



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to John A. Beemer Papers

NMAH.AC.0957

Alison Oswald

2016

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

P.O. Box 37012

Suite 1100, MRC 601

Washington, D.C. 20013-7012

[archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu)

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Arrangement.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects .....	2
Container Listing .....	3
Series 1: Professional Materials, 1907 - 1956.....	3
Series 2: Projects, 1910 - 1948.....	4
Series 3: Miscellaneous, 1915 - 1946.....	6

---

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	John A. Beemer Papers
<b>Date:</b>	1907-1956 (bulk 1919-1931)
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0957
<b>Source:</b>	National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering
<b>Creator:</b>	Beemer , John A., 1879-
<b>Extent:</b>	3 Cubic feet (4 boxes; 3 oversize folders)
<b>Language:</b>	Collection is in English. Some materials in Russian.
<b>Summary:</b>	Papers document Beemer's engineering activities as a civil engineer who worked on irrigation and dam related projects.

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Immediate source of acquisition unknown.

### Provenance

Transferred to the Archives Center from Division of Work and Industry, 2006.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Alison Oswald, archivist, 2016.

### Preferred Citation

John A. Beemer Papers, 1907-1955, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

---

## Biographical / Historical

John Arthur Beemer (b. 1879) was born in Fincastle, Virginia. He earned a B.S. in Engineering from the Case School of Applied Science (now known as Case Western Reserve) in 1907.

Beemer, a civil engineer, joined the United States Reclamation Service of the Department of the Interior as a junior engineer in 1907. He worked for the Department until 1913, and again from 1933-1943, on a number of reclamation and irrigation dam projects. Between 1913 and 1933, Beemer worked as an engineer for the Philippines government, 1913-1916; consulting engineer in Idaho, 1916-1917; captain in the Army Engineer Corps, 1917-1918; engineer for the U.S. Indian Service, 1918-1921; engineer for projects in Nevada and California, 1921-1929; and as a consulting engineer for the Russian government, 1929-1931.

---

## Scope and Contents

Papers document Beemer's engineering activities. Includes correspondence, reports, plans, drawings, blueprints, and specifications concerning reclamation and irrigation dams in the Philippines, 1913-1918; Idaho, 1916-1917, 1941-1943; California, 1921-1926; the Soviet Union, 1929-1931; Wyoming, 1935-1938; and Utah, 1938-1941. Also includes data on metal gates, lifts, weirs, rating flumes, and gauging stations; and employment records for Beemer.

---

## Arrangement

The collection is divided into three series.

Series 1: Professional Materials. 1907-1956

Series 2: Projects, 1910-1948

Series 3: Miscellaneous, 1915-1946

---

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Civil engineering
- Civil engineers
- Dams
- Dams -- California
- Dams -- Idaho
- Dams -- Utah
- Dams -- Wyoming
- Irrigation
- Public works

### Names:

National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering

### Places:

Soviet Union

---

## Container Listing

### Series 1: Professional Materials, 1907 - 1956

Scope and Contents: This series contains documentation about Beemer's professional career as a civil engineer and the type of employment he held. Materials include resumes, engineering certificates, published articles, correspondence, especially with the United States Civil Service about retirement and the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation.

Box 1, Folder 1	Resumes and articles, 1915 - 1915, 1950 - 1950
Box 1, Folder 2	Construction of the Nampa Division of the Boise Irrigation project (thesis for B.S. in Engineering, Case School of Applied Science) , 1913
Box 1, Folder 3	Federal employment materials, 1907 - 1956
Box 1, Folder 4	State of California employment materials, 1929 - 1931
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1912 - 1934
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1929 - 1944
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, 1945 - 1946
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence, 1947
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence, 1948
Box 1, Folder 10	Correspondence, 1949 - 1950

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 2: Projects, 1910 - 1948

Scope and Contents: This series consists of correspondence, notes, contracts, agreements, reports, statistical data, work estimates, maps, plans, and other charts for the projects Beemer worked/consulted on. Beemer was employed by the Trans-Caucasia Water Economy Service in Tiflis, Russia, as a civil and construction engineer for irrigation, drainage and flood control work from 1929-1931. The documentation includes handwritten and typescript correspondence, agreements, telegrams, reports, travel expenses, and receipts related to his work there. This series is arranged alphabetically by project.

Map-folder 2; Box 1, Folder 11	Alcorn Dam Project, 1935 - 1938
Box 1, Folder 12	Anderson Ranch Dam, 1942 - 1948
Box 1, Folder 13	Big Springs irrigation District, 1927 - 1927
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Boise Project , 1910 - 1910, undated
Map-folder 2	Carson Valley District (plans), 1917 - 1917, 1913 - 1913
Box 2, Folder 3	Carson Valley District (correspondence), 1922 - 1923
Box 2, Folder 4	Davis Dam (correspondence), 1948 - 1948
Map-folder 1; Box 2, Folder 5	Deer Creek Dam Project (Utah), 1938 - 1941
Box 2, Folder 6	Dwinnell Hydraulic Dam (reports and notes), 1927 - 1929
Box 2, Folder 7; Map-folder 2	Hazel Valley Dam/El Dorado, 1926
Box 2, Folder 8	Haye Bridge Reservoir (report), 1930 - 1930
Map-folder 1; Box 3, Folder 1; Box 2, Folder 9-12	Montague Water Conservation District Reservoir, 1921 - 1929
Box 4, Folder 7; Map-folder 1	Metal gates and lifts, 1919 - 1920
Map-folder 1; Box 3, Folder 2	Philippine's/Pillar Irrigation Project, 1914 - 1915
Box 3, Folder 3;	Shasta River , 1929 - 1929, undated

Map-folder 2

Map-folder 2                      State of Idaho Irrigation, 1917

Box 3, Folder 4-10;              Trans-Caucasia Water Economy Service (Zakavvodhoz), 1929 - 1931,  
Map-folder 2                      undated

Box 4, Folder 1-5;              Walker River irrigation District, 1909 - 1930

Box 3, Folder 11;

Map-folder 3

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 3: Miscellaneous, 1915 - 1946

Box 4, Folder 6      Newspaper Clippings, 1937 - 1937, 1922 - 1922

Map-folder 2      Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, miscellaneous materials, 1915 - 1946

Box 4, Folder 8      Water distribution, operation, rules and regulations, 1918 - 1928

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*