

Guide to the Louis Family Papers, 1872-2009



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Louis Family Papers, 1879-2009 (bulk 1880-1945)

Processed by Catherine Trujillo, Laura Sorveti, and Beverley Kwang, 2012; encoded by Byte Managers, 2012

Special Collections Department
Robert E. Kennedy Library
1 Grand Avenue
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
Phone: 805/756-2305
Fax: 805/756-5770
Email: archives@calpoly.edu
URL: <http://www.lib.calpoly.edu/specialcollections/>

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Table of Contents

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY	5
TITLE:	5
COLLECTION NUMBER:	5
CREATORS:	5
ABSTRACT:	5
EXTENT:	5
LANGUAGE:	5
REPOSITORY:	5
ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION	6
PROVENANCE:	6
ACCESS:	6
RESTRICTIONS ON USE AND REPRODUCTION:	6
PREFERRED CITATION:	6
ABBREVIATIONS USED:	6
INDEXING TERMS	7
SUBJECTS:	7
GENRES AND FORMS OF MATERIAL:	7
RELATED MATERIALS	8
RELATED COLLECTIONS:	8
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE	9
SOURCES	10
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE	11
SERIES 1. AH LOUIS PERSONAL PAPERS, 1891-1937	13
A. AH LOUIS PERSONAL PAPERS, 1894-1937	13
B. GON YING LOUIS PERSONAL PAPERS, 1891-1914	13
SERIES 2. LOUIS CHILDREN PERSONAL PAPERS, 1915-1994	14
A. ELAINE LENA (AH TYE) LOUIS, 1925-1975	14
B. WONG YOUNG (JUNG YEONG) LOUIS, 1920-1947	14
C. MAE (AH MAY) LOUIS, 1936	14
D. WALTER (AH SING) LOUIS, 1993	14

E. HELEN WONG (LAINE HEUNG/AH HEONG) LOUIS, 1915-1994	14
F. FRED WONG LOUIS (AH YUEY), 1920-1994	15

SERIES 3. HOWARD AND YVONNE LOUIS PERSONAL PAPERS, 1908-2008.....17

A. HOWARD "TOBY" LOUIS STUDENT PAPERS, 1921-1944	17
B. HOWARD LOUIS CORRESPONDENCE, 1928-2008	17
C. HOWARD LOUIS RECORDS, 1928-2000	19
D. YVONNE LOUIS RECORDS, 1908-1964	20

SERIES 4. CHINA TRIP, 1932-1934.....21

A. CORRESPONDENCE, 1932-1934.....	21
B. TRAVEL EPHEMERA, 1932-33	22
C. DOCUMENTS REGARDING AH LOUIS' RETURN TO UNITED STATES, 1933	23

SERIES 5. CLIPPINGS FILES, 1927-200924

A. CLIPPINGS FILES, 1927-2009	24
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SERIES 6. PHOTOGRAPHS, 1888-2008.....25

A. PHOTOGRAPHS, 1888-2008	25
B. OVERSIZED PHOTOGRAPHS, UNDATED, 1923-1925	26
C. SCRAPBOOKS, 1925-1931.....	27
D. CHINA TRIP PHOTOGRAPHS, 1932-1933.....	27
E. NEGATIVES, 1920s-1930s	29
F. YOUNG LOUIS CAL POLY PRINTS AND NEGATIVES, 1935-1940.....	29

SERIES 7. AH LOUIS BUSINESS RECORDS, 1872-193232

A. BANKING AND FINANCIAL RECORDS, 1888-1914	32
B. LOUIS STORE RECORDS, 1879-1932	32
C. PURCHASE AND SALES INVOICES AND RECEIPTS, 1878-1932.....	33
D. OTHER BUSINESS RECORDS, 1871-1918.....	36
E. FREIGHT BILLS, 1887-1914	37

SERIES 8. LOUIS STORE RECORDS, 1937-194339

A. PURCHASE INVOICES AND RECEIPTS, 1937-1943.....	39
B. SALES INVOICES, 1937-1941	40
C. BUSINESS EPHEMERA, 1937-1944	40
D. FREIGHT BILLS, 1937-1943.....	41

SERIES 9. ARTIFACTS.....42

A. STORAGE CONTAINERS, 1930s-1943.....42

Descriptive Summary

Title:

Louis Family Papers, 1872-2009 (bulk 1880-1950)

Collection Number:

MS 167

Creators:

Louis, Ah, 1840-1936
Louis, Gon Ying, 1868-1909
Louis, Lena Ah Tye, 1891-19875
Louis, Wong Young, 1893-1988
Louis, Mae, 1895-1988
Louis, Walter Sing, 1897-1993
Louis, Helen Wong, 1903-1994
Louis, Fred Wong, 1907-1994
Louis, Howard, 1908-2008

Abstract:

The Louis Family Papers contains nineteenth- and early twentieth-century business records and personal papers of the Louis family, a prominent and pioneering mercantile family in San Luis Obispo, California. Born in China, Wong On (Ah Louis) migrated to the United States in 1861 and opened a Chinese mercantile store in San Luis Obispo in 1874. Included are the records of Louis' children, of which Howard Louis' records comprise the bulk. The collection is comprised of approximately 20 linear feet of family correspondence, financial and legal records, and business correspondence and financial records. The collection was donated in 2010.

Extent:

33 boxes (20 linear feet)

Language:

English, Chinese, Spanish

Repository:

Special Collections, Robert E. Kennedy Library
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

Administrative Information

Provenance:

Donated in 2010.

Access:

Collection is open to qualified researchers by appointment only. For more information on access policies and to obtain a copy of the Researcher Registration form, please visit the Special Collections Access page.

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Preferred Citation:

[Identification of Item]. Louis Family Papers, Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Abbreviations Used:

c.: circa

n.d.: no date

l.f.: linear feet

c.f.: cubic feet

Co.: Company

U.C.: University of California

c/o: care of

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects:

Chinese--California.
Chinese--California--History--19th century.
Chinese--California--History.
Chinese Americans--California--San Luis Obispo--History.
Chinese Americans--California--History.
San Luis Obispo (Calif.)—History
San Luis Obispo County (Calif.)—History

Genres and Forms of Material:

Business records
Correspondence
Family papers
Glass and film negatives
Photographs
Scrapbooks
Secondary sources

Related Materials

Related Collections:

Special Collections and University Archives, Cal Poly

Sinsheimer Collection, 1868-1997 (MS 36)

University Archives Photograph Collection

Special Collections, Young Research Library, UCLA

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California Chinese American Oral History Project, 1978-1991 (MS 1688)

Ah Louis Correspondence [unprocessed]

History Center of San Luis Obispo County (previously known as the San Luis Obispo Historical Society)

Biographical Note

Ah Louis was a pioneering merchant in nineteenth-century San Luis Obispo, California. Born Wong On in 1840 in the Ock Gong Loong On village, Toishan District, Guangdong Province, China, Louis immigrated to California in 1861. After traveling through mining towns in Oregon and California, Louis settled in San Luis Obispo in 1870.

