Guide to the Brannock Device Company Records

NMAH.AC.0672

Amy K. Watia

1925-1998
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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: Brannock Device Company Records
Identifier: NMAH.AC.0672
Date: 1925 - 1998
Extent: 12 Cubic feet (34 boxes)
Creator: Park-Brannock.
Park, Ernest N.
Brannock, Otis C.
Brannock, Charles F., 1903-1992
Brannock Device Company.
Language: English
Summary: The Brannock Device Company began with the 1925 invention of the Brannock Device, a tool to measure foot length and width at the same time, by inventor and businessman Charles F. Brannock. Early in his career Brannock worked as a shoe salesman at the Park-Brannock shoe store, and in 1962 he became the CEO of the company. This collection documents both the Park-Brannock store and the Brannock Device. Materials in The Brannock Device Company Records, 1925-1998, include of correspondence, design drawings, United States and foreign patents and trademarks, advertisements, product information, sales records, photographs, and a film strip documenting the invention, promotion, and sale of the Brannock Device as well as the concurrent development of Park-Brannock as a leading shoe store in Syracuse, N.Y.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
The collection was donated to the National Museum of American History by Salvatore Leonardi on November 4, 1998.

Related Materials
Materials at the National Museum of American History
Artifacts (several Brannock Devices and competitors' devices) are in the Division of Culture and the Arts and the Division of Armed Forces History.

Processing Information
Processed by Amy K. Watia, August 1999; revised by Alison L. Oswald, archivist, August 23, 2001.
Preferred Citation


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Restrictions

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Biographical / Historical

The Brannock Device Company began with the 1925 invention of the Brannock Device by Charles F. Brannock. Charles Brannock was working as a salesman in the Park-Brannock shoe store, co-owned by his father Otis C. Brannock and Ernest N. Park, in Syracuse, New York when he saw the need for an improved foot-measuring device. The Brannock Device soon gained favor over size-sticks because it measured foot length and width at the same time. Additionally, it measured heel-to-ball length, a feature which aided in fitting heeled shoes.

Charles F. Brannock (1903-1992) was an inventor and businessman. He began tinkering with the idea of a new foot-measuring device while attending Syracuse University, where he would get up in the middle of the night and work on sketches and calculations. Brannock obtained a patent for the device on August 28, 1928, but by then manufacture and sale of the device was already underway. Brannock assembled the device in the Park-Brannock shoe store and gave the device a trial on the sales floor. In 1926, Charles Brannock began offering the device to shoe retailers first on a rental basis and then by sale through the use of salesmen who lived throughout the country and each covered a geographic area. By 1929, the company began to phase out salesmen because it offered quantity discounts to shoe companies which distributed the devices to their stores at a lower price than salesmen could offer.

Brannock sold his device internationally beginning in 1929 through Mr. I. Singer of London, England. In 1936 distribution rights transferred to Henry Maitland Marler of Feature Shoes Limited of London, an affiliate of the Selby Shoe Company. Renewing and protecting foreign trademarks proved to be a legal challenge. Due to some confusion, Brannock's British patent was allowed to lapse. In order to prevent other companies from using the Brannock name in England, H.M. Marler set up Brannock Fitting Device Limited in October 1937. The company began manufacturing Brannock Devices in January 1946, but royalties accrued through European sale by 1951 did not even cover a third of the cost of trademarks, patents, and designs.

Fortunately for the Brannock Device Company, these costs were absorbed by the Selby Shoe Company, with whom it had entered into agreements about foreign distribution in November 1941. Selby had exclusive rights to distribute the Brannock Device in South America, South Africa, and other countries, and assisted Brannock in securing trademarks in many foreign countries.
In 1933 a United States Navy captain asked a shoe salesman to find the source of many sailors' foot problems. The salesman, after measuring sailors' feet with the Brannock device, declared that the Navy shoe was not the cause of the problem; the sailors were simply wearing the wrong size shoes. The captain was so happy that he would not have to order special shoes for his men that he wrote an article in the July 1933 issue of United States Naval Institute Proceedings which described how the Brannock Device had eliminated foot troubles aboard the ship. This gave Brannock an opportunity to promote his device in the Navy by sending the article to other ships. He calibrated his device for use in other branches of the military and by World War II the Brannock Device was being used by most of the armed forces. Several articles were written about the greater foot comfort enjoyed by the military after the introduction of the device. Charles Brannock was proud of his small but widespread role in the war effort and in the comfort of America's enlisted men and women.

Through the years Charles Brannock developed many different models of his device, including the women's, men's, junior, growing girl's, athletic, ski-boot, and military models. In 1947, Brannock moved the device company to a machine shop at 509 East Fayette Street in Syracuse, where it remained for 50 years.

Brannock advertised both the store and the device in local papers, and the device in trade literature such as Boot and Shoe Recorder. He encouraged other shoe stores to promote themselves by using the device in their advertising. He also attended the annual National Shoe Fair in Chicago from 1938 to 1968 in order to promote the device as well as learn about shoe-fashion trends for the Park-Brannock shoe store.

