



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Wood and Brooks Company Records

NMAH.AC.0457

Alison Oswald

2021

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Collection Overview

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Repository: | Archives Center, National Museum of American History |
| Title: | Wood and Brooks Company Records |
| Date: | 1889-1959 |
| Identifier: | NMAH.AC.0457 |
| Creator: | Wood & Brooks Company (Creator) |
| Source: | Brady, Larry (Donor) Gielow, Albert C. (Donor) |
| Extent: | 3 Cubic feet (10 boxes) |
| Language: | English . |
| Summary: | Collection documents the activities of Wood & Brooks, a manufacturer of piano keys and actions. |

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection donated by Wood & Brooks Company, through Elizabeth W. Crane, President, 1992.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

Pratt, Read and Corporation Records (NMAH.AC.0320)

Warshaw Collection of Business American, Series: Ivory (NMAH.AC.0060)

Warshaw Collection of Business American, Series: Pianos (NMAH.AC.0060)

Ernest D. Moore Papers (NMAH.AC.0321)

Otto Gerdau Collection (NMAH.AC.0363)

Sohmer & Co. Records (NMAH.AC.0349)

Steinway & Sons Records and Family Papers (NMAH.AC.0178)

Chickering & Sons Piano Company Collection (NMAH.AC.0264)

Processing Information

Collection processed by Alison Oswald, archivist, 2021.

Preferred Citation

Wood and Brooks Company Records, 1925-1966, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

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Accruals

Additional materials documenting Wood and Brooks Company was donated by Albert C. Gielow (1992); Larry Brady (1994); and Courtney Brooks (2017).

Biographical / Historical

Charles Hammond Wood founded Wood and Brooks Company in 1901, in North Tonawanda, New York with financial help from Connecticut entrepreneur, M.S. Brooks. The company manufactured piano keys and piano actions. In 1905, Wood and Brooks acquired Seavern Piano Action Company of Cambridge, Massachusetts and in 1910 purchased Kurtz Action Company of Rockford, Illinois.

Source

Dolge, Alfred. *Pianos and Their Makers. Development of the piano, Volume II*, 1913.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists primarily of correspondence Charles H. Wood, M.S. Brooks and Hilton C. Brooks, financial and sales records, and some photographs documenting the company's work as manufacturer's of ivory piano keys and piano actions.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into six series.

Series 1: Executive Records, 1889-1949 Series 2: Correspondence, 1890-1932 Series 3: Financial Records, 1891-1932

Series 4: Photographs, 1902-1959 Series 5: Piano Action and Specification Materials, 1927-1959

Series 6: Miscellaneous, 1958

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Collective labor agreements
- Factories
- Factory workers

Ivory
Ivory industry
Keyboard instruments
Photographs
Piano
pianos
stock certificates

Types of Materials:

Business records
Correspondence -- 19th-20th century
Specifications
Specifications

Names:

Brady, Larry
Gielow, Albert C.
International Association of Machinists
Pratt, Read and Company
United Furniture Workers of America

Container Listing

Series 1: Executive Records, 1889-1949

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Box 1, Folder 1 | Certificate of Incorporation, 1901, 1950, 1959 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | By-Laws, 1941, 1947 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Notice of meeting, 1901 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Minutes of Organization Meeting, 1901 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Minutes of Stockholder Meetings, 1909, 1917, 1941 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Certificate of Merger, 1951, 1969, 1974 |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Certificate of Change in Number of Directors, 1941 |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | Certificate of Reduction of Capital Stock, 1949 |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | Certificate of Increase in Capital Stock, 1909, 1917 |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | Certificate of Payment of Capital Stock, 1902 |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Luther E. Wood agreements, 1942 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Pratt, Read & Company, 1889-1890 |

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Correspondence, 1890-1932

Scope and Contents: Topics include costs, plant operations, dividend payments, purchase of ivory, and work at the factory. The majority of the correspondence is between H.C. Brooks and Charles H. Wood as well as other piano action companies.

