Banning Company Records: Finding Aid

Processed by The Huntington Library staff; supplementary encoding and revision supplied by Xiuzhi Zhou and Diann Benti.
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Manuscripts Department
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San Marino, California 91108
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Banning Company Records
Dates (inclusive): 1859-1948
Collection Number: mssBanning Company
Creator: Banning Company
Extent: 12,104 pieces in 33 boxes, 203 volumes, and 1 rolled map.
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
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Abstract: This collection consists of business records chiefly to the Banning Company, founded by Phineas Banning (1830-1885) in Los Angeles, California. There are also records of the various subsidiary firms of the Banning Company, as well as Banning family letters, and receipts of William and Hancock Banning. Subject matter in the collection includes: land in Southern California (Wilmington, San Pedro, Pasadena, Compton, Newport Beach, and Los Angeles), Santa Catalina Island, Railroads (Los Angeles & San Pedro Railroad, Southern Pacific Railroad, and the California Pacific), Inter-urban lines (Los Angeles Inter-urban and the Pacific Electric), Los Angeles harbor, the petroleum industry, the city of Yuma, Arizona, and Fort Yuma, California.

Language: English.

Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Banning Company Records, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance
Gift of Hancock Banning, Jr., in 1962, with a small quantity of addenda acquired from Green Door Books in 1972 and another from Mrs. Hancock Banning, Jr., and Robert Banning in 1985. Additional material donated in 1996 by Nancy Call is currently being processed.

• Banning Company Records, Addenda I, 1819-1979 (bulk 1855-1925)
• Banning Family Collection of Photographs, Part I, 1850-1979 (bulk 1880s-1910s). (Call number: photCL 180)
• Banning Family Collection of Photographs, Part II, 1814-1879. (bulk 1880-1920). (Call number: photCL 451)

Historical Note
The Banning Company was started by Phineas Banning (1830-1885), a transportation leader in the Los Angeles area and founder of the city of Wilmington, California.

Phineas Banning (1830-1885) was born in 1830 in Wilmington, Delaware, went to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to work as a clerk in the law office of his brother William L. Banning, and came to California at the age of 21 as an assistant to a merchant. On arriving at San Pedro in 1852, he took a job with commission merchants Douglass & Sanford. Soon he became the partner of David W. Alexander in the freight and stage lines between San Pedro and Los Angeles. In 1858 Alexander became a silent partner and the firm was known as Banning & Co. After a short period of partnership with A. F. Hinchman, Banning took over sole leadership for the Banning Co.

In 1857, the Dominguez family sold Banning a large parcel of land at the head of the slough northeast of San Pedro. Banning started a settlement called New San Pedro, then in 1859 changed the name to Wilmington after his birthplace. He built a wharf, warehouses, and a lumber yard. He built lighters and steamboats and bought stages and wagons to carry passengers and freight from San Pedro to Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and even as far as Yuma and Salt Lake City.
In 1865, Banning was elected state senator and through his exertions railroads were encouraged in Southern California. Los Angeles voted the necessary bonds to build a railroad from Los Angeles to Wilmington. In time, the Southern Pacific Railroad purchased this Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad and work began on improving the harbor. A suit was initiated to definitely settle the title to the tidelands which had been purchased by Phineas Banning. The litigation began in 1880 and continued until 1917 when the final settlements were made, generally in favor of the Banning family.

Phineas Banning died in 1885. The business was carried on by his three sons, William, Joseph Brent, and Hancock. The company purchased Santa Catalina Island, developed it as a resort and provided the ships for transportation. Wilmington Transportation Company, Santa Catalina Island Company, and Wilmington Development Company were subsidiary firms of the Banning Company. The company's real estate interests also grew and included land in Los Angeles, Pasadena, Newport Beach, as well as petroleum leases near Wilmington and Newport.

The final dissolution of the company came in 1920 at the time of the death of Joseph Brent Banning.

Bibliographical Notes
Krythe, Maymie, Port Admiral Phineas Banning, California Historical Society, S.F. 1957 (F 867 B3 K7)
Banning, Hancock, Jr., The Banning Family in Southern California, University of California, c. 1971 (F 868 L 8 B 35)

Scope and Content Note
The collection consists of legal papers, correspondence, letter books, ledgers, and account books related chiefly to the Banning Company, Wilmington harbor, Wilmington property, and Santa Catalina Island. There are also papers of the various subsidiary firms of the Banning Company, as well as Banning family letters, and receipts of William and Hancock Banning. After 1920, with the final dissolution of the company, business papers are in the names of William Banning or Hancock Banning individually.

