

# BANCROFTIANA

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*Ruth Teiser interviewing Robert Grabborn, 1967. Photo by Ted Streshinsky.*

In the mid-1930s a well-brought-up young lady came to The Bancroft Library to do research for a class paper and was, as she said, "entrapped." Ruth Teiser was on her way to a Ph.D. in English Literature, but she turned instead to intensive work on a book on California history. Although that book was never published, the research for it appeared over the years in countless articles, books, exhibits, and in the oral histories she eventually came to do. If entrapped, she found the confines inspiring!

*Ruth Teiser*  
1915-1994

This intertwining of the love of books and history, of libraries, of writing and editing, were innate in Ruth. She was the daughter of Sidney Teiser, a leading Portland, Oregon, attorney and amateur historian who turned out a steady stream of articles on Oregon history, historical novels, and even poetry. Young Ruth left Portland, diploma in hand from the exclusive girls' school, Miss Catlin's, to attend Mills College.

She went on to Stanford University for her graduate work in English, but at The Bancroft

Library she succumbed to the lure of California history and the excitement of tracing that history through original sources. She chose then to spend her life in researching, writing, photographing, and collecting Californiana.

Ruth Teiser knew many of the legendary figures of The Bancroft Library, Herbert Bolton, Elinor Bancroft, J. B. Tompkins, Helen Bretnor, George Hammond. Over the years she shared her love of books and history with them, and she found a kindred passion for fine printing in James D. Hart. Beginning in 1965, Ruth was an integral part of the staff of the Regional Oral History Office, continuing Hubert Howe Bancroft's tradition of first-hand history-gathering.

I well remember first hearing of Ruth Teiser and her friend and colleague Catherine Harroun from Maryon Monahan, then the Library Business Officer, and also in charge of personnel. She caught me in the hall one day outside the administrative offices and said she wanted to recommend a photographer-writer-historian team of free-lancers. "If you could get them on your staff, the office would profit from their experience."

Indeed they were a real find for the Regional Oral History Office. They came to us with a background of writing articles on San Francisco history, trade journal pieces on businesses such as food processing, and authorship of a range of book reviews for the *Chronicle*. They were adept at both historical research and design arts. They must have known their potential value to us when they negotiated a higher-than-usual starting salary of \$3.51 an hour!

Catherine Harroun had been head of advertising for Wells Fargo Bank, and head of the Wells Fargo History Room. A dancer and an artist, she introduced Ruth to the graphic arts, book binding, and to the great fine printers of San Francisco. The partnership immediately began a series of oral histories, first with Oscar Lewis, about literary San Francisco. The series, forty-seven volumes in all, ultimately included Edwin, Robert, and Jane Grabhorn, Brother Antoninus, Haywood Hunt, Lawton Kennedy, Adrian Wilson, Leah Wollenberg, Stephen Gale Herrick, and Dr. Albert Shumate. In 1976 the Book Club of California published *Printing as a Performing Art* drawing on these early interviews.

Simultaneously Ruth and Catherine devel-

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oped an interest and expertise in the California wine industry, propelled by the availability of the founding winemaking families, and with funding support from the Wine Advisory Board. Summer travels to Italy and England became searches for remote lore on both winemaking and fine printing. The reports of their excursions would be redolent with gorgeous countryside, friendly people, wonderful food, and wildly insulting and vulgar drivers – Ruth, at the wheel in these trips, would try to steel herself for the Italian drivers, settling on a loud "Stupido!" as a retort for any gesticulations from her fellow motorists.

In 1983 their wine studies resulted in the classic *Winemaking in California*, published by McGraw-Hill. It won the Commonwealth Club award for the best California history book of the year, and the California Historical Society honored the work with the 1983 Award of Merit. That year Catherine Harroun died, but Ruth's wine interviews prospered under new sponsorship from the *Wine Spectator* magazine. Later this year five newly-completed winemaker oral histories will be presented, this last group carried out by Ruth and by ROHO's Carole Hicke, associated with Ruth in the winemaking histories since Catherine's death.

Ruth and Catherine worked well together as joint interviewers. Ruth did most of the actual interviewing, with Catherine quietly, perceptively, encouraging a second thought, and unobtrusively taking candid photographs of the interview in process. Their friendships led to a significant group of interviews including famed photographer Ansel Adams, sculptor Ruth Cravath and watercolorist George Post, and the poet Josephine Miles.

