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J. GOODMAN

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The south veranda at the Rancho Camulos, from a set of photographs taken in 1887 by Ventura photographer J.C. Brewster. Scores of other photographers would later capture the same view. Courtesy of the author.

"What I sought is that which I have found" The Origins of the Ramona Myth, 1885-1890

by Phil Brigandi

Ramona has been described, discussed, debated, and disparaged for more than a century. Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 protest novel touched southern California in ways she never could have imagined. Written to try to bring attention to the plight of southern California's native people, Jackson "sugar-coated" her reform message with a love story.

But too many readers were not ready to accept a sympathetic portrayal of the Indians, and instead seized upon her descriptions of life on the old ranches and the beautiful California countryside. Published on the verge of the "Boom of the '80s," Jackson's novel was quickly swept up into the drive to promote the region as a

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EDITOR'S CORNER

The story of Ramona written by Helen Hunt Jackson appears very soon after the publication of Jackson's landmark book, *A Century of Dishonor,* 1881. This book was among the first major works of nonfiction to describe the terrible treatment of the American Indian. Remember, this book appeared only five years after the Battle of the Little Big Horn where Indians were portrayed as bloodthirsty savages who had the gall to kill over two hundred members of the seventh Calvary including the boy general of the Civil War.

At that time most non-Indians in the United States shared the point-of-view that Indians were savages. Jackson tried to show how Indians in this country were really treated, losing their land over and over again until pushed onto the most worthless land possible and relegated to a life of dependency on the U.S. government. Phil Brigandi's well-written article documents the myth and the reality of the Indian condition, a mixture of truth and fiction, written by Jackson to show that American Indians were real people with real human emotions, not bloodthirsty savages. We think the story of Ramona and *A Century of Dishonor*, both attempt to tell the same story in different ways.

In many ways we feel that the fate of the buffalo parallels that of the American Indian. By 1900, the buffalo was almost extinct due to over hunting and by 1900 the population of the American Indian had dropped to slightly over 200,000, most killed by disease. We honored both by putting their images on coins, the buffalo nickel and the Indian head penny. That way, we would always know what they looked like even if they completely disappeared, by simply reaching in our pockets or purses. Today things have changed dramatically, both the buffalo and the American Indian have come back dramatically and the coins have become collectors items.

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destination for tourists and settlers. There was a rush to connect the characters, settings, and incidents of the story with real people, places, and events. The novel became almost a guidebook for Eastern tourists visiting the area, and a powerful tool for local boosters.

The resulting belief in the reality of *Ramona*—and the subsequent marketing of it —has come to be known as the "Ramona Myth." The term has been a stumbling block for some. To many people, "myth" is simply a synonym for "untrue." But in the case of *Ramona,* it is perhaps best to understand it as a myth in the sense of a story to which people assign meaning. And that meaning can be different for different people at different times.

The most influential discussion of the Ramona Myth remains the chapter in Carey McWilliams' 1946 study, *Southern California Country, An Island on the Land.* McWilliams argues that the Ramona Myth filled some sort of psychological need for Californians. "The newness of the land itself seems, in fact, to have compelled, to have demanded, the evocation of a mythology which could give people a sense of continuity in a region long characterized by rapid social dislocations," he wrote.

Yet other regions with plenty of visible reminders of their history still have their own myths. *Ramona is* hardly the only novel where fact and fiction have become blurred. Guidebooks are still sold leading people the places associated with Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind.* Hannibal, Missouri still shows off the fence Tom Sawyer tricked the boys into whitewashing. Mail still arrives addressed to Sherlock Holmes at 221 B Baker Street. As recently as the 1990s, *The Bridges of Madison County* touched off a tourism boom in Iowa. Still, most later commentators have mirrored McWilliams' views.

But missing from most of these discussions of the Ramona Myth is the element of time. Writers often cite material published decades after the novel first appeared, which tell us more about the power of the Myth than about its origins. Yet as this article will show, almost every aspect of the Ramona Myth was already in place as early as 1890. For later generations of southern California residents and tourists, the supposed reality of Ramona was presented as an accepted fact, with hardly a voice raised against it until after World War II. Later commentators sometimes ask how the public could have accepted this rose-colored view of the past, but after reviewing the vast array of material published to support the Ramona Myth, one could just as easily ask how they could not have embraced it.

So to try and understand the origins of the Ramona Myth, we must turn to the years when it was being created.

In its earliest form, the Ramona Myth began as a debate over the facts that lay behind Jackson's story. Critics who did not share Jackson's commitment to Indian rights were quick to dismiss her novel as pure fiction. Yet others knew better. An editorial in the Los Angeles *Times* (January 13, 1885) argued that:

"The simple story of 'Ramona,' as told by Helen Jackson, is a story of facts, bound together by a few threads of romance - facts gathered from actual life, and from the daily occurrences that are transpiring about us here in Southern California...."

This editorial was written while Jackson was still alive, and insisting that the "Indian history" in her novel was all based on fact. It was only after her death that the first claims appear that her entire novel, including the settings and the characters, was in some ill-defined way "true."

As the boom of the '80s began to pick up steam, tourists flocked to southern California. Many of them were already familiar with *Ramona.* The Pasadena *Star* (April 3, 1889) noted that "A Bostonian sojourner in this happy valley, who has not read Ramona and wept over the sad story of wrong and oppression, with anathematizing the oppressor, is as unique as the famed white black bird."

By 1886, tourists and tour guides alike were searching for the "real" places they had read about in Jackson's novel. The earliest, and one of the most influential articles to help launch the Ramona Myth, was pub-

One of the earliest photographs ever made of Ramona Lubo, taken on the Cahuilla Reservation, circa 1890. It was originally sold as a cabinet card by H.J. May, a San Jacinto photographer. Later, the image was reprinted many times as a postcard. Courtesy of the author.

lished that spring, and makes it clear that the tourists had already been there ahead of the travel writers.

