Finding Aid to the Yorba-Cota Family Papers MS.1061

Finding aid prepared by Maritxu de Alaiza, Anna Liza Posas
Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
234 Museum Drive
Los Angeles, CA, 90065-5030
323-221-2164
room@theautry.org
2013
Title: Yorba-Cota Family Papers
Identifier/Call Number: MS.1061
Contributing Institution: Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet(1 box)
Date (inclusive): 1837-1897
Abstract: The Cotas the and Yorbas were prominent and wealthy land-owning families who played an integral role in early California history and politics. Pablo Antonio Cota and Jose Antonio Yorba both participated in the Portola expedition and were granted vast stretches of California land as a result. This collection consists of legal documents pertaining to the Yorba and Cota families ranging from 1837 to 1897. The documents relate to land ownership, lawsuits, wills, and financial dealings.

Language: Spanish and English.

creator: Cota Family
creator: Yorba Family

Biographical/Historical note
The Cotas the and Yorbas were prominent and wealthy land-owning families who played an integral role in early California history and politics. Pablo Antonio Cota and Jose Antonio Yorba both participated in the Portola expedition and were granted vast stretches of California land as a result.

The Cotas:

Pablo Antonio Cota was born circa 1744 at Loreto in Baja California. On July 4, 1768, he enlisted as a soldier at the age of 24. In March of 1769, he traveled with the Portola expedition to San Diego, thus establishing the Cota family in California. Pablo Antonio Cota died on December 30, 1800, and was buried at the Presidio of Santa Barbara. He was 55 years old at the time of his death having served as a presidio soldier for 32 years. He and his wife, Dona Rosa Lugo, had a daughter, Maria Los Angeles Cota de la Torre, who was born at Santa Barbara in 1790. At 13 she was married to Don Jose Joaquin de la Torre, cadet and commissary at Monterey, and afterwards secretary to Governor Sola. She died at Monterey in 1877, aged eighty-seven years, after seventy-four years of married life. She left three sons, three daughters, forty-three grandchildren, thirty-four great-grandchildren, and several great-great-grandchildren.

Maria Ysabel Cota de Pico was born in Santa Barbara, May, 1783. At 19 she married Jose Dolores Pico, one of three brothers who came to California with the first Mexican colony as officers in the military service of the Spanish Vice-royalty in Mexico. Her husband died in 1827, after fifty years of military service. Of this marriage were born thirteen children, who, with their cousins, the Castros, children of their father's brothers, and allies by marriage, were all powerful in the affairs of government in California at the time of the American invasion. Maria Ysabel Cota de Pico was over 86 years old when she died. Her descendants numbered over 300, including one of the sixth generation; nearly all live in California and they bear the names of the most prominent native families, as well as of many leading American citizens intermarried with them. In the 1830s the Cota family received several large land grants between Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, California which served to further their power and prominence in California and its history.

The Yorbas: Jose Antonio Yorba, originally from Catalonia, Spain, was a young corporal when he participated in the Portola expedition which passed through Orange County in July of 1769 on its way toward Monterey, California. He is credited with the discovery of the Santa Ana Canyon during this expedition. He married Maria Josefa Grijalva in San Francisco on May 17, 1782. Their first three children were born in the Monterey area while Jose Antonio was in the army. In 1789 the family moved to San Diego after he had been assigned to the presidio there. Eleven more children were born to the family between 1789 and 1810. Juan Antonio retired from the army in 1797 and, with his father in-law, Juan Pablo Grijalva, he began grazing cattle on the land that was to become Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana. When Jose Antonio Yorba, along with his nephew, Juan Pablo Peralta, applied for their land grant they were required to get permission from Grijalva's widow, Maria Josefa. On July 1,1810, Governor Figueroa granted the 62,516 acres to Jose Antonio Yorba and Juan Pablo Peralta. The Yorba family is said to have once owned “all the land between Riverside and the sea.” The original Yorba land grant, given to Jose Antonio Yorba by the king of Spain in 1769, included what are now Corona, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin, Olive, Costa Mesa, and El Modena, California.

References:
Member of ‘oldest farm family’ succumbs. (1950, May, 2). Los Angeles Times.
‘Dancing’ Cotas to delight audience at queen of missions. (1949, August 3). Santa Barbara News-Press.

Processing history
Initial inventory created by Southwest Museum staff, circa 1941. Descriptive notes for finding aid created by Maritxu de Alaiza, 2012 August 30. Finding aid completed by Anna Liza Posas 2013. Final processing of collection and publication of finding aid made possible by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

Scope and contents
This collection consists of legal documents pertaining to the Yorba and Cota families ranging from 1837 to 1897. The documents relate to land ownership, lawsuits, wills, and financial dealings.