Louis' business ventures were many and varied. Records show he was a labor contractor for railroad and road building, mines, farms, and other local work. In the 1870s he opened what is believed to be the first brickyard in the county, and the bricks from his operation were used in many downtown edifices that still remain, including the old San Luis Obispo Courthouse and his own store. Louis also engaged in vegetable farming and later seed farming in farmland throughout San Luis Obispo County. He owned mercury and chrome mines and bred racehorses.

Louis opened a general mercantile store in 1874, to provide for the needs of his laborers and direct his labor contracts. In 1884 he built a brick store at 800 Palm Street (the corner of Palm and Chorro). From the building Louis operated and oversaw his many business enterprises, as well as serving as a banker, advisor, herbalist, and merchant. The store was stocked with Chinese foods and herbs, as well as Anglo holiday wares, firecrackers, Japanese goods, and an assortment of wares imported from San Francisco's Chinatown or directly from China.

In 1889 Louis married Eng Gon Ying (1868-1909) in San Francisco. Their eight children, born in the family residence located above the Louis Store, were:

Lena Ah Tye (1891-1975)
Young Jung Yeong (1893-1988)
Mae Ah May (1895-1988)
Walter Ah Sing (1897-1993)
George Ah Him (1899-1993)
Helen Ah Heong (1903-1994)
Fred Ah Yuey (1907-1994)
Howard "Toby" Ah Toa Wong (1908-2008)

The experiences of the Louis siblings are extensive and varied. They attended San Luis Obispo public schools and Cal Poly and worked for local businesses. They were actresses, restaurateurs, photographers, servicemen, and participated in the development of the Chinese American community in San Luis Obispo.

Court records suggest that Ah Louis had a son, Willie Louis, born from a previous marriage in China. It is unclear if Willie Louis was a biological son of Ah Louis or if he was claimed as a "paper son" in order to immigrate to the United States. In 1909 Willie Louis was convicted of murdering Eng Gon Ying Louis.

In December 1932, at the age of 93, Ah Louis, accompanied by his sons, Fred and Howard, returned to China, intending to live out the rest of his life in his homeland. However, soon after arriving in China, Louis wished to return to San Luis Obispo, disappointed in the political upheaval and lack of social change in Canton. Ah Louis anticipated living out the

remainder of his days in China; therefore he did not have the requisite paperwork needed to return to the United States. The Chinese Exclusion Act required all Chinese to obtain certification for reentry; as a result Ah Louis, accompanied by Fred and Howard, was detained at Angel Island, San Francisco. After obtaining support of several prominent San Luis Obispo residents, including Mayor Sinsheimer and Superior Court Judge Norton, Louis was permitted to reenter the United States in November 1932.

Ah Louis died in San Luis Obispo on December 18, 1936.

Howard "Toby" Louis (1908-2008) was the youngest of the Louis children. He attended Court School and San Luis Obispo High School and worked several jobs in San Luis Obispo, including projectionist at the Elmo Theatre. He attended U.C. Berkeley from 1930 until he left to accompany his father on his trip to China.

After their return from China, Howard took over management of the Louis Store and shifted the merchandise sold from general sundries to imported gifts and art objects. In 1941 Howard married Yvonne Sam and in 1942 was drafted into the U.S. Army, serving in the 89th Infantry Division in Europe.

After returning to San Luis Obispo, Howard resumed management of the store. In the early 1950s Howard prevented the demolition of the store when the city wanted the space for a parking lot. In 1965 the store was designated a state historical landmark.

Howard remained active in the San Luis Obispo community throughout his life. He provided substantial support for the Chinatown mural on the Palm Street parking structure, the Iron Road Pioneers statue in Railroad Square, and a new entrance to San Luis Obispo High School.

Howard Louis, the last surviving child of Ah Louis, passed away in San Luis Obispo on August 15, 2008 at the age of 100.

Sources

Wong, H. K. *Gum Sahn Yun (Gold Mountain Men)*. California: Fong Bros. Print., 1987.

Twelfth Census of the United States (1900)

Thirteenth Census of the United States (1910)

Articles on the murder of Gon Ying Louis published in the *San Luis Obispo Tribune*, 1909

Ochs, Patricia M. *A History of Chinese Labor in San Luis Obispo County and A Comparison of Chinese Relations in This County with the Anti-Chinese Movement in California, 1869-1894*. 1966. Senior Project, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 1966.

Scope and Content Note

The Louis Family Papers contain the personal and business records of the prominent Chinese-American mercantile family of San Luis Obispo, California.

The Louis Family Papers are organized in eight series:

- Series 1. Ah Louis Personal Papers, 1891-1937
- Series 2. Louis Children Personal Papers, 1914-1994
- Series 3. Howard and Yvonne Louis Personal Papers, 1908-2009
- Series 4. China Trip, 1932-1934
- Series 5. Clippings Files, 1927-2009
- Series 6. Photographs, 1888-2008
- Series 7. Ah Louis Business Records, 1872-1932
- Series 8. Louis Store Records, 1937-1943

The records span two generations of the Louis family—patriarch Ah Louis, wife Eng Gon Ying, and their eight children and their spouses—from the late nineteenth century through the turn of the twenty-first century. Although the collection is relatively small in physical extent, it warrants attention as one of the most extensive sets of records of a Chinese-American family in nineteenth- and twentieth-century San Luis Obispo County.

Records created or collected by Ah Louis in his personal or business pursuits account for only a small portion of the collection, approximately 1 linear foot. However, his business records are of particular interest and value to researchers of early San Luis Obispo history. The records document Chinese laborers in the county and provide evidence of Louis' various business pursuits, including his store; agricultural and mining interests; and labor, property, and brickyard records.

Records pertaining to Ah Louis identify him by several different names, including Wong On, Ah Luis, Ah Luey, and Ah Louis.

Howard Louis is identified in personal correspondence as "Toby."

