

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Standard Oil Company of California

Good Friday Earthquake Records, 1964

MS 230

1 box (3 folders)
0.25 linear ft.

Processed By: Sean Lanksbury,
June 2007

ACQUISITION: Chief Geologist Don Zeigler (SOCAL-WOI) transferred the records to Neil E. Fahy of Daly City, CA in June of 1974. Mr. Fahy donated the records to the Historical Collections in August of 2004 (Acc# 2004-039.)

ACCESS: The collection is available for viewing, however; the photographs may not be photocopied.

COPYRIGHT: Request for permission to publish material from the collection must be discussed with the Librarian.

PROCESSING: Donation transferred into pH-neutral container. Original order has been maintained. The collection is described at collection level, with donor generated inventory attached.

HISTORICAL NOTE

On March 27, 1964, at approximately 5:36 p.m. Alaska Standard Time, the "Good Friday" Earthquake (also known as the Great Alaska Earthquake) shook all of Southcentral Alaska. The quake's epicenter was 80 miles east of Anchorage in Prince William Sound. The quake's magnitude was originally recorded between 8.4 and 8.6 on the Richter scale, but later upgraded to 9.2. The earthquake was the most powerful earthquake ever recorded in North America. It was the second largest earthquake ever recorded, second only to Chile in 1960, which experienced a quake of 9.5.

75 homes and several businesses were destroyed in Anchorage. Of the 131 deaths recorded in Alaska, 119 were caused by the tsunami (tidal wave) triggered by the quake that devastated Valdez and severely damaged the coastal towns of Seward and Kodiak.

When the Alaska quake occurred in 1964, there was, in addition to other Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL) department personnel, an Exploration Department office in the Cordova Building in Anchorage. When the quake news reached the Exploration Department headquarters in San Francisco, an earthquake correspondence file was created with a retention life of ten years.

No SOCAL personnel suffered any financial loss in the quake because their property losses, etc. were assumed by SOCAL. This financial information was between them and the company. The correspondence of the individual reimbursements was removed from the file.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Materials in the collection include correspondence, maps, photos, clippings, and memorabilia related to the 1964 Alaska (Good Friday) earthquake kept as files of Standard Oil of California, Western Operations, Inc. (SOCAL-WOI).

The people sending and receiving messages were (WOI is Western Operations, Inc, the SOCAL company in the western states and Alaska):

- William F. Barbat - Chief Geologist, WOI.; San Francisco
- W. L. Blair - WOI, San Francisco
- Sam Bowlby - Shell Oil Company, Los Angeles
- Ed Dobrick - WOI
- William A. Egan - Governor of Alaska
- L. E. Hunt - Seattle, WOI
- R. W. Johnson - Accounting??, WOI San Francisco
- Chuck Kerschner - Geologist, Alaska Exploration Division, WOI.
- B. W. Packard - San Francisco
- Edwin S. Parker - Superintendent, Alaska Exploration Division, WOI.
- A. R. Timmons - Chairman, Alaska Emergency Coordinating Committee, Seattle, WOI.

- Stan Totten - Vice President, Exploration, WOI.
- Howard G. Vesper - President, Standard Oil Company of California

SUBJECTS

Standard Oil Company of California.

Alaska Earthquake, Alaska, 1964.

Earthquakes--Alaska.

Earthquake damage--Alaska--Anchorage.

Buildings--Earthquake effects--Alaska--Anchorage.

Anchorage (Alaska)--Buildings, structures, etc.--Earthquake effects.

Anchorage (Alaska)--History.

