The Finding Aid of the Blanche Ebert and Frank R. Seaver Papers 0008

Jessica Geiser and Jamie Henricks
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Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives.
July 2012
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URL: https://library.pepperdine.edu/collections/boone-special-collections-university-archives.htm
Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: Pepperdine University, Special Collections and University Archives.

Title: Blanche Ebert and Frank R. Seaver Papers

Identifier/Call Number: 0008

Physical Description: 14.61 Linear Feet (14 boxes)

Date (inclusive): 1882-1996

Date (bulk): 1919-1987

Abstract: The collection contains the personal and professional papers of Frank R. and Blanche Seaver, philanthropists who greatly contributed to the evolution and success of Pepperdine University. The materials range from 1882 to 1996 and document Blanche's involvement with Pepperdine; Frank's business, the Hydril Company; Blanche's former career as a composer and musician; and their personal lives.

Pepperdine University, Special Collections and University Archives.

Language of Material: Materials are in English.

Conditions Governing Access
Advance notice required for access.

Conditions Governing Use
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Preferred Citation
[Box/folder# or item name], Blanche Ebert and Frank R. Seaver papers, Collection no. 0008, Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries, Pepperdine University.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
The exact date of acquisition for most of the materials in the collection is unknown, but it is likely the material was transferred following Blanche Seaver's death in 1994. The Hydril Company and Frank Seaver materials were donated by Hydril in 2007, and turned over to the University Archives by the President's Office.

Biographical note
Frank Roger Seaver was born in San Jose, California, on April 12, 1883, as the second of five children and the first son of Carlton and Mary Estella Seaver. The family spent Seaver's childhood years on a farm in Claremont, California, later moving to Pomona where his father founded the First National Bank of Pomona. After graduating from high school in 1901, Seaver attended Pomona College to study biology, where he was active in sports, clubs and student government. He also joined the National Guard in 1903, and after graduating from Pomona in 1905, worked in San Francisco to help police the city following the devastating earthquake in 1906. During this time, Seaver also began studying law, and in the fall of 1906, he passed the bar examination in California, which he followed with a year of postgraduate studies in law at Harvard University.

Seaver returned to California in 1907, finding a position at a law firm in Los Angeles, and soon opening his own practice with his brother where he worked for almost a decade. During this time, Seaver also became an active member of Los Angeles civic and cultural life. In 1912, he was elected to the Board of Freeholders of Los Angeles County, where he helped draft the first Los Angeles County Charter. He was also a member of the Amateur Players Club, where in 1915 he fell in love with their new vocal coach from Chicago, Blanche Ebert. After a quick courtship, the two were married on September 16, 1916.

Blanche Ebert Seaver was born on September 15, 1891, as the youngest of ten children of Norwegian immigrants in Chicago, Illinois. She started playing the piano as a very young girl, and at five years old was considered a musical prodigy. She graduated from the Chicago Music School in 1911, and began a career as an accompanist, vocal coach and concert pianist. In 1914, she moved to Los Angeles, where she opened her own studio and continued to accompany many famous artists in concert before ending her career to marry Frank in 1916.

The Seavers were married for six months when Frank, who had joined the California Naval Militia in 1913, was called to active duty in 1917 as a result of World War I. As a Lieutenant in the Naval Militia, Seaver served as a deck officer of the USS Pueblo, an armored cruiser in the Atlantic until December of 1918, when he was transferred to office duties in New York City. Blanche left California to join Frank in New York, and during the war years, she found a new career as a successful composer, writing dozens of songs for the top artists of the time.

During his time in the militia, Frank Seaver became friends with a fellow reserves man, Ned Doheny, whose father, oil man Edward L. Doheny, also became close to Frank. Seaver's friendship with the Doheny family continued throughout the war, and led to Edward Doheny offering Frank a position in his company as an attorney in 1919. In 1921, Doheny asked Seaver
to work as the attorney and general representative for a division of his oil company in Mexico City, the Huasteca Petroleum Company. The Seavers moved to Mexico for seven years, where Frank rose to the position of vice-president of the company, and Blanche began a lifetime of philanthropy by establishing a society to help homeless children in Mexico City. In 1928, the Seavers moved back to the United States, where Frank decided to buy the Doheny-Stone Drill Company from Edward Doheny. The company, which manufactured oil well equipment and parts, was at the time almost defunct, but Seaver turned the business around to form a multiplant operation in the United States and Canada, which in 1933 was renamed the Hydril Company. Frank ran Hydril until his death on October 31, 1964, whereupon it was taken over by his nephew, Richard C. Seaver.

In addition to his career at Hydril, Frank Seaver was also heavily involved in philanthropy, starting in a major way in 1956 with a million dollar donation to his alma mater, Pomona College. This donation was followed by two more gifts, which allowed for the construction of three science buildings at Pomona now known as the Seaver Science Center. Inspired by this first donation, the Seavers went on to donate large gifts to a number of educational and charitable organizations, including the University of Southern California, Loyola University, the First Congregational Church, the Harvard Boys School and the Freedoms Foundation. Frank also during this time established The Seaver Institute, which continues to handle the Seaver Estate and serve as a philanthropic organization to this day.

