

Inventory of the

J.F. Glidden
DeKalb, Illinois

Papers

In the
Regional History Center

RC 6

INTRODUCTION

The records of J.F. Glidden came to the Northern Illinois University Archives as part of the Waite W. Embree Collection in 1967. Mr. Embree, a local historian, had assembled these materials from a variety of sources. In January 1978, the University Archives transferred the collection to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center.

Property rights in the collection are held by the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 5.5
 Number of containers: 5 boxes + 3 volumes
 Northern Illinois Regional History Center
 Collection 6

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of J.F. Glidden primarily document the personal and business activities of Joseph Farwell Glidden during the years 1882-1906, and to a lesser degree, other Glidden family members, relatives and friends from 1885-1954. Additionally, there are small quantities of records from the Henderson and Olson Company, Lee, Illinois, which have as yet an undetermined relationship with J.F. Glidden and are included herewith. This collection does not contain any significant amount of material relating to Glidden barb wire.

The collection consists of seven series: J.F. Glidden Personal and Business Correspondence; Glidden House; J.F. Glidden's Non-Agriculture Business Interests; J.F. Glidden's Agricultural Business Activities; Bills and Receipts; Glidden Family Papers; and Henderson and Olson Company, Lee, Illinois.

Series I contains personal and business correspondence of J.F. Glidden from 1885 to 1906. Glidden House, Series II, documents the operations of the hotel from 1886 to 1912. Included are the bills and receipts of individuals or businesses, arranged alphabetically, who did business with the Glidden House. J.F. Glidden's non-agricultural business interests other than the Glidden House are contained in Series III while Series IV consists of J.F. Glidden's agricultural business activities. Agreements with farms/individual farmers are alphabetically arranged. Series V is arranged alphabetically and contains bills and receipts made out to J.F. Glidden. Series VI is comprised of Glidden Family papers, other than J.F. Glidden, and is arranged alphabetically. Business records from the Henderson and Olson Company, Lee, Illinois are included in Series VII.

Included with the collection are three bound account ledgers, 1896-1907, with name indexes, that relate to the Glidden Publishing Company.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Joseph Farwell Glidden (1813-1906) was born in New York and spent much of his early life on several of his father's farms. In 1842 Joseph and his brother, Josiah Willard, moved westward eventually reaching Mt. Morris, Illinois. In the winter of 1842-43, Joseph purchased 600 acres from his cousin near the village of DeKalb, Illinois, and this became the Glidden homestead.

Primarily interested in farming, Glidden spent the 1840's-1860's increasing his acreage and encouraging agricultural development. In 1851 he donated right of way privileges to the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad; in 1852 he was elected sheriff of DeKalb County; in 1863 and 1866 he was on the County Board of Supervisors.

Ending a long standing plague of the farmers, the free-ranging herd, Glidden perfected and patented a new, inexpensive barb wire fence in 1873. He formed a partnership with a local merchant, Issac Ellwood, and their business became an overnight success. Several years later Glidden sold his half of the business but not before becoming a wealthy man from his invention.

Glidden kept busy in the local community. In 1876 he built the Glidden house, a fancy hotel that featured shops on the main floor and rooms in the upper stories. In 1879, he and partner Clinton Rosette founded a newspaper, the DeKalb County Chronicle. In the early 1880's he was a partner with Henry B. Sanborn in a 250,000 acre ranch and cattle raising venture in the Texas panhandle. In the late 1880's he was head of several industrial mills in DeKalb. And in 1895, after the state legislature passed a bill creating a State Normal School at DeKalb, Glidden donated 64 acres of his land which formed the campus of the new school.

