

Collection #
P 0321

**DAVID PEAT
COLLECTION, CA. 1881–1952**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 4 folders of photographs

COLLECTION
DATES: 1952

PROVENANCE: David Peat, La Porte, Indiana, 1952 and 1953

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1952.0002, 1952.0803, 1953.0208

NOTES:

HISTORICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Meinard Rumely and his brother John Rumely started building threshing machines in La Porte, Indiana, in 1856, and founded M. & J. Rumely the following year. Through the 1860s and 1870s the company manufactured stationary and portable steam engines, and traction engines. Meinard bought out his brother's share in the company in 1882 and established M. Rumely and Company. He died 31 March 1904 at age 81.

Dr. Edward Rumely succeeded his grandfather. In 1908 Dr. Rumely hired inventor John Secor to design a fuel-powered engine specifically for farm machinery. Secor had been manufacturing fuel-powered engines since 1885. Secor and William Higgins, the Rumely factory superintendent, tested the first Oil Pull tractor in March 1909. A new factory in LaPorte produced the first production model in February 1910.

In 1912 M. Rumely and Company employed 2,000 factory workers in LaPorte. Sales that year totaled 16 million dollars. The company went into receivership in 1915, and reorganized as the Advance Rumely Thresher Company. Allis-Chalmers bought out Advance Rumely in 1931.

The J. I. Case Threshing Machine Company in 1880 manufactured steam tractors from 1892 to 1924. The company's first tractor plant opened in 1913. Production of steam traction engines ceased in 1924.

A. D. Baker, a machinist, made his first traction engine in his small shop in Swanton, Ohio in 1898. The A. D. Baker Company incorporated in 1901, and built steam-powered tractors until the mid-1920s. The company ended tractor production during World War II.

Gaar, Scott, and Company manufactured traction engines and tractors in Richmond, Indiana, from before 1880 to ca. 1913.

Almus E. Vinton and Lewis W. Hasselman founded the Washington Foundry and Machine Works in Indianapolis in 1850. The company made agricultural implements, steam engines, grist mills, and sawmill machinery. Vinton retired in 1865, and Hasselman reorganized the business as the Eagle Machine Works.

David Walter Peat was the son of Wilbur Peat, director of the John Herron Art Institute. David Peat was a student living with his parents at 1640 North Talbott Street, Indianapolis, at the time the photographs were made.

Sources:

- Bond's City Directory of Richmond, Wayne County, Indiana*. Richmond: Charles F. Bond, ca. 1882.
- Dunn, Jacob Piatt. *Greater Indianapolis*. Volume II. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1910.
- Mills, Robert K. *Implement and Tractor: 100 Years of Farm Equipment*. Overland Park, Kansas: Intertec Publishing Company, 1986.
- R. L. Polk and Company's Richmond Directory. 1914*. Indianapolis: R. L. Polk and Son, ca. 1914.
- Wendell, C. W. *The Encyclopedia of American Farm Tractors*. Sarasota, Florida: Crestline Publishing Company, 1979.
- Pierce Family Papers (M 0226). Indiana Historical Society Library.
- Polk's Indianapolis Directory*. Indianapolis: R. L. Polk and Co., 1952.
- Who Was Who In America*, Vol. 4, 1961–1968. Chicago: A. N. Marquis Company, 1968.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains twenty-one snapshot photographs of vintage farm machinery, seven photographic copies of Rumely farm equipment, and two mechanically reproduced images from the 1892 Eagle Machine Works equipment catalog. David Peat's photographs of steam-powered machinery dominate the collection. The photographs show threshing machines, traction engines, and tractors made by the Rumely Company working in the fields, and pulling other equipment at a farm in La Porte, Indiana, in 1952. Other photographs show examples of Rumely, Baker, Case, and Gaar, Scott and Co. farm machinery parked in fields, and on display at the 1952 Indiana State Fair at Indianapolis.

David Peat reproduced seven images of Rumely machines from graphics originally printed in La Porte city directories, ca. 1880s–ca. 1890s. The images include separators, tractors, and a threshing machine made by M. and J. Rumely and the M. Rumely Company. Two mechanically reproduced images from the 1892 Eagle Machine Works catalog show a traction engine, and the company's logo.

The processor grouped the photographs by topics and placed them into four folders. The folder captions were provided by the processor and are in square brackets [].

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
[Gaar, Scott, Rumely, Baker Engines]	Folder 1
[Traction engines by Rumely, Baker and Case Companies]	Folder 2
[Rumely Company advertisements]	Folder 3
[Hasselman Traction Engine advertisements]	Folder 4

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.

4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P 0321).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.