Guide to MS041 Wilbert H. Timmons Papers

Leilani Marshall
Guide to

MS 041

Wilbert H. Timmons Papers

Inclusive dates 1584-1992
Bulk dates 1949-1990

15 feet, 8 inches

Prepared by Leilani Marshall
June 1998

Donated by W.H. Timmons

Citation: Wilbert H. Timmons Papers, MS 041, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library

C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department
University of Texas at El Paso Libraries
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Sketch</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series Description</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provenance</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Rights</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Collections</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container List</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series I. Literary Endeavors</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series II. Community/Professional Activities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series III. Biographical</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series IV. Correspondence</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series V. Research Files</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series VI. Realia</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Biographical Sketch

Wilbert Helde Timmons was born in 1915 in Springfield, Missouri. He attended Park College in Missouri where he received a B.A. in History. He received an M.A. in European History from the University of Chicago. After serving in the United States Navy as an officer during World War II, he attended The University of Texas at Austin, where he received a Ph. D. in Latin American History in 1949.

That same year, W.H. Timmons arrived in El Paso to teach history at Texas Western College, now the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). During his years at the university, Dr. Timmons was an avid researcher and writer on Mexican and Texan history, particularly El Paso history. He published many articles and scholarly works, as well as several books, including *Morelos of México, Tadeo Ortiz, Mexican Colonizer and Reformer*. His most popular and well-known work is *El Paso: A Borderlands History*.

From 1962-1965, Dr. Timmons served as the Chair of the Department of History at UTEP. He also served as Director of the Mexican Microfilm Project from 1971-1978, during which time 2,000 rolls of microfilmed archives from Chihuahua and Durango were preserved at UTEP library. Active in several national, state and local historical associations, Dr. Timmons contributed greatly to the written record of El Paso history.

After teaching history for nearly thirty years at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), Dr. Timmons took an early retirement in 1978 and became Professor Emeritus of History. His early retirement was due in part to Dr. Timmons' desire to start working on an El Paso celebration that commemorated the four-hundredth year of European presence in El Paso. In 1981, he was unofficially named "Mr. History" for the role he played in creating support for the Four Centuries celebration.

Another distinguished role he has played is as the creator of the Dr. W.H. Timmons Fund of the El Paso Community Foundation. This foundation was established for the promotion of the town of El Paso, such as the publication of area history pamphlets and the marking of historic buildings and sites in the city and county of El Paso. A map project, undertaken by Dr. Timmons in 1981, to teach El Paso history to seventh grade students in El Paso was also made possible through this fund.
SERIES DESCRIPTION

The W. H. Timmons Papers are arranged in six series:

Arranged in two subseries - Books and Articles. The Books are further divided into five sections: one for each of the books Timmons authored, one for the book Timmons edited. Each section devoted to the individual book includes a file folder containing publisher correspondence and the research materials used on the books and articles Timmons published. The Articles subseries includes copies of articles by Timmons published in journals and newspapers. The material in this series is arranged alphabetically either by the title of the work or by the subject. When searching by name of individual, use the full name (ie, Henry L. Dexter Papers are in the H's, not the D's). Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

Series II. Community/Professional Activities, 1971-1981. 5 linear inches (1 document box).
Arranged in four subseries - Microfilm Project, Map Project, El Paso Historic Markers, and 4 Centuries '81. This material includes photographs, newspaper clippings, flyers, transparencies of El Paso area maps, and magazine articles. The material in this series documents the achievements and contributions made by Timmons to the city and county of El Paso.

Arranged in three subseries - Biographical Information, Personal Papers, Certificates and Awards, and Academic Miscellaneous. This material includes newspaper clippings, photos, and writings by Timmons. The Personal Papers includes professional correspondence and legal matter documenting Timmons' history as a professor at the University of Texas at El Paso. Certificates and Awards contains the awards, certificates and diplomas awarded to Timmons by various organizations for his efforts in the El Paso community and for his contributions to these associations. This series includes framed material and some plaques. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

Series IV. Correspondence, 1966-1992. 5 linear inches (1 document box).
Arranged in two subseries - Literary Works and Academic. The Literary Works contains professional correspondence related to the Texas Western Press as well as minutes of meetings of the board of the Texas Western Press. Other correspondence is of a professional nature and relates to books Timmons wrote. Also included in this series are book reviews written by Timmons. The Academic subseries contains correspondence relating to the UT El Paso library, and other correspondence with colleagues.
Series V. Research Files, 1538-1985. 59 linear inches (9 document boxes, 2 oversize boxes).

