



## **Watkins Woolen Mill Oral History Project (K0826)**

**Collection Number:** K0826

**Collection Title:** Watkins Woolen Mill Oral History Project

**Dates:** 1934-1988

**Creator:** Potts, Louis

**Abstract:** The Watkins Woolen Mill Oral History Project collection contains correspondence, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and research concerning Watkins Woolen Mill and the Watkins Mill Association, as well as oral history interviews conducted with Lee Oberholtz, secretary and founding member of the Watkins Mill Association.

**Collection Size:** 0.16 cubic foot  
(7 folders, 2 cassette tapes)

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

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City](http://www.shsmo.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at [kansascity@shsmo.org](mailto:kansascity@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

**Restrictions on Use:** The Donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Watkins Woolen Mill Oral History Project* (K0826); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Kansas City].

**Donor Information:** The collection was donated to the University of Missouri by Louis Potts on February 19, 1988 (Accession No. KA0451). An addition was made on June 13, 1988 by Louis Potts (Accession No. KA0467).

**Processed by:** Processed by Whitney Heinzmann, October 2018

**Historical Note:**

Watkins Woolen Mill opened in 1860. The mill conducted a stable business selling cloth during the Civil War. In 1863, the factory expanded its carding, spinning, and weaving operations. In 1864, the factory and gristmill halted operation because of frequent raids by bushwhackers. Through the 1870s, the mill thrived, but by the mid-1880s, the woolen industry began to decline. The factory gradually reduced textile production until it closed in 1898. In 1905, all other operations, such as production of flour and cornmeal at the gristmill, ceased.

In 1958, the Watkins Mill Association was founded. The Association's mission is "to promote the Watkins Woolen Mill State Historic Site and to provide financial assistance for preservation projects carried out by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Division of State Parks."

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into seven folders.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The Watkins Woolen Mill Oral History Project collection contains correspondence, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and research concerning Watkins Woolen Mill and the Watkins Mill Association. Of special interest are cassette tapes with oral history interviews conducted in 1987 with Lee Oberholtz, secretary and founding member of the Watkins Mill Association.

**Container List:**

Box 001	f. 1	History, 1959-1983, no date
	f. 2	Correspondence, 1954-1988
	f. 3	Visitor Information, no date
	f. 4	Articles, 1934-1957, no date
	f. 5	Research Updates, 1988, no date
	f. 6	Research Paper, 1988
	f. 7	Cassette Tapes, 1987

**Index:**

Index Term	Folder
Oral history	7
Textiles	1-7
Watkins, Waltus L., 1806-1884	1
Watkins Woolen Mill State Historic Site (Lawson, Mo.)	1-7