

TITLE: Sturges Farms Collection

DATE RANGE: 1892-1956

CALL NUMBER: Y-MS 58

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 12 linear feet

PROVENANCE: Donated by the Sturges Trust, 1992

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CREDIT LINE: Stephen Sturges Collection Y-MS 58, Arizona Historical Society- Rio Colorado Division

PROCESSED BY: Linda Whitaker, September 2015

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Stephen H. Sturges was one of ten children born to William W. and Hattie (Black) Sturges on August 9, 1896. In 1907 the family moved from Meadville, Missouri to Yuma where his brother Charlie bought a 40-acre farm. The Sturges boys went to work early. Stephen said, "I could go to school only every other year. Farm work came first, school second." He finished high school at age 22. He went on to become President of Sturges Farms which cultivated 2,500 acres, rented 2,000 additional acres, and also held state leases on 2,000 acres. He experimented with almost every crop and agricultural process known to the Yuma area.

After serving in the U.S. Navy during World War I, Stephen returned to Yuma where he expanded the family farming business to include alfalfa, cattle, lettuce, cantaloupe production and shipping, cotton production and ginning, real estate, land excavation, and other ventures such as copper mining in California and oil in Ohio. He became active in irrigation politics and was known as a tireless fighter for irrigation development. He served many years on the Board of Governors of the Yuma County Water Users Association. He is remembered for his successful efforts in freeing control of the project from the Bureau of Reclamation. In his later years, he became interested in buying and selling art.

During his first marriage, Stephen Sturges adopted his niece Jane Sturges Schoenherr. In 1943, he married Rose Poos, a school teacher at Fourth Avenue Grammar. She was well-liked by her students, many of whom became lifelong friends. Like her husband, she was active in the community throughout her life. She was known for her flower gardens and received many awards for her flowers and arrangements. In 1991, she was inducted into the Yuma County Educational Hall of Fame. She died in 1995, at the age of 96.

Stephen Sturges, enjoyed hunting and fishing along the Colorado River with his brothers and was one of Yuma’s best known and best liked citizens. By all reports, he was a friendly, informal and generous man who preferred the outdoors walking the fields and checking his crops. He ran “a happy office “without status symbols and where working people were always welcomed. Stephen Sturges died in 1982 at the age of 85.

(Sources: *Arizona Edition, American Biographical Encyclopedia, Profiles of Prominent Personalities* by Paul W. Pollock, 1967 p. 58.
Sturges Charitable Trust <https://sites.google.com/site/sturgescharitabletrust/home/about> accessed 9-1-15)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: As of this date, very little remains of Stephen Sturges’ personal and business papers. The bulk of this collection consists of checks and invoices in a narrow date range from 1954-1956. Given his contributions to Yuma agri-business and his reputation as a generous, civic-minded man, this is a real loss to the historical record. However, he and his wife live on through the Stephen H. Sturges and Rose P. Sturges Charitable Trust.

This trust provides funding for scholarships through the Yuma Community Foundation to qualified Yuma high school students planning to attend college. *Since 1985, over 340 students have received scholarships from the Stephen H. and Rose P. Sturges Trusts. Each year, twelve to fifteen Higher Education Scholarships are awarded to Yuma area high school seniors. With satisfactory grades and proper enrollment, each scholarship is renewable for three years for a total scholarship of \$10,000.* (Source: <https://sites.google.com/site/sturgescharitabletrust/home/about> accessed 9-1-15)

Arranged in four series and chronological or alphabetical within. **Series I: General Correspondence** – folders reflect original titles and the only extant correspondence to and from Stephen Sturges. Of interest is the Yuma Producers Association’s Prisoner of War Committee. **Series II: Investments** – real estate titles and abstracts. **Series III: Cancelled Checks** – documents the principle business accounts for Sturges Farms; includes paychecks that show the scope of the Sturges Farms payroll. **Series IV: Invoices** – document a wide range of farming expenses and his support of Yuma businesses.

CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Folder	Title	Dates
1	1	General Correspondence: “A”	1954
	2	General Correspondence: “B”	1954
	3	General Correspondence: “C”	1952-1954
	4	General Correspondence: “F”	1954
	5	General Correspondence: “G”	1954
	6	General Correspondence: “R”	1954

