

Guide to the Manhattan Silver Mining Company Papers

WA MSS S-1303



by Heather L. Holeman

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-1303

CREATOR: Manhattan Silver Mining Company of Nevada

TITLE: Manhattan Silver Mining Company papers

DATES: 1863-1884

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2.75 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers contain correspondence, accounts, bills and receipts, and legal papers concerning silver mining in Lander County, Nevada.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.manhatt>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.manhatt>.

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

- b. box
- f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The majority of the papers were purchased in 1957 from William P. Wreden on the William Robertson Coe Fund for Western Americana; two letterpress copybooks were purchased the following year from Wreden also on the Coe Fund.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Manhattan Silver Mining Company Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

MANHATTAN SILVER MINING COMPANY

Austin, Lander County, Nevada was established in 1863 following the discovery of silver ore in the area. Lander County remained prosperous until the early 1880s, when mine production decreased and the United States government abandoned the silver standard. The Manhattan Silver Mining Company of Nevada was established in Austin in 1863 with H. Augustin Taylor as president and Allen A. Curtis as agent and superintendent. The company was associated with several other mining companies in the Austin area.

Scope and Contents

The Manhattan Silver Mining Company Papers include correspondence and a variety of business papers spanning the dates 1863 to 1884. The papers document the operation of several mining companies, particularly the Manhattan Silver Mining Company of Austin, Nevada.

The correspondence, arranged chronologically in folders 1-13, provides brief descriptions of a variety of mining operations. H. Augustin Taylor's letters to Allen A. Curtis reveal the process of choosing and purchasing mining machinery. Taylor also discusses banking procedures, silver exchange rates, and investments in other mining companies. Curtis, the primary recipient of correspondence, was associated with several Austin mining firms. As agent for the Manhattan Silver Mining Company, he received letters dealing with employee relations, theft of ore from mines, planning and establishment of mines, and financial and legal matters pertaining to the operations of the mines.

The two letterpress copybooks (folders 13A-13B) retained copies of Curtis's outgoing letters from October 7, 1868 to October 2, 1870. The letters document the daily work of the mine's agent. Curtis's main correspondent was Taylor to whom he wrote constantly to report on mine operations, alterations to mills and plants, value of the bullion, financial and stock transactions, and other administrative details. Often the letters mention enclosed monthly operation reports, maps, and cash accounts, but these documents are not included in the copybook. Curtis also wrote to the company's banker in San Francisco, the Banking House of John Sime & Co. He sent "coin drafts" to Sime with orders for the banker on how to credit the accounts. In 1869 the company switched to W. C. Ralston's Bank of California. Finally, Curtis wrote to various companies in San Francisco and Sacramento for mining equipment and machine parts. Usually, the copybook only contains the cover letter for the order, so the supplies are not listed. Curtis was also responsible for paying these merchants and although the checks are not included the sum is usually stated in the letter.

Accounts, arranged alphabetically by company in folders 14-23 and Oversize (Box 2, folder 25), include financial statements from the American Mining Company, John Duncan Company, Ethan Allan Gold and Silver Mining Company, Manhattan Silver Mining Company, Mineral Hill Mining Company, Reese River Mining Company, Whitlock Union Gold and Silver Mining Company, and other unidentified organizations. The bills and receipts, chronologically arranged in folders 24-30 and the check receipt book, folder 31, complement the accounts.

Legal documents (folders 33-34) include a deed fragment, a county broker's license, an assayer's statement, a stock certificate, and two attachment forms for employees of Curtis. As a group, the legal documents are

not very informative. A prospectus for "A New Amalgamator" by John T. Strauss of New York is located in folder 35.

The papers, although incomplete and unfocused, provide information on the development of mining companies in Austin, Nevada, during the nineteenth century.

Collection Contents
CORRESPONDENCE

b. 1, f. 1	Correspondence	1864-65
b. 1, f. 2	Correspondence	1866-67
b. 1, f. 3	Correspondence	1868
b. 1, f. 4	Correspondence	1869
b. 1, f. 5	Correspondence	1870
b. 1, f. 6-7	Correspondence	1871
b. 1, f. 8	Correspondence	1872
b. 1, f. 9	Correspondence	1873
b. 1, f. 10	Correspondence	1874
b. 1, f. 11	Correspondence	1875-78
b. 1, f. 12	Correspondence	1881-84
b. 1, f. 13	Correspondence	n.d.
b. 1, f. 13A	Letterpress copybook See: Volume 1, shelved after Box 1	1868-69 Nov
b. 1, f. 13B	Letterpress copybook See: Volume 2, shelved after Box 1	1869 Dec-70

ACCOUNTS

b. 1, f. 14	American Mining Company	1870, n.d.
b. 1, f. 15	Ethan Allan Gold and Silver Mining Company	1867
b. 1, f. 16	John W. Duncan Company	1864-66
b. 1, f. 17	Manhattan Silver Mining Company	1865-82
b. 1, f. 18	Mineral Hill Mining Company	1870-71
b. 1, f. 19	Reese River Mining Company	1863-64
b. 1, f. 20	Whitlock Union Gold and Silver Mining Company See also: Oversize, Box 2, folder 36	1866
b. 1, f. 21-23	Accounts, miscellaneous	1864-77, n.d.

OTHER PAPERS

b. 1, f. 24-30	Bills and receipts	1863-65, n.d.
b. 1, f. 31	Check receipt book	1865-66
b. 1, f. 32	Ledger book	1875
b. 1, f. 33-34	Legal documents	1864-82
b. 1, f. 35	Prospectus	1865

OVERSIZE

Manhattan Silver Mining Company papers
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OVERSIZE

b. 2, f. 36

Accounts: Whitlock Union Gold and Silver Mining Company

1866

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Industries -- Nevada
Mineral industries -- Nevada
Silver mines and mining -- Nevada

Geographic Names

Austin (Nev.)
Lander County (Nev.)

Genres / Formats

Account books -- United States

Occupations

Silver miners -- Nevada

Names

Curtis, Allen A.
Taylor, W. Augustin

Corporate Body

Manhattan Silver Mining Company of Nevada