

GUIDE TO THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION STATE HISTORIC PARK
PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

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Park History

Governor's Mansion State Historic Park contains nearly one acre of historical resources. Located in Sacramento County, the park sits at the southwest corner of 16th and "H" streets in the city of Sacramento. The park is accessible by car and by foot via "H" Street.

Prior to John Sutter's 11-league land acquisition, the Sacramento Valley housed the Nisenan (Southern Maidu) tribe for a few thousand years. Making their home in the area contained by the Sacramento River and the Sierra Mountains, the Nisenan were hunter-gatherers who subsisted on fish, local game, acorns, and seeds. With roughly 75 percent of the Nisenan population decimated by a disease epidemic in 1833, Sutter easily subdued the remainder when he established his fort six years later. Most of the Nisenan suffered extermination in the years surrounding the Gold Rush.

Originally deeded in 1841, Sutter's land grant ultimately comprised major portions of the city of Sacramento. With the influx of forty-niner prospectors, the introduction of state government, and the establishment of the city as a hub of the Transcontinental Railroad, Sacramento quickly expanded to accommodate its growing population, burgeoning industries, and emerging business class. By 1876, the parcel of land where the present-day park sits had changed hands several times. In January, owner J. B. Haggin sold the western half of lot 2 to A.A. Bennet, who sold lots 1 and 2 to W.L. Pritchard that same month. The following year, Pritchard sold the plot to local businessman, Albert Gallatin (**Figure 1**). A partner with Huntington & Hopkins, then the largest hardware firm on the West Coast, Gallatin commissioned prominent architect Nathaniel Dudley Goodell to conceive a home befitting his wealth and prestige. Goodell designed and local contractor U. M. Reese constructed the Second Empire Italianate-style mansion that stands there today (**Figure 2**).



Figure 1. Portrait of Albert Gallatin, ca. 1900. Catalog # 090-22542.

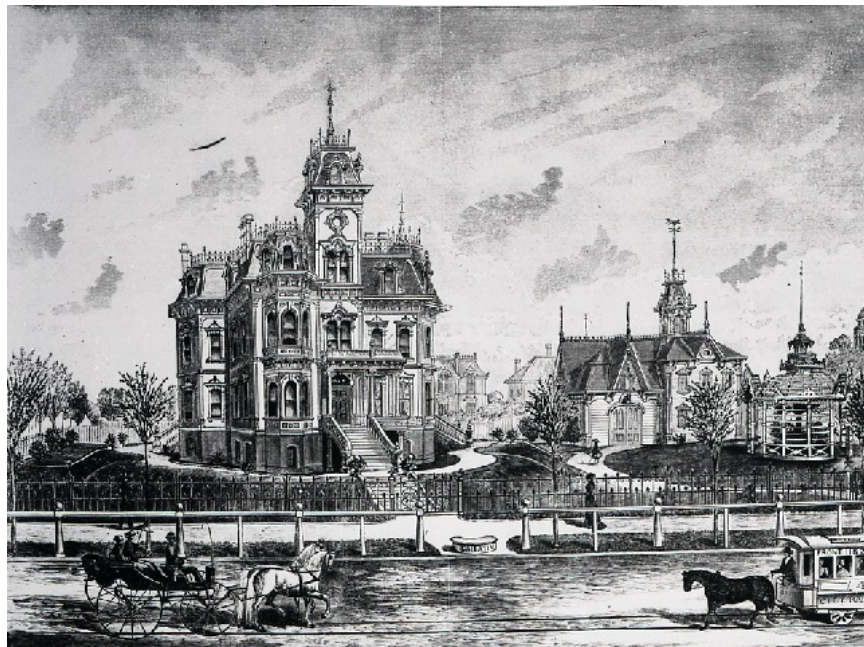


Figure 2. Drawing of Gallatin Mansion, ca. 1880. Catalog # 090-P52579.

