With jaunty liftings of the hectoring head,  
Angular forward stride, cross-questioning glance,

A putty-faced comedian's gravitas,  
Saying aloud your poems whose letters bite  
Ink-deep into my fingers lines I set

In ropt caslon on my printing press:  
AN EVENING LIKE A COLOURED  
PHOTOGRAPH

A MUSIC STULTIFIED ACROSS  
THE WATERS

THE HEEL UPON THE FINISHING  
BLADE OF GRASS.

In these lines two ghosts commune while the letters of Auden's poem, both as sounds remembered and as tactile sensations from the setting of type, have become part of Spender. The last three lines printed in upper case are from the poem "Considering if you will how lovers stand," one of those early Auden poems Spender printed. The three images are beautiful examples of Auden's way of making the actual stuff of separations between sublunary lovers become the signs of something more than fleshly loves. They are intensely characteristic of that young, "clinically detached" Auden and make him live, though twice buried.

"Auden's Funeral" is a lovely evocation of metaphysical poetry. Everything about the poem from the almost eight years of silent rumination before Spender got around to writing it to the extraordinary care he took to say just what he wanted (as attested by the heap of manuscript obsessively reworked) speaks of the significance of the poem's subject to the poet. And if the poem weren't enough to tell us about the communion between Spender and Auden, the manuscript provides

a further clue. Nestled between two drafts of "Auden's Funeral" in the composition notebook is another poem in Spender's hand, dated February 2d, 1981 and addressed to another, younger poet, Reynolds Price. It ends with the following lines:

I pray there may be still more time to run  
Of friendship in the sun  
Before I'm my multiple of zero  
You care to name me when my time is done.

T.H.

(Quoted material © 1982 by  
Stephen Spender)

### *Her Lively and Beneficent Interest*

Some people are tasters for knowledge,  
and some people are thirsters for knowl-  
edge. Emma is a thirster.

These words spoken by Lucy Ward Stebbins, Dean of Women at Berkeley, aptly described her friend Emma McLaughlin, civic leader extraordinaire. Emma Elisabeth Moffat was born in San Francisco on September 21st, 1880, the daughter of Adrianna Swett and Henry Moffat, who had come to California in 1857 and established a wholesale meat-packing business. Educated in public schools and later at Miss West's School, she entered the University of California with the Class of 1902 which also included Mabel Gillis, Monroe Deutsch, John Eshleman, and Bernard Etcheverry. In 1904 she was married to Alfred McLaughlin, a physician whose large practice included the Italian colony in the Mission district and Butchertown, the packing house district of San Francisco.

Through her husband's pioneer efforts to provide quality medical care for low-income, immigrant families, Mrs. McLaughlin became increasingly aware of the great need for adequate health education, and following his death in 1908 she began working with the Certified Milk and Baby Hygiene Committee of the American Association of University Women. The Committee operated well-baby clinics which diagnosed illnesses and other problems and advised parents about proper health care. From 1917 to 1919 she was chairman of its San Francisco Children's Year Committee which examined more than ten thousand babies during its initial campaign.



Emma Moffat McLaughlin, c. 1950.

These activities were carried out in cooperation with the San Francisco Chapter of the League of Women Voters, an organization Mrs. McLaughlin had joined shortly after it was formed and which she served as president for the year 1920-21. During this period she was a member of the committee which established the San Francisco Community Chest. Evidence of her continuing interest in improving the quality of community health and of her strong influence upon the Chest can be seen in one of its first projects, a survey of the city's health needs.

Another of her many interests was world affairs. An active member of the Institute of Pacific Relations from its organization in 1927, twenty years later she helped to reorganize its San Francisco council into the World Affairs Council of Northern California. She became its secretary, participated actively in its study groups, attended most lectures, secured volunteers for projects, and opened her home for formal dinner parties to honor visiting dignitaries. Her colleague, Professor John Bell Condliffe, described her role: "Mrs. McLaughlin not only was its wise counsellor and staunch defender from the beginning; but she came to be, in the eyes of all associated with it, its very soul."

