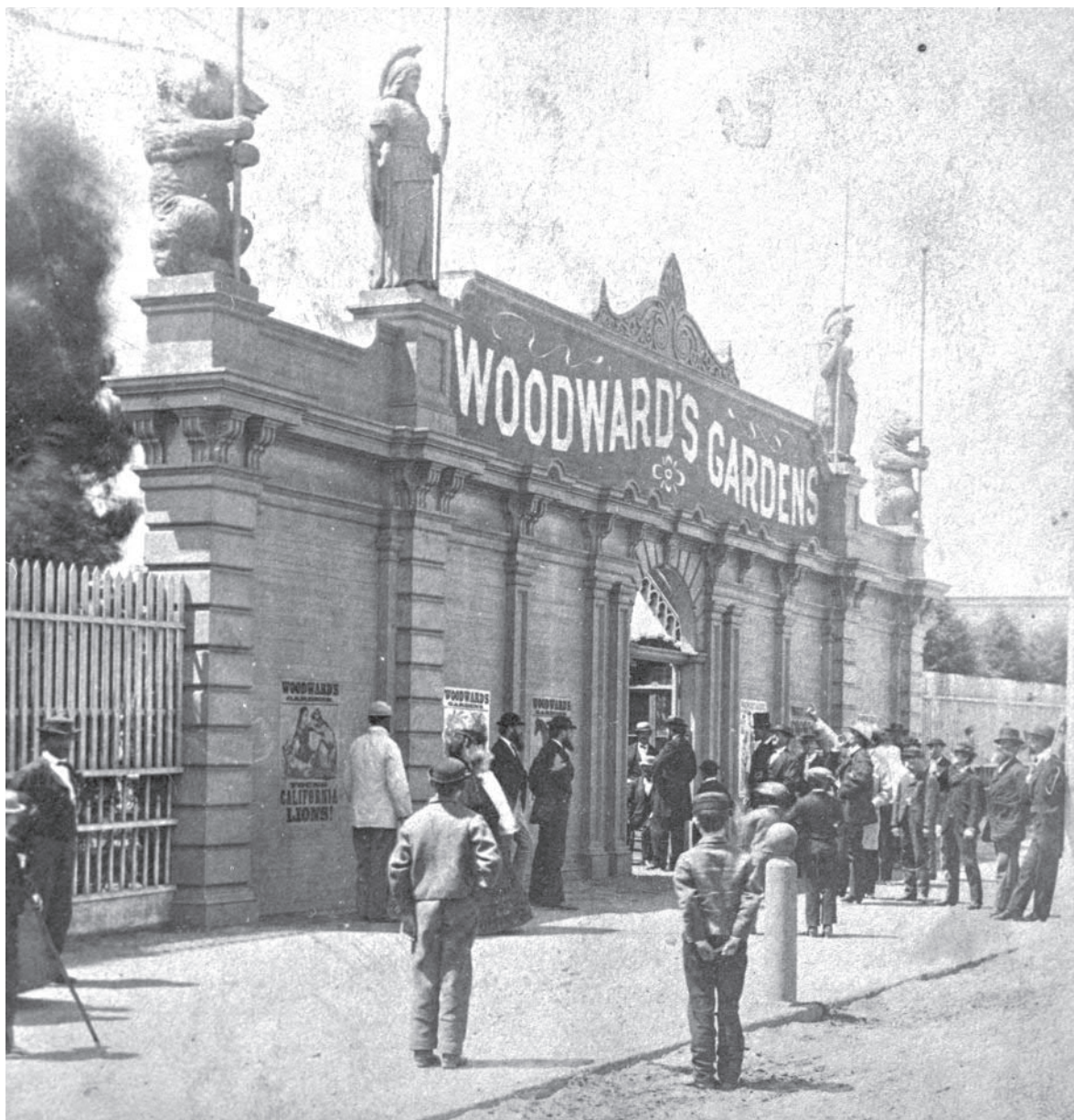


THE ARGONAUT

JOURNAL OF THE SAN FRANCISCO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



THE ARGONAUT

Journal of the San Francisco Historical Society

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HONORING THE LIFE OF CHARLES FRACCHIA:

*Historian, Writer, Teacher, Friend
With Love and Gratitude*



AUGUST 10, 1937–JULY 21, 2021

Charles Fracchia died peacefully on July 21, 2021. One of San Francisco's most respected historians, Charles gave countless gifts to the city he loved. He founded the San Francisco Historical Society in 1988 and built it into one of the finest historical societies in the country. He led 17 historical walking tours for two generations of San Franciscans, inspiring residents and visitors to explore all parts of the city. A natural teacher and brilliant orator, Charles taught history courses at USF, the Fromm Institute, San Francisco State, and City College—and he lectured at venues throughout the city.

Charles was a true Renaissance man. After a successful career in investment banking, he turned his attention to writing and teaching. He was the author of nearly 20 books and, for more than 25 years, served as publisher of SFHS's historical journal, *The Argonaut* and its quarterly newsletter, *Panorama*. He was the founder of both publications, which, for more than 30 years, have told the stories of San Francisco's past, weaving together the many diverse narratives that have led to the city's present. Charles loved the history of our city. He knew it well, and he readily shared his vast knowledge with irrepressible enthusiasm.

Charles also loved clubs. He was an active member of the Book Club of California, the University Club, the Lotos Club of New York, E Clampus Vitus, and the Association Nationale de Bibliophilie. He was a Fellow of the California Historical Society and one of the founders of Rolling Stone magazine.

Charles was a wise mentor, a faithful friend, and a trustworthy confidant. His intelligence, compassion, and quick (sometimes wicked) wit will be dearly missed by the many, many people who love him. He and his wife Liz were generous hosts; a dinner party in San Francisco or a weekend at their home in Sutter Creek was an experience long cherished.

A requiem mass was held on Tuesday, July 27, at Star of the Sea Church in San Francisco to honor Charles's long life and many accomplishments.

♥ ♥ ♥ We miss you, Charles ♥ ♥ ♥

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY CHARLES FRACCHIA

- John Maynard Keynes: book collector*, 1968
- Second Spring: The Coming of Age of U.S. Catholicism*, 1971, 1980
- Converted into Houses* (with Jeremiah O. Bragstad), 1976
- Melville in San Francisco*, 1977
- How to Be Single Creatively*, 1979
- Living Together Alone: The New American Monasticism*, 1979
- So This Is Where You Work! A Guide to Unconventional Working Environments*, 1979, 1985
- Junk Bonds: A Guide to Aggressive, High-Yield Investing*, 1980
- Certificate of the Stock Exchange Association* (with Dr. Albert Shumate), 1971, 1982
- Fire & Gold: The San Francisco Story*, 1994
- Fire & Gold: The San Francisco Story, Educational Edition*, 1997
- City by the Bay: A History of Modern San Francisco*, 1997
- A History of Modern San Francisco, 1945–Present*, 1997
- The Golden Dream: California from Gold Rush to Statehood* (with Kerry Drager), 1997
- San Francisco: From the Gold Rush to Cyberspace* (with Thomas Stauffer), 2000
- San Francisco, Yesterday and Today*, 2008
- When the Water Came Up to Montgomery Street: San Francisco During the Gold Rush*, 2009
- Palimpsest: A Man's Life in San Francisco* (fiction), 2015
- Misfits, Merchants, and Mayhem: Tales from San Francisco's Historic Waterfront 1849–1934* (Lee Bruno & Charles Fracchia), 2018



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PUTTING SAN FRANCISCO ON THE MAP

Part 1: A Riddle Wrapped in a Mystery, Inside an Enigma

by Angus Macfarlane

Winston Churchill's 1939 characterization of the Soviet Union can also describe an equally perplexing item displayed in the sixth-floor elevator lobby of the Main San Francisco Public Library. The object is a large, 167-year-old map of San Francisco that is in such poor condition that it rejects close-up inspection. Very few of the library's staff or patrons give it more than a passing glance, if that. A better copy is at the Mechanics' Institute, and a superior version sold at auction for \$43,000 in 2013. The one in this essay is courtesy of the Maclean Collection of Chicago.

This map by R. P. Bridgens (henceforth "Bridgens Map"), printed in 1854, is a derivative (copy) of a map printed in 1850. On Christmas Day of that year, city newspapers acknowledged receipt of "a complete . . . [and] excellent map" of San Francisco by civil engineer S. H. Marlette (henceforth "Marlette Map"). Earlier in the year the *Official Map of San Francisco* by City Surveyor William Eddy had been published and widely distributed. What happened in that time that apparently made Eddy's map obsolete, and Marlette's map "complete"? Statehood? Hardly.

Thus, the *riddle*.

Unfortunately, Marlette's map no longer exists and the reason for its printing is forgotten. Thankfully, between 1851 and 1854 at least four derivatives were printed, providing clues to the lost map's details. As mentioned above, one of the derivatives of the Marlette Map is the San Francisco Library's 1854 Bridgens Map.

The Bridgens Map, like its progenitors, is an artifact from San Francisco's nascent years, representing more dream than reality. East of Larkin Street to the waterfront, a distance of 1.4 miles, the map shows the familiar cartographic landscape of Eddy's *Official Map of San Francisco* of four years earlier. However, west of Larkin Street to the western edge of the Bridgens map, unmapped by Eddy, it is 1.5 miles.

In Bridgens' west-of-Larkin-Street dreamscape streets are named for prominent pre-statehood San Franciscans unknown to us today: Hervey Sparks, Bethuel Phelps, Dexter W. Wright, and Archibald C. Peachy, among others. Who were these pioneers? Whose dream was it? How did it come about? How was it to be realized?

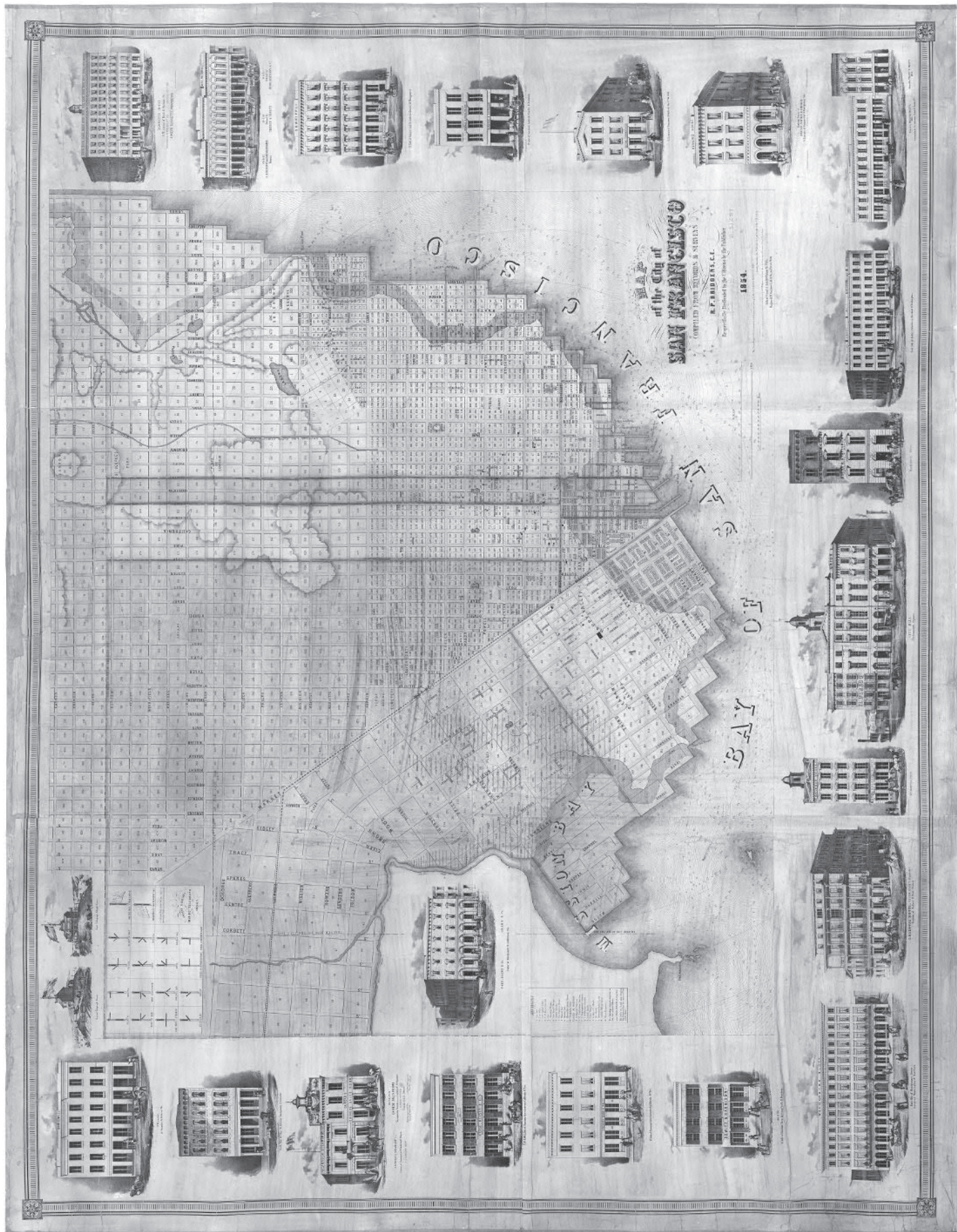
This is our *mystery*.

Our *enigma* is what happened to that dream city west of Larkin Street.

The intent of this two-part article is to:

- reconstruct Marlette's lost 1850 map
- explain its purpose
- connect it to the 1854 Bridgens map, and
- solve the cartographic conundrum of the origin and fate of the west-of-Larkin-Street dream.

To do so, we will extract cartographic DNA from an atlas of other forgotten San Francisco maps to reanimate the extinct 1850 Marlette Map and learn how San Francisco was literally and figuratively put on the map.



Bridgens map of San Francisco, published 1854. Courtesy of Maclean Collection.

In addition, we will recognize four men variously responsible for the naming of San Francisco, the mapping of both east and west of Larkin Street, and creating the west-of-Larkin dream. They are a descendant of American colonial nobility, an Irish immigrant, a Kentucky newspaper man, and arguably the most influential Californio in pre-statehood California. These men are respectively Thomas Larkin, Jasper O'Farrell, Robert Semple, and Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo.

To fully understand and appreciate the roles that our leading men-of-interest played and how they related to one another in this historical tapestry, we need to know something about them and review some early California and San Francisco history.

TODAY IT IS SAN FRANCISCO.
PREVIOUSLY, IT WAS YERBA BUENA,
SPANISH FOR GOOD HERB.¹

The first civilian settlement on the northern end of the peninsula was established in 1835, when William Richardson built his residence near a cove on the bay where the fragrant, minty good herb grew in abundance. In 1792 British naval explorer Captain George Vancouver visited and noted "Yerba Buena Cove, that most excellent bay," which offered a sheltered anchorage.² But before it was San Francisco, or Yerba Buena, or Yerba Buena Cove, it was San Francisco Bay.

Gaspar de Portolá's expedition in 1769 comprised the first Europeans to see San Francisco Bay. If not for a series of close calls, near misses, errors, and accidents, San Francisco Bay might have been discovered as much as 190 years earlier.

Miguel Costanso, an army engineer and cartographer, was a member of Portolá's expedition, which stumbled upon San Francisco Bay while searching for Monterey Bay.³ Costanso's map of the discovery, published in 1771, refers to *Pto de S. Francisco* (Point San Francisco) and *Estero de S. Francisco* (San Francisco estuary). He also designates *Pto de los Reyes* (Point Reyes) and *Los Farellones* (the Farallon Islands).

What was Costanso's inspiration for "San Francisco"?

When Costanso stood at the discovery site

(today's Sweeney Ridge) in 1769, he could look down onto San Francisco Bay to the east. In the distance, a few degrees east of north, he saw San Pablo Bay. Directly north was the Golden Gate, the entrance to San Francisco Bay, but intervening hills blocked Costanso's view of that important feature. To the northwest he could clearly see Drake's Bay and Point Reyes 38 miles away.

To keep track of Portolá's progress, Costanso had maps, charts, and records of previous Spanish voyages along the Alta California coast. The oldest record in his possession was that of Sebastian Cermeño, a sixteenth-century Portuguese navigator.

California was "discovered" by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542, but it took 227 years for Spain to colonize the region. Beginning in 1565, and for the next 250 years, Manila galleons, Spanish ships filled with Asian goods, wealth, and plunder, regularly sailed between Manila and Acapulco. The last leg of the galleons' ocean-current-driven voyage took them on a southerly course parallel to the rocky, windy, and often foggy California coast. These were merchant ships, not explorers, so their captains' goal was a safe arrival—not discovery—with their valuable cargo. The captains saw, and perhaps recorded, but kept a safe distance from land.

In 1594 Sebastian Cermeño was appointed by Spain's King Philip II to undertake a voyage of discovery: to explore and to chart the unknown California coast and to find a safe port where the Manila galleons could take refuge from the weather.⁴ In March 1594, Cermeño sailed from Acapulco to Manila, where he took command of the *San Agustin*. He departed Manila on July 5, 1595. His first land sighting was the Mendocino coast on November 4. With the weather rapidly deteriorating and his ship in need of repairs, he found a safe anchorage in today's Drake's Bay on November 6.

The next day Cermeño went ashore and took possession of the land in the name of Spain.⁵ Following the tradition of Catholic explorers naming discoveries in honor of the saint whose feast day was closest to the day of discovery, Cermeño named it *La Bahia de San Francisco* (San Francisco Bay) in honor of Saint Francis, whose feast day had been October 4. Fray Francisco de la Conception of the Order of the Barefoot Franciscans baptized it.⁶

Cermeño careened the *San Agustín* (deliberately grounding the vessel) to do repairs. For two weeks, most of the crew camped on the beach while Cermeño explored the area. He met with friendly Indians who lived nearby and exchanged gifts. There is no evidence that Cermeño was aware of Sir Francis Drake's arrival in 1579.⁷

The *San Agustín* carried a small unassembled launch that Cermeño intended to use to chart nearby rivers and bays. It was unloaded, assembled, and by November 15 Cermeño was exploring the *esteros*. In late November a powerful storm hit, blowing the *San Agustín* onto the rocks, destroying it. All the cargo was lost, and twelve men drowned. The launch was the crew's only hope of returning to Mexico. On December 8, eighty men set off in the small boat, christened *San Buenaventura* (Good Luck). Uncertain of the seaworthiness of the crowded craft, Cermeño hugged the coast while charting it to the best of his ability. He became the second navigator, but not the last, to bypass the entrance to San Francisco Bay. He continued to chart the coast and assess every harbor he encountered, including Monterey Bay.⁸

The crew had meager supplies and survived mostly on acorns, fruit, and dried meat they got from the coastal natives along the way. After sailing over 1,500 miles, they arrived at Puerto de Chacala, Mexico on January 17, 1596, after forty days at sea. Rather than being hailed as a hero for miraculously bringing his crew safely home against impossible odds, Cermeño was vilified by the government of New Spain for losing the *San Agustín* and its cargo.

Cermeño was an excellent navigator and mapmaker, but the *San Agustín* affair destroyed his credibility. The government disavowed his charts, even though they were

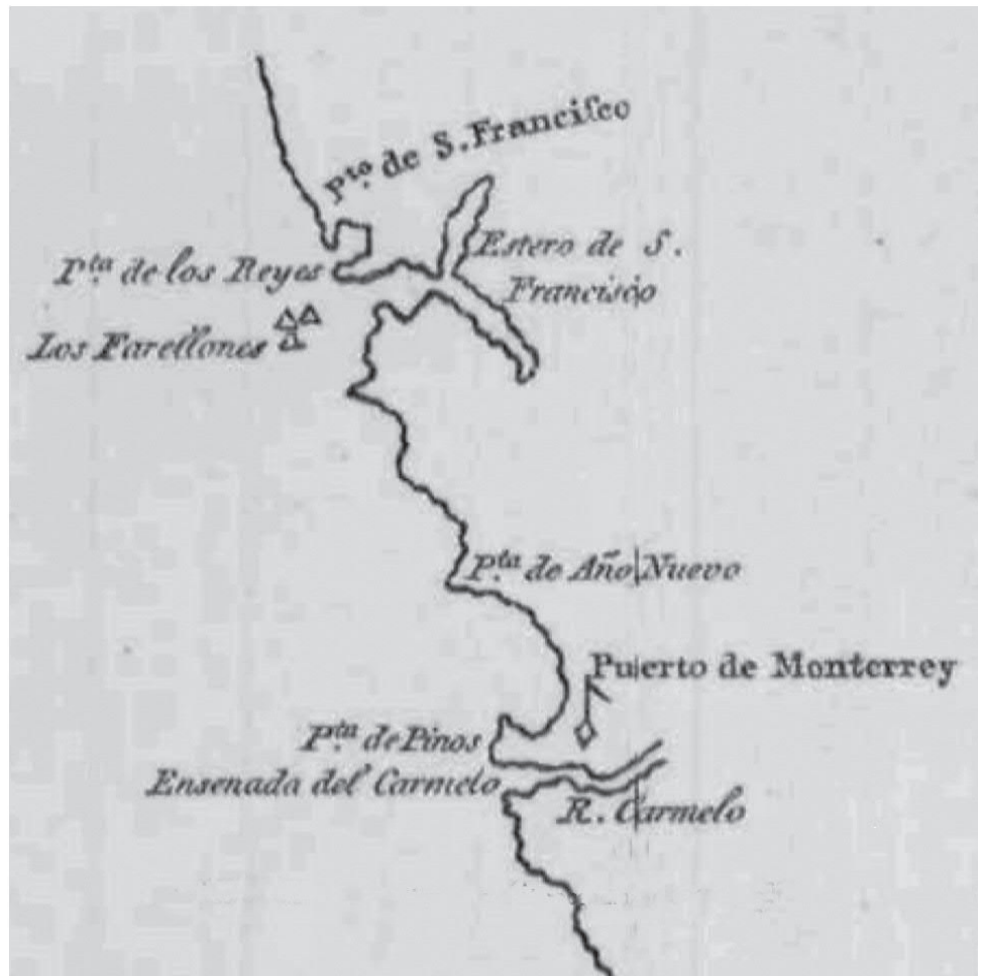
the most accurate maps of the California coast at this time and well into the future.

Nobody trusted them, and therefore nobody used them.

Until Miguel Costanso, 173 years later.

On November 3, 1769, after a trek of nearly 600 miles over 122 days, the Portolá expedition beheld the totally unexpected.

Comparing Cermeño's charts and accounts with the panorama before him, Costanso could clearly see Drake's Bay and Point Reyes, which corresponded with Cermeño's description of San Francisco Bay in 1595. Assuming Drake's Bay was the entrance to the *estero* before them, and unable to see the Golden Gate, Costanso took liberties with the information available to him to draw his map of San Francisco Bay. When Costanso's map was printed in 1771, there was no presidio or mission or pueblo bearing the name *San Francisco*. There was just the bay. San Francisco Bay, named in 1595.



Miguel Costanso map of San Francisco Bay, 1770. Courtesy of Antiquarian Society.

Between the printing of Costanso's map naming San Francisco—the bay—in 1771, and Alcalde Washington Bartlett's proclamation naming San Francisco the city in 1847, old empires fell and new nations were born. Spain, a New World colonial superpower for three centuries, lost its holdings—including California—while the United States' Manifest Destiny was inexorably reeling in California.

In 1602 Sebastian Vizcaino rediscovered Monterey Bay (first sighted by Cermeño in 1595) while leading a sea voyage along the Alta California coast to find safe harbors for the Acapulco-bound galleons. Plans for establishing a settlement, or at least a safe port for Spanish mariners, were proposed, debated, delayed, and finally scrapped in 1608. This disinterest led to a 161-year delay in Spain's colonization of California.

By the late 1760s, Britain, France, and Russia were showing increasing interest in Spain's holdings. Prompted by fear of foreign intrusion, Spain finally began to pay attention to the strategic importance of its northwestern frontier. The Spanish settlement of *Las Californias* ("the Californias" referring to Lower or *Baja* and Upper or *Alta*) began in Baja California in 1697. Between 1697 and 1767, eighteen missions were established along the peninsula from south to north. In May 1769 Gaspar de Portolà, governor of *Las Californias*, crossed from the Baja California Peninsula to mainland Alta California to establish the Presidio of San Diego, the first permanent European settlement in Alta California. In July the Mission San Diego de Alcalá was founded, the first of twenty-one missions in Alta California.

That summer, Portolà led a party north from San Diego to find Monterey Bay. They reached it on October 1 but failed to recognize the bay described 167 years earlier by Vizcaino from an ocean vantage point. They continued north, accidentally discovering San Francisco Bay on November 4, 1769. The next year Portolà led another overland trek from San Diego to Monterey, arriving on May 24.

Three hundred years of Spanish colonial rule in the Americas ended in the second decade of the nineteenth century, as Spain's New World colonies, including Mexico, rebelled. After ten years of armed conflict (none of which occurred in Alta California), Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821.

Under Spanish rule, annual supply ships brought goods to Alta California, since the region's pastoral economy had never developed any means of manufacture. Its main exports were cattle hides, tallow, and related items in exchange for manufactured products. After the revolution, these supply ships stopped. Trade with the outside world was prohibited by law during Spanish rule, but the cessation of shipments of goods from Mexico created a vacuum that was quickly filled by foreigners. Trade opened in Alta California to the outside world in 1822.⁹

The United States had designs on California as early as 1806. In 1819, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, acting for President James Monroe, tried to secure California, an effort that continued into his presidency in 1827. Andrew Jackson unsuccessfully tried to buy California in 1829.¹⁰

Following are the footprints that our four leading men made in California up to the war with Mexico in the order of their arrival in California.

MARIANO GUADALUPE VALLEJO

Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo was born on July 7, 1808 (some sources give July 4) at Monterey, Alta California, a Spanish subject. Mariano's father, Ignacio Vallejo, was born in Jalisco, Mexico in 1748. According to historian H. H. Bancroft, Ignacio was "of pure Spanish blood, and of a family that included many educated people, especially several priests, friars, and nuns of some prominence. Nothing is known of Ignacio's early years."

In 1773, the twenty-five-year-old Ignacio enlisted in the colonial army and volunteered for service in Alta California. During his fifty-year military career, he achieved the rank of distinguished sergeant despite being, according to Bancroft, "a somewhat unmanageable soldier, often in trouble, but praised for his bravery in campaigns against the native Indians."

In 1815 young Mariano Vallejo had just started school when he was selected by Governor Pablo Sola to learn French, Latin, and English in addition to the regular curriculum presented in Spanish. When he was fifteen years old, Vallejo petitioned Governor

Luis Arguello, the first California governor under Mexican rule, to allow him to be a cadet in the provincial army. His request was granted, and he was assigned to the governor's staff as a personal secretary, a position he held for about two years.

At age nineteen, Vallejo was a sergeant when Governor José Echenadía chose him to replace a delegate at the provincial legislature meeting in Monterey. His next promotion was to *alferez*. There is no American equivalent for this military rank, but he now outranked his still-active-duty father.

In 1834 Vallejo was promoted to lieutenant and elected as alternate delegate to the National Congress in Mexico City. The same year, Governor José Figueroa appointed him to be the commander of the San Francisco Presidio and the military commander and director of colonization of the northern frontier of Alta California: i.e., north of the Golden Gate—the farthest extent of Mexican colonization in Alta California.

Because of the region's isolation from the central government in Mexico City, Vallejo was frequently forced to make many of his own political and military decisions, finance his own army garrison, serve as foreign minister in matters relating to the Russians at Fort Ross, and monitor and control the American immigrants and foreign traders entering California in ever-increasing numbers.

After Governor Figueroa's death in 1835, Mexico City appointed a replacement who was so unpopular with Alta Californians that he was driven out within three months. In the immediate political vacuum, the citizens seized the capital at Monterey. Juan Alvarado proclaimed himself governor and immediately named Vallejo military commandant of Alta California. According to Bancroft, by 1835 Vallejo was the most independent and, in some respects, the most powerful man in Alta California.

In 1838 the central government recognized Alvarado's authority and confirmed Mariano Vallejo as commanding general. To keep his forces intact, General Vallejo spent more than \$10,000 of his own money. Vallejo constantly quarreled with Governor Alvarado over reimbursement. When Alvarado presented Vallejo's claims to the central government in Mexico City, he was replaced as governor. The new governor, Manuel Micheltorena, in turn, discharged Vallejo as commanding general.

Since the Mexican government did not have the funds to pay Vallejo's claim, Governor Micheltorena granted him land from the public domain. In March 1843, Vallejo was granted 80,000 acres of land on the northern shores of Suisun and San Pablo Bays. Part of this area is now occupied by the cities of Vallejo and Benicia.

THOMAS OLIVER LARKIN

Thomas Oliver Larkin was born in Boston on September 16, 1802. He could trace his ancestry on American soil to Richard Warren, a *Mayflower* passenger and a signer of the Mayflower Compact. His great-grandfather, Samuel Larkin, owned the horse that Paul Revere rode on his famous Midnight Ride; and his grand uncle, Ebenezer Larkin, fired on British troops during the Battle of Bunker Hill.¹¹ But an aristocratic bloodline was no help for a fifteen-year-old orphan who had only a brief elementary education.

After four years toiling as a bookbinder in Boston, in 1821 Larkin sought better luck in North Carolina. His reward for a decade in the South was wisdom in the ways of business, but no financial gain. An older half-brother, John B. R. Cooper, had settled in Monterey, Alta California in 1823, after a career as a sea captain. In California, Cooper made a successful living raising cattle, hunting sea otters, and selling merchandise. The once-Yankee Protestant had become a Catholic and a naturalized Mexican citizen. He also married Encarnación Vallejo, Mariano Vallejo's sister. All of this entitled Cooper to receive land grants from the Mexican government. But he needed a competent bookkeeper.

Larkin accepted the position as Cooper's clerk and assistant. He was twenty-nine years old when he arrived in Monterey in April 1832. It was the capital of Alta California and the premier Mexican port on the California coast. Larkin called Monterey "the jumping off place of the world." He studied Spanish during the six-month voyage around the Horn en route to his new home.

Historian T. H. Hittell cites Mexican census data for reporting Alta California's population in 1830 at about 6,000.¹² Historian H. H. Bancroft estimated that the "white" population of Alta California in 1830 was 4,250,¹³ Monterey's population was 700,¹⁴ and the "foreign" male population of Alta California was about 300.¹⁵

At the time of Larkin's arrival, Alta California was in political and economic transition. Both British and American trading agents had been established for a decade and were thriving. The custom duties paid by the merchant vessels at California ports covered the cost of government services.

In 1834 the twenty-one California missions were secularized and converted to parish churches, and the land and other church assets were sold or given away. The newly freed-up mission lands expanded public land ownership, but non-Mexicans, such as Larkin (who had kept his American citizenship), were not eligible for land grants. His children, however, were born Mexican citizens and therefore could own land. Larkin obtained large grants in their names.

