

**McLean County Museum of History**

**Wilcox Tile Factory Collection**

Processed by  
Carol Straka  
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**Collection Information**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1885-1969
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also Funk's Grove Wilcox Tile Factory Account Day Book 1918-33.  Gift of J.C. Wilcox/Nina & Wesley Wilcox Family of Worthington, OH, in 2000.

## **Brief History**

An Ohio native, John Wilcox (1858-1920) came to McLean County as a child. During adulthood he ran a sawmill and later a successful tile factory. Sons George and later Grant were also involved in the tile business.

The Funk's Grove Tile and Brick Company began in the 1880s, perhaps a successor to Hewett & Carr's tile works. It was situated in Funk's Grove Township about mid way between Funk's Grove and McLean. The company sold tile for farm drainage and at least for a while, tile for farm silos as well as some common brick. For most of its life it was known as "John Wilcox and Sons" and used a McLean mailing address. The factory closed shortly after WWII. The structures were later razed for the construction of Interstate 55.

The "Tile Factory School" was so named because it was located near the tile factory. Originally school District 8, it was renumbered to District 10 in 1902. In 1947, it was consolidated into McLean district and the schoolhouse was sold at auction the next year.

## **Scope**

The collection focuses on the tile factory business, the local school district and other miscellaneous. Newspaper articles, business correspondence and financial records, stock certificates, and more are included.

## **Box and Folder Inventory**

### **Tile Factory (folders 1-6)**

#### **Folder 1: Newspaper Articles**

- 1.1 "Think Home's Hot? It's 2,000 Degrees in Tile Factory," *Pantagraph*, 13 Aug 1938. Full page photo essay on Tile factory. Original plus photocopy.
- 1.2 George L. Wilcox obituary, *Pantagraph*, 11 Mar 1969.

#### **Folder 2: Silos**

- 2.1 "The Wilcox Curved Silo Brick," 15 pp booklet detailing the construction of silos from this brick plus offering testimonials, 1915. 2 copies.
- 2.2 Letter from Geo. Champion Jr. at Foosland, IL, to John Wilcox, 15 Jun 1914, requesting particulars on silo brick and construction.
- 2.3 Letter from Delos L. James, Mgr of Sinnissippi Farm in Oregon, IL, to John Wilcox & Sons, 5 Jun 1916, requesting further info on silo construction.
- 2.4 Letter from D.O. Thompson of Bloomington to John Wilcox, 28 Jun 1916, concerning building silo near Honey Creek, WI. Seal affixed to envelope publicizes "Trial the Tractors" event that coming August at Bloomington.

#### **Folder 3: Customer Accounts and Correspondence**

- 3.1 Blank account statement form, 1930s. 2 copies.
- 3.2 Cobb, Albert R. (tenant Morgan Moberly), Lexington, 1937, 1942. 3 items.
- 3.3 Ellington, I.M., Waynesville, IL, 1929.
- 3.4 Ewing, Charles A., Decatur. 1939.
- 3.5 Funk, Hazel E., Bloomington, 1926-31. 5 items.
- 3.6 Funk, L.P., Funk's Grove, 1923. 3 items.
- 3.7 Holmes, Hazel, Cambridge, MA, 1934, 40. 3 items
- 3.8 Kauffman, Arthur, Covel, 1928. 2 items.
- 3.9 Leach, Fred S., McLean, 1923. 2 items.
- 3.10 Martin, Henrietta B., Joliet, for farm near McLean, 1934. 2 items.
- 3.11 Nafzeiger, Archie, 1924.
- 3.12 Pitts, J. Joseph, 1930.
- 3.13 Reeves, E.D., McLean, 1928.
- 3.14 Starkey, Ida (tenant R. Reinhart), Clinton, 1940.
- 3.15 Swearingen, John, 1923.
- 3.16 Tibbetts, W.C., Bloomington, 1933-34. 2 items.
- 3.17 Weldon, Thos. S. and Dr. Behrendt, 1930.