Their interest in business history led them to conduct interviews with San Francisco business families such as the food-processing Di Giorgios; Max Kniesche of Schroeder's Restaurant; Claire Giannini Hoffman of the Bank of America family; Polly Ghirardelli Lawrence. They interviewed their fellow historian Thomas W. Chinn, and did biographical memoirs with Mortimer Fleishhacker and Alice Levison.

Among the bibliophiles they met in their fine-printing circle was an enthusiastic librarian, Father William Monihan. Over the years the friendship deepened as Father Monihan's interest in book collecting intersected with their writing on printing and small presses. In



### *Church of the New Jerusalem, San Francisco*

The minister of this Swedenborgian church, Joseph Worcester, crafted homes in Piedmont and San Francisco in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a simple shingle style which influenced the development of what has come to be called the Bay Region style. With architect A. Page Brown, he designed this church in 1895, the interior of which emphasizes the simple and straight-forward use of natural materials. This is but one of a collection of both interior and exterior views of the church, a gift of Alfred W. Einarsson.

*William Roberts*

1970 Ruth was named a Fellow of the Gleeson Library. She served on the Board of the Associates and conducted a perceptive interview with Monihan.

Ruth's headquarters were in her 1906 earthquake cottage on Vallejo Street. She did most of her work there, and she enjoyed entering the age of computer technology, using her modem to work at home in the last of her ROHO years. She was always our "ear to the ground" in San Francisco. We called on her wise counsel constantly, and with it received a taste of her wry and vital sense of humor.

Ruth died in June 1994, but her influence continues. She conducted more than one hundred oral histories, and donated to Bancroft a large photographic collection documenting

California places and persons. To assure that her influence will carry into the future, Ruth bequeathed a generous endowment to The Bancroft Library.

The Ruth Teiser Endowment will be used for oral histories reflecting Ruth's broad, compassionate world view. The Endowment will help measurably in meeting ROHO's need to pursue oral histories documenting significant social issues where the social need itself is the main competitor for limited funding. It is a splendid memorial, and a great tribute to The Bancroft Library, where she found an academic home, and an introduction to a world she both chronicled and participated in with joy.

*Willa K. Baum  
Suzanne Riess*

*Yoshiko Uchida,*  
1922–1992. *Nissei Author*  
and *Philanthropist*

It was a cruel irony that Yoshiko Uchida, a Cal honor student, missed attending her commencement exercises by only two weeks. Instead, in May 1942, her University diploma, rolled in a cardboard container, was mailed to Tanforan Race Track in San Mateo and delivered to Stall Number 40, her family's assigned living quarters during their six-month internment. The Uchidas were among 8,000 Bay Area Japanese Americans incarcerated at Tanforan following Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor.

The experience of being interned at Tanforan, and later at a camp in Utah, is central to the themes of the many books Yoshiko Uchida wrote. She became the first Nissei writer to devote her entire career to writing for young people about her own rich cultural heritage. She almost single-handedly created a body of Japanese American literature for children, where none existed before.

I have tried in my writing not only to eradicate the stereotypic image of Japanese Americans still held by non-Asians, but I have also tried to evoke the strength and courage of the first generation Japanese whose survival over countless hardships is truly a triumph of the human spirit. I hope today's young people can learn from the Issei's sense of purpose, affirmation and hope in life, and will cherish the traditions and values of the past.

Ms. Uchida wrote twenty-nine books from 1949 until her death in Berkeley in 1992. They included twenty-seven books for children; a volume of memoirs, *Desert Exile: the Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family*, which the University of Washington Press published in 1982, and *The Invisible Thread*, an autobiography written for teenagers and published by Julian Messner in 1991.

She was born in Alameda, California, to parents who were both born and educated in Japan and then immigrated early in this century to California. She was reared in Berkeley, and attended UC Berkeley, majoring in English, philosophy, and history. After her six-month internment, she had the opportunity to attend Smith College, where she completed a Masters in Education and was awarded a graduate fel-



*Yoshiko Uchida with her grandmother, ca 1935.*

lowship in 1943. She later received a Ford Foundation Grant to study in Japan where she collected folktales, wrote a series of feature articles about craftsmen for the *Nippon Times*, and completed a chapbook for the Folk Art Movement about one of Japan's major potters.

