Overview of the Collection
Title: Rosario Curletti Collection of A. M. Ebbets Papers
Dates (inclusive): 1824-1964
Collection Number: mssHM 69651-69707
Extent: 70 items in 2 boxes
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2129
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
Abstract: This collection contains an 1849 sea voyage diary of A.M. Ebbets (1830-1903) chronicling his trip to San Francisco, California, and supplementary material about Ebbets. Nineteen pages of pencil drawings by Arthur Ebbets, depicting scenes from his 1849 voyage, accompany the diary.
Language: English.
Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.
Publication Rights
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Note: The letter by Elizabeth Whitney Putnam, HM 69705, may have publication restrictions.
Preferred Citation
Provenance
Gift of Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., April 7, 2005.
Related Materials in the Huntington Library
The collection also originally included a photocopy of the Augustin W. Hale diary, the original of which the Huntington holds in the Hale papers. Hale also sailed to California on the Pacific in 1849, and the he and Ebbets were apparently friendly. Details and references in the two collections overlap occasionally. The John Goodman papers at the Huntington also overlap with the Curletti papers, specifically in the folders discussing the ships Pacific and Tennessee. Rare book and print items donated along with the Curletti collection were cataloged separately.
Biographical Note of Rosario Curletti
Rosario Andrea Curletti (1913-1986) was a Southern California anthropologist, genealogist, historian and book collector. Her main specialties were Santa Barbara history and the Chumash Indians. Curletti began assembling this collection in the 1950s and made (unsuccessful) efforts to have Arthur Ebbets’ diary published. She died in 1986.
Biographical Note of Arthur Ebbets
Arthur Mercein Ebbets (1830-1903) was born in New York on 18 January 1830 and came to San Francisco at the age of 19, in 1849, on the ship Pacific (built in 1843). While on board the Pacific, Ebbets published a newspaper that was highly critical of the ship’s first captain, Hall J. Tibbits, whom many of the ship’s passengers considered nearly insane. Upon the ship’s arrival at Rio de Janeiro, the passengers appealed to the American consul to have Tibbits removed. The consul complied, placing George T. Estabrook (or Easterbrook) in command for the remainder of the voyage. Captain Tibbits contested his dismissal and met the ship in San Francisco to resume command.
In San Francisco, Ebbets established himself first as a general merchant and land developer. He later became an agent for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and for Wells Fargo, and a coal merchant (in 1859). He participated in the vigilante committees of 1851 and 1856, and also served in several minor political and organizational offices. Ebbets made several trips back to the East, where he was part of the mercantile company Brown, Ebbets, and Co. (in New York City). In San Francisco, he erected and lived in one of the early city’s finest houses, which he sold in 1901. He died on 5 May 1903.
Arthur Ebbets' first wife, Charlotte “Lottie” White Penniman Ebbets came to California in 1853 aboard the Georgia and the Tennessee, crossing the isthmus by land. She was either already acquainted with Arthur (whom she married in 1854) or met him when she boarded the Georgia in New York, and mentions him in one of her letters. After returning east for a time (possibly with Arthur), she made the journey West again in 1855, this time on the Oregon with her infant son. Charlotte, a native of Baltimore, Maryland, was of delicate health, and died in 1863. Only one of her children with Arthur, Charlotte Penniman Ebbets, survived to adulthood. Arthur married his second wife, Elizabeth Ann Stevenson, in 1864; they had four children. Elizabeth died in 1894.

Scope and Content
This collection was donated in honor of Southern California anthropologist Rosario Curletti. The collection consists of the 1849 sea voyage diary of Arthur Mercein Ebbets (121 pages) and supplementary material, including six letters by Charlotte White Penniman Ebbets, written while during her 1853 voyage on the steamer Tennessee (which ran aground near San Francisco); 14 folders of biographical manuscripts about Arthur written by his daughter Charlotte Penniman Ebbets; other family manuscripts, including family trees; and correspondence of Rosario Curletti regarding the diary and letters. It was Charlotte Penniman Ebbets who supplied Rosario Curletti with several items in the collection. Nineteen pages of pencil drawings by Arthur Ebbets, depicting scenes from his 1849 voyage, accompany the diary. Seven other early California and Panama items supplement the Ebbetts items, including drafts of short stories or memoirs by K. V. Hastings (“A Visit to Acapulco,” “A Day on Shipboard,” and “From Panama to Aspinwall”), a copy of a long letter by Elizabeth Whitney Putnam detailing her journey west (she and her child sailed aboard the Tennessee and the Georgia on the same voyage as Lottie Ebbets), and Spanish and English versions of the diary of Pablo de la Portilla, a Mexican captain attached to Santa Barbara Presidio who led an unsuccessful 1824 expedition against a group of Chumash Indians who had rebelled against the San Buenaventura mission.

Finally, the collection originally included a photocopy of the Augustin W. Hale diary, the original of which the Huntington holds in the Hale papers. Hale also sailed to California on the Pacific in 1849, and he and Ebbets were apparently friendly. Details and references in the two collections overlap occasionally. In addition, the ships Pacific and Tennessee are both discussed in detail in the John Goodman Papers at the Huntington.

Arrangement
Organized alphabetically by manuscript author.

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

Subjects
Curletti, Rosario Andrea, 1913-1986.
Ebbets, Elizabeth Ann Stevenson, d. 1894.
Tibbits, Hall J.
Georgia (Steamer)
Oregon (Steamboat)
Pacific (Ship)
Tennessee (Steamer), 1848-1853.
Chumash Indians.
Frontier and pioneer life -- California.
Historians -- California -- Archives.
Merchants -- California.
Ocean travel -- 19th century.
Vigilance committees -- California -- San Francisco.
Voyages to the Pacific coast -- Personal narratives.
California -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Callao (Callao, Peru) -- Description and travel.
Horn, Cape (Chile) -- Description and travel.
Juan Fernández Islands.
Lima (Peru) -- Description and travel.
Panama -- Description and travel.
Panama, Isthmus of (Panama) -- Description and travel.
Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) -- Description and travel.
San Francisco (Calif,) -- Description and travel.
San Francisco (Calif,) -- History -- Sources.
San Francisco (Calif,) -- Politics and government -- 19th century.
Santa Barbara (Calif,) -- History -- Sources.

**Forms/Genres**
Biographies -- California.
Diaries -- 19th century.
Drawings -- 19th century.
Genealogical tables.
Letters (correspondence) -- 19th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- 20th century.
Poems -- California.
Short stories.

**Additional Contributors**
Ebbets, Charlotte Penniman, fl. 1950.
Ebbets, Charlotte White Penniman, d. 1863.
Hale, Augustin W., 1814-1902.
Hastings, K. V.
Portilla, Pablo de la, Captain, fl. 1819-1838.
Putnam, Elizabeth Whitney, fl. 1853.

Box 1  
**1830–1903 (HM 69651-69653, HM 69673-69706)**
Includes diary. Also includes 1 folder of ephemera.

Box 2  
**Pencil drawings by A. M. Ebbets. 1849 (HM 69654-69672)**