Guide to the Halleck, Peachy & Billings Records, 1852-1867

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Note
History --History, California --GeneralGeographical (by Place) --California
Guide to the Halleck, Peachy & Billings Records, 1852-1867

Collection number: BANC MSS C-B 421

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: Halleck, Peachy & Billings Records,
Date (inclusive): 1852-1867
Collection Number: BANC MSS C-B 421
Origination: Halleck, Peachy & Billings
Extent: Number of containers: 9 boxes and 55 items in 9 oversize foldersNumber of microfilm reels: 10
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 papers relating to land and land litigation (including original documents and disenos, and transcripts) and to various legal cases, some concerning Chinese immigration, ships, and the funding bill in San Francisco; accounts; and tax records. Also included: correspondence and papers relating to the military career of Henry Wager Halleck, 1847-1856, and manuscript drafts and notes for Halleck's History of California.

Languages Represented: English

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**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Halleck, Peachy & Billings records, BANC MSS C-B 421, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

**Scope and Content**

The Halleck, Peachy & Billings papers, purchased from John Howell Books in February 1948, and acquired from the Cowan and from the T. W. Norris Collections, include correspondence, mainly relating to land litigation, with documents and diseños (originals, copies, and translations) used in the settlement of the claims; papers in various legal cases, some concerning ships, Chinese immigration and the San Francisco funding bill; a few accounts and some tax records.

Also contained in the collection is a small group of correspondence and papers relating to Halleck's military career from 1847 to 1856, and manuscript drafts and notes for his *History of California*.

There follows a detailed key to arrangement, a partial list of correspondents and claimants, an alphabetical list of property claims represented in the collection, and a list of diseños and maps.

Items listed in the key to arrangement as contained in "oversized portfolio," see 9 folders in oversize drawers.

**Organizational History**

Halleck, Peachy & Billings, one of the leading law firms in San Francisco employed by claimants in the settlement of titles to Mexican land grants, consisted of three partners - Frederick Billings, Archibald C. Peachy and Henry Wager Halleck. Of these, the most prominent was Halleck, a graduate of West Point in engineering, a participant in the Mexican War who later prepared a report on California land titles, and was an active member of the California constitutional convention. He resigned from the army in 1854 to join the firm, and compiled two legal works acknowledged to be leading texts in their time - *Mining Laws of Spain and Mexico* and *International Law*. In 1860 he returned to the military life, rising to the position of general during the Civil War.

Both Frederick Billings and Archibald C. Peachy came to California in 1849. Billings immediately set up practice in San Francisco and soon formed a partnership with Peachy. Billings in a short while became well known as a legal adviser, and counseled General Riley during the aftermath of the Mexican War, thus meeting Halleck, then military secretary of California.

The other member of the firm, Archibald C. Peachy was also a member of the California Assembly (1852) and of the state senate in 1860 and 1862.

The firm dissolved in 1861 after Halleck left California, by mutual agreement, although the formal partnership was retained until Halleck's death in 1872.

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Chew, Robert S., 1811-1873

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portfolio portfolio (o.s.) Box 1, oversize no. 11

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Halleck, Peachy and Billings
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