

Phoenix Historical Society Museum

Hours of operation: Thursday-Saturday 1p-4p

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PHSM 101: Ferns Family (1880-1998)

***CREATOR**

Family members including Rene Williams, as well as many community members.

***EXTENT**

Linear Feet: .25'

Number of Containers: 1 box

Number of Items or Digital Files: 2 vertical file images scanned; may be more

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Materials contributed by family members and collected by the museum over time. The Ferns Family is one of the founding families of Phoenix.

LANGUAGES

English

PROCESSING ARCHIVIST

Margaret Croly, Dorothy Cotton

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This finding aid was developed in part with funding from an Oregon Heritage Commission grant and with the support of Southern Oregon University.

Collection Details

Biographical / Historical Note

Thomas (1855-1899) and Amelia Buckley Carver Ferns (1859-1937) and their children, Mark, William, Lovell, Charles, Jenny, Eliza and Archie, came from Iowa in 1897, and made arrangements to purchase the farm formerly owned by Ebenezer Carter, Amelia's late grandfather. The land was planted to wheat, the main commercial crop at the time, and a small orchard. To this, the Ferns added large plantings of corn and alfalfa. Two years later, tragedy struck when Thomas' health deteriorated and he died in March, 1899. At age 40, Amelia Buckley Ferns found herself a widow with seven children to support and more than 900 acres of farm land to care for. The children ranged in age from 2 to 15. The task Amelia faced wasn't an easy one. She had to be sure the farm produced enough each year to support the family and pay the taxes. She traded wheat for flour. There were chickens to feed and cows to milk. Eight to ten hogs were butchered and cured every year. When the orchard boom hit, Amelia planted one of the first commercial orchards in what was by then known as Fern Valley. Life was hard, but through hard work, perseverance, and the help of her children, Amelia managed to raise her family and keep the farm, which was later passed on to her children. Many of the family, including Thomas and Amelia, William John, Jenny, Ralph and Archie are buried in the Phoenix Pioneer Cemetery. The last of the early family was Robert Archie Ferns (1932-2014). Fern Valley Road is named after this family as is the Fern Valley exchange, an I5 exit.

*Collection Description

The Phoenix Historical Society has acquired a variety of materials on the Ferns Family. These materials are in paper, photographic, ephemera and physical format.

Arrangement Description

This material was processed at the collection level.

Separated Materials

Scrapbook with tag: For Uncle Stan, Aunt Bonnie & Family. From Rene. Looseleaf scrapbook includes 8 photos, family tree, family histories, audiotape, miscellanea

Related Materials

- Waldron, Sue. "County Byways: Payne-Fern Valley Roads," Table Rock Sentinel, Summer 1992, p 47 [includes references to Jackson County property and road records]
- Fern Valley School, a book and CD, donated by Karen and Bob Carr [covers an early one room school house, of photo of which is in the Phoenix Historical Society Museum digital collection]
- Cotton, Dorothy. "Amelia Ferns" Gasburg Gazette, Spring 2017
- O'Harra, Marjorie and Dorothy Cotton. "Fern Valley Road" Gasburg Gazette, Fall 2014

Location of Originals

The materials are housed in an acid free box shelved in the collections area of the museum, in a mobile shelving unit in the back room and in other locations in the museum.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Rene Williams

“My grandma is Gladys Davenport, born Gladys Mae Ferns. From the time I was very small my mom, Phyllis, and my grandma would tell stories of the great grandparents and relatives. Those stories became a part of me and gave me a sense of pride in my heritage. I would imagine what they were like as I listened to the stories and looked at the pictures. I have identified with Amelia Buckley Carver Ferns when hard times have come. I also recognize the humor that has been a strength and a common quality of most of our family members. This written material and tape is my gift to other family members to help continue the tie between the past and future generations. I hope that the stories and photos will be cherished and will help bring a sense of identity and pride to the many descendants of the Ferns family to come.”

Subject Headings

Williams, Rene; Ferns, Gladys; Ferns Family (Or.); Ferns, William Thomas; Ferns, Amelia Buckley Carver; Phoenix (Or.) – History; Jackson County (Or.) – History; Phoenix Historical Society Museum (Or.)

Processing Note

There may be photographs in the not-yet-scanned files of the 4-drawer file cabinet and in the drawers under the display cases.

Using the Collection

ACCESS STATEMENT

Collection is open and available for use at the Phoenix Historical Society Museum.

RIGHTS STATEMENT

The material in the Ferns Family collection may be freely used for non-profit, educational and research purposes. Any and all commercial use must be explicitly approved by the Phoenix Historical Society Museum.

Copyright has been assigned to the Phoenix Historical Society Museum by various donors.

PREFERRED CITATION

PHSM101. Ferns Family Collection (1880-1998), Phoenix Historical Society Museum, Phoenix, Oregon, October 2022.

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Rene Williams Donation, 1998

Miscellaneous paper, photographic, ephemera and physical objects related to the Ferns Family.

Subseries 1: Loose leaf Scrapbook

Description	Date(s)	Box	Folder
Photocopies of family members identified by name	nd	01	binder
Family tree	nd	01	binder
6 pages of original photographs	nd	01	binder
Statement of Line of Eligibility for Membership in the Society of Mayflower Descendants for Richard Warren, Abigail Warren (undated)	nd	01	binder
The Ebenezer Waterman Carver Story as told by Sybil Carver Sollars (8 typewritten pages)	March 15, 1978	01	binder
Descendants of Jane Doonan Ferns and William Ferns prepared by Mrs. Lloyd L. Ferns (24 typewritten pages)	November 1, 1998	01	binder
Printed photocopies of family and home [count 4]	nd	01	01

Subseries 2: Audiocassette

Description	Date(s)	Box	Folder
Audiocassette tape: Ferns' Family Stories, Gladys Phyllis and Rene	undated	01	01

Series 2: Ferns Family

Subseries 1: Objects

Description	Date(s)	Box	Folder
Framed watercolor picture painted by Mrs. Ferns	undated	In stand on display case in front room	
Framed certificate		in filing cabinet in front room	scanned #
Framed certificate		in filing cabinet in front room	scanned #

Subseries 2: Photos

Description	Date(s)	Box	Folder
Family photo Amelia and her children	Early 1900's	Scanned #	