

THE UNION DAIRY COMPANY INDIANAPOLIS

By Steve Lang

The Union Dairy Company was in business from 1910 to 1917 in Indianapolis, IN. Their products included milk, cream, eggs and butter. The Dairy's leading brands were "Red Clover" cream and "Day's Creamery Butter." The company was founded by three businessmen from different backgrounds.

Elbert H. Day or E.H. Day owned Day's Creamery in Carmel, Indiana, just north of Indianapolis. Elbert was the oldest son of Mahlon Day who was an early pioneer in Hamilton County, Indiana, where Carmel is located.

Leonard Cosand was a bookkeeper by trade and worked for Chandler & Taylor Company of Indianapolis where they made engines, boilers and sawmill machinery. He left his job at Chandler & Taylor in 1909 to become a partner with Jesse Kellum in the Kellum & Cosand Dairy located on the Northeast corner of Baltimore Avenue and 31st Street.

Jesse Kellum had started out with R.W. Furnas back in 1899 as a partner in the Indianapolis Street Cleaning Company. Furnas moved from street cleaning to the ice cream business, incorporating the R.W. Furnas Ice Cream Company on September 13, 1899, with Kellum and J. Martin Antrim as partners. Kellum worked with Furnas for 14 years as the Plant Manager. Kellum left Furnas and tried his hand at Real Estate with Carter-Kellum Company in 1907.

On Friday, October 21, 1910, The Union



Amber Quart, Union Dairy, Indianapolis with embossed Clover Leaf Milk Bottle (Photo courtesy of John Parsons)

Dairy Company of Indianapolis, the consolidation of the Kellum and Cosand Dairy Company, dealers in buttermilk and cream from Indianapolis and Day's Creamery, filed articles of incorporation with a capital stock of \$10,000 to manufacture and deal in butter and dairy products. Principals for the corporation were Elbert H. Day, President, Jesse Kellum, Treasurer, and Leonard Cosand, Secretary. The Union Dairy was located at 710-714 East 24th Street on the northside of Indianapolis.

The Dairy Company trademarked their bottle embossing on March 21, 1911. Their slug plate embossing contained a four-leaf clover, and was used continuously until they closed.

On June 28, 1911, *The Indianapolis Star* reported that four local dairymen were convicted of violating city health ordinances by selling milk containing visible dirt and two ice cream manufacturers were found guilty of violating the pure food law. Representing Union Dairy, Jesse Kellum was fined \$10 and costs. Also convicted was George Bixler of Bixler Bros Dairy, John Weber of The Weber Dairy and Harry Wischmeier of the Mary F Wischmeier Dairy, all of Indianapolis.

During the March 1913 Carmel, Indiana floods, boats were being rowed up and down the brick-paved streets. The dairy was one of many businesses surrounded by water. The Union Dairy was the only place trying to do business according to



Clear Quart, E.H. Day, Carmel Indiana milk bottle (Photo courtesy of John Parsons)



Clear Quart, Furnas Indianapolis milk bottle (Photo courtesy of John Parsons)



Clear Half Pint, Jessup & Antrim Indianapolis milk bottle (Photo courtesy of John Parsons)

E.H. DAY, JESSE KELLUM, L.E. COSAND,
Pres. Treas. Sec.

The Union Dairy Co.
— INC. —
INDIANAPOLIS

SELLING—

Fresh Pasteurized Milk
Fancy Creamery Butter
Best Country Eggs

Our Country Plants are located at
CARMEL, NOBLESVILLE and
LITTLE CHICAGO.

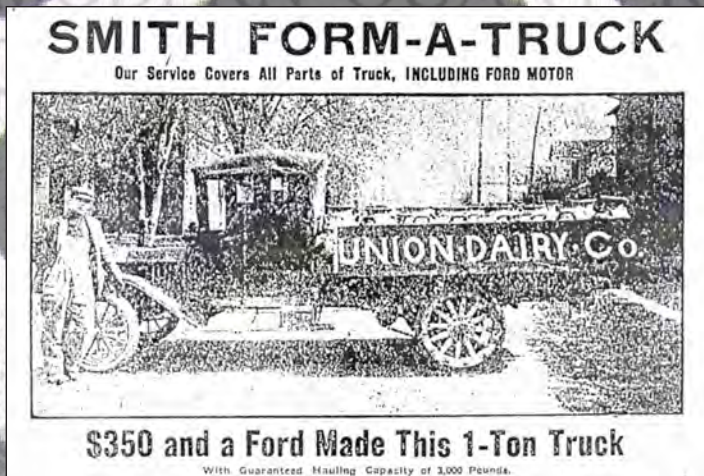
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December 31, 1913, Indianapolis Star Newspaper advertisement, shows The Union Dairy Co. is serving three communities.

