DATE: October 23, 1986  DONOR: Rubye R. (Mrs. W. D.) Burcham

FILE ENTRY: Burcham, William D. (1834-1972)


Addition Biographical Material can be found in a folder at the end of the collection.

DESCRIPTION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS:</th>
<th>LEAVES:</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bound leaves</td>
<td>unbound leaves</td>
<td>82</td>
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<tr>
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<td>758</td>
<td>single 84</td>
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</table>

CONTENT:

ARRANGEMENT:

CORRESPONDENCE 1939-1966 & n.d. (7 unbound, 32 leaves)(38 leaves)
DRAWINGS n.d. (3 leaves)
FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS 1932 & n.d. (9 leaves)
LEGAL DOCUMENTS 1940-1952 & n.d. (5 unbound, 11 leaves)(3 leaves)
MAPS 1905-c. 1916 & n.d. 6 leaves)
PHOTOGRAPHS 1942 (1 leaf)
PRINTED MATERIAL c. 1911-c. 1970 & n.d. (22 unbound, 342 leaves)(5 leaves)
REPORTS 1907-1958 & n.d. (47 unbound, 373 leaves)(20 leaves)

Inventoried By: Cindy Marquez  Typed By: Cindy Marquez
Approved By:  Form B
COLLECTION SUMMARY
of the

The W. D. Burcham Collection was donated to the Archives of the Big Bend on June 22, 1984, by Rubye R. Burcham (Mrs. W. D.). All of the material in the collection deals with the quicksilver mining industry in the Terlingua Mining District and Opal, Zacatecas, Mexico.

William David (W. D.) Burcham was born on June 10, 1884 in Salem, Indiana. He attended school in Oregon and California, and graduated from Stanford University. On April 22, 1917 he married Rubye Richardson in Alpine, Texas and had three children--William Jackson, Richard Lusk, and Rubye June. The family moved from mine to mine until 1938. Burcham was appointed Brewster County Commissioner of Precinct Number 4 in November of 1922. He served that position until 1938. He was also Vice-President of National Quicksilver Producers Association from 1933-1934. In 1938 Alpine became Burcham's "home base" while the children were in school. W. D. Burcham died on May 31, 1972 in Alpine, Texas and was buried in Marathon, Texas. Also buried there are two infant children that the Burchams lost.

The W.D. Burcham Collection is a group of papers pertaining to the many different mines and people Burcham was involved with. Among the collection are mining documents relating to Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated, Chisos Mining Company, Esperado Mining Company, Mariscal Mining Company, and the mines located in Study Butte, Texas, Terlingua, Texas, and Mexico.

The production of mercury (quicksilver) began in the Terlingua Mining District of Texas in the late 1800's. When word got out that quicksilver had been discovered in the Big Bend of Texas, the rush was on. Many people came to the Terlingua country hoping to cash in on the quicksilver industry.

W. D. Burcham was a mining geologist and engineer who worked for many different people and mines. He was involved not only with the mines in the Terlingua Mining District but also with the mines in Opal, Zacatecas, Mexico. In 1910 Burcham moved to Shafter, Texas and became superintendent of the silver mines (prior to Shafter, he worked in the gold fields of Alaska and Nevada as a mining engineer). In 1916 he moved to Study Butte because of the quicksilver business there. He became the superintendent of the Study Butte Mines (which consisted of the Texas Almaden Mine and the Big Bend Mine) and the Mariscal Mines. In 1927, Burcham and John H. Leavell leased the Study Butte Mines and referred to the properties as Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated. By 1936 Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated was in financial difficulties. Southwest Mines Incorporated assumed its liabilities and Burcham was dismissed by the new owners.

W. D. Burcham also worked for the Rainbow Mining Company and the Chisos Mining Company under Howard E. Perry. In 1942 the Chisos Mining Company was sold at a bankrupt sale to the Texas Railway Equipment Company and reopened
as the Esperado Mining Company. Burcham worked for the Esperado Mining Company in its costly attempt to resurrect the mine. They were unsuccessful and closed the mine in 1945. After World War II Spain and other quicksilver producing countries dumped an oversupply of quicksilver onto the world market so that it was no longer profitable for Texas mines to operate. For the first time in over 50 years, there was no quicksilver production in Texas.

After the closing of the Chisos Mine, Burcham went to work as a mining geologist and engineer in the Republic of Mexico. He is documented as having worked for the Puerta Rica Mining District, Mercuries del Norte, San Pedro, La Abundancia, and El Rosicler Mines.

The collection consists of Correspondence, Drawings, Financial Documents, Legal Documents, Maps, Photographs, Printed Material and Reports. There are original documents as well as carbon copies in each folder throughout the collection. Mining reports make up the bulk of the collection and are very informative about the quicksilver mining industry in the Big Bend. The material is housed in one archival storage box. Folders are arranged alphabetically by category and sub-category. Material is arranged chronologically within each folder.

