



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

Guide to the Parsons, Brinckerhoff,  
Quade and Douglas Records

NMAH.AC.0969

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2017

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas Records
<b>Date:</b>	1906-2003 (bulk 1906-1918)
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0969
<b>Source:</b>	National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of History of Technology (Collector) National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering (Collector)
<b>Creator:</b>	Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas (Creator)
<b>Extent:</b>	5 Film reels 5 Cubic feet (11 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	Collection documents the engineering firm of Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas through reports prepared for a variety of clients.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The initial collection was donated in 1967, presumably by the firm of Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, to the Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, National Museum of History and Technology (now the National Museum of American History).

### Provenance

The entire collection was transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Work and Industry, 2007.

### Related Materials

#### **Materials in the Archives Center**

Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Series: Streetcars and Subways (AC0060)

#### **Materials at Other Organizations**

##### **New York Public Library**

William Barclay Parsons papers, 1880-1939

Collection consists of correspondence, lecture notes, and materials used in preparation of Parsons's book, *Engineers and Engineering in the Renaissance*, published in 1939. Correspondence, 1881-1900, relates to his student days at the Columbia University School of Mines, appointments to various railroads, and activity as Columbia trustee. Notes on lectures about mining at Columbia, 1880-1881, are illustrated

with drawings and plates. Materials used in the preparation of Parsons's book include final typescript, proofs, illustrations, maps, notebooks, and other source materials.

### **Columbia University**

Papers, 1899-1915

Correspondence including letters from Grover Cleveland, Gilbert Parker, and printed monographs and magazine articles. Mr. Parsons' diaries of Panama Canal years and World War I have been catalogued as book manuscripts.

### **Processing Information**

Collection processed by Alison Oswald, 2017.

### **Preferred Citation**

Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas Records Collection, 1905-ca. 1970s, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### **Restrictions**

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270.

### **Conditions Governing Use**

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

### **Accruals**

The addendum of motion picture films was donated in 1985 by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas.

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## **Biographical / Historical**

On January 1, 1885, William Barclay Parsons (1859-1932) and his younger brother Henry de Berkeley Parsons founded a consulting engineering firm in New York City. The brothers combined their talents as civil and mechanical engineers to create a firm that would making a lasting mark on designing and constructing infrastructure. Among the firm's most notable projects were the original IRT line of the New York City Subway, the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART), the Cape Cod Canal, and the charting the course of a railway in China from Hankow (Wuhan) to Canton (Guangzhou). The firm also designed and built large water supply systems, railroads, hydro-electric dams, refrigeration warehouses, marine terminals, and conducted survey work. Through the years, the firm diversified its engineering competence and knowledge by adding partners: Eugene A. Klapp (b. 1867), chief engineer and bridge specialist; Henry M. Brinckerhoff (b. 1868), a traction engineer; Walter J. Douglas (b. 1872), structural engineer and bridge specialist; and Maurice Quade (1900-1966), structural engineer. The firm had several name changes and became known as Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas with both domestic and foreign offices. Today the company operates in the fields of strategic consulting, planning, engineering, construction management, infrastructure and community planning. Parsons Brinckerhoff was acquired by WSP Global in 2014.

### **Sources**

*Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas Notes*, December 1960.

Bobrick, Benson. *Parsons Brinckerhoff The First 100 Years*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985.

Petroski, Henry. "William Barclay Parsons," *American Scientist*, Volume 96, No. 4, July-August 2008, pp. 280-283.

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## Scope and Contents

These records contain reports (some containing photographs and full size drawings folded) from the New York engineering firm of Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas. Included are typewritten and printed reports for a variety of clients. The bulk of the reports relate to power and transportation. The collection includes five 16mm motion picture films, relating to the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART).

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged into three series.

Series 1: Background Materials, 1960-2003

Series 2: Reports, 1906-1918

Series 3: Moving Image, 1960 and undated

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Bridges
- Dams
- Railroads
- Subways
- Subways -- Boston (Mass.)
- Subways -- New York (N.Y.)
- Tunnels
- Wharves

### Types of Materials:

- 16mm films
- Motion pictures (visual works) -- 20th century
- Reports

### Names:

- Belvedere, DeKalb, and Southern Railway
- Chicago Traction and Subway Commission
- Detroit Rapid Transit System
- Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
- National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of History of Technology
- National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering
- San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (Calif.)

### Places:

- Boston (Mass.)
- Brooklyn Bridge (New York, N.Y.)
- Chicago (Ill.)

Columbus (Neb.)  
Death Valley  
Detroit (Mich.)  
Fremont (Neb.)  
New York  
Texas

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Background Materials, 1960 - 2003

Scope and Contents: This series contains company histories and select issues of *Notes*, an internal publication of Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas for its employees and friends.

