

Information Sheet

R **Federal Lead Company. Mining Dept. (Flat River, Mo.).**
520 **Letterbooks, 1907-1913.**
 Seventeen volumes.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are letterbooks of outgoing correspondence maintained by Harry Adelbert Guess, general manager of the Federal Lead Company's mine and mill at Flat River in St. Francois County, Missouri. Topics include production, exploration, shipping, labor relations, and environmental pollution.

Harry Adelbert ("H. A.") Guess was born in Hartigan, Ontario, Canada, on 21 November 1875, the son of Charles Wellington Guess and Augusta (Shorey) Guess. He received a Master's degree from Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, in 1895. A mining engineer, he came to the United States in 1901 and became a U.S. citizen in 1923. During the period of these letterbooks he was married to Eva (Young) Guess, who died in 1935. They had a son, Shorey Cameron Guess. A Republican and a Presbyterian, H. A. Guess died on 11 April 1946.

H. A. Guess joined the American Smelting & Refining Company, a part of the Guggenheim mining interests, in 1901. As these letterbooks open, Guess is a "milling superintendent" for the American Smelters Securities Company, a Guggenheim subsidiary. As such, he visited and oversaw milling operations at several sites in the United States and Mexico. However, he was devoting much of his time to the firm's Federal Lead Company mining and milling operations at Flat River, Missouri. By the late summer of 1908 he had assumed direction of the Flat River mines and mill, and related leased properties in Madison County, Mo., although he continued to advise on other milling operations. In October 1908 he began to use the title of "Manager" on his letters from Flat River.

Guess reported regularly to his superiors in New York, first to Cortlandt Palmer, then to S. W. Eccles, and, finally, to T. H. Leggett. His letters summarized activities in all areas of operations at Flat River, including production, profits, exploration, development, and methods. Of particular interest are his frank assessments of labor relations, which included the recruitment of immigrants from eastern Europe for the least desirable job category, that of "shoveler." Job-related injuries and deaths were reported, as well as Guess's attempts, usually successful, to make a minimal settlement payment to the worker or his survivors. Another topic of interest was a suit filed by farmers and ranchers along the Big River, who claimed that lead pollution had harmed or destroyed their crops and herds. This suit had not been settled by the close of the letterbooks. Under normal conditions Guess's reports indicate that the Flat River enterprise was very profitable to the Guggenheim interests throughout his tenure.

The final three letterbooks, designated "GP" by Guess, contain correspondence he considered to be of a personal nature. Included there are Guess's purchase of an automobile and its subsequent upkeep, summer vacations for him and his family, and business related to a mine and farmland owned by Guess in British Columbia and Alberta, Canada, respectively.

A shelf list, an alphabetical list of addressees, and an alphabetical list of addressed firms have been prepared for each volume.

Shelf List

These are letterbooks of outgoing correspondence maintained by Harry Adelbert Guess, general manager of the Federal Lead Company's mine and mill at Flat River in St. Francois County, Missouri. Topics include production, exploration, shipping, labor relations, and environmental pollution.

Section 1: "G" letterbooks containing business correspondence.

<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Inclusive dates and notes</u>
01	G-2*	30 July 1907 -- 03 October 1908
02	G-3	05 October 1908 -- 12 February 1909
03	G-4,5,6	13 February 1909 -- 26 June 1909
04	G-7	26 June 1909 -- 20 December 1909
05	G-8	20 December 1909 -- 29 April 1910
06	G-10*	21 October 1910 -- 13 March 1911
07	G-11	14 March 1911 -- 03 August 1911
08	G-12	03 August 1911 -- 25 November 1911
09	G-14*	05 March 1912 -- 24 May 1912
10	G-15	01 June 1912 -- 19 August 1912 (25 May -- 01 June in GP-2)
11	G-16	19 August 1912 -- 11 November 1912
12	G-17	16 November 1912 -- 20 February 1913
13	G-18	19 February 1913 -- 19 May 1913
14	G-19	20 May 1913 -- 22 September 1913

Section 2: "GP" letterbooks containing personal correspondence.

<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Inclusive dates and notes</u>
15	GP	03 August 1909 -- 25 January 1911
16	GP-1	26 January 1911 -- 16 May 1912
17	GP-2	16 May 1912 -- 06 October 1913 (includes G-15-1 through G-15-46)

*Books G-1, G-9, and G-13 are missing.

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25 March 1993

City of Bonne Terre

Gift

Index Cards

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 American Smelting and Refining Company.
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