

Archer Bowden Papers

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Archer Bowden Papers

Dates: 1916-1924

Collection Number: 74-14593

Creator/Collector:

Extent: .25 linear feet

Repository: History San Jose Research Library
San Jose, California 95112

Abstract: Personal papers of former San Jose city attorney Archer Bowden. The bulk of the papers relate to his service in the U.S. Army during World War I. Belden was born in 1885 to California pioneers Nicholas and Sally Trimble Bowden, and worked in private practice and as city attorney for both San Jose and Oakland.

Language of Material: English

Access

The papers are available to researchers by appointment with the Curator of Library & Archives.

Publication Rights

Contact the Curator of Library & Archives regarding reproduction and publication.

Preferred Citation

Archer Bowden Papers. History San Jose Research Library

Acquisition Information

The papers were donated to the San Jose Historical Museum in 1974.

Biography/Administrative History

A native of San Jose, Archer Bowden was the oldest of five children born in 1885 to California pioneers Nicholas and Sally Trimble Bowden. He served with the 348th field artillery in the U.S. Army during World War I as captain in overseas service. Before the war, Bowden worked as an assistant district attorney and San Jose City Clerk; after the war he joined his father Nicholas Bowden's law firm. In 1920 he was appointed San Jose city attorney by City Manager C. B. Goodwin. In 1930 he was also appointed to the board of military and veterans affairs by Governor Young, to succeed Allen B. Bisby, and as a director of the California League of Municipalities, he achieved a reputation as an authority in city administration. In 1942 he took a temporary leave of absence to serve as trial lawyer for the San Francisco regional Office of Price Administration. A year later he returned to his San Jose position, but was forced to resign shortly thereafter. In 1945 he became an assistant city attorney in Oakland. Bowden and his wife Francis returned to San Jose in July 1952. Bowden died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot to the head at age 68 on February 12, 1953.

Scope and Content of Collection

Personal papers of former city attorney Archer Bowden. The bulk of the papers relate to his service in the U.S. Army during World War I, with a small amount of material from his early career after the war as an attorney with his father Nicholas Bowden's firm, and his appointment as San Jose City Attorney in 1920.
