W.A. McCollough & Sons, Inc.
Webster City, Iowa

Celebrating 100 years

Pictured Left to Right: Bertha McCollough, Laura McCollough, Richy McCollough, Luther McCollough, Grace McCollough, W.A. McCollough, McKinley McCollough, George McCollough, Cousin Thad Eaton, in the door above, an employee, Rutledge.
Note to Readers:

Approximately three years ago, my dad (Robert) began his research on the McCollough family and their businesses. Eventually, my mom (Ruth), brother (Kirk), and I got involved. We had a great deal of fun sorting through photo albums, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, and little slips of paper with handwritten notes and listening to the personal stories of various members of the family (including some taped conversations with family long gone).

In the end, we put together this brief history of W.A. McCollough and his businesses. We made every effort to be accurate but we also recognize that memories fade and that different members of the family recollect events differently. We also made every effort to include the highlights as we saw them and hope that we have not missed some watershed moment.

Please enjoy the book and please send your stories our way; we would be happy to add them to our little collection.

Jennifer McCollough
This book is dedicated to William Arnold (W.A.) and Bertha McCollough whose inventions, vision, creativity, tenacity, and just plain hard work set the stage for each of the generations that have followed.

We thank them for everything they gave us.
William McCollough, born 10-11-1822
Married Isabel Arnold on May 1, 1850

Their children were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth Date</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther (M.L.)</td>
<td>10-27-1851</td>
<td>Born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Bell</td>
<td>7-4-1856</td>
<td>Married Isabel Arnold on May 1, 1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George McDonald</td>
<td>12-20-1860</td>
<td>Married Bertha Richey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burtrum Bruce</td>
<td>4-1-1867</td>
<td>Born</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Talbert</td>
<td>9-13-1853</td>
<td>Born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Arnold (W.A.)</td>
<td>7-24-1858</td>
<td>Married Bertha Richey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar Johnson (O.J.)</td>
<td>3-26-1863</td>
<td>Born</td>
</tr>
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Their children were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Wives</th>
<th>Children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George</td>
<td>Ethel, Blanche, Emma</td>
<td>Margaret Genschmer, Dick (Richard), Barbara Talcott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Jesse Smith</td>
<td>Bill, Bob, Roger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richey</td>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>Betty Jo Crow, Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>(Mildred) Ferne</td>
<td>John, Robert, Mary Donna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luther</td>
<td>Carrie</td>
<td>Patsy Hoover, Daryl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Seated: Bertha and W.A. McCollough
Standing: Laura, McKinley, George, Luther, Richey and Grace
W.A. McCollough
Born: July 24, 1858
Died: January 28, 1938
President from 1909-1936

George McCollough
Born: November 24, 1889
Died: April 29, 1974
President from 1936-1950

McKinley McCollough
Born: October 21, 1896
Died: November 16, 1962
President from 1950-1962

John A. McCollough
Born: November 20, 1920
President of McCollough’s Inc from 1962-1986

Blaine J. McCollough
Born: April 21, 1948
President of McCollough’s Inc from 1986-1993

Robert L. McCollough
Born: July 24, 1925
President of McCollough’s Foundry (later Seneca Foundry) from 1962-1994

Kirk L. McCollough
Born: July 24, 1951
President of Seneca Foundry since 1994
In 1907, our founder, W.A. (William Arnold) McCollough, was working as a blacksmith and farming in Burlington, Colorado. It was then that he designed a hog feeding trough. W.A. filed for a patent for his hog feeding trough on October 10, 1908 and received the patent September 7, 1909.

W.A.’s brother M.L. (Martin Luther) – pictured here with his wife Fannie – lived and worked in Webster City as an auctioneer. At M.L.’s urging, W.A. and family moved to Webster City.
In October, 1909, W.A. moved his family (wife Bertha and children George, Grace, Laura, McKinley, Richey, and Luther) to Webster City, Iowa. They settled into a home on the northeast corner of Second and Superior Streets. Next to the home was a large lot suitable for a good-sized building – the spot where W.A. would build a factory.

