

**McLean County Museum of History**

**Dairies Collection**

Processed by  
Jana Kiefer  
Summer 2023

**Collection Information**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1857-2021
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: Collections: - Prince Coll., Dillman Correspondence; - Exhibit-Mfg Coll., Larry Yeast interview; - Mason Family Coll., Dairyman's Journal article; Library: - "Souvenir program: Farmers Creamery" Company, Bloomington, Illinois; - "A Laesch family story" - "Prairie Farms Dairy: 75 years of blue-ribbon tradition 1938-2013"

## Brief History

Bloomington-Normal has been home to family dairies that delivered milk to customers since the mid-1800s. In 1920, McLean County boasted more than 4,000 dairy farms and 26,000 cows. Horse-drawn delivery wagons were a familiar early morning site on city streets with the well-trained horse stopping at the correct customers' houses without direction from the delivery driver. Progress in the industry and the changing economy eventually whittled the number of independent dairies down to a few businesses, with some still active.

## Scope

This collection spans roughly 170 years of dairy farming, processing, and delivery in Bloomington-Normal. Advertising plays a major role in this collection. Various dairies advertise their wholesome milk, creamy ice creams, high quality butter, and other dairy products. The evolution of milk packaging, homogenization, and distribution is also noted. Two personal recollections of dairies in McLean County are included in the collection as is information on Bloomington ice cream saloons.

## Box and Folder Inventory

### Folder 1: General

- 1.1 "100 Years of McLean County Dairying," photocopy of Don Meyer column, *The Normalite*, July 22, 2021. Includes general history plus briefs on 11 local dairies.
- 1.2 "It's Time to 'Say Cheese!'" photocopy of Don Meyer column, *The Normalite*, August 5, 2021. General history plus briefs on 5 local cheese makers (Gridley, Colfax, Farmer City, Minonk, and Ropp Jersey Cheese).

### Folder 2: Lemman Dairy

- 2.1 "Alpha and Omega of Bloomington Dairy," typescript by Marjorie I. Ringo, circa 1985, 9 pp.
- 2.2 Version of 2.1, Marjorie I. Rehker Ringo, *Gleanings*, MCHS publication, Winter 2024, pp. 6-11.
- 2.3 "Due to increased costs, new prices effective July 1, 1941," price card for Lemman Dairy, (2 copies).

### Folder 3: Bevan's Dairy

- 3.1 Photocopy of ad "Steve Bevan's Tutti Fruitti Ice Cream," and Bloomington Ice Cream Companies "Special For Sunday Fig Marmalade," *Pantagraph*, October 20, 1923, (2 copies).
- 3.2 "Serve Bevan's Old-Fashioned Ice Cream," and "Pease's Weekend Special," photocopies of ads, *Pantagraph*, November 1, 1924.
- 3.3 "Finish Your Sunday Dinner With Bevan's Ice Cream," photocopy of ad, *Pantagraph*, January 15, 1927.
- 3.4 "Pure Milk, Bevan's Dairy & Ice Cream Co.," photocopy of ad, *Bloomington City Directory*, 1930-1931.

- 3.5 "Harry H. Bevan, Owner of Dairy Company, Dies," newsclip, *Pantagraph*, January 24, 1943.
- 3.6 "City Directory Search for H. H. Bevan Dairy," compiled by Milan Jackson, October 26, 2012.

**Folder 4: Bloomington Ice Cream Company**

- 4.1 "Special for Sunday Caramel Nut Ice Cream," photocopy of ad for Bloomington Ice Cream Co., *Pantagraph*, January 15, 1927.
- 4.2 "Baltimore Oysters," Bloomington Ice Cream Co., photocopy of ad, *Pantagraph and Bulletin*, December 10, 1927.
- 4.3 "Chop Suey Ice Cream," Bloomington Ice Cream Co., photocopy of ad, *Pantagraph*, January 14, 1928.
- 4.4 "Sunday Special, Fresh Strawberry Ice Cream," photocopy of ad, Bloomington Ice Cream Co., *Pantagraph*, May 26, 1928.
- 4.5 "As a Mother and a Hostess I Never Worry," photocopy of ad, Bloomington Ice Cream Co., *Pantagraph*, August 26, 1930.
- 4.6 "City Directory Search for Bloomington Ice Cream Co.," compiled by Milan Jackson, August 8, 2013.

