

4-19-2017

Milling an important part of county's economy

Wendy Bradley Richter

Arkansas State Archives, wendy.richter@arkansas.gov

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/articles>



Part of the [Public History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Richter, Wendy Bradley, "Milling an important part of county's economy" (2017). *Articles*. 195.
<https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/articles/195>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Publications at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Articles by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

Milling an important part of county's economy

By Wendy Richter
For the Siftings

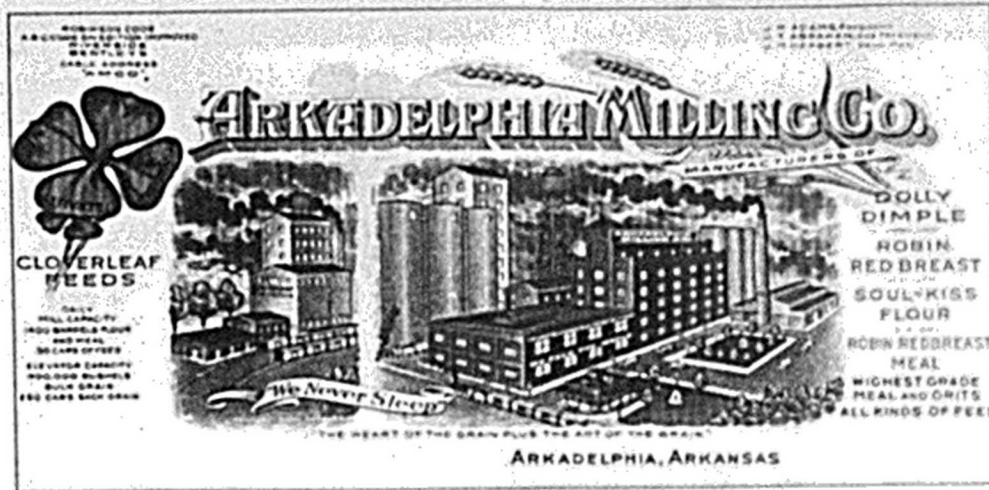
In the early twentieth century, the Arkadelphia Milling Company was an important part of Clark County's economy.

The company produced flour, meal, feed, and other products, and also supplied much of Arkadelphia's electrical power for many years. Among the Milling Company's best-known product lines were Dolly Dimple and Robin Red Breast, which were shipped to all parts of the world. Advertisements read, "Arkadelphia Milling Company Feeds the World." Other slogans painted on the sides of buildings included "The Heart of the Grain Plus the Art of the Brain," and "We Never Sleep."

Brothers W.E. Adams, Joe H. Adams, and T.H. Adams moved from Tennessee to Arkansas and began their company in Arkadelphia in 1899. Their business grew quickly, and within about ten years, its output reached about 1,000 barrels of flour per day. The facility operated at a site near the local railroad station, and had its own set of side tracks on which rail cars could bring in grain and then later be loaded with a finished product for distribution.

One of Arkadelphia Milling Company's products was quite ingenious in its marketing. The Dolly Dimple flour sack could be made into a cute doll, so that children everywhere begged their mothers to purchase the product. The dolls were so popular that many families still have theirs today.

One hundred years ago, in April of 1917, a Southern Standard newspaper article mentioned new construction at the plant as well as some future plans: "The three grain bins under construction



SUBMITTED PHOTOS/FOR THE SIFTINGS

Above, newspaper advertisement appeared in the Southern Standard. At right, image of the Milling Company courtesy of the Clark County Historical Association.

for the Arkadelphia Milling Co. will be completed this week.

The bins are made of 7-inch reinforced concrete and are 75 feet high with a diameter of 21½ feet. Each bin will hold 50,000 and is absolutely fireproof, which makes the insurance rate very low. Grain can be stored in the bins with much less overhead expense than in other elevators.

The Southwestern Engineering & Appraisal Co. of Springfield, Mo., has charge of the construction and has been working men day and night, rain or shine, for the past three weeks. The bins are located between the engine room and flour department.

By constructing these bins, the company is not only making a storing place for grain, but in case fire destroyed the elevator, the mill would not have to stop more than 24 hours because the bins could be used instead. The milling com-

pany will probably erect two more sets of bins in the near future, making nine in all."

The Arkadelphia Milling Company operated into the early years of the Great Depression. However, it found itself holding many large, unpaid accounts when banks began to fail across the nation. The business could not continue. The company did not declare bankruptcy like many similar concerns, but decided to simply liquidate the business, marking the end of an era in Arkadelphia industry.

A book to be published this summer by the Clark County Historical Association will feature front-page stories from 1911-1920, including Arkadelphia Milling Company news and many other fascinating articles that tell the story of the county in a time of great change. For additional information about Clark County history, visit or contact the Clark

County Historical Museum (www.clark-countyhistory.org or 230.1360) or the Clark County Historical Association's Archives at the Ouachita Baptist University Library (www.obu.edu/archives or 245.5332).