San Luis Obispo County Historic Lithographs Collection

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Processed by:
Denise Fourie
Date Completed:
2008
Encoded by:
Byte Managers and Marisa L. Ramirez, 2008, 2009
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Descriptive Summary
Title: San Luis Obispo County Historic Lithographs Collection,
Date (inclusive): 1883
Collection number: MS 047
Creator: Unknown
Extent: 1 box
Language: English
Repository: Special Collections, Robert E. Kennedy Library
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, California 93407
Abstract: This collection contains 48 sheets of hand-tinted lithographs, each approximately 11 ¾ x 8 ½ inches, depicting 61 different ranches, residences, hotels, commercial and civic buildings throughout San Luis Obispo County in 1883. These lithographs illustrated the History of San Luis Obispo County, California, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers, produced in 1883 by publishers Thompson and West of Oakland, California.

Provenance
Purchased from dealer.

Restrictions on Access
Collection is open to qualified researchers by appointment only. For more information on access policies and to obtain a copy of the Researcher Registration form, please visit the Special Collections Access page. Collection stored remotely. Advance notice for use required.

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Preferred Citation
San Luis Obispo County Historic Lithographs Collection, Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Abbreviations Used:
c.: circa
Calif.: California

Historical Note
The lithographs in this collection were produced for publication in a county history in 1883. During the late nineteenth century and the first few decades of the twentieth century, county and local histories were quite popular as American communities expressed pride in their economic achievements and attempted to boost further development and growth. Many county histories and so-called county “mug books” were published on a “subscription basis” — those profiled paid to be included. As a result, the biographical sections and illustrations of the paying subscribers or “patrons” formed a substantial part of each history. In cases such as the Thompson and West histories of this period, artists’ renderings of the ranches and properties of the subscribers and of other prominent citizens added an additional dimension to the publication. Publishing partners Thomas H. Thompson and Albert A. West produced about 17 other similar historical works on western locales including: History of Nevada (1881); History of Los Angeles County, California (1880); History of Sacramento County, California (1880); History of San Joaquin County, California (1879); History Of Santa Barbara & Ventura Counties, California (1883).

In 1883, San Luis Obispo County's population was about 9,000. With a population of 2,243 (1880), the town of San Luis Obispo was the largest community between Monterey (population 1,396 in 1880), Santa Barbara (population 3,460 in 1880) and Bakersfield (population 2,626 in 1890) and served as the regional market center for an isolated, agricultural area. Stage lines transported passengers between San Luis Obispo and Los Angeles or San Francisco during the 1860s and 1870s. The first passenger train from San Francisco arrived in 1894, though the railway link from San Francisco to Los Angeles was not completed until 1901.

At the time this book was produced, San Luis Obispo County enjoyed a growing prosperity, with dairy production of major importance in the primarily agricultural region. By 1883, the mining of cinnabar in Cambria made it the second largest city in the county, and Port Harford at San Luis Bay was regarded as one of the most accessible harbors on the California coast.

The editor of the History of San Luis Obispo County was local booster and journalist Myron Angel; he also is credited as the editor of Thompson and West's History of Nevada and History of Placer County.

The lithographs in this collection are typical of those found in other Thompson and West histories: detailed and quaint, though also quite tidy and idealized renderings of their rural subjects. Also typical to most of their other histories, the artists of the lithographs are unnamed and uncredited. According to Walker A. Tompkins in his introduction to the reproduction edition of Thompson and West's History of Santa Barbara & Ventura Counties, typically, multiple artists working for the publisher went out into the field and made pencil sketches, which were then shaded “with grease crayon and the whole reproduced by lithography in a manner most pleasing to the eye.”

Sources


Scope and Content Note

This collection contains 48 sheets of hand-tinted lithographs, approximately 11 ¾ x 8 ½ inches, depicting 61 different ranches, residences, hotels, commercial and civic buildings throughout San Luis Obispo County in 1883. These illustrated the *History of San Luis Obispo County, California, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers* produced in 1883 by publishers Thompson and West of Oakland, California. The lithographer and artists are unknown; typically, multiple artists working for the publisher went out into the field to do the sketching. The geographical range of the lithographs includes ranches and buildings located in the coastal parts of the county (Morro, Los Osos, Pismo, Cayucos, Cambria, San Simeon) and the inland areas of San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Arroyo Grande, and Nipomo.

The collection has one series:
Series 1: Lithographs

The collection is housed in one box. The individual prints have been divided into two subseries, arranged alphabetically by owner name:
A. Ranches and Dairies and
B. Commercial and Civic Buildings

In order to simplify access to the collection for researchers, the lithographs were reorganized and refoldered to more accurately reflect their contents.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects
San Luis Obispo County (California) -- History
San Luis Obispo County (California) -- Pictorial works
San Luis Obispo County (California) -- History -- Pictorial works
San Luis Obispo County (California) -- California -- Drawings
Ranches--San Luis Obispo County (California) -- Pictorial works
San Luis Obispo (California) -- History
San Luis Obispo (California) -- Pictorial works

Genre and Forms of Material
Color hand-tinted lithographs

Related Material
Materials Cataloged Separately:
Angel, Myron, ed. *History of San Luis Obispo County, California, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*. Oakland, CA: Thompson & West, 1883.

1. Lithographs

Scope and Content Note
Contains two subseries: A. Ranches and Dairies and B. Commercial and Civic Buildings

A. Ranches and Dairies, 1883

Scope and Content Note
Contains lithographs of ranches, dairies, farmhouses, and ancillary buildings, arranged alphabetically by the owner's last name. In some cases there are images of 2 different properties on the same plate, which have been noted below; in these cases the surname of the first owner is used for alphabetization. 39 folders.

