
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MS 1123
Wright, John B., 1872-1934
Papers, Ca. 1890-1966 (Bulk: 1924-1927)

DESCRIPTION

Primarily legal documents and correspondence concerning the legal claim by Carlotta Cockburn to the estate of Carlotta Crabtree in 1926-27. John B. Wright was an attorney for Cockburn and the collection contains Wright's notes on the depositions and witnesses which concerned their knowledge of Tombstone in 1880-1881. A smaller part of the collection are the papers of John B. Wright's son, Charles M. Wright, which concern the 1956 and 1966 reunions of the 1916 class of Tucson High School.

3 Boxes, 1.25 linear ft.

ACQUISITION

Donated by Helen C. Wright in 1976.

ACCESS

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

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Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society, Tucson, Archives Department.

ARRANGEMENT

1/Crabtree Case, 2/Other John B. Wright Papers, 3/Charles M. Wright

PROCESSING

The collection was processed by Riva Dean in December 1998.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

John B. Wright, Tucson attorney, was born in Denver in 1872. After graduating from the University of Michigan Law School in 1894, he joined his father's law practice in Tucson. He then moved to Yuma where he became territorial District Attorney for Yuma County. After one term, he returned to Tucson, where he built up a large private practice. In 1909, he was appointed territorial attorney general and held that post until Arizona became a state in 1912. His private law practice became one of the largest in Tucson. In 1925, he was appointed U. S. District Attorney and held that position until 1929 while also keeping up his private practice. His work as attorney on the Lotta Crabtree case brought him national attention. He was married to Mary McPhee and they and four children, Jean, Sally, Betty and Charles M. Wright.

Charles McPhee Wright, Tucson attorney, graduated from Harvard Law School in 1925 after graduating from Tucson High and Harvard College. After practicing Law in Los Angeles and then in Washington, D.C., he returned to Tucson in 1948. He worked for many years with the A.C.L.U. and handled many cases for the Indian tribes in Arizona. He died in 1975.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The bulk of the collection covers John B. Wright's work on the suit by Carlotta Cockburn to the estate of Carlotta Crabtree (1847-1924), actress, in 1924-1927. Cockburn's claim was that she was the daughter of Carlotta's brother, Jack and Annie Leopold and was born in Tombstone in 1881. To support this claim, her lawyers called as witnesses and received depositions from many individuals who were in Tombstone at that time, and remembered Jack Crabtree. Of interest to Tombstone researchers are the recollections of Tombstone as a rough, mining town with no moral standards by which to judge a common law marriage. Included in the witnesses were Wyatt Earp, George W. Parsons, Alexander T. Davidson.

The papers of Charles M. Wright are predominantly concerned with the Tucson High School class of 1916 and their class reunions in 1956 and 1966. Of interest is the correspondence from members of the class to "Mac" Wright, in which they describe their high school years as well as what they have been doing. Correspondents include Rosemary Drachman Taylor, Carlyle Heney, Ralph Herndon, Eleazor Herreras, Leta Hoffman Davis, Mary Fickett Howes and Margaret Wakefield Johnson. Also included are photographs from the class of 1916 (taken between 1914-1916) as well as photographs taken at the reunions. Included in Charles M. Wright's papers is one folder of photographs of Yuma taken in the 1890s.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Series 1: John B. Wright: Crabtree Case

Box 1

- f. 1 Brief for Carlotta Cockburn (Printed) in Equity #2042
- f. 2 Brief for Carlotta Cockburn, Appellant, 1927
- f. 3-4 Brief submitted by Carlotta Cockburn's lawyers, typewritten, 1927
- f. 5 Brief submitted to court, "Motion to frame issues for Jury trial," 1925
- f. 6-8 "Motion to Strike out Appearance of Carlotta Cockburn," 1927
- f. 9 Option filed 14 June 1928
- f. 10 Agreement concerning exhibits in the case
- f. 11-12 Depositions
- f. 13 Evidence: Kentucky Mine Claim, Great Register
- f. 14 Evidence: Photographs
- f. 5-16 Testimony in Crabtree Case

Box 2

- f. 17 Legal Agreements, 1927
- f. 18-19 JBW's Handwritten Notes, (missing 111-186)
- f. 20 JBW's List of Exhibits
- f. 21 JBW's notes on dates
- f. 22 JBW's notes on additions, township laws
- f. 23 JBW's notes on depositions
- f. 24 JBW's notes on answers to questions by witnesses
- f. 25 JBW's notes on Rabb incident
- f. 26 JBW's misc. notes
- f. 27 JBW's notes on domicile, proof of marriage, common law marriage
- f. 28 JBW's notes on kinship
- f. 29 JBW's notes on witnesses
- f. 30 Crabtree case correspondence
- f. 31 Crabtree case correspondence with Calvin Jones
- f. 32 Crabtree case telegrams
- f. 33 Crabtree case clippings

Series 2 Other John B. Wright papers

- f. 34 Correspondence, 1915-1927
- f. 35 Manuscripts: *The Jitney*
- f. 36 Manuscripts: *Story of Arizona's Admission to Statehood*, 1927
- f. 37 Personal Papers/Certificates

Series 3
Box 3

Charles M. Wright papers

- f. 38 Tucson High School Class of 1916 Reunions – Clippings, 1956, 1966
- f. 39 Tucson High School Class of 1916 Reunions – Correspondence, 1956-57
- f. 40 Tucson High School Class of 1916 Reunions – Correspondence, 1966
- f. 41 Tucson High School Class of 1916 Reunions – Information Sheets, 1953, 1966
- f. 42 Tucson High School Class of 1916 Reunions – Memorabilia
- f. 43 Photographs of Tucson High School, 1914-1916
- f. 44 Photographs of Tucson High School reunion, 1956
- f. 45 Photographs of Tucson High School reunion, 1966
- f. 46 Photographs of Yuma, 1890s