Guide to the Leib Family Collection 1979.171

Finding aid prepared by Catherine Mills
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10/04/2011

Note
This finding aid is based on two existing print guides created for the Leib Family Collection and the Sarah Winchester Series.
Guide to the Leib Family Collection 1979.171

Title: Leib Family Collection
Identifier/Call Number: 1979.171
Contributing Institution: History San Jose Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 6.0 Linear feet (12 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1864-1922
Abstract: The Leib Family Collection includes family and business correspondence as well as household and business records from Samuel and Lida Leib and their five children.
Language of Materials note: The materials are in English.
Biographical/Historical note
Samuel Franklin Leib (1848-1924) was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, to Joseph and Clarissa Leib. He had two brothers. He was educated in law in Michigan and came West to join the law practice of the celebrated attorney Delphine Delmas. He died of pneumonia in San Jose, December 26, 1924, at the age of 76.
Samuel Leib married Lida Campbell Grissom (d. 1929) of Kentucky in 1874. Lida had three sisters, Anna, Eva and Nettie. There were five children from this union; four of them were alive when Samuel died. The children, two girls and three boys, were named Lida, Elna, Frank, Roy and Earl.
Lida Leib married Charles Armstrong of Omaha at Stanford. She lived for a while in the Midwest. There were apparently no children.
Elna Leib married Dr. William Hammond Wright, an astronomer who had been trained at UC Berkeley. They traveled widely on various astronomical observations. Dr. Wright was a director of the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton. There were apparently no children.
Frank Leib (1880-1937) graduated from Stanford with a law degree but was interested in horticulture. He took over his father's many fruit and nut ranches. With his father he developed the walnut industry in California, establishing the packing company of Leib and Leib. Frank married Mary Sandilands Bennett in 1901, a San Jose native. There were four children: Samuel Franklin, Charles Bennett, Mary Sandilands and Lida Campbell. Frank died in an automobile accident in 1937.
Roy Leib (1883-1954) graduated in law from Stanford and went to work with his father in the law practice Leib & Leib. He took over many of his father's duties and followed his father as a director of the First National Bank of San Jose and a director of the San Jose Water Works.
Earl Leib (d. 1921) graduated from Stanford with a AB in geology. He married Grace Burke and died in Los Angeles in 1921.
Charles Bennett Leib also became an attorney and joined his uncle Roy in the law firm of Leib & Leib.
Biographical information was taken from the National Register application for the Leib carriage house prepared by Patty Dixon.
Conditions Governing Use note
Property rights reside with History San Jose. For permissions to reproduce or to publish, please contact History San Jose Research Library.
Conditions Governing Access note
Materials are open to the public for research by appointment.
Immediate Source of Acquisition note
The collection was donated by Charles Leib in 1979 to what was then the San Jose Historical Museum.
Preferred Citation note
Leib Family Collection 1979-171, History San Jose Research Library, San Jose, California 95112-2599.
Scope and Contents note
The Leib Family Collection includes family and business correspondence as well as household and business records from Samuel and Lida Leib and their five children. Business correspondence includes legal records and letters with clients of the law firm of Leib & Leib as well as records and letters from the many fruit and nut growing ranches and packing enterprises which the family developed.
In addition the collection includes records and letters from their many civic efforts. Samuel Leib was a practicing attorney, a president of the board of trustees of Leland Stanford Junior University, a director of the First National Bank of San Jose, a director of the San Jose Water Works and a director of the San Jose Municipal Railway. He was also on the board of several other corporations including the Climax Oil Company of San Jose. He was elevated to the bench but declined the judgeship after about a year.
Lida Leib was a founder of the San Jose chapter of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) and the Colonial Dames. An avid gardener, she was a longtime member of the San Jose Garden Club. The Leib family was actively involved in music and the arts and their home was used for small concerts by the music society.

The material is sorted into 11 boxes of Leib Family material and 1 box (4 linear inches) of Sarah Winchester material.

**Related Archival Materials note**

Additional material on the Leib Family in the History San Jose Archives includes the following manuscripts:

"Leib Carriage House", Patricia M. Dixon (2005-50-277). Narrative material and application to the National Register of Historic Places for the carriage house and garden of Samuel Leib. This structure is now a California State landmark and is in the historic inventory of the City of San Jose. The structure is located at 60 North Keeble Avenue, between the Alameda and Stockton.


**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Leib & Leib.
Leib family -- Correspondence
Leib, Earl, d. 1921
Leib, Frank, 1880-1937
Leib, Lida C., (Campbell Grissom), d. 1929
Leib, Roy, 1883-1954
Leib, Samuel F., 1848-1924
Wright, Elna Leib
Wright, William H., Dr.
Fruit trade--California--Santa Clara Valley (Santa Clara County)
San Jose (Calif.)
Santa Clara County (Calif.)
Stanford University

**Box 1**

**Leib family correspondence** 1979-171 (98-105) **1876-1928**

Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Linear feet(1 box)
Scope and Contents note
Correspondence from various members of the immediate family to each other.
Correspondents include Samuel F. Leib, Lida Campbell Grissom Leib, Earl Leib, Frank Leib and Roy Leib.

