Perris District Defense Association and Val Verde Water Company Papers: Finding Aid

Finding aid prepared by Alex Young, October 14, 2010.
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2129
Email: reference@huntington.org
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Perris District Defense Association and Val Verde Water Company Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1895-1929

Bulk dates: 1895-1902

Collection Number: mssHM 74187-74207, mssHM 74412-74420

Extent: 205 items in 1 box and 9 volumes

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Abstract: This collection contains business correspondence, documents, and ephemera relating to the operation of the Perris District Defense Association in Riverside County, California, and a single document and multiple pieces of ephemera relating to the operation of the Val Verde Water Company, with the bulk of the collection dating from 1895-1902.

Language: English.

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

Provenance
Gift from Mrs. E. C. Conklin, July 16 and December 12, 1934.

Cataloger’s Note
Sixty-seven (67) items were found in page 103 of the Minutes Book (HM 74416). That material was put into a folder labeled “Material found in Minutes Book” and put at the end of the collection; it is not item listed in the container list but is described below in the Scope and Content Note.

Historical Note
The Perris District Defense Association was formed in 1895 by property holders in the Perris Irrigation District in order to take legal action against the district for what the Defense Association saw as fraudulent practices of the district, with the aim of dissolving the district so as to clear the property holders of the expensive bonds they were paying to the district. The Defense Association was active through at least 1901 in its efforts to finance and conduct legal action against the original irrigation district. It appears that the association also acted as de facto managers of other matters relating to the maintenance and regulation of the district’s irrigation infrastructure.

The Val Verde Water Company, which also operated in Riverside County near Perris, solicited bonds from local property holders to maintain and build irrigation infrastructure. It shared at least two officers with the Perris District Defense Association, F.J. Fogg and George Conklin.

Scope and Content
The collection contains business correspondence, documents, and ephemera relating to the operation of the Perris District Defense Association, and a single document and multiple pieces of ephemera relating to the operation of the Val Verde Water Company. The materials are organized into two series 1. Perris District Defense Association material; and 2. Val Verde Water Company material. Within each series the materials are divided into sub-series of document type, and organized chronologically within these subseries. The one letter authored by the Val Verde water company to the Perris District Defense Association (HM 74201) is in the sub-series of letters pertaining to the Perris District Defense Association.

The correspondence of the Perris District Defense Association (HM 74187-74204) consist primarily of letters relating to the legal strategy the association regarding their attempt to release District property holders from their financial obligations to
the Perris Irrigation District. HM 74195, a letter soliciting contributions from property holders in the district, offers a good overview of the aims of the association. HM 74205 is the agreement between the association and an attorney working in the legal department of the Southern California Railroad Company, who assisted the law firm of Works & Lee in serving as legal advisors for the association. The minutes of the Perris District Defense Association, HM 74206, offers perhaps the most complete record in the collection of the association’s activities.

The materials of the Val Verde Water Co. are much more incomplete. The draft contract, HM 74207 outlines the company’s intent to solicit subscriptions for the purpose of constructing a pumping station, and the two folders of ephemera provide a very partial sense of the company’s quotidian expenses and activities.

There are also nine volumes in the collection; arranged chronologically. They include cash books, ledgers, journals, stock ledger, transfer journal, record book, and a minutes book that includes meeting minutes and the by-laws of the Val Verde Water Co. The material found in Minutes Book (HM 74416) includes: receipts, invoices, reports, proxy notes, meeting minutes, insurance information, miscellaneous financial documents and one piece of correspondence all related to the Val Verde Water Co.

**Arrangement**

The materials are organized into two series: 1. Perris District Defense Association material; and 2. Val Verde Water Company material.

**Indexing: Subjects**

Southern California Railroad Company

**Indexing Terms**

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

**Subjects**
- Perris District Defense Association.
- Southern California Railway.
- Val Verde Water Company.
- Irrigation -- California -- Riverside County.
- Water resources development -- California -- Riverside County.
- Water-supply -- California -- Riverside County.
- California -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
- Perris (Calif.)
- Riverside County (Calif.)

**Forms/Genres**
- Business letters -- California -- 19th century.
- Business letters -- California -- 20th century.
- Business records -- California -- 19th century.
- Business records -- California -- 20th century.

**Additional Contributors**
- Perris District Defense Association.
- Val Verde Water Company.

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**Correspondence, documents, and ephemera**

1899, Jan. 23. Templin, C.M. Letter to The Perris District Defense Association Board of Trustees. HM 74198.
[c. 1907]. Val Verde Water Co. Ephemera: Returned mail and change of address slips. 6 items.
1901-1926. Material found in Minutes Book. 67 items.

Volumes

1899-1901. Journal. HM 74412
1899-1901. Ledger. [Three items in front cover.] HM 74413
1899-1901. Stock Ledger. HM 74414
1899-1903. Cash Book. [Two items in front cover.] HM 74415
1899-1903. Minutes Book. HM 74416
1899-1908. Transfer Journal. HM 74417
1912-1929. Cash Book. HM 74418
1913-1926. Cash Book. HM 74419
1917-1928. Record Book. HM 74420