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Guide to the Anthony Dey Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company Records

WA MSS S-1743



by Diana M. Smith

September 1996

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-1743

CREATOR: Dey, Anthony, 1776-1859

TITLE: Anthony Dey Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company records

DATES: 1821-1855

BULK DATES: 1830-1835

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 5.87 linear feet (6 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The records consist of correspondence, documents, account books, case files, financial papers, and printed material which document one of the earliest Texas land companies. The correspondence concerns the company's business, dealing with agents, and receiving reports from Texas, Mexico City, and various places in Europe. Principal correspondents include John T. Mason, William H. Sumner, Jonathan Turnbull, G. H. Paulsen, and William S. Allen. Other papers in the collection include copies of grants, agreements with agents, papers relating to court cases, highly detailed account books, printed scrip, and a small amount of printed material including newspapers, broadsides, and pamphlets.

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Requesting Instructions

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To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The papers were purchased from High Ridge Books, Inc. in 1992-1993 on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Anthony Dey Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company Records are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Anthony Dey Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company Records. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

When the collection arrived at the Beinecke Library, it required extensive conservation treatment. The papers were treated and encapsulated in mylar, but there is still much evidence of water damage, mildew, fading of ink, and incursions of insects affecting text.

GALVESTON BAY AND TEXAS LAND COMPANY

The Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company was organized in New York on October 16, 1830 by Anthony Dey, George Curtis, and William H. Sumner. The company was to work as agents of empresarios Joseph Vehlein, David G. Burnet, and Lorenzo de Zavala, who had grants of land east of the San Jacinto River and south of Nacogdoches. Anthony Dey (1776-1859), a lawyer in New York, was the president of the company; the other trustees were George Curtis (1799-1884), also a lawyer in New York, and William H. Sumner (1780-1861), a lawyer in Boston.

The company was the first commercial effort in the United States to emulate Stephen Austin's plans to colonize Texas, and it published some of the earliest accounts of Texas printed in English. The company owned none of the land to be colonized but instead sold scrip which was a permit to settle. The company's American agents included Jose Antonio Mexia and John T. Mason; it also had several agents in Europe soliciting recruits. Once in Texas, the settlers would have to complete the requirements of the Mexican colonization law before they could obtain title to their land. Restrictions imposed by the government of Mexico frustrated the company's efforts, and it became a strong supporter of Texas independence.

In November 1835 the General Council of the provisional government of Texas closed the land office. At that time the company had not received the premium lands (three haciendas and two labors) the Mexican government had promised to empresarios for settling 200 families. When the Republic passed a law in June 1837 that permitted empresarios to institute suit to establish their claims so long as neither aliens nor assignees of aliens should benefit by the law, the company authorized Robert Rose, successor of John T. Mason, to enter a suit. In 1848 the courts ruled that the term aliens applied to assignees of the company

and that Rose was not qualified to sue. With the failure of the suit, the company went out of business. Even after this time, however, Anthony Dey continued to pursue his claims against the Mexican government in court, and was sued by other members of the company.

Scope and Contents

The Anthony Dey Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company Records consist of correspondence, documents, account books, case files, financial papers, and printed material which document the workings of one of the earliest Texas land companies. The collection spans the years 1828-1855, but the bulk of the material dates from the most active years of the company, 1830-1835.

The Records are organized into five series: Correspondence, Agreements, Grants and Proposals, Court Actions, Financial Papers, and Printed Material. Boxes 4-6 contain Oversize material.

[Series I, Correspondence](#) (1828-1855), contains letters addressed to either Anthony Dey or the Galveston Bay Company and letters from Dey, as well as a small group of third party correspondence. The series is arranged chronologically. The earliest correspondences date from the time that Lorenzo de Zavala obtained his grant; later letters concern the company's business, including correspondence with agents both in Texas and Europe, sending instructions and receiving news from Texas, Mexico City and various places in Europe. There are also inquiries in response to the Company's advertisements, letters from surveyors, and discussions of the advantages of to the United States if it were to purchase Texas from Mexico. Principal correspondents include John T. Mason, William H. Sumner, Jonathan Turnbull, G. H. Paulsen, and William S. Allen. There is a gap in the correspondence from January 1836 to June 1849. The letters from 1849-1851 are written by William H. Sumner to Anthony Dey and concern a memorial to President James K. Polk that Sumner was preparing. Five folders of correspondence fragments have been placed at the end of the series. One of these, folder number 18, contains correspondence, probably written to John T. Mason, discussing the merits of the United States owning Texas.

