



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Hart, Schaffner and Marx Records

NMAH.AC.0426

Grace Angle

1992

Archives Center, National Museum of American History
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Hart, Schaffner and Marx Records
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0426
Date:	1901-1955
Extent:	6 Cubic feet (17 boxes)
Creator:	Hart, Schaffner and Marx. National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Costume
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Image(s): Hart, Schaffner and Marx Records

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Hart, Schaffner and Marx, 1973.

Provenance

Transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Costume (now Division of Cultural and Community Life) on October 8, 1991.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Grace Angle, 1992

Preferred Citation

Hart, Schaffner and Marx Records, 1901-1955, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

Collection is open for research.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Probable copyright and trademark restrictions.

Biographical Note

In 1872, twenty-one year old Harry Hart and his 18-year-old brother Max opened a retail store for men's clothing on State St. in Chicago, Illinois. In 1879 two brothers in law Levi Abt and Marcus Marx joined them. Eight years later Levi Abt left and Joseph Schaffner, a cousin of the Harts, took his place. Thus in 1887 Hart, Schaffner and Marx was born.

The transition from retailing only to manufacturing evolved from clothing that was made to sell in their own store. There was an apparent need for facilities to supply ready made men's clothing to interested retailers and the business prospered.

High quality workmanship and improved employee management relationships were among early goals of the company. A labor agreement of 1911, initiated by Joseph Schaffner, was developed in cooperation with Sidney Hillman, then a cutter in a Hart, Schaffner and Marx factory. As a result Joseph Schaffner emerged as a leader and humanitarian and Sidney Hillman led the way for workers to cooperate with management wherever possible. The 1911 agreement became the model for the men's clothing industry and later for women's clothing. It was the foundation on which the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America was built and helped to rid the United States of sweatshops in the clothing industry. Sidney Hillman in later years won world acclaim as a labor leader and became an advisor on labor relations to President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Hart, Schaffner and Marx became known for a number of "firsts" in the clothing industry in addition to its peaceful labor relations. The firm introduced a one price policy permitting no cut rates or better prices for any one; it advertised nationally; it introduced the tropical weight suit for summer wear. The company conceived and carried out selling with swatches of materials thus doing away with the practice of salesmen using trunk loads of clothing to demonstrate their line. It was the first manufacturer to offer proportional fit clothing made for men of different build as well as different size. Hart, Schaffner and Marx was also among the first to develop and expand its own retail division. By the firm's 75th anniversary in 1962 it had 78 stores in 37 metropolitan areas inspite of being thought of primarily as a manufacturer. Based in Chicago it did business throughout the United States.

Scope and Contents

The collection falls roughly into 4 parts. Series 1 is primarily composed of the company's history and its advertising, including a number of style books. The historical materials highlight the firm's importance in the men's clothing industry; the style books are a valuable record of styles in men's clothing during the first half of the 20th century. The Warshaw Collection of Americana contains a number of Hart, Schaffner and Marx style books from 1903 1928 that duplicate a number in this collection. The miscellaneous records in Box 3 relate primarily to a failed retail store that was placed under new management and reports on naval uniforms and government shipments in the first half of the 1940's. Though obviously incomplete, these records illustrate that the company manufactured military uniforms during World War II as well as civilian clothing.

The Trade Board decisions in Series 2 (February 1921 February 1934) provide a colorful picture of early labor management relations and the everyday incidents in the work place that came before the Trade Board. They are also illustrative of good labor management relations that were developed very early in the history of organized labor.

The company's records, kept in minute detail, in notebooks, by hand, comprise Series 3, the largest part of the collection. They are testimony to the many operations involved in the profitable production of a suit, coat, vest, knickers, or trousers that are part of men's clothing. Large books record items such as tailoring

specifications for various articles of clothing, hours worked and earnings for specific operations, piece work lists by article and operation for various shops. There are also account books, cash books, and a voucher register. These appear to be illustrative rather than complete records.

Series 4 consists of 2 boxes of materials of the kind used in the manufacture of men's clothing. They have been kept with the records because Hart, Schaffner and Marx was the first manufacturer to have its salesmen work from swatches of material instead of trunk loads of clothing, an innovation soon followed by other manufacturers.

All of the actual company records are prior to 1955. There are a few pieces of descriptive material of a later date.

The arrangement is chronological where appropriate; otherwise, it is alphabetical. Many of the records in Series 3 are handwritten.

Arrangement

Divided into 4 series.

