Guide to the John Wilson Papers, 1840-1897

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Note
History --History, CaliforniaGeographical (By Place) --CaliforniaGeographical (By Place) --North America (excluding USA) --Mexico
Guide to the John Wilson Papers, 1840-1897

Collection number: BANC MSS C-B 420

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: John Wilson Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1840-1897
Collection Number: BANC MSS C-B 420
Creator: Wilson, John, 1790-1877?
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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: Correspondence and documents relating to Wilson's activities as U.S. Indian Agent, Naval Agent and lawyer, mainly concerning land claims and Whig politics. Santa Cruz County poll list of 1854. Diary of visit to silver mines in Chihuahua in 1864, and some miscellaneous papers of Wakeman and Cooper families also included.

Languages Represented: English

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], John Wilson papers, BANC MSS C-B 420, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Scope and Content
The greater portion of the Wilson papers, acquired through Col. Fred B. Rogers, were given to the Bancroft library by Mrs. Evva M. Cooper in 1948 and 1949. A few items were purchased from Col. Rogers in 1951 and Mrs. Lucile B. Bradley gave some additional material in 1952.

John Wilson, born in 1790, came to California in 1849 as Indian Agent, then as Navy Agent in San Francisco. He soon settled down to practicing law in San Francisco, becoming somewhat of a specialist in land claim cases. Tremendously interested in the Whig party in California, he was active politically. These two aspects - land claims and politics - form the backbone of the incoming correspondence, spanning for the most part the years 1849 to 1860. Some letters and vouchers relate to Wilson's position as Indian Agent and later as Navy Agent. The few outgoing letters, mainly in draft form and some incomplete, include a contemporary copy of a letter to Hon. T. Ewing, Department of the Interior, concerning the state of the Indians; a partial description of difficulties of trip from Missouri to San Francisco, 1849; Whig politics; and a discussion of the wealth of Nevada mines. Among the miscellaneous personal papers, related largely to his legal practice, is to be found William B. Ide's proclamation to the people of Sonoma of June 15, 1846.

There are also a few papers of members of the Wilson family - his wife, Ann Robertson (Pulliam) Wilson; his son Micajah D.; and his daughter, Mary Elizah (Wilson) Wakeman. A scrapbook assembled by a grand-daughter, Katharine (Wakeman) Cooper and various papers relating to members of the Cooper family, with legal papers of Ferdinand O. Wakeman, round out the collection.

Box I
Outgoing letters, 1849-1875 - 10 items, drafts, some incomplete.
Incoming correspondence, A-L

Box II
Incoming correspondence, M-Z

Box III
John Wilson's papers.
Ide, William B.
Proclamation to people of Sonoma, June 15, 1846
Wilson's papers relating to Deseret petition of 1849 include his appointment as delegate for the state of Deseret to the convention and draft of petition to Peter H. Burnett.
Papers as Indian Agent: Memos relating to Indian tribes in intermountain region (see also copy of Wilson letter of Aug. 22, 1849 to Ewing, Box I); Invoices; vouchers, abstracts and accounts of trip from Missouri to California (including vouchers to Joel Palmer for his services as guide and to Peter Lassen).
Accounts as Naval agent.
Diary, marked no. 3, Mar. 1864 records portion of journey to Chihuahua; his stay there; Santa Eulalia mines; evils of Mexican priesthood; religious rites; Apaches; mention of Governor Luis Terrazas
Diaries 1 and 4, 1864, also form part of the Chihuahua trip. (Purchased from Mrs. McPortland, Jan. 1965)
Miscellaneous legal papers, arranged chronologically - 1850-1876. Brought together here were documents either drawn up by Wilson or in which he figures in some way.
Include: (1) Sharon, William
Agreement with Isaac Saffarans. Aug. 1, 1850
(2) Hagan, James
(3) Brown & Bouldin
Agreement with Wilson concerning fees as attorney in suit brought up re Vaca/Peña grant
Miscellaneous legal papers (not by or directly concerning Wilson). Arranged alphabetically. Mainly summons and subpoenas in various cases.
Also include: (1) Dalton, Henry
Lease of Santa Anita Ranch to Alexander W. Hope, Dec. 27, 1852.
(2) Love, Mary
Power of attorney to William I. Higgins, Apr. 1, 1858
(3) Patterson, William H.
Duplicate contract of sale of Rancho Corallitos to W. J. Williams, Sept. 23, 1867.

