
Guide to the Nathan Spear papers, 1802-1849

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Note

History --History, California --History, Bay AreaGeographical (By Place) --California --Bay Area

Guide to the Nathan Spear Papers, 1802-1849

Collection number: BANC MSS C-B 106

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: Nathan Spear Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1802-1849

Collection Number: BANC MSS C-B 106

Creator: Spear, Nathan, 1802-1849

Extent: Number of containers: 2 boxes

Repository: The Bancroft Library
Berkeley, California 94720-6000

Physical Location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Abstract: Consists of letters and accounts and other commercial records of his store in Monterey from 1832 and in San Francisco from 1836. Some relate to partnership, 1836-38, with William Sturgis Hinckley and Jacob Primer Leese.

Languages Represented: English

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Nathan Spear papers, BANC MSS C-B 106, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Acquisition Information

Forms part of the Hubert Howe Bancroft Collection.

Scope and Content

The papers, which include correspondence, accounts, and invoices, were given to Hubert Howe Bancroft in 1878 by Spear's son, William N. Spear.

Biography

Nathan Spear was born in Boston in 1802. In 1829 he went to the Sandwich Islands and in 1832, went to Monterey. He opened a store and engaged in coastal trade with the schooner "Nicolás."

Spear, in partnership with Jacob Primer Leese and William Sturgis Hinckley opened a store in San Francisco in 1836, and moved there in 1838, leaving his Monterey store in charge of William R. Warren. The partnership was dissolved the same year. Spear continued the business, transferred the "Nicolás" to San Francisco, and bought the schooner "Isabel." He also built a grist-mill with a machine for making shingles, and a turning-lathe. His nephew, William Heath Davis, was his clerk from 1838.

Spear was arrested during the Graham affair in 1840. In 1846 he was an unsuccessful candidate for alcalde of San Francisco. Although he owned several town lots, he never became a Mexican citizen, and so obtained no land grant.

Ill-health forced Spear to move to Napa Valley in 1846. He returned to San Francisco late in 1848 and died at the home of his nephew in October, 1849.

Box 1:

Letters written by Nathan Spear relating to business matters, 1837-1845.

Physical Description: (2 folders, 9 letters)

Scope and Content Note

Arranged chronologically. Include letters to William Sturgis Hinckley, Jacob Primer Leese, and Stephen Reynolds.

Letter book, 1836-1841.

volume v. 1 -

Copies of letters to Job Dye, John Gilroy, Thomas Oliver Larkin, John Marsh, John Augustus Sutter, and others.

Physical Description: (112 p.)

Scope and Content Note

Also includes several accounts. Also on microfilm.

Letters to Nathan Spear, unless otherwise noted. Arranged alphabetically. see [List of Letters to Nathan Spear](#)**Accounts (ships)**

volume v. 2 -

Account of sales of merchandise shipped on the "Avon," "Clementine," "Crusader," "Don Quixote," and "Iolani," [1832-1837].

Physical Description: (31 p.)

volume v. 3 -

Account of sales and merchandise shipped on the "Avon," "Bolivar," "Clarion," "Clementine," "Don Quixote," and "Iolani," 1834-1837.

Physical Description: (35 p.)

volume v. 4 -

Invoice of merchandise shipped on the "Crusader," and invoices of business transactions between Nathan Spear and William Sturgis Hinckley, 1832-1839.

Physical Description: (52 p.)

Invoices of merchandise shipped on the "Clementine," 1835-1836.

Physical Description: (1 folder, 6 items)

Invoices of merchandise shipped on the "Diana," [ca. 1837-1840].

Physical Description: (1 folder, 4 items)

Invoices of merchandise shipped on the "Clarion," 1837-ca. 1840.

Physical Description: (1 folder, 2 items)

Invoices of merchandise shipped on the "Avon," "California," "Corsair," and "Iolani," 1835-ca. 1840.

Physical Description: (1 folder, 6 items)

Accounts (individuals)

Scope and Content Note

Mainly invoices and receipts, arranged alphabetically by name of person. There are two folders of miscellaneous accounts and separate folders: see [List of Accounts for Individuals](#)

Box II:

volume v. 5 -

Account books (individuals)

Includes accounts of Isaac Graham, John Coffin Jones, and David Spence; also the ships "California," "Clementine," and "Europa," 1835-1840.

Physical Description: (149 p.)

volume v. 6 -

Sundry accounts and bills received from Messrs. Leese & Co., 1838.

Physical Description: (31 p.)

volume v. 7 -

Accounts of Edward Turner Bale and William Alexander Leidesdorff, 1836-1847.

Physical Description: (11 p.)

volume v. 8 -

Includes accounts of Edward Turner Bale, William Davis Merry Howard and William Alexander Leidesdorff, 1845-1848.

Physical Description: (27p.)

volume v. 9 -

Accounts of Edward Turner Bale, John Calvert Davis, George C. Yount, and other Napa Valley residents, 1845-1848.

Physical Description: (38 p.)

volume v. 10 -

Accounts of William French and Joseph O. Carter; also accounts of several ships and copy of a letter to Benjamin Pitman, 1838-1842.

Physical Description: (8 p.)

volume v. 11 -

Account of Stephen Smith, 1845.

