James Augustin Brown Scherer Papers: Finding Aid

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
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James Augustin Brown Scherer Papers: Finding Aid
mssScherer papers
Overview of the Collection

Title: James Augustin Brown Scherer Papers
Dates (inclusive): 1916-1943
Bulk dates: 1917-1918
Collection Number: mssScherer papers
Extent: 452 items in 4 boxes
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: The bulk of the collection centers on the work with the Council of National Defense of James A.B. Scherer (1870-1944), president of the California Institute of Technology, during the First World War. Subjects in the collection include: African-Americans; Americanization; American Red Cross; liberty bonds; military training camps; Newton Baker; patriotism; rationing; sedition; preventive medicine, U.S. Department of Agriculture; World War I propaganda; war risk insurance; and William Randolph Hearst.

Language: English.

Access
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Preferred Citation

Provenance
In Library.

Biographical Note
James Augustin Brown Scherer (1870-1944) (aka James A.B. Scherer) was born in Salisbury, North Carolina, on May 22, 1870, to the Rev. Simeon and Harriet Isabella (née Brown) Scherer. After earning his bachelor's degree from Roanoke College, Scherer accepted a position teaching English at the Japanese Imperial Government school in Saga, Japan. While serving in this post, he met Bessie Brown, a native of Yamaguchi, Japan, whom he wed on July 5, 1894. He also began a lifelong interest in the Japanese people and culture. Scherer returned to the United States with his new wife the following year, and went on to complete both his master's and doctoral diplomas at Pennsylvania College in 1897.

Scherer's work as an educator and administrator began in earnest when he took his first teaching position as a professor of history at the Lutheran Seminary at Charleston, S.C. After seven years teaching, nearby Newberry College offered its vacant presidency to Scherer. He accepted, and spent the next four years garnering himself a reputation as an excellent administrator. In 1908, Scherer came west to head the Throop Polytechnic Institute. Throop's board of trustees knew of Scherer's aptitude for organization and fundraising and hired him although had little scientific background or training. Scherer reorganized Throop into a West Coast center of science and an academic powerhouse – renaming it the California Institute of Technology in the process – the following year. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Scherer volunteered to serve as the chief field agent for the state councils' section of the Council of National Defense. In the summer of 1918, Scherer abruptly quit his post when Secretary of War Newton Baker ordered him to cease his criticism of William Randolph Hearst's newspapers, which Scherer had felt harbored pro-German sentiments. Though he remained on as a special representative of the United States Shipping Board, Scherer resigned his primary post on the grounds that Baker's orders infringed on his rights to free speech.

In 1920, Scherer retired from Caltech and spent six years traveling the nation and writing. During this period, he produced a number of books on the history of California. On his return, he became director of the Southwest History Museum at Los...
Angeles. He continued in this position until 1931, when he made a final voyage to Japan. During these five years, Scherer wrote six books on the Japanese, which garnered him the Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure - an extraordinary honor - from Emperor Hirohito in 1937. True to his convictions regarding his freedom of speech, however, Scherer returned the medal to the Japanese government a year later when it suppressed his indictment of Japanese imperialism in Japan Defies the World (1938).

During World War II, Scherer again offered his services to the war effort. After the entrance of the United States into the war in December 1941, the Office of War Information (OWI) capitalized Scherer’s fluency in the Japanese language and his familiarity with the Japanese people, and had the former university president send out bi-weekly short-wave broadcasts across the Pacific Ocean. Once again, Scherer found his participation in the war effort cut short, due not to political disagreements, but to ailing health. Scherer never lived to see the rapprochement between the United States and Japan. He died at his home in Santa Monica of a heart defect in February 1944.