(4) U.S. Surveyor General
Plat of the Rancho San Augustin. Copy, signed by J. W. Mandeville, June 27, 1860

Papers relating to Briones claims for Bolinas:
(1) Notes in Wilson's hand concerning claim
(2) Certified copy of case no. 189 Northern District, U.S. vs. Gregorio Briones.

Papers relating to Castro suit for Rancho San Pablo, 1854-1859, include Wilson's notice to the Castros, Feb. 18, 1854, and printed letter by A. J. Kopsch concerning a portion of the San Pablo Rancho, Oct. 10, 1859.

Notes in Wilson's hand relating to claims for Punta de los Reyes.

Papers relating to personal property in Contra Costa County, 1853-1865. (leases and deeds)

Papers relating to personal property, in San Francisco, various ranches, and mines, 1850-1864

Powers of attorney to Wilson.

Accounts, tax statements

Appointments

Obituaries

Box IV

Miscellaneous papers of Wilson family; Wakeman family; Cooper family.

Wilson, Ann Robertson (Pulliam) (Mrs. John Wilson)
(1) Certified copy of marriage record, 1877
(2) Widow's pension papers
(3) Memorial card, 1886

Wilson, Micajah D. (Son of Ann and John Wilson)
Appointments as commissioner of deeds for California in the states of Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, New Hampshire and Virginia. Also appointment as notary public for California in Missouri, 1849

Cooper, Katherine (Wakeman) (grand-daughter)
Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, a few relating to Ann and John Wilson and to Mary Eliza (Wilson) Wakeman, and some concerning Santa Cruz social affairs.

Cooper papers
(1) Miscellaneous Cooper & Co. records, 1852-1853
(2) Santa Cruz County: Names of voters and number of votes polled in election held Sept. 6, 1854.
(3) Papers relating to Watsonville Guards (California Militia), 1863-1868 (8 items)
(4) Copies of correspondence - petitions for the job of Postmaster at Santa Cruz for William F. Cooper.

Wakeman, Ferdinand O.: Legal papers
7 items (1849) relating to claims against the Mexican Government for imprisonment with Isaac Graham in 1840. Agreements and powers of attorney with and to Wakeman and William I. Higgins.

Davis, William: Deeds of mining property in Nevada to Wakeman (3 items).

Wakeman, Mary Elizah (Wilson) (daughter of Ann and John Wilson)
(1) Letter for William Rockwell to R. A. Redman concerning Wakeman/Wilson property, May 27, 1890

Miscellaneous accounts - not Wilson's - include:
(1) Receipts relating to Thomas C. Carpenter and the Bark Ralph Cross (1849)
(2) Philadelphia Commercial and Mining Company: Receipts, 1849-1850 (8 items)

Rogers, Fred B.: Notes concerning Wilson papers.
Additional notes (gift of Fred B. Rogers, 1964)

A Miscellany

Andrews, J. H.
Re Point Reyes Ranch and Randall heirs. Nov. 2, 1869

Adamson, John
2 letters, re Vaca/Peña grant. 1858
Aud, Francis L.
3 letters, 1851-1853. 1851 letter refers to water lot speculation in San Francisco.

