

## Information Sheet

**R**      **Springfield Wagon Company.**  
**59**      **Records, 1873-1972 (bulk 1873-1907).**  
            **12 volumes and 50 folders.**

### **MICROFILM**

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

The Springfield Wagon Company was organized in 1872 by a group of businessmen and merchants in Springfield, Missouri. Near bankruptcy forced the reorganization of the company in 1875, at which time Homer F. Fellows, Norris W. Fellows, and Ezekiel Boyden began managing the firm. The new managers made improvements in the supply and sales departments, after which the company began to thrive in the fiercely competitive wagon market. However, the company was still in debt, and the Fellows brothers and Boyden became sole owners in late 1875 after a controversial lawsuit.

The "Springfield Wagon" was a durable, "premium" product. Because of cheaper freight rates on raw materials and finished products at Springfield, the company had an advantage over its nearest competitors. Beginning in southwestern Missouri and northeastern Arkansas, the Springfield Wagon Company expanded its markets to include Kansas, Indian Territory, and Texas. Despite stiff competition and a fire that destroyed the factory at Springfield in 1884, the Springfield Wagon Company was one of the dominant firms in the wagon trade by 1890. The company carried on a record business with the U.S. Army during World War I, and by 1925 it enjoyed a virtual monopoly as the other companies abandoned the wooden wagon trade. In order to cope with the steadily decreasing market, the company began to manufacture steel farm wagons and highway trailers in 1927. Based on the sales of those products, the company remained solvent through the Depression. In 1941 the Phipps Lumber Company of Fayetteville, Arkansas, a long-time supplier of hardwoods for wagon manufacture, bought the Springfield Wagon Company. Phipps continued to produce the Springfield Wagon until lack of demand brought an end to production in 1951.

The records of the Springfield Wagon Company are held by the Museum of the Ozarks, Inc., (now The History Museum for Springfield-Greene County) at Springfield, Missouri. In addition to various account books and ledgers, the collection includes forty-eight folders of correspondence received from traveling agents, dealers, suppliers, and customers. The correspondence is most useful for determining the parameters of the company's trade. It is most complete for Missouri, Arkansas, and Indian Territory, but a score of other states also are represented. The correspondence is arranged by state, location, and date, and a register has been filmed at the beginning of each folder.

The collection formed the basis of a master's thesis on the company by Steven L. Stepp in 1972. Stepp's research correspondence is especially useful for information about the company after 1900. It has been filmed following the company's records.

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*Museum of the Ozarks, Inc.*

*Loaned for microfilming*

### Shelf List

This collection consists of correspondence, ledgers, cash books, and catalogs from the Springfield Wagon Company of Springfield, Missouri, and Fayetteville, Arkansas, 1873-1941. There is also research correspondence, 1971-1972, of Steven Stepp in connection with his master's thesis on the company.

### **VOLUMES 1-12: ACCOUNT BOOKS**

Ledgers, cash books, time books, inventory ledgers, wagon order ledger, and bank deposit book, 1873-1901.

Volume 01:	Ledger, 1873-1879
Volume 02:	Ledger, 1882-1883
Volume 03:	Time book, 1875-1879
Volume 04:	Time book, 1876-1881
Volume 05:	Ledger, Inventory, 1880-1888
Volume 06:	Ledger, Inventory, 1889-1893
Volume 07:	Ledger, Wagon orders, 1893
Volume 08:	Cash book, 1883
Volume 09:	Cash book, 1884-1886
Volume 10:	Cash book, 1890-1891
Volume 11:	Cash book, 1900-1901
Volume 12:	Bank deposit book, 1910-1911

### **FOLDERS 1-14: ARKANSAS**

Correspondence, Arkansas, 1882-1893. Arranged chronologically by year, then alphabetically by point of origin.