Emma Moffat McLaughlin lived her firm belief that community service is the responsibility of all citizens. In recognition of this service her *alma mater* awarded her the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters at Commencement ceremonies in 1960. The citation reads, in part: "We honor today your lively and beneficent interest in the world about you." A second honorary degree was granted by Mills College in 1962. The papers of this outstanding Californian (aggregating about thirty thousand leaves) are available for research in The Bancroft Library, the gift of her daughter, Mrs. Jefferson Doolittle of San Francisco. Together with the oral history memoir which she completed shortly before her death in 1968, they reflect her remarkably active and productive life.

M.E.J.

### *Mark Twain's Russian Visitor*

Surprisingly enough, a potentially important but all too often neglected resource for the study of Russian history and culture lies in specialized archival collections of American institutions. The November 1981 issue of *Bancroftiana* drew attention to a rare decree signed by Empress Catherine II, now part of the Manuscripts Division. In the Mark Twain Papers are two letters written to Samuel and Olivia Clemens by Sergei Mikhailovich Kravchinsky (1851-1895), better known to the western public by his pseudonym, "Stepniak," or "Man of the Steppe."

Stepniak-Kravchinsky was an important and colorful figure in the political and literary history of late nineteenth-century Russia: a socialist propagandist, a revolutionary journalist, a terrorist, and, in the last seventeen years of his life, an interpreter of the revolutionary movement in Russia to the European and American public. His career as an active revolutionist on the scene in Russia ended in 1878 when he was forced to flee abroad following his daring assassination in broad daylight of the chief of the Tsarist political police, General Mezentsev. Stepniak's action marked the beginning of the terrorist counterattack against the government of Aleksander II, which would culminate in 1881 with the assassination of the Tsar himself.

Settled in exile in London, Stepniak came into his own as a man of letters. *Underground Russia: Revolutionary Profiles and Sketches from Life* appeared in 1882 and *The Career of a Nihilist* in 1889. Further to influence public opinion in the west and to raise funds for the struggle in Russia, he spent several months in late 1890 and early 1891 in the United States where he hoped to establish a chapter of The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, organized in England in 1889. In attempting to enlist the support of influential American writers he became friendly with William Dean Howells who gave him an introduction to Clemens.

On April 12th Stepniak wrote to Mark Twain from Boston:

My dear sir,

I enclose an introductory letter from Mr. Howells. I will pass Hartford on Tuesday morning or Wednesday and shall be very happy indeed to see you. Do not trouble answering if you will be at home. If not please drop me a card. . . .

The two met in Hartford on April 17th, and although Clemens was slightly embarrassed at having to admit that he "had read neither Balzac nor Thackeray," he and his Russian visitor seem to have been favorably impressed with one another. Two days later Stepniak wrote from New York to Olivia Clemens, suggesting another visit and noting that he had

sent yesterday to Mr. Clemens a copy of my underground [*i.e. Underground Russia*] and I hope he will not object to my treating him with certain familiarity in my dedicatory lines: I wrote them as a *literary critic*, and literary critics are people entitled to recognise no distinction of age or anything else.

This second meeting did not take place, and Stepniak returned to London in late May 1891. Before he left, however, an American chapter of The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom was formally organized with the participation of Clemens, although Howells chose not to lend his name to the group. A. A., JR.

## *The Bancroft Fellows for 1982-83*

Two fellowships have been granted for the academic year beginning in September to

graduate students within the University of California system whose research is based upon source materials held in The Bancroft Library. The winners this year are Linnea B. Klee of San Francisco and Gillian Brown of Berkeley.

A graduate of George Washington University, Mrs. Klee is studying for her doctorate at the University's San Francisco campus. Her dissertation topic concerns the communicable disease experience of nineteenth-century immigrants in San Francisco and she plans to reconstruct both the "real" historical epidemiology of such diseases as tuberculosis and malaria, and contemporary expressions of popular and professional health ideologies.

Ms. Brown, whose undergraduate work was done at the University of Michigan, is pursuing studies in Berkeley's Department of English where her thesis will be an examination of the significance of domesticity in nineteenth-century American literature. She plans to utilize the George R. Stewart collection of etiquette books, along with domestic guides published before and after the Civil War and correspondence of feminists such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

Both Mrs. Klee and Ms. Brown will share this year's Wilma Seavey Ogden Purse, donated by Paul Ogden in memory of his wife, an alumna of the University in its Class of 1930. We look forward to welcoming our two new Fellows in the Heller Reading Room.