**Folder 5: Corn Belt Creamery Company**

- 5.1 Photocopy of ad for "Corn Belt Creamery," *Pantagraph*, May 20, 1911.
- 5.2 Photocopy of ad for "The Pioneer Creamery Company, Successor to Corn Belt Creamery Company," and "The Kodak Store," *Bloomington City Directory*, 1920.
- 5.3 "Corn Belt Creamery" advertisement among other businesses on a sheet that may have been part of a program book, n.d.
- 5.4 "City Directory Search for Corn Belt Creamery and Pioneer Creamery," compiled by Milan Jackson, February 14, 2013.

**Folder 6: Farmers Creamery Company (later Prairie Farms Creamery)**

- 6.1 Farmers Creamery Company 11th Annual Report, 1941, 16 pp.
- 6.2 13th Annual Report, 1944, 16 pp.
- 6.3 14th Annual Report, 1945, 16 pp.
- 6.4 15th Annual Report, 1946, 16 pp.
- 6.5 "Farmers Creamery Company," advertisement from McLean County Fair Program Booklet, 1933 (copy).
- 6.6 "Cash for Cream and a Dividend," advertisement from *McLean County Farm and Home Bureau News*, December 1933 (copy from scan).
- 6.7 "Congratulations to the Happy Hour Stores on Your 10th Anniversary," advertisement, *Pantagraph*, May 17, 1939.
- 6.8 Advertisement (Prairie Farms butter), *Pantagraph*, January 1, 1942.
- 6.9 Advertisement (Prairie Farms butter), *Pantagraph*, January 1, 1944.
- 6.10 Advertisement, *Pantagraph*, May 8, 1945.
- 6.11 Advertisement from Bloomington Centennial 1850-1950 Souvenir Program, September 17, 1950. (2 copies).
- 6.12 Farmers Creamery Patron Statements to different patron farmers, 1934-1943, 14 items.

- 6.13 "Farmers Creamery Company," Souvenir Program Booklet celebrating dedication of new building, August 2, 1941, 16 pp.
- 6.14 Envelope addressed to Prairie Farms Creamery at 103 North Robinson Street, nd.
- 6.15 "Prairie Farms Producer" Newsletter, March 1951, 2 pp., double sided.
- 6.16 "Prairie Farms Producer" Newsletter, January 1952, 2 pp., double sided.
- 6.17 "Name is Changed," regarding Farmers Creamery Company becoming Prairie Farms Creamery, *Pantagraph*, December 1945.
- 6.18 Advertisement, Bloomington High School yearbook, 1969.

**Folder 7: Ice Cream Saloons and Manufacturers**

- 7.1 "And They All Played Ball," Advertising card produced by Arnold Bros. Company, n.d.
- 7.2 "New Advertisements. Wood's Ice Cream Saloons!," photocopy of ad, *Pantagraph*, May 23, 1857
- 7.3 "Wood's Ice Cream Saloon," photocopy of news item, *Pantagraph*, May 23, 1857.
- 7.4 "Arnold Brothers," photocopy news article, *The Pantagraph*, June 17, 1911.
- 7.5 "Retired Auto Dealer Dies; Ill One Week," photocopy news article, *Pantagraph*, July 4, 1941. Alfred S. Arnold obituary.
- 7.6 "Ice Cream Wagon No Modern Invention," photocopy of news item, *The Pantagraph*, May 27, 1951. (Operated by J.S. Thomas and Jas W. Moore.)
- 7.7 "Remember," photocopy of news item, *Pantagraph*, September 27, 1979. Arnold Bros. Ice Cream.
- 7.8 "City Directory Search for Ice Cream Saloons and Manufacturers," 1868-2012, compiled by Milan Jackson. 15pp.