Seven of Louis' nine children's papers are represented in the collection and include records created by their spouses. Not found in the collection are records pertaining to sons George Louis and Willie Louis (a son from a previous marriage). The bulk of these records were created, collected, or annotated by Howard Louis, the last surviving family member. As the final custodian of the family's papers, Howard Louis photocopied and annotated many documents, as well as apparently reorganizing the records. Howard Louis deposited photocopies of portions of the records with the History Center of San Luis Obispo County (formerly the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society).

Of particular interest in the family's personal papers is Series 4, the records of a trip Howard, Fred, and Ah Louis made to China in 1933, which comprises approximately 5 linear feet. The China Trip Series includes correspondence to and from Howard and Fred to their friends and family in the U.S. and China. Subseries C: Documents Regarding Ah Louis' Return to the United States contains documents created when Ah Louis was held at Angel Island, San Francisco, awaiting permission to reenter the United States. These documents

include letters of recommendation written by prominent San Luis Obispo families and a detailed interview with Louis, conducted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, in which he provides valuable biographical information. Scrapbooks and hundreds of photos of the trip—many annotated near the time of creation—are in Series 6: Photographs.

The business records are divided into two series: Ah Louis's business records and the Louis Store business records from 1937 to 1943. Ah Louis' business records document the varied business interests that Ah Louis engaged in while living in San Luis Obispo. Series 8 contains records created while the store was primarily under the management of Howard. They provide only an incomplete record of his full tenure, which spanned roughly 1936 to 2008.

Several series in the collection include photocopies of original documents. In some instances the originals are also included; however, in numerous cases the originals are not present. The majority of the collection lost original order and during processing a new order was imposed to more accurately reflect folders' contents.

In transit to Cal Poly an intermediary not affiliated with Cal Poly reorganized the collection and materials were removed and deposited at UCLA and the National Archives at San Francisco. Materials absent from the collection include documents related to the murder of Gon Ying Louis, the wife of Ah Louis; Willie Louis, Ah Louis' son from his first marriage; and personal correspondence of Ah Louis written in Chinese, which was separated from the papers and deposited at UCLA before arriving at Cal Poly.

The Louis Family Papers are housed in 33 boxes.

Series 1. Ah Louis Personal Papers, 1891-1937

Contains 2 subseries: A. Ah Louis Personal Papers and B. Gon Ying Louis Personal Papers.

A. Ah Louis Personal Papers, 1894-1937

Contains financial and legal records, including photocopies annotated by Howard Louis, arranged chronologically. See Series 3 Subseries B: Howard Louis Correspondence for photocopies of Ah Louis' correspondence. 7 folders.

Box 1 Folder 1

Pacific Coast Savings Society Stock, 1894, 1900-01

Box 1 Folder 2

Invoice, Pierson & Regan, 1905

Box 1 Folder 3

Life Assurance, 1912

Box 1 Folder 4

Deed of Trust, Ah Louis and Young Louis, 1916

Box 1 Folder 5

Deed of Gift [Louis Store], Ah Louis to Lena Toy Hong, et al., 1932

Box 1 Folder 6

Ah Louis funeral expenses, 1937

Box 1 Folder 7

Child's prescription, undated

B. Gon Ying Louis Personal Papers, 1891-1914

Contains correspondence and probate records, arranged chronologically by date. 2 folders.

Box 1 Folder 8

Correspondence, Fong Sir San, Wong Long Shing, and Wong Loey Goey, Rancho Piedra Blanca, to Gon Ying Louis, 1891

Box 1 Folder 9

Probate record, Gon Ying Louis, 1914

Series 2. Louis Children Personal Papers, 1915-1994

Contains 6 subseries: A. Elaine Lena Louis, B. Wong Young Louis, C. Mae Louis, D. Walter Sing Louis, E. Helen Wong Louis, F. Fred Wong Louis. The Louis siblings' papers were retained by Howard as the last surviving brother, which is why their personal papers contain records relating to their passing. Due to the size and scope of Howard Louis' records, they are found in a separate series, Series 3.

A. Elaine Lena (Ah Tye) Louis, 1925-1975

Contains vital and property records of Lena Louis Toy, arranged chronologically. 3 folders.

Box 2 Folder 1

Marriage certificate to Toy Ho Lung, 1925

Box 2 Folder 2

Property records, 1941-47

Box 2 Folder 3

Vital and death records [includes photocopies], 1964, 1975

B. Wong Young (Jung Yeong) Louis, 1920-1947

Contains business and property records of Wong Young Louis, arranged chronologically. 3 folders.

Box 2 Folder 4

Business records for Louis Store, A-K, 1920-1932

Box 2 Folder 5

Business records for Louis Store, L-Z, 1920-1932

Box 2 Folder 6

Property records, 1925, 1947

C. Mae (Ah May) Louis, 1936

Contains registration certificate. 1 folder.

Box 2 Folder 7

Certificate of Registration, San Luis Obispo, 1936

D. Walter (Ah Sing) Louis, 1993

Contains photocopies of estate records. 1 folder.

Box 2 Folder 8

Estate records, 1993

E. Helen Wong (Laine Heung/Ah Heong) Louis, 1915-1994

Contains personal papers of Helen Louis, including schoolwork, correspondence, and a biographical essay on Helen Louis, arranged chronologically. 9 folders.

Box 2 Folder 9
School composition books, c. 1915, 1917

Box 2 Folder 10
Application for permission to enter Canada, 1930, 1932

Box 2 Folder 11
"A Century of Progress" identification card, Chicago, 1933

Box 2 Folder 12
Correspondence, Ted [unidentified] to Helen Louis, 1938

Box 2 Folder 13
Marriage certificate for Helen Louis and Thomas B. Jean, 1938

Box 2 Folder 14
Passports, 1968-1997

Box 2 Folder 15
Correspondence, Helen Louis to siblings [includes records of Lena's passing], 1942, 1968, 1975-6, 1993

Box 2 Folder 16
A Vital Hyphen: A Study of the Life and Influence of Helen Wong Jean, student essay by Linda Sue Holubek [76 pages], 1979

Box 2 Folder 17
Vital Records [includes joint memorial for Helen and Fred], 1988-9, 1994

F. Fred Wong Louis (Ah Yuey), 1920-1994

Contains personal papers of Fred Louis, including a biography of the Louis family written by Fred, arranged chronologically. 7 folders.

