Overview of the Collection
Title: William Gillet Ritch Papers
Dates (inclusive): 1539-1901
Bulk dates: 1845-1882
Collection Number: mssRI 1-2270
Extent: Approximately 2,390 pieces in 41 boxes and 24 volumes (29.97 linear feet)
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
Abstract: This collection contains the personal and professional papers of historian and New Mexico territorial governor William G. Ritch (1830-1904) and his collection of historical manuscripts, documents, and maps related to the history of New Mexico.
Language: English and Spanish.
Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.
Publication Rights
The Huntington Library does not require that researchers request permission to quote from or publish images of this material, nor does it charge fees for such activities. The responsibility for identifying the copyright holder, if there is one, and obtaining necessary permissions rests with the researcher.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. William Gillet Ritch Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Acquired from Watson L. Ritch, May 1923.
Processing Information
Collection was cataloged by Huntington staff after May 1923. In July 1998, Jennifer L. Martinez and Peter Blodgett created a finding aid. Xiuzhi Zhou encoded the finding aid in 2004 and Brooke M. Black edited the encoding in 2017. In June 2019, Gina C Giang added clippings, scrapbooks, and printed matter (Boxes 35-41) to the collection and finding aid, which had previously been separated and handled as ephemera.
• [Collection. New Mexico. Scrapbooks]. 1864-1904. (Call number: 128134)
• [William G. Ritch Collection of Studio Portraits of New Mexico]. Approximately 1863-1887. (Call number: photCL 314)

Biographical Note
William Gillet Ritch (1830-1904) was territorial secretary of New Mexico from 1873 to 1885 and authored several books about New Mexico history. He was a native of New York who moved to Michigan in 1855 and later settled in Wisconsin. After serving in the 46th Wisconsin Cavalry in the Civil War, Ritch returned to Wisconsin and was elected state senator. He was later proprietor and editor of the Winnebago County Press. Failing health forced Ritch to seek a better climate, and in 1873 he was appointed secretary of the Territory of New Mexico. He served in this capacity until 1885, with the added responsibility of serving as acting territorial governor in 1875. He was active in the establishment of a public school system in the Territory and became a regent of the State Normal School. He developed an interest in the history of New Mexico and began collecting historical documents in hopes of circumventing their destruction or dispersal. He was elected as the first president of the New Mexico Historical Society in 1880.

Scope and Content
The collection contains clippings, correspondence, manuscripts, documents, maps, and scrapbooks in both English and Spanish related to the history of early and territorial New Mexico collected by William G. Ritch. The very early portion of the collection (1539-1700) contains original manuscripts, contemporary copies, and later translations of official documents and journals of explorers, correspondence, papers of various governors, court records, church inventories, and passport lists of
American traders. The papers for the years 1846-1873 cover the American military occupation, New Mexico politics and government, New Mexico during the US Civil War, and Indian affairs relating to the Navajo, Apache, Comanche, and Pecos tribes. Items after 1873 tend to be the personal papers of William G. Ritch, including biographical sketches of significant New Mexicans, drafts of articles, and notebooks of research materials (including the biography of Father Antonio Jose Martinez by Santiago Valdez).

Correspondents include Manuel Armijo, William Frederick Milton Arny, James Henry Carleton, Miguel Antonio Otero, Donaciano Vigil, and others.

**Arrangement**

Arranged in two series: Bound Volumes and Boxes. Boxed materials are chiefly arranged chronologically in Boxes 1-31, followed by newspaper clippings (Boxes 32-33), oversize materials (Box 34), and additional clippings and scrapbooks (Boxes 35-41).

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the [Huntington Library's Online Catalog](https://www.huntington.org).

