Title: Farwell, William Brigham Papers
Identifier/Call Number: C057928
Contributing Institution: Society of California Pioneers
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 folder 3 items (2 typescripts, 1 handwritten)
Date: 1898
Abstract: These papers are Pioneer recollections of early gold digging and mining all throughout California, as related in the article Farwell wrote for an issue of The Pioneer from January 1898. There is also a handwritten account tracing the author’s life from the time he left Boston in 1848, through his various careers and offices held in California. He was a member of The Society of California Pioneers, and active as an officer of that organization.
creator: Farwell, William Brigham, 1829-1903
Related Archival Materials note
Society of California Pioneers records: Archives Record, vo. 2, pg. 11; SCP Records, vol. 2, pg. 83; Autobiographies and Reminiscences, vol. 5, pg. 88 (see Online Archive of California for online access); Obituary Record, vol. 9, pg. 181; Mortuary Record, 1892-1906, pg. 168.
Biography
Willard Brigham Farwell, born in Marlboro, Massachusetts January 26, 1829, left his job in Boston (Jan. 12, 1849) for California, organizing 150 men (Boston and California Joint Stock Mining and Trading Company) on the "Edward Everett". Stopping in Valparaiso, arriving in Benicia July 12, 1849, Farwell left on the first steamboat to navigate the Sacramento River (Aug.17, 1849). He went to Bidwell's Bar but failed at mining. Returning to Sacramento, then to S.F. with his brother and a shipmate, they left for the southern mines (1850). Having no luck in Wood's Creek, nor Angel's Camp, they returned to S.F., and bought land (Mission Lands) in San Jose. In 1852 Farwell helped found the S. F. newspaper "The Daily Whig". In 1854-55, he served in the State Legislature, and was nominated for State Senate (Whig) in the fall of 1855, but was defeated. Farwell was Editor-in-Chief of the "Alta California" in 1860 and moved to Washington D.C. to work for U.S. Senator E.D. Baker (Oregon). Appointed Naval Officer in the Customs House of S.F. (1861-65), he also was elected President of The Society of California Pioneers (1863). Appointed " Resident Agent - Abroad" of the U.S. Treasury Dept., he traveled in Europe, but resigned in 1870 to begin the "The North Atlantic Express Company" as Gen. Supt. for 3 years. In 1884, Mr. Farwell was elected Sup. of the Calif. State Central Committee. The account in this manuscript notes Farwell as being born and raised in the East, leaving home as a young adult and sailing from Boston around the Horn arriving in Bodega Head July 6, 1849, and anchoring in San Francisco that evening. It continues with a history of his personal and professional life and his extensive world-wide travels. He was elected to the state assembly in 1854 for one year and in 1861 was appointed as a Naval officer at the Customs House. He was nominated for other offices - public and private - and was also active in building in San Francisco. He apparently travelled and lived abroad for a period of years related to his term as a Naval officer. Farwell died in 1903.
Scope and Contents note
"Pioneer recollection of early "gold digging" and gold mining on the fiftieth anniversary of discovery of gold in California" as presented and published in the January 1898 issue of The Pioneer. This 21 page typewritten manuscript discusses in detail the amounts of gold found in many locations as well as including detailed tabulations of gold dust shipped from California to various locations. This report also includes discoveries of the largest gold deposits, mining techniques and short vignettes of miner’s experiences - specifically noting the amounts of gold taken out by individuals. Farwell also discusses specific areas of the diggings and nuggets found and their weight. He also mentions the Alaskan gold rush. The early part of this article also discusses the early history of The Society of California Pioneers as an organization. The other item is a handwritten account by Farwell (80 pages) which traces his ancestry and life in California.
Conditions Governing Access note
Collection open for research.
Conditions Governing Use note
There are no restrictions on access.
Existence and Location of Originals note
Donor
Donor and date of acquisition unknown.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Gold miners - Biography
Gold miners - California - Biography
Gold mines and mining - Alaska
Gold mines and mining - California - History - 19th century