Physical Description: (5 p.)

volume v. 12 -

Includes accounts of John Coffin Jones, Jacob Primer Leese, and Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, 1834-1838.

Physical Description: (38 p.)

volume v. 13 -

Includes accounts of Juan Bautista Alvarado, John Bautista Rogers Cooper, William Edward Petty Hartnell, Thomas Oliver Larkin, and David Spence, 1833-1835.

Physical Description: (140 p.)

volume v. 14 -

Includes accounts of Domingo Feliz, William Johnson, and John Augustus Sutter, 1839-1845.

Physical Description: Pasted in: note of transfer of part of lot 2, San Francisco, by Mrs. William Sturgis Hinckley and signed by Richard M. Sherman. (34 p.)

- volume v. 15 - **Includes accounts of Edward Turner Bale and William Alexander Leidesdorff, 1835-1846.**
Physical Description: (4 p.)
- volume v. 16 - **Includes accounts of William Heath Davis, Antonio Mara Pico, and Thomas Shaw, with most items deleted, 1838-1842.**
Physical Description: (67 p.)
- Miscellaneous papers, ca. 1836-1849.**
Physical Description: 3 folders (items 1 and 2 in folder 1, item 3 in folder 2, items 4 through 8 in folder 3).
- item , item 1. **Account of stock in Monterey store, indicating stock consigned to Nathan Spear by William Sturgis Hinckley with list of people owing on purchase of articles consigned by Hinckley, ca. 1836.**
- item 2. **Agreement between Nathan Spear, William Sturgis Hinckley, and Jacob Primer Leese to form a company, ca.1836.**
- item 3. **Papers concerning settlements of accounts by Jacob Primer Leese with Nathan Spear and William Sturgis Hinckley, 1836-ca. 1840.**
Physical Description: (19 items)
- item 4. **Deed of sale of Jacob Primer Leese's schooner "Nicolás" to Nathan Spear, witnessed by Victor Prudon and certified by William Richardson, 1838.**
- item 5. **Copy of promissory note, 1839, from Jacob Primer Leese to William Sturgis Hinckley and Nathan Spear with Hinckley's release of his share to Spear and certified a true copy by Thomas Oliver Larkin, U. S. Consul, Monterey, with consular seal affixed. 1845.**
- item 6. **Draft of petition by Nathan Spear for legal action to force Jacob Primer Leese to pay his debt, 1845.**
- item 7. **Draft of power of attorney from Nathan Spear to Joseph P. Thompson, 1848.**
- item 8. **Draft of lease to Charles O. Southard and Thomas J. Roach for a portion of Nathan Spear's Napa ranch; copy of deed from Nathan Spear to Edward A. King for property on Yerba Buena Island; quit claim deed from Nathan Spear to Stephen Reynolds for the Guenoc Ranch, certified by John W. Geary, alcalde of San Francisco, 1849.**
Physical Description: (3 items)
- Flügge, Charles William, d. 1852**
Letter, Sept. 2, 1843
- Hinckley, William Sturgis, 1807-1846**
14 letters, 1833-1836
- Leese, Jacob Primer, 1809-1892**
14 letters, 1836-ca. 1840
- Peck, Sherman**
Letter, Sept. 29, 1835
- Pedrorena, Miguel, ca. 1808-1850**
Letter, Sept. 28, 1840
- Phelps, William Dane**
2 letters, 1842
- Reynolds, Stephen W., 1782-1857**
31 letters, 1830-1847
- Spear, William N., 1846-1884**
Letter, Apr. 15, 1872, to Hubert Howe Bancroft
- Spence, David, 1798-1875**
Letter, Sept. 22, 1841
- Sutter, John Augustus, 1803-1880**
5 letters, 1844-1847
-

Thompson, Alpheus Basil, 1797-1869
Letter, Aug. 9, 1834

Vallejo, Mariano Guadalupe, 1808-1890
5 letters, 1839-1844

Bale, Edward Turner, 1811-1849
4 items, 1838-1848

Covarrubias José María, 1801-1870
1 item, 1839

Fitch, Henry Delano, 1799-1849
1 item, 1841

Guerrero y Palomares, Francisco, 1811-1851
18 items, 1838-1843

Herrera, José María, 1803-
3 items, 1836

Hinckley, William Sturgis, 1807-1846
21 items, 1830-1845

Jones, John Coffin
5 items, 1834-ca. 1840

Larkin, Thomas Oliver, 1802-1858
1 item, 1845

Leidesdorff, William Alexander, 1810-1848
3 items, 1845-1848

Limantour, José Yves, d. 1885
1 item, 1842

McKinley, James, 1803-1875
3 Items, 1840-1847

Pedrorena, Miguel, ca. 1808-1850
2 items, 1843

Prudon, Victor, 1809?-
6 items, ca. 1840

Reynolds, Stephen W., 1782-1857
2 items, 1835-1837

Smith, Stephen, 1786-1855
4 items, 1843-1845

Sutter, John Augustus, 1803-1880
3 items, 1841-1843

Thompson, Alpheus Basil, 1797-1869
4 items, 1833-1845

Vallejo, Mariano Guadalupe, 1808-1890
1 item, 1836-1837

Vallejo, Salvador, 1814-1876
12 items, 1839-1843