Underhill (John P.) Collection, 1924-1967

Collection number: Ms39

San Joaquin County Historical Society

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2012
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Descriptive Summary

Title: Underhill (John P.) Collection
Date: 1924-1967
Collection Number: Ms39
Location: Erickson Vault
Extent: .5 linear feet
Contributing Institution: San Joaquin County Historical Society and Museum
11793 North Micke Grove Road
Lodi, CA 95240

Language of Material: Records written in English

Abstract: The Underhill Collection consists of scattered correspondence and minutes of the Stockton Potato Day Records Committee (1924, 1925); minutes of the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau Tomato Section meetings (1946-1947); copies of the Tomato Growers Association Bulletin (1946-1958); a brief history of the establishment of the Cooperative Marketing Council in San Joaquin County (1946-1947); an agenda and related items pertaining to the Cooperative Marketing Council's Cooperative Directors Conference (1956); and the "Tomato Issue" of Tideways magazine (1967).

Access Information
Collection is open for research by appointment.

Conditions of Use
The library can only claim physical ownership of the collection. Users are responsible for satisfying any claimants of literary property.

Preferred citation: [Item name], John P. Underwood Collection, Ms39, San Joaquin County Historical Society and Museum, Lodi, California.

Related Material

Title: Tillie Lewis Foods Collection,
Date (inclusive): 1935-1979 (Ms52)

Title: University of California Agricultural Cooperative Extension, San Joaquin County, Collection,
Date (inclusive): 1914-1994 (Ms82)

Historical Sketch
The San Joaquin River Delta peat lands were a major producer of potatoes from 1900 until about 1925. Two of the most prominent of the Delta potato growers were Chin Lung and George Shima. The latter, the first Japanese American millionaire and head of the Japanese Association of America, was known as the "Potato King." San Joaquin County potatoes were successful in eastern markets because they could be harvested almost any time of year. After 1925, the Delta potato hegemony collapsed under pressure from competition in southern California, Oregon, and Idaho. Due to the popularity of potatoes, local boosters conceived the idea of a "Potato Day" (1924). This event was celebrated at the Kroyer Plant on Cherokee Lane with a carnival, displays, formal ceremonies, and a dance. Starting in the 1930s, tomatoes became a far
more important San Joaquin County crop. With irrigation, tomatoes could be grown in many county locations and their
cultivation was stimulated by successful food processors such as the Flotill Corporation of Stockton, which specialized in
pomodoro tomato canning, and the Heinz Company of Tracy, premier ketchup manufacturers. John P. Underhill was
assistant farm advisor (1946-1955) and director (1956-1975) of the University of California Agricultural Extension Service in
San Joaquin County. He collected these materials in the course of his work with the potato and tomato growers of San
Joaquin County.

Scope and Content
The Underhill Collection consists of scattered correspondence and minutes of the Stockton Potato Day Records Committee
(1924-1945); minutes of the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau Tomato Section meetings (1946-1947); copies of the Tomato
Growers Association *Bulletin* (1952-1958) and the State Tomato Section *Bulletin* (1947-1951); copies of the San Joaquin
County Farm Bureau Tomato Section *Bulletin* (1946-1947); a brief history of the establishment of the Cooperative
Marketing Council in San Joaquin County (ca. 1947); an agenda and related items pertaining to the Cooperative Marketing
Council's Cooperative Directors Conference (1956); and the "Tomato Issue" of *Tideways* magazine (1967).

Personal Names
Adriance, J. Willis
Lewis, Tillie, 1904-1977
Lung, Chin
Shima, George, 1864-1926
Underhill, John P., 1908-2009

Subjects
Agriculture--California--San Joaquin County--History
Farm Bureau (San Joaquin County, Calif.)
Potato industry--California
San Joaquin County (Calif.)--History
Tomato industry--California

Folder 1  California Farm Bureau Federation, Correspondence. Mar.-June 1947
Folder 2  California Farm Bureau Federation, State Tomato Section, *Bulletin*. Feb.-Sept. 1947
Folder 9  California Farm Bureau Tomato Section Meeting Minutes. 1946-1947
Folder 10 Cooperative Marketing Council in San Joaquin County, Directors Conference. 1956
Folder 11 Cooperative Marketing Council in San Joaquin County, History. ca. 1947
Folder 12 Potato Records Committee, Correspondence. 1924-1945
Folder 13 Potato Records Committee, Meeting Minutes. 1924-1945
Folder 14 San Joaquin County Farm Bureau, Tomato Section, *Bulletin*. June 1946-Dec. 1947
Folder 15 *Tideways* (tomato issue). 1967