Box 1, Folder 1	Company History, 1985 - 1985, 1975
Box 1, Folder 2	Notes, 1967 - 1967, 1960, 1969 - 1969
Box 1, Folder 3	Notes, 1970, 1982 - 1984
Box 1, Folder 4	Notes, 1989 - 1996
Box 1, Folder 5	Notes, 2000 - 2003
Box 1, Folder 5A	Engineering Progress Reports, 1964-08-04 - 1964-08-04
Box 1, Folder 5A	Engineering Progress Reports, 1964-09-04 - 1964-09-04

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## Series 2: Reports, 1906 - 1918

**Scope and Contents:** The reports consist of typewritten documents that detail work done by Barclay Parsons & Klapp Consulting Engineers for a variety of clients from city municipalities to railroads to private individuals. The subjects of the reports vary and include: subways, power (e.g. electrification and water), testing, and erosion. The reports focus on the viability of a proposed project and some include a more comprehensive analysis of the financial status and materials testing. Included are some oversize drawings (blueprints) and photographs. The reports are arranged numerically and are not comprehensive.

Box 1, Folder 6	#1-1A, Austin Trenching Machine, 1906
Box 1, Folder 7	#2, Belvidere, De Kalb and Southern Railway, 1906
Box 1, Folder 8	#3, Boston Cambridge Subway, 1907
Box 1, Folder 9	#4, Manhattan Terminus of Brooklyn Bridge, [1907?]
Box 1, Folder 10	#5, Brooklyn Extension, South Ferry to Atlantic Avenue, 1907
Box 1, Folder 11	#6, Compania del Puerto, 1906
Box 1, Folder 12	#7, Water power development at Columbus, Nebraska, 1906
Box 1, Folder 13	#8, Proposed development at Columbus and Fremont, Nebraska, 1906
Box 1, Folder 14	#8-1, Death Valley Corporation, 1906
Box 1, Folder 15	#9, Water power development at Fremont, Nebraska, 1906
Box 2, Folder 1	#11, New York Subway Routes, New York City, 1907
Box 2, Folder 2	#11A, Construction and cost of the tunnel of New York and Long Island Railroad, 1908
Box 2, Folder 3	#12, New York and Ontario Power Company, 1907
Box 2, Folder 4	#13, Niagara Well and Power Company, 1906
Box 2, Folder 5	#14, Niagara, Lockport, and Ontario Power Company, 1906
Box 2, Folder 6	#14A-#14D, Niagara, Lockport, and Ontario Power Company, 1907
Box 2, Folder 7	#15, Warehouse and Dock Project of Havana Projecto Scovel, 1906
Box 2, Folder 8	#15A, Havana Docks, 1910



Box 2, Folder 9	#15B, Havana Docks, 1906
Box 2, Folder 10	#17, Proposed bridge across St. Lawrence River at Montreal, 1906
Box 2, Folder 11	#19, Schuylkill County Properties, 1906
Box 2, Folder 12	#19, Extension of Eastern Pennsylvania Company's Line from Pottsville to Shenandoah, 1906
Box 2, Folder 13	#20, Union passenger station, City of Toronto, 1907
Box 2, Folder 14	#21, United Railways of Yucatan, 1907
Box 3, Folder 1	#23, Test of storage battery, Hartwick Power House, Oneonta, Mohawk Valley Railroad Company, 1907
Box 3, Folder 2	#23, Water power development at Colliers, New York, 1907
Box 3, Folder 3	#24, Water supply system for Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, 1908
Box 3, Folder 4	#24-A, Artesian wells and machinery installed by Hudson Engineering Company for Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, 1911
Box 3, Folder 5	#25, Filler Plant and Waterworks System of Louisville Water Company, 1907
Box 3, Folder 6	#26, Beach protection for John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1908
Box 3, Folder 7	#27, Springfield Waterfront Improvement, 1908
Box 3, Folder 8	#28, North Georgia Electric Company, hydroelectric developments and transmission system, 1909
Box 3, Folder 9	#29, Preliminary Report on Underground Electric Railways Company of London Limited and Subsidiary Companies , 1909-07-02
Box 3, Folder 9	#30, Underground Electric Railways of London, 1909
Box 3, Folder 10	#31, White Rock Creek Dam, Dallas, Texas, 1909
Box 3, Folder 11	#32, Georgia Power Company, hydroelectric developments, 1909
Box 3, Folder 12	#33, Springfield Water Front Improvements, 1910
Box 3, Folder 13	#34, Granite quarries on the Potomac River, 1909
Box 3, Folder 14	#35, Interborough-Metropolitan Company, extension of the Hudson-Manhattan Railroad, 1909

