

California State Railroad Museum Library & Archives  
Collections

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## Books & Periodicals

The Library's collection of published materials totals over 10,000 books and reports. The Library is a member of OCLC, a national online bibliographic database. Popular titles and reference books are available for research in the reading room. Additional books are housed in the Library stacks; some titles are stored off-site.

Imprints date from the 1830s to contemporary publications. The collection includes popular titles about railroading and rail travel, corporate histories, regional surveys, engineering and technological treatises, pictorial accounts of a single railroad or a geographic area, and how-to volumes for modelers. The Edwina Coffing Western Americana Collection contains basic texts and bibliographies pertaining to California and U.S. history.

Specialized reference works provide information for historical, equipment and genealogical research. Henry V. Poor's *Manual of the Railroads of the United States*, issued annually from 1868, and Moody's various railroad manuals, issued annually from 1900, provide summary histories of North American railroads. Train, route and schedule information can be traced in *The Official Guide of the Railways*, published monthly since 1868 and containing the passenger schedules of over 700 North American railroads. The photographs, diagrams, specifications, glossaries and descriptive text published in the *Car Builders' Dictionary and Cyclopedia* and the *Locomotive Dictionary and Cyclopedia* provide a wealth of mechanical information. The library has a complete set of both series, issued on an irregular basis since the late 1800s. The *Official Railway Equipment Register* published monthly beginning in 1885 and quarterly since 1937, lists in tabular form details of car ownership, marking and numbers, and dimensions and capacity for North American railroads.

The *Biographical Directory of Railway Officials of America* (issued irregularly between 1885 and 1922), *Who's Who in Railroading in North America* (issued irregularly between 1930 and 1968) and the current *Who's Who in Railroading* and *Rail Transit* provide basic career and biographical details for upper-level management personnel. The *Pocket List of Railroad Officials* has since 1895 provided concise listings of railroad management as well as railroad-related manufacturing companies.

Over 800 titles are represented in the periodical collection. Popular railroading and hobby magazines are available for review as are publications from regional fan groups and railroad historical associations. Industry publications trace railroad practice. The Library also collects employee magazines issued by railroad unions and the major Western railroads. Patrons can use the Library's set of the *Engineering Index* (1892-1984) to locate periodical articles relating to the railroad industry and technology.

Other serial publications include corporate annual reports and the proceedings of railroad-related professional organizations such as the *Master Car Builders' Association* and the *American Railway Engineering Association*.

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## Corporate Collections

The library's corporate collections relate to over 1,500 railroads. In some files, there may be only a single clipping, in others there are multiple references covering all aspects of railroad management, operation, finance, and public relations. Typical sources in these files include rule books, equipment operation and maintenance manuals, promotional brochures, union agreements, employee instructions and job descriptions, historical summaries, and rosters.

Certain types of documents relating to corporate entities are maintained in separate files. These include menus, tickets, passenger and freight tariffs, stocks and bonds, travel passes, stationery, forms and signs, and business and membership cards.

Materials in corporate collections have not been individually catalogued. Library staff can identify the railroads for which we have information.

Between 1911 and 1963 the Interstate Commerce Commission issued accident investigation reports as required by the Accident Reports Act of May 6, 1910. These cover accidents which involved injury to persons, equipment or roadbed, but do not cover every railroad-related accident or fatality. The Library has an incomplete but extensive set of these reports for the years circa 1927 to 1963. Photocopies of accident reports can be ordered.

[Search the Railroad Accident Reports online catalog.](#)

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## Drawings

Full-size drawings, especially those produced by manufacturers and architects, are the most desirable source for design details. Drawings come in many formats from the original ink-on-linen delineation to blue-line copies. Subjects include not only locomotives and cars but also bridges, boats, stations, turntables, roundhouses, water towers, motor cars, and a multitude of obscure but essential components.

Highlights include the collections of the Lima Locomotive Works (approximately 40,000 drawings), Southern Pacific Railroad (approximately 25,000 drawings from the Stockton Division and the Sacramento Division), Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (approximately 25,000 drawings), Pacific Fruit Express Company (unprocessed collection of drawings from the Mechanical and Engineering Department in Brisbane), the Whitcomb Locomotive Company and Sterling Engine Company (unprocessed collection of mechanical drawings), Risdon Iron & Locomotive Works (unprocessed collection of drawings of mining and industrial equipment), and the Western Pacific Railroad (unprocessed collection of freight car drawings).

