

**MASON, William COLLECTION**  
Architecture Museum, Adelaide University

**MASON, William**

**SERIES 236**

William Mason (3/11/1917–17/8/2000) was born and raised in Sydney but worked mainly in the Northern Territory.

Mason left school at the end of 1932 with an Intermediate Certificate and in 1936 completed a conversion course to matriculate. Between 1937 and 1952 he studied architecture at Sydney Technical College. Frank Bloomfield, a well-known Sydney architect, took him on as a draughtsman and in 1956 Mason finally gained his registration.

Between 1946 and 1948 Mason worked for the Housing Commission as a draughtsman, updating existing kitchen designs. In 1949 he became an architect with the Commonwealth Department of Works in Sydney. He drew up plans and alterations for post offices in the city and suburban and rural areas; military installations in suburban and rural areas; a Qantas hangar at Mascot; and alterations to Kirribilli House. In about 1957 he became a research architect in the Department of Labour and National Service. In this position he examined conditions for factories and offices, for example the Austin Motor Company and Vicks Company, because work practices influenced building practices. He also looked at office layout with respect to function to assess how well buildings worked and studied the suitability of office furniture and equipment.

On a friend's recommendation about the favourable lifestyle in Darwin, in 1960 Mason applied successfully for a job with the Department of Works in Darwin where he was put in charge of all building works in the Northern Territory with a staff of one – a building inspector. He was also responsible for setting up the administrative section of the Building Board. He fought to get an engineer appointed and prepared changes to the regulations and instigated administration changes that put him in conflict with the Board. It took six years, after much wrangling and disruption in the department, to have these finally approved.

Mason's responsibilities included European and Aboriginal housing; stores; administration; animal husbandry; forestry; preschool, primary and high schools; and police and gaols. He had to determine if the building was needed, exactly what it was to be used for, and then how efficiently the building could be used for a minimal cost. He worked directly on the Aboriginal settlements of Maningrida on the Arafura Sea near Arnhem Land and Papunya, about 200 miles west of Alice Springs. Both had been leprosaria and families had moved there to be near their relatives. As well, he surveyed all Aboriginal settlements of between 2000 and 12,200 inhabitants to determine what was there and to make proposals for the development of water supplies, facilities generally available in small towns, potential work for residents, accommodation for staff, and stores.

Settlements had developed as centres for storehouses to improve eating habits, which led to the development of hospitals and the infrastructure necessary for hygiene. Education for Aboriginals led to reasons for further settlements. As children had to learn English, the Papunya children boarded in the accommodation provided. Their parents began to camp at the school as foodstuffs disappeared from outlying areas, leading to a need for toilets, food, kitchen, and eating halls: one for men and one for women. The population survival rate of the Aboriginal inhabitants was higher than the then average because of medical assistance, which led to improved health.

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After Cyclone Tracy devastated Darwin in 1974, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission took control and the Works Department and Mason's job disappeared. He and his wife and family left Darwin in April 1976 to live at the Adelaide suburb of Mt Osmond. In 1986 he moved to Thirkell Street, Beaumont, building a house based on a modified Jennings plan.

Mason was active in the Darwin community and was the inaugural President of its All Nations Club, formed in the late 1960s. His interest in history led him to become a founding member of the Northern Territory History Society. After he moved to Adelaide he continued to pursue his interest in history, becoming a founding member of the Burnside Historical Society.

### **SOURCES**

Christine Garnaut interviews with William Mason, 18 November 1997, 11 February 1998, 17 February 1998. Mason Collection, Architecture Museum, University of South Australia.

### **COLLECTION DESCRIPTION**

This collection is comprised of Magazine Articles; Plans, Drawings And Estimates; Newspaper And Magazine Clippings; Pamphlets, Brochures and Handbooks; documents from the Commonwealth of Aust. Dept. of Works and Housing, Naval Section; Typed Extracts, Minutes And Reports; Government Department Forms Department Housing And Construction; Building Code For Northern Territory; Various Typed S.A. Papers And Notes; Personal Correspondence And Writings; Samples Of Building Materials; Mason's Thesis: Railways And Their Structures; Slides; and Job Specifications.

