

BUSH

HATCHERY and MILLING CO.

204 S. Franklin Street • DWIGHT, ILLINOIS

The Bush Hatchery and Milling Company opened in Dwight in 1929. Mr. Lloyd W. Bush came to Dwight to locate his new business from St. Anne, where he had been employed as the Superintendent of the High School and the Grade School. Mr. Bush also taught Ag in St. Anne and coached the basketball team.

He made arrangements to occupy the old A & H Ice Cream company building next to Boyers' Garage. He installed an incubator and went into business. During the first two years, Mr. Bush spent only a part of his time in Dwight and the rest of the time as a feed salesman for Allied Mills in Iowa. After those two years he quit his Feed Salesman's job and moved to Dwight. Several years after the Hatchery business was started he decided to make his own brand of feed. An interesting carry-over from his first feed operation was the hand-made wooden feed mixer that he used at first. The big round circular ends for this home-made mixer are now being used for the ends for the big lottery drum, which is used for almost all of Dwights' big drawings.

In 1935, the Bush Hatchery opened up a store in Morris, Illinois to serve as a pick-up place for hatching eggs. It was operated by Bob Dippon. This store was closed after the hatchery season ended and was reopened the next year. In 1937 the outlet was opened on a full time basis. George Wagner was made store manager of the Bush Hatchery in Morris at that time. In 1939 the Kankakee Store was opened on the west side of Kankakee under the management of Jesse Palmer, who is still the manager there. In 1945 the store in Streator was opened up under the management of Cliff Bossert who is now the manager of the Morris Store. In 1946 the new Feed Mill was

completed on the east side of Dwight on Route 47. In all the 25 years that the Bush Hatchery has been in operation, there has been some building project going on almost every summer. For instance, in the location downtown, the business was started in a room about 21 feet long and 65 feet wide. The Variety Store which was located in the cement block building just south of the original room, went out of business to make room for the first Feed Mill. Later on the state trucks were asked to move out of the 50 X 50 foot building behind the original room, to make room for the incubators. Then there were three more rooms added on the south and east sides of the original building. The last addition at this location is the 50 X 33 foot room which is being added in the front as a new salesroom and custom mill set-up. When the business started 25 years ago, Mr. Bush and Mr. Amidon were the sole employees--at the present time there are approximately 35 people working for the Bush Hatchery during the peak of their hatching season. The growth of the business over the last 25 years has been gradual but constant. Although there were only a few thousand chickens put out in those first years, since 1952 the chick production has been over a million chicks each year.

The Bush Hatchery owes a debt of gratitude to the Dwight community for its wonderful support and cooperation through the years. Without the support of the hatchery flockowners in this area and the thousands of farmers who have been customers, it would have been impossible for the Bush Hatchery ever to have reached its present size by its 25th anniversary. The support the company received in the communities around Kankakee, Morris, and Streator has also been of great importance. The Bush family and all of the Bush employees look back over the last 25 years with a deep feeling of humility toward all those people who have helped them in their progress. Twenty-five years is only a land mark, which by coincidence falls on Dwight's centennial year.