

# JOURNAL of the Riverside Historical Society

Number Sixteen

February 2012

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Riverside, California

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The Riverside Historical Society  
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Layout and Graphics:  
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Printed by:  
Inland Printworks  
Riverside, California

**<http://www.riversidehistoricalsociety.org>**

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## Forward

Welcome to the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Journal of the Riverside Historical Society. Through this journal, it is the hope of the Society to bring to the public the latest in research/writing about the history of Riverside. I believe we've continued this tradition with the articles contained herein, and I think you'll agree.

Mel Opatowsky relates to us the now-forgotten saga of Mayor Dighton and the many libel suits that were argued in the courts during his tenure. Mel brings his background as newspaperman, professor, and legal scholar together in this fascinating piece about Riverside at the eve of the Great Depression.

Next, Mary Curtin relates the story of Riverside's own renowned artist Mine Okubo. Mary has done extensive research into the life of this long-time Riversider, and is preparing a book, from which her article was gleaned.

Patricia Stewart, who with her husband Bob worked tirelessly for the advancement of Fairmount Park, tells us the story behind Stewarts Boathouse and how that rebuild monument came into being.

The next article has to be a first for the Journal. Fully seven authors contributed to this work, which highlights a new program by the Riverside Metropolitan Museum reflecting research and interpretation of Riverside's Japanese-American community. It is a fascinating compendium of the research that has occurred over the past several years regarding the small yet very forceful Japanese-American community here.

Jurupa-area historian Kim Jarrell Johnson tells us of one of the first families of the area - the Parks - who have generally been overlooked in many of the histories of early Riverside.

Finally, Andrew Howe tells us about his trials and tribulations regarding his search for proof that the writer Upton Sinclair visited Riverside, and more specifically, La Sierra University. Many of us who have done local history research in the past can relate to Andrew's article!

I hope you enjoy this latest incarnation of the journal, and will look forward to many others.

Steve Lech  
President, Riverside Historical Society

## About the Authors

**Mary H. Curtin** has lived in Riverside since 1963, has taught at Riverside Community College, and is currently at work on Mine Okubo's biography.

**Erin Gettis** has been the Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Riverside for over five years and the lead Historic Preservation staff in three jurisdictions in California.

**Donna Graves** is a historian and urban planner in Berkeley, California. She is the director of the state-wide project, Preserving California's Japantowns.

**Catherine Gudis** is Associate Professor of History and Director of the Public History Program at the University of California, Riverside.

**Sue Hall** is a PhD candidate in the field of Public History at the University of California, Riverside. Her research interests focus on the preservation of both the built and natural environments and their role as tools in remembering the past.

**Kevin Hallaran** is the archivist for the Riverside Metropolitan Museum and has also been the Curator of History for the Mission Inn Foundation.

**Andrew Howe** is an Associate Professor of History at La Sierra University, where he teaches courses in 20th century American history, popular culture, and film studies.

**Kim Jarrell Johnson** is a published author and historian of the Jurupa area of Riverside County.

**Krystal Marquez** currently works as a Planning Intern with the City of Riverside and has a love for local history and historic preservation.

**Mel Opotowsky** is a CSU Fullerton journalism instructor and former managing editor of the *Press-Enterprise*. He is the chair of the State Bar's Review Committee of the Judicial Nominations Review Commission, board member of the state First Amendment Coalition and a former member of the Riverside County Bench-Bar-Media Committee.

**Patricia Stewart** is a long-time Riverside resident who, with her late husband Bob, spearheaded the effort to revitalize Fairmount Park and its boathouse.

**Lynn Voorheis** is the Curator of Historic Structures and Collections at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, where she is responsible for the National Historic Landmark Harada House and Riverside's Heritage House.

# The Right to Bare Libel

*By Mel Opatowsky*

Except in egregious cases, the use of libel law has all but disappeared in California political battles. But in years past, it was often the weapon of choice, not unlike dueling pistols. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Riverside at the end of the 1920s. The most high-powered weapon at the time was criminal libel, the heavy artillery that those in control of law enforcement unholstered when they felt threatened.

In Riverside during this period, libel was the artillery, used at least four times amid a matter of months centered on one major political battle. The opening salvo was aimed at the city's mayor after he attacked "the Mission Inn crowd" that he felt ran the town. Then it was used by the establishment against a small newspaper, a propaganda sheet actually, whose editor was thrown in jail. The third occasion involved the embattled mayor suing an established city daily. And finally serious threats of a libel suit put the city's other daily newspaper into a defensive crouch.

Criminal libel using the prosecutorial power of the state and the potential for jail no longer exists in California. U. S. Supreme Court decisions in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century have also made it virtually impossible for a politician to successfully sue for civil libel unless there were serious errors published and the aggrieved could show a deliberate, malicious attempt to use the erroneous information to cut him down.<sup>1</sup> But those restraints were not in place in the 1920s.

Political tempers started rising in November, 1927, not long after grocer Edward Dighton, age 54, was elected mayor of Riverside in an upset. The heat built up to the point of a mini-volcanic eruption that led to his being tried on charges of criminal libel and willful misconduct in office, which resulted in a successful attempt to recall him.

Dighton was a stern-faced fellow with a large nose, wire-rimmed glasses, and a fast-receding hairline.<sup>2</sup> With a law-and-order posture, he had a penchant for flights of fancy, which appeared to have a part in his undoing. During the mayoral campaign, for instance, he warned

Riversiders that confectionary-makers from Los Angeles were lacing candy with “dope,” putting their children at risk.<sup>3</sup>

Dighton, a native of Ohio, was foremost an outsider, fighting the upper and middle class establishment. He represented a socio-political phenomenon dubbed paranoid politics by historian Richard Hofstadter.<sup>4</sup> This condition, and especially how Dighton fit the mold, was described in excellent detail by Alan Curl in his (unfortunately unpublished) 1977 UCR thesis, “Dighton: A Study of Recall in Riverside, CA.”

Dighton had been living in Riverside for seven years when he ran against a bevy of “establishment” types: the incumbent mayor, a former mayor, a former Chamber of Commerce official, and a couple of businessmen. In the modus of paranoid politicians operating in tough economic times, Dighton went after the real and perceived practices of the upper middle class that had long managed city affairs. For starters, he railed against the hiring of a Redondo consultant for more than \$10,000 to come up with a new-fangled city development plan that made the Mission Inn the hub of a civic center—the Inn being owned by the most influential upper class elitist in the city, Frank Miller.<sup>5</sup>

Dighton was elected in a race that only required a plurality. He immediately signaled his rebellion against the establishment by announcing a purge on January 1, 1928, and appointing a wide range of new officials as well as board members to commissions. His legal authority to use such a street-sweeper approach was challenged by the common council and members of the commissions. But Dighton prevailed amid turmoil.

Headbutting continued. A major issue was Dighton’s unheeded call for more money for police, especially to enforce prohibition, in a city whose population had been booming. Councilmen attacked Dighton’s police chief, John Franklin, for not seeking their approval for much of what he was doing; they even wanted him to leave attacks on the demon rum to Sheriff Clem Sweeters.<sup>6</sup>

But it was Dighton’s belief that there were fiscal irregularities that led more directly to his criminal libel indictment. Before the election, he had vaguely alluded to suspicions of mishandling of city funds. In August, 1928, Dighton again implied that huge sums of money were missing from city coffers. With what he called “the crowd across the street at the

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Mission Inn” nipping at his heels (“Here is one man that the Mission Inn crowd is not going to run”), he had hired an auditor, George Robertson, to go over city books for 1927-28 under authority of the city charter.<sup>7</sup>

In early October 1928, the Riverside City Council balked at paying Robertson’s bill for the audit. Still, the auditor gave a preliminary report to Dighton who went to the Los Angeles *Express* newspaper alleging “grafters . . . sacked the city exchequer.” He claimed there was a serious shortage of funds and said the financial books were in a deplorable condition. He also said he would ask the state attorney general to investigate instead of leaving it to Riverside County District Attorney Albert Ford because of an “alleged political situation” in Riverside. He told the paper’s reporter, Charles Dawson, that Ford was “in league with the crowd down there” and could not be trusted.<sup>8</sup>

After giving the story to the *Express*, he went to the Riverside *Enterprise*, extending his railing by further alleging criminal negligence on the part of City Auditor Herbert Pierson. But Editor and Publisher John R. Gabbert said he checked with Robertson, who denied that his report came to any such conclusion. Gabbert refused to print the story, saying it was libelous.<sup>9</sup>

Here was high drama. The *Express* story hit the streets of Riverside on Tuesday, October 16, 1928, the day the common council was holding its weekly session. It caused a furor at the meeting. Council members immediately convened a formal hearing and made the mayor testify under oath while launching strong personal attacks against him, noting that they had not seen Robertson’s auditing report and had not been told of any irregularities. The mayor unpersuasively said the *Express* story was an exaggerated account of what he told the paper.

But in a remarkable turn, he said the reason he brought his charges to the two newspapers was to “beat them to it,” opening the door publicly to a bizarre development in which days earlier he had promised to resign as mayor over a contretemps that had nothing to do with city business and then reneged on the promise. It turns out that earlier in the year he had signed paperwork for membership in the United Spanish War Veterans chapter, but a check with the adjutant general’s office in Ohio where he said he had served turned up no evidence of a “Captain Dighton” doing military service.



Major J. A. Cummings of the veterans group told the common council that the mayor had promised to resign at that very same meeting, apparently in return for keeping the incident quiet. Cummings faced the mayor and demanded that he read the resignation letter. The mayor said he had changed his mind.<sup>10</sup>

### **The First Case of Criminal Libel: People v. Dighton**

What followed was a classic use of the swift power of authority to retaliate against an outsider. The city's two established newspapers, the *Daily Press* and the *Enterprise*, railed against him. The grand jury met exactly a month later under the guidance of district attorney Ford. It heard from twelve witnesses, including Robertson, who told them nothing in his audit led to any conclusions that there was "defalcation," just a relatively minor series of inaccurate entries in the books. Editors and the reporter at the *Express* testified that the story was accurate and that the mayor had reviewed the material.<sup>11</sup>

On the next day, November 17, 1928, the grand jury issued two indictments. The first alleged criminal libel. "(The) publication was intended to and did tend to impeach the honesty, integrity, virtue and reputation of said Herbert W. Pierson, as said Auditor, and in his private capacity, and thereby expose him . . . to public hatred, contempt and ridicule." The maximum penalty if convicted was \$1000 fine and one year in jail.

The second action was labeled an "Accusation" of misconduct in office. This was a civil charge but was to be handled like a criminal case. A conviction would result in dismissal from office. The accusation said Dighton failed to present to the common council and to the board of public utilities the audit charges that he made to the newspaper. The accusation said further that the charges in the newspaper were made in bad faith to forestall public accusations about the United Spanish War Veterans caper. The penalty on this charge would be removal from office.

Bail was set at \$1500. The mayor hired well-known attorney Miguel Estudillo of Estudillo and Schwinn, who had once defended the city in a discrimination case filed by black residents wanting to use the city swimming pool.<sup>12</sup>

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Dighton responded to the charges in typical fashion. Right after the indictment, his hand-picked Board of Public Utilities hired the Los Angeles accounting firm of MacLeod, McFarland & Co. for another audit. On December 6, 1928, citing audits by Robertson and MacLeod, he suspended Pierson.<sup>13</sup> The council quickly and unanimously reinstated him.<sup>14</sup>

But the “Mission Inn crowd” moved quickly, too. It started a recall against the mayor. Soon Dighton’s supporters started a recall against five city council members.<sup>15</sup> The nasty libel wars that followed were one of the results of posturing for recall votes, leading up to the February 8, 1929 special election.

