Title: Volney E. Howard Biographical Collection
Identifier/Call Number: MS.685
Contributing Institution: Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.1 linear feet (1 folder)
Date: 1923
Abstract: This file contains correspondence between C. W. Ramsdell of the Department of History at the University of Texas, Austin and Los Angeles lawyer Grant Jackson from 1923, regarding biographical information on Judge Volney E. Howard (1809-1889) and his involvement in the Commission to Settle Private Land Claims in California in the 1850s.
creator: Jackson, Grant, 1866-1925
creator: Ramsdell, Charles W. (Charles William), 1877-1942
Biographical note
Volney Erskine Howard (1809, October 22 – 1889, May 14) was an American lawyer, statesman, and jurist. Born in Mississippi, Howard moved to Texas and was appointed the first Attorney General of the State of Texas in 1846. He served in that role for only 6 months. He then represented Texas's District 2 in the U.S. Congress from 1849 to 1853. Appointed attorney to the Land Commission of California by President Franklin Pierce, Howard left Texas to move to California. He resigned from the Commission after a few months to practice law in San Francisco. In 1856, he was appointed Adjutant General of California. In 1861 he moved to Los Angeles, where he was the District Attorney of Los Angeles, California from 1864-68, and a superior court judge beginning in 1879. He served only one term, due to the ill health that also forced him to refuse a potential nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court. Howard died in Santa Monica, California, May 1889.
Historical note
The Commission to Settle Private Land Claims was set up in San Francisco by act of Congress, the California Land Act of 1851, “to ascertain and settle private land claims” which derived from Spanish and Mexican grants in California. The Commission was active from 1851 to 1856, and there were some 813 such claims brought before the Commission.
Scope and Contents
This file contains correspondence between C. W. Ramsdell of the Department of History at the University of Texas, Austin and Los Angeles lawyer Grant Jackson from 1923, regarding biographical information on Judge Volney E. Howard (1809-1889) and his involvement in the Commission to Settle Private Land Claims in California in the 1850s.
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Acquisition
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Commission to Settle Private Land Claims.
Howard, Volney E. (Volney Erskine), 1809-1889
California -- History
California -- History -- 19th century
Correspondence
Land grants -- California
Lawyers
Politicians -- West (U.S.)