Box 2 Folder 18
Biographical and military information, circa 1920-1987

Box 2 Folder 19
Grades, California Polytechnic School, 1924

Box 2 Folder 20
Correspondence, Standard Talking Film Service to Fred Louis, 1934

Box 2 Folder 21
Property records, 1947

Box 2 Folder 22
"Biographical Briefs of Ah Louis' Family," typescript by Fred Louis, 1970

Box 2 Folder 23
Correspondence, Fred Louis to Howard Louis, 1978, 1992

Box 2 Folder 24
Death records, 1994

Series 3. Howard and Yvonne Louis Personal Papers, 1908-2008

Contains 4 subseries: A. Howard Louis Student Papers, B. Howard Louis Correspondence, C. Howard Louis Records, D. Yvonne Louis Records.

A. Howard "Toby" Louis Student Papers, 1921-1944

Contains academic records from Howard Louis' time at San Luis High, U.C. Berkeley, and U.S. Army Specialized Training Program, arranged chronologically. See Series 6 Subseries C for photographs taken at this time. 9 folders.

Box 3 Folder 1

San Luis Obispo High School - Notebook, 1921-22

Box 3 Folder 2

San Luis Obispo High School - Records, 1921-28

Box 3 Folder 3

San Luis Obispo High School - Yearbook, 1927

Box 3 Folder 4

San Luis Obispo High School - Notebook, 1928

Box 3 Folder 5

Yoke Choy Life Newsletter, 1928

Box 3 Folder 6

U.C. Berkeley - International House Yearbook, 1931-1932

Box 3 Folder 7

U.C. Berkeley - Coursework, 1931-1932

Box 3 Folder 8

Army Specialized Training Program – academic transcripts, 1943-1944

Box 3 Folder 9

Army Specialized Training Program – Chinese language flashcards, undated

B. Howard Louis Correspondence, 1928-2008

Contains Howard Louis's correspondence with family, school and military acquaintances, professors, and historical societies, arranged chronologically. Of particular interest is the correspondence from Howard to Yvonne while he was serving in Europe in 1945 and photocopies of Chinese correspondence included with the Fetzer correspondence. 27 folders.

Box 4 Folder 1

Christmas Cards, folder 1 of 4, 1928

Box 4 Folder 2

Christmas Cards, folder 2 of 4, 1928

Box 4 Folder 3

Christmas Cards, folder 3 of 4, 1928

Box 4 Folder 4
Christmas Cards, folder 4 of 4, 1928

Box 4 Folder 5
Hughes, Rush to Howard Louis, 1937

Box 4 Folder 6
Louis, Howard to Willy Wong, 1937

Box 4 Folder 7
Jean, Helen Louis and Thomas to Howard Louis, 1940

Box 4 Folder 8
On, Ho to [Howard] Louis, 1940

Box 4 Folder 9
Burpee Co. to Howard Louis, regarding floral arranging, 1941

Box 4 Folder 10
Women's Army Corps Recruiting Headquarters to Howard Louis, 1944

Box 4 Folder 11
Louis, Howard to Yvonne Louis [photocopies, includes transcription], 1945

Box 4 Folder 12
Louis, Howard, to unidentified [Yvonne?], circa 1945

Box 4 Folder 13
Louis, Fred and Iris to Howard Louis, 1945

Box 4 Folder 14
Louis, Howard to Helen and Lena Louis, 1950

Box 4 Folder 15
Louis, Howard to San Luis Obispo High School Class of 1927, 1977

Box 4 Folder 16
Lee, Chantal [Canadian Consulate General] to Howard and Yvonne Louis, 1989

Box 4 Folder 17
Wong, Mae to Howard Louis, 1992

Box 4 Folder 18
Correspondence re death of Helen Louis, 1994

Box 4 Folder 19
Fong, Jane Y. to Howard Louis, including Cal Poly students' work, 1995

Box 4 Folder 20
Bashore, Anne to Howard and Yvonne Louis, 1999

Box 4 Folder 21
Robison, Homer to Howard Louis, 2002

Box 4 Folder 22
Louis, Howard to *San Luis Obispo Tribune*, 2003

Box 4 Folder 23
Certificate of Appreciation, Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, 2003

Box 4 Folder 24
Good Samaritan of the Year, Help Hospitalized Veterans, 2005

Box 4 Folder 25
Birthday Celebrations: 2006, 2007

Box 4 Folder 26
Kongable, Ross, South County Historical Society to Howard Louis, 2007

Box 4 Folder 27
Fetzer, Joel to Howard Louis [includes photocopies of Chinese correspondence], 2008

C. Howard Louis Records, 1928-2000

Contains financial and vital records, as well as records documenting Howard Louis' efforts to fund and design the Chinatown mural and the SLO High School entry courtyard, arranged chronologically. 13 folders.

Box 5 Folder 1
Financial records, 1928, 1950, 1952-3

Box 5 Folder 2
Power of Attorney for siblings [includes correspondence], 1951-52, 1987

Box 5 Folder 3
Ah Louis Store - Program, dedication as State Historical Landmark, 1965

Box 5 Folder 4
Grant deeds of Louis family, 1981

Box 5 Folder 5
Ivory and snuff bottle inventory [for Louis Store?], 1987

Box 5 Folder 6
San Luis Obispo Chinatown Mural – correspondence and proposals, 1990, 1995-97

Box 5 Folder 7
San Luis Obispo High School Entry Courtyard – plans, 1993

Box 5 Folder 8
San Luis Obispo High School Entry Courtyard – photographs, 1994

Box 5 Folder 9
Documents regarding Fred Louis's death and burial, 1994

Box 5 Folder 10
Documents regarding Helen Louis's death and burial, 1994

Box 5 Folder 11
San Luis Obispo Chinatown Mural - dedication, 1997

Box 5 Folder 12
Ah Louis Store - brochure, 1997

Box 5 Folder 13
Passport, 2000

D. Yvonne Louis Records, 1908-1964

Contains vital and property records for Howard's wife Yvonne Louis, arranged chronologically. 4 folders.

Box 5 Folder 14
Biographical information, 1908, 1918, 1941-43, 1953, 1964

Box 5 Folder 15
Divorce, Yvonne Seto vs. Joseph Seto, 1941

Box 5 Folder 16
Marriage Certificate for Yvonne Seto and Howard Louis, 1941

Box 5 Folder 17
Property Records, 1946-48

Series 4. China Trip, 1932-1934

Contains 3 subseries: A. Correspondence, B. Travel Ephemera, C. Documents re Ah Louis' return to United States. Photographs, scrapbooks, and negatives of the trip are located in Series 6 Subseries D and E.

A. Correspondence, 1932-1934

Contains correspondence written to and from Howard and Fred Louis while accompanying their father on his return to China. Arranged alphabetically by name. The majority of the letters sent to the family were addressed to Mae and were intended to be shared with all the Louis siblings. Includes an introduction and transcription completed by a family member in 1996. 21 folders.

