

TITLE: Walter Riley Collection

DATE RANGE: 1900 – 1969

CALL NUMBER: Y-MS 46

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2 linear feet (3 boxes)

PROVENANCE: Materials were donated in 1989 by Nik Curtis who purchased the materials at an auction in 1988.

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RESTRICTIONS: This collection is unrestricted.

CREDIT LINE: Walter Riley Collection, Y-MS 46, Arizona Historical Society-Yuma

PROCESSED BY: Benjamin Findley, May 2014

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Walter Riley was born in 1879 in Denton, Texas to Francis Marion Riley and Frances Riley nee Webb. Not much is known about his early life until he arrived at Yuma in 1897. Over the course of his life he wore many hats. He spent several years as Undersheriff working for Gus Livingston. He worked as a court recorder and prison guard and was a member of the volunteer fire brigade. The Federal government employed him riding along Mexican border painting boundary markers. He went into politics and spent 18 years as the Yuma County Assessor. In his later years Walter hunted mining claims and wrote stories about his earlier years. He was married twice, first to Leota Webb until her death in 1922 and then to Clara Johnson. Walter Riley passed away in 1959. His home at 734 Second Avenue, now known as the Clara Smith Riley House, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: The bulk of this collection consists of legal and business documents, stories about early Yuma, photographs and memorabilia. Other materials correspondence involving mining ventures, Walter's time as County Assessor and a petition signed by 96 Yuma men who organized a "Home Guard" perhaps in response to border unrest. There are numerous family photographs as well as those taken of various locations in Yuma and Arizona. The memorabilia contains campaign signs, reading glasses, and a Yuma County Undersheriff badge as well as assorted pamphlets, and ribbons. There is also a Scrapbook in the oversize box containing photos of Walter's wife Clara and her first husband, A. E. Smith. Organized by format (print material, photographs, memorabilia).No series.

CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Folder	Title	Dates
1	1	Biographical	1950s-1970s.
	2	Business Correspondence	1909 – 1939, n.d.

	3	Personal Correspondence	1908 – 1948, n.d.
	4	Petition for Home Guard Duty	n.d.
	5	<i>Yuma Daily Examiner</i>	1909
	6	Writings (reminiscences and short stories of early Yuma)	n.d.
	7	Photographs - Various People (includes children at Indian School, Hill Family, Hook Ranch, and others all identified)	1918 – 1942, n.d.
	8	Photographs - Johnson Family	1920 – 1946, n.d.
	9	Photographs, - Riley, Clara	1918, n.d.
	10	Photographs - Riley Family	1919, n.d.
2	1	Photographs - Riley, Walter	1888 – 1952, n.d.
	2	Photographs – Unidentified Individuals	1911 – 1948, n.d.
	3	Photographs - Unidentified Individuals	n.d.
	4	Photographs - Various Locations (includes cyanotypes)	1900 – 1961, n.d.
	5	Photographs – Various Locations (includes cyanotypes)	n.d.
	6	Memorabilia (includes Undersheriff badge)	n.d.
3	OV	Memorabilia (includes campaign signs)	n.d.
	OV	Scrapbook (Clara and A. E. Smith)	