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**S236/1 Magazine Articles**

S236/1/1	'Like the Factories he designed Albert Kahn lived to Work'. In <u>Smithsonian</u> magazine Jan 1994. Sept 1998, pp23-30 & 115-124. [ND] pp145-156	Sep 1998. Jan 1994
S236/1/2	<u>House Beautiful</u> , April 1968, pp104-123 <u>Architectural Forum</u> , May 1943, pp69-70	April 1968 May 1943
S236/1/3	<u>House and Garden</u> , Oct 1971, pp103-108	Oct 1971
S236/1/4a	'Houses' in <u>The Architectural Forum</u> 'Houses' in <u>The Architectural forum</u>  'Houses' in <u>The Architectural Forum</u>	May 1941 March 1942 June 1942 Aug, Sept, Oct Nov, 1942 March, April July, Sept. 1943 Jan., Feb., June, Aug., Nov. Dec.1944
S236/1/4b	<u>The Architectural Forum</u> 'Products and practices' 'IRB Buildings' 'Health facility' 'Service Station' 'Hardware Store' 'Bakery and Candy Store' 'High School' 'City Hall' 'Hotel'	Feb.1948 Feb. 1943 May 1943 May 1943 May 1943 May 1943 May 1943 May 1943 May 1943
S236/1/4c	<u>The Architectural Forum</u> 'Products and practice: Plywood' 'Products and practice: Electronics' 'Products and practice: Review of new lamps' 'Products and practice: Drywall construction' 'Products and practice: Dehumidifying' 'Products and practice: Television' 'Products and practice: Water supply piping'	March 1941 Jan. 1944 July 1944 Oct. 1944 Aug. 1944 April 1945 Dec. 1944
S236/1/5	<u>The Australian Home Beautiful</u>	Jan 1942, May 1947 Dec 1947, Dec1948, April 1949 July 1950 Oct 1950

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S236/1/6	Copies of articles from <u>Architecture</u>	Jan, April, July, Oct, Dec 1939. Oct, Nov 1940. Jan, June, Aug, 1941.
S236/1/7	Copies of <u>Art in Australia</u> . June 1941, p67. Sept 1941 pp75-77. Contents page, Series 4 No 3, Sept, Oct. Nov 1941 Reprint from <u>Australian Forest Industries</u> journal, Vol.43, No2, March 1977	1941  1977
S236/1/8	Copies <u>Decoration and Glass</u> . June, July, Aug, Oct, 1939 Jan, June, July, Oct, Nov, 1940 Dec, 1941	1939  1940 1941
S236/1/9	<u>Building</u> . May 1939, pp18-25	1939
S236/1/10	<u>Architecture in Australia</u> pp 479-486 'Documents on Australian Architecture' by W. V. Mason	June 1968
S236/1/11	<u>Unknown provenance</u> . 'Short cuts to linear perspective' Frederick Crowther. 'Little things that matter: diagrams' William Harvey. 'Simplified procedure devised for scaling perspective drawings' unknown author. 'Experts discuss sun-heated houses' unknown author.' The housing explosion' no author. 'Ekistics' no author. 'Down on the ground, off the bandwagon', John Burton. 'Weipa: after 16 years it's impact is global' no author. 'Indonesia' no author. 'Federation Square' Stephen Varady. 'Aluminium yacht for Admirals Cup team' no author.	October 1950
S236/1/12	<u>Architecture Australia</u> 'Federation Square'	Nov/Dec 1997
S236/1/13	<u>The Listener</u> 'Bath revisited'	Nov. 1935
S236/1/14	<u>BCME</u> 'Is your building too safe' <u>BCME</u> 'Quality work and construction tolerances'	November February
S236/1/15	<u>R.I.B.A. Journal</u> , 'Review of construction and materials'	April 1948
S236/1/16	<u>Architectural Record</u> 'Building Types Study' 'New York State building code commission' 'Modular coordination in Frame Houses' 'Designed for subdivisions' 'Satisfactory practice'	October 1951 June 1951 May 1951 July 1950 May 1950

