



NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY

# BANCROFTIANA

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*Hubert H. Bancroft*

## *Save the Redwoods League's Centennial Year*

It was 1917, and the world was at war. The United States was ramping up its industrial capacity to meet the demands of the first global conflict, and the markets for metals, coal, oil, fiber, and lumber were exploding. Across the American West, new mines opened and virgin forests fell to satisfy the unrelenting call for munitions, homes, clothing, and the expansion of America's nascent electric grid.

There were still vast old-growth forests in America then, including Douglas fir, western hemlock, and red cedar in the Pacific Northwest, and ponderosa pine from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. But the true behemoths were located in a narrow strip along the Northern California littoral: coast redwoods, the tallest trees in the world, second only in girth and volume to the giant sequoias on the west slopes of California's Sierra Nevada.

But while they had endured successive ice ages, the great trees were proving all too vulnerable to the demands of the industrial age. Most stands in and around the Bay Area had been clear-cut by the start of the twentieth century, and loggers were steadily working their way north. Three conservationists – John C. Merriam, Madison Grant and Henry Fairfield Osborn – were appalled by news of the rapid destruction of the North Coast's redwoods. Osborn's colleague, Stephen Mather, a Berkeley graduate and the first director of the National Park Service, encouraged them to investigate.

The three men drove north from the Bohemian Grove in Sonoma County, and what they found confirmed their worst fears. Along the Mendocino coast, they traveled through the heart of logging, milling, and shipping activities that had been underway for more than sixty years. Where the road turned inland into the watershed of the Eel River, however, they witnessed a primeval forest that was still mostly undisturbed. Though the three of them had seen many great forests in many parts of the world, this one caused them to bare their heads and whisper—or simply observe the scene in awestruck silence. They vowed to protect these magical forests.

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Redwoods like these in Fortuna, California, which were threatened by the development along U.S. Route 101 and the Eel River, inspired John C. Merriam, Madison Grant and Henry Fairfield Osborn to establish Save the Redwoods League. [Postcard of redwood scene in Fortuna, California, n.d.], from Postcards of California, Oregon, and Washington [graphic], BANC PIC 1999.011:092

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

# INCREASING ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL TREASURES



M.M. O'Shaughnessy with two workers on dam scaffolding, M.M. O'Shaughnessy photograph collection, BANC PIC 1992.058--PIC, Carton 5:40

The bounty, beauty, variety, and endless possibility of the American West have fired the imagination and drawn successive waves of settlers to this region since the advent of the Spanish in Mexico 500 years ago. Responses to the land and its peoples have been as different as the new arrivals were from each other and from the Indigenous population they displaced. Nowhere has the difference in their visions been more evident than in the ways they have engaged with the land itself.

Two Bancroft exhibitions last year presented contrasting responses to the opulence of the West. One emphasized efforts to preserve California's natural wonders and habitats for future generations. The other focused on projects that harnessed the energy and resources of the region to meet the needs and ambitions of its ever-growing population. The exhibitions gave visitors a chance to experience both these compelling points of view, which are extensively documented in Bancroft's rich collections on science, technology, and the environment in the West.

The primary focus of the gallery exhibition was the outstanding conservation effort of Save the Redwoods League. *Sustaining Grandeur: The First 100 Years of Save the Redwoods League* was the capstone event in a five-year partnership between Bancroft and California's second-oldest environmental organization. Our joint objective was to get the League's records and photographic collection transferred to Bancroft, arranged, cataloged, and open for research—in time to celebrate the League's hundredth anniversary with an exhibition of its materials in the Bancroft gallery. The centennial show opened in April 2018. Exhibition designer Gordon Chun transformed the gallery for the occasion into a cool foggy redwood grove, with big trees rising to the ceiling, brightly-colored banana slugs inching their way across video monitors on the wall, and everywhere the record of the League's sustained effort to preserve California's most ancient trees. This joint project is a fine example of the way Bancroft partners with other organizations and individuals to make accessible to the public chapters of Western history that we could not present without their help.

A smaller exhibit on the Bancroft mezzanine provided by contrast a retrospective look at the remarkable engineering feats of Michael Maurice O'Shaughnessy (1864–1934). *Engineering the Promised Land* looked at the natural wonders of the West through the eyes and projects of one of California's greatest early twentieth-century engineers. O'Shaughnessy served as San Francisco City Engineer from 1912 to 1932. He is best remembered in the Bay Area for developing the infrastructure of the city, and more widely as the father of the ever-controversial Hetch Hetchy Dam.

On St. Patrick's Day (by coincidence), Bancroft and UC Berkeley's Irish Studies Program welcomed a research team from the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI-G) that has collaborated for several years with Bancroft staff on the O'Shaughnessy archival collections held at each institution. At a reception in the Morrison Library, Galway colleagues Jamie Goggins, Chartered Engineer and senior lecturer in the School of Engineering, and Aisling Keane, digital archivist at the NUI-G Library, screened a short documentary film they had produced on the life and career of O'Shaughnessy. They were joined by Bancroft Western Americana curator Theresa Salazar and UC Berkeley Geography visiting scholar Gray Brechin, who introduced the Irish colleagues and the Bancroft exhibit.