By: Cindy L. Marquez
    Archival Assistant

    October 22, 1986
"Burcham rites held." The Alpine Avalanche, 8 June 1972, sec. 1, p. 1.


Burcham, Rubye R. Archives of the Big Bend, Alpine, Texas. Oral History Interview #85, June 22, 1983.

Cline, Francis. Archives of the Big Bend, Alpine, Texas. Oral History Interview #83, June 16, 1983.


SEE ALSO:

W. KESEY COLLECTION 1872-1964 & n.d.
HARRIS S. SMITH PAPERS 1920-1972
RUBYE R. BURCHAM (MRS. W.D.) OH B947W 1983
**Collection Title:** W. D. Burcham Collection 1905-c. 1970 & n.d.

**Name of Business (Give Name Changes and Dates):** Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated

**Principal Name Around Which Collection Is Formed:** William D. Burcham

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Study Butte, Texas</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Dissolution</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Study Butte, Texas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reason for Dissolution:** Financial Difficulties

**List Purpose of Business:**

To mine quicksilver from the Study Butte Mines.

**List Owners of Business, Dates of Ownership, and Type of Business Structure (partnership, corporation, single owner, etc.):**

- W. D. Burcham 1927-1937
- John H. Leavell 1927-1937

**List Employees, Positions, and Dates of Employment:**

- W. D. Burcham, President 1927-1937

**Primary Locations and Dates:**

Study Butte, Texas 1927-1937

**List Other Significant Information About the Above Named Company:**

In 1937, Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated became Southwest Mines Incorporated.

Name of Business: Esperado Mining Company

Principal Name Around Which Collection Is Formed: William D. Burcham

Date of Formation: 1942

Place: Terlingua, Texas

Date of Dissolution: 1945

Place: Terlingua, Texas

Reason for Dissolution: Water seepage into the shafts and the dropping price of quicksilver

List Purpose of Business:
To restore the Chisos Mine and mine quicksilver at a profit.

List Owners of Business, Dates of Ownership, and Type of Business Structure (partnership corporation single owner etc.):
Texas Railway Equipment Company

List Employees, Positions, and Dates of Employment:
Frank Parker 1943
W.D. Burcham 1943
Herman Brown of Brown & Root Company

Primary Locations and Dates:
Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District 1942-1945

List Other Significant Information About the Above Named Company:
In 1942 the Texas Railway Equipment Company bought the Chisos Mine at a bankrupt sale and reopened it as the Esperado Mining Company. They could not mine it successfully and closed it once again in 1945.
1. **COLLECTION TITLE** W.D. BURCHAM COLLECTION 1905-1970 & n.d

2. **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON** William David (W.D.) Burcham

3. **DATE OF BIRTH** June 10, 1884  
   **PLACE OF BIRTH** Salem, Indiana

4. **DATE OF DEATH** May 31, 1972  
   **PLACE OF DEATH** Alpine, Texas

5. **FATHER’S NAME**  
   **MOTHER’S NAME**

6. **NAMES OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF #2 ABOVE, WITH BIRTH AND DEATH DATES FOR EACH:**

   - Mrs. W.G. Lauderdale (Pauline)  
   - Mrs. A.C. Spaulding (Mary)  
   - Dec 10, 1869- Apr. 24, 1953

7. **EDUCATION (LEVEL OF EDUCATION, NAMES OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, DATES OF ATTENDANCE):**

   - Attended school in Oregon and Palo Alto, California  
   - Graduate of Stanford University, California

8. **DATE OF MARRIAGE** April 22, 1917  
   **NAME OF SPOUSE** Rubye Richardson

9. **CHILDREN OF #2 ABOVE, WITH BIRTH AND DEATH DATES:**

   - William Jackson (June 6, 1918 - )  
   - Richard Lusk  
   - Rubye June (Mrs. Rubye Ervin) (June 21, 1929 - )

10. **PRIMARY RESIDENCE(S), WITH DATES IF KNOWN:**

    - Shafter, Texas  
    - Alpine, Texas  
    - Study Butte, Texas  
    - Marathon, Texas  
    - Glenn Springs, Texas

11. **PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION(S)** Mining Geologist and Engineer

12. **MEMBERSHIPS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, OFFICES HELD:**

    - 1922-1938 Brewster County Commissioner of Precinct No. 4  
    - 1933-34 Vice-President of National Quicksilver Producers Association  
    - 1936 President of Mariscal Mining Company  
    - Member of the Masonic Lodge and Presbyterian Church

13. **SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND DATES IN THE LIFE OF #2 ABOVE**

