Descriptive Summary

Creator: Denton Family

Title: Denton Ranch Collection (Jacume, Baja California Norte, Mexico),

Date (inclusive): 1864 - 1993

Extent: 1.00 linear feet (2 archives boxes, 6 oversize folders)

Abstract: Title documents and correspondence related to the ownership of the Denton Ranch, also known as Rancho Jacume, located on the international border in Baja California Norte, Mexico near La Rumerosa. The collection forms the documentation for the Denton Family's claim for compensation for the expropriation of the ranch in 1939 during the Cardenas administration. The collection is divided into three series: 1) TITLE DOCUMENTS, 2) CORRESPONDENCE, and 3) MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS.


La Jolla, California 92093-0175

Collection number: MSS 0115

Language of Material: Collection materials in English

Access
Collection is open for research.

Acquisition Information
Not Available

Preferred Citation
Denton Ranch Collection (Jacume, Baja California Norte, Mexico), MSS 0115. Mandeville Special Collections Library, UCSD.

Publication Rights
Publication rights are held by the creator of the collection.

Historical Background

Col. William Denton (1828-1907), an English civil engineer, came to California during the Gold Rush, worked for the United States geodetic survey and later pursued an interest in mining exploration and speculation in Mexico. In 1860, he married Elena Cano de los Rios of Mulege, Baja California and eventually moved his family to San Diego in 1874. Denton became a naturalized Mexican citizen in 1896.

In 1885, Col. Denton purchased two thousand five hundred hectars (6,175 acres) of land in Mexico known as "Jacumbo" from Senora Higinia Tortoledo for five hundred pesos. Rancho Jacume, as it was known locally, was located on the frontier of the Northern District of Lower California, Mexico on the international border. Col. Denton maintained his residence in San Diego, where his children were educated, and used Rancho Jacume for cattle grazing.

At the time of his death in 1907, Col. Denton's estate was largely comprised of properties in Baja California, Mexico. He owned an undivided interest in Rancho Algodones, located on the Colorado River in Baja California; Rancho Jacume; and half interest in the mines known as Toronjil, Angel de la Guardia, Nueva Esperanza, La Vaca, Tarantula, the Chubasco group, the Sireno group, Santa Rosa, Alice, Josephina, Ajax and Vulcan. Denton worked in a mining partnership with H.A. Howard of San Diego, who provided capital for survey expenses, title acquisition, and taxes.

Upon Col. Denton's death, title to the Denton Ranch was divided between his wife, who received a one half interest, and his children, William Smith Denton, Oscar Alan Denton, Sara Brent Denton Scott, Alexander Marion Denton, Maria S. Denton Showley and Morgan Gascoigne Denton. Elena Denton willed her property equally to Sara Denton Scott, Maria Soledad Denton Showley, Morgan Gascoine Denton, and Samuel John Murvin Showley. Oscar Alan Denton occupied the Denton Ranch and administered the property.

In 1939, the Denton Ranch was expropriated by the Mexican government and ownership transferred to a newly form ejido, or agricultural collective. Over the next seven years, Maria Denton Showley and her brother, Morgan Denton, pursued a suit with the American Mexican Claims Commission for compensation and on June 28, 1946 a settlement was reached.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Denton Ranch records contain title documents and correspondence supporting the Denton Family's claim for compensation to the American Mexican Claims Commission for the 1939 expropriation of the Denton Ranch. The documents trace the chain of ownership from Senora Higinia Tortoledo, through Colonel William Denton, to Maria Denton Showley and Morgan Denton. The bulk of the correspondence relates to the compensation claim. The collection is arranged in three series: 1) TITLE DOCUMENTS, 2) CORRESPONDENCE, and 3) MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS.

SERIES 1: TITLE DOCUMENTS
The TITLE DOCUMENTS series contains copies, often holograph, of documents of conveyance, wills, certificates and testimony which establish clear title to the Denton Ranch. The materials date from 1872 to 1939 and are arranged in chronological order. Of particular interest is the document which associates Senora Higinia Tortoledo with the property called "Jacumbo" in 1885 (Box 1, Folder 3).

SERIES 2: CORRESPONDENCE
The CORRESPONDENCE series contains all the correspondence in the collection and is arranged chronologically. Included are letters from Col. William Denton and his wife, Elena and other family members. The bulk of the correspondence dates between 1930 to 1946 and relates to the administration of the estate. Elena Denton, Maria Denton Showley and Morgan Denton are the major correspondents during this period.

SERIES 3: MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS
In the MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS series are documents related to William Denton's other holdings in Baja California- Rancho Algodones and various mining properties. Also included is genealogical information on the Denton Family. Finally, an interesting transcription by Dan Showley of a seaman's diary provides description of Baja California at the time of William Denton's marriage to Elena Cano de los Rios in 1860.

RELATED COLLECTIONS
Maps and materials related to Denton's Baja California mines are located at the San Diego Historical Society.