In 1887, Albert and Clemenza Gallatin moved to the city of San Francisco and sold the mansion to their friends, Joseph and Louisa Steffens. The Steffens resided in

the home for over a decade before selling the property to the State of California in 1903 to serve as the first official home for governors and their families (**Figure 3**). In its role as the state's executive mansion, the house hosted 13 governors beginning with Governor George C. Pardee, who presided over the mansion's purchase in 1903, and culminating with Governor Ronald Reagan, who moved out of the residence in 1967. Beyond housing California's first families, the mansion also served as a formal reception space for visiting dignitaries. Members of the general public were also often invited to tour the property, particularly during the tenancies of governors Earl Warren, Goodwin Knight, and Edmund "Pat" Brown. In 1967, Governor Reagan opted to rent his own living quarters elsewhere in the city, a practice adopted by all subsequent California governors until 2015, when Governor Jerry Brown made the mansion his residence. After Governor Reagan left, California State Parks maintained the historic monument, reclassified a state historic park in 1970, as a historic house museum. It formally acquired the property from the Department of General Services in 1991, but relinquished control in 2015 upon the property's reprisal as the governor's residence.



Figure 3. Governor's Mansion (exterior), 1900. Catalog # 090-22531.

Prior to Governor Brown's return to the mansion, California State Parks, coordinating with the California State Historic Governor's Mansion Foundation, had preserved and maintained historical resources at Governor's Mansion State Historic Park (**Figure 4-6**). In addition to the mansion, which has been preserved as each governor

had left it resulting in a "tour through time," the park also included the historic carriage house (which housed the Visitor Center and Museum Store) as well as a vibrant garden.



Figure 4. Governor's Mansion (exterior), February 9, 2009. Catalog # 090-P62093.



Figure 5. Governor's Mansion (interior, living room), February 12, 2009. Catalog # 090-P62117.



Figure 6. Governor's Mansion (interior, kitchen), February 12, 2009. Catalog # 090-P62151.

Scope and Content

The Governor's Mansion State Historic Park Photographic Collection spans the years 1855-2014, with the bulk of the collection covering the years 1895-1905, 1950-1992, and 2003-2011. There is a total of 597 cataloged images including 288 photographic prints, scans, and negatives, 190 35mm slides, and 119 born-digital images. Photographs originated from California State Parks staff and a variety of other sources.

The collection mainly depicts interior and exterior views of the mansion over time. Exterior views include the building's ornately detailed Italianate facade, the surrounding grounds, the adjacent carriage house converted into a garage by Governor Hiram Johnson, the swimming pool constructed under Governor "Pat" Brown, and various commemorative plaques. Interior views feature spaces preserved and restored to various eras from the 1880s to the 1960s. Spaces include the sitting room, living room, dining room, bedrooms, hallways, entrance, bathrooms, and kitchen with all attendant period furnishings as well as several exhibit panels.

The collection also includes several individual and group portraits of prominent people in the park's history. Individuals include: Albert Gallatin and his children, Albert Jr. and Jane Gallatin Powers; Governor Hiram Johnson; Governor Friend Richardson, his family, and his wife, Augusta; Governor Culbert Olson; Governor Goodwin Knight and his wife, Virginia; and Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown.

Also included are images documenting various park staff performing interpretive duties. Images include park rangers, museum technicians, and docents in period dress interacting with visitors.

The collection also documents two events held at the mansion: the 1955 wedding of Carolyn Knight, Governor Knight's daughter, to Charles V. Weedman; and "Children's Day," held in 1978 and 1979.

Miscellaneous items include late-nineteenth-century drawings of the "Albert Gallatin Mansion" (as it was referred to then) as well as newspaper articles and photographs related to the mansion and its esteemed tenants.

Related Collections

Earl Warren Papers, California State Archives.

Edmund G. Brown Papers, UC Berkeley: Bancroft Library.

George C. Pardee Papers, UC Berkeley: Bancroft Library.

Goodwin J. Knight Papers, California State Archives.

Governor's Mansion State Historic Park Collection, California State Parks Archives.

Governor's Office Records, California State Archives.

Catalog Subject Search Terms

Aerial view	Virginia Knight
Albert Gallatin	Visitor(s)
Augusta Richardson	
Carriage house	
Children's Day	
Docent(s)	
Drawing	
Exterior	
Governor Culbert Olson	
Governor Edmund "Pat" Brown	
Governor Friend Richardson	
Governor George Pardee	
Governor Goodwin Knight	
Governor Hiram Johnson	
Group portrait	
Interior	
Newspaper article	
Painting	
Plaque	
Portrait	
Tour	