**Personal Names**

- Abert, J. W. (James William), 1820-1897
- Abbreu, Santiago
- Allen, William S. (William Stickney), 1805-1868
- Alvarez, Manuel, 1794-1856
- Armijo, Manuel
- Arny, W. F. M. (William Frederick Milton), 1813-1881
- Axtell, Samuel B. (Samuel Beach), 1819-1891
- Baca, Ramon
- Baird, Spruce M. (Spruce McCoy), 1814-1872
- Baker, Grafton
- Bandelier, Adolph Francis Alphonse, 1840-1914
- Beall, Benjamin Lloyd
- Beaubien, Carlos
- Beck, Preston
- Becknell, William, 1787 or 1788-1856
- Benedict, Kirby, 1810-1874
- Blumner, Charles
- Buell, Salmon A.
- Burnside, Ambrose Everett, 1824-1881
- Bustamante, Anastasio, 1780-1853
- Calhoun, James S., 1803?-1852
- Carleton, James Henry, 1814-1873
- Carson, Kit, 1809-1868
- Chandler, Zachariah, 1813-1879
- Clark, William, 1770-1838
- Cleaver, Charles P., 1830-1874
- Concha, Fernando de la
- Cooke, Philip St. George, 1809-1895
- Ewell, Richard Stoddert, 1817-1872
- Fernandez de la Cueva Enríquez, Francisco, duque de Alburquerque, 1666-1733
- Gregg, Josiah, 1806-1850
- Houston, Sam, 1793-1863
- Howe, Timothy O. (Timothy Otis), 1816-1883
- Houghton, Joab, 1810-1876
- Jones, Anson, 1798-1858
Kearny, Steven Watts, 1794-1848
Kennedy, John Pendleton, 1795-1870
Lamy, John Baptist, 1814-1888
Lane, William Carr, 1789-1863
Leavenworth, Henry, 1783-1834
Mackenzie, Ranald Slidell, 1840-1889
Martínez, Antonio José, 1793-1867.
McMullen, William, 1824-1901
Magoffin, James Wiley, 1799-1868
Maxwell, Lucien Bonaparte, 1818-1875
Meriwether, D. (David), 1800-1893
Messervy, William S.
Otermin, Antonio de, active 1678-1682
Otero, Antonio Jose
Otero, Miguel A. (Miguel Antonio), 1829-1882
Paredes y Arrillaga, Mariano, 1797-1849
Philip III, King of Spain, 1578-1621
Prince, L. Bradford (Le Baron Bradford), 1840-1922
Rencher, Abraham, 1798-1883
Riley, Bennett, 1787-1853
Robidoux, Antoine, 1794-1860
Rynerson, William Logan
Salcedo y Salcedo, Nemesio, 1754-1814?
Santa Anna, Antonio Lopez de, 1794?-1876
St. Vrain, Ceran, 1802-1870
Sturgis, Samuel Davis, 1822-1889
Sumner, Edwin V. (Edwin Vose), 1797-1863
Vargas, Diego de, 1643-1704
Vigil, Donaciano, 1802-1877
Vigil y Alarid, Juan Bautista
Waldo, Jose David
Wallace, Lew, 1827-1905
Washington, John Macrae, 1797-1853
Watts, John S. (John Sebrie), 1816-1876
West, J. R. (Joseph Rodman), 1822-1898

**Corporate Names**
New Mexico. Secretary of the Territory -- Archives

**Subjects**
Apache Indians -- History -- Sources
Comanche Indians -- History -- Sources
Indians of North America -- New Mexico -- History -- Sources
Manuscripts -- Collectors and collecting -- New Mexico.
Mexican War, 1846-1848 -- New Mexico -- Sources
Navajo Indians -- History -- Sources

**Geographic Areas**
New Mexico -- History -- 19th century -- Sources
New Mexico -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Sources
New Mexico -- Politics and government -- 19th century -- Sources

**Genre**
Clippings (information artifacts) -- United States -- 19th century
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 19th century
Maps -- New Mexico -- 19th century
Journals (accounts) -- Kansas -- 20th century
Personal papers -- New Mexico -- 19th century
Professional papers -- New Mexico -- 19th century
Scrapbooks -- New Mexico -- 19th century

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**Bound volumes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>卷</th>
<th>说明</th>
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| RI 66 | **Fernando VII, King of Spain. Death Warrant for Antonio Carbojal... Apr. 5, 1809.**
Valdez, Santiago. *Biografía del Reverendo Padre.* 1877 [3 volumes]. |
| RI 2211 vol. 1 | Valdez, Santiago. *Biografía del Reverendo Padre...* 1877. |
| RI 2211 vol. 2 | Valdez, Santiago. *Biografía del Reverendo Padre...* 1877. |
| RI 2212 vol. 1 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Notebooks.* c. 1890 [7 volumes]. |
| RI 2212 vol. 3 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Notebook.* c. 1890. |
| RI 2212 vol. 4 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Notebook.* c. 1890. |
| RI 2212 vol. 5 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Notebook.* c. 1890. |
| RI 2212 vol. 6 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Notebook.* c. 1890. |
| RI 2212 vol. 7 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Notebook.* c. 1890. |
| RI 2213 | Ritch, William Gillet. *Topical Index to his own Works.* c. 1890. |
| RI 2214 (vol. 1-8) | Ritch, William Gillet. *Topical Index to his own...* c. 1890 [8 volumes in 1 box]. |
| RI 2215 | New Mexico. Board of Commissioners... *Letterbook.* Jan. 19, 1853-Nov. 28, 1854. |