Alaska--History--1959-

INVENTORY

XX/XX/1964	Newspaper	Landslide Areas Delineated In Geological Survey Reports.
XX/XX/1964	USGS Circular 491	Alaska's Good Friday Earthquake, March 27, 1964: A Preliminary Geologic Evaluation.
03/XX/1964	Parker to Barbat	Trans ltr; Map of company buildings and residences marked. Photographs of Anchorage 23 photographs.
3/29/1964	Parker to Totten	Easter Sunday letter
3/30/1964	Vesper to Miller	Trans ltr.
3/30/1964	Bowlby to Egan	Telegram: Offer of drilling barge etc to State of Alaska.
04/XX/1964	Engineering Geology Evaluation Group	<p>Preliminary Report 27 March 1964 Earthquake in Greater Anchorage Area. 38 pgs + 8 figs + 5 photos + 11 plates.</p> <p>Fig 1 Earthquake epicenters. Fig 2 Terminology diagram. Fig 3 Preliminary map of landslide areas. Fig 4 "L" Street slide, cross section. Fig 5 Fourth Street Slide-drill hole. Fig 6 Government Hill Slide-drill hole. Fig 7 Government Hill Slide-cross section. Fig 8 Turnagain area-USGS sample and well locations.</p> <p>Photo 1 Turnagain Area-tension cracks. Photo 2 Scarp at head of Turnagain Slide. Photo 3 Turnagain -small pressure ridge. Photo 4 Turnagain slump blocks. Photo 5 "L" Street Side-"pull-away" or tension trough.</p> <p>Plate 1 Earthquake geology 27th March 1964 Greater Anchorage Area Plate 2 "L" Street slide, Downtown Anchorage area. 1" = 100' 04/06/1964 Plate 3 Earthquake geology 27th March 1964 Greater Anchorage Area Plate 4 "L" Street slide, Downtown Anchorage area. 1" = 100' 04/06/1964 Plate 5 never received</p>

		<p>Plate 6 Movement of houses - Turnagain Slide area. 30 March 1964</p> <p>Plate 6a Earthquake Geology 27th March 1964 Northeast Turnagain Slide area. 1" = 100'</p> <p>Plate 7 Fence diagram showing distribution of Bootlegger Cove clay, Anchorage, Alaska. 04/08/1964</p> <p>Plate 8 Fourth Avenue Slide Area - Preliminary Geologic Cross-section. 4/08/1964</p> <p>Plate 9 "L" Street slide area.</p> <p>Plate 10 Preliminary Geologic Cross-sections of the Turnagain Landslide.</p> <p>Plate 11 Turnagain Area showing landslide and area of instability 1" = 500'. 04/12/1964</p> <p>Plate 12 Downtown Anchorage showing landslide zones & areas of instability. 1" = 500'. 04/12/1964</p>
4/1/1964	Vesper to Egan	Summary of SOCAL status
4/1/1964	Parker to Totten	Report on Anchorage Disaster Situation - Chiefly Turnagain Residences
4/1/1964	Hunt to Pickard	Trans Ltr
4/1/1964	Timmons	Status Report-Alaska Earthquake with 1st report of Alaska Emergency Coordinating Committee (AECC)
4/1/1964	Becker to Vesper	4-1-64 Alaska Report
4/1/1964	Parker to Totten	Telgm: Status of SOCAL operations
4/2/1964	Barbat to Parker	Earthquake cracks.
4/3/1964	Totten to Dobrick & Parker	Company Losses, Alaska Earthquake. trans ltr
4/2/1964	Johnson to Officers & Dept Heads, WOI	Company Losses, Alaska Earthquake
4/6/1964	Barbat to Parker	Anchorage Oblique Photos.
6/1/1964	Kerschner to Parker	Alignment of earthquake epi-centers and major surface fractures, North Kenai area.
6/1/1964	Kerschner to Parker	Map of area of Kenai quad 1:250,000.
7/8/1964	Parker to Blair	Results of Soil Studies, Anchorage. Trans ltr.
7/8/1964	Task Force 9 report	L-K Street Slide and Downtown.
7/8/1964	Task Force 9 report	City of Anchorage, Alaska - Producing Department Real Estate Owners. 1"=500' 5-62
7/8/1964	Scientific & Engr	Partial reclassification of risk areas, Anchorage and vicinity, Generally excluding military lands.

	Task Force	
7/14/1964	US Army Engineer Dist-AK Task Force 9	Turnagain Slide.
7/14/1964	US Army Engineer Dist-AK Task Force 9	City of Anchorage, Map of Turnagain Residential area. 1"=100' 7-16-64
7/15/1964	Anchorage Daily Times	Turnagain Wins SBA Approval