Finding Aid to the Anson Stiles Blake Papers, 1882-1959 MS 204

Finding aid prepared by California Historical Society staff.
California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105
415-357-1848
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Title: Anson Stiles Blake papers
Date (inclusive): 1882-1959
Collection Number: MS 204
Creator: Blake, Anson Stiles, 1870-1959
Physical Description: 1.5 boxes (0.75 Linear feet)
Repository: California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105
415-357-1848
reference@calhist.org
URL: http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/
Physical Location: Collection is stored onsite.
Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English.
Abstract: Consists chiefly of typescripts and manuscripts of Blake's speeches to San Francisco Bay Area social clubs and organizations, concerning California history and contemporary issues, including labor relations, the cement and asphalt business, Berkeley, and other topics. Includes papers relating to his participation with the California Historical Society and the Society of California Pioneers, and a small amount of personal correspondence, receipts, and miscellany. Also includes some material on Blake's father, Charles Thompson Blake and his travelling and business partners, Roger Sherman Baldwin, Charles T.H. Palmer, and Caspar T. Hopkins, who is represented by a [1932] typed copy of his autobiography, written in 1888-1889.
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Anson Stiles Blake Papers. MS 204, California Historical Society, North Baker Research Library.
Separated Materials
Photographs shelved as MSP 204.
Related Collections
Anson S. Blake Business Records, MS 203 Charles Thompson Blake Letters and Miscellany, 1849-1865, MS 204A
Note
This entry replaces NUCMC number 75-235.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Blake, Charles Thompson, 1826-1897
Hopkins, Caspar T. (Caspar Thomas), 1826-1893
Businessmen.
California--History.
Industrial relations--California.
Quarries and quarrying--California.
Agriculture--California Folder 26
American Federation of Labor Folder 14
Art--San Francisco Bay Folder 32
Berkeley, California, 1875-1900 Folder 8
Berkeley, California--Transportation--Railroads Folder 9
Berkeley, University of California Folder 8
Bidwell, John Folder 18
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Botany Folder 16
California--Emigration Folder 17, 18
California--History, 1861-1865 Folder 11
California--Politics and government, 1849-1879 Folder 21
Chapman, Charles E. Folder 15
Cleland, Robert G. Folder 15
Collective bargaining Folder 14, 21
Congress of Industrial Organizations Folder 14
Conservation Folder 30
East Bay Municipal Utility District--History Folder 17
Kensington, California Folder 22
Labor--California Folder 29
Labor disputes Folder 21, 34
Mines and mining Folder 25
Palmer, Charles T. Folder 24, 35
Prohibition--California Folder 27
Race relations Folder 28
San Francisco--Politics and government, 1846-1848 Folder 31
San Francisco--Social life and customs, 1846-1848 Folder 31
San Francisco Bay Folder 31, 32
Street-cars--Berkeley, California Folder 9
Sutter, John A. Folder 24
Sutter's Fort Folder 24
Trade-unions Folder 23, 29
Wine and winemaking Folder 27

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Source unknown.

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No additions are expected.

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Scope and Content
Consists chiefly of typescripts and manuscripts of Blake's speeches to San Francisco Bay Area social clubs and organizations, concerning California history and contemporary issues, including labor relations, the cement and asphalt business, Berkeley, and other topics. Includes papers relating to his participation with the California Historical Society and the Society of California Pioneers, and a small amount of personal correspondence, receipts, and miscellany. Also includes some material on Blake's father, Charles Thompson Blake and his travelling and business partners, Roger Sherman Baldwin, Charles T.H. Palmer, and Caspar T. Hopkins, who is represented by a [1932] typed copy of his autobiography, written in 1888-1889.

Biography
Anson Stiles Blake was born in San Francisco on August 6, 1870. He was the son of Harriet Stiles Blake and Charles Thompson Blake. His father, C.T. Blake was an early pioneer to San Francisco, arriving in 1849 from New Haven, Connecticut after a difficult voyage through Central America. Anson Blake attended Lincoln Grammar School and Boy's High School in San Francisco before moving with his family to Berkeley where he attended the University. Upon graduation in 1891 Blake went to work for the Bay Rock Company in Oakland, moving two years later to the Oakland Paving Company a macadamizing outfit run by his father and his father's associate C.T.H. Palmer. In 1899 he became president of that company. In 1894 he married Anita Day Symmes, a recent U.C. graduate.