## *Mortimer's Brideshead & Other Plays*

During the past four years the Library has acquired a number of manuscripts written by John Mortimer, the English novelist, critic, and dramatist, whose adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Brideshead Revisited*, was aired on American television earlier in 1982. Born in Hampstead, London in 1923 and educated at Harrow and at Oxford, where he read law, Mortimer worked after graduation for the Crown Film Unit as an assistant director and scriptwriter, an experience which inspired *Charade*, his first novel, published in 1947. Called to the bar in 1948 and having pursued since then an active and successful legal career, John Mortimer has also been a prolific writer. These diverse achievements were probably

aided by the idiosyncrasy that he requires only four hours of sleep a night.

Having published his sixth novel in 1956, Mortimer turned his hand to drama, writing *Dock Brief*, a one-act play first produced on radio by the BBC in 1957 and subsequently adapted for television, motion pictures, and theater. He found that "at last, I was writing what I had wanted all my life to say." In his early plays the dramatist concentrated on comedy. In the introduction to *Three Plays* he called it "the only thing worth writing in this despairing age, provided the comedy is truly on the side of the lonely, the neglected, the unsuccessful, and plays its part in the war against established rules and against the imposing of an arbitrary code of behavior upon individual and unpredictable human beings."

*Dock Brief* was followed by a number of plays about people unable to cope with ordinary life who take refuge in fantasy. These include *What Shall We Tell Caroline* (1958), *The Wrong Side of the Park* (1960), and *The Judge* (1967). Mortimer also adapted two plays by Feydeau, *A Flea in Her Ear* (1966) and *Cat Among the Pigeons* (1969). Many of his shorter works have won high acclaim and he has, ever since the appearance of his first play, been interested in writing works which meet the requirements of radio, television, and motion pictures as well as the theater.

*Chas (drinking)*  
It seems to be working wonderfully.  
*Julia*  
What a day! Keros and champagne  
*Chas*  
I wish you would sit go on about the same  
Somehow sent them to Julia  
*Julia*  
Oh, than all right then. That lets you  
out completely

A portion of the manuscript for *Brideshead Revisited*.

Along with the manuscript for *Brideshead Revisited*, the first batch of Mortimer's manuscripts to come to Berkeley included drafts and revised typescripts of four one-act plays gathered under the title *Come As You Are* and six parts of the television series *Rumpole of the Bailey*. Subsequently more *Rumpole* episodes were added to the Library, along with the

screenplay for Terence Rattigan's play *Cause Célèbre*. In 1980 came the television plays *Unity*, based on David Pryce-Jones' book about one of the Mitford sisters, and the autobiographical *Too Young to Fight, Too Old to Forget*, and last year the Bancroft acquired the manuscript of his autobiography, *Clinging to the Wreckage*, written, like his other works, on long sheets of lined white paper, bearing many revisions in red ink. The most recently accessioned materials include a revised holograph of *A Medical Interlude*, a short play first performed at the Young Vic Theatre in London on January 6th, 1982, and "Shakespeare," the inaugural lecture delivered at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford for the International Shakespeare Congress in 1981.

I.M.

## *"Oh, wonderful days!"*

[Amelia Earhart] spent two nights with us. The first night she gave a lecture at the Fairmont Hotel, I remember, and then Sunday she said, "Would you like to go up?" I had never been up . . . I was terrified, but I thought if I couldn't go up with Amelia Earhart who was about to cross the *Pacific*, I would never go up! So I went up in her plane.

High-spirited is the quality that marks Lurline Matson Roth, the "I" in this quotation from her recently-completed memoir, *Matson and Roth Family History: A Love of Ships, Horses, and Gardens*. Her family and three major aspects of her life are the subjects of interviews conducted in 1980 and 1981 by Suzanne Riess of the Bancroft's Regional Oral History Office.

The story of the Matson and Roth families suggests some great eras and strengths of California. The shipping history concentrates on the tale of a ten-year-old Swedish lad, William Matson, who shipped out as a handy boy in 1859 and, not diverted by gold mining in California, went on to command a ship, a corporation, and a consulate. He was progressive and daring, and had dreams which, as his daughter relates, "came true."