W. A. rented a building on the southwest corner of Seneca and First Streets late in 1909 and with his brother Burt and son George began planning a building they would construct to use in manufacturing the hog feeding troughs.

The yellow brick family home can be seen to the left of the factory on the front cover. It can also be seen to the right of the old Webster City City Hall in the picture above.

Construction of the factory, pictured below, began in the spring of 1910 on the northeast corner of Second and Superior Streets. Every member of the family helped in the construction – regardless of age.
W. A. was a prolific inventor, filing and receiving 11 patents during his lifetime. Sons George and McKinley filed a 12th patent on behalf of W.A. McCollough & Sons. This final patent was approved October 11, 1932.

Early hog feeders were made of wood because sheet metal was scarce during WWI.

By 1940, W.A. McCollough & Sons, Inc. was producing 45% of the nation’s self-feeders for hogs. The other 55% of self-feeders were made by 24 other businesses across the country.

Although each invention had its place in history, two inventions in particular are worth noting. The first patent for a “Rack for Feeding Troughs” was granted September 7, 1909. This invention was significant in that it launched W.A. McCollough & Sons. Perhaps more importantly, it ushered in new, more sanitary methods of feeding and watering pigs. The rack prevented pigs from standing or lying down in the trough. The relatively clean, sanitary trough and feed kept the pigs disease free.
The “Invalid’s Bed” patented March 10, 1925, was a precursor to today’s hospital bed. This bed could be adjusted in many ways to accommodate a patient. It also had an arched frame which could be used to provide traction for the patient, to hang IVs and other uses.

W. A. and Sons manufactured and shipped the hospital beds for a short time. However, the company determined that its knowledge of manufacturing a bed was limited as were the finances for such an endeavor. So, in the mid-1920s, the rights to the bed were sold to the Brown Bed Company.

Arch Foster of Foster’s Funeral Home purchased one of the hospital beds that he would loan to those who had an ill or injured family member at home.
The first fair in Hamilton County was held from September 30, 1868, through October 2, 1868, at a site very near our current fair grounds. The county fairs, however, ceased sometime in the 1880s after which privately managed fairs were held on the west side of Webster City at a site about where the senior high school stands today.

All fairs – county and private – were discontinued by the early 1900s. However, in 1918, a Hamilton County Fair Board was established and a county fair was again held. But, this fair was not held at the county fair grounds. It was housed in the second story of the W.A. McCollough & Sons factory and in the livery barn on Seneca Street (which later became the Wehrheim Sale Barn).
Displays at the 1918 County Fair.
McKinley and Ferne McCollough with son John were at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. On July 5, 1932, the family was about to head home to Webster City. They tried to settle their bill before leaving, but the clinic would not take their check. It was then that McKinley and Ferne learned that most of W.A. McCollough & Sons money had been lost because the bank in Webster City had closed.

George and McKinley never forgot the lesson of 1932 when most of their money was lost. The brothers persevered. Eventually, in the ‘30s, they bought out their siblings’ interest in W.A. McCollough & Sons, Inc. As the Great Depression wound to a close and the company again began making money, the brothers bought farm ground – about 500 acres in Wright County – rather than put their hard-earned profits in the bank.

The Siblings:

- Grace McCollough Fausch was Secretary of W.A. McCollough & Sons and worked in the office for a time before moving to California.

- Laura McCollough Smith studied nursing. She was married to Jesse Smith; they lived on a farm south of Tama, Iowa.

- Richey McCollough worked for a time with W.A. McCollough & Sons before signing on with the U.S. Postal Service.

- Luther McCollough worked a bit with W.A. McCollough & Sons. However, Luther had tuberculosis and needed a different climate. He spent much of his adult life in New Mexico.

During the Great Depression, McCollough’s Inc. produced and sold sweeping compound and a mortar mix.
Iron castings were an integral part of the livestock waterers. Rather than find a supplier of such castings, George and McKinley felt it would be more efficient for the company to produce its own. That led to the building of an iron foundry in 1936.