Riverside County judges were recused from Dighton’s libel case after he pleaded not guilty. Estudillo asked for a change of venue, which was denied by Orange County Judge James L. Allen. So Estudillo insisted on jurors who were not residents of the city, which was accommodated. Petitions were signed by 77 persons asking for the trial to be held in larger quarters. At that time, the courthouse already was busy with the sensational multiple child murder trial of Gordon Stewart Northcutt, so the trial was moved to the Elks Club, which could seat 250 persons. Some 32 of the signatories were women, possibly a reflection of the support the mayor enjoyed from the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, which had backed his efforts for strong prohibition enforcement.<sup>16</sup>

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Leon Yankwich, considered an expert on libel, was named by the California Judicial Council to hear the case. Two venire panels of 75 persons were picked for the two trials, with the libel case starting first on January 7, 1929. By the end of the morning session, after 34 perspective jurors had been questioned, nine men and three women jurors were seated. The *Enterprise* noted that a large crowd, including “many women,” heard the proceedings.<sup>17</sup>

Dighton was questioned extensively, as were accountant Robertson and four members of the MacLeod firm. John Albright, one of the mayor’s allies, said he helped in the hiring of Robertson, adding that the accountant had told him the books were badly out of balance, which he relayed to the mayor. Pierson also testified, claiming the errors found in the books were minor and were corrected—that there was no loss of funds to the city. W. H. McColly, a member of the Spanish War Veterans, told of the private meeting where the mayor was confronted with his application for

membership claiming war service, which he said the mayor acknowledged was false.

As the trial started, Yankwich cited a seminal 1921 California Supreme Court case concluding that if a statement against officials was made in good faith and believed to be true, it could not be considered libelous.<sup>18</sup> Then with the testimony and summations over, Yankwich gave a series of 31 instructions to guide the jurors. Some were basic—explaining the concept of reasonable doubt, for instance. Others perhaps foreshadowed today’s libel status protecting the First Amendment right to criticize public officials. One called for acquittal if the mayor’s comments had a good intent, justifiable ends, and if he believed they were true.

The jury elected D. W. Glenn of Corona as its foreman and returned an hour later with its verdict: Not guilty.<sup>19</sup>

While the libel jury was deliberating, Judge Yankwich started proceedings to pick the panel for the second trial on the accusation of willful misconduct in office. That had to be suspended for a while when the libel jury returned with its verdict.

The second trial jury of five women and seven men heard much the same evidence that the prosecution presented at the libel trial, but the defense called no witnesses. Judge Yankwich then advised the jury to acquit because the prosecution failed to prove there was any misconduct in office. He said the accountants had testified there were no shortages in city funds; therefore Dighton did not fail in reporting any shortages, as would have been required by the city charter.<sup>20</sup> “The fact that the mayor thought there was shortage is immaterial if, in fact, there was none. That the mayor may have been guilty of disloyalty to the city in shouting ‘graft’ or that he may have hurt it, is not grounds for removing him from office under these proceedings,” said the judge. Then he added: “The city can take care of its own political situation in due time.” Jury foreman Philip Truby of Beaumont announced its not guilty verdict 35 minutes later.<sup>21</sup>

### **The Second Libel Case: *People v. C. C. Pitts***

While the city’s major papers attacked the mayor and supported recall even before the libel trial, another paper that Dighton helped launch

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took his side, going after “the Mission Inn Crowd.” Called the *Riverside News*, it had been launched by C. C. Pitts, a Dighton supporter who spoke at rallies backing the mayor and who had been in town only a few months—indeed, in the state only six months. After starting the paper, he took on a business manager, D. B. Barnhart, and on December 14, 1928, published a thinly described parody about a place called “Graftin, the City Beautiful.”

The parody talked about the city’s famous establishment, the Tiddle-Dee-Winks Inn, and its owner Frank Buller, “who was also the big Boss and political advisor of the Old Gang.” Buller “was continually having it repaired and building new additions, which never showed when he got his tax bill each year.” “It was rumored by some of the Suckers (townspeople) that you could get anything you wanted at the Tiddle-Dee-Winks Inn: wine, women or song. Of course, you understand, for a price.” It wasn’t a stretch to conclude the tale was talking about the Glenwood Mission Inn and its owner Frank Augustus Miller. It implied that Buller or Miller was questioned by federal agents about an alleged bootleg connection in this prohibition time.

The article, credited to “Walt the office boy,” went on to describe four common council members whose names and mannerisms could be linked to the real-life fellows: Clarence Backstrand, John Taylor, J. T. Redman, and Jesse Wells. Backstrand was a particularly vocal opponent of the mayor in council meetings.

But the establishment apparently was not amused and the authorities flexed their muscles again. Immediately after the story was published, criminal libel charges were filed by District Attorney Ford against Pitts, Barnhart, and “Walt the office boy.” Arrest warrants were signed on a Saturday, the day after publication. The charges were based on a complaint by Irwin Hayden, who later was to become a city councilman, and who had been one of the losers in the mayoral race that Dighton won. The charges said the articles contained “false, defamatory and libelous words” emphasizing the impact on the council members “in their private capacity and their official capacity as members of the common council.”<sup>22</sup>

Officials appeared to treat the two accused roughly. Pitts and Barnhart were picked up by a sheriff’s deputy on Monday outside of the

newspaper office. Bail was first set by Justice of the Peace Leonard J. Difani at \$5,000, as recommended by the district attorney (that seemed high because that would have been the maximum fine under the law if they had been convicted). Pitts produced a bond. However, Difani insisted on questioning the bondsman and then raised the bail to \$10,000. Pitts was held in jail for six hours while the bond was arranged.<sup>23</sup> C. W. Benshoof, attorney for the defendants, sought to disqualify Difani at the preliminary hearing, citing his bail actions as well as his “strong feelings” in the city’s heated political atmosphere. Difani rejected the motion, immediately held the hearing, and found there was enough evidence for a trial.

The bitter taste of what can happen when authority is challenged apparently was enough for Pitts. Before his trial was scheduled to start, he issued a public recanting of his support for the mayor in a statement to the *Enterprise* and the *Press*, which carried it on the front page.<sup>24</sup> He said that when he arrived in Riverside he was “unfortunate enough to become connected with the faction that had the wrong kind of men for leaders.” He said he gave up his interest in the now defunct *Riverside News* and had no connection to its successor the *Riverside Facts*, another Dighton propaganda sheet. “I am not in favor or in sympathy with the tactics or policies used by Mayor Dighton,” he added.

Pitts’ retreat came a few days before a major rally was to be held protesting Dighton, who faced a recall election. Joe Long had been named as the man to succeed him if the recall was successful.<sup>25</sup> Long had strong backing from the establishment and the two newspapers. But even though the Dighton faction had launched its own recall action against five of the common council members, the Pitts break isolated the mayor even more.

When it was time for the Pitts trial, Frank Miller was among those subpoenaed to testify, but Dr. A. W. Roblee notified the court February 6, 1929, that Miller was seriously ill and would be unable to make any court appearances for at least a month. The doctor said in fact he would not allow the subpoena server to see Miller.

When the libel trial started at the end of February, Pitts filed an affidavit asserting that he did not write the article about the town of Graftin, the city beautiful. According to him, it was written by Walter H. Miller, apparently no relation to Frank,<sup>26</sup> who was listed in the city

directory as a mail carrier. Indeed, Pitts said, he rejected the article at first because he was concerned about libel and required some changes. Walter Miller then confirmed that the charges implied in the edited article were true, and so, Pitts said, he published the story.

But he added that after the furor over the article surfaced, he tried to confirm the allegations about the Inn and Frank Miller, and could not. Pitts said he was “very sorry that he published that article,” and that he extended his “sincere apology.”

District Attorney Ford immediately withdrew the charges against Pitts and Barnhardt, and said he would talk to Walter H. Miller before deciding whether to proceed with the case. Nothing in the court record indicated any further action took place in the criminal libel case.

Still, more official pressure was turned on. The state labor commission held a hearing at the end of January accusing the *Riverside News* management of failing to pay for work performed. Dighton testified that he gave \$50 start up money for the paper and his superintendent of parks added that he put up \$500 for equipment. But the mayor denied he guaranteed any work payment, although Barnhardt’s testimony contradicted him.<sup>27</sup> Dighton lost the recall election February 8, 1929, and thereafter the labor case appeared to have been dropped.<sup>28</sup>

### **The Third Libel Case: Dighton v. The Daily Press**

Ironically, the libel case that appeared to have the most merit never got anywhere. In that case, Dighton sued the *Daily Press* for \$65,000 for a November 27 editorial that linked the mayor to the stench of the Ku Klux Klan. Apparently giving credence to whispers that Dighton was backed by the Klan, the editorial cited “an anonymous letter but one that was sent by the Dighton organization” to the city’s pastors. According to the *Daily Press*, the anonymous letter had been sent by a secret organization, a covert allusion to the KKK, and had information about deplorable conditions in city affairs.

The editorial said the letter was headed, “THE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICAN LEAGUE” and included another line, “ONE HUNDRED PER CENT CHRISTIAN.” The editorial added that

“This latest move [is] to bolster up the fading political fortunes of Mayor Dighton.” Except for some legal motions, that suit went nowhere and Dighton dropped it in April, but not before forcing the paper to hire two prominent attorneys from Los Angeles to arrange its defense.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Libel Threat Against the Riverside Enterprise**

The criminal libel case against Dighton spurred even more legal maneuvers. The mayor hired A. D. MacLeod of MacLeod, Macfarlane & Co. to examine the books of the Electric Light and Water Departments again, this time undoubtedly expecting a more critical report than the one provided by Robertson, who testified he did not find any malfeasance, just a few bookkeeping errors.

MacLeod’s report indeed did lay out some serious findings of improper bookkeeping by city treasurer Harry Dunbar, but at the same time, the council hired its own accountant, John Jahn, who said the books were clean. The *Enterprise* was critical of McLeod, pointing out how much all these investigations were costing taxpayers and then attacking the report in an editorial and front page commentary.<sup>30</sup>

McLeod sent a long letter to the paper demanding it be published on a specific date on Page 1 along with a retraction. MacLeod labeled the paper’s attack as a “most serious accusation” implying deliberate falsification. The paper meekly put McLeod’s letter on its front page the day he demanded and in an editorial in the same issue said that it did not mean to “misrepresent” the MacLeod organization or imply that it falsified a report. So that potential libel case never materialized.

Dighton was recalled as mayor and the council members that he attacked won their recall elections. The now ex-mayor left town, couldn’t get work, and died in tough financial straits.<sup>31</sup> No one was ever found guilty of libel. That is not to say, however, the suits had no impact on how the city was run and who ran it. No outsiders prevailed for a long time. But that’s another story.