Bancroft adopted the title of the film, *Engineering the Promised Land*, for its exhibit to stress the joint character of the Irish and California research projects on O'Shaughnessy; both the film and the Bancroft exhibit included material from each institution's collection. Together they represent the first fruits of a collaboration that both institutions hope will result eventually in making the complete O'Shaughnessy holdings accessible to researchers around the world in a linked online collection.

This issue of *Bancroftiana* focuses primarily on our extensive environmental collections. We describe just some of them to give you a sense of their wide scope and to encourage you to use them. Particularly important to the stories of western land use and conservation are the many excellent Oral History Center interviews with individuals who have helped make history in these fields. We list some of these as well to remind you of this rich category of evidence that complements and enhances so many other Bancroft collections. For this issue, the collaborative M. M. O'Shaughnessy project stands as a solitary witness to that other great story of engagement with the land in the American West—the history of the built environment. Bancroft collections documenting science, technology, and industry in the region also provide ample material for many more exhibitions and other issues of *Bancroftiana*. But that's another story.

*James D. Hart*

The James D. Hart Director  
The Bancroft Library



*Continued from page 1*



*Fern mats, like this one from Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, are found high in the canopy and develop on redwood branches hundreds of feet above the ground. They moderate the climate around them because of the rich moist soil they hold and so create a perfect habitat for insects and animals normally found on the forest floor. Stephen Sillett, [Canopy Fern Mat], 2011. Courtesy of Save the Redwoods League.*

By 1918 the appropriately named Redwood Highway was completed, extending U.S. Highway 101 from the Golden Gate Bridge to Del Norte County. It also provided easy access to the North Coast's ancient forest and billions of standing board feet of straight-grained redwood. Loggers swarmed, and the mill workers were right behind them. The great trees fell at an ever-accelerating pace.

Working with Mather, the three conservationists founded Save the Redwoods League in 1918. By the end of the 1920s, the League had established several memorial groves, driven the effort to secure the first acquisitions for Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, spearheaded the campaign to establish a California State Parks Commission, and led a successful effort to pass a state bond to acquire land for state parks. The League's approach to conservation differed from that of other conservationists of the period who championed a variety of causes and advocated political activism. Instead, the League focused on a single issue and emphasized collaboration. At the time the League was founded, the political situation on the North Coast made activism and organized resistance strategies largely ineffective for protecting redwoods. The land had been securely locked up by private timber interests and the trees were falling too fast. Only people with power of their own could make a difference.

"The League's founders and supporters were well-connected," says Sam Hodder, the League's President and Chief Executive Officer. "They had wealth and influence, and that was what was required to establish the first parks and preserves. They came along just when they were needed."

Save the Redwoods League became one of the nation's seminal conservation organizations, conceived as it was at a time of accelerating natural resource depletion and incipient public awareness of the consequences of unregulated logging, mining, and grazing. Much of the League's success can be attributed to Newton Drury, who served the organization in stints as Executive Director, President

and Chairman of the Board from 1919 until his death in 1978. He was also the fourth director of the National Park Service and served as chief of the California Division of Beaches and Parks. Drury, an early practitioner of public relations, was asked to handle fundraising and publicity for the League shortly after the organization was established.

"He was savvy when it came to making a case to the public," said Hodder. "He played a vital role in promoting the passage of 1928's six-million-dollar state bond measure to purchase state park lands."

In 1960, Save the Redwoods League began to donate its rich trove of documents and images to The Bancroft Library, augmenting the library's extensive environmental collections. Bancroft's environmental archives consist of about a hundred collections and related publications, ranging from those of mainline conservation groups, such as Save the Redwoods League and the Sierra Club, to the papers of smaller ad hoc organizations and the letters and publications of individuals prominent in the conservation movement.

In observance of the League's centennial year, in spring 2018 the League collaborated with The Bancroft Library to sponsor an exhibition on the century-long battle to protect the redwood forest, drawing extensively on the League collection.

"The connections between Save the Redwoods League and the University of California, Berkeley, are strong and deep," says Hodder. "Bancroft has been the best possible steward of our archives, safeguarding them for posterity and providing access to scholars and researchers from around the world. We're honored by our partnership."

"The League's archives are extensive," says Marjorie Bryer, Bancroft Accessioning and Processing Archivist. "There are more than 140 cartons of records, as well as a significant photograph collection that includes thousands of prints and negatives that document the League's work to preserve redwood forests."



While the Redwood Highway was the fuse that ultimately led to the explosive logging of the North Coast redwoods, the materials in the League's collection also indicate that the new road functioned as an alarm for fledgling conservationists.

"The highway increased the pressure to cut," Hodder said, "but it also focused attention on the cutting. Until the road went through, many of the redwoods were too inaccessible to be logged profitably. Their remoteness protected them. But the highway changed that dynamic. It forced the timber industry and the conservationists together. It made them recognize and deal with each other."

The collection also dovetails with other aspects of California history in significant ways. Bryer observes that, "While the focus of the collection concerns protection of the redwood forest, it also tells us a lot about the history of labor, class, and women in California, and shows how environmental history intersects with the political history of the state."

Land acquisition remained a priority for the League through the twentieth century, but development pressures also dictated intensive lobbying to mitigate the impact of destructive projects. The collection documents this evolution of the League's mission from the 1950s through the 1990s.



