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## Guide to the James T. Stratton Papers, 1857-1903

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**Note**

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

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## Guide to the James T. Stratton Papers, 1857-1903

**Collection number: BANC MSS C-B 770**

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University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, California

### Contact Information:

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### Collection Summary

**Collection Title:** James T. Stratton Papers,

**Date (inclusive):** 1857-1903

**Collection Number:** BANC MSS C-B 770

**Creator:** Stratton, James T.

**Extent:** Number of containers: 6 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:** Mainly letters received by Stratton, ca. 1883-1901; letterpress copies of outgoing correspondence, 1881-1903; account books; diaries; survey records; deeds and tax receipts.

**Languages Represented:** English

### Access

Collection is open for research.

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**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], James T. Stratton papers, BANC MSS C-B 770, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

**Title:** Frederick Smith Stratton Papers,

**Identifier/Call Number:** BANC MSS C-B 771.

**Material Cataloged Separately**

Two mining stock certificates of the Chemical Gold Mining and Reduction Company have been removed to California Mining Stock Certificates, 1850-1912, BANC MSS C-G 2, v. 1, no. 12.

**Scope and Content**

The James T. Stratton Papers were presented to Bancroft Library by his grandson, Dr. James Malcolm Stratton, and his wife in June, 1958. The Frederick Smith Stratton Papers, also presented at this time, have been separately catalogued as C-B 771.

The Collection has been arranged in six boxes. It should be mentioned that among the incoming correspondence have been placed letters addressed to James W. Shanklin. These letters were undoubtedly passed along to Stratton and were kept by him after Shanklin's death in 1902. Since they concern business ventures undertaken jointly by Stratton and Shanklin it is felt that they are best kept together.

The Collection covers the period from 1857 to 1903, with the major part of the correspondence dated after 1881. Pocket diaries exist for the decade from 1869 to 1878, with the exceptions of 1871 and 1877.

A few items concerning George Malcolm Stratton have been gathered together into the Miscellany in Box 6.

**Biography**

James Thompson Stratton was born on October 9, 1830 at Thompsonville, New York, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Stratton. His maternal grandfather was the Honorable William A. Thompson, first judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Alston and Sullivan counties, New York.

Stratton was educated at the Columbia Grammar School in New York, and came to California, via the Isthmus of Panama, just after the Gold Rush. He arrived in San Francisco on the "Columbus" on June 6, 1850. His first work in California was a survey of the town of Benicia; later, in 1851, he travelled up the American River to try his luck at the diggings. In 1853 he completed a survey of the town of Alameda, and in the following year he returned East to marry Cornelia A. Smith at Sing Sing, New York, on October 30, 1854.

Returning to California following his marriage, Stratton settled in the town of Clinton, now renamed East Oakland. In 1858 and 1859 he was the County Surveyor for Alameda County, and made many important surveys in other parts of California, becoming an authority on the large Mexican grants. It is said that he subdivided more Spanish ranchos than any other surveyor.

Stratton was appointed U.S. Surveyor-General for California by President Grant in 1873, but because of failing eyesight he was forced to abandon the job in 1876. During the period from 1880 to 1883 he served as Chief Deputy State Surveyor under General James W. Shanklin. Toward the end of his life he was associated with Shanklin in many land ventures throughout the state. It may also be noted that Stratton was a pioneer in the introduction of the Australian eucalyptus into California, planting over 300 acres of these trees on his Hayward ranch.

Stratton's death occurred in Oakland on March 15, 1903. He was survived by his wife and four children: Frederick Smith Stratton, George Malcolm Stratton, Robert T. Stratton and Mrs. Walter Good.

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Box 1	<b>Letters to Stratton: Miscellany, A-Z to Kimball.</b>
Box 2	<b>Letters to Stratton: Lataillade to Wright.</b>
Box 3	<b>Land Papers: School land agreements; Alameda to Monterey counties.</b>
Box 4	<b>Land Papers: Plumas to Yuba counties.</b>
Box 5	<b>Vol. 1: Out-letters, 1893-1898</b> <b>Vol. 2: Out-letters, 1899-1903</b> <b>Vol. 3: Account book, 1857-1859</b> <b>Vol. 4: Account book, 1859-1860</b> <b>Vol. 5: Account book, 1873-1874</b> <b>Vol. 6: Account book, 1884-1897</b> <b>Vol. 7: Account book, 1894-1900</b>
Box 6	<b>Vol. 8: Diary, 1869</b> <b>Vol. 9: Diary, 1870</b>

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**Vol. 10: Diary, 1872**

**Vol. 11: Diary, 1873**

**Vol. 12: Diary, 1874**

**Vol. 13: Diary, 1875**

**Vol. 14: Diary, 1876**

**Vol. 15: Diary, 1878**

**Vol. 16: Diary, 1883**

**Vol. 17: Diary, 1885**

**Vol. 18: Survey book, 1863-1882**

**Vol. 19: Record of school land location surveys, 1890**

**Adams, Frederick**

Letter(s), 1883-1901 (9). Indemnity School Land Grant appointing Adams to examine land, Jan. 19, 1895, included.

