



AP17:115

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 19, 2017

CONTACT:

Jesse Melgar or Sam Mahood

(916) 653-6575

California State Archives Releases Nearly 3,000 Newly Digitized Photos of Early 20th Century Life and Landmarks

SACRAMENTO – The California State Archives has completed one of its largest digitization projects ever. The collection features nearly 3,000 photographs taken by native Californians William M. and Grace McCarthy from approximately 1905 to 1938. The McCarthys traveled extensively during the early years of automobile travel, as newly constructed highways connected people and places throughout the United States and beyond, providing pictorial documentation of a pivotal period in our nation's history.

[Click here to view the McCarthy Photo Collection](#)

“While most of us do not leave the house without a camera on our smartphone now, William and Grace documented California during a much different time,” Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. “As early adopters of automobile travel and personal photography, the McCarthy’s embodied California’s pioneering spirit. Their photo collection captures the landmarks and events that defined California, and beyond, during the early 20th century. These clear, high-quality photos are some of the true gems of the State Archives, I’m proud of the hard work of our staff to ensure that they will be easily accessible to a global audience.”

Always ready with his camera, William McCarthy captured stunning images of California landmarks and significant events, including:

- Shots of San Francisco, including before and after the 1906 earthquake, and the fire that destroyed the famous Cliff House in 1907.
- Los Angeles’ iconic City Hall and the Hollywood Hills.
- California’s stunning natural beauty—including Lake Tahoe, Yosemite, the central coast, and the Mojave Desert.
- San Diego’s Balboa Park and Mission San Diego.
- A journey into Mexico along the Pan American Highway.
- State and International Expositions, including the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Panama-California Exposition, the Chicago World’s Fair, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, and the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition.

The original black and white photographs, mounted in eleven albums, make up one of the few private collections preserved by the California State Archives. The collection was digitized by the State Archives' curatorial staff. This newly collection substantially builds upon the State Archives' previous online exhibit, "[California Memoirs: The William M. McCarthy Photograph Collection](#)," that was launched on Google Arts & Culture in July 2017. The previous exhibit contained several dozen images, while the newly digitized McCarthy photo collection contains nearly 3,000 images.

William M. McCarthy (1876 – 1956) and Grace C. Kane (1878 – 1957) wed in the early 1900s and were married for over fifty years. They lived in San Francisco for most of their lives where William was stationed as an armament expert for the U.S. War Department.

###

Follow the California Secretary of State on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).