Early California equipment builders are represented by examples from Carter Brothers, Golden State and Miners Iron Works, Union Iron Works and the Hall-Scott Motor Car Company. Some builder's specifications, which often include drawing numbers, are also part of the Library's drawing collections. The Library has microfilm copies of drawings produced by the Union Pacific Railroad as well as the Northern Pacific and Great Northern Railroads.

Catalogued drawings can be searched by corporate name, keyword, drawing number, or date.

- [Search the Technical Drawings online catalog.](#)

There are special instructions for ordering reproductions from the Lima Locomotive Works Collection.

- [Search the Lima Locomotive Works Drawing Indexes online catalog.](#)

*Unless condition, size or other restrictions preclude reproduction, reference copies of drawings may be ordered.*

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## Ephemera

The definition of ephemera is “something short lived or transitory.” Paper ephemera, either printed or manuscript, is produced for a specific purpose and is intended for disposal. Advertising material, blotters, business cards, calendars, forms and signs, postcards, postcards, posters, stationery, tickets, and travel passes are examples of the types of ephemera the Library collects.

The Library also has ephemera relating to industry associations and labor unions, fairs and events, and railway and technology museums. An extensive set of California rail enthusiast organization by-laws, membership lists, and excursion announcements complements the information available in the Library’s holdings of club newsletters. Subject files cover topics such as movies, miniature railroads, hobos, and railroad terminology. The Library also has information about notable railroad-related personalities, including artists, writers, photographers, and collectors.

For the most part, ephemera has not been individually catalogued nor entered into searchable databases. Each document type is arranged by corporate name, and may be further subdivided by subject, date or personal name.

## Genealogy Resources

The California State Railroad Museum Library has several types of documents which may provide biographical information about railroad employees and officials. Biographical directories tend to document high-level management. Other railroad-issued publications, such as corporate directories or employee magazines cover a wider range of individuals.

Listed below are selected sources which may include personal information. All are available for review in the reading room. If you are unable to schedule a visit to Sacramento, please contact the Library. Library staff will search for a single specific name in the sources noted with an **asterisk**. Some restrictions may apply. For the remaining sources, your personal review is requested.

### **Published Sources**

- **\*POCKET LIST OF RAILROAD OFFICIALS.**  
Published quarterly since 1895. Arranged by corporate name with a personal name index. Lists only upper-level management with job title.
- **\*BIOGRAPHICAL DIRECTORY OF THE RAILWAY OFFICIALS OF AMERICA.**  
Published: 1885, 1887, [1893], 1896, [1901], 1906, 1913, 1922. Biographical entries for upper-level management. CSRM does not have the years enclosed in brackets.
- **\*WHOS WHO IN RAILROADING IN NORTH AMERICA.**  
Published: 1930, 1940, 1946, 1949, 1954, 1959, 1964, [1968]. Biographical entries for upper-level management. CSRM does not have the years enclosed in brackets.
- **\*WHOS WHO IN RAILROADING AND RAIL TRANSIT.**  
Published: 1971, 1977, 1983, 1985. Biographical entries for upper-level management.

[Corporate magazines]

Many railroads published magazines which included information about employees. The CSRM Library has extensive runs of titles issued by Western railroads and selected issues for other North American lines. CSRM Library staff can advise you of the appropriate title for your search and our holdings. Library staff cannot search magazines for individual names.

[Seniority Lists / Corporate Directories]

Railroads and railroad unions compiled lists of employees for labor or record-keeping purposes. In nearly all cases the information is limited to employee name, date of hire and job title. Occasionally there will be notations for promotions or location of employment. The Library does not have this type of document for every railroad. These documents are available for review in the reading room.

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**Manuscript Sources**

The California State Railroad Museum Library has several archival collections which contain employee information. These documents cover specific railroads, for specific occupations, during specific time periods. The Library does not have complete employee records for any railroad. Some materials are held off-site. Please call in advance for an appointment to use manuscript sources.

Several of the large employee files are described below. Library staff will search for a single specific name in collections marked with an **asterisk**.

- **\*ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE RAILWAY** Coast Lines employees, Arizona and California, circa 1900-1950. Single sheet personnel records arranged in alphabetical order by surname. Incomplete file for surnames beginning with the letters A, B, C, I, J, K, L, M, R, S, W, Y. These records have been microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah.
  
- **ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE RAILWAY**  
Trainmen and yardmen, Southern California area, circa 1890s-1910s (with some annotations into the 1940s). One bound volume. Not in alphabetical order. Advance appointment required for use. These records have been microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah.
  
