

TITLE: John H. Page & Company

DATE RANGE: 1880-1981 (bulk 1900-1960)

CALL NUMBER: FM MSS #145

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2.9 linear ft (6 boxes)

PROVENANCE: Donated by Fred Eldean, 1980. Donated to the Arizona Historical Society in 2012 by the Arizona Historical Foundation.

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CREDIT LINE: John H. Page & Company, FM MSS 145, Arizona Historical Society-Papago Park.

PROCESSED BY: John Irwin, 2011

BIOGRAPHICAL and HISTORICAL NOTE:

John H. Page (1877-1960) was born in Rutland, Vermont, the son of former Vermont Governor John Boardman Page. He graduated from Harvard University with a Bachelor of Science Summa Cum Laude degree in mechanical engineering in 1900. Soon after in 1900 he came to the Grand Canyon in Arizona. He both operated the Canyon Copper Company mine and a tourist lodge at Grand View. In 1903 he was elected to the Arizona Territorial Legislature from Coconino County and he served in both houses. In 1906 Governor Kibbey appointed him to be Territorial Auditor, and in 1909 President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him as Secretary of the Territory of Arizona. He also served as Chairman of the Board of Equalization and was a member of the Board of Control.

Mary E. Leverich established a land office in Phoenix in 1906 that specialized in government land script and land exchanges. Mr. Page became a partner in this firm in 1910. When Ms. Leverich retired in 1916, David B. Morgan, who had been employed at the U. S. Land Office in Washington D. C. and K. K. Koontz from the Arizona Land Department, joined Page as partners. They operated the John H. Page & Company together for more than forty years. In 1922 the company was the first tenant of the Luhrs Building in downtown Phoenix. When Morgan retired in 1958, Fred Eldean, a client of the firm, acquired his partnership and he later became President upon the death of John Page in 1960. The company later became the Page Land and Cattle Company.

Over the decades this company became the largest and most prominent land company in Arizona. Under its auspices millions of acres of land throughout Arizona changed hands. The company was involved in facilitating thousands of state and federal land sales and exchanges,

railroad tracts, mining claims and patents, lumbering permits, cattle and sheep ranch sales, grazing rights, electric transmission line right-of-ways, oil and gas leases, and urban development of government lands. Notable deals included several expansions of the Navajo Indian Reservation, the U. S. patent for the San Manuel Mining Corporation and land for the new town of San Manuel, and City of Phoenix park acquisition of South Mountain.

From 1922-1927 Mr. Page was Director and Vice President of the new Tucson, Phoenix, and Tidewater Railroad Company. He was Lease and Real Estate Agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad from 1924 -1947, and one of the incorporators and the first Vice President of the Arizona Public Service Company. Mr. Page was also a Director of the First National Bank of Arizona.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

This collection includes a wide breadth of Arizona land transactions, 1900-1960, among Arizona's major land owners and developers, and their interface with territorial, state and federal government and Indian tribes. It documents the formative period that laid the footprint for Arizona's land tenure, and Arizona's tremendous growth and real estate development of the first half of the twentieth century.

The bulk of this collection is composed of the company's client files microfilmed in 1961-1962. The resulting 201 reels are arranged in two series, **Series I: 1900-1950**, **Series II: 1950-1960**, reflecting the original index. This index has been scanned into PDF and serves as the container list. The file headings include those of individuals, businesses, corporate entities, and investors. Files contain scripts, bills of sale, deeds, homestead patents, plats, abstracts of title, leases, appraisals, water rights, correspondence, background material, technical reports, financial and litigation records.

Box 1 contains a photograph of John H. Page, and a transcript of a 1981 speech by Fred Eldean about the decades-long effort for a major land transaction of 98,000 acres in northern Arizona between the Forest Service, Aztec Land and Cattle Company, and Southwest Lumber Mills. The transaction was approved in 1958.

At the end of Series II are five miscellaneous reels. Reel 195 contains Page family business and legal documents in Vermont, 1880's – 1890's, including former Vermont Governor John Boardman Page. Of special significance are files from Page's residence at the Grand Canyon, 1900-1903. Included are documents concerning the construction of the Grand Canyon Railway Company, the Bright Angel toll trail, the Bright Angel Hotel, the Grand View Hotel, the Tusayan Development Company, the Anita Consolidated Copper Company, the Atkinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, the Babbitt Brothers Trading Company, Grand Canyon entrepreneur Martin Buggelin, and Arizona's future U. S. Senator, Ralph Henry Cameron.

Reel 196 "John Page Historical Files" includes biographical and genealogical data of John Page; a 1960 manuscript history of the company by Tom Tarbox; business records of Page and the company's original owner, Mary E. Leverich; and Page's 1959 claim of Ellis Island in the New

York City harbor. Included in Reel 198 under “Hearst” are significant files concerning mining claims at the Grand Canyon.

Notable clients included: Acme Cattle Company, American Smelting and Refining Company, Arivaca Land and Cattle Company, Arizona Public Service Company, Arizona Cattle Growers Association, Arizona Eastern Railroad, Arizona Livestock Company, Arizona Sand and Rock Company, Arizona Wool Growers Association, Aztec Sheep Company, Babbitt Brothers Trading Company, Baboquivari Cattle Company, Boquillas Cattle Company, H. C. Boice, Louis Bowman, Frank Brophy, George F. Campbell, Canyon Copper Company, Central Arizona Light and Power Company, City of Phoenix, Charles C. Day, Henry B. Day, James Stewart Douglas, Lewis W. Douglas, Grand Canyon Cattle Company, Greene Cattle Company, Dwight Heard, William Randolph Hearst, Chester W. Johns, Kennecott Copper Company, Magma Copper Company, Howell Manning, J. A. Manterola (Howard Sheep Company), Ohaco Sheep Company, Phelps Dodge Copper Company, Pouquette Sheep Company, Carlos Ronstadt, San Manuel Copper Company, Santa Fe Railroad, Three Links Cattle Company, City of Tucson, Joseph K. Udall, Karl G. Udall, Union Gypsum Company, United Verde Extension Mining Company, Uranium Bell Inc., William Wrigley.

Researchers are also advised of two related oral history recordings (AV 388, 443) by Fred Eldean at the Arizona Historical Society Library in Tucson. These document railroads acquiring Western lands, the creation of national forests, and land development in Arizona.

CONTAINER LIST:

| Box | Reel | Title | Dates |
|------------|-------------|--|--------------|
| 1 | 1-30 | Index of Files, 1900-1960; Index of Files, 1950-1960 | 1962 |
| | | John H. Page photograph | n. d. |
| | | “The Case Of The 98,000 Acres” by Fred Eldean | 1981 |
| 2 | 31-66 | Series I: Microfilm | 1900-1950 |
| 3 | 67-102 | Series I: Microfilm | 1900-1950 |
| 4 | 103-138 | Series I: Microfilm | 1900-1950 |
| 5 | 139-143 | Series I: Microfilm | 1900-1950 |
| | 144-168 | Series II: Microfilm | 1950-1960 |
| 6 | 169-201 | Series II: Microfilm | 1950-1960 |
| | | Two unidentified 8mm film reels | n. d. |

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