In this unsettled but opportunity-rich environment, Larkin prospered beyond his wildest dreams. He opened his first store in Monterey in 1833. He married Rachel Holmes, and their daughter, Isabel, was the first child born to American citizens in California that year. Fluent in Spanish and a successful merchant, Larkin became the most important and influential pre-statehood American in California. This was proven in 1842 when Larkin was the right man at the right place at the right time.

In the summer of 1842, relations between the United States and Mexico over Texas were deteriorating. A dire prediction from the U.S. Consul at Mazatlán, Mexico that war was likely between the two countries reached Commodore Thomas A.P. Catesby Jones, commander of the U.S. Pacific fleet while he was at Lima, Peru. Suspicious movements of the British and French fleets in the Pacific led Commodore Jones to believe that California was the destination of either or both foreign fleets with the intent to seize the territory. Under these assumptions, he set course for California. After six weeks, he arrived at Monterey on the evening of October 19, 1842, raised the American flag, and demanded the surrender of the town.

The civil authorities of the undefended town were caught completely by surprise and capitulated almost immediately, agreeing to send representatives to Jones on his flagship, the *United States*, to work out the details of the town's surrender. Larkin was included as interpreter. Jones believed a state of war existed between the United States and Mexico. Larkin asked Jones about his sources. His answers

did not satisfy Larkin, who showed Jones recent letters and newspapers that made no mention of war, convincing Jones that he was wrong. The commodore returned the town to the authorities, and his Pacific Fleet sailed away, saluting the Mexican flag as he exited the harbor.

Prior to this incident there had been discussions in Washington D.C. of the need for an American Consul in Alta California. Larkin's intervention in the Jones affair made him the prime candidate. Larkin received his appointment in early 1844, for which he received no salary.

JASPER O'FARRELL

Little is known of Jasper O'Farrell's early life other than he was born in Ireland in 1817 and studied civil engineering in Dublin. In 1841 he joined a British surveying expedition of the Pacific coast of South America. He arrived in Alta California in November 1843, settling near San Rafael. Soon he was surveying land grants in the area.

Up to 1800, Spain had awarded only 20 land grants in Alta California. After 1820, under Mexican rule, over 800 were awarded, the majority between 1842 and 1846.¹⁶ The customary surveying practice in laissez-faire Mexican California was to sketch a *diseño*, (design). This was a crude diagram of the boundaries of a grant, using rough physical features and approximate distances. This tradition of lackadaisical surveying begged for the precise surveys and plats at which Jasper O'Farrell was an expert.

Word of O'Farrell's surveying proficiency spread, bringing him referrals to survey other land grants in today's Sonoma, Marin, and Napa Counties. His reputation reached Alta California Governor Manuel Micheltorena, who appointed him the official government land surveyor for Alta California in August 1844.¹⁷

Within a year of his arrival, O'Farrell found himself caught up in one of Alta California's seemingly endless political squabbles. In this instance, O'Farrell sided with his friend John Sutter in support of Governor Micheltorena against Manuel Castro, a political rival. On January 1, 1845, Sutter and a rag-tag army of 220 men, mostly foreigners and Indians, left his Sacramento fort for Salinas to join with Micheltorena's forces. O'Farrell was his

quartermaster. On February 20, 1845, at Cahuenga Pass near Los Angeles, the opposing sides exchanged ineffective gunfire. After the bloodless battle, Micheltorena conceded, and Pio Pico became Governor—California’s last Mexican governor.

Recognizing O’Farrell’s talent, Governor Pico retained him as Alta California’s official surveyor. O’Farrell stayed in southern California surveying for the new governor. Since he was not a Mexican citizen, he could not receive land grants; so, as payment, he received horses and cattle. He returned to San Rafael shortly before war broke out.

ROBERT SEMPLE

Robert Semple was born in southern Kentucky, the son of a political office holder in both Kentucky and Virginia. According to H. H. Bancroft, he tried his hand at many occupations, but dentist and printer best described his talents. In July 1845 he attended a lecture on emigrating to California. He was so taken by the speaker’s persuasiveness that he did just that. Six-foot eight-inch, red-headed “Long Bob” arrived at Sutter’s Fort on Christmas Day, five months later. He spent the winter and spring at a ranch on the Bear River, about fifty miles northeast of Sutter’s Fort.

In 1830 Monterey was the capital of Alta California, but the birthplace of San Francisco was still “in a state of nature.”¹⁸

In 1833, by the time Thomas Larkin had become established in business in Monterey, eighty-five miles to the north, Candelario Miramontes was raising potatoes on what would become San Francisco’s plaza and later Portsmouth Square.¹⁹

On June 25, 1835, as Larkin was building the first two-story structure in Monterey (the family residence above his store), William Richardson put up a crude tent dwelling in Yerba Buena for his wife, Maria Antonia Martinez, and their three children. They became the first residents at Yerba Buena Cove.²⁰

The Richardson “home” was on a 100-vara²¹ lot on what is now the west side of Grant Avenue between Clay and Washington Streets.²² Richardson, an English-born sailor, had been in California since 1822. In 1825 he married the daughter of the *comandante* of the Presidio. In the same year, he

unsuccessfully petitioned for a grant of land near the Presidio. His requests of 1828 and 1834 were also rejected, but Governor Figueroa considered his 1835 application.

It had been fourteen years since Mexico had won its independence from Spain. San Francisco Bay was becoming an active port, with foreign trading ships coming more frequently and in increasing numbers to do business with the ranchos and missions encircling the bay. Governor Figueroa wanted to establish a port of entry to collect custom duties and taxes to finance the town he envisioned growing at the cove. Sensing the future, he granted Richardson’s request for land and appointed him the harbor master of the port. The only restriction on the location of Richardson’s residence was that it had to be at least 200 varas (about 550 feet) from the shoreline—today’s Montgomery Street. That area was reserved for public purposes.²³

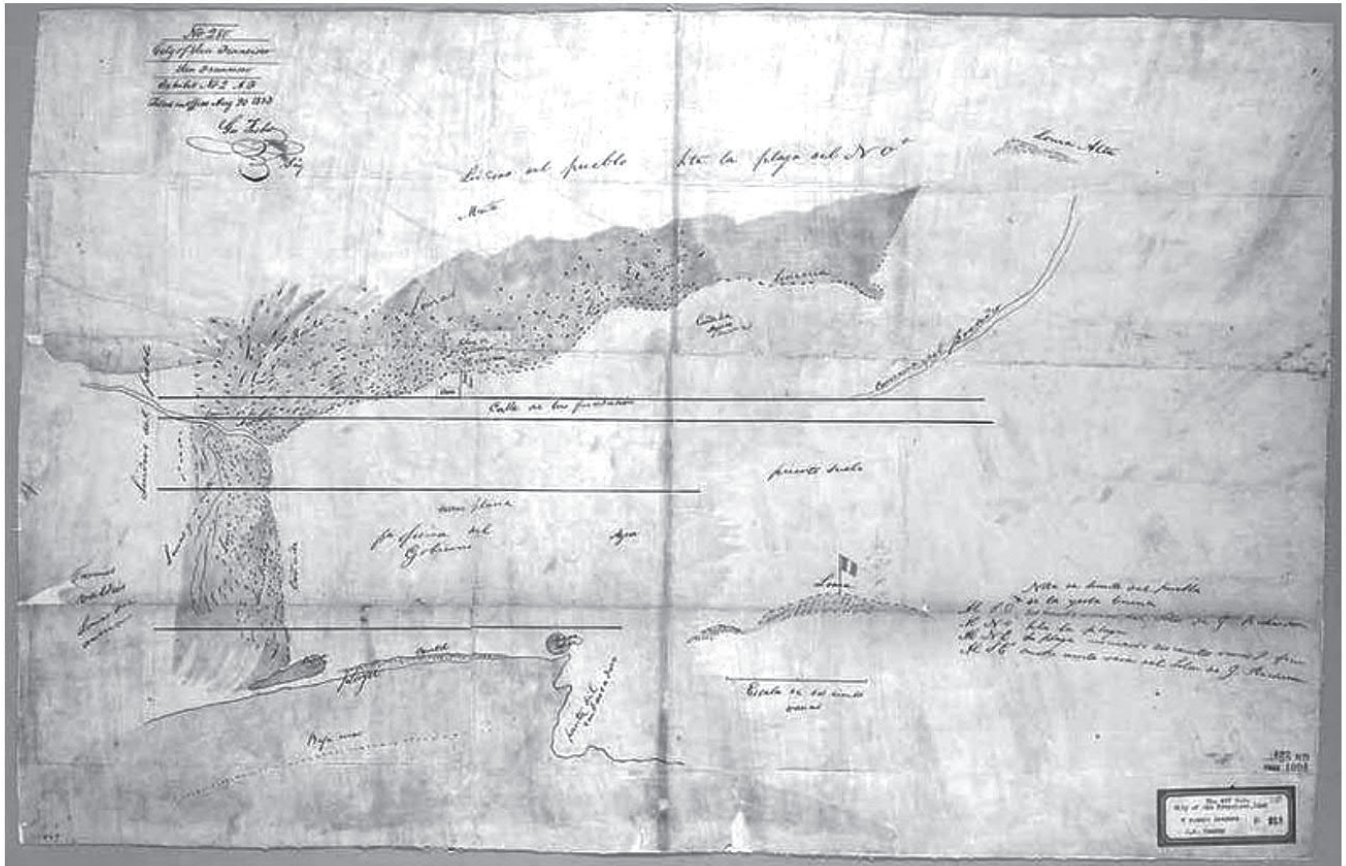
As was the practice of the time, Richardson drew a *diseño* of his grant showing certain landmarks but lacking finer details and no compass points. It included one “street” in front of the Richardsons’ home: *Calle de la Fundacion*, today’s Grant Avenue. For its purpose and for the time, Richardson’s *diseño* was adequate.

Technically, this was San Francisco’s first map, although it was not really a map, and Yerba Buena was not yet San Francisco.

Now there were three separate settlements on the northern tip of the San Francisco Peninsula: the Presidio, the military outpost; the Mission, the ecclesiastical center; and Yerba Buena, Governor Figueroa’s envisioned port.

Since their establishments in 1776, both the presidio and mission were designated *San Francisco*. This was not a geographical reference to the harbor of San Francisco, but in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the order of Franciscans, which was instrumental in the founding of the mission and the presidio in 1776.²⁴ The names of the harbor of San Francisco and the mission and presidio of San Francisco derived from different origins and are purely coincidental.

Sometime before Yerba Buena Cove was settled, a third entity was established officially bearing the designation *San Francisco*: the *Partido of San Francisco*.²⁵ Under Mexican rule, Alta California



Richardson diseño of Yerba Buena, 1835.

was a “department,” the equivalent of a territory. For administrative purposes, the department was divided into districts, and each district was sub-divided into *partidos* (divisions). Within the *partidos*, where a certain number of citizens warranted it, were pueblos, the smallest political jurisdiction. Pueblos were administered by an *ayuntamiento* (a common council). An *alcalde* (sometimes called “magistrate” or “justice of the peace”) headed the *ayuntamiento*, combining executive and judicial responsibilities.²⁶ Some pueblos were large, such as Monterey and Los Angeles; some were small.

On November 14, 1834,²⁷ Governor Figueroa recommended the formation of an *ayuntamiento* for the already-existing *Partido of San Francisco*, which included today’s Alameda, Contra Costa, Sonoma, Marin, and San Francisco Counties.²⁸ However, not long afterward, the government determined that, based on a recent census of the northern part of the peninsula, it qualified as a pueblo and was therefore entitled to its own *ayuntamiento*.²⁹

Governor Figueroa directed the *comandante* of the Presidio to conduct an *ayuntamiento* election for the newly created Pueblo of San Francisco. The new pueblo was legally entitled to four square leagues of land, which encompassed the Presidio, the Mission, Lake Merced, and Visitacion Valley, among familiar locales today.

San Francisco’s first *ayuntamiento* was installed on January 1, 1835 and met at the Presidio. Francisco De Haro was the first *alcalde*.³⁰

On December 13, 1835, six months months after the Richardsons set up housekeeping at Yerba Buena Cove, on the plaza in front of their home was the polling place for the pueblo’s voters to elect a new *ayuntamiento* for 1836.³¹ Yerba Buena was not a separate municipality; it was just one settlement within the four square leagues that legally defined the Pueblo of San Francisco.

For a year, the population of Yerba Buena held steady at five. On July 3, 1836 the cove grew by one when Jacob Leese, a twenty-seven-year-old

Ohio native, built a house to the southeast of the Richardsons and held a huge July 4th celebration.

In 1839, by which time nine grants had been awarded since Richardson’s, Governor Alvarado appointed Jean Jacques Vioget to survey the little settlement by the cove. The survey encompassed the area surrounded roughly by Pacific Avenue and California, Grant, and Montgomery Streets. Superimposed on a contemporary map, the survey would cover about 15 blocks of the Financial District and Chinatown, or roughly fifty-two acres.

The survey showed lots and blocks, but even to the untrained eye these features were not parallel or perpendicular to one another. The obtuse and acute angles of the lots and blocks of Vioget’s survey were not his errors, but the result of sloppy and careless demarcation of the features. His product

was a stumbling, staggering start to mapping. While it literally put Yerba Buena on the map and was an improvement over Richardson’s *diseño*, it was far from adequate. This slowly growing scatter of buildings desperately needed the talented hand and eye of Jasper O’Farrell—whose arrival was years away.

According to Bancroft, by 1840 Yerba Buena had “more than a half dozen structures and a population of about fifty souls.”³²

Beginning with the Bear Flag Revolt on June 14, 1846, the ensuing year and a half would be an eventful period for our four leading men. So far, they had been living separate lives, without coming into contact with one another. Now their life trajectories would not merely intersect, but would become intimately intertwined.



Vioget survey of Yerba Buena, 1839.



"The Sea Town and Port Yerba Buena in S. francisco [sic] Bay in California." Sketch by G. M. Waseurtz of Sandels, September 1842.
 Courtesy of Society of California Pioneers.

Unknown to Californians, the United States had declared war on Mexico on May 15, 1846. It would be weeks before word reached the Pacific coast, but events had been simmering in California, which was steadily becoming less and less Mexican and more and more American. As tensions, prejudices, and suspicions mounted, each group feared and believed that the other was planning to attack. Making a bad situation even worse, endless Mexican factional politics were tearing the Mexican-Californian population apart, adding fuel to the combustible situation. As more and more American settlers arrived, Mexican authorities, fearing that they would be overwhelmed by the foreigners, threatened to forcibly remove the new arrivals.

What was an innocuous event was distorted and manipulated by U.S. Army Captain John C. Fremont into what became known as the Bear Flag Revolt. It gave us our state flag, but in the larger historical context, not much else. For our narrative, however,

the incident was the catalyst that would finally bring our four men together.

The Americans' fear of expulsion boiled over in June 1846, when a herd of horses was being moved from Mariano Vallejo's Sonoma rancho to Sutter's Fort near the Sacramento River. Rumors spread that this event was the anticipated attack, the forced removal that the Americans had feared. Encouraged by Captain Fremont, on June 10 a group of fifteen men intercepted the *vaqueros* herding the horses. After taking the seized animals to their camp near Sutter's Buttes, the emboldened Americans turned their sights on capturing the most powerful Mexican in the territory and his seat of governance: General Mariano Vallejo and the garrison town of Sonoma.

Realistically, both Vallejo and Sonoma were faded symbols of Mexico's past. Sonoma was no longer the important military outpost it had once been, tasked with keeping the Russians out of Mexican territory, nor was Vallejo a general. "General" was

an honorific title. Now he was just a rancher.

The group of fifteen was reinforced by men from their camp and additional trappers, drifters, and roving adventurers they encountered as they made their way to Sonoma, sixty-five crow-flight miles to the southwest. In the early morning of June 14, 1846, two leading men, Mariano Vallejo and Robert Semple, met in a most unconventional manner, as Vallejo was wakened by incessant pounding on the door of his home, *Casa Grande*.

Different historians name various men as leaders of the Bear Flag Revolt, but Vallejo family history notes that the group of thirty-three men that Vallejo beheld that morning was

. . . without a leader, a purely go-as-you-please concern. Finally a huge Kentuckian, Dr. Robert Semple, found a voice and told General Vallejo that they were acting under orders from Captain Fremont to seize and to hold the village of Sonoma.³³

These were men who, according to Fremont, had nothing to lose. They were ruffled, disorderly, and begrimed. Some wore buckskin pants, some sported blue pants reaching only to the knee, several had no shirts, and many were without shoes. A few wore coyote or wolfskin hats, others slouched hats full of holes or straw hats as black as charcoal. All were armed—rifles, muskets, pepper-box pistols, tomahawks, hunting knives—and all were tired and agitated.³⁴

In addition to his wife and five children, present in Vallejo's home that morning were his brother, Salvador; a guest, Victor Prudon; and his brother-in-law Jacob Leese, the fifth resident of Yerba Buena. Mrs. Leese later complimented Semple as being the "least inhuman of that god-forsaken crowd." Vallejo, more charitably and sincerely, characterized him as *buen oso* (the good bear).³⁵

Vallejo assumed that the long-anticipated war between Mexico and the United States had broken out. Believing that the men at his door were acting under military orders and were not a band of outlaws, he agreed to meet with a committee of three to draft terms of capitulation. After hours of negotiation and generous samplings of the contents of Vallejo's wine cellar, Semple presented Vallejo with an agreement (in both Spanish and English) that guaranteed the



John Charles Fremont (1813 – 1890).

Courtesy of Wikipedia

safety and security of the residents of Sonoma and their property, and liberty for Vallejo on parole—his word that he would not take up arms against the United States. Since Vallejo had been sympathetic toward California becoming part of the United States, he had no difficulty agreeing to the terms.

The thirty men waiting outside became impatient at the hours-long delay and sent in (according to Vallejo family history) a "rather elderly, crack-brained enthusiast" called William Ide. Ide, seeing the effect that Vallejo's hospitality had had on the negotiators, angrily cancelled the agreement, denied Vallejo's parole, and ordered that the Vallejos and their guest Victor Prudon be brought to Captain Fremont as prisoners of war.

Vallejo was confident that Fremont, an officer and a gentleman, would reinstate his parole and release his brother and Prudon, so he willingly went with ten *osos* (bears), including Semple, to



General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo was an extraordinary Californio. He founded Sonoma and is remembered today as a great American who contributed a great deal to California both before and after statehood. Courtesy of the City of Sonoma.

Fremont's camp. Leese, an American, came along as interpreter and a character witness for the POWs. Vallejo assured his family that the group would return within four days. Nonetheless, Vallejo had the presence of mind to send word of his predicament to Captain Montgomery of the *USS Portsmouth*, anchored at Sausalito. Unfortunately for the prisoners, Montgomery chose to be neutral.

Two days later, the prisoners and escorts arrived at Fremont's camp, where the captain denied any knowledge or responsibility for the men's captivity. Yet, while denying that they were his prisoners, Fremont ordered his men to take the prisoners, including the American Leese who was guilty by association, to be confined at Sutter's fort. Semple accompanied the group.³⁶

At first, Sutter treated his unwilling guests kindly, referring to them as "gentlemen prisoners which I wanted to treat so well as possible." But Fremont chastised Sutter for his kindness, resulting

in the prisoners being confined in cubicles infested with mosquitoes from a nearby slough, causing malaria-like symptoms. The concerned Sutter sent a message to Captain Montgomery, who dispatched Lt. Revere and the *Portsmouth's* surgeon to treat the prisoners.

On July 1, Semple went to Yerba Buena under Fremont's orders where he and other bear flaggers seized a Mexican official. Their route to Sutter's Fort this time was through San Francisco, San Pablo, and Suisun Bays before going up the Sacramento River. En route, Semple's attention was drawn to a point of land on the north side of the Carquinez Strait, thirty miles northeast of Yerba Buena. After depositing his prisoner at Sutter's Fort, Semple rejoined Fremont's band camped nearby.³⁷

Whereas Mariano Vallejo was the most important Mexican in the north, Thomas Larkin, American consul to Alta California, was the most important American. Despite his office and importance, Larkin had no forewarning of Fremont's clandestine agenda or of the events at Sonoma. When he did learn of the Bear Flag incident on June 18, he was horrified. He had worked hard to help California become a state non-violently through increased American immigration and by winning over influential Mexican-Californians to peaceful annexation by the United States—not by rebellion. The Bear Flag Revolt was a cataclysm that destroyed his vision and ruined his hard work. Now Larkin was overhearing the Mexican-Californians in Monterey talk of taking him hostage in return for Vallejo's release.

On July 1, 1846, Commodore John Sloat's Pacific Squadron arrived in Monterey Bay.

During this visit Sloat informed Larkin that the United States and Mexico were at war. For the next six days the men discussed matters in lengthy conferences. Larkin even helped Sloat draft his proclamation of July 7; when the Stars and Stripes was raised over Monterey, Sloat proclaimed, "Henceforth California will be a portion of the United States."³⁸

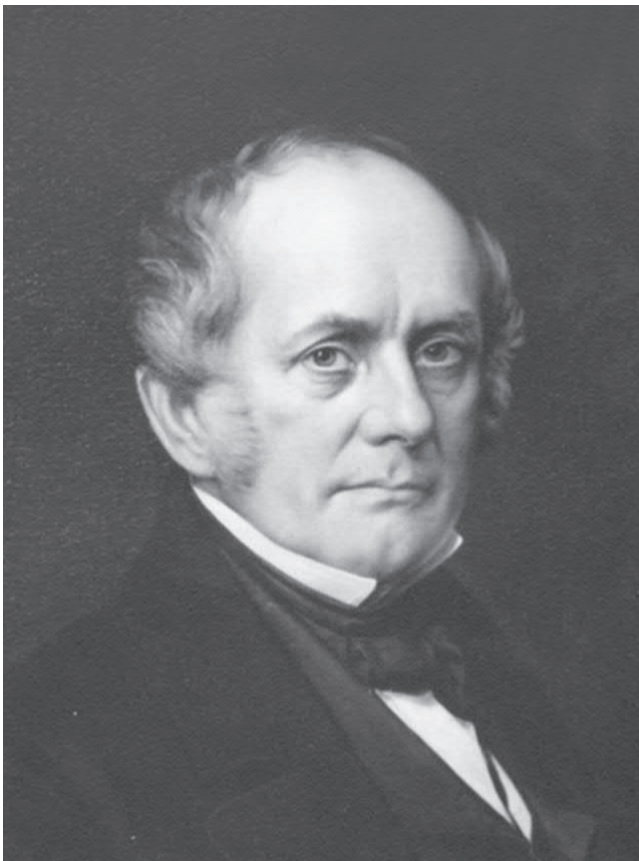
Monterey was "captured" without incident, as was Yerba Buena two days later by men from the *USS Portsmouth* led by Lt. Joseph Revere. Later in the day, the single-star Bear Flag that had flown over Sonoma for twenty-five days (but nowhere else in California) was stricken by Lt. Revere, who hoisted

a twenty-seven-star American Flag. Revere then sent a courier to Sutter's Fort with an American flag. Vallejo and Semple saw the Stars and Stripes raised on July 11. The twenty-one-gun salute and general rejoicing gave the POWs hope that they would soon be released.

The next day Commodore Sloat ordered Fremont and his men to Monterey. Before departing, Fremont commanded Sutter that the POWs were to remain in custody despite the American flag now flying over his fort.

A week later Fremont arrived in Monterey leading the California Battalion, or Dragoons, his sanitized new appellation for his regular army troops and the highly irregular Bear Flaggers. Among them was 6-foot 8-inch, red-headed "Long Bob" Semple.

Larkin was aware that Vallejo was being held prisoner and was working for his release with all of the persuasion he could exert. At the time, Commodore Sloat, the ranking American in Alta California, was waiting for Commodore Stockton to relieve him, and was unwilling to take any action.



Thomas Oliver Larkin (1802 - 1858).
Courtesy of Wikipedia.

On July 23, 1846, Vallejo wrote to Larkin:

I perceive the interest you take in our misfortunes and for your good offices shall forever recognize the obligation, and do now most sincerely thank you. . . . I have at last seen the standard of North America hoisted and our situation is still the same. . . . I believed the moment I saw the American Flag flying that we should be set at liberty but nothing has happened. . . . I hereby do most heartily beg of you in the name of Friendship to use all your kindly influence with the Commodore [Stockton] for our liberty. . . .³⁹

Victor Prudon, Vallejo's unfortunate house guest on June 14, also wrote to Larkin on July 23, 1846, saying:

Our imprisonment . . . would form a history too large to be inserted here, and I shall only say that our situation is most lamentable, and the horrors of a prison are augmented by our absolute incommunication, so that we could not know what passed outside and others could not know what we were suffering within.⁴⁰

Larkin prevailed on Commodore Stockton to order the release of Vallejo and his party on July 29 after more than six weeks in captivity.

Robert Semple's brief military career ended the moment he discovered an abandoned printing press in Monterey, the only printing press in the territory. On August 15, 1846, the former Kentucky newspaperman published the inaugural edition of the weekly *Californian*, the first newspaper in California.⁴¹ Printed in both English and Spanish, it was an immediate sensation.

Larkin was not in Monterey for the *Californian's* debut. He had left for Los Angeles, the capital of Alta California, on August 1, where he met with Alta Californian officials. He returned to Monterey on September 15. Letters were waiting for him, confirming that his efforts on behalf of the Vallejos, Prudon, and Leese had been successful.

On August 14, 1846, Captain John B. Montgomery of the *Portsmouth* named his Lieutenant, Washington A. Bartlett, to replace Jose de Jesus Noe

as the *alcalde* of Yerba Buena. Bartlett was about thirty years old, fluent in Spanish and familiar with American and Spanish law. An election for *alcalde* was held on September 15 with Bartlett receiving sixty-six of the ninety-six votes cast.

Also on September 15, Vallejo wrote to Larkin:

Being now in my house on my return from my prison at the Sacramento, I can offer you my services if they may be of any use to you, as well as my person. I left the Sacramento half dead and arrived here almost without life; but I am now much better . . . ⁴²

When Alcalde Bartlett was assured that he had the authority to grant town lots, he began doing so on November 16, 1846, approving three petitions that day. One of them (lot #95) was to Capt. John B. Montgomery, his commanding officer on the *Portsmouth* and the man who appointed him *alcalde*.⁴³ By the time Bartlett had granted thirteen lots, he encountered a problem and turned to the best surveyor in Alta California to help him. On November 26, he wrote to Jasper O'Farrell:

Jasper O'Farrell, Esqr.

Dear Sir:

I have the utmost desire to have the town surveyed at the earliest possible day—therefore I shall expect you at your earliest convenience as everyday lost will make it more difficult to get matters arranged as I wish them regarding the streets and lots.

All seem anxious to have a good plan of the town and I do not think I involve any risk of objection from any quarter. Therefore it shall be done.

Yrs. very Truly
Wash'n A. Bartlett
Magistrate

Bartlett wasn't the only one with visions of city-building. Vallejo shared a similar dream with Larkin in his letter of September 15:

I expect that within a short time the Straits of Carquinez will be the site of a large and mercantile city for many reasons; and as I have got there a quantity of land, I now offer



Washington Allon Bartlett (c. 1816 – February 6, 1865) was the first U.S. citizen to serve as alcalde of Yerba Buena/San Francisco. Courtesy of Wikipedia.

you a competent house lot without it costing you a rial. You yourself told me so when we last saw each other in Monterey and your prophesy will ultimately turn out true. I have a great desire to see you and speak about every thing.⁴⁴

Was Vallejo's offer of a house lot at the Straits of Carquinez a gesture of gratitude for Larkin's efforts in freeing him, or was it an overture to join him in a partnership to develop the Straits of Carquinez into "a large and mercantile city"? After all, Vallejo and Larkin were extended family relatives (Vallejo's sister, Encarnacion, was married to Larkin's half-brother John Cooper). And Larkin had a sterling reputation as an honest merchant and businessman, as well as having been the U.S. consul to Alta California.

Mariano Vallejo wrote of the first time he saw the Carquinez Strait in a letter to his son Platon in 1874, recounting the founding of the city of Benicia:

The first time that I was there was in the year 1829, which influenced me in 1835 when I came to colonize the frontier at the north

of San Francisco Bay, to take across in that same place in open boats and launches more than 4,000 head of cattle and horses, mine and those of the families of the officials and troops that accompanied me.⁴⁵

Ten days after Vallejo wrote to Larkin of “a large and mercantile city” on Carquinez Strait, Robert Semple, being a good journalist, was in Sonoma to document the Bear Flag Revolt.⁴⁶ It seems inevitable that Vallejo and Semple, two of the main actors in the events of June 14, 1846, would meet. Clearly, the idea of developing Carquinez Strait was foremost on Vallejo’s mind when he had written to Larkin ten days before Semple arrived in Sonoma. Since Larkin had not responded to Vallejo’s letter, was he open to someone else as a partner in the venture?

In the same letter that Vallejo wrote to his son in 1874, he added this about Semple:

While I was a prisoner in Sutter’s Fort, . . . the Bears had an advance guard at Carquinez Strait to prohibit the passage of Mexican forces, and Dr. Semple was the leader of that guard.

Vallejo continued in his letter that Semple had ample time and opportunity to assess the attributes of the Carquinez site. Following his release, Vallejo, along with Lt. Revere of the *Portsmouth* and Semple went “to locate the best spot for the city. We reached the place and from there we returned, satisfied with the result.”

By October 23, Larkin still hadn’t responded to Vallejo’s offer. On that date, while sailing up the Sacramento River to Sutter’s Fort, Larkin stopped and closely inspected a likely townsite at Carquinez Strait.⁴⁷ He subsequently wrote:

I am trying to screw myself up to building a town 30-40 miles up the Sacramento River (the Straits of Kaukins). I have views and plans sufficient to amass a dozen fortunes. Time will tell.⁴⁸

Back at Yerba Buena, O’Farrell arrived from San Rafael in mid-December where he met with Acting Alcalde George Hyde, who informed him that Alcalde Bartlett was unavailable. On December 10, 1846, Bartlett left with a party for Santa Clara

to rustle some cattle when they were taken prisoner by Francisco Sanchez and a group of about one hundred Mexican-Californian irregulars.⁴⁹ A rescue party of one hundred marines and volunteers left Yerba Buena on December 29. Bartlett and his party were freed on January 8 after Sanchez’s forces were defeated.

Bartlett and O’Farrell hadn’t agreed to a contract prior to O’Farrell’s arrival. On December 24, 1846, Acting Alcalde Hyde wrote to O’Farrell:

My Dear Sir

In answer to your favor this Morning, I have to say that I very cheerfully agree to the terms proposed by you, for the survey of certain portions of the town.

As soon as you conveniently can, I trust you will commence the survey and thereby oblige the citizens as also your

Humble Serv’t
George Hyde
Alcalde



Jasper O’Farrell (1817–1875) was an Irish-American politician who served as the first surveyor for San Francisco.