Dirt road curving through a stand of redwood trees. Mill Creek, Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. *Howard King, December 5, 1964. Save-the-Redwoods League photograph collection. BANC PIC 2006.030--NEG*

"Many of the reserves and parks were in main transportation corridors," Hodder says. "The League expanded its efforts from land acquisition to forest protection advocacy, not just for the parks and reserves but for all the redwood forest, including those areas that had not received designated safeguards. It's clear from the archives that the League's perspective was expanding to the landscape scale, to a view of the redwood forest that incorporated all component species and their interconnected relationships, not just ancient trees."

To a significant degree, the history of environmentalism in California is the history of environmentalism in general; the nation's embrace of wild land conservation and environmental regulation started with epiphanies in California. Further, the environmental movement doesn't stand discrete and isolated, separate from the social and economic turbulence of history. As confirmed in the Bancroft collections, environmentalism is a nexus involving a broad range of political and cultural theses.

Since its founding, Save the Redwoods League — in close collaboration with landowners, donors, public agencies, conservation organizations, and other partners — has protected more than 214,000 acres of California's redwood forest. In that time, the League worked to create 66 redwood parks and preserves and pioneered innovative, science-based forest-restoration work. It inspired millions of transformational experiences as generations of visitors from around the world have walked among the ancient, towering giants that were saved. The League has advanced scientific discovery high in the forest canopy and educated thousands of schoolchildren about the resilience of coast redwoods and giant sequoia. Through its research, the League has learned that redwood forests store more carbon per acre than any other forest in the world, confirming they are a critical resource in our response to climate change. Through its first century, the League's primary emphasis was on preservation and protection. While those goals remain paramount, the League has expanded its mission to include connection and restoration: establishing and maintaining forested corridors between preserves and parks, and revitalizing logged-over forests, accelerating the development of old-growth characteristics through innovative management that includes prescription fire, selective thinning and genomic research.

—Save the Redwoods League



## *Pete Bancroft (1930-2019), a Personal Recollection*

Paul Bancroft III—Pete, as he was universally known—passed away in his sleep on the afternoon of January 3, 2019. He had been suffering from squamous cell carcinoma in his throat for over a year.

I was fortunate enough to know him for more than twenty years. During that time not only did Pete and his wife, Monica, become two of The Bancroft Library's most generous donors, but they also became good friends of my wife Jamy and me. The relationship started slowly. We corresponded briefly in 1995 after I became director, but we didn't meet until 1998, when he and Monica came over to campus for the presentation of the Hubert Howe Bancroft Award to Jean Stone, the widow of Irving Stone. Shortly before that, at his daughter Kim Bancroft's urging, Pete had offered to give us the splendid roll top desk that had belonged to his great-grandfather Hubert Howe Bancroft (HH, as Pete used to call him), which was still in use at the family's Teton Ridge Ranch near Jackson Hole. I jumped at the chance, sight unseen. It still sits in Elaine Tennant's office, along with Robert Gordon Sproul's swivel desk chair. At the same time that he gave us the desk, Pete established an endowment in honor of his father, Paul Bancroft, Jr., who in fact had offered the desk to my predecessor, Jim Hart, in 1975.

In 2003 Pete and Monica moved back permanently to the Bay Area. I asked Pete if he would join the Council of the Friends of The Bancroft Library, and he immediately accepted. That was just about the time that we started raising funds for the complete renovation of the Doe Annex. Built in 1950, the Doe Annex was generic library space, but it had never functioned particularly well as Bancroft's home. We had been informed in 2001 that \$17 million in state seismic safety funding was available and that construction work would begin in 2005. However, if we wanted to make the building usable as well as safe, we would have to raise at least that much more.

With the help of a campaign committee co-chaired by former Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman and former Vice Chancellor-Development M. Watson "Mac" Laetsch, we came up with a list of potential donors. Pete was high on the list. In fact he was one of the first people I called, since I was pretty sure that he would get the campaign started with a substantial gift. I had very little experience in fundraising, but I did know how to approach someone on the telephone: "Pete, it's Charles Faulhaber. Can we have lunch? I want to ask you for some money." Pete replied, "all right, why don't you come over to San Francisco next week?"

At the appointed day, we had a lovely lunch, but I couldn't bring myself to make the "ask." Finally, over coffee, Pete asked me point-blank, "Didn't you have some



*Pete Bancroft circa 1975. Courtesy of Kim Bancroft.*

business to discuss?" "Yes," I replied, "I want to ask you for some money, and I have a figure in mind." "Oh, what's the figure?" Well, the figure was one million dollars, but I couldn't bring myself to say it, so I stammered out, "A hun-hundred thousand dollars?"

Pete looked at me poker-faced and then launched into a speech which seemed to go on for half an hour but, in fact, was probably more like thirty seconds. He mentioned that he and Monica had seven children between them and that they wanted to ensure that the kids were taken care of; and he noted that he still wanted to give some money to our mutual alma mater, Yale. As he talked, the figures were ratcheting down in my brain: \$75,000, \$50,000, \$25,000.... But then he said, "I knew we were going to have this conversation, so Monica and I talked about it last night. She told me, 'Pete, this library has your name on it.' And that's important to me, but I'm not going to give you \$100,000." He paused a beat as my face fell: "I'm going to give you a million." At which point I said, "I think I will have another glass of wine." And then he warned me, "That's it, though. Don't come back to me later and ask for more."