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S236/1/17a	<u>Engineering</u> 'The history of road vehicles' 'Mr. H. Cecil Booth; inventor of the vacuum cleaner' 'Hand-wrought chains' 'Science and engineering' 'International building exhibition at Paris' 'The art of heating and ventilation' by Neville S. Billington 'Influence of the engineer on sea transport and trade' by S. F. Dorey 'Bucket-wheel excavator' 'The resurrection of Icarus' 'Development of firearms'	January 1955 February 1955 March 1955 June 1955 July 1955  August 1955 Sept. 1955 Oct. 1955 Dec. 1955 Dec. 1955
S236/1/17b	<u>Engineering</u> 'Engineering centenaries of 1956' 'The human element' 'A short history of gears' 'Removal of dust' 'Domestic heating in Great Britain, by W. F. B. Shaw' 'Joseph Stenson and the Britania Bridge' by I.M.F. Hooker and Dermott Hunt 'Historic engines and machines in the Midlands' 'Water turbine manufacture' 1856-1956 'The domestic Heat Pump' <u>'Historical and scientific background of automation' by J.F. Coales</u>	Jan. 1956 Feb. 1956 Feb. 1956 April 1956  May 1956 June 1956 July 1956 August 1956  Sept. 1956
S236/1/17c	<u>Engineering</u> 'Bearings since the Stone Age' by C. St.C. Davison 'The Mayflower 11' 'Telford: Man of his age' 'Origin of the Foot-measure' by C. St.C. Davison	Jan. 1957 May 1957 Aug. 1957 Oct. 1957
S236/1/17d	<u>Engineering</u> Three human reactions' by Z. M. T. Tarkowski 'Which should turn - wheel or axle?' 'Anxiety and escape' by Z. M. T. Tarkowski 'Authoritarian barriers to communication' by Z.M.T. Tarkowski 'America is still going places' 'Training to understand people' by Z.M.T. Tarkowski 'Craft workshops displayed' 'Naperian log'	April 1958 April 1958 May 1958  June 1958 July 1958 Sept. 1958 Oct. 1958 Nov. 1958
S236/1/18	Unknown provenance <u>'The new look Project House'</u>	n.d.
S236/1/19	Unknown provenance <u>'Old colonial architecture'</u>	n.d.

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S236/1/20	<u>Building : Lighting : Engineering</u> 'The old order changeth' 'Dimension in building'	June 1958 Sept. 1958
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**S236/2 Plans, Drawings and Estimates**

S236/2/1	Proposed dining room Alice Springs Gaol, for the Department of Territories, N.T. Administration	n.d.
S236/2/2	Floor plan. Suggested nucleus house for Ranger at Coburg Terrace, N.T. Administration.	n.d.
S236/2/3	Plans and elevations. House for <u>Joseph and Amanda Gosling, 3 Maslin Street, Wangari, N.T.</u>	n.d.
S236/2/4	Plans and elevations. <u>House at 53 Hudsonfysh Avenue, Fannie Bay, N.T.</u>	n.d.
S236/2/5	Floor and site plans. <u>Glenunga Close, 591 Portrush Road.</u>	n.d.
S236/2/6	Floor plans, ref. N/H/4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Plus floor plans on large sheet titled ' <u>Single Pensioner</u> '.	1960
S236/2/7	Floor plans and proposed extensions for house of <u>Dr. and Mrs M. P. Heasley, 153 Fisher Street, Malvern.</u>	1989
S236/2/8	Drawings from " <u>Draughtsmanship Perspective</u> ", and " <u>American Housing</u> ", <i>Architects Journal</i> ,	Nov. 1948, Feb. 1949 April 1936
S236/2/9	Various drawings for residence at <u>84, Gleneagles Road, Mt. Osmond.</u>	n.d.
S236/2/10	Estimate summary for construction of house at <u>887, Rossiter Street, Rapid Creek.</u>	n.d.
S236/2/11	Notated plans of proposed house for <u>W V Mason, Lot 84, Gleneagles Rd, Mount Osmond</u>	Oct 1976
S236/2/12	<u>GPO Sydney</u> . Additional floor s to annexe. (A4 photocopies)	
S236/2/13	Sketch drawings: Proposed <u>T.A.S. School, H.M.A.S. Penguin, Balmoral Naval Depot. For Dept of Navy.</u> (A4 photocopies)	5/4/1949
S236/2/14/	W/coloured ozalid, house for <u>W V Mason</u> at 83	6/6/1949