Scope and Content
The bulk of the collection centers on the work of James A.B. Scherer with the Council of National Defense during the First World War. There are two and half boxes of documents which had been previously collected in two large volumes. The original arrangement (by date) has been retained for both collections (labeled “Bulletins” and “General Letters,” respectively) in cataloged form. The “General Letters” collection is the most extensive; it comprises the entirety of Box 2 and the first half of Box 3. In some cases – due to the similarity of their subject material – two or more consecutive listings in the index have been cataloged together in one folder. There are two smaller collections labeled “Noteworthy Activities Undertaken by State Councils” and “I.C.A. Circulars.” These two smaller document collections have their own folders in Box 3. All four contain an index – those for the two still-bound collections list the bulletins in the reverse order of their appearance. The two large volumes have been cataloged in the order listed in their indexes.

The collection also has one box of semi-cataloged manuscripts, correspondence, and ephemera. In addition to directives on the formation of community-level patriotic organizations and meetings, Americanization programs, and fuel and food conservation for the war effort, the box also contains Scherer’s travel itinerary from his tour of State Councils of National Defense early in the war. The box also contains a bevy of newspaper clippings covering Scherer’s criticism of the Hearst newspaper syndicate and his resignation following an order from the Secretary of War to end his criticism. Most of the unbound council of National Defense documents are stamped “For Information Only; No Action Desired” – all dated after Scherer had stepped down. The collection’s ephemera includes a number of Council of National Defense pamphlets, advertisements, and news clippings.

Subjects in the collection include: African Americans; Americanization; American Red Cross; Newton Baker; the draft; Fourth of July; liberty bonds; military training camps; patriotism; rationing; sedition; preventive medicine, U.S. Department of Agriculture; World War I propaganda; war risk insurance; and William Randolph Hearst.

Indexing: Subjects
African Americans

Americanization
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “National List of Americanization Agencies:” [form letter] (1918, Mar. 6) signed by George Porter. The packet also contains a form letter (1918, Mar. 2) from George
Creel (the Committee on Public Information’s Chairman) and an Americanization registration card. 3 items. Box 2 (49).

**American Red Cross**
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “American Red Cross War Fund Campaign:” [form letter] (1918, May 22) signed “Chief of Section” [Arthur Fleming]. The packet also contains a form letter (Mar. 28, 1918) from the Red Cross’ Assistant General Manager and a list of division chairmen. 3 items. Box 2 (59).
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Securing information for Red Cross as to loyalty of personnel to go abroad:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 26) signed by W.S. Gifford and Arthur Fleming. Includes a letter from the American Red Cross and a list of personnel. 3 items. Box 2 (74).

**Baker, Newton Diehl, 1871-1937**
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Attitude towards new enterprises or undertakings during the war:” [form letter] (1917, Oct. 4) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. The folder also includes a letter (1917, Oct. 1) from Newton Baker, the Secretary of War, to Will Hays, Chairman of the Indiana State Council of Defense. 2 items. Box 2 (2).
- Subject in Newspaper Clippings re: Subversion in the Hearst newspapers (1918). 7 items. Box 4 (12).

**Draft**

**Fourth of July**
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “President’s Fourth of July Message:” [manuscript] (1918, June 9). Also include the volume’s back cover. 2 items. Box 1 (102).

**Hearst, William Randolph, 1863-1951**
- Subject in Newspaper Clippings re: Subversion in the Hearst newspapers (1918). 7 items. Box 4 (12).

**Liberty bonds**


• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Second Liberty Loan:” [form letter] (1917, Aug. 13) signed by Arthur Fleming. Attached to the letter are copies of letters from President Wilson and the Treasury Department, as well as a list of state directors of the National War Savings Committee. 1 item. Box 3 (5).


• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Protection of military camps from contagious diseases:” [form letter] (1918, May 29) signed by W.S. Gifford and Arthur Fleming. There are two letters from the Treasury Department attached the cover letter. 1 item. Box 2 (72).

• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Army and Navy – Pamphlet on Venereal Disease:” [form letter] (1918, June 21) signed by Arthur Fleming. Also includes the pamphlet on venereal disease. 2 items. Box 3 (13).


• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Coordinating Patriotic Work:” [form letter] (1917, Nov. 28) signed “Director” [W.S. Gifford]. The folder also contains a document titled “Program of Work of State
Councils for Men in Training Camps.” 2 items. Box 1 (81).


