
Finding Aid for the My diary from Sydney, 1858-1859

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Finding Aid for *My diary from Sydney, 1858-1859*

Collection 170/011

UCLA Library Special Collections
UCLA Library Special Collections staff

Los Angeles, CA

Cataloged by:

Jonathan Naito, August 2004

Encoded by:

Caroline Cubé

Online finding aid edited by:

Josh Fiala, October 2004

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Descriptive Summary

Title: My diary from Sydney,

Date (inclusive): 1858-1859

Collection number: 170/011

Creator: Stephens, W.H.

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.

Los Angeles, California 90095-1575

Abstract: Journal of W.H. Stephens' journey from Australia to Samoa, Tahiti, Honolulu, California, Mexico, and Panama. Includes detailed description of theaters in Australia and Northern California. Also includes some discussion of local customs and dress in Samoa, Tahiti, and Hawaii.

Physical location: Stored in UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Language: English.

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Restrictions on Access

Open for research. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Provenance/Source of Acquisition

Undated purchase by Lawrence Clark Powell, from P.J. Dobell.

Preferred Citation

W.H. Stephens *My journey from Sydney* (Collection 170/011). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

UCLA Catalog Record ID: [5022751](#)

Biography

According to the manuscript, W.H. Stephens was an actor who performed in Australia until going to San Francisco in 1858.

Scope and Content

Journal entries date from May 1, 1858 to June 6, 1859. The author first gives an account of the decline of drama in New South Wales, a decline that he blames on the arrival of the comedian James Simmonds, a performer brought to Australia by Lola Montez. Stephens' makes reference to Sydney, Melbourne, and Geelong theaters. He then sails from Sydney on a ship called the Ocean, and describes his travels in Samoa, Tahiti, and Hawaii with some attention to local customs and dress in

all three places. Stephens' travels on the Eurydice from Tahiti to San Francisco. Once in San Francisco, he provides a detailed description of the local theatre scene and his professional engagements, as well as an overview of life in the city. The journal also records his travels in California's Gold Country (with some mention of local drama), Acapulco, Mexico, and Panama. The journal ends abruptly after Stephens reaches Panama.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Stephens, W.H.--Diaries.

Stephens, W.H.--Travel--Polynesia.

Stephens, W.H.--Travel--Hawaii.

Stephens, W.H.--Travel--California, Northern.

Stephens, W.H.--Travel--Mexico.

Stephens, W.H.--Travel--Panama.

Actors--Diaries.

Theater--Australia--History--19th century.

Theater--California, Northern--History--19th century.

Polynesia--Social life and customs.

Hawaii--Social life and customs.

Polynesia--Description and travel.

Hawaii--Description and travel.

California, Northern--Description and travel.

Mexico--Description and travel.

Panama--Description and travel.

Related Material

[Bound Manuscripts Collection \(Collection 170\)](#) . Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

Collection number: 170/011

My journey from Sydney, 1858-1859.

Creator/Collector: Stephens, W.H.

Physical Description: 110 leaves, blue paper; 160 × 90 mm. bound to 166 × 102 mm.

Physical Description: Layout: On paper with varying-length columnar ruling (probably intended for account book entries), text has been entered, without respect to the existing columns, at an average of 20 lines per page, with a small margin left free at bottom.

Physical Description: Script: Cursive.

Physical Description: Binding: Brown paste paper over worn boards, lacking spine. Upper pastedown and free endleaf are pages from the "Almanack for 1854."

Scope and Content Note

Contents are as follows:

- ff. 1v-11v: discussion of theaters in Sydney, Melbourne, and Geelong, with particular attention to author's career.
- ff. 13r-20r, 36v-65v: discussion of life onboard the ship.
- ff. 20r-28r: Samoa.
- ff. 28v-36v: Tahiti.
- ff. 60r-65v: Honolulu, Hawaii
- ff. 65v-79v: San Francisco, California.
- ff 79v-88v: Nevada City, Marysville, and Grass Valley, California.
- ff. 95v-98r: Acapulco, Mexico
- ff. 98r-101r: Panama.
- ff. 101v-110: blank, except for 105r, 107v and 109.
- ff. 105r, 107v: personal finance records.
- ff. 109 [cut out].
- ff. 110: end.