



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Instruments

NMAH.AC.0060.S01.01.Instruments

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives Center, National Museum of American History |
| Title: | Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Instruments |
| Identifier: | NMAH.AC.0060.S01.01.Instruments |
| Date: | circa 1800-1965 (bulk 1830-1930) |
| Extent: | 4.56 Cubic feet (consisting of 10 boxes, 1 folder, 1 oversize folder, 1 map case folder.) |
| Creator: | Warshaw, Isadore, 1900-1969 |
| Language: | English Collection is in English. Some materials are in German. |
| Summary: | A New York bookseller, Warshaw assembled this collection over nearly fifty years. The <i>Warshaw Collection of Business Americana: Instruments</i> forms part of the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Subseries 1.1: Subject Categories. The Subject Categories subseries is divided into 470 subject categories based on those created by Mr. Warshaw. These subject categories include topical subjects, types or forms of material, people, organizations, historical events, and other categories. An overview to the entire Warshaw collection is available here: Warshaw Collection of Business Americana |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Instruments is a portion of the Business Ephemera Series of the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Accession AC0060 purchased from Isadore Warshaw in 1967. Warshaw continued to accumulate similar material until his death, which was donated in 1971 by his widow, Augusta. For a period after acquisition, related materials from other sources (of mixed provenance) were added to the collection so there may be content produced or published after Warshaw's death in 1969. This practice has since ceased.

Forms Part Of

Forms part of the [Warshaw Collection of Business Americana](#).

- [Series 1: Business Ephemera](#)
- [Series 2: Other Collection Divisions](#)
- [Series 3: Isadore Warshaw Personal Papers](#)
- [Series 4: Photographic Reference Material](#)

Processing Information

In 2016, with funding provided by the Smithsonian Institution's Collections Care and Preservation Fund, the Archives Center at the National Museum of American History implemented the use of minimal level processing standards to increase information about and facilitate access to more of our collections.

For this subject, minimal processing included arrangement to the folder level, based on prior processing and preservation action, with retention of the pre-existing arrangement when possible, if applicable. Otherwise, an order was imposed by the Processing Archivist. Some materials were consolidated to eliminate excess bulk but items within folders were not arranged further. The guide may or may not include a more refined list of folder contents. Nonarchival housing was replaced for long-term stability, but staples and other fasteners have not all been removed.

Minimal level processing and machine-readable finding aid completed by Nicole Blechynden
2016 October.

Preferred Citation

Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Instruments, Archives Center,
National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Some items may be restricted due to fragile condition.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Scope and Contents

The Instrument category covers devices and tools used in arts and sciences, including but not limited to architecture, biology, medicine, geography, physics, chemistry and related laboratory investigation, navigation, in industry with machinery, astronomy, and a variety of optics including reading glasses. An emphasis on engineering and survey work is evident in the volume of Drawing and Surveying catalogues present.

Materials include a small sampling of business records, particular invoices and receipts, with also some advertisement, correspondence, financials, import/export documents. The bulk of material is comprised of product catalogues, many with detailed descriptions, specifications, and illustrations, plus pricing information. A number of catalogues are in German. A small portion of the catalogues are not instruments per se, but are accompaniments used with instruments. For example, specimen slides for microscopes. A few company publications are present as well. Several guides on the use of or history of some apparatus are present, as are a few stand-alone illustrations, though most catalogues are heavily illustrated.

No extensive runs or complete records exist for any single company, brand, and no particular depth is present for any singular subtopic though some publications may provide general and historical overviews of a person, company, or facet of industry. Separate folders were used for a few companies which have a

small bulk of material. Companies of note: Bausch & Lomb, Sperry Corporation and Wheelco Instrument Company.

With the industries and trades represented in this category, there is overlap with *Hardware*, *Tools*, and *Mensuration*.

Arrangement

Instruments is arranged in two subseries. Researchers are advised to look both under the company name and under the category of catalogue of products it produces.

