

TITLE: Wallace E. Clayton Research Collection

DATE RANGE: 1877-1941

CALL NUMBER: MS 165

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1 Box, .25 linear foot

PROVENANCE: This collection was donated to the Arizona Historical Society by Wallace E. Clayton, Editor of the Tombstone Epitaph.

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RESTRICTIONS: This collection is unrestricted.

CREDIT LINE: Arizona Historical Society-Tucson, MS 165 – Wallace E. Clayton Research Collection

PROCESSED BY: This collection was processed in March 1992 by Joanne Callender under the supervision of the Acting Head of the Archives Department, Rose Byrne.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Biographies of John Philip Clum (1851-1932), Wyatt Earp (1848-1929) and William S. Hart (1870-1946)

John Philip Clum, born in Claverack, NY, enjoyed a multifaceted career, highlighted by a successful Indian Agency tenure in San Carlos, AZ, from 1874 to 1877, during which time the Apache Chief, Geronimo, was captured. Thereafter he became founder and published of the Tombstone "Epitaph", where he wrote a famous editorial on the gunfight as the OK Corral. In the 1890's he was Postal Inspector in Washington, DC, and in Alaska. From 1911-1920 Clum was Official Lecturer for the Southern Pacific Company. His last years were spent in Southern California studying crop cultivation and writing articles about Indian and Arizona history.

Wyatt Earp was Deputy U.S. Marshal assigned to the Arizona Territory during the early days of the area's development when cattle ranching and mining had made Tombstone the farthest outpost of civilization. Although we find it hard now to separate fact from fiction, Tombstone was obviously a wild unruly town and Earp had at least one shining moment when he rapidly disposed of the Clantons and McLowerys, cattle rustlers in 1881. His career in Tombstone ended with his departure soon afterwards.

William S. Hart was an early Western movie actor, popular between 1914 and 1920, after which he turned to writing Western books principally for young boys. An established legend by 1920, he encouraged Wyatt Earp in these letters and offered his help through contacts in the publishing business.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Wallace E. Clayton, Editor and Publisher of the Tombstone “Epitaph”, donated these two Tombstone-related records. This collection consists of two remotely related groups, the John P. Clum documents (1851-1932), and the Wyatt Earp/William S. Hart correspondence (1920-1929)

Series I: Clum Documents

Sub-series 1 – Correspondence contains incoming and outgoing correspondence between John Clum and the U.S. Department of the Interior, War Department and Postal Department between 1877 and 1917. It deals primarily with his applications for employment, acceptance or denial of employment, and resignations from each of these agencies.

Sub-series 2 – Finance Documents, consists of time cards from 1890 and 1891 by the War Department for John Clum while he was serving in a postal service capacity.

Sub-series 3 – Manuscript, by Marjorie Clum Parker, granddaughter of John P. Clum, is a narrative recounting the early life of her father, Woodworth Clum, when John Clum was editor of the “Epitaph” and Earp was U.S. Marshal in Tombstone. The connection between the two records in this collection is revealed here.

Sub-series 4 – Printed Material, include Rutgers Alumni Monthlies (selected issues 1936-1941) which contain biographical material on John Clum by himself and his son Woodworth Clum (1936), lecture engagement schedule of John Clum, 1916-1917, Newspaper clippings from the Tombstone Epitaph, 1881-1882, and Fairbanks Daily News, 23 Jan.1909 recommending Clum to Director of Posts for Alaska.

Series II: Earp/Hart Correspondence

Wyatt Earp’s letters to William S. Hart demonstrate his concern regarding the correction of misconceptions about his role in the early days of Tombstone. Earp wrote a manuscript in which, he says, he revealed the true story; he submitted his script to a number of publishers, none of whom accepted it; later he hired two writers to tell the story, their scripts too were rejected. Death finally released Earp from his effort, but meantime we see a glimpse of the mutual affection between these men as well as Earp’s lingering fascination with the West (he spends much time at his copper mine in Vidal, CA). The 1928 Newhall flood, Tex Rickard’s death in 1929, and other events of the day are mentioned in passing.

The letters do not reveal how or when Hart and Earp became acquainted.

CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Series	Folder	Title	Dates
1	1	1	John Clum Letters	1877-1910
		2	John Clum Letters	1911-1917
		3	Time Record Cards	1890-1891

		4	Marjorie Clum Parker Manuscript	Undated
		5	Printed Material	1936, 1941
	2	6	Wyatt Earp-William S. Hart Correspondence	1920-1929