I went back to campus that day walking about three feet off the ground and told David Duer, the Library's Director of Development, what had just transpired. From that day to this I have enjoyed a totally undeserved reputation as a fund-raiser.

In late 2004, we were wrapping up the campaign, juggling “value engineering” to reduce the cost of the project against the need for more money to make the numbers work. At the end of one of our meetings, Pete came up to me and said, “I think I can do a little bit more.” “But Pete, you told me not to ask you for more.” “Well, that was then, and this is now.” Indeed, he made an additional gift of half a million dollars.

Bancroft’s collections and staff moved out of the Doe Annex between 2005 and 2008 while the building was gutted down to the bare walls and floors and totally reconfigured. At the ceremony inaugurating the newly renovated building Pete was one of the speakers, offering an eloquent summation of HH’s goal for The Bancroft Library: to serve as the historical memory of the American West, the first and largest such library for any region in the country.

Pete was keenly aware of HH’s historical innovations, from the invention of the 3 × 5 card index for the catalog of his library to the use of oral histories, his “dictations,” in the 39 volumes of *Bancroft’s Works*. In 2007 he approached me with a suggestion that Bancroft organize an oral history series on the beginnings of venture capitalism in the Bay Area in the 1960s, a movement that had been the motor behind California’s supremacy in information technology and biotechnology. This was something about which he could speak authoritatively, since he had been a general partner with the pioneer VC firm of Draper Gaither & Anderson. He was also a founding director of the National Venture Capital Association and its president in 1976-1977. For the project Pete recruited twenty of his contemporaries, all of them legendary figures in the VC world, and provided the bulk of the funding.

Pete was aided and abetted in projects supporting Bancroft by his daughter Kim, who received her Ph.D. from Berkeley in 2005 and taught in high schools and colleges all over the Bay Area, and even in Mexico, for three decades before returning to her first love, writing and editing. In addition to preparing a splendid abridged edition of HH’s autobiography, *Literary Industries* (2014), she also edited the series of oral histories she had done with Pete starting in 2000 into a lovely and touching autobiography, *Paul the Tyrant, Pete the Lamb* (2018). I was astonished to hear Pete called “Paul the Tyrant.” I only knew Pete the Lamb.

During these years Jamy and I became increasingly close to Pete and Monica. In 2008 they invited us to join them and their children, Chris and Leighton Devine, on a week-long trip on the canal barge *Amaryllis* in Burgundy, through some of the greatest vineyards in the world, just the six of us. In 2012 we joined Pete and Monica, Chris, Leighton, and Greg and Wendy Bancroft on a three-week photo safari to Kenya. We hopped between deluxe tent accommodations (hot showers and solar power!) and high-end lodges, ending up in the Masai Mara in southern Kenya. The following year Pete and Monica joined us and Bancroft Friends Tom and Kiyoko Woodhouse on a Cal



*Pete Bancroft and his wife, Monica, attended the annual meeting of the Friends of The Bancroft Library in June 2015.*



*Pete Bancroft, his daughter, Kim Bancroft, and Bancroft director emeritus Charles Faulhaber celebrated Charles's retirement in the beautiful Heyns Reading Room in June 2011.*



*Monica and Pete Bancroft celebrated the rededication of The Bancroft Library in October 2008 after years of fundraising to retrofit the building for seismic safety.*



Discoveries trip to Morocco. As I wrote to a friend at the time, “Pete and Monica are real troopers. We were moving fast and they kept up with the best of us, even when Jamy and I were gasping for breath.”

When I retired in 2011, the Council of the Friends of The Bancroft Library, with Pete’s generous support, established an endowment fund in my name to mark my sixteen years of service to Bancroft. In the summer of 2013 while Pete and I were chatting before a campfire in the woods near the Russian River, he told me he was thinking of adding some money to that endowment. As we talked, I told him that I had an idea for him to think about. Because of his long-standing interest in oral history, I proposed that he consider the possibility of building on the existing Faulhaber endowment of about \$500,000 to bring the corpus up to a total of \$2 million to support the oral history program. After giving the idea some thought, Pete agreed to it, and with Elaine Tennant’s help we set about the project. Pete would commit \$500,000 outright and then make a second gift of \$500,000 as a challenge grant. He had only one stipulation. He had never liked the name of the Regional Oral History Office, finding it too restrictive in relation to the far-ranging work of the program. If Elaine could change the name to something less limiting, he would go ahead. Elaine could, and he did.

Thus the Charles B. Faulhaber Endowment for the Director of the Oral History Center of The Bancroft Library was established in 2014, with Martin Meeker as the first incumbent. Pete not only provided the initial funding, he also did most of the fund-raising for the challenge grant by calling on his network of venture capitalist colleagues: Dave Bossen, Bill Bowes, Bill Draper, Bill Edwards, Ed Glassmeyer, Pitch Johnson, Dick Kramlich, Charles Lea, Burt McMurtry, Art Rock, and Toby Schwartzburg.

Over the past four years Pete’s engagement with Bancroft continued enthusiastically. After Jeffrey Mackie-Mason became University Librarian, he and Elaine put their heads together to establish an \$8 million campaign to support Bancroft’s Western Americana collections and programs, far and away the library’s most heavily used resource. Pete put up \$1 million as a lead gift, and an anonymous donor contributed \$3 million for an initial \$4 million challenge grant.

