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Panama Collection

Collection Summary

Title:	Panama Collection
Call Number:	MS 82-01
Size:	0.25 linear feet
Acquisition:	Purchased Michael Ginsberg Books
Processed By:	KJB, 4-13-1982; JEF, 6-22-1998; MN, 10-2008
Note:	None
Restrictions:	None

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Restrictions

None

Content Note

The majority of these letters are addressed to Captain Theodorus Bailey, commander of the United States Ship St. Mary's. Tension between the Americans and the Panamanians is reflected in many of the letters in the collection. Five of the letters concern a group of American passengers traveling by train from Aspinwall, on the Atlantic Coast, to Panama City, on the Pacific Coast, on their journey to California. There is also a letter to a J. Hawes from Cornelius Vanderbilt, who was at this time trying to establish an alternative route through Nicaragua to compete with the Panama route and was, therefore, deeply involved in Central American politics. The rest of the letters deal with Navy business.

Administrative History

In December 1855, Captain Bailey received orders from the U.S. government to cruise between Valparaiso, Chile, and San Juan del Sud, Nicaragua, touching eleven ports in between, "for the protection of our citizens and

their commerce." In April 1856, Bailey's ship was anchored in Panama Bay. On the 15th of that month, there had been a riot in Panama City between native Panamanians and American passengers traveling along the Pacific Railroad Company's Trans-Isthmian route. The Panamanians had sacked property owned by American citizens in the city. At the same time, other Americans were trying to establish alternative routes through Central America to compete with the Panama route.

Detailed Description: Box and Folder Listing

Box 1	FF 1	March 24, 1855. U.S. Flag Ship <i>Independence</i> , Valparaiso, Chile. William Mervine, Commanding U.S. Pacific Squadron, to Theodorus Bailey, Commanding U.S. Ship <i>St. Mary's</i> . Orders to cruise between Valparaiso and San Juan del Sud, Nicaragua and touching at intermediate ports.
Box 1	FF 2	February 10, 1856. U.S. Ship <i>John Adams</i> , Bay of Panama. E. B. Boutwell, Commander, to T. Bailey. Concerning three deserters from the <i>John Adams</i> being held on the <i>St. Mary's</i> .
Box 1	FF 3	April 25, 1856. U.S. Consulate, Panama. Thos. Wm. Ward to T. Bailey. Ward states that "our position here becomes more dangerous." Request that Commander Bailey come ashore and send a message to the Atlantic Navy requesting cooperation of one or more ships at Aspinwall.
Box 1	FF 4	April 29, 1856. Panama. Allan McLane to Theodorus Bailey. McLane requests that Bailey keep his boats stationed nearby in case of trouble while passengers newly arrived from Aspinwall are put onto the ship, <i>Golden Age</i> .
Box 1	FF 5	April 30, 1856. Legation of the United States in Ecuador. Philo White to T. Bailey. White thanks Bailey for the protective service of his ship, but states that it is not necessary for any U.S. war vessels to make a lengthened stay in Ecuadoran waters.
Box 1	FF 6	May 5, 1856. Panama. Allan McLane, agent, Panama Steamship Co., to T. Bailey. McLane states that the Prefect of Gamboa has agreed to be present when the passengers from Aspinwall arrive at the station and requests Bailey not to land his boats unless actual trouble occurs.
Box 1	FF 7	May 6, 1856. Panama. Allan McLane to T. Bailey. McLane states that the passenger train from Aspinwall is expected to arrive at 2 p.m. and the baggage train is expected at 11 a.m. He repeats his message of May 5.
Box 1	FF 8	May 6, 1856. Panama. Allan McLane, agent for D. M. Corwine, to T. Bailey. Both the passenger and freight trains have been derailed. Many passengers are seriously injured and some have been killed.
Box 1	FF 9	May 7, 1856. Railroad Station outside Panama City, noon. Allan McLane to T. Bailey. The freight train has arrived and the passenger train is expected around 3 p.m. The police guard is present under McLane's order and no trouble is expected. McLane requests that the arrangement of the previous day be followed. Fifteen were killed and about sixty injured in the train wreck. Postscript - 1 p.m. The passenger train is expected around 4:30 p.m.
Box 1	FF 10	June 5, 1856. Steamer <i>Susquehanna</i> , Aspinwall. Captain Hiram Paulding to T. Bailey. Paulding regrets not having the opportunity to visit Bailey and

congratulates him on his letters to the Governor of Panama, Francisco de Fabrega.

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| Box 1 | FF 11 | June 19, 1856. Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography. Captain Dn. Ingraham, Acting Bureau Chief, to T. Bailey. Fifty Colts Navy Pistols, with appendages and ammunition, are being shipped to Bailey. |
| Box 1 | FF 12 | August 4, 1856. Office of the Accessory Transit Co., New York. Cornelius Vanderbilt, President, to J. Hawes, Panama. Copy of a letter giving instructions to Hawes, concerning American Consul T. W. Ward, Panama. Vanderbilt also reports that the Secretary of the Navy approves of Captain Bailey's actions in giving the Sea Letters to Vanderbilt's ships. |
| Box 1 | FF 13 | August 10, 1856. U.S. Flag Ship <i>Independence</i> , Harbor of Callas, Peru. Wm. Mervine, Commander of the Pacific Squadron, to T. Bailey. Mervine reports on the Supreme Court's decision regarding the doctrine of Extraterritoriality, and the State Department's policy regarding the doctrine. |
| Box 1 | FF 14 | August 10, 1856. U.S. Ship <i>Saratoga</i> , Harbor of Aspinwall. Commander E. G. Tilton to T. Bailey. Tilton reports that he has a force ready in case he receives word from Bailey that there is trouble between U.S. citizens and Panamanians. |
| Box 1 | FF 15 | December 18, 1856. U.S. Flag Ship <i>Independence</i> , Bay of Panama, Lieutenant McCauley to T. Bailey. McCauley is sending Bailey a letter from Col. George M. Totten of the Panama Railroad Company to Bailey and a letter from Col. Totten to the Secretary of State at Bogota. |

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