Among the honors she received for her work are the Commonwealth Club of California medal for *A Jar of Dreams* and the Bay Area Book Reviewers Award for *The Happiest Ending*. *The Magic Listening Cap* was named a Herald Tribune Honor Book and *The Best Bad Thing* an ALA Notable Book. Seven of her books are included in the prestigious California Recommended Reading List, used as a model for the National Reading Initiative. She received the University of Oregon's Distinguished Service Award in 1981.

But Uchida's work and contributions remained very personal. She gave numerous talks at schools, libraries, and professional conferences, and each year answered hundreds of children's letters from throughout the world.

Uchida not only communicated her values through her writing, but she extended them, and enriched learning opportunities at UC Berkeley, with significant gifts. She established a gift annuity for an endowed book fund whose proceeds will be used to purchase children's books for the Education-Psychology Library in Tolman Hall. The East Asian Library was the recipient of a collection of Japanese language books that belonged to her



*A night class in advanced English at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center, where, "for the first time," according to the photograph's label, many of the older people are given "the opportunity to read and write the language of their chosen country."*

parents. And, the Library and the University figured prominently in Uchida's estate as well. Her legacy includes establishment of several scholarships, as well as the donation of her copyrights, manuscripts, papers, and published works to The Bancroft Library.

Although my books have been about the Japanese and Japanese Americans, I hope they will enlarge and enrich the reader's understanding of the human condition as well. Each of us must take pride in our special heritage, but there is purpose in searching our past to better understand ourselves only if we can one day understand each other and celebrate our common humanity.

When she died she had just finished a volume of poetry, *Birdsong*, which she privately published as a gift for her many friends. The poems are hopeful and spunky, cheerful and celebratory, wise and simple at the same time — and delicate — just like the sketches which accompany the poems. They help all of us who knew her remember her zest for life, her transparent honesty, her passionate convictions about our common humanity, and her dedication to the creative life.

*Mary Jane Perna*

*Japanese American*  
*Evacuation and*  
*Resettlement Records*

The Bancroft Library and the Conservation Department are currently engaged in a joint project to preserve the Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Records Collection (BANC MSS 67/14 c). Funding through a Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), Title III: Networking, Preservation and Statewide Resource-Sharing grant will help save the physical items and make them more widely accessible to researchers. The primary focus of the project is to complete the arrangement and description of over 225 cartons (an estimated 500,000 pieces) to facilitate their use and to prepare them for microfilming. The low-grade World War II paper is now extremely brittle and threatens the collection's continued existence; microfilming the papers will insure the preservation of their contents for future scholars and researchers.

Material was integrated into this collection from two major sources: the Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study

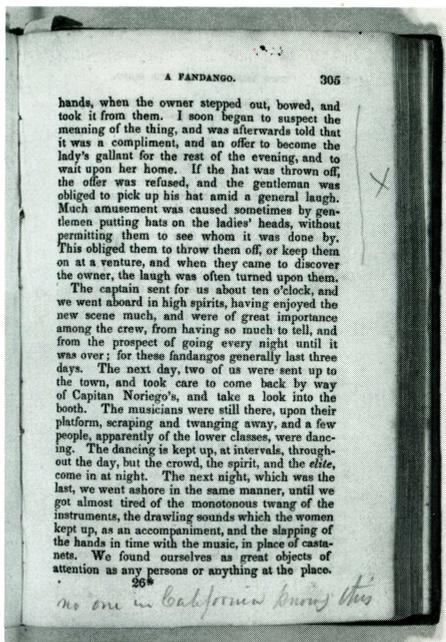
(JERS) at the University of California, Berkeley and the United States War Relocation Authority.

The Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study monitored and recorded the sociological, political, economic, and legal dimensions of the relocation program. Evacuees were hired to document their experiences and report on the situation in the relocation centers. This segment of the collection contains extensive personal statements in the form of journals, diaries, reports, case histories and interviews as well as correspondence, studies, and writings by JERS staff. Included with the JERS papers are gatherings of primary and secondary research materials collected by JERS Project Director Dorothy Swaine Thomas, staff members Rosalie Hankey Wax and Morton Grodzins, as well as material donated to JERS by Galen M. Fisher, a human rights activist.

The records of the War Relocation Authority (WRA) are the official documents of the agency created in 1942 to supervise the relocation and resettlement of the Japanese and Japanese-Americans. The WRA materials were deposited in The Bancroft Library following World War II. They were originally thought to be duplicates of materials sent to the National Archives in Washington, D.C., but a preliminary investigation indicates that while there is some overlap, the two collections are not identical.