B Miscellany
Bell, Bary C
Re Bodega Ranch. June 7, 1859
Bennett, M. V.
Re land claims in Santa Cruz County relating to his mother’s (Mary Bennett, later Mary Love) property. Sept. 22, 1857
Bennett, Mary
see Love, Mary Bennett
Berry, Richard N.
Re Whig Party. Jan. 10, 1851
Boynton, Charles
Re Whig organization in Calaveras County. June 24, 1852
Briones, Pablo
Nov. 27, 1874
Bennett, Winston 1819-
4 letters, 1852-1858
Browder, Thomas W.
Re legal business pertaining to land grants, mainly in Santa Cruz County. 12 letters, 1859.
Brown, Orlando
see U.S. Office of Indian Affairs.
Brown, Thomas A., 1823-1889
2 letters, 1853-1855
Bruce, Samuel C.
6 letters re estate of Samuel Gregg. 1851-1857
Burnett, Peter Hardeman, 1807-1895
4 letters re Madden case. 1852-1854
C Miscellany
Carpentier, Horace W., 1824-1918
Re copies of records of Vicente and Antonio Peralta. July 4, 1852
Carroll, N.
Re politics. [ca. 1851?]
Crabb & Co., Santa Cruz
Partially re Whigs in the local election. Sept. 9, 1851
Crane, James M.
Re Whigs and Thomas Butler King. Feb. 22, 1852
Curl, James D.
Aug. 19, [1875]
Currey, John, 1814-1912
May 11, 1859
Carr, Jesse Douglas
Clark, Smyth
Re John C. Frémont’s Mariposa claim. Sketch map of mines included.
Coggeshall, Amasa
5 letters, 1858, relate to property on Weber/Gulnac grant.
Collins, John Anderson
4 letters, 1851-1853, re Whig politics in Grass Valley. References to John B. Weller.
Crabb, Henry A.
2 letters, 1853, re Whig convention and politics; anti-Bigler.
Crane, George W.
2 letters, 1850-1851
D Miscellany
Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889
California's future, commerce with Asia. Dec. 5, 1850

Doane, Charles
Importance of establishing telegraphic connections between San Francisco and Sacramento via Stockton. June 13, 1851

Dodge, Henry Lee, 1825-1902
Apr. 27, 1850

Du Bertrand, E.
Re gold in the Klamath River region. Oct. 1, 1850

Depeaux, Louis
3 letters relating to José Bolcoff, Rancho Soquel and Rancho de San Michael. 1853-1856

Dollarhide, Evan W.
4 letters re Vaca/Peña grant. 1859

F Miscellany
Field, Stephen Johnson, 1816-1899
August 16, 1856

Ford, Henry L., 1822-1860
4 letters re mines: Gulnac claim and San Francisco property. 1852-1857

G Miscellany
Gilroy, Miguel
Re land grants of San Ysidro, Las Animas and Llagos. n.d.

Gordon, John
Re Whigs in El Dorado County. July 13, 1852

Gridley, R. C.
Re politics in Yreka. May 29, 1855

Grove, W.
Description of Guaymas by Wilson's nephew. June 23, 1860

Grahm, William Alexander, 1804-1875
see U.S. Navy Dept.

H Miscellany
Hester, C. P.
Re Martin Castro's Claim. Oct. 13, 1859

Hope, Alexander W., 1820-
Re Whig party in Los Angeles. Dec. 30, 1851

Huddart, R. Townsend
Re sale of Santa Cruz ranches to foreign capitalists. May 18, 1853

Harper, John H.
2 letters re Gold Bluff mines. 1852

Hartley, Henry Hare
3 letters re Vaca grant. 1859

Helstrom, S. M.
6 letters re Pacheco/Mesa grants. One letter incomplete. 1858-1859

Hihn, F. A.
9 letters re Tarpey case, Rincon Ranch and Soquel Ranch. 1857-1859

Holcomb, N.
3 letters re Soquel Ranch. 1857-1858

Hubbs, Paul K., 1800-1874
16 letters re legal aspects concerning lots and lands; Colton grants. 1854-1856

J Miscellany
Jarragin, J. M.
Description of Sonora; mention of Santa Anna. Jan. 25, 1854

Johnson, John Neely, 1825-1872
Re meeting of Whig State Central Committee. Feb. 25, 1852

Jones, James McHall, 1823-1851
Nov. 8, 1851
Jones, Roger, 1789-1852
see U.S. Adjutant General's Office; U.S. Post Office
Jones, Thomas Ap Catesby, 1790-1856

K Miscellany
King, Austin Augustus, 1802-1870
May 24, n.y.