It is not known what O'Farrell's terms were, or what was meant by "certain portions of the town," but it seems there was a problem between O'Farrell and Hyde. This prompted an anonymous letter writer to send this missive to the *California Star* on January 9, 1847. The author of the letter identified himself as "YERBA BUENA" and suggested that Hyde, instead of withholding the money to pay O'Farrell, should direct him to:

. . . map the whole place [as] O'Farrell thinks ought to be done, as he finds the previous survey incorrect. And besides, a large and handsome map of the whole will be made instead of scraps and patches around the edges as is now intended. It is far better too, that this be done, before the lots are built upon, as the corporation will probably save one hundred times the amount now expended straightening the streets hereafter, and purchasing property or carrying on lawsuits with such citizens may build on the wrong spot.

In the meantime, a group of real estate speculators who feared that O'Farrell's survey would jeopardize their plans hired Benjamin Buckelew to map the area around Portsmouth Square. This became variously known as the Buckelew Map or the Bartlett Map.⁵⁰

On January 7, 1847, O'Farrell petitioned Acting Alcalde Hyde for a grant of a 100-vara lot. Hyde granted his request on January 17 with a 100-vara lot on the north side of Mission Street between 100-vara grants to Col. John C. Fremont and Alcalde Washington Bartlett. Today it is the site of the California Historical Society.⁵¹

The answer to the above question whether Vallejo was seeking a partner at Carquinez was answered in the November 28, 1846 issue of the *Californian* in a letter written by Robert Semple on November 22:

CITY OF FRANCISCA on the North side of the Bay of San Francisco at the Straits of Carquinez, about 30 miles from the mouth of the Bay, is in progress of being laid out. Francisca is situated far enough from the sea board to make the climates as pleasant as any part of California.



ROBERT BAYLOR SEMPLE

Robert Baylor Semple (1806–1854) was a 19th-century California newspaperman.
Courtesy of Wikipedia.

Semple went on to extol the virtues of Francisca, named in honor of Vallejo's wife. Less than two months after visiting Sonoma, Semple was a spokesman for a city that did not yet exist. So, obviously, Vallejo and Semple did put their minds together to conceive of the city of Francisca on the Carquinez Strait.

Larkin was captured by Mexican-Californian rebels on November 14, 1846 and held prisoner in Los Angeles until January 9, 1847. He returned to Monterey on February 2, still not having responded to Vallejo's offer of nearly five months earlier.

Washington Bartlett was back in his office by January 20, 1847, when he and O'Farrell agreed to a contract whereby O'Farrell would survey five hundred 50-vara lots in the vicinity of Portsmouth Square for \$1,500. Given the prevailing practice of forming each block with six 50-vara lots meant that O'Farrell would survey more than eighty-three blocks.

On December 22, 1846, while Larkin and Bartlett were both imprisoned and presumably incommunicado, Vallejo and Semple formally agreed to found the city of Francisca on five square miles of land on the northern side of the Carquinez Straits belonging to Vallejo. In Semple's *Californian*, they published a nine-point agreement that included Vallejo's granting to Semple half of Francisca's five square miles, the establishment of ferry service and schools, the division of profits, and how the parties would resolve any changes in the agreement.

This document was filed in the Lands Records of the District of San Francisco on January 19, 1847 above the signature of W. A. Bartlett, Chief Magistrate of San Francisco. Four days later, Chief Magistrate W. A. Bartlett placed the following notice in the January 23, 1847 issue of the *California Star* in English and Spanish.

AN ORDINANCE. Whereas the local name of Yerba Buena as applied to the settlement or town of San Francisco is unknown beyond the immediate district; and has been applied from the local of the Cove on which the town is built— Therefore, to prevent confusion and mistakes in public documents,

and that the town may have the advantage of the name given on the published maps, It is hereby ordered that the name of San Francisco shall hereafter be used in all official communications, and public documents, or records appertaining to the town.

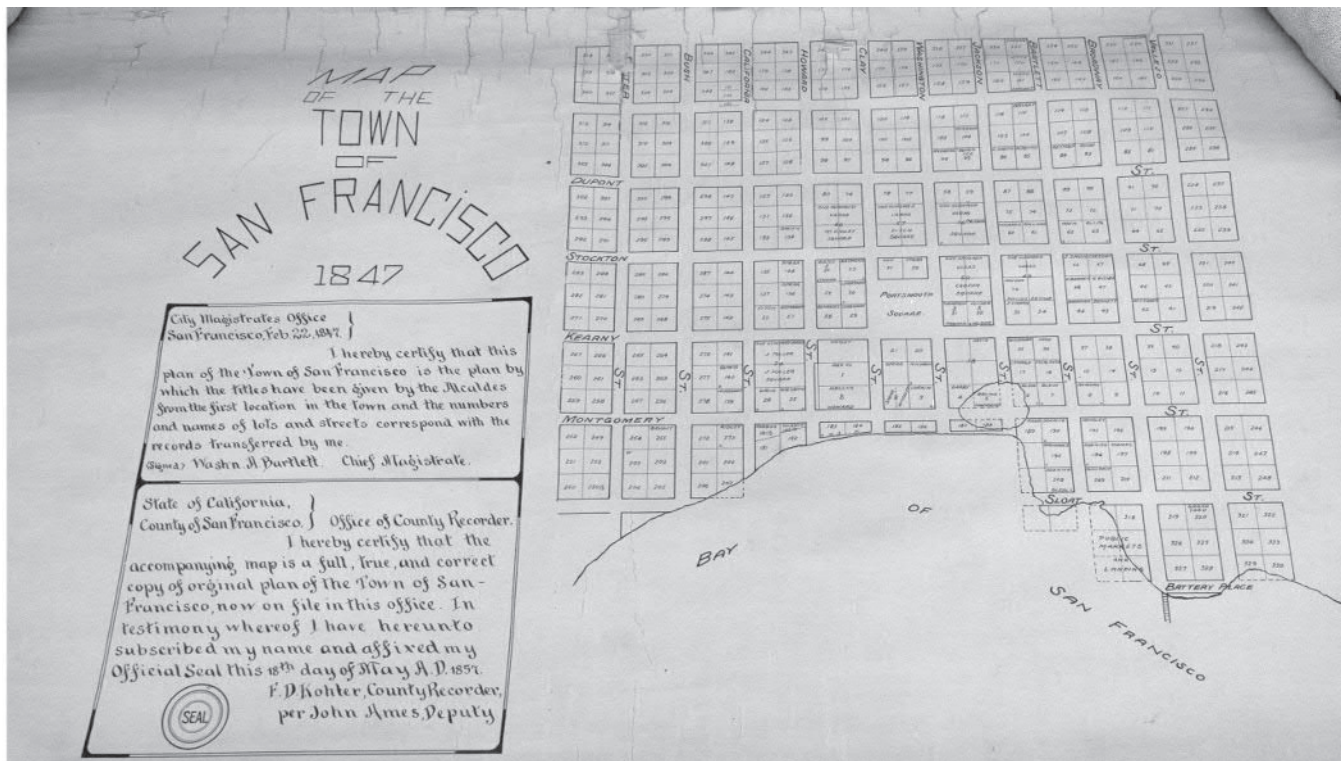
WASH'N A. BARTLETT *Chief Magistrate*

The notice was reprinted in the January 30 edition of the *Star*. Not surprisingly, no mention of Yerba Buena's name change appeared in Robert Semple's *Californian*.

Much of this occurred during Larkin's imprisonment in Los Angeles. After his release on January 9, 1847, he remained in Los Angeles for nearly a month before returning to Monterey on February 8. On January 22, he wrote to Vallejo from Los Angeles:

By no means do anything respecting the whole tract of land where we want to have the town. I have not grown lukewarm on the speculation, and wish it to embrace all your land at that place.⁵²

The Buckelew map, commissioned by real estate speculators during O'Farrell's inactivity, sketched



Buckelew map, 1847. Author's collection.

twelve east-west and eight north-south streets forming sixty-nine full and partial blocks around Portsmouth Square, amounting to 265 acres (five times the area of Vioget's survey) or about 0.4 square mile. Alcalde Bartlett certified the map on February 22, 1847, one of his last acts before returning to active naval duty that day. This map bears the title *Map of the Town of San Francisco 1847*.

Finally, San Francisco was now literally on the map.

Another last-day-in-office act by Bartlett was to grant to his incoming successor, Edwin Bryant, a 50-vara lot on Pine Street between Montgomery and Sansome (lot #255). Bryant reciprocated on February 26 by granting Bartlett a lot (#62) at the northwest corner of Dupont and Broadway.⁵³

When the United States seized Yerba Buena, it was much more than just a military occupation. It was also a monumentally huge and an exceedingly delicate administrative undertaking to locate, document, verify, preserve, and translate public records, especially land claims in the former Mexican possession. Among the records surviving today is the English translation of the *Spanish Blotter Vol. 8B 1826-1846*, which begins: "This book consists of the possessions of lots in Yerba Buena by the Disposition of the Government Department." Washington Bartlett wrote the following on page 29:

Civil Magistracy of the District of San Francisco August AD 1846. Having been appointed by Captain John B Montgomery USN, Governor and Military Commandant of the Northern District of San Francisco to fill the office and discharge the duties of the Civil Magistracy of San Francisco and Yerba Buena, I applied to Don de Jesus Noe, the Alcalde of said town under the late government of California to surrender all public archives and documents. When this book was given up as containing the only record of the grants of lots in said town of Yerba Buena.

signed: Wash'n Bartlett
Acting Magistrate

When Bartlett sought O'Farrell's expertise to "get matters arranged regarding streets and lots" in Yerba Buena, he wasn't troubled by the limitations of Vioget's 1839 map. That document may have been an accurate representation of the skewed property lines and paths of the time, but as a planning tool it was simply an embellished *diseño*.

Up to the time of the creation of Vioget's 1839 map, only nine grants had been awarded in Yerba Buena and the population was probably fifty souls with "more than six" structures, so there was no planning urgency. Afterward, ten lots were granted (including Vioget's of January 15, 1840) up to April 23, 1841, when Governor Jose Castro communicated with Yerba Buena's Alcalde Francisco Sanchez:

To the Justice of the Peace of San Francisco: That in making the grants of house lots, they shall be in as good order and arrangement possible, and as the situation of the place may require, in order that the streets and plazas which may be formed **may have from the beginning proper uniformity and harmony.** (emphasis added)⁵⁴

In the same communication Castro directed that "lots might well be granted to particular individuals, but the number of varas should not exceed fifty" (i.e., 50 varas or 137 feet square). Thus, Governor Castro introduced both urban planning and zoning regulations in Yerba Buena in 1841.

As a planning document, Vioget's survey was incompatible with Castro's *proper uniformity and harmony* decree. And it lacked something essential: the flexibility to allow for future growth and planning. In no one's wildest imagination could Vioget's landscape be considered a "plan" from which a city could grow.

At that time, lots were sometimes defined in relation to adjoining lots. When Jean Vioget received his grant from Alcalde Francisco Guerrero, it was recorded as being "fifty varas wide and one hundred varas long *immediately west of the lot granted to J.P. Leese and south east of the Public Square*" (emphasis added).⁵⁵ When Pedro Sherrebeck received his 50-vara grant on May 1, 1842, it was located "*fronting [the grant to] Davis and east of the public square.*"⁵⁶

This imprecision could not continue.
And it didn't.



Vioget's 1839 survey overlaid on 1847 Buckelew map. Courtesy of Neatline Antique Maps.

Yerba Buena cartographic history of a sort was made on July 12, 1843, when Roberto Ridley received his grant for lot #139 “on the plan of Yerba Buena.”⁵⁸ (Emphasis added.) The reference to a lot number was not a new practice, going back to July 8, 1837, with the granting of lot number 56 to Jacob Leese. The reference to “the plan of Yerba Buena,” however, was new. Similar references to the plan of Yerba Buena were cited in eight subsequent grants between July 12, 1844 and May 20, 1846.

There is no record of what the plan of Yerba Buena actually was. However, in 1845, Alcalde William “Captain” Hinckley prevailed upon the prefect at Monterey to have Vioget’s survey extended to Mason Street on the west, Green Street on the

north, and Sutter Street on the south. This area covered 200 acres (compared to Vioget’s 52 acres) or about 0.3 square mile.⁵⁹ John H. Brown refers to this plan in his reminiscences of early San Francisco, recalling his arrival in Yerba Buena in 1845:

There was one small general merchandise store in the place, one billiard room and a liquor saloon. The billiard room was at that time the headquarters for all strangers in the city, both foreigners and Californians. All persons wishing to purchase lots would apply to [Robert] Ridley, as the first map of surveyed land was kept in the barroom. The names of those who had lots granted were written on the map.

The map was so much soiled and torn from the rough use it received that Captain Hinckley volunteered to make a new one. He tried several times, but being very nervous he could not succeed in making the lines straight, so he got me to do the work, according to his instructions. The original map was put away for safe keeping. The maps were left in the barroom until after the raising of the American flag, when they were demanded of me by Washington A. Bartlett of the United States ship Portsmouth by order of Captain Montgomery.⁶⁰

Mr. Brown, the copier and keeper of the second Barroom Map, included a re-creation of the map in his book along with descriptions and explanations of important lots and buildings based on his recollection.

The Buckelew map, which became San Francisco's official map on February 22, 1847, was an ad hoc/ad lib map hastily drawn in protest before O'Farrell could begin his official survey. It was a regular street grid covering five times the area of Vioget's survey. It defies common sense to believe that Buckelew's orderly street grid could be quietly imposed on Vioget's smorgasbord of polygons in a matter of weeks without creating any public outcry or protest over property lines, rights of way, and other real estate concerns.

Unless there was a missing link, which would only require a small step and not a giant leap to get from Vioget's survey to Buckelew's.

And there was a missing link: *The Plan of Yerba Buena*, which existed as early as 1843 and perhaps earlier. The thirty-five blocks on the Barroom Map, drawn from Brown's recollection, covered about 125 acres or about 60 percent of the Buckelew Map's area. More than likely, the Barroom Map was a copy of the official *Plan of Yerba Buena*, first referenced in 1843, and was posted at the bar for show and convenience, since such an important civic document as the original would not be handled so cavalierly. The official map was probably kept by the *alcaldes* with the land record book seized by Lt. Bartlett. The taking of the Barroom Map as related by Brown is consistent with the seizing of other town records, as Bartlett noted in the English translation of the *Spanish Blotter Vol. 8B 1826-1846*.

We can deduce from the Barroom Map and Brown's recollections that the *Official Plan of Yerba Buena* was a grid and that it was the template from which the larger Buckelew Map was expanded to become the official map of San Francisco on February 22, 1847.

On March 8, Alcalde Edwin Bryant and Jasper O'Farrell drew up a revised contract. Nearly four months after receiving his November 1846 summons from Alcalde Bartlett "to have a good plan of the town, and get matters arranged regarding streets and lots," O'Farrell could finally begin surveying.

* * * * *

Next Up: Part II, "Putting the Maps on San Francisco," will explore the mapping of Gold Rush San Francisco leading to the Marlette map and ultimately to the Bridgens Map.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Angus Macfarlane's passions are historic San Francisco maps and nineteenth-century San Francisco baseball. This is his fifth article to appear in *The Argonaut* (but the first one about maps). His previous articles in *The Argonaut* were: "San Francisco Racetracks" — "Part 1: Pioneer and Pavilion Racetracks of the 1850s" and "Part 2: The Racetracks of the 1860s" (Vol. 19, No. 1, Summer 2008); "San Francisco Racetracks" — "Part 3: Bay District and Golden Gate Racetracks of the 1870s and 1880s" and "Part 4: Ingleside, Oakland, and Tanforan Racetracks of the 1890s and 1900s" (Vol. 19, No. 2, Winter 2008); and "The Byfield Tract" (Vol. 21, No. 2, Winter 2010). He is currently working on the "pre-hippie history" of the Haight-Ashbury.

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12. T. H. Hittell, *History of California*, Vol. 2, 469.
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35. Harlow; *California Conquered*, 99; and Woodrow Hansen, *California Historical Quarterly*, 41:3 Sept 1962, 227; Woodrow J. Hansen, Robert Semple, *Pioneer, Promoter, Politician*.
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WOODWARD'S GARDENS

Robert B. Woodward's "Central Park of the Pacific"

by Gary F. Kurutz

INTRODUCTION

One of the most famous features of San Francisco in the nineteenth century was an extraordinary amusement park and educational center known as Woodward's Gardens. Created through the imagination and drive of hotel owner Robert Blum Woodward (1824–1879), it captured the imaginations of tens of thousands of San Franciscans and Californians and became known across the country as one of the nation's foremost cultural venues from 1866 to 1892. Well known for his generous and caring nature, Woodward converted his own home and estate at Mission and 14th Streets to a public garden for the benefit of all. Its museums, conservatories, greenhouses, library, zoo, aquarium, music hall, restaurant, skating rink, gymnasium, bear pit, seal pond, and lush landscaping made Woodward's Gardens an ongoing source of delight. Here nature, art, and science harmonized, achieving Woodward's goal of making his former home a place of education, recreation, and amusement. Over its comparatively short life, the Gardens hosted scores of concerts, dances, athletic contests, balloon ascensions, and other events, many of which Woodward made available to schools and charitable organizations free of charge. To be sure, San Francisco enjoyed such verdant spots as Russ Gardens, The Willows, and Hayes Park, but nothing could compare to this place that became known as the "Central Park of the Pacific" or, as acclaimed in one magazine, the "Eden of the West."¹

To create and support such a stunning complex required considerable financial resources, and Woodward's business acumen made this possible. He ranks as one of California's pioneer millionaires and chose to share his good fortune with the city that made it possible.

THE WHAT CHEER HOUSE & BUILDING A FORTUNE

San Francisco during the early rollicking years of the rush for gold served as the major transit center where gold seekers, after arriving after a tedious ocean voyage, were in a scramble to leave the port city and head northeast to "the great Golconda."* Others, however, saw a different alternative to panning or digging for nuggets in the icy streams of the Sierra foothills. A poignant saying describes these entrepreneurs: they "mined the miners."

One such person was Robert Woodward, an experienced businessman from Providence, Rhode Island, who owned a general merchandise business in partnership with his father. With the electric news from California, young Woodward saw a new opportunity and decided to head west. According to his 1879 obituary in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, he boarded the ship *Naumkeag* in Providence, along with twenty-nine eager passengers leaving on March 6, 1849. Woodward took with him a generous supply of merchandise to embark on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The *Naumkeag* sailed around Cape Horn and arrived in San Francisco on November 18, 1849, after a journey of 255 days.²



Robert B. Woodward, founder of Woodward's Gardens. Courtesy of The Society of California Pioneers, Gift of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Mrs. Caspar Brown, and Mr. Henry C. Melone.

While others scrambled to reach the goldfields, Woodward waded through the chaos of the muddy streets of this burgeoning port to market his New England goods. He also realized that the miners were going hungry as they wandered the streets, and he established a grocery store and quality restaurant.³ However, fires ravaged the mostly wood and rag city in the early days; more than likely, Woodward witnessed his enterprise go up in smoke. As the city recovered, he took note of the expensive cost of hotels and saw another opportunity, as the steep prices repelled many potential customers.

On July 4, 1852, Woodward opened his own caravansary conveniently located at the corner of Sacramento and Leidesdorff Streets between Montgomery and Sansome.⁴ Like many other new buildings, he wisely had it constructed of fire-resistant brick and stone graced with elegant arches on the first floor, metal grill work balconies on the second floor, and a decorative cornice crowning the flat-roofed structure. Langley's 1868 *San Francisco Directory* provides an engraving of a handsome and sturdy-looking five-story hotel.⁵

Woodward gave this stately structure the memorable name "What Cheer House," which reflected his Rhode Island heritage where the friendly greeting of "what cheer" was commonplace.⁶ In response to high room rates and sympathetic to the common man, he fitted his hotel with small, modestly priced rooms furnished with "mahogany bedsteads, curled hair mattresses, a box of matches, a pin-cushion filled with pins, table, chair—and a brush and comb." It appealed to miners, general laborers, and visitors who appreciated not only its room rate, but also its cleanliness. An advertisement in *Le Count and Strong's* 1854 directory boasted: "Its accommodations have been greatly enlarged. Shaving and hair dressing saloons, and bathing rooms have been added with warm or cold shower baths. Board per week: \$8.00; lodging per week, \$2.00 to \$6.00; baths 50¢. Payment to be made in advance."⁸ By the early 1860s, the What Cheer House adopted the "European Plan," whereby a guest could secure board without lodgings or lodgings without board. Woodward charged fifty cents a night and included free shower baths, plus a laundry service and a boot-black room. So popular did the What Cheer House become that it was called a "people's institution" or

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT. 61



WHAT CHEER HOUSE.

This favorite and well established House is now

Conducted on the European Plan,
GUESTS PAYING FOR ONLY WHAT THEY ORDER.

FIRST CLASS LODGING
50 Cts. per Night,
And Less Rates by the Week.

Sacramento Street,
Between Montgomery and Sansome.

AN EXTENSIVE
Library, Museum & Reading Room Free to all the Guests

The Omnibus will take Guests and Baggage to the house Free of Charge. Look to the name of the Omnibus to avoid imposition.

R. B. WOODWARD, PROPRIETOR.

WHAT CHEER LAUNDRY.

WHAT CHEER HOUSE.

The Oldest and Most Reliable Laundry on the Pacific Coast.

WASHING DONE UP IN THE BEST STYLE,
And returned in Eight Hours notice, if required. Also, a large assortment of
Gentlemen's Furnishing Goods kept constantly on hand,
AND SOLD CHEAP TO SUIT THE TIMES.

MAIN ENTRANCE ON LEIDESDORFF STREET, 2 DOORS FROM SACRAMENTO.

Ever the entrepreneur, Woodward placed advertisements for his What Cheer House in newspapers and city directories. This advertisement appeared in Langley's 1868 *San Francisco Directory*. Touting its distinctive features, the hotel offered a library, museum, and reading room for its guests instead of a saloon or card room. In addition, the hotel boasted a laundry.

Courtesy of the California State Library.

a "miner's hotel."⁹ The hotel boasted a full-service restaurant where delicious meals were priced cheaply at twenty-five cents each which, again, contrasted with hotel restaurants such as the Occidental, Lick, Cosmopolitan, and Russ House.¹⁰

The What Cheer House gained in popularity. It could accommodate up to a thousand guests a night, and its restaurant served up to 4,000 meals daily. To keep control over such a full place with so many swarthy men squeezed together and with a firm belief in temperance, Woodward purposely did not include a bar and no women were allowed on the premises either as guests or employees. The former Rhode Islander banned hard liquor (temperance at the time meant no hard liquor, but wine and beer were permitted), but, as will be seen, he offered other diversions. Newspapers praised the caravansary.



Exterior of the What Cheer House on the south side of Sacramento Street below Montgomery, 1865. Woodward opened the hotel on July 4, 1852. Photograph by T. E. Hecht, courtesy of San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

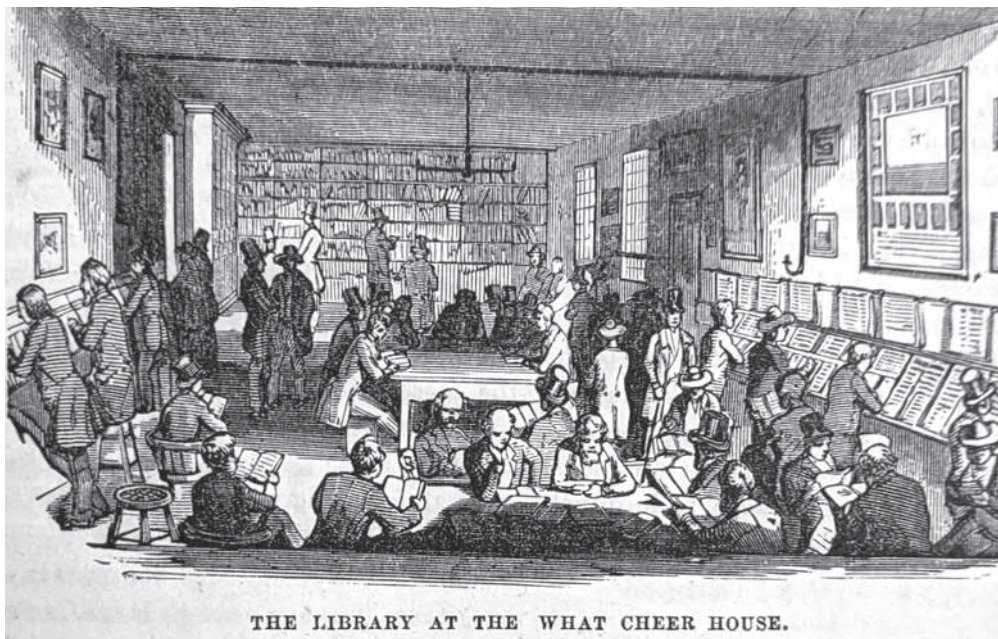
The March 24, 1864, issue of the *Sacramento Daily Union*, for example, called it the “best, cheapest, largest, and most convenient hotel in California.”¹¹ Charles H. Webb devoted an article to Woodward’s “boarding house” in the widely circulated *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, stating, “The ‘What Cheer House’ is known throughout the whole length and breadth of the Pacific Coast. It is as much an institution of San Francisco as are the summer winds.”¹²

As the What Cheer House flourished, so did Woodward. Now a wealthy proprietor, he reinvested his profits in the hotel and made other improvements to Woodward’s Gardens. While a tired stevedore or carpenter could not “belly up to the bar” for a shot of whiskey at this hotel, he was offered a very different kind of diversion: a free library and museum—a first in San Francisco. Woodward knew that his city was filled with lonely and sometimes uncouth and

violent men. His library and museum offered safe, wonderful, and stimulating diversions. So extraordinary was the library and museum that *Hutchings' California Magazine* in its November 1860 and January 1861 issues devoted illustrated articles to these cultural wonders. An enthusiastic Hutchings wrote, "We believe we can say with truth that no library in the State is more extensively and better read than the What Cheer Library."¹³ He went on to write: "The proprietor, finding that his house was the best patronized in the State, seems to have come to the conclusion that he would make a little world in itself out of it."¹⁴ Discovering a library for working-class hotel guests in this Gold Rush city prompted Hutchings to do further research, and he concluded:

A library in a public hotel has presented itself to us as such a novelty, that we have sent our memory on an expedition of exploration among all the hotels with which we are familiar, both north and south, east and west, and over parts of Europe, and the reports on its return is, "Nothing of the kind to be found."¹⁵

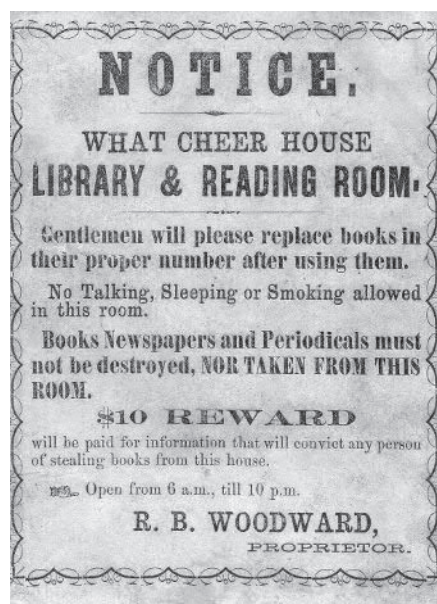
Established in 1856, the library room in the What Cheer House consisted of a large space with a high ceiling flanked on both sides by slanted tables and racks designed to hold newspapers from California cities and the principal cities of the eastern United States and Europe. At the south and west sides of the great room stood floor-to-ceiling bookcases holding a collection of between two and three thousand volumes. According to the *Hutchings* article, Woodward bought with taste, and his library equaled the contents of many better-known libraries. This innkeeper crammed his shelves with literary classics, poetry, drama, stories of voyages and travel,



THE LIBRARY AT THE WHAT CHEER HOUSE.

The library at the What Cheer House. from *Hutchings' California Magazine*, July 1859. Courtesy of the California State Library.

historical works, biographies, and works on such practical matters as beekeeping, vine-growing, horticulture, and farming. The latter group had direct application, as Woodward would, in short time, develop gardens in the city, vineyards, and orchards of Napa. Typically, "attentive readers" filled this great room to capacity. An illustration in the *Hutchings* periodical depicts a bevy of hotel guests perusing newspapers, while others sat in chairs and at tables studiously reading books.¹⁶

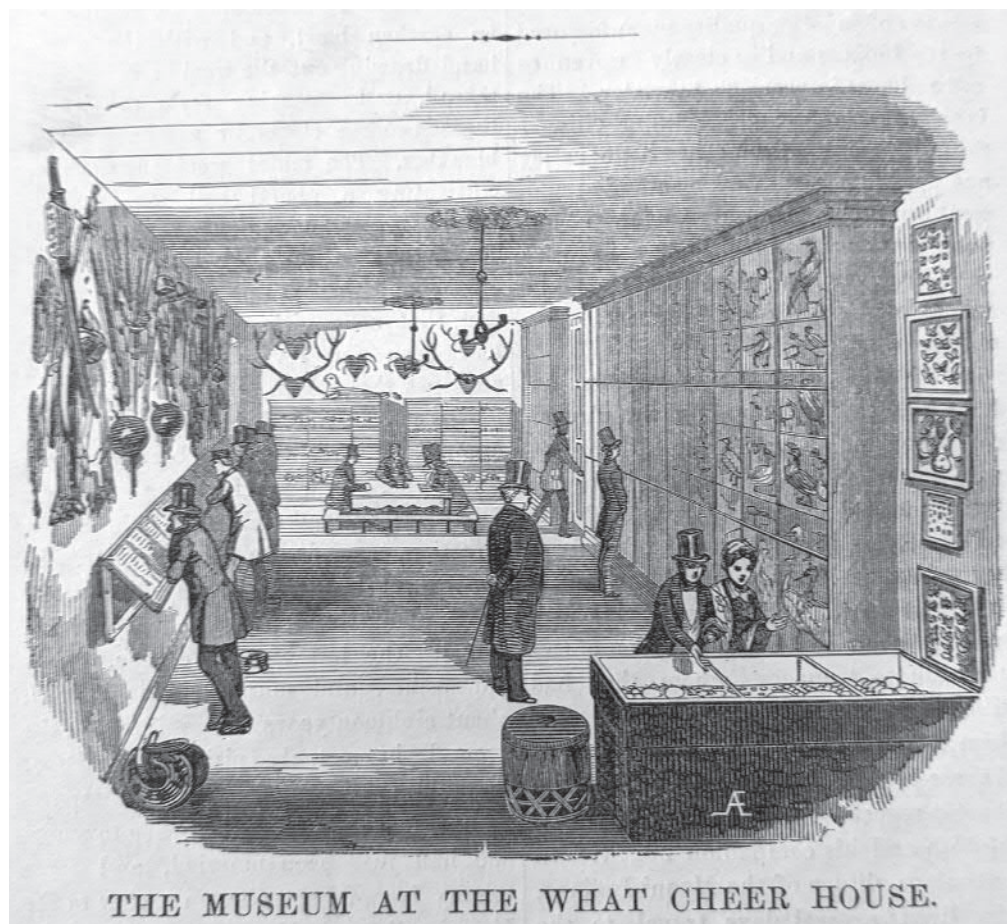


Bookplate from the What Cheer House Library. Typical of bookplates in libraries open to the public, the text clearly stated rules of behavior forbidding talking, sleeping and smoking. Courtesy of the California State Library.