[Series II, Agreements, Grants, and Proposals](#) (1826-1835) contains documents related to the people and events discussed in the correspondence of Series I. The files include copies of the grants of the empresarios, agreements with agents, letters of attorney for agents to sell scrip, and proposals of surveyors. [Series III, Court Actions](#) (1832-1852), contains papers relating to four court cases in which the company or Dey was involved, which are arranged by case. The first, Anthony Dey, impleaded with George Curtis ads. Charles A. Carter concerns a dispute with a land agent over payment for services rendered. The second case, Anthony Dey ads. Peter Reinoudt and Stewart Newell concerns Anthony Dey's dispute with his agents Newell and Reinoudt over the allocation of the grant lands. The case of Galveston Bay Company vs. Federal Government of Mexico consists of Anthony Dey's claims against the government of Mexico for the expenses incurred and premiums not gained due to governmental interference. The case of Stephen Whitney et al. vs. Anthony Dey et al. concerns a complaint brought by Stephen Whitney and others who had been appointed directors of the Galveston Bay Company.

Anthony Dey's personal financial papers are included with Galveston Bay Company papers in [Series IV, Financial Papers](#) (1821-1837). A two volume, highly detailed, account book dating from 1821 to 1834 carries both personal and business accounts, from the payment of servants, and purchase of horses and bread to the sale of shares in the Galveston Bay Company. Also present is Anthony Dey's bankbook as trustee of the company, and eight printed scrip, one of which was printed in Germany. [Series V, Printed Material](#), includes newspapers, pamphlets (one published in Germany), broadsides, and other printed ephemera. Several items in this series have been cataloged separately, but remain with the collection.

[Oversize](#) contains material from Series II, IV, and V, arranged in box order.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1828-1855

1.67 linear feet (1 box)

Series I, *Correspondence*, contains letters addressed to either Anthony Dey or the Galveston Bay Company, letters from Dey, as well as a few third party letters. Correspondence fragments are filed at the end of the series.

b. 1, f. 1	Correspondence	1828 Jun 7
b. 1, f. 2	Correspondence	1829 Apr
b. 1, f. 3	Correspondence	1830
b. 1, f. 4-5	Correspondence	1831
b. 1, f. 6	Correspondence	1832
b. 1, f. 7	Correspondence	1833
b. 1, f. 8-9	Correspondence	1834
b. 1, f. 10-11	Correspondence	1835
b. 1, f. 12	Correspondence	1836 Jan 18
b. 1, f. 13	Correspondence	1849
b. 1, f. 14	Correspondence	1850 Dec 2
b. 1, f. 15	Correspondence	1851 Apr 16
b. 1, f. 16	Correspondence	1855 Jul 7
b. 1, f. 17	Correspondence	n.d.
b. 1, f. 18-21	Correspondence fragments	1831, n.d.
b. 1, f. 22	Correspondence fragment	[1834]

Series II: Agreements, Grants and Proposals, 1826-1835*0.2 linear feet*

Series II, *Agreements, Grants and Proposals*, is arranged chronologically.

b. 2, f. 23	Copy of David G. Burnet's grant	1826 Dec 22
b. 2, f. 24	Translation of the grant to Lorenzo de Zavala	1829 Nov 10
b. 2, f. 25	Revoking agreement with Joseph R. Brazier	1830 Dec 25
b. 2, f. 26	Draft proposition of Barnabus Bartol	1831 Jan
b. 2, f. 27	Draft proposition of Daniel McLaren & Co.	1831 Jan
	Agreement with Benjamin Poor See: Oversize, box 4, folder 79	1831 Oct 11
	Agreement with Jane M. McManus Three copies, two of them signed by McManus and Dey See: Oversize, box 4, folder 80.	1832 Sep 12
b. 2, f. 28	Anthony Dey's letter of attorney to Jane M. McManus authorizing her to sell scrip for labors of land See also: Oversize, box 4, folder 81	1832 Sep 12
b. 2, f. 29	Contract with David Ayres	1832 Sep 19
b. 2, f. 30	Agreement with Barrett Ames	1832 Oct 16
	Answer to proposal of Jane M. McManus See: Oversize, box 4, folder 82	1832 Oct 26
b. 2, f. 31	Trustees letter of attorney to John T. Mason One letter of attorney written on the verso of a printed broadsheet dated December 10, 1830 See also: Oversize, box 4, folder 83.	1832 Nov 9
	Agreement with John Turnbull Two copies, both signed by Turnbull and Dey See: Oversize, box 4, folder 84.	1834 Jul 5
b. 2, f. 32	Agreement with George Henry Paulsen	1834 Oct 20
b. 2, f. 33	Agreement with Moses Willard Wetmore	1834 Dec 1
b. 2, f. 34	Agreement with Rollin C. Hall	1834 Dec 24
b. 2, f. 35	Schedule of Contracts made by A. Dey for the sale of Texas Scrip	1834-35
b. 2, f. 36	Agreement with William S. Allen	1835 Mar 13
	Alphabetical list of names and addresses See: Oversize, box 4, folder 85	n.d.