Horses were always a part of the Matson and Roth story; the volume includes illustrations of both Captain Matson and daughter Lurline at the reins. During the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, Mrs. Matson and Lurline were



Lurline Matson Roth on her wedding day, 1914.

proud that they had got their saddle horses out of the stable, but when the Captain came in on a ship from Honolulu that night he was more struck that his family had left the front door of their home on Franklin Street open, and all the household valuables behind.

Lurline Roth is acknowledged as one of America's great horsewomen, and her oral memoir includes tributes to her splendid stallion, Chief of Longview, "The Great Parader," and comments on stables, horsepeople, on riding—"the skill is in your hands," it can't be taught—and on naming horses.

Lurline's mother, Lillian Low Matson, Brooklyn-born, of Scottish descent, courted on the brig *Lurline* en route to Hilo to teach at a plantation school, was by all reports heroically adaptable, traveling back and forth to the Islands with the family, despite a genuine disposition to seasickness, bowing to her husband and her daughter's interest in horses, and entertaining as befitted the wife of a consul, "a very capable woman."

In 1913, Lurline Matson, who had studied voice in Paris and grown to be "one of San Francisco's most charming society girls," met William P. Roth, a broker from the Islands. His suit was refused by Captain Matson and Miss Matson, heartbroken, went on a tour with her mother to spas in Europe, attempting

to recover from the failure of health this thwarted courtship brought on. Her father had a change of mind, and the local papers of the day summarized his admission that "he had been poor himself, once."

William P. Roth, "the comparatively penniless youth, just making his start in the world," in time took over the Matson Navigation Company, dedicated his career to the firm, building ships to bring tourists to the Islands, and constructing the Royal Hawaiian Hotel for the wealthier ones. Bill and Lurline Roth and their teen-age children, William Matson Roth and twin daughters Lurline and Berenice, moved in 1937 to Filoli, the mansion built in 1916 by Willis Polk for William Bourn, and given by Mrs. Roth to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1975, with an endowment to guarantee that house and gardens, secluded near Crystal Springs Reservoir, will be permanently open to the public. To document the history of Filoli's gardens, a singular example of California landscape design and horticultural excellence, a supplementary interview was conducted with the highly-respected horticulturist, Toichi Domoto, who, with Isabella Worn, and the head gardeners, under the guidance of Mrs. Roth, "kept the gardens alive and vital and yet with total respect to the original design."

The memoir includes a transcript of Lurline Roth Coonan's talk to docents in training at Filoli, the Domoto interview, and extensive supplementary documents regarding William Matson and the Matson Navigation Company ships. Maritime historian Karl Kortum was present for one of the interviews with Mrs. Roth, and another of the interviews took place in the gardens at Filoli. The many fine illustrations are from the Roth family scrapbooks.

S.R.

## James F. Smathers & the Electric Typewriter

The history of technology is too often a flat catalogue of inventions. If the competition of rival designs is mentioned at all, it is dismissed with the simple statement of which design won. The story lacks the leavening of personality, dispute, and profit motives.

Histories of the typewriter, for example, may point out that the first successful design

for harnessing electric power in typewriting was the work of James F. Smathers in 1912. They may also note that IBM took over the Smathers patent in 1933. Certainly the prominence of IBM in electric typewriter technology is by now well established. But the two decades between the original patent and its assumption by IBM are not accounted for, nor is Smathers' experience with the realities of patent rights, royalties, and production and marketing decisions.

These are, however, just the questions that are addressed in a set of papers recently acquired as part of The Bancroft Library's History of Science and Technology Program. A gift to the Library from Mrs. Edgar Sherman of San Francisco, a longtime friend of James Smathers, the collection contains correspondence between the two regarding the invention and subsequent development of the electric typewriter.

When Smathers filed his patent application in 1912, the manual typewriter was already some forty years old. The speed advantages conferred by the typewriter had given rise to annual "world's championship speed contests," and the major typewriter firms maintained schools to train their entrants. As Smathers later explained, "Typing speed was the big issue." When shown Smathers' invention, the big four manufacturers rejected the innovation:

The nimbleness of the operator's fingers and the responsiveness of the typewriter keys were considered the determining factors in typewriter speed and it was argued that the introduction of electrical apparatus, which after all would have to be controlled by the nimbleness of the fingers, would necessarily reduce the speed potential.

