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#16 Clemens, Ira, Photograph Album, 1923
1 volume of 56 pages

INTRODUCTION

A collection of photographs, postcards, and notes compiled in 1923 by Ira Clemens. The materials concern mining communities and towns in Crawford and Cherokee Counties in Kansas and Mindenmines, Missouri. The photographs consist primarily of street scenes, churches, public buildings such as libraries and schools, recreational buildings and parks, and residences of miners. The notes typically define the physical location of the community, indicate the population characteristics, identify the major buildings, disclose bank holdings, and other features of the community.

DONOR INFORMATION

Unknown.

BIOLOGICAL SKETCH

Ira Clemens was born on October 27, 1873, in Ray County, Missouri. At age 9, he was forced to leave school and work in the mines around Weir City, Kansas. After low-paying, odd jobs that included wheeling ashes from engine rooms, working underground for 50 cents a day, and working as a brakeman for the Frisco Railroad for three years, Clemens returned to coal mining. He first established the Clemens & Son Coal Company and later organized the Clemens Coal Company. He sold his interests in these companies in 1930 then organized and managed the Commercial Fuel Company until his retirement in 1941. During his career in coal mining, Clemens held many distinguished positions. He was the Federal Production Manager for mines in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado. He was one of the original directors of the National Coal Association in which he served for 22 years. He was the first president of the Associated Industries of Kansas for three years. The American Mining and Metallurgical Engineers Society honored him with a degree for designing the first successful strip-mining shovel. In 1940 Clemens also received the doctor of laws degree from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, for his work in the fields of education and religion. Clemens chaired the construction committee that built an addition to Pittsburg's Mt. Carmel Hospital in 1918 and he chaired the committee that constructed St. Mary's High School in Pittsburg, Kansas in 1919. In a span of 17 years, Clemens financially helped nearly 100 students further their education. Ira Clemens died on August 24, 1943, at the age of 69.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Ira Clemens Photograph Album consists primarily of photographs, postcards, and notes compiled in 1923 by Ira Clemens. The album is arranged in its original order; alphabetical by community unless otherwise noted. The album pages have been placed into folders that are numbered consecutively. The album is in fragile condition and the photographs have been pasted to the album pages by rubber cement.

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