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

Subjects
Denton Family -- Archives
Denton, William, 1828-1907
Denton, Elena
Showley, Maria Denton
Denton, Morgan
Denton Ranch (Jacume, Baja California Norte, Mexico) -- Archives
Rancho Jacume (Jacume, Baja California Norte, Mexico) -- Archives
Land titles -- Registration and transfer -- Mexico -- Baja California (Peninsula)
Land tenure -- Mexico -- Baja California (Peninsula)
Baja California (Mexico : Peninsula) -- History

TITLE DOCUMENTS

box 1, folder 1
Transfer of title to Jacume executed in La Paz, Baja California 1872
Note
Typescript carbon transcription of conveyance from Albina Arriola de Higinia Tortoledo to William Denton for 500 pesos.

box 1, folder 2, oversize FB08201
Marriage certificate of William Denton and Maria Elena Cano de los Rios 1876
Note
Recorded in San Diego, Cal.

box 1, folder 3
Rancho "Jacumbo" homestead document 1885
Note
Document establishes Senora Higinia Tortoledo's claim to the 2,500 hectare tract

box 1, folder 4, oversize FB08202
C. Secretario de Estado y del despacho de Fomento 1885
Note
Signed in Todos Santos de Ensenada by William Denton
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box and Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| box 1, folder 5, oversize FB08203 | William Denton's Mexican naturalization certificate 1886  
  Note  
  Photocopy |
| box 1, folder 6, oversize FB08204 | Power of attorney from Higinio Tortoledo to William Denton 1877  
  Note  
  Transcribed copy and lawyer's translation |
| box 1, folder 7 | Citacion 1887  
  Note  
  Executed at Todos Santos de Ensenada |
| box 1, folder 8 | No. 644 El Administrador de Rentas de este Territorio.... 1887  
  Note  
  2 copies |
| box 1, folder 9, oversize FB08205 | Certificacion 1887  
  Note  
  Relates to the payment of 246 pesos by William Denton to the Administrador de Rentas in Todos Santos de Ensenada |
| box 1, folder 10 | Testimonial compulsado de los poderes.... 1890  
  Note  
  Documentation of the transfer of power of attorney from Higinia Tortoledo to William Denton in 1877 |
| box 1, folder 11 | El suscrito, Consul de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos en San Diego.... 1893 |
| box 1, folder 12 | Copias certificadas de algunas constancias que obran en el juicio.... 1905  
  Note  
  Validation of Denton's title to "Jacume" in the District Court of Ensenada |
| box 1, folder 13 | William Denton's last will and testament 1906  
  Note  
  Typescript copy |
| box 1, folder 14 | Copy of title as recorded in Ensenada 1911  
  Note  
  Photographic copy and typescript translation |
| box 1, folder 15 | Court of Tecate confirms Elena Cano de los Rios as owner of "Jacume" 1916  
  Note  
  Photographic copy |
| box 1, folder 16, oversize FB08206 | Primer testimonio de la escritura por la que la senora Elena Cano de los Rios... 1929  
  Note  
  Photograph copy |
| box 1, folder 17 | En Tecate, Baja California a las nueve horas.... 1930  
  Note  
  Elena Cano de los Rios' signed will |
TITLE DOCUMENTS

box 1, folder 18  Testament of Elena Cano de los Rios 1930
Note
Typescript English translation of records submitted in probate proceedings

box 1, folder 19  Appointment of executors for Elena Cano de los Rios' will 1939
Note
Typescript English translation

box 1, folder 20  El Ciudadano Luis G. Carreno, Secretario del ramo penal.... 1939
Note
Typescript

CORRESPONDENCE

box 1, folder 21  Correspondence 1864 - 1899
box 1, folder 22  Correspondence 1900 - 1909
box 1, folder 23  Correspondence 1910 - 1919
box 1, folder 24  Correspondence 1920 - 1929
box 1, folder 25  Correspondence 1930 - 1939
box 1, folder 26  Correspondence - Part I 1940 - 1949
box 1, folder 27  Correspondence - Part II 1940 - 1949
box 1, folder 28  Correspondence 1950 - 1959
box 1, folder 29  Correspondence 1970 - 1979
box 1, folder 30  Correspondence 1980 - 1982

MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS

box 1, folder 31  Fitch, F.G. "The Sea of Cortes, 1858-1859: the diary of F.G. Fitch" 1858 - 1859
Note
Recent typescript transcription edited by Dan Showley

box 1, folder 32  In regard to the Algodones Rancho - Thos. H. Blythe & others
Note
Typescript photocopy

box 1, folder 33  Newspaper clippings 1907 - 1993
box 1, folder 34  Photographs of Denton Ranch 1929 - 1954
Note
Photocopies

box 1, folder 35  Report on a group of iron properties in the "Trinidad" mineral district 1903
Note
Photocopy

box 2, folder 1  Showley, Dan. "Sabbatical Leave Report" 1949
Note
Description and travel in Mexico

box 2, folder 2  Some allied families & posterity of Robert John Young and Daisie Frances Denton
Note
Family history

box 2, folder 3  Vital dates of Denton family members
Note
Photocopy
box 2, folder 4

Originals of preservation photocopies