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1	Prince Edward Ave, Earlewood	
2	Details of foundation columns. Ink on trace	n.d.
3	Ink on linen. Plan & elevations	n.d.
4	Photos & pencil on trace. Plan & aspects for house. Submitted for marks.	Dec 53
S236/2/15/	Student work.	
1	Problem 1/53/V. Pencil on trace. Draw	1953
2	Problem 1/53/V. Pencil & wash on cartridge	1953
3	Problem 1/53/V. Pencil on cartridge	1953
4	Not labelled. Pencil on paper. Markers comments.	n.d.
S236/2/16	Student work.	
1	Architectural Exhibition. Pencil & ink on trace.	1954
2	Exterior view untitled. Wash on trace. Sem. 2	1955
3	Untitled sketch. Ink on trace	n.d.
4	Replanning for Victoria Cross, Sydney. Ink on trace	n.d.
S236/2/17	Student work.	
1	Untitled drawing of flats. Ink on trace	n.d.
2	10 pgs. Rebuilding hospital. Ink on trace. Markers comments.	1954
S236/2/18	Mr & Mrs Goslings house, 3 Mazlin St, Casurina, NT. Alterations to comply with 1975 (Darwin) Cyclone Code.	n.d.
S236/2/19	S R Cavenagh house, Langton Rd, Howard Spings.	1975
1A-D	Details of foundations, walls & ceilings. Ink on paper	n.d.
2A-D	Preliminary sketches of house. Pencil on trace	n.d.
3	Secondary sketch of house. Ozalid + pencil correct'ns	n.d.
4	Ozalid copy of final drawing	n.d.
5	Final drawing of house. Ink on butter paper	n.d.
S238/2/20	John W Roberts & Assoc, Sydney. Plan for Sydney University Union Theatre.	n.d.
1	Ozalid of plan at level 3. Drg No 3	
2	Ozalid of long section 'AA'. Drg no 5	
3	Ozalid of Parramatta Rd elevation. Drg no 8	
4	Untitled ozalid of long Section 'AA'	
S236/2/21	Sketch of entertainment area with job allocations and comments. Berry St, Darwin. Pencil on trace.	n.d.

**S236/3 Newspaper and Magazine Clippings**

S236/3/1	Pictures and drawings of various automatic doors: Industrial and domestic.	n.d.
S236/3/2	Clippings, newspaper and magazine on Sydney harbourside and homes, salt damp, S.A. coastline. 'Forum' and 'Plain Words' discussion on various topics. 'Reports' from Greece, Turkey and Spain.	n.d.
S236/3/3	Clippings: Theatres, Auditoriums and Similar	
S236/3/4	Native and Regional Architecture	

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S236/3/5	Town Planning (inc. personal note by Mason)	
S236/3/6	Professional Practices, Building Methods, Management & Administration, Family Studies, Living Aids.	
S236/3/7	Acoustics (incl. Personal notes by Mason)	
S236/3/8	Public Housing. War Housing	

**S236/4 Miscellaneous**

S236/4/1	Historical poster for " <u>The Australian Pictorial Weekly</u> "	n.d.
S236/4/2	Job advertisement " <u>S.A. Advertiser</u> "	April 1977
S236/4/3	Metters price list Percentage listings of site details for <u>Plowman Street Alice Springs.</u>	Oct. 1945 n.d.
S236/4/4	Correspondence, quotations, for tradesmen, and ACROW Steel Formwork	n.d.
S236/4/5	Samples of window film	n.d.

**S236/5 Pamphlets, Brochures and Handbooks**

S236/5/1a	Pamphlet: "Progress: The Australian Architectural Convention", RAIA. Courier-Mail Printing	Nov. 1952
S236/5/1b	Pamphlet: "Radio relay system; Darwin -Mt. Isa"	n.d.
S236/5/2	Design handbook, " <u>Steel-mesh reinforcing fabric</u> "	n.d.
S236/5/3	Brochures, "Martin Place: opening stage 2". Council of the City of Sydney. Martin Place pedestrian precinct, action plan no.24. Clarke Gazzard architects. Photocopies of Martin Place and ground plan.	July 1976 n.d.
S236/5/4a	Information sheets: 'Concrete information', Cement and Concrete Association of Australia.	June 1978 May 1986 Feb.1983
S236/5/4b	Pamphlet: 'Surface finishes for concrete paving',	n.d.

