Guide to the George Kenyon Fitch Papers, 1826-1906

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Note
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Guide to the George Kenyon Fitch Papers, 1826-1906

Collection number: BANC MSS C-B 761

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: George Kenyon Fitch papers,
Date (inclusive): 1826-1906
Collection Number: BANC MSS C-B 761
Origination: Fitch, George Kenyon, 1826-1906
Extent: Number of containers: 2 boxes, 2 cartons, 4 volumes
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 newspaper clippings relating mainly to the San Francisco Call and the Bulletin, and to California politics and railroads; legal and financial papers concerning the Sacramento Times and Transcript; reports on San Francisco water supply; biographical sketches of Fitch; invitations and programs. Correspondents include William Jennings Bryan, James Duval Phelan, and Stephen Mallory White.

Languages Represented: English

Access
Collection is open for research.

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**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], George Kenyon Fitch papers, BANC MSS C-B 761, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Two photographs of Fitch, have been placed in the portrait drawer with the call numbers 4453 -4454.

Printed items which have been catalogued separately in the book catalog. They are as follows:

- Pamphlets. [Each catalogued separately in the Bancroft Library]
- Report of Professor George Davidson upon a system of sewerage for the city of San Francisco. San Francisco, 1886.
- All about Alaska. Issued by the Pacific Coast Steamship Company. 1888.
- Republican speech of Hon. Morris M. Estee, delivered at Odd Fellows Hall, San Francisco, September 24, 1898.
- Memorial of the life and services of Washington Bartlett ... adopted by the Society of California Pioneers ... May 7, 1887.
- The New San Francisco. An address by James D. Phelan ... Sept. 1, 1896.
- Appeal to the People, by Horace W. Philbrook. Sept., 1898.
- In the Supreme Court of the State of California. The People of the State of California vs. The City and County of San Francisco. 1887.
- The law and the facts in relation to the fixing of water rates for the city and county of San Francisco, by Charles Wesley Reed ...
- Constitution, by-laws and list of members of the Society of California Pioneers, since its organization, as revised August, 1874. Organized August, 1850. San Francisco, 1874.
- Message of the President of the United States and the majority and minority reports of the commission appointed to investigate the Pacific Railways ... Washington, 1890. 50th Cong., 1st sess., Ex. doc. 51.
- Governmental debt of the Pacific Railroads. 54th Cong., 1st sess., Report 778 pt. 2.
- In the Supreme Court of the State of California. Dept. 2. George K. Fitch, Appellant vs. M. H. De Young, Respondent. 1885.
- Giant Gap water supply proposed for city and county of San Francisco, Cal. Proposition to Board of Supervisors, February, 1901.
- Estimate of the value of the Spring Valley water works ... by H. Schussler. San Francisco, Feb. 5, 1901.
- A lecture about the water supply and sewerage of San Francisco, delivered before the Cooper Medical College and Lane hospital, Feb. 16, 1900, by Dr. Chas. W. Ellinwood.
- Report of the commissioner and of the minority commissioner of the U.S. Pacific Railway Commission, 1887.
- The Age Annual. Political and Statistical Register of the Colony of Victoria, 1890. Melbourne, 1890.
- Report of the Union Pacific Railway and its branches, the Central Pacific Railway and its branches, the central branch of the Union Pacific Railroad, the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad; also on auxiliary and leased lines, by Richard Price Morgan, 1887.
- The Canadian Railroad Question. Arguments and facts submitted to a committee of the U.S. Senate by E.W. Meddaugh and A.C. Raymond, at a hearing in Detroit, Mich., May 1, 1891.
- Prospectus of the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad. 1893.
- The Argonaut, June 2, 1906.