Access
Collection is open for research. Appointments to view materials are required. To make an appointment please visit http://theautry.org/research/research-rules-and-application or contact library staff at rroom@theautry.org.

Use
Copyright has not been assigned to the Autry National Center. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Autry Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Autry National Center as the custodian of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the reader.

Preferred citation
Yorba-Cota Family Papers, 1837-1897, Braun Research Library, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.1061; [folder number] [folder title][date].

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Cota, Leonardo.
Cota, Manuela Nieto de.
Cota, Ynez Yorba de
Figueroa, Francisco
Peralta, Juan Pablo
Sepulveda, Family
Wolfskill, Francisca
Wolfskill, Lewis
Yorba, Bernardo, 1800 or 1801-1858
Yorba, Teodorio
Actions and defenses
Affidavits
Baja California (Mexico : Peninsula)
California -- History -- Sources
Correspondence
Deeds -- California
Land grants -- California
Land tenure -- California
Legal documents
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History -- Sources
Maps
Memorandums
Rancho Los Alamitos (Calif.)
Receipts (financial records)

Proceedings (expediente) concerning Jose Sepulveda and Teodocio Yorba. 248.L.14 circa 1840
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
- Physical Description: 8.0 pages
- Scope and Contents note
Written on Aduana Maritima de Monterrey paper. Originally 10 pages, but the first two pages missing. Document includes a testimony of witnesses to show that the criminal Jose Antonio Flores escaped from jail on the night of Thursday, February 13, 1840, visited Jose Sepulveda and returned to jail again; and that Sepulveda wished to implicate Teodocio Yorba in criminal activities.

Petition of Hilario Barelos in behalf of Bernardo Yorba in connection with the execution of a judgment against Juan Pablo Peralta. 248.L.15 1849
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian

Proceedings against Juan Pablo Peralta instituted by Bernardo Yorba through attorney Cota. 248.L.16 1849
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
- Physical Description: 10.0 pages

Letter of Leonardo Cota to the Ayuntamiento of Los Angeles suggesting securing wood supply though the planting of fences composed of living trees about all cultivated fields in the pueblo. 248.L.17 1845
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
- Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Speech written by Leonardo Cota on behalf of the Ayuntamiento of Los Angeles to some new official, apparently the Governor, assuring him the cooperation of the Ayuntamiento. 248.L.18 Undated
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
- Physical Description: 1.0 page

Document signed by Leonardo Cota assuming responsibility for a prisoner, Leonisio Alipaz, if released from jail. Two endorsements signed "Carillo." 248.L.19 1845
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
- Physical Description: 1.0 page

Document Approving a land petition, signed by Leonardo Cota. Attached to (B) a document in regard to the delay in building a house on granted land, signed by Judge Marquez. 248.L.20 1845
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian

Conditional deed (similar to a mortgage) to Estevan Joudain, covering a vineyard; signed by Leonardo Cota on behalf of members of the Cota family. 248.L.21 1848
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian

Note of Juan P. Peralta to Bernardo Yorba for $220.00. 248.L.22 1848
- Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Summons to Leonardo Cota from Sheriff Barton 248.L.23 1853
Language of Material: English

Will of Manuela Nieto de Cota 248.L.24 1837
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Cota land survey map 248.l.25 Undated
Note for $100 in favor of K. Cohn & Co., signed by Leonardo Cota. 248.L.26 1887
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 page

Motion of Rives et als vs. Cota et al. 248.L.27 1873
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 5.0 pages

Suit of Yves Yorba de Cota against Lewis Wolfskill for abrogation of foreclosure and damages 248.L.28 1877
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Casa de los Cotas records 248.L.29 circa 1874
Physical Description: 20.0 pages
General note
English and Spanish
Scope and Contents note
Bundle of copies of documents that consists of an abstract of title for the Casa de los Cotas in Los Angeles originally granted to Leonardo Cota on behalf of his father Guillermo Cota in 1844.

Report of commissioners appointed to apportion and subdivide the south half of Rancho El Rincon among the heirs of Bernardo Yorba. 248.L.30 1873
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 6.0 pages

Deposition etc. regarding perpetuation of the testimony of Andres Dominguez 248.L.31 1873
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 9.0 pages

Summons and complaint; Rives et als vs. Cota et als. Regarding Rancho Rincon. 248.L.32 1872
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 4.0 pages

Copy of affidavit to oppose writ of assistance. Lewis Wolfskill and Francisca Wolfskill vs. Leonardo Cota 248.L.33 1877
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 4.0 pages
Copy of a summons and complaint in partition, Andrea E. de Davila et al vs. Prudencio Yorba et al. 248.L.34 1872
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 7.0 pages

Quit-claim deed on Rancho La Habra; Francisca Roldan de Carillo and Juan Carillo to Leonardo Cota. 248.L.35 1875
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Package of documents and copies regarding title of Rancho La Sierra 248.L.36 circa 1888
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 24.0 pages

Memorandum and copies of documents referring to property granted to Guillermo Cota. 248.L.37 circa 1876
Physical Description: 15.0 pages
General note
English and Spanish
Scope and Contents note
Includes document titled "Solar y casa de Guillermo Cota," marked Miguel Cota.