The microfilm produced by The Bancroft Library will include all JERS material plus any WRA material not already filmed by the National Archives. Plans also include the rehousing of the entire collection into acid-free folders and document boxes and the creation of an updated collection inventory to be issued in both paper and electronic formats. Project Archivist Elizabeth Stephens expects to complete the project in October of 1996. Microfilm copies of the originals at Bancroft and the collection guide will be made available in the California State Library, Sacramento, as well as in The Bancroft Library, thus providing access and service at both institutions. Bancroft will continue to provide archival storage and access for the original documents.

Mary Morganti  
Elizabeth Stephens



J.H. Everett's comment on a Dana description.

## Damn that Dana!

When I was just a fledgling librarian at Bancroft, former director Jim Hart told me a story about having once seen a copy of Richard Henry Dana Jr.'s *Two Years before the Mast* (New York, 1840) which had belonged to someone who was aboard ship with Dana. Hart recalled that the book was full of annotations, most of them severely critical of Dana's command of the facts. The discovery of this annotated copy especially interested Hart since Dana was the subject of his doctoral thesis at Harvard. There were, however, two unfortunate aspects to the discovery: 1) Hart's thesis had been finished roughly twenty years before and 2) the book was not for sale.

Jim Hart told me that story about ten years ago and added that he had lost track of the volume. But due to a bit of luck, I now know where the annotated Dana is. A staff member at a local auction house left a message for me on June 12 saying that an interesting copy of *Two Years before the Mast* would be sold the following day. For some reason, the Library had not received the catalog for the auction sale, so he faxed me a description. It was *the Dana*.

It is the only copy of the book known to exist with annotations by a crew member. J. H. Everett of Boston was a purchasing agent for the brig Pilgrim when the ship was on the California coast. Dana and Everett shared a mutual dislike. In his book, Dana never referred to Everett by name, only as "the agent," and never had anything flattering to say about him:

This filled up the measure of the agent's unpopularity, and never after this could he get anything done by any of the crew; and many a delay and vexation, and many a good ducking in the surf, did he get to pay up old scores, or "square the yards with the bloody quill driver."

Everett avenged himself on Dana in his copy of the book. He must have been very anxious to see it too, as he dated his acquisition on the flyleaf September 26, 1840, and the Library of Congress did not receive its deposit copy until the next month. Everett made scores of annotations in the margins of the text, many of them limited to "a lie" or "a falsehood," but other comments are more substantial. He noted Dana's mistakes with place names and sailing directions and challenged many of his descriptions.

On pages 306-307, Dana described a dance he called a "fandango" involving a complicated ritual of donning and doffing sombreros. Everett's acerbic comment in the margin: "No one in California knows this."

It will take detailed analysis to determine just how accurate Everett's criticisms of Dana really are and how many can be attributed to ill will. It is clear, though, that the commentator took every opportunity to criticize the author. This being the case, one can assume that there is tacit agreement on detail and description when Everett fails to carp.

So where is this wonderful copy of the annotated *Two Years before the Mast*? It's in my office at the moment, our most recent purchase on the James D. Hart Memorial Fund.

Anthony Bliss

## Bishop Edward Lambe Parsons

The Edward Lambe Parsons Papers (BANC Mss 86/58c) were given to The Bancroft Library by his daughter, Harriet Parsons, and by Dr. Massey Shepherd, former Professor at the

Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley. As the third Episcopal Bishop of California, Parsons' activities ranged from civil rights and human justice issues, to ecumenism and liturgical reform. The papers document his involvement in the political, social, and religious life of San Francisco, Berkeley, and several Bay Area counties. With the papers, the Library also received a group of photographs of the Bishop, his family, and several local Episcopal churches.

The papers cover all periods of Bishop Parsons' life. Born in 1868 in New York City, he was raised a Presbyterian. When that denomination turned down his petition for admission to the ordained ministry, he joined the Episcopal Church. Parsons based his action on the belief that the Anglican Communion would play a strategic role in the matter of Christian unity. Moving to California in 1896, he became Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Menlo Park. During this period, he also served as Professor of Philosophy at Stanford University. The Parsons papers include correspondence with Stanford through 1951.

In 1904 Parsons was called to be Rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Berkeley. The papers contain a small amount of correspondence from his years as Rector, and sermons and other addresses delivered at the parish and elsewhere during his long career. In 1919 he began his involvement with the Faith and Order Commission, visiting the leaders of Eastern Orthodox and Protestant churches in Europe and the Near East, encouraging attendance at the first Faith and Order Conference, finally convened at Lausanne in 1927. These efforts prepared for the drawing up of a scheme for a World Council of Churches, established in 1948.