Edwards Roberts was a travel writer. In April, 1886, while touring southern California, he paid a call at the Rancho Camulos, on the eastern edge of Ventura County. Camulos was the 1,300-acre remnant of the Rancho San Francisco, granted in Mexican times to the Del Valle family. The 1850s adobe there was well-known for its hospitality and the Del Valle's efforts to preserve the colorful traditions of Old California.

"What I sought is that which I have found," Roberts announced to his readers a few weeks later, "—the Camulos ranch, the home of Ramona, whom 'H.H.' created, and described as living with the Señora Moreno in this house from which I write to-night. Yes, here lived the heroine of the novel which many call the American novel, long watched for and now come at last.... It is all as Mrs. Jackson, in her novel of 'Ramona,' describes it. One recognizes at once the various places where this and that scene was enacted, and the characters of the story become living realities." (San Francisco *Chronicle,* May 9, 1886.)

Establishing the model for scores of articles to follow, Roberts went on to match up quotes describing the Moreno Ranch of the novel with what he had found at Camulos - though like almost all later writers, Roberts chose to ignore the details in Jackson's novel that do not fit with the real rancho. He also mentions the tourists, who had already begun to visit the rancho, and speculates about the origins of some of the characters there. One looks in vain for any hesitation on Roberts' part about linking the real and the fictional ranches and their occupants.

Left at that, Roberts' article might have had little impact. But Roberts was a brother (though not a partner) of the Roberts Brothers, the publishers *Ramona.* So beginning in 1887, Roberts' Camulos article was added as an appendix to the novel. It was still in the trade edition as late as the 1920s. Thus almost all the earliest readers *of Ramona* were assured — on the authority of Jackson's own publisher — that the settings and characters of the novel were all "living realities."

For the next few years, Camulos bore the brunt of Ramona tourism. It was easily accessible from Los Angeles (particularly

C.F. Lummis' 1888 booklet, *The Home of Ramona* featured a cover design by noted California artist Alex Harmer. Courtesy the Ramona Pageant Association.

after the Southern Pacific railroad laid its tracks past the gates of the rancho in 1887), and Edwards Roberts had helped make the "Home of Ramona" famous. Individuals, small parties, and organized tour groups descended on the rancho by the thousands.

Author Charles Dudley Warner, a friend of Jackson's, visited Camulos in 1887, and wrote:

> *...I am certain that she could have had no idea what the novel would be to the people of Southern California, or how it would identify her name with all that region, and make so many scenes in it places of pilgrimage and romantic interest for her sake. I do not mean to say that the people in California knew personally Ramona and Alessandro, or altogether believe in them.... I hope she knows now... that all the travelers and tourists (at least, in the time they can spare from real estate speculations) go about under her guidance, are pilgrims to the shrines she has described, and eager searchers for the scenes she has made famous in her novel; that more than one city and more than one town claims the honor of connection with the story, that the tourist has pointed out to him in more than one village the very house where Ramona lived, where she was married - indeed, that a little crop of legends has already grown up about the story itself. I was myself shown the house in Los Angeles where the story was written, and so strong is the local impression that I confess to looking at the rose-embowered cottage with a good deal of interest, though I had seen the romance growing day by day in the Berkeley in New York.* (Los Angeles *Times*, May 24, 1887.)

The role of the real estate boom in fostering the Ramona Myth continued as two Ramona town sites battled for supremacy. In November, 1886, the little San Diego County town of Nuevo changed its name to Ramona. A few weeks later, J. De Barth Shorb announced the opening of his own Ramona town site, near Alhambra.

The San Diego County Ramona had already secured a post office, but Shorb used his political connections to get the name switched to his proposed tract. He maintained that the name was his by rights, since Jackson had first heard it while a guest at his home, where she met his little daughter of that name, and announced that she would use it as the name of her story.

(This even though Jackson did not conceive of her famous novel until after she had left California, and had originally entitled it *In the Name of the Law.)*

But Shorb's Ramona died on the vine, and in 1895 the post office was closed. The San Diego County folks were quick to get the

name back, and have retained it ever since.

Avoiding such complications, in 1887 another group of promoters in what is now Riverside County dubbed their new town site Alessandro. But Alessandro proved no more successful than Shorb's Ramona. The town site failed and during World War I the area was taken over for March Field - today's March Air Force Reserve Base.

Both established communities and boomtowns tried to lay claim to different parts of the Ramona story. Los Angeles, San Diego, San Gabriel, Pasadena, Temecula, and a host of other communities all joined in. A correspondent for the San Diego *Union* (October 30, 1887), rounded out a typical bit of boom time promotion of the little town of San Jacinto with the suggestion:

"Outside of the main object in coming here, which is investment, there is in every human soul a hankering for the beautiful and sentimental which softens our work-a-day arms. It will strike a chord in many sympathies to see the very spot where "Helen Hunt" drew inspiration for her pretty fiction. Here "Ramona" found shelter in the mountain fastness, and wept in agony over murdered "Allessandro." [sic] Down the valley, in the village of Soboba, she was nursed in pity by the Serranos, who are still struggling against the hand of fate."

The boosters and travel writers who wrote up descriptions like these for the popular press were mostly newcomers and tourists. California writers seemed slower to pick up the tale.

The first book (or rather, booklet) to capitalize on the Ramona Myth was Charles Fletcher Lummis' *The Home of Ramona* (1888). Later seen as the quintessential Southwesterner, at the time Lummis was a newspaperman who had been in the state less than three years. His booklet is made up primarily of photographs he had taken at the Rancho Camulos, matched with descriptions from the novel. It went through at least two editions and several printings.

The only real rival to Camulos as the "Home of Ramona" was the Rancho Guajome, near Vista in San Diego County. Two years after *Ramona* was published, the San Diego *Union* (November 21, 1886) quoted a Midwestern visitor, "A correspondent of the Omaha Excelsior thinks he has located the scene of Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson's 'Ramona' at the Wahoma [sic] ranch in San Diego County." But Guajome received little publicity before the 1890s, and could never match the prominence of Camulos.