**Folder 8: Laesch Dairy Company**

- 8.1 Photocopy of Frank Laesch Family Tree includes photocopy page from Laesch Family bible, August 2, 1982, (2 copies).
- 8.2 Photo ad for Laesch Dairy featuring dairy building and delivery trucks in 1952 *AEPIX*, Bloomington High School yearbook.
- 8.3 "Enjoy Laesch Dairy Egg Nog," newspaper ad, *Pantagraph*, November 25, 1963.
- 8.4 "Your Health is Our Concern" ad in *Normalite*, April 10, 1964
- 8.5 "Laesch Dairy Co. 1907-1968," full page advertisement, *Pantagraph*, January 30, 1968.
- 8.6 Advertisement, coupon, 10 cents off orange juice, *Pantagraph*, April 24, 1968.
- 8.7 Advertisement, soft-freeze, *Pantagraph*, May 17, 1968.
- 8.8 Letter from Laesch Dairy Office Manager to Floyd M. Partridge about health insurance rider, July 29, 1969, includes envelope.
- 8.9 Laesch Dairy Specials Flyers, December 1973 – November 1974, April and August missing, 10 pp.
- 8.10 Page from Program for "Barber Shop for all Seasons," show, Barber Shoppers show, with Laesch Dairy ad, February 1977.
- 8.11 Ad for Birckelbaw's Apple Cider from Laesch, *Saybrook Gazette*, October 5, 1977.
- 8.12 "The 'new look' in milk," about new Merlon polycarbonate returnable bottles, flyer, December 1979.
- 8.13 Price list for Laesch Dairy Co., January 1, 1983.
- 8.14 Letter to Employees from Dennis (Gieseke) stressing the importance of consistent portions, includes instruction list for ice cream specialties, Spring, 1983, 5 pp.

- 8.15 Letter from Daniel Laesch to Judy Markowitz at WJBC Radio outlining dairies he remembered from his youth, September 28, 1984, 2pp.
- 8.16 "First-time author pens history of Laesch Dairy in support of ALS; book signing planned for Aug. 7, *The Normalite*, August 5, 2021.
- 8.17 "A Laesch Family Story," color paper notice of book signing at the McLean County Museum of History's Farmers' Market Booth, circa 2021.
- 8.18 Card with large L and "Laesch Dairy Co., Bloomington, Illinois" printed on it, n.d.
- 8.19 "Order for Today," pad of customer order forms, 15 identical pages, n.d.
- 8.20 List of newspaper articles showing date, identification of image, and publication where found, June 25, 1982, 3 double-sided pages.
- 8.21 City Directory search for Laesch Dairy Stores, shows various locations and dates occupied, February 17, 2017.
- 8.22 Laesch Dairy Barn sale ad, *Vidette*, October 13, 1982.
- 8.23 Ad "Thank you..." about grand opening weekend, January 25, 1973.

**Folder 9: Normal Sanitary Dairy**

- 9.1 "Announcing...An Improved Service at No Increased Cost to You! Normal Sanitary Dairy," photocopy of newspaper ad, *Normalite*, June 19, 1936.
- 9.2 "Laboratory Tested!" Normal Sanitary Dairy ad in Purple and Gold Pictorial, Bloomington High School, 1941.
- 9.3 Ad for The Normal Sanitary Dairy from AEPIX, Bloomington Highschool Yearbook, 1942.
- 9.4 "Pasteurized Dairy Products," advertising in *Bloomington & Normal Classified Telephone Directory*, Normal Sanitary Dairy and Meadow Gold dairy products, Snow & Palmer, winter, 1945-46.
- 9.5 "Normal Sanitary Dairy Ice Cream," advertisement from AEPIX, Bloomington High School Yearbook, 1950.
- 9.6 "Normal Sanitary Dairy Butterscotch Twirl Ice Cream," advertisement, *Pantagraph*, January 1, 1954.
- 9.7 "The Historic Farm with Four Names," photocopy of Don Meyer column in *Normalite*, Sept 1, 2022. Covers Walter D. Alexander's daily enterprise at Alexander Acres and sales via Normal Sanitary Dairy of which Alexander was president.

