

# Missouri State Archives

## Finding Aid [998.263]

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### MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

#### Mid-Continent Iron Company Photograph Collection

*Abstract:* Images and an excerpted history of the Mid-Continent Iron Company located in Carter County.

*Extent:* 12 negatives and 2 paper items

*Physical Description:* Negatives; Paper

*Location:* Missouri State Archives; Stacks

### ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

*Alternative Formats:* TIFs of the photographs

*Access Restrictions:* None

*Publication Restrictions:* Standard copyright rules apply

*Preferred Citation:* [item description], [date]; *Mid-Continent Iron Company Photograph Collection*, Record Group 998.263; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

*Acquisition Information:* Gift with deed; Accession #1998-0089

*Processing Information:* Processing completed by EW on 04/19/2017. Updated by EW on 03/24/2021.

### HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

*Quoted from Murphy's dissertation:*

“In 1917 Frank Larabee of Kansas City formed the Mid Continent Iron Company, and built a smelter on Pike Creek north of Fremont in Carter County. The plant, which had a capacity of 100 tons of pig iron per day, began operating in November, 1918, and shipped its production to steel foundries. A town called Midco, including 200 houses built by the company, grew up at the mill, and at its peak had a population of 2,000. The nearby forests were clear-cut to supply the

furnaces with charcoal. As part of World War production, the United States Government had the company construct a chemical plant to recover wood alcohol and calcium acetate from the wood being burned for charcoal. The government invested \$1,400,000, or 60 percent of the cost, in this project, which was sold to the iron company after the war. The entire project closed down in 1921 and Midco became a ghost town.”

Murphy, James Lee. A History of the Southeastern Ozark Region of Missouri: A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Saint Louis University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. 1982: 215-216.

## ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

### Related Collections

MS265 Katy Duckett Photograph Collection  
MS380 Lynn Morrow Collection  
MS465 US Forest Service Photographs  
MS468 Ozark National Scenic Riverways Photograph Collection  
RG110 Department of Natural Resources  
RG771 Little River Drainage District

### Additional External Resources

The State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia maintains the following collections:

[#C3966 An Interview with Andrew McDowell](#)

[#R306 Midco Mercantile Company Coupon Book, ca. 1920](#)

[#R485 Mark Twain National Forest \(Mo.\) Historical Photographs, ca. 1900-1985](#)

## SERIES

Photographs (1918-1942)

Documents (1982-1997)

## PHOTOGRAPHS, 1918-1942

*Arrangement:* None

### Scope and Content

These are 4x5 copy negatives made by Wright Studio sometime between 1995 and 1997. They were made from original photographs and what appear to be book scans. The donor grants permission for duplication. All images have been digitized and are available in the Reference Room on Manuscript DVD #1.

### Container List

Location	Box	Folder	Image	Contents	Date
	69	1	1	The Midco Office Building, aka "The Brick House" – Bernice Turley (46) in the center with sons Alan (13) and Paul (11) on the left	Summer 1942
	69	1	2	View of Midco from the blast furnace	1918-1921
	69	1	3	Mid-Continent Iron Company Train No. 4	1918-1921
	69	1	4	View of Midco from blast furnace, rear	1918-1921
	69	1	5	Midco complex	1918-1921
	69	1	6	Midco retort building and coolers	1918-1921
	69	1	7	Midco complex	1918-1921
	69	1	8	Midco building and structures	1918-1921
	69	1	9	The railroad tracks and the Current River	1918-1921
	69	1	10	Current River boom taking timber out of the water at Chicopee, Carter County	1918-1921
	69	1	11A	Tie drive on the Current River	1918-1921
	69	1	11B	Midco administration building (same as image 12)	1918-1921
	69	1	12	Midco administration building (same as image 11B)	1918-1921

## DOCUMENTS, 1982-1997

*Arrangement:* N/a

### Scope and Content

There are two items in this series: 1) an excerpt from a dissertation by James Lee Murphy called A History of the Southeastern Ozark Region of Missouri, pp. 215-216 and 2) a caption for image #1 in the series above and information on the origin of the image.

### Container List

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	69	1	<u>A History of the Southeastern Ozark Region</u> dissertation excerpt. (Obtained from microfilm reel #F472.09 M87 of University of Central Arkansas.)	1982
	69	1	Image #1 caption and origin story	1997