
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MS 0007
Aguirre Family
1929-1934

DESCRIPTION

This collection pertains to the history and activities of the Aguirre family in Mexico, New Mexico and Arizona. The collection is particularly valuable for its description of early overland freighting and the development of some of the largest ranches in the area.

6 Boxes, 1 outside item, 3 linear ft.

ACQUISITION

Donated by Yjiniio Aguirre. One copy of Mamie's journal and the marriage certificate were donated by the Westport (Missouri) Historical Society.

ACCESS

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

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Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society, Tucson, Archives Department.

PROCESSING

The collection was processed in 1983 as part of an NHPRC grant.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Yjinio F. Aguirre family are Arizona pioneers with roots in Spain and Mexico. The family settled in the province of Nueva Vizcaya, New Spain (now Chihuahua, Mexico) in the mid-eighteenth century. There they prospered in silver mining and ranching. Don Pedro Juan Aguirre (1810-1865), the original Aguirre emigrant to the United States, engaged in the freighting business. He married dona Maria del Refugio Mendoza and they had six children: Epifanio born in 1834, Pedro Jr. in 1835, Conrado in 1836, Beatris in 1838, Guadalupe in 1842, and Jose Yjinio in 1844.

Don Pedro's wife died in 1849, while they were still in Mexico. He married Narcissa Ornelas in 1851. There were five children from this marriage: Dolores, Patriocina, Emilia, Feliberto and Mariano.

In 1852, don Pedro moved from the Hacienda de Chorrennas in Chihuahua, to Las Cruces in the New Mexico territory where he established a cattle ranch. He brought with him a caravan of covered wagons and a number of people who had lived on his property. In 1855 he became a naturalized citizen.

Toward the late 1850s, don Pedro established his sons, Epifanio, Pedro and Conrado, in the freighting business on the Santa Fe Trail. Jose Yjinio, the youngest son of his first marriage, joined them after completing five years of schooling in the east. The Aguirre brothers held large government contracts to freight supplies to military posts throughout the territory. Their route extended from Independence, Missouri, to all of the important points in the southwest United States and northern Mexico.

On a trip to Independence, Missouri, the oldest son, Epifanio, met Mary E. Bernard, daughter of Noah Bernard, a prominent merchant in Westport, Missouri. They were married in Westport on August 21, 1862 and moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico the following year. Around 1869 they moved to Tucson, where Epifanio and his brothers ran the stage line between Tucson and Altar, Sonora. In 1870, don Epifanio was killed by Indians near Sasabe. Mrs. Aguirre returned to Missouri with their three sons, Pedro, Epifanio and Stephen. She remained there until 1874, when she returned to Tucson, accompanied by her brothers. She taught in the public schools for many years, and in 1895 was appointed to the chair of Spanish language and English history at the University of Arizona. She died in San Jose, California in 1906 and was buried in Tucson.

The Aguirre brothers continued in the freighting business after Epifanio's death. They also established stage lines south to the border and developed large cattle ranches. Don Conrado married dona Maria del Carmen Elias and established himself in Nogales, Sonora. He died in 1889. Don Pedro, Jr. married dona Ana Maria Redondo. They lived for some time in Altar, Sonora, the base for a stage line between Tucson and Hermosillo. He moved his family to Tucson around 1870 and soon after established the Buenos Aires Ranch near Sasabe, where he lived until his death in 1907.

The youngest of the freighting Aguirre brothers, don Yjinio, married dona Elvira Beltran (1846-1895), from Pitiquito, Sonora in 1870. They had five children: Epifanio, Higinio, Dolores, Elvira, Refugio and Isabel. Soon after his marriage, don Yjinio contracted with Charles Hayden to build a canal near Tempe. He moved to the Willcox area in 1887, where he had a contract to haul coke between Willcox and Globe. In 1892, he established a large ranch near Red Rock in Pinal County. Don Yjinio's wife died in 1895. He married dona Sara Felix of Pitiquito, Sonora in 1896. They had three children: Sara, Albert and Trinidad.

Don Yjinio took his two oldest sons from his first marriage, Epifanio and Higinio, as partners in his cattle and farming business. Epifanio married Luz Celaya in 1896. Higinio, the second son, also started a butcher shop in Tucson in 1904, with a slaughterhouse north of town. He married Anita Munguia (1878-1963) of Tucson at San Xavier Mission in 1906. They had five children: Guadalupe, Yjinio F., Enrique, Alfonso, and Ana Maria.