Arranged in two subseries - Holdings Lists and General Research. This material includes lists of archival holdings, library holdings, indexes to archival holdings, photostats, photocopies and photographs of Spanish documents, transcriptions of letters, journal and magazine articles, photographs, maps, student and faculty papers, and oral histories. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

Series VI. Realia. 28.75 linear inches (1 document box, 2 flat boxes)

This series contains a set of Mexican spurs, a replica of the Aztec calendar, and four reels of film about Mexico.
Scope and Content Note

The Wilbert H. Timmons Papers (15 feet, 8 inches) is composed primarily of the research papers used by Dr. Timmons during his decades of study of the El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua area. These documents include photocopies and photostats of published material, maps, transparencies, transcriptions of letters, official documents, oral histories, newspaper clippings, student papers, theses, computer disks, and photographs. Most material of a more personal or family nature were not donated. The collection is organized into six series.

The first series is **Literary Endeavors**, which contains the research notes and material used by Timmons in the books and articles written and edited by him. Included are bound copies of two of Timmons' works and a copy of another work on disk. There are also copies of Timmons' journal, newspaper, and magazine articles, some of which are typed copies. Newspaper clippings, reviews of Timmons' books, and photographs of Timmons are a part of this series. The material is arranged in alphabetical order by title of document or by subject. Some large material and documents are filed separately in an oversize box.

The second series contains information about Timmons' **Community and Professional Activities**. Timmons was very active in the El Paso area community, especially in areas of historical importance. This series contains photographs of some of the historical markers around El Paso that Timmons was responsible for getting erected, transparency maps he used in educating the children of El Paso, and newspaper clippings and flyers reporting on and advertising the 4 Centuries '81 celebration that took place in El Paso in 1981, in which Timmons played a large part in bringing together. Included in this series is information about Timmons' role in the microfilm project that took place in the Chihuahua Archives, Mexico.

The **Biographical** series contains the bulk of Timmons' personal information that can be found in the collection, most of which is professional. Correspondence between Timmons and the University of Texas at El Paso make up a significant part of this series. Also included here are copies of Timmons' resume and vita, newspaper and magazine articles written about Timmons, and a bound copy of Timmons' Master thesis. This series also contains the awards, certificates, and diplomas awarded to Timmons by various organizations for his efforts in the El Paso community and for his contributions to these associations. Information on Timmons' life apart from the University and his community activities is scarce. This series includes framed material and some plaques. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.
The fourth series contains the majority of Timmons' Correspondence, both personal and professional. Most of the correspondence is professional in nature, between colleagues, and relates to Timmons’ work and writings. Included in this series are book reviews written by Timmons. Two file folders contain some correspondence relevant to the Texas Western Press publishing company, and include minutes of meetings of the board of the Texas Western Press.

The bulk of research material Timmons used in writing his books and articles is in the Research Files series. The subseries Holdings List includes indexes to various archive and library collections, calendars of microfilm in archives and libraries, and guides to the holdings of various libraries. The subseries General Research includes various other types of research material, such as copies of letters, photographs of historic documents, journal articles, and papers. The material is arranged in alphabetical order by title of the document or by subject. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

The final series, Realia, contains objects of various sizes. They include a set of Mexican spurs that dates back to the turn of the century, a replica of the Aztec calendar, and four reels of film, three about the Mexican Revolution and one about México.
PROVENANCE

In 1993, Dr. W.H. Timmons donated his research material and personal papers to the Special Collections Department of the University of Texas at El Paso Library. The first of the material arrived that same year, and a second accession was added in 1998. A formal gift deed was signed in 1993.

