Henry Burton Papers: Finding Aid

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Overview of the Collection

Title: Henry Burton Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1888-1934

Collection Number: mssBurton papers

Creator: Burton, Henry H.

Extent: 292 items in 2 boxes

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Abstract: This collection contains correspondence and legal documents related to the case of Henry Burton, son of María Ampara Ruiz de Burton (1832-1895) and Mexican-War general Henry S. Burton (1819-1869), to confirm legal claim to land in Baja California, chiefly in the 1920s in both Washington, D.C., and Mexico City. Much of the collection reflects issues between Burton, the Los Angeles law firm of Spalding and Myers, and attorney Harry B. Lind. The legal documents are primarily about cases brought against Burton and Spalding and Myers by Lind for breach of contract.

Language: The majority of the collection is in English. A few items are in Spanish.

Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

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Preferred Citation
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Provenance

Biographical Note
Henry Burton was the son of General Henry S. Burton (1819-1869) who fought in the Mexican-American War and settled in San Diego, California, at the conclusion of the conflict. General Burton married a Mexican woman, María Ampara Ruiz (1832-1895), who was the heir to two Spanish land grants—the Enseñada de Todos Santos and San Antonio de las Minas parcels in Baja California. The Spanish government granted the lands, totaling over 1,000,000 acres, to María Ampara Ruiz's grandfather, Don José Manuel Ruiz, in 1804. Ruiz served as the military governor of Baja California. María Ampara Ruiz de Burton was a noted Mexican-American author and published two books about the Mexican experience in the United States after the Mexican-American War.

The sole heir to General Burton and María Ampara Ruiz de Burton, Henry Burton launched a campaign in the 1920s to reclaim the land or receive compensation for the grants from the Republic of Mexico following the Mexican Revolution. He hired attorney Harry B. Lind and the Los Angeles law firm of Spalding and Myers (William D. Spalding and Maurice C. Myers) to represent him to the Mexican government and the General and Special Claims Commissions of the United States and Mexico (the agency organized to handle claims for damages against American property during the Mexican Revolution). Harry Lind and the firm of Spalding and Myers initially worked together closely on the case. Burton, however, suspected Lind of undermining his interests and eventually broke his contract with the attorney, choosing instead to work solely with Spalding and Myers.

Scope and Content
This collection contains correspondence and legal documents related to the case of Henry Burton, son of María Ampara Ruiz de Burton (1832-1895) and Mexican-War general Henry S. Burton (1819-1869), to confirm legal claim to land in Baja California, chiefly in the 1920s in both Washington, D.C., and Mexico City.

The correspondence series contains 172 letters and is organized alphabetically by author. The correspondence reflects Burton’s attorneys’ efforts to confirm legal claim to the land, both in Washington, D.C. and Mexico City. The
correspondence also reflects the rift that developed between Lind, Burton, and Spalding and Myers.

The legal documents series contains 73 documents. The series is organized alphabetically by type of document. The legal documents are primarily about cases brought against Burton and Spalding and Myers by Lind for breach of contract. A few of the documents refer specifically to Burton’s claim against the Mexican government. The series includes affidavits, complaints, contracts, depositions, indentures, power of attorney forms, subpoenas, and copies of testimony.

The ephemera series contains 47 items and is organized alphabetically by type of document. The series includes checks, envelopes, memoranda, newspaper clippings, notes, pamphlets, and receipts relating to the Burton cases.

Much of the correspondence and legal documents in this collection reflect the retaliatory measures Lind took against Burton and Spalding and Myers as a result of this split. It is not clear from the collection how Burton’s case to reclaim the land or compensation for it was resolved.

Arrangement
This collection is divided into three series: correspondence, legal documents, and ephemera.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Subjects
Burton, Henry H.
Ruiz de Burton, María Amparo, 1832-1895.
Land grants -- Mexico -- Baja California (Peninsula)
Baja California (Mexico : Peninsula)

Forms/Genres
Legal documents Mexico -- 20th century.
Legal documents -- United States -- 19th century.
Legal documents -- United States -- 20th century.
Letters (correspondence) Mexico -- 20th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 20th century.

Additional Contributors
Bouve, Clement Lincoln, 1878-1944.
Lind, Harry B.
Myers, Maurice C.
Spalding, William D.
General Claims Commission (Mexico and United States)
Spalding and Myers.
United States. Special Mexican Claims Commission.

