Finding aid to the Thomas Houseworth and Co. stereograph collection PC RM Houseworth

The collection was processed by Erin Hurley in December 2018.

California Historical Society
December 2018.
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URL: http://californiahistoricalsociety.org/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: California Historical Society
Creator: Thomas Houseworth & Co., Publisher
Identifier/Call Number: PC RM Houseworth
Title: Thomas Houseworth and Co. stereograph collection
Date (inclusive): 1868-1869
Physical Description: .5 box 1 photo box, half of which is Houseworth and Co., and half of which is Lawrence and Houseworth.
Abstract: Thomas Houseworth and Co. is the company continued by Thomas Houseworth after his partner George Lawrence retired in 1869. Houseworth was an optometrist and stereograph merchant located in San Francisco, Calif. The images in this collection contain reprints of Lawrence and Houseworth images, as well as newly created images. Houseworth was a major player in the stereograph market until the early 1870s, and he took numerous measures to make sure his work remained viable, including introducing new formats and competing with rival stereograph publishers.
Language of Material: Collection materials are in English.
Biographical / Historical
Lawrence retired from Lawrence and Houseworth between 1867 and 1868, and Houseworth took over the business, renaming it Thomas Houseworth and Co., while still also offering optometry services. He introduced many new categories of views at this time, and was still offering views once sold by Lawrence and Houseworth. New images were also produced, likely between 1868 and 1869, and Houseworth hired a number of new employees. The stereoscopic market was lucrative and quite competitive, and Houseworth wanted to maintain his dominance of the market. He even moved his business to a more tourist-friendly location, at No. 9 Montgomery Street, underneath the Lick House (a lavish hotel). However, business began to decline after losing a bid to competitor Bradley and Rulofson to publish Eadweard Muybridge's new series of views. The stereoscopic market in general was also on the decline. In 1874, he moved his business again – opening a "photographic parlor" across the street from his old location. He offered a new series of nearly 3,000 cabinet cards, which he called "Houseworth's Celebrities" and which depicted famous theater actors and actresses, as well as athletes and politicians, and which were quite popular. Houseworth continued working at this location until 1886, and retired from photography in 1894.
Conditions Governing Access
Collection is open for research.
Conditions Governing Use
Materials in this collection are in the public domain in the United States. Permission to publish or reproduce is not required.
Immediate Source of Acquisition
Collection is comprised of multiple donations from various donors. Please see collection files for more information.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item, date]; Houseworth and Co. stereograph collection, PC-RM-Houseworth; [box number, folder number]; California Historical Society.
Scope and Content
The collection contains 105 albumen stereographs printed between 1868-1869 depicting street scenes, buildings, and industry in San Francisco. There are numerous images of the redwoods of Calaveras County, Calif., and of Donner Lake. There are photographs of nature, including the Yosemite Valley, the geysers of Sonoma County and the lighthouses of Mendocino. The collection also includes photographs of Lake Tahoe and of mining towns in Nevada. There's a series devoted to the Central Pacific Railroad and to the Western Pacific Railroad. There are also images of some of the indigenous people of California.
Arrangement
The collection comprises one series of stereographs arranged in numerical order using Houseworth's original numbering system, as it appeared in his fifth edition catalogue in 1869. The numbers and titles are printed on the cards themselves, and were verified using Peter Palmquist's Lawrence and Houseworth / Thomas Houseworth and Co.: A Unique View of the West 1860-1886 (National Stereoscopic Association, 1980).
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Stereographs
Optometry
Yosemite Valley (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
San Francisco (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Oakland (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Calaveras County (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Donner Lake (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Placer County (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Sonoma County (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Nevada County (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
Giant sequoia -- Pictorial works
Mines and mineral resources -- California -- Pictorial works
Plants -- California -- Pictorial works
Railroads -- West (U.S.) -- Pictorial works

No. 73: Cactus Giganta, 18 feet high, San Jose.
   General
   Printed on front of card: "San Jose, Cal." Printed on back: "Paris International Exposition 1867, The Highest Prize, A Bronze Medal, awarded to Thomas Houseworth and Co. 317 and 319 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, for the superiority of their Stereoscopic and Mammoth Photographic Views of Scenery on the Pacific Coast."