RESTRICTIONS

Photocopying of unpublished manuscripts is prohibited due to copyright restrictions.

LITERARY RIGHTS

Permission to publish material from the W.H. Timmons Papers, MS 041, must be obtained from the C.L. Sonnichson Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library.

RELATED COLLECTIONS

Texas Western Press Records, MS 366, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library.
**LITERARY ENDEAVORS**  
**BOOKS written by Timmons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diderot and Catherine II</strong></td>
<td><em>El Paso: A Borderlands History</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correspondence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Paso Book</td>
<td>El Paso Book</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian Ethnohistory: Indians of the Southwest</td>
<td><em>El Paso: A Borderlands History</em> on thirty-two 5 1/4 diskettes, and on two 3 1/2 diskettes</td>
<td><em>El Paso Area Fact Book, 1983</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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</tr>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Box  Folder                        MS 041 Timmons Papers

23                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1821-1848--Census data
                                             [oversized photocopies separated, see also OverSize
                                             box 25]

24                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1821-1848  [oversized photocopies
                                             separated, see also OverSize box 25]

25                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1821-1848 [oversized photocopies
                                             separated, see also OverSize box 25]

4  26                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1821-1848 [oversized photocopies
                                             separated, see also OverSize box 25]

27                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1848-1881 [oversized photocopies
                                             separated, see also OverSize box 25]

28                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1848-1881

29                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1848-1881

30                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1848-1881

31                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1881-1925

32                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1848-1881

33                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1848-1881

34                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1881-1925

35                                         History of El Paso--Docs 1881-1925

36                                         History of El Paso--1881-Present, secondary materials,
                                             Part II

5  37                                         History of El Paso--1881-Present, secondary materials,
                                             Part II

38                                         History of San Elizario

39                                         Independence of Mexico--List of Documents

40                                         Juárez Archives Index

41                                         Juárez Archives, Reel 46

42                                         Maps, sketches, photos--El Paso Area

43                                         Marqués de Rubí--Dictámen with English Translation

44                                         Northern New Spain: A Research Guide

45                                         Papers--El Paso Area

46                                         Papers--El Paso Area

47                                         Photos in the El Paso Book

48                                         Photostats and Documents--miscellaneous Mexican history

49                                         Pueblo de la Ysleta del Sur--Chronology and Related
                                             Historical Material

50                                         Spain in North America: Selected Sources on Spanish
                                             Colonial History, Archaeology, Architecture and Art,
                                             and Material Culture
7 51 The Life of José María Morelos: The Founder of the Mexican Nation

Morelos of Mexico: Priest, Soldier, Statesman

Correspondence:
52 Morelos

Research Materials
53 Casa de Morelos
54 Clippings on Morelos
55 Complete Testimony of Morelos before the Inquisition
56 Morelos Papers

Framed Illustrations (found hanging on walls in Rare Books Stacks)
by José Cisneros
José María Morelos sketch
Morelos panel of four sketches

Tadeo Ortiz, Mexican Colonizer and Reformer

Correspondence
8 57 Tadeo Ortiz

Research Materials
58 Correspondence between Lucas Alamán and Tadeo Ortiz
59 Early Revolutionary Career of Tadeo Ortiz
60 El Pensamiento Político, Económico y Social de D. Tadeo Ortiz por Taricio García
61 Tadeo Ortiz--Bases sobre las que se esta formando un plan de Colonización, 1823
62 Tadeo Ortiz--Biographical sketches
63 Tadeo Ortiz--Colonization 1821-1831--Tehuantepec, Coatzacoalcos
64 Tadeo Ortiz--Colonization 1821-1831--Tehuantepec, Coatzacoalcos
65 Tadeo Ortiz--Correspondence, 1830-1831, Texas
66 Tadeo Ortiz' death, October 1833
67 Tadeo Ortiz--Director de la Colonización; August 1833
9 68 Tadeo Ortiz in Buenos Aires
69 Tadeo Ortiz in Buenos Aires
70 Tadeo Ortiz in Guatemala, 1822
71 Tadeo Ortiz--México Considerado
72 Tadeo Ortiz--Resúmen de la Estadística del Imperio Mexicano
73 Tadeo Ortiz--Revolutionary career
Tadeo Ortíz--Revolutionary career