#### **Folder 4: Stock Certificates and Land Deeds**

- 4.1 Photocopy of certificate No. 1 of Stock of Funk's Grove Tile & Brick Co, 55 shares: to Henry H. Hewitt 23 Jan 1885. Transferred to Phillip A. Karr by Harriet B. Hewitt (executor and sole legatee of Henry H. Hewitt's will), 3 Jul 1900. Transferred to John Wilcox, 26 Mar 1910.
- 4.2 Photocopy of certificate No. 2 of 30 shares of Funk's Grove Tile and Brick Company to Thomas J. Noble, 23 Jan 1885. Transferred to Mrs. Hattie B. Hewitt, 28 Jan 1885; transferred to Phillip A. Karr, 31 Jul 1900; transferred to John Wilcox, 26 Mar 1910.
- 4.3 Photocopy of certificate No. 3 of 15 shares of Funk's Grove Tile and Brick Company to Phillip A. Karr, 23 Jan 1885. Transferred to John Wilcox, 26 Mar 1910.
- 4.4 Photocopy of land deed: Funk's Grove Tile and Brick Company to Philip A. Karr of Funk's Grove, 9/16 of acre for \$ 39.40, 9 Jan 1889.
- 4.5 Photocopy of land deed: Phillip A. and Willie A. Karr of Bloomington to John Wilcox of Town of Funks Grove 3 small parcels of land near Funks Grove Tile and Brick Co land for \$1,100, 1 Aug 1891.

**Folder 5: Tile Factory Blueprints**

- 5.1 Four (4) blueprints related to Radiation Dryer, 1910-12.

**Folder 6: Tile Factory Miscellaneous**

- 6.1 Receipt for \$5 payment of loan, 1 Aug 1898.
- 6.2 Note payable for \$245, to Darnall & Spence, due July 1, 1915, dated 25 Mar 1915.
- 6.3 Bank deposit slip, National Bank of Bloomington, 24 Nov 1939.
- 6.4 Three(3) invoices: saw tools 1904, oil (1920), freight on coal (Alton Railroad, 1942).
- 6.5 Correspondence and statements from Springfield Drain Tile Co, Springfield, IL:
  - Correspondence about potential drain tile order, 8 Mar 1917.
  - Statement for drain tile, 30 Mar 1917.
  - Invoice for freight, etc., 7 Apr 1917.
  - Correspondence sharing price lists for drain and building tile, 12 Jun 1917.
- 6.6 Account statement summary, Warren C. Darnall, land and loan broker, Bloomington, 1928.
- 6.7 Ledger papers with resources and liability summaries for customers, etc., undated. 2 pp.
- 6.8 Unused form from Illinois State Geological Survey for reporting 1938 production of "Clay Products and Other Refractories." 2 p.

**Other (folders 7-9)**

**Folder 7: School District**

- 7.1 Copy of petition to form new school district, undated.
- 7.2 Invoice to School Dist. #10 from H.H. Tompkins for hardware, 6 Nov 1916.
- 7.3 Certification that no teacher in Dist. 10 came under the Illinois pension law provision for year ending June 1918.
- 7.4 "General Information for School Officers" covering new school laws, undated. 8 pp.

**Folder 8: Kansas Documents**

- 8.1 Twenty-four (24) cancelled checks of John Wilcox on The Marion Bank, Florence, KS, 1887-88.
- 8.2 Land deed: George M. Wilcox to John Wilcox, both of Marion, KS, 1/8 of a section in KS for \$800, Sept 1887.
- 8.3 Land deed: John T. Wilcox of Marion, KS to Topeka to Florence Land, Lot and Development Company, two city lots for \$200 to be paid in \$10 monthly installments, 1 Dec 1887.
- 8.4 Handwritten from J. Wilcox note substituting for a personal check, 12 Dec 1887.

**Folder 9: Miscellaneous**

- 9.1 IOOF District Meeting notice at Bloomington Lodge 400, 16 Oct 1931.
- 9.2 The Odd Fellow Special: subscription order form for Illinois IOOF magazine.
- 9.3 Sample Official Ballot for the Annual Town Meeting of the Town of Funk's Grove, 4 Apr 1916. Geo. L. Wilcox, Town Clerk.
- 9.4 First part of letter to "Sister (Jen) & All" from Peoria, 26 Apr 1896.
- 9.5 Most of letter from Claude Wilcox at Williamstown, OH, to brother, 5 Mar 1934, concerning power of attorney for Joh Wilcox & Sons Co and corn hog contracts.
- 9.6 Four invoices to Lou Wilcox at McLean from blacksmith (3) and one from veterinarian for cows, 1926-29.
- 9.7 Correspondence from Bondholders' Protective Committee of Chicago regarding the Leader Store Building bonds, 1929 & 1933. 2 items.
- 9.8 Museum gift agreement, 2000.

**Loose Items (3):**

**School District record for District 8, Twp 22.** Minutes, teacher contracts, clerk's reports, tax certificate, lists of school officers, expense records, directors' annual reports, 1894-1902.

**Wilcox Tile cash book, 1924-32.**

**Accounts receivable ledger for tile business, 1918-30**