Guide to the William Hammond Hall Papers MS 913

Finding aid prepared by California Historical Society staff.
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Collection Summary

Collection Title: William Hammond Hall papers
Dates: 1878-1914
Collection Number: MS 913
Creator: Hall, Wm. Ham. (William Hammond)
Physical Description: 2.5 Linear feet
Repository: California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105
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URL: http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/

Physical Location: Collection is stored onsite.

Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English.

Abstract: Chiefly correspondence, reports, accounts, and other papers pertaining to Hall's irrigation projects in Calif., with some materials on projects in Nev. and Yakima, Wash. Includes some papers related to Hall's research and publications on irrigation, dams, and reservoirs; reports and correspondence on irrigation from the Calif. State Engineering Department; and correspondence and directories from the Association of Irrigation Districts. Also includes assorted publications on irrigation in the West outside of Calif., public lands, and water use.

Access
Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation
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Title: William Hammond Hall Letterbooks.
Identifier/Call Number: MS 914
Title: William Hammond Hall Papers, 1873-1911.
Identifier/Call Number: MS 915
Title: California Historical Society Photography Collection--General Subjects--Agriculture--Irrigation
Identifier/Call Number: GS:Box 003

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog. Irrigation engineers--California. Irrigation engineering--California. Irrigation engineering--West (U.S.) California--Officials and employees. California--Environmental conditions. California. State Engineering Dept.

Accruals
No additions are expected.

Processing Information
Processed by California Historical Society staff.

Biography
William Hammond Hall was born on February 12, 1846, the son of John Buchanan Hall and Anna Marie Hammond. At the time of his birth the family lived in Hagerstown, MD but moved to Stockton in 1853. Between 1858 and 1865 Hall was
enrolled in a private episcopal academy. It had been planned that Hall would attend West Point so his education was
directed toward mathematics, however, as a result of the Civil War, Hall's mother would not allow her son to fight against
'her people' so he never received a college education.

His practical education began the summer of 1863 when he worked as a rodman and leveler for surveyor A.J. Bender. The
following summer Hall did barometrical work under a Col. Williamson on Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams in Oregon. Following
completion of his schooling in 1865, he was permanently employed by the Board of Military Engineers in San Francisco. A
year later he was appointed Asst. Civil Engineer of the U.S. Engineering Corps. In addition to his work for the Army and the
U.S. Engineering Corps, Hall worked on the Outside Lands Survey under City Surveyor W.P. Humphreys and in 1869 Hall
was involved in mining engineering in the White Pine District, Nevada.

1870 was an important year in Hall's life. He was married to Emma Fitzhugh, member of a prominent Southern family. And
in August of that year, Hall, as low bidder, was awarded the contract to survey and topographically map out Golden Gate
Park. Following that report, he prepared a plan for the Park's development and the following August was appointed
engineer and superintendent of the Park. A position Hall held until his resignation in 1876.

During 1872-73, Hall consulted in the grading and development of the University of California campus at Berkeley. In the
few years after his resignation Hall was involved in a variety of projects which included: inspection work and reports on the
construction of Wm. Ralston's Palace Hotel; and serving as chief engineer for the Central Irrigation District and the West
side Irrigation District.

In the Spring of 1879 Governor William Irwin appointed Hall as the first state engineer of California. He was reappointed to
this position by four successive governors. In this capacity he was asked by Gov. Stoneman to act as consulting engineer
for Golden Gate Park in 1886. 1886 was also the year in which Hall launched his journal Land and Water with editorial
assistance from his Assistant State Engineer James D. Schuyler. Hall resigned as State Engineer in 1889 and was appointed
supervising engineer of the U.S.G.S. Irrigation Bureau a position he held for a year.

Hall went into private practice in 1890 and worked as a civil engineer on irrigation projects in central and southern
California and as consulting engineer on irrigation and waterworks in England and South Africa. In 1889 Hall went to Russia,
in 1905 to Panama to report on engineering studies on the Panama Canal and in 1918 to Turkey where he reported on
Armenian and Syrian Relief. During these years Hall was in business as a civil engineer and land developer. During the
early part of the twentieth century Hall was involved in a controversy concerning land in Yosemite (now known as
Hetch-Hetchy) which the City of San Francisco was seeking for a water supply.

Hall had three daughters, Anna Hammond, Margaret Fitzhugh, and Katherine Buchanan Hall. He died on October 16, 1934
and was buried in Colma.

Source: Clary, Raymond. The History of Golden Gate Park.

Scope and Contents of Collection

Consists of records from William Hammond Hall's professional practice as an engineer and especially as a water resources
specialist. The material in this collection relates specifically to Irrigation in California, Nevada and Yakima, Washington.
Folders 1-8 contain more general materials such as correspondence; outlines and notes from Hall's research and toward
articles and reports he was intending to write; copies of his published works and reports on reservoirs, two by his assistant
James D. Schuyler.

Folders 9-16 relate to the California State Office of Engineering and include reports and correspondence. There are some
materials relating to a controversy in that office that took place in 1890. There is also material from the Association of
Irrigation Districts.

The remainder of the collection are records relating to specific water engineering projects throughout California. Included
are reports, correspondence, specifications, financial records such as cost estimates and accounts, arid land legislation and
newspaper clippings. Projects included in this material include the California Central Irrigation District, irrigation in Southern
California, a major endeavor in Yakima, Washington, and various flood control and canal projects throughout the state.
There are also records from a project in Nevada.