_Framed Illustrations_ (found hanging on walls in Rare Books Stacks)
by José Cisneros
Tadeo Ortíz' Dream
Tadeo Ortíz
Tadeo Ortíz

**BOOK edited by Timmons**

*John F. Finerty Reports Porfirian México 1879*

_Correspondence_

10  75  Finerty

_Research Materials_

76  John F. Finerty--Dispatches written for the _Chicago Times_
on Texas and Mexico, 1877-1879
77  John F. Finerty--Dispatches written for the _Chicago Times_
on Texas and Mexico, 1877-1879
78  John F. Finerty--Mexican Flash Lights
79  John F. Finerty--Mexican Flash Lights
80  John F. Finerty--Mexican Flash Lights

**ARTICLES written by Timmons**

11  81  "The Anglo-American Advance into Texas, 1810-1830"
82  "The Borderlands and the Bicentennial," Presented to
   the El Paso County Historical Society, 1975
83  _Congressional Record_, May 2, 1989
84  "Continental Crossroads: El Paso in History"
85  "El Paso del Norte was Primary Pueblo Along Rio Grande
   Chain"
86  _El Paso Times_ Series on the history of El Paso
87  "Four Centuries at the Pass of the North"
88  "José María Morelos--Agrarian Reformer (?)"
89  "Mexican Independence in Texas: The View From El
   Paso"
90  "Mission 1981"
91  "The Population of the El Paso Area: A Census of 1784"
92  "Revolution Offered Spain Opportunity She Was
   Seeking"
93  "Revolution on the Rio Grande: The El Paso Area in
   the 1840s"
94  "Tadeo Ortíz, Mexican Emissary Extraordinary"

COMMUNITY / PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES
**MICROFILM PROJECT**
12  95  Photographs & Clippings of the Microfilm Project

**MAP PROJECT**
96  Map Project for the Public Schools
97  Maps, sketches, photos--El Paso Area

**EL PASO HISTORIC MARKERS**
98  Historic Markers and Landmarks in El Paso

**4 CENTURIES '81**
99  4 Centuries '81
100  4 Centuries '81 - El Paso del Norte
101  4 Centuries '81 - El Paso del Norte

**BIOGRAPHICAL**

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**
13  102  Biographical Information--Clippings, Pubs, Photos
103  North Centennial

**PERSONAL PAPERS**
104  Personal Papers, 1949-1978
105  Personal Papers, 1949-1978

**CERTIFICATES & AWARDS**
14  106  W.H. Timmons: Awards, Certificates, Personal Photographs [oversized material separated, see OverSize box 25]
4 Centuries '81 Commission. For service on the 4 Centuries '81 Commission, 1981
Commissioners' Court of El Paso County. Commissioned as Admiral in the El Paso Navy [1991?] [oversized material separated, see OverSize box 25]
Discover El Paso Honors Dr. W. H. Timmons, October 22, 1991
El Paso County Historical Society. Citation for lecture delivered May 13, 1971, entitled "Our Spanish Southwest: The Untold Story" [oversized material separated, see OverSize box 25]
El Paso Herald-Post Writers Hall of Fame. Authors of the Pass, 1991
El Paso Historical Commission. "For his many years of outstanding contributions to the research..." 1988
Texas Heritage Council. Award for Conservation, 1981
15
University of Texas System. Members of the Chancellor's Council: Dr. and Mrs. Timmons, July, 1993

**ACADEMIC MISCELLANEOUS**

107  *Flowsheet* - 1963, Texas Western College Yearbook

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**LITERARY WORKS**

16  108  Articles in encyclopedias
109  Book reviews and articles
110  Texas Western Press
111  Texas Western Press