Pete’s philanthropy was always hands-on and not limited to Bancroft. I am personally aware of two of his other projects. His son Greg put him in touch with Harry Bologna, a former Navy SEAL who lost both legs in Afghanistan. Pete led a campaign to raise money for his rehabilitation. He also became heavily involved with the Gladstone Institute at UC San Francisco, which works on cutting-edge medical research.

This past fall, as it became clear that Pete’s struggle against cancer was not going well, I proposed that we establish the Pete Bancroft Endowment for the Bancroft Oral History Center in his honor, as part of the Western Americana campaign. I had to get Pete’s permission first; it was a tough sell. He said, “After all, the library already has

my name on it.” “Yes, Pete, but you have friends and colleagues who love and respect you and would be grateful to demonstrate those feelings.” In November Pitch Johnson made the lead pledge of \$250,000 in order to establish the fund, and in the days and weeks following, Pete’s friends began to write checks and make pledges. Just before Christmas I got a call from Pete to tell me that he wanted to make a large gift to the endowment as part of his estate plans, a gift that arrived at the end of December. Pete was thinking of The Bancroft Library to the very end. Fund-raising for this endowment continues.

He was a wonderful man and a wonderful friend. I miss him terribly.

—Charles Faulhaber  
*Director Emeritus*



To make a donation to the Pete Bancroft Endowment for the Oral History Center please visit <https://give.berkeley.edu/> and search for “Pete Bancroft”.

We are grateful to the following for gifts to fund W8648 through July 31, 2019:

Grace Arnold, Jean-Pierre Bailly, John Baker, Sr., Bessemer Trust Company, Linda & Neill Brownstein, Sam Butler, Jay & Pat Cahill, Duncan Chapman, Shanti Corrigan, Alan Dachs, Byron Deeter, Bill & Phyllis Draper, Charles & Jamy Faulhaber, Bill & Sakurako Fisher, Jim Gaither, Bruce Gelb, Ed & Penny Glassmeyer, Ira Hannon, Elaine Hilp, George Hume, Pitch & Cathie Johnson, Sande & Michael Marston, Marilee Matteson, Bill & Eve Price, Toby & Evelyn Rosenblatt, Paul & Elle Stephens, Elaine Tennant, Anne & Putney Westerfield, Sandy & Jennifer Williams, Blake Winchell.



EXHIBITION OPENING

# Sustaining Grandeur – The First 100



*Elaine Hartogian Anderson and Louise Gregory smile at the exciting addition of Save the Redwoods League materials to Bancroft's environmental collections.*



*Visitors closely examine materials from the League's collection, which are now available for researchers.*



*League staff Jennifer Benito-Kowalski, Rolando Cohen, and Suzanne Moss join supporters Peter Frazier, Robin Frazier, Noel Kirshenbaum, and Sarah Connick to celebrate the success of a team effort.*



*Bancroft Deputy Director Peter Hanff and Jennifer Charney of Save the Redwoods League share a laugh at the opening.*



*Rosanna Petralia of California State Park and Ellen Barth share a word about their experiences in conservation.*



*Curator Theresa Salazar and longtime Redwoods and Bancroft supporter Mrs. Meri Jaye enjoy the opportunity to catch up.*



# Years of Save the Redwoods League



*The exhibition featured a multi-media installation on complex forest habitats.*



*Visitors admire a year's worth of natural beauty in the Save The Redwoods League calendar.*



*Roger Samuelsen, Shanti Corrigan, and Jeane Samuelsen discuss the important work of Save the Redwoods League.*



*Peter Frazier, Natalie Mottley, Peggy Light, and Sam Hodder, President and Chief Executive Officer, Save the Redwoods League, learn more about the protection of redwoods.*



*Robin Frazier, Peter Frazier, and Jennifer Benito-Kowalski congratulate each other on the centenary exhibition that was years in the planning.*



*Visitors gather around various installations to learn more about the efforts of Save the Redwoods League*



# THE BANCROFT LIBRARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL COLLECTIONS



*Carleton Watkins, La Capitaine, 3300 feet, circa 1878. BANC PIC 1959.066:14--C*

In the nineteenth century, the American West, a seemingly endless expanse of nature, became the principal arena in which the growing struggle between land preservationists and commercial developers of natural resources played out. From the later 1800s to the present, natural resources in the West have often been consumed indiscriminately and with adverse environmental consequences. Mining, lumbering, and agricultural development have all resulted in decimation of natural habitats and deterioration of forests and other landscapes, as well as in loss of native species, including redwood trees, throughout California. Population growth in the West

has impacted limited water resources and air quality, and compromised living conditions for human inhabitants of both urban and rural areas. Those concerned with stopping unregulated development and destruction of land have battled with powerful opponents. The extraordinary leadership and foresight of individuals in the environmental movement have enabled environmentalists to address these challenges and issues. The impressive archival holdings of The Bancroft Library allow researchers to look retrospectively at the environmental issues that activists have confronted in the American West as they study more recent activism.



