Monterey Collection: Finding Aid

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The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
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Overview of the Collection
Title: Monterey Collection
Dates (inclusive): 1785-1877
Bulk dates: 1828-1854
Collection Number: mssMR 1-407
Extent: 1,337 pieces in 8 boxes
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Abstract: This collection consists of letters and documents related to the government of the municipality of Monterey, California, primarily during the period 1828-1854.
Language: Spanish and 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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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Monterey Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Wilford R. Holman, of Pacific Grove, Calif., February 15, 1959.
Historical Note
The town of Monterey, California, founded by the Spanish as a presidio in 1770, remained under the rule of New Spain until the Mexican government took control in 1822. During the Mexican period, the city was governed by an Ayuntamiento and an alcalde. Walter Colton became the first American alcalde of Monterey on July 28, 1846, serving during this formative period when the territory was under the rule of United States military governors. California officially became a U.S. possession in 1848, and after obtaining statehood in 1850 the Ayuntamiento became the Common Council, and a mayor was elected in place of the alcalde.
Scope and Content
This collection consists of letters and documents related to the government of the municipality of Monterey, California, primarily during the period 1828-1854, with two earlier items for 1785 and 1798, and a later one for 1877. The collection also includes minute books, election results, and records of disbursements of funds and of ordinances passed. Most of the documents are in Spanish until 1846, and in English thereafter.
The papers offer a good example of the California municipal system of government operating under an ayuntamiento during the Mexican period, when Monterey was the capital of the province, and under a common council during the early American period.
Subject matter includes:
• Common welfare and the preservation of the public order
• Health measures, sanitation and hospitals
• Financial administration: salaries of public officials and employees; assessment of property and taxation, collection of revenues, etc. (over 350 pieces consist of orders to pay, bills, receipts, etc.).
• Education
• Elections
• Administration of justice
• Repair of streets, bridges, & public buildings
Persons represented in the collection include George Allen, W.E.P. Hartnell, José María de Hijar, Philip A. Roach, José Mariano Romero, and David Spence.

Some notable items include:

- Hartnell, William E. P. To Ayuntamiento of Monterey: petition for Mexican citizenship. 1829, Jan. 22 (MR 188)
- Spence, David. To Ayuntamiento of Monterey: petition for Mexican citizenship. 1829, Jan. 22 (MR 364)
- Monterey (Calif.). Ayuntamiento. Minute books of meetings for the years 1833, 1834, and 1836, which, according to Bancroft, were not believed to be extant. The 1836 minute book contains a copy of the inaugural address of Gov. Mariano Chico, of which there seems to be only one printed copy in the Mercantile Library in San Francisco. (MR 251-253)
- Hijar, José María de. Letter to David Spence, then Alcalde, requesting a certificate of good character as demonstrated during the four months he resided at Monterey, and asking to state if Spence ever considered that he entertained revolutionary ideas. 1835, Apr. 12 (MR 191)
- Romero, José Mariano. Letter from the teacher of the normal school at Monterey to the Ayuntamiento, protesting the unjust criticism of his teaching levelled at him by parents and civic authorities. 1835, Nov. 14 (MR 347)
- Allen, George. Accounts of receipts and disbursements of the municipal funds. 1835 - 1837 (MR 41-45)
- Tally list of votes, signed ballots cast, and list of delegates elected at Monterey to the Consejo General, scheduled to meet at Santa Barbara on June 15, 1846. 1846, May 26 - 30. (61 pieces) (MR 13)
- Several documents and bills concerning the building and repair of Colton Hall, California’s Constitution Hall. 1847 - 1850 (MR 29, 102, 226, 336, 400)
- Roach, Philip A. To Common Council of Monterey. Letters from the Mayor containing his recommendations to the council regarding the need for defining the boundaries of the newly constituted city of Monterey, the sale of vacant lands, efforts to be made to have Monterey designated as the capital of California, need for building a wharf, etc. 1850, April 10 and 27. (MR 330)
- Monterey (Calif.). Residents. Petition addressed to the Common Council requesting that an appropriation be made to defray the expenses of suitably celebrating the 4th of July. Document containing 23 signatures, dated June 6, 1850. (MR 282)

Arrangement
The collection is arranged in chronological order.

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

Subjects
Allen, George, 1796-1847.
Hijar, José María de.
Romero, José Mariano.
Spence, David, 1798-1875.
Monterey (Calif.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Monterey (Calif.) -- Politics and government -- 19th century.

Forms/Genres
Financial records -- California Monterey -- 19th century.
Government records -- California Monterey -- 19th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- California Monterey -- 19th century.
Minute books -- California Monterey -- 19th century.

Alternate Authors
Allen, George, 1796-1847.
Hijar, José María de.
Romero, José Mariano.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1785-1833</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1834-1836</td>
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<td>1837-1844</td>
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<td>1845-1849 (and undated between 1849 and 1850)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1850 January 2-October 11</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1850 October 17-1850 December (and undated between 1850 and 1852)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>1851 January 3-1852 April 5</td>
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<td>1852 June 16-1877 August 20</td>
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