b. 2, f. 37-38	Copy of Lorenzo de Zavala's grant	n.d.
	Form for the grants for land in Texas See: Oversize, box 4, folder 86	n.d.
b. 2, f. 39	Proposal of surveyors Charles Zimpel & J. J. S. Hassler	n.d.
b. 2, f. 40	Translation into Spanish, Trustees letter of attorney to Jose Antonio Mexia	n.d.

Series III: Court Actions, 1832-1852*0.4 linear feet*

Series III, *Court Actions*, is arranged chronologically by case.

DEY ADS. CARTER		
Full case name: Anthony Dey, impleaded with George Curtis ads. Charles A. Carter		
b. 2, f. 41	Copy of accounts current and notice received by C. A. Carter	n.d.
b. 2, f. 42	Tender of delivery	1832 Mar 17
ANTHONY DEY ADS. PETER REINOUDT AND STEWART NEWELL		
b. 2, f. 43	Interrogatories to be administered to William S. Allen and his deposition	1836 Nov-Dec
GALVESTON BAY COMPANY VS. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO		
b. 2, f. 44	Abstract of exhibits and affidavits	n.d.
b. 2, f. 45	Anthony Dey's claim for damages from the Mexican Government	1849, n.d.
b. 2, f. 46	Deposition of Charles A. Carter	1849 Jun
b. 2, f. 47	Draft of Anthony Dey's affidavit	n.d.
b. 2, f. 48	Draft stated account of Trustees	n.d.
b. 2, f. 49	Draft of statement by Trustees	n.d.
b. 2, f. 50	Inventory of exhibits	n.d.
b. 2, f. 51	List of papers sent to James J. Roosevelt, Member of Congress	1849 Dec 30
b. 2, f. 52	Memorial to James K. Polk	1846 May 27
b. 2, f. 53	Reference to exhibits	n.d.
STEPHEN WHITNEY ET AL. VS. ANTHONY DEY ET AL.		
b. 2, f. 54-56	Answers of Anthony Dey and George Curtis	n.d.
b. 2, f. 57	Depositions on the part of the plaintiffs	1852 Jul-Aug
b. 3, f. 58	Interrogatories to be administered to Benjamin W. Bonney	n.d.
b. 3, f. 59	Interrogatories to be administered to Alfred Roe, Andrew S. Garr, and John Whitehead	n.d.
b. 3, f. 60-61	Points for the defendants Dey and Curtis	n.d.

Series IV: Financial Papers, 1821-1837*2.2 linear feet*Series IV, *Financial Papers*, is arranged chronologically.

	Account book belonging to Anthony Dey See: Oversize, box 5, folder 92	1821-28
	Account book belonging to Anthony Dey See: Oversize, box 6, folder 93	1828-34
b. 3, f. 62	Miscellaneous receipts See also: Oversize, box 4, folder 87	1823-32
b. 3, f. 63	Assignment of scrip. Joseph R. Brazier to Azel Snow	1830 Dec 22
b. 3, f. 64	Bill of William P. Harris	1831 Sep 8
b. 3, f. 65	Statement of accounts with agents	1831
b. 3, f. 66	Scrip (5) for one labor made out to Charles A. Carter	[1832 Mar 17]
b. 3, f. 67	Bank book. Anthony Dey with City Bank as Trustee of the G.B. & T.L.C.	1832-36
b. 3, f. 68	Stock transfers	1832-33, n.d.
b. 3, f. 69	Bill of lading for papers belonging to Anthony Dey being shipped to Le Havre	1834 Oct 23
b. 3, f. 70	Declaration of deposit of 12 sitios with Samuel Ward to secure \$2000 for the Steamboat Connecticut	1834 Nov 19
b. 3, f. 71	Claim for commission to purchase fee simple	1835
b. 3, f. 72	Certificate for four shares made out to Joseph Osborne, Jr.	1837 Jan 20
b. 3, f. 73	Scrip (1) for one labor made out to Richard V. Dey	n.d.
b. 3, f. 74	Scrip (1) for one labor made out to Rodman Moulton	n.d.
	Scrip (1), in German, for one labor, not completed See: Oversize, box 4, folder 88	
b. 3, f. 75	Statement of Anthony Dey's accounts against the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company	n.d.