Subject matter in the collection includes: land in Southern California (Wilmington, San Pedro, Pasadena, Compton, Newport Beach, and Los Angeles), Santa Catalina Island, Railroads (Los Angeles & San Pedro Railroad, Southern Pacific Railroad, and the California Pacific), Inter-urban lines (Los Angeles Inter-urban and the Pacific Electric), Los Angeles harbor, the petroleum industry, the city of Yuma, Arizona, and Fort Yuma, California.


Arrangement
Business papers and correspondence for Banning Co. as a whole, then for individual family members, i.e., Anne Banning, Hancock Banning, Phineas Banning, and William Banning (Boxes 1 - 32) Volumes of letterbooks, account books, and miscellaneous (stock ledgers, minute books, etc.) (Volumes 1 - 203)

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Subjects
Banning, Hancock, 1865-1925 -- Archives.
Banning, Joseph Brent, 1861-1920 -- Archives.
Banning, Phineas, 1830-1885 -- Archives.
Banning, William, 1858-1946 -- Archives.
Banning Company -- Archives.
California Pacific Railroad.
Central Pacific Railroad Company.
Kerckhoff-Cuzner Mill and Lumber Company.
Los Angeles and Independence Railroad Company.
Los Angeles & San Pedro Railroad.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company/Entity</th>
<th>Location/Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Interurban Railway Company</td>
<td>Los Angeles Trust Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Electric Railway Company</td>
<td>Santa Catalina Island Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Pacific Railroad Company</td>
<td>Wilmington Development Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmington Transportation Company</td>
<td>Harbors -- California -- Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum industry and trade -- California, Southern -- History -- Sources</td>
<td>Railroads -- California, Southern -- History -- Sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real property -- California -- Compton</td>
<td>Real property -- California -- Los Angeles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real property -- California -- Newport Beach</td>
<td>Real property -- California -- Pasadena</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History</td>
<td>Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santa Catalina Island (Calif.) -- History</td>
<td>Santa Catalina Island (Calif.) -- History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilmington (Los Angeles, Calif.) -- History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yuma (Ariz.) -- History</td>
<td>Newport Beach (Calif.) -- History</td>
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### Forms/Genres
- Account books -- California, Southern.
- Business records -- California, Southern.
- Legal documents -- California, Southern.
- Letter books -- California, Southern.
- Letters (correspondence) -- California, Southern.
- Corporation records -- California, Southern.

### Alternate Authors
- Banning, Adelaida.
- Banning, Anne Ophelia.
- Banning, Hancock, 1865-1925.
- Banning, Hancock, 1892-1982.
- Banning, Joseph Brent, 1861-1920.
- Banning, Phineas, 1830-1885.
- Banning, William, 1858-1946.
- Banning, William L., 1814-1893.
- Bard, Thomas Robert, 1841-1915.
- Brent, Joseph Lancaster, 1826-1905.
- Crocker, Charles, 1822-1888.
- Douty, F. S.
- Hancock, Winfield Scott, 1824-1886.
- Horter, J. W.
- McLellan, Hayden.
- Patton, George S. (George Smith), 1856-1927.
- Polhamus, Albert Alexander.
- Smith, George H. (George Hugh)
- Vail, Walter.
Banning (Family)
Santa Catalina Island Company.
Wilmington Development Company.
Wilmington Transportation Company.

