

COLORADO GOVERNORS

Oliver H. Shoup



Scope and Content Note

The Oliver H. Shoup collection comprises approximately 32 cubic feet of record material spanning his two terms as Governor from 1919-1923. Major record series included in the collection are correspondence; vouchers; extraditions and requisitions; the Executive Record; and reports. The correspondence series makes up the bulk of the collection and is organized by subject. Of special note are the materials on the Moffat Railroad Tunnel, the devastating flood in Pueblo on June 3, 1921, the development of the State Highway Department and the expansion of the Colorado National Guard.

Biography

Oliver Shoup was born on December 13, 1869, in Champaign County, Illinois, the eldest son of William R. and Delia (Ferris) Shoup. His father was born near Columbus, Ohio, and was a Union soldier in the Civil War. The family moved to Colorado Springs in November of 1882 when Oliver was thirteen years of age. He attended the public schools of that city and then spent one year at Colorado College before embarking on a business career in 1888 with the Colorado Springs Company, which was directed by General William J. Palmer.

Eight years later he was offered the position of private secretary to Verner Z. Reed, a wealthy mining man, who at that time was conducting an investment and real estate business. After a few years, he became general manager of Reed's extensive enterprises. While working with Reed and other Colorado Springs capitalists, he became interested in the oil industry, later making his fortune by opening a number of Wyoming oil fields. He was the first president of the Midwest Oil Company; and in 1914, he became the first president of the Midwest Refining Company. Two years later, he retired from active participation in the oil business and devoted his time to stock raising and agricultural development throughout the state. He owned a ranch north of Colorado Springs.

Oliver H. Shoup was active for many years as a Colorado Republican party leader and in 1918, he was elected governor of the state. When he ran again in 1920, he was re-elected by 65,000 votes. He was asked, but declined to run for a third term. He was prominently mentioned as a potential vice presidential candidate in the presidential campaign of 1924.

Shoup is known for accomplishing numerous tasks during his terms. Two important developments in state government during his term were the organization of the State Highway Department and the reorganization of the Colorado National Guard, including construction of thirteen armories throughout the state. He took a great personal interest in the National Guard and elevated it to a status of importance. Shoup was also a strong advocate of prohibition both for Colorado and for the nation.

Perhaps what Shoup is best known for is his efforts to develop the Moffat Railroad Tunnel project which was one of the world's greatest engineering feats. He labored persistently to have the six-mile tunnel bored through the Continental Divide. On June 3, 1921, after three days of torrential rain, the Arkansas River swelled over its banks, driving into and through the city of Pueblo and down the valley, killing more than 100 people. The deluge also carried with it 600 houses and an estimated \$19,000,000 worth of property was destroyed. Governor Shoup responded by summoning the legislature into special session. Legislation was passed allowing for the construction of flood control installations at Pueblo. Piggy-backed onto this legislation was a bill allowing for construction of the Moffat Tunnel. Both concepts were passed at the same time in order to get support from the southern counties for construction of the railroad tunnel. There had been opposition to the Moffat Tunnel in the past, because the more southern Arkansas Canyon had been the main railroad route through the mountains. Now, the northern tunnel would be the main railroad gateway through the Rockies. Finally, and largely through Shoup's efforts, the Moffat Tunnel was begun in 1923.

Oliver H. Shoup in later years turned his attention to ranching development and was a director in several Colorado banks. His first marriage was to Unetta Small on September 18, 1891. To them were born four children, namely: Reba A., Oliver H. Jr., Merrill E. and Verner R. His second marriage was to Mary Alice Hackett on March 3, 1930. He retired to Santa Monica, California and died there of a heart attack on September 30, 1940. He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery at Colorado Springs.

Bibliography of Oliver H. Shoup

- Hafen, Le Roy R. Colorado and Its People. New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1927.
- McMechen, Edgar C. The Moffat Tunnel of Colorado, 2 vols., Denver, CO., 1927.
- Oliver H. Shoup Collection, 1888-1940, Denver, CO.: Denver Public Library Western History Collection.
- State Historical and Natural History Society of Colorado. History of Colorado. Denver, CO., Linderman Co., Inc., 1927.
- Stone, Wilbur Fisk (ed). History of Colorado, 4 Vols., Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918. Pp. 364-66.
- Ubbelohde, Carl, Benson, Maxine, and Smith, Duane. Colorado History. Boulder, CO., Pruett Publishing Co., 1972.

Periodicals

- The Denver Post, September 30, 1940, p. 1.
- The Rocky Mountain News, October 1, 1940, p. 18.
- "The Pueblo Flood of 1921," The Colorado Magazine, November, 1940, pp. 201-11, by Guy E. Macy.
- "A Glimpse of Moffat Tunnel History," The Colorado Magazine, March, 1927, pp. 63-66, by Ernest Morris.

Series Descriptions

Executive Record

The Executive Record contains executive orders; appointments; legislative messages; pardons; extraditions and requisitions; honorary citations; and proclamations which were issued by Governor Shoup during his term of office from 1919-1923.

Correspondence

Included in this series is correspondence between Governor Shoup and his constituents, state agencies, and other public officials. There is also a significant amount of correspondence related specifically to the Pueblo Flood of 1921, Pueblo Relief, and the Moffat Tunnel.

Speeches and Messages

Shoup's Inaugural Address (1919), the Biennial Address (1921), and his Message to Extraordinary Session (1919) comprise this series.

Proclamations

This series consists of Executive Proclamations issued by the governor and deposited as filings in the Office of the Secretary of State.

Reports

Reports from this series include annual reports from state agencies and more specific reports concerning various topics.

Extraditions and Requisitions

This series includes documentation concerning the surrendering of alleged criminals to a different jurisdiction for trial. Records may include the application for extradition, the warrant for arrest, and correspondence concerning the extradition.

Manuscripts

This series consists of manuscripts concerning the Arkansas and San Luis Valleys, Eastern Colorado, Northwestern Colorado, the Western Slope, and Mineral Resources.