Guide to the William Hammond Hall Papers, 1873-1911
Collection number: MS 915

Finding aid prepared by California Historical Society staff; revised by David Krah.

California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105
415-357-1848
reference@calhist.org
2001, revised 2009
Title: William Hammond Hall papers  
Date (inclusive): 1873-1911  
Collection Number: MS 915  
Creator: Hall, Wm. Ham. (William Hammond)  
Physical Description: 9 boxes, including 13 volumes, 13 oversize folders (3.5 linear feet)  
Contributing Institution: California Historical Society

678 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA, 94105  
415-357-1848  
reference@calhist.org  
URL: http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/  
Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English  
Physical Location: Collection is stored onsite.  

Abstract: The William Hammond Hall papers (MS915) consists of correspondence, technical reports, scrapbooks, and blueprints generated during his time as the first State Engineer of California (1879-1889), as a supervising engineer for the U.S. Geological Survey (1889), and as a private civil engineer designing dams and irrigation projects in California, Utah, Washington and southern Africa. Correspondence includes letters written to California Governors William Irwin and George clement Perkins in his capacity as State Engineer, and extensive correspondence with Frederick Law Olmstead & Co. regarding the Alleandro (California) town improvement project. Reports include U.S. Geological Survey materials from the California and Lahontan divisions, as well as reports relating to the construction of the Santa Ana Canal, the Northern Pacific, Yakima, and Kittitas Irrigation Co., dams on the Sacramento, Yuba, American, and Feather Rivers, and irrigation projects in the California Central Valley. Additionally, there are reports and miscellaneous notes on subjects such as artesian wells, stream gauging, sewage, and other hydrology topics. Blueprints in the collection date from Hall's time as a private engineer, and include plans relating to the Santa Ana Canal project (California), Central Irrigation District projects (California), the Northern Pacific, Yakima, and Kittitas Irrigation Co. (Washington), and miscellaneous plans and maps from projects built in southern Africa. The scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings pertaining to Hall's professional interests, including 3 volumes relating to irrigation and the cultivation of crops, 2 volumes relating to river and flood control, and clippings relating to Supreme Court decisions concerning irrigation and water rights.

Access
Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], William Hammond Hall Papers, MS 915. California Historical Society.

National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collection Number
NUCMC 82-389

Title: William Hammond Hall Papers, 1878-1914.
Identifier/Call Number: MS 913

Title: William Hammond Hall Letterbooks.
Identifier/Call Number: MS 914

Title: California Historical Society Photography Collection--General Subjects--Agriculture--Irrigation
Identifier/Call Number: GS:Box 003

Subjects and Indexing Terms
California. Office of State Engineer. Records and Correspondence.  
Blueprints  
California--Environmental conditions.
California--Officials and employees.
Engineers--California.
Letter books.
Reports
Scrapbooks.
Water-supply engineering--California
Allesandro Park Plan Box 1, folder 2A
Bancroft, A.L. Box 1, folder 2
Bear Valley Irrigation Project Box 1, folder 3
California State Prison (San Quentin) Box 1, folder 2
California State Prison (San Quentin) Box 1, folder 1
Crocker, Charles T. Box 1, folder 3
Grant Brothers Box 1, folder 3
Haggin, J.B. Box 1, folder 1
Hanks, Henry G. Box 1, folder 2
Frederick Law Olmstead & Co. Box 1, folder 2A
Johnson, James A. Box 1, folder 1
Miller & Lux Box 1, folder 1
Raymond, William Box 1, folder 2
Riverside County Box 1, folder 2
Rudisill, H.J. Box 1, folder 2
Ryer, Dr. W.M. Box 1, folder 1
Schuyler, James D. Box 1, folder 2
Shorb, J. de Barth Box 1, folder 2
Southern Pacific Railroad Box 1, folder 1
Topp, T.U. Box 1, folder 1
Tucker, G.H. Box 1, folder 1
Wharton, J.F. Box 1, folder 1

Acquisitions
Papers comprising collection MS915 were acquired by donation from Katherine Buchanan Hall, daughter of William Hammond Hall in 1951.

Accruals
No additions are expected.

Processing History
Processed with the assistance of Dr. Otto H. Pflueger, 1971.

Biography of William Hammond Hall
William Hammond Hall was a California engineer who served as Superintendent and Engineer of Golden Gate Park (1871-1876), a consultant in the grading and development of the University of California campus at Berkeley (1872-1873), chief engineer for the Central and West Side Irrigation Districts (1870s), the first State Engineer of California (1879-1889), and Supervising Engineer of the Irrigation Bureau at the United States Geological Survey (1889). Beginning in 1890, he worked in the private sector as a civil engineer.