San Diego also laid claim to Ramona's marriage place. As early as 1886, the Estudillo Adobe in Old Town San Diego was already being pointed out as site of Ramona and Alessandro's marriage — ignoring the fact that in the novel, the couple are married in the chapel nearby, and only later sign the marriage register in the priest's room in the "long, low adobe building" on the plaza.

The last of the Estudillo family moved out in 1887, leaving the place in the hands of a caretaker who was more than willing to show the tourists around, and perhaps even pull off, say, an old roof tile as a souvenir if they made it worth his while. Within a decade, the house was in ruins. It was eventually rebuilt by the local streetcar company, and opened as a commercial tourist attraction in 1910.

The continuing stream of Ramona tourists also opened the door for more traditional souvenirs, including Indian artifacts, photographs, and assorted knickknacks. The picture postcard boom that would see so many Ramona-related images published was still more than a decade away, but at least three California photographers published sets of Ramona views in the years before 1890.

While the most popular Ramona landmarks were near big cities, a few hearty souls began pushing further and further into southern California's interior, where they started another of the Ramona Myth's most enduring features - the search for the "real" Ramona.

The death of Alessandro is based (by Jackson's own admission) on the 1883 killing of a Cahuilla Indian named Juan Diego in the foothills of Mt. San Jacinto. For the mythmakers, Juan Diego had to be the "real"

Alessandro, which made his widow the "real" Ramona. The fact that she was also named Ramona only made them more sure (though Jackson also admitted that she didn't know that when she selected the name for her title character).

By 1887, the tourists were already visiting Ramona Lubo (her maiden name) at her little home near the cemetery on the Cahuilla Indian Reservation, in Riverside County. Most expressed disappointment that she did not resemble Jackson's fictional heroine. Nor did her limited knowledge of English allow for much conversation. But until her death in 1922, Ramona Lubo would be a tourist attraction just as much as Camulos or the Estudillo Adobe. It is one of the more unsavory aspects of the Ramona Myth.

Another aspect of the Ramona Myth that was already taking shape in the 1880s was dramatizations of Jackson's novel. Five stage versions of the story were copyrighted before 1890; at least one of them was published, and presumably some of them were produced on the stage. In later years, five film versions, America's longest-running outdoor drama, and—most recently—a *telenovela* mini-series have all been based on the story.

By 1890, tourists in southern California met Ramona at every turn. A correspondent of the Louisville, Kentucky *Courier-Journal* (June 29, 1890), writing from Santa Barbara, quoted a California acquaintance: "I visited the Home of Romona *[sic]*, two years ago. It is a lovely spot. They will not let visitors in now. The crowd of tourists is so large that the people who live at Cumulus [sic] are forced to deny them admission; they could do nothing but answer questions, and take strangers through the house, the chapel, the garden, the olive groves, the mustard thickets. Isn't it too bad, that those who love the story can not roam about and gaze at the spot so lovely and so sad? You have the photograph of Romona's [sic] home. They have a great sale among visitors to California."

The author continues: "You can buy Cumulus *[sic]* olives in any California town; the storeman will say, as he dishes up the pickles from the barrel of brine: 'Yes, these grew at Romona's *[sic]* home. They are the old Spanish olives; the Cumulus *[sic]* olives have always been famous; they grew on Cumulus' *[sic]* ranche *[sic]* that Mrs. Jackson wrote about. As soon as that book was read, it seemed like all of California started out to search for the home of Romona *[sic]*, and there it was, down there on the plains behind Los Angeles."

She then relates the story of a California man who had been a guest in Jackson's home in Colorado Springs. When he praised the descriptive writing in *Ramona*, she replied: "Descriptions! What are they? Can nobody see the wrongs? Does no one believe me? Does no one weep? Is the scenery of southern California all that is real to the multitude? Do they not feel the wrongs, the dishonor, the tragedy? ... I have put my life into this book-and-people-praise-its-descriptions."

Jackson had hoped to disguise her reform message in a love story, but she did her work too well. Most readers simply saw *Ramona* as a romantic tale of Old California. And when they came to visit in the sunny Southland, they found the romantic aspects of the story presented for their pleasure, and the actual Indian history of the story largely ignored. Even today, one still sees critiques of *Ramona* that dismiss it as "a romantic book about the California missions."

Born in the boom years, the Ramona Myth was created largely by commercial interests. It grew not so much out of the novel itself, as out of the tourist industry that capitalized on *Ramona's* popularity. It seems to have been created primarily by visitors, or newcomers to Southern California. For example, descriptions of Camulos as the "Home of Ramona" are rare in the Ventura *Free Press* during the late 1880s, and most of the feature stories that do appear are copied from distant papers. Perhaps too many Southern Californians still harbored resentment towards Jackson and her crusade ("I hear it has caused much anger in San Diego Co.," Jackson gloated "...I am glad of it!") Unlike many of her Eastern readers, they

The Estudillo Adobe, sketched for a feature in the San Diego *Union*, August 28, 1887. "To sleepy Old Town it is known as 'Estudillo's,' but the outside world knows it as the marriage place of 'Ramona,' the heroine of Helen Hunt Jackson's famous historical romance." Courtesy of the author.

understood only too well the real purpose of Jackson's novel. It represented a point of view that few of them shared.

The boom time tourists who settled here were thus already imbued with the spirit of the Ramona Myth. And the later arrivals found it firmly in place, and reinforced repeatedly in the press, adding that curious power of the printed word to the power of myth. Over the coming years, hundreds of books and articles appeared proclaiming the reality of *Ramona*. But few offered anything new beyond what had been written in the 1880s.

Even today, after being refuted scores of times, the Ramona Myth is still influencing our view of Jackson, her novel, and the history of southern California. To ignore the impact of the Ramona Myth simply because it is a myth, is to ignore one of the factors that—for better or for worse—helped to shape the southern California we know today.

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By 1890, the lone buffalo represented a fading western frontier.
Photo courtesy of the author.