Concurrently, Charles Brannock also played a significant role in the Park-Brannock shoe store. His father, Otis C. Brannock and Ernest N. Park founded Park-Brannock in 1906 in a small store at 321 South Salina Street, focusing on women's shoes. In February 1937, they moved to a three-story building at 427 South Salina Street. Finally, in 1946, a six-story store was built at 473-475 South Salina Street through 129 East Onondaga Street. While waiting for the newest store to be built, Park-Brannock temporarily moved to the Chimes Building at 510-512 South Salina Street and 113 West Onondaga Street. Park-Brannock gained fame in Syracuse for a wide selection of men's, women's and children's shoes, handbags, millinery, hose, and accessories. In an advertisement, the store declared itself "one of America's finest shoe stores." The design of the two newer stores was state-of-the-art, and Park-Brannock was featured in shoe magazine articles. For example, the men's department was designed to look like a great room inside a ship. Charles Brannock became the CEO of Park-Brannock after both his father and Ernest Park died in 1962. Park-Brannock closed its doors in 1981, after the Hotel Syracuse offered to purchase the property for its new Hilton Tower.

Charles Brannock died on November 22, 1992, at the age of 89. The company was purchased in 1993 from the Brannock Estate by Salvatore Leonardi. Leonardi continues to manufacture Brannock devices in a small factory in Liverpool, New York. Over a million Brannock Devices have been manufactured, and it remains the shoe industry standard.

Scope and Contents

The Brannock Device Company Records, 1925-1998, consist of correspondence, design drawings, United States and foreign patents and trademarks, advertisements, product information, sales records, photographs, and a film strip documenting the invention, promotion, and sale of the Brannock Device as well as the concurrent development of Park-Brannock as a leading shoe store in Syracuse, NY. The collection is useful to researchers for its stories of invention and entrepreneurship and its exemplification of the patent and trademark process in the United States and internationally in the early 20th century. The process of manufacturing and marketing in the shoe industry, and manufacturing of military supplies during World War II is also highlighted.
Arrangement

The collection is divided into two subgroups.

Subgroup 1, The Brannock Device Company, 1925-1998

Series 1: Historical Background, 1928-1995

Series 2: Operational Records, 1926-1980

Subseries 1: Book for Recording Devices on Hand, 1927-1929
Subseries 2: Correspondence, 1926-1951
Subseries 3: Census, 1947-1980
Subseries 4: Insurance Inventory, 1956
Subseries 5: Royalties Accrued, 1946-1951
Subseries 7: Notes, undated


Subseries 1: Competitors' Devices and Other Products, c. 1928-1981
Subseries 2: Fitting Stool, 1936-1947
Subseries 3: Design, 1925-1975
Subseries 4: Manufacture, 1927-1959


Subseries 1: Correspondence, 1926-1998
Subseries 2: Mailing Lists, 1947-1950
Subseries 3: Ideas and Copy, undated
Subseries 4: Printed Materials with the Brannock Device Name (stationery, business cards, leases), undated
Subseries 5: Advertisements and Product Information, 1934-1980
Subseries 6: Measuring Device Instructions, undated
Subseries 7: Advertising and Merchandising Plans, 1938-1956

Series 5: Sales and Distribution Records, 1925-1986

Subseries 1: United States--Private Sector, 1925-1973
Subseries 2: United States--Military, 1928-1972
Subseries 3: Foreign, 1937-1986

**Series 6: Photographs, c. 1930-1997**

Subseries 1: Personal, undated

Subseries 2: Foot-Measuring Devices, undated

Subseries 3: Military, undated

Subseries 4: Employees and Factory, undated

Subseries 5: Negatives of Brannock Device, 1933-1958

**Subgroup 2, Park-Brannock Shoe Store Records, 1916-1918, 1927-1981**

**Series 1: Historical Background, 1936-1981**

**Series 2: Operational Records, 1936-1972**

Subseries 1: Financial Materials, 1936-1972


Subseries 3: Business Course Tailored to Park-Brannock, undated

Subseries 4: Business Course Tailored to Park-Brannock, 1935-1961

Subseries 5: New York City Business Trips, 1945-1952

Subseries 6: Miscellaneous Notes, undated

**Series 3: Advertising and Marketing Records, 1933-1962**

**Series 4: Sales Records, 1916-1977**

Subseries 1: Customer Correspondence, 1928-1977

Subseries 2: Supplier Correspondence, 1927-1944

Subseries 3: Florsheim Sales Instruction Manual, undated

Subseries 4: Inventories, 1961

Subseries 5: Promotions, undated

Subseries 6: Receipts, 1916-1918

Subseries 7: Sales Floor Management, undated

**Series 5: Photographs, 1932-1967**

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**Names and Subject Terms**

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:
Subjects:
Design, Industrial -- New York -- Syracuse
Foot -- Measurement
Measuring instruments
Measuring instruments industry
Military supplies
Shoe industry -- New York -- Syracuse
Shoe machinery
Shoes -- Fitting
Shoes -- Sizes
Show-windows -- New York -- Syracuse
World War, 1939-1945 -- Equipment and supplies

Types of Materials:
Advertisements
Design drawings
Filmstrips
Patents
Photographic prints
Photographs -- 20th century
Photographs -- Black-and-white negatives -- Glass -- 1890-1920
Sales records
Slides (photographs)
Trademarks

Names:
Selby Shoe Company
United States. Armed Forces -- Supplies and stores
United States. Army -- Supplies and stores
Container Listing

Subgroup 1: Brannock Device Company Records, 1925 - 1998

Series 1: Historical Background, 1928 - 1995
This series contains articles about Charles Brannock, the Brannock Device, the device in the military, and shoe-fitting in general. The series provides an understanding of the company and the shoe industry as shown both through trade magazines, popular magazines, and newspapers.