During WWII, lumber was scarce; much of the available supply was being used in the war effort. Because McCollough’s Inc. needed lumber in the making of its hog troughs, the company eventually purchased a saw mill in order to have a ready source for lumber.

The sawmill during a flood, June, 1944.

The drying kiln at the sawmill, June, 1944.

The company name was changed in 1939, not long after W.A.’s death, from W.A. McCollough & Sons to McCollough’s, Inc.
McKinley’s sons, John and Robert (Bob) and George’s son, Dick, all spent time in the military service in the early through mid-1940s. When they returned to Webster City, they all went to work in the family business. John went to work at the factory. Bob went to work at the foundry. Dick worked back and forth between each of these units of the business.

It was not long after the sons took an active role in McCollough’s Inc. that McKinley and George decided to split the family holdings. In 1949, McKinley was given the two manufacturing businesses, and George was given the farm, the saw mill, and land just to the west of the foundry. John and Bob remained in their respective roles in the factory and foundry; Dick moved to the farm and worked for George operating the sawmill.

Each part of McCollough’s Inc. – factory and foundry – grew. And over time, McKinley, John, and Bob determined that it made sense to operate the factory and foundry as distinct and separate businesses. So, on July 18, 1955, the foundry split off from McCollough’s Inc. and became McCollough’s Foundry, Inc.

After WWII, the company could again find sources for lumber and therefore had no need for a saw mill. The mill was sold first to Walt Raven and later to a Mr. Campbell, a relative of Denny Tasler’s, who eventually owned the mill.
With John at the helm, McCollough’s Inc. continued W.A.’s original charter. In spite of losing the building twice to fire, the company ticked along. Over time, the company sold products under a variety of names, including Square Deal, Dura-Mac, Utility, Big Chief, and Thrif-T-Feed.

John had his grandfather’s “invention gene” and through the years at McCollough’s Inc. produced more than just livestock waterers and feeders. The company made swing sets, picnic table bases, the Rolfe tilting farm gates, and poultry feeding equipment to name just a few.

Some of the devastation from a fire at McCollough’s Inc. in the late 1940s.

From a 1968 catalog.
By the 1960s, McCollough’s Inc. had its own color printing department and produced all of its own advertising materials. It added IBM data processing equipment in 1967 and processed data for the company and many local and regional firms into the 1970s.

With the diversity of businesses, help was needed from the entire family. Leola helped John in the office. Daughter Connie Sue handled data processing; son Blaine managed the plant. Connie Sue’s husband, Jerry, handled sales and Blaine’s wife, Willa, worked in the office.

Leola Stone McCollough at work in the office.

Connie Sue McCollough Haidle (far right) training, from left, George Bloomberg, Roger Bottorf, and a city employee.
Jerry Haidle (left) and Blaine McCollough show a Dura-Mac Feeder.
By the early 1970s, open-air hog lots were waning and confinement units were becoming the preferred method of hog production. Due to this change in raising hogs, the feeders and waterers produced by McCollough’s Inc. were no longer in demand and by 1986 the company had ceased production.

Salesmen and customers of McCollough’s Inc. Rich Rasmussen is at far left; LeRoy Rasmussen is 3rd from right with his back to the camera. John McCollough is 2nd from the right.

LeRoy Rasmussen (right) with a customer.
Bob had a big job trying to bring McCollough’s Foundry up-to-date from an 1890s-style foundry to a modern foundry starting with changing the dirt floors to cement floors. With that job done, newer, better equipment, such as molding machines, was added.

In Webster City, there are many McColloughs; we spell it with an “o.” Anyone who is not a part of the clan could – and often did – get the McColloughs confused. In an effort to reduce some of the confusion over the McCollough businesses, Bob decided to change the name of the foundry. Nothing difficult about this process. Bob simply looked out his office window, saw the cross-street sign – Seneca / Stockdale – and renamed the foundry to Seneca Foundry, Inc. The new name was official on March 30, 1961.