Frank Seaver became interested in Pepperdine College during the early 1960s, through his support of programs sponsored by Pepperdine including the Pepperdine College Forum and Pepperdine's National Citizenship program. He also included Pepperdine College as a beneficiary in his will, which inspired Blanche Seaver to become more involved with Pepperdine after his passing. In addition to providing the Seaver Learning Center on Pepperdine's Los Angeles campus, Blanche also provided a pacesetting gift of over a million dollars to help Pepperdine establish its Malibu campus in 1972. As a show of gratitude for her generous support of the school, in 1975 Pepperdine dedicated the new college, Frank R. Seaver College, in honor of Frank (the name was later shortened to its current form, Seaver College). Mrs. Seaver remained active in Pepperdine's affairs, as she was named a lifetime member of the Board of Regents in 1976. She also received an honorary doctorate in 1980, and continued to make donations to the school, serving as the most generous donor in Pepperdine's history until her passing on April 14, 1994.

Biographical information was taken from collection materials, newspaper articles, and The Legacy of Frank Roger Seaver by Bill Youngs.

Scope and Content
The collection contains the personal and professional papers of Frank and Blanche Seaver. Included in the collection are photographs of Blanche Seaver, the construction of Seaver College at Pepperdine and the Pepperdine campus; music composed by Blanche and music books owned by her; personal materials including personal portraits of Frank, information about the Seaver name, name cards collected by Blanche, and Blanche's personal possessions; and materials produced by the Hydril Company including correspondence, brochures, company records and photographs. Materials in the collection span from 1882 to 1987.

Arrangement
Materials within series are arranged alphabetically by folder title except when noted, and original folder titles have been maintained when possible. (In places where Smythe wrote Mr. and Mrs. Seaver, the names have been changed to Frank and Blanche.) Materials are arranged in four series:

Series 1: Photographs
Series 2: Personal Materials
Series 3: Music and Music Books
Series 4: Hydril Company Materials

Processing Information note
The collection was initially arranged and described by James Smythe in 2002. The collection was re-arranged with new material incorporated and described by Jessica Geiser and Jamie Henricks in July 2012.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Sheet music
Articles
Oil field equipment and supplies industry
Malibu (Calif.) -- History
Photographs
Financial records
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History
Ephemera
Family archives
Brochures
Correspondence
Sales catalogs
Universities and colleges -- California -- History
Hydril Company
Seaver, Frank R. (Frank Roger)
Dohney-Stone Drill Company
Doheny, Edward L. (Edward Laurence)
Pepperdine University
Pepperdine College
Seaver, Blanche Ebert

box 9, box 1

Series 1: Photographs 1890s-1980s

Scope and Content
The series contains personal photographs of Frank and Blanche Seaver, including
photographs depicting Frank and Blanche's childhoods, individual portraits of the Seavers,
the Seavers together, the Seavers with others, Blanche Seaver at Pepperdine events, and
the construction of Seaver College at Pepperdine.

box 1
Blanche Ebert Seaver 1890s-1972
box 1
Construction of Seaver College 1970
box 1
Frank Seaver 1890s-1959
box 1
Frank and Blanche Seaver 1920s-1930s
box 1
Frank and Blanche Seaver with Others 1963-1978
box 1
Blanche Seaver at Pepperdine Events 1972-1987
box 1
Blanche Seaver's Photos of Others 1941-1980
box 1
Blanche Seaver with Other People 1949-1981
box 9
Oversized Photographs
box 9
Frank and Blanche Seaver walking at Pomona College Trustees/Faculty Retreat,
Hotel Del Coronado
box 9
Frank Seaver and other California Naval Militia Members ca. 1915
box 9
Groundbreaking for Seaver Laboratory for Chemistry, Pomona College 1963
box 9
Frank Seaver addresses the Board of Supervisors 1963
box 9
Pomona College Football Team, Frank Seaver in Center 1904
box 9
Portrait - Frank Seaver
box 9
Portrait of Lieutenant Frank Seaver of the armored cruiser USS Pueblo 1917-1918

box 2, 7, 13,

Series 2: Personal Materials 1927-1984
box 10, 14

Scope and Content
The series contains personal materials belonging to Frank and Blanche Seaver, including
information on the Seaver family crest; name cards of acquaintances and friends collected
by Blanche; personal effects including a dress, mirror, brush, perfume bottle, and hat once
owned by Blanche; gifts and honors given to the Seavers; printed material about Blanche;
speeches given by Blanche; correspondence between Blanche and others; materials from
Blanche's baptism; and souvenir programs collected by Blanche. Also included are oversized
certificates of an Honorary Doctorate of Law given to Frank Seaver by Loyola University in
1959, and a certificate of Frank's honorable discharge from the United States Navy in 1924.