    - 1910 Moved to Shafter, Texas  
    - 1916 Moved to Study Butte, Texas  
    - 1927 Reopened Mariscal Mine  
    - Formed Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated  
    - 1938 Moved to Alpine, Texas
Contains mostly business correspondence involving W. D. Burcham and his
mining activities. Herman Brown of the Esperado Mining Company and Brown &
Root, General Miguel Gonzales from the Puerta Rica Mining District (Mexico),
and C. N. "Curt" Schuette, consulting mining engineer for the U. S. Bureau
of mines, are the most frequent correspondents. Also included is a series
of letters between Burcham, Wright, Clark & Senkel, Inc., and Dr. C. E. Gray
concerning payment for materials borrowed.

Folder #1 Business Correspondence 1939-1966 & n.d. (7 unbound, 32 leaves)(38 leaves)

Contains hand drawings of a condenser, structural geology of the
Terlingua Mining District, and sample locations of unknown.

Folder #2 Hand Drawings n.d. (3 leaves)

Contains operating expenses of Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated,
Special Expansion Program and Routine Operations of Mercuries del Norte.

Folder #3 Financial Papers 1932 & n.d. (9 leaves)

Contains mining leases and memorandums of agreement among the Southern
Kraft Corporation, B. L. Wooley, W. D. Burcham, the Rainbow Mine, General
Miguel Gonzales, and Jerry Rivera.

Folder #4 Mining Leases 1940-1952 & n.d. (5 unbound, 11 leaves)(3 leaves)
BOX #1

*MAPS 1905-c. 1916 & n.d. (5 leaves)

Contains maps of Presidio County, Brewster County and Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District.

912.764()

(203) Texas (Brewster County) Chisos Mountain Quadrangle 1905 (1 leaf)
(204) Texas (Presidio Co.) Polvo Sheet 1909 (1 leaf)
(205) [Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District] c. 1916 (1 leaf)
(206) Rainbow Mining Claims n.d. (2 leaves)

PHOTOGRAPHS 1942 (1 leaf)

Contains photographs of mining equipment (condensers, ore bins, furnace tubes) and the Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District. Four photographs attached to one piece of cardboard.

Folder #5 Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District 1942 (1 leaf)
R.2.a.12 Mining equipment, Terlingua Mining District
R.2.a.13 Mining equipment, Terlingua Mining District
R.2.a.14 Mining equipment, Terlingua Mining District
R.2.*.1 Terlingua Mining District

PRINTED MATERIAL c. 1911-c. 1970 & n.d. (22 unbound, 342 leaves1(5 leaves)

Contains excerpts from journals and publications, United States Geological Society bulletins and booklets dealing specifically with the quicksilver mining industry.

Folder #6 Mines and Mineral Resource Material (Reports on quicksilver)
c. 191 -c. 1970 & n.d. (22 unbound, 342 leaves)(5 leaves)

REPORTS 1907-1958 & n.d. (47 unbound, 373 leaves)(20 leaves)

Contains geological and production reports of Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated, Esperado Mining Company, and associated mines. Reports on the Mexico mines in the Puerta Rica Mining District including Mercurios del Norte, San Pedro, La Abundancia, and El Rosicler are also included. General reports on quicksilver mining in the U.S. and the Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District are included in this section. There are also reports on miscellaneous mines such as Fresno Mine and Mariscal Mine and unknown mining companies.

*Maps are housed in the Map File
BOX #1

REPORTS (cont.)

BREWSTER QUICKSILVER CONSOLIDATED 1908-1937 & n.d. (7 unbound, 74 leaves)(5 leaves)
   Folder #7 Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated 1931-c. 1935 & n.d. (1 unbound, 6 leaves)(2 leaves)
   Folder #8 Study Butte Mines 1928-1937 (6 unbound, 68 leaves)(2 leaves)
   Folder #9 Texas Almaden Mine (Dallas Mine) 1908 & n.d. (1 leaf)

ESPERADO MINING COMPANY c. 1918-1951 & n.d. (12 unbound, 139 leaves) (10 leaves)
   Folder #10 Esperado Mining Company 1941-1946 & n.d. (3 unbound, 62 leaves)(3 leaves)
   Folder #11 Chisos Mines and Rainbow Mines c. 1918-1951 & n.d. (6 unbound, 52 leaves)(6 leaves)
   Folder #12 Mariposa Mine c. 1930 (1 leaf)
   Folder #13 Waldron Quicksilver Properties Inc. 1937-1942 (3 unbound, 25 leaves)

GENERAL REPORTS 1918-1947 & n.d. (8 unbound, 48 leaves)
   Folder #14 Mercury Mining in the U. S. 1918-1947 (5 unbound, 38 leaves)
   Folder #15 Terlingua Quicksilver Mining District 1941 & n.d. (3 unbound, 28 leaves)(3 leaves)