Where the Buffalo Roam

by Donald Duke

Buffalo is a common name of several kinds of large oxen. Some have long hair and some short hair. It was called a water buffalo in India on account of its desire to soak in the water. In North America we have oxen with long hair simply called *Buffalo*. To a zoologist it is known by the proper name *Bison*. A buffalo or bison has a large head, horns, and humped shoulders.

The American Bison has brownish colored hair that covers the head, and the hump. The hair forms a beard around the throat and chin. A full-grown buffalo measures from 10 to 12 feet in length, from nose to tail it can weigh from 1,600 to 3,000 pounds per animal.

In the early days of the American West great herds of buffalo roamed the plains from the Appalachian Mountains to the base of the Rocky Mountains. As a kid I remember seeing buffalo on Catalina Island and assumed they had grown up there. At the William S. Hart ranch in Newhall I saw lots of buffalo while photographing trains in the area. Years ago I asked Iron Eyes Cody where did all the buffalo come from? It was my understanding they did not exist beyond the Rocky Mountains. Iron Eyes told me they were brought to Catalina for a silent film in the late twenties called *The Vanishing American*. After the film they were left there. He said William S. Hart took some of the buffalo and placed them on his ranch in Newhall. Over the years they have multiplied and the ranch now has some 100 in the herd.

American Indians hunted the buffalo for centuries, and used the animal for meat, hides for clothing, and to cover their tepees. In 1850, it was thought there were 20,000,000 buffalo wandering on the plains. Buffalo are a social animal and live in herds, sort of like a family, and stick together. They graze on grass throughout the year. A bison male is considered full grown at three years of age and services all the ladies that will accept him. It is possible for a buffalo to live at least 30 years and some even 40 years of age. Because of their quick tempers, they are hard to train. They have to be captured at birth and then they can be tamed. Animal breeders have tried to cross the buffalo with range cattle that produces a larger cow with more hearty meat. It has not proved successful.

In building the Union Pacific from Omaha to the west, in the late 1860's, huge herds of buffalo roamed over the tracks and sometimes would wreck or derail construc-

tion trains. If someone on the tram took several shots at the buffaloes, he was likely to start a stampede. Even the sound of a locomotive whistle might cause a stampede.

When the Union Pacific Railroad reached Cheyenne, Wyoming, the railroad split buffalo country in half. Following the building of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad across Kansas in 1871, the buffalo skin hunters sold a buffalo hide for $1.25 each. Tongues, which were a delicacy fetched twenty-five cents, and hind quarters sold for two cents per pound. Dodge City became the buffalo market place south of the Union Pacific tracks.

The Indians, in canyon country, would arouse the buffalo and run them over cliffs to their death. A buffalo would just follow the animal ahead of him. The Indians would be below the cliff and begin to dress out the buffaloes for meat and hides. The meat would be strung out on long pole lines to dry and then placed in storage for the long winter months. The rawhide would then be chewed to soften ft up.

During the 1860's and 1870's, a number of European hunters traveled to the West to try their marksmanship on the shaggy animals. Among them was Sir William Drummond Stewart, who came from Scotland to shoot buffalo. On some days when his crew had finished shooting, the prairie would be strewn for miles with dead animals.

The most publicized hunt of this type was that of the Grand Duke Alexis, a son of Czar Alexander II of Russia. He had chartered a private Union Pacific train that left Omaha to shoot buffalo. En route he met William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, who coached Alexis on downing buffalo. At the time of the Grand Duke's hunt, the decade of the slaughter of buffaloes for their hides was about to begin. In the span of two decades the herd was reduced in half. Also, once the Indians got horses and became masters of riding, the herds were reduced even further.

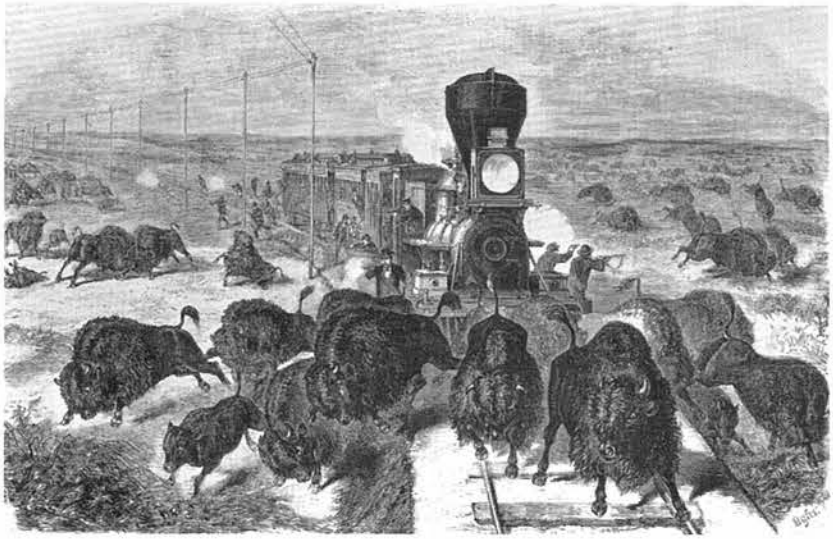
At this time the American Fur Company was sending cargoes of hides to Europe for robes and coats. The Europeans thought the buffalo hides were terrific and wanted more. In the meantime the butchering was increasing. Pioneer farmers in Kansas and Nebraska killed thousands of buffalo for their meat The *Wichita Eagle* for January 9, 1873 reported, "Choice humps and rounds of buffalo meat are selling for as much as three cents a pound on our streets."

A hunter had to be accurate to down a buffalo. Hunters tried to shoot just behind the shoulder blade and this would penetrate the heart. A wounded bull could be dangerous, but with new rifles a hunter could pump plenty of lead into an animal

One Union Pacific Special of private hunters carried fifteen skinners on board. It was claimed the hunters had killed 1,500 buffalo in a week, and as many as 250 in a single day. Covered wagon trains moving west were often attacked and wrecked by stampeding buffalo. At one place in Nebraska, a wagon train bound for Oregon, ran onto 6,500 carcasses from which the hides had been removed leaving the meat to rot in the sun. Packs of wolves were attacking the meat. A stampeding herd of buffalo was an irresistible force. When thoroughly frightened the herd might run for miles, unheeding, and in a compact mass. The thunders of buffalo hoofs shook the ground like an earthquake.