Series V: Printed Material, 1830-1850

0.2 linear feet

Series V, *Printed Material*, is arranged chronologically.

	<i>To all to whom these Presents shall come or may concern. We, Lorenzo de Zavala,...Joseph Vehlein...David G. Burnet..Do...appoint...Anthony Dey, William H. Sumner, and George Curtis ...the true and lawful attorneys... of us....</i> Broadsheet, with letter of attorney written on the verso. See: Box 4, folder 83	1830 Dec 10
	Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company Scrip, completed in manuscript See: Box 3, folders 66, 73, 74, and box 4, folder 88	[1832], n.d.
	<i>El Fenix de la Libertad</i> Tom. IV, Num. 40. Mexico See: Oversize, box 4, folder 89	1834 Feb 9
b. 3, f. 76	Clipping advertising the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company	[1834]
b. 3, f. 77	<i>Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. Notice. A meeting of the Stockholders of the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company was held at the Shakespear Hotel...</i> Handbill. Large tears along old folds, affecting text. Signed in manuscript "W. M. Willson, Secy."	1835 Jan 20
	<i>Texas and Emigrant's Guide</i> Vol. 1, No. 5. Nacogdoches, Texas See: Broadside case, folder 94	1835 Dec 26
	<i>Texas und Einladung zu einer vortheilhaften Unsiedelung daselbst....</i> Stuttgart Pamphlet See: Oversize, box 4, folder 90.	1835
	Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company Share certificate, completed in manuscript See: Box 3, folder 72	1837 Jan 20
b. 3, f. 78	<i>Claim of the Union Land Company</i> , n.p. Pamphlet	[1850]
	Portrait of Anthony Dey See: Oversize, box 4, folder 91	n.d.

Oversize*1.67 linear feet*

Oversize contains material from Series II, IV, and V, arranged in box order.

b. 4, f. 79	Agreement with Benjamin Poor (in Series II)	
b. 4, f. 80	Agreement with Jane M. McManus (in Series II) Three copies, two of them signed by McManus and Dey	1832 Sep 12
b. 4, f. 81	Anthony Dey's letter of attorney to Jane M. McManus authorizing her to sell scrip for labors of land (in Series II)	1832 Sep 12
b. 4, f. 82	Answer to proposal of Jane M. McManus (in Series II)	1832 Oct 26
b. 4, f. 83	Trustees letter of attorney to John T. Mason (in Series II)	1832 Nov 9
b. 4, f. 84	Agreement with John Turnbull (in Series II) Two copies, both signed by Turnbull and Dey	1834 Jul 5
b. 4, f. 85	Alphabetical list of names and addresses (in Series II)	n.d.
b. 4, f. 86	Form for the grants for land in Texas (in Series II)	n.d.
b. 4, f. 87	Miscellaneous receipts (in Series IV)	1823-32
b. 4, f. 88	Scrip (1), in German, for one labor, not completed (in Series IV)	
b. 4, f. 89	<i>El Fenix de la Libertad</i> Tom. IV, Num. 40. Mexico (in Series V)	1834 Feb 9
b. 4, f. 90	<i>Texas und Einladung zu einer vortheilhaften Unsiedelung daselbst....</i> Stuttgart (in Series V)	1835
b. 4, f. 91	Portrait of Anthony Dey (in Series V)	n.d.
b. 5, f. 92	Account book belonging to Anthony Dey (in Series IV)	1821-28
b. 6, f. 93	Account book belonging to Anthony Dey (in Series IV)	1828-34
b. bsd, folder 94	<i>Texas and Emigrant's Guide</i> Vol. 1, No. 5. Nacogdoches, Texas (in Series V)	1835 Dec 26

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

Land companies -- Texas
Land grants -- Texas
Real property -- Texas

Geographic Names

Coahuila and Texas (Mexico) -- Colonization
Texas -- Description and travel
Texas -- Emigration and immigration
Texas -- History -- To 1846

Genres / Formats

Account books
Case files
Land grants

Names

Allen, William S.
Burnet, David G. (David Gouverneur), 1788-1870
Curtis, George, 1799-1884
Dey, Anthony, 1776-1859
Mason, John T. (John Thomson), 1787-1850
Paulsen, G. H.
Sumner, William H. (William Hyslop), 1780-1861
Turnbull, Jonathan
Vehlein, Joseph
Zavala, Lorenzo de, 1788-1836

Corporate Body

Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company