
Finding aid to Spring Valley Ranch of J.P. Whitney by Runnels & Stateler, San Francisco, circa 1889

Processed by Katherine Ruiz.

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Collection number: BANC PIC 1977.018--fALB

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Processed by Katherine Ruiz.
Finding Aid Encoded By:
GenX

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: Spring Valley Ranch of J.P. Whitney by Runnels & Stateler, San Francisco

Date (inclusive): circa 1889

Collection Number: BANC PIC 1977.018--fALB

Photographer: Runnels & Stateler, San Francisco

Extent: 1 album (28 photographic prints) ; 28 x 34 cm.28 digital objects

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Languages Represented: Collection materials are in English

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Preferred Citation

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Digital Representations Available

Digital representations of selected original pictorial materials are available in the list of materials below. Digital image files were prepared from selected Library originals by the Library Photographic Service. Library originals were copied onto 35mm color transparency film; the film was scanned and transferred to Kodak Photo CD (by Custom Process); and the Photo CD files were color-corrected and saved in JFIF (JPEG) format for use as viewing files.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog California Heritage Project. CU-BANC

Online Archive of California.

Families -- California -- Placer County.

Ranches -- California -- Placer County -- Photographs.

Spring Valley Ranch (Placer County, Calif.) -- Pictorial works.

Whitney, Joel Parker, 1835-1913. -- Homes and haunts -- Pictorial works.

Acquisition Information

The Spring Valley Ranch photographs were purchased by The Bancroft Library in 1976.

Biography

Joel Parker Whitney (1835-1913) was born in Gardner, Massachusetts. Lured to California at the age of 17 by prospects of gold, he tired quickly of the tedium of mining and joined a hunting party near San Francisco. He soon tired of hunting as well and briefly joined his brothers' mercantile business in San Francisco before becoming an independent shipper. With the money earned from his successful shipping business, Whitney was able to contribute sizable sums of money to his father's sheep ranch, known as the Whitney Ranch, near Rocklin, California. When his father died in 1873, Whitney inherited the land and about 15,000 sheep from Australia. The sheep were larger and had heavier fleece than American sheep. He sold thousands of these sheep to other ranchers as they continued breeding and the business became quite profitable.

Whitney's next project was to go to Colorado Territory for gold mining in 1865 -gold had been discovered there but had been largely ignored. His interests turned to silver when the thousands of dollars worth of gold he purchased ended up containing more silver than gold. He wrote a booklet entitled *Silver Mining Regions of Colorado* (said to have been instrumental in the establishment of statehood for Colorado) and represented Colorado Territory in its mineral exhibition at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1867, which won a gold medal and international recognition. Whitney's mining interests continued in Colorado for years. Eventually he moved on to mines in New Mexico.











Whitney continued to visit the Whitney Ranch in California, also known as Spring Valley Ranch. He believed that irrigation was a prime factor in land development, and tried to attract settlers to his properties with the enticement of modern irrigation. He continued to acquire adjoining land, and used old ditches previously used for mining operations to bring water to the ranch. He wrote another booklet, entitled *Fresh Water Tide Lands of California* (1873), in which he described his vision of California's agricultural future as including the most modern farm machinery and the ownership of farm lands by large corporations in the interests of funding state-of-the-art irrigation projects, which small farmers could not afford to explore. Whitney systematically improved his land by reclamation, irrigation, and the commencement of fruit and vineyard cultivation. His mansion at Spring Valley Ranch was known as "The Oaks," the building of which began in 1884. After 1888 Whitney devoted most of his time and resources to Spring Valley Ranch, constructing roads on the property and continuing his prospering sheep business. His many trips to Europe were evident -he cultivated the land with the addition of English horses and with methods of grape cultivation from Spain. His last major land venture was the Placer County Citrus Colony, which fully utilized his irrigation and land development techniques.

Whitney had great impact on California and many other states through his investments in the building of the Union Pacific Railroad, his sheep business and mining interests, and his countless innovative agricultural and land development projects which changed the face of agriculture.

