Title
Charles Spencer collection

Dates
1910-1920

Extent
11.3 cm textual records, 5 blueprints

Biographical History
Charles Spencer grew up in along the San Juan River in Utah Territory and near Mancos, Colorado. He received just three months of formal education in Durango, Colorado. Instead, Spencer opted to pursue mining and engineering. He served as Managing Director at the Lee’s Ferry, Arizona field office at the American Placer Company. Independently, he selected several sites for the harvest of resources such as gold or water, and solicited investors to fund the ventures.

In 1911, Spencer and his investors commissioned the construction of a steamship in San Francisco. It was shipped in pieces to Salt Lake City, Utah, and reconstructed to be used to transport newly mined coal up the Colorado River. In 1912, a clogged amalgamator rendered the steamboat unusable, and it was docked near Lee’s Ferry. The boat was submerged in a 1921 flood, and was later placed on the National Register of Historic Places and can still be viewed along the Colorado River.

In 1913, Spencer visited Flagstaff and began work on a project to acquire water rights from the San Francisco Peaks for distribution to towns and cattle ranches in the vicinity. He formally incorporated the Coconino Water Development and Stock Company in 1915, with attorneys C.B. Wilson and Gerard T. Wall of Flagstaff as his incorporators. This Company held water rights to a good portion of the resources in the region. In 1917, he incorporated the Great Western Cattle and Sheep Company in California and the Arizona Cattle and Sheep Company in Arizona. Jointly, these companies held stock in the Coconino Water Development and Stock Company, which enabled Spencer to avoid the need to create a public utility company. When the companies were unable to generate the promised resources and revenue by 1920, investors withdrew from the project, and Spencer was forced to end his projects relating to the San Francisco Peaks in Flagstaff. He continued to be involved in mining ventures in the area until the 1960s in the area, though he was never overly successful.

Scope and Content
Records consist of large amounts of correspondences sent and received by Charles Spencer in the course of his activities as founder of the Coconino Water Development and Stock Company, the
Arizona Cattle and Sheep Company, and the Great Western Cattle and Sheep Company. It contains several agreements, permits, notices, reports, legal papers, blueprints, and notes related to plans for water development in the San Francisco Mountains. Among the hand-drawn plans are two sets of drawings for the Linger-Longer Rest Camp, a lodge planned for the Great Western Cattle and Sheep Company for which there is no evidence of ever being constructed. Additionally, the collection contains plans for the Charles H. Spencer Steamship, which was used for his coal mining operations previous to his water development projects in Flagstaff.

**System of Arrangement**
This collection is arranged in the following series and sub-series:

- **Series 1: Water Development, 1910-1920**
  - Sub-series 1: Charles Spencer Research Materials, 1910-1916
- **Series 2: Charles H. Spencer Steamship Blueprint**

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**Languages and Scripts of the Materials**
All materials are in English.

**Finding Aids**
An earlier index of this material was created by Harold S. Colton in 1956. A more detailed inventory listing is available upon request.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**
This accession was received from C.B. Wilson in 1956. It was assigned accession #MS-23 by the MNA Library.

**Accruals**
No further accruals are expected.

**Related Archival Material**
The following sources provide additional information related to the activities of Charles H. Spencer and/or his activities associated with the Coconino Water Development Project:

- Northern Arizona University Cline Library: Babbitt Brothers Trading Company, NAU.MS.83, NAU.PH.421: Box-folder numbers 5-124
- University of California at Los Angeles Young Research Library: Cory Family Papers, Series 1 (Reports), Box 3, Item 269
Publication Note
Materials in this collection were used for the following publications, which are found in the MNA Library:


Description Control
Finding aid written by Libby Coyner using DACS, 4 February 2009
Title
Series 1: Water Development

Dates
1915-1920

Extent
10.8 cm textual records, 4 blueprints

Scope and Content
Series consists of Charles Spencer’s correspondences, articles of incorporation, agreements, board meeting minutes, blueprints, and various legal documents resulting from his activities in water development in the San Francisco Peaks.

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Title
Sub-series 1.1: Charles Spencer Research Materials

Dates
1910-1916

Extent
.5 cm textual records

Scope and Content
Sub-series consists of presidential proclamations regarding National Forest land in Arizona, as well as Department of Interior topographical maps.

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Title
Series 2: Charles H. Spencer Steamboat Blueprint

Dates
1911

Extent
1 blueprint

Scope and Content
Series consists of one blueprint of the Charles H. Spencer Steamboat.

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<th>Series 2: Charles H. Spencer Steamboat Blueprint</th>
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LCSH Access Points
Charles H. Spencer (Steamboat)
Coconino County (Ariz.) – History
Flagstaff (Ariz.) – History – 20th century
Flagstaff (Ariz.) – Maps, Topographic
San Francisco Peaks (Ariz.)
Water rights – Arizona

Additional Access Points
Dr. Herbert A. Parkyn
A.H. Jones
American Placer Corporation
Gerard T. Wall
C.B. Wilson
R.N. Burgess
H.T. Cory
Coconino Water Development and Stock Company
Great Western Cattle and Sheep Company
Arizona Cattle and Sheep Company
Charles H. Spencer Steamboat