

Svea Mutual Insurance records, 1865-1970s

Size: 20.75 linear feet, 15 boxes (14 oversized)

Acquisition: Donated to SSIRC in 1994.

Access: The Collection is open for research. A limited amount of photocopies may be requested via mail.

Processed by: Christina Johansson

Control Num.: SSIRC I/O:45

History

Svenska Brandförsäkringsbolaget Svea was formed in Altona, Illinois in 1868 by Swedish immigrant farmers in Knox and Henry County. After many of the farmers had been approached to purchase insurances by American agents they were not able to understand, they felt the need start their own company with agents that spoke Swedish. Svea's first meeting was held in Altona on January 23, 1869, at which time the by-laws were approved and incorporated. The company initially offered a fire and lightning policy to Swedish immigrants and their descendants only.

In 1872 *Svea*, was merged with another similar Swedish insurance company in Andover, namely *Svenska Brandstods-Compagniet*, which had been formed in 1865 under the same circumstances as *Svea Brandförsäkringsbolag*. *Svea* expanded its business in 1880 to include all Scandinavian immigrants and their descendants in Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties. In 1916, the policy was extended to accept Scandinavians by intermarriage. Tornado and cyclone insurances were also introduced at that time. In 1920, the by-laws were amended again to include all persons regardless of race, color or previous nationality.

Svea Mutual Insurance Company still insures farmers in western Illinois and presently has its headquarters in Orion, Illinois.

Scope and Content

The material includes insurance policy registers, cashbooks, and minutes from annual meetings from the 1860s to the 1970s, with some gaps. The policy registers provides the names and addresses of the policy owner and the specific items included in the policy. In most cases, farmers had their personal home and household goods as well as all farm dwellings, animals and equipment covered in one policy. Detailed information fires and/or other claims were discussed

and approved at the time of the annual board meetings and recorded in the minutes. The initial by-laws, the company charter and the minutes up 1899 are in the Swedish language.

The material gives a good insight to how a group of Swedish immigrants shaped their own organization and how it evolved into a successful American financial institution in the 1920s.

Box 1

Folders 1-10

1. Finding Aid, history of the company
2. Statues and by-laws, in Swedish
3. loose-leaf insurance applications, misc.
4. letters to "appraisers" from secretary C.A. Asplund.
5. Correspondence, misc. and plat book for Henry County
6. two photographs, not identified
7. 2 photographs, one group photo of, only person identified is C.A. Asplund
8. Minutes 1868-1895, in Swedish
9. Minutes 1899-1915, in Swedish
10. Annual Reports, 1818-1965

Listing of Account and Insurance Books

(The ledgers are arranged chronologically as far as possible)

Box 1

1. Minutes in Swedish for *Svenska Brandstods-Compagniet* of Mercer and Henry Counties, Illinois; 1860s-1870s; with index of rotena 375 p. includes also annual reports from 1866-1871
2. Lynn Township, 1865-1879, 400 p., with personal name index
3. Journal, Henry County Insurance Record Book, index included, 1886-1904, 634 p., organized by townships: Lynn, Andover, Oxford, Western, Osco, Geneseo, Clover, Cambridge, and Kewanee
4. Knox County Record of Insured Property, index included, 1880-1906, 636p., includes Walnut Grove, Victoria, Copely, Rio, Ontario, Sparta, Knoxville, Galesburg, Henderson, Weller, and Galva
5. Fire Insurance for Henry County, index included, 1896-1906, 500 p., includes Western, Osco, Geneseo, Cambridge, Clover, Oxford, Munson, and Cornwall

Box 2

6. Storm Insurance of Henry County, index included, 1896-1912, 601 p., includes Lynn, Andover, Western, Geneseo, Cambridge, Osco, Weller, Galva, Kewanee, and Munson
7. Storm Insurance for Knox County, index included 1896-1912, 601 p., includes Walnut Grove,

Lynn, Galesburg, Henderson, Victoria, Copely, Knoxville, Sparta, Ontario, Rio, Oxford, and Clover

8. Svea Insurance Records, Mercer County, 1896-1914, 300 p., includes Richland Grove, North Henderson, Rivola, Aledo, and Green

9. Application Book for Knoxville District, Knox County, 1887-1927, 270 p. with gaps, index included

10. Fire Insurance Records from Knox County, 1896-1907, 601 p., index includes Walnut Grove, Galesburg, Henderson, Victoria, Sparta, Copely, Knoxville, Ontario, Rio, and Lynn

Box 3

(11. Accounts, early 1900s, 184 p.—missing/labeled incorrectly ?)

