Finding aid prepared by Nick Scales
Society of California Pioneers
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July 17, 2012
Title: Gordon, William Papers
Identifier/Call Number: C057982
Contributing Institution: Society of California Pioneers
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 folder8 pages (photographic copies)
Date (inclusive): 1843-1844
Abstract: 7 photographic copies of handwritten financial papers of William Gordon. 3 pages are a financial record of accounts kept for John A. Sutter covering the period from October 20, 1843 to Jun 7, 1844. The records include receipts for purchase of land in Sonoma and promisory notes.
creator: Gordon, William, 1801-1876
Conditions Governing Access note
Collection open for research
Conditions Governing Use note
There are no restrictions on access
Preferred Citation note
William Gordon Papers, The Society of California Pioneers
Immediate Source of Acquisition note
Donor and date of acquisition unknown
Biography
William Gordon, although not a member of The Society of California Pioneers, was an ancestor of two other early members of the Society - Sen. Frank Gordon and Nathan Coombs. Gordon was born in 1801 in Ohio and at age 18, joined the Hudson Bay Company as a trapper and agent. He traded with the Indian tribes and became proficient in their languages, often serving as an interpreter. In 1864 he left the company, and trapping as he crossed the Rocky Mountains to Taos (Mexico). He opened a fur business there, and after losing the business, opened another and married Mary Jane Lucerro, an 18 year old woman of pure Castilian blood. Over the following 15 years, 7 children were born: Thomas (b. 1827); John, (b. 1831), William (b.1833), Isabel (b.1828), Joseph (b.1835), Sarah (b.1837), and Margaret (b. 1835) after they settled in Los Angeles. In 1840, through the Workman Party, Gordon was promised a land grant if he would travel to and settle in California. In 1841 arrived in California from Taos, Mexico to claim his land grant. He arrived first in Los Angeles and remained there during the early part of 1842, and then set out for Napa Valley. It was there that he intended to take up a grant promised him by the Mexican government. He and his wife Mary Jane, stopped at the adobe south of the city, Mrs. Gordon remaining there while William continued on to Yountville. George C. Yount then told him his grant had been given to another settler. Gordon, undeterred and proficient at stone cutting, proceeded to provide many millstones for the area, notably that of John Sutter at his mill, as well as for Yount in Yountville. The Gordon family was assisted by Sutter in laying out a ranch in Yolo County - making them the first settlers in the area. His wife Mary died two years later. Gordon had a second son with his second wife, Sarah Ingraham. (Source: Bio File, Gordon, Wm, and Mary Jane - Newspaper article, "New Yolo Memorial Marks Historic Gordon Cemetery", Napa Register, Nov. 6, 1947.)
Scope and Contents note
7 photographic copies of handwritten financial papers of William Gordon. 3 pages are a financial record of accounts kept for John A. Sutter covering the period from October 20, 1843 to Jun 7, 1844. The records include receipts for purchase of land in Sonoma and promisory notes.
Existence and Location of Originals note
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Sutter, John Augustus, 1803-1880
California, Northern-History-19th century.
Napa County (Calif.)
Pioneers--California--History--19th century
Receipts (financial records).