**Box 2**

**Elna Leib Wright correspondence** 1979-171 (106-112) **1882-1904**

Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Linear feet(1 box)

**Box 3**

**Elna Leib and William H. Wright correspondence** 1979-171 (113-123) **1900-1957**

Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Linear feet(1 box)
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<td><strong>Scope and Contents note</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Personal correspondence between Lida Campbell Grissom Leib and her relatives and friends in her native Kentucky. Relatives include her mother Nellie Grissom and her three sisters Annah, Eva and Nettie. The box contains one letter to Elna Wright from horticulturist Luther Burbank. There is also a miscellaneous letter marked '?'; this is probably a letter from a law practice client that strayed into the personal correspondence. There is also a folder of miscellaneous correspondence that has not been sorted.</td>
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<td><strong>Elna Leib and William H. Wright booklets and ephemera</strong></td>
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<td>Contains three folders with bills and receipts from the Wright household. Dr. Wright was the director of the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton and some of the material dates from his tenure there.</td>
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<td><strong>Earl Leib and Edna Leib Wright financial records</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Scope and Contents note</strong></td>
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<td>Contains the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors of the Climax Oil Company of San Jose, 1900-1915; minutes and constitution of the Lecticonian Literary Society, 1878-1883; record of garden activities, 1946-1948 kept by Elna Leib Wright; Elna Leib Wright's personal financial records, 1957-1959; and list of &quot;Sources of Income&quot; of Elna Leib Wright, 1959.</td>
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<td>minutes</td>
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<td><strong>Samuel F. Leib checkstubs</strong></td>
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<td>1979-171 (219-228) 1911-1919</td>
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<td>Samuel F. Leib correspondence and F. A. Fiedler Estate papers</td>
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<td>1890-1950</td>
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<td>Samuel F. Leib correspondence</td>
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<td>1903-1918</td>
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<td>Sarah Winchester papers</td>
<td>1979-171 (265-294)</td>
<td>Bulk, 1888-1922 1864-1922</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Biographical/Historical note
Samuel Franklin Leib was the legal advisor for Sarah Winchester. He advised her regarding property sales and purchases, including the maintenance of deeds, mortgages, and certificates of sale. He also provided investment advice and completed a number of purchases and transfers for her. He resolved issues regarding her tax payments. Leib corresponded with Winchester regarding her will and performed a number of tasks regarding the settling of her affairs after her death. It is unclear whether or not he was the formal executor of her estate. He collected her bank statements and cancelled checks as well as many receipts for both professional services and the purchase of household goods. Leib maintained a collection of newspaper clippings in regard to the Winchester Arms Company and also had some of her personal items in his files, including letters.

Sarah Winchester was born to Leonard and Sarah Purdee in 1837. She married William Wirt Winchester, heir to the founder of the Winchester Arms Company, in 1862. They had a child named Annie in 1866. The baby died after 6 months and William died of tuberculosis the following year. After travelling, Sarah settled in San Jose, California in 1884. She had a number of homes built in that area, most notably one on what is now known as the Winchester Mystery House on Winchester Avenue in San Jose. She died in 1922.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Winchester, Sarah Pardee, 1837-1922
Winchester Mystery House (San Jose, Calif.)

Correspondence 1979-171 (265-270) 1865-1922

Scope and Contents note
Winchester's correspondence includes financial, legal and personal letters. The financial letters and telegrams are mostly correspondence from Samuel Leib to Sarah Winchester. Other writers include business colleagues at banks and judges. There is some correspondence from individuals engaged in the selling of property, contacting one another regarding the availability of funds. Subject matter primarily includes property purchases from 1865 to 1920, taxes from 1917 to 1921, as well as stocks, bonds, certificates and trusts from 1888 and 1908 to 1922. Legal correspondence includes 1910 and 1911 letters from Leib to Winchester regarding her will, and post mortem (1922) letters regarding both her will and financial records. A few letters dated 1912 discuss a payment dispute with her dentist. Personal correspondence includes letters from relatives and friends spanning 1914 to 1918, one includes 3 black and white photos, a letter adding the Winchesters to the roll of Distinguished U. S. Families (n.d.), and a 1914 solicitation from A. P. Hill which includes a long personal notes. Almost all of the correspondence is to or from Samuel Leib or to Sarah Winchester. There is only one letter from Sarah Winchester.
Financial records 1979-171 (271-280) 1878-1921
Language of Material: English
Scope and Contents note
Financial records include 1910-1920 bank statements, cancelled checks, and debit slips. Numerous receipts are included as well, most from 1896 to 1921 and some undated. Miscellaneous items include two undated copies of a document modifying a trust, rules regarding stocks dated 1920, an accounting record book covering 1878 to 1885, and a 1905 prospectus. Lastly, there are some records of household purchases including a paperwork for auto purchases in 1909 and 1917 and a warranty for a washing machine dated 1920.

Legal records 1979-171 (281-289) 1862-1920
Language of Material: English
Scope and Contents note
Legal records primarily consist of deeds, mortgages and certificates of sale between 1862 and 1907. There is also paperwork for a 1865 land transfer. Newspaper articles regarding the Winchester Arms Company are included (n.d., 1919-1920). A small number of newspaper clippings report lawsuits and a strike against the Company during the years 1865, 1901, and some not dated. A few papers and a map from 1868 to 1905 are related to a railroad crossing one of Winchester’s properties. There are some contracts regarding property purchases and construction from 1907 to 1920. There are also two maps, both not dated; one shows a tract of land next to Adobe Creek and the San Antonio Rancho and the second is part of the Lenzen Subdivision.

Personal materials 1979-171 (290-292) 1913-1916
Language of Material: English
Scope and Contents note
Personal materials include a newspaper clipping and a telegram advising of Nettie Davis's death in 1916, a memo book with Christmas gifts listed between 1913 and 1915, and an undated black and white photo of a hospital plaque dedicated to William Wirt Winchester.

Miscellaneous 1979-171 (293-294) 1911, 1915
Language of Material: English
Scope and Contents note
Two business cards from person involved in property purchases (n.d.) and two envelopes with original J. P. Morgan wax stamp dated 1911, 1915.