L Miscellany
Langdon, C. W.
Re La Jota grant and George C. Yount. Nov. 1, 1859
Love, Harry
May 24, 1858
Latham & Sunderland, Sacramento
2 letters re Vaca/Peña grant. 1857

Love, Mary Bennett
About business matters. With one letter from John Moore to Mrs. Bennett.

M Miscellany
McCutcheon, William
Re San Ysidro Ranch. Written and with additional note by Thomas Bodley. May 16, 1857
McKinstry, Elisha Williams, 1825-1901
Re Moraga vs. Emeric. May 15, 1854
Majors, Joseph L.
Written and signed for him by C. Winterholter. Apr. 21, 1859
Marshall, Edward C.
Re Guinac claim; politics; Gwin and Broderick. Nov. 11, 1854
Minor, D. K.
Addressed to James M. Crane, but meant also for John Wilson. Re lots in San Francisco. Dec. 2, 1853
Montgomery, John Berrien, 1794-1873
Requesting information concerning town lots held by his two deceased sons. Mar. 13, 1853
Moore, Jacob Bailey, 1797-1853
Relating to Wilson's accounts as Indian Agent and Navy Agent. Feb. 18, 1853
Moore, John H.
Re Mary Bennett Love's case; Whigs. June 14, 1852
See also: Love, Mary Bennett
Murphy, John M.
Re San Jose Pueblo Land Claim. Sept. 26, 1856

McKiernan, Charles
5 letters re Guadalupe Castro; Soquel Ranch. 1857-1858

McLean, John T.
2 letters re Whigs in Santa Cruz. 1851-1852
Martin, G. T.
2 letters re Whigs. 1851-1852
Medill, William, 1805-1865
see U.S. Office of Indian Affairs.
Merrill, Nathaniel, 1823-1900
5 letters, 1856. Include one letter to Henry L. Ford. Re Claims in Tehama County.
Monson, A. C.
2 letters re Whigs. One letter written as Chairman, Whig Convention Committee. 1851
Moore, Benjamin F.
3 letters re Whigs in Tuolumne County. 1851-1852
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<td>Noble, Augustus</td>
<td>9 letters re Soquel Ranch. 1857-1858</td>
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<td>Payran, Stephen</td>
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<td>Peckham, R. F.</td>
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<td>Parks, H. G.</td>
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<td>Parsons, George</td>
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<td>Porter, George R.</td>
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<td>Preston, William Ballard</td>
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<td>Accepting nomination as Whig candidate for office of State Governor. June 9, 1851</td>
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<td>Reed, E. P.</td>
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<td>Robinson, Tod</td>
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<td>Sargent, Aaron Augustus</td>
<td>Re politics. May 25, 1855</td>
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<td>Semple, Charles D.</td>
<td>Re politics. May 21, 1855</td>
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<td>Seward, William Henry</td>
<td>Re politics. Also clipping of Mar. 15, 1854 sent by Seward to Wilson (of Wilson’s endorsement on verso) Dec. 6, 1856</td>
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<td>Smith, S. S.</td>
<td>As clerk of Whig Party Ward Committee. July 2, 1851</td>
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<td>Swan, Thomas M.</td>
<td>Aug. 31, 1859</td>
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<td>Switzler, S.</td>
<td>Description of Hangtown (Placerville) and of mining. Jan. 27, 1850</td>
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<td>Sawyer, Ebenezer D.</td>
<td>5 letters. Whig Politics; San Francisco water front land. 1854</td>
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<td>Sevige, James</td>
<td>2 letters re Whigs in Sutter County. 1851</td>
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<td>Smith, Henry H.</td>
<td>2 letters re property around Martinez. 1859</td>
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Partial List of Correspondents

