

Carl Bradley Collection

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California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives

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2018

Descriptive Summary

Title: Carl Bradley Collection

Dates: 1973-1997

Collection Number: MS 633

Creator/Collector:

Extent: 1 half box

Repository: California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives
Sacramento, California 95814

Abstract: A munitions train, loaded with aerial bombs headed for Viet Nam exploded in the Southern Pacific Transportation Company's Roseville, California yard on April 28, 1973. The collection includes photocopies of news clippings, the Federal Railroad Administration's Railroad Accident Investigation Report No. 4187 with supporting documentation, correspondence, memos, and site drawings about the 1973 incident. For the 1997 clean-up, there are team contact lists, correspondence, and company talking points for media contact.

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.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Carl Bradley Collection. California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives

Acquisition Information

Gift of Carl Bradley, 2001

Biography/Administrative History

Carl Bradley was a Superintendent for the Southern Pacific Company in Roseville. He retired in May of 2000 as Union Pacific's General Superintendent at Roseville.

Scope and Content of Collection

A munitions train, loaded with aerial bombs headed for Viet Nam exploded in the Southern Pacific Transportation Company's Roseville, California yard on April 28, 1973. Between 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., a series of explosions rocked the nearby cities of Roseville, Citrus Heights and Antelope, injuring approximately 350 people and damaging 5,500 buildings, mostly residential. Eighteen thousand people were evacuated from the area. Southern Pacific lost 169 freight cars and suffered damage to another 98 cars, a locomotive, tracks, and equipment, and with casualty claims, total losses amounted to about \$23 million. The cause of the explosions was never determined. Possibly one of the box cars caught fire when braking action generated sparks which may have ignited the wood floor. Another theory is that the bombs were not properly manufactured or loaded at the Hawthorne Naval Ammunitions Depot (Nevada) where the shipment originated and were thus unstable. The clean-up of the Roseville yard led to the discovery of approximately 1,200 unexploded bombs which were removed and sent back to the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot. The full transcript of the Federal Railroad Administration's Railroad Accident Investigation Report No. 4187 can be found online at: <http://dotlibrary.specialcollection.net/>. In 1997 Union Pacific Railroad construction crews at the Roseville yard unearthed nine unexploded bombs. This discovery led to a search for remaining bombs. A task force composed of representatives of the Union Pacific Railroad, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Sacramento County oversaw the clean-up. Carl Bradley was the Union Pacific Railroad's representative for these efforts. The collection includes photocopies of news clippings, the Federal Railroad Administration's Railroad Accident Investigation Report No. 4187 with supporting documentation, correspondence, memos, and site drawings about the 1973 incident. For the 1997 clean-up, there are team contact lists, correspondence, and company talking points for media contact.