No. 107: Kearny Street - Looking North from Market.
   General
   Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 108: Corner of Kearny and Geary Streets.
   General

No. 109: Junction of Kearny, Geary and Market Streets.
   General
   Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 110: Post Street - West from Montgomery.
   General
   Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 114: East Side of Montgomery Street - From Sacramento to California.
   General
   Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 143: The Lick House - from the corner of Market and Montgomery streets.
   General
   Printed on front of card: "San Francisco." There are two copies of this card.
No. 145: J. W. Tucker and Co.'s Jewelry Establishment, northwest corner Montgomery and Sutter streets.
General

No. 149: Montgomery Street - Looking North from Market (Instantaneous).
General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco."

No. 165: San Francisco, from cor. Market and Sixth Streets.
General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 178: Cosmopolitan Hotel, corner Sansom and Bush streets.
General

No. 179: The Grand Hotel, Market street front, San Francisco.
General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco."

General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco."

General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 683: From Rocky Point - Looking South, Sierra, and Cave Rocks in the distance, Eastern shore of Lake Tahoe.
General
Printed on front of card: "Lake Tahoe."

No. 695: Carson City and Valley - From the West.
General
Printed on front of card: "Nevada. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 704: Virginia City and Mount Davidson - from the East.
General
Printed on front of card: "Nevada. By Thomas Houseworth and Co." There are two copies of this card, one of which has "Nevada." on front of card.
No. 741: Fort Homestead - Gold Hill.
General
Printed on front of card: "Nevada."

No. 783: Scene at Lake Angela, near Donner Peak, Nevada County.
General

No. 796: Hydraulic Mining - Washing down the bank into the Sluice.
General
Printed on front of card: "Hydraulic Mining."

No. 839: Snow-Shoe Traveling - The Bear Trap.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad."

No. 847: Reflections in Donner Lake.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 851: Pollard's Hotel, and Reflections in Donner Lake.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 856: Reflection in Donner Lake.
General

No. 874: Mammoth Grove Hotel, Calaveras County.
General
Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees."

No. 877: Section of the Big Tree, 30 feet in diameter, and House over the Stump, from the Sentinels.
General
Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees."

No. 879: But-end Section of the Big Tree, showing the auger-holes made in felling.
General
Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees."
No. 885: Big Tree Wm. Cullen Bryant, 305 ft. high, and 45 ft. in circumference; near view; Calaveras County.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees."

No. 886: Pioneer's Cabin; near view; diameter 32 feet, Mammoth Grove, Calaveras County.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 888: Mother of the Forest; 305 feet high; 63 feet circumference; bark off 121 feet."
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees."

No. 892: Stump of the Big Tree Eagle Wing. Mammoth Grove, Calaveras County.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees."

No. 893: Big Tree George Washington; 284 feet high, 52 feet circumference, Calaveras County.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Mammoth Trees, California." Printed on back: "Paris International Exposition 1867, The Highest Prize, A Bronze Medal, awarded to Thomas Houseworth and Co. 317 and 319 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, for the superiority of their Stereoscopic and Mammoth Photographic Views of Scenery on the Pacific Coast."

No. 910: Section of the Original Big Tree - near view. Mammoth Grove, Calaveras County.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Calaveras County."

No. 926: Dr. Jno. Torrey, Prof. Dana, and Salem Witch.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Calaveras Big Trees. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 1152: Looking up the Cañon from the Devil's Office, Sonoma County, Cal.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Great Geyser Springs."

No. 1160: Witches' Cauldron, Sonoma County, Cal.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Great Geyser Springs."

No. 1165: Steamboat Geysers, Sonoma County, Cal.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Great Geyser Springs."

No. 1168: Indian Sweat Bath, Sonoma County, Cal.
    General
    Printed on front of card: "Great Geyser Springs."
No. 1197: Point Arena Light-House - Mendocino Co., Cal.
General
Printed on front of card: "Pacific Coast. By Thomas Houseworth & Co."

General

No. 1228: American Cañon, from the Central Pacific Railroad, 4 miles above Alta.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad."

No. 1236: Section of the Long Ravine Bridge - 120 feet high.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad." Printed on back: "Paris International Exposition 1867, The Highest Prize, A Bronze Medal, awarded to Thomas Houseworth and Co. 317 and 319 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, for the superiority of their Stereoscopic and Mammoth Photographic Views of Scenery on the Pacific Coast."