	7	General Correspondence: "S"	1954
	8	General Correspondence: "T"	1954
	9	General Correspondence: "U"	1955-1956
	10	General Correspondence: "W"	1954
	11	General Correspondence: Yuma County Water Association	1948-1951
	12	General Correspondence: Yuma County Producers Cooperative Association, Prisoner of War Committee	1945-1946
	13	Investments: Title Abstract, Lot 10, Block 4, Speese Addition	1892-1931
	14	Investments: Title Abstract, Southwest Quarter of Southwest Quarter of Southeast Quarter, Section 31 Township 8 (includes mining claim Lucky Rock No. 1)	1897-1912
	15	Investments: Title Abstract, Lot 5, Block 26, Yuma Heights Subdivision	1897-1938
	16	Investments: Title Abstract, West Half of Southeast Quarter, Section 31 Township 8	1902-1924
	17	Investments: Title Abstract, Lot 2, Northwest Quarter, Section 6 Township 9 South	1904-1941
	18	Investments: Title Abstract, South Half of Northeast Quarter, Lots 1 & 2, Section 6 Township 9	1905-1942
	19	Investments: Various Properties (includes valuation, photos, produce labels)	n.d.
2		Cancelled Checks: Cotton Finance Account	1955
		Cancelled Checks: Free Growers Picking Account	1955
		Cancelled Checks: General Account	1955-1956
		Cancelled Checks: Grain Finance Account	1955
3		Cancelled Checks: Operating Account	1958
4		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #1753-#2299	1954
5		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #2400-#2799	1954
6		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #2800-#3299	1954
7		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #3300-#3799	1954
8		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #3800-#4244	1954
9		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #742-#1399	1958
10		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #1402-#5599	1958
11		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #5600-#6199	1958
12		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #6200-#6799	1958
13		Cancelled Checks: Paychecks #6800-#7391	1958
14	1	Invoices: Atmar Distributing Company	1954-1955
	2	Invoices: Arizona Public Service	1954

	3	Invoices: Arizona State Tax Commission	1953-1954
	4	Invoices: Arizona Title Guarantee & Trust	1954
	5	Invoices: Arizona Trucking Company	1954-1956
	6	Invoices: Arizona Water Company	1955-1956
	7	Invoices: "B" (various)	1954-1955
	8	Invoices: B&H Refrigeration	1954-1955
	9	Invoices: Bard District Welding & Machine	1954-1955
	10	Invoices: Beckett's Tacna Garage	1955
15	1	Invoices: Beeler, Clarence	1954-1955
	2	Invoices: Begley Tractor Company	1954-1955
	3	Invoices: Bell Lumber Company	1954-1955
	4	Invoices: Billingsley, HF	1954-1955
	5	Invoices: Blake, Moffitt & Towne	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Bonanza Airlines	1954-1955
	7	Invoices: Boone, Orville	1954
	8	Invoices: Braden Machinery Company	1954-1958
	9	Invoices: Bradford Richfield Service	1955
	10	Invoices: Brandt Brothers	1954-1955
	11	Invoices: Brecht Manufacturing Company	1954
	12	Invoices: Brown & Bigelow	1954
	13	Invoices: Burch Aircraft Repair	1954-1955
	14	Invoices: Bureau of Indian Affairs	11954-1956
	15	Invoices: Burgess Sheet Metal Company	1954-1955
	16	Invoices: Busch Tractor & Implement Company	1954-1955
	17	Invoices: Business Systems Inc.	1954
16	1	Invoices: "C" (various)	1952-1955
	2	Invoices: Capitol Engineering Company	1954-1955
	3	Invoices: Calhoun Richfield Service	1953-1955
	4	Invoices: California Department of Employment	1954
	5	Invoices: California-Western State Life Insurance Company	1954
	6	Invoices: Carson Enterprises	1954-1955
	7	Invoices: Conner Tire Company	1954-1955
	8	Invoices: Cash	1954-1955
	9	Invoices: Columbia Ribbon & Carbon Pacific Inc.	1954
	10	Invoices: Commodity News Services Inc.	1955-1956
	11	Invoices: Continental Gin Service Company 1 of 3	1954
	12	Invoices: Continental Gin Service Company 2 of 3	1954
	13	Invoices: Continental Gin Service Company 3 of 3	1955

