

SULLIVAN INC HISTORY

"If it's grain, we'll bid". That's the motto of an eighty-four year business in Ulysses. However, had it not been for a strong faith in Grant County, Dan C. and Jerry P. Sullivan might as easily have been bidding on cattle in Arizona.

During World War I, Mary R. Sullivan convinced her son, Dan, to plant 30 acres of grass pasture to wheat. That 30 acres produced 1,000 bushels of wheat, sold for \$1.25 a bushel. It seemed much easier than handling cattle.

When Dan's brother, Jerry, returned from the Army, they realized the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad coming to Ulysses would split the rangeland with wheat growing "nesters", as the cowboys called the farmers. It also would make it easier to market grain and cattle.

Thus began many discussions between Mrs. Sullivan, Dan, and Jerry - to stay in Grant County or begin a new cattle business in southwestern United States, away from the wheat farmers. Mrs. Sullivan favored staying; her sons weren't so sure.

Finally, after conversations with a grain elevator operator in Moscow, Kansas, the brothers began to lean toward the grain business. According to the veteran grainman, the main thing was learning to load grain into a boxcar. Three hours later, when Dan had scooped more grain than he cared to and was dusty inside and out, cattle were sounding wonderful. However, when the elevator operator offered to go into business with the Sullivan brothers, their grain business began. They shipped the first boxcar of wheat from Ulysses on a work train in 1922, paying 80 cents a bushel.

Three months later, the wooden elevator building was completed, and the outside man sold his interest, making Dan C., Jerry P., and Mary R. Sullivan equal partners.

After several learning years, including one where the brothers had to take an 8,000 bushel loss, thanks to grease smut, Jerry suggested building another elevator at the Hickok switch, eight miles east of Ulysses. The wooden elevator was built in 1926. This kept Jerry scooping grain at Hickok and Dan scooping at Ulysses.

In 1928, Sullivan Brothers Grain built a wooden elevator at Milepost 29, or Sullivan Spur, six miles west of Ulysses. With a 22,000 bushel capacity at MP 29, Sullivan Brothers could handle 44,000 bushels at the three stations.

After Mrs. Sullivan's death in 1929, there were two good crop years. Jerry and Dan could see a storage elevator would be a good investment. They could not predict, however, the severe drought and economic depression ahead. The contract was let for the storage elevator in Ulysses in 1930; the building was completed in 1931. An open house dedicated the concrete structure, which held 200,000 bushels, in 1931.

During the dust bowl (1933-1936), Sullivans were forced to close all but the Ulysses terminal. Elevator properties became almost worthless. Dan and Jerry were forced to re-evaluate their decision to become grainmen many times as the dust blew across empty fields.

The dust storms subsided, though, and grain prices rose. In 1946, looking at piles of wheat on the ground, Sullivan Brothers again decided to build. They added 400,000 bushels of storage space to the Ulysses plant, making a 600,000 bushel facility.

Also, on May 1, 1946, Sullivan Brothers Grain became Sullivan, Inc. Stockholders are members of both brothers' families.

Back in 1934, Dan and Jerry bought a 10,000 bushel elevator on the main ATSF Railroad line at Coolidge, Kansas, near the Arkansas River. Later, they added 135,000 bushels of flat round-top grain storage. In 1948, the contract was let for a 255,000 bushel capacity concrete facility there. Still not enough, a 450,000 bushel addition was provided in 1950.

Always expanding, Sullivan Investments was formed on April 14, 1951. Such investments included mainly farmland and rangeland. Always interested in cattle, Sullivan Investments, Inc. was the outlet for a large cattle operation managed mainly by Jerry. The corporation dissolved in 1976.

Sullivan Realty, Inc. surfaced in July 1960. Holdings included Valley View addition and the San Man Motel. Sullivan Realty, Inc. dissolved in 1972.

Through the years, Sullivan, Inc. continued to expand the four stations. Concrete additions were built at the Ulysses plant in 1954 and 1958. Two round-top storage buildings were added in 1958 and 1960. Total storage became 3,082,000 bushels. The office staff moved into a new office in 1959.

Concrete storage was added to Hickok and Milepost 29 in 1955. More roundtop grain storage was added to the Coolidge plant in 1958 and 1959. In 1982, total bushel capacities for the three terminals were: Hickok - 741,000 bushels; Milepost - 201,000 bushels; Coolidge - 1,805,000 bushels. The

addition of commercial feed lines lets Sullivan, Inc. serve the farm wife with a few chickens, the 4-H member with a hog project, and the commercial feedlot.

Dan C. and Jerry P. Sullivan were active in Sullivan, Inc. for many years. Dan served as president of the Kansas Grain and Feed Dealers Association from 1941 to 1944.

Dan C. Sullivan passed away in 1964. Jerry P. Sullivan passed away in 1973. The legacy they left behind in Sullivan, Inc. has continued to flourish through the years into a thriving grain business. "If it's grain, we'll bid", and will continue bidding for many more years to come.

In 2005, Sullivan, Inc. sold the Coolidge Elevator to the Scoular Company.

In 2006, Sullivan, Inc. became part of the G. C. Co-op. Garden City Co-op purchased the five elevators remaining along with the feed and crop divisions. Upon buying the elevators, Garden City Co-op sold the Kendall Elevator to the Syracuse Co-op.

In 2008, Sullivan, Inc. dissolved after having been in business for 86 years.