Folder 01:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1882
Folder 02:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1883-1884
Folder 03:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1885
Folder 04:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1886, "A"-"L"
Folder 05:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1886, "M"-"Y"
Folder 06:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1887, "A"-"H"
Folder 07:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1887, "I"-"Y"
Folder 08:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1888, "A"-"F"
Folder 09:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1888, "G"-"P"
Folder 10:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1888, "R"-"Y"
Folder 11:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1889, "A"-"H"
Folder 12:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1889, "I"-"Y"
Folder 13:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1890, "B"-"Y"
Folder 14:	Correspondence, Arkansas, 1893, "B"-"W"

### **FOLDERS 15-32: MISSOURI**

Correspondence, Missouri, 1882-1907. Arranged chronologically by year, then alphabetically by point of origin.

Folder 15:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1882, "A"-"W"
Folder 16:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1883, "A"-"W"
Folder 17:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1884, "B"-"S"
Folder 18:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1885, "A"-"W"
Folder 19:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1886, "A"-"H"
Folder 20:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1886, "J"-"Sai"
Folder 21:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1886, "Sar"-"W"
Folder 22:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1887, "A"-"M"
Folder 23:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1887, "N"-"W"
Folder 24:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1888, "A"-"M"
Folder 25:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1888, "N"-"W"
Folder 26:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1889, "A"-"R"
Folder 27:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1889, "S"-"W"
Folder 28:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1890, "A"-"W"
Folder 29:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1891-1892
Folder 30:	Correspondence, Missouri, 1893, "A"-"P"

- Folder 31: Correspondence, Missouri, 1893, "R"-"W"  
Folder 32: Correspondence, Missouri, 1894-1907

**FOLDER 33: ILLINOIS**

- Folder 33: Correspondence, Illinois, 1882-1903

**FOLDERS 34-36: INDIAN TERRITORY**

- Folder 34: Correspondence, Indian Territory, 1882-1903, "A"-"K"  
Folder 35: Correspondence, Indian Territory, 1882-1903, "L"-"S"  
Folder 36: Correspondence, Indian Territory, 1882-1903, "T"-"W"

**FOLDERS 37-44: MISCELLANEOUS STATES**

- Folder 37: Correspondence, Indiana, 1882-1903  
Folder 38: Correspondence, Kansas, 1882-1906  
Folder 39: Correspondence, New York, 1882-1890  
Folder 40: Correspondence, Ohio, 1882-1890  
Folder 41: Correspondence, Pennsylvania, 1882-1890  
Folder 42: Correspondence, Tennessee, 1882-1888  
Folder 43: Correspondence, Texas, 1883-1893  
Folder 44: Correspondence, other states, 1883-1907

**FOLDERS 45-47: MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- Folder 45: Correspondence: Fragments, undated, no place of origin  
Folder 46: Correspondence, National Wagon Manufacturers' Association, 1893  
Folder 47: Commercial reports and credit ratings, Dun & Bradstreet Companies, 1883-1890

**FOLDERS 48-50: EXPENSE BOOK (1898); CATALOGS; STEPP CORRESPONDENCE, 1971-1972**

- Folder 48: Travel expense booklets, Homer F. McElhaney, 1898  
Folder 49: Catalog and price lists, ca. 1900-1941  
Folder 50: Correspondence of Steven L. Stepp, 1971-1972

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**Index Cards**

Bradstreet Mercantile Agency  
Business records—Arkansas  
Business records—Illinois  
Business records—Indian Territory  
Business records—Indiana  
Business records—Kansas  
Business records—Missouri  
Business records—New York  
Business records—Ohio  
Business records—Oklahoma  
Business records—Pennsylvania  
Business records—Texas  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Arkansas  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Illinois  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Indiana

Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Kansas  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Missouri  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—New York  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Ohio  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Oklahoma  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Pennsylvania  
Carriage manufacturers and dealers—Texas  
Faucett, Leon, Mrs.  
Fayetteville (Ark.)  
Greene County (Mo.)  
Kinney, H. M.  
Lee, Frank G.  
McElhaney, Homer Fellows  
McElhaney, Robert J.  
Mason, T. G., Mrs.  
Mercantile Agency of R. G. Dun & Company  
National Wagon Manufacturers' Association  
R. G. Dun and Company  
Springfield (Mo.)  
Springfield Manufacturing Company  
Springfield Wagon Company  
Stepp, Steven Lee  
Stice, B. F.  
Wagons