If this were not enough, Woodward developed a museum in his hotel to provide even more intellectual stimulation for his guests. His “little world” continued to grow. Woodward established the museum in the summer of 1860. Visitors entered the museum through the library, and, like the library, it occupied a 45-x-14-foot room. An insatiable collector with a mind brimming with curiosity, Woodward packed the room with all kinds of specimens and artifacts. As stated in the *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, “All California, and in fact the whole Pacific coast, has been ransacked to obtain the curiosities.”¹⁷

One can only imagine the astonishment of his boarders and guests at what they saw. Woodward had loaded the What Cheer House with six hundred stuffed birds, twenty-five stuffed animals, twelve hundred eggs, minerals, shells, butterflies, and other insects. To this he added collections of rare coins; paintings; sculpture; South Sea and Native American artifacts; and other novelties such as walrus and wild boar tusks, sea lion and seal skins, and elk, deer, and mountain sheep horns. He had acquired many of these objects on an 1861 trip to Europe. According to the *North Pacific Review*, he returned with more than five hundred boxes of natural history treasures.¹⁸

This staggering Victorian-era cabinet of curiosities was housed in floor-to-ceiling glass cases or picture frames, or hung high on the walls. Oddly, the engraving of the museum in the *Hutchings* magazine shows a man and a woman gazing into an exhibit case—odd because the What Cheer House was a male-only establishment.¹⁹



The museum at the What Cheer House. Hutchings' *California Magazine*, June 1860.
Courtesy of the California State Library.

In addition to natural history, Woodward had an eye for European art and sculpture. During his European peregrinations in Italy and Holland, he spent several thousand dollars on paintings that he hung in the hall of the What Cheer House. While in Italy, he met artist Virgil Williams and commissioned him to select paintings for a gallery of art. John S. Hittell in his article, “Art in San Francisco,” commented on Woodward’s acquisitions, writing: “Several of them are good, especially one by [German Ernst] Schweinfurth, representing ‘A Scene in the Garden of a Convent.’” The real coup, however, was his purchase of a bust of “California” by Hiram Powers, derived from his celebrated full-length sculpture of the female figures symbolizing the Golden State.²⁰ Thus the museum in the Sacramento Street hotel continued to grow. It foreshadowed Woodward’s future development of his multi-acre Garden complex.

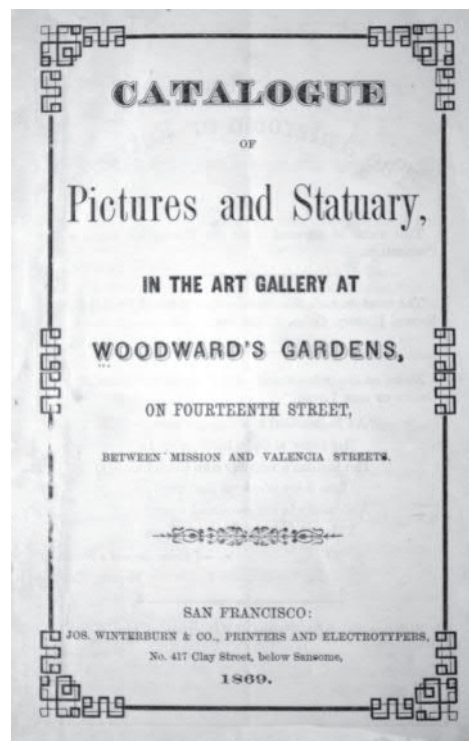
WOODWARD'S VILLA

Ethel Malone Brown, a granddaughter of Woodward, related how, before leaving Providence for California, Woodward had married Mary C. Buckland in Providence. In 1857, a now-prosperous Robert Woodward returned to Providence to bring his wife and children to San Francisco.²¹ Not wanting to fully expose them to the city's noisy and congested streets with swinging saloon doors, he sheltered them in a home in the fashionable South Park neighborhood.²² Wishing for an even more serene atmosphere for his family, Woodward purchased property described as a "villa on the old Mission Road" between 13th and 15th Streets comprising four acres. At the time, the property consisting of sand hills and was considered a remote and quiet location. As stated in the June 28, 1860, *Daily Alta California*, "He bought the place some four months since, and within that short period, has so metamorphosed it that in a few weeks it will be hardly recognizable as the same spot."²³

The two-story villa was previously owned by none other than John C. Fremont. Woodward envisioned much more than an ordinary home. He was no longer confined to a hotel structure and could now create his own fantasy world spread out over two large city blocks. The innkeeper brought in a large labor force to enlarge the villa and enhance the surrounding property. He raised the structure some seven feet and leveled the space between Mission Street and the home. To this he added a summer home on the property. In keeping with the Victorian era's deep appreciation of nature, and being a man of refined taste, Woodward had his crew surround the villa with trees, choice plants, outdoor furniture, and other amenities that would soon evolve into a public garden. The *Alta* noted that "a perennial stream" ran through the grounds. Taking advantage of this natural asset, his crew redirected the stream to form a series of miniature lakes for fish and waterfowl, as well as provide irrigation for his gardens. No longer would he have to rely on stuffed animals. Instead, he added to the spacious backyard a variety of living creatures, including birds, rabbits, and ducks. He imported statuary expressly for his garden, created by sculptors from Carrara, Italy. San Franciscans began to notice what a paradise he had created, and

many no doubt wished they could stroll through his peaceful grounds.

Woodward took a second trip to Europe in 1866 with his family. With earnings from the What Cheer House, this insatiable collector was in his element. Seizing the moment, he purchased a stunning natural history collection from Edouard and Jules Verreux's establishment in Paris.²⁴ The Verreux were not only naturalists but also respected collectors and dealers. This purchase would become the foundational collection for his villa. During this cultural sojourn he received a message from San Francisco inquiring if he would make his villa available to a fundraising organization known as the Sanitary Fund, which benefitted wounded Civil War veterans. (The Sanitary Fund was the predecessor of today's Red Cross.) With his magnanimous personality, Woodward agreed, and for the first time his gardens were opened to the public.²⁵ This turned out to be a transformative event. It occurred to Woodward that his mansion and its grounds could be used for other charitable events or for the general enjoyment of the public. Now he could share the many treasures that he had accumulated, including paintings, books, ancient artifacts, and exotic specimens from his natural history collection.



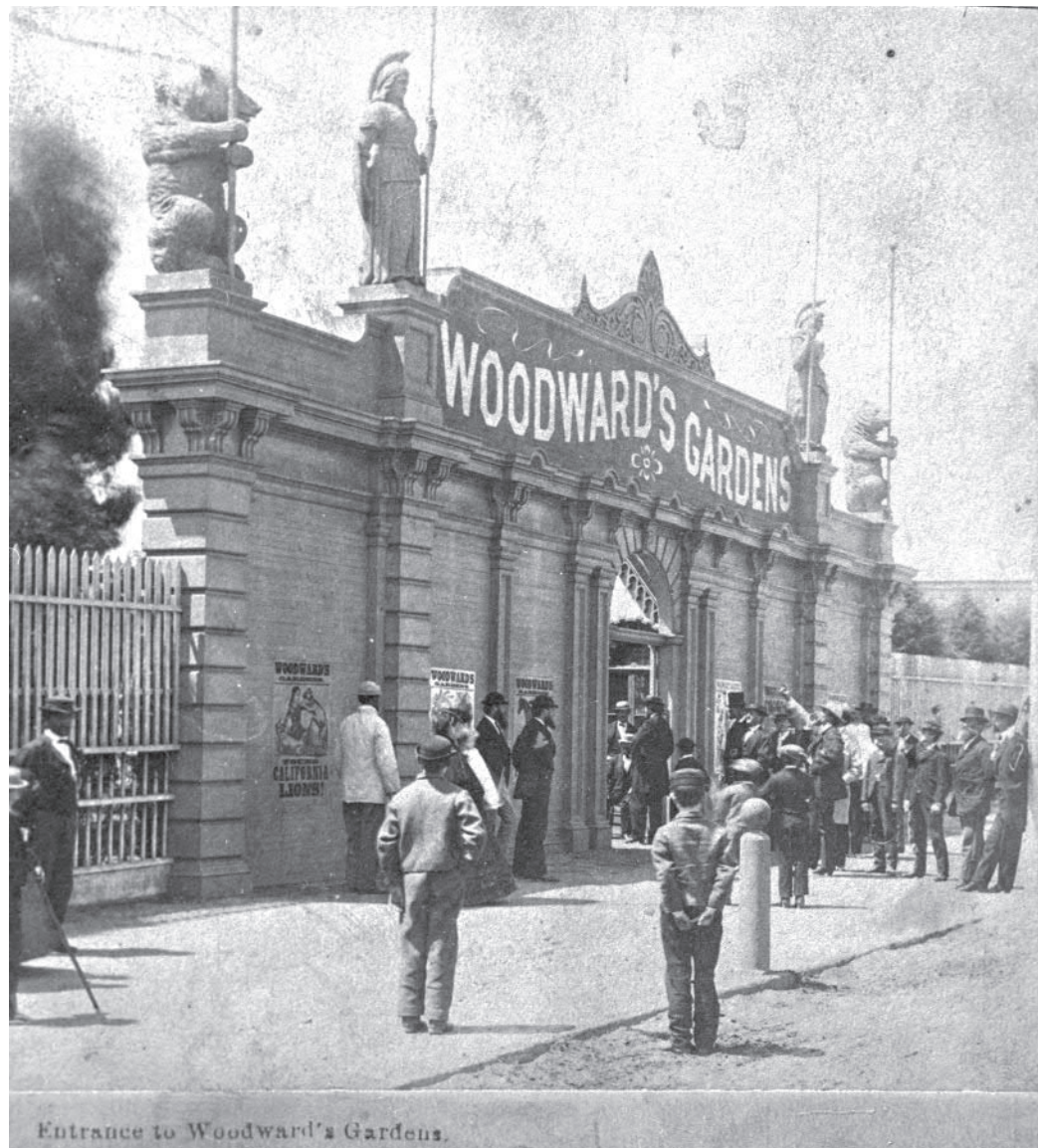
Catalogue of Pictures and Statuary, in the Art Gallery. Published in 1869, the gallery featured reproductions of European masters and original works by San Francisco artists Virgil Williams and Albert Bierstadt. Courtesy of the California State Library.

The only drawback that Woodward faced was safeguarding his family. With the general public free to roam through his property, his wife and daughters reportedly protested with the same response, “We might just as well be a ‘public pleasure ground!’” Father Woodward embraced the phrase “public pleasure ground,” but to allay their concerns, he acquired a gorgeous estate in Napa County known as Oak Knoll.²⁶ He also transformed this family oasis and it served as his own retreat when he needed rest. Taking a carriage or donkey car back and forth between the What Cheer House on Montgomery Street, which overflowed with hundreds of men, and his mansion on Mission Street might not always have been a soothing experience.²⁷

Turning back to the concept of the “public pleasure ground,” Woodward saw in his Mission Street villa and grounds something much bigger that would bring acclaim to his adopted city—a city best known across the country for its rowdy night life, so prominently featured in Gold Rush era publications and images. One observer noted the villa’s hard and dry walkways, comparing them to “the muddy [downtown] streets we had so recently left.”²⁸ He adopted a three-fold goal or purpose for the villa: it would become a place for education, recreation, and amusement to benefit the young and old alike.

A PUBLIC PLEASURE GROUND

In May 1866, a much-expanded “Woodward’s Gardens,” as his estate became known, was thrown open to the general public. It featured a dazzling array of attractions housed in Victorian-era structures complete with fantasy-like minarets and domes. The main entry gate stood on Mission Street. It was flanked on both sides by an attractive white picket fence backed by dense hedges of Monterey cypress twenty feet high and four hundred feet long.²⁹ At this entrance, visitors encountered an impressive and elegant neo-classical gateway crowned with a mammoth sign for the Gardens. Four large statues

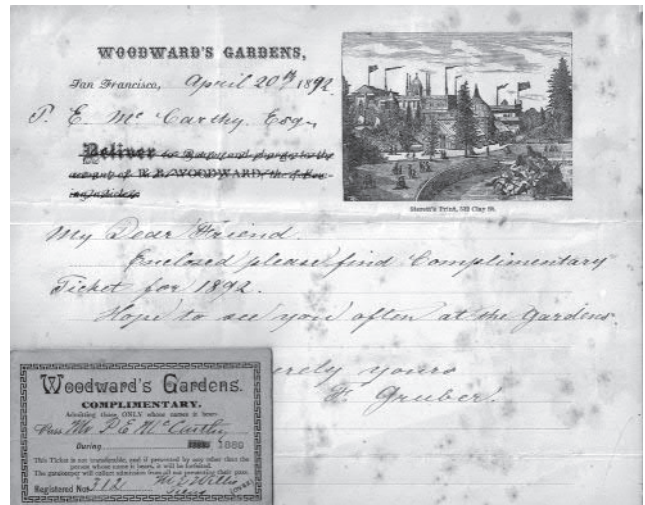


Entrance to Woodward's Gardens, 1870.. The photograph shows a poster advertising young California lions. Photograph by Eadweard J. Muybridge (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection/Courtesy of a Private Collector), OpenSFHistory/wnp37.00568.

surmounted the gateway. Each figure held a flag. The two central statues resembled either the Goddess Minerva or the Goddess of Liberty, and two hefty carved grizzly bears flanked the ends of the gateway.³⁰ In addition, large posters mounted on the outside wall announced new events.

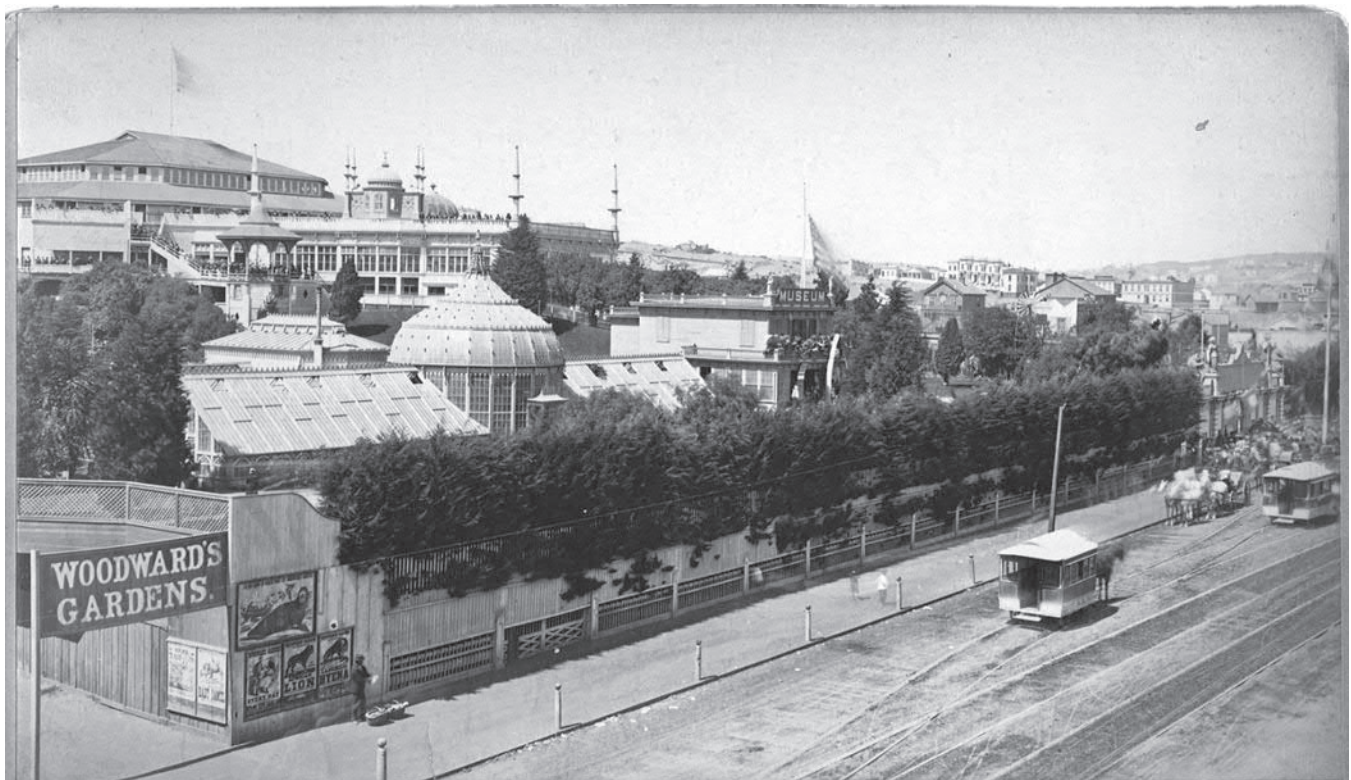
Once inside, patrons purchased tickets to the Gardens. Being realistic, Woodward realized that it would be necessary to charge admission to maintain the grounds, make improvements, feed the animals, expand its attractions and collections, and pay his staff. His brother, William Woodward, served as the Gardens' manager. Adults paid a modest twenty-five cents and children ten cents. However, free entrance was often given for charitable events. According to one source, youngsters slipped in unnoticed, and Woodward consistently mailed out free tickets.³¹ To help make the Gardens an educational experience, visitors could obtain illustrated guidebooks filled with lucid descriptions of what they were about to see. The guidebooks also included a pictorial map. Visitors could also buy flowers, photographs, and other souvenirs.³²

Walking through the gateway, visitors encoun-

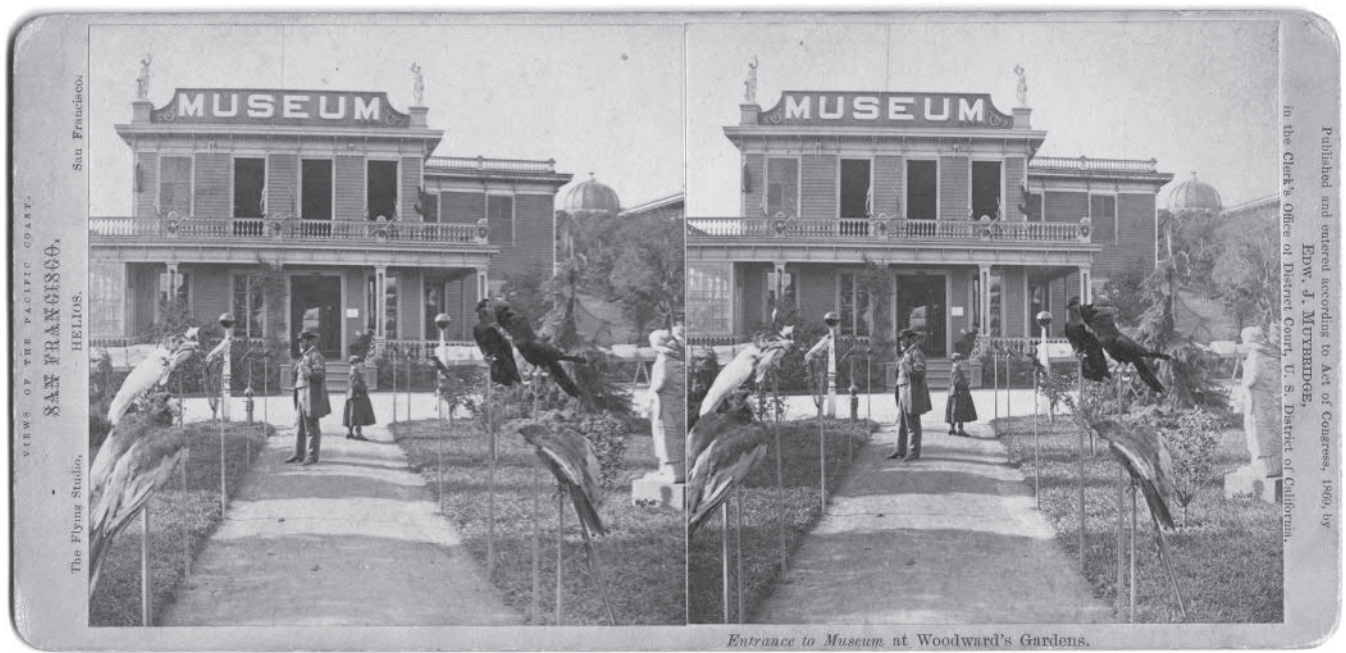


Professor Ferdinand Gruber held the position as the park's curator and sent a complimentary ticket, dated April 20, 1892, on Gardens' stationery to P. E. McCarthy. A year later, on April 6, 1893, the Garden's extraordinary collections were put on the auction block. Courtesy of the California State Library.

tered a beautifully landscaped park with meandering pathways leading to the various museums, fountains, and greenhouses—in addition to an aquarium, amphitheater, conservatory, orangery, and seal pond—all surrounded by lawns and manicured



View of Mission Street Entrance of Woodward's Gardens with "Bob Cars" and large crowd, 1869. Powered by one horse, the "Bob Cars" took passengers from the inner city to the Gardens. Tickets cost 5¢. Photograph by Carleton E. Watkins, courtesy of California State Library.



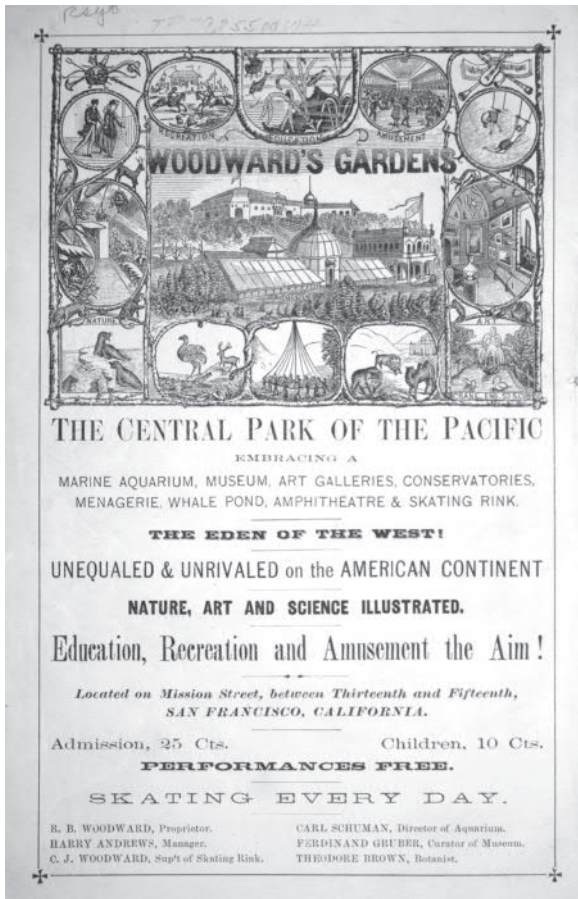
Entrance to the museum, 1869. The entrance is flanked by live birds tethered to posts. Stereograph by Eadward J. Muybridge. By securing the talents of famed photographers like Muybridge, Woodward produced these three-dimensional stereo views to promote the Gardens and sell to tourists. Courtesy of California State Library.

hedges, trees, and plants. Throughout the Gardens, Woodward's staff had installed a variety of Greco-Roman statues and classic tables and benches. To the immediate right of the gateway, a gargantuan bust of George Washington greeted guests. Although 14th Street split the grounds in half, a tunnel led visitors under the street to the zoo and zoological gardens. Here, on this dirt-packed surface, were large enclosures for live animals, a bear pit, aviary, outdoor gymnasium, the amphitheater, and a place to launch manned balloons.³³

Upon entering the formal grounds, visitors were greeted by exotic live birds tethered to perches flanking the walkway. Next, sightseers strolled under an archway formed by the jawbones of a mammoth whale that led to Woodward's former mansion, which he had converted into a museum to display his artifacts. The giant jawbones alone would have left the first-time visitor awestruck. Woodward's home now became San Francisco's first sizable museum. He engaged the naturalist Professor Ferdinand Gruber to serve as the museum's curator and to further build its collections.³⁴ The printed guide proudly claimed that "it is second to none in America." The museum contained well over 1,200 artifacts.



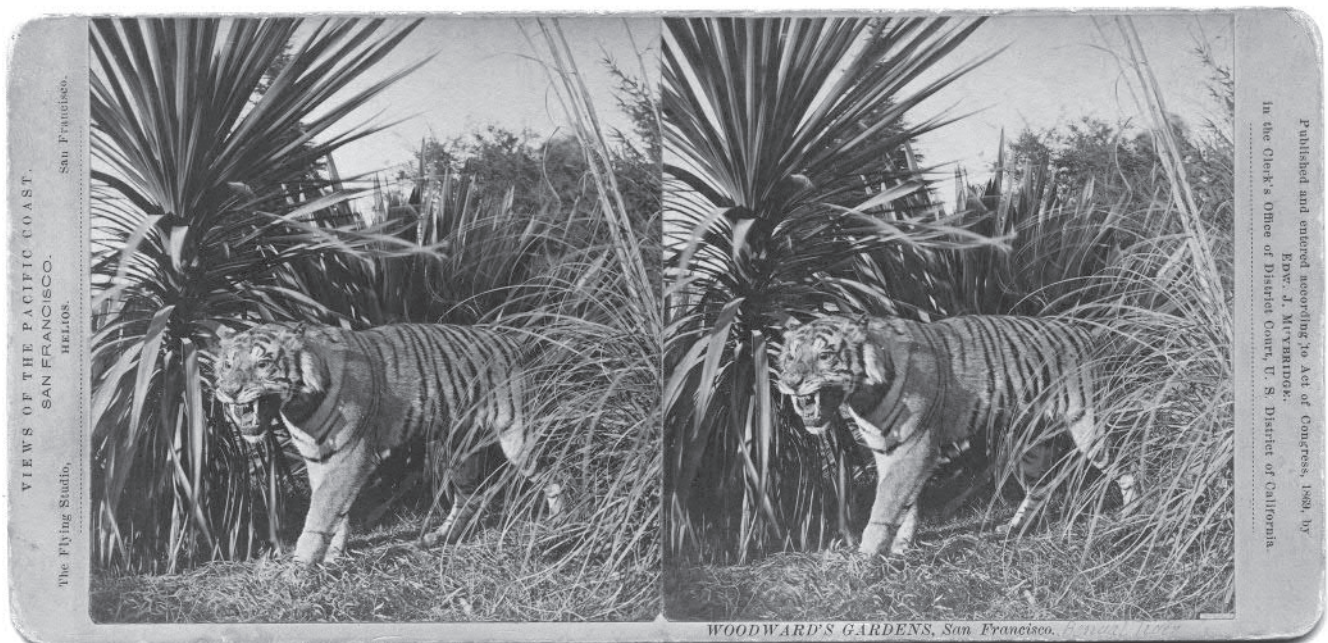
Illustrated Guide and Catalogue of Woodward's Gardens, 1879. Ferdinand Gruber, the curator of Woodward's Gardens, compiled this informative and beautifully printed guidebook. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Advertising flyer for Woodward's Gardens. Woodward saw the aim of the Gardens as "Education, Recreation and Amusement." Courtesy of the Sutro Library branch of the California State Library.

Sightseers then walked into the ornithological gallery of stuffed birds, scientifically organized by type and complete with their Latin and common names exhibited in sixty-seven cases. Their colorful feathers presented a visual feast. On the upper floor, Gruber curated the zoological gallery, which was devoted to quadrupeds (four-legged critters), reptiles, fish, and crustacea. To give the spectator a sense of realism, one of the cases depicted an anaconda attacking a jaguar. Other exotic species on display included a sloth, armadillo, and anteater.

To add further to the viewing pleasure, hand-colored double elephant folio plates from John James Audubon's *Birds of America* were installed in the stairway leading to the upper floor of the museum. Audubon's brilliant lifelike plates no doubt helped viewers appreciate the stuffed specimens in the exhibit cabinets. Rounding out the museum were displays of California minerals, lava from Hawaii, an Eskimo canoe, an Alaska Native cloak made from sea parrot feathers, stalactites and stalagmites from the Alabaster Cave of El Dorado County, fossils from England, and meteorites from California and England, to name just a few. Of particular pride was the 1,587-piece geological and mineralogical collection from the Japanese Islands collected by Professor Jacques Kaderly, formerly of the Imperial Academy of Yeddo. Kaderly, in one of the Garden's guidebooks,



A snarling stuffed tiger no doubt startled visitors. Stereograph by Eadweard J. Muybridge, 1869. Courtesy of California State Library.



Interior view of the conservatory, ca. 1870. Stereograph by Lange & Newth, Photographers, San Francisco. Courtesy of California State Library.

admitted that the display had to be compromised as he yielded to the wishes of Woodward in arranging the specimens “to please the eye of the visitor.”³⁵

Adjacent to the museum stood a magnificent glass conservatory adorned with a large central dome. Inside the rotunda visitors were introduced to a wide variety of exotic plants that were too numerous and changing to be listed in the guide. In the center of the conservatory’s rotunda stood a beautiful marble fountain and a pool stocked with goldfish. Also housed in the conservatory were a “fernery” and tropical plant house.