17	1	Invoices: <i>Cotton Digest</i>	1954-1955
	2	Invoices: <i>Cotton Trade Journal</i>	1954
	3	Invoices: Credit Bureau of Yuma	1954-1955
	4	Invoices: Culligan Soft Water Service	1955-1955
	5	Invoices: "D" (various)	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Dateland Farms	1954-1955
	7	Invoices: Davis, Henry	1954-1955
	8	Invoices: Davidson, Howard	1954
	9	Invoices: Douthitt, WH	1954-1955
	10	Invoices: Dunbar, CC	1953-1955
	11	Invoices: "E" (various)	1954-1955
	12	Invoices: El Paso National Bank	1955
	13	Invoices: Electronic Equipment Distributors	1954
18	1	Invoices: Elliot, Howard Chevron	1955
	2	Invoices: Equitable Life Assurance of the United States	1953-1954
	3	Invoices: "F" (various)	1954-1956
	4	Invoices: Farm Loan Association	1951-1954
	5	Invoices: Farmers Marketing Corporation	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Faulds Incorporated	1954-1955
	7	Invoices: First Federal Savings & Loan Association	1954-1955
	8	Invoices: First National Bank	1954
	9	Invoices: Folly, DP	1954-1955
	10	Invoices: Fred's Service Station 1 of 3	1954
	11	Invoices: Fred's Service Station 2 of 3	1954
19	1	Invoices: Fred's Service Station 3 of 3	1955-1956
	2	Invoices: "G" (various)	1954-1955
	3	Invoices: General Petroleum	1954
	4	Invoices: Gilpin's	1954-1955
	5	Invoices: Glover, Margaret	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Galbraith-Foxworth Lumber Company	1954-1955
	7	Invoices: Goodyear Shell Service 1 of 4	1954-
	8	Invoices: Goodyear Shell Service 2 of 4	1954
20	1	Invoices: Goodyear Shell Service 3 of 4	1954
	2	Invoices: Goodyear Shell Service 4 of 4	1955
	3	Invoices: Growers Farm Supply	1954
	4	Invoices: "H" (various)	1954-1955
	5	Invoices: "I" (various)	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Recorders Office	1954
	7	Invoices: "S" (various)	1956
	8	Invoices: Sabin, Kirby	1956
	9	Invoices: Snap-on Tools	1956
	10	Invoices: Somerton Rotary Club	1956

	11	Invoices: Svensson, Freight Lines 1 of 3	1953
	12	Invoices: Svensson, Freight Lines 2 of 3	1954
21	1	Invoices: Svensson, Freight Lines 3 of 3	1954
	2	Invoices: "T" (various)	1953-1956
	3	Invoices: Tate & Hobart Gas & Equipment Company 1 of 3	1953-1954
	4	Invoices: Tate & Hobart Gas & Equipment Company 2 of 3	1955
	5	Invoices: Tate & Hobart Gas & Equipment Company 3 of 3	1955-1956
	6	Invoices: Texas-Arizona Motor Freight	1953-1955
	7	Invoices: Texas Tag & Specialty Company	1954-1955
22	1	Invoices: The Texas Company	1954
	2	Invoices: Thomas, Merle	1954-1955
	3	Invoices: Tide Water Associated Oil Company	1954
	4	Invoices: Toledo Seale Company	1955-1956
	5	Invoices: Trigg, CH	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Triple A Water Company	1954-1955
	7	Invoices: "U" (various)	1954-1955
	8	Invoices: Underwood Corporation	1953-1955
	9	Invoices: Union Oil Company	1954-1955
	10	Invoices: Uptown Drug	1954-1955
	11	Invoices: "V" (various)	1954-1956
	12	Invoices: Valley Auto Supply Company	1954-1956
	13	Invoices: Valley Cafe	1954-1956
	14	Invoices: Valley Commercial Company	1954-1956
	15	Invoices: Valley Drug	1954-1956
	16	Invoices: Valley Motor Company	1954-1956
	17	Invoices: "W" (various)	1953-1956
	18	Invoices: Waddell, JJ Insurance	1954-1955
	19	Invoices: Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation & Drainage District 1 of 2	1952-1954
	20	Invoices: Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation & Drainage District 2 of 2	1955
23	1	Invoices: West, Kenneth	1954
	2	Invoices: Western Brake & Wheel	1955
	3	Invoices: Western Truck Lines Ltd. 1 of 2	1954
	4	Invoices: Western Truck Lines Ltd. 2 of 2	1954-1955
	5	Invoices: Western Union	1954-1955
	6	Invoices: Westover & Mansfield Attorneys at Law	1954
	7	Invoices: White, Matilda B.	1951-1954
	8	Invoices: Wholesalers Credit Association of Arizona	1955

	9	Invoices: Williams Food Market	1954-1955
	10	Invoices: Witman, Roy	1954-1955
	11	Invoices: Worthington, James 1 of 2	1954
	12	Invoices: Worthington, James 2 of 2	1955
24	1	Invoices: "X,Y, & Z" (various)	1954-1956
	2	Invoices: "Xmas" Checks	1954
	3	Invoices: Yuma Auto Supply	1954-1955
	4	Invoices: Yuma Country Club	1954-1955
	5	Invoices: Yuma County Assessor & Treasurer 1 of 3	1946-1948
	6	Invoices: Yuma County Assessor & Treasurer 2 of 3	1949-1952
	7	Invoices: Yuma County Assessor & Treasurer 3 of 3	1954
	8	Invoices: Yuma County Water Users Association	1954-1955