Edwin S. Waterhouse journal

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Edwin S. Waterhouse journal
Dates: 1858-1860
Collection Number: SFH 248
Creator/Collector: Waterhouse, Edwin S., 1837-1911
Extent: 1 volume
Repository: San Francisco Public Library. San Francisco History Center
San Francisco, California 94102
Abstract: Account of a voyage on the Golden Rocket from Boston to San Francisco, with later entries from Placer County, California
Language of Material: English
Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
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 Acquisition Information
Purchase
Biography/Administrative History
Edwin Sawyer Waterhouse was born in Maine, lived in Cooper, Washington County, and came to California when he was twenty-two years old. After gold mining in the state, in 1869 he married Mary Gruwell, and they had six children. He worked as a farmer and wheelwright in Oakdale and Modesto, Stanislaus County. He died near Modesto in 1911. The Golden Rocket was put into service for the Union during the Civil War and burned by the Confederacy in 1861.
Scope and Content of Collection
The bulk of this journal of 116 numbered pages is an account of a voyage of the clipper ship Golden Rocket from Boston, Massachusetts to San Francisco. The account commences December 7, 1858, and ends with the ship anchoring at San Francisco May 18, 1859. A stop at the island of Juan Fernandez, otherwise known as Robinson Crusoe Island, is recorded beginning p. 69. A list of passengers and crew is included on p. 73-74. Lists of Waterhouse’s purchases of clothing and supplies for the inland journey ahead appear on p. 93-95. The day after anchoring in San Francisco, Waterhouse traveled by steamer to Sacramento, then by the railroad to Folsom, and finally by stage to Coloma. Waterhouse befriended two Maine natives on the ship, William Dinsmore and Alpheus Downs, who traveled to Coloma with him and worked alongside him, doing farm work and mining on the American River. With other partners, Waterhouse staked a mining claim at Yankee Jim’s Gulch, now Snyder Canyon; found various short term occupations; copied letters to friends and to his brother in the journal; wrote of his hope to wed Mary Cooper; recorded payment for work; listed women’s names from Maine towns, p. 115. Throughout the volume, Waterhouse practiced his handwriting. Entries at end of volume are not written in chronological order. A letter to a Friend copied on p. 105 is dated February 5, 1860. Several pages have been removed from journal. An accompanying folder includes a typewritten transcription of the journal.
Indexing Terms
Gold mines and mining--California--Placer County
Voyages to the Pacific Coast
Penmanship, American
Golden Rocket (Ship)
Robinson Crusoe Island (Juan Fernández Islands)
Maine--Biography
Yankee Jim’s (Calif.)--History--19th century
Placer County (Calif.)--History