Every once in a while a white buffalo would appear on the scene. The Indians believed the white buffalo was some sort of god. They would catch it and hold an elaborate ritual. They even rubbed it as a cure of all ailments. How does a buffalo come out white? It comes when a mate mates with his mother. About one in ten thousand comes out as an albino baby with pink eyes. After the birth the mother will not have anything to do with a white calf, and most white buffalo die without being seen. The last white buffalo to be born was in South Dakota about 10 years ago and pictures appearing all over the news media.

Ever wonder how William F. Cody got the name "Buffalo Bill?" The Kansas Pacific railroad was building west from Kansas City.



A special Union Pacific train carrying the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia shooting buffalo. WilliamF. Cody coached the Russian aristocrat on downing buffalo. Courtesy of the author.

Having heard of his experience and success as a buffalo hunter he was hired by the Goddard Brothers Company who ran the commissary for the rail laying crews of the Kansas Pacific. They needed buffalo meat to serve the construction crews at the evening meal. They required meat from twelve buffalo a day twenty-four hams and twelve humps. Only the hindquarters were used. Cody signed a contract with the Goddard Brothers to supply the meat.

Cody often took a meal with the grading crews and the men began to call him "Buffalo Bill." The reputation stuck. For eighteen months Cody killed more than 4,280 buffalo. During this period of time he had many exciting escapes from Indians who tried to kill Cody for killing their buffalo. Cody went on to further adventures with his Wild West shows, but the name "Buffalo Bill" stuck.

Buffalo dried dung — called buffalo chips - served as fuel for many a wagon train on the tree-less plains. It was an excellent fuel when dried. The finely group-up grass glued together with digestive juices made a flat plate when dropped. Dry buffalo chips were used for cooking and made a fine fire to keep warm on cold nights.

Early in 1896, William Hornaday, the chief taxidermist for the United States National Museum, took inventory of the museum's collection of buffalo skins. To his surprise, he found the museum was without a single presentable specimen. In researching where the remaining buffalo were, and how to obtain new skins, Hornaday found there were less than 20,000 buffalo in North America. He then petitioned Congress to outlaw the killing of buffalo until the herd could be rebuilt. It then became a federal crime to kill a buffalo.

The National Park Service tried to gather up all the buffalo they could locate and to place them at Yellowstone National Park which became a buffalo preserve. It became Hornaday's life work to preserve the buffalo until he died in 1937. From a herd of 800, they had grown to over 15,000 animals. Several buffalo had wandered off the Yellowstone preserve over the years and were found on various ranches in the area. In the meantime, other preserves were formed in Oklahoma, Montana and South Dakota. According to the National Buffalo Association in Fort Pierre, South Dakota, there are approximately 80,000 buffalo roaming the plains today.

Today, Montana wildlife officials are planning to allow the hunting of buffalo that

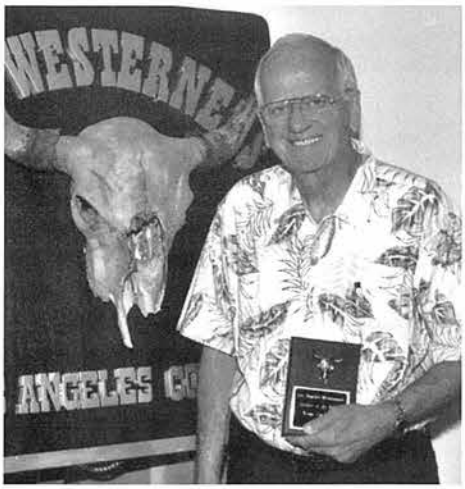
Photo #3 A stack of buffalo hides which the American Fur Company of Topeka, Kansas, sent east by train. Pioneer farmers in Kansas killed thousands of buffalo for their meat and sold the hides. Courtesy of the author.

wander out of Yellowstone National Park and onto Montana state land. The move is almost certain to rekindle the controversy over whether the animals should be hunted at all. However, in Oklahoma, they have thinned out the herd and sold the meat for resale to market chains at various times. Apparently buffalo meat has a sweet taste and is less fatty than beef cattle. I have seen buffalo meat at Von's market on occasion, but it is sold at a high price.

At Middle Ranch, Santa Catalina Island, on November 12, 2003, some 200 buffalo were gathered up and shipped to South Dakota. Sadly, the buffalo herd had become too big for the island. The story behind the relocation of the buffalo began early in 2003 when Debbie Avellana, who lives on Catalina Island read in the local newspaper that the herd was to be reduced by the Santa Catalina Island Conservancy. She also learned that the buffalo would be slaughtered. Avellana, in turn found homes for the animals in South Dakota.

Today the federal buffalo preserves are so well supplied with buffalo that the vast herds that had vanished nearly to extinction still roam in song and memories.

If you should like to try buffalo meat that is sweeter, and not as fatty as beef cattle, you can get it on the internet. Family Pride Meats of Ipswich, South Dakota, raise buffalo for their meat and resale. You can find them on the internet at: *www.familypride meats.com.*



Photograph by Froy Tiscareño.

July Meeting Speaker Tom Andrews

July Meeting

Tom Andrews provided an interesting overview of the rich historical material located in the special collections at Azusa Pacific College. This is a topic close to Tom's heart since he has devoted a great deal of his time to improving the collection at the college. Tom noted that "history happens," which can mean that it is rich in the unexpected and a challenge for the next generation to rediscover the past. Indeed, history does not repeat itself or leaves no stone unturned for the next generation. Rather as Tom noted, "History is the living past of the undead."