Elected Bishop Coadjutor of the Episcopal Diocese of California in 1919, he became Diocesan Bishop in 1924. Parsons served as Bishop until his retirement in 1941. His papers include diocesan material, correspondence, and other items relating to individual parishes in the diocese, which at that time extended from Novato in the north to King City and Salinas in the south. Parsons' own vision of the diocese is outlined in his book, *The Diocese of California, a Quarter Century, 1915-1940*.

Worship was central to Parsons' life. In 1913, he was appointed to the Episcopal Church's Joint Commission on the *Book of Common*

*Prayer*, which produced the proposals resulting in the 1928 prayer book. This revision of the American prayer book represented a major change from earlier versions, and set the stage for the revision adopted in 1979. Parsons' work on prayer book revision is well documented in his papers. The 1928 book reflects Parsons' own concerns for social issues in introducing prayers on Christian service, social justice, every man in his work, and Parsons' own prayers for the family of nations and Independence Day. Parsons' views on the 1928 book appeared in 1937 under the title *The American Prayer Book, its Origins and Principles*, written jointly with Bayard Hale Jones, then Professor of Liturgics at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

Parsons became an advocate of the liberal evangelical position, which stressed the unity of religious and scientific truth, and the concept that dogma and biblical narrative are but clothing pointing to the important personal relationship with God and humankind. His association with liberal church leaders is reflected in the wide range of correspondents found in the papers. Particularly noteworthy is the extensive correspondence with Henry Ohlhoff, a San Francisco layman who worked with Community Chest, and with the homeless and destitute at Canon Kip Community Center.

Parsons' interest in social justice issues was evident throughout his life. His study of the Bible convinced him that sweeping social change was essential for the well-being of American life. Elected a national vice-chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union in 1930, Parsons' longtime presidency of the Northern California chapter is extensively documented in the papers. An early advocate of the admission of women to the ordained ministry, the papers also show his strong support of theological education for women, and under his guidance St. Margaret's House for training deaconesses was established in Berkeley. Parsons served with such diverse groups as the Social Service Commission of the Episcopal Church, the Rosenberg Foundation, the Pacifica Foundation, the Alameda County Board of Public Welfare, and the Berkeley Commission on Public Charities.

Until his death in 1960, Bishop Parsons exerted a wide influence in California. His voluminous personal archive offers a wealth of op-

portunities for research. The Parson papers detail not only the history of the Episcopal Church in California, but a broad range of topics in California social history.

Patrick J. Russell

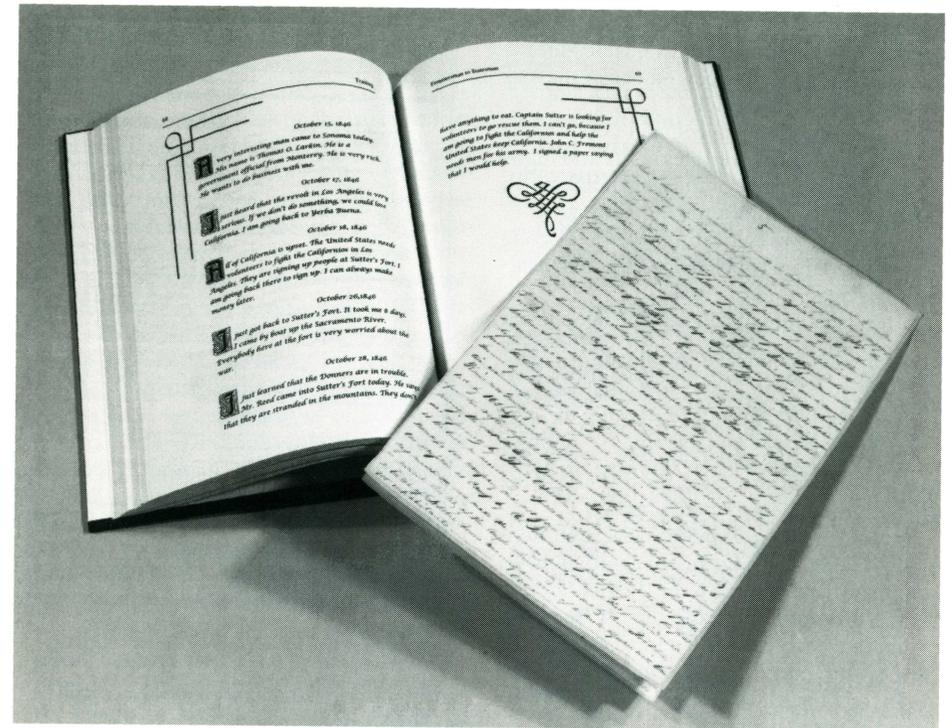
## *Madera Method Students Present Historical Discovery to Bancroft*

