
Biographical History

William M. Tipton was born in Dayton, Ohio on February 20th, 1857. His family moved to Brownsville, Nebraska the following year and his father Thomas Weston Tipton was elected to the United States Senate after the end of the Civil War. During Thomas Tipton's incumbency, the family lived in Washington, D.C. where William Tipton was educated at the Emerson Institute. William Tipton briefly taught in the Brownsville, Nebraska public schools before accepting a position in the office of the Surveyor General of the Territory of New Mexico in Santa Fe. In order to read old governmental documents from New Mexico from its time under the governance of Spain and Mexico, Tipton learned Spanish and began to develop skilled understanding of land grants and how to handle Spanish language documents specifically. Because of this self-taught expertise, he worked as a land surveyor and protected the U.S. government from fraudulent land claims in the New Mexico Territory.

On August 15, 1892, Tipton was appointed a Special Agent and Spanish Expert to the United States Attorney for the Court of Private Land Claims. The court was organized to address and settle land claims in New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, and Arizona in the aftermath of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. In 1901, Tipton was sent by the United States government to the Philippines at the beginning of the U.S. occupation following the 1898 Treaty of Paris. He established the Bureau of Public Lands and became the first head of the Bureau. After a few years working in Manila, Tipton returned to the United States and worked in different federal and New Mexican state government positions before his retirement in 1921.

He then moved to Santa Clara County with his second wife, Alice J. Tipton, and lived on a ranch there until his death in 1922 at the age of 65.

Throughout his life, Tipton compiled lists of Spanish terms with the hope of adding them to a Spanish-English dictionary. These lists make up the majority of his personal papers.

The biographical information for this finding aid comes mostly from a letter written by William Tipton's second wife Alice J. Tipton to the University President Rev. Zacheus J. Maher, S.J. from when she transferred William Tipton's papers to the University Library in 1923 and from an article from The American Surveyor.


Organizational History

Santa Clara University was founded in 1851 by the Society of Jesus as Santa Clara College and is California's oldest operating institution of higher learning. It was established on the grounds of Mission Santa Clara de Asís, the eighth of the original 21 California missions. The college originally operated as a preparatory school and did not offer courses of collegiate rank until 1853. The institution became known as the University of Santa Clara in 1912, when the schools of engineering and law were added. For 110 years, Santa Clara University was an all-male school. In 1961, women were
accepted as undergraduates and Santa Clara University became the first coeducational Catholic university in California. The number of students and faculty tripled over the next decade and the university began the largest building program in school history with eight residence halls, a student union, and an athletic stadium. In the early 1970s, the Board of Trustees voted to limit the size of the undergraduate population, an action that was intended to preserve the character and ensure the quality of the university for generations to come. In 1985, the university adopted Santa Clara University as its official name.


Preferred Citation
William M. Tipton Papers, MSS.1923.09.23, Santa Clara University Library, Archives & Special Collections.

Processing Information

Related Materials
Arthur Spearman, S.J. Papers (link to online finding aid): http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6r29n8f2
Ames on forgery; its detection and illustration, with numerous causes célèbres (illustrated) by Daniel T. Ames (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1014491
Código de colonización y terrenos baldíos de la República Mexicana / formado por Francisco F. de la Maza y publicado según acuerdo del presidente de la República. Por conducto de la Secretaría de estado y del despacho de fomento. Años de 1451 a 1892 (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1302826
Coleccion de los decretos y ordenes de las Cortes de España, que se reputan vigentes en la republica de los Estados-Unidos Mexicanos (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1805086
Diccionario enciclopédico de la lengua castellana con la nueva ortografía adoptada oficialmente por la Real Academia española / Enrique Vera y González (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1121965
Ensayo de gramática hispano-tagala / compuesto por el fr. Toribio Minguella de las Mercedes (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1080588
Gramática de la lengua castellana: destinada al uso de los americanos / por D. Andres Bello (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1066170
Gramática de la lengua castellana / por la Real academia española (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1060871
Historia de la Nueva México / por el capitán Gaspar de Villagrá. Reimpresa por el Museo Nacional de México, con un apéndice de documentos y opúsculos (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1306608
Manuel iloco-castellano: ó, Sea método para aprender ó enseñar el castellano en los pueblos ilocanos / Fernando Ferrer (link to bibliographic link): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1061657
Nahuatlismos de Costa Rica ; ensayo lexicográfico acerca de las voces mejicanas que se hallan en el habla corriente de los Costarricenses (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1105758
Nuevo diccionario de la lengua castellana / por la Academia española, añadido con unas veinte y seis mil voces, acepciones, frases, y locuciones entre ellas muchas americanas, por don Vicente Salva; y con un suplemento de más de 300 páginas, que contiene las voces de ciencias y artes, etc., que no se hallan en el cuerpo de la obra (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1085323
Ordenanzas de tierras y aguas, o sea formulario geométrico-judicial para la designación, establecimiento, mensura, amojonamiento y deslinde de las poblaciones y todas suertes de tierras, sitios, caballerías y criaderos de ganados mayores y menores y mercedes de agua / obra publicada por Mariano Galvan (link to bibliographic link): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1081458
Papers of President Zachaeus J. Maher (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1811018
Reales ordenanzas para la direccion, régimen y gobierno del importante cuerpo de la minería de Nueva-España : y de su Real Tribunal general / De orden de Su Magestad (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1148381
Second report of the United States Board on Geographic Names (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1279615
The handwriting of Junius : professionally investigated by Charles Chabot, expert / With preface and collateral evidence, by the Hon. Edward Twisleton (link to bibliographic record): https://sculib.scu.edu/record=b1290313
Scope and Content of the Collection

