



The Stanford (University) Album: A Photographic History, 1885-1945

Margo Davis, Roxanne Nilan

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The Stanford Album brings together some 600 photographs, largely unpublished, and an interpretive text to tell the story of the community life of Stanford University from the University's creation in 1885 through the Second World War.

It is a fitting coincidence that at the same time Stanford is celebrating its Centennial Years (1985-91), the art of photography has reached its own anniversary of 150 years since the birth of the daguerreotype. The founders of the university, Jane and Leland Stanford, sat for their wedding portraits in 1850, and these daguerreotypes were just the beginning of the Stanfords' fascination with patronage of the new art form.

Leland Stanford's perception of the value of the camera as a medium of documentation resulted in a superb pictorial record of the planning, construction, and dedication of the university, some of which is reproduced in *The Stanford Album*. By the turn of the century, technical advances in photography made possible the small, handheld camera, and at Stanford the "snapshot" image of campus life began to proliferate. Commercial photographers mainly concentrated on athletic events, drama productions, student parades, and other campus rituals; students who owned cameras intruded everywhere with the mysterious little boxes—into dormitories, fraternities and sororities, classrooms, dances, picnics, and beer busts.

The book revisits a bygone Stanford. Through the magic of the camera lens, a vanished world of college life comes alive again, and we can see the community that existed yesterday under the same arcades where those at Stanford today study, work, and stroll.

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