## THE SIERRA CLUB

The Bancroft Library holds the records of some of the principal environmental groups, including those of the oldest environmental organization in the country, the Sierra Club, founded in 1892. John Muir, who campaigned tirelessly to protect Yosemite Valley and the Sierra from development and exploitation, was a founding member and the club's first president. Muir believed that the rights of nature were as important as the rights of humans. The proposal to dam the Hetch Hetchy Valley within Yosemite National Park was diametrically opposed to this essential precept of wilderness conservation. It pitted the citizens of San Francisco and their need for water against the great wilderness of Yosemite. The project crystallized the resolve of Muir and his followers to preserve the wilderness, but the construction of the Hetch Hetchy Dam despite their efforts was a huge defeat for Muir and the early environmental movement. Richly documented in the club's papers is the transformation of the organization after Muir's death from a club largely for climbers, hikers, and campers focused on experiencing nature, into an activist organization concerned with broader national environmental issues. Sierra Club members successfully opposed the government's plans to dam a river flowing through Dinosaur National Monument, which would have flooded sections of national park lands. Under the passionate leadership of Club president David Brower, the club used advertising and media to promote environmental causes. With the publication of Sierra Club books such as *Time and the River Flowing* (1964), Brower convinced both the public and politicians that a Grand Canyon dam would destroy many exquisite parts of the surrounding park. Later, opposition to Secretary of the Interior James Watt's pro-use agenda sparked a near doubling in club membership from 181,000 members in 1980 to 346,000 in 1983. The Sierra Club continues to fight for the preservation of wilderness and the protection of national parks.

## SAVE THE REDWOODS LEAGUE

In 1917 John C. Merriam, Henry Fairfield Osborn, and Madison Grant drove north to survey the redwoods along the California coast. After witnessing the logging devastation along the Redwood Highway, the three resolved to organize an effort to save the redwoods. Thus, in 1918 the second-oldest environmental organization in California, Save the Redwoods League, began its steadfast focus on preserving California's sublime redwoods. The League has purchased tracts of land and lobbied local, state, and national governments for further preservation of these forests. Since 1918 it has helped to establish 66 redwood parks and purchased more than 200,000 acres of redwood land for the California Redwood State Parks, Redwood and Sequoia National Parks, and many local parks and reserves.

While the advocacy paths of the Sierra Club and Redwoods League have taken them in a variety of directions, both groups have evolved over time from organizations of mainly amateur, often recreational advocates, to include as well highly trained professionals with a variety of skills and expertise in lobbying, public relations, science, and law.



Redwood Trees, Santa Cruz Mountains, California. This lithograph by L. Prang and Co. is based on a painting from the early 1870s by John Ross Key, who had a studio in San Francisco from 1870 to 1873.  
BANC PIC 1963.002:0680--A



Carleton Watkins, Mount Broderick and Nevada Fall, 1861.  
BANC PIC 1905.17143:048--ffALB



## ROBERT MARSHALL AND THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

The Bancroft Library also holds the papers of Robert Marshall, an expert climber and a passionate advocate for wilderness preservation, who was a sympathetic supporter of the poor and powerless. His vision of how man and nature should co-exist anticipated the complexities and competing concerns of the environmental movement in the second half of the twentieth century. Marshall was adamantly against private control of American forests and he fought hard for public ownership to protect those spaces. He, like John Muir, saw the aesthetic value of nature, but he also felt that this experience should not be reserved for an elite few. Rather, he felt that parks were intended for the broader American public, including disadvantaged and less privileged people. In 1935 Marshall, along with Robert Sterling Yard of the National Park Service, Benton MacKaye, the “Father of the Appalachian Trail,” and Aldo Leopold, a wildlife ecologist at the University of Wisconsin and author of the classic environmental text *Sand County Almanac* (1949), started the Wilderness Society. Marshall began his unprecedented work on wilderness preservation as a forester working for the Office of Indian Affairs and the National Forest Service. The archive includes his writings and photographs related to his field work mapping the Koyukuk area of Alaska, his influential writings that shaped U.S. Forest Service policy on wilderness designation, and his work with the Wilderness Society, whose mission to preserve pristine wild areas and protect national monuments throughout the country continues. Bancroft also holds hundreds of volumes from Aldo Leopold’s personal library. (See *The Aldo Leopold and A. Starker Leopold Collection*, <https://tinyurl.com/y57tx4gk>.)

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The individuals who first envisioned and developed the notion of the national park did so with a variety of motivations. When Congress granted Yosemite Valley to the State of California in 1864, the stage was set for further congressional action on land preservation. In 1872 the Department of the Interior reserved Yellowstone as a public park, making it the first national park in the world. Congress continued to establish more national parks, including Sequoia, Yosemite, Mt. Rainier, Crater Lake, and Glacier. In 1915, during the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Stephen Mather and Horace Albright (both members of the University of California Class of 1912) held an inaugural conference of federal park supervisors on the Berkeley campus to campaign for a national parks bureau that could manage the growing organizational challenge of all the new parks and monuments. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson created the National Park Service. Mather became its first director, and Albright the second. The Bancroft Library’s holdings include the papers of Stephen Mather and an oral history with Horace Albright.