For almost 150 years, the letters of Benjamin S. Lippincott lay in an old cedar chest, untouched and forgotten. Writing between 1846 and 1851, Lippincott described of his experiences on the California Trail, his service with Fremont's California Battalion, his participation as a delegate in California's first Constitutional Convention, and finally his role as a Senator from San Joaquin County in California's first legislature. When placed in chronological order, these letters represent a first-hand account of the story of California's transition from a Mexican province to a possession of the United States.

Mrs. Agnes Harrison, a Lippincott descendant, turned her ancestor's letters over to Bill Coate, educational coordinator for the Jean and Irving Stone Madera Method Educational Program, who in turn involved 250 fourth and fifth grade students and their teachers from Sisk Elementary School in Salida California. Armed with this primary source material and with the assistance of John Osborne, Vice-President of the Historical Society of Southern California, the young detectives went to work analyzing the documents, researching them, and preparing them for publication. They developed a chronology of Lippincott's life from 1846 to 1851, and assumed his identity to write a fictional diary as if they had participated in these historical events.

Their work, *From Frontiersman to Statesman: Memories of Benjamin S. Lippincott* as well as the original Lippincott letters were recently presented to The Bancroft Library in a special ceremony. In addition to the student historians, Chancellor Tien, Mrs. Stone, and Dr. Bonnie Hardwick participated in this latest example of cooperation between The Bancroft Library and the Madera Method educational program.

The Madera Method educational program,



*Madera Method's publication of From Frontiersman to Statesman: Memories of Benjamin S. Lippincott, with one of the original Lippincott letters.*

now in its tenth year, was named and nurtured by the late Irving Stone and his wife and editor-in-residence, Jean Stone. Its purpose is to allow children to "do" history by exposing them to primary sources. This is the second time The Bancroft Library has been the recipient of a Madera Method publication. At a special ceremony in June, 1992, sixth and seventh grade students from the Madera Unified School District presented The Bancroft Library with a copy of their publication, *The Civil War Diary of Samuel Corbett: a Source Book for the California One Hundred*, which documents a band of California volunteers who fought for the Union during the Civil War.

William S. Coate

## *Rebels and Royalists in Colonial Mexico*

On December 30, 1813, insurgents of the Villagran band attacked a property of the Conde de la Cortina at Venta Hermosa. In the engage-

ment, the Conde's troops killed four rebels and captured forty prisoners, four muskets, ten machetes, twenty horses, and fifteen packets of cartridges.

Sometime after 1816, Vicente Gomez de la Cortina, Conde de la Cortina, began work on his "testimonio de servicios," an account of his personal and financial services to King Ferdinand VII during the insurgency in New Spain, 1810-1816. The battle at Venta Hermosa is just one of seventeen military encounters described by the Count during the period 1811-1813. One copy of the manuscript was sent to Madrid as a permanent record, but a second copy was retained by the family. The retained copy was recently acquired by The Bancroft Library, purchased as a gift of the Friends.

The Cortina manuscript is a singularly impressive document: 178 folio pages, written with approximately thirty lines to a page, bound in polished calf elaborately stamped in gold around the edges of the boards, with a red title label on the heavily gilt spine. Several fold-out tables detailing military actions,

financial contributions, and agricultural production provide a rich and invaluable glimpse into the insurgency's effects on one of the major haciendas in the region.

As was typical of the colonial nobility, the Cortina family owned estates in the arid highland basins and plains of the Mezquital, north of Mexico City. Besides grazing, the main economic activity was cultivating *maquey*, a strong fibrous plant from which *pulque*, a potent alcoholic beverage, is fermented.

After the failure of Miguel Hidalgo's revolt of 1803-1811, insurgents in the countryside lacked any focus or unifying goals other than their own local grievances. Although the rebels have been lionized in the historical lore of the War of Independence that created the Mexican nation (1810-1821), the royalists of the time regarded them as mere brigands.