In fact, in the first speed championship in which an electric machine was permitted, a competitor without special speed training—but with an IBM electric—beat the manual speed experts by some twenty words per minute. The next year the competition was discontinued. In Smathers' words, "Continuing speed contests in typewriting after the electric typewriter was entered was like racing horses against an automobile."

Smathers had a working model built in a

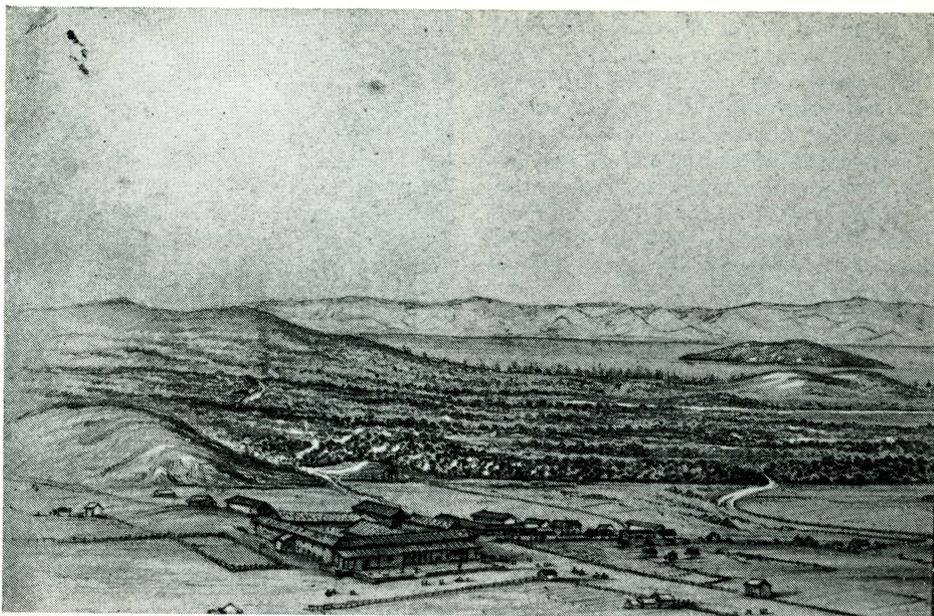
Kansas City machine shop and proceeded to use it daily in his own job at the American Type Founders Company. After the first World War, Smathers again received a disheartening response from New York executives of the major typewriter manufacturers, but was able to persuade an automotive electric equipment firm to diversify and to begin producing electric typewriters. A decade later Thomas J. Watson, Sr. of IBM bought out this operation and took over Smathers' royalty contract—over twenty years after the original patent application.

But the story does not end there. The Smathers papers now at the Bancroft recount disputes over royalties and patent infringement. They also describe subsequent technical innovations (including experimental remote control typewriters used by Admiral Byrd in his polar expedition), pressures and opportunities during World War II, and Smathers' sometimes stormy interactions with the IBM executives and engineering staff. The papers complement the collection of typewriters (manual and electric) at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, and prompt questions that can be used to expand and enliven the technological history of this machine. They also provide a participant's view of what proved to be remarkably important and profitable business decisions by one of the nation's major corporate entities.

R. E. R.

## Original Views of San Francisco, 1849-51

Following the discovery of gold at Coloma in January 1848 and its official announcement by President Polk at the end of that year, the sleepy little port of San Francisco was overwhelmed by a tremendous influx of hopeful gold-seekers hurrying on their way to promised wealth in the mines and placers of the Mother Lode. While the town grew explosively in size, it also underwent a radical transformation in appearance. The bay was being filled, and by mid-1851 six devastating fires had swept away almost every trace of the early boom town; the outlines of our modern city were beginning to emerge, and the past was quickly forgotten.



The Bancroft Library is fortunate to own a number of rare drawings and paintings made by early visitors and settlers which illustrate this brief and colorful era of our history. Included in this group are original works by Daniel W. Coit, Augusto Ferran, William McMurtrie, and a very engaging view of the Plaza by an amateur watercolor-artist known only as "Tom." On October 22d, 1850 William H. Dougal completed a drawing, "Mission Dolores, looking towards San Francisco," a detail of which is shown here, giving a clear sense of the relationship between the established mission community and the new settlement of the bay.

These drawings and paintings of early San Francisco are now brought together for the first time in an exhibition which will be on view in the Bancroft's Administrative Offices through September.

L.D.

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