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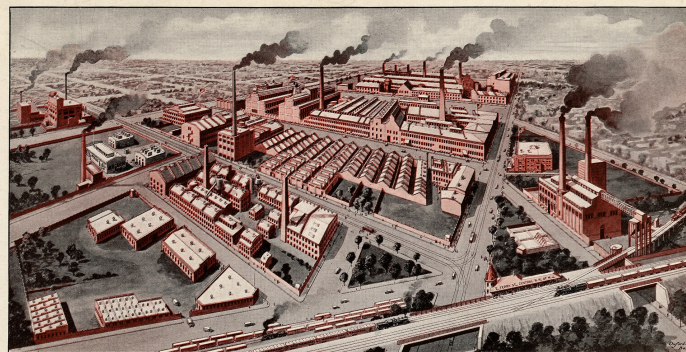
*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the Celluloid Corporation Records

NMAH.AC.0009

Robert S. Harding and E.S. Etuk

1985 July 11



On January 30, 1871, The Celluloid Manufacturing Company was organized at Albany, under the laws of the State of New York.  
In 1872 the business, then a very small one, was transferred from Albany to Newark, New Jersey, which city has remained the home of The Celluloid Company ever since. The first factory was in a small building on Mechanic Street.  
In 1875, this first small plant was replaced by a new and larger factory, followed in succeeding years with many new buildings and additions, until today the Company's plant covers twelve blocks in the city of Newark, with some twenty-nine acres of floor space.  
On November 25th, 1890, the present The Celluloid Company, was formed by the merger of The Celluloid Manufacturing Company with the several subsidiary companies that had been organized to fabricate and market the material made by the Manufacturing Company, thereby centralizing the manufacture and fabrication of "Celluloid" which has remained the standard pyroxylin plastic material of the world to this day.

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	Celluloid Corporation Records
<b>Date:</b>	1883 - 1943
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0009
<b>Creator:</b>	Hyatt, John Wesley (inventor) Celluloid Corporation. (Creator)
<b>Extent:</b>	3 Cubic feet (3 boxes )
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The collection consists of trade catalogs, price lists, notebooks, promotional literature, patents, a salesman's kit (including samples), photographs and prints of plant buildings, personnel, celluloid molds and by-products documenting the Celluloid Corporation.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Immediate source of acquisition unknown.

### Provenance

Transferred from the Division of Physical Sciences (now the Division of Medicine and Science) on April 5, 1983.

### Processing Information

Processed by Robert S. Harding, archivist and E.S. Etuk, 1985.

### Preferred Citation

Celluloid Corporation Records, 1883-1943, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at [archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu) or 202-633-3270.

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## Biographical / Historical

The Celluloid Manufacturing Company is the original corporate name of the present Celluloid Corporation. It was founded in 1872 to present celluloid to the world. The word "celluloid" was registered as a trademark in 1873 by its inventor, John Wesley Hyatt. This registration marked the beginnings of the plastic industry. The first efforts were directed to supplying the dental trade with plates for artificial teeth. In 1882 the corporation began to use amyl acetate as a nitro cellulose solvent, which paved the way for the development of the lacquer industry. In 1910 non flammable "safety film" was made from cellulose acetate. In 1912 the corporation invented Lumarith, a true thermoplastic, meaning it could be molded or cast into any conceivable form without undergoing a chemical change. It came in powder form (granules) for the new injection molding processes. It was injected into the mold and in a matter of seconds the finished article was ejected.

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## Scope and Contents

These records are divided into four separate series: Series 1: Publications, 1891-1935, including news clippings, notebooks, promotional literature, and patents; Series 2: Trade Catalogs, 1883-1928, including price lists; Series 3: Salesman's Kits, 1937-1943, including samples; and Series 4: Photographs, undated, including photo prints of plant buildings, personnel, celluloid molds and other by-products.

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## Arrangement

The collection is divided into four series.

**Series 1: Publications, 1891-1935**

**Series 2: Trade Catalogs, 1883-1928**

**Series 3: Salesman's Kits, 1937-1943**

**Series 4: Photographs, undated**

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Celluloid
- Chemistry
- Physical sciences
- Plastics -- Molding

Types of Materials:

- Catalogs
- Notebooks
- Patents
- Price lists

Names:

Celluloid Manufacturing Company.  
Nepera Chemical Company.

