
Andrew James Barclay photographs and papers

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California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives

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2020

Descriptive Summary

Title: Andrew James Barclay photographs and papers

Dates: 1877-1941

Collection Number: MS 724

Creator/Collector: Barclay, Andrew James

Extent: 8 linear feet

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

Abstract: Photograph albums depicting construction work on several projects for which Mr. Barclay was Southern Pacific's supervising field engineer. Personal and business papers going back to Mr. Barclay's childhood.

Language of Material: English

Access

Collection open for research at our off-site storage facility. Please contact staff at least one week in advance of your visit.

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Preferred Citation

Andrew James Barclay photographs and papers. California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives

Acquisition Information

Gift of Ronald Barclay, 2016

Biography/Administrative History

Alexander J. Barclay was born on March 13, 1871 in Rome, New York. He was first employed by SP in May 1891 as a chainman and camp boss. After a series of other jobs with Southern Pacific, including inspector, draftsman, instrument man, and leveler, Barclay became an assistant engineer in 1897. He served under Chief Engineer William Hood in January 1905 during the construction of Fallon Railway and from 1909 to 1917 worked as the Assistant Engineer in charge of construction on the Central Pacific 2nd mainline track project. Between 1918 and 1923, when he was laid off by the SP railroad due to lack of construction projects, Mr. Barclay worked on various public and private projects such as building a pier at Manhattan Beach and a filtration tank for the City of Sacramento water system. In 1923, he was recalled to work for SP as a construction engineer. His last SP project was building the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal between 1933 and 1940. In addition to his career with Southern Pacific, Mr. Barclay was the Mayor of Auburn between 1913-1917, a member of several masonic bodies, and a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. Mr. Barclay died on May 25, 1950 in Alameda, California.

Scope and Content of Collection

Contains six photo albums plus a few loose ones depicting construction work on several projects for which Mr. Barclay was Southern Pacific's supervising field engineer. Many photos were taken and printed by professional photographers, either in private business local to the project or employed by Southern Pacific. Some apparently were taken by Mr. Barclay himself. Many of the latter are general scenic views not showing railroad activity. Also includes documents from Mr. Barclay's life and career. Of particular interest is a letter he received from the Los Angeles Chinatown in Chinese, together with an English translation thanking Mr. Barclay for successfully helping them receive payment Southern Pacific for payment to the Chinese residents for its destruction of Chinatown while constructing the L.A. Union Depot.

[MS 724 Alexander J. Barclay \[complete finding aid\]](#)
