Descriptive Summary
Title: Engel Sluiter Historical Documents Collection
Dates: 1930-2001
Collection Number: BANC MSS 98/79 z
Creator/Collector: Sluiter, Engel, 1906-
Extent: Approximately 116 linear feet (92 cartons, 1 box, 3 volumes, 2 oversize folders, 1 rolled item)
Repository: UC Berkeley. Bancroft Library
Berkeley, California 94720-6000
Abstract: Contains Engel Sluiter’s research notes and copies and transcriptions of historical documents from archives throughout Europe and Latin America made during approximately 1930-2001. Subject matter concerns Dutch voyages to the Pacific during the early 17th century, Dutch-Iberian global rivalry between 1568 and 1648, Dutch, English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese voyages to the New World; the transatlantic slave trade, the Nassau fleet, Newfoundland fisheries, Arctic exploration and whaling, and the complexities of imperial finances between the later sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries.
Language of Material: English
Access
Collection is open for research. COLLECTION STORED, IN PART, OFF-SITE: Advance notice required for use.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Engel Sluiter Historical Documents Collection. UC Berkeley. Bancroft Library
Acquisition Information
The Engel Sluiter Historical Documents Collection was donated to The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, in 1996, with the addition of one box and one roll donated by Nancy Sluiter in 2006 and one carton donated by Dauril Alden in 2013.
Scope and Content of Collection
The Engel Sluiter historical documents collection is the research collection of Dr. Engel Sluiter, Professor of Latin American History, made between 1930-2001. The collection contains copies, transcriptions, and translations of historical documents, mainly from archives and libraries throughout Europe and Latin America. This is a very extensive collection, the bulk of which is concerned with the period of European and colonial history between 1575 and 1650. The documents mainly relate to the history of the Low Countries, Spain, and Portugal, both in Europe and overseas, with many pieces relevant to the history of England, France, Germany, Scandinavia, and Italy. The subject matter concerns Dutch-Iberian global rivalry between 1568 and 1648, Dutch, English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese voyages to the New World, Dutch voyages to the Pacific during the early 17th century, the transatlantic slave trade, Newfoundland fisheries, Arctic exploration and whaling, and imperial finances. The majority of documents in the collection are in Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and English, with a smaller number in French and German. The collection contains many transcriptions of unpublished manuscripts, often accompanied by a copy of the original document and Dr. Sluiter’s own notes and/or translation in English. There are also photocopies of excerpts from relevant books and printed documents. The collection contains a small number of books. The wide variety of papers document the power struggle in Europe during the years indicated, especially involving the Eighty Years’ War between Spain and the Netherlands, expanding into a general European and global struggle. Economic and fiscal documentation predominates, shedding light on both the maritime-commercial rise of the Netherlands and expansion of Dutch trade, and the Spanish-Portuguese trade and navigation in America and the Orient. The collection contains fiscal data on Dutch and Spanish expenditures for war in the Netherlands, Spanish expenditures in the Catholic Cause during the Thirty Years’ War in Europe, and Spanish crown revenues. The collection also includes fiscal records (income/outgo) for fifty-nine American treasuries from the Contaduría section of the Archives of the Indies in Seville. There are also records of import/export duties on goods from American ports, including Lima, Panama, Acapulco, and Manila, as well as Cartagena
and Vera Cruz. There are also transcribed accounts of composición payments to Spain by resident foreigners in America. The Brazil collection starts in 1500 but falls mainly after 1580, and covers Dutch trade, navigation, and conquest in Brazil (1586-1662) and Portuguese documentation of Brazilian colonial development and documentation on Portuguese resistance to foreign encroachment. There is also information on brazilwood production and trade, sugar production, Basque and Portuguese whaling in Brazilian waters, and the triangular trade Brazil/West Africa/Rio de la Plata. Both the Brazil and Netherlands sections contain information on the exodus of Portuguese Jews from Portugal and Brazil to the Dutch Republic, as well as their participation in the slave trades. The Caribbean collection covers each of the four competing nations. Documentation on the Spanish Caribbean is heavily administrative, dealing with defense policy, financing, fortification, copper mining, trade regulation, illicit trade, foreign smuggling, economic development (sugar, mines, cattle, ginger), and labor supply. Information on the English in the Caribbean consists mainly of English contemporary accounts and some Spanish materials on English activities in the Caribbean. The immense section on the Dutch in the Caribbean is the product of intensive research in Dutch, Spanish, and English archives. The West Africa file mainly involves Dutch-Portuguese rivalry and trade. The section on Anglo-Dutch voyages to the Pacific Coast of America includes Spanish reports showing the English intrusions on the Spanish Pacific, loot obtained by Drake and Cavendish, and Spanish defense expenditures for royal Pacific Armada. Documentation on the Dutch expeditions to the Pacific Coast is in both Dutch and Spanish. Large New Spain and Peru collections have large Contaduría sections and extensive files of viceregal and other official correspondence, arranged chronologically by administrations. The collection also contains some information on Mexico-Manila/Mexico-Peru trades. The New Granada collection is largely fiscal, consisting of balance sheets of income/outgo, gold and emerald remittances, and accounts of “quintos” taxes paid. The slave trade collection contains documents from Seville, mainly licenses issued to Spanish emigrants to America for a specified number of slaves, contracts between the Spanish crown and other merchants or entrepreneurs, asientos on the number, sex, and destinations of the slaves, and sums paid to the crown. Information on the Guianas and the smaller North America/Arctic collections contain documents, rare contemporary accounts, and archival material on Dutch trade and colonization in the Guianas and exploration in the Arctic. Source: Dr. Sluiter’s “Observations and Information About the Collection.”

Indexing Terms
Imperialism--History
Slave trade--America--History
Slave trade--Africa
Fisheries--Newfoundland and Labrador
Historians--United States
Arctic regions--Discovery and exploration
America--Discovery and exploration
America--Discovery and exploration--British
America--Discovery and exploration--Dutch
America--Discovery and exploration--French
America--Discovery and exploration--Portuguese
America--Discovery and exploration--Spanish
Sluiter, Engel, 1906--Archives
University of California, Berkeley. Department of History--Archives

Listing to the Engel Sluiter Historical Documents Collection, 1930-2001