

Inventory of the

Colehour Grain Elevator
Mt. Carroll, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 91

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Fred T. Colehour, President, deposited the Colehour Grain Elevator Records with the Regional History Center on March 26, 1980.

Property rights to the collection remain with Colehour Elevator, Inc.; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: .75
Number of containers: 2
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 91

SCOPE AND CONTENT

These records partially document the origin, growth, and business activities of Colehour Elevator, Incorporated of Mt. Carroll, Illinois during its first eighty years. Although many of the records of the first century of its operation appear to have been lost, this collection documents the financial development of the elevator quite well, especially during the 1895-1945 period. Of special note are the files relating to the impact of World Wars I and II on local grain dealers through federal government programs. Although the volume of the collection is not great, the information contained in these records is rich in detail and helps to trace the beginnings and growth of a typical, small, local agribusiness in the prairie grain belt of northern Illinois.

Researchers using this collection are advised that the Regional History Center holds other grain elevator collections which nicely complement this set of records: Lindenwood Grain Co-op (RC 11); T. C. Mighell and G. W. Wakefield Smithy, Grain, and Coal Company (RC 22); H. W. Colwill (RC 47).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

As the population increased in the northwestern region of Illinois during the mid-1800s, the need for grain proportionally multiplied. John Coleman, an enterprising young businessman, recognized this need and decided to open a grain elevator company in 1869. Today, Mr. Coleman's great-grandsons successfully continue to run the business he started over one hundred years ago.

Over the years, the Colehour grain elevator has gone through four generations of owners. John Coleman's son-in-law, Fred Henry Colehour came into the business during the late 1890s. Fred's sons, F. Theodore and C. R. (Jim) Colehour took over the elevator in 1933 naming it Colehour Brothers. Finally, C. R.'s sons, Fred and Richard became the owners, renamed the business, Colehour Elevator, Inc., and are still managing the enterprise today.

As the elevator company changed administratively, the business practices altered. When the elevator first opened it shipped wheat, corn, oats, and barley into the region. Since then soybeans have replaced the barley, and the grains are shipped out to other areas in the country.

In the early 1900s, when business slowed down during the summer months, Colehour's decided to sell dry cement, treated lumber, fencing, coal, and oil. Some of these products still are sold, but the main areas of business are grains, seeds, and fertilizer.

Colehour Elevator has survived more than administrative and product changes. The United States Food and Fuel Administrations imposed price controls during World War I and II with which the Colehour's readily complied. The Colehour's also established an on-the-job training program through the Veterans Administration in 1945. This program was in operation until 1950. Now in its 111th year, Colehour Elevator, Inc. continues to offer a wide variety of services to it's customers.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Coal trade
Colehour Grain Elevator
Grain
Mt. Carroll (Ill.)
World War I
World War I

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Day Book, 1869-1870
	2	Day Book, 1907
	3	Accounts Ledger, 1915-1932
	4	Day Book and Accounts Ledger, 1932-1933
	5	Record of R.R. Cars Shipped, 1911-1918; Refund Ledger, 1918-1919; Account Ledger, 1923-1929
	6	Personal, Business, and Community Account Ledger (includes Family Genealogy), 1884-1899
	7	Account Book, 1928-1939
2	1	Account Receipts, 1907-1931
	2	Loan Ledger Book, 1917-1921
	3	Correspondence, 1860-1874
	4	On-The-Job Training Program Establishment, 1946-1950
	5	Coal Contract, 1902
	6	Insurance Policies, 1891-1907
	7	Special Hazard Report, 1921
	8	U.S. Food and Fuel Administration Licenses and Price Regulations, 1917-1919, 1944
	9	U.S. Price Administration Awards, 1942, 1944
	10	Tax Receipts, 1864, 1885
	11	Club Certificate, 1888
	12	Newspaper Articles, 1923-1949
Oversize Drawer 18	5-6	Ledger, 1927 Mt. Carroll Map, 1894