

“Respectfully Dedicated to My Friends, Messrs. Bradley & Rulofson”  
Photographically Illustrated Sheet Music and Connections Between Photography Studios and Sheet Music Publishers in the 1860s and 1870s


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Introduction

**When:** The early 1860s through the early 1880s.  
**What:** Sheet music illustrated by adhering paper photographs (usually of celebrities) directly to the printed cover. Research began with The Huntington’s collection of about 50 items.  
**Where:** San Francisco was a major center, although these objects were created in cities around the United States.  
**How many:** Unknown, but comparatively rare.  
**Who:** Photographic publishers/studios, sheet music publishers and dealers, printers, and musical celebrities.  
**Why they are significant:**  
These objects illuminate connections between photography and printing history.  
Photographs by well-known photography studios can be discovered “hidden” in sheet music collections.  
These objects provide a glimpse into post California Gold Rush/early Gilded Age life.


Physical Components

**Photograph**



- Nearly always **albumen**, although earliest examples can be salted paper prints.
- Often **carte-de-visite** size in the 1860s, with **cabinet card** size becoming more prevalent as the era progresses.
- Adhered directly to the cover, usually distorting the cover.

**Printing Ink**



- These covers were usually **lithographically** printed in color.
- Most are a single color, but a few may use up to 4 inks.
- The music itself was generally intaglio, in black ink, and would be set by a different printer.

**Sheet Music Paper**  
Machine-made wove paper. Usually medium quality for the era and location.

Selected References and Online Sheet Music Catalogs

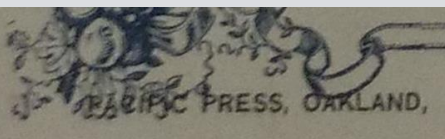
Haas, Robert Bartlett. “William Herman Rulofson: Pioneer Daguerreotypist and Photographic Educator.” *California Historical Society Quarterly*, 34, no. 4 (December 1955): 289–300. and 35, no. 1 (March 1956): 47–58.  
Krummel, Donald W. and Stanley Sadie. *Music Printing and Publishing*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1990.  
Palmquist, Peter E., Lawrence & Houseworth/Thomas Houseworth & Co.: *A Unique View of the West, 1860-1886*. Columbus, Ohio : National Stereoscopic Association, 1980.  
Palmquist, Peter E. and Thomas R. Kailbourn, “Bradley” and “Rulofson” in *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West, A Biographical Dictionary, 1840-1865*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.


Online Sheet Music Catalogs:  
Johns Hopkins University, Lester S. Levy Collection of Sheet Music (their dedicated “Engraver, Lithographer, Artist” field makes it possible to find items by photography studio, which is unusual).  
• UCLA’s Sheet Music Consortium • The California Sheet Music Project • The Library of Congress (search by music publisher or composer in “Notated Music.” Photographer is generally not part of these records).

Credited Roles

**Photographic Publisher**  
BRADLEY & RULOFSON, PHOTO, S. F.  
Printed directly on the cover, usually below the photograph. Nearly always present.

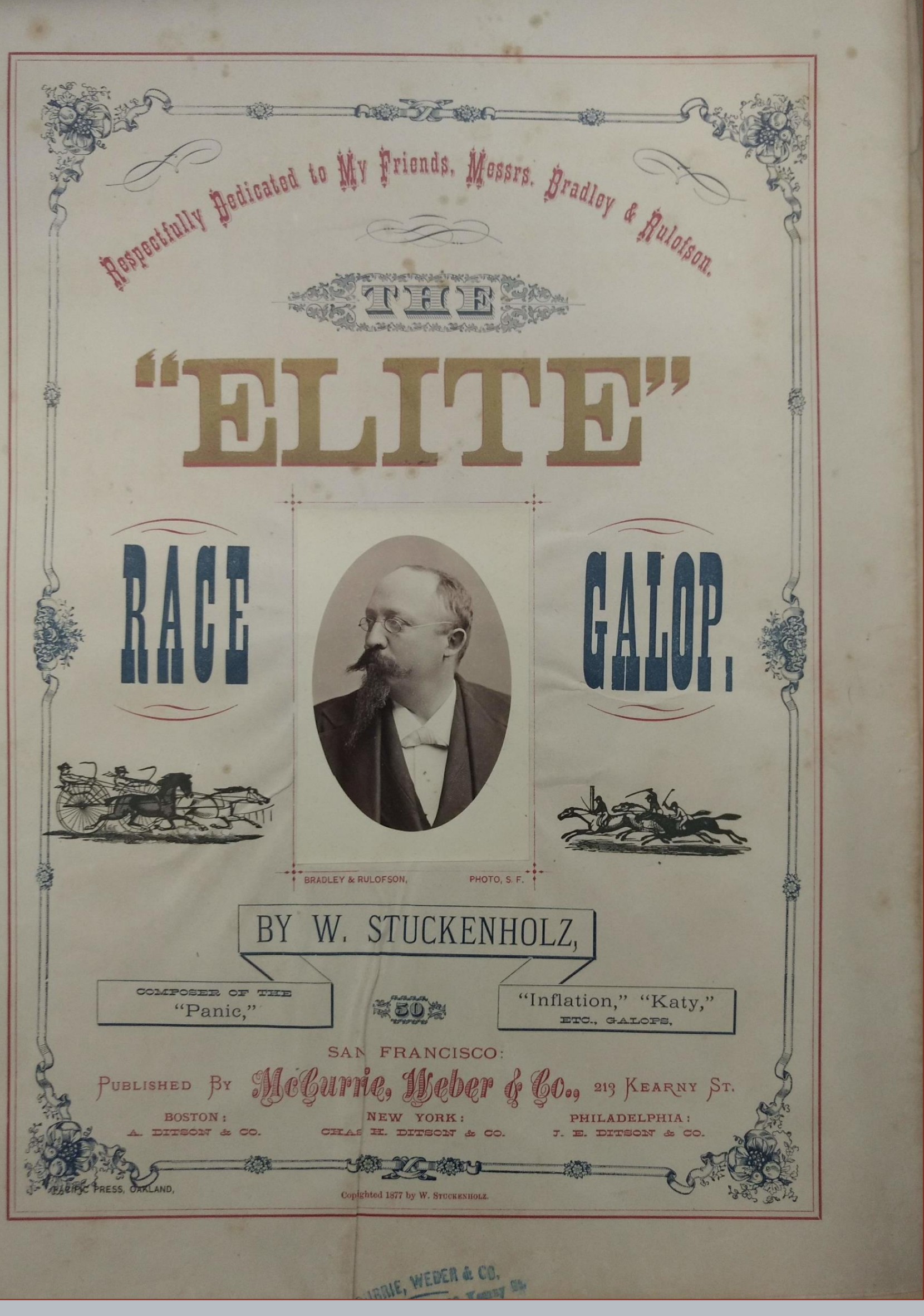
**Music Publisher**  
McCurrie, Weber & Co.,  
The publisher was usually also a music store selling pianos.

