

JAMES HANSEL NEATHERY PAPERS

Mss. 5014

Inventory

Compiled by
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Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

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CONTENTS OF INVENTORY

SUMMARY	3
BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE	4
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE	5
LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES	6
SERIES DESCRIPTION	7

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SUMMARY

Size	1.5 linear ft.
Geographic Locations	Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama
Inclusive Dates	1890-1974
Bulk Dates	1938-1964
Languages	English
Summary	The James Hansel Neathery Papers consists of scrapbooks, newsletters, notebooks, and photographs documenting his career in the sugarcane agricultural equipment industry and involvement in the Plaquemine religious and civic organizations.
Access Restrictions	None.
Reproduction Note	May be reproduced.
Copyright	Physical rights and copyright are retained by the LSU Libraries.
Citation	James Hansel Neathery Papers, Mss. 5014, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack Locations	T:99, OS:N

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

James Hansel "Hank" Neathery was born August 3, 1895 to James M. and Georgia W. (Hayes) Neathery of Van Alstyne, Tex. The Neatherys were originally from Kentucky but relocated to Pilot Grove, Tex., around 1873. James M. Neathery was in the pharmacist business and opened a drug store in downtown Van Alstyne in 1888. The Neatherys had four children: Clyde, who died in infancy, James Hansel "Hank," Lola, and Callie. After high school, Hank Neathery attended the Georgia School of Technology and began working in the tractor and farm equipment industry in 1917. He moved to Shreveport, La., in 1920 to manage the Wray Dickerson Ford dealership's tractor department. In 1924, he accepted a sales position at Thomson Machinery Company, Inc. in New Orleans, La. Neathery was a sales representative for Thomson in North Louisiana, where he resided in the City of Shreveport. Thomson Machinery relocated from New Orleans to Labadieville, La. in order to focus on the sugar cane industry. In 1933, he moved to Donaldsonville, La. Five years later, Neathery moved to Bayou Goula to establish the Cane Equipment Co., a division of Thomson Machinery Company, in nearby Plaquemine, where he remained for 36 years. A few years later, around 1942, Thomson Machinery began its relocation to Thibodaux, La.

Thomson Machinery was founded by Byron C. Thomson in 1918. Thomson's 1928 development of the first tractors specifically designed for cultivating and harvesting sugar cane (including the "Hurry-Cane" line) is credited with modernizing the sugar industry. Subsequent inventions and innovations (especially with Allis-Chalmers tractors and equipment) helped Thomson dominate the cane tractor market in Louisiana. By 1958, nearly 90% of the total cane harvested in Louisiana was completed with equipment from Thomson Machinery. During Neathery's tenure at Thomson, the company expanded sales operations beyond Louisiana to every sugar-producing region across the globe. By 1960, He was president of Cane Equipment Company of Plaquemine and New Roads, one of several companies under the Thomson banner that was then purchased by Lamb Industries, Inc. of Toledo, Ohio.

In 1927, Neathery was married to Willie Mae Mashaw (b. March 4, 1903) of Ruston, La. They had two sons, James "Jim" Byron (1931), who went into construction equipment, and William Hansel (1934) who went into tractor and farm equipment. The Neathery family initially lived on Tally Ho Plantation near Bayou Goula but moved to Plaquemine in 1952.

James Hansel Neathery was a member of the Plaquemine First Methodist Church and served as the president of the men's Bible class. He was also a member of the local Chamber of Commerce, Masonic Lodge and Rotary Club. Neathery was particularly active in the Plaquemine Rotary Club, which was organized October 21, 1931, and accepted into Rotary International November 11, 1931. He was a long time member and the club president from 1950-1951. He was also one of the founding members of the Deep South Farm and Power Equipment Association in 1945 and served as an officer. In

1963, after serving on the Board of Directors for fifteen years, he was made a Lifetime Director, the first honor of this kind in the organization's history. James Hansel Neathery died on August 30, 1964.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The James Hansel Neathery Papers consist of scrapbooks, newsletters, bound volumes, and photographs from approximately 1890-1974. The materials document Neathery's long-time employment in the tractor and farm implement industry, his involvement with the Plaquemine Rotary Club, and other civic and professional engagements.

LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES

Series I. Scrapbooks, 1890-1974.

Series II. Newsletters, 1961-1964.

Series III. Bound Volumes, 1929-1947.

Series IV. Photographs.

Subseries 1. Tractor and Equipment Photographs, ca. 1920-1958.

Subseries 2. Scrapbook Photographs, 1938-1963.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series I. Scrapbooks.

Arrangement Note: The scrapbooks were originally bound but were disassembled and rehoused to preserve the contents. Items that were interfiled within but not affixed to the scrapbook pages were housed in separate file folders and kept in the same container, except in the instances of photographs, which are included in another series. The separate file folders were arranged chronologically, as indicated in the Container List.

