

Alvan F. Waller Papers, 1838-1908

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Waller, Alvan F., b. 1808
Title	Alvan F. Waller Papers
Dates	1838-1908 (inclusive) 1838 1908 1839-1870 (bulk) 1839 1870
Quantity	.5 cubic feet (1 document case, 1 oversize folder)
Collection Number	Mss 1210
Summary	Papers of a pioneer Methodist missionary in Oregon who was active in Oregon City and later at The Dalles and Salem. Includes correspondence with missionaries Jason and Daniel Lee, materials relating to a land dispute with John McLoughlin and other land claims, organization of the Oregon Provisional Government, teaching activities, and the establishment of Willamette University. Also includes Waller's diary of his journey to Oregon on the ship <i>Lausanne</i> , 1839-1840, and 2 additional diaries covering the years 1841-1845.
Repository	Oregon Historical Society, Davies Family Research Library Davies Family Research Library Oregon Historical Society 1200 SW Park Avenue Portland, OR 97205 Telephone: 503-306-5240 Fax: 503-219-2040 libreference@ohs.org
Access Restrictions	The collection is open to the public.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Historical Note

Alvan F. Waller, pioneer Methodist missionary, was born in Abington, Pennsylvania on May 8, 1808. In 1833 he married Elpha White, with whom he had three children. In 1840 he came to Oregon on the ship *Lausanne* and established a mission at Oregon City with the assistance of Hudson's Bay Company factor Dr. John McLoughlin and missionary Jason Lee. In 1844, Waller was appointed leader of the Wascopam Mission at The Dalles, succeeding H.K.W. Perkins and Daniel Lee. He was transferred to Salem in 1847 where he remained until 1857 and helped to found the Oregon Institute, which became Willamette University. In the course of his career he assisted in the building of several Methodist churches in Oregon and the founding of *The Pacific Christian Advocate*. He died at his home in Salem on December 26, 1872.

Content Description

Papers include: Correspondence (1838-1873); diaries (1839-1845); documents, including public note on land dispute with Dr. John McLoughlin; and essay "General Instructions to Missionaries." Correspondents include George Abernethy, Henry Bridgman Brewer, Jason Lee, Daniel Lee, John McLoughlin, Ira Leonard Babcock, George Gary, Marcus Whitman, and Henry Harmon Spalding. Topics of the letters include criticism of Catholic missionaries, religion and the government, teaching school, organization of Provisional government, Waller's land claims, and Willamette University. One diary describes Waller's voyage to Oregon on the ship *Lausanne* in 1839 and 1840; and two other diaries describe life and travels in Oregon between 1841 and 1845. Included in one diary are brief notes on meetings of the trustees of the Oregon Institute (later Willamette University). Typed transcripts of some of the diaries are included. A brief manuscript details Waller's travels in the Willamette Valley, circa 1852.

Use of the Collection

Alternative Forms Available

Selected items from the collection are available on Mss1200-1225 Microfilm, reel 1, at the Oregon Historical Society Research Library.

Restrictions on Use

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Preferred Citation

Alvan F. Waller Papers, Mss 1210, Oregon Historical Society Research Library

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in the following series:

- Series A: Correspondence, 1838-1873
- Series B: Diaries, 1839-1845
- Series C: Documents and general materials, 1839-1908

Acquisition Information

Portions of the collection were gifts of Verne Bright, 1947 May 26, and 1950 Aug. 23.

Bibliography

Sarah Hunt Steeves, *Book of remembrance of Marion County, Oregon, pioneers, 1840-1860* (Portland, Or. : The Berncliff Press, 1927), p. 1-5.

Related Materials

See also additional papers relating to Protestant missionaries in Oregon contained in Mss1200 through Mss1225, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.

Location of Originals

Originals of land claim documents are housed at the Library of Congress.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series A: Correspondence, 1838-1873

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Folder		
1	Letters from Alvan F. Waller (4 items)	1856-1870
Letters to Waller		
Folder		
2	A-C	1840-1871
3	D-H	1844-1870
4	J-S	1838-1873
5	T-Z	1844-1860
Folder		
6	Letters to Waller from Daniel Lee (4 items)	1841; 1860; undated
7	Letters to Waller from unidentified correspondents (2 items)	1847; 1858

Series B: Diaries, 1839-1845

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Folder		
8	Diary transcripts, including voyage of the <i>Lausanne</i>	1839-1840
9	Diary transcripts	1841; 1844
10	Diary transcripts	1842; 1845
11	Original diary Includes voyage on the <i>Lausanne</i> and notes of trustees' meetings of the Oregon Institute, as well as fragments of other diaries.	1839-1844
12	Original diaries (2 vols.)	1841; 1844

Series C: Documents and general materials, 1839-1908

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Folder		
13	Petition of Alvan Waller to Roger P. Taney Petition to Chief Justice Roger P. Taney relating to Waller's controversy with Dr. John McLoughlin over the Oregon City claim, 1843 Dec. 7. Attested by John Ricord and Jason Lee at the Sandwich Islands. Photostat of original in Library of Congress, "Senator Allen Papers," and typed transcript.	1844 February 8
14	General materials Includes: General Instructions to Missionaries" from the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1839 and 1846 Account payable, from A. E. Wilson, agent for E. & O. E., 1843 June 2 to 1844 June 7 Account of Francis Pettygrove, 1843 June 2 to 1844 July 13, and receipt, 1844 July 22 Other accounts and receipts Power of attorney to Waller on behalf of Willamette University, 1860 Feb. 1 Letter of recommendation entitling Waller to represent Willamette University, 1860, June 1 June 1; protest against charges by E. White, undated Obituary for Waller's daughter, Julia Elinore Waller Stratton, 1908	1839-1908

Container(s)	Description	Dates
15	"Notes on travel in the Willamette Valley" Manuscript, probably by Waller. Includes typed transcript.	circa 1852
Oversize Folder	Oversize documents Certificates (2) for life membership in the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to Alvan F. Waller and Julia E. Waller, 1856 Sept. 20 and undated. Public notice "To the people of Oregon" concerning land dispute in Oregon City with Dr. John McLoughlin, signed by John Ricord, attorney for Alvan Waller, 1843 Dec. 20.	1843; 1856; undated

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Frontier and pioneer life--Oregon
 Indians of North America--Missions--Northwest, Pacific
 Missionaries--Northwest, Pacific--Correspondence
 Missionaries--Northwest, Pacific--Diaries
 Voyages to the Pacific coast

Personal Names :

Abernethy, George, 1807-1877--Correspondence
 Babcock, Ira Leonard, 1806-1888--Correspondence
 Brewer, Henry Bridgman, 1813-1886--Correspondence
 Gary, George, 1793-1844--Correspondence
 Lee, Daniel, 1806-1895--Correspondence
 Lee, Jason, 1803-1845--Correspondence
 McLoughlin, John, 1784-1857--Correspondence
 Spalding, Henry Harmon, 1803-1874--Correspondence
 Waller, Alvan F., b. 1808--Diaries
 Waller, Alvan F., b. 1808--Correspondence
 (creator)
 Whitman, Marcus, 1802-1847--Correspondence

Corporate Names :

Methodist Episcopal Church--Missions--Northwest, Pacific
 Willamette University

Form or Genre Terms :

Diaries
 Letters

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