

**TITLE:** Charlie Meadows Collection

**DATE RANGE:** 1880-2000

**CALL NUMBER:** Y-MS 5

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2 linear feet (2 boxes)

**PROVENANCE:** Various sources.

**COPYRIGHT:** Unknown

**RESTRICTIONS:** This collection is unrestricted.

**CREDIT LINE:** Charlie Meadows Collection, Y-MS 5, Arizona Historical Society-Rio Colorado Division, Yuma.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:**

Charlie Meadows was born Abraham Henson Meadows in the early 1860s (precise date varies) in Visalia, California. His name was changed to Charlie sometime before 1870. In his teens his family moved from California to Diamond Valley, Arizona. In 1882 Apache warriors attacked the Meadows ranch killing his father and one brother. After this, Charlie drifted around Arizona, becoming a noted cowboy and Indian fighter. The early 1890s found Charley working for travelling Wild West shows, most notably Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Later he started his own show called Arizona Charlie's Wild West Show. The late 1890s found Charlie in Dawson City, Canada taking part in the Klondike Gold Rush. By all accounts Charlie did well, building the Palace Grand Theatre in Dawson City and printing the *Klondike News*.

In 1901, Charlie sold his theatre and returned to the Southwest. Charlie's next great scheme led him to gather a group of well-armed men and sail to Tiburon Island off the coast of Mexico in search of lost treasure. The expedition met with little resistance but failed to find any hidden treasure. An attempt to buy the island from the Mexican government also failed.

Soon after Charlie's nautical adventure he settled as a cattle rancher in Yuma, Arizona. In Yuma, Charlie became known as a bitter and cantankerous man. Records of numerous trials exist for everything from tax evasion to slander and armed assault. In 1906 Charlie began intermittent printings of a newspaper called *The Valley Hornet*. This paper was published whenever Charlie was angered, verbally attacked anyone and everyone who came to Charlie's attention. The content of the paper caused Charlie to be sued several times for slander even after he began publishing under the pseudonym I. Sting. He died on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1932 in Yuma. He was buried in Yuma Cemetery, fulfilling his prophecy that it would snow at his death, during the first snow storm Yuma had seen in 50 years.

Arizona Charlie was a colorful, famous, and iconic Western figure during his lifetime and long after. The Palace Grand Theatre in Dawson City was restored and his name is celebrated there. In addition, a hotel and casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, bears his name and memory.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:**

This collection primarily consists of secondary source material, such as news clippings and short biographies. Among the notable papers of this collection are copies of several pages from Charlie’s diary, a copy of the 1916 edition of *The Valley Hornet*, and a copy of the *Klondike News*.

**CONTAINER LIST:**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<b>1</b>	1	<b>Biographical Information:</b> Charlie Meadows	1902–2013
	2	<b>Biographical Information:</b> Thomas Beach, Herbert Hughes, James Meadows, Mobley Meadows, Annie Oakley	n.d.
	3	<b>Business Ventures:</b> Arizona Charlie’s Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	1980-2000
	4	<b>Business Ventures:</b> Hot Air Navigation Company	n.d.
	5	<b>Business Ventures:</b> Valley Hornet Newspaper	1916
	6	<b>Correspondence:</b> Charlie Meadows	1882–1932
	7	<b>Correspondence:</b> Research correspondence	1965–1987
	8	<b>Papers:</b> Legal Papers	1906–1916
	9	<b>Papers:</b> Manuscripts (includes photocopy and transcript of his 1891 diary)	1891, n.d.
	10	<b>Papers:</b> News Clippings	1910–n.d.
	11	<b>Photographic Reference Material</b>	1974, n.d.
	12	<b>Postcards</b> (French Art Burlesque, California, Germany, Japan and Religious)	n.d.
	13	<b>Publications:</b> <i>Arizona Charlie</i> by Jean Knight	1989
	14	<b>Publications:</b> <i>Arizona Charlie and the Klondike Kid</i> by Julie Lawson (children’s book)	2003
<b>2</b>	1	<b>Oversize:</b> Business Ventures, Arizona Charlie’s Wild West Show broadside	1893–1896
	2	<b>Oversize:</b> Business Ventures, <i>Klondike News</i>	1898