William Moore Papers: Finding Aid

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
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Overview of the Collection

Title: William Moore Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1857-1891

Collection Number: mssMoore, William papers

Creator: Moore, William, 1827-

Extent: 95 items including two oversize ledgers.

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Abstract: This collection contains the papers of William Moore (born 1827), an early settler and surveyor in Los Angeles, California. The materials chiefly reflect Moore's surveying projects from the late 1850s into the 1870s and include Moore’s daily diaries as well as his field books.

Language: Primarily English. A few items are in Spanish.

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]. William Moore Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance


Biographical Note

William Moore was an early settler and surveyor in Los Angeles, California. He worked for the Los Angeles city surveyor's office as early as the 1850s and served as the Los Angeles county surveyor in 1857, 1858-59 and 1861. He also worked as the Los Angeles city surveyor in 1868 and 1873. Moore conducted surveys of many of the city’s major streets, neighborhoods, and real estate tracts. From his diaries, it also appears that he invested in real estate in the downtown area.

In the late 1860s and 1870s he began working for the Canal and Reservoir Company owned by Isaias Hellman and John G. Downey. Hellman was a prominent Los Angeles banker and Downey served as governor of California during the Civil War. They partnered in the creation of the Canal and Reservoir Company, which created a system of canals to divert water from the Los Angeles River and bring it to the neighborhood now known as Bunker Hill. They also collaborated to found the well-known Farmers and Merchants Bank in Los Angeles. Moore knew both men and worked for the Canal and Reservoir Company surveying and overseeing work on the canal system. After work on the canals, Moore worked with the Los Angeles city council on the city’s sewer system.

Moore also completed a number of other surveying projects around Southern California, including a survey of the San Gabriel Mission and its lands as well as the Los Nietos township (owned by John Downey and eventually incorporated as the city of Downey). According to his diaries, he also surveyed areas of the Arroyo Seco. Moore’s work also included projects with Los Angeles mayor Prudent Beaudry and the prominent Boyle, Temple, and Workman families.

Moore was a bilingual English and Spanish speaker and practiced his language skills by writing some of his diary entries in Spanish. His language skills may have helped him secure work surveying land for some of Southern California’s wealthy Mexican-American families.

In the 1890s, Moore also invested in agricultural land in Southern California and grew oranges during the region’s citrus boom.

Scope and Content
This collection contains the papers of William Moore (born 1827), an early settler and surveyor in Los Angeles, California, in the following series: manuscripts, correspondence, legal documents, ephemera, and oversize. The manuscripts include Moore’s daily diaries as well as his field books. The diaries contain short entries reflecting his business activities. The field books contain sketches and calculations of his various surveying projects. The small series of correspondence includes letters from friends written to Moore and his wife. The correspondence also includes one letter from Moore to his wife about his discovery of gold during a mining expedition in 1878. The legal documents include contracts, deeds, indentures, leases, and promissory notes. The two oversize ledgers include notes and drawings of Moore’s various surveying projects.

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the [Huntington Library's Online Catalog](http://example.com).

**Subjects**
Moore, William, 1827-.
Surveyors -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archives.
California -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Maps.
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Surveys.
Los Angeles County (Calif.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Los Angeles County (Calif.) -- Maps.
Los Angeles County (Calif.) -- Surveys.

**Forms/Genres**
Diaries -- 19th century.
Field notes -- California, Southern -- 19th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- California, Southern -- 19th century.
Maps -- California, Southern -- 19th century.
Surveys -- California, Southern -- 19th century.
Time books -- California, Southern -- 19th century.

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**Manuscripts**

**Box 1**

**Diaries, 1869-1876**

Folder 1

*Diary: William Moore (1869).* 1 item.

Folder 2

*Diary: William Moore (1870).* 1 item.

Folder 3

*Diary: William Moore (1872).* 1 item.

Folder 4

*Diary: William Moore (1873).* 1 item.

Folder 5

*Diary: William Moore (1876).* 1 item.

**Box 2**

**Diaries, 1884-1891 and Field Books, 1857-1861**

Folder 1

*Diary: William Moore (1884).* 1 item.

Folder 2

*Diary: William Moore (1885).* 1 item.

Folder 3

*Diary: William Moore (1891).* 1 item.

Folder 4

*Field Book: William Moore (1857-1858).* 1 item.

Folder 5

*Field Book: William Moore (1858).* 1 item.

Folder 6

*Field Book: William Moore (1858-1859).* 1 item.

Folder 7

*Field Book: William Moore (1861).* 1 item.

**Box 3**

**Field Books, 1868-1872**

Folder 1

*Field Book: William Moore (1868, Jan.-Aug.).* 1 item.

Folder 2

*Field Book: William Moore (1868, Mar.).* 1 item.

Folder 3

*Field Book: William Moore (1868-1869).* 1 item.

Folder 4

*Field Book: William Moore (1868-1871).* 1 item.

Folder 5

*Field Book: William Moore (1869).* 1 item.

Folder 6

*Field Book: William Moore (1870).* 1 item.

Folder 7

*Field Book: William Moore (1872).* 1 item.

Folder 8

*Field Book: William Moore (1872-1873).* 1 item.
Field Book: William Moore (1872-1883). 1 item.

Field Books, 1873-1875

Field Book: William Moore (1873). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1873-1874). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1874). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1875). 2 items.

Field Book: William Moore (1875, Feb.-June). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1875-1882). 1 item.

Field Books, 1876-1889

Field Book: William Moore (1876-1879). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1877-1880). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1881-1882). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1883). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1886-1887). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1888-1889). 1 item.

Field Book: William Moore (1889). 1 item.

Time Books, Correspondence, Legal Documents, Ephemera

Time Book: William Moore (1871). 1 item.


Time Book: William Moore [undated]. 1 item.

Traverse Table [undated]. 1 item.

Hall, Mary. 1 letter (1871, Oct. 30) to L. A. Talbot.

Hayes, J. B. 1 letter (1881, Sep. 21) to William Moore, b.1827.

Lathrop, Mary. 1 letter (1891, Jan. 2) to “My Dear Friends.”

Minns, George W. 1 letter (1881, Apr. 16) to “My Dear Mrs. Moore.”

Moore, William, b.1827. 1 letter (1877, Dec. 6) to “His Honor the Mayor, the
Common Council of the City of Los Angeles.”

Moore, William, b.1827. 1 letter (1878, Dec. 22) to “My Dear Wife.”

Shaw, Frederick. 1 letter (1887, July 30) to William Moore, b.1827.

------. 1 letter (1861, Nov. 20) to “Dear Libby.”

------. 1 letter [undated] to [unknown addressee].

Certificate of Tax Sale (1883, Jan. 10). 1 item.

Contracts (1877-1889). 2 items.


Indentures and leases (1883-1887). 6 items.


Power of Attorney (1875, Apr. 17). 1 item.

Promissory Notes (1869-1878). 7 items.

Stock Certificate (1873). 1 item.

Subpoena (1881, Sep. 6). 1 item.

Business Cards [undated]. 1 item.

Clippings [undated]. 2 items.

Envelopes [undated]. 1 item.

Leather Document Cases. 2 items.

Notes and Sketches [undated]. 10 items.

Receipts (1877-1896). 3 items.

Oversize

Volume 1 Survey Ledgers: William Moore. [undated] (1 of 2)

Volume 2 Survey Ledgers: William Moore. [undated] (2 of 2)