Smith, Truman, 1791-1884
25 letters re Whig politics; Thomas Butler King; Pacific Railroad; gold, copper and silver mines of Lake Superior. 1850-1856

Stout, Alfred H.
2 letters re Whigs in Colusa County; California Indians. 1851-1853

T Miscellany
Taylor, R. H.
Requesting information to refute democratic charges against the Whigs. Aug. 15, 1851
Torre, Pablo della
Aug. 11, 1858
Torrence, G. W.
Letter of introduction for Mr. William Bickham, Whig delegate from El Dorado County. May 22, 1851

Tanner, James
6 letters re Sutter Claim. 1852-1853

Tarpey, Matthew
5 letters re Santa Cruz lands. 1857-1858

Thomas, A.
2 letters re Vaca/Peña grants; news of Governor Boggs. 1859

Troy, Daniel
4 letters. 1858-1859

U Miscellany
U.S. Adjutant General's Office
Contemporary copy (for Wilson) of letter by Roger Jones to William Wing Loring. Apr. 13, 1849

U.S. General Land Office
Signed by James Whitcomb, Commissioner. Aug. 19, 1840

U.S. Post Office
Letter from Fitzhenry Warren, enclosing letter from Roger Jones, of May 14, 1849. May 15, 1849

U.S. Quartermaster's Dept.
Written by Charles Thomas. Oct. 14, 1851

Upson, Lauren, d. 1885
Written on California lettersheet "Diagram of the Burnt District - Sacramento ... 1852." Discussion of the Chinese Question in terms of its political significance to the Whigs. June 12, 1854

U.S. Navy Dept.
9 letters, 1849-1851. 3 signed by William Ballard Preston, 6 signed by William A. Graham. All relate to Wilson as Navy Agent.

U.S. Office of Indian Affairs
3 letters, 1849-1850. Written by Orlando Brown and William Medill. Apr. 7, 1859 letter includes commission to Wilson as Indian Agent, signed by Zachary Taylor.
Feb. 19, 1850 letter contains statement as to boundaries of Indian agencies, defining Wilson's authority to west of the Sierra Nevada.

U.S. Treasury Dept.
3 letters re accounts as former Indian Agent. Signed by Powell Clayton. 1851-1853

Van Dyke, Walter
2 letters re Whigs; scheme for getting mail for Trinidad, California. 1852

W Miscellany
Weller, John B., 1812-1875
Nov. 9, 1857.

Whitton, Jesse W.
Re George Yount's claim in Napa Valley. Apr. 12, 1852

Wilson, William Henry
Re Gold Bluff Mine. May 5, 1857
Winn, A. M.
Re Temperance organization in relation to politics. Oct. 2, 1855

Walthall, Madison
4 letters re Whigs and politics. 1850-1853

Weld, E. F.
Re various land claims, including Coggeshall's. 6 letters, 1858-1859.

Wilson, Micajah D., d. 1862
3 letters re Gold Bluff Mines. Reference to J. Ross Browne. Aug. 10, 1858 letter to
Henry L. Ford. 1851-1858

Wilson, O. P.
5 letters re Amesti claim, Calavessero grant. 1858-1859

Wood, R. N.
4 letters re Whig politics. Include copy of letter addressed to President Fillmore,
written by Wood and signed by various Whig members of the California
legislature. 1852

Worster, J. Rutherford
5 letters re politics and business affairs. 1854-1855

Y Miscellany
Yoell, Jasper Alexander
Re Gulnac claim. Oct. 28, 1854

Young, John, 1802-1852
Introducing Samuel Strong. Feb. 16, 1850

Younger, Coleman
2 letters re San Jose Pueblo Lands. 1851-1852

Alvarado, Juan Bautista, 1809-1882
To John Gilroy. Oct. 3, 1858

Kenaday, Alexander McConnell
To A. C. Russell, concerning politics in Southern California. July 24, 1851