

Charles E. Boulson

Oct 26 1909 - Oct 29 2006

AAFA #0396

R Boulson, Charles E.

404 Papers, 1928-1990.

Fifty-six folders.

NOTE: THIS COLLECTION IS IN OFF-CAMPUS STORAGE. AT LEAST TWO DAYS' ADVANCE NOTICE IS REQUIRED FOR RESEARCH USE.

These are personal and professional papers of an electrical engineer in Missouri. Boulson was general manager of the Sho-Me Power Corporation, 1954-1974, and member of the Board of Directors of Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. The collection includes correspondence, scrapbooks, professional and historical writings, speeches on rural electrification in Missouri, and corporate manuals and annual reports of Sho-Me Power Corporation and Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Charles Elbert Boulson is the son of Clyde White Boulson and Blanche Ames Boulson. He was born on 26 October 1909 at Iola, Kansas, where he grew up and attended primary and secondary school, Iola High School, and Iola Junior College. The family purchased a ten-acre farm in Taney County, Missouri, and in 1931 moved to the Ridgedale community south of Hollister. The move was designed to improve Clyde Boulson's health and to capitalize on land values which were expected to increase greatly upon the completion of Table Rock Dam on the White River. However, construction on the project did not begin for many years, and the Boulsons arrived in Taney County just as the depression began to hit hardest on the local economy. The family was unprepared for rural life and endured exceeding difficult times in the four years they remained in Taney County. In 1932 the Boulsons accepted the resident management of a two hundred acre fruit farm and livestock ranch near Ridgedale. Income was augmented by Clyde Boulson's employment by the University of Missouri to assist in archaeological surveys of the White River Valley, and by Charles's employment in a tomato cannery at Ridgedale and, later, on the Ava District of the Mark Twain National Forest. Clyde Boulson took a position in 1935 with the Missouri Geological Survey at Rolla. Charles joined the family there in late 1936. He entered the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy in 1937 and graduated in 1939 with a degree in electrical engineering. In June 1940, Boulson was employed as a staff engineer of the Missouri Electric Power Company, a predecessor of Sho-Me Power, a regional power distribution organization headquartered at Marshfield and serving south-central Missouri. Boulson continued in the same capacity after Sho-Me Power was organized in 1941, and became Chief Engineer in 1944. He was appointed acting manager in 1953, and in June 1954 was named General Manager. Boulson retired in 1974 after thirty-five years of service with Missouri Electric Power Company and Sho-Me Power Corporation.

Boulson was exceedingly active in the development of rural electrification in Missouri. In addition to his work with Sho-Me Power, he was one of the founders of Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., headquartered at Springfield, Missouri. AECEI was organized in 1962 as a wholesale supplier of electric power to regional cooperatives which serve nearly all of Missouri and southeastern Iowa. Boulson was one of the first directors of AECEI, and continued as a member of the Board of Directors to 1974. Boulson was also a member of the Missouri & Arkansas Power Cooperative, headquartered at Poplar Bluff, Missouri, and the Farm Electrification Council, a national organization dedicated to the development of rural electrification.

Boulson married Inez Curnutt, a native of Douglas County, shortly before his graduation from the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy in 1939. They have resided in Marshfield since 1941. Boulson has been active in the community as a member of the Masonic Lodge, the Lions Club, and the Methodist Church, and has served on the boards of the Marshfield Public Library and the Marshfield Housing Association. He authored many speeches and articles on rural electrification for professional organizations and local service groups, and has written extensively on local history for the *Webster County Historical Society Journal*. After his retirement, Boulson authored *The Farmer Took A Hand In Missouri* (1984), a history of the Sho-Me Power Corporation, and *History of St. Luke United Methodist Church, Webster County*, (1988).

The Boulson papers consist of an assortment of personal, professional and corporate materials primarily concerning the development of rural electrification in Missouri. They have been arranged in seven sections, including personal and biographical materials, scrapbooks, professional papers and historical writings, speeches, Sho-Me Power Corporation papers, manuals, annual reports, and interviews with key personnel of Associated Electric Cooperative Inc., and miscellaneous publications concerning the electric power industry. Of particular interest and use to local historians are Boulson's Taney and Douglas County diaries, 1933-1936, a scrapbook concerning the Missouri Electric Power's Niangua River tunnel project, 1929-1930, a publication detailing the utility and post engineer services at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, 1944, and the history of the Methodist Church at St. Luke, Missouri. Researchers interested in rural electrification should consult Boulson's numerous speeches and writings, *The Farmer Took A Hand in Missouri*, and the papers and annual reports of Sho-Me Power Corporation, and Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. There are also video-taped (VHS) interviews with the directors and officers of AECEI, including Truman Green, Charles Boulson, James McNabb, Luther Riddle, and Gerald Diddle. Included with the interviews is a brief history of AECEI, produced on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary.

Charles E. Boulson, 97, Marshfield, passed away at 10:22 a.m. Sunday, October 29, 2006, in Mercy Villa, Springfield. Mr. Boulson was a former General Manger of Sho Me Power, retiring in 1974, having worked there for 35 years.

At his request, his body has been cremated. A graveside service will be Saturday, November 4, 2006, at 10 a.m. in the Marshfield Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, his family has asked that memorial contributions be made to the Marshfield United Methodist Church.

In a message dated 11/5/2007 11:41:25 AM Pacific Standard Time, gilalford@yahoo.com writes:

Hi,

The Post Office just returned a birthday greeting sent to AAFA #0396, Charles E. Boulson.

Checking the SSDI I find that he died Oct 29 2006. 493-16-8836. He was born Oct 26 1909.

He has a very distant Alford ancestor but I'll try to fix a ahnentafel and get it posted on the website.

He was present for some of the meeting in Springfield, MO so I expect J&J have a photo if needed for the IR article or the memorial album.

Should we be doing anything about deceased members in the OnLine Newsletter? See my earlier message today- not to all - on the general subject of the OLNL.

.. Gil