



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Louise A. Taber (1851-1944)

Louise Austin Taber was born in 1851 in New Bedford, Massachusetts to Rebecca Holmes Lund and Charles A.M. Taber. While little is known of Louise's life, she came from a prominent New England family whose descendants arrived on the Mayflower. Her father was a sea captain, poet, and artist. Her paternal uncle, Isaiah West Taber, was a successful photographer.

Charles Austin Mendell Taber was born in 1824 in Rochester, Massachusetts and moved to New Bedford with his family at the age of 10. He began working on whaling ships as a teenager and quickly ascended through the ranks to become captain.¹ During his more than three decades of whaling, Taber authored several essays on weather and climate. In 1873, Taber published a volume of poetry titled *Rhymes from a Sailor's Journal*.²

Isaiah West Taber also began his career at sea. He arrived in California on a whaling ship in 1845.³ Three years later, his brother arrived in San Francisco from Chili during the California Gold Rush.⁴ Charles stayed for a year transporting passengers and freight between San Francisco and Sacramento aboard his sloop *Caroline*.⁵ Isaiah joined the Gold Rush in 1850 and later returned to the east coast to study photography.⁶

In 1872, Isaiah established a photography studio in California. In 1882, Charles returned to the West Coast accompanied by his daughter Miss L.A. Taber.⁷ They spent two months in Oakland visiting Isaiah.⁸ In recognition of his art, Isaiah was appointed a commissioner for Yosemite Valley in 1888. He later photographed Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and King Edward VIII.⁹

While in California in 1848, Charles made sketches of San Francisco and of Sacramento. He later made a painting of the Sacramento waterfront based on his sketch. An engraving of the painting was published in a magazine in 1888. Taber's painting which depicts the *Caroline* and other boats is the oldest known painting of Sacramento. It was acquired in 1974 by the Sacramento Pioneer Association.¹⁰

¹ "Mariner, Poet and Scientist," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts), Mon, Jan 30, 1911, 5.

² Thos. W. Herringshaw, *Poets of America* (Chicago: American Publishers' Association, 1892) 51.

³ "Taber, Noted Pioneer Photographer, Dead," *The Reedley Exponent* (Reedley, California) · Thu, Feb 29, 1912, 4.

⁴ "Personal Mention," *Oakland Tribune* (Oakland, California), Thu, May 25, 1882, 3.

⁵ "Artist's View of City in 1848," *The Sacramento Bee* (Sacramento, California), Tue, Apr 16, 1974, 25.

⁶ "Taber, Noted Pioneer Photographer, Dead."

⁷ "Passenger Lists," *The Record-Union* (Sacramento, California), Mon, May 22, 1882, 2.

⁸ "Personal Mention," *Oakland Tribune* (Oakland, California), Thu, May 25, 1882, 3.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ "Artist's View of City in 1848," *The Sacramento Bee* (Sacramento, California), Tue, Apr 16, 1974, 25.