

# **HENRY L. AND SARAH YESLER PAPERS**

**MsSC 117**

## **BACKGROUND**

Born in Washington County, Maryland, on November 30, 1810, Henry Yesler received a minimal public education. At a young age he worked as a carpenter and millwright before moving to Massillon, Ohio in 1830. In Massillon, he worked in a sawmill gaining the skills he would later need in the Pacific Northwest. On December 31, 1839, Yesler married Sarah Burgert. Sarah was born on January 18, 1822, in Paris, Ohio. They had one son and a daughter, both of whom died in infancy.

In 1851, Henry left Sarah in Ohio and headed West. He arrived in Portland in April 1851, and worked as a carpenter. One year later, he left Portland for the gold fields near Sacramento. He mined for only three days, giving up the gold fields for work packing salmon. Noticing the dire need for lumber in San Francisco and the gold rush towns, Yesler left California for Washington Territory. He had heard that there was an unlimited supply of trees to provide for all of California's needs. On October 15, 1852, he landed in the vicinity of Seattle.

Once in Seattle, Yesler convinced Arthur Denny and "Doc" Maynard to give him a strip of land extending from his claim to Elliot Bay to build a sawmill. By April 1853, his mill was in full operation and quickly became the hub of social activity in the small community. The steam sawmill erected by Yesler became the industry that kept Seattle afloat. Yesler hired many of the local Indians and gained the trust of the local tribes. During the Indian wars, Yesler went, at the urging of Governor Stevens, to many of the camps proposing peace terms, which were acceptable to the Indian tribes. Yesler quickly became the leading figure in the growing city of Seattle and after the "Indian troubles" were over, he sent for his wife. Sarah arrived in Seattle in 1858.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The papers contained within this collection represent an unknown portion of Henry and Sarah Yesler's private papers.

## **INCLUSIVE DATES**

1836-1890

## **RESTRICTIONS**

Researchers should use photocopies of the originals. Originals may not be photocopied. If a photocopy is required, then it should be a copy of the master photocopy.

## **VOLUME**

.3 linear feet.

## **ACCESSION NUMBER**

1985.35

## **ACCESSION DATE**

1985

## **FILE LISTING**

**BOX 1:** BILL; CORRESPONDENCE; AND DEED. (This box contains originals please use Box 2 containing photocopies of the records in Box 1).

1. **Bills:** 1/6/1853—**1.** Location of the County-Seat of King County, by  
Mr. Ebey of Thurston County. Be it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Oregon, that the County-Seat of King County be and the same is hereby located at Seattle, on the land claim of David S. Maynard. **2.** Appointing Officers for King County by Mr. Ebey of Thurston County.
2. **Correspondence:** 6/26/1836—L.I. Ziegler to Henry J. Yesler.
3. **Correspondence:** 12/14/1836—Josiah Harris to Henry J. Yesler.
4. **Correspondence:** 8/27/1837—"Saphet to the Major" (Yesler).
5. **Correspondence:** 2/13/1838—Barbara Ziegler to Henry J. Yesler.
6. **Correspondence:** 5/27/1840—"Tim" to Henry J. Yesler.
7. **Correspondence:** 10/9/1843—Josiah Harris to Henry J. Yesler.
8. **Correspondence:** 2/6/1852—J.E. McLain to Henry J. Yesler.
9. **Correspondence:** 2/18/1852—J.E. McLain to Henry J. Yesler.

10. **Correspondence:** 3/22/1852—F.C. Miller to Henry J. Yesler.
11. **Correspondence:** 4/3/1852—Harper Partridge to Henry J. Yesler.
12. **Correspondence:** 7/4/1852—Sarah Yesler to Henry J. Yesler.
13. **Correspondence:** 8/22/1857—Henry J. Yesler to Sarah Yesler.
14. **Correspondence:** 1/5/1858—Henry J. Yesler to Sarah Yesler.
15. **Correspondence:** 1/22/1858—Henry J. Yesler to Sarah Yesler.
16. **Correspondence:** 8/29/1858—Louisa M. Goodwin to Sarah Yesler.
17. **Correspondence:** 10/1/1858—David Burgert to Sarah Yesler.
18. **Correspondence:** 12/25/1858—Josiah Harris to Sarah Yesler.
19. **Correspondence:** 4/8/1859—M.A. De Votre to Henry J. Yesler.
20. **Correspondence:** 6/1/1859—G.W. Burgert to Sarah Yesler.
21. **Correspondence:** 3/14/1860—Henry J. Yesler to Sarah Yesler.
22. **Correspondence:** 3/17/1860—Mrs. Woodard to Sarah Yesler.
23. **Correspondence:** 3/29/1860—E.B. Wilson to Sarah Yesler.
24. **Correspondence:** 5/10/1860—G.W. Burgert to Sarah Yesler.
25. **Correspondence:** 5/15/1860—Adam Burgert to Henry J. Yesler.
26. **Correspondence:** 5/15/1860—“Lizzie” to Sarah Yesler.
27. **Correspondence:** 6/6/1860—B. Darvin to Henry J. Yesler.
28. **Correspondence:** 8/12/1860—Mary Burgert to Sarah Yesler.
29. **Correspondence:** 8/19/1860—Eliza B. Kimball to Sarah Yesler.
30. **Correspondence:** 8/29/1860—Eliza B. Kimball to Sarah Yesler.
31. **Correspondence:** 10/7/1860—Eliza B. Kimball to Sarah Yesler.
32. **Correspondence:** 1/27/1861—Adam Burgert to Sarah Yesler.
33. **Correspondence:** 1/28/1861—E.B. Wilson to Sarah Yesler.
34. **Correspondence:** 5/8/1861—Eliza McLain to Sarah Yesler.
35. **Correspondence:** 5/12/1861—“Rosey” to Sarah Yesler.
36. **Correspondence:** 8/30/1861—“Lee” to Sarah Yesler.
37. **Correspondence:** 9/9/1861—Mrs. Olevant to Sarah Yesler.
38. **Correspondence:** 12/16/1861—Elizabeth to Sarah Yesler.
39. **Correspondence:** 11/10/1890—Unsigned to Henry J. Yesler.

Questions of Yesler’s moral character are addressed by an “old friend.” Yesler’s friend consoles him on the loss of his wife Sarah.

40. **Correspondence:** Undated—Partial Letters.
41. **Deed:** 11/7/1888—D.L. and Louisa Denny to A.W. Craig. Lot 9 Block 9 Denny’s East Park Addition to Seattle, WA Territory.

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