MEXICO MINES 1944-1958 & n.d. (13 unbound, 70 leaves)(4 leaves)
   Folder #16 Mercurios del Norte 1944-1952 & n.d. (2 unbound, 17 leaves)(1 leaf)
   Folder #17 Puerta Rica Mines 1951 (4 unbound, 25 leaves)
   Folder #18 San Pedro; La Abundancia; El Rosicler 1951-1958 (7 unbound, 28 leaves)(3 leaves)

MISCELLANEOUS MINES 1907-1941 & n.d. (7 unbound, 42 leaves)(1 leaf)
   Folder #19 Fresno Mine 1941 (1 unbound, 9 leaves)
   Folder #20 Mariscal/Viviana Mine 1917-c. 1935 (3 unbound, 21 leaves)
   Folder #21 Miscellaneous Mines 1907-1941 & n.d. (3 unbound, 13 leaves)(1 leaf)
W. D. BURCHAM COLLECTION 1905-c. 1970
& n.d. ______________________
Donor Rubye R. Mrs. W. D.) Burcham
Donation Date June 22, 1984
Reference File:
Biographical Data Sheet Yes
Summary Sheet Yes
Microfilmed No
Oral History Interviews:
None
Type of Material:
CORRESPONDENCE 1939-1966 & n.d.
DRAWINGS n.d.
FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS 1932 & n.d.
LEGAL DOCUMENTS 1940-1952 & n.d.
MAPS 1905-c. 1916 & n.d.
PHOTOGRAPHS 1942
REPORTS 1907-1958 & n.d.

Number linear feet
Number of items 842
Catalogued:
Date October 23, 1986
By Cindy Marquez

ARCHIVES OF THE BIG BEND SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

Identification:
See Collection Summary

Related Material:
Robert L. Cartledge Collection
W. Keesey Collection
Harris S. Smith Papers

Principal Subjects:
Brewster Quicksilver Consolidated
Brown, Herman
Burcham, William D. (W. D.)
Chisos Mining Company, Terlingua, Texas
Colquitt-Tigner Mine, Terlingua, Texas
El Rosicler Mines, Mexico
Esperado Mining Company, Terlingua, Texas
Fresno Mines, Presidio County, Texas
Gonzales Miguel S.

Evaluation:
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Location ________

Date October 23, 1986
Principal Subjects:  (continued)

Schuette, C. N. “Curt”
Study Butte, Texas--Mines
Terlingua, Texas--Mines
Terlingua, Texas--Maps
Texas Almaden Mine, Study Butte, Texas
Two Forty-Eight Mine, Terlingua, Texas
DATA SHEET FOR THE NATIONAL UNION CATALOG OF MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Name of Repository: Archives of the Big Bend

Reported by: Cindy L. Marquez

Date: October 23, 1986

1. Name of collection and inclusive dates of material:


2. Principal name around which the collection is formed; i.e., person (full name, birth and death dates), family, business, society, government agency, or some other corporate body:

William David Burcham 1884-1972

Give relationship to the collection; i.e., writer, addressee, collector X, other (specify) -

3. Occupation or type of activity of the principal person, family, or corporate body; significant events and dates in the career or activity; and place of residence or location of activity:

Mining geologist and engineer for quicksilver mines in the Terlingua Mining District and Opal, Zacatecas, Mexico. The Terlingua Mining District is located in Brewster County, Texas.

4. Number of linear shelf feet (if 1 foot or more), ______; or number of items 842 (known X or estimated).

5. If the collection contains copies of manuscripts, describe the form(s) of reproduction (handwritten or typewritten transcripts, positive or negative photocopie, positive or negative microfilm with no. of reels) and give the number (or fraction of total) of each kind. Give location of originals, and dates and circumstances under which the copies were made:

6. Nature of acquisition (gift, permanent deposit, etc.), date(s) and source(s) of acquisition and former owner(s):

Mrs. Rubye R. Burcham donated the collection on June 22, 1984.

7. Research access restricted ______, unrestricted X State nature of restriction and when it will be terminated:

8. Full citation of any published or unpublished description, guide, index, calendar, etc.:

10. DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT AND SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION.

This description should cover: types of papers (e.g., correspondence, letters, diaries, documents, etc.); dates, subjects, and types of groups of materials that bulk largest; relationship of the material to specific phases of the career or activity of the principal named in item 2; full names, dates, and biographical identification of other persons and names of corporate bodies significant (by quality and quantity of material) to the collection; showing dates, types, and subject matter; geographical areas covered; specific events, topics, and historical periods with which the materials deal; and particular items of extraordinary interest.

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