

A Guide to the Page Milling Company Daybooks, 1955-1960 SC 0416

Page Milling Company daybooks
1955-1960



Title Statement

A Guide to the Page Milling Company Daybooks, 1955-1960 SC 0416

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0416

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/798

Unit Date

1955-1960

Language

English

Abstract

Two daybooks documenting the business activities of Page Milling Company in Luray, Virginia.

Creator

Page Milling Company (Luray, Va.)

source

Tim Abbott Americana

Extent

0.47 cubic feet 1 box

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

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Acquisition Information

Purchased from Tim Abbott Americana in August 2025.

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Administrative History

Located in Luray, Virginia, Page Milling Company was founded in 1902 and in operation until at least 1962. Originally known as Luray Mill and Elevator Company, the business was established by C. W. Carter in 1895 and sold to E. C. Harnsberger (1868-1939) in 1898. Harnsberger reincorporated the business as Page Milling Company in 1902. The mill had a 50-barrel daily capacity which increased to over 200 barrels per day. In 1929, after a three-month closure and renovation, the milling company's daily capacity increased to 300 barrels.

M. E. Roudabush (1892-1957) succeeded Harnsberger as president of Page Milling Company in 1938. H. H. Price (1915-2003) took over as company president in 1955, when the mill became a Federal Bonded Warehouse under the U. S. Warehouse Act. As of 1962, Page Milling Company employed fourteen employees and had a storage capacity of 187,000 bushels.

Robert Harnsberger (1906-2001), son of E. C. Harnsberger, is alleged to have invented the quick rising biscuit mix now known as Bisquick. Harnsberger purportedly sold his recipe to the Washburn-Crosby Company (later General Mills) in 1930 for an outright fee of \$15,000. However, the origin story of Bisquick, according to General Mills, attributes the product to Carl Smith, a General Mills salesman, who was introduced to a quick biscuit in 1930 while on a train ride to San Francisco.

Scope and Contents

Two daybooks documenting the business activities of Page Milling Company in Luray, Virginia. The daybooks detail the daily financial transactions of the company and include wheat and cornmeal sales, selling and delivery expenses, and other operating expenses.

While the name of the business is not documented in the daybooks, internal evidence (e.g. accounts at Page Valley National Bank and National Bank of Manassas; columns for wheat, cornmeal, mixed feed, truck drivers, and selling and delivery expenses; common Page County surnames and local business names listed) suggests the daybooks are from Page Milling Company. Furthermore, the names of people known to have worked at Page Milling Company, per their obituaries, are listed in the account entries as employees - Nelson Gochenour, J. Kenneth Campbell, and H. H. Price.

Related Materials

Keywords

Daybooks

Mills and mill-work -- Virginia -- Luray

Mills and mill-work -- Virginia -- Page County

Grain trade -- Virginia -- Luray

Grain trade -- Virginia -- Page County

Wheat -- Virginia -- Luray

Wheat -- Virginia -- Page County

Corn meal -- Virginia -- Luray

Corn meal -- Virginia -- Page County

Luray (Va.) -- History -- Economic conditions

Page County (Va.) -- History -- Economic conditions

Tim Abbott Americana

Description of Subordinate Components

Daybook

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/32441

Unit Date 1955-1957

Mixed Materials [1000925013] OV 1 (box)

Daybook

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/32442

Unit Date 1957-1960

Mixed Materials [1000925013] OV 1 (box)