The William M. Tipton Papers, 1887-1978 (bulk 1893-1918), document the professional and personal life of William M. Tipton who worked in several capacities for the state and federal government, starting as a land surveyor for the New Mexico Territory. In his spare time, Tipton compiled several lists of Spanish terms that did not appear in most prominent Spanish-English dictionaries of his time with the hope of submitting them and also studied how Tagalog interacted with Spanish in the Philippines. The records consist of lists of Spanish terms, notes, government documents, land surveyor tools, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, and photographs.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms

Santa Clara University -- History
Education, Higher -- California -- San Jose
New Mexico -- History
Land Grants -- New Mexico

SERIES I. William M. Tipton's Personal Papers, 1887-1978 (bulk 1893-1918)

Scope and Content

This series documents Will Tipton's personal and professional life as a land surveyor and self-taught expert in old Spanish documents. It includes materials from the Philippine Committee of Geographical Names and photographs of Fr. Arthur Spearman, history professor and archivist at Santa Clara University, at Mr. Tipton's grave.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format.

| box 1, folder 1 | List and inventory of the Tipton collection, 1978 |
| box 1, folder 2 | Clipping: "El Origen de la Palabra 'Gringo'," 1916 |
| box 1, folder 3 | By-laws of the Phillippine Committee of Geographical Names, 1904 |
| box 1, folder 4 | Report from the U.S. Senate Committee on the Philippines, 1908 |
| box 1, folder 5 | Correspondence, 1887-1927 |
| box 1, folder 6 | "Additions and Changes to Spanish and English Dictionary" by Will M. Tipton, undated |
| box 1, folder 7 | Miscellaneous materials (includes memo, letter and several lists of books), 1973, & undated |
| box 1, folder 8 | Miscellaneous pamphlets, 1896-1901, & undated |
| box 1, folder 9 | Photographs of Arthur D. Spearman and Richard P. Vaggione, 1972 |
| box 1, folder 10 | Notes and clippings: "memoranda of Spanish words, phrases, etc," 1903-1918, & undated |

SERIES II. Lists of Spanish Terms with English Translations, n.d.

Scope and Content

This series documents the personal efforts of William M. Tipton to compile Spanish terms to be added to a Spanish-English dictionary. Most entries include the English equivalent of the word.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format.
SERIES II. Lists of Spanish Terms with English Translations, n.d.


Scope and Content
This series documents the professional and personal life of William M. Tipton. The series includes a manuscript of William M. Tipton’s collected writings edited by Rev. Richard Paul Vaggione, the full name of which is “The Gift of Tongues: The Collected Papers of Will M. Tipton Presented in Lexicographical Form- edited by The Rev. Richard Paul Vaggione.” The series also includes the surveyor tools, including several glass protractors, that were used by William Tipton in a professional capacity.

Arrangement
This series is arranged by format.

box 2
Binder with notes on new Mexican Spanish terms, undated

box 3, Item 1

box 3, Item 2
Fiske Reading Machine (includes directions for use), c. 1926

box 3, Item 3
Small leather box labeled “Will M. Tipton, Examiner of Questioned Documents” (note: box contains 13 glass plates with imprints of protractors, line measures and flat rulers), 1915, & undated