Guide to the Surveyor Records


Santa Clara County Archives
San Jose, California

Processed by:
Michael Griffith

Date Completed:
processing ongoing

Encoded by:
Michael Griffith

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Surveyor records
Dates: 1880-1969
Creator: Santa Clara County (Calif.). County Surveyor's Office
Collection Size: 8 archives boxes and 16 oversize boxes.
Repository: Santa Clara County Archives.
San Jose, CA 95112-2527

Abstract: This collection includes sets of aerial photographs used by the County Surveyor to create topographic maps and for other purposes and a collection related to the lawsuit Miller v. Thomas.

Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult Archives staff.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights
The Archives can claim physical ownership only for some collections. Users are responsible for securing permission of the copyright holder for publication or quotation.

Preferred Citation

Acquisition Information
These records were transferred to the Archives by the County Surveyor in 2006 and 2007.

Processing Information
This collection was processed in part under NHPRC grant NAR07-10047-07. The photographs were removed from acidic envelopes and/or boxes and placed in acid-free folders and boxes. Where two sets of prints existed, both were saved and interfiled. Photographs of individual streets were placed in alphabetical order. The Miller v. Thomas collection was unorganized when received. Items were organized into series, put in chronological or alphabetical order when appropriate, and foldered. Maps and drawings were flattened.

Administrative History
The office of County surveyor has existed since the nineteenth century. In the late nineteenth century, the Surveyor surveyed roads, established grades, and oversaw the construction of bridges and other public structures. Previously an elected official, the Surveyor now is part of the Office of Planning. The Surveyor's mission is to "help to ensure professional surveying and mapping services" in the county. For much of the office's history the Surveyor was permitted to maintain a private surveying business as well as hold the County post.

Scope and Content of Collection
For the scope and content of this collection, see the entries for the major subdivisions.
Arrangement
For the arrangement of this collection, see the entries for the major subdivisions.

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

Santa Clara County (Calif.). County Surveyor's Office
California Aerial photographs
Miller, Henry, 1827-1916
Las Animas Rancho, Santa Clara County, Calif.

Aerial photographs, 1939-1965

Physical Description: 7 archives boxes.

Series Scope and Content Summary
This series consists of aerial photographs taken of Santa Clara County between 1939 and 1965. Most of the series consists of groups of photographs taken of the entire county. One subseries, taken at a low altitude, is of individual streets, roads, and highways and may have been used for planning purposes.

County-wide aerial photographs, 1939-1956

Physical Description: 3.5 archival boxes and 13 oversize boxes.

Subseries Scope and Content Summary
This subseries consists of aerial photographs taken of the entire county or a large section thereof in 1939, 1940, 1950, 1956, 1960, and 1961. The 1939 set consists of 9 x 9 inch pictures; the 1950 and 1956 sets include both 9 x 9 pictures and large prints, at least 23 x 23 inches. The 1940, 1960, and 1961 sets include only large prints. Each photograph is dated and includes an identification number. Large photographs, or keys, which indicate how the individual aerial photographs fit together, are available for 1939, 1950, and 1956. For 1939, the two sets of keys cover only part of the county. For 1950, six of the seven parts of the key are available, and for 1956, all seven parts of the key are present. For 1960 and 1961, single-sheet guides indicate the areas covered by individual photographs.

Arrangement
The photographs are arranged by the year taken and then in order by identification number.

Streets, roads, and highways aerial photographs, 1955-1958

Physical Description: 3 archival boxes.

Subseries Scope and Content Summary
This subseries consists of aerial photographs taken of county streets, roads, and highways from 1955 to 1958. These pictures were taken at relatively low altitudes and show individual structures clearly. The pictures for any given road overlap, and the entire length of the street photographed may be viewed by placing the pictures together. The individual pictures normally include the road name, an identification number for the road, the date, and a photograph number. Many sets of pictures include a map showing the location of the road photographed. Many photographs also have side streets identified in red pencil.

Arrangement
The photographs are arranged in alphabetical order, by name of street.
Aerial photographs, 1939-1965

Miscellaneous aerial photographs, 1963-1965

Physical Description: .5 archival box.

Subseries Scope and Content Summary
This subseries consists of three small sets of aerial photographs. The time and altitude photographs, taken in 1963, include both the time and the altitude at which the picture was taken. Each picture is numbered and the set is arranged in numerical order. Two sets, labeled "key" photographs, were taken in 1963 and 1965. For both sets, each photograph is numbered, and each set is arranged in numerical order. The purposes for which these pictures were taken is not certain.

Miller v. Thomas, 1880-1890

Physical Description: one archival box and one oversize box

Series Scope and Content Summary
This collection consists of miscellaneous records relating to the case of Henry Miller et al. v. Massey Thomas et al., involving title to land in and around Gilroy. These documents appear to have been accumulated by County Surveyor A. T. Herrmann in the course of his service as one of three commissioners appointed by the court. It is likely the role of the commissioners was to make determinations of property lines and monies owed in compliance with the rulings of the court. Most of the collection consists of surveys of property, correspondence related to surveys, and related documents.