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## **California State Archives Releases Online Digital Collection of 19<sup>th</sup> Century California Trademarks**

**SACRAMENTO** – California Secretary of State Alex Padilla today announced the release of nearly [4,000 digitized California trademark images and applications filed with the Secretary of State between 1861 and 1900](#). These images and documents are the largest digital collection ever assembled by the State Archives, a division of the Secretary of State's office.

“This is our history and it should be shared,” said Secretary of State Alex Padilla. “I commend the work of our Archives Division staff who did a tremendous job assembling the collection. I encourage Californians to explore these images, which for the first time are easily accessible to the public online.” Padilla added.

“As archivists, we are dedicated to preserving and sharing California history,” said Deputy State Archivist Rebecca Wendt.

**[Click here to view California's “Old Series Trademarks” collection](#)**

The explosion of population and commerce after the Gold Rush led to California's first-in-the-nation trademark law which resulted in this collection of product labels and logos registered with the California Secretary of State. Champagne, cigars, peaches and patent medicines were affixed with trademarked labels depicting the California landscape, Native Americans, and iconic images of California grizzly bears, gold miners, Minerva, the Capitol dome and colorful produce.

These “Old Series Trademarks” provide a fascinating view into commerce and consumer goods in the Golden State at a time when the industrial revolution and transcontinental railroad brought transformative change and expansive new markets for products from California.

“California has always been a land of opportunity that encourages entrepreneurship—qualities evident in our state's earliest trademarks. Whether you were a miner, farmer, brewer, or seamstress, registering a trademark was vital to protecting your business,” Padilla added.

California's ground-breaking Trademark Registration Act of 1863 allowed businesses to register images and labels for any product with the Secretary of State and made it unlawful for others, without consent, to use the same trademarked items to sell similar or counterfeit goods. An 1861 law allowed registration of brands on certain beverage bottles. These trademark laws were enacted nearly 10 years before federal trademark legislation.

The images can be viewed online at the following link:

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/trademarks>

Padilla has made digitization and online access a priority for the archives. "The State Archives is home to so many treasures that reflect California's rich history. Digitizing key collections and exhibits will provide Californians, and the rest of the world, greater access to the history of our amazing State," Padilla said.

Padilla is sponsoring [AB 2674](#), authored by Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland) to establish an Online Archives Program. The State Archives currently has about 125,000 cubic feet of paper records, but less than one-quarter of one percent of that total is digitized.

The trademark project was made possible by grant funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission which awarded The Friends of California Archives funding to support this effort to digitize approximately 24,000 pages from the collection of Trademark Registrations and Specimens, Old Series, 1861 – 1900 at the California State Archives.

"We can use modern technology to help explore our past. Digitization allows anyone to access the State Archives' resources from their home or mobile device," Padilla added.

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