After don Yjinio's death in 1907, his sons, Epifanio and Higinio, expanded their ranching activities to include the Canada del Oro in Oracle, which they bought from the estate of their uncle

Mariano G. Samaniego. They had bought and developed a number of other properties and by 1915 were at the peak of their farming and ranching activities. The partnership ended in 1922 due to several years lack of rain which caused heavy losses in their dry farming operations. Don Epifanio moved his cattle holdings to Sonora, where he developed the Aravaipa and El Datil ranches. He died in 1950 in Tucson.

Higinio continued ranching and farming in the Red Rock area. In 1937 he began selling off some of his holdings. The United States Government bought 3½ sections in 1939 for the Marana Air Base. The last of the original Aguirre holdings were sold in 1946 to Wint Bowman. In 1947, Higinio bought 7½ sections in the Red Rock area which he developed in partnership with his son, Enrique, until his death in 1960. His son, Yjinio F. Aguirre, also continued to ranch in the Red Rock area.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of six boxes of manuscript material arranged in five series: (1) Business and Personal Correspondence, 1905-1925; (2) Manuscripts, 1875-1969; (3) Aguirre family history and records, 1907-1976; (4) Financial Records, 1906-1922; (5) Miscellaneous, 1823-1859.

Series one consists of correspondence, both business and personal, from 1905-1921. Most of the business correspondence is addressed to Epifanio Aguirre at Red Rock, Arizona and concerns requests to settle accounts regarding lawyer's fees, insurance premiums, and supplies for the ranch. Other correspondence relates to accounts with the Consolidated National Bank, buying and selling cattle; cattle brands and inspections; and certificates of purchase from the Arizona State land Commission. A few letters concern a well being dug at the Red Rock Ranch in 1916-1918. Additional correspondence concerns the activities of Y.F. Aguirre as a livestock valuation specialist, 1947-1949, in the employ of the Mexican-United States Commission for the Eradication of Hoof-and-Mouth Disease. Most of the remainder of the series consists of correspondence which is mainly concerned with the rounding up, selling and buying of cattle. A few pieces of correspondence concern Y.F. Aguirre's interest in his family history. There is also some miscellaneous family correspondence. A small percentage of the personal correspondence is in Spanish.

Series two consists of twelve manuscripts, 1870-1969. The majority of these contain the memoirs of Mary Bernard Aguirre, written between 1870 and 1901. Autobiographical material includes a narrative covering the years 1844-1870, which includes topics such as Civil War activities in Westport, Missouri, 1860-1862; travel across the plains from Westport to Las Cruces, New Mexico; social life and culture of Las Cruces, La Mesilla and Las Vegas, New Mexico; and Indian attacks on travelers in the 1860s. She also wrote about "Steam travel in the Gulf of Mexico" in 1870 and "The public schools of Tucson in the 1870s." Two other manuscripts by Mrs. Aguirre are "Some Arizona local names" written in 1902, and "Indian traditions of the creation," in 1903. Other manuscripts in series two include an address to the 13th Annual Arizona Historical Convention in 1972 by Y.F. Aguirre, on the Hoof-and-Mouth Commission in Mexico, 1947-1952; and "Last of the Dons," a family history written by Y.F. Aguirre in 1969. A final manuscript in the series is a Pacheco family genealogy by Rudy Pacheco, nephew of Y.F. Aguirre.

Series three consists of Aguirre family records and history, 1907-1973. It includes a brief family biography, genealogy and miscellaneous marriage, baptismal and citizenship records. Additional materials concerning the Aguirre cattle business, 1907-1919, and includes cattle brand records and contracts for the sale and purchase of cattle. Newspaper clippings include portions of the "Journal of Mamie Bernard Aguirre" published in the Jackson County Historical Society (Missouri) in 1966, and "Anza Marches Again" published in Arizona Highways in 1976. A few clippings concern wedding and funeral announcements of relatives and friends. Notes and notebooks of Y.F. Aguirre

are also present, between 1946 and 1952, and concern his activities on the Hoof-and-Mouth Commission.