From there, a doorway led to the stunning Pompeiian Room or art gallery, so named because it was decorated with frescoes inspired by the ancient ruins of Pompeii. Architect J. P. Gaynor, who designed the art gallery, had it embellished with fresco ceilings and statues. Expanding on what Woodward displayed at his hotel, the entrance was filled with cases of stuffed birds, coins, and relics. Two niches on either side contained statues of “Rebekah at the Well” and “The Indian Girl by the Grave of Her Lover.” The art gallery fully demonstrated that Woodward was emerging as a truly Renaissance man. One of his

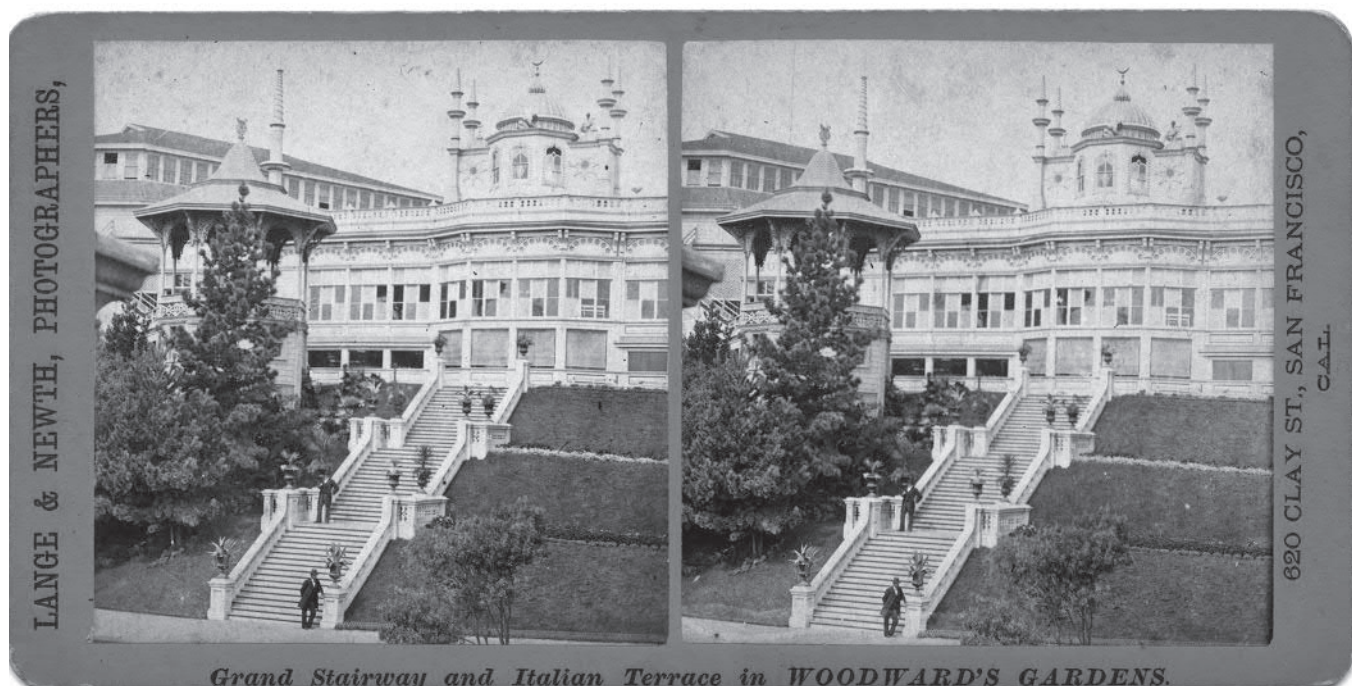


Children reclining on a settee in the art gallery, 1869. Eadweard Muybridge photograph (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection/Courtesy of a Private Collector), OpenSFHistory/wnp37.01615.

ambitions was the creation of an art museum that would compete with those in the eastern United States. Woodward assigned the curation of the art gallery to the noted artist Virgil Williams. He first met Williams in Europe, where the artist had lived and studied for many years. On the walls Williams hung seventy-two ornately framed paintings, many of which were copies of European masters that he had produced. In addition, this brilliant artist contributed his own original paintings, including landscape views of the Napa Valley and scenes of Rome created from his stay in Italy. In his profile of art in San Francisco, Hittell especially praised Williams for his portrait of one of Woodward's daughters, calling it "the best picture which he has painted in San Francisco."³⁶ On the gallery's walls Williams installed his own landscape paintings, including "The Golden Gate at Sunset, from Meigg's Wharf," "View in the Napa Valley, Near White Sulphur Springs," "Yosemite Falls, Yosemite Valley," and views painted while he was in Italy.³⁷ However, the art gallery did not impress everyone. A local critic, John P. Young, derisively wrote: "With the exception of a few canvases by [Albert] Bierstadt and Virgil Williams, the sixty-three numbers were all Italian potboilers and statues were plaster casts."³⁸ Despite this, the gallery attracted many visitors.

Recognizing advances in the new art of photography, the Gardens' Polymathic Hall featured striking albumen large-format or mammoth-plate photographs by California's great pioneer photographer, Carleton E. Watkins. The images visually recorded his journeys to Yosemite and the California coast, as well as city views, notable mansions, and portraits. Not far away, Watkins operated his Yosemite Art Gallery at 22 and 26 Montgomery Street.³⁹ One photograph in the art gallery captured the famed and innovative photographer Eadweard Muybridge reposing on a padded bench. Muybridge, known for his brilliant images of Yosemite, would gain fame for his photographic studies of animals and humans in motion. Stereograph and album views by both pioneer photographers could be purchased at the Gardens' entrance.⁴⁰

Woodward enthusiastically embraced high technology. Curator Professor Gruber installed in the Polymathic Hall a large "Zoographicon," which he had invented. This marvel "consisted of a wheel over 12 feet high and 24 feet in diameter, turning on a vertical axis, and displaying with its eight divisions in succession, characteristic and instructive scenes of the different continents, giving the Arctic, tropical, semi-tropical, and South Pacific Island views all studiously true to nature."⁴¹ It gave viewers a sense



One of most attractive features of the Garden was the Grand Stairway and Italian Terrace that led to the orchestra stand (left), Saloon and Restaurant (center), and Mosque (top). Stereograph by Lange and Newth, San Francisco. Courtesy of California State Library.



General View of Salt-Water Tanks. Woodward opened one of the earliest aquariums in North America. The Gardens included salt and fresh-water tanks and spectators enjoyed viewing a variety of aquatic life. View from Illustrated Guide and Catalogue, 1873. Courtesy of California State Library.

of motion, as if they were actually traveling to these distance places. Woodward's granddaughter Ethel Brown commented, "Nothing delighted youthful members of the family more than the fun of being allowed occasionally to ride around on this contraption in the midst of the monkeys and jackals." To further dazzle his audience, Woodward installed a camera obscura, "where for a small extra charge, a fine view in miniature can be had of the living, active scene around you, in the gardens and adjoining parts of the city."⁴²

As a key element to his educational program, Woodward created a marine aquarium of immense size "so that the finny tribe may be more largely represented."⁴³ It took workers two years to complete this new wonder, which fittingly opened on July 4, 1873 and attracted a sizable crowd.⁴⁴ In creating the aquarium, Woodward sought advice from Professor George Davidson, president of the California Academy of Sciences.⁴⁵ Charles Shuman, listed in

the city directory as a florist, held the position of "superintendent of aquarium and conservatories." The Gardens proudly touted the aquarium as "the first and only establishment of the kind on the continent of America."⁴⁶ Adjacent to 14th Street, this new structure featured large glass reservoirs or tanks and included both salt and freshwater tanks so spectators could observe aquatic nature up close.

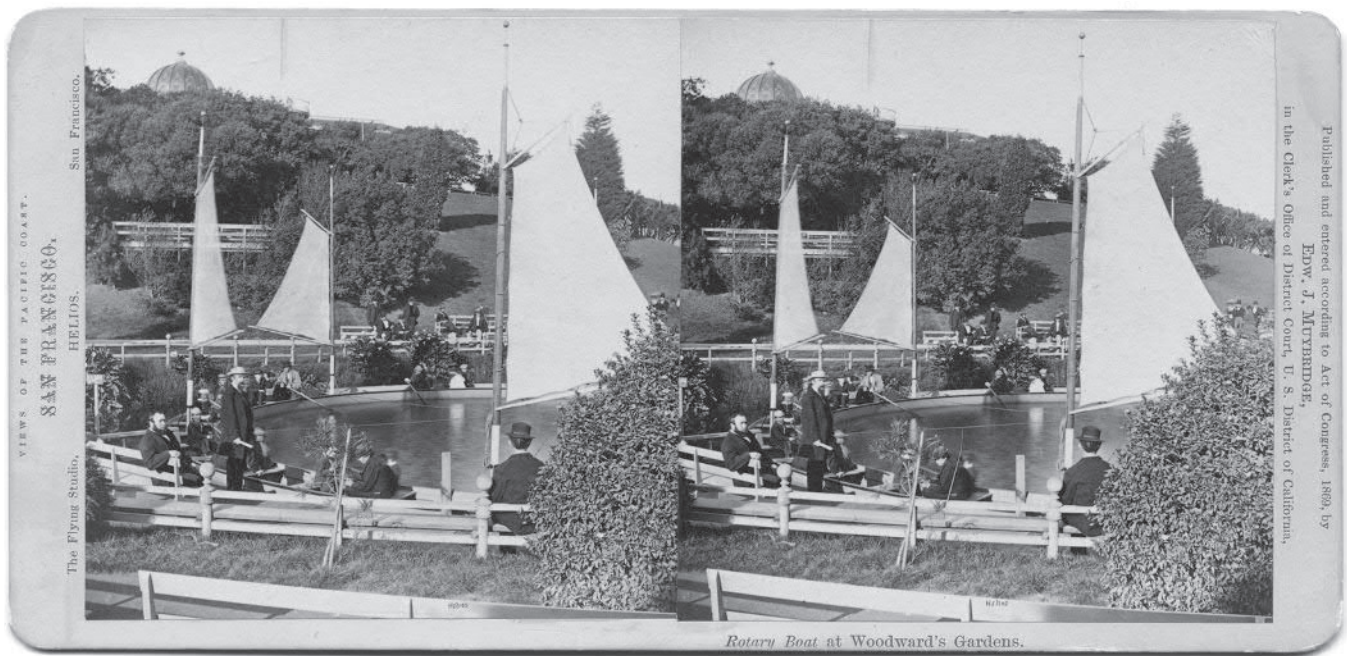
Building the aquarium took much experimentation and emulation of systems developed at places like the Crystal Palace in London and other European aquaria. The public could look into eighteen tanks and see an incredible variety of aquatic life swimming in circles or ascending for air. In one tank a blue shark and a stingray swam by the spectators; in another, Sacramento River perch, carp, and sturgeon revealed another type of "finny" species. To make all this work, staff created a way to keep the saltwater circulating and flowing from one reservoir to another via a pump. This kept the

water clean for a year. However, to obtain the ocean water, an aquarium crew had to go several miles off the coast to ensure its purity and haul the water in large casks to the aquarium, where it was dumped into large underground reservoirs. Consequently, it was not necessary to constantly empty out the reservoirs and replace the ocean water. A long hallway, known as the “Polymathic Hall,” passed over the aquarium and was decorated with large pictures of California scenery, adding further to the visitor’s pleasure. Attached to this was a marine museum. In the nearby inner garden, the aquarium department displayed a mammoth skeleton of a whale measuring seventy-five feet in length.⁴⁷

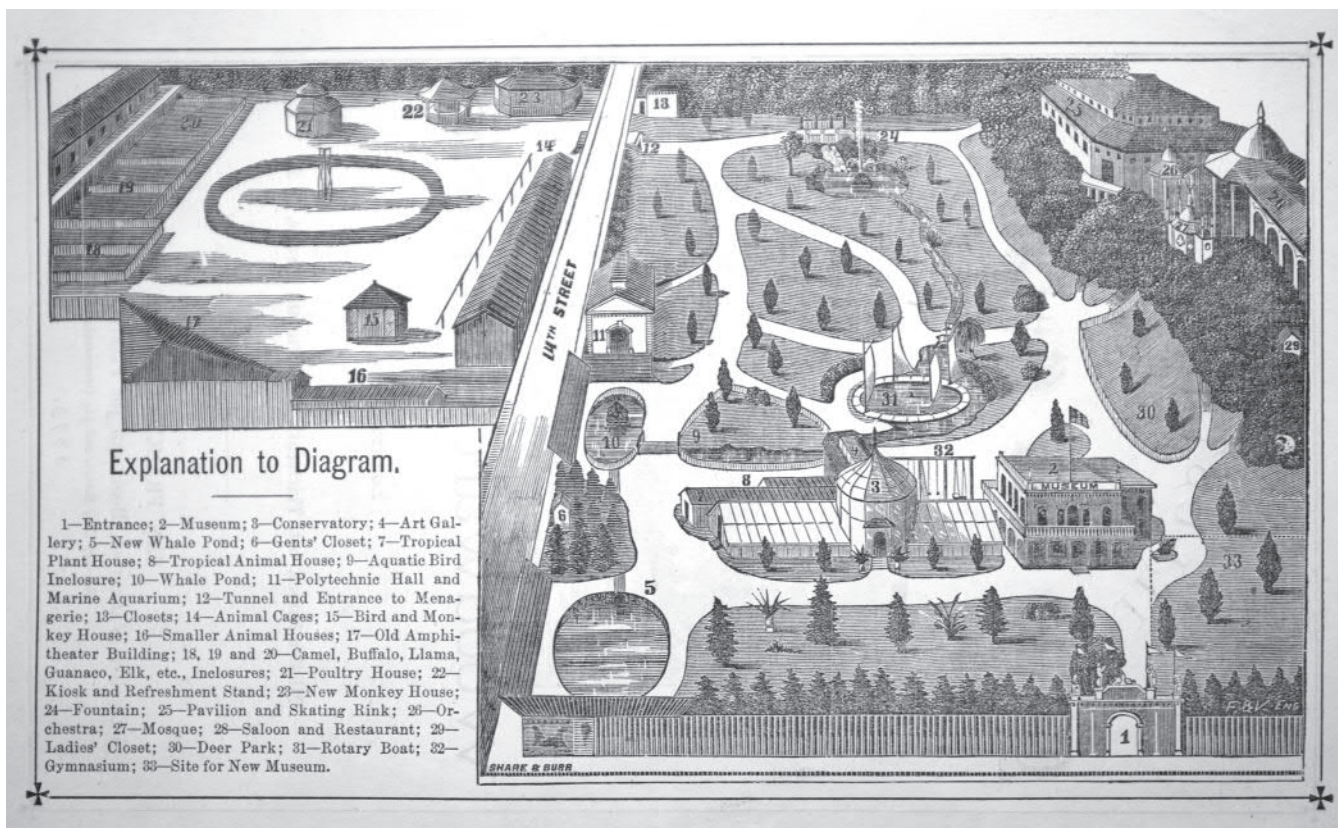
Located in the center of the formal garden was a lake that included the ever-popular Rotary Boat Ride. As he had done with many of the other displays and amusements, Woodward modeled this 360° ride on examples found in Europe. The plan for the rotary boat came from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Edinburgh.⁴⁸ According to the Gardens’ guide, the boat traveled in a circle and could accommodate up to one hundred passengers at a time. It was propelled by passengers rowing and by sails catching the ever-prevalent winds. Passengers gleefully went round and round, merry-go-round style, waving to friends

on the shore. As a journalist for the *San Francisco Call* reminisced, the juvenile population took particular delight in this aquatic ride as they shouted with joy and eagerly leaned over the boat’s side trying to grasp pond lilies. Gardens officials assured everyone that “there is not a particle of danger,” as the lake was only eighteen inches deep. However, a passenger could get wet or have to step into the water when entering or exiting, and some did.⁴⁹

Not far from the museum and conservatory, Woodward had constructed an elaborate seal and sea lion pond. To maximize its viewing pleasure, the pond was flanked by bleachers. B. E. Lloyd in his lively book, *Lights and Shades in San Francisco* (1876), wrote a delightful description of the pond and its variety of inhabitants. A mountain of craggy rocks rose above the surface, giving the creatures a resting place to stretch out on sunny days. As told by Lloyd, however, life in the pond was not always blissful. At feeding time, the seals uttered angry howls and scrambled over one another fighting for a bite. One specimen in particular merited a full portrait: “A monster sea lion rules as king of this colony. He is terrible in his wrath when disturbed by his lesser kinsmen, and roars and barks in deafening tones if his mandates are disregarded.”⁵⁰



Rotary Boat at Woodward’s Gardens, 1869. Offering a variety of thrills, Woodward modeled this 360° ride after an aquatic ride in the Royal Gardens at Edinburgh. The circular ride could handle up to one hundred passengers at a time. Stereograph by Eadweard J. Muybridge, Helios Flying Studio. Courtesy of the California State Library.



This useful diagram of Woodward's Gardens appeared in the Illustrated Guide and Catalogue for 1873. The diagram clearly shows the key attractions of the Gardens including the museum (2), conservatory (3) [center], polytechnic hall and marine aquarium (11) [middle], pavilion and skating rink (25), and saloon and restaurant (28) [on the far right]. Several of the attractions depicted here were actually placed in different locations once constructed. Courtesy of the California State Library.

The biggest and most versatile structure at the Gardens was the “mammoth” pavilion, which opened in April 1871, paralleling 13th Street. Bancroft's *Guide* declared it to be the largest wooden structure on the coast. In the shape of a parallelogram, slightly elevated above the lakes and pathways, and adjacent to the restaurant, the pavilion hosted a number of activities. Probably the most prominent and heavily used feature was the roller-skating rink. It had a large wooden floor measuring one hundred and ten feet by ninety feet, making it the largest rink on the coast.

With a capacity of 6,000 visitors, the pavilion also hosted concerts, dances, and a variety of other shows.⁵¹ On opening day, Woodward presented the pavilion at 11:00 a.m. with a gala ceremony with flags and banners adorning the structure. He invited school children by the thousands to witness the event and to enjoy the many attractions geared

to youngsters. According to the *Alta*, Woodward kept twenty-two streetcars running all day to bring children to this unmatched playground. The *Alta*'s headline reported that more than 18,000 visitors came to the Gardens on opening day. The opening ceremony included a band playing an overture, plus prayers and speeches. Apparently, the noise level frustrated those giving orations. At one point, one of the ministers begged the children to keep quiet. This was followed by the Oakland Academy Cadets performing drills, which pleased the large and restless audience. After shouting cheers, the children were let loose, bursting into all directions wildly heading for the swings or ponds, or hiding behind trees and under bushes. One child fell from the swings and badly injured his leg. But all in all, those who attended praised the opening as a roaring success.⁵²

By the time of the pavilion's grand opening, roller skating was already a popular pastime across the nation, and Woodward's Gardens hosted the best-known venue in the West. Recognizing not only the thrill of skating but also the healthy aspects of this fast-moving sport, Woodward and his patrons enthusiastically embraced this adrenaline-rousing diversion. The guidebook to the Gardens emphasized: "To those who are confined by close application during the day [i.e., desk jobs], nothing can be more healthful to the bodily powers and exhilarating to the spirits, than an hour's skating."

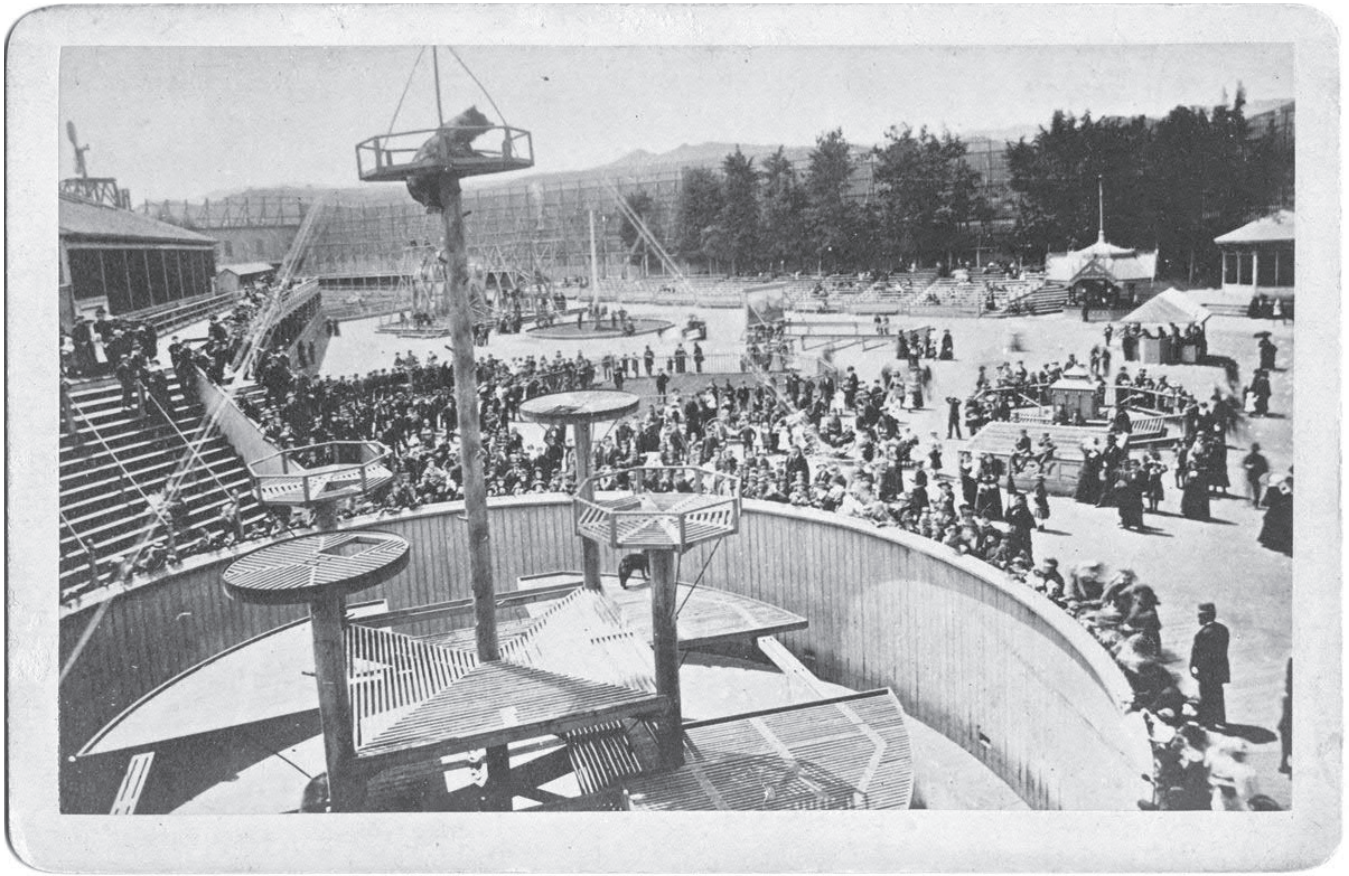
The guidebook went on to promote the special benefits of skating for women: "As a fashionable exercise for ladies, there is nothing so well adapted to the development and display of a fine figure, and in no way can a lady present equal elegance and grace, as when circling about on skates in evening costume."⁵³ In comparison, the men as shown in one drawing did not don "evening costume" but left their wool coats, vests, and hats behind. "Skating Assemblies," as they were called, took place every day, and every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evening.

(The rink was open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.) After paying a modest ticket price, skaters could choose between Plympton or Occidental skates or bring their own.⁵⁴ The Gardens even set aside a separate floor for beginners and offered instruction by none other than family member Charles J. Woodward.

The skating rink, like so many other aspects of the Gardens, became a constant site to watch celebrities of all kinds perform. Woodward brought in the national ice-skating champion Callie Curtis from Chicago to entertain crowds at the pavilion. Callie displayed much dexterity and wore roller skates instead of ice skates, and the audiences cheered him on. The *Alta* said: "He skims over the boards as gracefully with the clumsy roller skates as if he were sliding on smooth ice ... and performs as many different feats."⁵⁵ The pavilion echoed with applause as Curtis wowed the spectators by doing more than twenty different movements. No doubt he inspired others to perform more challenging moves than just circling about. Equally eye-popping was the performance by Jenny Bishop and Ally Peplon, known as the "infant skating wonders."⁵⁶



Camels at the Gardens, 1872. A staff member proudly stands next to a newborn camel. The large building in the background housed the Camera Obscura. L. Dowe, Photographer. Courtesy of the California State Library.



Woodward astonished audiences by creating a "Bear Pit" whereby brown, black, and grizzly bears shared space and would astonish audiences by climbing a high pedestal. Photograph by O. V. Lange, courtesy of the California State Library.



A visitor feeds an emu and her chick, 1874. The emu is the second largest living bird. As demonstrated by this photograph, Woodward did not put all his animals in cages. Courtesy of San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

The aforementioned tunnel led visitors under 14th Street to the zoo and zoological gardens. Here on this dirt-packed surface were large enclosures for live animals that included a bear pit where brown, black, and grizzly bears shared space and could climb a tall pole. At the opposite end, an aviary housed exotic birds. This spacious yard, surrounded by high fences on the street sides, made room for a series of cages filled with other live creatures such as hyenas, leopards, lions, Bengal tigers, deer, camels, and giraffes, plus kangaroo shelters, a "monkey house," and areas exhibiting and protecting smaller critters. The park offered camel rides, and children could interact with the monkeys. Such displays of wildlife created a lifetime of memories and curious



Entry to Woodward's Gardens. The entranceway has a sign promoting the library at the gardens. Photograph by Eadweard J. Muybridge. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection/Courtesy of a Private Collector), OpenSFHistory/wnp37.00557.

dreams. The grounds must have been filled with shrieks of awe and wonder. To mix with the wildlife, Woodward's staff added an outdoor gymnasium, an amphitheater for concerts and other performances, and a place to launch hot air balloons.⁵⁷

Walking back under 14th Street, visitors who wished for a rest or a change of pace or to catch their breath, could then ascend the grand stairway up a gentle landscaped hill called the Italian Terrace, which would take them past a Turkish mosque to the restaurant and music hall. Or, from this elevated position overlooking the lakes, fountains, and gardens, they could simply gaze in astonishment at this cultural

wonderland, plan where to have a picnic lunch, or decide on what to see next. Some may have dreamed they were strolling on the grounds of a palace.

As an important component of his educational program and following the precedent of his What Cheer House, Woodward included a library at the Gardens. A sign at the original 14th Street gatehouse advertised the library, inviting visitors to "walk in." Bancroft in his *Tourist Guide* stated that this new learning center made available "nearly two thousand standard volumes, many of them rare and costly." A surviving card file at the Sutro Library in San Francisco shows what an astute bookman Woodward

was. Some of these volumes he transferred from his hotel, as they carry an ink stamp of both the hotel and gardens. Many of the titles represented the latest and best scientific thinking of the day and form a who's who of natural history writing, while others featured magnificent hand-tinted plates. This library also provided important source material for the Gardens' curators.⁵⁸

Certainly, a highlight was Audubon's *Birds of America*. It is not known, however, if Woodward acquired a complete set of this monumental work, as individual plates were exhibited in the museum's stairway.⁵⁹ Other treasures of the Woodward's Gardens library included Spencer F. Baird's *The Birds of North America* (1860 and with the atlas); Comte de Buffon's six-volume *Natural History of Birds, Fish, Insects, and Reptiles* (1808); John Cassin's *Illustrations of the Birds of California, Texas, Oregon* (1862); Albert Haller's *Historia Naturalis Ranarium* (1755); and Thomas Martyn's *The English Entomologist* (1792). Four large folio titles deserve special mention as rare book treasures: Edward Lear, *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae or Parrots* (1832), with forty-two hand-tinted lithographs by the famed artist and poet; Patrick Russell, *An Account of Indian Serpents* (1796), acclaimed as the greatest of all snake books; Robert John Thornton's *Temple of Flora* (1799), considered as the finest flower book; and Mrs. Edward Bury's incomparable work on lilacs, *A Selection of Hexandrian Plants* (1831–1834), embellished with gorgeous hand-tinted engravings by Robert Havell. Havell is famous for creating the aquatint engravings for Audubon's ornithological masterpiece.⁶⁰

The museum alone brought widespread praise, not only for the quality of exhibits, but also for the very existence of such a temple of learning on this western extremity of American civilization. *The Pacific Rural Press* burst with pride describing the Gardens as a world-class institution:

It is true that in no city in the world, unless it be Paris, or London, can so varied and complete a collection of remarkable objects of nature and art be found in one place, as at Woodward's. The celebrated Garden of Plants in Paris, and Kew Gardens near London, are, perhaps, the only real exceptions. Hence, for education of young and old alike, for their



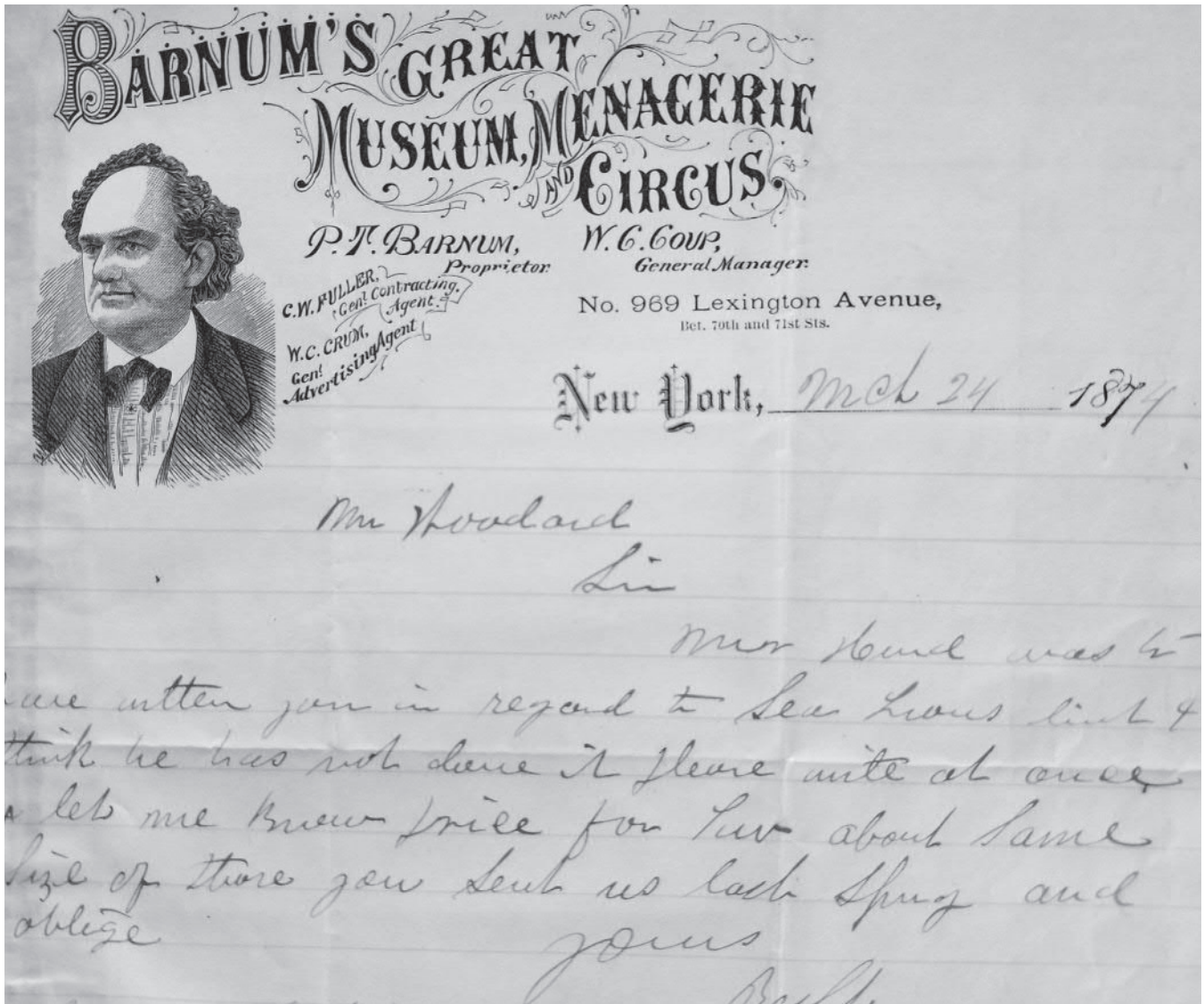
One of Woodward's library treasures was this large folio volume by the famed poet and artist Edward Lear. Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae (London, 1832) is illustrated with 42 hand-colored lithographs of parrots. The reverse side or recto of each plate bore the ink stamp of Woodward's Gardens. Courtesy of the Sutro Library branch of the California State Library.



entertainment, or amusement, and for all innocent pleasure, no place surpasses these charming gardens.⁶¹

“THE P. T. BARNUM OF THE WEST”

During the heyday of the Gardens, R. B. Woodward achieved a reputation not only as a sophisticated connoisseur but also as the “P. T. Barnum of the West,” and with good reason. Like the famous Connecticut showman, he mixed serious art and science with a jumble of shows designed to elicit laughter and or provoke awestruck responses by seeing a bear climb the high pedestal in the bear pit, a tail-less horse, a sword tournament, chariot races, men on horseback jousting, passenger-carrying carts pulled by goats, and death-defying trapeze acts.