Rationing—United States

- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Food Conservation:” [form letter] (1917, Aug. 17) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. There is also a letter (1917, Aug. 16) from the Chairman of the Woman’s Committee and an appended questionnaire. 2 items. Box 1 (52).
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Food Conservation:” [form letter] (1917, Sept. 8) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes a form letter (1917, Sept. 9) from the chairman of the Woman’s Committee. 2 items. Box 1 (56).
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Home Gardens:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 8) signed “Chief of Section” [Arthur Fleming]. Also includes a form letter (1918, Apr. 5) from the CND’s woman’s committee chair, a document outlining the coordination of local gardens for the war effort, and a copy of pledge and record cards for donors. 4 items. Box 2 (62).
- Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Economy – Deliveries:” [form letter] (1918, June 13) signed “Chief of Section” [Arthur Fleming]. The folder also includes a report from the War Industries Board. 2 items. Box 2 (84).

Sedition--United States

United States. Dept. of Agriculture
• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Agricultural Program for 1918:” [form letter] (1918, Mar. 9) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes detailed plans for increasing domestic agricultural during the war. 2 items. Box 2 (50).

War risk insurance
• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Federal Insurance and Aid to Dependents of Soldiers:” [form letter] (1917, Nov. 12) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes a copy of Congress’ legislation for the insurance program, a pamphlet listing its terms and conditions, a pamphlet outlining family allotments, and an application for the program. 5 items. Box 2 (7).
• Subject in Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Condemning the use of claim agents in collecting claims from the War Risk:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 11) signed by W.S. Gifford. 1 item. Box 2 (65).

World War, 1914-1918--Propaganda
• Subject in Newspaper Clippings re: Reports from the European Front/anti-German propaganda (1917-1918). 7 items. Box 4 (10).
• Subject in Newspaper Clippings re: War production/ preparedness (1917). 5 items. Box 4 (13).
• Subject in Ephemera: Pro-American/anti-German propaganda (1918). 4 items. Box 4 (17).
• Subject in Ephemera: World War I pamphlets (1917-1918). 2 items. Box 4 (19).
Arrangement
Arranged in the following order:

- Boxes 1-3: Council of National Defense. State Councils Section
- Box 4: Manuscripts, Newspaper clippings, and Ephemera

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Subjects
American Red Cross.
United States. Dept. of Agriculture.
African Americans.
Americanization.
Draft.
Fourth of July.
Liberty bonds.
Medicine, Preventive.
Military training camps.
Patriotism -- United States.
Rationing -- United States.
Sedition -- United States.
World War, 1914-1918 -- Propaganda.
United States -- History -- 20th century -- Sources.
United States -- Politics and government -- 20th century -- Sources.

Forms/Genres
Government records -- United States -- 20th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 20th century.
Manuscripts -- United States -- 20th century.
Newspaper clippings -- United States -- 20th century.
Pamphlets -- United States -- 20th century.

Additional Contributors

Council of National Defense. State Councils Section

<table>
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<td>Also includes cover of the volume. 2 items.</td>
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Folder 7  

Folder 8  

Folder 9  

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Folder 30  
Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “President’s proclamation on Regular Army recruiting:” [form letter] (1917, June 22) signed by W.S. Gifford. 1 item.

Folder 31  

Folder 32  

Folder 33  


Folder 51  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Com. on Training Camp Activities:” [form letter] (1917, Aug. 15) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes a list of war recreation workers. 1 item.

