

EXCELSIOR CREAMERY COMPANY RECORDS

1914 - 2002

FINDING AID

The Sherman Library
614 Dahlia Avenue
Corona del Mar, CA 92625
(949) 673-1880

Administrative Information

Extent: 7 document boxes and 3 flat oversize boxes.

Date Span: 1914-2002.

Provenance: The collection was donated to the Sherman Library by Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Ranney in 1981.

Citation information: [identification of item], Folder [#], Box [#], Excelsior Creamery Company Records, Sherman Library, Corona del Mar, California.

Processed by: Jennifer L. Martinez, August 2006.

Historical Note

Walter Daniel Ranney (1875-1949), his wife, Florence Knettles Wycoff Ranney (1877-1949), and their four children moved from Groton, New York, to Santa Ana, California in 1913. That same year W. D. Ranney established the Ranney Sanitary Dairy. In 1915, he and Charles F. Heil bought the Excelsior Dairy, which Henry Russell and E. D. Burns opened in Santa Ana earlier that year. W. D. Ranney's brother, Joseph A. Ranney, moved from New York to also join in the business, and in 1917 the name of the company changed to Excelsior Creamery. In 1920 they purchased Taylor's Ice Cream Factory in Santa Ana and entered the ice cream business, selling Excelsior ice cream in chocolate, vanilla and strawberry flavors. In 1922 the Excelsior Creamery opened its \$150,000 three-story complex on East First Street in Santa Ana. The Excelsior Creamery was the first in Orange County, California, to use the milk pasteurization process and to offer frozen orange juice for sale.

In the 1920s they leased pasture land for the creamery's cows in Round Valley, California, near Bishop, and in 1922 they purchased 400 acres to accommodate milk cows at Prado, California, just west of Corona. The Excelsior Ranch Company, created in 1930, separated the farming operations and dairy from the creamery, and in 1937 they purchased 100 acres of property in Garden Grove along with the cows and the dairy operations from Raitt's Dairy (Orange County's first dairy farm, which began operations in 1896). Following the Santa Ana River Flood of 1938, their Prado property was acquired through eminent domain by the government in order to build what became the Prado Dam, and afterwards all their dairy farming operations continued at what grew to be the 240 acre Seventeenth Street ranch in Garden Grove. The Excelsior Ranch Company dissolved in the early 1950s, the Garden Grove property was sold for the development of homes in 1953, and in 1957 Excelsior Farms was created and began cattle ranching in Norco, California.

Upon its sale to the Los Angeles-based Carnation Company in 1980, the Excelsior Creamery's sixty-five year dairy industry business came to an end.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of the business records (including correspondence, financial records, publications, legal documents and other materials) of the Excelsior Creamery Company and its affiliated organizations, the Excelsior Ranch Company and Excelsior Farms. A sizeable amount of financial records in the collection between 1925-1966 show various annual and monthly profit and loss figures and balance statements for the company and record its growth over the years. There are materials regarding a few other Orange County area dairies acquired by the company and an extensive amount of land records which indicate the extensive amount of property acquired by the Excelsior Creamery over the years.

Of particular note in the collection is the large body of materials which document the regulations and restrictions placed on manufacturers, supplies and food products during World War II. There are official publications from the United States Office of War Information and the Department of Agriculture regarding the rationing of sugar and automobile fuel and tires, and there are also contracts and related documentation regarding Excelsior Creamery's role as the supplier of dairy products for Orange County area military bases during the war. There are also some materials from this same era which record early attempts to use refrigerated ice cream trucks to deliver and distribute frozen foods.

Other interesting materials in the collection include documents regarding the various types of containers for milk delivery, advertisements for Excelsior Creamery products and for Family Brick ice cream, and a large amount of company stock certificates. There are a few recipes in the collection related to the use of chocolate and cocoa to make chocolate milk and chocolate malted beverages, and it appears that at one time the Excelsior Creamery had a cocoa mix which they sold to other dairies with which they could create chocolate milk.

The collection also contains materials related to the dairy, livestock and grazing activities of the Excelsior Creamery Company and its affiliated organizations, the Excelsior Ranch Company and Excelsior Farms. There is some material concerning their grazing activities on leased land in California's Owens Valley, but there is more documentation concerning their Garden Grove ranch. There is a small amount of material concerning the condemnation of their grazing property in the vicinity of what became the Prado Dam following the destructive Santa Ana River Flood of 1938.

