Photograph album of H. J. Whitley lands near Corcoran, California, 1920-1931?

Processed by Jane Carpenter with assistance from Simon Elliott; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.
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Descriptive Summary

Title: Photograph album of H. J. Whitley lands near Corcoran, California

Date (inclusive): 1920-1931?

Collection number: 94/17

Creator: Whitley, Hobart Johnstone.

Physical Description: 1 album (46 photographic prints) : b&w, 11 x 17 cm (album)
Photographs (9.3 x 15 cm) are mounted on recto and verso of 24 leaves of black paper, without captions.
Bound in limp dark red patterned leather covers, with blind-stamped ornamental border; covers tied with black silk cord;
retailer's black and white label on inside back cover: "Earl. V. Lewis Co. Developing, Printing, Enlarging, Framing, 226 W.
4th St., 421 W. 7th St., Los Angeles, Calif."
Spec. Coll. copy: in modern beige and white woven cloth clamshell box with velcro closure; spine title "Whitley. Paso
Robles."

Abstract: Snapshots of agricultural scenes, probably taken during the 1920s, on lands belonging to H. J. (Hobart
Johnstone) Whitley, possibly near Corcoran, California, in the San Joaquin Valley, east of Paso Robles.

Language: Finding aid is written in English.

Language of the Material: Materials are in English.

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA
Library Special Collections for paging information.

Restrictions on Access
Open for research. STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA
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Preferred Citation
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Biography/History
California real estate developer and banker. Hobart Johnstone Whitley came to Southern California in the mid-1880s after
following the westward expansion of the frontier railroads across the country, and successfully founding scores of towns
throughout the Oklahoma Territory, Dakotas, and Texas. As a major investor in the Los Angeles Pacific Boulevard and
Development Co., Whitley, along with associates Harrison Gray Otis and George W. Hoover, was responsible for much of
the development of land at the south end of the Cahuenga Pass known as the Hollywood Ocean View Tract, as well as a
commercial district on Highland Ave. He organized a land syndicate in 1909 to develop the southern end of the San
Fernando Valley, creating the towns of Van Nuys, Reseda, and Canoga Park on 47,500 acres of farmland formerly owned by
wheat magnate Isaac Newton Van Nuys. Whitley also purchased large tracts of land further north in the San Joaquin Valley,
where he built the city of Corcoran, although he died in 1931 before his last development, Whitley Gardens east of Paso
Robles, was completed.

Scope and Content
The amateur photographer took photos--some shot from the car window--of herds of cattle, grazing on rolling hillsides as
well as standing in pens near farm buildings; a sign for the H.J. Whitley Land Co. is visible in one photo. Several photos may
show Whitley himself, standing amid fields of wheat, his car parked nearby. Other photos document the harvesting of the
grain using large mule-drawn reapers, and the bags of newly-threshed wheat stacked in rows at the end of the field. Also
included are photos of other aspects of the ranch, such as artesian wells--drilled by the Coburn and Brewster company as
noted on a sign in one photo--irrigation ponds, water tanks, and well-drilling towers; chickens in a large yard, bordered by a
row of coops; country roads, farm buildings, and houses. There are also three photos of orchards planted on hillsides.
Possible range of dates suggested by automobiles models and signs visible in photographs.

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

Subjects
Whitley, Hobart Johnstone.
Real estate developers --California --San Joaquin Valley.
Ranches --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
Cattle --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
Agriculture --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
Wheat --Harvesting --Machinery --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
Harvesting machinery --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
Artesian wells --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
Irrigation --California --San Joaquin Valley --Photographs.
San Joaquin Valley (Calif.) --Photographs.
Paso Robles (Calif.) --Photographs.

Genres and Forms of Material
Photographic prints --California --San Joaquin Valley --1920-1931.
Photograph albums --California --San Joaquin Valley --1920-1931.

Other Index Terms Related to this Collection
Whitley, Hobart Johnstone, 1847-1931.
Earl V. Lewis Co. (Los Angeles, Calif.)

Related Material
Additional information available from the Hobart Johnstone Whitley Papers, ca. 1889-1946 (Collection 744) in UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.
Part of the Photograph Album Collection (Collection 94) in UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.