**Folder 10: Snow & Palmer Company**

- 10.1 Letter from Snow & Palmer Company to customers explaining the reasons behind pasteurization, January 24, 1922.
- 10.2 "S & P" Brick Ice Cream, advertisement, *Pantagraph*, July 6, 1917.
- 10.3 "Milk," advertisement in *Kinloch-Bloomington Telephone Company Directory*, March 1918.
- 10.4 "Quality in Milk safety," photocopy of ad, *Daily Bulletin*, March 31, 1918.
- 10.5 "Quality in Milk Keeping Quality, photocopy of ad, *Pantagraph*, April 3, 1918.
- 10.6 "Resist the Flu," advertisement *Daily Bulletin*, October 27, 1918.
- 10.7 "Ice Cream for Sunday," advertisement, *Pantagraph*, September 5, 1919.
- 10.8 "Ice Cream for Sunday, Harlequin Brick," photocopy of advertisement, *Pantagraph*, November 13, 1919.

- 10.9 "More Than Just Something to Drink," photocopy of advertisement, *Pantagraph*, May 11, 1920.
- 10.10 "Of Constant, Dependable Quality PURE—CLEAN—WHOLESOME," photocopy of advertisement, *Pantagraph*, July 17, 1920.
- 10.11 "A Big Glass of Cold Snow & Palmer Co's Milk," photocopy of advertisement, *Pantagraph*, July 24, 1920.
- 10.12 "Choc-o-Lac, Enjoy a bottle of this nutritious drink every day," *Daily Bulletin*, May 27, 1927.
- 10.13 "For Forty Years AND NOW Leaders," photocopy of advertising in 1930 Centennial Edition, *Pantagraph*, August 26, 1930.
- 10.14 "Sixty Years of Dairy Service," advertisement from souvenir program, McLean County Centennial, published by Lang-Fuller Printing Company, August 27-30, 1930.
- 10.15 "AN EXTRA MEASURE OF SERVICE," advertisement for Snow & Palmer – Meadow Gold, *Daily Pantagraph*, April 27, 1935.
- 10.16 "Snow & Palmer," photocopy of advertisement from Progress Edition, *Pantagraph*, 1930, (2 copies).
- 10.17 "Snow & Palmer," original advertisement from Progress Edition, *Pantagraph*, 1930.
- 10.18 "W. D. Snow Dies; Dairy Pioneer," photocopy of obituary, *Pantagraph*, January 28, 1941.
- 10.19 "National Defense Needs National Health," advertisement from "Year in Pictures," *Pantagraph*, January 1, 1942,
- 10.20 Photocopy of Snow & Palmer advertisements from the Bloomington-Normal Newcomer's Club, 3 pp. December 1944.
- 10.21 Dixie Cream-Pak, cardboard seal for ice cream cup, n.d.

**Folder 11: Little Boss Dairy**

- 11.1 Photocopy of newspaper advertisement, "Featuring 2 of the Little Boss'es, Jerry & Judy Alvery, Drako-Sealed Milk," *McLean County Courier*, April 28, 1950.
- 11.2 Photocopy of newspaper advertisement, "What is Yogurt?" *McLean County Courier*, March 21, 1951.
- 11.3 Photocopy of advertisement "Protect Your Children's Health," *McLean County Courier*, September 29, 1949.
- 11.4 Photocopy of advertisement, "Durco Sealed Milk, We Specialize in Cottage Cheese," *McLean County Courier*, September 15, 1950.

**Folder 12: Miscellaneous**

- 12.1 Price card for M.L. Hastings Guernsey Dairy, n.d.
- 12.2 Booklet, "Eat Ice Cream," Illinois Department of Agriculture, 1920s, with list of members, Illinois Association of Ice Cream Manufacturers (includes Bloomington Ice Cream Co. and Snow & Palmer Co.), 1 sheet.
- 12.3 Reference to Mt. Hope Township as "the center of the chief dairying industry of McLean County ...." From *History of McLean County* by Jacob L. Hasbrouck, 1924, pp. 112-113.
- 12.4 Beatrice Foods Co. / Meadow Gold dairy products order form, ? / 13 / 1963 (copy), original in Brokaw Hospital Collection.

