**Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Morse, E. W. -- (Ephraim W.), 1823-1906

**Title:** Ephraim W. Morse Papers,

**Date (inclusive):** 1861 - 1884

**Extent:** 1.80 linear feet (5 archives boxes)

**Abstract:** Papers (1861-1884) of Ephraim W. Morse, a San Diego merchant, real estate broker, insurance agent, and city promoter. Materials include storebooks and account books for Morse's Old Town and New Town stores; correspondence; cased daguerreotypes and ambrotypes of unidentified subjects; and a scrapbook. The collection is arranged in four series: 1) FINANCIAL RECORDS; 2) SCRAPBOOK; 3) PHOTOGRAPHS; and 4) CORRESPONDENCE.

**Repository:** University of California, San Diego. Geisel Library. Mandeville Special Collections Library.

La Jolla, California 92093-0175

**Collection number:** MSS 0079

**Language of Material:** Collection materials in English

**Access**

Collection is open for research.

**Acquisition Information**

Not Available

**Preferred Citation**

Ephraim W. Morse Papers, MSS 0079. Mandeville Special Collections Library, UCSD.

**Publication Rights**

Publication rights are held by the creator of the collection.

**Historical Background**

[The following information was taken from Earl Samuel McGhee's thesis entitled E.W. Morse, Pioneer Merchant and Co-Founder of San Diego (1950).]

Ephraim W. Morse was born in West Amesbury, Massachusetts on October 16, 1823 and arrived in San Diego in April of 1850 to pursue a business in general merchandising. His first store was located in Davis' Addition, but he soon entered into a partnership with Thomas Whaley and relocated in the plaza of Old Town. By April 1854, Morse had dissolved his association with Whaley and moved across the street until financial problems forced him out of business in 1859.

In 1861, he opened a new store in Old Town which continued until February 1869 when he sold out to Philip Crosthwaite and Thomas Whaley. Morse then moved to Horton's Addition and opened a real estate and insurance office, serving as an agent for the Phoenix Insurance Company of Hartford, Connecticut; the Home Insurance Company of New York; and the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company of London and Edinburgh. Morse invested heavily in land and actively promoted San Diego. He sought to make San Diego a western terminus of the railroad as director of the San Diego and Gila Railroad Company; helped to organize the Bank of San Diego in 1870; helped develop the San Diego Flume Company; and presided over the San Diego Bee Keepers Association in 1877.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

Accession Processed in 1993

The FINANCIAL RECORDS series contains business records from Morse’s mercantile store in Old Town, San Diego, between 1861 and 1869, and his general entrepreneurial activities in New Town between February 1869 and 1884.

Morse kept two types of business records for his Old Town store. He recorded each transaction serially in a "storebook" each day and also kept an “account book" for individuals with running credits and debits. For each transaction in the "storebook," Morse assigned a unique number to each individual based upon the page number assigned in one of the several "account books." The "account books" summarize transactions by person. Missing from the "storebooks" for Old Town are records from November 1, 1863 to December 31, 1865. Missing from the "account books" are records from 1861 to 1864. Morse’s activities in New Town, beginning in February 1869, are also represented by "storebooks," February 6, 1869 to June 30, 1879, and "account books", 1869-1884.

The SCRAPBOOK contains photographs of San Diego taken circa 1874 and a collection of pressed ferns from the southern California region. Some of the photographs are probably duplicates from the production of the pamphlet entitled Information relative to the City of San Diego, California. Illustrated with twenty-two photographic views, containing, also a Business Directory of the city (1874). Morse sat on the production committee of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce for this publication. Included in the collection of images are commercial buildings in New Town, houses of prominent local
citizens, and landscapes in the county.
The PHOTOGRAPHS series contains examples of cased ambrotype and daguerreotype portraits of unidentified subjects. Finally, the CORRESPONDENCE series contains two folders of letters. In the John Capron materials is a letter from Charles White which discusses the election of Sheriff McCoy. The E.W. Morse folder contains miscellaneous notes, letters from insurance companies, and materials related to the Masonic Building Association.

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

Subjects
Morse, E. W. -- (Ephraim W.), 1823-1906 -- Archives
Businessmen -- California -- San Diego -- Correspondence
San Diego (Calif.) -- Pictorial works
San Diego (Calif.) -- History -- Pictorial works
San Diego (Calif.) -- History -- Sources
San Diego (Calif.) -- History
Photographic prints -- 19th century.
Daguerreotypes.

FINANCIAL RECORDS

box 1, folder 1 Storebooks - “Store”
   Note
   October 7, 1861 - September 30, 1863.

box 1, folder 2 Storebooks - “From January 1st 1866 to March 2nd 1867”
box 1, folder 3 Storebooks - “From March 2nd 1867 to April 13 1868”
box 2, folder 1 Storebooks - “From April 13th 1868 to February 6th 1869”
box 2, folder 2 Storebooks - “E.W. Morse - Day Book”
   Note
   February 6, 1869 - December 31, 1870

box 2, folder 3 Storebooks - untitled
   Note
   January 2, 1871 - June 30, 1879

box 2, folder 4 Account Books - “Leger G”
   Note
   June 1st 1864 to December 31st 1867

box 3, folder 1 Account Books - “Leger H”
   Note
   January 1st 1868 to [ca. July 1870]

box 3, folder 2 Account Books - “Account Book No. 3 - 1864 - 1865”
box 3, folder 3 Account Books - “Account Book No. 4”
   Note
   October 1, 1866 to February 1869

box 3, folder 4 Account Books - “Leger [sic] No. 9” 1869 - 1884

SCRAPBOOK

box 4, folder 1 Scrapbook
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<th>Box and Folder</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Daguerreotypes</td>
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<td>Capron, John 1875</td>
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<td>Morse, Ephraim W. 1874 - 1881</td>
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