Guide to the Thomas E. Risley Papers, 1900-1935

Processed by Michael Hendrickson; machine-readable finding aid created by James Lake
Sanoian Special Collections Library
California State University, Fresno
5200 North Barton Avenue M/S ML 34
Fresno, California 93740-8014
Phone: (559) 278-2595
Fax: (559) 278-6952
Email: specialc@listserv.csufresno.edu
URL: http://www.lib.csufresno.edu/SubjectResources/SpecialCollections
© 1998
California State University, Fresno. All rights reserved.
Guide to the Thomas E. Risley Papers, 1900-1935

Sanoian Special Collections Library

Henry Madden Library
Fresno, California

Contact Information:
Sanoian Special Collections Library
California State University, Fresno
5200 North Barton Avenue M/S ML 34
Fresno, California 93740-8014
Phone: (559) 278-2595
Fax: (559) 278-6952
Email: specialc@listserv.csufresno.edu
URL: http://www.lib.csufresno.edu/SubjectResources/SpecialCollections

Processed by:
Michael Hendrickson
Date Completed:
1997
Encoded by:
James Lake

© 1998 California State University, Fresno. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary
Title: Thomas E. Risley Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1900-1935
Creator: Risley, Thomas E., 1881-1942
Extent: 9 linear inches
Photographs: In box 2.
Repository: Henry Madden Library (California State University, Fresno).
Sanoian Special Collections Library.
Fresno, California
Language: English.

Acquisition
The papers were donated through John Powell in 1985.

Access Restrictions
The collection is open for research.

Publication Rights
Copyright has not been transferred to California State University, Fresno.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Thomas E. Risley Papers, Sanoian Special Collections Library, California State University, Fresno.

Biography
Thomas Eugene Risley was a businessman and property owner in Fresno, California, during the early part of the twentieth century; he was also a socially active community figure. Born in Arizona in 1881, Risley moved to Fresno in 1889 when his father Eugene W. Risley, an attorney, moved the family west. Risley studied mining engineering in college. Upon graduation he relocated to Nevada to work in the mining industry. Returning to Fresno in 1915 to look after his father's business affairs, Risley became a very wealthy and influential man. Risley also had a family by this time--his wife Gladys, and their daughter, Eleanor. His reputation for astute financial dealings brought him the attention of local political figures. As a result, he was appointed to various political positions in the Fresno area, including that of city commissioner in 1923. Risley
also took an active interest in education and was the chairman of the committee on schools of the Fresno County Grand Jury.

Thomas Risley died of heart disease in 1942.

Scope and Content

The Thomas Risley papers measure 9 linear inches and date from 1900 to 1938. The collection is arranged in seven series: Personal information, Clubs and organizations, Financial records, Fresno County schools, Fresno politics, Property, and Photographs.

The Personal information series (1916-1931) contains personal correspondence to Risley's daughter, Eleanor, as well as her school essays and progress reports from elementary school through college. Also included is Risley's will.

Clubs and organizations (1925-1931) include correspondence between club leaders documenting Thomas Risley's participation in local social clubs and organizations such as the Rotary Club and the Community Chest.

Financial records (1918-1935) include investment records, stocks, bonds, receipts of property maintenance, and bank account records.

Risley participated in the advising of Fresno County schools (1925-1932), especially on funding and other financial matters. He was also a member of the Fresno County Grand jury dealing with educational matters.

The Fresno politics series (1918, 1924-1925) contains the correspondence between Risley, as Finance Commissioner and other city officials and business leaders in Fresno.

The Property series (1900-1935) includes Risley's deeds to both residential and commercial sites as well as a few to his father's buildings in the Fresno and San Francisco Bay areas. Also included are his mining claims throughout California as well as the blueprints for his Fresno home.

The Photographs (undated) feature one of Risley's daughter, Eleanor, and several of various unidentified individuals (presumably family members).

---

**Personal information**

Box Box 1

Risley, Eleanor, 1918-1931
Risley, Thomas, 1916-1931
Clubs and organizations, 1925-1931

---

**Financial records**

Box Box 1

Receipts, 1918-1928
Stocks, bonds, investments
1922-1925
1926-1927
1928
January-August
September-December
1929
1930-1935
Fresno county schools

---

**Fresno county schools**

Box Box 2

1925-1931
1932
Fresno politics

---

**Property**

Box Box 2

1918, 1924-1925
Bay area and Monterey, 1918-1928
Fresno area
1900-1921
1925
1927-1935
Blueprints of Risley home [shelved in map case, drawer]
Mining claims, 1916-1917
Photographs, undated

Box Box 2 General