- **ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE RAILWAY** Yardmen and office workers, Los Angeles Division, 1915-1925. One bound volume. This is an incomplete file and contains **ONLY** surnames beginning with the letters Tak – Zim. Advance appointment required for use. These records have been microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah.
  
- **CENTRAL PACIFIC/SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROADS** Corporate financial vouchers. Central Pacific, 1861-1889; Southern Pacific, 1879-circa 1910. Approximately 70,000 vouchers arranged by year and then by voucher number. Some vouchers contain payroll information. There is no index. Advance appointment required for review. One year of vouchers will be brought to the reading room each visit.
  
- **\*PACIFIC FRUIT EXPRESS COMPANY** Employee record cards, Roseville shops, circa 1920s-1970s. Includes laborers, carpenters, carmen.
  
- **\*SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD** Employee record cards, Sacramento General Shops, circa 1900-1930. Approximately 50,000 cards arranged in alphabetical order by surname. Information may include birth date, occupation, address, previous SP employment and wages. The file is incomplete for surnames beginning with the letters H through K, and T through Z. These records have been microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah. Researchers may also wish to contact the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board at: [U.S. Railroad Board Genealogy Research](#).

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## Manuscript Collections

Manuscript collections are unpublished materials created by corporate bodies or individuals during the course of daily activities. The Library's manuscript collections are extensive and diverse, ranging in size from a single item to hundreds of cartons. The archives contain corporate, operating, financial, personnel, and engineering records, personal papers, research notes of writers and historians, as well as a wide variety of railroad-related documents accumulated by private collectors.

The administrative and financial records of several California and Western railroads form the core of the Library's archival holdings. These documents relate to the major Western railroad companies such as the Southern Pacific Railroad and its numerous predecessor and subsidiary companies, as well as to the Western Pacific, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, and the Union Pacific Railroads. The Library also collects the records of smaller lines such as the Sierra Railway, the Virginia & Truckee, Nevada Central, and the Northwestern Pacific Railroads.

The Southern Pacific Company files are extensive. Although much of the material is unprocessed, finding aids are available for a sizeable amount. For the Central Pacific Railroad, the Library has manuscripts which document the early years, including payment vouchers, payrolls and engineering records pertaining to the building of the transcontinental railroad. For both the CP and the SP, equipment records document the railroads' roster of locomotive and rolling stock.

The Library received the Western Pacific Railroad Presidents' files in 1987. There is much information about the day-to-day operation of the company, its policies, financial and technical information for the period 1905-1983. Information about subsidiary companies such as the Tidewater Southern and the Sacramento Northern may also be found in the WP archives.

The records of companies which supplied materials to the industry are also part the Library's holdings. In 1991, the Baldwin-Hamilton Company donated a collection relating to the Whitcomb Locomotive Company and the Sterling Engine Company which includes records of the sales department, specifications, and vendors files, as well as drawings. The Pacific Fruit Express collection contains material relating to the construction and operation of freight cars.

The Library has microfilm copies of significant railroad collections held by other institutions. These include records relating to the Baldwin Locomotive Works from the DeGolyer Library, Stanford University and the Smithsonian Institution, and the Collis P. Huntington Papers from the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University.

The Library has manuscript collections of railroad writers and historians. These authors are Jeff Asay, Lucius Morris Beebe, Gerald Martin Best, Arthur Detmers Dubin, Philip Ross Hastings, M.D., Gilbert Harold Kneiss, Louis L. Stein, Jr. and Jack Russell Wagner. Many of these collections contain research notes and rough drafts relating to their publications. The lives of the men and women who worked for the railroad are documented in several collections ranging in size from a single certificate of apprenticeship to more substantial coverage of an individual's



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career. Employee record cards from Southern Pacific's Sacramento Shops between 1900 and 1930 document over 55,000 local railroad workers. For more information regarding the Library's holdings relating to railroad employees, see Genealogy Resources.

Several collections reflect the role which labor unions have played in the railroad industry. These include the records of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and other Western branches of major railroad-related unions.

In 1996 the Museum, funded by a grant from the Sacramento Trust for Historic Preservation and the California State Railroad Museum Foundation, undertook the Southern Pacific Railroad Sacramento Shops Oral History Project. Men and women who worked in the Sacramento Shops as laborers, craftsmen, clerks and managers were interviewed, their sessions taped and transcribed, and in some cases videotaped. These intriguing stories are available for review in the Library reading room.