Box 6 Folder 1

Introduction and transcription of Louis brothers' 1932-33 correspondence, created by Ed Watson, 1996

Box 6 Folder 2

Chang, Rose and family to Howard Louis, Feb – May 1933

Box 6 Folder 3

Chang, Rose and family to Howard Louis, June - August 1933

Box 6 Folder 4

Jowe, Bob to Howard Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 5

Lee, Dora, to Howard Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 6

Louis, Howard to family, December 1932 – March 1933

Box 6 Folder 7

Louis, Howard and Fred to family, July, August, and October 1933

Box 6 Folder 8

Louis, Howard to family [includes key to location of photographs found in Series 7 Subseries D], April 1934

Box 6 Folder 9

Louis, Howard to Ross Miller, May 1933

Box 6 Folder 10

Louis, Mae, Young, and nephews to Howard and Fred Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 11

Lowe, I.D. "John" to Howard Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 12

Lowe, Lorna to Howard Louis, May 1933

Box 6 Folder 13
Lowe, Lorna to Howard Louis, July - September 1933

Box 6 Folder 14
Wong, Anne to Howard Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 15
Wong, Jimmy to Howard Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 16
Yanagimachi, Nobuko to Howard Louis, 1933

Box 6 Folder 17
Correspondence, First Names Only, A-B, 1933

Box 6 Folder 18
Correspondence, First Names Only, H-P [no Q-Z], 1933

Box 6 Folder 19
Correspondence, Surname A-L, 1932-34

Box 6 Folder 20
Correspondence, Surname M-Z, 1933

Box 6 Folder 21
Unidentified correspondence [includes photographs], undated

B. Travel Ephemera, 1932-33

Contains a newspaper, map, luggage tags, tickets, and travel ephemera, arranged alphabetically. 4 folders.

Box 7 Folder 1
Hongkong Weekly Press, newspaper, March 1933

Box 7 Folder 2
Travel ephemera, Canton, 1932-33

Box 7 Folder 3
Travel ephemera, Hong Kong, 1932-33

Box 7 Folder 4
Travel ephemera, steamships, 1932-33

C. Documents Regarding Ah Louis' Return to United States, 1933

Contains correspondence and governmental records regarding Ah Louis' return to the U.S., including letters of recommendation from prominent San Luis Obispo businessmen and forms that provide descriptions of Louis' life in San Luis Obispo; arranged chronologically. The majority of the records are photocopies. The originals and additional records are held at the National Archives and Records Administration at San Francisco. 3 folders.

Box 7 Folder 5

Forms and correspondence regarding application for visa, October 1933

Box 7 Folder 6

Letters of recommendation from San Luis Obispo businessmen [including Mayor Sinsheimer and Superior Court Judge Norton], November 1933

Box 7 Folder 7

Angel Island reentry forms, November 1933

Series 5. Clippings Files, 1927-2009

Contains 1 subseries: Clippings Files.

A. Clippings Files, 1927-2009

Contains clippings from California and U.S. newspapers and magazines relating to Ah Louis, the Louis Store, and the Louis family, arranged chronologically. 6 folders.

Box 8 Folder 1

Press coverage of Ah Louis, Ah Louis Store, and Louis Family, 1927-1947

Box 8 Folder 2

Press coverage of Ah Louis, Ah Louis Store, and Louis Family, 1951-1967

Box 8 Folder 3

Press coverage of Ah Louis, Ah Louis Store, and Louis Family, 1970-1978

Box 8 Folder 4

Press coverage of Ah Louis, Ah Louis Store, and Louis Family, 1980-1988

Box 8 Folder 5

Press coverage of Ah Louis, Ah Louis Store, and Louis Family, 1990-1999

Box 8 Folder 6

Press coverage of Ah Louis, Ah Louis Store, and Louis Family, 2000-2009

Series 6. Photographs, 1888-2008

Contains 6 subseries: A. Photographs, B. Oversized Photographs, C. Scrapbooks, D. China Trip Photographs, E. Negatives, F. Young Louis Cal Poly Prints and Negatives.

A. Photographs, 1888-2008

Contains photographic prints and reprints of family members and San Luis Obispo places and events; arranged alphabetically by subject and thereunder chronologically. Creators unidentified. 27 folders.

Box 9 Folder 1

Louis, Ah, circa 1888

Box 9 Folder 2

Louis, Ah, circa 1930s

Box 9 Folder 3

Louis, Ah with Howard Louis and unidentified, circa 1933

Box 9 Folder 4

Louis, Fred, 1943, circa 1957, undated

Box 9 Folder 5

Louis, George and unidentified, undated

Box 9 Folder 6

Louis, Gon Ying, undated

Box 9 Folder 7

Louis, Helen, circa 1939, undated

Box 9 Folder 8

Louis, Howard, circa 1925-1945

Box 9 Folder 9

Louis, Howard – World War II, circa 1945

Box 9 Folder 10

Louis, Howard – World War II, includes negatives, circa 1945
Scope and content note: Includes photos of Fred and Yvonne.

Box 9 Folder 11

Louis, Howard - floral arrangements, reprints, 1947

Box 9 Folder 12

Louis, Howard, circa 1950s-2008

Box 9 Folder 13

Louis, Howard – San Luis Obispo High School, Class of 1927 60th reunion, 1987

Box 9 Folder 14
Louis, Howard – Red Cross World War II exhibit, no date

Box 9 Folder 15
Louis, Howard and Yvonne, circa 1940-50s
Scope and content note: Includes marriage, travel, Louis storefront.

Box 9 Folder 16
Louis, Howard and Yvonne, 1969-1990s
Scope and content note: Includes portraits, travel, and interior of Louis store.

Box 9 Folder 17
Louis, Young and Stella, 1980, 1983, undated

Box 9 Folder 18
Louis siblings – group portraits, circa 1900, 1961, 1965, circa 1974

Box 9 Folder 19
San Luis Obispo – Chinatown Mural Dedication, 1997

Box 9 Folder 20
San Luis Obispo – La Fiesta Parade, 1957, 1967, undated

Box 9 Folder 21
San Luis Obispo – Louis Store, San Luis Obispo, circa 1900-1910

Box 9 Folder 22
San Luis Obispo – Louis Store, San Luis Obispo, circa 1955

Box 9 Folder 23
Watson, Ed - exhumation of deceased, San Luis Obispo, circa 1926

Box 9 Folder 24
Watson, Ed, Jane and Jim, 1995

Box 9 Folder 25
Watson, Eddie and Billy, Richard Chong, and Yvonne Louis, undated

Box 9 Folder 26
Wong, Anna Mae, undated

Box 9 Folder 27
Unidentified portrait, undated

B. Oversized Photographs, undated, 1923-1925

Contains oversized photographic prints, arranged alphabetically by subject. 6 folders.