Box 1, Folder 1  Articles about Charles Brannock and the Brannock Device Company, 1934 - 1995
Box 1, Folder 2  Articles, Brannock Device in the military, 1933 July, November 1942
Box 1, Folder 3  Articles, Brannock Device in the military, 1933 July-1954 September
Box 30, Folder 1  Articles, Brannock Device in the military, 1942 February, 1965 August
Box 1, Folder 4  Enna Jettick Retailer articles by Charles Brannock, 1934 August-1935 February
Box 1, Folder 5  Articles about shoe-fitting which may mention or depict the Brannock Device, 1928-1969, undated

This series contains bookkeeping, correspondence, census, insurance, and financial records which account for the company as a whole. It is organized into seven subseries: Book for recording devices on hand, November 1927-January 1929; Correspondence, 1926-1951; Census, 1947-1963, 1980; Insurance Inventory, 1956; Royalties Accrued, January 1946-March 1951; Time Records, 1952, 1954, 1958; and Notes, undated.

The correspondence between Charles and Otis Brannock reflects the strong business relationship which existed between father and son. Charles Brannock put Florence Williams in charge when he was vacationing each July from 1928 to 1931. The often humorous correspondence between them reflects daily business at the factory. Correspondence with Dr. Joseph Levyfield, chairman of the National Foot Health Council, pertains to children's foot exams in schools. For sales analyses of the Brannock Device, see Series 5: Sales and Distribution Records, United States--Private Sector, Direct Sales, under Sales analyses, 1964-1973.

Subseries 2.1: Book for Recording Devices on Hand, 1927 November-1929 January

Box 1, Folder 6

Subseries 2.2: Correspondence, 1926 - 1951

Box 1, Folder 7 General, 1926 April-1928 April, 1943-1944

Box 1, Folder 8 Charles Brannock, Otis Brannock, and Norma Boulware (sister), 1926 September-1951 May

Box 1, Folder 9 Florence Williams, 1928 July-1931 July

Box 1, Folder 10 Dr. Joseph Levyfield, National Foot Health Council, 1945 April-1950 August

Subseries 2.3: Census, 1947-1963, 1980

Box 2, Folder 1

Subseries 2.4: Insurance Inventory, 1956 - 1956

Box 2, Folder 2

Subseries 2.5: Royalties Accrued, 1946 January-1951 March

Box 2, Folder 3

Subseries 2.6: Time Records, 1958, 1954, 1952

Box 2, Folder 4

Subseries 2.7: Notes, undated

Box 2, Folder 5

This series documents the process from invention to manufacture of the Brannock Device. It is divided into four subseries: Competitors' Devices and Other Products, Fitting Stool, Design, and Manufacture. Patents and Trademarks are included in the Sales and Distribution series because they were granted after sale of the device had already commenced and the foreign patents and trademarks are intricately linked to foreign sales.

The Competitors' Devices and Other Products subseries is further refined: Competitors' Devices; Other Products; Correspondence, 1928-1981, and Memos and Reports, n.d. The subseries provides documentation on the other devices Brannock considered while designing and making modifications to his own device. It also includes sale or manufacture negotiations for other inventors' products. Most of these devices were designed later than the Brannock Device and had attributes of the Brannock Device. Charles Brannock liked to keep abreast of new developments in order to protect his own interests.

The Fitting Stool subseries is a product development file on the fitting stool Charles Brannock designed to accommodate his device which enabled salesmen to measure the foot while seated instead of kneeling or squatting. It consists of design drawings and correspondence with American Fixture and Showcase Manufacturing Company, Thonet, and Commonwealth Shoe and Leather Company about negotiating its manufacture.

The Design subseries is further divided: Drawings and Ideas; Specifications; Correspondence, 1935-1975; Customer Comments; and Case of Child Cutting Finger on Device, July 1961-January 1962. The drawings and ideas are rough sketches done by Charles Brannock. The specifications include descriptions of materials used and assembly instructions. They were shipped with military orders for devices and are included in the text of patent applications. The design correspondence consists of actual and proposed modifications to the device. Of particular interest are the unsolicited modification proposals the company received. Customer comments were always appreciated and taken into account in the design process from 1946-1961. The case file of a child cutting her finger on a device resulted in a legal settlement in 1962.