Box 3, Folder 15	#36, Power development by Caroga Water Power and Transmission Company, [1909?]
Box 3, Folder 16	#37, Concession of Compania del Puerto, Havana, 1910
Box 3, Folder 17	#38, Monroe County Water Power and Supply Company, 1910
Box 3, Folder 18	#39, Monroe County Water and Supply Company, 1910
Box 4, Folder 1	#40, Almandares River Bridge, 1910
Box 4, Folder 2	#41, Cleveland Subway, 1910
Box 4, Folder 3	#42, Cardenas City Water Company, 1910
Box 4, Folder 4	#42A, Cardenas City Water Company, 1910
Box 4, Folder 5	#43, Pumping Station to Sewerage Commission, Baltimore, 1910
Box 4, Folder 6	#45, Railroad Commisioner of Springfield Waterfront Improvement, 1911
Box 4, Folder 7	#46, Failure of retaining wall, Fulton Avenue Bronx, Casualty Company of America, 1911
Box 4, Folder 8	#47, Extensions of Erie Company, 1911
Box 4, Folder 9	#47A, Erie Lighting Company and Erie County Electric Company, 1912
Box 4, Folder 10	#47X, Decision of arbitrator, Transit Development Company and Hudson Engineering Company, 1911
Box 4, Folder 11	#48, Salmon River Development, 1911
Box 4, Folder 12	#48A, Salmon River development and bennett Bridge development, 1914
Box 4, Folder 13	#49, Neversink River Project, 1911
Box 4, Folder 14	#49A, Hydroelectric Neversink River, New york, 1912
Box 4, Folder 15	#49B, Hydroelectric development, Neversink River, 1914
Box 4, Folder 16	#49C, Hydroelectric development on Neversink River for New York Edison Company, 1914
Box 4, Folder 17	#50A-#50, Culvers of the Midland Pennsylvania Railroad, 1911

Box 4, Folder 18	#51, Power development, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Lake Superior Power Company, 1911
Box 5, Folder 1	#51A, Power plant of Lake Superior Power Company, 1911
Box 5, Folder 2	#52, United Light and Power Company, San Francisco, 1911
Box 5, Folder 3	#53, Candian Light and Power Company, 1911
Box 5, Folder 4	#53A, Canadian Light and Power Company, 1912
Box 5, Folder 5	#54, Examination of dam, Hartwick Power Company, 1911
Box 5, Folder 6	#55, Etowan Water Power Development, 1909
Box 5, Folder 7	#56, Georgia Power and Railway Company, 1912
Box 5, Folder 8	#57, Matanzas and Cardenas Improvement Company, 1912
Box 5, Folder 9	#58, Power plant and power market, Fort Dodge, Des Moines and Southern Railroad, 1912
Box 5, Folder 10	#60, Operation of Power Canal and Pulp Mill, Lake Superior Power Company, 1912
Box 5, Folder 11	#60A, Power Canal and Pulp Mill, Lake Superior Power Company, 1913
Box 5, Folder 12	#61, Bellows Falls Power Project, 1912
Box 5, Folder 13	#62A, Reconstruction of Brunswick terminals, Atlanta, Birmingham and Atlantic Railroad, 1913
Box 5, Folder 14	#62B, Reinforcement of bulkhead x at A.B. and A Terminal, Brunswick, Georgia, 1913
Box 6, Folder 1	#63, City of Springfield, improvements of river front, 1913
Box 6, Folder 2	#64, Proposed wire mill at Fort William or Port Arthur, 1912
Box 6, Folder 3	#65, Trip to August Belmont's estate, New Ashford, Massachusetts, 1913
Box 6, Folder 4	#66, Manhattan Elevated Railroad, 1913
Box 6, Folder 5	#67, Passenger Car Addition, National Steel Car Company, 1914
Box 6, Folder 6	#67A, Car Plant inspection for National Steel Car Company, 1913
Box 6, Folder 7	#67B, Investigation of Power Consumed, Normal Steel Car Company, 1914