Foundries changed more after WWII than in the previous 5000 years.
Many items made by Seneca Foundry are hidden inside other products. But some products are familiar to most everyone.

Seneca “labeled” Webster City; 210 street markers were put up in 1948. Bob McCollough is at the far right.

Grave markers for military veterans.

Manhole covers.
Over time the foundry was able to expand. New equipment, such as a rockover, a stripper, an overhead sand system, and a cupola furnace, was installed.

Employees at work at the original McCollough's Foundry.

The overhead sand system was a tremendous addition to the foundry since hand shoveling of sand was eliminated. Can you find the stripper in this picture?

Installation of a cupola furnace, 1951.
In 1962, Willis “Buck” Kistner was a supervisor at the Universal Foundry in Wisconsin. That foundry was working at capacity and needed help. At Buck’s suggestion, a portion of Universal’s business was offered to and accepted by Seneca Foundry.

The Coats Company (at one time a Fort Dodge, Iowa, industry) manufactured the tire changer pictured here. One of the parts for this product was designed by Gilbert Coats and Bob McCollough. When it came time to manufacture the part, however, Bob told Coats that Seneca could not produce the part which was made from ductile iron, a type of iron that Seneca did not yet use.

Coats eventually convinced Seneca to get into the ductile iron business. The ductile process was done in a rented building located across the street from the foundry. Local businesses - Osmundson Forge and Mertz Engineering - were also involved.

Employee Dave Haggard operates the Detroit Rocker used in making ductile iron castings.
Employees at work at the original foundry.
Franklin Manufacturing (today Electrolux) was expanding in the late '60s and early '70s and they needed land. That company was able to take over Stockdale Street from Des Moines Street east nearly to the foundry. This left Seneca Street as the only access to the foundry. Not a problem as long as no train was blocking the street.

In the evening of Monday, October 27, 1969, the Illinois Central railroad was switching train cars and was blocking Seneca Street. Meantime, a fire was growing inside the foundry. The fire department was able to get to the fire only by taking the old Waterworks road up the hill from White Fox Road to Seneca Street. But the damage was done.

Dave Hanson was part of the fire department when the fire broke out at Seneca Foundry. When the fire trucks were stopped by the train, Dave grabbed a couple of fire extinguishers, crawled under the train and ran to the fire. Unfortunately, the effort was futile – the fire needed much more than a couple of fire extinguishers.
It wasn’t long before Franklin Manufacturing, eventually White Consolidated Industries, again came calling. They now wanted as much land to the west of the foundry as they could get. Bob was unwilling to sell another small chunk of land but would sell the entire corner. The key to the sale was the price. Bob wanted enough money from the sale to cover a significant portion of the cost of building a new, modern foundry, long a dream of his. The sale was final in 1971 and the new Seneca Foundry building was underway on the west side of Webster City.

The new foundry nears completion

Employees load equipment onto a truck to move to the new foundry in 1972.
By the early 1970s, many of the foundry processes were automated. The extremely hard, manual labor was a thing of the past.

In the 1980s, the foundry added a second furnace, converted molding machines to the Hunter automatic molding machine and eventually the Hunter 20 molding machine which made much bigger molds. A core room was added as well as a room on the east side of the building.

Rich Roberts and Marv Stueland make molds. This equipment was eventually replaced by the Hunter 10 molding machine and the Hunter 20 was added later.
Pouring floor.

Employees pour hot iron into a transfer ladle.

Core room.
Bob’s son Kirk took over as president in the mid-90s. A big addition was completed on the north side of the building with space for office staff, a room for patterns and additional production space.
Roy Lobenhofer, a metallurgical consultant, began working with the foundry during this time period. His advice was instrumental in the continuing growth of the company. His service was invaluable to the quality of our products.

In 2003, Matt Anderson joined the company and implemented LEAN manufacturing which improved the efficiency of all aspects of the business.