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Hilton C. Brooks, 1901, 1904 |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Hilton C. Brooks, 1902 |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Hilton C. Brooks, 1903 |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Hilton C. Brooks, 1909 |
| Box 8, Folder 4 | M.S. Brooks, 1900-1915 |
| Box 8, Folder 5 | M.S. Brooks, 1916 |
| Box 8, Folder 6 | M.S. Brooks, 1917 |
| Box 8, Folder 7 | M.S. Brooks, 1918 |
| Box 4, Folder 2 | M.S. Brooks & Sons, letterhead, undated |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | Sterling Blower Company, 1912-1914 |
| Box 2, Folder 1 | Sterling Blower Company, 1914-1916 |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | Sterling Blower Company, 1916-1918 |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | Sterling Blower Company, 1919-1921 |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | Sterling Blower & pipe Manufacturing Company, 1910 |
| Box 8, Folder 8 | Charles H. Wood, 1890 |
| Box 8, Folder 9 | Charles H. Wood, 1894 |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | Charles H. Wood, 1902 |
| Box 2, Folder 6 | Charles H. Wood, 1903 |
| Box 2, Folder 7 | Charles H. Wood, 1904 |
| Box 2, Folder 8 | Charles H. Wood, 1905 |
| Box 2, Folder 9 | Charles H. Wood, 1906 |

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Box 3, Folder 1 | Charles H. Wood, 1907 |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Charles H. Wood, 1908 |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | Charles H. Wood, 1909 |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Charles H. Wood, 1910 |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Charles H. Wood, 1911 |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | Charles H. Wood, 1913-1921 |
| Box 3, Folder 7 | Charles H. Wood, 1922-1926 |
| Box 3, Folder 8 | Charles H. Wood, 1927-1928 |
| Box 3, Folder 9 | Charles H. Wood, 1929-1931 |
| Box 4, Folder 1 | Charles H. Wood, 1932 |
| Box 8, Folder 2 | Charles H. Wood, re: Drummond Island file #2808, 1916-1917 |
| Box 8, Folder 3 | Charles H. Wood, re: Drummond Island file #2808, 1918 |
| Box 8, Folder 10 | Charles H. Wood, undated |
| Box 8, Folder 11 | Charles H. Wood pension claim materials, 1897 |
| Box 4, Folder 3 | General, 1896, 1939 |
| Box 4, Folder 4 | General, undated |
| Box 8, Folder 1 | Drummond Island Trading Corporation, letterhead, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 7 | N.R. Luther correspondence (3 loose pages), undated |

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Financial Records, 1891-1932

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Box 4, Folder 5 | Pratt, Read & Company, customer orders, 1891-1896 |
| Box 4, Folder 6 | Pratt, Read & Company, manufacturing and sales information, 1893-1897 |
| Box 4, Folder 7 | Canceled stock certificates (1-199), 1901-1909 |
| Box 4, Folder 8 | Canceled stock certificates (200-350), 1909-1917 |
| Box 5, Folder 1 | Wood & Brooks, valuation, 1917-1926 |
| Box 5, Folder 2 | Dividend payments, 1917-1931 |
| Box 5, Folder 3 | Inventory, 1903-1908 |
| Box 5, Folder 4 | Financial notebook, 1895-1900 |
| Box 5, Folder 5 | Financial notebook, 1901 |
| Box 5, Folder 6 | Sales data, 1902-1907 |
| Box 9, Folder 1-5 | Financial Ledger, 1907-1919 Notes: Includes sales data for Kurtz Action Company, inventories and accounts received. |
| Box 10, Folder 1 | Bills receivable, 1902-1908 |
| Box 10, Folder 2 | Sales data, 1922, 1924-1928 |
| Box 10, Folder 3 | Sales data, 1929-1932 |
| Box 10, Folder 7 | Pratt & Read Company, financial data, 1901-1904 |

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Series 2: Photographs, 1902-1959

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Box 5, Folder 7 | Bleach House, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 8 | Factory floor, interior view, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 9 | Ivory samples, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 10 | Kreetan Company (exterior lumberyard views, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 11 | Landing craft vehicles, 1940s |
| Box 5, Folder 12 | Machinery, unidentified, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 13 | Machine to cut ivory, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 14 | Matching Department, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 15 | Mills, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 1 | Piano keys, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 2 | PLaning ivory, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 3 | Sawing Department, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 4 | Wood & brooks truck, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 5 | Polishing ivory, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 5 | Wood & Brooks factory, exterior views, 1902, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 6 | Wood & Brooks factory, exterior and aerial views, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 7 | Plan of Wood & Brooks factory, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 8 | Unidentified men, portraits, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 9 | Employee list of deaths, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 10 | Annual outing programs, 1909-1911, 1916 |
| Box 6, Folder 10 | Picnic pins, 1909 |
| Box 6, Folder 11 | Specifications for labor at Wood & Brooks buildings, 1911, 1914 |