Box 6, Folder 8	#67C, National Steel Car Company, 1919
Box 6, Folder 9	#68, Inspection of buildings, Numbers 225 and 227, Pearl Street, 1914
Box 6, Folder 10	#68A, Cost report, North Laramie Irrigation Project, 1914
Box 6, Folder 11	#69, Georgia Railway and Power Company, 1914
Box 6, Folder 12	#70A, Leased properties of Georgia Railway and Power Company, 1914
Box 6, Folder 13	#70B, Estimated appraisal, Georgia Railway and Power Company
Box 7, Folder 1	#71, Knoxville, Sevierville and Eastern Railway Company, 1914
Box 7, Folder 2	#72, Niagara Gorge Power Company, 1914
Box 7, Folder 3	#73, Consolidated Railway and Power Company, Fayetteville, North Carolina, 1914
Box 7, Folder 4	#74, Investigation of power in Gloversville, Johnstown, Fonda and the outlying towns served by Fulton County Gas and Electric, 1914
Box 7, Folder 5	#75, Kensico Dam, [1913?]
Box 7, Folder 6	#76, Salmon River, 1914
Box 7, Folder 7	#77, Pensacola, Mobile and New Orleans Railway, 1914
Box 7, Folder 8	#78, Valuation on fabricating plant, Milliken Brothers, Inc., 1914
Box 7, Folder 9	#79, Test for 150 horse power Akerlund Down Draft Gas Produce Plant, 1914
Box 7, Folder 10	#79A, Test of economy and efficiency of Akerlund Down Draft Producer, Standard Gas Power Company, 1914
Box 7, Folder 11	#81, Tampa Water Works Company, 1914
Box 7, Folder 12	#82, Tate Electrolytic Waterproofing process for fabrics, 1914
Box 7, Folder 13	#83, Kennebec Gas and Fuel Company, 1914
Box 8, Folder 1	#83A, Proposed drainage of the Zapata Swamp, Cuba, 1913
Box 8, Folder 2	#84, Power situation, Magor Car Company, 1915
Box 8, Folder 3	#85, Waterworks Department, City of Nashville, 1915
Box 8, Folder 5	#85A, Health Department, sewerage system and garbage disposal, Nashville, 1915

Box 8, Folder 6	#85B, Electric Light Department, Nashville, 1915
Box 8, Folder 7	#85C, Waterworks Department, Nashville, 1915
Box 8, Folder 8	#85D, Street paving, Nashville, 1915
Box 8, Folder 9	#86, Public Utilities, Bahia, Brazil, 1915
Box 9, Folder 1	#86XX, Boston, Cape Cod, and New York Central Company, 1915
Box 9, Folder 2	#87, Proposed plaza over railroad tracks, Atlanta, 1916
Box 9, Folder 3	#88, Lantern Hill Silica Property, 1916
Box 9, Folder 4	#89, Santa Fee Electrification, 1917
Box 9, Folder 5	#89X, Power development in the Grand Canyon of Colorado, 1917
Box 9, Folder 6	#90, Test of Ford fire line reducing valve, 1918
Box 9, Folder 7	#91, Investigation of Luyties Shell (shell fire), 1918
Box 9, Folder 8	#92, Improvement of ferry service in Norfolk Harbor, 1918
Box 9, Folder 9	#93, Deep River Power Company, Copenhagen, New York, 1918
Box 9, Folder 10	#110, Subways [Philadelphia?], 1912
Box 9, Folder 11	#117, Water power at Paulo Affonso Falls, Brazil, 1916
Box 9, Folder 12	#126, Proposed dry dock and repair facilities for Standard Shipbuilding Corp., 1918
Box 10, Folder 1	#130, Chicago Traction and Subway Committee, Valuation of the Chicago Elevated Railways, diagrams and costs data, 1916
Box 10, Folder 2	#349, Chicago Traction and Subway Commission, on a unified system of surface, elevated and subway lines, 1916
Box 11, Folder 1	#350, Rapid Transit System for the City of Detroit, 1918
Box 11, Folder 2	#351, Earnings, Operating expenses, service and rate of fare, Detroit United Railway, 1918

Box 11, Folder 3

#352, Rapid Transit System for the City of Detroit, 1918

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## Series 3: Moving Image, 1969-1985

Reel OF 969.1	<p>Building MARTA, 1985 1 Motion picture film (color, composite optical soundtrack, print; 16mm, 550 feet) Notes: Filmed and Edited by M. Douglas Beers. Copyright 1979 Duane L. Cronk and Associates</p>
Reel OF 969.2	<p>BART - A Vision to Reality, 1985 1 Motion picture film (color, composite optical soundtrack, print; 16mm, 690 feet) Notes: Tells the story of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system, built in 1970.</p>
Reel OF 969.3	<p>Decisions Before the Day, 1969 1 Motion picture film (color, composite optical soundtrack, print; 16mm, 700 feet) Notes: Tail credits: Presented by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, consulting engineers for the Rhode Island Turnpike &amp; Bridge Authority A Silvermine Production</p>
Reel OF 969.4	<p>The Transbay Tube, 1984 1 Motion picture film (color, composite optical soundtrack, print; 16mm, 720 feet) Notes: At head: "Directed by Duane L. Cronk for Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Tudor-Bechtel, general engineering consultants to the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District"</p>
Reel OF 969.5	<p>Beginning with BART, 1984 1 Motion picture film (color, composite optical soundtrack, print; 16mm, 820 feet) Notes: At head: "Presented by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Tudor-Bechtel, general engineering consultant to the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District Produced by Duane L. Cronk Filmed by Barrett Productions"</p>

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