H. F. Parsons Account Book

Collection number: MS 241

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Descriptive Summary
Title: H. F. Parsons account book
Dates: 1883-1899
Collection number: MS 241
Creator: Parsons, Henry Fell
Collection Size: 1 portfolio
Repository: University of California, Santa Cruz. University Library. Special Collections and Archives
Santa Cruz, California 95064
Abstract: This small collection contains an account book 1883-1890, with cash income and expenses for Parsons and son, William B. Parsons, as well as loose letters, receipts and ballots for the Democratic Primary Election.
Physical location: Stored offsite at NRLF: Advance notice is required for access to the papers.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
Collection open for research.

Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
H. F. Parsons account book. MS 241. Special Collections and Archives, University Library, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Acquisition Information
Gift of Aaron Ashley in 1991.

Biography
Henry Fell Parsons was born in England in 1822. Being left an orphan, he came to America at the age of ten years. He lived in New York until he had attained his majority, and then removed to St. Louis, Missouri, where he engaged in mercantile business for several years. In 1849 Mr. Parsons came to California, making the trip with three companions. He brought with him a daguerreotype outfit, under contract with a Philadelphia firm to make views of scenery along the plains. This part of the project was abandoned, however, for it was found impossible to keep the apparatus in order while transporting it on pack saddles.

Mr. Parsons may be said to have originated the name of two localities in Santa Cruz County, Watsonville and Pigeon Point. Watsonville was named by Mr. Parsons' first using the name in describing some property on which he served an attachment, and which was located on the Balsa [i.e., Bolsa] del Pajaro, near land claimed by Watson & Gregory [John H. Watson and Durell S. Gregory], under Alexander Rodrigues' title [i.e., Sebastian Rodriguez]. Pigeon Point took its title from the splendid clipper ship Carrier Pigeon, bound from New York to San Francisco, and wrecked on the point which bears the
name. At Mr. Parsons' suggestion, the master of the vessel wrote "Pigeon Point" as the date line of the letter in which he informed the owners of their loss.

Mr. Parsons is connected in various other ways with the history of the county. He planted the vines and raised the grapes from which the first wine was made in Santa Cruz County. The vines are growing yet. He also filed the first pre-emption claim on land in this county, but lost his title on account of conflicting boundaries.

In 1859 Mr. Parsons was married to Miss Emma Marwede in San Francisco. Three other Santa Cruz pioneers, Werner Finkeldy [i.e., Finkeldey], Ernest Kunitz, and Charles Bern, married sisters in the same family. Four children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Parsons, a son and two daughters.

From *History of Santa Cruz County, California*, by E.S. Harrison. pg. 241-242

**Scope and Content of Collection**

This small collection contains an account book 1883-1890, with cash income and expenses for Parsons and son, William B. Parsons, as well as loose letters, receipts and ballots for the Democratic Primary Election. Included are two ballots, one for John S. Collins for school trustee and one for H.F. Parsons who is listed as no.3 of 21 on the other ballot for the delegate to County Convention.

**Indexing Terms**

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

Parsons, Henry Fell
Santa Cruz County (Calif.)--History
Hamilton, Robert E.
Parsons, William B.
Ramirez, Victoriana

| Box:folder 1:1 | Account book, 1883-1890 |
| Box:folder 1:2 | Correspondence, 1892-1899 |
| Box:folder 1:3 | Receipts, 1885-1892 |
| Box:folder 1:4 | Democratic Primary Elections ballot sheets, ca. 1870-1890 |