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Box 6, Folder 12 | Agreements with United Furniture Workers of America, 1957-1959 |
| Box 6, Folder 12 | Agreements with Unity Lodge 1553, International Association of Machinists, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 13 | Bribing an alderman in connection with installtion of sewer at factory, 1902-05-27 |
| Box 10, Folder 4 | Ivory tusks selected for Steinway & Son, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 4 | Ivory tusk held by employee, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 5 | Thayer piano action, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 6 | Wood & brooks Factory (aerial views), undated |
| Box 10, Folder 7 | Ivory price charts for 1870 to 1910, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 7 | House of Seaverns, employee profiles, 1907 |
| Box 10, Folder 7 | [Unidentified piano action?], undated |

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Piano Action and Specification Materials, 1925-1959

Subseries 5.1: General, 1959

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Box 7, Folder 1 | Pressed Felt Specification report, 1959 |
| Box 7, Folder 2 | Actions, customer list, undated |
| Box 7, Folder 3 | Actions, general information, undated |

Subseries 5.2: Grand Action Patterns, 1925-1963

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Box 7, Folder 4 | Everett Piano Company, 1930-1949 |
| Box 7, Folder 5 | Jesse French and Sons, 1927-1938 |
| Box 7, Folder 6 | Grinnell Brothers, 1937-1941 |
| Box 7, Folder 7 | Gulbransen Company, 1932-1957 |
| Box 7, Folder 8 | Haddorff Piano Company, 1927-1939 |
| Box 7, Folder 9 | Hardman & Peck, 1939 |
| Box 7, Folder 10 | Heintzman, 1955 |
| Box 7, Folder 11 | Ivers & Pond, 1942 |
| Box 7, Folder 12 | W.W. Kimball, 1954-1963 |
| Box 7, Folder 13 | Kohler & Campbell, 1949 |
| Box 7, Folder 14 | Lester Piano Company, 1933-1939 |
| Box 7, Folder 15 | Mathusek Piano Manufacturing Company, 1938-1940 |
| Box 7, Folder 16 | Carl Sauter, 1955 |
| Box 7, Folder 17 | Sohmer & Company, 1946-1962 |
| Box 7, Folder 18 | P.A. Starck Piano Company, 1925-1932 |
| Box 7, Folder 19 | Story & Clark Piano company, 1935-1936 |
| Box 7, Folder 20 | Weser Brothers, 1936 |

Box 7, Folder 21 Rudolph Wurlitzer, 1937-1940

Subseries 5.3: Upright Action Patterns, 1931-1966

Box 7, Folder 22 Aeolian American, 1944-1965

Box 7, Folder 23 Astin-Wright Piano Company, 1961

Box 7, Folder 24 Baldwin Piano Company, 1959-1965

Box 7, Folder 25 Bremen Piano Company, 1931-1955

Box 7, Folder 26 Emerson Piano Company, 1955

Box 7, Folder 27 Estey Piano Company, 1953-1963

Box 7, Folder 28 Everett Piano Company, 1949-1966

Box 7, Folder 29 Gordon Laughead Company, 1954

Box 7, Folder 30 Grand Piano Company, 1966

Box 7, Folder 31 Grinnell Brothers, 1938-1964

Box 7, Folder 32 Gulbranse Piano Company, 1949-1966

Box 7, Folder 33 Jansen Piano Company, 1949-1964

Box 7, Folder 34 W.W. Kimball, 1955-1962

Box 7, Folder 35 Kohler & Campbell, 1956-1965

Box 7, Folder 36 Lowrey Piano Company, 1965

Box 7, Folder 37 Sohmer & Company, 1959

Box 7, Folder 38 P.A. Starck Piano Company, 1937-1963

Box 7, Folder 39 Steinway & Sons, 1938-1960

Box 7, Folder 40 Story & Clark, 1941-1965

Box 7, Folder 41

Rudolph Wurlitzer, 1949-1963

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Miscellaneous, 1958

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|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Box 6, Folder 14 | Circular about piano key discoloration, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 16 | Wood & Brooks, label, undated |
| Box 6, Folder 15 | Piano action proposal, 1958 |

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