Box 10 Folder 1
Group portrait – “Pak Ching, Chui King, Pak Ho, and Pak Chun,” undated

Box 10 Folder 2
Louis, Howard, undated

Box 10 Folder 3
Louis Brickyard, undated

Box 10 Folder 4
Unidentified family, 1924

Box 10 Folder 5
Wong, Anna May, 1923, 1925

Box 10 Folder 6
Wong, Lulu Harriett [inscribed to Stella], undated

C. Scrapbooks, 1925-1931

Contains scrapbooks created by Howard and Fred Louis, arranged chronologically. See Subseries C for their China Trip scrapbooks, which include photographs taken after Howard's return to California. 4 scrapbooks.

Box 11 Folder 1
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, 1925-33
Scope and Content Note: Includes photos of San Luis Obispo High School sports, U.C. Berkeley and Yoke Choy Club, Central Coast, Louis family, photos of the Louis Store.

Box 11 Folder 2
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, U.C. Berkeley, 1929-33
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs of campus and students while Howard Louis' attended U.C. Berkeley, including International House students.

Box 12 Folder 1
Fred Louis, Scrapbook, Album 1 of 2, 1931
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs of family and friends, Yosemite, Pismo Beach, and the University of Chicago.

Box 12 Folder 2
Fred Louis, Scrapbook, Album 2 of 2, 1929-31
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs University of Chicago and traveling for wrestling competitions, family and friends, and Pismo Beach.

D. China Trip Photographs, 1932-1933

Contains photographic prints and scrapbooks, arranged in original order. 5 boxes.

Box 13 Folder 1
Howard Louis, typescript, descriptions of numbered photographs, 1933

Box 13 Folder 2
China Trip contact prints, folder 1 of 2, 1932-33

Box 13 Folder 3
China Trip contact prints, folder 2 of 2, 1932-33

Box 14 Folder 0
China Trip photographs [approximately 400, some duplicated in scrapbooks], 1932-33

Box 15 Folder 1
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip, 1932-33
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs from the first leg of the trip, including Honolulu, Shanghai, Hangchow, Japan, Hong Kong, and Canton.

Box 15 Folder 2
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip, 1932-33
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs from the first leg of the trip, including Honolulu, Shanghai, Hangchow, Japan, Hong Kong, and Canton. For numbered photographs see Howard Louis's captions Box 13 Folder 1.

Box 16 Folder 1
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip, 1932-33
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs of Macao, Honam, Ah Louis' birthplace, and the Wong ancestral temple. For numbered photographs see Howard Louis's captions in Box 13 Folder 1.

Box 16 Folder 2
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip, 1932-33
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs of Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Lingnan University. Some photographs include captions.

Box 17 Folder 1
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip, 1932-33
Scope and Content Note: Lacks captions, comprised primarily of duplicates, includes some commercial prints.

Box 17 Folder 2
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip, 1932-33
Scope and Content Note: Lacks captions, comprised primarily of duplicates

Box 17 Folder 3
Howard Louis – Scrapbook, China Trip and California, 1933-36
Scope and Content Note: Includes photographs of the return voyage from Hong Kong to San Francisco, travels in Canada and Arizona, Chicago, the 1934 Fiesta de los Flores, and the Central Coast.

E. Negatives, 1920s-1930s

Contains photographic negatives, including glass plate negatives, arranged in original order, undated, probably from 1920s through 1930s. The creators are unidentified, although it appears Howard and Fred created the majority of the negatives. Many negatives have corresponding prints in Subseries C. and D. The negatives from the China trip were originally stored in several negatives scrapbooks. They are rehoused, but preserved in original order. 8 boxes.

Box 18 Folder 1

Louis, Ah, glass plate negative, circa 1933

Box 18 Folder 2

Louis, Ah and Mae Louis, half-tone plate, circa 1934

Box 19

Negatives, undated and circa 1935

Box 20

Negatives, circa 1935

Box 21

Negative 35 mm film strips, rehoused from original canister [including China trip negatives], circa 1930

Box 22

Negative 35 mm film, rolled, rehoused from original canister [including Fred Louis at the University of Chicago], circa 1930

Box 23

Negatives, China Trip, 1932-33

Box 24

Negatives, China Trip, 1932-33

Box 25

Negatives and damaged negatives originally housed together, circa 1933

F. Young Louis Cal Poly Prints and Negatives, 1935-1940

Contains prints and negatives of Cal Poly taken by Young Louis, arranged alphabetically by subject. Folder descriptions taken from captions included with negatives. The set came as a separate collection that preceded the Louis donation. 23 folders.

Box 26 Folder 1

Agriculture, Interior View, 1937

Box 26 Folder 2

Agriculture, Pruning Trees, circa 1937-38

Box 26 Folder 3
Cal Poly Campus, Campus Views, 1938

Box 26 Folder 4
Cal Poly Campus, Crandall Gymnasium, 1940

Box 26 Folder 5
Cal Poly Campus, Lecture Rooms, 1938

Box 26 Folder 6
Cal Poly Faculty, Faculty Group, 1935

Box 26 Folder 7
Cal Poly Music Department, Cal Poly Band, 1937

Box 26 Folder 8
Cal Poly Music Department, "Collegians" Dance Band, 1940

Box 26 Folder 9
Cal Poly Music Department, Glee Club, 1939

Box 26 Folder 10
Cal Poly Sports, Baseball Squad, 1939

Box 26 Folder 11
Cal Poly Sports, Basketball Team, 1935

Box 26 Folder 12
Cal Poly Sports, Basketball Team, 1939

Box 26 Folder 13
Cal Poly Sports, Basketball Team, 1940

Box 26 Folder 14
Cal Poly Sports, Football Team, 1938

Box 26 Folder 15
Cal Poly Sports, Football Team, 1939

Box 26 Folder 16
California Agriculture Teachers Association, 1938

Box 26 Folder 17
Monogram - CP, 1937

Box 26 Folder 18
Poly Royal, Executive Committee, 1935

Box 26 Folder 19
Poly Royal, Executive Committee, 1936

Box 26 Folder 20
Poly Royal, Executive Committee, 1937

Box 26 Folder 21
Poly Royal, Executive Committee, 1938

Box 26 Folder 22
Poly Royal, Executive Committee, 1939

Box 26 Folder 23
Poly Royal, "Hungry Five" Band, 1939

Series 7. Ah Louis Business Records, 1872-1932

Contains 5 subseries: A. Banking and Financial Records, B. Store Records, C. Purchase and Sales Invoices and Receipts, D. Business Records, E. Freight Bills.