Once established, the National Park Service came to oversee more and wider land holdings as individuals lobbied Congress in support of parks. The Bancroft Library holds the papers of some of those individuals, including Francis Farquhar, a conservationist and prominent member of the Sierra Club, who was an advocate for the parks and instrumental in the creation of Kings Canyon National Park in 1940. Bancroft also holds the papers of William Penn Mott, Jr., who served as director of the National Park Service during the Reagan administration. Mott dedicated his career to public parks, serving at each level of park management, from local to regional to state to national. Working for the Oakland Park Department and the East Bay Regional Park District, Mott was the staunch advocate of a long-term vision for maintaining public spaces, privileging park development over economic development. He helped substantially increase the acreage of park holdings in the Bay Area and introduced the Bay Area Ridge Trail. His successes prompted Governor Ronald Reagan to name Mott the director of the California State Department of Parks and Recreation, a position he held from 1967 to 1975. Mott’s vision also earned him the job of director of the United States National Park Service from 1985 to 1989. Mott supported several controversial policies, including the 1988 decision to allow the Yellowstone wildfires to burn and the program to reintroduce wolves into Yellowstone National Park. Until the end of his public service career, Mott remained committed to cultivating a relationship between protected natural environments and the people who need and enjoy them.

## GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to federal agencies like the National Park Service, the National Forest Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency, non-governmental organizations actively tackle environmental issues and have been able to effect impressive changes. Individual citizens and grassroots organizations confront issues as diverse as preservation of natural scenery, protecting native plants and animals, restoring deteriorating water systems, urban development, and environmental justice. Bancroft collects the records of, among other organizations, Save San Francisco Bay Association, Friends of the River Foundation, Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides in Northern California, Arizona Toxics Information, and Get Oil Out, which address a variety of issues related to environmental quality and environmental justice. While many of these groups work locally, they exist within a global structure, too. Organizations like Friends of the Earth, Rainforest Action Network, Earth Island, and the Urban Habitat Program offer international complements to local work. Awareness and support of the environmental movement by individual citizens and policymakers in the West at all levels of government are greater than ever.



## WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Women have been key players in the environmental movement, and Bancroft's archives richly reflect their inimitable contributions. In 1959 the Army Corps of Engineers published a report titled *Future Development of the San Francisco Bay Area, 1960-2020*, recommending that cities along the San Francisco Bay reclaim land along their waterfronts in order to accommodate the burgeoning Bay Area population. Drawn together by their mutual concern about the fate of the San Francisco Bay, three women associated with the University of California—Catherine Kerr, wife of UC President Clark Kerr, Ester Gulick, wife of UC Berkeley Professor Charles A. Gulick, and Sylvia McLaughlin, wife of UC Regent and Professor Donald Hamilton McLaughlin—sought to stop the pollution and destruction of the Bay. The work of their Save San Francisco Bay Association (SSFBA) supported the passage of the McAteer-Petris Act in 1965, which preserved San Francisco Bay from indiscriminate filling. In 1969 the McAteer-Petris Act was amended to make the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) a permanent agency. Bancroft's records reflect SSFBA's successful efforts to halt the growth of urban development along the Bay waterfront and to help the public gain access to and appreciation of the Bay and its shoreline. The SSFBA (now Save the Bay) has been in existence for fifty-eight years and is still going strong.

In 1952 Margaret Wentworth Owings began her first battle for the environment in Carmel, California, where she worked to preserve the San Jose Creek Beach. She worked tirelessly on efforts to protect sea lions, sea otters, and mountain lions. Appointed to the State Park Commission Board, she served from 1963 to 1969. Owings worked to prevent freeway construction through the Redwood National Park on the California coast.

Cornelia (Peggy) Elliott came to San Francisco to work as a copywriter at the end of World War II. In 1947 she met and married Edgar Wayburn, a conservationist and future president of the Sierra Club. Peggy Wayburn authored four books on Alaska that were key to the Wayburns' campaign to save the Alaskan wilderness. Their work helped pass the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980, which preserved over 100 million acres of wilderness, national parks, and national wildlife refuges. Locally, the Wayburns helped establish Point Reyes National Seashore in 1962, Redwood National Park in 1968, and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1972.



Botanist Alice Eastwood was the longtime curator of botany at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. She worked for the preservation of redwood trees in Humboldt County. In 1953, the California Spring Blossom and Wildflower Association, a group she helped found thirty years earlier, dedicated a grove in her honor. Unknown photographer, [Alice Eastwood with plant press], 1913, Warner Hot Springs, San Diego Co., Alice Eastwood papers (MSS. 142). Courtesy of California Academy of Sciences.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

### INTERVIEWS WITH ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Continuing a tradition that begins with Hubert Howe Bancroft's own dictations, the Oral History Center (OHC) has for decades interviewed the individuals who were making environmental history in the West. These interviews on the protection of the environment and the management of natural resources are another major strength of Bancroft's environmental holdings. Since 1954, OHC has interviewed hundreds of individuals about grassroots environmental activism, environmental law and public policy, large membership-driven organizations, and parks and open spaces. This collection includes major interviews with David Brower of the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, photographer and conservationist Ansel Adams, SSFBA (Save the Bay) founder Sylvia McLaughlin, and Horace Albright. The collection includes extensive projects dedicated to the Sierra Club, Save the Bay, California water resources, the California Coastal Commission, the U.S. Forest Service, and more.