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	Cement and Concrete Association of Australia.	
S236/5/4c	Brochure: 'Pedestrian Ways', Cement and Concrete Association of Australia, Harbour Press.	n.d.
S236/5/4d	Brochure: 'Cities are for people', Cement and Concrete Association of Australia, Harbour Press.	n.d.
S236/5/5	Pamphlet: 'A Flexible house for happier living', Revere Copper and Brass Inc., N.Y.	n.d.
S236/5/6	Pamphlet: 'Architectures Australiennes', Exposition of the Australian Embassy, Paris. (lang.French)	Nov 1982- Jan. 1983
S236/5/7	Pamphlet: 'Is your home secure?' Sun Alliance Australia-S.A. Police, Adelaide	n.d.
S236/5/8a	Information sheets: 'Termite protection policy', Services S.A., Building management S.A. 'Control of development'- Hills face zone', S.A. Planning Authority. 'Control of land subdivision - Hills face zone, S.A. Planning Authority. 'Fee guide', R.A.I.A.	March 1988 Nov. 1975  March 1988
S236/5/8b	Information sheets: 'Adelaide skylights', CSIRO Information service: division of building research, several topics. 'Monarch roller blinds and doors', A.R.C. Engineering Pty. Ltd., reinforcing fabric price list.	1977  n.d.
S236/5/8c	Information sheets plus correspondence: Atlantis Corporation Pty. Ltd. 'Sub surface drainage', 'Structural steel dimensions' 'Decorative fibrous plaster', Adelaide fibrous plaster works Pty.Ltd. 'Shakespeares second globe' (advertising leaflet)	1994 1995 n.d.  n.d.
S236/5/8d	Information sheets; <u>Lead by Lead Development Assoc.</u> <u>Lead Alloys.</u> <u>Water supply,</u> <u>sanitation</u>	
S236/5/9	<u>Information sheet:</u> Tubewrights (Aust) Ltd. in associon with Stewarts and Lloyds (Aust) Pty. Ltd. <u>Steel products and their uses.</u>	n.d.
S236/5/10	Leaflet: Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme.	n.d.

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S236/5/11	Brochure: <u>Humes</u> design aids reinforcements.	n.d.
S236/5/12	Leaflet: <u>The Fantastic Plastics</u>	n.d.
S236/5/13	Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. 1944, 'There's a new trend in Store Design' (oversize)	1944

S236/6	<u>Removed to S236/14/8</u>	
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**S236/7 Photocopied Papers**

S236/7/1	Photocopied article 'Tomorrow's housing is on the way', Mark Walkier <u>Century of wonders</u> 1872-1972	May 1972
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**S236/8 Commonwealth of Aust. Dept. of Works and Housing, Naval section**

S236/8/1	Reference Data: various drawings, specifications and graphs, Commonwealth of Australia Department of Works and Housing, Naval section	1945
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**S236/9 Extracts, Minutes and Reports**

S236/9/1	Typed foolscap pages of extracts on welfare work, office furniture and office accommodation	1960
S236/9/2	Typed foolscap pages on occupation health	1960
S236/9/3	Typed foolscap pages on N.T. award wages.	1970
S236/9/4	Typed minutes: Inter departmental committee - Design of tropical buildings	1957
S236/9/5	Typed report: pre-cast concrete dwellings	1959
S236/9/6	Typed memos, correspondence, reference copies	1960-61
S236/9/7	Typed foolscap report- Maintenance of Commonwealth works assets.	n.d.
S236/9/8	Typed foolscap paper- Information on the N.T.: The Public Service.	n.d.
S236/9/9	Typed foolscap specification for erection of a timber framed house	n.d.

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S236/9/10	Typed foolscap programme for 1957-58. Industrial building design. Inspections of factories and offices.	n.d.
S236/9/11	Typed foolscap report: 'Principles of planning' re-airport.	n.d.
S236/9/12	Typed foolscap extracts on acoustics, house plans protection of steel plate, corrosion of steel.	1960
S236/9/13	Typed copies of works programmes N.T.	1967-68
S236/9/14	Typed letter and article: 'Fire and space separation'	1960
S236/9/15	Typed description of residence at Maranboy Police Station	n.d.

