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## Guide to the James A. Bradley Journal MC299

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**Language of Material:** English

**Contributing Institution:** University of California, Davis Library, Dept. of Special Collections

**Title:** James A. Bradley Journal

**Creator:** Bradley, James A.

**Identifier/Call Number:** MC299

**Physical Description:** 1 volume132 pages. Oblong 12mo. Lacking covers, stitched as issued. Minor chipping at edges of outer leaves. Light tanning. In a consistent, legible script.

**Date (inclusive):** 1884-1885

**Abstract:** A detailed journal that documents the agricultural life of James A. Bradley as he tended to his new fruit farm in Vacaville, California, during 1884 and the beginning of 1885.

Researchers should contact Archives and Special Collections to request collections, as many are stored offsite.

### **Biography**

James A. Bradley was a farmer in Vacaville, California in the late 19th century.

### **Scope and Contents**

A detailed journal that documents the agricultural life of James A. Bradley as he tended to his new fruit farm in Vacaville, California, during 1884 and the beginning of 1885. Bradley purchased two smallish plots of twenty and twenty-six acres in a November 1882 auction that broke up the estate of Lewis Pierce for \$125 per acre. The daily entries in this log span from January 1, 1884, to October 24, at which point he travels to Bay Area for several weeks. The entries resume in December and run until March 7, 1885. The journal also includes an account of his expenses from 1883 and 1884.

During much of the late winter and spring of 1884, Bradley and his workers are busy ploughing the fields, and acquiring and planting orchard trees and grape cuttings. His entries often detail the varieties and quantities of plants purchased. In February, Bradley paid a man named E.C. Merwin \$94 dollars for building a house on his property, and hired several hands for farm work such a digging holes for apricot trees and ploughing the roads on the property. In March, he purchases fifty Royal Ann cherry trees, plants petite prunes and Foster peaches, and sets about care for 1,500 rooted mascal grape vines. In April, he plants more pear, prune, and cherry trees.

Bradley's diary also reflects wider aspects of life in California at this this time. By the end of April, Bradley hired two hands he refers to as "Mr. Alex" and "Chinaman" to hoe the orchards. On May 2, he pays "Mr. Alex" \$21.50 for 10.75 days of work; "Chinaman," meanwhile, was paid \$11.50 for 10.25 days labor. Two other Chinese hands, who are referred to as "Sing 1" and "Sing 2," are paid \$12.60 for twelve days work chopping mustard and hoeing grapes. After returning from his sojourn in the Bay Area, Bradley moves into Vacaville, and purchases a horse by which he can travel to the farm during the day, although town life did not seem to suit him. On February 22, 1885, he noted a "Chinese celebration with fire crackers in the p.m. -- making a great noise and seriously disturbing the quiet of the Sabbath." The next month he is bothered by a loud party at the town hotel.

[Description provided by McBride Rare Books]

### **Access**

Collection is open for research.

### **Processing Information**

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### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Purchased from McBride Rare Books, 2020.

### **Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], James A. Bradley Journal, MC299, Archives and Special Collections, UC Davis Library, University of California, Davis.

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### **Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Agriculture -- California -- Solano County

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Solano County (Calif.) -- History

Farmers -- California -- Solano County

Bradley, James A. -- Archives

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