

C Rocheport Roller Mills, Rocheport, Missouri, Records, 1882-1937
344 67 volumes on 10 rolls of microfilm

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INTRODUCTION

Records of the grain mill established in 1875, originally called Monitor Mills. It produced Tuberose and Snowflake flour, as well as meal, ship stuff, and bran.

DONOR INFORMATION

The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Mrs. George Harper on 1 February 1944 (Accession No. 88).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Monitor Mill was erected by Jeremiah W. Champion and Leopold Grossman, both early settlers in the Rocheport area. Little is known of its early years, but before May 1887 Champion seems to have left the partnership and Grossman had leased the operation to J.S. Sexton and someone named Wilson. Their newspaper advertisement for what was then called Rocheport Roller Mills noted that it had been “thoroughly remodeled” and that “an ample stock of Flour and Corn Meal [was available] at all times.” They also offered exchange on wheat and corn “on the most liberal terms” and free delivery to anyone in town. Champion obviously was interested in raising corn as he received a patent for a hand corn planter in May 1892.

By July 1893 Mr. Wilson’s name had been dropped from the advertisements and Sexton was listed as the sole proprietor. He billed his operation as manufacturer of “the celebrated Tuberose and Snowflake flour.” His ads in the local newspapers, the *Commercial* and the *Democrat*, remained basically the same until September 1905. At that time he described himself as “The Jolly Miller at Rocheport” and noted that he could also furnish mill feed, corn, baled hay, and coal. Additionally he would pay “spot cash” for grain and had plenty of wheat sacks.

In March 1906 Sexton’s Mill appears to have reached the fullest extent of its diversification. He advertised, “Am also a ‘Hay Seed,’ Own the Big Meadows, Shorthorn cattle a specialty, Will sell you a fancy horse or a span of mules. Keep fine Poultry as a side line. Have a row boat to loan and you can fish back of the mill and I will furnish the bait.”

Sexton, known as “Sep” according to a *University Missourian* obituary, died on 18 November 1920 of pneumonia at age 65. He had retired from the milling business around the time the 1906 ad was published. In addition to his milling business he was a director of the Peoples Bank of Rocheport, serving for a while as its vice president. He was not married.

It is not known who continued to operate the mill after his retirement, but when a boiler exploded on 31 March 1911, damaging the structure extensively, Mr. and Mrs. George Chapman were living in the upstairs quarters. They were shaken, but not

severely injured. Damage was listed at \$7000. The record books indicate that the business was in operation until at least 1937.

The other original owner, Leopold Grossman, had been born in Baden, Germany, on 15 November 1817 and came to Rocheport in 1844. In addition to being Democratic county committeeman on at least one occasion, he served as mayor and on the town council at various times.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records have been arranged into the following eight series: **Ledgers, Cashbooks, Order Books, Daybooks, Receipt Books, Wheat Exchange Books, Grain Shipment Records, and Wheat Books.**

These records offer a relatively complete view of farming in the Boonville/Rocheport area for the critical period leading up to the Great Depression. Yields can be studied through comparison of seed sales with production; quantities of land under cultivation can be vaguely ascertained; and lifestyles may be deduced from total dollar yields of crops during the period. These volumes contain a fairly complete list of farmers in the area.

A comparison of the mill's sales records with purchase records as evidenced in the order books, daybooks, and ledgers provides information concerning consumption of grain products by area residents. Records of feed grains purchased or handled through the wheat exchange give an indication of the number of livestock being fed, while coal sales records offer clues to the types of heating used in various parts of the community. Grain shipment records offer a partial record of yield capacity of area farms, and fiscal condition of the mill itself can be established.

More complete series descriptions are located in the folder list.

FOLDER LIST

Ledgers Series

- v. 1 4 January 1882-1 December 1885
- v. 2 12 November 1885-1 August 1887
- v. 3 1 January 1890-11 January 1896
- v. 4 6 July 1891-27 June 1894
- v. 5 1 July 1911-1 January 1913
- v. 6 1 January 1913-27 February 1917
- v. 7 27 February, 1917-17 August 1920

Cashbooks Series

- v. 8 c. 1910
- v. 9 4 May 1916-2 May 1922
- v. 10 1 May 1922-29 January 1936

Order Books Series

Orders for in-town delivery were recorded in these books. Those paid on delivery were so marked; others were then transferred into the daybooks, then to the ledgers.

