
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PC 129**Spencer family****Spencer family photographs, ca. 1890s, 1940s****DESCRIPTION**

Family portraits, photographs of many Tucson homes and buildings, and photographs of the Warsaw mining camp in the Oro Blanco Mining district were taken at the turn of the century mostly between 1895 and 1905, with a few family pictures taken in the 1940s.

2 boxes, 1.25 linear ft.

ACQUISITION

Gift of Dr. Elizabeth A. Spencer in October 1947.

ACCESS

One original album in restricted due to fragile condition; copy prints are available for patron use.

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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

Kim Frontz prepared this finding aid in September 2002.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Dr. Michael Spencer and his wife, Abby Wasgate Spencer, came to Arizona in 1884. Dr. Spencer was a surgeon at the Gunsmith Mine for two years, then moved to Tucson as a partner to Dr. John C. Handy. He died on October 2, 1896 as he returned from a medical call. The Spencers had seven sons and two daughters. One daughter, Elizabeth was a physician in San Francisco. His son, Alex was a miner living in Tucson and southern Arizona. Alex and his wife, Minnie, had a son Harold who died at an early age in a shooting accident. Another brother, John W. Spencer was also a miner in the Tucson area.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains photographs of family members including Elizabeth Spencer, her parents Michael and Abby Spencer, and her brothers John and Alex. There are also several photographs of Alex's wife, Minnie, and son, Harold. Most are studio portraits; a few images of Harold show the child in various activities including sitting inside a pot and sitting on a burro with a rifle and mining tools.

There are also two photograph albums present, created by Alex B. Spencer. One of these shows many images of Tucson including buildings, homes, and businesses as well as people, and a circus; there are also Bisbee mining scenes. The Tucson scenes, dated about 1898, show Congress Street, the Tucson Indian School, St. Mary's Hospital, St. Joseph's Academy convent, the Don Chun Wo grocery, the Eagle Flour Mill on Toole Avenue, homes on North Main Avenue and more. One image is labeled as "old courthouse and old city wall."

The other photograph album mostly shows the Warsaw Mining Camp in the Oro Blanco Mining District, about 1903. These images include a Mexican washwoman, Japanese cook, the company store, stamp mills at Oro Blanco, Old Glory, and Tres Amigos, miners, and circa 1901 "curved dash" automobile.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1

- f.1 Michael and Abby Spencer
- f.2 Elizabeth Spencer
- f.3 John W. and Elizabeth Spencer
- f.4 Alex B. and Minnie Spencer
- f.5 Minnie Spencer and son, Harold
- f.6 Harold Spencer
- f.7 Bohall children of Nogales
- f.8 Album pages, Warsaw Mining Camp, Oro Blanco district
- f.9 Mine buildings, unidentified

Box 2

Photograph album - Tucson and Bisbee

Includes: Wheeler & Perry Grocers 40 E. Congress, stand pipe for water works, University of Arizona buildings, Elks Hall at 89 Court St., Fort Lowell, St. Mary's Hospital, St. Joseph's Academy convent, Carnegie Library, Tucson Indian Training School, Southern Pacific station, Don Chun Wo grocery, J. Ivancovich grocery, Methodist Episcopal parsonage on Stone near Pennington, Safford School, an African-American boy, a Chinese boy with balloons, Warren Grossetta as a drummer boy with the Mariner's Juvenile Band, a circus parade on Congress Street with elephants and a zebra, Gen. Miles and Mrs. Miles at award ceremony in 1887, Dr. Whitmore, Rev. Foley, San Agustin Cathedral, San Augustine Hotel, Eagle Flour Mill on Toole Avenue, the old courthouse and city wall, and North Main Avenue homes of Satterwhite, Herring, and Franklin, and homes of Blake and Wheeler, and the Spencer homes at 131 N. Stone Avenue. Other photographs show the Copper Queen Mine, burros carrying water, slag dumps, and the Dunnivan family.