



## **Powell Lumber Company Financial Records (R1536)**

**Collection Number:** R1536

**Collection Title:** Powell Lumber Company Records

**Dates:** 1892-1933, bulk 1920-1925

**Creator:** Powell Lumber Company

**Abstract:** The Powell Lumber Company Financial Records contain the expenditures, profits, client/customer lists, accounts, and inventories of the Powell Lumber Company in Phelps County.

**Collection Size:** 3 cubic feet  
(21 volumes, 3 oversize volumes)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society 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-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [rolla@shsmo.org](mailto:rolla@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Powell Lumber Company Records* (R1536); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

**Donor Information:** The records were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Dennis Peterman on August 6, 2024 (Accession No. RA1751).

**Processed by:** Processed by Evan Laurent (SHSMO intern), January 22, 2026

**Historical Note:**

The Powell Family began when William James Walbridge Powell, an English emigrant, married Sullivan, Missouri native Frances “Fannie” Martin in 1874 after the death of his first wife. Together they had at least nine children, Walbridge Henry (1879-1961), Frances Marie (1880-1959), Mollie Martin (1882-1901), Frank B. (1884-1949), Adele Sophie (1886-1969), Edith S. (1889-1970), Grace R. (1891-1963), Letitia Sybil (1893-1952), and William Clark (1896-1965). Powell purchased a newspaper company in Rolla and later started his own, the *New Era*. He was editor of the paper until his death from stomach cancer in 1897. Two of their sons started lumber companies in Missouri: Walbridge Henry of W. H. Powell Lumber Co. in St. James, Missouri, and Frank Bowman of Frank B. Powell Lumber Co. in Rolla, Missouri. A third son, William Clark, founded another lumber company in Texas. All three sons attended the Missouri School of Mines (now Missouri University of Science and Technology). Their mother managed real estate and leased property, as well as co-managing her sons’ businesses, until her death in 1932.

Walbridge Henry Powell was born in 1879 He married Ola V. Forester, daughter of John Jasper and Malinda Forester. In 1905, he founded a lumber company in St. James, Missouri with his father-in-law. They would go on to expand to St. Clair, Missouri. Frank Powell bought John Forester’s share at the St. Clair location in 1910, and Walbridge Powell bought his partner’s share at St. James that same year. Frank later sold his St. Clair share to his mother, and the brothers co-opened a location at Rolla in 1910. The company expanded until, by 1916, they had locations in St. James, St. Clair, Rolla, Newburg, Sullivan, Salem, and Union. That same year, Walbridge Powell sold the Rolla location to his brother Frank, which became the F. B. Powell Lumber Co, originally a subsidiary of the St. James location but thereafter an independent operation. Frank Powell died in 1949 of a heart condition. Walbridge and Ola’s children later managed the W.H. Powell Lumber business along with their parents, and had locations in Pacific, House Springs, Camdenton, Weldon Springs, Potosi, and Ironton. They also operated Powell Ranch, outside St. James, Missouri. Walbridge H. Powell died in 1961.

### **Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following 5 series:

- Customer Accounts and Balances
- Sales and Expenditures
- Supplies Inventory
- Financial Records
- Oversize

### **Scope and Content Note:**

#### **Customer Accounts and Balances**

The Customer Accounts and Balances series contains lists of customer accounts and balances for transaction for each volume’s respective time frames. The records date from 1896 to 1925 are arranged in chronological order.

#### **Sales and Expenditures**

The Sales and Expenditures ledgers contain daily transactions and profits organized date and customer. The records date from 1892 to 1922 and are arranged in chronological order.

## Supplies Inventory

The Supplies Inventory ledgers contain assessments of current inventory and value, taken twice in the respective years. The records date from 1924 to 1930 and are arranged in chronological order.

## Financial Records

The Miscellaneous Financial Records contain shipping costs and invoices, sales and expenditure tables with no date, and a receipt book for property leased by the Powell family. The records date from 1909 to 1933 and are arranged by subject.

## Oversize

The Oversize contain an account book of print suppliers for W. J. W. Powell's print company, a book of customer accounts and balances, and a book of sales and transaction organized by date. The records date from 1886-1925 and are arranged in chronological order.

## Container List:

### Customer Accounts and Balances

Box 001	v. 1	1896-1912
	v. 2	1917-1919
	v. 3	1917-1925
	v. 4	1920-1925

### Sales and Expenditures

Box 002	v. 5	1892-1893
	v. 6	1909-1910
	v. 7	1917-1921
	v. 8-9	1920-1921
	v. 10-11	1921-1922

### Supply Inventory and Value

Box 003	v. 12	1924-1925
	v. 13	1926
	v. 14	1927-1928
	v. 15	January, 1929
	v. 16	July, 1929
	v. 17	1930

## Financial Records

v. 18	Shipping costs and invoices, 1909-1910
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v. 19 Sales and expenditures by client January-July, no date  
 v. 20 Sales and expenditures by client November-February, no date  
 v. 21 Receipt book, 1930-1933

**Oversize**

Box 004 v. 22 W. J. Powell print suppliers and accounts, 1886-1891  
 Box 005 v. 23 Customer accounts and balances, 1913  
 Box 006 v. 24 Daily sales and transactions by date, 1925

**Index:**

<b>Index Term</b>	<b>Medium</b>
Missouri University of Science and Technology	v. 3, 5-7, 9, 19-20
Phelps County (Mo.)	v. 3, 7, 9
Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co.	v. 2-4, 18
Powell Lumber Company (Phelps County, Mo.)	v. 1-24
Powell, William J. W., 1850-1897	v. 22
Rolla (Mo.)	v. 2-3, 6-7, 9, 18-20
Standard Oil Co.	v. 2, 4