

Inventory of the

W.F. and John Barnes Company
Rockford, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 123

INTRODUCTION

Kimball L. Finkenstaedt, Rockford, Illinois, donated the W.F. and John Barnes Company records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on February 5, 1981.

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: 3.5
Number of containers: 3 + 5 volumes
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 123

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The W. F. and John Barnes Company records collection represents a small portion of the documents usually generated by a large industrial firm. Nevertheless, as the only surviving records of this important machine tool corporation, the collection is vitally important to the preservation of the industry's history.

Records in the collection date from 1878 to 1963 with the bulk of the materials between 1940 and 1962. The first series contains company histories, legal agreements and leases, minutes annual reports, and reports to stockholders detailing organizational changes such as the formation and dissolution of subsidiary industries. Since there are no minutes pre-dating 1931, only the company histories reveal the industry's beginnings.

Voting trust agreements, correspondence, interdepartmental memoranda, special reports on facets of industrial developments, and financial records comprise the second record series (1878, 1932-1960). Of special note are two shipping registers (1919-1940) recording the names of the companies purchasing equipment, their location and the number or type of machine being shipped. The books are valuable tools for studying the effect of economic conditions on company production and sales statistics.

The final series of the collection consists of printed materials such as catalogs, articles, news releases, and operation plans, architectural drawings, and photographs. A large portion of the photographs portray exterior and interior portions of the factory and chronologically depict additions and alterations made during the 1940's. Another set of photographs show the construction of the Rockford Ordnance Plant in 1941-1942. The architectural drawings not only detail company facilities, but also machine building specifications.

Researchers should note that there is an extensive company history available in Box 1, Folder 1. The Regional History Center also holds a number of other industrial collections: Rockford Mitten and Hosiery Company, Rockford Chair and Furniture Company, Smith Oil and

Refining Company, National Chair Company, Starline, Incorporated, and Westclox, Incorporated (RC 38, 42, 48, 59, 114, 116). Researchers also might consult the local history reference collection for information on northern Illinois industries.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

While working as a wood model maker for Emerson Talcott and Company of Rockford, Illinois, a manufacturer of harvesting machinery, John Barnes developed a foot powered woodworking tool. When word spread of the invention and orders for the tool began increasing, Barnes sent for his brothers, W. F. and B. Frank, to come help manage the new business. In 1872 the brothers formed a partnership; the W. F. and John Barnes Company incorporated in 1884.

Although B. F. Barnes left the company in 1899 to open a similar company of his own-- B. F. Barnes Company-- his brothers consolidated their ideas until they developed the first multiple operation machines for interchangeable parts in the world (1908) The next 30 years produced tremendous expansion in the company's production line. In 1929 a subsidiary, John S. Barnes Corporation, organized to furnish highly efficient hydraulic equipment. In 1933 they made the first automatic progress-through machine for International Harvester Company. In 1934 Ford Motor Company ordered one of the first transfer type machines used for diamond-boring cylinders in the motor block. And in 1939, a special honing machine designed for hydraulic cylinders brought in a large number of orders from the airplane industry.

The build-up of defense production in 1940 swelled the orders for machines to assist in the manufacture of guns and ammunition. Barnes underwent several plant enlargements to maintain production levels. Among the company's newest achievements were: manufacture of a machine for making precision optical components used in gun sights; establishing a chemical division to produce a substance used with optical polishing machines; signing a contract with the War Department in 1940 to build a plant to produce armor piercing projectiles; developing electrical controls and designing circuits. In addition, another subsidiary, Metal Cutting Tools, Incorporated, organized during the war.

After World War II Barnes resumed manufacturing machine tools for automotive and other high production industries. The engineers also devised an extensive line of equipment for handling cans and jars in canning plants; Barnes began working with Quaker Oats, Campbell Soup, Kaiser Aluminum, and Dole Company. Following an investigation of atomic energy, the company began manufacturing teletherapy equipment used in cobalt cancer treatment.