The manufacture subseries contains correspondence with, and pamphlets about, companies that manufactured the device. Of particular interest are the Brannock Device Company's investigation into making plastic devices due to the shortage of aluminum in World War II, as outlined in the correspondence with the Eclipse Moulded Products Company. Also, a number of sample shoe company name plates and instruction plates which were screwed into free sections of the device are in this subseries.

Subseries 3.1: Competitors' Devices and Other Products, c. 1928-1981

Box 2, Folder 6   Competitors' Devices, Patents and drawings, undated
Box 2, Folder 7   Competitors' Devices, Advertisements and articles, undated
Box 2, Folder 8   Competitors' Devices, Paper foot-measurers, undated
Box 2, Folder 9   Other Products, Shoe-reshapers, undated
Box 2, Folder 10  Other Products, X-ray shoe fitting machines, undated
Subgroup 1: Brannock Device Company Records

Box 2, Folder 11  Correspondence, Competitors' devices, 1928 August-1964 November

Box 2, Folder 12  Correspondence, Miscellaneous sale or manufacture proposals, 1950 November-1981 September

Box 2, Folder 13  Correspondence, Clarke Device sale negotiations, 1943 March-1961 July

Box 2, Folder 14  Correspondence, "Fit-Rite" Shoe Gauge sale negotiations, 1959 September-1961 June

Box 2, Folder 15  Memos and Reports, undated

Subseries 3.2: Fitting Stool, 1936 August-1947 August

Box 2, Folder 16

Subseries 3.3: Design, 1925 - 1975

Box 2, Folder 17  Drawings and Ideas, Assorted, undated

Box 2, Folder 18  Drawings and Ideas, Military, undated

Box 2, Folder 19  Drawings and Ideas, Sock measuring device, 1942 - 1943

Box 2, Folder 20  Specifications, Civilian models, undated

Box 30, Folder 3  Specifications, Athletic and Safety Models, with photostats, 1954

Box 2, Folder 21  Specifications, Army (Munson Last), 1925 - 1945

Box 2, Folder 22  Specifications, Marine Corps, 1944 - 1954

Box 3, Folder 1  Specifications, Women's Army Corps, 1942

Box 3, Folder 2  Specifications, Miscellaneous military, 1949 - 1967

Box 3, Folder 3  Specifications, Sock-measuring device, 1942 - 1943

Box 3, Folder 4  Correspondence, Modification Proposals, 1935 July-1965 October

Box 3, Folder 5  Correspondence, Attempted modification for Endicott Johnson, 1952 October-1955 May
Box 3, Folder 6  Correspondence, Modification of Junior Model for English Distribution, 1950

Box 3, Folder 7  Correspondence, Kalso Earth Shoe Calibration, 1975

Box 3, Folder 8  Customer Comments, 301 Model, 1943 February-June

Box 3, Folder 9  Customer Comments, General, 1946 - 1961

Box 3, Folder 10  Case of Child Cutting Finger on Device, 1961 July-1962 January

Subseries 3.4: Manufacture, 1927 - 1959

Box 3, Folder 11  Controlled Materials Plan, 1951 - 1952

Box 3, Folder 12  Eclipse Moulded Products Company, 1941 July-August

Box 3, Folder 13  Die-casting companies, 1927 August-1959 December

Box 3, Folder 14  Finishing companies, 1944 December-1948 June

Box 3, Folder 15  Materials used in Army devices, 1942 January-1943 January

Box 3, Folder 16  Shoe company name plates--Correspondence, 1948, 1927-1928

Box 3, Folder 20  Miscellaneous companies, undated

Box 3, Folder 19  Inspection procedure, undated

Box 3, Folder 17  Shoe company name plates--Sample plates, undated

Box 3, Folder 18  Assembly notes, undated

This series contains records from the company which contributed toward the goal of making a sale. It is divided into seven subseries: Correspondence, 1926-1974, 1998; Mailing Lists, 1947-1949; Ideas and Copy; Materials Printed with the Brannock Device Name; Advertisements and Product Information, 1934-1980; Measuring Device Instructions; and Advertising and Merchandising Plans, 1938, 1956, and undated.

The Correspondence, 1926-1974, 1998, contains letters between Brannock and various advertising agencies, printers, and magazines.

The Mailing Lists, 1947-1949, are partial listings of stores Brannock sent advertisements to.

The Ideas and Copy subseries consists of advertising ideas sketched by Brannock or proposed by the Proctor and Collier advertising agency or others. Also included are preliminary versions of advertisements and product information booklets.

Printed Materials with the Brannock Device Name, provides examples of stationery, business cards, and leases seen by potential customers.

The Advertisements and Product Information, 1934-1980, subseries contains various advertisements which appeared in magazines, newspapers, and displays, and product information leaflets which were mailed to customers. Also represented are advertisements by shoe stores which feature the Brannock Device and examples of the Brannock Device being used to advertise other products such as insurance, apartments, magazines, carpets, floorings, and die castings.

The Instructions subseries contains: Ideas and Copy, and Completed Instructions. Ideas and Copy are preliminary versions of the instruction sheets of individual models, including the Bran-X-Stick and a Sock-Measuring Device. The Completed Instructions are finished copies of the instruction sheets of many models.

