
Register of the French (Henry M.) Papers, 1873-1941

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Collection number: Mss158

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Contact Information

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Date Completed:

October 1998

Encoded by:

Don Walker

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Descriptive Summary

Title: French (Henry M.) Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1873-1941

Collection number: Mss158

Creator: Robert B. Bolt

Extent: 1.5 linear ft.

Repository: University of the Pacific. Library. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections
Stockton, CA 95211

Shelf location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the library's online catalog.

Language: English.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], French (Henry M.) Papers, Mss158, Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library

personal name

French, Henry Nelson

personal name

French, Henry M. (1851-1916)

personal name

French family

personal name

Tretheway family

corporate name

Prohibition Party (Calif.)

subject

Merchants -California -San Jose

subject

Prohibitionists -California

subject

Great Britain -History, Naval -19th century

subject

San Jose (Calif.) -Politics and government -1850-1950

Biography

Henry M. French (1851-1916) was born in Cornwall, enlisted in the British Navy (1866) and served aboard the following ships: H.M.S. Cordelia, commanded by Capt. Charles Perry, hero of the Sir John Franklin Rescue Expedition; H.M.S. Aboukir, a Canadian Lake steamer converted to West Indian service; and H.M.S. Northumberland, largest ship in the British Navy. Three diaries describe his naval career, including numerous appearances of the British Royal Family and the coronation exercises of the King of Sweden. In 1874 he resigned and emigrated to California where he married Frances Rebecca Tretheway of Lockeford, San Joaquin County (1876). French then entered the grocery business in San Jose while attending classes in the commercial dept of the University of the Pacific (1879-1880). In 1882 became a naturalized citizen. Prominent in the Prohibition movement, he ran for Mayor of San Jose on a hybrid Prohibitionist-Republican ticket, nominated John Bidwell for Governor at the State Prohibition Party Convention (1888) and served as Chairman of the State Central Committee of the Prohibition Party. French later studied law, became a San Jose attorney and ran for Governor on the Prohibition Party ticket (1896).

Scope and Content

This collection consists of the diaries (1873-1915), family papers and an account book (1904-1916) of Henry M. French, prominent San Jose (Calif.) merchant, attorney and politician. The collection also includes a diary of French's son Henry Nelson French (1912).

BOX 1---DIARIES, 1873-1893

1.1 Biographical sketch to 1890. [typescript, 17 1.]

1.2 Diaries: 1873-4, 1876, 1878-9, 1883-9, 1890-3. [15 v, 20cm or smaller]

BOX 2---DIARIES, 1894-1907

2.1 Diaries: 1894-1907. [14 v, 20cm]

BOX 3---DIARIES, 1908-15; OTHER MATERIALS

3.1 Diaries: 1908-1915. [8 v, 20cm]

3.2 Account book, 1904-1916 (estate to 1990) [1 v, 22cm]

3.3 Diary of Nelson French, 1912. [1v, 20cm]

3.4 Unidentified diary excerpts, 1893-1941 [typescript; 4 1.]

3.5 Miscellaneous letters and notes. [ca 15 items]