Descriptive Summary

Title: Charles E. Duryea and J. Frank Duryea Papers, 1894-1944
Dates: GC 1362
Collection Number: 1894/1944
Creator/Collector: Duryea, Charles E., 1861-1938 Duryea, J. Frank (James Frank), 1869-1967
Extent: 1/2 letter
Repository: Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
Los Angeles, California 90007-4057
Language of Material: English
Access
Research is by appointment only
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Charles E. Duryea and J. Frank Duryea Papers, 1894-1944. Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
Biography/Administrative History
Charles E. Duryea (1861-1938) and J. Frank Duryea (1869-1967) collaborated in Springfield, Massachusetts to build a gasoline-powered motor vehicle in 1892. Frank contended that he alone successfully invented the car.
Scope and Content of Collection
Publications, advertising booklets, correspondence and ephemera. An artificial collection about the Duryea brothers and their contributions to the start of the automobile industry in the United States. 1894-1944, undated. Some papers document the Kiwanis Club of Springfield, Massachusetts, that honored Charles in 1937 as the "Father of the Automobile". The state governor’s office sought to lay a plaque to similarly honor Charles in 1942. Several publications from the 1940s reveal the rivalry between the brothers, with the surviving younger brother Frank’s attempts to correct the historical fact. These publications contain reprinted manuscripts, typescripts, clippings, letters and notarized affidavits attesting to Frank’s involvement as inventor and his contention that his older brother fabricated lies. Correspondence includes those received and written by the museum curator of Physical & Mechanical Sciences. Contact the Detroit Public Library, National Automotive History Collection, for Charles E. Duryea Papers 1878-1957 (bulk 1898-1930).
Indexing Terms
Automobiles--United States--History
Springfield (Mass.)