
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MS 0174
Corbett family
Papers, 1875-1963 (bulk 1875-1900)

DESCRIPTION

Correspondence, printed material, scrapbooks, and ledgers relating to the Corbett family and their activities.

1 box, 2 outside items, 1.5 linear ft.

RELATED MATERIAL

Related Hiram S. Corbett photograph collection at PC 025.

ACQUISITION

Gift of Hiram S. Corbett, 1949, and Ruth Corbett Cross, 1987.

ACCESS

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

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Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society - Tucson, Archives Department.

PROCESSING

The collection was processed by Kim Frontz, September 1998.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John N. Corbett, of Sumtner, South Carolina, and his wife, Gulie Britton, had eight children: L. George, Henry, J. Knox, Leonard, William, Elizabeth, Emma, and Susan. In 1880, William and Henry came to Arizona. They were joined by J. Knox in 1881. William Corbett was appointed assistant Postmaster in Tucson and in 1889, he married Bell Creary. In 1890, he established the W.J. Corbett Hardware Company which he operated until his death in 1919. Henry was employed as a merchant, prospector and laborer. He married Rose, and they had one daughter, Emma.

In 1883, J. Knox Corbett was appointed assistant Postmaster. He married Elizabeth Hughes, daughter of Samuel Hughes and Anastacia Santa Cruz Hughes, in 1885. They had two children Hiram S. and Gulie (married first to Joseph C. Caperton, second to William A. Bell). In 1890, J. Knox was appointed Postmaster; he served four years then he established J. Knox Corbett Lumber. From 1915 to 1917, he served as Mayor of Tucson. He died in April 1934.

At the retirement of his father, Hiram S. Corbett became president of what was then the J. Knox Corbett Hardware and Lumber Company. He married Dorothy Udall in 1924; they

were later divorced. They had one son, J. Knox Corbett II. Hiram later married Ruth Weissinger and they had one daughter, Ruth (married to Edward J. Meyer and later Barton Cross). After the death of Hiram's wife, Ruth, he married Frances Ruppelius.

Hiram was an amateur golfer in the 1920s and 1930s. He organized the first Tucson Open golf tournament in 1950. As president of the Texas Baseball League, Hiram was instrumental in bringing professional baseball to Tucson. In 1951, the baseball field at Reid Park was named "Hi Corbett Field" in his honor. Hiram was active in the Republican Party and served as Pima County Chairman, 1920-1924, State Chairman, 1924-1928, and as a national committeeman, 1928-1932. He represented Pima County in the State Senate from 1953 to 1964. He died in July 1967.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes correspondence between family members; some writing from the southern United States, the rest written by William, Henry, and J. Knox in Tucson concerning family activities and their early life in Tucson, 1880-1885. The 1934 correspondence consists of condolence letters received following the death of J. Knox Corbett. Two letters, 1951 and 1956, relate to Hi Corbett, one letter seeking election support and the other about the naming of "Hi Corbett Field." Some correspondence to Elizabeth Fladung, 1920s, is from her grandmother, Atanacia Hughes (in Spanish), and her aunts regarding family matters. There is printed material including golf programs, an early menu, and political reportage. One scrapbook contains clippings about family members, the other follows news coverage of a California and Oregon land fraud trial that J. Knox Corbett was involved in. There are also ledgers regarding the guardianship of Elisa Stevens Velasco relating the sale of cattle and payments to workers.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1

f.1	Family correspondence (from Tucson)	1880
f.2	Family correspondence (from Tucson)	1881
f.3	Family correspondence (from Tucson)	1883-1885
f.4	Family correspondence (from Tucson)	undated, circa 1880
f.5	Family correspondence (out-of-state)	1875-1882
f.6	J. Knox Corbett as mayor/postmaster	1883-1930
f.7	Family correspondence to Elizabeth Treat Fladung	1920s
f.8	Condolence letters – death of J. Knox	1934
f.9	Correspondence – Hi Corbett	1951,1956
f.10	Legal documents – real estate	1871,1898
f.11	Printed material	
f.12	Scrapbook re: family members	
f.13-15	Ledgers – Elisa Stevens	1894-1903

Outside Item 1: Two ledgers, probably practice exercise for a business school.

Outside Item 2: Scrapbook of clippings about Oregon and California land fraud case which J. Knox Corbett was involved with.