From left: Matt Anderson, Milt Friedel, Dave Poland, Linda Davidson, and Kirk McCollough
August, 2005: Seneca brought in a pattern-maker and Top Notch Tooling (TNT) was born. Ken Stahmer runs TNT. About 60% of his work is for Seneca; outside companies fill up the remainder of TNT's time.
October, 2007: Seneca started another subsidiary, DesignCast Specialities. Employees of DesignCast were to market Seneca’s products. However, DesignCast morphed into a retail product arm of Seneca. Products designed here are made in China and imported. Who knew Seneca would join the international trade market and become an importer and wholesaler?
March, 2009: Another subsidiary is born. Gold Chip Machining machines Seneca castings.

Seneca Today: Our Employees

Dwight Trampel

Randy Asklund

Mary Stueland and Bill Espinoza
EMPLOYEES

Dan Paulson and Elijah Reels

Ken Algoe

Mike Firgard

Linda Davidson

Mike Jacobson

Dave Poland
W.A. McCollough was a man of great character. One story is that he worked hard on designing and pricing parts needed by the railroad. A buyer arrived at the plant and informed W.A. that his bid was competitive and the equipment very satisfactory. But one thing was missing – a “gratuity” for the railroad buyer. W.A. quietly asked the buyer to leave. The buyer was slow to pick up on W.A.’s demand until he was told to leave immediately or be thrown out. W.A.’s response to the kickback request cost the company a large order but not his integrity.

Products made by W.A. McCollough & Sons were best marketed directly to farmers. A “sales trip” usually took several days, but hotel rooms were not always available and of course the rooms cost money. So, W.A. retrofitted a Model T with two beds and a stove. W.A., his brother O.J., his son George, and other employees used this “camper” to travel from farm to farm.
Richey McCollough, Luther McCollough, and Jim Mertz sit atop a stack of feeding-trough racks at the Iowa State Fair.

Jim Mertz and his son Harry joined several of the McColloughs and employees in front of the factory following a heavy snow.
Special Day. W.A. McCollough was born in Bellville, Ohio, on July 24, 1858. Sixty-seven years later Bob McCollough was born, July 24, 1925. When Bob was just 4 years old his dad, McKinley, became ill and Bob was sent to stay for a time with his grandparents W.A. and Bertha. It was during this time, June, 1929, that W.A. took Bob to see the flooded Boone River, a trip that was polished off with a special treat – ice cream.

Birthdays for years meant a stop at Demond’s Café for ice cream to go with a piece of Grandma’s chocolate birthday cake. But the best birthday of all came in 1951 when Bob’s son, Kirk, was born on – you guessed it – July 24.
1936:
W.A. McCollough & Sons built a foundry this year – smack in the midst of the Great Depression. Financing was available only from private sources. There was no Small Business Administration (SBA), no forgivable loans, no grants from the state or federal governments, and the banks were still recovering from the Crash. W.A., George, and McKinley certainly had great vision and greater courage.

Original Foundry

Later version of Foundry.
George’s first wife, Ethel, died from influenza leaving behind 3-year-old Margaret, 1½-year-old Dick, and an 8-day-old baby (who died six months later). George, devastated, took the children to W.A. and Bertha. Laura was in nursing school in Marshalltown at the time, and she came home to help care for the children.
Margaret worked as a secretary at the factory for a short time after graduating from high school before attending business school (AIB) during the heart of the depression. W.A. McCollough & Sons covered her tuition, her folks covered her room, and she worked for her board.

Laura remained close to George's family through the years. Her children are, from left, Bill, Roger, and Bob Smith.
McKinley McCollough was head of the rationing board during WWII. April 1, 1945, the local newspaper (now the Daily Freeman Journal) wrote: “Hamilton County motorists were warned Saturday by Chairman McKinley McCollough of the war price and rationing board to ‘take it easy’ on their tires since the quota of grade 1 tires for April is 40% less than the figure for March.”
The Utility Poultry Feeder No. 125

The Utility Poultry Feeder No. 125 is constructed entirely from galvanized sheet steel. It is very durable, neat appearing and operates fine, eliminates waste and keeps the feed before the hens at all times. It is mounted on short angle iron legs which brings the feed outlet up eight inches from the floor, the feeder is twenty-four inches long, thirty-four inches high, eight inches wide at the top and sixteen inches wide at the bottom. It holds 125 pounds of mash and has feed openings on both sides the entire length. This feeder is equipped with a non-roost baffle that keeps it clean and sanitary all times. The Utility Poultry Feeder No. 125 weighs 25 lbs. and is shipped set up in cartons.