(Source: Miller, Richard A. *Fortune Built by Gun ; the Joel Parker Whitney Story*. Walnut Grove, CA : The Mansion Publishing Co.,1969.)

Scope and Content

This collection consists of an album of 28 photographic prints of Joel Parker Whitney's Spring Valley Ranch in Placer County, California. The photographs were taken by the firm of Runnels & Stateler of San Francisco, circa 1889. Included are photographs of the ranch and ranch properties in oak-covered foothills; 2 photographs of the vineyard; 1 photograph of Whitney under the trees; 3 photographs of unidentified children; and many photographs of "The Oaks," Whitney's mansion, including exterior and interior views. Captions are printed below each photograph.

The Oaks. Residence of J. Parker Whitney, Rocklin, Placer Co., Cal.BANC PIC 1977.018:01--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf8290107p>**The Oaks. Residence of J. Parker Whitney.** BANC PIC 1977.018:02--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf9z09p4kw>**The Oaks. Residence of J. Parker Whitney, Rocklin, Placer Co., Cal.**BANC PIC 1977.018:03--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf6n39p2pk>**The Oaks. Lawn.** BANC PIC 1977.018:04--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf996nb782>**The Oaks. Hallway.** BANC PIC 1977.018:05--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf05800506>**The Oaks. Dining Room.** BANC PIC 1977.018:06--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf9v19p4bm>**The Oaks. Library.** BANC PIC 1977.018:07--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf4b69p08t>**Spring Valley Ranch, the Old House** BANC PIC 1977.018:08--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf0x0nb1q1>**Spring Valley Ranch. Vineyard and Buildings.** BANC PIC 1977.018:09--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf8g50108t>**Spring Valley Ranch, the Fort** BANC PIC 1977.018:10--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf9v19p4c4>**Spring Valley Ranch, Beryl Avenue** BANC PIC 1977.018:11--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf9g50118m>**Spring Valley Ranch. Driveway at the Bluffs.** BANC PIC 1977.018:12--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf3w1007cc>**Spring Valley Ranch. Park in Clover Valley.** BANC PIC 1977.018:13--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf600008bx>**Spring Valley Ranch. Bluffs from High Hill.** BANC PIC 1977.018:14--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf2b69n8sc>**The Oaks. Residence of J. Parker Whitney, Rocklin, Placer Co., Cal.**BANC PIC 1977.018:15--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf8b69p3ts>**The Oaks. Library and Dining Room.** BANC PIC 1977.018:16--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf9d5nb6v1>**The Oaks. Blue Room.** BANC PIC 1977.018:17--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf500007m8>**The Oaks. Beryl's Room.** BANC PIC 1977.018:18--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf7s2009fz>**The Oaks. School Room.** BANC PIC 1977.018:19--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf5g50092p>**Spring Valley Ranch. Rocky Glen.** BANC PIC 1977.018:20--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf700009bq>**Spring Valley Ranch. The Fort.** BANC PIC 1977.018:21--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf5r29p0w2>**Spring Valley Ranch. Field of Flowers.** BANC PIC 1977.018:22--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf6h4nb52c>**Spring Valley Ranch. Spring Valley from Spring Hill.** BANC PIC 1977.018:23--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf6j49p2z2>**Spring Valley Ranch. In Clover Valley.** BANC PIC 1977.018:24--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf0b69n80v>**Spring Valley Ranch. In Clover Valley.**BANC PIC 1977.018:25--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf7t1nb6qz>BANC PIC 1977.018:26--fALB  <ark:/13030/tf7870093h>**Spring Valley Ranch. Steep Hollow Terrace.** BANC PIC 1977.018:27--fALB 
<ark:/13030/tf8n39p3n5>**Spring Valley Ranch. Vineyard from Long Drive.** BANC PIC 1977.018:28--fALB 
<ark:/28722/bk0010k1r9w>