Inventor, farmer, businessman, community leader and politician, J.F. Glidden was a man of many talents. Although his interests helped found a university, start a newspaper, and run a hotel and a large Texas ranch, he is best remembered for his invention of barb wire. This latter invention deservedly gives Glidden a secure place in American history.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Barbed Wire
Bush, William
Draft horses- Percheron
Electric Industries
Glidden Family
Glidden, Joseph F.
Henderson and Olson Company
Lee (Ill.)
Livestock
Steel Industry
Wire Industry

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Series I. J.F. Glidden's Personal and Business Correspondence		
1	1	Genealogical Material, n.d.
	2	Biographical Arrangements
	3	Family Correspondence, 1886-1900
	4	Glidden Publishing Company, 1888-1911
	5	Letter from Clinton Rosette, n.d.
	6	William Bush Correspondence, 1886-1902
	7	Personal Business, 1881-1901
		Expenses:
	8	Legal Fees, 1892-1902
	9	County Clerk Fees, 1887-1899
	10	Water Tax, 1887-1905
	11	Sidewalk Assessment Fees, 1895-1905
	12	Charities, 1892-1904
	13	Cancelled Checks, 1865, 1887-1904
14	Patents and Inventions, 1885-1904	
Series II. Glidden House		
	15	Correspondence, 1886-1902
	16	Accounts, 1892-1900
	17	Cancelled Checks, 1903-1906
	18-26	Bills and Receipts, A-W, 1892-1906
2	1	Bills and Receipts, W-Z, 1896-1906
	2	Consignee Slips, 1893-1906
Series III. J.F. Glidden Non-agricultural Business Interests		
		DeKalb Roller Mills:
	3	Correspondence, 1893-1906
	4	Receipts, 1892-1902
	5	Glidden/Condon Steel Gate, 1893-1903
	6	Business Correspondence, 1882-1902
	7-8	J.F. Glidden Receipts, A-Z, 1883-1905
	9	Non Glidden Bills, 1892-1902
	10	Advertising, n.d.
Series IV. J.F. Glidden Agricultural Business Activities		
	11	Panhandle Ranch, Texas, 1886-1906
	12-13	Individual Agreements, 1892-1905
	14	Farm Agreements, 1885-1901
	15	American Percheron Cattle and Horse Breeding, 1892-1904
	16	Commodity Purchases, 1886-1913

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Series V. Bills and Receipts		
2	17	Receipts and Bills, A-C, 1886-1902
3	1-7	Receipts and Bills, D-Z, 1891-1906
	8	Damaged Documents, 1891-1906
Series VI. Glidden Family Papers		
	9	Annie Glidden, 1901-1903 Bertha Glidden:
	10	Speeches, 1917-1923
	11	Home Makers Convention, 1916-1957
	12	Economic Associations, 1911-1926
	13	Illinois Farmer's Institute, 1912-1923
	14	School of Domestic Art and Science, 1917-1934
	15	History of DeKalb Methodist Church, n.d.
	16	Ladies Aide Society, 1916-1932
	17	Methodist Church Papers, 1938-1954 John Glidden:
	18	Family Correspondences, 1896-1906
	19	Hinman Correspondence, 1897-1906
	20	DeKalb Electric Company, 1896-1906
	21	Building Correspondence and Blueprints, 1897-1906
	22	Business Correspondence, 1894-1907
	23	Loring Correspondence, 1893-1901
	24	Stock and Farm Correspondence, 1906
	25	Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1893-1907
4	1	Bills, 1892-1906
	2	Cancelled Checks, 1901-1906
	3	Mabel Carter Glidden, 1894-1906
	4	Nansen Glidden, 1914-1915
	5	George Gowery, 1901-1904
	6	Elisha and Emma Warne, 1885-1899

Series VII. Henderson and Olson Company, Lee, Illinois

7-8 Bills and Receipts, A-Z, 1912-1914

Included in this collection but housed in the Bradt Genealogical Reference section in the Reading Room is the following volume:

The Descendants of Charles Glidden of Portsmouth and Exeter, New Hampshire, comp. By G. Chamberlain; ed. By Lucia Glidden Strong, Boston, 1925, 1974.

ADDENDUM

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	5
4	9 10 11 12 13	Barb Wire Historical Marker Correspondence, 1952-1955 Early U.S. Barbed Wire Patents, n.d. Mass Meeting of the Citizens of DeKalb, 1903 Dr. Sherman Bonney-Utilites Syndicate, 1929-1930 Military Order Ledger, 1869	
5	1 envelope 1 volume 1 volume 1 box	J.F. Glidden's Birthday, 1903 J.F. Glidden Ledger, 1907-1908 Grocery Store Ledger, 1880s Glidden Publishing Co. Ledger Index to 3 oversize volumes	
Oversize	3 volumes	J.F.G. Publishing Company, 1896-1906	