**Boxed materials**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1</th>
<th>General land and business papers</th>
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<tr>
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**Wilmington Tidelands**

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<td>Land papers of Phineas Banning, 1866-1884</td>
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<td>Abstract of title to Tidelands Location No. 53, 1872-1894</td>
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<td>Folder 1b</td>
<td>Abstract of title to Tidelands Location No. 57, 1880-1902</td>
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<td>Folder 1-7</td>
<td>Legal papers, correspondence, etc. re tidelands. 1909-1915</td>
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<th>Box 4</th>
<th>Wilmington Tidelands (1916-1933) and printed maps of Wilmington Basin</th>
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<td>Folder 1-4</td>
<td>Legal papers, correspondence, etc. re tidelands. 1916-1920</td>
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Boxed materials

Wilmington Tidelands

Folder 5
Harbor District Industrial Survey Committee. 1931-1933
Physical Description: 50 pieces

Folder 6
Printed maps of Wilmington Basin of Los Angeles Harbor. 1908-1917
Physical Description: 30 pieces

Box 5
Wilmington Transportation Company and Santa Catalina Island Company

Folder 1-7
Wilmington Transportation Company. 1890-1923
Physical Description: 91 piece

Folder 8-16
Santa Catalina Island Company. 1893-1922
Physical Description: 194 pieces

Box 5A
Abstracts of title to land in Rancho Palos Verdes, Rancho San Pedro, and Wilmington. 1834-1893
Physical Description: 9 pieces

Wilmington Property

Box 6
Wilmington Property. 1855-1911
Physical Description: 425 pieces

Box 7
Wilmington Property. 1912-1923
Physical Description: 120 pieces

Box 8
Property in other cities

Folder 1
Alamitos Beach Townsite. 1886-1906
Physical Description: 2 pieces

Folder 2
Berkeley. 1921
Physical Description: 1 piece

Folder 3
Compton. 1909-1922
Physical Description: 67 pieces

Folder 4
La Cañada. 1885-1910
Physical Description: 1 piece

Folder 5
Los Angeles. 1875-1923
Physical Description: 41 piece

Folder 6
Pasadena. 1886-1923
Physical Description: 76 pieces

Tax receipts
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<td>Box 9</td>
<td><strong>Tax receipts. 1890-1911 (except 1909)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 35 pieces</td>
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<td>Box 10</td>
<td><strong>Tax receipts. 1912-1914</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 10 pieces</td>
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<td>Box 11</td>
<td><strong>Tax receipts. 1914-1927</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 31 piece</td>
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<td>Box 12</td>
<td><strong>Banning Family Correspondence</strong></td>
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<td>Folder 1</td>
<td><strong>Banning, Adelaida (Mellus). 1892-1902</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 45 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 2</td>
<td><strong>Banning, George Hugh. 1907</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 1 piece</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
<td><strong>Banning, Hancock (1865-1925). 1881; 1911-1924</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 19 pieces</td>
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<td><strong>Banning, Hancock (1892-1982). 1909-1921</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 39 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 5</td>
<td><strong>Banning, Joseph Brent, Sr. 1881; 1909</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 8 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 6</td>
<td><strong>Banning, Joseph Brent, Jr. 1909</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 12 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 7</td>
<td><strong>Banning, Katharine (Stewart). 1909-1920</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 9 pieces</td>
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<td><strong>Banning, Mary (Hollister). 1878-1881; 1909</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 33 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 9</td>
<td><strong>Banning, Phineas. 1884</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 5 pieces</td>
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<td><strong>Banning, William. To Brown Bros. Co. 1912</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 8 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 11</td>
<td><strong>Banning, William. To George Smith Patton (1885-1945). 1909</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 5 pieces</td>
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<td><strong>Banning, William. To Hancock Banning (1865-1925). 1909-1913</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 8 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 14</td>
<td><strong>Banning, William L. Letter and estate papers. 1881; 1887-1912</strong>&lt;br&gt;Physical Description: 9 pieces</td>
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<td>Folder 15</td>
<td>Brent, Joseph Lancaster. To Joseph Brent Banning, Sr. 1861</td>
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<th>Folder 17</th>
<th>Photographs and clippings</th>
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<th>Box 13</th>
<th>Anne Ophelia (Smith) Banning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
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<th>Correspondence, etc., re art collection. 1927-1946</th>
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**Hancock Banning (1865-1925)**

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<tr>
<th>Box 14</th>
<th>Business correspondence; Receipts (1919)</th>
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<td>Folder 1-2</td>
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<th>Receipts. 1919</th>
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<th>Receipts. 1920</th>
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<th>Box 16</th>
<th>Receipts. 1921-1922</th>
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**Phineas Banning**

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<tr>
<th>Box 18</th>
<th>Accounts and receipts. 1877-1883</th>
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**William Banning**
Box 19
Folder 1
Oil leases
Banning Drilling Co. 899
Physical Description: 3 pieces