Box 5 contains an assortment of published sources such as Sierra Buttes Canal & Water Co. briefs, issues of the Census
Bulletin from 1892, and other published material relating non-California irrigation, public lands and water use.

Arid regions (f. 47)
Association of Irrigation Districts (f. 15, 16)
Bear Valley Dam (San Bernadino Co.) (f. 17)
Bosley, William B.
Brown, Walston H. & Bros. (f. 32)
California. State Department of Engineering (f. 9-14)
Central Irrigation District (f. 18-20)
Clear Lake (Lake Co.) (f. 21)
Contra Costa & Oakland Water Co. (f. 22)
Coyote River Water Project (Santa Clara Co.) (f. 23)
Crocker & Huffman Canal (Merced Co.) (f. 24)
Dixon, L.L. (f. 25)
Granger, Walter N. (f. 36)
James, Walter (f. 25)
Kern County--Irrigation (f. 25-28)
Kern River (f. 26-28)
Los Angeles (f. 15, 34,35)
Nance, J.W. (f. 15)
Nevada Irrigation Project (f. 29)
Newlands, Francis G. (f. 29)
Northern Pacific, Yakima and Kittitas Irrigation Co. (f. 36-44)
Nurse, M. A. (f. 30)
Pardee, George C. (f. 10)
Perris Irrigation Project (f. 15, 17)
Riverside Co. (f. 15, 17)
Salt Spring Valley Reservoir (Calaveras Co.) (f. 32)
San Bernadino Co. (f. 34, 35)
Schuyler, James D. (f. 6,7)
San Diego Co. (f. 15, 34, 35)
Sierra Buttes Canal & Water Co. (f.50)
Sterling, Guy (f. 41, 42)
Washington (State) (f. 36-44)
Yakima Valley Project (WA) (f. 36-44)
Zillah Headquarters Building (f. 36-42)

Mixed materials 1, Folder 1
General correspondence 1883-1910
Mixed materials 1, Folder 2
Irrigation; Its Province and Problems, outline and notes 1889
Mixed materials 1, Folder 3
Dams for Storage Reservoirs, manuscript undated
Mixed materials 1, Folder 4
Notes and miscellaneous documents undated
Mixed materials 1, Folder 5
Published Works 1891, 1897
Mixed materials 1, Folder 6
Reservoir of San Bernadino and L.A. Counties, by J.D. Schuyler 1880-1881
Mixed materials 1, Folder 7
Report on Mountain Reservoirs on the Kern River, by J.D. Schuyler 1888
Mixed materials 1, Folder 8
Specht's Report on Reservoirs and Dams for Storage Purposes undated
Mixed materials 1, Folder 9
California State Engineering Department
General undated
Container List

Mixed materials 1, Folder 10
Irrigation District Report - correspondence 1888

Mixed materials 1, Folder 11-12
Report on Irrigation 1880-1888

Mixed materials 1, Folder 13
Controversy circa 1890

Mixed materials 2, Folder 10
Association of Irrigation Districts
Correspondence 1891-1992

Mixed materials 2, Folder 11-12
Directories 1891

Mixed materials 2, Folder 13
Projects
Bear Valley Dam and Perris Irrigation Project 1889

Central Irrigation District
Correspondence 1891-1892

Central Irrigation District
Specifications 1889-1891

Central Irrigation District
Cost estimates 1891

Mixed materials 2, Folder 14
Clear Lake Survey undated

Mixed materials 2, Folder 15
Contra Costa and Oakland Water Co. 1886-1894

Coyote River Water Project 1901-1902

Coyote River Water Project 1901-1902
The Crocker and Huffman Canal undated

Kern County Irrigation Project 1878-1885

Kern River Gaugings
Correspondence 1903-1904

Kern River Gaugings
Reports 1903-1904

Kern River Gaugings
Accounts 1903-1904

Mixed materials 2, Folder 16
Nevada Irrigation Project 1889-1890

Sacramento River Flood Control - correspondence 1903-1904

Sacramento Valley Irrigation Project 1883

Sacramento Valley Irrigation Project 1883
Salt Spring Valley Reservoir 1889

San Joaquin Valley Canal - statistics 1885

Mixed materials 2, Folder 17
Irrigation in Southern California circa 1888

Mixed materials 2, Folder 18
Irrigation Projects in Southern California (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Bernadino)
undated

Mixed materials 2, Folder 19
Yakima Valley (Washington) Irrigation Project
Correspondence
Mixed materials 4, Folder 36
Mixed materials 4, Folder 37
Mixed materials 4, Folder 38
Mixed materials 4, Folder 39
Mixed materials 4, Folder 40
Mixed materials 4, Folder 41-42
Mixed materials 4, Folder 43
Mixed materials 5, Folder 44
Mixed materials 5, Folder 45
Mixed materials 5, Folder 46
Mixed materials 5, Folder 47
Mixed materials 5, Folder 48
Mixed materials 5, Folder 49
Mixed materials 5, Folder 50

W.N. Granger 1893-1894
C.R. Rockwood 1890-1892
J.B. Rogers 1893
D.W. Ross undated
P. Schulze 1892-1894
G. Sterling 1891-1893
Correspondence undated
Final Cost Reports 1894
Yolo County Sub-Irrigation undated
Yosemite Valley Project 1902

Miscellaneous
Arid Lands Legislation 1889-1890
Newspaper clippings 1888-1890
Sierra Buttes Canal & Water Co. - Briefs