**Scope and Content**

The Fitch papers were presented to Bancroft Library in March 1940 by his daughter, Virginia Fitch. Covering the period from 1849 until his death, they include correspondence, newspaper clippings, reports, legal and financial papers, invitations and programs, and biographical sketches of Fitch. Names of principal correspondents and other items of note appear in the
George Kenyon Fitch was one of the best known of the pioneer editors of California. He was born in New York State on March 2, 1826 and came to California in 1849 after working in Ohio and New Orleans as a printer. He settled first in Sacramento where he helped establish the *Sacramento Times and Transcript* and in 1852 went to San Francisco. In partnership with Loring Pickering and James W. Simonton, he purchased the *San Francisco Bulletin* and then the *San Francisco Call,* and the two newspapers became powerful forces in the city. Fitch was responsible for the *Bulletin* while Pickering managed the editorial affairs of the *Call.* In January 1895, after the death of Pickering, the *Call* and the *Bulletin* were sold, and Fitch retired from active life. He died June 18, 1906, in San Rafael, California.

**Box 1**

**Letters written to George K. Fitch, ca. 1850-1904**

Scope and Content Note

Chiefly concerning the *Call* and the *Bulletin,* political matters and railroads. Single letters have been placed in one folder; several letters from any one correspondent in separate folders. Cards have been placed in the manuscripts catalog for correspondents of note.

**Letters written by Fitch, ca. 1869-1902**

Scope and Content Note

Chiefly drafts and copies. Arranged chronologically.

**Letters written to Loring Pickering**

Scope and Content Note

Two letters from J. W. Pratt, 1889, and from Stephen M. White, 1892.

**Letters written to Mrs. George K. Fitch and to Virginia Fitch**

Scope and Content Note

Include letter written by James D. Phelan, 1929.

**Letter written by Virginia Fitch, 1940, presenting the Fitch Collection to the University of California.**

**Extracts from correspondence of James W. Simonton concerning the *San Francisco Bulletin,* 1860-1861.**

Scope and Content Note

Include portions of letters written to Fitch, Dr. Tuthill and others. Extract from Simonton's power of attorney, Dec. 26, 1861, also.

**Letter, Daniel Cleveland to J. Ross Browne, July 27, 1868, concerning the Chinese in California.**

**Letter (copy) from David D. Colton to C. P. Huntington, Dec. 1, 1875.**

**Letter (copy) from [Philip Gleason?] Galpin to John O. Davenport, 1894.**

Biographical sketches of Fitch written by George D. Squires [some on film].

**Fitch’s account book with the London and San Francisco Bank Limited, 1869-1880.**

**Fitch’s notes on Golden Gate Park in San Francisco**

**Invitations, programs, etc.**

**Legal and financial papers pertaining to the Sacramento Times and Transcript**

Scope and Content Note

Included are the following: Articles of agreement, Mar. 18, 1850 between George K. Fitch, Samuel C. Upham, H.S. Warren, J.M. Julian, and T. Russell; two promissory notes, Gilbert C. Weld to Samuel C. Upham and to Fitch, both dated June 29, 1850; note by S.C. Upham, June 13, 1850, re sale of his interest in the Transcript to G.C. Weld; promissory note, Sept. 28, 1850, Fitch, as administrator of the estate of G.C. Weld, to Fitch; receipt, signed by W. T. Yeomans, Jan. 19, 1852, for money received from G. K. Fitch.
Articles of agreement, June 25, 1852 - Placer Times and Transcript, San Francisco
Scope and Content Note
Signed by G.K. Fitch, L. Pickering and others.

Exhibits (mainly financial statements) in litigation
Scope and Content Note
(Fitch vs. DeYoung?) involving the San Francisco Bulletin and the Call. Included also is a letter from the attorneys for Fitch to Messrs. Lloyd and Wood, May 6, 1887.

Proceedings before Judge McKenna, Nov. 26, 1894, in re sale of the Bulletin and the Call.
Certified copies of four deeds, bound together as follows:
1. Sebastian Keyser to Edward A. Farwell;
2. Edward A. Farwell to Chapman and Warbass;
3. John Bidwell to Chapman and Warbass;
4. Farwell and Bidwell to Chapman and Warbass. All filed for record Oct. 27, 1860...

Butte Co.
Miscellaneous papers concerning the San Francisco water supply
Scope and Content Note
Include the following: Communication to the Board of Supervisors, San Francisco by Milo Hoadley, Mar. 7, 1870 which incorporates report of George Davidson of the U. S. Coast Survey report, "The water storage reservoirs of San Francisco. A comparison with those of other American cities" -unidentified, incomplete and undated; an untitled report on the Spring Valley Water Co. with note: "To Mr. Fitch From J. F. Saip"; a report on San Francisco water supply in the form of letter to the editor -unsigned and undated.