The Advertising and Merchandising Plans, 1938, 1956, n.d. subseries contains information on three promotional schemes employed by the company: an early advertising plan, a Brannock Device Company merchandising campaign in 1938, and a cooperative effort with Miles Shoes in 1956.

Subseries 4.1: Correspondence, 1926-1974, 1998

| Box 3, Folder 21 | 1926 May-1928 February, 1941 October-1951 February, 1926 May-1928 February, 1941 October-1951 February |
| Box 3, Folder 22 | 1952 October-1974 December, 1952 October-1974 December |
| Box 4, Folder 1 | Advertising in chiropody magazines, 1927 - 1933 |
| Box 4, Folder 2 | Proctor and Collier, 1926 November-1928 January, 1934 February-April |
| Box 4, Folder 3 | Use of Brannock Device in unsolicited ads and articles, 1998 April, 1939 March-1963 November |

Subseries 4.2: Mailing Lists, 1947 - 1950

Box 4, Folder 4
Subseries 4.3: Ideas and Copy, undated

Box 4, Folder 5-8 Charles Brannock and others, undated
Box 4, Folder 9 Proctor and Collier, undated
Box 4, Folder 10 A Plan to Help Sell More Shoes Through Your Salesmen, Your Dealer, undated

Subseries 4.4: Printed Materials with the Brannock Device Name (stationery, business cards, leases), undated

Box 5, Folder 1

Subseries 4.5: Advertisements and Product Information, 1934 - 1980

Box 5 Boot and Shoe Recorder, 1964 August 15, 1966 July 1, 1964 May 15
Box 31, Folder 3 Newspaper and magazine advertisements, 1934 - 1980
Box 31, Folder 1 Newspaper and magazine advertisements, 1966-1968, 1980, 1934-1959
Box 5, Folder 2-5 Standard Models, undated
Image(s)

Map-folder 1 Standard Models, undated
Box 5, Folder 6 Military theme, undated
Box 5, Folder 7 Safety Shoe Model, 1944 - 1963
Box 5, Folder 8 Children's Models, undated
Image(s)
Box 30, Folder 4 Children's Models, undated
Box 5, Folder 9 Foreign, c. 1937-1944
Map-folder 1 Foreign, c. 1937-1944
Map-folder 1 Shoe stores promoting the Brannock Device, c. 1937-1979
Box 5, Folder 10 Shoe stores promoting the Brannock Device, c. 1937-1979
Box 5, Folder 5  Brannock Device used to advertise other products, c. 1938-1980
Box 5, Folder 11  Brannock Device used to advertise other products, c. 1938-1980
Box 31  Brannock Device used to advertise other products, c. 1938-1980
Box 5, Folder 12  Point-of-purchase display advertisements, undated
Map-folder 1  Point-of-purchase display advertisements, undated
Box 5, Folder 13  Product information packet, c. 1972

Subseries 4.6: Measuring Device Instructions, undated

Box 5, Folder 14  Ideas and Copy, Double Unit Military Model, undated
Box 5, Folder 15  Ideas and Copy, Double Unit Navy Model, undated
Box 6, Folder 1  Ideas and Copy, US Marine Combat Boot Model, undated
Box 6, Folder 2  Ideas and Copy, Women's Army Corps Models, undated
Box 6, Folder 3  Ideas and Copy, Safety Shoe Models, undated
Box 6, Folder 4  Ideas and Copy, Standard Adult Models, undated
Image(s)
Box 6, Folder 5  The Bran-X-Stick, undated
Box 6, Folder 6  Sock-Measuring Device, undated
Box 6, Folder 7  Completed Instructions, Reference file used in mailing instructions, undated
Box 6, Folder 8  Completed Instructions, Athletic Model, undated
Box 6, Folder 9  Completed Instructions, Children's Models, undated
Box 6, Folder 10  Completed Instructions, Military Models, undated
Box 6, Folder 11  Completed Instructions, Safety Shoe Model, undated
Box 6, Folder 12  Completed Instructions, Standard Models, undated

Subseries 4.7: Advertising and Merchandising Plans, 1938, 1956, undated

Box 6, Folder 13  Advertising plan, undated

Box 6, Folder 14  Brannock Device merchandising plan, 1938

Box 6, Folder 15  Miles Shoes, September 1956
Series 5: Sales and Distribution Records, 1925 - 1986

The largest series in the collection, the sales and distribution series documents Brannock's sales, partnerships he entered into, and the legal measures he took to ensure his company's success. The series is divided into three subseries: United States--Private Sector, United States--Military, and Foreign.

The United States--Private Sector subseries is further divided: Patents and Trademarks, 1928-1971; Direct Sales, 1926-1973; Salesmen Files, 1925-1935; and Shoe Fairs, 1938-1968.

The Patents and Trademarks, 1928-1971, contains patent and trademark certificates; correspondence with Brannock's lawyer, Theodore E. Simonton, and others in reference to obtaining patents and trademarks; and sales inquiries from those wishing to buy Brannock's patents.

The Direct Sales, 1926-1973, contains customer information and form letters; rental contracts, 1926-1927; customer correspondence, 1927-1989; customer service endeavors, and sales figures.

