



Robert H. Hess Papers

Collection Summary

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| Title: | Robert H. Hess Papers |
| Call Number: | MS 2000-04 |
| Size: | 1.5 linear feet |
| Acquisition: | Donated by the Hess Family |
| Processed By: | AGH, 5-16-2000; Reprocessed by MN, 10-2008 |
| Note: | None |
| Restrictions: | None |

Literary Rights

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Restrictions

None

Content Note

The Robert H. Hess Collection contains reports and articles pertaining to water in Wichita, Kansas from 1938-84. These include annual reports, water studies and plans, and information about specific projects in the area. Documents related to professional awards Hess received, and a number of career related photographs are also included.

Biography

Robert Harlan Hess was born in Caldwell, Kansas, in 1910. In 1936 Hess received a Master's of Science degree from the University of Kansas. He then worked for the Water Supply Division of the City of Wichita, Kansas, from 1940 until he retired in 1973, serving as Chief Chemist, Superintendent, and eventually becoming the Director in 1955. During his career, Hess was instrumental in the development of the Equus Beds and Cheney reservoir as water resources for Wichita. Hess died in December 1993.

Detailed Description: Series Listing

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| Series 1 | Box 1-Box 2 FF 6 | Professional Activities. Contains information on water in Wichita, Kansas, including an incomplete set of Wichita Municipal Water Utility Annual Reports dated 1958-87. Documents on specific projects Hess was involved in are arranged chronologically and include Quivira Scout Ranch, Cheney Reservoir, a project in Manilla, Wesley Medical Center, fluoridation, and the Kansas State Water plan. Also included are a number of photographs related to Hess's career. |
| Series 2 | Box 2 FF 7-Box 3 FF 5 | Biographical Information. Contains general newspaper and magazine clippings about Hess from 1940-75, documents pertaining to professional awards received, and a resume and chronology of Hess's career. |
| Series 3 | Box 3 FF 6-9 | Personal and Family. Contains high school and college diplomas for Mr. and Mrs. Hess, a baby book for Janet Elizabeth Hess (died in infancy), 3 letters from Hess family members, and a guest book and correspondence for Hess's retirement in 1973, and 50th wedding anniversary in 1981. |
| Series 4 | Oversized Storage | Oversized. Contains 3 pictures of the State Training School in Winfield, Kansas, in 1929, a circa late 1950s aerial photo of the University of Kansas campus, and other large photos related to Hess's career. |

Detailed Description: Box and Folder Listing

Series 1 – Professional Activities

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| Box 1 | FF 1 | Water in Wichita through 1980. Contains "Chronological History of Municipal Water Supply and Treatment Facility From 1938-Present" (1954), Chronology of water running from January 1955-July 1956, "History of the Development of Water Supply for Wichita, Kansas," and an edition of The American City magazine which includes the article "Wichita Water in Transition," all of the above were written by Hess. Also contains the 1965 City of Wichita Annual Report, "The Story of Water in Wichita" pamphlet, and clippings about water in Wichita. |
| Box 1 | FF 2 | Water in Wichita 1980-84. Contains "Water Supply Wichita, Kansas, 1983," a brief overview of current conditions and considerations for future potential water sources; "Groundwater Hydrology and Water Quality of Sedgwick County, Kansas, May, 1983"; "Central Kansas Wholesale Water Supply District Feasibility Study-Phase I," 1983; "A Report of Water Conservation," Oct. 1983; correspondence of the Water Resource Council (Hess member); "Report of the Water Conservation Task Force for Wichita, Kansas"; and correspondence between Mayor Bob Knight and the Chamber of Commerce on the Water Conservation Plan, 1984. |
| Box 1 | FF 3 | Annual Reports of the Wichita, Kansas Municipal Water Utility. Contains the 1958-67, 1969-71, 1973, 1983, and 1987 editions. |

