Antonio F. Coronel (1817-1894) Papers

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Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
900 Exposition Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90007-4057
(213) 763-3359
seavercenter@nhm.org
http://www.nhm.org/site/research-collections/seaver-center
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Descriptive Summary

Title: Antonio F. Coronel (1817-1894) Papers
Dates: 1770-1959
Collection Number: GC 1001
Creator/Collector:
Extent: 30 legal boxes; 2 8x10 boxes; 3 oversize boxes; map case folders.
Repository: Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
Los Angeles, California 90007-4057
Abstract: Antonio Coronel was a public servant for most of his life during the Mexican period of California and continuing in the American statehood. Most notably he served as Mayor of Los Angeles and State Treasurer. Correspondence, speeches and documents relating to Coronel's appointments to office; Los Angeles city ordinances, charters, political handbills, broadsides and related materials; deeds, papers connected with lawsuits and similar documents, such as for Indian affairs; maps, real estate ads, almanacs, lithographs, photos, memorabilia, invitations, notices, programs, publications, clippings and artwork. There is correspondence from and to Mrs. Coronel. There are items related to author Helen Hunt Jackson. 1770-1959, undated
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Access
Research is by appointment only
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Antonio F. Coronel (1817-1894) Papers. Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Biography/Administrative History

Antonio Franco Coronel was born October 21, 1817 in Mexico. He and his family were members of the Híjar-Padrés Colony reaching Alta California in 1834. Settling in Los Angeles, his father Ignacio Coronel, Antonio Coronel and his sister established a school. For the rest of his life, he served various public offices: Assistant Secretary of the Tribunals of the City of Los Angeles (1838); Judge of the First Instance (1843); Captain of the Auxiliary Companies and Visitor of the Southern Missions (1844); Representative to the General Congress of Towns (1846); Member of the Body of Magistrates in charge of regulation and order of Irrigation (1847-1848); County Assessor of Los Angeles (1850-1851-1852); Mayor of Los Angeles (1853); Member of the Common Council (ranging from 1854 to 1867); State Treasurer (1867-1871); Commissioner on the State Board of Horticulture. In 1873 Coronel married Mariana Williamson, and he died in 1894. Mariana Williamson de Coronel (born Mary Burton Williamson) in San Antonio Texas, in 1851, was the eldest daughter of Nelson Williamson, a native of Augusta, Maine and Gertrudes Romana de Williamson, of Mexican birth. She was raised fluent in both the English and Spanish languages. Her family came to California in 1859. She was educated in the public schools of Los Angeles and in the College of the Sisters of St. Vincent. She was only 22 years old when she married the much older Coronel. In 1895 she remarried, to Dr. C. Edgar Smith of Los Angeles, but they divorced by 1900. A separate collection (P-157) contains references in the most recent photographs (i.e. 1913) to “Mariana Coronel de Dominguez”, indicating perhaps she remarried a third time. Details of her life are nil after her divorce from Smith, and several genealogical web sources indicate that she died June 20, 1917. Sources used for biographical note: An Illustrated History of Los Angeles County, California (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1889), 425-428. Kate Phillips, Helen Hunt Jackson, A Literary Life (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 242. National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York: J. T. White, 1904), 566. Los Angeles Herald, December 23, 1900 (California Digital Newspaper Collection).

Scope and Content of Collection

Correspondence, speeches and documents relating to Coronel's appointments to office; Los Angeles city ordinances, charters, political handbills, broadsides and related materials, largely 1858-80; deeds, papers connected with lawsuits and similar documents, such as for Indian affairs; telegrams; maps, real estate ads, almanacs, lithographs, photos, and memorabilia. Includes material on the Los Angeles City Council, Los Angeles Board of Education, California State Board of Horticulture, and the Democratic Club of California. Persons prominently mentioned include Manuel Coronel, Jose G. Estudillo, Pablo de la Guerra, J.M. Guinn, Helen Hunt Jackson, Augustine Olvera, Andres Pico, Pio Pico, Manuel Rodriguez de Poli, Jose L. Sepulveda, Ygnacio Sepulveda, Mariano G. Vallejo, and Benjamin D. Wilson. 1770-1959, undated. The collection also contains periodicals, newspapers and clippings; personal and business cards, invitations and programs; death and
funeral notices; souvenirs acquired from trips to Mexico; European lithographs; artwork made of feather and straw materials; education and schooling materials; and there is personal correspondence from and to Mariana Coronel as well as correspondence dating from the time Mrs. Coronel was remarried to Dr. Edgar Smith. The collection also contains original poetry composed by Coronel reflecting a more personal side, including a 10th wedding anniversary tribute of endearment to his wife. There are several items pertaining to music and hymns. The collection contains a printer’s type, noted to be the first printing type used in Los Angeles. The collection contains items related to Helen Hunt Jackson. Author Jackson had a close friendship with the Coronels. They influenced her writings of the novel Ramona, according to a Jackson biographer. The collection includes a presentation copy of Ramona to Mrs. Coronel and several book covers, including pages of text that are noted to not have been a part of the novel. The collection includes a portrait of Jackson initialed by AFH [Alexander F. Harmer]. There is a greeting card described to have been received by “H.H.” At the time of this writing, a portion of the photographs are separately housed in collection P-157, however, a portion of the photographs remain in this collection until further processing can be done. The collection is also described in The Antonio F. Coronel Collection, Exhibition Room Third Floor, Chamber of Commerce Building (Los Angeles: Baumgardt Publishing Co., 1906) and in the Los Angeles County Museum Quarterly, vol. 14, n. 4 (1958), pages 4-7.