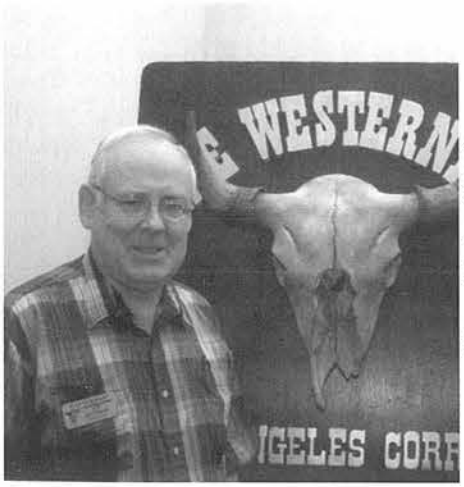
Tom noted that in 1844, Henry Dalton purchased the Azusa rancho and became a British ranchero in Mexican California. In the 1870s, Henry Dalton and William Wolfskill organized a water company, surveyed a city, and undertook an ill-fated venture to organize a mound city township. In the 1880s, banker Johnathan S. Slauson purchased Dalton's properties and organized the Azusa Land and Water Company during the land boom of the Eighties. Lots were sold in a rapid frenzy during 1887-1888, placing Azusa squarely on the map of southern California. Tom noted that Azusa was now a reality along the same lines as Don Enrique Dalton envisioned years earlier.

As a young professor at Azusa Pacific College, Tom was asked to become involved in developing a special collections program. A significant collection that Tom developed was the Azusa Pacific Citrus Collection, which includes over fifty documents related to the transfer of the rancho to Jonathan S. Slauson, including the conveyence of the property from the Dalton family. It also includes the properties sold during this important era and the 1887 plaque of Azusa, coupled with early copies of the Azusa News. The collection also includes several documents related to the utilities and agricultural companies involved with the genesis of the Azusa township. Most importantly, it highlights a great deal of the local activity related to the land boom of the late nineteenth century.

In 1974, Tom undertook the prodigious effort to organize the Jonathan S. Slauson and Sayre MacNeil collections. Diaries, letters of various important figures in the history of early Azusa. It also sheds lights on the economic and social life of our local region during the late nineteenth century. Other collections highlight Protestant missionaries in the far West. Tom also secured for the library Monsignor Francis J. Weber's important collection of Catholic historiography, writings, and rare books on Catholic

history in southern California. In 1976, Tom organized special collections on the evolution of Azusa Pacific University as a theological institution. Glen Dawson also assisted Tom in the development of the Irving Stone collection, which includes correspondence, rough drafts and letters of this prolific writer. The collection is a valuable insight to writers and students working on publications of all types.

By 1977, the last year of Tom's tenure at the college, Azusa Pacific University had acquired several books of interest to scholars of the Gold Rush era, trailblazers and early pioneers, including additional writings, notes and collections donated by familiar scholars and corral members such as Gloria Lothrop. Indeed, Tom's presentation offered an important insight into Azusa Pacific University as a valuable research center for students of local history.



Photograph by Froy Tiscareño.

August Meeting Speaker Abe Hofman

August Meeting

Abe Hoffman provided corral members with a lively discussion of the controversial interpretations by historians of the colorful figure of John C. Fremont. Fremont was California's "Pathfinder," a man who wore many "hats," such as a military leader, diplomat, politician, and explorer. The essence of Fremont's varied career explains, in part, the rather diverse and contrary interpretations of his life. Fremont explored the West, commanded troops in California, engineered a treaty to end hostilities during the Mexican-American conflict, championed abolition, married into a prestigious political family, ran as the first Republican candidate for president, and served the Union cause during the Civil War.

Abe traced the historiography of Fremont from the earliest political monographs of praise to critical appraisals by the likes of Joshia Royce, followed by a discussion of recent interpretations by Andrew Rolle and Midge Sherwood. Of course, the debate involving Fremont concern whether he was an opportunist or liberator in his campaigns during the Mexican-American war, a patriot or self-promoter in his run for the president, and whether or not patriotic motives were behind his Civil War exploits or a potential challenge to Abraham Lincoln in the 1864 campaign. Naturally, his identification through marriage with his father-in-law, Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a controversial anti-slavery figure in his own right, also fueled the earliest criticisms and praise of the Pathfinder.

In the end, Fremont is a fascinating presence in California history, and a man that still has detractors and admirers, which probably attests to his enduring importance in state history. Abe brought to life the many provocative amd flawed interpretations, which made for a "path finding" evening with the Los Angeles Corral.

Corral Chips

In October, John Robinson's long list of contributions in writing and research were honored by the Southern California Historical Society. John was elevated to the status of "Fellow" and presented with a Fellows medallion by Tom Andrews. Several Westerners attended the Fellows Gala, including Doyce Nunis, Glen Dawson, Powell Greenland, Willis Osborne, Pat Adler-Ingram, Froy Tiscareno, and Ken and Carol Pauley.

Loren Wendt revisited his roots, traveling to Kansas in October. He visited with group members of the "Kansas Cowboys" at Ellsworth, Kansas and then traveled to visit family in his old home town of Woodbine,Kansas. During the trip, Loren stopped in Scottsdale, Arizona to receive his award for poetry from the Westerners International. Loren summarized the trip as "simply great!"

In November, a group of Westerners attended the annual George Dunning Lecture at the Skirball Museum. This presti-

gious event is sponsored by the Historical Society of Southern California and included Professor Keven Starr as the featured speaker. The Westerners contingent who attended this annual event included Hugh Tolford, Nick Curry, Mike Gallucci, Bob Blew, Abe Hoffman, Monsignor Francis Weber and Tom Andrews.