- v. 11 20 September 1907-6 July 1908
- v. 12 7 July 1908-4 May 1909
- v. 13 8 May 1909-23 May 1910
- v. 14 28 December 1918-3 June 1919
- v. 15 4 June 1919-31 December 1919
- v. 16 20 December 1923-29 July 1924.
- v. 17 12 September 1925-4 June 1926
- v. 18 5 June 1926-1 July 1927
- v. 19 2 July 1927-14 February 1928
- v. 20 19 July 1928-27 April 1929

Daybooks Series

List daily credit sales of flour, meal, ship stuff, bran, and feed grain both to individuals and local merchants. Payments of cash and in-kind services are recorded, as are advertising and other expenses.

- v. 21 5 March 1907-23 September 1908
- v. 22 26 September 1908-7 May 1910
- v. 23 9 May 1910-10 May 1911
- v. 24 10 June 1911-4 January 1913
- v. 25 25 February 1912-23 October 1912
- v. 26 17 April 1916-23 February 1918
- v. 27 24 October 1918-2 July 1919
- v. 28 3 July 1919-11 September 1920
- v. 29 11 September 1920-11 January 1922
- v. 30 12 January 1922-3 November 1923
- v. 31 16 July 1923-20 December 1924
- v. 32 22 December 1924-22 August 1925
- v. 33 11 February 1928-16 April 1929
- v. 34 29 April 1929-22 November 1929
- v. 35 17 April 1929-13 June 1930
- v. 36 14 June 1930-13 May 1931
- v. 37 14 May 1931-9 November 1932
- v. 38 10 November 1932-4 May 1934
- v. 39 9 June 1936-17 July 1937

Receipt Books Series

- v. 40 29 January 1908-28 August 1908
- v. 41 27 July 1909-8 July 1911

Wheat Exchange Books Series

Records of wheat and corn stored at the mill to be drawn against for flour, meal, graham, bran, and other staples.

- v. 42 8 August 1887-9 July 1890
- v. 43 5 July 1890-16 July 1892
- v. 44 16 July 1892-28 June 1894
- v. 45 11 July 1907-2 July 1910
- v. 46 1 January 1913-7 July 1917

Grain Shipment Records Series

Records of grain shipment by rail from Rocheport for the period. Entries indicate individual farmer or partnership, date of shipment, name of line and car number, quantity and condition of the grain, and total payment to the grower.

- v. 47 1917-1924
- v. 48 1926-1927
- v. 49 1930-1932. Also contains orders for flour, meal and feed for January through July 1931: related to order books, volumes 11-20.
- v. 50 1934
- v. 51 1935

Wheat Books Series

Records of grain purchased from local farmers either for production of flour and meal or for resale and shipment. Entries indicate producer, quantities, condition of grain, and total proceeds. Some books also have shipping records related to volumes 47-51; those after 1925 contain records of coal sales.

- v. 52 1912
- v. 53 1913
- v. 54 1914
- v. 55 1917
- v. 56 1918
- v. 57 1919
- v. 58 1920
- v. 59 1921-1922
- v. 60 1922-1923
- v. 61 1923-1924
- v. 62 1924-1925
- v. 63 1926-1927
- v. 64 1927-1928
- v. 65 1929-1930
- v. 66 1931-1933
- v. 67 1936-1937

INDEX TERMS

Subject
Champion, Jeremiah W.
Corn
Farm life--Missouri
Farm produce
Farm produce--Prices
Flour mills
Freight and freightage
Grain
Grain--Prices
Grossman, Leopold (1817-)
Ledgers
Meal
Mills and millwork
Missouri, Boone County
Missouri, Rocheport
Monitor Mills, Rocheport, Missouri
Rocheport Roller Mills, Rocheport, Missouri
Sexton, J. S. (1855-1920)
Wheat Prices