Folder 52  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Food Conservation:” [form letter] (1917, Aug. 17) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. There is also a letter (1917, Aug. 16) from the Chairman of the Woman’s Committee and an appended questionnaire. 2 items.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Food Conservation:” [form letter] (1917, Sept. 8) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes a form letter (1917, Sept. 9) from the chairman of the Woman’s Committee. 2 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Cooperative and Central Deliveries:” [form letter] (1917, Sept. 22) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes two governor’s proclamations and a copy of resolutions adopted by a woman’s committee in Rhode Island. 4 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Retail Deliveries:” [form letter] (1917, Oct. 29) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes a manuscript entitled “Resume of Campaign for Economies in Deliveries” and a form letter to all federal food administrators. 3 items.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Folder 71  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Cooperation with Com. on Nursing [form letter] (1917, Nov. 13) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes a letter (1917, Nov. 8) from the chairman of the Department of Maintenance of Existing Social Service Agencies, a pamphlet on nursing, and a manuscript titled “Excerpts from Report of Committee on Nursing.” 4 items.


Folder 87

Folder 88
Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Community Councils – Assistance of Superintendent of Schools:” [form letter] (1918, Mar. 6) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. Also includes an undated form letter signed by P.P Claxton (Commissioner of the Education Department) and Henry E. Jackson (Special Organization in Community Organization). 2 items.

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Folder 97

Folder 98

Folder 99

Folder 100

Folder 102

Folder 103
Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “President’s Fourth of July Message:” [manuscript] (1918, June 9). Also include the volume’s back cover. 2 items.

Box 2
Folder 1

Folder 2
Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Attitude towards new enterprises or undertakings during the war:” [form letter] (1917, Oct. 4) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. The folder also includes a letter (1917, Oct. 1) from Newton Baker, the Secretary of War, to Will Hays, Chairman of the Indiana State Council of Defense. 2 items.


Folder 7  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Federal Insurance and Aid to Dependents of Soldiers:” [form letter] (1917, Nov. 12) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes a copy of Congress’ legislation for the insurance program, a pamphlet listing its terms and conditions, a pamphlet outlining family allotments, and an application for the program. 5 items.


Folder 9  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Special Series of News Articles:” [form letter] (1917, Nov. 21) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes a short form of the first article in the series. 2 items.

Folder 10  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “News Articles #2 and #3:” [two form letters] (1917, Nov. 26 and 1917, Nov. 30) signed by George Porter. The folder also contains the two articles. 4 items.


Folder 15  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “News Article # 7:” [form letter] (1917, Dec. 12) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes a copy of the article. 2 items.


Folder 18  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “News Article # 8:” [form letter] (1917, Dec. 14) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes a copy of the article. 2 items.


Folder 22  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “News Article # 10:” [form letter] (1917, Dec. 22) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes a copy of the article. 2 items.


Folder 25  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Resolution requesting discontinuance of sending food to camps:” [form letter] (1918, Jan. 11) signed by W.S. Gifford and George Porter. The folder also includes the resolution itself. 2 items.


Folder 32  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Shipyard Volunteer and Publicity:” [four form letters] (1918, Jan. 23) signed by George Porter, a copy of a dispatch sent by the Chairman of the Shipping Board, a certificate of enrollment, and an application for enrollment. 7 items.


Folder 37  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Retail Deliveries:” [form letter] (1918, Feb. 7) signed by George Porter. The folder also includes the proceedings of a conference on retail deliveries held in mid-January, remarks by the Secretary of Commerce, remarks by the U.S. Food Administrator, and excerpts from the remarks from the Chairman of the Commercial Economy Board. 5 items.