**Atherton, Dominga Goñi de**

Quit claim deed to James T. Stratton. San Francisco. Aug. 2, 1879. Executed with Alexander B. Grogan as executor of the estate of Faxon D. Atherton, releasing Stratton from all indebtedness.

**Baker, P. Y.**

Letter(s), 1891-1900 (4).

**Belcher, E. A.**

Letter(s), 1891-1895 (6). Two letters written to Belcher and forwarded to Stratton; one written by Belcher to Tax Collector, Del Norte County; and three cards from Tax Collector, Del Norte County.

**Benson, John A.**

Letter(s), 1901 (3). One addressed to James W. Shanklin.

**California. Surveyor General.**

Letter(s), 1889-1901 (29). Chiefly signed by Theodore Reichert and M. J. Wright. A few addressed to James W. Shanklin.

**Carr, J. D.**

Letter(s), 1882-1884 (13). A few letters addressed to H. I. Willey and forwarded by him to Stratton.

**Chipman & Garter (firm). Red Bluff, California.**

Letter(s), 1884 (8).

**Cutting, William Bayard, 1850-1912**

Letter(s), 1893-1894 (2).

**Denton, William**

Letter(s), 1882 (5).

**Dodge, Edmund R.**

Letter(s), 1883-1884 (22).

**Du Brutz, A. B.**

Letter(s), 1884-1885 (4).

**Fay, Alvin**

Letter(s), 1883-1884 (5).

**Fleming, G. W.**

Letter(s), 1898-1900 (5). One letter addressed to James W. Shanklin.

**Garter, Dozier & Wells (firm). Red Bluff, California.**

Letter(s), 1899-1901 (29). Mainly signed by John J. Wells. Several letters addressed to James W. Shanklin.

**Hayes, J. Chauncey**

Letter(s), 1884 (3).

**Johnston, William J.**

Letter(s), 1883-1884 (12). Also, one letter addressed to Johnston by Binger Hermann, Commissioner, U.S. General Land Office, July 8, 1899.

**Keddie, Arthur W.**

Letter(s), 1901 (2).

**Kimball, Gorham G.**

Letter(s), 1883-1884 (7).

**Lataillade, C. E.**  
Letter(s), 1883 (4). One addressed to Theodore Reichert.

**McGarvey, R.**  
Letter(s), 1884 (2).

**Mackenzie, J. A.**  
Letter(s), 1900-1901 (2).

**Mullan, John**  
Letter(s), 1883-1884 (2).

**Norboe, P. M.**  
Letter(s), 1883-1884 (3).

**Parker, W. M. R.**  
Letter(s), 1883 (3).

**Peck, F. F.**  
Letter(s), 1900-1901 (3).

**San Francisco Savings Union.**  
Letter(s), 1885-1901 (22). Mainly signed by Lovell White, cashier.

**Shanklin, James W., 1824-1902**  
Letter(s), 1883-1901 (14). Including letters written to Shanklin and copies of letters written by Shanklin to others.

**Smith, J. Malcolm**  
Letter(s), 1882-1883 (4).

**Stevens, Horace**  
Letter(s), 1883, 1901 (2).

**Stratton, Frederick Smith, 1859-1915**  
Letter(s), 1880-1901 (8).

**Southern Pacific Railroad Company. Land Department.**  
Letter(s), 1892 (2). Signed by Jerome Madden, agent.

**Tennyson, D. D.**  
Letter(s), 1883-1884 (2).

**U.S. Land Office. Humboldt, California.**  
Letter(s), 1883-1892 (3).

**U.S. Land Office. Shasta, California.**  
Letter(s), 1883-1884 (7). Signed by J. W. Garden, registrar.

**U.S. Land Office. Susanville, California.**  
Letter(s), 1884-1899 (5). Two addressed to James W. Shanklin.

**U.S. Land Office. Visalia, California.**  
Letter(s), 1892-1900 (11). Mainly signed by George W. Stewart, registrar. Several letters addressed to Theodore Reichert and James W. Shanklin.

**Van Valer, E. L.**  
Letter(s), 1883-1884 (3).

**Wherily, J. R.**  
Letter(s), 1900-1901 (4).

**Willey, H. I.**  
Letter(s), 1882-1884 (4). Two letters written as Surveyor General.