An official from P. T. Barnum's famous New York Museum wrote Woodward this letter, dated March 24, 1874, inquiring about the purchase of sea lions. Courtesy of the California State Library.

Woodward also approved the visit of head-turning phenomena: internationally famous Chang Woo Gow, the “Heathen Chinese Giant” who stood eight feet, three inches in height; and in contrast, “Admiral Dot,” a midget barely two feet tall and weighing a miniscule fifteen pounds. Woodward permitted Anne E. Leak, an armless woman who wrote with her feet, to perform.⁶² The museum containing the natural history displays of stuffed animals included a case filled with “freaks of nature,” such as a “little pig with two heads,” a “lamb born with the eyes and ears on the throat,” and a “five-legged dog.” No doubt some thought these displays to be either silly or morbid.

In the evening, Gardens’ staff set off spectacular displays of rockets, Roman candles, and other fireworks as large crowds both inside and outside the Gardens craned their necks skyward to watch the exploding pyrotechnics. After the last piece was fired off at 10:00 p.m., the audience converged on the pavilion to dance the night away. Amazingly, the *Alta* reported that “it was estimated that not less than twenty thousand persons availed themselves of the day to visit the Gardens.”⁶³

Every weekend, concerts and performances of all kinds further added to the luster of the Gardens. Orchestras routinely performed in the Music Hall, Mammoth Pavilion, the large open-air venue called



"Japanese Performers at Woodward's Gardens," 1869. Stereograph by Eadweard J. Muybridge, Courtesy of the California State Library.

the "Amphitheater Promenade," and the ornate octagon-shaped bandstand on the Italian Terrace. To ensure quality, Woodward engaged such well-known ensembles as the August Wetterman Orchestra. As recorded in dozens of local newspaper articles, performances by Wetterman entertained not only paying visitors but also charitable groups at the Gardens, including the Union Sunday School, Protestant Orphan Asylum, Ladies Protection and Relief Society, Little Sisters' Infant Shelter, and the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society.⁶⁴

Supplementing live performances by Wetterman and others, Woodward acquired a fantastic mechanical instrument or device known as an "orchestration." This instrument was invented sometime in the early nineteenth century, and Woodward's orchestration was one of the first in the United States. *The Pacific Rural Press* wrote:

Not only does one of the best orchestral bands discourse sweet music on special occasions, but daily visitors are delighted by the choice selection of standard pieces performed exquisitely by a fine large orchestration—or full brass band, arranged like an organ and run by clockwork—manufactured by Schenstein, in Villingen, Baden. Having 10 or a dozen separate cylinders, it performs 30 or 40 pieces.⁶⁵

Among the many sideshows engaged by entertainment manager Harry Andrews was a group of Yaqui Indians from the Mexican province of Sonora. This was the third group of Natives or non-Euromerians to perform at the Gardens.⁶⁶ The first consisted of Fijian cannibals and the second a band of Warm Springs Indians from Oregon, and both bands received an enthusiastic response from the predominately all-white audience. Having heard their reputation for intelligence and dexterity, Andrews secured the Yaqui performance for early September 1876. He promised it would be "very entertaining." The *Alta*, expressing surprise, reported to its readers that the group had brought with them two violins and a harp to accompany their dances and that "In their dances they go through a large variety of steps, and show almost phenomenal strength of their muscles of the leg, foot and toe."⁶⁷ Typical of the times, the *Alta* also noted: "This last band of red brethren will doubtless be as popular as the former as their entertainments have been presented in the best style."⁶⁸ Following their show on September 3, the *Alta* reported: "The Yaqui Indians attracted an immense crowd yesterday, and their peculiar performances were applauded to the echo. One of the principal members, in dancing the Pascela, was rewarded with a shower of half-dollars."⁶⁹

FLYING THROUGH THE AIR: GYMNASTIC AND HOT AIR BALLOONING

Seeing wild animals up close caused many a heart to beat rapidly. However, nothing could match the feats of the daring men and women who performed gymnastic tricks suspended from hot-air and gas-filled balloons.

Balloon ascensions were nothing new, as aeronauts standing in wicker baskets had flown over the Bay Area as early as 1850. The spacious open grounds on the western side of the Gardens allowed thousands of spectators to witness a massive canvas balloon being inflated with hot air from burning hay or gas and then rising above the Gardens with an aeronaut and his passengers waving to them. Sandbags of ballast were tossed out and the balloon with its human cargo drifted higher and higher. As documented by the local press, ballooning did have serious risks, especially with the high winds that blew across the San Francisco. Found in the Woodward's Gardens correspondence are letters from aeronauts from the eastern United States offering to come to San Francisco.⁷⁰

In August 1872, the renowned Buislay family came to San Francisco and became a major attraction. Ten fearless performers of both sexes wowed crowds with their death-defying gymnastic and trapeze feats. One was the "Niagara Falls leap," staged in a theater where one of the Buislays swung over the audience and landed on the stage in front of a giant mural of the falls. One of the brothers proposed an even more awesome feat: performing his gymnastic tricks from a trapeze bar hanging from a hot air balloon thousands of feet above the city. He certainly understood the risk, as one of his brothers had fallen to his death in Mexico, and another had

dropped into San Francisco Bay and come perilously close to drowning.⁷¹

On August 4, Auguste Buislay prepared to perform this breathtaking aerial trapeze act. A crew filled the massive balloon with hot air generated from burning hay, which in itself posed the risk of catching the balloon's envelope on fire. A crowd of approximately 8,000 gathered at the amphitheater to witness this feat, and as the *Alta* reported, they were "attracted by the novelty and the danger." The *Alta's* journalist further pointed out that if the gymnast did not fall from the trapeze by simply losing control, he ran the risk of the wind pushing him over the bay where he could drown or by being smashed against a building if the balloon's air cooled too fast. However, a severe gust of wind swooped down on the launch site causing the flight

to be canceled or postponed.⁷²

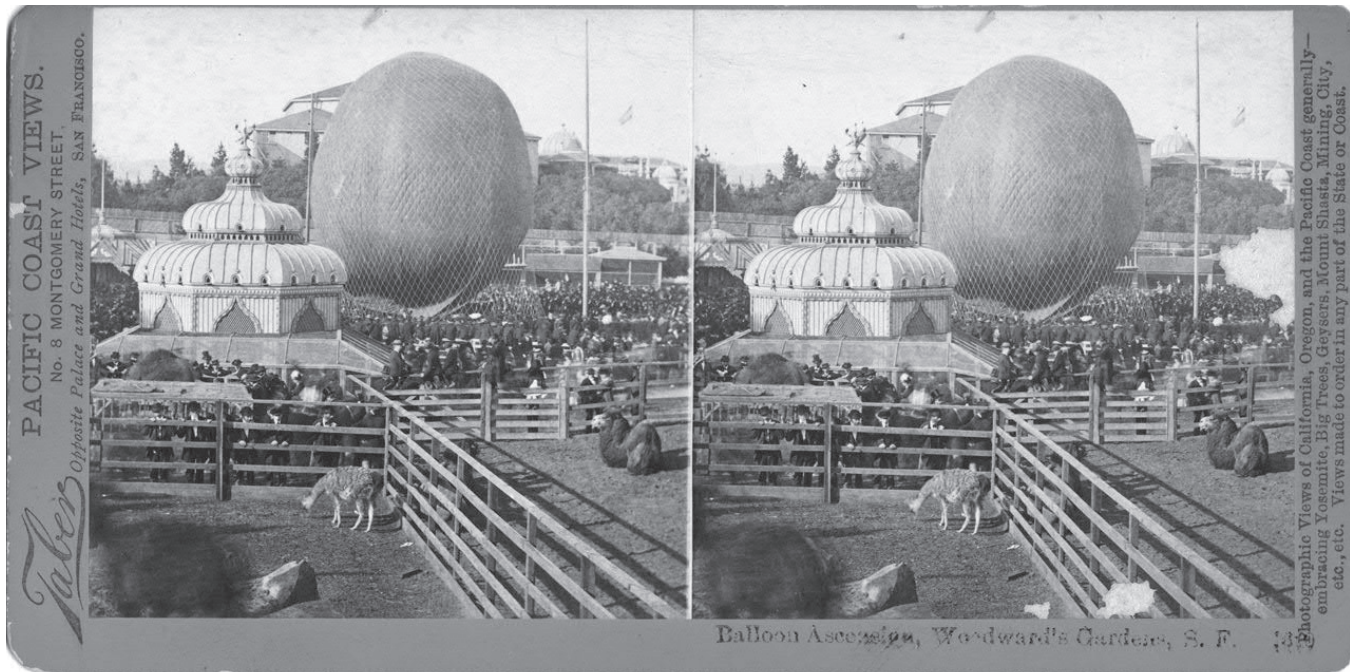
Buislay, resolute as ever, persisted, and on August 11, he made another attempt at skyscraping gymnastics. The *Alta's* reporter questioned both aeronaut and spectators, writing:

Woodward's Gardens were thronged yesterday by a multitude of people, eager to satiate that uncontrollable desire to witness blood-curdling scenes and perilous feats, which seems to actuate the people of all lands and all ages. There evidently must be something pleasurable in the fascination of danger, which, while it affrights and makes the heart almost cease to beat yet affords a sensation that delights the nervous organism.⁷³

This time Buislay's balloon caught fire, threatening the aeronaut and his ground crew. Despite the failure to launch, the crowd did not complain and seemed relieved not to have witnessed a tragedy.



Distant view of a balloon ascension at the gardens. Photograph taken from near Ramona and 14th Streets. Photographer unknown (Martin Behrman Negative Collection, Courtesy of the Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives), OpenSFHistory/wnp71.2203.



Balloon Ascension, Woodward's Gardens, 1885. Stereograph by I. W. Taber, San Francisco. Courtesy of the California State Library.

Several years later, on October 5, 1879, a huge throng came out to watch "Professor" S. W. Colgrove, a veteran aeronaut, and his assistant make an ascent in the *General Grant*, a new balloon named in honor of the president's visit. However, the flight did not go as planned. Charles Williams, the director of amusements at Woodward's Gardens, insisted on joining the professor, no doubt thinking it would not only be the thrill of a lifetime but also superb publicity for the Gardens. Wishing to please his employer, Colgrove yielded and allowed Williams to step into the basket. More than likely the aeronaut recognized that his new passenger was rather obese but felt he had no choice than to allow him to be part of the stunt. The crew inflated the balloon's envelope with gas, and Colgrove gave the command to cut the rope. However, a gale force wind caught the craft as it shot upward, and it quickly drifted over Howard Street between 15th and 16th Streets. All on the ground gasped, as they could see the imminent peril facing the *General Grant*. According to witnesses, the half-inch ropes that extended from the basket to the balloon got caught on a telegraph wire which in turn severed all but one of the ropes. The balloon with its hanging basket drifted over rooftops to Folsom Street and Williams fell some fifty

feet, dying instantly as his face struck a curbstone. This caused the balloon, minus the weight of the heavy manager, to shoot up but the last rope broke loose and the basket with Colgrove still onboard crashed at the junction of Fifteenth and Harrison Streets. He also was killed.⁷⁴

News of this horrifying double fatality spread throughout the Gardens and indeed the entire city. Several witnesses were interviewed by the press. Mr. Abbott, the man charged with filling the *General Grant* with gas, said he "rallied" Williams against going up, telling him "to leave his 'paunch' behind him. Williams said: 'It all goes with me.'" Others tried to convince Williams not to go up, but he insisted on joining the aeronaut Colgrove. As noted in the *Chronicle*, "A strange circumstance in the unhappy affair is that Williams has more than once said that he would be killed from a balloon."

Both men left family behind. Williams, a popular manager of the Gardens, was married with one child. Colgrove's fatal flight was his twenty-sixth and his seventh or eighth balloon flight in San Francisco. Many other balloons were launched from the Gardens. Judging by the newspaper coverage, each seemed to produce a heart-stopping moment. Nonetheless, the aeronauts attracted great crowds.⁷⁵

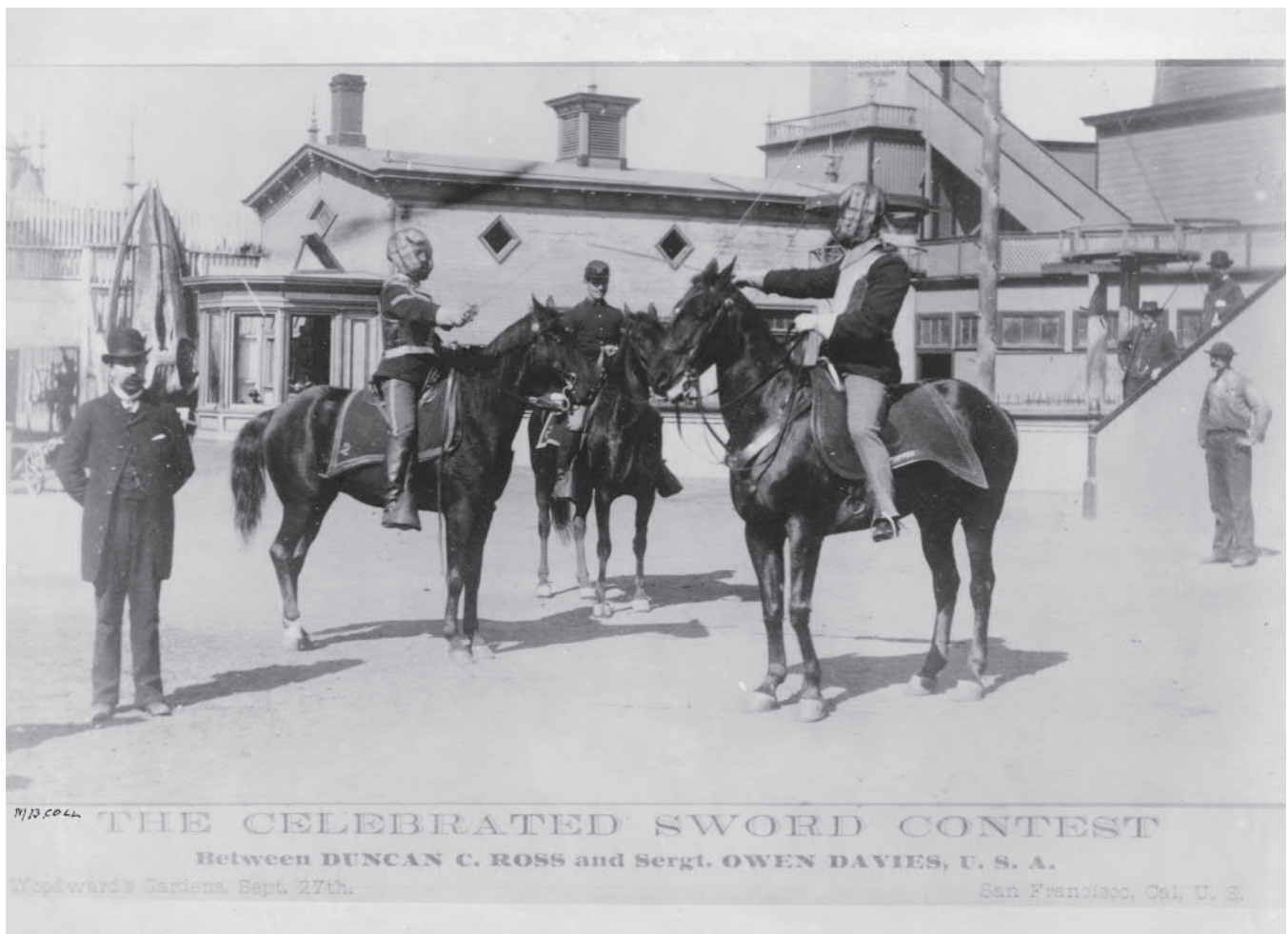
SWORD CONTESTS

Harkening back to the “knights of old,” the Gardens staged sword contests where two swordsmen mounted on horses would charge each other trying to strike a blow against their opponent. Each wore protective armor and masked helmets. Demonstrating the keen interest in watching the combat, the *Alta* reported:

The advertised sword contest between Duncan C. Ross, the Scotsman, and Sergeant Owen Davis, Second U. S. Cavalry, took place yesterday afternoon in the amphitheater of Woodward’s Gardens, and was witnessed by probably not less than 15,000 people. An hour or more before the contest commenced the available places were all

occupied, and as the hour approached for the bloodless combat every spot where one could gain a foothold was taken up, and the impressive youth began to look for places on the high fences about the enclosure on which they could hang by their eyelids.⁷⁶

Starting at 3:00 in the afternoon of September 27, 1885, the bugle sounded, and Ross and Davis began their combat. The two cut and parried back and forth, striking each other and scoring points. Several thrusts were made but without any effect. The combatants charged each other a total of twenty-nine times. On the last attack, Ross struck Davis on his mask, and the judges announced a draw with both horses and contestants exhausted. Fortunately, neither swordsman was hurt, and the massive crowd was thrilled.



The Celebrated Sword Contest between Duncan C. Ross (the Scotsman) and Sergeant Owen Davies (Second U.S. Cavalry) took place in the amphitheater on September 27, 1885. More than 15,000 were in attendance to witness this bloodless contest. The combatants charged each other a total of 29 times. The contest ended in a draw. Courtesy of California State Library.

PROMOTING THE GARDENS

To publicize his educational pleasure grounds, Woodward was a master advertiser. First of all, he created much community goodwill by allowing a variety of charitable, ethnic, and school groups into his urban park with discounted and sometimes free tickets. May 1 and July 4 were annual dates for hosting grand all-day events. For example, Woodward invited all schoolgirls and their teachers to the Gardens free of charge for the May Day celebration of 1870. One of these spring festivals attracted 10,000 children. Frequently, too, he permitted these groups to host their own events within the museum, aquarium, conservatory, zoo, rides, and skating rink as added inducements.

Woodward also placed large advertisements in locally produced periodicals like *The Wasp*, *San Francisco Newsletter*, and *Argonaut*. Newspapers like the widely distributed *San Francisco Daily Alta California* and the *San Francisco Morning Call* carried daily advertisements, usually on the back page.

Becoming more aggressive, Woodward announced on August 5, 1873, that he had contracted with the San Francisco firm of P. E. McCarthy and Company to produce and distribute programs and circulars to promote the Gardens. For every Saturday and Sunday performance and concert, McCarthy and Company would print 5,000 programs “printed on superior and perfumed paper with colored inks.” To saturate the city, the advertiser agreed to print 10,000 circulars weekly “to be placed in the hands of the people in every part of the city, and into the Mission and Dupont Street Cars.” Each circular would be embellished with an “attractive cut [engraving] —to attract the eye—on one side” and advertisements on the other side. Woodward’s “Programmes” featured a beautiful masthead engraving with a centerpiece showing the conservatory and museum surrounded by border vignettes of their attractions in six essential areas: education, recreation, science, nature, art, and amusement. In short, Woodward promoted people enjoying intellectual growth and physical wellbeing while having a joyous, fun-filled visit to Woodward’s Gardens. The vignettes were further decorated with highly animated birds, horses, monkeys, and other representatives from his menagerie.⁷⁸

SOME SHUTTLE SEWING MACHINE; Price, \$40. Lock Stitch. None Better. E. W. HAINES, Agt. #7 NEW MONTGOMERY ST. (Grand Hotel)

PROGRAMME OF WOODWARD'S GARDENS

SOMETHING NEW.
 NEW CUTLERY, PLATED WARE, Etc.
 HAYNES & LAWTON, 110 Second Street, San Francisco.

WOODWARD'S GARDENS
 The Central Park of the Pacific!
 SATURDAY, MAY 4th, 3d ANNUAL Children's May Festival!
 SUNDAY AND MONDAY, S. F. Turn Verein Festival!
 On Exhibition The Baby Bears!

WONDERFUL!
 NEW ENGLAND MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
 Of Boston, Mass.
 WALLACE EVERSON, General Agent for Pacific Coast.

SLEEVE BUTTONS
 DANIEL HALL, Watchmaker & Jeweler

MINER'S RESTAURANT
 No. 531 & 533 COMMERCIAL STREET
 Cheapest and Best in the City.
 789 Market St., bet. 3d & 4th. A. DEAYBURN & CO

Go to N. YORK PHOTOGRAPHIC GALLERY, No. 25 Third St.

Front cover of Programme of Woodward’s Gardens, 1872. Upon entering the Gardens, visitors could procure educational programs that included a map and summaries of the various attractions. The Programme promoted events like the Children’s Festival. It also included an array of commercial advertisements. Courtesy of the California State Library.

In addition to these marketing efforts, Woodward published the aforementioned guidebooks to the Gardens, under the title *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue of Woodward’s Gardens*, with numerous illustrations, a map of the grounds, and a summary of the various attractions. The subtitle on the booklets was *The Central Park of the Pacific* with a list of its attractions followed by this proud statement: “Unequaled and Unrivaled on the American Continent.” *The Guide and Catalogue* was remarkable for its detail and would have pleased the scientist and educated visitor alike. Woodward illustrated each with fine and detailed line drawings of the grounds, buildings, and individual specimens on display in the various museums. For example, the



Scandinavian Children's Festival, April 30, 1873. (right side of stereograph missing). Stereograph by Carleton E. Watkins. Courtesy of California State Library.

section describing the family (or *Psittacidae*) of parrots and cockatoos included thirty dense lines of text describing the species, written in an intelligible and not overly scientific manner.

With Woodward's Gardens gaining national and even international fame, Woodward himself was besieged with letters and telegrams from performers of all types offering their services. He heard from musical groups, aeronauts, roller-skaters, animal trainers, and lecturers on various topics (for example, the immortality of the soul). As noted above, service and ethnic groups likewise asked for his support to help celebrate an anniversary or generate donations. Knowing of Woodward's desire to keep adding to his collections, he naturally received many solicitations to purchase wild animals, all kinds of plants and trees, artifacts, and works of art. He always replied that he would have to see the item or collection before agreeing to a price.

Occasionally, Woodward traded or sent animals elsewhere. In 1874, he sent surplus sea lions to New York and London. At the time, he was hoping to acquire a rhinoceros and a zebra. Naturally, too, this insatiable collector was deluged with offers for

freaks of nature like a two-headed calf or asking him if he wanted to showcase a nine-year-old fat girl who weighed 190 pounds. Wisely, Woodward declined the latter, responding that fat people did not generate much interest.⁷⁹

MEETING PRACTICAL NEEDS IN A PUBLIC PARK

Woodward did not leave anything to chance, especially when it came to transporting visitors to his amusement center. Seizing a grand opportunity, he organized the City Railroad Company and constructed rail lines out to the Gardens. In 1870 one-horse "balloon cars" or bobtail cars followed tracks from the inner city out to Mission and Market Streets to the Gardens and as far west as Twenty-sixth Street. For this service, he charged a modest five cents per ticket, undercutting his competitors. A later advertisement in programs issued by the Gardens stated: "The Cars of the Mission Street Line and those of the new Mission, Fifth, Market and Dupont Street Line, run every five minutes, and every two and a half minutes on Sundays."⁸⁰ Proprietors of other railroad lines were not pleased because of Woodward's low prices, and property owners resented the intrusion of the streetcars into their neighborhoods. Legal battles ensued, but the Gardens' proprietor prevailed.⁸¹

Woodward, with a wife and three daughters, was sensitive to the needs of women and introduced the elegantly appointed "palace car" to transport unescorted women to the Gardens. Historian Oscar Lewis discovered the following description of the ladies' car:

This car is elegant in design, luxuriously fitted up with velvet carpet, and sofas extending the length of the car, upholstered in embroidered tapestry. The fresco paint work was done by a San Francisco artist, at a cost of two hundred dollars. The object of the car is to supply a want long felt by the ladies desiring to visit Woodward Gardens at hours when gentlemen are engaged or cannot accompany them. It being strictly a ladies' car, no gentlemen will be admitted unless with ladies.⁸²

Woodward, with his considerable experience as a restaurateur, anticipated thousands of hungry and thirsty visitors to his Gardens. Both sides of the Gardens provided ample opportunities to purchase beverages and meals or snacks, including popcorn and candy washed down by sodas. Twelve “drinking-posts” with cups provided cool water was scattered throughout. Following the example of his What Cheer House, Woodward’s Gardens was intended to be a temperance establishment; refreshment stands and restaurants offered wine and beer but not whiskey or other “hard” drinks. Taking into account human needs, “closets” or restrooms were scattered about. The proprietor’s son, Charles J. Woodward, managed the restaurants and refreshment “saloons.”⁸³

While the Gardens’ goal was to educate and entertain visitors, its management recognized the reality of huge throngs of people of all types entering the park. The introduction to the Gardens’ 1879 guidebook included the following practical admonitions: “Do not smoke in the buildings! Do not pick the flowers! Do not tease the animals. No dogs allowed on the grounds.”⁸⁴ Again, realizing that problems do occur, the guide offered the following two points: “Lost children must be brought to the gate, where parents or guardians will find them” [and] “Lost property delivered at gate will reach its proper claimants.”⁸⁵ However, the guide bragged about Woodward’s Gardens’ safety record and the good manners and good cheer of visitors for this invigorating park that so dramatically demonstrated the growing sophistication of this city gracing the Pacific shore. Even with camel rides for children, swings, a skating rink, a rotary boat, and frolicking animals, everyone would be safe. “As long as the gardens exists no deaths by accident, no fire, or disturbances of any kind have occurred on the grounds; and it is a positive fact, the visitors protect the property as well as if it were their own.”⁸⁶ The worst that could happen would be the overturning of the rotary boat and the passengers getting their feet wet; since the water was shallow, and there was no chance of drowning. However, as reported in the media, children did fall off of swings, and it would not be surprising if skaters did not occasionally collide or sprain an ankle as they crashed to the hardwood floor. One of the performers, a Mlle

Gracie, became disabled while performing her “blind trapeze” act.⁸⁷ As witnessed by thousands of Garden spectators, special events such as balloon launchings, occasionally did have fatal consequences.

THE PASSING OF THE GREAT MAN AND THE DECLINE OF THE GARDENS

Despite his unflinching commitment to the What Cheer Hotel, his San Francisco pleasure garden, and his Oak Knoll estate, Woodward began to show signs of physical decline by the late 1870s. For several years he had endured asthma, rheumatism, and kidney disease before succumbing to these ailments at Oak Knoll on Friday, August 22, 1879, at the young age of fifty-five. Naturally, the San Francisco newspapers announced his death with lengthy obituaries. All praised him for his high morals, business honesty, and for his contribution to San Francisco—especially by making his private home, Woodward’s Gardens, open to the general public. Noting how he cared so deeply for the common man, the headline for his obituary in the *Alta* read: “Death of the Founder of Cheap Restaurants and Lodging Houses in San Francisco and of Woodward’s Gardens.”⁸⁸ *The Pacific Rural Press* also offered a beautiful tribute: “The story of his life is an illustration of how a man can pursue a public-minded career and yet attain great individual success; how a man can help the people and at the same time help himself.”⁸⁹ Fittingly, the flags of the What Cheer House and Woodward’s Gardens flew at half-mast. Departing from its usual biting satire, the rear cover of *The Illustrated Wasp* featured a flattering full-page color portrait of Woodward.⁹⁰ *The Alta* left us with this verbal portrait: “In personal appearance he was tall, thin and awkward in manner, with dark complexion and heavy, close-cropped beard. His general manner was affable.”⁹¹

His grieving family arranged for his funeral on the afternoon of August 24, at the Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco.⁹² The patriarch’s body was transported from Oak Knoll and across the bay via the steamship *Yosemite*. Because of his prominence, a large number of friends and admirers crowded into the church to pay their respects. Symbolic of his humanitarian work and commitment to education, a delegation from each public school was invited. The Reverend John Hemphill conducted the funeral

service and gave a stirring and emotional tribute to the deceased, praising his life and character and explaining how he provided a bright example to the young people of San Francisco and the entire state. Following the funeral, this iconic son of Rhode Island was buried at Laurel Hill Cemetery near present-day Lone Mountain.⁹³

The *Alta* estimated the value of his estate at \$2 million, which represented a remarkable sum for a man so devoted to honesty and providing his hotel and restaurant patrons with modestly priced rooms and bills of fare and his guests at the Gardens with equally modest admission charges. The Gardens itself was appraised at a very modest \$1 million.⁹⁴ The death of this unpretentious millionaire, combined with the retirement of the Gardens' manager Harry Andrews in 1876,⁹⁵ the landmark San Francisco "pleasure ground" gradually began to decline, as his family did not possess the same drive and vision to keep it flourishing. It did operate, however, for another decade and routinely provided entertainment and educational programs to tens of thousands of visitors, including former President U. S. Grant, Emperor Dom Pedro of Brazil, national publisher Frank Leslie, internationally famous scientist Louis Agassiz, the young poet Robert Frost, and circus king P. T. Barnum.⁹⁶ However, San Franciscans and the scores of tourists who came to the city had begun to discover other attractions.

Competition was developing. Golden Gate Park, which did not charge admission, was maturing and giving the community not only free museums but a grand park that dwarfed the Mission and Valencia Streets venue. In addition, San Francisco was preparing to host the International Midwinter Fair in the park.

With the Gardens becoming moribund and more of a challenge to operate, Woodward's heirs decided to auction off the fabulous collections that their father had created over several decades. Early in 1893, the local firm of Easton, Eldridge & Company issued a catalog announcing the auction of the "Great Collection in Natural History of the Woodward's Gardens," commencing on April 6, 1893. The auction consisted of 75,000 articles that included the contents of four museums, an art gallery, three conservatories, living animals and birds, and marble statues and vases. To this the firm added

"a large assortment, not enumerated, consisting of mules, wagons, carts, hose, glassware, crockery, benches, chairs, stool, iron piping and sundries." If ever a heterogeneous collection was auctioned, this was it.⁹⁷

On the appointed day of April 6, a large crowd of about six hundred gathered at the Gardens, despite the threat of rain. Fortunately, the clouds blew away and Wendell Easton, a partner of the auction company, gave an eloquent and emotional presentation not only on the terms of the sale, but also on the singular contribution of Robert B. Woodward in creating San Francisco's first pleasure resort where he ingeniously combined museum collections with a bucolic garden filled with exotic wildlife, streams, and pools. As told by the *Morning Call*, the auction evoked a touch of sadness among the spectators who nostalgically looked back with fondness to their childhood days at the Gardens as they ran by the bear bits or marveled at the trapeze artists or enjoyed staring at and yelling into the Monkey House. Parents became nostalgic over the picnics they enjoyed among the peaceful grounds. Many expressed regret that Woodward's fabulous collections were going to be scattered to the winds.⁹⁸ Others saw a grand opportunity. Then George C. Ludington of Easton, Eldridge stepped forward to call out the auction.