A. Banking and Financial Records, 1888-1914

Contains bank account books, paid checks, and Wells Fargo money receipts, including photocopies that appear to be annotated by Howard Louis, arranged alphabetically and then chronologically. These records detail Ah Louis' management of his finances, as well as the individuals he was receiving and paying money from/to. 10 folders.

Box 27 Folder 1

Account Book, Commercial Bank, 1899-1901

Box 27 Folder 2

Account Book, County Bank, 1895-1899

Box 27 Folder 3

Account Book, Jack, Goldtree and Co., 1885-1895

Box 27 Folder 4

Money receipts, Wells Fargo & Co's Express, 1888-89 1890-92, 1899, 1906

Box 27 Folder 5

Paid Checks, Commercial Bank, 1899-1900

Box 27 Folder 6

Paid Checks, Commercial Bank, 1901

Box 27 Folder 7

Paid Checks, Commercial Bank, 1902

Box 27 Folder 8

Paid Checks, Commercial Bank, 1906-07, 1914

Box 27 Folder 9

Paid Checks, First National Bank, 1888-1894

Box 27 Folder 10

Paid Checks, First National Bank, 1895-1898

B. Louis Store Records, 1879-1932

Contains records relating to the management of the Louis Store while under Ah Louis' management, including photocopies that appear to be annotated by Howard Louis, arranged alphabetically by record type. 7 folders.

Box 28 Folder 1

Account books, Sinsheimer Brothers, 1890-96, 1896-97

Box 28 Folder 2
Account book, unidentified, 1883-89

Box 28 Folder 3
Business licenses, 1887-8, 1891-92, 1925

Box 28 Folder 4
Liquor license and taxes, 1890-92

Box 28 Folder 5
Post office box rent, 1888, 1891

Box 28 Folder 6
Tax receipts, 1879, 1886, 1890-1891, 1926

Box 28 Folder 7
Utilities bills, 1888-89, 1891, 1931-2

C. Purchase and Sales Invoices and Receipts, 1878-1932

Business receipts and invoices from individual customers, business accounts, and vendors, arranged alphabetically. Included are photocopies annotated by Howard Louis. These records provide evidence of the goods and services Ah Louis purchased to stock his store and support his related business enterprises. See also Subseries E. Freight Bills. 50 folders.

Box 28 Folder 8
A. D. Barling [labor at celery ranch], 1899

Box 28 Folder 9
A. Blochman and Co., 1878

Box 28 Folder 10
Boston Tailoring Co., 1891

Box 28 Folder 11
Braunschweiger & Co [alcohol purchase], 1885-88

Box 28 Folder 12
R.S. Brown & Co., 1889

Box 28 Folder 13
California Fireworks Co., 1919

Box 28 Folder 14
Central Milling Company, 1892

Box 28 Folder 15
Correa, E. G. [rent], 1887

Box 28 Folder 16

Crawford, E.H. [race horse purchase], 1885

Box 28 Folder 17
Daily Republic, 1886

Box 28 Folder 18
Dallidet, P.H. [rent], 1891

Box 28 Folder 19
M.F. Dorsey and John F. Hogan, 1887, 1892

Box 28 Folder 20
Dutton's Reliance Grocery, 1899

Box 28 Folder 21
Eagle Oil and Refining Co., 1889

Box 28 Folder 22
Charles Errickson, 1900

Box 28 Folder 23
Fireman's Fund Insurance Co. [brick purchase], 1899

Box 28 Folder 24
Goldtree Brothers, 1887-88

Box 28 Folder 25
Goodenough Shoeing Shop, 1890-92

Box 28 Folder 26
Green, Monroe D., Import/Export, 1929

Box 28 Folder 27
Kaetzel, Phil, 1888

Box 28 Folder 28
Lewis, E.B. [for family photographs], 1897

Box 28 Folder 29
Louisville Puritan Club Co. [alcohol purchase], 1907

Box 28 Folder 30
Lüdeke [sp?], Henry, 1887

Box 28 Folder 31
Maino, C.A. [car], 1919

Box 28 Folder 32
G.W. McCabe, Blacksmith, 1888

Box 28 Folder 33
Michalitschke Bros. & Co., 1886

Box 28 Folder 34
M.C. Nason & Co. [produce], 1891

Box 28 Folder 35
Newcombe Restaurant [sales invoice from Ah Louis?], 1913

Box 28 Folder 36
Quong Lee Co., 1932

Box 28 Folder 37
Pioneer Hay Scales, 1885, 1892

Box 28 Folder 38
Realty Syndicate of San Francisco, 1899, 1909

Box 28 Folder 39
Salinas Valley Lumber Co., 1899, 1905

Box 28 Folder 40
San Luis Hardware & Implement Co., 1917

Box 28 Folder 41
San Luis Obispo Flour Mills, 1886-87

Box 28 Folder 42
San Luis Paving and Improvement Company, 1889

Box 28 Folder 43
W. Sandercock, 1884

Box 28 Folder 44
Schwartz, Beebee & Co., 1885, 1890

Box 28 Folder 45
Selby Smelting & Lead Co., 1891

Box 28 Folder 46
Sinsheimer Brothers, 1897

Box 28 Folder 47
Smith & Waite, 1885-86

Box 28 Folder 48
Southern Pacific Milling Co., 1905, 1908

Box 28 Folder 49
Teele Co., 1917

Box 28 Folder 50
Thomas Pattison, 1888, 1890

Box 28 Folder 51
Tribune Printing Co., 1890

Box 28 Folder 52
Unidentified invoices, 1889-92, 1905, 1909

Box 28 Folder 53
Union Sugar Company, 1917

Box 28 Folder 54
F. W. Vetterline, 1891

Box 28 Folder 55
August Vollmer & Co., 1891-93

Box 28 Folder 56
J.W. Wilkinson Co., 1928

Box 28 Folder 57
Willson's Fireworks Co., 1919

D. Other Business Records, 1871-1918

Contains records of Ah Louis' businesses excluding the Louis Store, including photocopies annotated by Howard Louis, arranged alphabetically by subject. The correspondence relates primarily to the contracting of Chinese labor and Ah Louis' varied agricultural pursuits. 15 folders.