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| Box 1 | FF 4 | Quivira Scout Ranch, 1960- contains reports on a test hole dug here in 1960, follow-up reports in 1961 and 1970, 4 maps of the area, and documents related to Hess's involvement with the camp. |
| Box 1 | FF 5 | Cheney Project 1965. Contains pamphlet about the project, 3 programs from the dedication ceremonies, and a copy of the June, 1965, Public Works City, County and State magazine which has an article about the project and features Hess on the cover. |
| Box 1 | FF 6 | Manilla Project, 1970. Contains clippings about Hess' trip to Manilla, a brief history of the Philippines, a 2 page "Study of the Operation of the Philippine National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority," and 3 photographs of the trip. |
| Box 1 | FF 7 | Wichita Footnotes. Contains the March, September, and December 1973, and the September 1974, editions of this newsletter. |
| Box 2 | FF 1 | Wesley Report, 1974. Contains the "Report on Secondary or Emergency Water Supply for Wesley Medical Center," written by Hess as a consultant. |
| Box 2 | FF 2 | Fluoridation 1976-78. Contains "Water Fluoridation Principles and Practices," a booklet published by the American Water Works Association; "Fluoridation is for Everyone" pamphlet; "Statement on Fluoridation Presented to the Wichita-Sedgwick County Board of Health," written by Hess on the effects fluoridation has on plumbing; newspaper clipping about the pros and cons of fluoridation in Wichita, 1977-78; and statements from professional agencies about fluoridation. |
| Box 2 | FF 3 | Kansas State Water Plan, 1983. Contains a "Preliminary Draft for the Kansas State Water Plan for Fiscal Year 1985-86," a working draft, and a revised working draft of the plan; a "Position Paper Regarding the State Water Plan prepared by the Water Resources Committee" (Hess member); correspondence of the Water Resource Committee; a resolution by the City of Wichita regarding the State Water Plan; a list of names and address for the Kansas Water Authority; a listing of the "Public Involvement Program Listening Posts" for the plan; and newspaper clipping about the plan. |
| Box 2 | FF 4 | Ephemera. Contains Hess's name badge and business card from the City of Wichita; a Christmas card sent out by the water department; "Reclaiming Water through Aquaculture"; "The Story of Drinking Water" pamphlet; Midwest Municipal Utilities magazines from Nov.-Dec. 1947, Nov.-Dec. 1948, and July-August 1965 (covers feature photos pertaining to water in Wichita); the November 1973 and November 1974 editions of Willing Water, a monthly publication of the American Water Works Association, which contain articles on the "Annual News Media Catfish Derby" in Wichita. |
| Box 2 | FF 5 | Photographs. Contains photographs of Hess and other work related photos. |
| Box 2 | FF 6 | Photographs. Includes photocopied photos with captions from a display done about Hess, photos of Hess and others, and negatives. |

Series 2 – Biographical Information

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| Box 2 | FF 7 | Biographical. Contains Who's Who applications ranging from 1965-80, a copy of Hess's resume, and a chronology of his career from 1910-76. |
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| Box 2 | FF 8 | Clippings, 1940-1975, 1993. Contains newspaper and magazine articles about Hess. |
| Box 2 | FF 9 | Certificates. Contains training certificates from 1942-68, membership certificates to professional organization, and certificates of appreciation. |
| Box 3 | FF 1 | Activities, 1935-61. Contains documents pertaining to Hess's employment at the University of Kansas, 1935-6; a salary increase for "service beyond the call of duty," 1956; President Kansas Association of Municipal Utilities, 1956; and the George Warren Fuller Award, 1961. See also "Distinguished Jayhawker" award in oversized. |
| Box 3 | FF 2 | Public Works 10 Men of the Year, 1961. Contains clippings about the award, and letters of congratulations. |
| Box 3 | FF 3 | Kansas State Board of Health, 1961-67. Contains clippings about Hess's appointment to the board in 1961, and correspondence pertaining to his retirement from the board in 1967. |
| Box 3 | FF 4 | Samuel A. Greeley Local Government Service Award, 1973. Contains documents pertaining to this award of which Hess was a recipient. |
| Box 3 | FF 5 | Hess Pumping Station, 1974. Contains documents pertaining to the Wichita pumping station being named after Hess. Includes color pictures and a statistics sheet on the station, an invitation to the dedication ceremony, 2 articles about the dedication, 3 letters of congratulations, and a name plate that was originally framed with an oversized picture of the station. |

Series 3 – Personal and Family

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| Box 3 | FF 6 | Diplomas. Contains grade cards from 1922 and 1923, a program for the "1923 Commencement From Wallace County Common School," a 1923 "Public School Diploma," a program from the 1927 Junior-Senior Banquet, and a 1927 diploma from Weskan Consolidated High School, all for Elizabeth Hess (Mrs. Robert). Also contains a 1924 "Public School Diploma," 1928 South Haven High School diploma, a program for the 1933 commencement at Southwestern College, and transcripts from Southwestern for Robert Harlan Hess, referred to as "Harlan" in these documents. |
| Box 3 | FF 7 | Ephemera. Contains a "Marriage Bond Book" for Robert and Elizabeth Hess, a baby book for Janet Elizabeth Hess (born 1945, died in infancy), war ration books for Hess family members, an "In Memoriam" booklet for Elizabeth Paul (mother of Elizabeth Hess), 3 letters of correspondence from family members, 3 photographs, and family related news clippings. |
| Box 3 | FF 8 | Retirement, 1973. Contains a guest book, letters of congratulations, and news clippings about Hess's retirement from the Wichita Water Department. See oversized for "retirement card" from city employees. |
| Box 3 | FF 9 | 50th Anniversary, 1981. Contains a guest book and news clipping for the wedding anniversary of Robert and Elizabeth Hess. |

Series 4 – Oversized

Oversized
Storage

Oversized. Contains 2 panoramic views of the State Training School in Winfield, Kansas in 1929, 1 of the school in 1933, a photograph of the Kansas Senate in 1929, a map of Wichita in 1946, an aerial photo of the University of Kansas campus (c. late 1950s), a "Distinguished Jayhawker" certificate awarded to Hess in 1964, a matted image of the Hess Pumping Station, and a retirement card from the City of Wichita employees.

For information, please contact us at:

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