
Register of the Underhill (John P.) Collection, 1924; 1945-1968

Collection number: Ms39

San Joaquin County Historical Society and Museum

Lodi, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Underhill (John P.) Collection,

Date (inclusive): 1924; 1945-1968

Collection number: Ms39

Creator:

Extent: 0.5 linear ft.

Repository: San Joaquin County Museum.

Lodi, CA 95241

Language: English

Access

Collection is open for research by appointment only.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Underhill (John P.) Collection, Ms39, San Joaquin County Historical Society and Museum.

personal name

Adriance, J.W.

corporate name

Cooperative Marketing Council (San Joaquin County, Calif.)

Tomato Growers' Association (Calif.)

San Joaquin County Farm Bureau (Calif.)

subject

Potato growers - California - San Joaquin County

Tomato growers - California - San Joaquin County

Festivals - California - Stockton

Agriculture - California - San Joaquin County

geographic name

Stockton (Calif.) - Social life and customs

Stockton (Calif.) - History - Sources

Biography

The San Joaquin River Delta peat lands were a major producer of potatoes from 1900 until about 1925. Two of the most prominent of the Delta potato growers were Asians: Chin Lung and George Shima. The latter, the first Japanese American millionaire and head of the Japanese Association of America, was known as the "Potato King." San Joaquin County potatoes were successful in eastern markets because they could be harvested at nearly any time of year. After 1925 the Delta potato hegemony collapsed under pressure from competition in southern California, Oregon and Idaho. Due to the popularity of potatoes, local boosters conceived the idea of a "Potato Day" (1924). This event was celebrated at the Kroyer Plant on Cherokee Lane with a carnival, displays, formal ceremonies and a dance. Tomatoes became a far more important San Joaquin County crop during the 1930s and remained so. With irrigation tomatoes could be grown in many County locations and their cultivation was stimulated by successful food processors such as the Flotill Corporation of Stockton, which specialized in pomodoro tomato canning, and the Heinz Company of Tracy, premier ketchup manufacturers. John P. Underhill was Assistant Farm Advisor (1946-1955), then Director (1956-1975), of the San Joaquin County California Agricultural Extension Service. He collected these materials in the course of his work with the potato and tomato growers of San Joaquin County.

Scope and Content

The Underhill Collection consists of: scattered correspondence and minutes of the Stockton "Potato Day" Potato Records Committee (1924; 1925); minutes of the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau Tomato Section meetings (1946-1947); copies of the Tomato Growers Assn. Bulletin (1946-1958); a brief history of the establishment of the Cooperative Marketing Council in San Joaquin County (1946-1947); an agenda and related items pertaining to the Cooperative Marketing Council's Cooperative Director's Conference (1956); and, the "Tomato Issue" of Tideways magazine (1967).

BOX 1: UNDERHILL COLLECTION

1.1: Potato Records Committee---Corresp. & minutes, 1924; 1945

a-Minutes, n.d. [c1924; ms. yellow paper]

b-H.M. Bain [Admin. Asst. To US Agric. Scty. Wallace] to J.W. Adriance [SJ Co. Farm Advisor], 9-9-24

c-J.W.A. to H.M.B., 9-15-24

d-Dr. Thos. F. Hunt [UC College of Agric.] to J.W.A., 9-15-24

e-J.W.A. to T.F.H., 9-16-24

f-N.V. Shear [San Diego Co. Horticul. Comm.] to Carson C. Cook, 9-19-24

g-Minutes, 9-22-24 [2 pp.]

h-Alvin K. Matthews [Potato Day Scty.] to J.W.A., 9-25-24

i-J.V. Mendenhall [Potato Day Chmn.] to "members of all committees," 9-27-24

j-Minutes, 9-29-24 [2 pp.]

k-J.W.A. to A.K. Matthews, 10-2-24

l-Minutes, 9-7-45 [2 pp.]

m-Dave Davidson [Chmn. State Potato Comm.] to E.C. Sturges [Stkn Area Potato Comm.], 9-14-45

n-1945 Stockton Area Potato Comm. Members list

1.2: SJ Co. Farm Bureau Tomato Section---Minutes, 1946-47

1.3: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1946-1947

- 1.4: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1948-1949
- 1.5: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1950-1951
- 1.6: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1952
- 1.7: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1953
- 1.8: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1954-1955
- 1.9: Tomato Growers' Assn. Bulletin , 1956-1958
- 1.10: Cooperative Marketing Council in San Joaquin County---History, 1945-1947
- 1.11: Cooperative Marketing Council---Cooperative Directors' Council, 4-20-56
- 1.12: "Tomato Issue" Tideways 16:6 (1967)