**Boxes**

**Note**
This list is by no means comprehensive and does not include all subjects, persons, or geographic locations in each box. Its purpose is to provide access to broad topics and also to point out interesting or unique items in the collection.

**Box 1**

**Mar. 7, 1539 – Dec. 31, 1694**

**Scope and Content Note**
Early documents (1539-1694) concerning the history of Spanish exploration and settlement in New Mexico, many translated by Samuel Ellison. Many of these documents discuss events in the wake of the public uprising and the reconquest.

**Of special note:**
RI 1: 19th century translation of A relation...touching his discovery of...Cibola...by Marcos de Niza. March 7, 1539.
Box 2  1696, Mar. 22 - 1789, Dec. 9
Scope and Content Note
Early documents concerning Spanish resettlement and governance of New Mexico (1696-) and letters by the Duke of Albuquerque.
Of special note:
RI 55: Journal of events & operations against the Moqui. May 14 -Oct. 18, 1716. [extract]

Box 3  June 21, 1794 -Dec. 31, 1830
Scope and Content Note
Commerce and trade with the United States.
Of special note:
RI 70: Record of vaccinations, giving names of fathers and children. [summer 1815]
RI 74: Contemporary copy of treaty of Cordova between Spain and Mexico, establishing Mexican independence. Aug. 24, 1821.

Box 4  Jan. 1, 1831-Dec. 31, 1838
Scope and Content Note
Americans adopting Mexican nationality, passports, petitions for naturalization, fur traders from Taos, customs and commerce with the US including Josiah Gregg, and the Revolution of 1837.

Box 5  Feb. 9, 1839 -July 9, 1846
Scope and Content Note
American commerce, abortive Texan invasion of 1841, conflict between Texas and Mexico in NM, 1841-43.

Box 6  Aug. 1, 1846 -Dec. 31, 1847
Scope and Content Note
Documents related to the conquest of New Mexico and the operation of local courts in 1846-47 under American rule.

Box 7  Jan. 1, 1848-Dec. 31, 1850
Scope and Content Note
Assumption of American control over New Mexico, including letters of Governor Vigil and military affairs. Also Indian trading licenses (RI 365, 366, 368, 371, 367, 374, 375, 376, 389, 400, 402, 404, 406, 407).

Box 8  Jan. 1, 1851 -Nov. 31, 1851
Scope and Content Note
Territorial government and legislative activities of New Mexico. Also contains a document related to Indian trading (RI 1415).

Box 9  Dec. 1, 1851 -Apr. 30, 1852
Scope and Content Note
Territorial legislative activities and courts, and Indian affairs.
Of special note:
RI 493 & 494: Receipts for return of captive Hispanic children from Indians and Indian trading bonds. 1852.
RI 2150: Statement in regard to buying and selling Paiute children.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 10</th>
<th>May 1, 1852 - Apr. 30, 1853</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Indian affairs, including statements of supplies and services provided to the Navajos on their reservation in 1852.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 11</th>
<th>May 1, 1853 - Apr. 30, 1854</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Work of the Territorial Commission on Public Buildings (June 1853), complaint about election fraud, and the US Army.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 12</th>
<th>May 1, 1854 - Dec. 31, 1854</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>New Mexican militia affairs, including muster rolls (RI 1624, 2134, 643, 1622, 1623, 649, 689).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Box 13</th>
<th>Jan. 1, 1855 - Nov. 30, 1855</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Territorial administration, including letters from Elisha Whittlesey, call for volunteers by governor, and an Indian raid (RI 701).</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Box 14</th>
<th>Dec. 1, 1855 - Dec. 31, 1856</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Construction of public buildings for the Territorial government. Of special note: RI 2257: List of inhabitants and property for Indians in New Mexico towns. [c. 1855]</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Box 15</th>
<th>Jan. 1, 1857 - June 30, 1858</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Many statements and bills related to the costs of the territorial government. Correspondence of Miguel Antonio Otero to Charles Clever.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 16</th>
<th>July 1, 1858 - Feb. 28, 1860</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Expenses of per diem and mileage for legislators and descriptive list of paid Treasury warrants. Territorial politics and national politics. Correspondence of Miguel Antonio Otero to Charles Clever.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 17</th>
<th>Mar. 1, 1860 - Aug. 31, 1861</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Correspondence of Miguel Antonio Otero to Charles Clever.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 18</th>
<th>Sept. 1, 1861 - Oct. 31, 1862</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
<td>Map of the military district of New Mexico, per diem of legislative officers, New Mexico militia, New Mexico politics and elections, Indians (Apache &amp; Navajo). Of special note: RI 2159: Libro de Matricula de la eleccion. Sept. 1, 1862. Berridillo County. RI 1126 &amp; 1127: Kit Carson. New Mexico Militia. Sept. 27, 1862.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 19
**Nov. 1, 1862 - Feb. 28, 1863**