Box 1, Folder 1
Badasie, G., Dairy Ranch, Old Creek, San Luis Obispo County

Box 1, Folder 2
Branch, J. F., Ranch and Residence, Arroyo Grande

Box 1, Folder 3
Breed, S. F., Ranch and Residence, near San Luis Obispo

Box 1, Folder 4
Brians, Morgan, Ranch & Dairy, Green Valley, San Luis Obispo County

San Luis Obispo County Historic Lithographs Collection

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1. Lithographs

A. Ranches and Dairies, 1883

| Box 1, Folder 5 | Buffington, J. Q., Dairy Ranch and residence, near Cayucos |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Dana, John F., Ranch and Residence, Nipomo |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Dana, W. C., Los Berros, Ranch and Residence, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | Danglad, J. M., Residence, Arroyo Grande |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | Abbott, Austin, Ranch and Residence, near San Luis Obispo [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | De Nise, W. H., Ranch, Residence & Dairy, Santa Rosa Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | Estrada, Mariano, Dairy Ranch & Residence, near Cambria |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | Nelson, L., Dairy Ranch & Residence of, 4 miles south of Cambria [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Fink, Charles, Ranch & Residence, Arroyo Grande |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Blackburn, J. H., Stock Ranch & Residence, Paso Robles [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Fowler, J. D., Ranch & Residence, Willow Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Mayfield, B.F., Ranch & Residence, San Simeon Creek, San Luis Obispo Co., Cal. [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Freeman, E. R., Ranch, Residence and Dairy, Toro Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Freeman, G. A., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Torro [sp] Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Greening, John, Ranch, Residence & Carp Lake, near Morro [Bay] |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Hardie, A. M., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Cayucos |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | Henry, Daniel, Stock Ranch, near Arroyo Grande |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | Hess, Henry, Ranch and Residence, Arroyo Grande |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Hollister, J. H., Chorro Ranch: Ranch, Dairy and Residence, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | Howe, E. W., Stock Ranch and Residence, Morro Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 21 | Jespersen, C. H., Ranch & Residence, Los Osos Valley, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 21 | Tomasini, A., Dairy Ranch & Residence, Cayucos [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 22 | Kingery, Samuel, Ranch & Residence, Old Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 22 | Hazard, R. J., Dairy Ranch & Residence, Old Creek, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 23 | Langlois, Wm., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Morro Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 24 | Hill, J. C., Dairy Ranch, on the County Road From Cambria to San Luis Obispo, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 25 | Mabel Bros., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Old Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 26 | McFaddin, O. P., Ranch and Residence, Santa Rosa Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 27 | Muir, J. F., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Willow Creek, San Luis Obispo Co., Cal. |
| Box 1, Folder 28 | Murphy, T. J., Dairy Ranch and Residence, 6 miles from Cambria |
| Box 1, Folder 28 | McFerson, J. C., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Santa Rosa Creek, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 29 | Muscio, A., Dairy Ranch, Green Valley, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 30 | Muscio, G., San Geronimo Ranch: Dairy Ranch and Residence, Villa Creek, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 31 | O'Connor, P., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Los Osos Valley, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 32 | Petersen, F. J., Ranches, near Cayucos, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 33 | Phelan, Jeffry, Dairy Ranch & Residence, Near Cambria |
| Box 1, Folder 34 | Pierce, B. B., Ranch and Residence, Los Osos Valley, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 34 | Warden, L.M., Dairy Ranch and Residence, Los Osos Valley, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 35 | Proctor, G. W., Ranch and Residence, Near San Miguel |
| Box 1, Folder 35 | Price, John M., Pismo: Ranch, Residence and Hotel, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 36 | Quintana, Pedro, Ranch and Residence, San Luis Obispo County |
| Box 1, Folder 37 | Shipp, Mrs. Harriett, Ranch and Residence, [Cayucos Creek, San Luis Obispo County] |
| Box 1, Folder 37 | Powell, D. C., Dairy, Cayucos Creek, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate] |
| Box 1, Folder 38 | Van Gorden, Ira, San Simeon Ranch: Ranch and Residence, near Cambria |
| Box 1, Folder 39 | Warden, H. M., Ranch and Residence, Los Osos Valley, San Luis Obispo County |
**B. Commercial and Civic Buildings, 1883**

**Scope and Content Note**
Contains lithographs of hotels, stores, missions, and the county courthouse arranged alphabetically by the owner's last name or, if no personal owner, by the name of the building (e.g., Court House). In some cases there are images of two different properties on the same plate, which has been noted below; in that case the surname of the first owner is used for alphabetization. 9 folders.

- **Box 1, Folder 40**
  Bean Bros., Eight Mile House: Hotel, Hall and Ranch, 8 miles from San Luis Obispo

- **Box 1, Folder 41**
  Blackburn Bros. & James, Proprietors, El Paso De Robles Mineral Springs, San Luis Obispo County

- **Box 1, Folder 42**
  Cass, James & Co., Proprietor, Cayucos Landing, Cayucos

- **Box 1, Folder 43**
  Court House, San Luis Obispo

- **Box 1, Folder 44**
  Goldtree Brothers, Proprietors, Goldtree Block: General Merchandise, San Luis Obispo

- **Box 1, Folder 45**
  Mission, San Luis Obispo

- **Box 1, Folder 46**
  Mission, San Miguel

- **Box 1, Folder 47**
  Ryan, W. H., Hotel and Stable, Arroyo Grande

- **Box 1, Folder 48**
  Yori, L., Proprietor, Bay View Hotel, San Simeon

- **Box 1, Folder 48**
  Whitaker, J. M., Dairy Ranch & Residence, San Simeon Creek, San Luis Obispo County [On Same Plate]