**Printer(s)**  
  
The cover printer and/or the music printer may be credited.


**Music Store**  
  
Rubber stamp. Often same as the publisher, or in a different city.

**Performer/Celebrity**  
To Miss Emma C. Thursby.  
Usually the singer. Despite San Francisco’s cosmopolitan status, *performers* in this collection all appear white. Other celebrities, such as Hawaii’s King Kalākaua (a composer), occasionally feature.

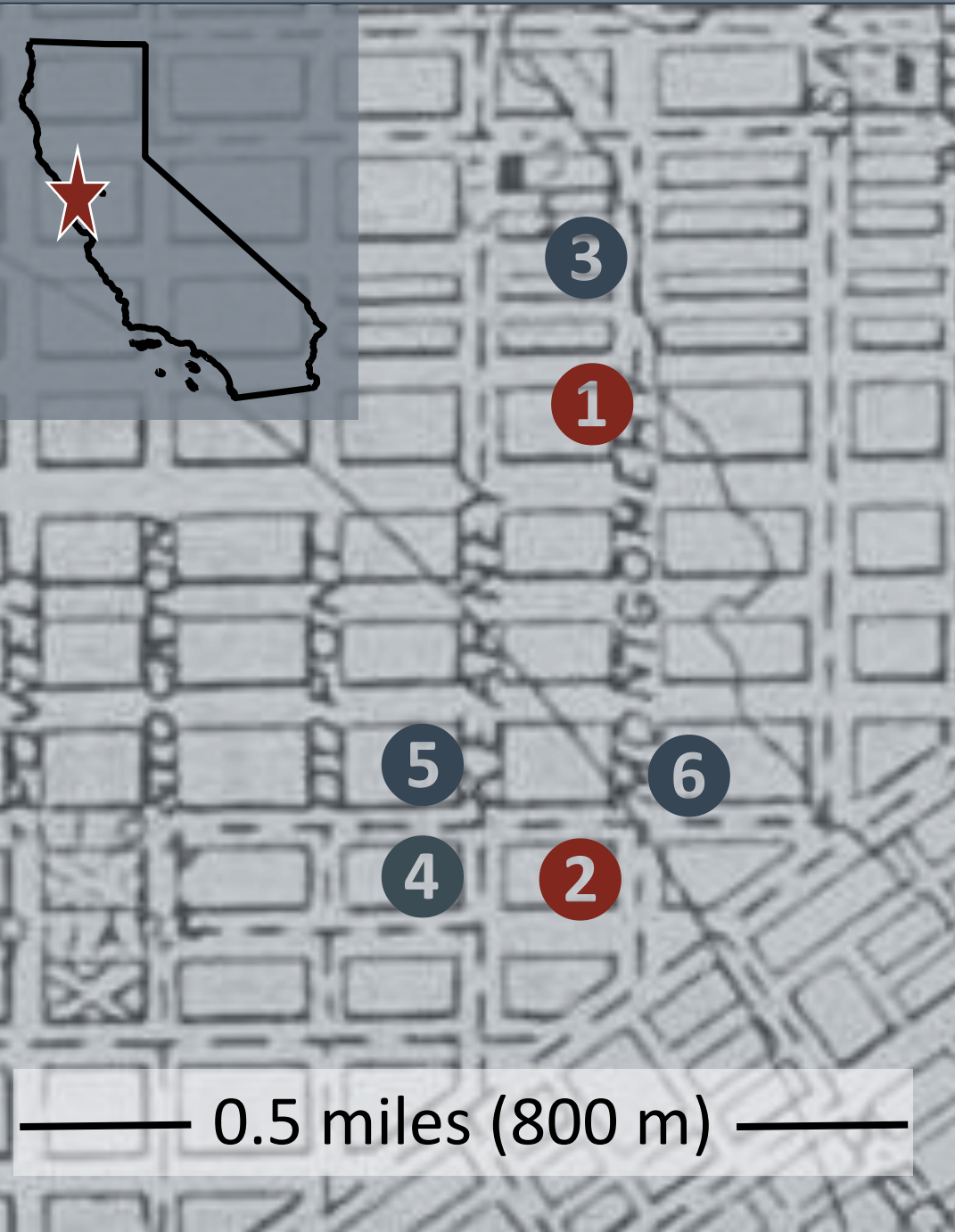
**Composer**  
BY W. STUCKENHOLZ,  
Nearly always credited.