No. 1245: Rounding Cape Horn.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad. By Thomas Houseworth & Co."

No. 1251: Winter View in Cisco - altitude 5,911 feet.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad. By Thomas Houseworth & Co."

No. 1255: Cisco in Winter - altitude 5,911 feet.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad. By Thomas Houseworth & Co."

No. 1263: The Snow Plow - near Cisco, Placer Co., Cal.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad."

No. 1278: French Lake - near Old Man Mountain, Nevada County.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad."

No. 1294: The Truckee River, near the State Line, Central Pacific Railroad.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad." Printed on back: "Paris International Exposition 1867, The Highest Prize, A Bronze Medal, awarded to Thomas Houseworth and Co. 317 and 319 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, for the superiority of their Stereoscopic and Mammoth Photographic Views of Scenery on the Pacific Coast."

No. 1318: Secret Town Bridge - 1,100 ft. long, 95 feet high, from the East.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad."

No. 1451: Looking Across Lake Merritt - From Jackson Street, North.
General
Printed on front of card: "Oakland, Cal. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."
No. 1471: Railroad Ferry-Boat El Capitan.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific Railroad. By Thomas Houseworth & Co."

No. 1480: Reflection in San Francisco Bay, from the Railroad Wharf, Oakland.
General
Printed on front of card: "Western Pacific Railroad."

No. 1525: Alameda Cañon, below the third Bridge.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific R.R."

No. 1600: The Ferry - crossing the Tuolumne River at Horr’s Ranch.
General
Printed on front of card: "Central Pacific R.R."

No. 1605: Yo-Semite Falls, 2,634 feet high.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yosemite Valley."

No. 1615: Yo-Semite Valley, from the Mariposa Trail.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1618: South Dome, 6,000 feet high, from Glacier Point.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1629: Tu-Tock-Ah-Nu-La, (El Capitan) 3,300 feet high, from the Merced River.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1630: Tu-Tock-Ah-Nu-La, (El Capitan) 3,300 feet high, from the Hardin Trail, Merced river.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 1634: Bridal Veil Fall, 940 feet high, the Three Graces, and the Merced river.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 1639: Nevada Fall, 700 feet high - after a Snow Storm.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1640: Nevada Fall, 700 feet high, and Cap of Liberty, 4,600 feet high.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yosemite Valley."
No. 1642: North Dome, 3,725 feet high - from the Merced River.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1645: Royal Arches and Washington Column.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1650: Cathedral Spires, 2,600 feet high.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1653: Three Brothers, 4,200 feet high - from the Merced River.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley. By Thomas Houseworth and Co."

No. 1657: The Vernal Fall - 350 feet high.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1659: Mirror Lake and Reflections.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yosemite Valley."

No. 1660: Mount Watkins - from Mirror Lake.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1664: General View of Little Yosemite Valley, from the Cap of Liberty.
General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite Valley."

No. 1745: Looking up the Grizzly Giant.
General
Printed on front of card: "Mariposa Big Trees." Printed on back: "Paris International Exposition 1867, The Highest Prize, A Bronze Medal, awarded to Thomas Houseworth and Co. 317 and 319 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, for the superiority of their Stereoscopic and Mammoth Photographic Views of Scenery on the Pacific Coast."

General
No. 2056: "Race for the Bride," - Oil painting by Chas. Nahl, 121 Montgomery st.

General

Unnumbered: Congregation Emanu-El Synagogue, Sutter Street, San Francisco
General
Original number, title, and series information has been covered with brown paper. Printed on front: "Thomas Houseworth and Co., San Francisco." Title has been supplied by archivist.

Unnumbered: St. Mary's Cathedral.

General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco." Title is handwritten on front of card.

Unnumbered: The Yo-Semite Fall, 2,634 feet high, near view, Yo-Semite Valley, Mariposa County.

General
Printed on front of card: "Yo-Semite, Cal." Printed on back: "Paris International Exposition 1867, The Highest Prize, A Bronze Medal, awarded to Thomas Houseworth and Co. 317 and 319 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, for the superiority of their Stereoscopic and Mammoth Photographic Views of Scenery on the Pacific Coast."

Unnumbered: Palace Hotel Workmen Removing Rails and Nicholson Pavement, on New Montgomery St.

General
Printed on front of card: "San Francisco."