American Furniture Industries Survey Collection

NMAH.AC.0286
Grace M. Angle
1988
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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: American Furniture Industries Survey Collection
Identifier: NMAH.AC.0286
Date: 1977-1980
Extent: 4 Cubic feet (10 boxes)
Creator: Woodward, Inc.
Vaughan Furniture Co., The.
Steelcase, Inc.
Lane Company, The.
Kessler Industries, Inc.
Jasper Cabinet Co.
Howland, Richard H., Dr. (special assistant to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution (1978-1979))
Hooker Furniture Corp.
Furniture World.
American Heirloom Galleries.
Drexel Heritage Furnishings
Domestic Life, Division of (NMAH, SI).
Broyhill Industries.
Century Furniture Co., Inc.
Bass Brothers Furniture Co.

Language: English

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
Immediate source of acquisition unknown.

Ownership and Custodial History
Transferred by the Office of the Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution to the Division of Domestic Life, 1983; transferred to the Archives Center, January 19, 1988.

Processing Information

Preferred Citation
Restrictions
The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use
Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Reproduction permission from Archives Center: fees for commercial use.

Biographical Note
This collection constitutes the raw materials from an attempt to survey the archival holdings of American furniture manufacturers which was undertaken by the office of Dr. Richard H. Howland, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in 1978-1979. The survey was intended as a preliminary study of industry owned collections and the possibility of a repository for such material. A letter and schedule were sent to approximately 210 furniture companies in the summer of 1979. In some instances follow up letters were sent in the fall. Each company was asked to complete a single page schedule and to send a catalogue if available.

Of the approximately 210 companies which received schedules, over 100 companies failed to respond. Forty five schedules were returned and more then 60 companies provided catalogues. Several companies sent brochures, pamphlets or annual reports in addition to or in lieu of catalogues. A few folders contain correspondence relating to prospective visits by the project director, or to preliminary plans for the survey.

The material received was not analyzed and no formal report was written. Funding did not materialize and the project was discontinued.

David A. Hanks, who worked on various projects under Dr. Howland's sponsorship before moving to New York in 1979 and Mrs. Johanna Rieg, a volunteer, worked on the project.

Page 5 of David Hanks paper before the Decorative Arts Archives Conference held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on October 21, 1979 refers to a report by Mrs. Rieg on the initial findings of the survey. A telephone conversation with Mrs. Rieg March 2, 1988 indicated that her statement was an informal one not a written paper. At that time the project was not far enough along for any significant data to be available.

Scope and Contents
The collection consists of the raw materials (completed schedules and catalogues) for a survey of material of historical interest and importance associated with American furniture manufacturers. There is a folder for each of the approximately 210 furniture manufacturing companies asked to participate in the survey, filed alphabetically by company.

Nearly all of the material has been kept in the original folders (not acid free) which are filed alphabetically by company. It is in excellent condition (1988) but should be transferred to acid free folders if a decision to keep it indefinitely is made).
Arrangement

This collection is arranged alphabetically by company name.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
- Business -- History
- Furniture industry and trade
- Advertising

Types of Materials:
- Sales catalogs
- Schedules

Names:
- Domestic Life, Division of (NMAH, SI).
Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1  Aireloom Bedding Company, undated
Box 1, Folder 2  Alba Industries, undated
Box 1, Folder 3  Albright and Zimmerman, undated
Box 1, Folder 4  Wesley Allen Incorporated and Wesley Allen Brass Beds, undated
Box 1, Folder 5  Alexis Manufacturing Company, undated
Box 1, Folder 6  Allied Upholstery Manufacturing, Incorporated, undated
Box 1, Folder 7  American Charms, Incorporated, undated
Box 1, Folder 8  American Drew, Incorporated, undated
Box 10, Folder 1  American Drew Incorporated, undated
Box 1, Folder 9  American Furniture Company, undated
Box 1, Folder 10  American of Martinsville, undated
Box 1, Folder 11  American Wicker Furniture Manufacturing, undated
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Brown Jordan Company, undated

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Broyhill Furniture Industries, undated

Box 2, Folder 53
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Box 8, Folder 1-2
Burlington House Furniture, 1979

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Box 2, Folder 55
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