
Guide to the Leonard McKay Research Papers, 1793-1991

Guide prepared by Daniel Jarvis

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Collection processed and guide prepared and encoded by:

Daniel Jarvis

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Leonard McKay Research Papers

Date (inclusive): 1793-1991

Date (bulk): 1850-1991

Collection Number: ECS03.02

Collector: McKay, Leonard Mortimore, 1921-2006

Extent: Containers: 12 boxes and 4 filing cabinet drawers

Volume: 11.5 cubic feet

Series I is housed in vault 1 in the Sourisseau Academy file cabinets ECS 8.1 to 8.4. Series II is located in vault 2 for cold storage, in the Gordon panoramic negatives cabinet 3. Series III is housed in vault 1 in the Sourisseau Academy shelf range 34, shelves 34C.3 to 34C.6.

Repository: Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History, San José State University

San José, California 95192

Abstract: The Leonard McKay Research Papers consist of photographs and papers that document the history of the Santa Clara Valley region. These materials were gathered by the late printer and historian Leonard McKay during his personal research into the history of the region. The papers include approximately 2100 original and reproduced slides and negatives depicting agrarian and urban life, technology, and local events. The papers also include Spanish, Mexican, and American civil records, locally created scrapbooks, and a large assortment of topical research files. Collectively, these pictorial and textual resources form a significant body of research material spanning the late 18th- to 20th- centuries, documenting economic, cultural, and social development within San José and the Santa Clara Valley region.

Language: English

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Leonard McKay Research Papers, [Box number]: [Folder number], Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History, San José State University, San José, California

Acquisition Information

The Leonard McKay Papers were donated to the Sourisseau Academy by the Edith Corinne Smith Trust in 2007.

Biographical Note

Leonard McKay, Jr. was born to Leonard Mortimore McKay, Sr. and Eugenia Adelina Nenn on October 21, 1921 in San José, California. He was born to a family with pioneering roots in the Santa Clara Valley and a tradition deeply entwined with the printing press. After managing the family printing business for 37 years, Eliza "Bessie" Smith sold the business to her grandson Leonard McKay Jr. in 1956. McKay and Bessie also agreed to revert to the original company name, the Smith and McKay Printing Company (1). McKay ran the Smith and McKay Printing Company until 1983, when he sold ownership to his son David. In 1986, he opened Memorabilia of San José and operated the business until his retirement in 2003. Beginning in the 1960s, he started to exclusively collect art created by Santa Clara Valley artists such as A.D.M. Cooper, Andrew Putnam Hill, and Louis O. Lussier. To this day, the ensemble of art collected by McKay remains a distinctive record of social and cultural memory in the Santa Clara Valley. From 1994 to 1995, McKay served his community and fellow Rotary members as president of the San José Rotary Club. Following his passion for local history, McKay was active in the Santa Clara County Pioneers, History San José, and served several terms on the board of the Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History. On October 17, 2006, McKay passed away in Santa Clara, California. (1) *The Trailblazer (Quarterly Bulletin of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County)*, Volume 39, Number 3, September, 1998

Indexing Terms

The following terms may be used to index this collection.

Personal Names

McKay, Leonard Mortimore, 1921-2006

Calloway, Hank, 1911-1995

Campbell, Lawrence A., b. 1907

Crummey, John D., 1878-1976

Loomis, Patricia, 1920-2010

Renzel, Ernie, 1907-2007

Sabatino, Murphy, d. 2010

Subjects

Agriculture

Agricultural machinery

Business

Industries

Technology

Scrapbooks

Geographic Names

San José (Calif.)

Santa Clara (Calif.)

Santa Clara County (Calif.)

Santa Clara Valley (Santa Clara County, Calif.)

Scope and Content

The Leonard McKay Research Papers consists primarily of reproduced and original photographs, public records, scrapbooks, and thematically arranged research files. Aside from the broad topics of agriculture, community members, and architecture, these materials document many aspects of life in San José and the Santa Clara Valley, the bulk of which dates from the mid-nineteenth to the late twentieth century. It is important to note the majority of the photographs in this collection are reproductions. Many of the photographs were in a state of degradation, were rare prints, or privately held when McKay copied them. Thanks in large part to his efforts, these photographs remain available to the public. The research files compiled by McKay include newspaper clippings, brochures, magazine articles, and privately and publically produced research reports. The scrapbooks assembled by McKay and others include a large assortment of news clippings from the San José Mercury and other regional newspapers. Several of these scrapbooks cover a wide variety of themes or issues, while others focus on a particular institution, such as the San José Rotary Club. Some of these scrapbooks are also

creations of important figures in regional history, like politician and former San José mayor Ernie Renzel, or former president of the Food Machinery Corporation, John Crummey. Also included are abridged translations of Spanish and Mexican legal records from the pueblo era of San José and meeting minutes for the Common Council of the City of San José, edited to include only council items relating to the city fire department. As an eyewitness to the natural and inevitable evolution of his community and region, McKay gathered and produced these historical resources to document the people, places, buildings, and events he thought significant to the cultural and historical development of San José and the Santa Clara Valley region.