A review of Sketches of Leading and Representative Men of San Francisco
Scope and Content Note
From the San Francisco Bulletin?

"Ought the Park To be Mutilated"
Scope and Content Note
Article appearing in the Bulletin? Handwriting unidentified.

Article on the election of John F. Miller
Scope and Content Note
With note by G. K. Fitch, Jan. 15, 1881.

Copies of newspaper articles concerning C. P. Huntington and Charles Crocker.
Scope and Content Note
Handwriting unidentified.

Citizens Non Partisan Party
Scope and Content Note
Excerpts from convention proceedings, 1896?

Newspaper clippings
Scope and Content Note
Concerning the following: Municipal problems; San Francisco Bulletin --printers strike, 1870 and 1886; San Francisco Chronicle.
carton Ctn 1  Newspaper clippings and magazine articles  
Scope and Content Note  
Concerning the following: San Francisco municipal politics and Non-Partisan Party; California history; Spring Valley Water Co.; California journalism; San Francisco municipal problems (Water-front, Sewers, Golden Gate Park and Dupont St. frauds); Southern Pacific Railroad; miscellaneous clippings.

carton Ctn 2  Newspaper clippings  
Scope and Content Note  
Concerning the following: Fitch vs. De Young libel suit; San Francisco earthquake and fire, 1906; Kissane clippings; George K. Fitch (obituaries); San Francisco Bulletin.

volume vol 1  Scrapbook of clippings  
Scope and Content Note  
Includes clippings of Fitch's letter to the Cleveland Herald, 1849; clippings from early California newspapers; and photographs of Fitch. Pasted inside the front cover are announcement of wedding to Clara V. Duvall, Apr. 21, 1857, receipted bill signed Fitch Upham & Co.

volume vol 2  Scrapbook of clippings  
Scope and Content Note  
Include clippings on mining, taken from early California newspapers.

volume vol 3  Scrapbook of clippings  
Scope and Content Note  
Include clippings on the Fitch vs. De Young libel suit and on railroads.

volume vol 4  Testimonial of Regard to George K. Fitch.  
Scope and Content Note  

Bartlett, Washington, 1824-1887  
Letter, April 5, 1887. Offering Fitch appointment to the Board of Regents, University of California.

Bryan, William Jennings, 1860-1925  
Letter, April 30, 1904.

Cleveland, Daniel, 1838-  

Colton, David Douty, 1832-1878  

Evans, Taliesin  
Letter, Jan. 9, 1895.

Ewer, Sophie M.C.  

[Fitch, Clara (Duvall)]  

Galpin, Philip Gleason, 1830-  

Kemble, E.W.  

Perkins, George Clement, 1839-1923
Letter, Nov. 27, 1880. Offering Fitch appointment to the Board of Regents, University of California.

Phelan, James Duval, 1861-1930
Letter to Virginia Fitch, Oct. 9, 1929.

Pickering, Loring, 1812-
Letters, 1865-1877 (7).

San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railway Co.
Letter, March 23, 1895. Form letter from Claus Spreckels, president, and Alexander Mackie, secretary, concerning meeting of the subscribers to the capital stock.

Simonton, James William, 1823-1882
Letters, 1865-1873 (5). One letter undated. Included is a letter, July 9, 1865, addressed to William C. Ralston. Among letters written by Fitch are several addressed to Simonton.

Sneath, Richard George, 1826-
Letter, Oct. 21, 1888.

Squires, George De Forrest, 1855-
Letter, Nov. 29, 1895.

Upham, Samuel Curtis, 1819-1885
Letter, Mar. 25, 1850.

Vassault, Ferdinand

White, Stephen Mallory, 1853-1901
Letters, 1892-1898 (3). Also, letter, Nov. 22, 1892, addressed to Loring Pickering with enclosure: copy of White's letter to T. Carl Spelling, Nov. 22, 1892.