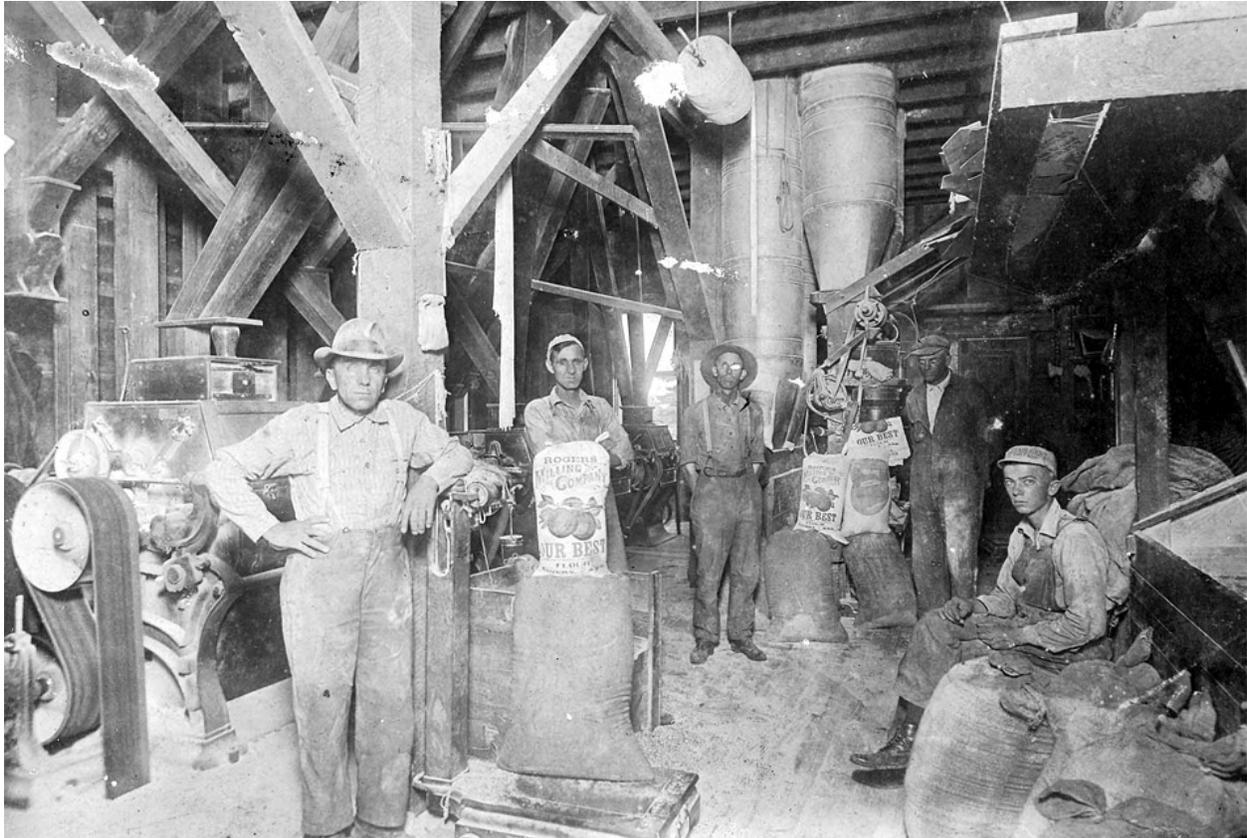


Photo of the Month

Rogers Milling Company



Rogers Milling Company
c.1900
Rogers Historical Museum
Rogers, Arkansas

Interior shots of businesses and industries in the early 1900s are really rare, so we were thrilled to receive this photo of the inside of the Rogers Milling Company. The donor does not know the names of the men in the photo, and is hoping someone who had an ancestor who worked at the company might recognize someone. If you see a familiar face, please let us know.

This was a thriving business during its heyday. Established in 1886, the mill created a lucrative market for local grain crops and established Rogers as a center for flour and meal production. J.W. Frey, the local Frisco railroad agent, was the chief promoter of the business and early stock holders included notable business leaders J.A.C. Blackburn, W.R. Felker, H.L. Stroud, and J.B. Steele.

The company had three large buildings located on the corner of North Arkansas Street and East Chestnut Street and included access to a railroad spur. The largest building was approximately 33 feet wide and 100 feet long, which included a grain elevator for moving and storing grain. Processing

equipment included eight sets of rollers, three packers, three purifiers, one separator, three dust collectors, one centrifuge, one corn bolter, two scourers, and sixteen reels. By 1900 the plant boasted an output of 75 to 150 barrels of flour daily (a barrel of flour weighs 196 pounds), with shipment of their "Rogers Special Patent" brand flour throughout the country.

By 1908 the mill employed twelve people and increased production to 200 barrels of flour daily. During these early years, farmers from across the county and Indian Territory sold wheat and corn at the mill. At harvest time, 30 to 40 wagons could be seen lined up to sell grain at the elevator. But as agriculture began to shift to fruit production and land replanted as orchards, a special rate from the railroad allowed the mill to continue large-scale operation by milling Kansas wheat and then shipping it on to markets.

A fire destroyed the mill on April 30, 1914 and the loss was valued at \$35,000. In 1916 a Pea Ridge miller, Mr. Rogers, and his business associate from Leslie, Arkansas, Mr. Fuller, built a larger mill on the site. The Rogers & Fuller Mill continued in business for many more years and expanded to include the sale of heating oil. In addition to continuing to produce 200 barrels of wheat daily, the new mill often sold 1,500 gallons of oil each day throughout the area. By 1953 the mill moved to Highway 62 on North Second Street and Rogers Transfer and Storage occupied the long-time mill buildings until closing their doors in 2010.