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Ogilvie Flour Mills Company.

The Ogilvie Flour Mills Company has now developed into something more than a milling company. It has a very extensive system of country elevators in the North-West, the facilities of which have doubtless been fully taxed during the past twelve months. Twenty-one buildings have been added to this system of elevators during the past year, making a total of 168 elevators owned by the Company, with a storage capacity of 5,385,000 bushels and covering a very wide area of territory. With terminal and country elevators combined, the Company's total wheat storage capacity now amounts to 10,335,000 bushels.

That this growth in interests other than milling is in some measure responsible for the satisfactory profits shown by the Company for the year ended August 31st last is shown in the remarks made by Mr. W. A. Black (managing director) at the annual meeting. An increase in returns from this source, together with fortunate purchases of wheat and a reduction in interest charges owing to the accumulation of capital investment in the business out of surplus earnings contributed, Mr. Black stated, to the favorable showing. Net profits, after payment of bond interest and an undisclosed provision to meet the Business Profits War Tax up to August 31st, 1916, are declared as \$774,270. This is equal to earnings of 25.37 per cent. on the common stock after payment of the preferred dividend or about 18 per cent. when the Company's reserve and surplus are taken into account. It will be in recollection that last year exceptional profits were made by the Company through the sale of wheat not required for milling purposes at a large advance over the purchase price, a transaction which resulted in the creation at one stroke of a reserve fund of \$1,250,000. It is therefore evident that the undisclosed War Tax runs into very large figures.

Of these net profits of \$774,270, dividends on the preferred stock and dividends and bonus on the common stock absorb \$440,000. The common stock, in addition to the standard 8 per cent. dividend received this year a bonus of 4 per cent. This is an extremely conservative distribution in view of the earning performances of the last two years. The balance after payment of dividends, \$334,270,

is carried to the credit of surplus which is accordingly raised to \$846,331.

Following is the profit and loss statement in comparison with the two previous years:—

	1916.	1915.	1914.
Profits.....		*\$1,060,594	\$581,943
Bond interest.....		141,000	132,000
Net profits.....	\$774,270	\$1,519,594	\$449,943
Preferred Div.....	140,000	140,000	140,000
Available for Com.....	\$634,270	\$1,379,594	\$309,943
Percentage.....	25.37	55.18	12.39
Common Dividend.....	300,000	200,000	200,000

*Including special profits of \$1,059,813.

† \$1,250,000 placed to contingent account.

‡ After payment of bond interest and reservation for Business Profits War Tax.

The balance sheet shows a strong position. Current assets at \$4,288,878 compare with current liabilities of \$1,848,862, in the latter being included this year dividends to date as well as bond interest. Cash is somewhat lower than a year ago but high in comparison with previous years at \$486,407. Bills and accounts receivable are \$1,720,319 against \$1,514,889. Stocks of wheat, flour, etc., have more than doubled, being \$1,460,873 against \$694,452. The auditors note that these "are valued on a safe and conservative basis taking into account the unusually high price of wheat and the contingencies of the markets." Investments are also more than doubled, being \$593,904 against \$224,028. The comparison of current assets with two previous years is as follows:—

	1916.	1915.	1914.
Cash.....	\$ 486,407	\$ 667,820	\$ 54,685
Bills and accounts receivable.....	1,720,319	1,514,889	1,618,414
Wheat, etc., on hand.....	1,460,873	694,452	1,234,379
Investments, stable plant, etc.....	621,279	269,290	246,520
	\$4,288,878	\$3,146,451	\$3,153,998

While the wheat crop in the Northwest is less than half of last year's, said Mr. Black at the shareholders' meeting, the yield as an average is little short of what it usually is, and the prices are very much higher. The high prices were in effect before the farmers had actually marketed the new crop, so that they will reap the full benefit, and the return to them as a whole will be little, if any, less than the previous year.

BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

In consequence of its enlarging interests the directors of the Bank of British North America have considered it expedient to appoint an advisory committee in Canada, and at their request Sir Herbert Ames, M.P., Mr. W. R. Miller, and Mr. W. R. MacInnes have consented to act in that capacity.

The Merchants Bank of Canada announces that it has opened a new branch at Grand'Mere, Que., under the management of Mr. J. A. Paquin.

The Bank of Montreal in declaring its last quarterly dividend for the current year also announces the half-yearly bonus of one per cent. which has been in force since 1912. The bonuses make the total distribution for the year 12 per cent.