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Publications, 1891 - 1935

Box 1, Folder 1      [Boehmer, George H. \(General Sales Manager\) Celluloid, Grand Daddy of 'Em All. Newark, New Jersey: Celluloid Corporation \(2 copies\) History of development of Celluloid and the Celluloid Corporation, 1935](#)

Box 1, Folder 1      [\[Illustration of Celluloid Factory buildings: section of booklet page\], 1935](#)  
1 Item (Ink on paper.; 2.7" x 4.3".)  
Language:      English.  
Notes:      AC0009-0000002.tif (AC Scan No.)  
Illustration on page 6 of Celluloid - Grand Daddy of 'Em All, by George H. Boehmenr.  
Names:      Celluloid Corporation.  
Topic:      Plastics industry and trade

Box 1, Folder 2      Lady on Sleigh; History of the different divisions of Celluloid Corporation, undated

Box 3, Folder 7      Records of Experiments, pp. 1-250, 1891-1893

Box 3, Folder 8      Amerith and the Arch Line, 1925

Box 3, Folder 9      Newark Newspaper Clippings on Celluloid Corporation

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## Series 2: Trade Catalogs, 1883-1928

Box 1, Folder 3	Celluloid Brush Co., 313 & 315 Broadway, New York, Celluloid Novelty Company, 313 & 315 Broadway, New York, Price List. (2 copies), 1899, 1883
Box 1, Folder 4	Illustrated Catalog & Price List, 30-36 Washington Place, New York (2 copies), 1899
Box 1, Folder 5	Illustrated Catalog & Price List, 427 & 429 Broadway, New York, 1892
Box 1, Folder 5	Illustrated Catalog & Price List, 427 & 429 Broadway, New York, 1895
Box 1, Folder 6	Electrical Fittings Price List, 1903
Box 1, Folder 6	Illustrated Price List, 1906
Box 1, Folder 7	Ivaleur (Ivory like substance) Catalog, 1916
Box 1, Folder 7	Ivaleur Trade Catalog #116 (of brushes, combs, mirrors, clocks and other articles), circa 1915
Box 1, Folder 7	Arch Amerith, Vanity Articles for the Dressing Table: Line of Toilet Requisites and Fancy Goods. New York: Amerith Division of Celluloid Corporation, Includes price list in rear cover, 1925 Notes: (This special trademark line is made of amerith and Amer-glo, a "new" distinctive quality pyroxylin material)
Box 1, Folder 7	Arch Amerith, Vanity Articles for the Dressing Table and Other Articles Made of Amerith. New York City: Celluloid Corporation, 1928

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## Series 3: Salesman's Kit, 1937 - 1943

Box 2, Folder 1	The Celluloid Corporation - Lumarith, The New Era Plastic, salesman kit, promotional literature in bound leather, late 1937-1943
Box 3, Folder 1	Salesmen's kit, promotional literature titled Protectoid, by G.H. Boehmer, undated
Box 3, Folder 2	The Plus Value of Doing Business with Celluloid Corporation (promotional catalog)
Box 3, Folder 2	Lumarith Protectoid invites you to meet Personable Packages (promotional catalog)
Box 3, Folder 2	Pages from Celluloid Corporation Trade catalogs

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## Series 4: Photographs, 1837 - 1920, undated

Box 3, Folder 3

John Wesley Hyatt, undated

Box 3, Folder 3

[\[Illustration of John Wesley Hyatt\], undated](#)

1 Item (Ink on paper.; 5.3" x 4.5".)

Language: English.

Notes: AC0009-0000003.tif (AC Scan No.)

Names: Hyatt, John Wesley (inventor)

Topic: Plastics industry and trade

[John Wesley Hyatt \[photoprint\], undated](#)

1 Item (7.5" x 5.0".)

Language: English.

Notes: AC0009-0000004.tif (AC Scan No.)

Silver gelatin on paper.

Box 9 Folder 3

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Names: Hyatt, John Wesley (inventor)

Topic: Plastics industry and trade

[\[John Wesley Hyatt and copy of 1869 patent document\], undated](#)

1 Item (7.5" x 5.0".)

Language: English.

Notes: AC0009-0000005.tif (AC Scan No.)

Silver gelatin on paper.

Box 9 Folder 3

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Names: Hyatt, John Wesley (inventor)

Topic: Plastics industry and trade

Box 3, Folder 4

Celluloid Corporation Employees &amp; Factory Buildings, undated

Box 3, Folder 4

[\[Illustration of Celluloid Factory buildings\], undated](#)

1 Item (Ink on paper.; 5.9" x 7.9".)

Language: English.

Notes: AC0009-0000001.tif (AC Scan No.)

Names: Celluloid Corporation.

Topic: Plastics industry and trade

Box 3, Folder 5

Products of the company, undated

Box 3, Folder 6

Pages from a book of testimonials to Celluloid dentures, undated

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