

Inventory of the

Starline, Incorporated
Harvard, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 114

INTRODUCTION

Mr. S. G. Burritt, Chairman of Chromalloy Farm and Industrial Equipment Company, Harvard, Illinois donated the Starline, Inc. Records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on November 18, 1980. Additional material was donated by Albert E. Hurd on April 6, 2015.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 7.25
Number of containers: 13
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 114

SCOPE AND CONTENT

A rich resource for the study of industrial development and corporate policies, the Starline, Inc. Records document the company's history from 1902 to 1973. The collection is divided into three record series groups: (1) Starline, Inc. records; (2) Federal Malleable Company Records; (3) other related companies' records. Series one is the most comprehensive.

The records of the Starline corporation, series one, comprise articles of incorporation and amendments, minutes, president's reports, annual reports and financial statements, correspondence, audits, and product catalogs. The complete set of minutes (1902-1973) and the president's reports (1958-1968) detail company business procedures, financial statements, capital stock value reports, organizational changes, and production statistics. Product catalogs, depicting poultry, milking, barn, and recreational equipment, reveal product endurance in the commercial market and price fluctuations (1890-1959). Although records predating the company's incorporation in 1902 are missing, the historical files contain basic background information on the company's development. Researchers also should note the correspondence with the Prudential Insurance Company and Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company discussing Starline's financing and eventual merge with Chromalloy American Corporation in 1969.

The two other record group series partially trace the history of companies Starline purchased half interest in or bought out. A major portion of these records date after Starline became involved in each company. The Federal Malleable Company records, consisting of articles of incorporation, minutes, correspondence, financial statements, and dissolution information, are the most complete and detail Starline's purchase and resale of the company (1954-1966).

Additional material consisting of photographs, mainly salesmen and company

manufactured equipment, are included in the addendum. A metal cap stamped with the Starline, Inc. logo is also a part of the addition.

As one of the nation's principal inventors and manufacturers of farmstead equipment, Starline's records reveal the development of one link in the chain of American industrialization.

Other collections held by the Regional History Center which deal with industrial development include: Rockford Chair and Furniture Company Records (RC 42); Rockford Small Business Collection (RC 57); National Chair Company Records (RC 59); North Corn Belt Seed Growers, Inc. (RC 90); and Westclox, Inc. Records (RC 116).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

In 1883, Henry L. Ferris invented and patented a hay carrier while working at his dairy, the Cold Spring Creamery, near Alden, Illinois. As news of the carrier spread through the farming community, a number of men visited Ferris with the thought of forming a business venture. Charles E. Hunt, associated with his father-in-law, Nathan B. Helm, in a hardware store in Harvard, Illinois, suggested that Ferris set up shop in the basement of the store for manufacturing the carrier, and he and Helm would sell the merchandise from the floor above. Ferris agreed and the Hunt, Helm, Ferris and Company business began.

As Ferris' engineering skills and inventiveness progressed, the company grew and prospered. Eventually, Ferris sold his dairy to the Gatman Brothers and moved his family to Harvard. In 1888 the company built a new and larger manufacturing facility on the south side of Front Street. Continued prosperity meant continued growth; they built additional buildings, and by 1898, constructed their first three story building. Product innovation allowed the partners to buy out the Church Hay Tool Company of Harvard prior to the turn of the century. Finally, Hunt, Helm and Ferris decided to incorporate in 1902.

Through the years, the company manufactured more than 50 products and acquired over 250 patents on equipment designed to streamline farm work. Ferris invented a windmill regulator, land roller, spring tooth cultivator, a barbed wire stretcher, fence posts, milk house equipment, barn hardware, automatic gutter cleaners and manure spreaders, silo unloaders, and a cattle feeder. Along the recreational line, Hunt, Helm, and Ferris manufactured a two-wheel bicycle called the "Ferris Wheel", steel coaster sleds, coaster wagons, and roller skates.

Since farmers referred to the company's merchandise as the "Star" line of farmstead equipment, Hunt, Helm and Ferris renamed the corporation Starline in 1931. This preceded a long line of alterations for the company. In 1943, Starline purchased the Federal Malleable Company of Wisconsin. Sixteen years later (1959), they sold Federal Malleable to facilitate purchasing 50% interest in the Howard Rotavator Company, an American branch of the British farm machinery manufacturer, Rotary Hoes. Starline also acquired half interest in the Hawk Bilt Company of Iowa in 1961; a company built around the invention and manufacturer of a patented

tank-type manure spreader. In 1969, Starline merged with Chromalloy American Corporation. Rotary Hoes declined to be part of the transaction and bought back Starline's half interest in their American company. Hawk Bilt Company agreed to the merger.

Today, Starline is part of the Farm Systems Division of Chromalloy Farm and Industrial Equipment Company headquartered in Harvard, Illinois. S. G. Burritt, the first non-family member elected chairman of the board, strives to keep Hunt, Helm and Ferris' objective alive--to streamline American farming.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Agricultural Implements
Agriculture
Barns
Big Foot Corporation
Dairying
Federal Malleable Company
Harvard (Ill.)
Hawk Bilt Company
Poultry Industry
Starline, Incorporated

