Central Pacific Land Grant Agent Robert Lardin Fulton Letters

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Central Pacific Land Grant Agent Robert Lardin Fulton Letters
Dates: 1887-1910
Collection Number: MS 737
Creator/Collector: Fulton, Robert L.
Extent: 1 box.
Repository: California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives
Sacramento, California 95814

Abstract: Largely consisting of the outgoing correspondence of Central Pacific land agent Robert Lardin Fulton, the material in this collection provides the context in which data on Southern Pacific and Central Pacific land grant records can be understood. Additional material in this collection allows for a deeper understanding of the relationships between railroad companies and the United States government in the late 19th - early 20th Centuries.

Language of Material: English

Access
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Acquisition Information
Dr. Richard Orsi, 2016.

Biography/Administrative History
Robert Lardin Fulton (1847-1920) began his railroad career as a telegraph operator for the Erie Railroad. In 1868, he worked as part of the construction team on Union Pacific’s Overland railroad, and after completion he switched employment to the Central Pacific Railroad Company. On June 15, 1875, Fulton became a field agent for Central Pacific in Placer County, CA, and was responsible for looking after timber lands along Central Pacific’s lines. Then in 1879, Fulton moved to Nevada, where his responsibilities increased to setting prices of land for sale by Central Pacific, and collecting rents from tenants of the land. In 1900, Fulton also became responsible for examinations of land in order to obtain patents for Central Pacific, and worked on land settlements along Central Pacific’s lines between Colfax, CA and Ogden, UT. Alongside his work as a land agent, Fulton was also an advocate for various agricultural and irrigation projects in California and Nevada, and often used the ‘Reno Evening Gazette’, which he owned and edited, to argue the case for such projects. Fulton worked as a principal agent for U.S. Representative Francis G. Newlands, helping Newlands to obtain land and water rights for a planned public water system in Nevada. Furthermore, Fulton and Newlands worked together to campaign for the passing of the National Reclamation Act (1902), which funded many irrigation projects in the Western states, beginning with the Truckee-Carson Project in 1903.

Scope and Content of Collection
Materials include two letterpress books of outgoing correspondence (1887-1910) from Central Pacific land agent Robert Lardin Fulton, mostly to chief CP land agent William H. Mills; court documents relating to a trial of the United States vs Central Pacific Railway Company, et. al., including a transcript of Fulton’s testimony concerning land patents; and a Summary of Facts that describes in depth the relationship between the United States Government and the Central Pacific Railroad Company in 1889. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Indexing Terms
Orsi, Dr. Richard