Arranged alphabetically, the Salesmen Files, 1925-1935 document the enthusiasm for the device experienced by shoe store owners across the country as they inquired about selling it followed by their disappointment with commission percentages and the fact that large shoe companies were getting the device at a discount and distributing it among their affiliates, and therefore not buying from salesmen.

The Shoe Fairs, 1938-1968, contains trade literature, visitation reports, and correspondence from Charles Brannock and his employees while attending the National Shoe Fair and the National Safety Congress and Exposition in Chicago from 1938 to 1968. It is organized chronologically by event. The information learned at the fairs was also useful in keeping abreast of the latest in shoe fashion for the Park-Brannock store.

The United States--Military, 1928-1972 subseries contains correspondence, contracts, and orders relating to the sale of the Brannock Device to the military. The subseries is arranged into seven smaller series: Army, 1939-1962; Coast Guard, 1932-1945; Marine Corps, 1943-1956; Merchant Marine, July 1944-August 1944; Navy, 1928-1970; Women's Army Corps, 1942-1944; and Miscellaneous Military Branches, undated. Arrangement within each smaller series is chronological.

Additional documentation on the Brannock Device in the military are in the following series: articles can be found in the Historical Background series; competitors' designs, drawings, specifications, and materials employed to make military devices are in the Product Development series; instructions and military-theme ads are in the Advertising and Marketing series, and photographs of military fittings and military devices are located in the photographs series.

The Foreign, 1937-1986, subseries documents the complex legal relationship between the Brannock Device Company, the Selby Shoe Company, the Brannock Device Company's lawyer, Theodore E. Simonton, and others as the companies strove for protection and distribution of the Brannock Device in foreign countries. It is arranged into five smaller series: Foreign Trademark Listings; Correspondence about Patents, Trademarks, and Distribution, 1928-1986; Patents and Trademarks; London Speech about Shoe-Fitting and the Company History; and Film Strip.

The foreign trademark listings were compiled periodically by the Brannock Device Company to keep track of their patents and trademarks. The correspondence is arranged chronologically. The actual patent and trademark certificates are arranged by country, and some folders also contain accompanying correspondence. This series does not contain all patents and trademarks issued to protect the Brannock Device internationally; some of the trademarks listed in the container list are renewals and therefore would not be the date of first issue. The London speech is a file of notes Charles Brannock used when giving a speech on his company's history and success in London, England. The sound-slide, instructional film strip is entitled "The Key to Repeat Sales." This series contains a transcript with a frame-by-frame description of each slide and accompanying narration.
Subseries 5.1: United States--Private Sector, 1925 - 1973

Box 6, Folder 16  Patents and Trademarks, Correspondence, May 1927-December 1928, November 1937-October 1971

Box 6, Folder 17  Patents and Trademarks--Patents, August 1928, August 1929, April 1937, June 1960

Box 6, Folder 18  Patents and Trademarks, Design Patent--Size Stick, October 1956

Box 6, Folder 19  Patents and Trademarks--Trademarks, May 1945, September 1951

Box 6, Folder 20  Patents and Trademarks, Patent Sale Inquiries, undated

Box 7, Folder 1  Direct Sales, Early sales lists and form letters, undated

Box 7, Folder 2  Direct Sales, Book of form letter examples, c. 1932-1933

Box 7, Folder 3  Direct Sales, Open accounts and prospects, 1926 - 1929

Box 7, Folder 4  Direct Sales, List orders, June 1938

Box 7, Folder 5  Direct Sales, Shoe Manufacturer distribution lists, undated

Box 7, Folder 6  Direct Sales, Rental contracts, November 1926-February 1927

Box 7, Folder 7  Direct Sales, Rental contracts, March 1927

Box 7, Folder 8  Direct Sales, Rental contracts, April 1927-May 1927

Box 7, Folder 9  Direct Sales, Rental contracts, June 1927-July 1927

Box 7, Folder 10  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, January-May 1927

Box 7, Folder 11  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, June 1927

Box 8, Folder 1  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, July 1927

Box 8, Folder 2  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, August 1927

Box 8, Folder 3  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, September 1927

Box 8, Folder 4  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, October 1927
Box 8, Folder 5  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, November 1927
Box 8, Folder 6  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, December 1927
Box 9, Folder 1  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, January 1928
Box 9, Folder 2  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, February 1928
Box 9, Folder 3  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, March 1928
Box 9, Folder 4  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, April 1928
Box 9, Folder 5  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, May 1928
Box 9, Folder 6  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, June 1928
Box 10, Folder 1  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, July 1928
Box 10, Folder 2  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, August 1928-September 1928
Box 10, Folder 3  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, October 1928-September 1928
Box 10, Folder 4  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, January-May 1929
Box 10, Folder 5  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, June 1929-July 1929
Box 10, Folder 6  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, August 1929-December 1929
Box 10, Folder 7  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, 1930
Box 11, Folder 1  Direct Sales, Customer correspondence, 1931
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Box 22, Folder 9  Patents and Trademarks--Holland, Trademarks, 1966 July 1

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Box 22, Folder 11  Patents and Trademarks--Iceland, Trademark, 1950 April 5

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Series 6: Photographs, circa 1930-1997

This series is divided into five subseries: Personal; Foot-Measuring Devices; Military; Employees and the Factory, 1949, 1997; and Negatives of Brannock Device, 1933-1958. The series contains black and white photos of Charles and Otis Brannock, competitors' devices, the Brannock device in window displays as well as in use and alone, the Women's Army Corps and various military men being fitted, employees, and the factory. There are also color photos, circa 1997, of the employees, the factory, and devices. Black and white, labeled negatives, 1933-1958, are also included here.