Scope and Contents
Compiled in the office of State Engineer (California), 1878-1888, and Division Engineer, U.S. Geological Survey. Includes survey reports of California rivers and the land surrounding them, blueprints of projects from private civil engineering practice, and correspondence.

Arrangement
The William Hammond Hall papers are arranged in four series: Series I - Correspondence, Series II - Reports, Series III - Scrapbooks of Newspaper Clippings, Series IV - Blueprints.
Series I - Correspondence is organized chronologically, by format, and in two cases by correspondent: 4 volumes of letterbooks (including one dedicated to communication with California Governors), and 4 folders of unbound correspondence, including 1 folder consisting of correspondence with Frederick Law Olmstead & Co.

Series II - Reports is organized chronologically, with one subseries consisting of reports authored for the U.S. Geological Survey.

Series III - Scrapbooks of Newspaper Clippings is organized first by subject, then chronologically.

Series IV - Blueprints is arranged by project and ordered according to an internal numbering system (K numbers). Unnumbered blueprints appear at the beginning of the series, with the remainder organized sequentially and grouped by project.

**Correspondence Series I 1878-1894**

- **Physical Description:** Box 1, folders 1-3; Box 5, volumes 1-4
- **Arrangement**
  - Correspondence arranged chronologically.
- **Scope and Contents**
  - Consists of mostly professional correspondence, including correspondence with California Governors William Irwin and George Clement Perkins as state engineer, and Frederick Law Olmstead & Co. regarding the Allesandro Town Improvement Project.

**Reports Series II 1880-1911**

- **Physical Description:** Box 1, folders 1-3A; Boxes 2-4
- **Arrangement**
  - Reports are arranged chronologically.
- **Scope and Contents**
  - Consists of reports on various irrigation and water works projects. Includes reports written while a supervising engineer with the U.S. Geological Survey, as well as technical notes on water flow, irrigation, sewage, and Hall’s stream gauging system.

**Reports**

- Box 1, Folder 1: Dam across Davis Slough, Sacramento River 1880
- Box 1, Folder 2: Dam in Yuba River Valley on the Yuba and Bear Rivers 1880
- Box 1, Folder 3: American River, Feather River 1880
- Box 1, Folder 3A: San Joaquin Irrigation Canal 1881
- Box 2, Folder 4: Reservoir Sites 1881

Claims allowed by Board of Directors Drainage District No. 1 1881

Sewage Report on City of Stockton 1883
Santa Ana River Reports
See Also - Blueprints
Santa Ana Canal, map-case drawer 7, folder 6

Specifications for a Topographical Survey along a route for the location of the
Northern Pacific and Yakima Canal
See Also - Blueprints
Northern Pacific, Yakima, and Kittitas Irrigation Co., map-case drawer 7, folder 7

Artesian Wells 1888-1889
1889
To Examining Commission on Rivers and Harbors, 1889
Artesian Wells
Bear Valley Water Shed
The Ostrander Reservoir Site
Canals and Irrigations of Kings River
Upper San Joaquin Irrigation Canal
Chowchilla Canal
Settlers Canal
Madera Irrigation District
Kaweah River

Alta Irrigation District
Knight River and Fresno Canal
Irrigation in New Mexico 1890
Articles of Incorporation of the Northern Pacific, Yakima and Kittitas Irrigation Co. 1890
See also - Blueprints
Northern Pacific, Yakima, and Kittitas Irrigation Co., map-case drawer 7, folder 7

Irrigation Possibilities of Humboldt River Valley, Nevada 1891
U.S. Geological Surveys 1889-1890
Physical Description: Box 2, folders 8-9; Boxes 3-4

Mountain Reservoir Surveys, Clear Lake Reservoir Surveys, and others
Truckee Basin and others undated
Monthly Reports from Lahontan Division, 1889
Lahontan Division, Closing Reports 1889
Monthly Reports from California Division, 1889
California Division, Closing Reports 1889
Annual Report 1890
Instructions for Field Work 1889
Miscellany 1889-1890

Report on System of Stream Gauging 1890
Cape Colony 1897-1898
Reports - South San Joaquin Irrigation District, T.R.P.P. Key to Canal, Meander and Road Lines 1911
Miscellany--Notes undated
Notes on water flow undated
Notes on irrigation undated
Notes on sewage undated
Chapter XVII--Kings River and Fresno Canal, Fowler Switch Canal, Centerville and Kingsburg Canal 1890
Miscellany, USGS Maps undated
Unidentified exhibit material on water usage undated
Scrapbooks of newspaper clippings Series III 1873-1891