**ACADEMIC**

112  CIABS: Center for Inter-American and Border Studies
113  University of Texas at El Paso

**RESEARCH FILES**

**Holdings Lists**

17  114  Archives-Special Collections Microfilm Holding List
115  Archivo General de las Indias
116  Archivo Municipal de Chihuahua, Chih.
117  Boletín de la Sociedad Chihuahuense de Estudios Históricos
118  Calendar of the Microfilm Edition of the Mexican Archives of New Mexico, 1821-1846
119  Calendar of the Microfilm Edition of the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, 1621-1821
120  Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Mexican Archives of New Mexico, 1821-1846
121  Guide to the Microfilm of the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, 1621-1821
122  Index of the Michoacán Microfilm Series
123  Index of the Morelia Microfilm Series
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to Pacheco y Cárdenas Copy 1, Part I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to Pacheco y Cárdenas Copy 1, Part II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to Pacheco y Cárdenas Copy 2, Part I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to Pacheco y Cárdenas Copy 2, Part II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to the Boletín de Archivo General de la Nacion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to the Calleros Collection, El Paso Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to the Mexican Materials on Microfilm in the Library of the University of Texas at El Paso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td></td>
<td>Index to the Revista de Historia de América, Números 1-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Inventario-Biblioteca Particular, by Francisco R. Almada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inventario-Biblioteca Particular, by Francisco R. Almada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Rare Books Collection of the UT El Paso Library--Section I--Books Printed During the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Rare Books Collection of the UT El Paso Library--Section II--Books Printed in Europe During the Eighteenth Century--Part I--Countries on the Continent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Rare Books Collection of the UT El Paso Library--Section II--Books Printed in Europe During the Eighteenth Century--Part II--Great Britain and Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Rare Books Collection of the UT El Paso Library--Section III--Early Americana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Texas at El Paso Library Holdings, 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Texas at El Paso Library, Special Collections and Archives Holding Lists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Material**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
<td>Affidavit of Don Pedro Pérez Pavón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td></td>
<td>Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1678-1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td></td>
<td>El Archivo de Hidalgo del Parral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clint Founders Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Cofradía de las Hijas de María) The Sisters of Loretto in San Elizario, 1898-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comandancia General e Inspección de los Estados Internos de Oriente--Los Insurgentes de Tejas, 1833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146</td>
<td></td>
<td>Constitution, Acts and other documents of the Revolutionary Junta of Chilpancingo in New Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contra Plan de Calleja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coronado document with his signature--Tiguex Oct. 20, 1541--AGI Patronato 184, Doc34 [see also Mapcase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
#15 for this document enlarged
149 2 Coronado letters from Nueva Galicia, 1538, with his signature--AGI Guadalajara, 5 [see also Mapcase #15 for this document enlarged]