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## Notes

1. Libel Defense Resource Center, 50-State Survey, 1996-97; See also U.S. Supreme Court cases *New York Times v. Sullivan* (1964); *Garrison v. Louisiana* (1966).
2. *Press-Enterprise*, July 19, 1964, Section B, p. 1.
3. *Riverside Enterprise*, Oct. 4, 1927.
4. Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1965)
5. "Dighton: A Study of Recall in Riverside, California," by Alan Curl, pp. 5. Unpublished.
6. *Riverside Enterprise*, April 4, 1928. The chief was fired about a month later when he was found drunk and asleep in the early morning hours in Colton, his car damaged. *Riverside Enterprise*, May 13, 1928.
7. *Daily Press*, Aug. 29, 1928, p. 1.
8. Grand Jury transcript, p. 27, in file Riverside County Superior Court case 18794, *People v. Dighton*.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Enterprise*, Oct. 17, 1928, p. 1.
11. Grand Jury transcript, in Riverside Superior Court file 18974, *People v. Dighton*.
12. Riverside Superior Court case file 18974, *People v. Dighton*.
13. *Daily Press*, Dec. 8, 1928, p. 1.
14. *Enterprise*, Dec. 20, 1928, p. 3.
15. *Daily Press*, Dec. 15, 1928, p. 2.
16. *Enterprise*, Jan. 8, 1929, p. 1
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Snively v. Los Angeles Record*, (1921) 185 Cal. 565; 198 p. 1; 1921 Cal. LEXIS 582. In that case, Yankwich was plaintiff's attorney.
19. *Enterprise*, Jan. 10, 1929 p. 1. Also, Riverside County Superior Court (civil) 18794 .
20. Riverside Superior Court case 18974, accusation against Edward Dighton.
21. *Enterprise*, Jan. 12, 1929, p. 1.
22. Riverside Superior Court case no. 18952, *People v. C. C. Pitts, et al.*
23. *Daily Press*, Dec. 17, 1928, p. 2.
24. *Enterprise*, Jan. 25, 1929, p. 1.
25. *Enterprise*, Feb. 1, 1929, p. 1.
26. *People v. Pitts, ibid.*



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- 27. *Enterprise*, Feb. 1, 1929, p. 1.
  - 28. *Enterprise*, Feb. 9, 1929, p. 1.
  - 29. Riverside Superior Court Case No. 18872, Dighton v. *Riverside Daily Press*.
  - 30. *Enterprise*, Jan. 21, 1929, p. 1.
  - 31. *Daily Press*, July 20, 1964, Section B, p. 1.
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### Postcards from Riverside



(Top) The hospital at March Field, 1940s  
(Bottom) Delivery truck of the Pachappa Dairy, 1920s  
Both photos courtesy Steve Lech



# Riverside's Miné Okubo

*by Mary H. Curtin*

Miné Okubo, internationally acclaimed artist, illustrator, and author, was born in Riverside, California, in a rented house on Eleventh and Kansas Streets, on June 27, 1912. The site of her birth is now part of Bobby Bonds Park, but while Miné was growing up, the house was surrounded on three sides by citrus groves. She loved playing in the water of the groves' irrigation ditches, found pollywogs there, and sometimes brought them home in a pail, just to watch them swim. Hers was a world of fragrance and color, in a city founded by idealists and dreamers. Like many other residents, her parents crossed an ocean to build a new life.

She was the fourth child in a family that would number seven. Her father, a scholar of Japanese history and philosophy, named her after the Japanese creation goddess Mine, [pronounced mee-neh], a great honor. However, most people in her hometown, unfamiliar with the creation goddess, called her "Minnie."

Miné Okubo attended Riverside schools: Longfellow Elementary and Poly High. Her parents offered to send her to Casa Blanca's Japanese language school, too, but she declined, saying, "I don't need to learn Japanese! I'm an American!"

She learned Japanese culture at home, anyway. Mama taught her calligraphy, and Father endowed her with the Japanese philosophy of the Four Noble Truths, a guide to ethics.

In 1931, when Miné enrolled in college, she rode her bicycle past citrus groves and smudge pots, down the arroyo, then back up the hill, to the not-yet-completed Riverside Junior College, where she studied with the school's first generation of teachers.

Richard M. Allman, Professor of Art, quickly recognized Miss Okubo's potential. She had talent and had learned discipline from her artist mother, who assigned her early on to paint a different cat every day, making sure to capture the cat's personality as well as its shape and color.

Dr. Allman encouraged the shy, quiet girl to illustrate for the school's newspaper and become art editor of her class of 1933 yearbook. He said

she should also pursue advanced study, preferably at the University of California at Berkeley. Miné didn't know where Berkeley was, and didn't think she or her family could afford it. Dr. Allman recommended her, anyway, Berkeley accepted her, awarded her a scholarship, and, with her part-time jobs, she could afford to study among some of America's finest art teachers. John Haley, founder of the Berkeley School of Art, became her friend for life.

Miné distinguished herself at Berkeley, but missed Riverside, especially Mama. When Miné felt lonely, she pictured Riverside as she remembered it, then painted what she loved most – a serene image of Mama, seated in front of her neighborhood church, Bible in her lap, a cat at her side. That painting, *"Mama with Cat"*, featured in exhibitions, books and magazines, now rests in a place of honor at Oakland Museum.

Graduating from Berkeley in 1937 with a Master's degree in both Art and Anthropology, Miné won their prestigious Bertha Taussig Traveling Art Fellowship, to study art in Europe. The frugal Miss Okubo chose to take a freighter across the Atlantic, rather than travel via passenger ship, saying there weren't many passengers on board the freighter, but plenty of grain!



*Miné Okubo*

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She bought a used bicycle as soon as she got to France, rode it all over Paris, and parked by the Louvre, where she could study original art by the Great Masters.

In France, she learned new art perspectives in social realism, and she came to know those helpful guides to pronunciation, French accent marks. She quickly appropriated one for her own name, and, from then on, signed her work with an accent mark.

As she traveled throughout Europe, she often packed lunch and art supplies into her bicycle's big basket, pedaled to a place that interested her, and stopped to internalize what she saw. Then, she created her own image of the place's meaning, its artistic truth. She traveled in over a dozen different European countries while on fellowship.

By September, 1939, however, war was coming to Europe. Friends urged her to go home, where it was safer, but she continued to work, until the day she received a telegram from Riverside, saying Mama was very sick. Miné should come home right away.

She had little money with her in Switzerland, her belongings were back in France, and the Swiss-French border was already sealed. Leaving seemed almost impossible, but her Swiss friends loaned her money to travel, and, somehow, she got back to France and worked her way aboard the last American passenger ship leaving Bordeaux, France. Along with terrified refugees hurrying to leave Europe before bombs started falling, Miné headed home, crossing an Atlantic full of unseen dangers. World War II in Europe was declared while they were still at sea.

Miné made it back to Riverside in time to see her mother alive, in time to share with her and give thanks, but Mama died in 1940. Her remains lie in Riverside's Olivewood Cemetery, beneath stone calligraphy designed and executed by family friend Tyrus Wong, the Chinese fine artist who illustrated the forest in the Disney film, *Bambi*.

After mourning her mother, Miné looked for work. In response to the Depression, America had implemented the WPA, a series of Federal employment programs. They hired artists. Miné returned to the Bay Area, where people knew her work. The WPA was happy to hire a person of her professional stature, and assigned her to create murals for luxury liners, frescoes for military bases Treasure Island and Fort Ord, and to

work in conjunction with the great Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, in San Francisco.

Glad to be earning money as an artist on important projects, Miné was also pleased to be sharing an apartment with her younger brother, Toku, now a Berkeley student. It was good to be with family again.

But on December 7th, 1941, Japan launched a surprise bomb attack on Pearl Harbor. Many Americans, stunned, no longer trusted anybody of Japanese heritage, even those formerly known personally as good neighbors. War changed everything.

People were edgy. Violence against Asians made headlines. A series of Presidential decrees ordered people of Japanese heritage to register, then to settle their affairs, prepare for mandatory evacuation from their homes. They must dispose of all belongings, pack as if going to camp, and bring only what each could carry. Nobody knew how long they would be away.

Miné and her brother were given three days' notice to report. At their Berkeley assembly center, they were assigned collective family number 13660, and were never again referred to by officialdom by their given names. Under armed guard, with other evacuees, they boarded a bus and were driven over a bridge to San Bruno's former race track, Tanforan, now an assembly center, where they lived for six months, in a horse stall.

Cameras were forbidden to internees, but Miss Okubo, knowing Americans wouldn't believe what was happening unless they saw it for themselves, determined to document every day she spent behind barbed wire. Carrying her sketch pad throughout the camp, she carefully recorded all she saw and experienced.

After six months at Tanforan, she was shipped to Topaz, an internment camp in the high, alkaline desert of central Utah. Behind another set of barbed wire, she meticulously committed to paper all aspects of internment. She also taught art to interned children and illustrated covers for the three issues of *Trek*, the newsmagazine produced by and for the camp's internees.

From her first week in internment to her last, she kept up extensive correspondence with friends outside. She even entered a Berkeley art contest by mail. She won! That brought her to the attention of editors of *Fortune Magazine*, in New York City, who were planning a special April

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1944 issue, featuring Japanese culture. They offered Miss Okubo a job, illustrating their special edition. They asked her to please come to New York City within three days.

To leave Topaz, she had to undergo extensive security and loyalty checks. When finally cleared and en route to New York City, she reflected on her years of incarceration and regimentation, and wondered how she'd be able to adjust to open society again.

*Fortune Magazine's* editors welcomed her, helped her find an apartment, and put her right to work. When they saw her camp drawings, they were so impressed they dedicated a full-blown illustrated article on internment camps, the first published in a national magazine.

After the special issue came out, the most trusted man in news, Walter Cronkite, gave his entire nationally-televised CBS program to his interview with Miss Okubo. The shy girl from Riverside had become a national phenomenon.

Urged to publish her camp drawings as a book, Miné added short captions and called the book *Citizen 13660*. Columbia University Press published it in 1946, to great reviews, after which Miné toured the country, telling her story, exhibiting her art, making a special stop to see friends at Riverside Public Library.

She taught art at U. C. Berkeley for two years, then returned to New York to devote full time to her own art. Her commercial illustrations appeared in major magazines, newspapers and scientific books, and her fine art was exhibited from Boston to Tokyo.

She hosted memorable salons in her third-floor Greenwich Village apartment. Artists and intellectuals from Harlem to Stuttgart flocked there, to discuss the latest artworks.

In 1981, she testified on behalf of internees at New York City's Congressional hearings of the U. S. Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, presenting commissioners a copy of *Citizen 13660*.

Miss Okubo received many honors for her work and her commitment. In 1973, Oakland Museum hosted a major retrospective of her work; in 1974, Riverside Community College named her Alumna of the Year; in 1987, The California State Department of Education featured her as one

of twelve California women pioneers in *The History of California (1800 to Present)*, on their large classroom poster, *California Women: Courage, Compassion, Conviction*, and in *An Activities Guide for Kindergarten Through Grade 12*; in 1991, she received Washington, D. C.'s *National Museum for Women in the Arts'* Women's Caucus for Art Honor Award; in 1993, Japan featured her in their 2006 National High School yearbook, used in all Japanese schools; and in the same year, Riverside Community College paid her tribute by renaming a street on campus after her and featuring the original play, *Miné: A Name for Herself*, at their Landis Performing Arts Center. The Smithsonian Institution later selected that play for its 2007 Day of Remembrance, and sponsored its performance in Washington, D. C.

Miné Okubo dedicated her life to art. Using Great Masters' principles, she portrayed truth and beauty with integrity, and she did it with such simplicity that a child of seven could appreciate and understand her renderings. Betty La Duke, Professor of Art at University of Southern Oregon, describes her later paintings as "serene, Buddha-like."

When Miss Okubo died on February 1, 2001, obituaries appeared in newspapers from New York to New Zealand. Memorials were held in New York City, Oakland, and Riverside. She left a legacy of courage, discipline, and love.

Her work continues to enlighten and to challenge. Her artwork hangs in major galleries and is treasured by collectors worldwide; her book, *Citizen 13660*, continues to be studied in classrooms across America and Canada. Recently, The Hague, in Holland, selected it as their choice for their summer discussion series.

Recognizing the lasting value of art over the ages, Miné Okubo bequeathed major pieces of her art and personal belongings to her first alma mater, Riverside Community College. Students and the public will have access to selections of the Okubo Collection at the College's new Museum of Social Justice, scheduled to open June 27, 2012, the hundredth anniversary of Miss Okubo's birth.

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# Stewarts Boathouse at Fairmount Park

*by Patricia Stewart*

Spring Brook, a tributary of the Santa Ana River, had formed an ideal place for a park at the north end of Riverside. Early settlers used Spring Brook as their main source for household water, and as a place to cool off during the hot summer months. The wilderness around Spring Brook was cleared for public use, and the 35-acre plot which included picnic grounds and swimming area was dedicated as Fairmount Park in 1898. Five years later, a dam across the brook formed Fairmount Lake with 5.5 acres of water. Riversiders could swim and launch small boats from shore.