In recent months, Gloria Lothrop has made prolific contributions to southern California scholarship. Gloria's paper "Italian Argonauts and the California Gold Rush," was recently presented at the Western History Association annual meeting at Scottsdale. She made an important presentation on the work of the Daughters of Charity at the Religion and Humanities Conference at the University of La Verne. Gloria also presented a paper at the 38th annual meeting of the American Italian Historical Association in Westwood along with chairing a session and leading delegates on a tour of historic Italian Los Angeles extending from El Pueblo to Venice. In October, Lothrop served as manuscript referee for the University of Oklahoma Press, Palgrave Publications and the Pacific historical Review. Her book review of *Witness to Integrity* appeared in the Summer 2005 issue of the *Southern California Quarterly*. Finally, she was interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times* and KCET's "Life and Times" regarding parallels between the 2005 New Orleans disaster and the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

In January at the MTA Board Room in downtown Los Angeles, Westerner Josef Lesser gave an inspired power point presentation tracing the history of Los Angeles passenger stations. With the use of original graphics and pictures from the Donald Duke Collection and the Archives of the State of California, Josef illustrated the progress of the mainline railroads' passsenger service, including the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Company, Southern Pacific, Santa Fe and Union Pacific leading up to the construction and occupancy of the Los Angeles Union Passenger Depot in 1939.

In February, Sheriff Ken Pauley presented the last segment in a four-part series of Weights and Measurements in California's Mission Period at the 23rd Annual Conference of California Mission Studies Association held at the San Diego mission. Ken gave a detailed power point presentation on the historical background of weights. He provided convenient tables and charts for quick conversion of colonial weight units into modern day units. Corral members can find all four presentations at website: www.ca-missions.org (Articles & Reports option).

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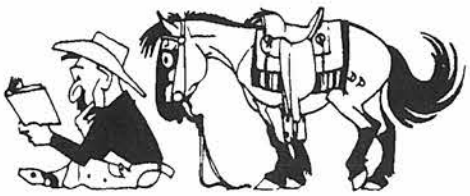

DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL ...

SAN FERNANDO REY DE ESPANA: *An Illustrated History*, by Kenneth E. Pauley and Carol M. Pauley: Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2005. ISBN 0-87062-338-9. 360 pp. Notes, Illustrations, Glossary, Index. Order from The Arthur H. Clark Co., P. O. Box 14707, Spokane, WA 99214.

In commenting on the Pauleys' book, fellow Los Angeles Corral member, Msgr. Francis Weber, described it as the " . . . most comprehensive treatise ever published on any one of the twenty-one missionary outposts along California's El Camino Real." Indeed, each mission would be handsomely served by a comparable volume. This comprehensive survey of Mission San Fernando reflects twenty-seven years of research by Ken and Carol Pauley in more than a score of libraries, archives, museums and private collections. The result is a richly illustrated and expertly published document which features paintings, architectural plans, graphs, surveys, maps, pen and ink drawings and vintage photographs. Many of them are from the Mission's archives and many are by noted practitioners of their craft. They include, among others, Edward Deakin, Edward Vischer, Henry Chapman Ford, Charles Pierce, Adam Clark Vroman and fellow Westerner, Andrew Dagosta.

This volume, however, is more than a richly documented history of the seventeenth of the Franciscan missions in Alta California. In addition to providing a comprehensive visual history, the authors have included passages from a variety of primary sources, a chronology of events in the San Fernando Valley, several appendices, a glossary, an index which includes subject headings, a comprehensive bibliography and a guide to abbreviations which also provides crisp biographical essays on the artists and photographers.

The Foreword by Doyce B. Nunis of the Los Angeles Corral is accompanied by a photomontage featuring long-time Mission San Fernando supporters, Marie Harrington and Norman Neuerburg, to whom the book is dedicated. Part One contains information about the indigenous people. It also provides records documenting Spanish exploration of the area, as well as a profile of Rancho Encino and an account of the eventual founding of the mission.

Part two, devoted to life and work at the mission, includes a discussion of agriculture which is enhanced by several graphs reflecting production from 1797 to 1832. The authors draw on friars' accounts to add considerable detail. But the treatment of mission life in this section is a bit problematic. Although the authors concede that "the friars were not absolute tyrants and monsters" noting that 1,081 remained at Mission San Fernando in the company of only two friars and six soldiers, the sources used to interpret mission life and support the authors' conclusions reflect a contemporary frame of reference and are steadfastly secular in their point of view. (p. 55) Apologists for the mission system like Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., are cited only with reference to specific details. Consequently, the evaluation of mission life does not consider the context of the times in which the missions operated and, most importantly, does not acknowledge the importance of religious belief in motivating the Franciscans, nor recognize it as one of the motivations for the neophytes to join the mission community.

Finally, in their informed discussion of mortality among the mission Indians the authors might have added the fact that both the increased size of a vulnerable infant population and the neophytes' practice of bringing unbaptized members of their extended families to the mission to receive the last rites, further contributed to the mortality statistics.

Part Three, devoted to the land, the buildings and the adornments, provides an exhaustive scrutiny of the physical structure with special attention to the water system. The section is generously documented with illustrations and photos, some of them tracing the outpost's nadir when it was almost completely ravaged by neglect and the erosions of time.

In Part Four, "The Transformation, 1834 to the Present," the authors provide an impressively comprehensive description of the process leading to the secularization of the California mission lands. The process, as the authors explain, began in New Spain in 1749 and reappeared in sporadic implementations over the next eighty-five years.

While the Pauleys focus on the Indians' relationship to the former mission lands, this outstanding recapitulation of events would have benefited from some discussion of the intense bias in favor of secularization expressed by Alta California's non-Indian residents who ultimately received grants to over 700 ranchos carved out of mission territory. The subject is addressed, however, in a succeeding chapter examining "Land Grants and Nefarious Schemes" in which the writers display their masterful grasp of the history of the mission holdings as they detail the subsequent disposition, legal and illegal, of each portion of the vast Mission San Fernando lands.

The final two sections document the mission's ruin which is finally transformed into triumph. The first step in the restoration of the abandoned site was championed by Charles Fletcher Lummis and the California Landmarks Club, followed by the exiled archbishop of Oaxaca who proposed transforming the convent into a school for teenage boys. The restoration efforts were further energized in 1938 with the arrival of Father Charles Burns and as a result of the efforts of Dr. Mark Harrington, curator of the Southwest Museum. The survey of the continuing progress concludes with the construction of the Archival Center and mission reconstruction after the Sylmar earthquake.

