

McLean County Museum of History

Portable Elevator Manufacturing Company Collection

Updated by
Summer 2020

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1902 - 2008
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

Brief History

The company was started in 1898, located at the corner of Grove and McClun streets in Bloomington. The White-Evans Manufacturing Company incorporated on July 10, 1902. On July 27, 1903, the name was changed to the Portable Elevator Manufacturing Company at a stockholders meeting with the following members present: William R. White, John F. White, G. W. Monroe, and G. B. Read, with Frank W. Aldrich being represented by proxy. The company manufactured a wide variety of soft drink vending machines and farm machinery, including five types of portable elevators, wagon boxes, truck hoists, cultivators, and chisel plows.

By 1963, Portable Elevator was the world's biggest independent manufacturer of portable grain elevators, distributing in the U. S. and Canada. Sales were more than \$2 million with a Bloomington workforce of 100. In 1967, Portable Elevator became part of Dynamics Corporation of America. Production in the Bloomington plant ended in 1985. The plant burned down in April 1989, just prior to its scheduled demolition.

Scope

The collection includes the minutes of directors' and stockholders' meetings from the company's inception through 1967, binders of stock certificates, miscellaneous correspondence, newspaper articles and ads, product catalogs, etc.

Book and Folder Inventory

Book 1: "U. S. Portable Elevator Co. - Organization Records"

Description: Bound book, dark green boards with red binding and corners, 8 x 10.5". In file folder. Contains the Certificate of Incorporation dated July 10, 1903, and articles and other information relating to forming the U. S. Portable Elevator Mfg Co.

Book 2: Untitled

Description: Dark green canvas boards with plain bound pages, 11.5 x 9". Contains drawings for pump base dated 11/1/45, some loose leaf, most bound.

Book 3: "Corporation Record"

Description: Black cloth boards with red leather corners and binding, bound, 14.25 x 8.5". Contains minutes of stockholders meeting of White-Evans Co., renamed Portable Elevator Manufacturing Company, from July 10, 1902, to December 1, 1942.

Book 4: Untitled

Description: Black boards with red binding and corners, 11.75 x 9.5". Contains minutes of directors' meetings, some loose leaf, dated February 12, 1943, to December 13, 1951, in reverse chronological order.

Book 5: Untitled

Description: Black boards, bound, 11.75 x 9". Contains minutes of directors' meetings from June 3, 1952, to December 19, 1955. Includes loose leaf copy of By-Laws, 13 pp, undated.

Book 6: Untitled

Description: Red boards bound, 11.75 x 9". Contains minutes of directors' meetings from March 21, 1956, to December 17, 1963.

Book 7: Untitled

Description: Black boards with red leather binding and corners, 15 x 8.75". Contains canceled stock certificates for Portable Elevator Manufacturing Co., dated July 13, 1953, to October 24, 1964.

Book 8: Untitled

Description: Black boards with red leather binding and corners, 15 x 8.75". Contains canceled stock certificates for Portable Elevator Manufacturing Co., dated November 25, 1964 to October 7, 1967.

Folder 1: White-Evans Mfg. Co.

- 1.1 Notice of special meeting of stockholders of White-Evans Mfg. Co., published in *Pantagraph* November 28-December 12, 1902.
- 1.2 Various proxy designations and permissions.
- 1.3 Notice of special meeting of directors, November 24, 1902.
- 1.4 Handwritten minutes of stockholders meeting, September 1, 1906.
- 1.5 Resolution to increase company stock.

Folder 2: Miscellaneous Company Correspondence

- 2.1 Minutes of special meeting of Board of Directors, November 13, 1934.
- 2.2 Miscellaneous notices of meetings, proxy permissions, mostly handwritten on slips of paper.
- 2.3 Authorization to negotiate with Frank Coatsworth for sale of Portable Elevator Mfg. Co., March 21, 1930 (two carbon copies) and notarization by Secretary.

Folder 3: Newspaper Articles

Pantagraph unless otherwise indicated

- 3.1 "Higher Court Decides Concrete Crib Patent," March 9, 1926, p. 13.
- 3.2 "Portable Expands to Make 3500 Grain Elevators this Year," February 13, 1949, p. 24.
- 3.3 "Portable Elevator Gets Signal To Start Peacetime Production," August 23, 1945, p. 3.
- 3.4 "Portable World's Biggest Independent Manufacturer of Portable Elevators," January 29, 1963 (part of "Progress Edition").
- 3.5 "Beer Nuts to clear elevator site," December 8, 1989, p. D2.
- 3.6 "Farmers once used local firm for portable elevators" ("Page from Our Past" column), September 28, 2008, p. B5.

Folder 4: Newspaper Ads

Pantagraph unless otherwise indicated

- 4.1 Little Giant, Harber Bros. Co., *Daily Bulletin*, October 24, 1910.
- 4.2 National Giant Farm Elevators, August 9, 1919, p. 18.
- 4.3 National Giants Farm Elevators, July 17, 1920, p. 4.
- 4.4 Little Giant, May 22, 1926, p. Eleven-B.
- 4.5 From McLean County Centennial (1930) program.
- 4.6 "Wanted At Once: Men for Steady Work," August 24, 1945, p. 6.
- 4.7 From *Pantagraph's* 100th anniversary issue, 1946 (original and photocopy).
- 4.8 Partial from January 29, 1963 Portable Elevator advertisement in the "Progress Edition."

Folder 5: Product Catalogs

- 5.1 Concrete-Ventilated Stave Corn Crib & Granary, ca. 1926.
- 5.2 "Little Giant Copper Bearing Galvanized Steel and Little Giant Wood Portable Farm Elevators" catalog, no date.
- 5.3 "Hog Killin' Days, Prize Recipes for Curing and Smoking Hams, Bacon, Sausages, Catalogue No. 37," no date.
- 5.4 "Granary and Crib Plans" booklet, no date.
- 5.5 Little Giant Elevators, Parts Book No. 7—Effective May 1, 1954, 45 pgs.
- 5.6 Little Giant "Compact" Elevator, Model 8-21, advertising flier, no date.

Folder 6: Miscellany

- 6.1 Sheet of eleven photographs, "Little Giant" restoration project by Raymond Mattox, Crete, IL. 2005 / 2006.
- 6.2 Image of factory from *Souvenir of Bloomington, Illinois* (1912).
- 6.3 Business ephemera, contract and order blank; bill of sale, 1938, 1 p. each.
- 6.4 *Pelco News*, April 1945, company monthly newsletter.
- 6.5 Outlook, October 1971, publication of the Association of Commerce and Industry (Portable Elevator "Firm of the Month.")
- 6.6 Email, Bloomington resident Richard Anderson to Roxanne Simonsen, July 10, 2009, re: color scheme of portable elevators.