**S236/10 Government Department Forms**

S236/10/1	Department of Works form: " <u>General Conditions of Contract</u> "	1969
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**S236/11 Department Housing and Construction**

S236/11/1	Extract of <u>Darwin reconstruction study</u> , Department of Housing and Construction.	n.d.
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**S236/12 Building Code for Northern Territory**

S236/12/1	Lecture, ' <u>Town planning and subdivision and surveying</u> ', H. D. Robb	n.d.
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**S236/13 Various Typed S.A. papers and notes**

S236/13/1	<u>'How to install a draught-proof sliding door'</u>	n.d.
S236/13/2	<u>'Colour'</u>	1959
S236/13/3	Lecture notes <u>'Early housing styles in S.A. - A double twilight'</u> , Gordon Young. (Given twice) <u>Principles of Composition</u>	June 1981 March 1982
S236/13/4	Historical survey of building construction, Lobethal.	n.d.
S236/13/5	<u>Theory of Architecture</u> , Harry Foskett. (incl. Notes by	1946

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	Mason for Theory of Architecture) <u>The Elements of Architecture Design</u> by Henry Pryor	1947
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**S236/14 Personal correspondence and writings**

S236/14/1	Typed transcript of W. Mason interview Obituary notice, <i>Advertiser</i>	18 Nov 1997 24 Aug 2000
S236/14/2	Correspondence: various, regarding Historic Grange Vineyards near Magill.	1983
S236/14/3	Articles and typed notes regarding the Burnside Historical Society.	1982-88
S236/14/4	Letter to 'The Dalesman' and relevant cuttings	1985
S236/14/5	Original handwritten and typed copy of Mason's article ' <u>Patterns of Change</u> '.	1965
S236/14/6	Photocopy of ' <u>North Bondi Memories</u> '	March 1998
S236/14/7	Educational certificates and letters of application	1953-81
S236/14/8	Article and photocopy of same by Mason on 'State arbitration systems' <i>Blueprint</i> . Paper on 'Arbitration and The Northern Territory' W. V. Mason. Handwritten report on the building of a police station. Job specification for Works Officer. Handwritten assessment for 'Mines and Water Resources Branch' Works Department, Darwin. Handwritten attachment (photocopy) re: Historical Society.	Dec. 1963  1923-30 1960  31 July 1969 14 March 1983

**S236/15 Finance**

S236/15/1	Zessers court case. Accounts, receipts & handwritten document - Part 1	1976-77
S236/15/2	Zessers court case. Accounts, receipts & handwritten document - Part 2	1976-77

**S236/16 Building material samples**

S236/16/1	<u>Melded Fabrics P/Ltd</u> carpet samples.	n.d.
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S236/16/2	Samples of <u>Colours in Relation to Illumination Levels.</u>	
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**S236/17 Railway Stations**

S236/17/1	<u>Railways Stations</u> by Mason W. V. Self publication. 52 pages Oversize Parcels	n.d.
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**S236/18 Thesis**

S236/18/1	Mason's 'On Railways and Their Structures'	
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**S236/19 Slides**

S236/19/1	Teaching aid ' <u>New Life for Old Buildings</u> ' with accompanying booklet Nicholas Jones , ' <u>Environment Architecture - New Life for Old Buildings</u> ' Part 1. Diana Willie Ltd	.
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**S236/20 Specifications**

S236/20/1	Residence at <u>Prince Edward Ave, Earlwood</u> for WV Mason. AO drawing, watercolour & pen. (in plan file drawer)	1949
S236/20/2	Residence at <u>Zions Ave, Malabar Heights</u> for B R Roberts	n.d.
S236/20/3	Alterations to <u>8 Castlereagh St, Sydney</u> . Coffee lounge for Ms M Denes	1958
S236/20/4	Residence at <u>Mosman</u> for Mr Winston	1958
S236/20/5	Residence at <u>St Andrews Ave, Mt Osmond SA</u>	n.d.

**Student Notes**

**S236/21**

'Architecture – Professional Practice and Architectural Economics', course notes and handwritten notes, Melbourne Technical College, in folder marked Cpl. W.V. Mason, Air Force HQs, Melbourne; Magazine Excerpts – 'The Architect and his Profits'; RAIA contract amendments 1948; magazine clippings regarding architectural practice, legal aspects, contracts, 1940-1950.