Organization and Arrangement Note

The collection is arranged in the following series:

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|------|----------------------|------------|
| I. | By-laws and minutes | Box 1 |
| II. | Legal records | Box 2 |
| III. | Subject files | Boxes 3-4 |
| IV. | Financial records | Box 5 |
| | A. Ledger books | Boxes 6-7 |
| | B. Stocks | Boxes 8-10 |
| V. | Historical materials | Box 10 |

Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Vol./ Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
1	1	California. Secretary of State - Certification of the Articles of Incorporation	1920
1	2	Articles of incorporation - Amendment regarding capitol stock	1928-1929
1	3	By-laws and minutes (bound volume)	1920-1923
1	4	Minutes (bound volume)	1924-1950
1	5	Minutes	1951-1968
2	1	Appraisal report [2 copies]	1945
2	2	Buildings - Manufacturing specifications	1922
2	3	California. Railroad Commission	1937, n.d.
2	4	Excelsior Ranch Company, Ltd. - Alfalfa hay	1942
2	5	Excelsior Ranch Company, Ltd. - Legal files regarding Prado Dam condemnation suit	1940-1943
2	6	Fullerton sanitary creamery (Fullerton, Calif.) - Purchase records	1920-1926
2	7	Gertrude S. Wilson v. Jackson Ice Cream Company...and Excelsior Creamery Company	1935
2	9	Katayama v. Excelsior Creamery Company	1933
2	10	Indenture - Dissolution of property	1922
2	11	Labor unions	1948, n.d.
2	12	Land records - Fullerton, Calif.	1939
2	23	Land records - Orange, Calif.	1929-1960
2	24	Land records - Orange County, Calif.	1924, 1929
2	25	Land records - Paid mortgages	1917-1930
2	26	Land records - Rincon, Calif.	1925-1926
2	27	Land records - Santa Ana, Calif.	1914-1953
2	28	Land records - Santa Ana, Calif. - "French's Addition"	1921-1966
2	29	Notes charged to bad debts	1920-1927, n.d.
2	30	Registration - Ranney's Ice Cream	1949
2	31	Sale and purchase records	1925-1932
2	32	Standard Brands Incorporated	1938
2	33	Trade mark claim	1953
3	1	Advertisements	1924 & n.d.
3	2	Advertisements - Excelsior Creamery Co.	1922-1980, n.d.
3	3	Advertisements - Ice cream	1923-1924, n.d.
3	4	Alcohol permit record	1925-1934, n.d.
3	5	Aliso Dairy Company (Paularino, Calif.)	1915

3	6	Anaheim Creamery Co. (Anaheim, Calif.)	1926 & 1933
3	7	Anderson, Roice and Leland Spencer. <i>Ways of Conserving Tires and Reducing other Expenses in the Distribution of Milk</i> [report]	[1941<]
3	8	Automobile costs	1925-1942, n.d.
3	9	Bacteria counting	1929-1939, n.d.
3	10	Bottles, jars and glass containers	1925-1943, n.d.
3	11	Butter	1943-1945
3	12	California. Dept. of Agriculture	1941-1943
3	13	Cans	1926-1945
3	14	Chocolate and cocoa - Correspondence	1929-1942
3	15	Chocolate and cocoa - Notes and ephemera	1937-1948, n.d.
3	16	Chocolate and cocoa - Recipes	1948, n.d.
3	17	Cholera	1942
3	18	Competitors	1928-1931
3	19	Contract	n.d.
3	20	Correspondence - General	1940-1945
3	21	Dairy and ice cream industries	1942-1943, n.d.
3	22	Dairy Institute of California - Newsletter	1942-1943
3	23	Dairy supplies to military bases	1942-1943, n.d.
3	24	Delivery expenses	1928, n.d.
4	1	Employees	1942-1944
4	2	<i>Excelsior News</i>	1955
4	3	Federal briefs, statements and legislation affecting the dairy industry	1941-1943
4	4	Fertilizers	1934-1937, n.d.
4	5	Fertilizers - Ephemera	1929-1936, n.d.
4	6	Frozen foods distribution	1930, 1949, n.d.
4	7	Frozen foods distribution - Correspondence	1937-1945
4	8	Frozen foods distribution - Invoices, contracts and forms	1941-1943
4	9	Frozen foods distribution - Prices	1936-1943, n.d.
4	10	Frozen foods distribution - Ephemera	1942, n.d.
4	11	Frozen foods distribution - Clippings	1930, 1942, n.d.
4	12	General Dairy Industry Committee - Newsletter	1942-1943