Series 1: Company History, Advertising and Style Books

Series 2: Trade Board Decisions, 1921-34

Series 4: Company Records, 1903-1946

Series 4: Material Swatches, undated

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Clothing stores -- 1900-1960
- Clothing trade -- 1900-1960
- Industrial relations
- Men's clothing
- Men's clothing industry -- 1900-1960
- Retail trade -- 1900-1960
- Sweatshops
- Trade-unions -- 1900-1960

Types of Materials:

- Account books -- 20th century
- Business records -- 20th century
- Cashbooks -- 1900-1950
- Retailers -- 1900-1960
- Sales catalogs -- 1900-1960
- Sales letters
- Stylebooks -- 1900-1960
- Voucher register

Vouchers -- 1900-1960

Names:

Abt, Levi
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.
Hart, Harry
Hart, Max
Hillman, Sidney
Marx, Marcus
National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Costume
Schaffner, Joseph

Geographic Names:

Chicago (Illinois) -- 1900-1960
Illinois -- 1900-1960

Container Listing

Series 1: Company History, Advertising and Style Books

Box 1, Folder 1	Annual Report, 1972
Box 1, Folder 2	Articles: Clothes, 1968-02-01
Box 1, Folder 2	News Week Advertising, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Behind the Seams," Hart, Schaffner and Marx Diamond Jubilee, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	History, Hart, Schaffner and Marx, undated
Box 1, Folder 5	Hart, Schaffner and Marx. The Men's Suit Industry, A Guide To The Industry And Its Occupations. Boston: Bellman Publishing Co., 1947
Box 1, Folder 6	"Joseph Schaffner, 1848 1918, Reflections and Impressions.", undated
Box 1, Folder 7	Style Book Covers , 1902-1928
Box 1, Folder 8	Style Book Covers (Costume) , 1901 25; 1937; 1941; 1943, undated
Box 1, Folder 9	Style Books, Hart, Schaffner and Marx , 1911-1951
Box 1, Folder 10	Style Books, Retailers, 1901-1945
Box 2, Folder 1	Advertising Materials, Styles, undated
Box 2, Folder 2-3	Descriptions and Photographs of Manufacturing Processes, undated
Box 3, Folder 1	Canceled Checks, Hoffman Sealock, undated
Box 3, Folder 2	Corporate Records, undated
Box 3, Folder 3	Hoffman Sealock Reports, 1932-1933
Box 3, Folder 4	The Vogue Shop, Successor to Hoffman Sealock., undated
Box 3, Folder 5	Government Shipments, 1945
Box 3, Folder 6-7	Naval Uniforms, undated

Box 3, Folder 8

Inter company memos, 1928-04-03-1929-01-08

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Series 2: Trade Board Decisions, 1921-1934

Box 4, Folder 1	Trade Board Decisions, 1921-02-03-1923-08-17
Box 4, Folder 2	Trade Board Decisions, 1923-09-04-1924-01-24
Box 4, Folder 3	Trade Board Decisions, 1924-01-21-1924-04-28
Box 4, Folder 4	Trade Board Decisions, 1924-05-06-1924-08-08
Box 4, Folder 5	Trade Board Decisions, 1924-09-16-1924-12-31
Box 4, Folder 6	Trade Board Decisions, 1925-01-02-1926-03-25
Box 4, Folder 7	Trade Board Decisions, 1926-05-26-1927-05-02
Box 4, Folder 8	Trade Board Decisions, 1927-05-06-1928-06-13
Box 4, Folder 9	Trade Board Decisions, 1928-07-17-1934-02-22
Box 4, Folder 10	Labor Agreement, 1927-11-23

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Series 3: Company Records

Box 4, Folder 1-22	Tailoring Labor Schedule Cost Estimates, 1931 May
Box 4, Folder 3	Tailoring Labor Schedule Cost Estimates, Post 1932 October
Box 4, Folder 4	Shop price list by article and operation, 1921-1922
Box 6	Hours and Earnings, 1919
Box 6	Hours and Earnings, 1920
Box 6	Hours and Earnings, 1924
Box 6	Manufacturing costs, Spring and Fall 1926
Box 7	Earnings, Sack Coats, 1944-1946
Box 7	Tailoring Specifications, Vests, 1925-1928
Box 7	Hours and Earnings , 1933
Box 8	"Dead File", Overcoats, undated
Box 8	Dead File Regular Vests, undated
Box 8	Instructions for Sack Coats, undated
Box 9	Shop Price List, Trousers, undated
Box 9	Shop Price List, Trousers, Knickers, Vests, Tropical Coats, Boys Sack Coats, undated
Box 10, Folder 1-6	Account Books, 1925-1931
Box 11	Cashbook, 1903-1904
Box 12	Cashbook, 1904-1905
Box 13	Voucher Register, 1951-12-1952-01
Box 14	Cancelled checks, Remittances, Custom Brokers Records, Invoices for Imported Merchandise, undated

Box 15

Piece Work Earnings, Factory L, 1933-07-17-1933-09-04

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Series 4: Material Swatches

Box 16

Box 17

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