#15 for this document enlarged
150 Coronado's Master Roll--1540--AGI Guadalajara, 5 [see also Mapcase #15 for this document enlarged]
151 Coronado's signature on his Residencia--1545--AGI Justicia, 339 [see also Mapcase #16 for this document enlarged]
152 Correspondence--Spanish Documents
153 Correspondencia de los Guadalupanos, 1812-1814
154 Correspondencia de los Guadalupanos, 1812-1814
155 Criminal Case of Felipe Montoya, New Mexican Insurgent, 1811
156 D. Manuel de Mier y Teran durante la Revolución de Independencia--Ana Flaschner Rosenberg
157 Documentary Relations of the Southwest Project Manual
21 158 Duplicates--Magoffin-José Cordero correspondence, 1849-1866
159 Duplicates--Magoffin-José Cordero correspondence, 1849-1866
160 EAH John--Spanish-Indian Relations in the Big Bend Region During the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries
161 El Eco del Pacifico Organo de la Poblacion Espanola en California--3 March 1865
162 Faculty Papers
163 "The fantasy of a Treaty to End Treaties"
164 Fernando Ocaranza--Establecimientos Franciscanos en el Misterioso Reino de Nuevo México--México D.F.
1934
165 Fort Concho, Report, Winter 1986-1987, 2 copies
166 Founding of the Villa de Chihuahua, 1720
167 Guadalupes--G346 M2
22 168 Los Guadalupes Letters, 1812-1814
170 Guías, 1832-1838 (Mexican Mercantile Passports)
171 Henry L. Dexter Papers
172 Instructions of King Fernando to Commanders of Divisions of New Spain
173 Itinerario de Juan de Oñate--August 1599--AGI Patronato
174 J.A. de Escudero--Noticias Estadísticas del Estado de Chihuahua, 1834
23 175 Juan María Ponce de León
176 King Ranch
177 Letter of Hernan Gallegos--1584--AGI Patronato, 77, R7
178 "Letter written in 1808 describes Dark Days of Napoleon's Victories"
179 Lucas Alamán's Vol V, Chap XII: Historia de México
180 Mexican attitudes towards immigration, 1821-1857
Las Misiones del Valle del Paso, by Gerard de Cormané [this material located in OverSize box #24]
181 The New Library at the University of Texas at El Paso, Formal Opening, November 15-17, 1968
182 Oral histories in Socorro and San Elizario, Texas
183 Oral History Institute Notes
184 Original Proclamation promulgated by the Mexican government under the direction of President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna
185 Otermin's Account--1680--AGI Guadalajara, 138 (25) [see also Mapcase #16 for this document enlarged]
26 186 Photos, Mexican Revolution from the El Paso Library
187 Proclamation of Charles III--1778--Assignment of Capt. Diego Bonica to Presidio of San Elizario
188 Proclamation of Charles III--1788--naming Don Francisco Xavier de Uranga a Teniente Gobernador del Pueblo del Paso del Norte [see also Mapcase #16 for this document enlarged]
189 Proclamation of Philip II--1583--AGI México, 1064
190 Las Provincias Internas en el Siglo XIX, Luis Navarro Garcia
191 Relación de Espejo--1582--AGI Patronato 22, R1 [see also Mapcase #17 for this document enlarged]
192 Relacion de Fray Marcos de Viza--1539--AGI Patronato 20, No5, R10 [see also Mapcase #17 for this document enlarged]
193 Relacion de Juan de Oñate--March 1599--AGI Patronato 22, R13 [see also Mapcase #17 for this document enlarged]
194 Seminar Papers
195 Simeon Hart Materials
196 The Spanish Colonial History of Socorro and San Elizario,
"A Tale of Two Western Stagecoach Depots"
Translated letter from Henry Clay to Augustin de Iturbide
*Two Spanish Colonial Censuses of the El Paso Area: 1784 and 1787*
UPA Research Collections 1990
Van Horne Letters--UTEP Microfilm #463 [oversized photocopies separated, see OverSize box 25]
Various photos of El Paso
Verdadero Orígen, Caracter, Causas, Resortes Fines y Progresos de la Revolucion de Nueva Espana
William H. Taft and Porfirio Díaz
William Richardson's Journal of Doniphan's Expedition
*Framed Illustrations* (some found hanging in Rare Books Stacks)
"Insurgent México, 1810-1815": map of Mexican Independence
Lower Valley landmarks sketches by Sam and Minerva Sánchez
Map: Colonial New Mexico by Rebecca Craver [this map located in Mapcase #17]
Map: El Paso region from the 16th to 19th centuries (with transparent overlays) [this map located in Mapcase #16]
Map: Emory Map, 1855 ("Boundary Between The United States and Mexico, 1855") [framed and on wall in the Rare Books Stack]
Map: Jornadas que hicieron El Capitan General don Francisco Vasquez Coronado Capitanes Durante, 1539-1542 [this material located in Oversize box #25]
Spanish soldier (in color, personalized to Timmons by illustrator José Cisneros)
Wagon Train sketch, by CM Russell [this material located in OverSize box #25]
Personal microfilm [might not be readable; Letter of Tadeo Ortiz, May 29, 1812; Letter of Henry Clay, March 13, 1822; Tadeo Ortiz, 1829 – 1831; Account of William Davis Robinson, 1816-1817; Documents concerning Tadeo Ortiz, Archivo de Indias, 1813 – 1815]

**REALIA**
Set of Mexican spurs dating from the Mexican Revolution period
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>207</td>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence relating to Mexican spurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>Replica of the Aztec calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reels of film--three of the Mexican Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reel of Film--&quot;Mexico's History&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>