One bidder stood out: Adolph Sutro, the entrepreneur who had made a fortune in Nevada's Comstock Lode with his tunnel and had built Sutro Heights, grounds with a magnificent mansion, a conservatory, Italian style gardens, and hedge mazes, all decorated with neo-classical statues and other amenities. Sutro Heights was located near Seal Rocks and the Cliff House, with commanding views of the Pacific Ocean, the Golden Gate, and Marin County. Sutro somewhat followed in the footsteps of Woodward as he opened his grounds to the public. In addition, he built the spectacular French chateau-style Cliff House and Sutro Baths complete with museum and six swimming pools. Like Woodward, he suffered from bibliomania and had built a world-class rare book library. Like his fellow collector, Sutro built a railroad to provide cheap transportation to his Pacific Coast wonderland.

The soon-to-be populist mayor of San Francisco had gone through the Woodward's Gardens auction catalog and attempted to purchase the entire

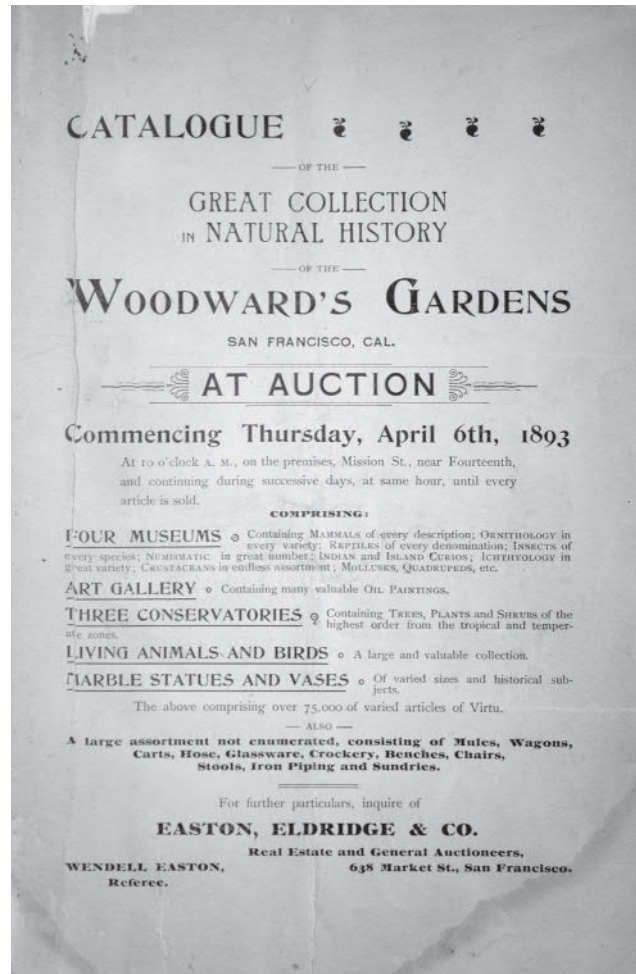
collection. His offer was declined. However, this did not stop him from being the dominant force as Ludington called out lot after lot. The bidder wore a white slouch hat and overcoat, and Ludington called him not Mr. Sutro, but “Diamond S.” *The Call’s* reporter described this passionate collector’s unorthodox bidding technique: “Another peculiarity was that Mr. Sutro only once opened his mouth when bidding. He used his pencil for a tongue. It was noticed that every time he held his pencil perpendicularly against the tip of his nose the auctioneer accepted it as a bid and this act was repeated whenever Mr. Sutro raised one.” The only time that the Comstock silver baron faced competition occurred when a man from Salt Lake went after the cabinet of sea lions and seals. Bidding started at less than \$100 but kept escalating. This time, Sutro dropped his pencil and raised his voice matching bid after bid until his competitor surrendered. Sutro secured the cabinet for \$250.⁹⁹

As the day progressed, other curiosities fell under the auctioneer’s hammer. For example, four cabinets of eggs sold for \$8.25, a shelf of turkeys for \$5, and a cabinet of parrots hammered down at \$53. All told, the first day realized about \$10,000, far below the prices Woodward had originally spent. Another collector, known as “Mysterious” Martin Kelly, likewise drew attention. What would he do with statues of “Pocahontas” and “Rebecca at the Well” and with plants, pipes, paintings, and a great pumping engine that he had won?¹⁰⁰ At least everyone knew that Sutro was

building a monumental public garden, museum, and giant bath house.

On the second day, an even larger crowd of 1,000 bidders and curiosity seekers strode into the Gardens. Like the first session, many came to witness the sad end of a place that had given them so much joy. Great collections, such as the fabulous menagerie of live animals, were scattered in a mere half hour. *The Call’s* headline read: “AND BRUIN WEPT. Final Bids on Woodward’s Beasts. SOLD FOR A MERE SONG. Sutro Was the Biggest Buyer with Mysterious Martin Kelly a Close Second.”¹⁰¹ The newspaper text went on to note: “The auctioneer’s hammer had fallen for the last time; the whole menagerie was sold without reservation; a unique happy family which has been a center of absorbing interest and joy for a quarter of a century had been irrevocably broken up.” The poor coyote, for example, sold for a paltry \$1, and its new owner planned to use it only for target practice with a rifle he had purchased for \$5. On and on went one gloomy story after

another. “The African lion was disgusted because he fetched only \$5; the spotted seal choked at being knocked down at \$2 but comforted himself that he was still in the pond, and they would have to sell the water before they could catch him. The kangaroos leaped up indignantly. What! Only \$32.50 for combined leg and tail locomotion such as theirs!” In addition, Sutro secured a \$1,500 organ for \$125 as well as a massive collection of miscellaneous animals, both live and stuffed, ranging from brown mules to



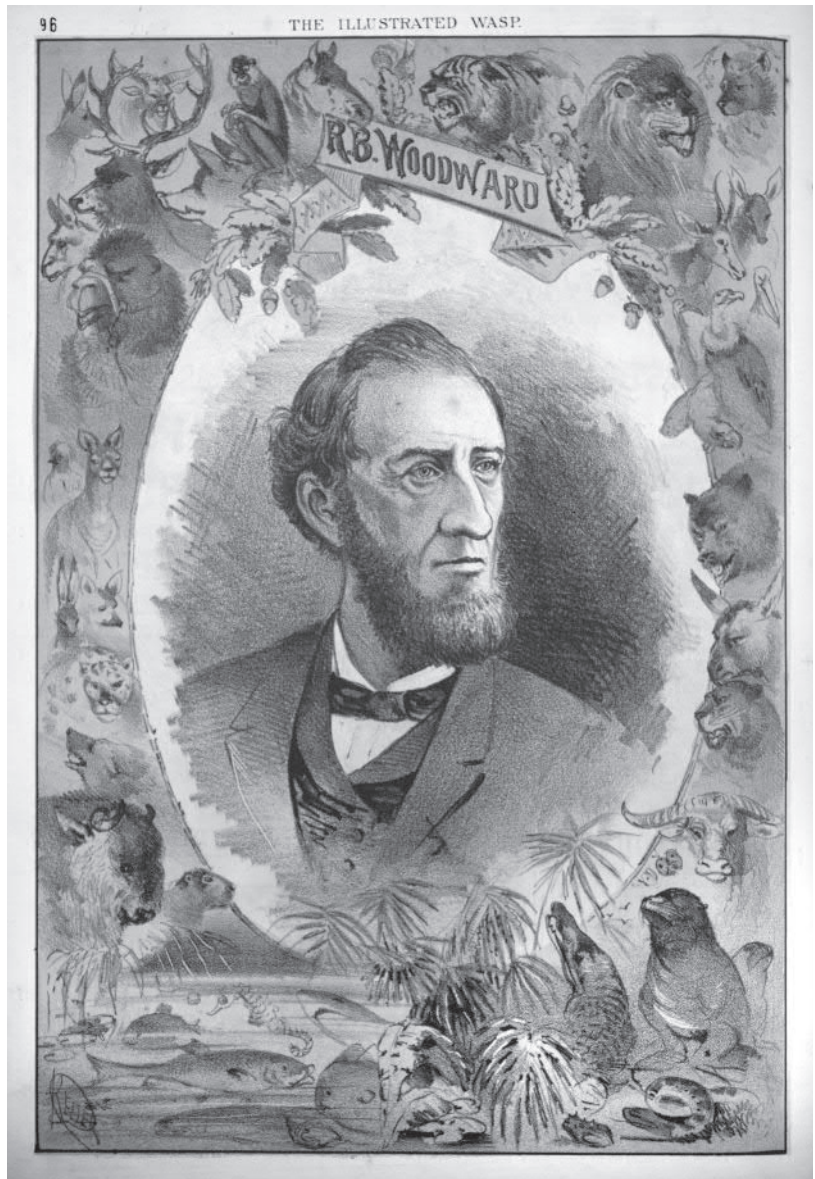
The San Francisco auctioneer firm of Easton, Eldridge & Co. issued this catalogue to begin the sale of the “Great Collection of Natural History of the Woodward’s Gardens” commencing on April 6, 1893. Courtesy of the California State Library.

a boa constrictor and benches, curios, and pictures.¹⁰² With Sutro being the principal buyer at \$3,829, it was hoped that he would reassemble much of Woodward's treasures at his new museum. In addition, Sutro smartly purchased much of Woodward's library and thankfully stored the books at his offices in the secure Montgomery Block.¹⁰³

The auction, however, did not dispose of the actual real estate. The Gardens that Woodward had so stylishly shaped were becoming a bit of an eyesore. Neighbors began to complain that its "unsightly" fence on Valencia Street hurt their neighborhood. By March 1894, the *San Francisco Morning Call* reported to a happy community that the fence would be demolished.¹⁰⁴ The *San Francisco Examiner* also reported that "Old age, dry rot and the dust of years are over everything at Woodward's." The rotary boat was underwater, and much of the property was overgrown or covered in cobwebs.¹⁰⁵ With the Gardens in such a state of decay, the property was divided among family members and sold off. The pavilion remained to be used for meetings and political rallies. Woodward's famous hotel, the What Cheer House, continued in business until destroyed by the 1906 Earthquake and Fire.

With the auction and sale of the four acres that once formed the popular Woodward's Gardens, San Francisco and California lost a prized cultural asset. The passion of a single public-spirited man, Robert Blum Woodward, had created an educational and cultural institution that brought joy to untold thousands. Little remains of his legacy, and yet it helped create a San Francisco known for much more than its "Barbary Coast." In a beautiful touch of nostalgia, his granddaughter Ethel Malone Brown summed it up:

Ask any old San Franciscan who remembers his 1870s and his 1880's 'Just what was



Memorial Portrait of Woodward, rear cover of The San Francisco Wasp magazine, August 30, 1879. The Wasp was noted for its biting satire but, on the occasion of Woodward's death, published this respectful portrait. Courtesy of the California State Library.

Woodward's Garden?' And watch his eye kindle and his tongue loosen. He will probably tell you that it was the most diverting and enchanting spot in the world, and that we have nothing today that can touch it.¹⁰⁶

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gary Kurutz is the retired head of special collections for the California State Library in Sacramento. Previously he held positions as library director of the California Historical Society in San Francisco and bibliographer of Western Americana at the Huntington Library in San Marino. Currently, he serves as the editor for the California State Library Foundation. He has received several awards and has written many books and articles, including *The Architectural Terra Cotta of Gladding, McBean and The California Gold Rush: A Descriptive Bibliography*. With his wife, KD Kurutz, he co-authored *California Calls You: The Art of Promoting the Golden State, 1870 to 1940*.

NOTES

1. Many sources ranging from newspapers and directories to recent publications describe Woodward's Gardens. In particular, the following three titles were most useful: Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846–1906* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007): 70–80; Marilyn Blaisdell, *San Francisciana: Photographs of Woodward's Gardens* (San Francisco: by the author, 2012); and James R. Smith, *San Francisco's Lost Landmarks* (Sanger, Ca.: Word Dancer Press, 2005): 27–37. The R. B. Woodward biographical files of the California History Section, California State Library, Sacramento and the Society of California Pioneers, Presidio of San Francisco were critical resources in writing this article.
2. Woodward's obituary in the *San Francisco Daily Alta California* (hereafter, *Alta*) (August 23, 1879), 1; and the *San Francisco Chronicle* (hereafter, *Chronicle*) (August 23, 1879), 1 both provide superb summaries of his life. For his voyage to California, see John Bartlett Goodman III, *The Key to the Goodman Encyclopedia of the California Gold Rush Fleet* (Los Angeles: The Zamorano Club, 1992).
3. Charles P. Kimball, *City Directory, September 1, 1850* (San Francisco Journal of Commerce Press, 1850).
4. "Caravansaries of San Francisco," *Overland Monthly*, 5:2 (August 1870), 179–181; *Chronicle* (August 23, 1879), 1; A. W. Morgan & Co., *San Francisco Directory*, San Francisco: September 1852 (San Francisco: A. W. Morgan & Co.): 64. On July 1, 1958, the site of the What Cheer House was designated an Historical Landmark.
5. Henry G. Langley, *The San Francisco Directory*, (San Francisco: 1868): 51.
6. Idwal Jones, "What Cheer House," *Westways* (May 1957), 24–25.
7. LeCount & Strong, *San Francisco City Directory for 1854* (LeCount & Strong, Advertising Department): 75.
8. *Ibid.*
9. "Caravansaries of San Francisco," *Overland Monthly*, 179–181; *Alta* (November 24, 1860), 1.
10. *Sacramento Daily Union* (March 24, 1862), 7.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Vol. 34 (April 1867), 603–606.
13. "Library of the What Cheer House, San Francisco," *Hutchings California Magazine*, 5:9 (January 1861), 294.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Gary F. Kurutz, "A Library of Libraries: The Formation of the Adolph Sutro Collection and the Library of Woodward's Gardens," *California State Library Foundation Bulletin*, 57 (October 1996), 9–14. No record survives that documents the building of Woodward's hotel library collection. San Francisco in the 1850s boasted many bookstores and no doubt ships arriving from the learning centers of the eastern United States unloaded thousands of volumes. In a short amount of time, California ranked fifth nationally in the number of bookstores.
17. *Alta* (July 10, 1860), 1.
18. Birgitta Hjalmarson, *Artful Players: Artistic Life in Early San Francisco* (Los Angeles: Balcony Press, 1999): 23.
19. "The Museum of the What Cheer House," *Hutchings California Magazine*, V:5 (November 1860), 206–208.
20. Woodward's European collection trip has been described in John S. Hittell, "Art in San Francisco," *The Pacific Monthly*, X:3 (July 1863), 103; "The Woodward Collection," *The North Pacific Review* (November 1862), 88.
21. *Alta* (October 2, 1857), 2.
22. Henry G. Langley, *The San Francisco Directory for the Year 1859* (San Francisco: Henry G. Langley): 124.
23. *Alta* (June 28, 1860), 1.
24. B. E. Lloyd, *Lights and Shades in San Francisco* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1876): 326.
25. *Alta* (August 23, 1879), 1 and *Chronicle* (August 23, 1879), 1.

26. *Chronicle* (June 7, 1872), 1, described Woodward's Oak Knoll residence as "palatial." *Alta* (August 30, 1866), 1, provided a brief but excellent description. It stated that Woodward's family occupied the mansion as a summer residence.
27. Ethel Malone Brown, "Woodward's Gardens," in Mrs. Silas H. Palmer, *Vignettes of Early San Francisco Homes and Gardens* (San Francisco: San Francisco Garden Club, 1935) (not paginated).
28. "Woodward's Gardens," *The Mining & Scientific Press*, XIII:23 (December 2, 1866): 361.
29. *Pacific Rural Press*, (April 13, 1878), 236.
30. *Bancroft's Tourist's Guide around the Bay, (south) Yosemite* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1871): 131.
31. "Woodward's Gardens, The Central Park of the Pacific," *Pacific Rural Press*, 15:10 (March 9, 1878), 153. This article provides a terrific description of the Gardens.
32. *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue of Woodward's Gardens: Located on Mission Street, between Thirteenth and Fifteenth Streets* (San Francisco: Woodward's Gardens). In writing this article, the author examined copies published in 1873, 1875, and 1879. As recorded by an early photograph, a gatehouse was built on 14th Street with a large sign for Woodward's Gardens that stretched over a wide dirt-packed sidewalk. Affixed to the gatehouse was a sign inviting visitors to walk into the impressive library that Woodward had created.
33. *Pacific Rural Press*, (March 9, 1878), 153.
34. Gruber operated a naturalist store on California St., *Alta* (August 18, 1871), 1; after the Gardens closed, Gruber became the curator of natural history at Golden Gate Park. He died on August 2, 1907, *Chronicle* (August 9, 1907).
35. *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue to Woodward's Gardens*, 1875, 40.
36. Hittell, "Art in San Francisco," 103.
37. *Catalogue of Pictures and Statuary, in the Art Gallery at Woodward's Gardens* (San Francisco: Jos. Winterburn & Co., 1869): 4-9.
38. Frank Bailey Millard, *History of the San Francisco Bay Region* (Chicago, San Francisco, New York: American Historical Society, 1924, Vol. I): 286.
39. *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue*, (1875): 67.
40. Rebecca Solnit, *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West* (New York: Viking, 2003): 51.
41. *Pacific Rural Press* (April 13, 1878), 236.
42. A camera obscura still exists near the Cliff House. *Pacific Rural Press* (April 13, 1878), 236; Brown, "Woodward's Gardens."
43. *Pacific Rural Press*, 1:1 (January 7, 1871) 1.
44. *Chronicle* (July 2 and July 5, 1873), 3.
45. Folder 67, Letters George Davidson to R. B. Woodward, April 22 and June 27, 1873, "Woodward's Gardens Collection, 1872-1877," Sutro Library, California State Library, San Francisco.
46. Phineas T. Barnum, an acquaintance of Woodward had established an aquarium in New York in 1856. The New York Aquarium, for example, opened on October 11, 1876. R. J. Hoage and William A. Deiss, eds., *New Worlds, New Animals: From Menagerie to Zoological Park in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996): 104.
47. *Pacific Rural Press* (April 13, 1878), 236.
48. *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue*, 1873, 61.
49. *San Francisco Call* (August 11, 1907), 6.
50. Lloyd, *Lights and Shades*, 329.
51. *Bancroft's Guide*, 137.
52. *Alta* (April 23, 1871), 1.
53. *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue*, 1873, 60.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Alta* (September 1, 1872), 1.
56. *Alta* (September 16, 1872), 1.
57. Described by Francis Gruber in *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue of Woodward's Gardens* (San Francisco: Francis, Valentine & Co., 1879): [4].
58. Woodward's Gardens Collection, Sutro Library, California State Library, San Francisco.
59. It is not known if Woodward could have obtained the Audubon plates individually or by removing them from the large folio volumes.
60. Kurutz, "A Library of Libraries," 14; Flora Haines Apponyi Loughed, *The Libraries of California* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Company, 1878): 219-220. As noted in this title, many of the books were also taken to Woodward's Oak Knoll estate, including the Audubon. Loughed in her description of the Oak Knoll library commended Woodward for his many gifts of books to public libraries.
61. *Pacific Rural Press*, 15:10 (March 9, 1878), 153.
62. For a full description of Chang Woo Gow's appearance at the Gardens see *Alta*, (June 26, 1870), 2; *San Francisco Examiner* (February 26, 1893), 13. The armless woman is documented in Folder 62, July 14, 1873, in Woodward's Gardens Collection, 1872-1877, Sutro Library, California State Library, San Francisco, Calif.
63. *Alta* (July 6, 1886), 8.

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64. *Pacific Rural Press* (April 13, 1878), 236.
65. *The Pacific Rural Press* (March 9, 1878), 153.
66. For a short sketch of Andrews see Lloyd, Lights and Shades: 330.
67. *Alta* (August 29, 1876), 1.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Woodward's Gardens Collection, Sutro Library.
71. *Alta* (August 5, 1873), 1.
72. Ibid.
73. *Alta* (August 12, 1872), 1.
74. *Alta* (October 6, 1879), 1.
75. Ibid.
76. *Alta* (September 28, 1885), 1.
77. Ibid.
78. *Programmes of Woodward's Gardens*, San Francisco: Woodward's Gardens, 1872–1888, consisting of ten examples, California History Section, California State Library.
79. These offers are documented in the Woodward's Gardens Collection, 1872–1877, Sutro Library, California State Library, San Francisco. and "Scrapbook, Woodward's Gardens," California Historical Society.
80. *Programmes of Woodward's Gardens, 1872–1888*, California State Library.
81. "R. B. Woodward. Sketch of the Life of a Deceased Argonaut," *Chronicle* (August 23, 1879), 1/3. His daughter Mary Woodward Raum, on behalf of her late father, submitted a biographical card to the California State Library and under the category of principal events listed only one item: "built City Railroad; reduced fare to 5 cents."
82. Oscar Lewis, *San Francisco: Mission to Metropolis* (Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1966): 117.
83. Gruber, *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue*, 1879: [3].
84. Ibid.: [4].
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. *Alta* (September 29, 1875), 1.
88. *Alta* (August 23, 1879), 2.
89. *Pacific Rural Press* (August 30, 1879), 140.
90. *The Illustrated Wasp* (August 30, 1879), 96.
91. *Alta* (August 23, 1879), 1.
92. Woodward was survived by his wife Alice, three daughters (Helen J. Hutchinson, Sarah B. Melone, and Mary C. Raum), and a son, Robert, who had been introduced into the management of the Gardens.
93. The cemetery was closed and the remains moved to Colma. *Alta* (August 25, 1879), 1.
94. *Chronicle* (August 23, 1879), 1.
95. *Alta* (December 6, 1876), 1.
96. *Illustrated Guide and Catalogue*, 1879, p. 85. Celebrated poet Robert Frost visited the Gardens as a young boy and wrote a poem "At Woodward's Gardens." It was published in *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse*, XLVIII:1 (April 1936).
97. Easton, Eldridge & Co., *Catalogue of the Great Collection in Natural History of the Woodward's Gardens, San Francisco, Cal., at Auction* (San Francisco: by the publisher, 1893).
98. *Morning Call* (April 7, 1893), 8, 1 and clipping from *San Francisco Examiner* (April 7, 1893); R. B. Woodward Biographical File, Society of California Pioneers.
99. *Morning Call* (April 7, 1893), 8.
100. Ibid.
101. *Morning Call* (April 8, 1893), 8.
102. Ibid.
103. The Sutro Library, a branch of the California State Library, located on the campus of San Francisco State University has many rare books bearing the stamp of Woodward's Gardens, What Cheer House, and Oak Knoll. Sutro did not store the books at Sutro Heights, as he was told to keep them away from the damp ocean air.
104. *Morning Call* (March 15, 1894), 7.
105. Clipping from *San Francisco Examiner* (February 26, 1893); R. B. Woodward Biographical File, Society of California Pioneers.
106. Brown, "Woodward's Gardens."

THE JUNIOR RECREATION MUSEUM IN BALBOA PARK:

The Brainchild of Josephine Randall and Bert Walker

by Lisa Dunseth

Except as noted, all photos are part of the Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records (unprocessed collection), courtesy of the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

In 1934, after the inmates at the Old County Jail were moved from Balboa Park to a new facility in San Bruno, the property was transferred from the Sheriff's Department to the Recreation Commission. In February 1937 the Junior Recreation Museum opened on the grounds of the old jail, where it operated until it moved in 1951 to its new building at Corona Heights. While a few old-timers remember it, most neighbors are surprised to learn that the Randall Museum's first incarnation was on Ocean Avenue in the Outer Mission, where you will now find northbound I-280 traffic. This was before the Exploratorium, Maker-Spaces, and STEM programs existed. And it was long before the Mission Science Workshop, ArtSpan, and the Performing Arts Workshop would plan to move into the district. But the roots of those ideas that link learning and recreation can be traced to the little building that once stood at 600 Ocean Avenue.

Josephine Randall was the right woman in the right position at the right time. In 1926 she was appointed San Francisco's superintendent of recreation, San Francisco's first female department head. By 1928 she had a dream of opening a children's nature museum. When the jail closed in 1934, the property in Balboa Park became available, along with federal money and staff. But Josephine needed a plan, and she needed Bert Walker.¹

Bert Walker* worked as a naturalist at San Francisco's Camp Mather in the High Sierra. He had been leading nature walks at the camp since 1932 and had built a small museum with the specimens he collected on hikes. He noticed how young people would become engrossed in the outdoors during their time in the mountains, and he wished kids could be exposed to such nature activities all year long.

Josephine Randall met Bert Walker during a visit to Camp Mather. She recognized the value of Bert's efforts, and she approved of his "stimulating nature program and museum" at Camp Mather. This fortuitous meeting led to the founding of the Junior Recreation Museum.

THE WPA AND THE JUNIOR MUSEUM

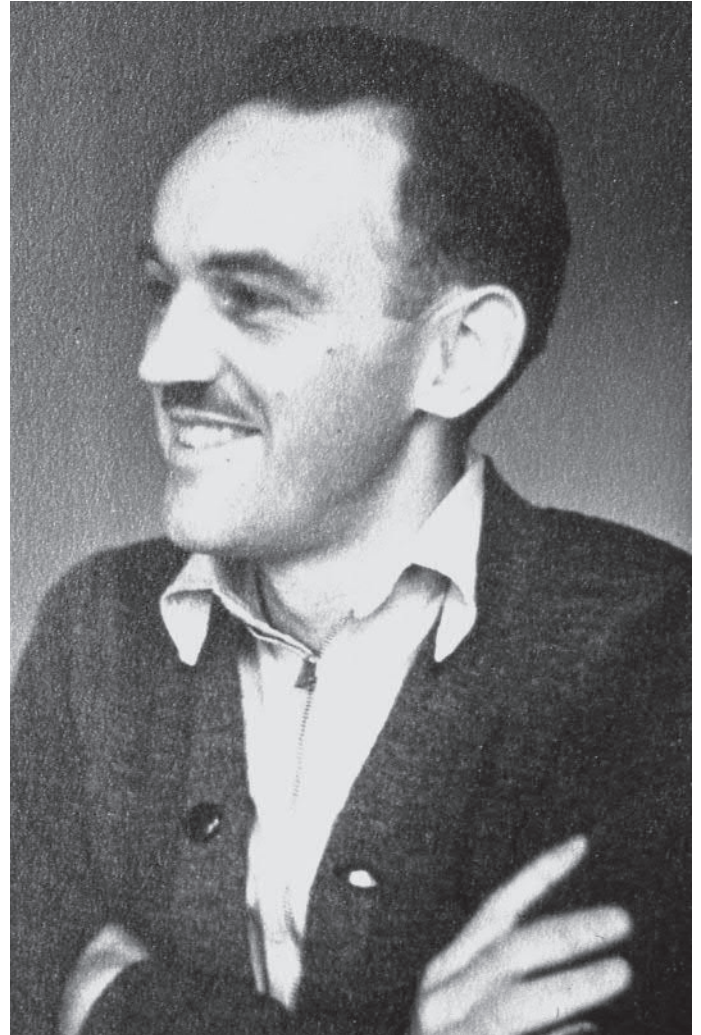
There were federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers at Camp Mather when Josephine and Bert met. As they talked about working together, they agreed that the WPA could play an essential role in their plan; Josephine and Bert would recruit WPA workers, and Bert would hire and train them. They would use Bert's Camp Mather model to create a hands-on nature museum for San Francisco children.²

When Bert arrived at 600 Ocean Avenue, he found a three-winged structure near the grounds of the old county jail. It had been built by the WPA. When the WPA turned the building over to the Recreation Department, the plans for the museum began in earnest.

Between late 1934 and the museum's opening in 1937, Bert and the WPA workers consulted and planned the core programs. They prepared the building and organized the collections and exhibits to accommodate an activity center for youth. Bert reportedly even salvaged wood from the old jail.



Josephine Randall, circa 1930s–1940s.



Bert Walker, circa 1930s–1940s. Collection of Neil Fahy.

He also arranged for a permanent loan of display cases from the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park.³ “With the creative leadership and the helpful assistance of the [WPA] staff . . . it was possible to prepare and arrange exhibits and organize groups more rapidly than otherwise would have been possible,” Josephine remembered.⁴

The WPA engaged San Francisco artist Nettie King Firebaugh to decorate the walls of the corridors with her paintings of wildflowers. She made fifteen to twenty 8.5-x-11-inch watercolors, which Bert hung on the walls behind glass. Neil Fahy* enjoyed the Junior Museum as a child, and later as a grown-up he worked there with Bert Walker. Neil particularly remembers admiring Nettie’s beautiful illustration

of the mustard plant. Meanwhile, just a few blocks away on Onondaga Avenue at Alemany Boulevard, another WPA artist was at work. Bernard Zakheim, one of the Coit Tower muralists, was creating two frescoes for the San Francisco Department of Public Health inside the Health Center building.⁵

“TO DELIGHT & INSTRUCT”: EDUCATION THROUGH RECREATION

The Junior Recreation Museum officially opened in February 1937 in one wing of the Ocean Avenue building. It was the first recreation center of its kind in San Francisco and the third of its kind in the United States. As superintendent of recreation,



Junior Recreation Museum, 600 Ocean Avenue, circa 1937. Collection of Neil Fahy.



Girls painting pictures of California wildflowers beneath display of Nettie King Firebaugh's wildflower paintings at the Junior Recreation Museum.



Junior Recreation Museum gardens.

Josephine had sought support and advice from experts at the Smithsonian Museum, Mt. Wilson Observatory, Brooklyn Children's Museum, San Francisco Museum of Art, and California Academy of Sciences.⁶

By 1939, the museum program was so successful that it had expanded into all three wings of the building. The arts-and-crafts wing was nearest Ocean Avenue, the model-craft wing on the east side, and the science wing in the middle. Elaborate gardens were constructed on the surrounding grounds. Ann Trilling, age 9, described it this way: "The entrance hall . . . has mounted animals in it . . . the library [has] a doll house . . . a phonograph . . . an old-fashioned stagecoach . . . and cabinets full of books. [You'll find] grass, flowers, and trees [outside] on both sides of the science [wing], and the little brook in back . . . has water in it only during the rainy season."⁷

The intention was to have collections and exhibits from every branch of natural history, to present illustrated talks, and to stimulate observation skills in youth through direct experiences. This working museum combined both art and science—a unique approach at the time. Most importantly, the museum was to encourage the development of hobbies determined by children's interests and to establish "clubs" around those interests with expert adult leaders as guides.