Box 29 Folder 1
Agricultural Records [including leases for land and sugar beet contracts], 1898-1909, 1918

Box 29 Folder 2
Applications to travel abroad, Low Lum 1901, and Wong Ah Yick, 1904
Scope and Content Note: Identified in applications as Louis employees.

Box 29 Folder 3
Brickyard Records, between 1884 and 1905

Box 29 Folder 4
Business Cards, undated

Box 29 Folder 5
Business Contract between Antonio de la Rosa and Ah Louis for "Sea-Lion Trim," 1900

Box 29 Folder 6
Business Correspondence, 1871-1880s

Box 29 Folder 7
Business Correspondence, circa 1895
Scope and Content note: Includes envelopes addressed to Chinese employees c/o Louis.

Box 29 Folder 8
Business Correspondence, circa 1905
Scope and Content Note: Includes correspondence in Chinese.

Box 29 Folder 9
Business Correspondence, undated

Box 29 Folder 10
Court Records, San Luis Obispo Water Co. v. Joaquin Estrada, et al., 1888

Box 29 Folder 11
Labor Contracts, 1881-82, 1886, 1891-92

Box 29 Folder 12
Mining Claims, 1872, 1879, 1882

Box 29 Folder 13
Opium Sales, 1889-1891

Box 29 Folder 14
Property Records [includes 1874 deed for Louis Store property], 1873-5, 1878-9, 1885

Box 29 Folder 15
Property Records, 1901, 1914, 1917

E. Freight Bills, 1887-1914

Louis depended on the combination of steamship and narrow gauge railway to transport his cargo to San Luis Obispo. Most freight bills are from the Pacific Coast Railway/Pacific Coast Steamship Company and Southern Pacific Company. The bills provide evidence of the types of items that Louis sold in his store and provided for his laborers. Included are photocopies that are annotated by Howard Louis when he was researching the consumption of rice by Chinese laborers during the construction of the railroad. Arranged chronologically. 9 folders.

Box 29 Folder 16
Freight Bills, 1887

Box 29 Folder 17
Freight Bills, 1888

Box 29 Folder 18
Freight Bills, 1889

Box 29 Folder 19
Freight Bills, 1890

Box 29 Folder 20
Freight Bills, 1891

Box 29 Folder 21
Freight Bills, 1892

Box 29 Folder 22
Freight Bills, 1894

Box 29 Folder 23
Freight Bills, 1914

Box 29 Folder 24
Folders with Howard Louis's holographic notes tracking his research re rice shipped to Ah
Louis, undated

Series 8. Louis Store Records, 1937-1943

Contains 4 subseries: A. Purchase Invoices and Receipts, B. Sales Invoices, C. Business Ephemera, D. Freight Bills. Records were originally housed in metal filing boxes.

A. Purchase Invoices and Receipts, 1937-1943

Contains purchase invoices and receipts and associated incoming and outgoing correspondence, arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by business name. 16 folders.

Box 30 Folder 1

Purchase invoices and receipts, A-C, 1937

Box 30 Folder 2

Purchase invoices and receipts, F-I, 1937

Box 30 Folder 3

Purchase invoices and receipts, M-O, 1937

Box 30 Folder 4

Purchase invoices and receipts, P-Q, 1937

Box 30 Folder 5

Purchase invoices and receipts, S, 1937

Box 30 Folder 6

Purchase invoices and receipts, T,V-W, 1937

Box 30 Folder 7

Purchase invoices and receipts, Y-Z, 1937

Box 30 Folder 8

Purchase invoices and receipts, A-B, 1941

Box 30 Folder 9

Purchase invoices and receipts, C Folder 1 of 2, 1941-2

Box 30 Folder 10

Purchase invoices and receipts, C Folder 2 of 2, 1941-3

Box 30 Folder 11

Purchase invoices and receipts, F-I, 1941

Box 30 Folder 12

Purchase invoices and receipts, J-N, 1941, 1943

Box 30 Folder 13

Purchase invoices and receipts, P, 1941, 1943

Box 30 Folder 14
Purchase invoices and receipts, Q-R, 1941

Box 30 Folder 15
Purchase invoices and receipts, S, 1940-41, 1946

Box 30 Folder 16
Purchase invoices and receipts, T-U, W, Z, 1940-43

B. Sales Invoices, 1937-1941

Contains sales invoices and correspondence, arranged alphabetically by customer. 4 folders.

Box 31 Folder 1
Corner Cupboard, Carmel, California, 1937

Box 31 Folder 2
Green, Milly, Missouri, 1941

Box 31 Folder 3
Jones, Robert M., Cambria, California, 1937

Box 31 Folder 4
Tucks's Gift Shop, Paso Robles, California, 1937

C. Business Ephemera, 1937-1944

Contains business-related ephemera including receipts for utilities and store upkeep, receipts for rental property, and completed census and tax records. Some personal receipts are included. 10 folders.

Box 31 Folder 5
Business licenses, 1937, 1941, 1943-44

Box 31 Folder 6
Utilities and maintenance bills, 1936-7, 1941, 1943

Box 31 Folder 7
Personal receipts and correspondence, 1936-37, 1941

Box 31 Folder 8
Hostess for Hospitality Merchant Frances Campbell, agreements and invoices, 1941, 1943

Box 31 Folder 9
Census of Business report and taxes, 1939

Box 31 Folder 10
Advertising receipts, 1937-8, 1941

Box 31 Folder 11
Sales and Property taxes, receipts and correspondence, 1937-43

Box 31 Folder 12
Ah Louis Store - shipping tags, business cards, undated

Box 31 Folder 13
Receipts for Palm Street rentals, 1937-1941

Box 31 Folder 14
Unidentified business correspondence and receipts, undated

D. Freight Bills, 1937-1943

Contains freight bills recording transport of merchandise from companies in San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles. Some receipts provide evidence of the varied merchandise that stocked the Louis Store, including chinaware, groceries, and fireworks. The records are in original order. 3 folders.

Box 31 Folder 15
Freight Bills, 1937

Box 31 Folder 16
Freight Bills, 1941

Box 31 Folder 17
Freight Bills, 1934-1943

Series 9. Artifacts

Contains 1 subseries: A. Artifacts.

A. Storage Containers, 1930s-1943

Contains storage containers in which photographs and Louis Store records were originally housed. 2 boxes.

Box 32

Cardboard boxes with handwritten labels that originally housed negatives of China Trip and family photographs

Box 32

Metal canisters that originally stored 35mm film, circa 1930s

Box 32

Negative scrapbooks that originally stored negatives from China Trip, circa 1933

Box 33

Metal filing boxes that housed Louis Store records, 1937-1943