Folder 2
Wilmington Tidelands Lease with Ventura Refining Co. 1916-1920
Physical Description: 10 pieces

Folder 3
Wilmington Tidelands Lease with Superior Oil Co. 1936-1939
Physical Description: 8 pieces

Folder 4
Wilmington Tidelands Lease with Superior Oil Co. 1936-1940
Physical Description: 10 pieces

Folder 5
Wilmington Tidelands Lease with Gremac Oil Co. 1938-1945
Physical Description: 27 pieces

Folder 6
Printed map of Santa Paula-Sespe Oil Fields. 1931
Physical Description: 1 piece

Folder 7
Reports on Oil Reserves in Wilmington Area. 1939-1948
Physical Description: 3 pieces

Folder 8
Miscellaneous
Physical Description: 10 pieces

Box 20
Inventory of home furnishings; Leases and agreements; Property; Memoranda; Estate settlement; Miscellaneous

Folder 1
Inventory of home furnishings. 1918
Physical Description: 1 piece

Folder 2
Leases and agreements. 1919-1924
Physical Description: 24 pieces

Folder 3
Leases and agreements [bound together]. 1923-1944
Physical Description: 1 piece

Folder 4
Property in Wilmington. 1920-1926
Physical Description: 86 pieces

Folder 5
Memoranda [bound together]. 1926-1944
Physical Description: 1 piece

Folder 6
Estate settlement. 1946-1948
Physical Description: 20 pieces

Folder 7
Miscellaneous (sailing master’s license, stock, etc.)
Physical Description: 6 pieces

Box 21
Business correspondence. 1920-1947
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 22
Receipts. 1919
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)
Boxed materials
William Banning

Banning Company Records: mssBanning Company
Finding Aid

Box 23  Receipts. 1920
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 24  Receipts. 1921-1922
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 25  Receipts. 1923
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 26  Receipts. 1924
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 27  Receipts. 1925
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 28  Receipts. 1926
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 29  Receipts. 1927
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 30  Receipts. 1928
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 31  Receipts. 1929
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Box 32  Receipts. 1930-1932
Physical Description: 500 pieces (approx.)

