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OSCAR SEAWELL

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BY ELIZABETH SEITZ

Biographical Sketch: Oscar Drumheller Seawell was born in 1923 in Yakima, Washington State, United States of America. He began studies at Whitman College in Washington in 1941 with a military draft deferment to study physics. In 1943 he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the Army Specialized Training Program to study advanced Civil Engineering for a school year at the University of Utah. After serving in the United States and on Guadalcanal, the Philippines and Japan, he was discharged in January 1946 and returned to studies at Whitman College and worked as part-time assistant physics laboratory instructor.

In 1947 he received a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) with major subjects physics and mathematics from Whitman College and took post-graduate civil engineering classes at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge obtaining a Masters degree in Science in Civil Engineering in 1948.

While employed by General Electric Company analysing nuclear reactors Seawell also attended the Oak Ridge School of Reactor Technology and from 1964 to 1970 he took additional nuclear and mechanical engineering classes part-time, at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

Through continuous part-time training which began in 1949 as an Officer in the Corps of Engineers in the United States Army Reserve Seawell rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and over time, was engaged in duties as a construction engineer, combat engineer company commander, public works and utilities officer, and sanitary engineer. Through correspondence courses Seawell earned a Diploma from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 1974.

Seawell worked in the construction industry for a short time and was a nuclear engineer for eleven years. His work at that time mainly concerned nuclear reactor design and safety, and performing systems and operations analyses with an emphasis on creating computer simulations which were, between 1948 and 1989 quite diverse.

Seawell's teaching career included work as an Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Idaho from 1952 to 1956, where he met and married Bonnie Scott in 1953. In 1956 they moved to Los Angeles, California where he worked as a nuclear engineer for Atomics International and The Marquardt Corporation. In 1956/57 and again in 1961/62 Seawell taught a nuclear reactor design extension class for the University of California, Los Angeles and in 1964 he and Bonnie moved to Palo Alto, California, where he taught engineering classes at San Jose State College.

He was then employed as Principal Analyst with Computer Usage Development Corporation and as Senior Operations Analyst in the Systems Applications Group of Stanford Research Institute.

In 1971 Oscar moved his family to Regina having accepted an appointment as Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus (known as the University of Regina since 1974). After initiating a short-lived Mechanical Engineering program he then planned and initiated a new Industrial Systems Engineering program, and his title was changed to Professor of Systems Engineering. He taught a variety of subjects from introductory through upper level engineering for students in other fields as well as Industrial Systems Engineering.

In 1960 Seawell was the Task Force Chairman for the American Standards Association with a mandate to prepare a general guide for analysing nuclear reactor accidents. He was Chairman of the Los Angeles Section of the American Nuclear Society for 1963/64 and Vice-Chairman for the University of Regina Faculty Association Executive Committee in 1975/76 and the Chairman in 1976/77. Seawell was the Engineering Curriculum and Program Committee Chairman from 1972 to 1980 and the Chairman of the President's Budget Advisory Committee in 1979/80, and Committee Chairman for the Faculty Association in 1988/89.

Seawell retired as Professor Emeritus in 1989 but continued to teach Engineering part-time through 1993. He and his wife Bonnie continue to reside in Regina.

Scope and Content: This small accession is comprised of one paper written by Oscar Seawell and two oversize maps regarding Saskatchewan's resources and its population and highways.

Custodial History: The files were donated to the University Archives and Special Collections in August 2017 by Oscar Seawell.

Legal Agreement: The donation agreement is pending.

Future Accruals: Future accruals are expected.

Access Restrictions: The records in this collection are open to researchers.

Related Accessions: Related material may be found in 91-77, 92-16, 92-61, 97-18, 2005-10, 2005-11 2013-11, 2013-20, 2013-27, 2014-56 and 2015-67.

- Maps (Oversize)
1. Map of Resources in Saskatchewan 1984
(oversize item #1 of 2) (Tube 1/1)
 2. Saskatchewan Population and Highways 1954
(oversize item #2 of 2) (Tube 1/1)
- Paper by Oscar Seawell
3. Ramship Model of Upper Earth Dynamics December 1984