Copy of Bernardo Yorba's will 248.L.38 1858
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 4.0 pages

Copy of power of attorney of N. Gutierrez to Francisco Figueroa with regard to Rancho Los Alamitos and the vina of San Gabriel, to liquidate accounts with managers thereof. 248.L.39.1 1840
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 1.0 page

Copy of deed to Abel Stearns of Rancho Los Alamitos. 248.L.39.2 1842
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 3.0 pages

Copy of decree of Subgefatura Politica 248.L.40 1874
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 4.0 pages
Scope and contents
Located in the northern part of Baja California. Document declares the cession of land in Valle San Rafael by Augustin Mancilla to Raymundo Yorba to be null and void.

Conditional bill of sale (in effect a chattel mortgage) of horses Raymundo Cota to Jose Antonio Machado. Time, 3 months. Horses redeemed and transferred to Leonardo Cota. 248.L.41 1852
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 3.0 pages

Military tax receipt to Leonardo Cota (50 cents). 248.L.42 1857
Language of Material: English
Letter of Prudencio Yorba to Leonardo Cota. 248.L.43 1862
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 1.0 page

Four tax receipts to Maria Antonia Cota 248.L.44 1853-1855
Language of Material: English

Memoranda on deeds and other material 248.L.45 circa 1871
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 3.0 pages

Map of property of Ynez Yorba de Cota 248.L.46 Undated
Language of Material: English

Note in favor of J. B. Durkee signed by Ynez Yorba de Cota and C. J. Cota. $6,000.00. 248.L.47 1892
Language of Material: English

Note in favor of Richard Gird signed by Wm Meredith and Maggie L. Meredith. $160.00. 248.L.48 1887
Language of Material: English

Bill to Leonardo Cota for barbed wire and staples. 248.L.49 1884
Language of Material: English

Express receipt to Leonardo Cota 248.L.50 1886
Language of Material: English

Subpoena 248.L.52 1859
Language of Material: English
Scope and Contents note
Document only includes part of the subpoena.

Bond of Leonardo Cota as guardian of Genovia Cota to Prudencio Yorba and Raymundo Yorba for the sum of $10,000.00 248.L.53 1859
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Mortgage for Ynez Yorba de Cota to Louisa Meyers in the amount of $1,000 248.L.54 1888
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 3.0 pages

Certificate of redemption of real estate to Guadalupe Grasalbra. 248.L.55 1894
Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Mortgage, Inez Yorba de Cota and G. J. Cota to J. B. Durkee; portion of Rancho La Sierra, $6,000 248.L.56 1892
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 4.0 pages
Mortgage, Inez Yorba de Cota and G. J. Cota to Wm. Cavanaugh. $2, 200.00. 248.L.57 1891
   Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Mortgage, Leonardo Cota and Ynez Yoruba de Cota to Cornelius Jensen. Part of Rancho El Rincon, $7,183 248.L.58 1881
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
   Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Agreements with regard to the operations of J.P. Olivera, G. J. Cota and C. C. Grove for liquidating claims on Los Nietos Rancho. 248.L.59 1897
   Language of Material: English
   Scope and Contents note
   Consists of three agreements.

Abstract of sheriff's fees and tax collections. 248.L.60.1 1870 July 19
   Physical Description: 3.0 pages
   General note
   English and Spanish

Cota genealogy 248.L.60.2 circa 1862
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian

Typed copy of a document 248.L.60.3 circa 1862
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
   Physical Description: 3.0 pages
   Scope and Contents note
   Document also includes notes written in pencil.

Capitulo V. De Los Abogados 248.L.60.4 circa 1862
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
   Physical Description: 5.0 pages

Photostats of documents signed by Bernardo Yorba 248.L.60.5 1850
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
   Physical Description: 2.0 pages

Nombres de los Hijos del finado Guillermo Cota 248.L.61
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
   Physical Description: 3.0 pages

Ley Organizando La Corta Suprema de Mexico, y Relative a Los Abogados by Leonardo Cota 248.L.62
   Language of Material: Spanish; Castilian
   Physical Description: 12.0 pages
   Scope and Contents note
   Also includes cover sheet.