12. Fire and Lightning Records, 1870-1923; 283 p. In Swedish and English

13. Records from Western Township, Henry County, 1865-1899; include also by-laws and accounts in Swedish, 257p.

14. Windstorm and Tornado Records; receipts and payments, 1896-1922; 139 p.

Box 4

15. Fire Insurance Records 1880-1945, 126 p., index included.

16. Appraiser's Records from Galesburg Township, Knox Co., and Colona-Edford Townships, Henry Co. 1889-1938; 125 p.

17. Fire and Tornado Insurance Records from Knox Co.; 1894-1924; 125p.

18. Insurance Records for Walnut Township in Knox County, arranged by policy number; 1880-1918; 268 p., index included

19. Insurance Records for Sparta Township. Knox Co.; 1888-1914; index included, arranged by policy number, 160 p.

Box 5

20. Fire Accounts, 1888-1948, 125 p. no index.

21. Fire Insurance Records, 1891-1947; index included; 126 p.

22. Storm Insurance Records, Victoria Township, Knox County, 1896-1919; index: 184 p.

23. Storm Insurance Records for Sparta Township, Knox County; 1896-1943; 84 p.; index included.

24. Fire Accounts for Victoria, Knox County; 1884-1910; 84 p; index included.

25. Fire Account Records, 1904-1919; 184 p.; index included.

Box 6

26. Receipt Book from 1910-1920

27. Fire Accounts from Sparta Township, Knox County; 1894-1952; 125 p.; and index.

28. Fire Lightning and Tornado Accounts from Atkinson Township, Henry County, 1885-1966; 125 p; Index.

29. Accounts for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1900-1917; 504 p.; no index

30. Fire and Tornado Accounts for Phenix Township, Henry Co., 1888-1966; 125 p., index included.

Box 7

31. Tornado Register for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1900-1928, index by township and county; 300 p.

32. Fire and Lightning Register for Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties, 1918-1928; 501 p., indexed by township and county

33. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties, 1928-1936; 502 p., index by township and county

34. Tornado Insurance Records for Henry, Mercer, Knox County, 1928-1943 502 p., index by township and county

35. Cash and Account Book, 1934-1940, 301p, Index by township and county

36. Tornado and Cash Records for Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties, 1923-1953; 231 p., no index

Box 8

37. Appraiser's Cash Accounts for Henry, Knox, and Mercer, 1928-1933, index by county and township, 496 p

38. Cashbook for Accounts, Knox and Mercer Counties; 1941-1969; 500 p.

39. Fire and Lightning Cash Book for Knox, Henry, and Mercer Counties, 1923-1953; 289 p.; index by county and township.

40. Tornado and Windstorm Insurance Records for Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties, 1944-1948; index by county and township.

Box 9

41. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1943-1947, 272 p., no index, arranged by policy number.

42. Fire and Lightning Accounts for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1947-1951, 300 p, no index.

43. Combination Policies arranged by policy number for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1955-1962; 300 p., no index

44. Combination Policies arranged by policy number for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1962-1966; 298 p., no index.

45. Tornado Insurance Records, index by county and township, 1949-1953, 608 p.

46. Tornado Insurance Records, index by county and township, 1953-1957, 608 p.

47. Tornado Insurance Records, index by county and township, 1958-1962, 608 p

Box 10

48. Fire Insurance Records, 1943-1955; index; 300 p.

49. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1943-1946 606 p., index by county and township.

50. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties, 1937-1942, 504 p., index by county and township.
51. Fire and Cash Accounts 1954-1969; no index; 300 p.
52. Tornado and Cash Accounts, 1954-1967, 300 p.; no index

Box 11

53. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1958-1962, 594 p.; no index
54. Tornado Insurance Account Book for Henry, Mercer, and Knox Co. 1962-1967, 600 p.
55. Cash Book of Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1967, 600 p.

Box 12

56. Fire and Lightning Account, 1953-1957; Henry, Knox, Mercer Counties, 607 p.
57. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #1
58. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #2
59. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #4
60. Fire and Lightning Policy Register: Book #5
61. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #6
62. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #7
63. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #8
64. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; Book #9
65. Fire and Lightning Policy Register; 1936-1939, Book #10
66. Fire and Lightning, 1939-1941, no index; Book #11
67. Fire and Lightning Applications, 1941-1943; no index; Book #12
68. Fire and Lightning; 1951-1955; Book #15. 300 p
69. Fire and Lightning Policy Registers; no date. Book #3
70. Windstorm and Tornado Policy Register; 1933-1939; Book #1. 96 p

Box 13

71. Windstorm and Tornado Policy Register; 1939-1944; no index; Book #2.
72. Windstorm and Tornado Policy Register; 1944-1952; no index; Book #3. 298 p.
73. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1947-1950; 612 p.
74. Fire and Tornado Records for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1966-1967; 300 p.
75. Fire and Lightning Records for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties, 1950-1953, 604 p.
76. Fire Accounts for Lynn, Andover, Weller and Galva Townships, Henry County, 1880-1905; 500 p.; index

Box 14

77. Fire and Tornado Register for Henry, Knox and Mercer Counties; 1953-1966; 300 p.
78. Fire and Tornado Register for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1967-1973; 604 p.
79. Svea Payroll, 1971-1976
80. Svea Payroll, 1976-1978

81. Svea Check book

82. Fire and Lightning Register for Henry, Knox, and Mercer Counties; 1963-1966; 600 p.