Volumes

Letterbooks

Volume 4  Phineas Banning (Incoming correspondence). 1878, Oct.-1879, May
Volume 16  Hancock Banning (1865-1925). Press copies. 1894, Mar.-1895, July
Volume 19  Hancock Banning (1865-1892). Press copies. 1907, Nov.
Volume 24  William Banning. 1895, Sep.- 1897, Apr.
Volume 26  William Banning. 1898, Sep.- 1901, May
Volume 31  Joseph Brent Banning. 1891, Dec.- 1895, Feb.
Volume 32  Joseph Brent Banning. 1903, Mar.- 1907, June
Volume 33  Joseph Brent Banning. 1907, June- 1908, May
Volume 34  Joseph Brent Banning. 1908, May - 1909, May
Volume 36  Banning Company. 1895, Apr.- June
Volume 37  Banning Company. 1895, June- Sep.
Volume 38  Banning Company. 1895, Sep.- 1896, Feb.
Volume 39  Banning Company. 1896, Feb.- June
Volume 40  Banning Company. 1896, June- Aug.
Volume 41  Banning Company. 1896, Aug.- 1897, Jan.
Volume 42  Banning Company. 1897, Jan.- May
Volume 43  Banning Company. 1897, May - June
Volume 44  Banning Company. 1897, June- Aug.
Volume 45  Banning Company. 1897, Aug.- 1898, Jan.
Volume 46  Banning Company. 1898, Jan.- Apr.
Volume 47  Banning Company. 1898, Apr.- June
Volume 48  Banning Company. 1898, June- Aug.
Volume 49  Banning Company. 1898, Aug.- 1899, Jan.
Volume 50  Banning Company. 1899, Jan.- June
Volume 51  Banning Company. 1899, June- Aug.
Volume 52  Banning Company. 1899, Aug.- 1900, Jan.
Volume 53  Banning Company. 1900, Jan.- May
Volume 54  Banning Company. 1900, May - July
Volume 55  Banning Company. 1900, July- Nov.
Volume 56  Banning Company. 1900, Nov.- 1901, Mar.
Volume 57  Banning Company. 1901, June- Aug.
Volume 58  Banning Company. 1901, Nov.- 1902, Feb.
Volume 59  Banning Company. 1902, Jan.- May
Volume 60  Banning Company. 1902, June- Aug.
Volume 63  Banning Company [To Santa Catalina Island Co.]. 1902, Nov.- 1903, Apr.
Volume 64  Banning Company. 1903, Feb.- May
Volume 65  Banning Company. 1903, May - July
Volume 66  Banning Company [To Santa Catalina Island Co.]. 1903, Apr.- July
Volume 69  Banning Company. 1904, Jan.- Apr.
Volume 70  Banning Company. 1904, Apr.- July
Volume 71  Banning Company. 1904, July- 1905, Jan.
Volume 72  Banning Company. 1905, Jan.- May
Volume 73  Banning Company. 1905, May - July
Volume 75  Banning Company. 1906, Jan.- Mar.
Volume 76  Banning Company. 1906, Mar.- July
Volume 77  Banning Company. 1906, Dec.- 1907, Feb.
Volume 78  Banning Company. 1907, Apr.- Sep.
Volume 79  Banning Company. 1907, May - Aug.
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<th>Volume</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Banning Company. 1908, Feb.- Aug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Banning Company [To Santa Catalina Island Co.]. 1908, Aug.- 1909, Apr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Account Books (interfiled in chronological order)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Phineas Banning. Ledger. 1864, Jan.- Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger. 1866, Jan.- Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger. 1867, Jan.- Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Banning Company. Journal [many Los Angeles accounts]. 1867, Jan.- 1868, June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger [many Los Angeles accounts]. 1867, Jan.- 1871, Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger. 1868, Jan.- Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Banning Company. Journal No. 1. 1869, Jan.- 1870, June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Banning Company. Journal [No. 27]. 1869, Jan.- 1870, June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Banning Company. Cash book. 1872-1886; 1902-1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger. 1888, July- 1889, Nov.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Wilmington Development Company. Ledger. 1889, June- 1890, Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Banning Company. Sales book. 1890, Feb.- 1891, June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>Banning Company. Journal. 1890, Sep.- 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger. 1892, Jan.- Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>Banning Company. Ledger. 1892, Dec.- 1894, May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Volumes
Account Books (interfiled in chronological order)

Volume 137  Banning Company. Trial balance. 1894, Jan.- 1895, May
Volume 139  Banning Company. Cash book. 1895; 1902-1905
Volume 141  Wilmington Development Company. Accounts. 1895-1899
Volume 143  Banning Company. Ledger. 1896, Apr.- June
Volume 156  Banning Company. Trial balance. 1899, Sep.- 1900, Jan.
Volume 162  Banning Wool Company. Ledger. 1901, Jan.- 1907, Apr.
Volume 175  Banning Company. Ledger. 1904, Dec.- 1905, May
Volume 176  Banning Company. Trial balance. 1905, Dec.- 1906, May

Other volumes

Banning Company Records: mssBanning Company
Finding Aid
Volume 190  Wilmington Development Co. Board of Directors - Minutes. 1884, Feb.-1889
Volume 191  Wilmington Development Co. By Laws. 1884, Sep.-1910
Volume 192  Wilmington Development Co. Stock Ledger. 1884, Oct.-1886
Volume 193  [Wilmington Development Co.?] Transfer Journal. 1884, Oct.-1886
Volume 194  Wilmington Development Co. Stock Book. 1884, Oct.-1889
Volume 195  Pasadena Transfer Company Letterbook. 1887-1890
Volume 196  Avalon House, Catalina Isl. Hotel Register. 1890-1894
Volume 197  Banning Wool Company Record Book. 1898-1907
Volume 198  San Pedro & Wilmington Water Co. By Laws, Minutes, Stock. 1900-1901
Volume 199  Banning Company Record of Property. 1897-1902
Volume 200  Banning Company Stock Journal & Ledger. 1904-1920
Volume 201  Banning Company Index
Volume 203  Metropole Hotel, Catalina Hotel Register [EMPTY]

Rolled maps - blueprints

- Portion of Tideland Location 152. 1917
- Portion of Tideland Location 154. 1926
- Outline of Mormon Island on Pierhead Line. n.d.