**Scope and Content Note**
Civil War in New Mexico, legislative affairs, applications and recommendations for militia officers.
RI 1193: Petition to President and Sec. Of War concerning Indian degradations by county.
Jan. 26, 1863.

Box 20
**Mar. 1, 1863 - Sept. 30, 1863**

**Scope and Content Note**
Territorial politics and government, including some election returns, Civil War in the West, military officers, and Navajo campaign.

Box 21
**Oct. 1, 1863 - June 30, 1864**

**Scope and Content Note**
Territorial politics and government, Civil War in the West, and Indian affairs.

Box 22
**July 1, 1864 - Dec. 31, 1864**

**Scope and Content Note**
Mexico, territorial politics and government, including election returns.

Box 23
**Jan. 1, 1865 - Mar. 31, 1866**

**Scope and Content Note**
Territorial politics and government, including legislative actions and election returns, as well as Indian affairs.

Box 24
**Apr. 1, 1866 - Mar. 31, 1875**

**Scope and Content Note**
Territorial politics and government, land holdings and population figures, and Indian affairs.

Of special note:
RI 2151: Enumeration of inhabitants of County of Taos. 1866.

Box 25
**Apr. 1, 1875 - June 30, 1877**

**Scope and Content Note**
Territorial politics and government.

Box 26
**July 1, 1877 - Aug. 31, 1878**

**Scope and Content Note**
Territorial politics and government, Indian affairs, education, Lincoln County War, and Colfax County War.

Box 27
**Sept. 1, 1878 - Nov. 30, 1880**

**Scope and Content Note**
Affairs in Lincoln County, Roman Catholicism in New Mexico, including the role of the Jesuits, public education, the penitentes, and Indian affairs.

Box 28
**Dec. 1, 1880 - Dec. 31, 1881**

**Scope and Content Note**
Politics and government, Indians (Utes), education, land, mines and mineral resources (coal & iron), education, disturbance in Socorro.

Of special note:
RI 2234: Free public schools. c. 1880.
Box 29  Jan. 1, 1882 - Nov. 30, 1882
Scope and Content Note
Biographical notes about various individuals compiled by William G. Ritch.

Box 30  Dec. 1, 1882 - Dec. 31, 1883
Scope and Content Note
Biographical sketches, Indian affairs, Civil War, and R.S. McKenzie.

Box 31  Jan. 1, 1884 - Dec. 31, 1900
Scope and Content Note
Lists of biographical notes by individuals and Revista Catholica -"A School Law" (March 9, 1884).

Box 32  Newspaper clippings arranged chronologically, 1856-1885
Box 33  Newspaper clippings arranged chronologically, 1886-1901 and undated
Box 34  Oversize materials.
Box 35  Books, clippings, and printed matter, 1857-1897, undated
Box 36  Scrapbook, 1864-1875
[1 volume].

Box 37  Scrapbook, 1873-1878
[1 volume].

Box 38  Scrapbooks, 1869-1878
[4 volumes].

Box 39  Scrapbooks, 1875-1883
[4 volumes].

Box 40  Scrapbooks, 1878-1885
[3 volumes].

Box 41  Scrapbooks, 1892-1896
[3 volumes].