The Library also preserves documents relating to the history and development of Old Sacramento State Historic Park and the California State Railroad Museum.

Finding aids provide detailed descriptions of processed collections, their intellectual organization, and at varying levels of analysis, of individual items in the collections. Finding aids for processed collections have been entered into a database and can be searched by corporate or personal name, keyword or date. Preliminary box lists are available for unprocessed collections.

[Search the Archives and Manuscripts online catalog.](#)

Selected CSRM finding aids have been converted to electronic format and are available on the Online Archive of California website. [The Online Archive of California](#), a component of the California Digital Library, is a single searchable database of the finding aids to primary sources held by nearly fifty California libraries, archives, museums, and historical societies.

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## Maps

The Library's cartographic materials cover the period from the 1850s to date. Many are ink-on-linen maps, which encompass the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway in the Southwest, the Southern Pacific Railroad in California and Nevada, as well as numerous short lines and industrial railroads.

Railroad maps illustrate track locations, station plans, profiles and right of way. Engineers and surveyor's notebooks from the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe's Coast Lines record plans and sketches of depots, structures, right of way, location of crossings, bridges and topographical features compiled during the railroad's building of the route across the Southwest and California from the late nineteenth century through the 1920s.

Catalogued maps can be searched by location, corporate name, drawing number, date, or keyword.

- [Search the Technical Drawings online catalog.](#)  
*Unless condition, size or other restrictions preclude reproduction, reference copies may be ordered.*

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## Photographs

The California State Railroad Museum photograph collection numbers over one million images in print (black and white, and color) and negative (film and glass plate) formats. Black and white images predominate. Over 4,000 corporate entities are represented. Both amateur and professional photographers as well as railroad and manufacturing companies have contributed photographic images to the Library. Every conceivable aspect of railroading has been captured on film. Although images of locomotives and rolling stock are the most common subject, users will also find views of trains, stations, shops and yards, bridges and buildings, as well as scenes of construction, railroad employees and documentation of significant events. Images which contain identified individuals have been catalogued separately in a portrait file.

Selections from the Southern Pacific public relations file (the surviving file is now housed at the Union Pacific Collection in Omaha) are available for study. The Southern Pacific Engineering Department print file contains rare views of construction in Oregon, California and Arizona in the early twentieth century. Early Western Pacific construction is also well documented. A donation from Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway provides in-depth coverage of early to mid-twentieth century rolling stock production, with an emphasis on freight cars. Researchers can study Pacific Fruit Express Company photographs which feature refrigerator cars and icing facilities. The Library has copies of the color specification sheets compiled by the Baldwin Locomotive Works (the original documents are held by Stanford University).

Photograph collections assembled by San Francisco Bay Area railroad enthusiasts Paul Darrell, Gilbert H. Kneiss, Roger Levenson, Warren Marcus, Stanley F. Merritt, and Louis L. Stein, Jr. have been added to the collection. There are also reference prints of railroad-related images by early Western photographers Alfred A. Hart, Lawrence and Houseworth, and Isaiah West Taber.

The photographic collections are housed in closed stacks. Library staff page files for patron use. Loose prints are filed in acid-free folders which are arranged in alphabetical order by corporate name, and if quantity warrants, further divided alphabetically by subject. Subject headings may be further subdivided by geographical or numerical order. Prints which lack any corporate identification are filed by subject. The donor's name and the negative number (if available) are marked on the back of the print. Unless condition or other restrictions apply, reference prints may be ordered.\*

Prints from various collections have been interfiled into a single and extensive alphabetical sequence – the California State Railroad Museum collection. The following photographic files are maintained separately from the Museum collection.

The Railway & Locomotive Historical Society deposited its research collection at the Museum in 1982. Over 300,000 photographs are arranged by corporate name and then by subject. The R&LHS collection is especially strong in its coverage of eastern and mid-western lines, but California and Nevada railroads are also well represented.

The photograph and negative collection of Lucius Beebe (1902-1966) and Charles Clegg (1916-1979) was acquired in 2000 through a combination of purchase and donation. The pair are

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perhaps the best-known and certainly among the most prolific authors and photographers to have graced the North American railroad scene. Secured from Charles Clegg's sister, Ann Clegg Holloway and her husband John E. Holloway, of Washington, D.C., the collection includes more than 11,000 photographs and over 4,000 original black and white negatives. Also included in the collection are prints from the collections of other well known railroad photographers such as Gerald Martin Best, Philip Ross Hastings, M.D., Fred Jukes, Stan Kistler, and Richard Steinheimer. Beebe was among the first popular authors to gain access to the Pullman Company archives and the collection includes many enlargements and contact prints of opulent cars built by Pullman. Contact the Library for more information regarding access to this collection.