- Business Records and Marketing Material
- Genre

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Architectural design
Architectural drawing
Architecture
Artists' materials
Chemistry
Chemistry -- 19th century
Chemistry -- Distillation
Consumer goods -- Catalogs
Dental instruments and apparatus
Dental instruments and apparatus -- 1880-1940
Dental instruments and apparatus -- 1930-1970
Drawing
Engineering instruments
Industrial productivity -- measurements
Laboratories
Magnetic instruments
Mail-order business -- Catalogs
Mathematical instruments
Measuring instruments
Measuring instruments industry
Medical Equipment
Medical instruments and apparatus
Medical supplies
Microscopes
Optics
Plant specimens
Retail trade
Scales (Weighing instruments)
Scientific apparatus and instruments
Scientific apparatus and instruments industry

Specimens -- catalog of
Specimens -- list of
Spectrum analysis -- Instruments
Surgical instruments and apparatus
Surveying -- Instruments -- 1800-1810
Surveying -- Instruments -- 1870-1940
Surveying and surveying instruments
Tools
Wild flowers -- Specimens
Zoological specimens -- Collection and preservation
advertising -- Business ephemera
advertising -- Specimens -- 1840-1950

Types of Materials:

Advertisements
Advertising
Advertising cards
Advertising fliers
Advertising mail
Business cards
Business ephemera
Business letters
Business records
Catalogs
Catalogues
Commercial catalogs
Correspondence
Ephemera
Invoices
Letterheads
Mail order catalogs
Manuals
Manufacturers' catalogs
Periodicals
Print advertising
Printed ephemera
Printed material
Publications -- Business
Receipts
Sales catalogs
Sales letters
Sales records
Surveying instruments
Trade cards
Trade catalogs
Trade literature

Functions:

Scientific instruments manufacturing

Container Listing

Business Records and Marketing Material, circa 1800-1953

Contains transactional documents such as receipts and invoices for goods and services, correspondence, and general marketing material including advertisements, product information, circulars, mailers, and thin catalogues. Some company history or publications may also be present.

Arranged alphabetical by company or proprietor name.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 1 | A, circa 1800-1937 (bulk 1855-1870) Including a number of invoices for E.H. Ashcroft. |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | B, 1838-1930 |
| Oversize 104, Folder 4 | Betz, Frank S. and Company, 1910 Advertising bulletin and supplement for medical instruments. |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | C, 1835-1928 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | D, 1891-1943 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | E, circa 1855-1921 (bulk 1873-1909) |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | F, 1881-1937 |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | G, 1866-1922 Includes patent documents. |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | H-J, 1818-1927 |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | K, 1839-1936 |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | L, 1869-circa 1930 |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | M, 1828-1953 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | N, circa 1890 |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | O-P, circa 1830-1922 No companies beginning with "O" are present. |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Q, 1864-1908 |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | R, 1836-1898 |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Box 2, Folder 1 | S, 1857-1931 |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | T-V, 1848-1913 |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | W, 1855-1893 |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | X-Z, circa 1894 No companies beginning with "X" or "Y" are present. Carl Zeiss is the predominate company in this folder. |
| Map-folder 2 | Advertising, Oversize Brown Instrument Company, undated Brochure. Bliss and Torrey, undated Specimen copy of instrument catalogue, one sheet. Speakman, William M., undated Circular for manufacturer of artificial teeth and dental supplies. Import/Export |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | Late 1830s, 1836-1839 |
| Box 2, Folder 6 | 1850s, 1855 |
| Box 2, Folder 7 | 1860s, 1861-1869 |
| Box 2, Folder 8 | 1870s, 1871-1879 |
| Box 2, Folder 9 | Early-Mid 1880s, 1880-1886 |
| Box 2, Folder 10 | Late 1880s, 1887 |
| Box 2, Folder 11 | Late 1880s, 1888 |
| Box 2, Folder 12 | Late 1880s, 1889 |
| Box 2, Folder 13 | 1890s, 1890-1899 |
| Box 2, Folder 14 | 1920s, 1924 |

Box SUPP 15, Folder 18
Product Information and Advertising, circa 1894
Some of the instruments being sold include thermometers, glass forceps, dissecting instruments, syringes, and medical instruments.

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Genre, 1841-1965

Catalogues

Chemistry

Box 3, Folder 1-3 In English, 1846-1927

Box 3, Folder 4-5 In German, 1890-1927

Box 4, Folder 1 In German, 1890-1927

Cross-Disciplinary

These catalogues typically offer a broad spectrum of instruments used in all the other catalogue categories and others not specifically identified here, though primarily related to math, science, and optics. Includes ship compasses, barometers, and specialized instruments for breweries, distilleries, and wineries.