The Utility Hen Feeder No. 30

This feeder is 4' long, 8' wide, and 8' deep, and will hold a bushel of feed. It has three compartments, and is placed on a hop-up stand 12' high. The sloping cover is removed for filling and is so constructed with a division in the center that the chickens cannot get into it. Shipped knocked down in a standard crate of three, weighing 20 pounds.

The Utility 10-Gallon Poultry Waterer

This waterer is made entirely of galvanized steel and is simply a miniature 70 gallon hog waterer. We had such wonderful success with the hog waterer, we simply made it smaller for chickens. It works fine and holds enough water for a large flock. It is equipped with the same float and valve that is used in the hog waterer. It has a large lamp that keeps it from freezing. Users like it fine and claim there is none better. Shipped set up one to the crate, weighing 25 pounds.

Baby Chick Waterer No. 1

This little waterer holds one gallon and is easily cleaned and filled. Note particularly that the top is flat. By having the top flat, the user can turn a number of them upside down on the floor and fill them all with a bucket or hose, without holding them. It is impossible to make a deep enough baffle to keep the little chicks off the top, so it is designed more for handy filling than anything else. It is not necessary to have part of it with your hands or balance it in a corner to fill it. Simply turn it upside down and pour the water in. Shipped nested in standard crates of 12, weighing 20 pounds to the crate.

Nos. 15 and 25 Utility Chick Feeders

The No. 15 and 25 are made in two and four foot lengths, holding 12 and 1 bushel, respectively. The cover lifts off easily. The entire top is removable. This makes it rainproof and keeps the chicks from scratching the feed out. It is made entirely of galvanized steel. Shipped set up in crates of 6, No. 15 weighing 30 pounds and No. 25 weighing 50 pounds.

Nos. 10 and 20 Utility Chick Feeders

The Utility Chick Feeder is made in two and four foot lengths, and is designed more for the smaller chicks where feeding space is required more than capacity. This is a wonderful little feeder; waste proof and can be easily cleaned. The top lifts off for this purpose, as well as for filling. It is made entirely of galvanized steel. Shipped set up in crates of 12, the No. 10 weighing 25 pounds and the No. 20, 70 pounds.
Mackmen

1944

McCollough's Inc. had a company softball team called the Mackmen – the “Macks” for short.

One of McCollough’s Inc.‘s employees, Peg Leg Roe (so called because one of his legs was prosthetic) was quite a character. One day at work, he was operating a saw and accidentally cut off his thumb. But to make a bad situation worse, his amputated thumb fell to the floor right next to Peg Leg’s little bulldog that accompanied him everywhere. Apparently thinking the thumb was for him, the bulldog grabbed it up and took off with Peg Leg in hot pursuit.

By 1946, the team had incorporated many returning servicemen. Do you recognize anyone in this picture?
1950s:

Bob Hayes, a truck driver, was sitting in the offices of the local grain co-op waiting for work. Bob McCollough was in need of a driver and a truck and stopped in at the co-op to ask whether any of the fellows there waiting for work would be interested in hauling castings. Bob Hayes took up the offer and ended up hauling castings for the foundry for more than 50 years.

McCollough’s Inc. is believed to have manufactured the first pontoon boat ever made in the U.S.
Seneca Foundry has won various awards over the years including safety awards, and the Quality Recognition Award.
from pigs to pig iron.

It has been quite a journey for W.A. and his family, these past 100 years. The future is unknown, of course, but we expect Seneca Foundry will be going strong for many years to come.