In 1911, the City Council contracted for the improvement of Fairmount Park by the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts. Sons of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, they were in San Diego working on the Panama-California Exposition. Their plans for Fairmount added a huge swimming pool and other features.

A Boathouse was built the following year. It was an open-sided building with an enclosed bay and concrete walkway. Small boats could be stored, boarded, and launched from inside. In 1920, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Riverside's founding, the Boathouse was given a new mission-style façade. The Bandshell designed by Arthur Benton was dedicated the same year.

A boat concession was operated from the Boathouse on Fairmount Lake from about 1925 until 1968. Rowboats and small battery-driven boats built by the concessioner were stored there. The construction of 40-acre Lake Evans in 1924 had increased the opportunity for more water sports. People came from miles around to enjoy the water features. Basically, the body of water is a double lake, each section with its own name, divided by the Redwood Avenue bridge.

## Problems

Floods have periodically damaged the lakes and the surrounding countryside. The 1938 flood washed out the lakes and dams in Fairmount Park and destroyed the boating concession. Boats were later found in

the sediment in West Riverside. The Boathouse was refurbished and put back in business until the 1968 flood wiped out the remaining boats and filled Fairmount Lake with silt. That event finished the Boathouse and it sat decaying until it was demolished in 1980. The concrete bay and steps remained intact.

Though Fairmount Park has been the much loved picnic spot and water playground for a century, during the 1970s it suffered a bad reputation. The lakes were unusable; the Boathouse was gone; the amusement park disappeared. City budget cuts eliminated many park staff positions and maintenance of the park declined. Vandalism and graffiti became common.

When city officials wanted to make changes in the park in 1979 because of the negative conditions, a consultant's plan would have downsized the lakes and removed the rose garden, among other major changes. Many people disagreed with the proposal and it was scuttled. Riversiders just wanted to CLEAN IT UP and MAKE IT SAFE!

### **Citizens Pitch In**

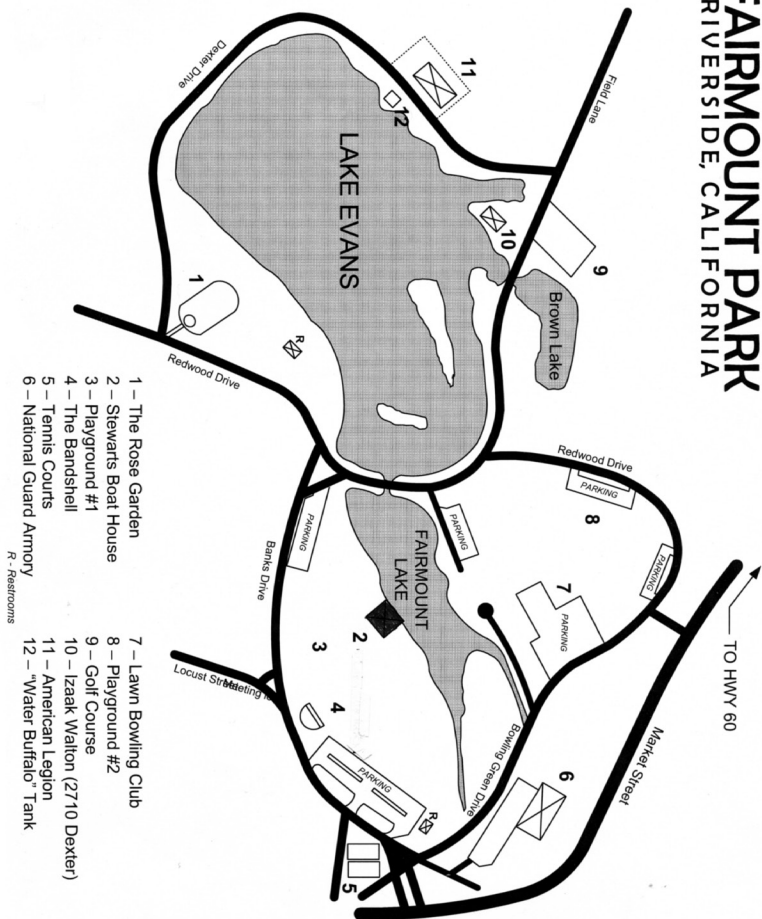
The controversy about the 1979 plan brought two committees into being. The Fairmount Park Planning Committee was appointed by the City Council to study and recommend formal guidelines for the park's future. The Planning Committee's 1981 report contained recommendations to improve the park in a non-invasive way, i.e., preserve topography and theme, enhance services, ease pollution, and provide concessions for boats and food.

The Fairmount Park Citizens Committee (FPCC), a volunteer hands-on group was formed by Bob and Pat Stewart, with the help and encouragement of Mayor Ab Brown. The goal of FPCC was to 'Save Our Park' – and to help clean it up. Many friends and experts came forward to pitch in. Bob also served on the Council-appointed Planning committee.

Pat and Bob interviewed old timers who had seen the better days of the park. Pat wrote a history documenting that each part of the park has special meaning to Riverside, including the Union Pacific locomotive engine, 'Old 6051,' the All American rose garden; the Bandshell; the Water

# FAIRMOUNT PARK

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Buffalo; and of course, the old Boathouse.

New research verified the 1911 Olmsted influence. The Fairmount Park Citizens Committee joined the National Association of Olmsted Parks (NAOP), which was also formed in 1979. In 1983, the Stewarts attended a NAOP conference in New York City, where they were inspired further by the nationwide resurgence in caring for public space.

The Stewarts presented the history of Fairmount Park to the Cultural Heritage Board, Park and Recreation Commission, and the City Council in 1985 to petition for landmark status. With proof of its unique character and the Olmsted connection, Fairmount Park was named the City of Riverside's Cultural Heritage Landmark #69.

Fairmount Park Citizens Committee projects began simply with painting picnic benches and cleaning up trash, and then grew more ambitious. FPCC's contributions to the park are impressive in number and scope. Among the projects proposed and carried out: rebuilding the Redwood Avenue bridge (between the lakes), several new restrooms, and the wrought-iron fence and old-fashioned light standards at the rose garden.

### **Vision of a New Boathouse**

A photograph of the old Boathouse with its 1920 mission-style façade was discovered. Bob Stewart was inspired to re-establish boating on the lakes, and sketched his idea for a new building.

Bob asked a team of professionals to volunteer their services to help with the new Boathouse: Dick Frick, Architect; John R. Byerly, Geotechnical Engineer; Neal Smithhammer, Structural Engineer; Tom Topham, Energy Calculation Services; and Jim Montgomery, Landscape Architect. The team worked very closely with Andrew Emery, the Project Manager for the Riverside Park and Recreation Department.

Meeting often with the team and using their expertise, Bob spent many hours envisioning and drafting the numerous detailed sheets that are required for a full blueprint. Dick Frick approved, confirmed, and signed off on the plans as the licensed architect. Bob presented his idea to State Senator Robert Presley in Sacramento to ask for funding. The project received \$600,000 in State Bond Act Grant and Park Development money.

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The Boathouse plans were approved by all necessary boards, commissions, and finally by the City Council. The new Boathouse would go on exactly the same site as the original, where the old 'footprint' and concrete steps had been. The groundbreaking date was May 19, 1994. It had taken more than ten years to get from the dream stage to the actual building. Bob's original rendering of the Boathouse was displayed in the lobby of City Hall for all those years.

### **The 1995 Boathouse**

The new façade replicates the 1920s Mission Revival style with its bell tower and arched openings, but the entire building is unique. There are two entrances. Stairs to the upper level lead to the beautiful Lakeside Room. Its arched doorways open to the wraparound balcony extending over the lake. Outside stairs and a handicap-accessible ramp give access to the balcony as well. A kitchen area serves for catering events in the Lakeside Room, and there are large restrooms.



*Lakeside view of the 1995 boathouse  
Photo courtesy of Pat Stewart.*



*Front view of the 1995 boathouse*

*Photo courtesy of Pat Stewart.*

the original concrete steps from the old Boathouse is at the top of the new steps to the boat landing, and is marked with a plaque

From the lake, the view of the building is of the balcony at the second floor level and the beautiful arched French doors; the lower part is the large entrance into the boat docks and launching area. The night time reflection in the lake of the building with its lights on is spectacular.

The boat concession is at the lower level. There is an office, a storage area, space for the pedal boats, loading dock, and space for the park maintenance boat. The wide doorway to the lake permits the boats access to the water.

To commemorate its beginnings, a portion of

### Construction notes

- The new two-story building is 40' by 82'8".
- Actual construction cost: \$1,050,032, with \$600,000 covered by the state grant. The estimated value of the donations by the architectural team was over \$66,500.
- To keep the water out of the construction site, a coffer dam was constructed so that forms for concrete could be built and kept dry.
- The old concession stand that was located just in front of the old Boathouse was recycled as a construction office for the duration of the project and then demolished.
- The water inside the Boathouse is about 3 feet deep; under it is a stabilizing system made up of alternating layers of geo-grid and gravel. This system forms a stable yet permeable mat-type foundation under the entire building footprint.
- The large bell in the tower is fiberglass.

### Dedication Day

On Boathouse Dedication Day on October 28, 1995, the ribbon was cut by Bob and Pat Stewart, accompanied by Mayor Ron Loveridge and City Councilman Chuck Beaty. The Boathouse Design Team was honored. New paddle boats were launched and piloted by guests. The platform/pontoon boat that Bob had built to use for cleanup, rescue, and lake inspection was also launched that day. It was christened 'Sam Evans.'

A plaque was unveiled with the name "Stewarts Boathouse," much to the surprise of the Stewarts. City officials had quietly decided to honor the man whose dream came true. The plaque named the team of volunteers who made the project possible, and the officials who took part at that time. (Note: 'Stewarts' is plural, for both Bob and Pat, who always worked as a team).

### About Bob

Bob Stewart, a native of Riverside, 'grew up' in beautiful Fairmount Park. Restoration of the park became his passion. Bob led clean-up groups (including many Boy Scout troops), helped rebuild the bandshell, painted the locomotive, and was instrumental in many other improvements to the park. He created a new sense of volunteerism and cooperation. He also left a legacy of numerous other items throughout the city. Bob served on the Park and Recreation Commission for eight years. He held many volunteer positions at the Greater Riverside Chambers



*Bob and Pat Stewart  
Photo courtesy of Pat Stewart.*

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of Commerce. As Chairman of the Beautification Committee, (which became Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful), he established a level of stewardship for which an annual award is given. When he passed away in 2000, the Fairmount Park Citizens Committee disbanded. It had served the city for 20 years.

### Today

Fairmount Park is truly Riverside's treasure. In October 2011, the American Planning Association gave awards to *Great Places in America*. Fairmount Park in the City of Riverside is first on the list of ten *Great Public Spaces*.

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# Reading the Sites: The Japanese-American Community in Riverside<sup>1</sup>

by Erin Gettis, Donna Graves, Catherine Gudis, Sue Hall,  
Kevin Hallaran, Krystal Marquez, and Lynn Voorheis

The history of Riverside, California, is the story of many different groups of people coming together in both conflict and community. Riverside's historic buildings and sites tell a story of civil liberties and more. Here men and women of different backgrounds contested constitutional constraints on the rights of Japanese and Japanese-Americans based on race. Yet these historic places matter not just because of the legal challenges they represent at the state or national level; they matter because they introduce us to people—individuals, families, and communities—who forged a stronger future for themselves and their children.

The heritage of Riverside's Japanese-American population can be found right at street level, if you know where to look. *Reading the Sites: The Japanese-American Community in Riverside* is a guide and introduction to a selection of these historic places. It focuses on some of Riverside's most notable Japanese immigrants—beginning as early as the 1890s—to highlight not only episodes of racial exclusion, discrimination, and conflict, but also inclusion, opportunity, and commemoration.