box 2
Dedication of the Frank R. Seaver College 1975
box 2
Frank Seaver Personal Materials
box 1
Gifts and Honors Received by the Seavers 1973-1996
box 1
Mrs. Frank Roger Seaver Dinner 1980 April 9
box 13, box 10, 14
Oversized Items
box 10
Frank Seaver - Doctorate of Law Certificates from Loyola University 1959
box 10  Frank Seaver - Honorable Discharge Certificate from US Navy 1924
box 13-14  Blanche Seaver's Personal Items - Brush, Dress, Hat, Mirror, and Perfume Bottle
box 2  Letters to Blanche Seaver 1971-1978
box 2  Letters to Blanche Seaver from her Minister, James E. Smythe 1978-1982
box 2  Blanche Seaver's Baptism 1978
box 2  Blanche Seaver's Speeches 1970-1980s
box 2  Name Cards of the Seavers' Friends and Acquaintances
box 2  Printed Material about the Seavers 1927-1994
box 7  Seaver's Legacy by Bill Youngs, in *Westways Magazine* 1978
box 7  Manuscript for *The Legacy of Frank Roger Seaver* by Bill Youngs [1976]
box 7  *The Seaver Story* by Jane Werner Watson (published by Pomona College) 1960
    Scope and Content
    The series contains sheet music of compositions written by Blanche Seaver, including some
    copies with handwritten notations, and two records of recorded works composed by Blanche
    Seaver. Also included are music books owned by Blanche Seaver, containing sheet music of
    famous operas and other musical works, and souvenir programs collected by Blanche Seaver
    of concerts she attended.

box 2  Music Compositions and Materials 1919-1967

box 2  *Calling Me Back to You* Sheet Music 1964
box 2  Blanche Seaver's Music - Original Manuscripts 1919-1967
box 2  Blanche Seaver's Music - Recordings
**Music Books 1882-1922**

**Scope and Content**

Materials in the sub-series are arranged in reverse chronological order where dates are known, followed by books with unknown dates which are arranged alphabetically by the composer's surname.


**Series 4: Hydril Company Materials 1927-1987**

**Scope and Content**

The series consists of materials from the Hydril Company, an oil well equipment manufacturing company bought by Frank Seaver in 1927. The company, previously called the Doheny Stone Drill Company, changed its name to Hydril in 1933, and was run by Seaver until his death in 1964. Materials in the series include correspondence, newspaper and magazine articles, working papers, advance bulletins, brochures, catalogs, financial reports, price lists, materials for Hydril salesmen, and technical drawings of drill parts. Also included are a large number of photographs depicting Hydril Company equipment and parts, manufacturing plants, oil well locations, Hydril employees, and oversized photographs including historic views of the Los Angeles Hydril property, Seaver with Edward Doheny at the first oil well in Los Angeles, the Hydril corporate building, and an example of a Hydril company stock certificate. Materials in the series span from 1927 to 1987.

**Hydril Records 1927-1987**

**Bettis Rubber Company Materials 1960s-1970s**

**Doheny Stone Drill Company Advance Bulletin 1929**

**Doheny Stone Drill Company Brochure 1927**

**Doheny Stone Drill Company Working Paper - Practical Application of Electricity to Rotary Drilling 1930**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Doheny Stone Drill Company/Hydril Correspondence 1933</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hydril Correspondence 1941-1969</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Hydril/Doheny Steel Financial Reports 1934</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Hydril History Documents 1987</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Machinery Catalogs, Brochures and Price Quotations 1933</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Newspaper Article - Frank R. Seaver Talks Progress in Oil Industry 1930</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Newspaper Articles on Frank Seaver and the Oil Industry 1925-1987</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Salesman Binder for Hydril Type K Ball Plug Valves 1958</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Seaver Trusts/ Hydril Corporation Documents 1080s-1990s</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Technical Drawing - Nozzle 2MA3 1944</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>The Texas Corporation Squabble 1933</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Western Machine World Magazine on Doheny Stone Drill Company October, 1928</td>
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<td>7, 8, 9, 11, 12</td>
<td>Photographs 1920s - 1960s</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Construction Sites</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Hot Springs and Geysers</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Houston, Texas Plant</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Hydril Employee Photobook - Ohio 1938</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Hydril Parts - Drawings</td>
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<td>7, 8</td>
<td>Hydril Photo Reference Books</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Machinery and Parts</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Buildings</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Rig/Machinery Sites</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Odessa, Texas Plant</td>
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<td>8, 8</td>
<td>Oil Companies</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>People</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Rig/Machinery Locations - California, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Rochester, Pennsylvania Plant 1927-1960</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Torrance, California Plant</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Turret Thread Mill</td>
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<td>Vehicles/Trucks</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Youngstown, Ohio Plant</td>
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<td>9, 11, 12</td>
<td>Oversize Photographs</td>
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<tr>
<td>9, 11</td>
<td>Hydril Company Headquarters in Los Angeles, California 1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>9, 11, 12</td>
<td>Frank R. Seaver and Edward L. Doheny with first Oil Well in Los Angeles late 1930s/early 1940s</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Historic Photographs of Los Angeles Hydril Location 1877-1943</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Example Hydril Stock Certificate</td>
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