
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MS 0715**Schneider, Gustav van Hemert, 1885-1951
Collection, 1867-1868, 1903-1951****DESCRIPTION**

Correspondence, caricatures, maps, ephemera, health dept. certificates, and photographs from Schneider's collections of materials on various topics including prostitution in Tucson about 1912; letters of Dr. Joseph Widney, an army physician in southern Arizona in 1867-1868; letters from Schneider to a friend reminiscing about the 1910s in Tucson, construction of Old Tucson for the movie Arizona; and Schneider's work with the railroad including caricatures of fellow employees and correspondence of the Epes Randolph Veteran's Association.

5 boxes, 7.75 linear ft.

ACQUISITION

The collection was donated in three parts: the first was received from Elizabeth Healy, sister of Gustav Schneider, in 1960; later donations were received from Frank and Justine Healy Keller in 1991, 1993, and 2000.

ACCESS

There are no restrictions on access to most of this collection. The original letters of Joseph Widney are restricted due to fragile condition; photocopies 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, Library/Archives Department.

PROCESSING

The collection was processed by Heather Lindsay, intern, under the supervision of Rose Byrne, in Fall 1996; additional materials were processed and added by Kim Frontz in October 1997 and July 2000.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Gustav van Hemert Schneider was born in Contra Costa County, California on January 9, 1885 to Joost van Hemert Schneider and Rose Mary Lyndell Schneider. Their other children, Carl, Elisabeth and Elanora, were also born in California. He studied art and architecture at Mark Hopkins Art School. He moved from Oakland, California to Tucson, Arizona in 1902 and worked at the Southern Pacific Railroad (S.P.R.R.) Engineering Dept. from 1903 to 1948. During his career, he designed many bridges for the railroad including the Rio Fuerte bridge in Mexico.

Gustav was also a well known local historian in Tucson. He served as technical consultant to Columbia Pictures during filming of the movie, *Arizona*, and assisted the *Tucson Daily Citizen* with preparation of its "Arizona Album" column by identifying historic photographs and providing historical information. He was also known for his accurate historical maps of Tucson. His caricatures of friends and co-workers are amusing and insightful.

Gustav was active in many organizations; he was past president of the Tucson Engineers Club and member of the Arizona Pioneers Historical Society, and was a 32nd degree Mason. He served as secretary for the Randolph Veterans Association; the group was formed by men who worked for Epes Randolph on the old Randolph Railroad lines in Mexico, later part of the Southern Pacific Railway system. Gustav's father, Joost Schneider, was a friend of Joseph Widney, author of letters in this collection. Gustav never married; he died in September 1951.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection falls into four series: Personal and miscellaneous, 1927-1951; Prostitution research, ca. 1912; Joseph P. Widney materials, 1867-1868; and the Randolph Veteran's Association, 1940-1951. The letters written by Joseph P. Widney, an army physician, describe his experiences serving at Fort Bowie, Arizona. He letters relate his travel experiences from Drum Barracks, California to La Paz, Tucson, and finally Fort Bowie, Arizona. Most letters are written from Fort Bowie, between June 1867 and May 1868. He describes medical treatments, people, and activities at the Fort including Apache attacks, visitors, and living conditions.

Schneider collected information relating to prostitution in Tucson circa 1912. The materials include a street map of Gay Alley created by Schneider, City Health Department certificates, and studio portraits of local prostitutes. The Randolph Veteran's Association material includes correspondence, group photographs, and information about the organization and its members from 1940 to 1951. There is also biographical information about Epes Randolph. Personal and miscellaneous materials include an autobiographical sketch, promotional material about Tucson, estate documents, and correspondence about early Arizona railroads. There is a series of letters written in the 1940s that contain reminiscences about work and life in the 1910s in Tucson. Also present are blueprint caricatures chiefly of Arizona Eastern Railroad co-workers, but also two of local prostitutes. Blueprint drawings, scripts, photographs, correspondence and autographs are present from the construction of Old Tucson for the movie *Arizona*. A typescript of reminiscences is also present of Charles Von Petersdorff, U.S. Mineral Surveyor in Tucson, ca. 1896. Location of the original is unknown.

Box and Folder List

Box 1

Series: Personal and miscellaneous, 1927-1951

- f.1 Personal correspondence, biographical sketch, etc., 1927-1951
- f.2 Correspondence re: early railroads in Arizona, 1949-1951
- f.3 Reminiscences written to Prof. Charles Leo Hunley, 1940s
- f.4 Typescript of SPRR Mexico diaries, 1913
- f.5 Caricatures, Individuals

- f.6 Caricatures, Albums
- f.7 Drawings, including 1880 house plans
- f.8-9 Tucson memorabilia, 1903-1949
- f.10 Schneider's copy of George Hand's diaries
- f. 10b Autobiography of Charles Von Petersdorff (typescript copy)

Series: Prostitution materials, ca. 1912

- f.11 Prostitution materials, ca. 1912
- f.12 Photographs – Prostitutes, ca. 1912

Box 2

Series: J.P. Widney Materials, 1867-1868

- f.13 Typescript excerpts and biographical information
- f.14-18 Letters, Jan. 1867-July 1868
- f.19 Invoices of medical supplies, 1867-1868
- f.20 Fort Bowie Muster Roll, Nov.-Dec. 1867

Series: Randolph Veteran's Association, 1940-1951

- f.21 Background and membership material, 1940-1951
- f.22-26 Correspondence, A-Z, 1948-1949
- f.27 Group photographs of Association members, ca. 1940-1950

Box 3

Series: Old Tucson construction, 1939-1940

- f.28 Bound collection of blueprints, photographs, script, lists of movie staff, and autographs for the movie Arizona. There are also typescript pages of historical notes about Tucson in the 1860s.

Box 4

- f.29 Screenplay for the movie Arizona, 1940
- f.30 Correspondence re: movie production, 1939
- f.31 Lecture on construction of Old Tucson movie set
- f.32 Examples of Poston's Tubac currency (created in 1940 for the movie)
- f.33 Cyanotype of oven (from movie set)
- f.34 Blueprint drawings of movie sets and scenes
- f.35 Publicity magazine for movie Arizona

Box 5

Oversize items

- Two maps of Gay Alley
- Various blueprint drawings and plans for Old Tucson construction