This walking and driving tour is one of the components of the Japanese-American Heritage and the Quest for Civil Rights in Riverside, California 1890s – 1970s: Reading the Sites project, funded by a State of California Certified Local Government grant. The City of Riverside's Historic Preservation Section collaborated with the Riverside Metropolitan Museum and the Public History Program of the University of California, Riverside (UCR) to conduct an intensive cultural and historic resources survey that identified and explored themes and properties associated with the local, state, and nationally landmarked Harada House. The project puts their Lemon Street house and the story of the Japanese-American family who lived there for over 85 years at the center of a larger National Register Multiple Property Submission aimed at recognizing



*Photograph, Harada House, ca. 1976,  
Riverside Metropolitan Museum Harada Family Collections.*

the role of Japanese-American history in the development of Riverside, the region, and the nation at large. Work on the project included extensive documentation of specific buildings and the people who lived and labored in them, oral histories, and associated educational programming. It is part of the Riverside Historic Preservation Program's continued effort to advance the cause of preservation in the city through the identification and evaluation of potential historic resources.

Research for this project underscores areas in which the history of Riverside's Japanese-American community is similar to other Japantowns on the West Coast. For instance, Nikkei (people of Japanese descent) in Riverside, as elsewhere, were initially employed in agriculture in the late 19th century. Increasingly they came to own businesses, including farms, during the first decades of the 20th century. In addition, Riverside's Japanese-American community shares the unique generational pattern of Issei, Nisei, and Sansei (first-, second-, and third-generation Americans of Japanese descent) created by anti-Japanese immigration laws.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, all of the Japanese-Americans residing in Riverside in 1942 also shared the experience of being forcibly removed and incarcerated during

World War II, alongside over 120,000 other Japanese immigrants and their American-born children throughout the Western United States. Like many Nikkei communities, Riverside never regained its pre-WWII numbers or vitality.

More significantly, this project revealed what is distinctive about local Japanese-American heritage. One unique aspect of Riverside's history is the Harada House and its continuous association with Japanese-American history, beginning with the Harada family's challenge to the 1913 anti-Japanese Alien Land Law and extending through their incarceration during WWII and the decades after. Our work uncovered several other notable aspects of Riverside's Japanese-American history that are unique to the region including its demographic pattern, religious affiliation, and the presence of an unusual number of individuals who were well-known not only within the local Nikkei community but well beyond.

Riverside had an early population peak rather than the continued expansion up to WWII seen in most Japantowns. The City experienced an agricultural flowering in the late 19th century due to the citrus industry that drew thousands of Japanese immigrants to work in the orchards. In addition to these seasonal workers, by 1910 the Japanese population of Riverside was approximately "500 Japanese settlers, including 70 women and 23 children."<sup>3</sup> By 1940 the Nikkei population of Riverside had declined to an estimated population between 250 and 300.<sup>4</sup> Although no documentation was found that allowed a definitive explanation for this phenomenon, the population contraction may be tied to ability of Japanese immigrants to change their early occupations in the local citrus industry to employment in small businesses, simultaneously as an influx of people of Mexican descent began to work in the citrus industry.

Also relatively unusual was the overwhelmingly Christian face of Riverside's Nikkei community. The Japanese Christian church was a central organization. Nearly seventy-five percent of the nation's Nikkei were Buddhist prior to WWII, but Japanese in Riverside were overwhelmingly Christian. Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, Riverside's established Methodist and Congregational churches sponsored missions to organize services for Japanese working in the citrus industry.

Finally, Riverside is notable for the number of prominent individuals who drew attention of Nikkei and non-Nikkei for their achievements

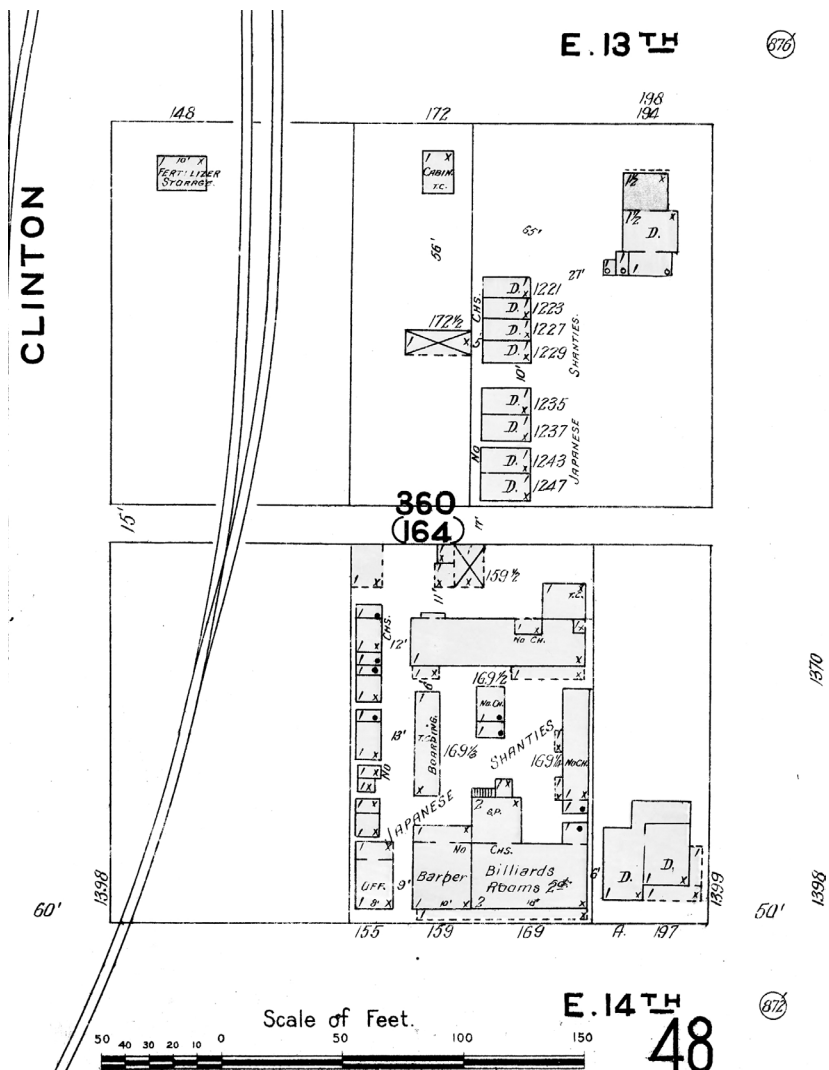
or their engagement with significant civil rights issues. The Harada House is first and foremost among the sites associated with these Nikkei. One of only thirteen National Historic Landmarks (NHL) associated with Japanese-American heritage in the United States (seven of them in California), the Harada House is the only NHL associated with the historical experiences of an individual family, rather than the broad arcs of Japanese-American history such as settlement and WWII incarceration. The Haradas' heroic struggle for civil rights and the home they fought to live in were the subject of great attention during their battle to purchase and remain on Lemon Street. Few Japanese immigrants received the national press coverage and attention from the legal community as Jukichi and Ken Harada. The overwhelming number of Issei were hard-working immigrants struggling to establish themselves and their families in the United States. Instances of Issei fame, such as the Haradas, were quite unusual. It is remarkable then, that two other Riverside residents of Japanese descent, businessman Ulysses Shinsei Kaneko, who was one of the first Japanese naturalized citizens in California, and acclaimed artist Miné Okubo also received widespread attention (as will be discussed here shortly).

While Riverside's contribution to Japanese-American history at local, statewide, and national levels has been established through the significance of the Harada House National Historic Landmark, this larger project provides an in-depth context through which to anchor and enlarge the story. It documents historic themes and sites associated with the establishment and development of Riverside's Japanese-American community, early 20th century anti-Japanese campaigns and legislation, the dramatic break in community continuity represented by WWII incarceration, and post-war resettlement. In so doing, the project overall strengthens our understandings of how anti-Japanese legislation, particularly the 1913 California Alien Land Law and Executive Order 9066 (authorizing internment in 1942), affected broad patterns of social and urban development. It also brings to life the struggles for civil liberties and civil rights engaged by racial minorities seeking to assume their rightful place in the American landscape.

In order to share the findings of this intensive level survey with an extended community—not just those in Riverside but in the larger region and nation—the walking/driving tour and a video podcast will be made available online. Other opportunities to continue public outreach efforts and educational programming will be engaged in the coming months and years. For the purposes of this introduction to the tour, we highlight below the history of select sites that help narrate the larger stories of race and civil rights in Riverside.

Incorporated in 1883, the City of Riverside had a business district located in the heart of the original “Mile Square” town site, while an additional thirty-three square miles were divided into small farm lots. Early agricultural crops grown successfully in the Riverside area were vineyards of raisin grapes, alfalfa, hay, and stone fruits. These agricultural successes were soon supplanted by citrus production. After the arrival of the Washington navel orange, first cultivated in Riverside by pioneers Eliza and Luther Tibbets in 1873, it soon became apparent that the ideal crop had been found for the climate and soil of Riverside. Most Japanese immigrants picked oranges and lemons in the groves and packed fruit in packinghouses.

Many Japanese citrus workers lived in employer-provided camps. Some lived in Casa Blanca. Others found shelter east of downtown’s Mile Square in structures on either side of Fourteenth Street across the Southern Pacific railroad and marked as “Japanese Shanties” in the 1908 Sanborn map. The Sanborn map depicting Fourteenth Street shows two boardinghouses and approximately ten buildings of attached housing units along with an office, barber shop, two billiard rooms, and four stores. No photographs of these blocks have been found, but the map describes wood-frame buildings, primarily of one story, though three establishments at 159-169, 152-54 and 162 E. Fourteenth Street were all of two stories. This collection of structures and uses typifies the environments that supported the bachelor culture of early Issei immigrants; later, families and other immigrant groups resided, visited, and worked here as well. Residents of these “shanties” presumably worked at packinghouses and groves nearby, including those owned by the Penn Fruit Company and Pachappa Orange Growers Association just to the west across the



*Detail showing Japantown, Riverside California, 1908 Sanborn Map, page 41.  
Riverside Metropolitan Museum Archives Collection.*

railroad tracks. Fourteenth Street was at the core of Riverside's former Japantown, which stretched south to Cottage and between Pachappa (today's Commerce Street) and Park Avenue, representing one of the early, significant Japanese immigrant settlements in Riverside, none of the structures indicated on the 1908 Sanborn map.

Within a short time, the thousands of Japanese who worked seasonally in Riverside's orchards were joined by permanent residents. These Issei sought homes, established businesses, and worked at the Mission Inn. Jukichi and Ken Harada arrived in Riverside in 1905. Six months after California legislators passed the 1913 Alien Land Law, the Haradas' five-year-old son died

from diphtheria, which his parents attributed to the cramped, unhealthy conditions of their second-floor quarters in a rooming house they occupied and ran at the corner of Orange and Eighth Streets. Jukichi and Ken resolved to find a better home to raise their family. As a native of Japan prohibited from becoming

a U.S. citizen, Harada was prevented from owning property under the California Alien Land Law of 1913, a culmination of anti-Asian activism throughout the West that began decades earlier, and was a legacy of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Jukichi purchased the house on Lemon Street in the names of his minor American-born children – Mine, Sumi, and Yoshizo—in December of 1915, with a loan from the First National Bank in Riverside. The Harada House became the center of the case *The People of the State of California v. Jukichi Harada*.

A group of residents in the Haradas' new neighborhood organized a committee even before the sale was finalized to try to convince the family that they were not welcome on Lemon Street. Cynthia Robinson, one



*Photograph, Harada Family Portrait, c. 1926.  
Riverside Metropolitan Museum  
Harada Family Collections.*



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of the six committee members who lived on Lemon Street, spread word among the neighbors that a Japanese family would be moving in, which led to the formation of the committee. Yet she eventually befriended the Haradas and, by the time of her court testimony, described them as kindly and good neighbors. The committee hired Riverside lawyer, Miguel Estudillo, to handle their case, which was joined by the state deputy attorney general from Los Angeles. Estudillo, a Californio, was appointed Clerk to the newly formed Riverside County Board of Supervisors in 1893. He was elected a member of the California Assembly in 1904, and elected to the State Senate in 1908.