Series four contains financial records, 1906-1922. They include tax receipts for the Aguirre Cattle Company, 1907-1916, and invoices and cancelled checks of Epifanio Aguirre, 1907-1922. Ledgers, 1907-1921, contain accounts relating to expenses, and list food supplies and salaries of ranch hands. The ledgers are untitled and it is not clear if they pertain to one or more Aguirre ranches.

Series five consist of miscellaneous items. They include a handwritten Spanish language document dated 1823, concerning independence from Spain; a certificate appointing Mary Bernard Aguirre as an honorary member of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1903; church missal and prayer books; and a book, Chihuahua Ciudad Procer, published by the University of Chihuahua, 1959. One outside item contains the marriage certificate between Epifanio Aguirre and Mary B. Bernard in Las Cruces in 1862.

Box and Folder Listing

Series 1: Business and Personal Correspondence

Box 1

- f.1-13 Correspondence of Epifanio and Higinio Aguirre
- f.14-15 Mexican-United States Hoof-and-Mouth Commission, 1946-1949
- f.16 Personal correspondence, 1939-1975
- f.17 Miscellaneous correspondence, 1906-1960

Series 2: Manuscripts, 1875-1969

- f. 18 "Last of the Dons" by Y.F. Aguirre, 1969
- f.19 Hoof-and-Mouth Commission in Mexico by Y.F. Aguirre, 1947-1952
- f.20 Autobiography of Mary Bernard Aguirre
- f.21 "Coincidence" by Mary Bernard Aguirre
- f.22 "Public schools in Tucson in the 1870s" by Mary Bernard Aguirre
- f.23 "Steam travel in the Gulf of Mexico in 1870" by Mary Bernard Aguirre
- f.24 "About my first school" by Mary Bernard Aguirre, 1875
- f.25 "First time I came to Tucson" by Mary Bernard Aguirre, 1897
- f.26 "Early reminiscences" by Mary Bernard Aguirre, 1901

Box 2

- f.27 "Some Arizona local names" by Mary Bernard Aguirre, 1902
- f.28 "Indian traditions of the creation and the flood" by Mary Bernard Aguirre, 1903
- f.29 Pacheco family genealogy by Rudy Pacheco, 1965

Series 3: Aguirre Family Records and History, 1907-1976

- f.30 Aguirre family history
- f.31 Aguirre family genealogy
- f.32 Marriage, baptismal, citizenship records
- f.33 Cattle brand records, 1907-1919
- f.34 Contracts for sale and purchase of cattle, 1913-1917
- f.35 "The Journal of Mamie Bernard Aguirre," Jackson County Historical Society (Missouri), 1966
- f.36 "Anza Marches Again," Arizona Highways, 1976
- f.37 Family funeral and wedding announcements, 1957; 1960; 1963; 1964
- f.38 Memo book of Y.F. Aguirre (mostly about cattle), 1946-1948
- f.39 Miscellaneous notes on cattle (mostly figures), 1946-1948
- f.40 Certificate of Appraisal for cattle notebook. Hoof-and-Mouth Commission, 1948
- f.41 Agenda book for activities of Hoof-and-Mouth Commission, 1949
- f.42 Notebooks of activities while on Hoof-and-Mouth Commission (5), 1950-1952

Series 4: Financial Records, 1906-1922

Box 3

- f.43 Tax receipts - Aguirre Cattle Company, 1906-1922
- f.44-62 Invoices, 1906-1922

Box 4

- f.63-69 Invoices, 1910-1921
- f.70 Payroll expenses, 1908-1921
- f.71-72 Cancelled checks, 1906-1921

Box 5

f.73-74 Cancelled checks, 1906-1921

f.75-76 Statements, 1907-1921

f.77-81 Ledgers, 1907-1913

Box 6

f.82-88 Ledgers, 1915-1921

Series 5: Miscellaneous, 1823-1959

f.89 Spanish language document - Independence from Spain, 1823

f.90 Prayer book, missal, religious booklet

f.91 Certificate - Honorary member of Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Mary Bernard Aguirre, 1903

f.92 Map of Land Plots, Township No. 105, Range No. 9E

f.93 Chihuahua Ciudad Procer, University of Chihuahua, 1959

f.94 Photographs, Images from Clara Brown Byrd

f.95 Photographs, Images from PJ Aguirre