

**TITLE:** Jose Maria Redondo Family Collection

**DATE RANGE:** 1860–2011

**CALL NUMBER:** Y-MS 15

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1linear foot (2 boxes)

**PROVENANCE:** Donated by family members and other sources. Much of it contains photocopied material.

**COPYRIGHT:** Unknown

**RESTRICTIONS:** This collection is unrestricted.

**CREDIT LINE:** Jose Maria Redondo Family Collection, Y-MS 15, Yuma County Library District

**PROCESSED BY:** Benjamin Findley, August 2012

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:**

Jose Maria Redondo was an important figure in the early history of Yuma. He was born in Altar, Sonora, Mexico on March 30, 1830. There is little information on his early years in Mexico. In 1849 he left his family's ranch in Sonora to find his fortune in the California gold rush. In California he met and married Piedad Contreras from a prominent Sonoran family.

In 1859, he moved his family south, eventually locating in Southern Arizona. He settled in Laguna for a time, searching for gold and owning a store and a bakery. In 1861 he began operating a ferry across the Colorado River. There are conflicting accounts where the ferry operated, some say it was in Yuma, then known as Colorado City, while others say it was in Laguna, or Ehrenberg) with William Werninger.

By 1862, his mining ventures had extended to Gila City as well as La Paz. At this time he started the Hacienda de San Ysidro, a large farm ranch and one of the earliest irrigation projects in Arizona by non-native settlers. At its peak San Ysidro consisted of more than 2,000 acres of land irrigated by twenty seven miles of canals. Jose soon left the running of the ranch in the hands of his brother Jesus Redondo.

When the Arizona Territory was organized in 1864, he was chosen to represent Yuma County in the Territorial Legislature. He was, however, found to be ineligible because he was not a citizen of the United States. One account claims that he became a citizen of the U.S. in California but his records were later destroyed. In 1866 he moved into Yuma where he continued to run a variety of businesses and sold produce from the ranch. In 1873, now a confirmed citizen of the U.S. he was elected to serve in the seventh Territorial Legislature. He subsequently served on the Council, or upper house, of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Legislatures. During his time in the Legislature he

arranged for the Territorial Prison to be built at Yuma, amending the bill proposing it be built in Phoenix shortly before it was passed.

In 1878 he was elected mayor of Yuma. His mayoral term was short-lived as a smallpox epidemic engulfed Yuma the same year. He sent his family to California to wait out the epidemic, but remained behind to perform his mayoral duties. He soon contracted the disease and died on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1878.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:** The majority of this collection is biographical material relating to the Jose Maria Redondo family and their numerous relatives and descendants. In addition to the Redondo family, there is material related to the allied families of Balsz, Bossung, Contreras, Elias, Figueroa, and Ronstadt families. This genealogical material represents complex family relationships. Some are confusing due to re-usage of names in the same and subsequent generations. See also Yuma Biography Collection.

This collection is arranged in six series.

**Series I: Biographical.** This series contains information in both English and Spanish on the life of the Jose Maria Redondo family, as well as their relatives and descendants. Also in this series is a biography written by Mulford Winsor, and a published booklet of biographical information including newspaper articles, photographs and extracts from oral interviews compiled by Mary Redondo Loroña. Finally there are research and reference cards noting various sources of information about Jose Maria Redondo.

**Series II: Correspondence.** This series contains two documents, the first is an 1883 letter written by Piedad C. Redondo, wife of Jose Maria Redondo; the second is a photocopy of several printed 1862 missives from or about Redondo excerpted from a book.

**Series III: Documents.** This series contains information about irrigation in Arizona, as well as various documents about Redondo family reunions in Yuma, Arizona. Also in this series are legal papers, including an Abstract of Title and several lawsuits brought against Piedad C. Redondo by her brother-in-law Jesus Redondo concerning the execution of Jose Maria Redondo's will.

**Series IV: Manuscripts.** This series contains manuscripts about Jose Maria Redondo.

**Series V: Redondo Ruins.** This series contains information about the ruins of the San Ysidro ranch, including an archeological survey in the early 1980s. There is also information about a 2005 rezoning case involving the land that the ruins occupy.

#### CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Folder	Title	Dates
1	1	<b>Biographical:</b> Elias Family	1960–1983, n.d.
	2	<b>Biographical:</b> Figueroa Family	1954–1957, n.d.
	3	<b>Biographical:</b> “Jose Maria Redondo” (by Mulford Winsor)	n.d.

	4	<b>Biographical:</b> Extended Family and Associates	Alphabetical
	5	<b>Biographical:</b> “Redondo: A Yuman Legacy” by Mary Redondo Lorona	2006
	6	<b>Biographical:</b> Redondo Family	Alphabetical
	7	<b>Biographical:</b> Redondo Family Genealogy	1860–1880, n.d.
	8	<b>Biographical:</b> Redondo Genealogy (Spanish Language)	n.d.
	9	<b>Biographical:</b> Redondo, Jose Maria	1864–2011, n.d.
	10	<b>Biographical:</b> Research and Reference Cards (1 of 2)	n.d.
	11	<b>Biographical:</b> Research and Reference Cards (2 of 2)	n.d.
<b>2</b>	1	<b>Correspondence</b>	1862–1883
	2	<b>Documents:</b> Irrigation	1880–1962, n.d.
	3	<b>Documents:</b> Legal Records	1878–1931, n.d.
	4	<b>Documents:</b> Redondo Family Reunion	2007–2011
	5	<b>Manuscripts:</b> Various (Biographies of Jose Maria Redondo)	n.d.
	6	<b>Redondo Ruins:</b> Archeological Survey	1982–1984, n.d.
	7	<b>Redondo Ruins:</b> General	1954–1983, n.d.
	8	<b>Redondo Ruins:</b> Rezoning Case	2005