Because of droughts, hard social conditions in the villages, and a history of agrarian rebellion, many landowners in the districts around the Cortina properties expected the peasantry to join the insurgency as it spread throughout New Spain. Indeed, insurrection arrived there in 1811, and haciendas of the nobility were attacked by agrarian guerrillas.

The principal forces opposing the rebels in the region were those of Cortina. His troops, primarily estate dependents from the Hacienda Tlahuelipan, pursued the rebels vigorously and inflicted many casualties. Because of the guerrillas' hit-and-run tactics, direct confrontations were rare; yet the royalists always claimed victory, as the Cortina accounts testify. Determined pursuit of the rebels by royalist forces had pacified the region by 1814.

Although the insurgents could not overthrow the royalist government, they did inflict severe losses on the landed elites. Despite pacification, the tables in the Cortina manuscript relating to taxation, value, and expenditures for pulque production show that economic recovery was slow. Pillaging and requisitions of food and livestock clearly had a considerable impact on labor and agriculture well after 1814. Although it was a political failure, the destructiveness of the rebellion succeeded in weakening the economic power of the nobility and contributed to their eventual defeat.

The Conde de Cortina's manuscript is a splendid survival of an old Spanish custom, the "testimonio de servicios," but more impor-

The image shows a page from a historical document titled "Estado que a consecuencia de lo prevenido en Superior Orden de A. B. de S. M. se hizo en el año de 1811...". It contains several tables of data, likely related to agricultural production or land management. The tables are organized into sections with headings like "Hacienda de Tlahuelipan" and "Hacienda de Tlahuelipan". The data includes various numerical values, possibly representing quantities of goods or land, and is presented in a structured, tabular format typical of 18th or 19th-century administrative records.

One of the statistical charts from the Gomez Testimonio.

tantly, it is a first-hand account of a crucial period in Mexican history.

Walter Brem

## What are they doing in the Reading Room (and who are 'they')?

In 1977, the University of California libraries began to phase out their card catalogs, replacing the sleek oak drawers and their well-thumbed contents with an online catalog that gained in utility what it might have lost in aesthetics. The Bancroft Library converted all of its manuscript records from card to computer in 1993. And last July, Bancroft began to automate its reader registration process as well, replacing the crammed, labor-intensive card-file with an electronic database.

The presence of a computer at the Reader Registration Desk offers a number of advantages, including the ability to offer catalog and basic reference assistance to potential library users before they even enter the reading room. And returning readers can now be identified in a fraction of the time it took to thumb through a "user-hostile" drawer. But perhaps the most valuable feature of the new system is the op-

portunity it offers to document the patterns of library use: Who uses The Bancroft Library, and what are they looking for?

As part of the registration process, the library collects information on the user's "status" (faculty member? graduate student? undergraduate?), affiliation (University of California, other institutions, or strictly independent), principal area of research, and the purpose of that research. This information allows the Public Services staff to construct a reliable profile of its readership, and provides the curators with patterns of scholarship within their respective collecting areas.

Since Bancroft opened its doors to undergraduates in 1973, its patterns of use have altered radically. The library's "open door policy" and the transfer of its catalogs from reading room drawers to the Internet has transformed Bancroft into one of the busiest and most complex special collections libraries in the United States. Readership has tripled over the past two decades, and the seasoned scholar who often arrived at Bancroft after great travel and travail has been overtaken by the Berkeley undergraduate whose access to the collections via the Gladis or Melvyl systems is as close as a desktop computer.

In 1973, Berkeley undergraduates constituted only 12 percent of The Bancroft's users; today, they represent 27 percent of all users, and 56 percent of those affiliated with the campus. More than 1,000 undergraduates have registered to use the library since last July, and during peak periods of the semester, they have comprised more than half of the daily reading room traffic.

But undergraduates aren't the only members of the campus community flocking to Bancroft. In 1973, only 40 percent of the readers were affiliated with the university. Now, twenty years later, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction, with university affiliates making up 55 percent of the readership.

In part, the swing can be attributed to the nearly universal campus access to the library's catalogs. No longer constrained by place or time, the campus community can browse listings of Bancroft holdings at home or at work—anywhere there is a computer and a modem. The impact of Gladis is most evident in regard to Bancroft's manuscript holdings, which until recently were treasures often hidden to all but those who followed whispers and

rumors, or pored over the sometimes faded maps of earlier scholars. Perhaps a bit of romance has been lost, but in return Bancroft has become a far more integral part of the university research community.