Harada was represented by the Riverside law firm of Purington and Adair, which had offices in Riverside's downtown Loring Building. A. Aird Adair, a Canadian who moved to Riverside in 1890, helped found the National Bank of Riverside and in 1906 was elected Board President. William A. Purington came to Riverside in 1889 from Chicago. He was appointed city attorney from 1893 to 1909 and was on the board that created Riverside's charter in 1907. Perhaps most pertinent to the Harada case was his leadership role in the First Congregational Church, and his wife Eva's activities with the Women's Missionary Society and the Japanese Mission Church. The Puringtons appear to have been allied with Mission Inn founder Frank Miller in their leadership of the Church and his support for Riverside's Japanese community.

Four months after the trial began in May 1918, Riverside County Superior Court Judge Hugh Craig decided in favor of the Haradas based on the constitutional rights of their American-born children. Motions from the State to move for a new trial were met by a denial from Judge Craig, whose decision on the "internationally famous Japanese land case" was printed in the Riverside Daily Press in January 1919. However, Judge Hugh Craig did not question the constitutionality of the Alien Land Law.

With the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, America's entry into WWII and the subsequent signing of Executive Order 9066 the Harada family members along with 120,000 others of Japanese descent were forcibly removed to internment camps. The Haradas were fortunate that Jess Stebler, a Caucasian friend, agreed to stay in their home and manage



their affairs throughout WWII. Their daughter Sumi Harada returned in 1945 to live in the house—opening it as temporary boarding for other returning Nikkei—until her death in 2000.

Harada family members deeded the house, family archives, and collections to the City of Riverside under the stewardship of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum in 2004/2005, which continues to ensure the preservation and interpretation of the site and collections. The Harada House is on the National Register of Historic Places and is located in the Heritage Square Historic District and is a National Historic Landmark.

The Haradas were members of a community of Japanese-Americans in Riverside who faced some challenges common to all United States immigrants, and others specific to newcomers from Asia and particularly Japan. In contrast to other immigrants whose rising numbers were reshaping the United States in the latter decades of the 19th century and early years of the twentieth, federal law prohibited Asian immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens. Naturalized citizenship was limited by 1790 law to “free white person(s)” and by the 1870 revision to that law, extended to “persons of Africa nativity or descent.” Yet from the beginning of Japanese immigration, Issei attempted to become naturalized Americans. Riverside was home to one of the most prominent of these early Issei citizens. Ulysses Shinsei Kaneko was among the first Japanese immigrants to achieve this status. He went on to become a prominent businessman and community leader who had an unusual ability to straddle social, business, and political circles within the Japanese and Caucasian communities.

U.S. Kaneko was listed as a restaurant owner in the 1898 Riverside City Directory at 750



*Photograph, Kaneko Family, ca. 1910.  
Riverside Metropolitan Museum  
Harada Family Collections.*

Eighth Street, and by 1905 had established the Golden State Hotel and Café at 634 Eighth Street in the Roosevelt Building (3616-1638 University Avenue). Jukichi and Ken Harada first worked for U.S. Kaneko at the Golden State Hotel before operating the Washington Restaurant. Census records show that the hotel primarily served Kaneko's large family, with a few rooms let to other Japanese immigrants. Given the small number of Japanese in Riverside, and their presumably meager wages, it is not surprising that one account notes that the café's clientele included many "Caucasians."

U.S. Kaneko immigrated to the United States in the late 1880s from Japan. He arrived in San Francisco with a group of students and worked as a "schoolboy" performing live-in domestic help for wealthy families in San Jose and San Francisco while studying English. After marrying in 1890, Kaneko accompanied the Mead or Meet family to Redlands. Sometime in that decade, Kaneko purchased land and a house on Center Street in San Bernardino and started growing oranges. According to a 1940 history by the Japanese Association, "This is considered the first of all the Japanese to purchase land in Southern California."<sup>5</sup>

Kaneko applied to become a citizen in 1892 and was granted citizenship four years later by Superior Court Judge George Otis in San Bernardino. He reportedly was able to travel abroad with an American passport. In addition to running the Golden State Hotel and Café, Kaneko worked as an auditor for the city, a translator for the courts, served on the grand jury, and was elected to the Board of the Riverside Chamber of Commerce -- in sum a very unusual degree of integration for a Japanese immigrant in the early 20th century. In addition, he reportedly served as the first President of the Riverside Japanese Association in 1905.

Despite Kaneko's ability to assimilate into Riverside society, his citizenship was challenged in 1914 by a U.S. District Attorney based on the argument that the judge was in "error" in granting him naturalized status eighteen years prior. Although the Los Angeles *Times* speculated that the case might mean that Kaneko and his eldest son's citizenship could be forfeited, and that "the future rights of the Japanese may be determined," the case was dismissed making Kaneko the only Japanese-American naturalized citizen whose status was confirmed in court.

In 1910 Jukichi and Ken Harada purchased a restaurant next to the Asami Barbershop on Eighth Street across from Kaneko's restaurant. A previous Japanese proprietor, T. Ohashi, had named the establishment Washington Restaurant, after the first American president. As the Haradas built a life around the Washington Restaurant and the rooming houses they operated, these sites testified to their commitment to putting down family roots in Riverside. In addition to a portrait of George Washington, a 1915 menu from the restaurant showed an array of American dishes, with nothing but a 5 cent serving

of boiled rice reflecting any aspect of Japanese culinary tradition. The menu also shows that the restaurant's hours were from 5 AM to 8 PM, and that rooms were available for rent at 25 cents per day. Like Kaneko and the other Nikkei business owners in Riverside, the Haradas relied on a combination of employing fellow Japanese immigrants and family labor to run their businesses, which needed to serve a broader range of customers than Nikkei proprietors in larger Japantowns. The Haradas operated the restaurant at 643 Eighth Street (in a building still extant at 3643 University Avenue) until 1925 when they relocated to 638 Ninth Street. Five years later, the Haradas moved their business to 541 Eighth



*Photograph, Washington Restaurant staff and patrons. Jukichi Harada stands behind his children, Masa Atsu and Mine, ca. 1910.*

*Riverside Metropolitan Museum  
Harada Family Collections.*

## BREAKFAST AND SHORT ORDERS

**BREAKFAST AND SHORT ORDERS**  
Open from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Short Orders at All Hours

**ALL MEAT ORDERS** Include Bread, Butter, Potatoes, Cup of Coffee, Tea, Orange Kola, or Milk. Chocolate 5 Cents Extra. Mush and Hot Cakes Free with Breakfast

Open from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### Short Orders at All Hours

ALL Meat Orders Include Bread, Butter, Potatoes, Cup of Coffee,  
Tea, Orange Kola, or Milk. Chocolate 5 Cents Extra.

STEAKS, CHOPS, ETC.

15	Veal Cutlets, breaded	25
20	Pork Steak	25
25	Pork Sausage	25
30	Hamburger Steak	25
35	Steak au Gratin	25
40	Steak au Oignons	25
45	Lamb Chops	25
50	Pork Chops	25
55	Ham and Eggs	25
60	Roast Chicken	25
65	Fried Bacon	25
70	Bacon and Eggs	25
75	Liver and Bacon	25
80	Pudding	25
85	Fried Potatoes	25
90	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
95	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
100	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
105	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
110	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
115	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
120	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
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555	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25
560	Fried Potatoes 56 and extra	25

## EGGS AND OMELETTES

Two Eggs, Fried.....	15	Plain Omelette.....	15
" Boiled.....	15	Parsley Omelette.....	20
" Scrambled.....	15	Jelly Omelette.....	20
" Poached.....	20	Cheese Omelette.....	20
Two Eggs, Poached on Toast.....	20	Spanish Omelette.....	25
" Shirred.....	15	Bacon Omelette.....	25

## CAKES, TOAST AND CEREALS

[illegible]

## PASTRY

Pie.....	\$	Four Doughnuts.....	\$
Rolls.....	¢	Rolls.....	¢

21 MEAL TICKET \$3.00

## Lunches Put Up 15 Cents

**CHICKEN DINNER SERVED EVERY SUNDAY**

**ROOMS 25 Cents per Day and Up, \$1.50 per Week and Up**

### Inquire of Cashier or Waiter

WASHINGTON  
RESTAURANT

J. HARADA, Proprietor

Open from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Prompt and Courteous Service

DINNER. 15c. and Up

DINNER 15c and Up

Dinner includes bowl of Soup, and one cup of Coffee, Tea, Milk, or Orange Kola and one order of Dessert. Chocolate, 5c extra. Side Dish of Meat or Fish, 10c extra and Up. Extra orders of Dessert or Milk, 5c extra.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

101

**our**

**FISH**

**Fresh Oysters in Any Style, 25 Cents**

COILED

ENTREES

COASTS

ork, 15

## SSERT

Lamb with Dressing, 150

5

### Boiled Rice, 5c

**CHICKEN DINNER SERVED EVERY SUNDAY**

BOOMS 25 Cents per Day and 1 lb. \$1.50 per Week and 1 lb.

**Inquire of Cashier or Waiter**

Street (razed), from which they, and later their children Sumi and Harold, managed affairs until WWII internment.

In the same immediate neighborhood was the Mission Inn. There, owner and operator Frank Miller employed Japanese immigrants as maids, kitchen help, and gardeners in the first decades of the 20th century. A number of the Mission Inn's Japanese employees lived at the Mission Inn Annex—a Spanish eclectic styled structure originally built in 1921. Today this structure contributes to the National Historic Landmark Mission Inn and is located in downtown's Mission Inn Historic District.

Miller, who owned the Mission Inn from 1880 to 1935, was very supportive of the Japanese and Japanese-American community in Riverside. Miller, who added numerous Japanese design features to his hotel, personified the “Japanophile” movement of educated Americans enamored with Japanese culture. In his case, Issei employees of the Mission Inn who worked in the kitchen, restaurant, and gardens reinforced Miller's connection to Japanese culture. As a leader of Riverside's First Congregational Church, Miller helped to establish the Japanese Methodist Church in 1901 and four years later helped with the founding of the local Japanese Association by offering funds and a place to meet at the Mission Inn. The Mission Inn's prominence as a gathering place for the most powerful organizations and leaders residing in, or visiting, Riverside reinforces the level of respect and acceptance Miller sought to confer on the local Japanese community.

Miller was active in networks attempting to counter the anti-Japanese movement and made speeches throughout California against passage of the 1913 Alien Land Law. Mine Harada Kido, eldest daughter of Jukichi and Ken Harada, remembered that Frank Miller helped her father when he was contemplating buying their Lemon Street home. Mine said that Ed Miller, Frank's brother, offered to purchase the house for the Haradas in his own name.

Miller continued to champion Japanese causes and culture, hosting annual Girls' and Boys' Day ceremonies for the entire Nikkei community and organizing elaborate banquets when Japanese dignitaries traveled through Southern California. The Japanese Emperor awarded Miller the





*Photograph, Frank Miller Receiving the Order of the Rising Star Ceremony,  
Mission Inn, Riverside, California, 1929.*

*Riverside Metropolitan Museum Archives Collection.*

Small Order of the Rising Sun in 1925, the same year the local community honored his international accomplishments with a Friendship Bridge, Peace Tower, and Japanese garden on Mt. Rubidoux. Although the project's leadership appears to have been all White, the Riverside Japanese Association made the largest single donation toward construction costs. Members of the Japanese community planted and maintained a "peace garden" at the base of the bridge.