The Gerald Martin Best Collection was donated to the Museum Library in 1986. Mr. Best (1895-1985) was a railroad photographer, modeler, and the author of numerous histories such as *Iron Horses to Promontory* and *Nevada County Narrow Gauge*. The photograph collection includes over 70,000 prints and 55,000 negatives, documenting more than 2,500 North American railroads. Prints are arranged by corporate name. Nearly all of the images are roster shots of steam locomotives. These have been further arranged in road number order. There are also train shots, and some coverage of diesel power and rolling stock. Not all prints have negatives, nor do all negatives have prints. A photocopy of the cards Mr. Best used to record date and location identification is available; however, it is not always possible to precisely link this data with a specific print.

California author Robert M. Hanft presented his negative collection to the Museum in 1995. Dr. Hanft is the author of several railroad histories including *San Diego & Arizona: The Impossible Railroad* and *Pine Across the Mountain: California's McCloud River Railroad*. Steam locomotives from the 1930s as well as electric traction equipment and first generation diesel-electrics are the focus of Dr. Hanft's work. The 17,000-plus piece collection was largely photographed by the donor but includes select examples of work from other notable railroad photographers. Although there are no reference prints at this time, Dr. Hanft prepared a detailed inventory of the collection. The negatives are arranged by corporate name and then by road number.

The black and white negative and color slide collection of Philip R. Hastings, M.D. was donated by his family in 1997. Dr. Hastings (1925-1987) was well known for the many illustrated articles which appeared in *Trains* during the 1950s and 1960s as well as his contributions to and authorship of numerous railroad books. His images often centered on the surroundings and people of the railroading rather than a traditional view of a locomotive or train. In the collection are 46,000-plus black and white negatives, about 4,000 prints, and over 32,000 35 mm color transparencies. Dr. Hastings arranged his negatives by railroad name and then grouped them together by date photographed or topic. Coverage is nationwide with an emphasis on mid-west and eastern lines. Please contact the Library for more information regarding access to the collection.

The Pullman Company builder's photograph collection numbers over 4,100 glass plate and film negatives. The collection was assembled through purchase and the gift of Arthur D. Dubin and the late George Krambles. The majority of the images are exterior and interior views of passenger cars and date from the late 1880s to the early 1940s. There are also views of freight

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cars, trucks, windows and chairs, as well as a series documenting shop activities. A database provides access to images by railroad name, car name or number, lot or plan number, Pullman negative number, and date. The Library is assembling a master file of Pullman prints for review. This set includes images for which the Library does not have an original negative. Both the negative and print files are arranged in Pullman negative number order.

[Search the Pullman Company Negatives online catalog.](#)

The California State Railroad Museum equipment collection photograph file documents the motive power, rolling stock and miscellaneous track vehicles owned by the Museum. Prints and slides taken prior to arrival at the Museum are arranged in albums by railroad and then in chronological order. Prints and slides of CSRM equipment taken during the restoration process as well as images documenting display and use subsequent to acquisition are also available.

*\*Unless condition, copyright or other restrictions apply, reference prints from the Museum's photographic collections may be ordered.*

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## Timetables

Timetables, both public and employee, record train schedules, fares, equipment consists, station stops, and other useful operating information. Employee timetables contain additional information regarding operating rules, station services, and personnel. The Railway & Locomotive Historical Society timetable collection supplements the Library's resources with extensive coverage of eastern and mid-western lines.

Employee timetables issued by over 400 railroads have been individually catalogued.

- [Search the Employee Timetables online catalog.](#)

Public timetables are arranged by railroad and then by date. They have not yet been individually catalogued. There is a list of the over 400 railroads for which the Library has selected issues.

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[Trade Catalogs](#)

The trade catalog collection contains product information for close to 1,000 manufacturers and suppliers to the industry. Every conceivable item relating to the construction, operation and maintenance of railroads can be found in trade catalogs. Typical documents include specifications, parts and operating manuals, advertising literature, and sales catalogs.

Trade catalogs are arranged in alphabetical order by the corporate name of the manufacturer or supplier. To date publications for only a few corporate entities have been entered into a database.