

**Morehead State University  
Special Collections & Archives  
Manuscript Accession Form**

**Collection Title:** Morehead & North Fork Railroad Records

**Manuscript Series Number:** MS026-2004

**Date Received:** August 30, 2004

**Processed by:** Kendyl Siebart

**Cataloged by:** Kendyl Siebart

**Date Listed:** February 2, 2015

**Date Span:** 1900-1986

**Size of Collection:** 57.0 linear feet.

**Number of Boxes:** 47 letter size document cases; 2 half letter size document cases; 9 legal size document cases; 4 half legal size document cases; 10 record center boxes; 15 oversized boxes.

**Type of Material:** Records, correspondence, maps, photographs, artifacts and ephemera.

**Condition of Material:** Good to Fair. Materials vary in degree of water and mold damage, but overall scope is legible.

**Arrangement:** Organized into series: I. Finance II. Labor. III. Photographs. IV. Legal V. Correspondence. VI. Miscellaneous. VII. Publications. VIII. Artifacts. IX. History. X. Oversized.

**Biographical / Historical Information:** The Morehead & North Fork Railroad was established in 1905 after the Morehead & West Liberty Railroad line was bankrupted while attempting to create a tunnel through Clack Mountain. The tunnel through Clack Mountain was finally completed by the Rinehart and Dennis Construction Co., but the completion of the railroad, including two more tunnels, was conducted by the Guy Snyder Construction Co. Both companies used mostly African American labor, though creating spokes was subcontracted to locals. At its longest, the railroad ran from Clearfield, Kentucky in Rowan County to Redwine, Kentucky in Morgan County, totaling 33 miles.

Logging was the primary reason for the construction of the railroad. A.W. Lee and John Wrigley bought thousands of acres of timber throughout the area and planned to capitalize on it through the establishment of the Clearfield Lumber Co, named after Clearfield, Pennsylvania where the men were from. Clearfield, Kentucky would later be named in honor of Clearfield, Pennsylvania for bringing industry to the region. The creation of the railroad made it easier to transport timber from the inlands to be sold to the east. By 1922, however, the timber was drained and the railroad began to expand the operations in more industries. The Lee Coal Co and

Clearfield Coal Co. transported cannel coal, a form of clean coal used in homes, from Redwine to Clearfield, but the coal was in short supply, too. By 1921 all the coal was exhausted. After coal evaporated from the region, operations turned to clay with the establishment of the Lee Clay Products Company in 1925. Lee Clay manufactured clay bricks and in the 1940's widened their product to include sewer pipe. Lee Clay would close its operations in 1970, leaving little for the Morehead and North Fork Railroad to transport. In 1973, President Roy Cassity closed the Morehead and North Fork Railroad, ending the 70 year operation.

**Scope and Content:** Collection contains 10 series. The first series includes financial records consisting of freight waybills spanning from January 1938 to 1953. Though the waybills have some sections missing, they are primarily fluid. The waybills generally consist of the freight transport of Lee Clay products, though other material transport is also documented. In addition, the financial records include government bills of landing. These documents are mostly from the US Forest Service during the expansion of protected lands. Other materials include shipping orders, tariff publications that directly affected the Morehead and North Fork Railroad, freight receipts, and weekly abstracts.

The second series, labor, consist of pay rolls, timber scale books, seal records, ledgers, and coal reports. The pay rolls range from Lee Coal Company records spanning 1915-1921, Lee Clay Company, 1946-1948, Clearfield Lumber, 1946, and general time entry books for the construction and expansion of the railroad from 1908-1931. The general time books are individual camp records, detailing the workers who were employed at different sections of track. Furthermore, the ledgers, spanning 1910-1921, are also individual camp book records. In this series one would also find the Lee Coal Company Daily Coal Reports. These reports state the amount of coal removed from the region, generally from Redwine, Kentucky daily. Likewise, the timber scale books, spanning 1913-1921, show the amount of trees removed from the area, the length and circumference, and the number of a specific type of tree removed on a given day.

The next series, photographs, contain photographs dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1970's. Photographs are mostly of steam locomotives powered by the Morehead and North Fork Railroad. In addition to the locomotive photographs, the series also includes some interesting pieces including photographs of The General's repair in Louisville, Kentucky in 1961 and of the Great Flood of 1937's damage on the railroad line. Other photographs include a portrait of Joe Doody, images of Roy Cassity, A.W. Lee and John Wirgley, as well as various other people, including patrons of the line.

The fourth series in the collection is legal paperwork. Mostly, the series contains items pertaining to the Clearfield Lumber Company v. US Internal Revenue court case that spanned 1922-1930. Moreover, the legal files also include various other documents dating as early as 1905 and as late as 1982. Items include court cases between regional locals and companies for property damages or personal injury, child labor agreements, and numerous contracts, permits and agreements.

The fifth series, correspondence consists of two parts, Judge Robert Winn and general correspondence. The correspondence with Judge Winn is comprised of information pertaining to legal cases spanning 1913-1944. The general correspondence spans 1900-1986 and includes correspondence of the purchase of the property, the building of the railroad, and the outsource of labor.

Series six consist of the miscellaneous files. These files include, and are not limited to, the locomotive plans of the various models purchased by the company, business address books, and advertisements. This series contains mostly personal items connected to Guy Snyder, Roy

Cassity and George Gearhart. The most promising item in this series is Roy Cassity's life story, in which Cassity explains the foundations of the railroad, Morehead in the early years, and the importance of blue stone to the area. This series spans 1905-1982.

The next series contains publications by various sources either about the Morehead and North Fork Railroad, pertaining to railroads in general, or catalogs on railroad parts. See the publication list for a more detailed understanding.

Series eight, artifacts, houses various artifacts related to the railroad. This series is a large array of items spanning from office equipment to railroad parts. One of the most significant items in the collection is found in series eight, a presumed piece of The General boiler removed during the rebuild conducted in Louisville, Kentucky. Moreover, there are also a few reels of footage in the series, too. One reel displays the last run of the Number 12 steam locomotive.

Next, in series nine, one can find the history of the Morehead and North Fork Railroad. This series spans 1901-1956 with most of the series dating prior to 1930. This series includes survey notebooks, blueprints of tunnels and the railroad line, weekly reports on the building of Clack Mountain and Popping Hill Tunnel, small maps and blueprints, and clay reports. Generally, this series pertains to information of the construction and expansion of the railroad, but also included are materials relating to the expansion of the industries, like clay mining.

Finally, series ten is oversized materials. These materials mostly contain blueprints and maps of the development of the Morehead and North Fork Railroad. Other oversized materials include newspapers related to the Morehead and North Fork Railroad, profit reports, cartoon prints, seal records, reports to the Interstate Commerce Commission, advertisement for the 1915 auction of materials, and coal records.

**Subject Headings / Descriptors:**

Railroads -- Kentucky -- Morehead -- History.

Railroad companies -- Kentucky -- Morehead -- History.

Morehead (Ky.) -- History.

Rowan Co. (Ky.) - History.

Morgan Co. (Ky.) - History.

Railroad companies.

Railroads.

Kentucky -- Morehead.

Industrialization.

Industrialization -- Kentucky.

Kentucky -- environmental conditions.

**Notes:**