Finding aid to George Robinson Fardon's Views in California photograph album
PC RM Fardon

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URL: http://californiahistoricalsociety.org/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: California Historical Society
Title: George Robinson Fardon’s Views in California photograph album
Creator: Fardon, G.R.
Identifier/Call Number: PC RM Fardon
Physical Description: 0.81 Linear FeetOne photograph album and a sleeved pannotype housed in flat box.
Date: 1856
Abstract: One photograph album containing 12 black and white, salted paper prints. Photographed by G.R. Fardon and published in 1856, the images are considered the earliest published photographic record of an American city. Photographs document the development of downtown San Francisco. Photographs primarily document churches and fire houses in San Francisco.

Conditions Governing Access
RESTRICTED ALBUM; permission of archivist required for use.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Gift of Templeton Crocker.

Biographical / Historical
George Robinson (G.R.) Fardon was born in Birmingham, England in 1807. He first emigrated to New York, but relocated to San Francisco in 1849, where he started a photography business. Fardon is believed to have introduced the glass plate negative process to San Francisco in 1852. Fardon captured photographic views of the city, including a seven-panel panorama of San Francisco and the published volume San Francisco Album (also known as Views in California). He moved to Victoria, British Columbia in 1859 where he continued to work as a photographer. In 1876 he returned to California, opening a photography studio with William H. Bluett. He died and was buried in Victoria in 1877. References: Palmquist, Peter E. and Thomas Kailbourn. Pioneer Photographs of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840-1865 Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Please access digital images available on the California Historical Society’s Digital Libary:
http://digitallibrary.californiahistoricalsociety.org/object/4317

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item, date]; Fardon’s (George Robinson) Views in California photograph album, PC RM Fardon; California Historical Society.

Scope and Contents
One photograph album titled Views in California (also known as 12 Views in California and San Francisco Album) photographed by G.R. (George Robinson) Fardon and published in 1856. Contains the earliest published photographic record of an American city. Photographs document the early development of downtown San Francisco. The album is arranged with images on right side and handwritten labels on left side. Images include the following San Francisco locations (identified in with handwritten labels): "Monumental" Bremham Place (also know as Monumental Engine house, on the Plaza); the First Methodist Church, Powell between Washington and Jackson; Sansome Engine House, Gold and Sansome Streets; Grace Church, Powell between Jackson and Pacific; the Custom House, Washington and Battery Streets; St. Mary's Cathedral, California and Dupont Streets; Pacific No. 8 (Firehouse), front between Jackson and Pacific; Merchants’ Exchange, Battery and Washington Streets; Empire No. 1 (Firehouse), Sacramento Street, between Kearny and Dupont Streets; Knickerbocker (Firehouse), north side, Sacramento Street near Sansome Street; Columbian (Firehouse), Bush Street above Kearny Street; Old American Theater, Sansome and Halleck Streets, torn down June 1854. First page with photograph is also labeled by hand: “12 Views in California” and “Views in California.” Photographs and small label at bottom left of each photograph are affixed to the pages of the album. Label is a salt print printed: “G.R. Fardon”, but is faded beyond visibility in most cases. Photograph album does not contain a title page or index. Photograph album is housed with a pannotype portrait of John Henry Link, son of James Lick, an early San Francisco real estate investor. The pannotype portrait is printed on leather and was taken by George Robinson Fardon, circa 1856-1858, and is stamped with Fardon’s mark on the back of the photograph.

Conditions Governing Use
Materials in this collection, which were created in 1856, are in the public domain in the United States. Permission to publish or reproduce is not required.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
- Church buildings -- California -- San Francisco -- Pictorial works
- Fire stations -- California -- San Francisco -- Pictorial works
- San Francisco (Calif.) -- History -- Pictorial works
- San Francisco (Calif.) -- Buildings, structures, etc. -- Pictorial works
- Photograph albums
- Salted paper prints
- Pannotype
- Lick, John Henry