Title: Fraser, John N. Letter
Identifier/Call Number: C057965
Contributing Institution: Society of California Pioneers
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 folder1 letter
Date: 1849
Abstract: Letter, Handwritten, 1page, both sides, on Feb 6, 1913, by John N. Fraser (Lincoln, CA) in response to a request by Mr. H. L. Boyne of the Society of California Pioneers. The subject is his arrival in San Francisco on August 21, 1849, aboard the "Duxbery". The ship struck a reef outside of the Bay and freed itself the next day. The reef is now called Duxbery Reef. The letter contains other brief references to his arrival such as witnessing the hanging of 5 men by the Committee of Vigilance and mining on Horse Bar in Amador County.
creator: Fraser, John N., 1828-1915
Conditions Governing Access note
Collection open for research
Conditions Governing Use note
There are no restrictions on access
Preferred Citation note
John N. Fraser letter, The Society of California Pioneers
Donor
Gift of John N. Fraser, Feb 6, 1913
Related Archival Materials note
SOCP Archives Volume 2, p29
Biographical/Historical note
Born Nov 25, 1828 in Portland, Maine. He arrived in San Francisco on Aug 22, 1849 on the ship Duxbery. He was a farmer at Tipton, Tulare County. He died on January 27, 1915 in Sacramento, CA.
Scope and Contents note
Letter, Handwritten, 1page, both sides, on Feb 6, 1913, by John N. Fraser (Lincoln, CA) in response to a request by Mr. H. L. Boyne of the Society of California Pioneers. The subject is his arrival in San Francisco on August 21, 1849, aboard the "Duxbery". The ship struck a reef outside of the Bay and freed itself the next day. The reef is now called Duxbery Reef. The letter contains other brief references to his arrival such as witnessing the hanging of 5 men by the Committee of Vigilance and mining on Horse Bar in Amador County.


"On February 9, 1849, twenty three-year-old William H. DeCosta and ninety-five other passengers, all lured by the hope of fortune and adventure, boarded the ship Duxbury of Boston, bound for the promised land. Like many argonauts, DeCosta recorded the incidents of the voyage in a journal."

"Two hundred and fifty ships sailed from Massachusetts in 1849, one hundred and fifty from Boston alone. The Duxbury, built in Duxbury, Massachusetts, in 1833, had been through a number of owners and captains in her fifteen years of service. An elegant threemasted vessel ninety-five feet long by sixty-two feet wide, and extremely hard to maneuver, it was said to "require all of Massachusetts Bay to turn." The numerous disputes between the Captain and passengers of the Duxbury, recorded in DeCosta's journal, suggest that this may have been the case with Captain William C. Varina who commanded this particular voyage.

"The Duxbury was one of eighty-eight company vessels that sailed from Boston in 1849. She had been chartered by the Old Harvard Company.

"On the evening of August 20, the Duxbury ran aground on a reef just north of the entrance to San Francisco Bay, at a place that in Spanish times had been called Punta de Baulenas (Point of Whales). The Duxbury sustained very little damage, and at the next high tide passengers and crew lowered the ship's boats and maneuvered them to pull her off the rocks. Although she would safely reach her destination the following day, the Duxbury would forever leave her name on the reef and point. Coastal survey charts of 1851 list this point as Duxbury Point and the reef as Duxbury Reef.
Existence and Location of Originals note
The Society of California Pioneers, 300 Fourth Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

Subjects and Indexing Terms
California--San Francisco (county)--San Francisco
Nebraska
Voyages and travels -- 19th century