Blake's interest in such businesses arose from his father's and grandfather's own mining and mine-equipment backgrounds. (His grandfather patented the Blake Rock Crusher in 1858.) In 1904 he helped to form the San Pablo Quarry Company which supplied materials to the city of San Francisco for its rebuilding after the earthquake. In 1914 the company, which
later became Blake Brother's in Richmond, was created and this business was in Blake's control until 1954. Rock from this company helped to keep islands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin from flooding in addition to supplying the bayside rock edges of Treasure Island for the 1939 Fair there.

Throughout his life, however, Blake's interests diversified far beyond those of the quarrying concern. He took an interest while still at Berkeley in the University YMCA - Stiles Hall - (donated by his grandmother,) and helped to support it throughout his life. He was a member of many clubs including the Berkeley City Club, the Claremont Country Club the Athenian Club and others. He wrote prolifically on a wide variety of subjects and was a frequent speech-giver. Speech topics covered such subjects as, Racial Contrasts on the Southwestern Frontier, to the effects of Prohibition on California grape growers. Usually, though, they dealt with history. He was president of both the Society of Calif. Pioneers and the Calif. Historical Society, the latter from 1945-48. He was on the Board of Trustees of CHS from 1924-1959 and was made a fellow in 1958. He did extensive research on his father, concentrating on the years Charles Blake spent mining in the Sierras during the Gold Rush. Among Anson Blake's papers are letters written by his father's traveling and business partners describing their trip to California and the Gold Rush.

In 1953 the California State Legislature bestowed upon him the title of Grand Old Man of Stiles Hall in honor of his 50 years of service. In 1958 he was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree by the University. He died on August 17, 1959, eleven days after his 89th birthday.

Box 1, Folder 1
Correspondence, receipts, notes and memorabilia 1867-1959

Box 1, Folder 2
California Historical Society 1936, 1941, 1956-1957, undated

Box 1, Folder 3
Society of California Pioneers 1929, 1937, undated

Box 1, Folder 4
Centennial Celebrations Committee 1946

Box 1, Folder 5-6
Casper T. Hopkins Autobiography 1888-1889

Box 1, Folder 7
Charles Thompson Blake, Notes from newspapers undated

Writings and Speeches

Box 1, Folder 8
Berkeley in Retrospect undated

Box 1, Folder 9
[Berkeley] The Land on Which We Live, Part 2 undated

Box 1, Folder 10
California Historical Society: The Infant Years 1957 May 9

Box 1, Folder 11
California in the Civil War undated

Box 1, Folder 12
[California Water and Reclamation] undated

Box 1, Folder 13
Codes and Code Making undated

Box 1, Folder 14
Collective Bargaining in Practice undated

Box 1, Folder 15
The Companion Histories of California undated

Box 1, Folder 16
David Douglas, A Pioneer Botanist in Action undated

Box 1, Folder 17
East Bay Municipal Utility District undated

Box 1, Folder 18
The First Emigrant Train to California undated

Box 1, Folder 19
The First Steamship Pioneers to California undated

Box 2, Folder 20
The Hudson's Bay Company in San Francisco undated

Box 2, Folder 21
The Initiative Incubates Ham and Eggs undated

Box 2, Folder 22
Kensington (The Carmelite Monastery and Blake property there) undated

Box 2, Folder 23
[The Labor Situation in the Industrial Community] undated

Box 2, Folder 24
Life at Sutter's Fort undated

Box 2, Folder 25
Life in the California Mines, 1850-1852 undated

Box 2, Folder 26
The Problem of a Rural Population undated

Box 2, Folder 27
Prohibition and the Grape Growers undated

Box 2, Folder 28
Racial Contrasts on the Southwestern Frontier undated

Box 2, Folder 29
Rights of Minorities in the Present Labor Situation undated

Box 2, Folder 30
Sacramento, San Joaquin Valleys, early views of California and conservation of natural resources undated

Box 2, Folder 31
San Francisco, 1846-1848 undated

Box 2, Folder 32
[Two Early Paintings of San Francisco Bay] undated

Box 2, Folder 33
The United States Reclamation Services undated

Box 2, Folder 34
[Wartime and governmental expenditures] 1945?

Box 2, Folder 35
Working for Wells Fargo, 1860-1863 undated