THE CLUBS

The clubs were intended to foster camaraderie, enthusiasm, and friendship. *Classes* and *teaching* were terms to be avoided at the Junior Museum. Instead, the programs were designed to provide opportunities for children to teach themselves.⁸ A club was developed as interest in a subject arose.



Boy with snake.

Neil Fahy remembers: “There were no scheduled formal classes . . . everything was on an individual basis. If someone brought in a butterfly and another a snake, the program that day would be on identification and mounting of butterflies and the care and feeding of snakes.” Over time, the clubs supported

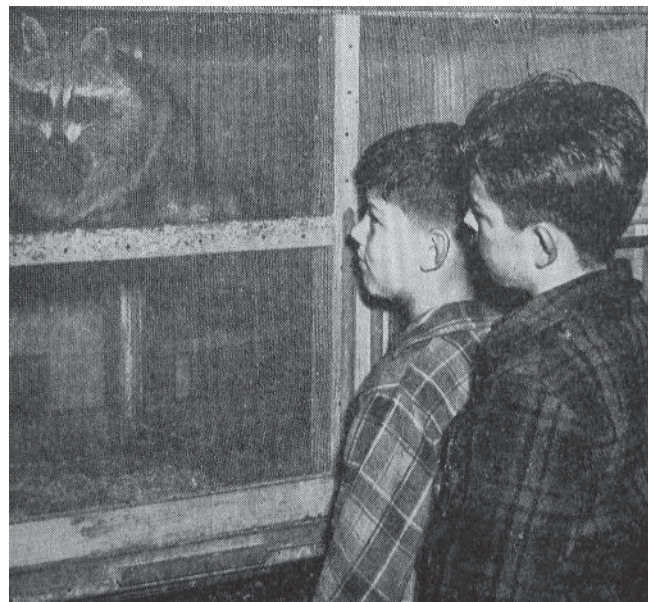


Boy with bird, Junior Recreation Museum.

interests in a variety of subjects, including butterflies, aquariums, modeling flowers in wax, basket weaving, printing, carpentry, photography, stamp collecting, and geology. The qualified staff played a crucial role in the success of the clubs.

The St. Francis Garden Club sponsored a club that cultivated a large plot at the rear of the building. The children studied horticulture and grew vegetables and flowers. At one point, the club members maintained a century-plant-watch as they eagerly awaited its bloom.

The Science Club helped with the care and feeding of animals, snakes, and fish. One “pet” was Rusty the Raccoon who, not surprisingly, could be quite a handful when he was in “a particularly unruly mood.” Rusty presumably fathered the four baby raccoons that were born at the museum and



Boys looking at pet raccoon, published in The Recreation Bulletin, 1947. Collection of Neil Fahy.

kept everyone busy. The Science Club performed more mundane duties as well: making leaf prints and plaster casts of animal tracks, as well as managing the wildflower exhibits.⁹

The Rockminors Club was for budding geologists. Participants collected specimens, tested them, organized exhibits, polished stones with lapidary equipment, and presented discussions on topics of geological interest. The club built a fine study collection of Bay Area fossils and took unknown



Children studying erosion, geology, and mapmaking at the Junior Recreation Museum.

specimens to the California Academy of Sciences for identification. Neil was president of the club as a youth and later worked part time as a geology instructor at the museum.

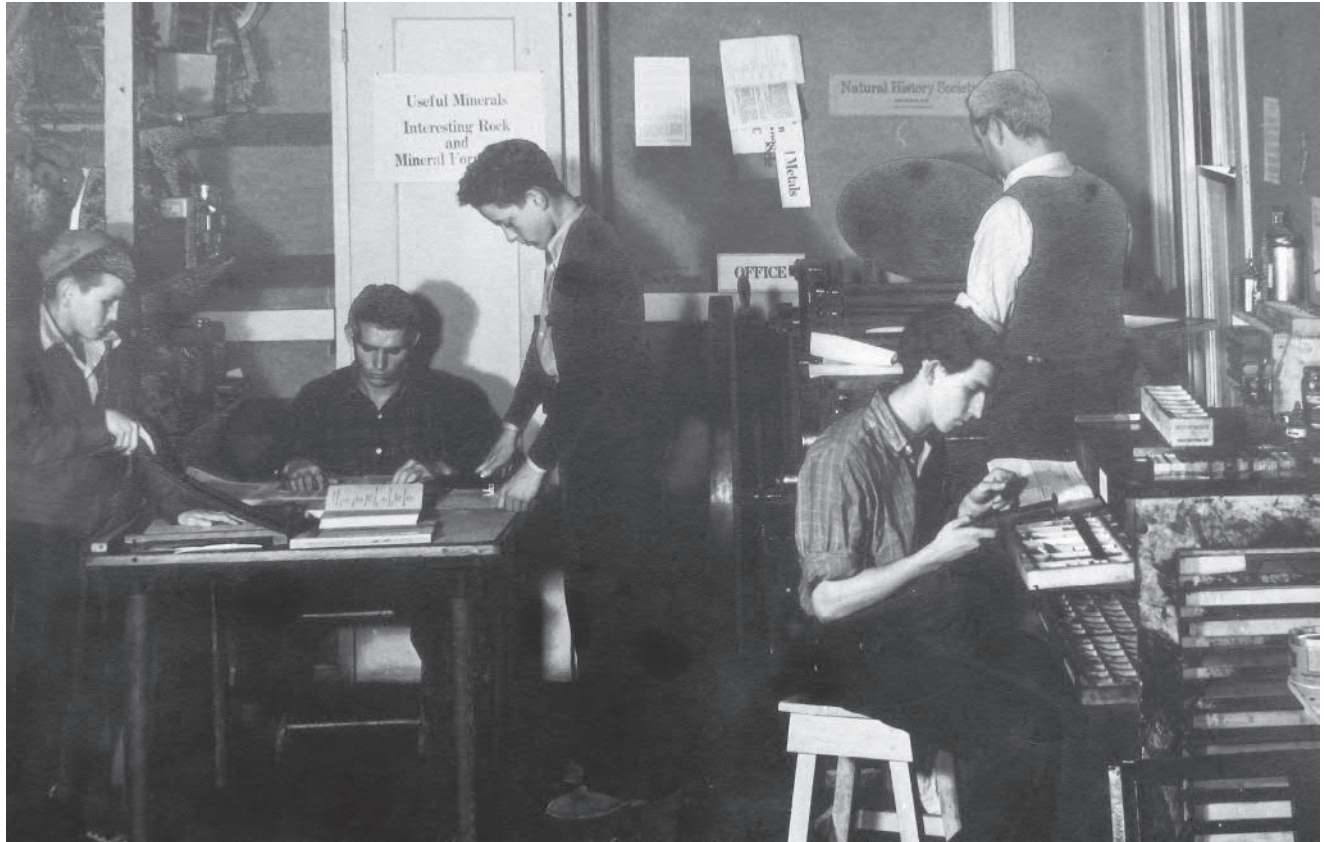
Part-time instructors, such as Mary Acelia Chamberlain, often led kids on a “ramble in the fields” to the slopes of Mt. Davidson where “one of the girls might call us over to see a Mission Blue Butterfly.” After the hike everyone would “retire to the back of the museum . . . for a moonlight weenie-roast.”¹⁰

One child astutely described the arts and crafts activities at the museum as a “backdoor” to nature study. There were several clubs to choose from. The Clay Modelers and the False Face Society did mask-making and

connected kids with anthropology. The Indian Arts Club, led by Evelyn Weiler, built dioramas of a Hopi Village and the Northwest Coast tribes.¹¹



Children installing rocks and minerals display at the Junior Recreation Museum.



Junior Recreation Museum print shop.

The museum had an active print shop where *The Junior Naturalist* and *The Third Dimension* (for the Model Airplane Club) were written, printed, and published. The front covers always featured handsome linoleum block illustrations designed by Bert or the children. “Copies were mailed to museums and recreation departments throughout the country; but the principal reason for printing . . . was to distribute [them to their] friends and folks at home.”¹² Katherine McKewon, a Denman Junior High School teacher, helped after school in the print shop.¹³ The tenth anniversary edition of the *Junior Naturalist* in April 1948 related its history:

Like all magazines it has had its troubles, shortages of ink, paper, editors, linoleum, even personnel; but come what would, the magazine always came out each month. The first six issues were mimeographed; and in celebrating our tenth anniversary, we are reprinting the first issue. Our printing press has an interesting history. Mr. D. David-Weill, a Frenchman . . . was visiting San Francisco . . . and was so



The Junior Naturalist, sample publication of the Junior Recreation Museum, 1943.



Printing Christmas cards at the Junior Recreation Museum, Balboa Park. Pictured, left to right: Jimmy Nuckolls, Edward Blum, George Ioannou, Jack Hardgrave, Donald Melville, Norbert Gutierrez, Fred Schulenberg, Marlene Smith, Mr. Bert Walker, curator; Richard Gutierrez, Sam Shulenberg. Published in *Recreation*, San Francisco Recreation Department, December 13, 1948. Collection of Neil Fahy.

impressed with the Junior Museum that he donated the money . . . to buy the [printing] press. In the beginning we published articles on the Model Airplane Club . . . [but as the Model Airplane Club grew we gave it] its own magazine, *The Third Dimension*.¹⁴

The kids' articles reflected their interests, including "Gypsum" by Roger Mackin, age twelve; "Fluorescence and Phosphorescence" by Fred Forsey, age thirteen; "Our Trip to Thornton Beach" by Dolores Pagano, age thirteen; and "Our Tarantula" by David Rivers, age twelve. In September 1947, an article titled "Forest Fires Up Forty Per Cent" included this plea: "Won't you please be careful so that when I grow up, I can get the same pleasure from the forests that you get now?"¹⁵

The children's extraordinary work was even noted by Joseph Henry Jackson in his column "Between the Lines," in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He praised the programs, suggesting that people go

visit the Junior Museum to see for themselves "one of the most intelligently conducted recreational enterprises anywhere."¹⁶

THE PTERODACTYLS CLUB AND WORLD WAR II

Members of the Pterodactyls Club, named after the "prehistoric dive-bomber," learned to construct models and free-flight airplanes. The club even set world records for the sustained flight of model planes. Vernon Parker, Doug Smith, and Bill Gaul (one of the original radio show Quiz Kids) worked in the airplane shop. In 1938 the museum hosted the citywide Recreation Commission's Science Fair, which included a model-airplane contest. The club's civilian activities continued during the war years; in 1944 they won top honors in the Towline Glider Contest sponsored by the San Francisco Junior Chamber of Commerce. Fritz Schafer won first and second place, and his time of three minutes



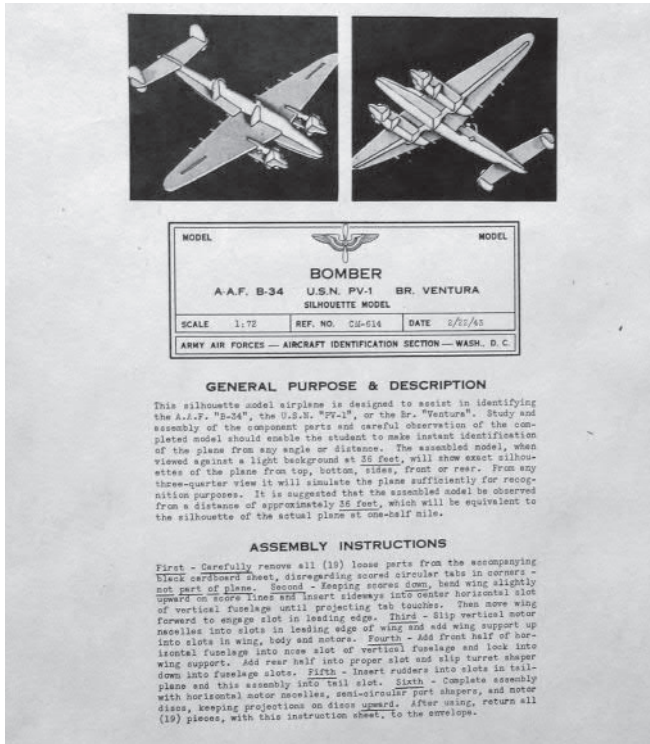
Airplane Club boys in Balboa Park, published in Recreation Bulletin, 1948. Collection of Neil Fahy.

six seconds was the outstanding flight of the day.

The effects of World War II were felt by those participating in a “rubber powered flying-scale” model contest in December 1944 at Balboa Park. “Good flights were turned in by the rubber powered models, but no records were broken. The new synthetic rubber appeared to be the main trouble, as the best flights were made with pre-war natural rubber salvaged from old models.”¹⁷ Bert Walker anticipated greater things from the model plane competitions when better materials became available after the war.¹⁸

One Junior Museum board member, Mrs. Paul Scherer, remarked that the clubs were good for children because “a hobby helps take the accent away from war and struggle.” The Pterodactyls

Club served this purpose well. During World War II many San Francisco schools participated in building model planes for the war effort and the Pterodactyls Club actively participated. They built models of commercial and military planes for aircraft spotters. The nationwide goal was for school kids to build 500,000 scale models; San Francisco school children were asked to build 4,000. A headline in 1942 read, “Youth Will Help the U.S. Win the War!” and featured a photo of kids with their models at the Junior Museum. Vernon Parker, a national model airplane champion, supervised two hundred boys and girls who built hundreds of models for aircraft recognition purposes. The Junior Museum had the most spectacular examples of German, Japanese, and Italian aircraft.¹⁹



*Silhouette model airplane identification packet, 1943.
Collection of Neil Fahy.*

During the annual Christmas model airplane contest of 1947, the weather was ideal in Balboa Park: "The cypress trees to the west and the eucalyptus trees to the north are still adorned with airplane parts. Models flying south, after clearing the roof of the museum and the sycamore trees, battled it out with the car barns and the cement works."²⁰

THE MUSEUM'S OUTREACH

Newspaper clippings from the time reveal that the Junior Museum was a significant place for youth. As many as three hundred kids a day visited the museum to explore a hobby or personal interest. According to Josephine, despite their large numbers, the club members never had disciplinary problems because each child was deeply interested in his or her project and accomplished the work "in a rhythm that he sets for himself." What had started on a shoestring budget in 1937, by 1949 had become a vital center. Bert was the full-time curator. There were two full-time assistants, two full-time instructors, and several part-time and volunteer workers. All at a cost to the taxpayers of San Francisco of only \$2,000 a month!²¹

The museum's influence was extended by the children's outreach to the wider community. In 1938 the California Spring Blossom and Wild Flower Association gave the Botany Club an Award of Merit for its display of fresh flowers.²² In 1939 the Rockminors produced an exhibit in the San Francisco building at the Golden Gate International Exhibition on Treasure Island. At that exhibit, Robert Dummel, age thirteen, entertained his audience with a talk on crystallography. Another time, Fred Forsey and Paul Wesendunk addressed the Audubon Society about geology.

During World War II the museum's Victory Garden was dedicated to growing vegetables. Four Garden Club members "donned in white dresses with French bouquets of cauliflower, bordered with radishes" participated in the Queen of the Camellia Show at City Hall, sponsored by the Victory Gardening Advisory Council. After the war the children resumed growing flowers. In September 1946 they sent fourteen vases of snapdragons, larkspur, godetia, stock, and roses from their plots to the injured soldiers at the Marine Hospital. The Junior Red Cross group produced "tray favors" of flowers and decorative cards for the hospitalized service men.²³

In 1946, four boys presented talks to the Golden Gate Exchange Club at the Alexander Hamilton Hotel and amazed their audiences. Donald Kun, age eleven, spoke about snakes and lizards; Roger Mackin, age twelve, lectured about his butterfly collection; John Madden, age twelve, talked about rock polishing and geology; and Bill Gaul, age thirteen, spoke about model airplanes.

In 1949 club members generated displays on a variety of topics—like rock collecting, ceramics, gardening, and model-making—for the Northern California Youth Talent Exhibit at the Civic Auditorium. The kids impressed their audiences and represented the Junior Museum very well.²⁴

In addition to the drop-in visits by individual children, the museum was visited by groups from the Camp Fire Girls, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and from public schools and playgrounds. They hosted visits from schools as far away as Stockton. The museum's growth, after only two years, was an inspiration "to all who have been privileged to participate in its development."²⁵



Children tending the live animals at the Junior Recreation Museum.



Valentine's Day party at the Junior Recreation Museum.

MOVING THE MUSEUM TO CORONA HEIGHTS

The Balboa Park building, always intended as a temporary structure, eventually proved to be inadequate. It was a potential fire hazard, discouraging some donors. Its exhibits, such as the Native American basket collection, had become too valuable to be housed there. In addition, the surrounding area was being developed; it had been a short walk through the fields to Mt. Davidson, but that was changing. By 1964, when the Bayshore Freeway opened, the museum would have been demolished.²⁶

Josephine had been dreaming, scheming, and planning for a new building for years. She wanted a location more “centrally located for the children of San Francisco”—not far away in the Outer Mission. In 1928 Josephine had taken Senator James E. Phelan, Rosalie (Mrs. Sigmund) Stern, and John McLaren for a walk to the top of Corona Heights to explain her dream of “science as recreation” at a time “when land prices were low and soon to get lower.” Josephine’s dream evolved from an idea in 1928 to the opening of the Junior Museum at Balboa Park in 1937. In 1936²⁷ the San Francisco Board of Supervisors purchased the plot of land at Corona Heights lot for \$27,333. In 1941²⁸ the Recreation Commission set aside the Corona Heights site for the museum. And, most importantly, the voters passed a \$12 million bond measure in 1947 to provide for the building of a new Junior Museum.

In 1949, Josephine was still fighting the political battle to get



Josephine Randall, with Paula Gelber of SF Youth Association's youth employment program, mid- to late 1950s.

the new structure built at Corona Heights. She argued that the land had been acquired and the monies had already been approved by the board of supervisors. She advocated for her project, proclaiming that an interactive museum such as this “is where children can create something. It accomplishes more for their nervous system than if they just watched.”²⁹

The monies were finally appropriated for the new building by September 1949, and construction began. At about this time, Josephine was planning to retire. Upon her retirement in 1951 she was credited with “providing San Francisco with a recreation system, recognized by experts, as outstanding in the nation.”

When the museum opened at Corona Heights on September 23, 1951, the Recreation and Park Commission suspended its long-standing rule against naming buildings for living people. The new museum was named the Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum, dedicated in honor of “Miss Randall,” who, for twenty-five years had “led the battle for recreation for the youth of San Francisco.”³⁰

The Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum, was dedicated and opened in Corona Heights in 1951.³¹

JOSEPHINE RANDALL: THE OVERLOOKED VISIONARY

Josephine once said she was especially moved after meeting a boy in a park who didn't know what a gopher was. She believed that if she encountered a child who had failed at sports and was “down in the dumps,” it was her job to direct that child to other activities that could be as satisfying. Josephine believed that a solid recreation program could help prevent juvenile delinquency. The program needed to be responsive to the needs of kids, in the neighborhoods where they lived, and have dedicated staff.³²

She expanded the Recreation Department during her tenure. When she began in 1926 San Francisco had twenty-two playgrounds on 91 acres, 120 employees, and a budget of \$377,000. When she retired, the city had sixty-seven playgrounds on 240 acres, 244 employees, and a budget of \$1,400,000.

In addition to the new Corona Heights center, Josephine's accomplishments included the photographic center at Father Crowley Playground at Duboce Park and the Glen Park Day Camp, both of which continue to shine in continued success. She established numerous dramatic, dance, and



Josephine Randall, circa 1950s or 1960s.



Mayor Christopher helped celebrate the 20th anniversary of the museum and Josephine Randall's 72nd birthday, 1957.

music programs as well. And with Mrs. Sigmund Stern, Josephine Randall founded the San Francisco Civic Symphony in 1931, now the oldest community orchestra on the West Coast.³³

Josephine Randall was born in Sebastopol on July 11, 1885, into a family with roots in the Gold Rush era. When she was seven years old, her mother opened one of the first kindergartens in California in the family's Santa Rosa home. Within a year, young Josephine was assisting her mother by organizing activities for the children at the school.

Josephine's grandfather lived near Luther Burbank's experimental Gold Ridge Farm in Sebastopol. As a young girl, Josephine worked with Burbank on projects in his gardens. She continued to assist with his botanical studies while a college student at Stanford.

Josephine earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Stanford in 1909 and 1913. Her time wandering the Stanford Hills with her science professors, collecting plants, insects, and geological specimens, planted the seed for the idea of a "junior museum." In 1915 she found a job in San Diego working on a playground and later became director of playgrounds for the City of San Diego. During World War I she worked for the War Camp Community Services program. From 1920 to 1923 she was the Midwest and Pacific Coast field representative for the National Recreation Association, for which she traveled to Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, and Wisconsin.³⁴

In 1924 she came to San Francisco, where she conducted a survey of the city's recreational facilities, and in 1926 she was appointed San Francisco's superintendent of recreation. She was a member

of the Society of Recreation Workers of America, the American Institute of Park Executives, and the Public Relations Society of America.³⁵

She was the first woman to be elected a Fellow of the American Recreation Society. She was granted an honorary law degree from the University of California about which she said, “anyone who’s lived through four mayors deserves one!”

She received awards from groups such as the American Recreation Society, the State of California for the Golden Gate International Exposition, the United Community Fund of San Francisco, the Auxiliary of the Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum, the Citizen’s Advisory Committee on Parks and Recreation of Palo Alto, the Great Domain of the Golden Dragon, and the Kiwi Club of New Zealand.

She died at age eighty-two on April 2, 1968.³⁶

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ABOUT BERT WALKER

Josephine Randall once said she had asked herself:

Where in the world will I find someone who had knowledge of botany, zoology, entomology, chemistry, astronomy, physics, shipbuilding, aeronautics, printing, ceramics, and arts and crafts? Bert had the vision, the interest, the knowledge, faith, and the courage to practically donate his services until the project could really get on its feet. He has given unstintingly of his time and has spared no effort to make this center come to life. Without Mr. Walker’s leadership we would not, I am afraid, have been able to create the museum.³⁷

Bert was born in Vallejo in 1904 and grew up in Los Gatos. In the 1920s he worked as a camp leader at the “Dimond-O,” which was Oakland’s Boy Scout Camp in the High Sierra. In 1932 he took a job as a naturalist at Camp Mather, where he participated in one of the Carnegie Institute’s research projects on plant studies.

According to Neil Fahy (see next page), Bert



*Bert Walker, Oakland’s Boy Scout Camp, circa 1920s.
Collection of Neil Fahy.*

stood only 5’4” but was a giant in spirit and a kind of “renaissance man.” Neil recalls, “Bert was a very interesting man. I think most of the boys at the museum wished their fathers could be as interested in them and their hobbies as Bert was. He was a man with an in-depth knowledge of many fields.”³⁸

Bert was especially talented and knowledgeable in the subjects of forestry, photography, printing, model building, gardening, nature lore, and the natural sciences. He was a “butterfly man” and

eventually donated his fine butterfly and mineral collections to the Oakland Museum. He could also build display cases. With all these skills, Bert was uniquely qualified to direct the museum. He worked at the Junior Recreation Museum in Balboa Park from its inception through 1951, when it closed. He moved to the museum's new building in Corona Heights and continued to work there until his retirement in October 1964.³⁹

As time passes, we forget, don't remember, or don't bother to learn the stories of the people who created such spaces. So, the next time you visit the Randall Museum, have a cup of coffee at the Josephine Cafe in appreciation of the vision, work, and collaboration of Josephine Randall and Bert Walker.

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ABOUT NEIL FAHY

Special thanks to the extraordinary Neil Fahy for his generosity, knowledge, and support of this project. He first visited Tuolumne Meadows in 1934, when he was seven years old. Seeing the mountains inspired him to become a geologist, and in the summer of 1944, he began volunteering at Camp Mather as a "volunteer naturalist." That is when he met Bert Walker.



Neil Fahy. Courtesy of San Francisco Recreation and Parks.

When he was fourteen, Neil started going to the Junior Museum, where he became president of the Rock Minors Club. After graduating the next year from Balboa High School, he worked at the museum during the summer, instead of going to Camp Mather.

Neil was drafted in September 1945, just after World War II ended, and he worked as a weatherman in the Army Air Force until 1947. When he got home, he returned to working at the museum. In 1950, he assisted with the museum's move to its new building at Corona Heights and continued working there from 1952 to 1960. For twenty years he taught geology and natural history classes through UC Extension and for fifteen years he taught at the Daly City Adult School. He also lectured on Royal Viking and Crystal cruise ships for thirty-one years (1979–2009).

Neil is a retired geologist who spends his summers, whenever possible, as a Camp Mather naturalist. He is a conchologist—or "snail man"—and has published numerous books and articles on the subject. He donated his snail collection to the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park and spent three years integrating his collection with theirs. He continues to volunteer at the Academy of Sciences as a research associate.

In 2019, Neil was hired as a recreation leader by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department—making him San Francisco's oldest employee. When I interviewed him, I found that his Mather knowledge is encyclopedic. His objective is to instill in the children and adults a curiosity of the natural world and the excitement in sharing this wonder with others.⁴⁰

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa Dunseth is a retired special collections librarian and local history enthusiast.

NOTES

1. *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1934, 7 (Proquest database).
2. Author interviews with Neil Fahy, March and April 2019. Fahy visited the Junior Recreation Museum in Balboa Park as a youth. He also worked at the museum from Autumn 1944 through September 1945 and from 1947 to 1951. He then worked at the new Randall Museum from 1952 to 1960.
3. “Founder of Junior Museum Honored...” February 14, 1957. “Josephine Randall,” *Examiner* Newspaper Clippings Collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; Josephine Randall, “A Recreation Museum for Juniors,” Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
4. *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 16, 1949, 11 (Proquest database).
5. Fahy interview—see note 3. Firebough’s wildflower paintings appear not to be extant. Susan Working, curator at the Randall Museum, confirmed that the paintings are no longer in the museum collection. Email dated April 10, 2019. Staff at the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library confirmed that the paintings were not included in materials transferred from the Randall to the Library circa 2014; http://default.sfplanning.org/Preservation/landmarks_designation/35-45_Onondaga_DesignationReport_FINAL.pdf
6. “All This and a Museum, Too,” July 17, 1977, Josephine Randall, *Examiner* Newspaper Clippings Collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; “The Junior Recreation Museum” by Josephine D. Randall, *The Municipal Record*, October 1937, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; “Josephine Randall Is Loaded With Ideas for Junior Museum,” n.d., “Josephine Randall,” *Examiner* Newspaper Clippings Collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
7. *The Junior Naturalist*, June 1947, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
8. Fahy interview—see note 3. Brooklyn’s museum was established in 1899 and Boston’s in 1913. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Children%27s_museum (accessed April 2019); Fahy interview—see note 3; Bert Walker, “Creative Crafts,” 1. Fahy Collection; Bert Walker, “A Municipal Children’s Museum,” *Museum News*, 39:7, April 1961, 30-33, Fahy Collection.
9. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 14, 1939, 15 (Proquest database); *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 25, 1950, 13L (Proquest database); Josephine Randall, “The Junior Recreation Museum,” *The Municipal Record*, October 1937, 17, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, March 17, 1947 Fahy collection; “There’s Fun in Science for Kids at San Francisco’s Junior Museum” newspaper clipping, n.d., Fahy Collection.
10. Fahy interview—see note 3; *The Junior Naturalist*, May 1, 1938. Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
11. Bert Walker, “Josephine Randall Junior Museum...” *Recreation and Park Department News Bulletin*, 2:9, September 21, 1951, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
12. *Recreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, September 2, 1946, Fahy Collection.
13. *Recreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, September 2, 1946, Fahy Collection.
14. *The Junior Naturalist*, Tenth Anniversary, April 1948, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
15. *The Junior Naturalist*, September 1947, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
16. *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 13, 1940, 17 (Proquest database).
17. *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, March 18, 1946, Fahy collection.
18. *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, January 28, 1946, Fahy collection.
19. *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 17, 1942, 10 (Proquest database).
20. *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, 14:28, July 15, 1946, cover, Fahy collection; *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 20, 1938, second section 1, 12; July 29, 1938, second section, 1; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, January 28, 1946, Fahy collection; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, June 30, 1947, Fahy collection; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, February 23, 1948, Fahy collection.

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21. *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 16, 1949, 11 (Proquest database).
 22. Award ribbon, card, and label, 1938. Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
 23. *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, 13:12, March 19, 1945 [sic, 1925], Fahy collection; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, December 2, 1946, Fahy Collection; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, March 17, 1947, Fahy Collection.
 24. Neil Fahy, *The Randall Museum, The Early Years, 1937–1967*; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, July 15, 1946, n.p.. Fahy Collection.
 25. Josephine Randall, A Recreation Museum for Juniors, 1938, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; *ReCreation Bulletin*, San Francisco Recreation Department, April 12, 1948, Fahy Collection.
 26. “Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum,” from *Junior Naturalist*, letterpress printed history brochure, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
 27. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 18, 1949, 13 (Proquest database).
 28. “Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum...: by Bert Walker, *Recreation and Park Department News Bulletin*, September 21, 1951, [no page], Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
 29. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 18, 1949, 13 (Proquest database).
 30. “Junior Museum to Be Named...,” and *San Francisco Chronicle* clippings, August 24, 1951 and September 24, 1951, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 21, 1951, 12 (Proquest database.)
 31. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 18, 1949, 13; *San Francisco Chronicle*. April 26, 1949, 3 (Proquest database); *San Francisco Chronicle* clippings, August 24, 1951 and September 24, 1951, Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum Records, unprocessed collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library. In 1953, the new building at Corona Heights received national coverage in the *Family Circle* magazine (author’s collection).
 32. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 18, 1939, 10 (Proquest database).
 33. “Josephine Randall Is Loaded with Ideas for Junior Museum,” January 30, 1957, “Josephine Randall,” *Examiner* Newspaper Clippings Collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; Fahy interview—see note 3; “Josephine Randall, 25 Years S.F. Recreation Chief to Retire July 1,” n.d., “Josephine Randall,” *Examiner* Newspaper Clippings Collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; “Founder of Museum Honored,” February 14, 1957, “Josephine Randall,” *Examiner* Newspaper Clippings Collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
 34. Josephine Randall, “Family Portrait of the Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum,” 1, Fahy Collection.
 35. Finding Aid to the San Francisco Recreation Department Records, SFH 375. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1951, 14 (Proquest database).
 36. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 4, 1968, 42 (Proquest database).
 37. Josephine Randall, “Family Portrait of the Josephine D. Randall Junior Museum,” October 18, 1954, 1–2, Fahy collection.
 38. Fahy interview—see note 3.
 39. “Bert Walker Retires as Museum Curator,” *San Francisco Municipal Review*, November 13, 1964, Fahy collection.
 40. Author’s notes from personal interviews with Fahy 2018–2019; <https://sfrecpark.org/1412/Our-Podcast>; <https://www.campmather.org/focm-naturalists.html>; <https://www.conchology.be/?t=9001&id=18084> and <https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A75516>.
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