This is not to suggest that Bancroft has become any less popular with its travelers from afar. While the percentage of off-campus users has dropped, the overall number of non-affiliated users has increased. Since the library's holdings are available worldwide on the Internet, a researcher in Boston or Bombay has equal access to the collections. And for those who cannot afford to travel, or for whom only a single item is of crucial interest, a simple letter can retrieve — through photocopy or microfilm — information that might not have been discoverable twenty years ago.

Not surprisingly, the most popular attraction for Bancroft researchers is the Western Americana collection which lies at the core of the library's holdings. Over 55 percent of the library's users owe a debt to Hubert Howe Bancroft's seminal collection and the vast amount of material added since its acquisition in 1905. The Rare Book and Modern Literature collections, merged with The Bancroft Collection in 1972, are used by 15 percent of Bancroft's readers. 12 percent of all registrants use the Latin American collections, 10 percent delve into the University Archives, and the remaining 8 percent divide themselves among the History of Science and Technology collection, the Pictorial collection and the Map collection.

Nearly 45 percent of Bancroft's users are engaged in academic research, ranging from term papers to dissertations, while 18 percent are researching articles or books intended for publication. 11 percent of the readers have been specifically assigned classroom projects utilizing Bancroft's resources. Readers pursuing personal or genealogical interests make up 23 percent of the clientele, and those with more commercial pursuits, 3 percent.

Since such detailed information was not collected until the advent of computer-based registration, it is difficult to know if present patterns of use differ from those of the past. But with such information literally at our fingertips, Bancroft's course can be charted with far greater accuracy, letting us know both where we have been and where it is we ought to go in the future.

Teri Rinne & Richard Ogar

## Desiderata

Bancroftiana from time to time publishes lists of books that the Library needs. We would be particularly pleased to receive gifts of any of the books listed below. If you can help us, please telephone Bonnie Bearden, Rare Books Acquisitions Assistant, 510-642-8171, or you may send a fax to 510-642-7589, send email to bbearden@library.berkeley.edu, or write a note.

ALLEN, WILLIAM G. *Wheatley, Banneker, and Horton; with selections from the poetical works of Wheatley and Horton, and the letter of Washington to Wheatley, and of Jefferson to Banneker*. Boston: D. Laing, 1849.

ATKINS, RUSSELL. *Phenomena*. Cleveland, OH: Free Lance Press, 1961

CROUCH, DORA P. *Spanish city planning in North America*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982.

CURTAY, JEAN-PAUL. *Lettrism and hypergraphics, the unknown avant-garde 1945-1985*. New York: Franklin Furnace, 1985.

DUMÉE, JANE. *Entretiens de Copernic, touchant la nobilité de la terre*. Paris: 1680.

GRIGGS, SUTTON ELBERT. *Imperium in imperio*. Cincinnati: Editor, 1899.

HENDERSON, JOSEPH W. *The Colored man and the ballot*. Oakland, CA: Henderson & Humphrey, 1888.

KIRKER, HAROLD. *California's architectural frontier; style and tradition in the nineteenth century*. San Marino, Calif., Huntington Library, 1960. (Our copy is falling apart; we have later editions, but would like a sound copy of the first edition.)

LOTHROP, GLORIA RICCI. *Chi Siamo, the Italians of Los Angeles*. Pasadena: Tabula Rasa Press, 1981.

MOORE, OLIVE. *The Apple is bitten again (self portrait)*. London, Wishart & co. [1934]

RIVERS, CONRAD KENT. *Dusk at Selma*. Cleveland: Free Lance Press, 1965.

———. *Perchance to dream, Othello*. Cleveland, OH: Free Lance Press, 1959.

———. *These black bodies and this sunburnt face*. Cleveland, OH: Free Lance Press, 1962.

SERRA, JUNIPERO. *Turning the tide, a letter written by Fray Junipero Serra, that sustained Spanish colonization of Alta California*. Los Angeles: Zamorano Club, 1970.

TOLBERT, EMORY J. *The UNIA and Black Los Angeles; ideology and community in the American Garvey movement*. Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, University of California, 1980.

WOODBAY, GEORGE WASHINGTON. *Black socialist preacher; the teachings of Reverend George Washington Woodbey and his disciple, Reverend G.W. Slater, Jr.* San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1983.

YOUNG, ANN ELIZA. *Life in Mormon bondage....* Philadelphia: Aldine Press [1908].

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