



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the S.S. White Dental Manufacturing Company/Brooks Typewriter Company Records

NMAH.AC.0365

Craig A. Orr

1990

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	S.S. White Dental Manufacturing Company/Brooks Typewriter Company Records
Date:	1890-1897
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0365
Creator:	Fitzgerald, Thomas E. (Donor) Brooks, Byron A. (Author) S.S. White Dental Manufacturing Co. (Author) Peyton, Joseph I. (Author) Williams Typewriter Company (Author) Brooks Typewriter Company (Author)
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection documents a patent dispute between the S. S. White Dental Manufacturing Company and the Williams Typewriter Company.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Thomas E. Fitzgerald, December 19, 1989.

Provenance

These records were stored at the S. S. White Dental Manufacturing Company's main office in Philadelphia until the 1970 merger. At that time, the Chairman of the Board, Wilmott C. Mach, offered these papers and an original Brooks typewriter to Thomas E. Fitzgerald, a Philadelphia typewriter collector and restorer. Mr. Fitzgerald donated these records to the Division of Engineering of the National Museum of American History in October 1989. They were transferred to the Archives Center in December 1989.

Related Materials

Mr. Fitzgerald deposited photostatic copies of some of the records in this collection in the Dietz collection at the Milwaukee Public Museum. The bulk of surviving records from the S. S. White Dental Manufacturing Company are located at the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware, where they form accession #1320 in the Manuscripts and Archives Department.

Processing Information

Processed by Craig A. Orr, archivist.

Preferred Citation

S.S. White Dental Manufacturing Company/Brooks Typewriter Company Records, 1890-1897,
Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

The S. S. White Company was a dental supply house founded in Philadelphia in 1844 by dentist Samuel Stockton White. Initially, White manufactured porcelain teeth only for his own use. He eventually gave up his dental practice in favor of full time production of dental instruments, supplies, and teeth. His porcelain teeth won awards at both the 1851 Crystal Palace Exposition in London and the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. In 1881 the firm was incorporated as the S. S. White Dental Manufacturing Company. Soon afterwards, extensive manufacturing facilities were acquired on Staten Island, New York. The firm's main offices were located in Philadelphia and two additional factory buildings were located in that city's Frankford section. In addition to producing dental supplies, such as teeth, amalgams for fillings, and precision instruments, the firm manufactured dental machinery such as vulcanizers and sterilizers. It also interested itself in and produced other types of machinery, such as typewriters. In 1970 the company was merged into the Penn Walt Company.

Scope and Contents

This collection concerns a patent dispute between the S. S. White Dental Manufacturing Company and the Williams Typewriter Company. The dispute centered on the manufacture and sale by the White company of typewriters on behalf of the Brooks Typewriter Company. These were a typewriting machine developed and patented by Byron A. Brooks in 1891. The Williams company produced a very similar machine which Brooks claimed was infringing on his patents. The records in this collection document Brooks' and the White company's efforts to prove Brooks' claims.

The bulk of the collection consists of correspondence received or sent by the S. S. White Company. Most of these letters are from either Byron A. Brooks or Joseph I. Peyton, a Washington, D.C., patent attorney. A group of summary notes and memoranda about the correspondence (filed separately) provides insight into the nature and progress of the case. The collection includes a number of legal agreements between the various parties, as well as a copy of the 1890 Incorporation Certificate of the Union Writing Machine Company and the original Incorporation Certificate of the Brooks Typewriter Company. Also of interest are a number of credit reports prepared by R. G. Dun & Company of New York in 1893 1896; these report on the background and assets of the Union Writing Machine Company and the Elliott & Hatch Book Typewriter Company. Also included in the collection are balance sheets for production of the Brooks Typewriter, 1894 1896.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged into

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Patents -- 1890-1900
Typewriters -- 1890-1900

Types of Materials:

Balance sheets -- 1890-1900
Business records -- 19th century
Correspondence -- 19th century
Credit records -- 1890-1900
Legal documents -- 1890-1900

Names:

Union Typewriter Company

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence, 1896 - 1896
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence, 1897 - 1897
Box 1, Folder 3	Notes and Memoranda on Brooks Typewriter Dispute, 1893 - 1896
Box 1, Folder 4	Legal Records, 1890 - 1896
Box 1, Folder 5	Mercantile Agency Credit Reports, 1893 - 1896
Box 1, Folder 6	Statements of Account, 1894 - 1896
Box 1, Folder 7	Notes on Typewriters Shipped, 1896 - 1896
Box 1, Folder 8	Williams Typewriter Company Advertisement, 1896 - 1896