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07/14/2003
Finding aid of the Samuel Heald Diaries C058479

Title: Heald, Samuel Diaries
Identifier/Call Number: C058479
Contributing Institution: Society of California Pioneers
Language of Material: English
Storage Unit: B001620
Storage Unit: C058479
Physical Description: 3.0 folders Folder 1: (4 diaries) Folder 2: (photocopies) Folder 3: (papers)
Date (bulk): Bulk, 1854
Date (inclusive): 1851-1857
Abstract: Four diaries of Samuel Heald's travels to and from California, mostly by ship; also includes personal papers and receipts.
creator: Heald, Samuel, d. 1874
Conditions Governing Access note
Collection open for research.
Conditions Governing Use note
There are no restrictions on access.
Preferred Citation note
Samuel Heald Diaries. The Society of California Pioneers
Donor
Gift of Mrs N. J. Saviers, 11/04/1933.
Biographical/Historical note
Samuel Heald was the son of George and Elizabeth Tatlow Heald, who were farmers first in Delaware, then Ohio, and moved to Sni Creek in Jackson County, Missouri in 1844. He was the eldest of 8 children. With news of the gold discovery in California, Samuel and two of his brothers, Thomas and Harmon, made the overland journey arriving in Sacramento city in September of 1849. Samuel moved to Sonoma County where he worked as a millwright and built a house near his mill on Mill Creek. He returned to Missouri to retrieve the rest of his family in 1851, and they lived with him in the vicinity of the mill until the summer of 1852. Harmon had already established himself near the current Healdsburg Plaza, and three other brothers, Thomas, Jacob, and George, settled on preempted land or land "purchased" from squatters in the vicinity.
Samuel ran the mill alone for three years until 1854, when he returned to Missouri to find a bride. Although married previously when he lived in Missouri, his wife had died there in childbirth. He now returned to marry one of her sisters, Martha Cobb. After a long honeymoon spent traveling across the United States they returned to California. Samuel went on to build an early flourmill in Napa, then moved to San Jose. When he also contracted tuberculosis he returned to Cloverdale to live with his sister Sarah Shaw. He died there in August of 1874 at the age of 56. He and Martha had two children, both of whom lived to adulthood. They in turn had no children. Samuel Heald's brother, Harmon built a cabin and eventually a store on what is now the west side of Healdsburg Avenue adjacent to and running north of the Plaza, and the town of Healdsburg is named for him.
Scope and Contents note
This collection is comprised of 3 folders.
Folder 1 - Samuel Heald Diaries (4 total) Diary No. 1 (01/01/1851-02/11/1851) begins on the steamer "Carolina" bound for Panama. After arriving in Panama, Heald boarded the "Georgia" bound for New Orleans and from there took a steamboat to St. Louis. This first portion of the diary includes observations of life on the ship and surrounding scenery and a prescription to cure cholera. A few of the entries are detailed, but most are brief. The second half of the diary is given over to trail details and directions: "6 or 7 miles from little vermilion you cross a small stream—no wood." The last few pages are devoted to prayers. Some latitude/longitude and distance notations are included. Diary No. 2 (01/01/1854-03/14/1854) begins as Heald prepared to leave California to travel once more to Missouri. One entry mentions that he is doing so in the hope of "meeting with her whom I long to see" (perhaps his future wife, Martha Cobbs). The voyage takes him from San Francisco to San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua; via mule and small ship to Isla de Ometepe; down Rio San Juan to the coast, north toward Colombia, and finally to New Orleans and St. Louis. Several ships provided passage. The diary ends while Heald is still bound for Wellington, Missouri. This diary consists mostly of brief entries detailing Heald's activities (churchgoing, walking about town, observing the weather) and physical health, but longer passages attest to his religious beliefs and provide brief
descriptions of the cities he visited. Diary No. 3 (06/22/1854-10/01/1854) was written following Heald’s marriage to Martha C. Cobbs on June 22, 1854. After visiting with friends in Missouri, Heald and his wife embarked on a voyage through the eastern states (with stops in St. Louis, Louisville, Cincinnati, Wheeling, West Virginia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Niagara Falls, and Boston) en route to New York City, where they boarded a steamer for Panama and then California. This diary ends while the ship is still off the coast of Monterey. This diary includes many regional observations and some latitude/longitude notations. Entries are more detailed than in his previous diaries. Diary No. 4 - Missing, was never donated to the Society. Diary No. 5 is a guide written during an overland journey from Missouri to California (possibly to Sonoma County). The inside front cover reads, “This was written after the 3 brothers and others came in ’49 and it was the route used when Samuel Heald brought his Mother, Jacob, wife, and baby sister Sarah, and brother George to California in 1851.” However, no dates are to be found in the diary itself. This diary consists of instructions for finding water, wood, and grass on the trail. Mile notations are included. Many forts and rivers are mentioned by name. No personal details.

Folder 2 - Photocopy of Samuel Heald Diary #1.
Folder 3 - Loose notes and letters removed from Diaries. Contains 6 documents comprised of receipts, a resolution regarding Pacific University and a letter from his brother Thomas telling of their mother’s death.

**Existence and Location of Originals note**
The Society of California Pioneers, 300 Fourth Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

**Related Archival Materials note**
C058879 - Samuel & George Heald Letters (8 Letters).

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Cobbs, Martha, fl. 1854
California, Northern - History - 19th century.
Journeys to the Pacific Coast
Overland journeys to the Pacific
Pontchartrain, Lake (La.)
Ships.
Sonoma County (Calif.)