

**CIVIL ENGINEERS**

**BUILDING A BETTER WORLD**

**ASCE**



**PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS**

**ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH OF THE LOS ANGELES SECTION**

**ON THE OCCASION OF ASCE'S 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

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# **CIVIL ENGINEERING AND THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS**

Engineers first were the men in ancient armies who designed and built roads, bridges, fortresses and war machines like catapults and towers. The ancient engineers also designed and built facilities for the civilian population such as aqueducts, ports, harbors canals and dams.

In 1716 the French formed the Bridge and Highway Corps and in 1747 they formed the National School of Bridges and Highways. This was the beginning of civil engineering as compared to military engineering.

Other Europeans and the British soon followed the lead of the French in the design and construction of facilities for the civilian population and in civil engineering education.

Benjamin Wright (1771-1824), was named the Father of American Civil Engineering for his work on the Erie Canal, other canals and railroads early in the development of our country.

The U. S. Military Academy at West Point began teaching civil engineering as the foundation of their curriculum in 1817.

The Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute founded in 1824, offered the first courses in civil engineering in the United States, in a civilian institution.

American civil engineering has quietly shaped the history of our nation and every community with it. Civil engineering is so universally present that it is not recognized by most of the population.

Civil engineers conceive, design and supervise the construction of a myriad of common everyday projects in addition to sensational projects such as big dams, tunnels and bridges. For homes and industry, civil engineers provide for the water that we use, for the collection and treatment of sewage, for our streets and highways and for the grading for all kinds of facilities. Nothing is built without civil engineers providing the necessary infrastructure.

Engineers uphold and advance the integrity, honor and dignity of the engineering profession by using their knowledge and skills for the enhancement of human welfare and environment; by being honest and impartial and serving with fidelity the public, their employers and clients; by striving to increase the competence and prestige of the engineering profession.

The American Society of Civil Engineers was formed in 1852 to advance the science and profession of engineering and to enhance the welfare of humanity.

This book has been written and published by the Orange County Branch of the Los Angeles Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers. This was done during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in honor of the civil engineering profession and to inform students and the general public of some of the activities of civil engineers. Fred J. Meier, Chairman of the History and Heritage Committee of the Orange County Branch, was the editor of this book.

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