A subsequent volume will, no doubt, survey the events surrounding the reconstruction following the 1994 Northridge earthquake, the historic visit of Pope John Paul II meeting with the assembled American bishops and the final installation of the Ezcaray altar pieces in the mission's sanctuary, all of which are noted in the book's chronology.

—Gloria Ricci Lothrop

HAZARDOUS METROPOLIS, FLOODING AND URBAN ECOLOGY IN LOS ANGELES, Jared Orsi, University of California Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London, 2004, ISBN 0-520-23850-8, $34.96 Amazon, cloth, 276 pages, photos, maps, notes, bibliography, index.

Jared Orsi is an assistant professor of History at Colorado State University and the 2005 Huntington Library Fellow sponsored by the Los Angeles Corral.

Water problems have plagued Los Angeles. Always too little or too much. Jared Orsi traces the history of what has been done to control flow of runoff water across the Los Angeles Basin. Until the 1890's water from the Los Angeles River entirely supported the city's needs. Rains soaking into the plains and surrounding mountains and supplied the river. As the city grew more water was needed; at the same time more paved land became impervious to water. That water became runoff. Runoff became threatening. In wet years not just water but enormous quantities of mud and detritus inundated foothill communities. The floods of 1914, 1934 and 1938 were major events, causing loss of life and property in unacceptable quantities. Politically something had to be done. This book traces the various proposed schemes, some good, some terribly misguided.

Probably the root of the political problem came in 1924 when it was proposed to dam the San Gabriel River near where the east and west forks come together in the mountains. The public bought the idea, voted for bonds to finance it, and then dis-

covered experts disagreed over this grandiose scheme. The St. Francis dam disaster suggested more careful study of the footings for this proposed dam. A contractor had actually hidden evidence of potential failure. Lawsuits flew. The public became disenchanted and the project was scuttled.

The year 1933 saw massive brushfires above La Crescenta. On New Years Eve heavy rains sent tons of mud and boulders crashing from every canyon destroying homes and taking lives. A tug of war developed between those wanting unlimited development and those seeking a more cautious approach. The 1930's also brought the New Deal. Turning flood control over to the Army Corps of Engineers would mean major funding from the Federal Government. Critics were silenced by the thought of all that "free money." Local politicians saw cover from lawsuits and angry constituents if anything went wrong.

All doubts were drowned in the waters of the great flood of 1938. $40 million worth of damage convinced every one of the benefits of paving the rivers. With cheap labor available the Corps did remarkable work by encasing 300 miles of waterways in concrete. Empty reservoirs were constructed to control runoff. All was sweetness and light—until Whittier Narrows. The good citizens of El Monte objected to being inundated every few years. Political processes forced the Corps to accept Plan B, moving the dam downstream. El Monte gained other perks. Whittier Narrows Flood Control Basin was completed in 1955. A freshman representative from Whittier brokered the deal and gained credit as a heroic arbitrator. His initials were RMN.

Most fortunately for Los Angeles, the years between 1938 and 1969 were relatively dry. The system worked, although voices were raised about the ugly concrete troughs crisscrossing the basin. Between January 18 and 26, 1969, thirteen and a half inches of rain fell on Los Angeles. Damage was $30 million. Without the flood control system the damage would have been in the billions. At the same time, reassessment of terms like "twenty-five year storms" began with computerized weather forecasting. It became obvious heavy rain years could quickly follow one another, they didn't occur only once in twenty-five years. Random mountain fires also greatly affected the equation; debris basins could turn into monster "flip basins" if drains became clogged, and they did. In 1980 flood waters almost topped some existing channels; heights were raised.

At this same time, environmental concerns were on the rise. Both government and engineers realized they must accommodate alternatives to grey concrete. So projects to use land for both flood control and recreation are now underway. The Cornfield, Southern Pacific's old rail yard just northeast of Chinatown, presents a suitable challenge. We shall see whether compromise can make something beautiful out of today's dusty land.

Jared Orsi is a very readable writer who brings a balanced presentation to this subject. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the historic and ongoing problem of water in southern California.

—Bill Warren

THE ARTHUR H. CLARK COMPANY: *An Americana Century, 1902-2002*. by Robert A. Clark and Patrick J. Brunet. Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark Co. 2002. Illustrations, Index, Bibliography. 303 pp. Cloth $75.00; "Centennial" edition of 100 copies, bound in leather, $350. Order from Arthur H. Clark Company, P.O. Box 14707, Spokane, WA 99214-0707.

This is an extraordinary volume that any collector of fine books must have for ready reference. In addition to a foreword by Richard M. Weatherford, this book contains a history of the company in terms of its people, its publishers, editors and authors, as well as the most complete bibliography of the company's publications. The bibliography contains complete entries of author, title, place of publication and date. In addition, each entry includes a physical description of

the work and the number published.

The history of the enterprise is more than interesting. It is a loving portrait of a most important publisher whose founder Arthur H. Clark, Sr. focused on North American history, found authors, worked with authors, and created a respected press. His vision of books securely founded in fact, sources interpreted in a scholarly manner, and written for readability made the press respected. His notion of scholarly quality carried over into production quality and the distinctive Clark style that continues today. Arthur Clark, Sr.'s connection with LeRoy Hafen deepened his interest in the American West and his commitment to publish the best on the West. Hafen would ultimately publish thirty-one books with the press. Clark's eye for solid history also brought Fred A. Shannon's *Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861-1862* to the press in the 1920s. Rejected by thirteen publishers before it arrived in Clark's hands, the book won the 1929 Pulitzer Prize in History.

Clark retired in 1947 and the company was in the hands of Paul W. Galleher and Arthur Clark, Jr. Galleher and others were founders of the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners. In 1972 Robert Clark joined the company and assumed full control of the firm in 1986. Today years later the company closed its doors in Glendale and relocated in Spokane. There the Clark legacy of quality production of the written word continues.

—Gordon Morris Bakken

Photo by Michael Patris

Rounding up the usual suspects. September Trail Boss Meeting.