Arrangement of the Leonard McKay Research Papers

The research materials are arranged into three series:

Series I: Research Files, circa 1850-1991

Series II: Negatives and Slides, circa 1850-1991

Series III: Scrapbooks and Records, 1793-1852, 1860-1983

Series I Research Files, circa 1850-1991

Scope and Content Note

This series consists of research files compiled by Leonard McKay and arranged alphabetically by topic. The files broadly address subjects on the history, culture, and politics of the Santa Clara Valley, but the focus is especially keen on the local individuals, families, and businesses that have shaped life in the valley. Most research files consist of newspaper clippings, brochures, magazine articles, but some also include privately and publically produced historical research reports. An inventory of the [research files](#) is available in PDF format on the Sourisseau Academy's webpage. Series I is housed in vault 1 in the Sourisseau Academy file cabinets ECS 8.1 to 8.4.

Series II Negatives and Slides, circa 1850-1991

Scope and Content Note

This series contains original and reproduced negatives and slides gathered or created by Leonard McKay. A small number of negatives were loaned out by McKay and never returned to him. Fortunately, the majority of the images he assembled remain in their original state of arrangement. These images focus on the history, events, communities, and people of Santa Clara Valley. Specific depictions include adobe structures photographed by Alice Hare, historic commercial buildings such as the New Century Block, and industrial and commercial enterprises like the Food Machinery Corporation. There are also numerous portraits of individuals, families, and business leaders noted for their contributions to industry, commerce, culture in the Santa Clara Valley. An inventory of the [negatives and slides](#) is available in PDF format on the Sourisseau Academy's webpage. Series II is located in vault 2 for cold storage, in the Gordon panoramic negatives cabinet 3

Series III Scrapbooks and Records, 1793-1852 1860-1983

Scope and Content Note

The items in this series were constructed and gathered to document aspects of history, culture and civil governance in San José. Boxes one to four contain scrapbooks created solely by local historian Hank Calloway. Boxes five and six house scrapbooks created by individuals such as Leonard McKay, Hank Calloway, John D. Crummey, and Ernie Renzel. Box seven contains a set of abridged minutes for the San José Common Council, created by former San José Fire Department Chief, Lawrence A. Campbell. These records duplicate every meeting minute Campbell could locate that addressed business concerning the city fire department or fire prevention. Box eight houses copied translations of Spanish and Mexican legal records produced by the juzgado during the pueblo era of San José. These records were originally translated and edited by Paul D. Nathan in 1966. Series III is housed in vault 1 on the Sourisseau Academy shelf range 34, shelves 34C.3 to 34C.6.

Box 1, Folder 1

Vol. 2: 1936-1937

Box 1, Folder 2	Vol. 3: 1937-1938
Box 1, Folder 3	Vol. 4: 1938-1970
Box 1, Folder 4	Vol. 6: 1951, "Centennial"
Box 1, Folder 5	Vol. 7: 1963-1967
Box 1, Folder 6	Vol. 8: 1975-1976
Box 2, Folder 7	Vol. 9: 1959-1977
Box 2, Folder 8	Vol. 10: 1970-1973
Box 2, Folder 9	Vol. 11: 1973-1974
Box 2, Folder 10	Vol. 12: 1974-1977
Box 2, Folder 11	Vol. 13: 1976-1977
Box 3, Folder 12	Vol. 14: 1977-1979
Box 3, Folder 13	Vol. 15: 1972-1973
Box 3, Folder 14	Vol. 16: 1973-1974
Box 3, Folder 15	Vol. 17: 1975-1976, Signposts by P. Loomis
Box 3, Folder 16	Vol. 18: 1976-1977, Signposts by P. Loomis
Box 3, Folder 17	"East SJ-Holy City-Round-Up days": 1988-1990
Box 4, Folder 18	Vol. 19: 1977-1978
Box 4, Folder 19	Vol. 20: 1979-1980
Box 4, Folder 20	Vol. 21: 1979-1983
Box 4, Folder 21	Vol. 22: 1979-1985
Box 4, Folder 22	Vol. 23: 1983-1985
Box 5, Folder 23	Vol. 24: 1984-1987
Box 5, Folder 24	Ernie Renzel's Scrapbook, 1937-1990
Box 5, Folder 25	John Crummey's Rotary Club Scrapbook, 1935-1943
Box 5, Folder 26	News Clips of Old San José
Box 5, Folder 27	McKay Scrapbook of El Dorado St., José Theater, and Wade Family
Box 5, Folder 28	California Pioneer Book of Obituaries, 1850's to 1900's
Box 6, Folder 29	Calloway Clippings, 1934-1944
Box 6, Folder 30	California Pioneer Scrapbook, 1964
Box 6, Folder 31	Murphy Sabatino Bicycle Racing Scrapbook, 1930's to 1940's
Box 6, Folder 32	Kate Townsend Obituary Scrapbook
Box 7, Folder 33	SJFD Book 1: 1850-04-13 to 1870-12-05
Box 7, Folder 34	SJFD Book 2: 1870-12-06 to 1877-08-06
Box 7, Folder 35	SJFD Book 3: 1877-08-07 to 1883-08-30
Box 7, Folder 36	SJFD Book 4: 1883-09-01 to 1893-05-29
Box 7, Folder 37	SJFD Book 5: 1893-05-29 to 1900-09-04
Box 7, Folder 38	SJFD Book 6: Further Research and SJFD Timeline
Box 8, Folder 39	Spanish Records Book 1: 1793-1833
Box 8, Folder 40	Spanish Records Book 2: 1833-1852