



Ellis and Tuttle Family Papers (C4763)

Collection Number: C4763

Collection Title: Ellis and Tuttle Family Papers

Dates: 1906-1973, 2019-2020

Creator: Ellis Family
Tuttle Family

Abstract: Papers consists of articles, correspondence, documents, and newspapers clippings, of members of the Ellis and Tuttle families, owners of the Woodland Farm in Prairie Home, Missouri.

Collection Size: 1.4 cubic feet
(29 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research but may be stored offsite. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at columbia@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number *Ellis-Tuttle Family Papers* (C4763); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia.

Donor Information: The records were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by William Ellis Tuttle Jr. on June 24, 2020 (Accession No. CA6576). Two additions were made by William Ellis Tuttle Jr on September 23, 2020, and November 16, 2020. A final addition was made by Susan G. Patton on May 21, 2025.

Processed by: Processed by Jonathan Phillips, October 3, 2025.

Historical Note:

The Ellis family started and operated Woodland Farm in Prairie Home, Missouri, in 1844. The farm operated commercially from 1844 to 1964, with the main draw of the business being its cured ham. This business was once of nationwide acclaim with many high-profile clients including Paramount Pictures, the Ford Motor Company, a number of officials and workers in the state and federal government, even including mentions of gifts to Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson and John F. Kennedy. The business no longer operates to this degree, ceasing commercial operations due to increased regulations in 1964.

After the marriage of Maria L. “Rylie” Ellis to Joseph Morton Tuttle in 1919, Woodland Farm began to operate under the Tuttle name by virtue of the marriage, though the same family effectively owned it.

Several of the family members served during World War II, with letters and documents primarily for Joseph Morton Tuttle Jr., born to Joseph M. Tuttle and “Rylie” Ellis on January 21, 1921, who served as a pilot in the U.S. Navy in the Pacific Theater, and who was shot down and confirmed killed in action on June 4th, 1942, at the age of 22.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 8 series:

Article
Correspondence
Documents
History
Ledger
Newspapers
Obituaries
Photos

Scope and Content Note:**Article**

This series contains an article in the 1944 edition of *American Life* magazine. This article goes over life on the farm, with all the hardships that came with it, over the previous century or so. This article was authored by Mrs. Rylie Ellis Tuttle, and ghost-written by Don Eddy.

Correspondence

This series contains correspondence between members of the Tuttle and Ellis families. The first set of correspondence is between the author of the *American Life* article, Mrs. Rylie Tuttle and their ghost writer, Don Eddy. These letters were written just before the article’s publication and go over some last-minute details regarding it.

The second set of correspondence covers letters of condolence from many people after the death of Joseph Morton Tuttle Jr. in June of 1942. These letters cover their experiences with Joseph and their sadness at his passing, followed by check-ups on the family. These letters continued to be sent until 1945.

The third set of correspondence covers all those letters related to the family's ham curing business. Most of these letters consist of both requests for ham and other pork products the farm produced, and letters of thanks and appreciation for the products. At one time, this business maintained nationwide acclaim, with orders and appreciation letters from places like the Ford Motor Company, Paramount Pictures, Missouri Government Officials, U.S. Government officials, and even contains a mention of a gift of a ham to then Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson with a suggestion to do the same for then President John F. Kennedy. These letters ranged from 1944 to 1967.

The fourth set of correspondence covers the 100th Anniversary of Woodland Farm. These letters congratulate the Tuttle family on their century of successful operation, often including personal stories of the place that their products have had in their family gatherings, business meetings, and other celebrations throughout the years.

The fifth set of correspondence consists of letters sent between Joseph Morton Tuttle Jr., who served in the U.S. Navy as a pilot during World War II, and his family and friends.

Documents

The documents series includes telephone numbers related to and used by those at Prairie Home and Woodland Farm, a client list of Woodland Farm, and miscellaneous documents related to the Tuttle family, including a list of Free Mason members, a funeral announcement for Samuel T. Ellis, various military documents related to Joseph M. Tuttle Jr., cards to be given out advertising the ham curing business, various menus in which the Woodland Farm products were served, copies of ham-curing recipes, a rotary club meeting document, medical and funeral bills for Joseph Morton Tuttle Sr., an advertisement for the Missouri State Fair in 1952, and a commencement address given for Camdenton High School in 1959.

History

The history of Woodland Farms stretches from 1820 all the way to 2019. This series contains papers from 2019 in celebration of the 175th Anniversary of Woodland Farm. These papers go over the history of the Farm and its related businesses since the very beginning.

Included is a booklet created by the donor William Ellis Tuttle Jr., which goes over the history of the land, as well as major events through the years, from 1820 to 2019. These events include the original establishment of the farm in 1844, the various births and deaths of those in the Tuttle family through the years, purchases, and additions to the farm and how much was spent.

Also included is a collection of newspaper articles, stories, and fables around Woodland Farm.

Ledger

This contains the business ledger of the Farmer's Telephone Company and lists information from 1906 to 1961.

Newspapers

Woodland Farms, and Morton Ellis by extension, was nationally famous for its pork products in general and its ham in particular. Many articles were written about and by Ellis surrounding the topic of pork products. Many of these articles detail the ongoing "war" between the different pork products across the country, as well as the winners of various contests which Morton Ellis took part in, often being acknowledged by the winners as tough competition.

Obituaries

This series contains various obituaries and mentions Joseph Morton Tuttle after his passing in June 1942.

Photos

This series contains two photos. One photo is of the Ellis Family in 1903, and the other is a rendering of the Woodland Farm.

Container List:

- f. 1 Article – American Life, 1944
- f. 2 Correspondence – American Life Authors, 1944
- f. 3 Correspondence – American Life Readers, 1943 – 1945
- f. 4 Correspondence – Condolences for Joseph Morton Tuttle Jr, 1942 – 1945
- f. 5 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, June 1944 – December 1955
- f. 6 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, 1956
- f. 7 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, 1957 – 1958
- f. 8 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, 1959
- f. 9 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, 1960
- f. 10 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, 1961 – 1964
- f. 11 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, January 1965 – June 1965
- f. 12 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, July 1965 – June 1967
- f. 13 Correspondence – Ham Curing Business, Miscellaneous
- f. 14 Correspondence – Miscellaneous
- f. 15 Correspondence – Woodland Farm 100th Anniversary
- f. 16 Correspondence – World War II, 1939 – August 1941
- f. 17 Correspondence – World War II, September 1941 – November 1941
- f. 18 Correspondence – World War II, December 1941 – February 1942
- f. 19 Correspondence – World War II, March 1942 – August 1942
- f. 20 Correspondence – World War II, September 1942 – July 1948
- f. 21 Correspondence – World War II, Miscellaneous
- f. 22 Documents – Miscellaneous
- f. 23 Documents – Prairie Home Telephone Information

- f. 24 Documents – Woodland Farm Client List
- f. 25 History – Woodland Farms, 1820-2019
- f. 26 Ledger – Farmer’s Telephone, 1906-1961
- f. 27 Newspapers
- f. 28 Obituaries – Joseph Morton Tuttle Jr, -1921-1942
- f. 29 Photos

Index:

Index Terms	Folder	Image
Ellis family	25, 27, 29	Yes
Farms—Cooper County, Missouri	29	Yes
Ham industry-Missouri	5-13	
Tuttle family	1-29	
Tuttle, Joseph M., 1921-1942	16-21, 28	
Tuttle, Morton, 1895-1969	27	
Tuttle, Rylie Ellis, 1896-1988	1, 25	
Woodland Farms—Cooper County (Mo.)	1, 15, 24-26	