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<tr>
<td>Folder 44</td>
<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Enlistment of Home Health Vols. for Children’s Year:” [form letter] (1918, Feb. 27) signed by George Porter. The packet also includes the plan as proposed by the Council’s Woman’s Committee and two enlistment forms. 4 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 49</td>
<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “National List of Americanization Agencies:” [form letter] (1918, Mar. 6) signed by George Porter. The packet also contains a form letter (1918, Mar. 2) from George Creel (the Committee on Public Information’s Chairman) and an Americanization registration card. 3 items.</td>
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| Folder 59 | Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “American Red Cross War Fund Campaign:” [form letter] (1918, May 22) signed “Chief of Section” [Arthur Fleming]. The packet also contains a form letter (1918, Mar. 28) from the Red Cross’ Assistant General Manager and a list of division chairmen. 3 items.
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<tr>
<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Economy:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 3) signed by W.S. Gifford. The folder also includes a list of resolutions. 2 items.</td>
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<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Home Gardens:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 8) signed “Chief of Section” [Arthur Fleming]. Also includes a form letter (1918, Apr. 5) from the CND’s woman’s committee chair, a document outlining the coordination of local gardens for the war effort, and a copy of pledge and record cards for donors. 4 items.</td>
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<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Joint Action between Home Service Section and local legal committees:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 9) signed by W.S. Gifford, Arthur Fleming, George E. Scott (General Manager, American Red Cross) and W. Frank Persons (Director General, American Red Cross). 1 item.</td>
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<td>Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Securing information for Red Cross as to loyalty of personnel to go abroad:” [form letter] (1918, Apr. 26) signed by W.S. Gifford and Arthur Fleming. Includes a letter from the American Red Cross and a list of personnel. 3 items.</td>
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Folder 84  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Economy - Deliveries:” [form letter] (1918, June 13) signed “Chief of Section” [Arthur Fleming]. The folder also includes a report from the War Industries Board. 2 items.


Folder 3  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Full text of the President's communication ‘To Our Citizens of Foreign Extraction:’” [form letter] (1918, June 4) signed by Arthur Fleming. Also includes a copy of President Wilson’s message. 2 items.


Folder 5  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “National War Savings Day:” [form letter] (1918, June 5) signed by Arthur Fleming. Attached to the letter are copies of letters from President Wilson and the Treasury Department, as well as a list of state directors of the National War Savings Committee. 1 item.


Folder 7  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “C.P.I. Publications:” [form letter] (1918, June 10) signed by Arthur Fleming. Also includes a pamphlet listing literature produced by the Committee on Public Information. 2 items.


Folder 14  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Policy Regarding Xmas Buying:” form letter (1918, June 24) signed by W.S. Gifford and Arthur Fleming. There is an additional form letter (1918, June 24) signed by Hannah J. Patterson (Director, Woman’s Committee CND) appended to the first letter. 1 item.


Folder 21  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. “Highways Transport Conference:” [form letter] (1918, July 6) signed by Arthur Fleming. Also includes an enclosed report of the conference’s proceedings. Also includes the volume’s back cover. 3 items.

Folder 22  Council of National Defense. State Councils Section. Noteworthy Activities Undertaken by State Councils. 1 item


Manuscripts, Newspaper clippings, and Ephemera

Box 4  Manuscripts, Newspaper clippings, and Ephemera

Folder 1  Connecticut State Council of Defense - Publicity Committee. “Outline for Speakers at War Rallies:” [manuscript] [ca.1917]. 1 item.


Folder 6  Scherer Correspondence. 5 letters (1916-1919). 5 items.

Folder 7  Newspaper Clippings: Foreign Press (1918). 2 items.

Folder 8  Newspaper Clipping re: Appointment of James H. Moyle to the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (1917). 1 item.


Folder 10  Newspaper Clippings re: Reports from the European Front/anti-German propaganda (1917-1918). 7 items.
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 12</td>
<td>Newspaper Clippings re: Subversion in the Hearst newspapers (1918). 7 items.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 13</td>
<td>Newspaper Clippings re: War production/preparedness (1917). 5 items.</td>
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<td>Folder 14</td>
<td>Ephemera: Copies of wartime legislation (1917-1918). 5 items.</td>
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<td>Folder 16</td>
<td>Ephemera: Map of the steel and wood depots of the United States (1917). 1 item.</td>
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<td>Folder 17</td>
<td>Ephemera: Pro-American/anti-German propaganda (1918). 4 items.</td>
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<td>Folder 18</td>
<td>Ephemera: Time to completion log [undated]. 1 item.</td>
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<td>Folder 20</td>
<td><em>California Folklore Quarterly</em> (1942, Jan.). 1 item.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 21</td>
<td><em>California Folklore Quarterly</em> (1942, Apr.). 1 item.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 22</td>
<td><em>California Folklore Quarterly</em> (1942, July). 1 item.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 23</td>
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