Box 1

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<th>Correspondence</th>
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<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Burton, Henry H. 6 letters (1927) to Harry B. Lind.</td>
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<td>Burton, Henry H. 3 letters (1927, Nov. 8) to William D. Spalding and Maurice C. Myers.</td>
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<td>Clark, Albert T. 7 letters (1927) to Maurice C. Myers.</td>
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<td>Colgrove, A. S. 1 letter (1929, Mar. 6) to Edith M. Aires.</td>
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<td>Folder 8</td>
<td>Dato, Gustavo. 11 letters (1930) to Spalding and Myers.</td>
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<td>Folder 10</td>
<td>Finkenstein, M. J. 2 letters [undated] to William D. Spalding and Maurice C. Myers.</td>
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<td>Goray, R. L. 1 letter (1928, Mar. 12) to Spalding and Myers.</td>
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<td>Hunt, Bert L. (Bert Leroy), b. 1884. 3 letters (1934) to Spalding and Myers. Note: On letterhead of General Claims Commission, United States and Mexico.</td>
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Correspondence

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Jones, Eleanor I. 3 letters (1929) to Spalding and Myers. Note: On letterhead of General and Special Claims Commissions, United States and Mexico.

Folder 14
Langston, James A. 2 letters (1928) to Spalding and Myers. Note: On letterhead of General and Special Claims Commissions, United States and Mexico.

Folder 15
Lind, Harry B. 2 letters (1925) to Frank B. (Frank Billings) Kellogg, 1856-1937.

Folder 16
Lind, Harry B. 1 letter (1927, Mar. 19) to Fred H. Hamilton.

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Folder 18
Lind, Harry B. 33 letters (1926-1927) to Henry H. Burton.

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Folder 20
Lind, Harry B. 1 letter (1926, Nov. 18) to John S. Bagg.

Folder 21
Lind, Harry B. 6 letters (1926-1927) to Maurice C. Myer.

Folder 22
Lind, Harry B. 8 letters (1927) to Mrs. Harry B. Lind. Note: Typewritten copies of originals.

Folder 23
Lind, Harry B. 14 letters (1926-1928) to William D. Spalding and Maurice C. Myers.

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Folder 25
Lind, Mrs. Harry B. 4 letters (1927) to Henry H. Burton.

Folder 26
Mullendore, William C. 1 letter (1927, May 12) to Maurice C. Myers.

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Myers, Maurice C. 1 letter (1927, May 12) to F. A. Dixon.

Folder 28
Myers, Maurice C. 5 letters (1927) to Albert T. Clark.

Folder 29
Myers, Maurice C. 1 letter (1927, May 12) to Fred Hamilton.

Folder 30
Myers, Maurice C. 2 letters (1926) to Gregory Perkins, Jr.

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Myers, Maurice C. 2 letters (1926) to Henry B. Lind.

Folder 32
Myers, Maurice C. 1 letter (1927, June 4) to William C. Mullendore.

Folder 33
Plumb, Edward Lee, 1827-1912. 1 letter (1864, July 27) to “Dear Sir.” Note: Typewritten copies of original.

Folder 34
Spalding, William D. 7 letters (1928-1930) to Agency of the United States, General and Special Claims Commission.

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Spalding, William D. 3 letters (1928) to General W. A. Bethel.

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Spalding, William D. 2 letters (1930) to Gustavo Dato.

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Spalding, William D. 1 letter (1928, July 25) to Horace Dodge.

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Folder 42
Spalding, William D. 1 letter (1930, July 22) to Richard Cole.

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Spalding, William D. 3 letters (1928-1929) to State Bar of California.

Folder 44
Spalding and Myers. 5 letters (1930) to Gustavo Dato.

Folder 45
Spalding and Myers. 3 letters (1926) to Harry B. Lind.

Folder 46
Spalding and Myers. 1 letter (1926, Oct. 11) to J. B. McLees.

Folder 47
Spalding and Myers. 1 letter (1926, Oct. 16) to Secretary of State, California.

Folder 48
Stanley, Clinton F. 1 letter (1928, Oct. 22) to William D. Spalding.

Folder 49
Woodard, B. F. 4 letters (1928) to Albert A. Rosenshine.

Folder 50
----- 2 letters (1928) to Albert A. Rosenshine.

Folder 51
----- 1 letter (1926, Aug. 27) to General James A. Drain.

Folder 52

Legal Documents and Ephemera

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Accused Answer to Complaint (1928). 2 items.

Folder 2

Folder 3

Folder 4
Complaints (1927-1928). 3 items.

Folder 5
Depositions (1929). 2 items.

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Folder 7
Notice of Hearing Application (1925). 1 item.

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Petition for Letters of Administration (1925). 1 item.

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Folder 10
Questions and Exhibit Lists [undated]. 3 items.
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