Descriptive Summary
Title: Frederic Joseph Shaw Papers
Dates: 1854-1970
Collection Number: MS 45
Creator/Collector:
Extent: 14 boxes + 1 half-box + 1 oversize box + 1 oversize folder
Repository: California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives
Sacramento, California 95814
Abstract: Papers pertaining to Mr. Shaw's work as an architect, his interest in railroading, the publication of his books, his artwork, and biographical information.
Language of Material: English
Access
This collection is open for research at our off-site storage facility with one week's notice. Contact Library & Archives staff to arrange for access.
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Preferred Citation
Frederic Joseph Shaw Papers. California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives
Acquisition Information
Gift of the Pacific Coast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society
Biography/Administrative History
Frederic Shaw was born August 21, 1883. His father, Dr. Robert Shaw, was a Presbyterian minister. Shaw who became an architect by profession, set up a practice in Tacoma, Washington with his brother, Stanley. He served overseas as an officer in the United States Army during World War I. He was elected County Commissioner from the 2nd District of Pierce County, Washington in 1923, was re-elected in 1925 and served until 1929 when he moved to Los Angeles. He moved to San Francisco and in 1947 to Sausalito, where he continued his involvement in local politics. During the Depression he went to work for the Union Oil Company, designing service and marketing stations, resuming his independent practice in 1936. He designed all of the McKale service stations in San Francisco. Before retiring in 1953, Shaw worked for the State of California as an architect for the Highway Division. Shaw was very active in American Legion activities and was a lifelong active member of the Presbyterian church. He was the President of the Marin County Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Frederic Shaw was an important and active figure in the San Francisco Bay Area railroad community and an author. Shaw's lifelong interest in railroads began as a boy. He spent many hours observing the diamond-stacked locomotives of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern, and the building of the Michigan Central through Sturgis. On January 23, 1940, the San Francisco Branch of the Railroadians of America was formed. Frederic Shaw was appointed as Western Representative and elected Temporary Chairman and Douglas S. Richter, Temporary Secretary. Shaw was also a founding member of the Pacific Coast Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society. Shaw's first book, OIL LAMPS & IRON PONIES, was published in 1949 and consisted of an abridged history of eight narrow gauge railways in the three Pacific Coast States. He also published LITTLE RAILWAYS OF THE WORLD (1958), and CASEY JONES' LOCKER (1959). Frederic Shaw died on December 21, 1961 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He was survived by his wife, Belle Shaw, and his daughter, Barbara Shaw (Mrs. Walter Bjorkland).
Scope and Content of Collection
These papers are arranged in five series: 1 CORRESPONDENCE / 2 ARCHITECTURE / 3 WRITINGS / 4 ARTWORK / 5 SUBJECT FILES Correspondence reflects Mr. Shaw's interest in railroading. Architectural files contain information about various projects completed by Mr. Shaw in California and in Washington. Drafts and completed copies of various writings and artwork are included in the collection. Biographical information about Shaw's various interests, his military service, and his family includes the program from his memorial service and documents relating to the estate sale.

MS 45 Frederic Joseph Shaw Papers [Complete finding aid]