Finding aid to the William D. M. Howard papers, 1823-1878, undated, Vault MS 30

Finding aid prepared by Tierney Haupt
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2011
Finding aid to the William D. M.
Howard papers, 1823-1878,
undated, Vault MS 30

**Title:** William D. M. Howard papers  
**Date:** 1823-1878  
**Collection Identifier:** Vault MS 30  
**Creator:** Howard, William D. M. (William Davis Merry), 1818-1856.  
**Extent:** 4 boxes, 1 oversize box (2.75 linear feet)  
**Repository:** California Historical Society  
678 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA, 94105  
415-357-1848  
reference@calhist.org  
URL: [http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/](http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/)  
**Location of Materials:** Collection is stored onsite.  
**Language of Materials:** Most items are in English, with a few in Spanish.  
**Abstract:** Collection consists of San Francisco merchant and financier William D. M. Howard’s correspondence and business papers. Also includes business papers of William R. Warren, a Honolulu merchant; Howard’s brother George; Henry F. Teschemacher, tenth mayor of San Francisco; and William A. Liedesdorff. Collection contains correspondence relating to an 1852 plan to light San Francisco with gas. A small number of papers relating to the outfitting of the expedition to rescue the Donner Party are also part of the collection. Two volumes are included: a log from the schooner Julia Ann, and court records relating to the Lup-Yomi Rancho case.  
**Access**  
Collection is open for research.

**Publication Rights**  
All requests to reproduce, publish, quote from or otherwise use collection materials must be submitted in writing to the Director of the Library and Archives, North Baker Research Library, California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Consent is given on behalf of the California Historical Society as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission from the copyright owner. Such permission must be obtained from the copyright owner. Restrictions also apply to digital representations of the original materials. Use of digital files is restricted to research and educational purposes.  
**Preferred Citation**  
[Identification of item], William D. M. Howard papers, Vault MS 30, California Historical Society.  
**Acquisition Information**  
The William D. M. Howard papers were given to the California Historical Society by Mr. and Mrs. K. K. Bechtel in 1955.  
**System of Arrangement**  
Items are arranged in chronological order. Folder headings were added to facilitate access.  
**Biographical Information**  
William Davis Merry Howard was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1818 and became a sailor, eventually working on trading ships along the Pacific Coast. He settled in San Francisco and dealt in hides before partnering with Henry Mellus in 1845. Mellus and Howard were successful in the general merchandise business, especially as business boomed during the Gold Rush. Howard assisted in the financial organization and support of the expedition to rescue the Donner Party in 1847. His first wife, Mary Warren, died in 1849 and he soon married Agnes Poett, with whom he had one son, William. Howard became a community leader, serving on the first city council, and was a well-known philanthropist in San Francisco. He also owned a rancho on land near San Mateo. He died in 1856 and, after his death, his widow Agnes married his brother George. Howard Street in San Francisco is named after him.  
**Scope and Contents**  
Collection consists of correspondence, invoices, and receipts from pioneer California residents, merchants, and companies, reflecting William D. M. Howard's extensive commercial activities through his firm, Mellus & Howard; business and personal papers (1823-1863) of Henry F. Teschemacher, mayor of San Francisco from 1859-1863; business papers (1823-1849) of William R. Warren, a merchant in Honolulu; Howard estate papers; business papers of Howard's brother, George; a small amount of papers relating to Howard's involvement in the Donner Party rescue; papers relating to William A. Leidesdorff, including estate papers while Howard was the executor, and records of Leidesdorff's schooner, Julia Ann; papers relating to the Lup-Yomi Rancho case and other land settlement cases; and to an abortive plan for lighting San Francisco by gas in  

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1852, involving Howard and Frederick A. Woodworth. Other persons represented include William Heath Davis, Henry D. Fitch, Thomas O. Larkin, and Jacob P. Leese. Also included are family letters from Howard’s mother, sister, and nephew in Boston, and from his second wife, Agnes, who married his brother George after Howard’s death.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
- Howard, George H.
- Howard, William D. M. (William Davis Merry), 1818-1856--Archives.
- Julia Ann (Schooner).
- Mellus & Howard Company.
- Teschemacher, Henry F.
- Warren, William R.
- Donner Party
- Rancho Lup-Yomi (Calif.)
- San Francisco (Calif.)--Commerce.

**Bibliography**
Biographical information from:

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<th>William R. Warren correspondence and business records 1823-1829</th>
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**Records for the relief expedition to the mountains to rescue the Donner Party 1847**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder  
Scope and Contents  
Collection includes receipts for supplies to outfit those heading to rescue the Donner Party and lists of donors to the relief effort. Howard was treasurer of the expedition for the relief of sufferers in the mountains.

Box 1, Folder 6  
**Correspondence and business records 1848**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder

Box 2, Folders 7-8  
**Correspondence and business records 1849**  
Physical Description: 2.0 folders

Box 2, Folders 9-10  
**Correspondence and business records 1850**  
Physical Description: 2.0 folders

Box 3, Folders 1-2  
**Correspondence and business records 1851**  
Physical Description: 2.0 folder

Box 3, Folders 3-4  
**Correspondence and business records 1852 January - June**  
Physical Description: 2.0 folders

Box 3, Folder 5  
**Gas lighting plan for San Francisco correspondence 1852**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder  
Scope and Contents  
Collection includes letters from Frank A. Woodworth to George H. Howard and George N. Shaw regarding a plan to bring gas lighting to San Francisco. Woodworth traveled around the northeastern United States investigating gasworks and reporting to Howard and Shaw. Their plan was abandoned due to competitors with lower prices.

Box 3, Folder 6  
**Correspondence and business records 1852 July - December**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder

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**Correspondence and business records 1854 January - June**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder

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**Correspondence and business records 1854 July - December**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder

Box 3, Folder 11  
**Family papers 1854**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder

Box 4, Folder 1  
**Correspondence and business records 1855**  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder

Box 4, Folder 2  
**Family papers 1855**  
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| Box 4, Folder 3 | **Correspondence and business records** 1856  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder |
| Box 4, Folder 4 | **Agreement regarding construction of a lane on rancho San Mateo** 30 September 1858  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder |
| Box 4, Folder 5 | **George Howard correspondence and business records** 1859  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder |
| Box 4, Folder 6 | **George Howard correspondence and business records** 1860s-1870s  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder |
| Box 4, Folder 7 | **Correspondence and business records** undated  
Physical Description: 1.0 folder |
| Oversize Box 1 | **Account book for the schooner Julia Ann** 1840-1842  
Physical Description: 1.0 volume  
Scope and Contents  
Log from the schooner Julia Ann listing the names of the crew and tracking deductions from sailors' wages for cash advances and the purchase of clothing and other goods. Also lists the ship's expenses for purchases of food and other goods in New York, Panama, Taboga, and along the coast of California. |
| Oversize Box 1 | **Transcript of the proceedings in case no. 507, H. S. Teschemacher, et al: claimants vs. United States, defendant for the place named Lup-Yomi** 29 April 1854  
Physical Description: 1.0 volume |