Subseries 6.1: Personal, undated

Box 27, Folder 1

[Photograph of Rex Dickinson and Charles Brannock with cartoon "balloons": black and white photoprint], [ca. 1940-1950], undated

1 Item (10.5"x7.5").

Image(s): Charles and Otis Brannock

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

02067213.tif (AC Scan)

In Box 27, Folder 1.

Topic: Foot -- Measurement
Shoes -- Fitting

Genre/ Form: Photographs -- 1940-1950 -- Black-and-white
photoprints -- Silver gelatin

Subseries 6.2: Foot-Measuring Devices, undated

Box 27, Folder 2

Competitors' devices, undated

Box 27, Folder 3

Brannock Device in window displays, undated

Image(s)

Box 27, Folder 4

Brannock Device in window displays, Argentina, undated

Box 27, Folder 5

Brannock Devices, undated
Image(s)

Box 27, Folder 3  Brannock Device in window displays, undated

Box 27, Folder 4  Brannock Device in window displays, Argentina, undated

Box 27, Folder 5  Brannock Devices, undated

Subseries 6.3: Military, undated

Box 27A, Folder 1  Women's Army Corps, undated
Image(s)

Box 30, Folder 6  Women's Army Corps, undated

Box 27A, Folder 2  Military fitting, undated
Image(s)

Subseries 6.4: Employees and Factory, undated

Box 27A, Folder 3  For article in Pride in Syracuse, 1949 December
Image(s)

Box 28, Folder 1-2  Employees, factory, and devices, circa 1997

Subseries 6.5: Negatives of Brannock Device, 1933 - 1958

Box 28, Folder 3

Series 1: Historical Background, 1936-1963, 1981

Newspaper and magazine articles about Park-Brannock anniversaries, moves into new stores, and the 1981 closing dominate this series. These articles are useful in understanding the rise of Park-Brannock as a leading shoe and accessory retailer. Photo-laden articles put the industrial design-influenced decor of each store into context.

Box 23, Folder 5 Articles, 1936-1963, 1981
Series 2: Operational Records, 1936 - 1972


The Financial Materials, 1936-1972 subseries contains all available financial information for Park-Brannock. It is arranged into five smaller series: Correspondence, May 1937-December 1972; Annual Reports, 1945-1972; Department Sales Figures, 1957-1961; Merchandise Budget, August 1939-January 1941; and Miscellaneous Reports, 1936-1944.

The Memos, December 1937-April 1944, January 1949, May 1958-May 1961 subseries contains a limited amount of general internal correspondence. For correspondence between Charles and Otis Brannock, see the Operational Records series of subgroup 1, the Brannock Device Company. For other internal correspondence, see the correspondence with Alice Buxton in the Advertising and Marketing Records series in subgroup 2, Park-Brannock.

The Business course Tailored to Park-Brannock, undated is a file on how to be successful in the shoe business with advice specifically for Park-Brannock. The author is unknown, but it appears to be a commissioned service.

The Store Planning, 1935-1961 subseries contains architectural drawings for a proposed but not undertaken renovation of the original Park-Brannock building in 1935, and files containing store planning advertisements and correspondence used in the moves to new stores in 1937 and 1946.

The New York City Business Trips, January 1949-August 1952 subseries consists of a chronological file of notes taken by Charles Brannock on business accounts during trips to New York City.

The Miscellaneous Notes, undated, subseries contains various notes made by Charles Brannock.


- Box 23, Folder 6: Correspondence and Annual Reports, 1937 May-1972 December
- Box 23, Folder 8: Annual Reports, 1956 - 1963
- Box 23, Folder 9: Annual Reports, 1965 - 1972
- Box 23, Folder 10: Department Sales Figures, 1957 - 1960
- Box 23, Folder 11: Department Sales Figures, 1960 - 1961
- Box 23, Folder 12: Merchandise Budget, 1939 August-1941 January
- Box 23, Folder 13: Miscellaneous Reports, 1936 - 1944
Subseries 2.2: Memos, 1937 December-1944 April, 1958 May-1961 May, 1949 January

