

Albert K. Owen papers

Finding aid prepared by Ena Hillery and Jaime Madrigal, Student Processing Assistants.

Special Collections & University Archives

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Albert K. Owen papers

Date (inclusive): 1863-1911, undated

Date (bulk): 1886-1911

Collection Number: MS 005

Creator: Owen, Albert Kimsey

Extent: 3.60 linear feet(4 boxes)

Repository: Rivera Library. Special Collections Department.
Riverside, CA 92517-5900

Abstract: This collection contains photographs, correspondence, contracts, court documents, newspaper clippings, blueprints, and other material pertaining to Albert K. Owen, an American civil engineer hired to construct a railway from Kansas City, Kansas to Topolobampo, Sinaloa. Includes material pertaining to the Topolobampo colony and Credit Foncier Company of Sinaloa as well as Owen's personal and professional correspondence. Letter books pertaining to land and mining operations in Sinaloa, Mexico are also contained in the collection.

Languages: The collection is in English and Spanish.

Access

This collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Copyright Unknown: Some materials in these collections may be protected by the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.). In addition, the reproduction, and/or commercial use, of some materials may be restricted by gift or purchase agreements, donor restrictions, privacy and publicity rights, licensing agreement(s), and/or trademark rights. Distribution or reproduction of materials protected by copyright beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. To the extent other restrictions apply, permission for distribution or reproduction from the applicable rights holder is also required. Responsibility for obtaining permissions, and for any use rests exclusively with the user

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [date if possible]. Albert K. Owen papers (MS 005). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

Acquisition Information

Purchased in 1982.

Processing History

Processed by Ena Hillery and Jaime Madrigal, Student Processing Assistants, 2015.

Processing of the Albert K. Owen papers was completed by undergraduate students from the University of California, Riverside as part of the Special Collections & University Archives Backlog Processing Project started in 2015. This project was funded by the UCR Library and administered by Bergis Jules, University and Political Papers Archivist, and Eric Milenkiewicz, Manuscripts Curator.

Biographical Note

Albert K. Owen was born in Chester, Pennsylvania in 1848. Owen was an American civil engineer and was hired in 1872 to evaluate the feasibility of constructing a railroad from Kansas City, Kansas to the northern Mexican port of Topolobampo, Sinaloa. Though his original plan was just to build a railroad, the modified plan soon included a cooperative colony which can be traced to Owen's roots in an Indiana utopian colony. From this plan came the Credit Foncier Company of Sinaloa. The Credit Foncier Company issued stock, credits, and scripts in return for labor which benefited the colony. This was also the agency used by Owen to acquire land holdings for himself and the colony. Though Owen's plans for the colony were never successful, his plans for the railway were pursued and later became what is now known as the Mexican Central Railroad which runs from El Paso, Texas across the Sierra Madre mountains, to the port of Topolobampo, Sinaloa.

Collection Scope and Contents

This collection is comprised of photographs, correspondence, contracts, court documents, newspaper clippings, blueprints, and other material pertaining to Albert K. Owen's involvement with the Topolobampo colony, located in the northern port of Sinaloa, Mexico. Mailings to Owen from personal contacts which encompass correspondence, diary entries, and letters on daily life are also included. Additionally, there is material on the Credit Foncier Company, an agency founded by Owen to issue stock, script, and credit in return for labor, as well as to obtain land holdings for Owen and the colony. Letter books pertaining to land and mining operations in Sinaloa, Mexico are also contained in the collection.

Collection Arrangement

This collection is arranged into three series as follows:

- Series 1. Documents, 1863-1911
- Series 2. Maps and blueprints, undated
- Series 3. Press clippings and photographs, circa 1879-1895, undated

Indexing Terms

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

Subjects

Kneeland, Ira Cook, -1812?
Collective settlements
Topolobampo (Mexico)
Utopias

Genres and Forms of Materials

Clippings (information artifacts)
Correspondence
Maps
Photographs

Series 1. Documents 1863-1911**Series Scope and Contents**

This series contains documents, correspondence, and other material pertaining to the Credit Foncier Company and Albert K. Owen. Also includes Ira Kneeland's correspondence, legal documents, and contracts regarding Topolobampo as well as letter books pertaining to land and mining operations in Sinaloa, Mexico.

Series Arrangement

This series is arranged sequentially by box and folder number.

Box 1, Folder 2
Box 1, Folder 3
Box 1, Folder 4

Documents of the Credit Foncier Company 1886-1892**Legal documents and contracts pertaining to Topolobampo 1863-1911****Correspondence of Albert K. Owen and Ira Kneeland 1886-1903****Scope and Content Summary**

This folder includes letters to and from Albert K. Owen and the Kneeland Letters.

Box 4

Letter books pertaining to land and mining operations in Sinaloa, Mexico featuring correspondence from A. Sydney Jones (?) to William N. Olmsted circa 1885-1895**Series 2. Maps and blueprints undated****Series Scope and Contents**

This series includes a collection of maps and blueprints pertaining to Topolobampo.

Series Arrangement

This series is arranged sequentially by box and folder number.

Box 1, Folder 5
Box 1, Folder 6

Maps of the United States and Mexico including the region of Topolobampo and Sinaloa, Mexico undated**Blueprints of buildings and street schematics for Topolobampo undated****Series 3. Press clippings and photographs circa 1879-1895, undated****Series Scope and Contents**

This series contains press clippings, photographs, and other material pertaining to the people and landscapes of Topolobampo and surrounding areas.

Series Arrangement

This series is arranged sequentially by box and folder number.

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 2, Folder 1

Box 2, Folder 2

Box 2, Folder 3

Box 3

Press clippings and promotional material pertaining to Topolobampo 1879-1890

Photographs of the landscapes and geography of Mexico including Topolobampo circa 1889-1894

Photographs of Fuerte Valley at the time of Topolobampo by Ira Kneeland undated

Photographs of people in Topolobampo and surrounding areas circa 1886-1895

Newspaper clippings regarding Topolobampo circa 1880-1889