Alongside churches, Japanese language schools, or *gakuen*, were the institutions most central to Japanese communities across the West Coast. Because parents' acquisition of English was generally quite limited, one of the *gakuen*'s roles was to support better communication between parents and children. More importantly, these institutions helped transmit cultural identity and practices to American born children. Yet, Nikkei educators were aware that Japanese schools were a sensitive subject in the

context of continuous anti-Japanese activism in the West. But gakuen held a far more important role in the community than a space devoted to training the younger generation in how to read and write in Japanese. As numbers of Nisei grew, special programs and performances were organized by students to demonstrate their new-found skills to parents. Issei and Nisei recalled community gatherings at the Riverside language schools for commemorative and holiday events.

The only remaining example of the approximately three or four gakuen originally in Riverside is the Lincoln Street Gakuen in the Casa Blanca area, which had another cluster of Japanese-American family residences and businesses. According to city building permits, the structure was erected by the Riverside Japanese Association in 1940. It included a large classroom, two bathrooms, and a kitchen. It hosted programs including plays, holiday events, lectures, and later, monthly screenings of Japanese movies. It is unclear exactly when the Lincoln Street Japanese language school was revived after WWII, but the building did serve as temporary housing for a number Japanese-Americans resettling in the Riverside community after the war. In a 1960 *Riverside Press-Enterprise* article, Gyosuke Iseda claimed credit for reviving the language school sometime in the early 1950s, in response to his own son's poor command of Japanese. The same account stated that classes included Nisei, Sansei, and "a few Anglo Americans."

The Japanese Navy's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, abruptly ended the communities established by Japanese immigrants in the Western United States. By and large, most Japanese-Americans, particularly the Nisei, considered themselves loyal Americans. None of the Issei or their American-born children was ever found guilty of sabotage or espionage. Within a few weeks of Pearl Harbor, Riverside's Nisei submitted a testimonial of their allegiance to the United States at a City Council meeting. Local Issei took a similar step during the first week of January 1942 stating that "Most of us are parents of American citizens. We have been living in America many years; long enough to be American citizens—if the United States law allowed. Yet now here we are technically aliens, but in reality American citizens. Therefore, again, we assure you our unquestioned loyalty to our adopted country, and will

do our best to serve her, not only in words, but in spirit and conduct as well.”<sup>6</sup> Yet wartime hysteria focused on Japanese-Americans throughout the Western States. On March 11th, over seventy county, state and federal officials arrested twenty-eight Riverside Issei, including a forty-four-year-old widow named Mrs. Takaji Koto.

On February 19, 1942, the lives of tens of thousands of Japanese-Americans were upended when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. This order led to the forced relocation and imprisonment of all men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast of the United States. In a little over 4 months, more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were forced from their homes and interned by the government under the guise of national security. During the years 1942 to 1945, Japanese-Americans were imprisoned in remotely sited concentration camps.

From Saturday May 23rd to the morning of Monday, May 25th, 1942, Riverside’s Nikkei were required to appear at the Evacuation Location at the corner of Fifth and Main Street for transport to Poston, Arizona. Several oral histories of Riverside Nisei recount the coffee and doughnuts that some non-Japanese Riverside women brought, as if to take the sting from the painful departure. There they boarded Greyhound buses and were transported to their “reception center” in Poston, Arizona. Most were imprisoned for the remainder of WWII.

Riverside-born Japanese-American artist, author, and civil liberties proponent Miné Okubo is nationally renowned for sharing her experiences of incarceration during WWII. Okubo’s father, a merchant and gardener, and her mother who had studied calligraphy and painting at Tokyo Art Institute, raised Miné with six brothers and sisters in the Okubo home on 11th Street in Riverside’s Eastside area. Both Miné and her older brother Benji had extensive formal art training before WWII. Benji taught art to other internees at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center Art Students League. While imprisoned at Topaz Relocation Center in Utah, Miné taught art classes for children and worked on the camp newspaper, the Topaz Times. She also collaborated with other Nisei to publish a literary journal called Trek, for which she served as arts editor. Another Nisei artist from Riverside, Alfred Sawahata, contributed drawings.



**WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY  
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**

Presidio of San Francisco, California  
May 3, 1942

**INSTRUCTIONS  
TO ALL PERSONS OF  
JAPANESE  
ANCESTRY**

**Living in the Following Area:**

All of that portion of the City of Los Angeles, State of California, within that boundary beginning at the point at which North Figueroa Street meets a line following the middle of the Los Angeles River; thence easterly and following the said line to East First Street; thence westerly on East First Street to Alameda Street; thence easterly on Alameda Street to East Third Street; thence northerly on East Third Street to Main Street; thence northerly on Main Street to First Street; thence northerly on First Street to Figueroa Street; thence northerly on Figueroa Street to the point of beginning.

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 33, this Headquarters, dated May 3, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, P. M. T., Saturday, May 9, 1942.

No Japanese person living in the above area will be permitted to change residence after 12 o'clock noon, P. M. T., Sunday, May 3, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the representative of the Commanding General, Southern California Sector, at the Civil Control Station located at:

Japanese Union Church,  
120 North San Pedro Street,  
Los Angeles, California.

Such permits will only be granted for the purpose of visiting members of a family, or in cases of grave emergency. The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property, such as real estate, business and professional equipment, household goods, boats, automobile and livestock.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residence.

**The following instructions must be observed:**

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Monday, May 4, 1942, or between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Tuesday, May 5, 1942.
2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Assembly Center, the following property:
  - (a) Bedding and linens (no mattresses) for each member of the family;
  - (b) Toilet articles for each member of the family;
  - (c) Extra clothing for each member of the family;
  - (d) Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls and cups for each member of the family;
  - (e) Essential personal effects for each member of the family.
 All items carried will be securely packaged, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.
3. No pets of any kind will be permitted.
4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.
5. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage, at the sole risk of the owner, of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted for storage if crated, packed and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.
6. Each family, and individual living alone, will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center or will be authorized to travel by private automobile in a supervised group. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

**Go to the Civil Control Station between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., Monday, May 4, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., Tuesday, May 5, 1942, to receive further instructions.**

J. L. DeWITT  
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

100 CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDER NO. 33

Copyright © National Historical, Visual, Communications Foundation, P.O. Box 200, Riverside, California 92502

*Instructions to All Persons of  
Japanese Ancestry, 1942.  
Riverside Metropolitan  
Museum Harada Family  
Collections.*

*Evacuation Location,  
5th and Main Streets,  
Riverside, CA.*



## Journal of the Riverside Historical Society

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*Citizen 13660*, the first published record of internment camp life by a Japanese-American, began as Okubo's ink drawings of daily scenes in Tanforan Assembly Center and Topaz Relocation Center.<sup>7</sup> The book, with a title from her camp identification number, expressed how stunned Okubo was at her circumstances. "We were in shock. You'd be in shock. You'd be bewildered. You'd be humiliated. You can't believe this is happening to you. To think this could happen in the United States. We were citizens. We did nothing. It was only because of our race."<sup>8</sup>

As War Relocation Centers closed after the war, some families chose to return to Riverside, including the Isedas, Takedas, and Senamatsus, whose homes still stand today. Sumi Harada went first to Chicago but she returned to Riverside in 1945 despite having received an offer to sell the family house on Lemon Street. Sumi recalled later, "I'm glad I had someplace to come back to. It's home. There's no other place."<sup>9</sup> Housing and jobs were in short supply for returnees. Sumi Harada, for instance, no longer had the Washington Restaurant to run as the family had been forced to sell it in 1942 at a significant loss. Instead, she served as a maid to several of Riverside's wealthy families.



*Photograph, L to R Sumi Harada, Michiko Yoshimura, Mine Okubo, Emily Ogawa, and Yoshiko Hirata, 1974. Riverside Metropolitan Museum Harada Family Collections.*

In the following decades, the Japanese-American Citizens League's National Committee for Redress (formed in 1976), the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (1980), and the Seattle-based National Council for Japanese-American Redress (1979) were three national organizations to lead the fight for redress and reparations. These organizations pressured legislative and judicial branches of the U.S. government and in 1980 Congress authorized the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) to investigate the impact of the internment program and suggest appropriate remedies. Miné Okubo provided testimony at these 1981 hearings in New York City, describing her experience of forced relocation and imprisonment, and her work as an artist to depict those years in simple language. Okubo brought a selection of her sketches and paintings and set them up for display in the rear of the chamber. She also presented a copy of Citizen 13660 and a wartime article from *Fortune* magazine that she illustrated, titled "Issei, Nisei, Kibei," which she described to the Commission as "one of the first illustrated articles that came out" on the topic in a national publication. After the war, Miné Okubo did not return to her childhood home or to Riverside, although she continued to keep in touch with Riverside friends, including Sumi Harada. She bequeathed a large collection of her papers and artwork to her alma mater, Riverside City College, which will house them and related exhibitions at the Riverside Community College District's Center for Social Justice and Civil Liberties.

The Harada House and other historic places that are documented in the printed and podcast versions of the tour (of which only a handful are represented here) provide a remarkable starting point for exploring the history not only of the Japanese-American community in Riverside, but also the ways in which race, civil liberties, and civil rights are inscribed on the landscape. The themes of the Harada story and the community at large are woven into the fabric of the City itself, whether tied to the locations of historical events or to the historical actors who bring them keenly to life. Please look for the complete tour brochure at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum and additional documentation of the project in the near future on the Museum's website, (<http://www.riversideca.gov/museum/haradahouse/>) and help us continue Reading the Sites.

## Journal of the Riverside Historical Society

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1. All the information for this article was excerpted from the Final Report materials sent to the State Office of Historic Preservation for the City of Riverside CLG Grant 2010/2011. These include the 1) City of Riverside, CLG Grant 2010/2011 Japanese American Heritage and the Quest for Civil Rights in Riverside, California 1890s-1970s, and Reading the Sites, Final Performance Report September 30, 2011 and 2) Donna Graves, Japanese American Heritage and the Quest for Civil Rights in Riverside, California, 1890s-1970s National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, 2011. These materials include research and State Historic Resources inventory forms completed by the following graduate students in UCR's Public History Program: Michelle An, Jennifer Collier, Oceana Collins, Stephen Duncan, Susan Hall, Martin Jones, Elliott Kim, Michelle Lorimer, Sarah Provo, Karen Raines, Jennifer Thornton, Jennifer Wilson, Susan Wood, Zita Worley, Rebecca Wrenn, and Shaina Wright.
2. First-generation Japanese immigrants, or Issei, were overwhelmingly male, due to immigration laws and custom. The 1907-08 Gentleman's Agreement—the result of negotiations between Japan and the United States in the face of virulent opposition towards Japanese, particularly in California—curtailed immigration of Japanese laborers but permitted wives and children. The 1924 National Origins Act ended all immigration from Japan. This sequence of restrictive immigration laws created an unusual generational structure for the Japanese American population, including those in Riverside—one age group for the original immigrants, another for their children, and yet another for grandchildren (Sansei).
3. *History of Japanese in America*. Originally published by the Japanese Association as Zaibei Nipponjin-Shi, 1940. English translation in collection of Japanese American Historical Archives, San Francisco. Hereafter referred to as HIJA.
4. *Ibid.*
5. HIJA records the purchase as dated October 1891. However, Morrison Wong writes that it occurred in 1897, Morrison Gideon Wong, "The Japanese in Riverside, 1890-1945: A Special Case in Race Relations" PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 1977), 43.
6. The *Arlington Times* (Arlington, California), January 9, 1942, 3.
7. Miné Okubo. *Citizen 13660* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1946)
8. Gordon Chang, Mark Dean Johnson and Paul J. Karlstrom. *Asian American Art: A History, 1850-1970* (Stanford University Press, 2008), p. 408.
9. Sumi Harada, interview by Mark H. Rawitsch, Riverside, California, 2003, transcript in collection of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, 25.