Box 24, Folder 1

Subseries 2.3: Business Course Tailored to Park-Brannock, undated

Box 24, Folder 2

Subseries 2.4: Store Planning, 1935 - 1961

Map-folder 1

Architectural Drawings--proposed remodeling of 321 S. Salina, 1935 February

Box 24, Folder 3

427 S. Salina St., 1936 - 1937

Box 24, Folder 4

473-475 S. Salina St-129 E. Onondaga St., 1961, 1945-1946

Subseries 2.5: New York City Business Trips, 1949 January-1952 August

Box 24, Folder 5

Subseries 2.6: Miscellaneous Notes, undated

Box 24, Folder 6
Series 3: Advertising and Marketing Records, 1933 - 1962

Like the Advertising and Marketing Records series in the Brannock Device Company subgroup, this series contains records from the company which contributed toward the goal of making a sale. Correspondence documents the arrangements made by the company to create and post advertisements. Ideas and copy display early moments of this process. Materials printed with the Park-Brannock logo represent what the customers were given to remember their purchases: stationery, receipts, gift cards, bags, and box designs. Printed advertisements, radio advertisements, and form letters brought customers into the store. The Junior League of Syracuse file documents photographic advertising campaigns surrounding this group of fresh-faced young girls, as well as Park-Brannock's efforts to edge into this consumer group with advertisements in their newsletter. Correspondence with and reports from Alice Buxton have to do with her visits with doctors and nurses to promote the store along with evaluations of the company's advertising campaigns. The "Betsey Budget" lawsuit resulted from Park-Brannock copyrighting a commissioned advertising booklet which the artist would rather have had in her own name.

Box 24, Folder 7  Correspondence, 1936 December-1955 September
Box 24, Folder 8  Form letters, 1937-1956 and undated
Box 24, Folder 9  Ideas and copy, undated
Map-folder 1  Park-Brannock product materials and packaging (shopping bags and shoe bags), undated
Box 24, Folder 11  Printed advertisements, 1933-1961 and undated
Map-folder 1  Printed advertisements, 1933-1961 and undated
Box 24, Folder 12  Radio advertisements, 1961 February-1962 February, 1943 November-1944 January
Box 24, Folder 13  The Junior League of Syracuse, circa 1937
Box 24, Folder 14  Alice Buxton, Correspondence, 1938 May-1942 December
Box 24, Folder 15  Alice Buxton, Reports, 1939 March-1940 November
Box 24, Folder 16  "Betsey Budget" copyright lawsuit, 1939 - 1940

This series is arranged into seven subseries: Customer Correspondence, 1928-1944; Supplier Correspondence, 1927-1944; Florsheim Sales Instruction Manual; Inventories, 1961; Promotions; Receipts, 1916-1918; and Sales Floor Management.

The customer and supplier correspondence consists of mail orders, returns, and repair requests. An interesting aspect of the customer correspondence is the amount of shoe orders customers placed through the mail. Customers often received several pairs of shoes matching their descriptions, selected a pair, and mailed the remainder back to Park-Brannock. Sometimes customers would send in an outline of their foot to be sized or color swatches to match the shoes to a dress. Often the purchasing negotiations would require several letters between store and customer. The most prominent shoe supplier to correspond with Park-Brannock was the Selby Shoe Company, followed by Brown Shoe Company; Marshall, Meadows, and Stewart, Inc.; and LaValle, Inc.

Subseries 4.1: Customer Correspondence, 1976-1977, 1928-1944


Box 25, Folder 2 1938 January-June, 1938 January-June

Box 25, Folder 3 1938 July-December, 1938 July-December

Box 25, Folder 4 1939 January-1943 December, 1939 January-1943 December

Box 25, Folder 5 1944 January-August, 1944 January-August


Subseries 4.2: Supplier Correspondence, 1927 - 1944


Box 25, Folder 8 1938, 1938

Box 26, Folder 1 1939, 1943, 1943, 1939

Box 26, Folder 2 1944, 1944

Subseries 4.3: Florsheim Sales Instruction Manual, undated

Box 26, Folder 3

Subseries 4.4: Inventories, 1961 - 1961
Box 26, Folder 4

Subseries 4.5: Promotions

Box 26, Folder 5

Subseries 4.6: Receipts, 1916 - 1918

Box 26, Folder 6

Subseries 4.7: Sales Floor Management, undated

Box 26, Folder 7
Series 5: Photographs, 1932 - 1967
This series contains labeled, black and white, 8" x 10" photographs from each of the three stores as well as a booklet celebrating Park-Brannock’s 50th anniversary in 1956, window displays from Park-Brannock and other stores, and labeled 8" x 10" negatives.

Box 28, Folder 4   Original store, 321 S. Salina St., circa 1934
Image(s)

Box 28, Folder 5   Second store, 427 S. Salina St., 1937 - 1946

Box 28, Folder 6   Third store, 473 S. Salina St., circa 1946-1947

Box 28, Folder 7   Booklet of 473 S. Salina St., circa 1947

Box 28, Folder 8   50th anniversary, 1956 April

Box 28, Folder 9   Window displays, 1935 May-1967 February
Image(s)

Box 28, Folder 10  Other store window displays, undated

Box 28, Folder 11  Employees, 1950 - 1954

Box 29, Folder 1   Negatives, 1932 January-1937 March

Box 29, Folder 2   Negatives, 1937 April-1939 March

Box 29, Folder 3   Negatives, 1939 April-1947 October

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