Finding aid for the Lane-Wells Company records 7055

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USC Libraries Special Collections
2017 November
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URL: http://libraries.usc.edu/locations/special-collections
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: USC Libraries Special Collections
Title: Lane-Wells Company records
creator: Wells, Walter T.
creator: Lane-Wells Company
Identifier/Call Number: 7055
Physical Description: 1.5 Linear Feet 1 box
Date (inclusive): 1939-1954
Abstract: This small collection consists of a commemorative album celebrating the 100,000th Gun Perforating Job by the Lane-Wells Company of Los Angeles on June 18, 1948 and additional printed ephemera, 1939-1954, created and collected by Walter T. Wells, co-founder and Chairman of the Board of the Lane-Wells Company. Walter T. Wells studied electrical engineering at Iowa State, graduating in 1910. He worked as an engineer in the Philippines and British Guiana (for the Demerara Bauxite Company), as well as in Hopkinsville, Kentucky and Denver, before settling in Glendale, California in 1924 where he worked selling street lighting equipment. He and Wilfed G. Lane co-founded the Lane-Wells Company in the early 1930s. The two men developed gun perforation as a service for oil wells after purchasing a patent for the idea. The first trial of their gun, which shot holes into the casings of wells that were no longer producing at original capacities, was performed on the Union Oil Company's La Merced No. 17 well in the Montebello oil field in December of 1932. From this successful trial, Lane and Wells built a company that provided the service across the United States and into Canada and Latin America. The company's main office was at 5610 Soto Street in Los Angeles. The 100,000th gun perforation was performed on June 18, 1948 at the same well as the first--Union Oil's La Merced No. 17. This was followed by a reception at the ballroom of the Biltmore Hotel.
Storage Unit: 1
Biographical / Historical
Walter T. Wells, co-founder of the Lane-Wells Company, was born in 1886 in Marathon, Iowa. He studied electrical engineering at Iowa State, graduating in 1910. He worked as an engineer in the Philippines and British Guiana (for the Demerara Bauxite Company), as well as in Hopkinsville, Kentucky and Denver, before settling in Glendale, California in 1924 where he worked selling street lighting equipment. He died in 1964 in Santa Barbara.
The Lane-Wells Company was founded by Wilfred G. Lane and Walter T. Wells in the early 1930s. The two men, both electrical engineers, developed gun perforation as a service for oil wells after purchasing a patent for the idea. The first trial of their gun, which shot holes into the casings of wells that were no longer producing at original capacities, was performed on the Union Oil Company's La Merced No. 17 well in the Montebello oil field in December of 1932. From this successful trial, Lane and Wells built a company that provided the service across the United States and into Canada and Latin America. The company's main office was at 5610 Soto Street in Los Angeles. The 100,000th gun perforation was performed on June 18, 1948 at the same well as the first--Union Oil's La Merced No. 17. This was followed by a reception at the ballroom of the Biltmore Hotel.
Content Description
This small collection consists of a commemorative album celebrating the 100,000th Gun Perforating Job by the Lane-Wells Company of Los Angeles on June 18, 1948 and additional printed ephemera, 1939-1954, created and collected by Walter T. Wells, co-founder and Chairman of the Board of the Lane-Wells Company. Also included are a photograph and business card of Walter T. Wells; "Tomorrow's Tools Today" (Lane-Wells publications: annual report for 1954, bulletin for 1939); "Permian Pete and His Fabulous Projects", by David Kimsey, published by the Lane-Wells Company in 1951 and which describes 12 of the "tallest oil field years ever spun"; a copy of "Petroleum World" (November 1939) which contains an article recounting the origins of the company and its activities; a biography of Wells written by the wife of Well's grandson (and the donor of the collection); and a copy of "The Bawl Street Journal" from May 24, 1946 (the Bond Club's annual spoof of Wall Street). The commemorative album consists of a dedication to Wells, photographs of the gun perforation and the reception, the invitation to the reception and a printed fact sheet about the perforation, signatures of some of the attendees at the reception (including executives from Western Oil, Security First National Bank, General Metals Corp., Union Oil, Independent Petroleum Association of America, General Petroleum, and others), and clippings about Lane-Wells and the perforation. The album was presented to Walter T. Wells on November 1, 1948.
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Preferred Citation
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Immediate Source of Acquisition
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Oil field equipment and supplies industry -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Oil fields -- Equipment and supplies -- Photographs
Petroleum workers -- California -- Los Angeles -- Photographs
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History -- Archival resources
Corporation reports
Printed ephemera
Scrapbooks
Lane-Wells Company -- Archives
Wells, Walter T. -- Archives