## Parks Family-Early Jurupa Pioneers

*by Kim Jarrell Johnson*

The early pioneers in the Jurupa area were an amazingly diverse group of people from all over the world. Arthur and Mary Ann Parks were the first to move their family to the Rubidoux area after Louis Robidoux began selling off parts of his Robidoux Rancho. They were the type of pioneers we can marvel at from distance of over 150 years. What they had to endure to finally arrive here is amazing.

Arthur Parks and his wife Mary Ann were both born in England in 1823. While still in their early twenties they encountered Mormon missionaries who had come to England from America to spread the word of their church. Apparently the Parks' liked what they heard as they converted to Mormonism and decided to go to Utah. The young family, both parents just 25 years old with two children under the age of four, boarded a ship early in 1848 to come to America.

The ship docked in Georgia. The young family stayed there just a short time before heading to New Orleans and then up the Mississippi River towards St. Louis. While on their journey they heard that a terrible cholera epidemic was raging in St. Louis so they decided to stop at a place called Frenchtown. There they lived for three years, waiting for the epidemic to run its course. While in Frenchtown their third child was born in 1850. In 1851, they made it to St. Louis where they joined a wagon train for Salt Lake City, Utah.

After arriving in Salt Lake City, Arthur helped build the Mormon Tabernacle and played organ for church services. He soon became an elder in the church. He was approached by church officials who informed him it was time for him to take a second



*Arthur Parks*

*Courtesy Kim Jarrell Johnson*

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wife. This news did not set well with his wife Mary Ann and Arthur refused to take another wife. Because of this refusal to follow church orders, the Parks family was banished from Salt Lake City to Cedar City where they lived for the next two years. Their fourth child was born there in 1853.

When a wagon train came along that was heading for a place in Southern California called San Bernardino, Arthur and Mary Ann decided to leave behind the primitive conditions in Cedar City and head out on another long journey. The wagon train arrived in San Bernardino a week before Christmas 1855, and the Parks' fifth child was born January 17, 1856. One can only imagine how hard this journey was on Mary Ann, pregnant and only four foot, eleven inches tall.

The family continued to live in San Bernardino for over 10 years. San Bernardino was a town founded by Mormon colonists. However, in 1857 Brigham Young recalled the Mormons to Salt Lake City. The Parks chose not to return.

On February 16, 1867, Arthur Parks bought fifty acres of land from Louis Robidoux for \$500. He purchased another 60 acres from Louis's son Pasqual on May 8th. The price for that land was also \$500. The Parks family then set about having adobe bricks made for their new home. The land Arthur purchased was north of Mission Boulevard in the vicinity of Avalon Street. The home they built was on what is now 34th Street.

Almost a year to the day later, Arthur was appointed Road Supervisor for the San Salvador District, which included Jurupa. By this point Arthur had also become a self taught attorney. He studied law on his own and passed the California Bar exam. He acted as attorney and land agent for Louis Robidoux during the last years of Robidoux's life. In 1869, the Jurupa School District was formed. Arthur became one of three school board members and served in that capacity for over 10 years.

In 1870 an organization known as the Southern California Colony association bought property across the Santa Ana River from the rural community that had grown from the former Robidoux Rancho. As the only attorney in the area, Arthur began handling law business for the



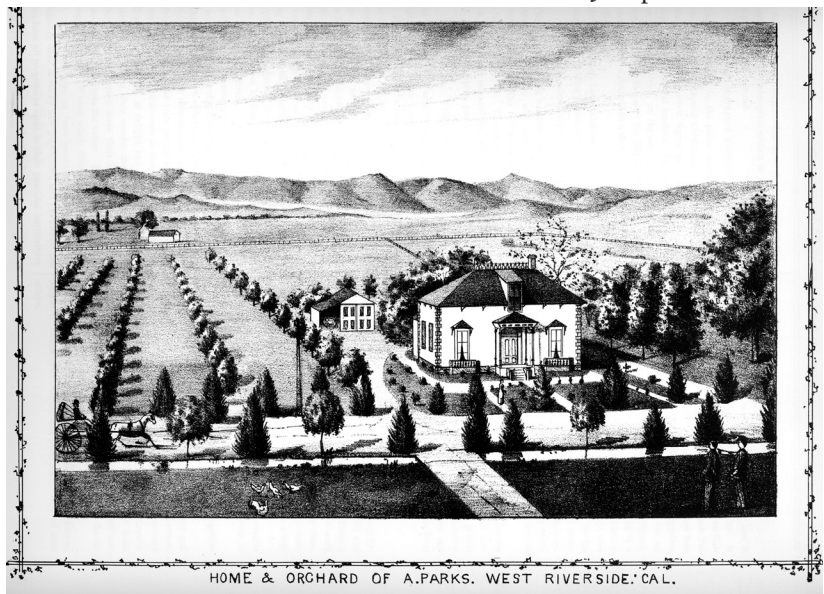
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people who came to settle in that new town. But the law was only part of his life. He continued to live a rural life and work his land in Jurupa. There is a story that Arthur lost most of his sheep in the surprise snow-storm of January 14, 1882.

The Parks family added a large wooden addition to the front of their home in about 1875. A drawing was done of the home in 1883, which appeared in the *History of San Bernardino and San Diego Counties* by Wallace W. Elliot. It shows a fine home with columns flanking the front door and a dormer window above it. The home was demolished in 1974.

Mary Ann died in 1889. Arthur remarried. His second wife was Emma Crowder. She was a cook at a marble quarry in Colton. When Arthur died in 1894, he left his home to his second wife.

Arthur and Mary Ann had eight children and twenty-three grandchildren. Some of their descendents still live in the Jurupa area.



*Copy of engraving of Arthur Parks' home and orchard, from Wallace Elliot's  
History of San Bernardino and San Diego Counties, 1883*

*Courtesy Steve Lech*

# **Upton Sinclair in Riverside: Charting a Research Cul-de-Sac**

*by Andrew Howe*

Too often, historical research is tantamount to drudgery. Sorting through the stacks, reading the indices and flipping through the pages, the payoff is too often deferred. However, it is that bolt of lightning, the moment whereby a cultural connection suddenly stands illuminated on the page that makes the hours of tedium so worthwhile. As one invested in research, I live for these moments, where the words suddenly coalesce out of the fog of indifference, at the priceless nugget of information that has been unearthed. These exhilarating moments motivate me to continue when I transfer yet another book to the ever growing stack of spent sources and unfulfilled promise. During these low moments, I imagine myself as an early California gold miner, perhaps having situated myself just down creek from Sutter's Mill. I envision that my relentless attack upon the pile of books before me is akin to the process of swirling the muddy water in the pan, hoping to see a glint of enlightenment. I manage to forget just how rarely miners historically struck gold; the possibility of a major find is what keeps me going. And even dead ends in research can be interesting as they serve to alleviate the boredom, as the cul-de-sacs that slam the door on promise can themselves be fascinating. For instance, I have recently been involved in archiving the research notes of Dr. Frederick Hoyt, Emeritus Professor of History at La Sierra University and resident of Riverside since 1935. During the course of this project, I ran across several interesting files that, although they didn't result in publication, no doubt provided the historian with a few hours of intrigue. One file, cryptically titled "U. S. Navy – Ketchup," contained information on how much ketchup was ordered annually by the navy, as well as synonyms used by sailors to denote the condiment (i.e. "red lead").



I myself have been engaged in such a research project, hoping what at this point appears to be a cul-de-sac will eventually allow for a breakthrough into a wider boulevard. Several years ago, Dr. Fred Hoyt told me that Upton Sinclair spent a year or two living in the Riverside area and was rumored to dine in the cafeteria of La Sierra College (later known as the Riverside campus of Loma Linda University and, eventually, La Sierra University). Just this quickly, I had a new research project: I was going to find evidence to support the claim that Upton Sinclair had set foot on university property! This assertion made sense; although he was born in Maryland and died in New Jersey, Sinclair spent much of his life in California. Furthermore, given his well-known antipathy for various meat products, famously chronicled in his 1906 work *The Jungle*, it would make sense that he would seek out a cafeteria that served only vegetarian fare, as is the case at La Sierra. Surely, having such a venerable literary and political figure grace the school where I teach would make for an interesting article. But would the evidence necessarily follow? A Sunday afternoon spent looking through old student newspapers turned up nothing. As is often the case, the excitement of the project began to wane, drawn against a realization that I was unlikely to find a smoking gun. The local Riverside newspaper, the *Press-Enterprise*, does not have an online database extending back far enough, and I just couldn't bring myself to go through daily issues during the thirty-year period after the formation of the university in 1922 but before Sinclair's move to Arizona in the 1950s. I thus turned to historical biographies, and after a few dead ends my feelings of despair were even more pronounced when I came across a reference to Riverside. In Lauren Coodley's work *The Land of Orange Groves and Jails*, the following appeared:

He drove until he was in the orange country. He stopped at a town called Riverside—but its river was dry; he put up at a hotel called the Mission Inn—but there was no mission, only a museum full of California curiosities. He had a good sleep, and then drove through miles and miles of orange and lemon groves, laden with golden and yellow fruit (Coodley, pg. 142).

Although interesting, this passage was not what I was hoping to find. My heart sank, as I envisioned that the bulk of Sinclair's stay in Riverside was spent asleep. He could have stopped off for lunch at the university, but this did not square with what I had heard about his daily visits to the cafeteria. Just when I was starting to consider abandoning the project, I suddenly had a break. In Sinclair's 1962 version of his autobiography (as opposed to other versions, in which he was silent about this part of his life), he mentioned living in Arlington in 1946 and Corona in 1947. I now had personal testimony as to his presence in the area, and knowledge of the university seemed to be demonstrated in another tidbit of information I found in a biography by William A. Bloodworth Jr. This source claimed that the heroine of one of Sinclair's books, *Another Pamela*, was Seventh-day Adventist, the religious affiliation of La Sierra University since its founding. I now had Sinclair living within a few miles and publishing a novel with an Adventist heroine. However, I still could not place him physically on campus, as even though my reading of this epistolary novel indicated a familiarity with the church and its peoples and customs, there *was* no smoking gun putting him definitively on the campus itself.

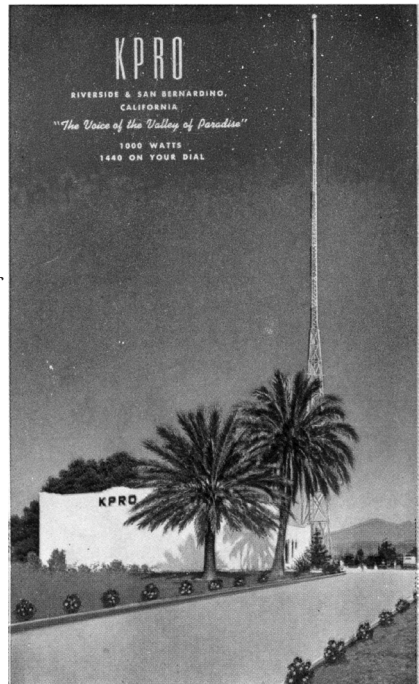
I wish there were a happier ending to this research story. However, as is so often the case, I find myself sealed off in an implacable cul-de-sac. I have even found material that contradicts my earlier findings, most notably the assertion in Arthur Anthony's well-received biography that Sinclair and his wife moved to Corona in 1950 to join her brother. At this point, it is as if I have backtracked, or perhaps circled around onto my own path. I have long given up hope of publishing a paper proving the presence of Upton Sinclair on the campus of La Sierra University. However, I continue to explore this cul-de-sac, because in addition to learning a whole lot of interesting things about Sinclair and the Inland Empire, I still hold out hope that lightning will strike and I'll find that one definitive source.

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## Postcards from Riverside

*Transmitting station and radio tower of  
station KPRO, Riverside, 1960s  
Photo courtesy Steve Lech*



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