4	13	Grazing	1942-1946, n.d.
4	14	Homogenized milk	1938, n.d.
4	15	Los Angeles (Calif.). Dept. of Water and Power - Land lease	1942
4	16	Machinery and equipment	1942-1943
4	17	Marshall, John, Jr. <i>Cost of Production of Market Milk for Los Angeles</i> [report]	1934
4	18	Milk - Cartons	1942, 1948
4	19	Milk - Cases	1932-1940, n.d.
4	20	Milk - Certification - Pamphlets	n.d.
4	21	Milk - Costs	1937, n.d.
4	22	Notes	1926, n.d.
4	23	Price cutting	1937
4	24	Route returns	[1930<?]
4	25	Sugar	1941-1942, n.d.
4	26	Sugar - Correspondence	1942-1943
4	27	Sugar - Purchase certificates	1942-1943, n.d.
4	28	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture - Food distribution orders	1943
4	29	U.S. Office of War Information. Office of Price Administration	1942-1943
4	30	U.S. Office of War Information. War Production Board	1942-1949
4	31	U.S. War Production Board. Division of Industry Operations	1942-1943
5	1	Financial records - 1925	1925
5	2	Financial records - 1926	1926
5	3	Financial records - 1927	1927
5	4	Financial records - 1928	1928
5	5	Financial records - 1929	1929
5	6	Financial records - 1930	1930
5	7	Financial records - 1931	1931
5	8	Financial records - 1932	1932
5	9	Financial records - 1933	1933
5	10	Financial records - 1935	1935
5	11	Financial records - 1936	1936
5	12	Financial records - 1937	1937
5	13	Financial records - 1938	1938
5	14	Financial records - 1940	1940
5	15	Financial records - 1941	1941
5	16	Financial records - 1942	1942
5	17	Financial records - 1950	1950
5	18	Financial records - 1951	1951
5	19	Financial records - 1952	1952
5	20	Financial records - 1953	1953

5	21	Financial records - 1954	1954
5	22	Financial records - 1955	1955
5	23	Financial records - 1956	1956
5	24	Financial records - 1957	1957
5	25	Financial records - 1958	1958
5	26	Financial records - 1959	1959
5	27	Financial records - 1960	1960
5	28	Financial records - 1961	1961
5	29	Financial records - 1962	1962
5	30	Financial records - 1963	1963
5	31	Financial records - 1964	1964
5	32	Financial records - 1965	1965
5	33	Financial records - 1966	1966
5	34	Financial records - Notes and charts	1926-1937, n.d.
5	35	Financial records - Taxes and licenses	1922-1948
6	vol. 1	Financial records - General ledger, 4/1/1921-8/31/1922	1921-1922
6	vol. 2	Financial records - Depreciation record ledger, 1915-1935	1915-1935
6	vol. 3	Financial records - Ledger, miscellaneous, 1914-1915, 1929, 1933-1938	1914-1938
7	vol. 1	Financial records - General ledger, 1915-1916	1915-1916
7	vol. 2	Financial records - General ledger, June 1915-March 1921	1915-1921
8	vol. 1	Financial records - Stocks - Stock transactions record ledger	1915-1921
8	vol. 2	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #100-197	1923-1930
8	vol. 3	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #1-150	1930
9	vol. 1	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #151-253 (Note: some documents are attached and loosely interfiled between the stock certificates in this volume, including receipts, bank checks, and correspondence)	1930-1935
9	vol. 2	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #254-402	1935-1955
9	vol. 3	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #403-501	1955-1963
10	vol. 1	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #502-525	1963-1966
10	vol. 2	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #526-549	1966-1969
10	vol. 3	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #550-575	1969-1970
10	vol. 4	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #575-600	1970-1973
10	vol. 5	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #601-625	1973-1977
10	vol. 6	Financial records - Stocks - Stock certificate book, #626-725	1977-1979, n.d.
10	1	Santa Ana (Calif.) - Cultural Heritage Committee - Historical landmarks inventory form	1980
10	2	Sullivan, Joan Ranney. <i>A History of Excelsior Creamery Co., Excelsior Ranch Co., and Excelsior Farms.</i>	2002

Subjects

Excelsior Creamery Company (Santa Ana, Calif.)

Excelsior Farms (Norco, Calif.)

Excelsior Ranch Company (Santa Ana, Calif.)

Dairies - California - Orange County - History - 20th century - Sources.

Ranches - California - Orange County - History - 20th century.

Business records - California - Orange County - 20th century.