Box 4, Folder 2-4 General Instruments, 1880-1965

Box 4, Folder 5 Queen, James W. and Company, 1874-1898

Box 5, Folder 1-3 Queen, James W. and Company, 1874-1898

Box 5, Folder 4 Drawing and Surveying, multidisciplinary, 1894-1942
Product information, detailed specifications, and price lists, company history and information. As is typically used in the disciplines of engineering, surveying, architecture, art, and mathematics. Some products represent: transits, chains, tapes, protractor, compass, t-square, telescopes, log books, coordinatograph, levels, tripods, sextants, plates, tables, angles, rules, paper, cloth, paints, brushes, burnishers, easels, dividers, pens, squares, scales. Some companies of note: Buff, G. Coradi, Gurley's American Engineers and Surveyors, Keuffel & Esser, Frost & Adams.

Box 6, Folder 1-5 Drawing and Surveying, multidisciplinary, 1894-1942

Box 7, Folder 1-2 Drawing and Surveying, multidisciplinary, 1894-1942

Box 7, Folder 3-4 Meters, Gauges, and Controls, 1859-1960

- Box 8, Folder 1-3 Medical, 1876-circa 1925
- Box 8, Folder 4-5 Natural History and Biological Specimens, 1880-1931
The catalogues represent materials that might be used in conjunction with instruments. Many are slide-mounted, but also present osteological models including skeletons, microbiology samples, storage cabinets, preserving solutions, and tools use in the mounting and preservation of specimens in a laboratory environment. Some materials are in German.
- Optical, 1880-1937
Product information, detailed specifications, and price lists, company history and information. Covers lenses, frames, spectacles, tools, supplies, microscopes, cleansers, surfacing, polishing, cutting, machinery, telescopes, glasses, eye-pieces, binoculars, accessories, balopticon, bifocals. Some companies of note: Carl Zeiss, Bausch & Lomb, American Optical Company.
- Box 9, Folder 1-2 General Optical, 1880-1937
- Box 9, Folder 3-4 Leitz, 1925-1938
- Box 9, Folder 5 Images, 1862, undated
Plates (disbound from a book) with detailed drawings of equipment pertaining to astronomy, air, chemistry, mariners, mechanics, hydrostatics, electricity, sound, fire, elastic fluids. One stereograph (No. 143) showing apparatus in the Nave at the International Exhibition of 1862.
- Oversize 104, Folder 4 Oversize Images, undated
Two plates (removed from book) depicting instruments and concepts in surveying and perspective.
- Serial Publications
- Box 9, Folder 6 *American Journal of Microscopy and Popular Science*, 1876 October
1 issue: Vol. I, No. II, pp.125-136 plus ads and wrappers.
- Box 9, Folder 6 *Comments*, 1942 August-1954 August
37 issues (incomplete, non-sequential), Published by Wheelco Instruments Company.
- Box 10, Folder 1 *Journal of the Franklin Institute Devoted to the Science of the Mechanical Arts*, 1877 July
1 issue: Vol. LXXIV, No. 1.
- Box 10, Folder 1 *Magazine of Science and School of Arts*, 1841 October 30
1 issue: Vol. III, No. XXXI, pp.241-248.

- Box 10, Folder 1 *Optical Journal and Review of Optometry, Fiftieth Anniversary Number 1891-1941*, 1941 January 12
1 issue: Vol. LXXVIII, No. 2.
- Sperryscope*
Published by the United States Naval Gun Factory.
- Box 10, Folder 2 1949-1951, 1949 Summer-1951 Autumn
8 issues (incomplete, non-sequential). Includes the 150th Anniversary edition, Vol. 11, No. 10.
- Box 10, Folder 3 1952-1954, 1952 Spring-1954 Fourth Quarter
10 issues (incomplete, non-sequential).
- Box 10, Folder 4 1955-1958, 1955 First Quarter-1958 Fourth Quarter
11 issues (incomplete, non-sequential), plus one mailing envelope.
- Box 10, Folder 5 Use and How-To Guides , 1845-1908
Most related to the operation and benefits of the microscope. One item is a guide to workshops and laboratories, another evaluates the use of the karatoscope. Covered also are the telescope, barometer, manometer, hygrometers, thermometers, and field glasses. Some material is in German.

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