Researchers use Bancroft's rich archival holdings on the environmental movement to explore far-reaching topics as diverse as land and water conservation, public policy, environmental justice, and the complex narrative of man's interaction with nature. Taken together, the manuscript, pictorial, and oral history collections present remarkable and lively dialogs (sometimes quite literally!) about the origins, history, and fate of the environment of the American West.

—Theresa Salazar  
Curator, Western Americana Collection

—Martin Meeker  
Director, Oral History Center



## SELECTED ENVIRONMENTAL COLLECTIONS AT BANCROFT



### Environmental Movements

- Sierra Club Records and Pictorial Collection
- Save the Redwoods League Records and Photographs
- Save San Francisco Bay Association (now Save the Bay)
- Tuolumne River Preservation Trust Records and Photograph Collection
- Conservation Associates Records
- Point Reyes National Seashore Foundation Records
- Urban Habitat Program Records
- Friends of the River Foundation Records, 1970–1983
- Friends of the Earth Records, 1987–2001

Left: *Leland Curtis (1897–1989), Mt. McGee, 1939, gouache.*  
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### Individual Conservationists

- LeConte Family Papers
- John Muir Collection of Papers
- Robert Underwood Johnson Papers
- Francis P. Farquhar Papers and Pictorial Collection
- William Colby Papers
- Sierra Club Members Papers, 1892–
- David R. Brower Papers and Pictorial Collection
- Michael McCloskey Sierra Club Papers, 1950–1999
- Michael L. Fischer Sierra Club Papers, 1986–1990
- Carl Pope Papers
- Robert Marshall Papers and Photograph Collection
- Sylvia McLaughlin Papers
- Kent Dedrick Papers
- Stephen Tyng Mather Papers
- Robert Bradford Marshall Papers
- William Penn Mott, Jr. Papers and Pictorial Collection
- Margaret Wentworth Owings Papers and Photograph Collection
- Edgar Wayburn Papers
- Peggy Wayburn Papers and Photograph Collection
- Sally Reid Papers
- Florence Merriam Bailey Papers, 1887–1940
- Aldo Leopold and A. Starker Leopold Book Collection

## SELECTED ENVIRONMENTALIST INTERVIEWS HISTORIES FROM OHC

### Sierra Club

- David Brower - Sierra Club ED, Friends of the Earth
- Doris Cellarius - Grassroots Activist, Hazardous Waste
- Cicely Christy, Wanda B. Goody, Ethel Rose Taylor Horsfall, Harriet T. Parsons - Women of the Sierra Club
- Polly Dyer - Sierra Club in the Northwest
- Brook Evans and W. Lloyd Tupling - National Lobbying Program
- Francis Farquhar - National Parks and the Sierra Club
- Carl Pope - Sierra Club executive director
- Edgar Wayburn - Sierra Club president
- Peggy Elliott Wayburn - Author and Environmental Advocate
- John Zierold - Environmental Lobbyist
- Michael McCloskey - Sierra Club executive director

### Government Agencies and the Environment

- Frank Adams - Irrigation, Reclamation, and Water Administration
- Horace Albright - National Park Service, and Mining Executive
- Joseph Bodovitz - Bay Conservation Development Commission, Coastal Commission
- George Collins - Park Planning and Preservation
- Newton Drury - National Park Service, Save the Redwoods League
- Michael Fischer - California Coastal Commission
- Luna Leopold - Hydrology and Environmental Policy
- William Penn Mott, Jr. - Director of the National Park Service
- Mel Nutter - Environmental Attorney and Advocate
- Gary Patton - Environmental Attorney and Advocate
- Alan Sieroty - California State Assemblyman and Senator
- Will Travis - Bay Conservation Development Commission, and Coastal Commission

### Individual Interviews

- Ansel Adams - Nature Photographer, Conservationist
- Martha Gerbode - Environmentalist and Philanthropist
- Bruce Howard - Save the Redwoods League
- Sylvia McLaughlin - Citizen Activist, Save the Bay
- Margaret Wentworth Owings - Artist, Wildlife Defender
- Edwin Philip Pister - Preserving Native Fish
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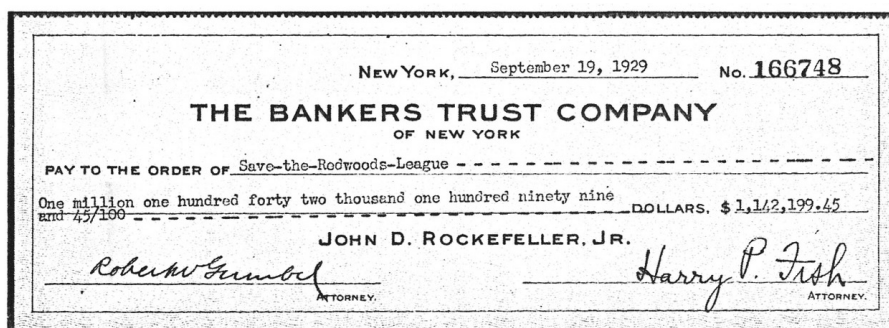


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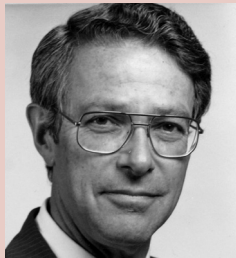
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the Bancroft Corridor Cases  
between Doe Library and  
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