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Series I. Starline, Inc. Records		
1	1	Historical Information, 1933, 1958
	2	<u>Starline As I Remember</u> by H. J. Ferris, 1972
	3	Articles of Incorporation and Amendments, 1902-1959
	4	Resolutions, 1963
	5	Information on Corporate Charter, 1936-1941
	6-8	Corporate Minutes, 1902-1927
2	1-11	Corporate Minutes, 1928-1973
	12-28	President's Reports, 1958-1966
3	1-4	President's Reports, 1967-1968
	5-9	Annual Financial Statements, (1908-1934), 1935-1950
	10	Annual Reports, 1955-1961
4	1	Annual Reports, 1962-1968
	2	Annual Reports to the Secretary of State, (1929-1974)
	3	Bid for Financing from Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co., 1965
	4	Correspondence with Prudential Insurance Company, 1966-1971
	5	Closing File, 1966
5	1	Stock Certificate Book, 1902-1904
	2	Stock holders Ledger, (1904-1966)
	3	Reports of Issuance of Shares, 1936-1969
	4	Capital Stock Value Report, 1913
	5-8	Audit Reports, (1911-1923), (1956-1965)
6	1-2	Audit Reports, (1965-1968)
	3-8	Tax Audits, 1922-1940
7	1-6	Tax Audits, 1941-1955
8	1	Tax Audit Renegotiations, 1942-1944
	2	Analytical Financial Examination, 1908-1921
	3	"Break Even Point" Financial Report, 1947
	4	Amended Tax Returns, 1921-1922

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
8	5	Income Tax Returns and Working Papers, 1929-1931
	6-8	Internal Revenue Correspondence and Tax Returns, 1933-1949
	9	Franchise Tax Invoices, (1928-1968)
	10	Summary of Invoices and Inventories, 1890-1899
	11	Employee List and Pay Rate, 1915-1916
	12-14	Trial Balance Sheets, 1948-1951
9	1-2	Trial Balance Sheets, 1952-1953
	3	Working Papers and Profit Sharing Retirement Fund, 1962
	4	Chart of Accounts, 1936
	5	Designation of Registered Offices and Agents, (1935-1963)
	6	Statement of Reduction of Paid-in Surplus, 1936
	7	Production and Cost of Grey Iron Casting, 1928
	8	Chart of Standing Expense Orders, n.d.
	9	Blueprint of Factory Layout, n.d.
	10	Corporation Policy Manual, 1958
	11	Salesman Handbook, 1929
	12	Salesman information Packet, n.d.
	13	Sales Data Book, 1947
	14	<u>The Star Liner</u> , Bulletin, (1921-1926)
	15-19	Hunt, Helm, and Ferris Co., Catalogs, 1907, n.d.
20-25	<u>The Star Line</u> , Catalogs, 1919-1922	
10	1-14	<u>The Star Line</u> , Catalogs, (1923-1958)
	15-16	<u>Star Hay Carriers</u> , catalogs, n.d.
	17	<u>Handling the "Pay Dirt"</u> , Catalogs, (1915-1917)
	18	<u>Better Barn Doors</u> , Catalogs, n.d.
	19	<u>Peerless Hay Carriers</u> , Catalogs, n.d.
	20	<u>Star Overhead Conveyors</u> , Catalogs, (?-1928)
	21	<u>Hardware Specialties</u> , Catalogs, n.d.
	22	<u>Star Barn Equipment</u> , Catalogs, n.d.
	23	Barn Equipment Catalogs, (1920's)
	24	Cannon Ball Door Hangers Catalogs, 1917, 1927
	25	Barn Construction Manuals, (1924-1927)
	26-28	Poultry Equipment Catalogs, (1926-1941)
	29	Poultry Equipment Information, 1930-1932
	30	Children's Vehicle Equipment Catalogs, (1925-1927)
11	1	<u>Dairy Dollars</u> , Catalogs, 1915-1917
	2	Dairy Equipment Catalogs, (1902?), (1950-1959)
	3	Horse Stable Equipment Catalog, n.d.
	4	Ventilators and Ventilation Systems Catalog, n.d.

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
11	5	Pumps and Water Systems Catalog, n.d.
	6	Supplements to Catalogs, (1903-?)
	7	Illustrated Price List of Parts, n.d.
	8	Rotasreader Catalog, n.d.
	9	Advertising Material from a Scrapbook, n.d.
	10-12	Photographs, (1892-1960) (33)

Series II. Federal Malleable Company Records

	13-14	Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, and Amendments, 1902-1959
	15-16	Minutes, 1954-1961
12	1	Correspondence, 1959-1961
	2	Purchase Agreement, 1959
	3	Dissolution Information, 1961-1962
	4	Lease Information, 1959-1966
	5	Financial Statements, 1959
	6	Depreciation Schedule, 1959
	7	Appraisal of Company Property, 1961
	8	Balance Sheets, 1959-1960
	9	General Ledger, 1959-1960
	10	Comparative Financial Statement, 1952-1953
	11	Income Tax Returns, 1957-1961

Series III. Other Subsidiaries Records

	12	Tax Audits, Big Foot Corporation, 1947, 1952
	13	Audit, Howard Rotavator Company, 1968
	14	General Ledger, Hawk Bilt Manufacturing Company, 1912-1951
	15	Catalogs, Church Hay Tool Company, n.d.
	16	Branch Companies Expense Ledger, n.d.
	17	Standard Cost for Managerial Purposes, 1931

Oversize

Drawer 16, Folder 2	Hunt, Helm, Ferris & Co. Factory Employees Panorama
	Starline Emblem, and 2 Corporate Seals [in artifact room]

BOX

FOLDER

DESCRIPTION

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ADDENDUM

13

Artifact box

Photographs, salesmen and equipment, 1923-1953
Metal "cap" stamped with Starline, Inc. logo