The J. H. Neathery Personal and Family Scrapbook consists of letters, greeting cards, newspaper clippings, and various printed items relating to his immediate and extended family. There are several items about Neathery's parents and their home in Van Alstyne, Tex., and handwritten notes listing Neathery family ancestors. The scrapbook also includes several love letters (mostly written on hotel stationery) from Neathery to his wife during their courtship and early years of marriage when he was a traveling equipment sales representative. Also of note are the documents relating to the purchase of the Neathery family home in Plaquemine in 1950 and the drafts of prayers and invocations that Neathery delivered at industry conventions in 1961 and 1963.

The J. H. Neathery Professional and Community Scrapbook consists of correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs (see Series IV), and various printed items documenting Neathery's professional career and community involvement. The materials primarily relate to Neathery's late career as president of Cane Equipment Co., his involvement with the Deep South Farm and Power Equipment Association, and relationship with Byron C. Thomson. There are a number of printed items relating to the Thomson Machinery Co. Sugarcane-O-Rama in 1963, which was a statewide gathering in recognition of Thomson's contribution to the sugar cane industry and included speeches by U.S. House Representatives Hale Boggs and Edwin Willis. This scrapbook also contains several older (1890-1920) pieces of correspondence and ephemera from A. Wilbert's Sons Lumber and Shingle Company in Plaquemine, which was one of Louisiana's largest sugar cane producers and one of Thomson's biggest clients. Of note are a poster from 1904 advertising a public meeting on race relations with Southern University founder Theophile T. Allain, and a collection of newspaper articles on civil rights protests and arrests in Plaquemine in 1963.

The Plaquemine Rotary Club Scrapbook consists of newspaper clippings, greeting cards, programs, and other printed items documenting local and national activities and membership. Of note are the bulletins and memorabilia from the Rotary International Golden Anniversary Conference in Chicago in 1955. It appears that the items relating to this conference were given to Neathery by an associate, but a letter from the Plaquemine Rotary Club written to Neathery's family shortly after his death identifies him as the creator of the scrapbook.

Series II. Newsletters.

This series consists entirely of *The Little Wheel* newsletter, which was the official bulletin of the Plaquemine Rotary Club. It includes a complete run of the publication from 1961-1964.

Series III. Bound Volumes.

The Bound Volumes consist of four pocket-sized notebooks from 1938-1947 and one McCormick-Deering Tractor Sales Manual from 1929. The notebooks contain business notes, sales figures, drawings, and other information.

Series IV. Photographs.

The Photographs are divided into two subseries based on how they were grouped within the collection prior to processing. The first subseries is the Tractor and Equipment Photographs and the second subseries is the Scrapbook Photographs.

Subseries 1. Tractor and Equipment Photographs.

The first subseries consists primarily of snapshots of tractors, planting and harvesting equipment, and other farm implements at work. These appear to be related to Neathery's work as a sales representative and executive at Thomson Machinery and Cane Equipment Co., particularly with Allis-Chalmers machinery that had been modified for sugar production. Most of the people in the photographs are unidentified, however several photograph groupings from this subseries were received within annotated envelopes, which have been retained and filed with each grouping. The early miscellaneous photographs (ca. 1920-1930) depict machinery and work crews at logging and construction sites in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Several of these have annotations on their backsides with dates and descriptions of the work being done. Of note in this subseries are photographs of German prisoners-of-war at a work camp near Donaldsonville, La.

Subseries 2. Scrapbook Photographs.

The second subseries consists of photographs and photograph groupings found interfiled within the scrapbooks described above. These photographs mostly depict Neathery's family, friends, and work associates at Thomson Machinery, Co. Of note are the snapshots of James and Georgia Neathery family home in Van Alstyne, Tex., and the heavily annotated photographs of the staff and administration at Thomson from the late 1950s. Each folder in this subseries indicates which scrapbook the photographs were housed in before processing.

INDEX TERMS

Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.