Physical Description: Boxes 6-9 (Volumes 5-13)
Scope and Contents
Scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings related to Hall's professional interests. [Vols. 1 - 4, see Series I, Correspondence]
Arrangement
Scrapbooks arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 6, Volume 5-6  Irrigation-Cultivation Crops 1876-1886
Box 7, Volume 7  Irrigation-Cultivation Crops 1891-1892
Box 7, Volume 8  Mining Debris Controversy & Legislation 1881
Box 8, Volume 9  Rainfall, Flood, and River Matters 1881
Box 8, Volume 10  Rainfall, Flood, and River Matters 1889-1890
Box 9, Volume 11  Sewage Disposal--House Drainage 1873-1892
Box 9, Volume 12  Supreme Court Decisions--Irrigation & Water Rights, 1886-1891
Box 9, Volume 13  University of California Bulletins, Agricultural Experiment Station, E.W. Hilgard 1884-1891

Blueprints Series IV 1890-1899
Physical Description: 13 oversize folders
Location: Located in map-case drawer 7
Arrangement and Organization
Blueprints arranged in folders by project, with some groupings of miscellaneous plans. Blueprints are organized by internal numbering system (K number). Unnumbered plans appear at the beginning of map-case drawer 7.
Scope and Contents
Blueprints pertaining to survey, dam, and irrigation projects in California, Washington, Utah, and Southern Africa during Hall's time as a private civil engineer.

Map-case 7, Folder 1  Cross section of head dam, Feather River undated
  Physical Description:  
  Sheets: 2 unnumbered sheets

Map-case 7, Folder 2  Van Ryn Dam Extension 1899
  Physical Description:  
  Sheets: 5 unnumbered sheets

Map-case 7, Folder 3  Divisional Map of Oudtshoorn 1890
  Physical Description:  
  Sheets: 2 unnumbered sheets

Map-case 7, Folder 4  Rand Mines - Natal Spruit Reservoirs Wasteway Structure undated
  Physical Description:  
  Sheets: K1

Map-case 7, Folder 4  Mattoppo Irrigation Works undated
  Physical Description:  
  Sheets: K2 - K5

Map-case 7, Folder 4  Calitzdorp Irrigation Scheme undated
  Physical Description:  
  Sheets: K6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map-case 7, Folder 3</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Krantz's Masonry Dam - Transverse Section undated</strong></td>
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<td>Physical Description:</td>
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<td>Sheets: 1 unnumbered sheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Map-case 7, Folder 5</td>
<td><strong>Masonry and Rock Dam Preliminary and Comparative Studies undated</strong></td>
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<td>Physical Description:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sheets: K8 - 5 sheets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Map-case 7, Folder 5</td>
<td><strong>San Jacinto Nuevo - Cross section showing strata at dam and waste weir site undated</strong></td>
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<td>Physical Description:</td>
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<td>Sheets: K9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Map-case 7, Folder 5</td>
<td><strong>Contours of Bear Creek Canyon undated</strong></td>
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<td>Physical Description:</td>
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<td>Sheets: K10</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 8</td>
<td><strong>Diagram for determining the value of C., D, R, &amp; S - Ganguillet &amp; Kutter formula undated</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sheets: K43</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 6</td>
<td><strong>Santa Ana Canal 1891</strong></td>
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<td>Sheets: K11- K25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Map-case 7, Folder 7</td>
<td><strong>Northern Pacific, Yakima, and Kittitas Irrigation Co. (N.P.Y. &amp; K.I. Co.) 1894</strong></td>
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<td>Sheets: K26 - K42</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 9</td>
<td><strong>South Gila Canal Co. undated</strong></td>
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<td>Sheets: K44 - K45</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 10</td>
<td><strong>Central Irrigation District undated</strong></td>
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<td>Sheets: K46 - K66</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 11</td>
<td><strong>Sharon Estate - Buchanan Reservoir, Chowchilla River 1891</strong></td>
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<td>Sheets: K67 - K70</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 12</td>
<td><strong>Mt. Nebo Irrigation Co. 1895</strong></td>
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<td>Sheets: K71 - K79</td>
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<td>Map-case 7, Folder 13</td>
<td><strong>Details of Sweetwater Dam undated</strong></td>
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<td>Physical Description:</td>
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<td>Sheets: K80 - K82</td>
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