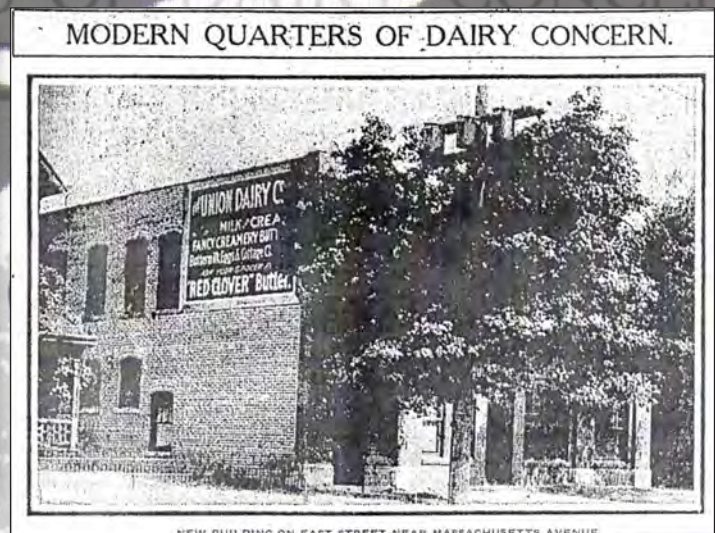
the *Indianapolis News* on March 25th.

In 1914, the Union Dairy Company, who had outgrown its 24th St operation, decided to move and build a 2-story brick building at 537-541 N. East Street near Massachusetts Avenue. The new location was a modern plant with York ice and refrigeration, automatic bottle filler and capper, as well as the latest dairy machinery. Twin brothers Mathias and Simeon Watson and Abraham Charles were hired to assist with the dismantling and moving of the business to the new location. The three men were working inside the old wooden ice box removing one wall and starting on the removal of the second wall when the lid or top gave way. Reported by the *Indianapolis Star* on Monday, August 14th, 1914, Mathias was crushed and died at the City Hospital. Simeon was badly bruised, but was able to go home. Abraham had fractured ribs, teeth knocked out, body crushed and was insensible at the City Hospital. Later in November 1914, there was a scare concerning the dairy cow herds that supplied milk for the Union Dairy. There was the possibility of Mouth and Hoof Disease infecting the cows. No indications were found by the inspectors in Indianapolis, Noblesville, Little Chicago or Westfield. Even with the move and the possible infected dairy herds, 1914 was a good year for the dairy who sold several thousand pounds of butter each week and thousands of gallons of milk and cream.

On Wednesday, January 19th, 1916, The *Indianapolis News* reported the Union Dairy Company pleaded guilty on Tuesday to a charge of selling adulterated milk. The milk contained visible dirt and was sold to Grocer, George Madinger. He then sold the milk to a customer, Fred Howe, who happened to be an inspector for the Indianapolis



Union Dairy Company delivery truck circa 1917 from Indianapolis Star



New Union Dairy building near East St. and Mass Ave. in 1914 courtesy of Indianapolis Star

Board of Health with a sworn affidavit. The dairy was found guilty and fined \$10 plus costs.

The Union Dairy Company ran an advertisement in the *Indianapolis News* on December 21st, 1916, offering their Davis Rotary Milk bottler/capper and Davis bottle washer for sale. On July 24th, 1917, the Dairy was put in receivership with assets of \$15,000 and liabilities of \$25,000. Jesse Kellum requested the suit to try to recover \$700 advanced to the company. The attorney handling the receivership was J. Martin Antrim who Kellum worked with back in 1899 at the Furnas Ice Cream Company. Small world.

Partner E.H. Day continued farming in Hamilton County afterward, and was a board member of the Carmel Telephone Company. He passed on July 1st, 1937, at the age of 69 and is buried in the Carmel (Old Richlands Friends) Cemetery.

After the Union Dairy went under, Leonard Cosand was listed as an officer with the Hamilton Candy Company of Noblesville in 1924.

He passed away on June 6th, 1933, at the age of 55.

Jesse Kellum, who was a graduate of Earlham College, took up farming near Cambridge City, Indiana, and lived to be 81 years old.

Several of the aforementioned names in this article owned or operated many other dairies in the Indianapolis area.



Clear Half Pint, Union Dairy co. Indianapolis bottle (Photo Courtesy of John Parsons)



Clear Pint, Union Dairy Co. Indianapolis milk bottle