**Copyright**  
Copyrighted 1877 by W. Stuckenholz.  
May be held by the publisher or the composer, as here.

**Price**  
  
50 cents here (~\$10 USD today). Ranges from 40 cents to \$1. There may be two printed prices, one about 10 cents cheaper without the photograph.

**Other Store Locations**  
BOSTON: A. DUTTON & CO. NEW YORK: CHAS. H. DUTTON & CO. PHILADELPHIA: T. E. DUTTON & CO.  
As the era progressed, music publishers created distribution links among different cities.



These **photo** and **music** publishers were all within a few blocks in 1870s San Francisco.

**Music Publishers**  
McCurrie, Weber & Co.,  
Chiefly a music store, with a fairly small production under their own name.  
213 Kearny 5

CHAS. S. EATON,  
No. 138 Montgomery Street,  
Charles S. Eaton. Small publisher. Main business was “pianos.”  
138 Montgomery 6

M. GRAY,  
Matthias Gray (1829-1887), the leading music publisher in San Francisco. Sold musical instruments.  
600s Clay and 105 Kearny 3

SHERMAN & HYDE,  
Leander Sherman & F. A. Hyde (and later C. C. Clay), become the major player after taking over the Steinway Agency from M. Gray in 1890. Music dealers and piano manufacturers.  
137-139 Kearny 4

The Main San Francisco Publishers and their Collaborations

**Bradley & Rulofson, S. F.**  
Henry W. Bradley (1813-1891) & William Herman Rulofson (1826-1878), studio: 1863-1887  
Claim “negatives of every person of note who has visited this coast since 1850.”  
Published *Bradley & Rulofson’s Catalogue of Celebrities* in 1878.  
Bradley is also the biggest importer of photographic supplies on the Pacific Coast.  
429 Montgomery Street 1

*Thomas Houseworth & Co.*  
Thomas Houseworth (1828-1916)  
One of the largest names in publishing photographs of the American West, especially stereographs. Also an optical instrument maker.  
Claims “the largest stock [of photographs] on the Pacific Coast.”  
Published *Houseworth’s Celebrities* beginning in 1875.  
9-12 Montgomery Street 2

Common Condition Problems

Creases

- In the cover only, radiating out from the adhered photograph, usually strongest on the right side.
- Key identification factor, often visible even in thumbnail digital images from scanned microfilm.
- The sheet music only partially restrains the photograph’s tendency to curl. Differences in hygroscopicity between photograph and cover paper result in dramatic creases.

“Foxing” Spots

- The second most common condition problem.
- Affects the sheet music paper more than the photograph.

Typical Albumen Degradation

- Image fading/discoloration** and **highlight yellowing**.
- Craquelure**: Could show a different amount of craquelure than albumen prints mounted to board (a standard mounting technique). More research is needed.
- The relative flexibility of the secondary support (the sheet music) can make creasing and folding more likely than for board-mounted counterparts.

Conservation & Handling Suggestions

- Accept creasing as a distinguishing feature of this technique, rather than a flaw. Attempts to open out the creases will redistribute them, causing additional stress on the photograph.
- If individual creases must be opened to reveal text, work locally on the crease from the outer edge of the sheet music inwards, to leave the area near the photograph as undisturbed as possible.
- Provide extra support when handling to minimize flexing of the photograph.

Conclusion

These hybrid objects illustrate the mutually beneficial relationships between photographic publishers and music publishers, composers, and performers. They require a little extra thought in handling and housing compared with standard sheet music and standard albumen formats. There are likely many more of these hybrid items in sheet music and ephemera collections. Potential future research includes investigating the commissioning and selling of these pieces, best approaches for treatment, and comparison with cardboard-mounted portraits. This research has focused solely on the San Francisco scene, but similar pieces were probably being made wherever music and celebrity portraiture markets overlapped.

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