Terms	Series
A. Wilbert's Sons Lumber and Shingle Company, Inc. (Plaquemine, La.)	I
Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company	III-IV
Construction--Machinery--Louisiana	IV
Deep South Farm and Power Equipment Association	I-IV
Farm equipment	I-IV
Logging--Machinery--Louisiana	IV
Neathery family	I, IV
Neathery, James Hansel, 1895-1964	I-IV
Newsletters	II
Photographs	IV
Plaquemine (La.)	I-III
Prisoners of war--Germany	IV
Prisoners of war--Louisiana--Donaldsonville	IV
Race relations--Louisiana	I
Rotary Club (Plaquemine, La.)	I
Rotary International	I
Scrapbooks	I
Thomson, Byron C.	II-IV
Thomson Machinery Company, Inc. (Plaquemine, La.)	I-IV
Traction engines	II-IV
Van Alstyne (Tex.)	I, IV

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
			Series I. Scrapbooks, 1890-1974.
T:99	1	1	<i>J. H. Neathery personal and family scrapbook, 1925-1938.</i>
		2	Miscellaneous printed items, ca. 1890-1938.
		3	Loose newspaper clippings, ca. 1914-1939.
		4	Loose scrapbook correspondence, ca. 1927.
		5	Personal and family correspondence, 1927-1942.
		6	Aircraft Warning Service certificate, 1943.
		7	Neathery property purchase documents, 1949-1950.
		8	Invocation drafts and notes, 1961-1963.
		9	Financial and work correspondence, 1962.
		10	Van Alstyne Cemetery Foundation correspondence, 1963-1964.
	2	11	<i>J. H. Neathery professional and community scrapbook, 1908-1963</i>
		12	A. Wilbert's Sons Lumber and Shingle Company materials, 1890-1914.
OS:N		1	Theophile T. Allain public meeting poster, 1904.
T:99	2	13	Anti-sugar beet political cartoons, 1912.
		14	Freemason and church pamphlets, 1936, 1958, 1960.
		15	Professional and trade publications, 1940-1963.

<u>Stack</u>				
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
		16	Sales list and sugar cane photograph, 1941, 1945.	
		17	Loose newspaper clippings, 1941-1964.	
		18	Conference speeches and addresses, 1943, 1962, 1963.	
		19	Personal and professional correspondence, 1954-1963.	
OS:N		1	Plaquemine city map, 1956.	
T:99	2	20	Neathery credentials and certificates, 1957-1961.	
		21	Plaquemine civil rights protests news clippings, 1963.	
		22	DSFEA appointment correspondence, 1963.	
OS:N		1	Sugarcane-O-Rama collage poster, 1963.	
T:99	3	23	<i>Plaquemine Rotary Club scrapbook, 1953-1965.</i>	
		24	Rotary International Convention in Chicago, 1955.	
		25	District 202 Rotary Club conference in Baton Rouge, 1955.	
		26	Toronto <i>Telegram</i> Rotary Souvenir Edition, June 10, 1964.	
		27	Neathery "requiem" letter and bulletin, 1965.	
		28	Loose newspaper clippings, 1963-1974.	
			Series II. Newsletters, 1961-1964.	
		29-32	<i>The Little Wheel</i> , 1961-1964.	

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
			Series III. Bound Volumes, 1929-1947.
	4	33	McCormick-Deering Tractor Sales Manual, 1929.
		34	Business notebooks, 1938-1947 (4 volumes).
			Series IV. Photographs, ca. 1920-1963.
		35	Subseries 1. Tractor and Equipment Photographs, ca. 1920-1958.
		36	Miscellaneous logging, construction, and equipment, ca. 1920-1930.
		37	Neathery and sugar cane harvester, 1938.
		38	Field preparation using "grange disc" and plow, ca. 1938-1940.
		39	Sugar and corn planting preparation, ca. 1938-1940.
		40	Sugar cane loader and other tractor models, ca. 1940.
		41	Allis-Chalmers Model "B" tractor, 1938-1940.
		42	Allis-Chalmers "UC" model with double discs, 1940.
		43	Allis-Chalmers "WC" model with single disc, ca. 1940.
		44	Pre-delivery of Allis-Chalmers tractors, ca. 1940.
		45	Tractor and mower, 1939-1940.
		46	German POWs at Donaldsonville, ca. 1941.
		47	Cane Equipment Company in Plaquemine, 1958.
		48	Sub-soil operation at Lula Plantation, 1958.
		49	Potato digger, undated.

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
		50	Quarter drain machine, undated.
		51	Small tractor with disc and middle buster, undated.
		52	Sugar cane hoist, undated.
		53	Sugar cane stubble, undated.
		54	Three-way cultivator, undated.
			Subseries 2. Scrapbook Photographs, 1938-1963.
		55	Neathery family, 1938-1961.
		56	Cane Equipment Co. building pre-opening, 1946.
		57	Neathery property in Plaquemine, 1950.
		58	Plaquemine First Methodist Church, ca. 1953-1954.
		59	Miscellaneous Neathery, 1954-1961.
		60	Thomson Machinery Co. administration and staff, 1955-1960.
		61	Thomson dinner photo album, 1957.
		62	Byron C. Thomson, 1959.
		63	Thomson Machinery Co. open house, 1959.
		64	Neathery family home in Texas, ca. 1963.
		65	Sugarcane-O-Rama, 1963.