The 1950's brought both prosperity and decline for the W. F. and John Barnes Company. The product line continued to expand, but following the Korean War orders began to slow down. By 1960, Barnes sold their stock interest in John S. Barnes Corporation and Metal Cutting Tools, Incorporated. The Food and Container Division also began to cut back and in April, 1960 ceased operations.

Early in 1963 the Babcox and Wilcox Company began exploring the establishment of a manufacturing facility capable of producing the component parts of a nuclear industry. Barnes' experience with atomic energy led Babcox and Wilcox to negotiate an agreement with Barnes. On November 1, 1963 Babcox and Wilcox purchased Barnes' principal assets, acquired the personnel and facilities of the company, and acquired the W. F. and John Barnes company name.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Barnes, John
Machine Tools
Rockford (Ill.)
W.F. and John Barnes Company

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1-4	Historical Information
	5	Ten Years of Automation at the Rockford Ordnance Plant, 1955
	6	Government Contract, 1948
	7	Intercompany Agreements with Metal Cutting Tools, Inc., 1954-1961
	8	Working Papers for Main Plant Lease with John S. Barnes Corporation, 1954-1962
	9	Leases and Working Papers with John S. Barnes Corporation, 1953-1961
	10	John S. Barnes Corp. Information, n.d.
	11	B. J. Svenson Materials, 1950-1960
	12	Agreement with John S. Barnes Co. Odin Corp. and E. J. Svenson, 1941
	13	Agreement contract and correspondence, B. F. Barnes Co., 1907-1920
	14	B. F. Barnes Co. Articles of Incorporation, 1899 and Dissolution Agreement, 1920
	15	B. F. Barnes Co. Minutes and By-Laws, 1912-1916
	16-19	W. F. and John Barnes Co., Minutes, (1931-1961)
	20	Annual Reports, 1949-1954, 1958, 1960
	21	Reports to Stockholders, 1946-1949
	22	Irving Pratt Stock Purchase, 1940, 1947
	23-24	Voting Trust Agreements, 1957-1959
	25	Correspondence, 1933-1962
	26	Interdepartmental Memoranda, 1949, 1953-1958
	27	Finkergstaedt correspondence and notes, 1924-1963, 1975
	28	Special Report on. Canning Machinery, 1954
	29	Report on the Manufacture of a Rare Earth Oxide for Precision Lens Polishing Purposes, 1949
	30	Report for Insurance Coverage, 1953
	31	Special Report on Sales Products and Development Projects, 1953
	32	Defense Plant Corporation Status Reports, 1943
	33	Report to Olin Industries, 1954
2	1	Report to American Smelting and Refining Co., 1954
	2	Financial Journal, 1878
	3	Balance Sheets, 1960

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
2	4	Balance Sheets, Odin Corp., 1949-1959
	5	Food and Container Assets, 1960
	6	Sales Department Recommendations, 1932
	7	Summary of Sales Activity, 1939
	8	Proposed Program for Collaborative Work with Union Carbide, 1958
	9	Proposal for a Food Preservation Pilot Plant, 1955
	10	Aseptic Canning Survey, 1957
	11	Barnes Can Study, n.d.
	12	Summary of the Development of Product Lines in Fields Other than that of Machine Tools, 1950's
	13	Suggested Plan of Operation, 1957
	14	Company Policies, 1957
	15	Operator's Handbook, n.d.
	16	Instruction Books, Magnetic Loader, n.d.
	17	Introduction Pamphlet, n.d.
	18	Finkenstaedt Speech, "Mass Production Technique as Applied to Ammunition Production", 1945
	19	News Releases, 1963
	20	Advertisement Reproductions, 1892-1893
	21	Article Reprints, 1946-1962
	22	Representative Ads, 1940
	23	Product Descriptions, n.d.
	24-35	Catalogs, (1927-1963), n.d.
	36	Informative Booklet, Process Equipment Division, n.d.
	3	1-3
4		<u>Teamwork</u> , Magazine, 1954-1955
5		Drawings (2) Plant and Parking Facility, n.d.
6		Entertainment Programs, 1954-1962
7-8		Newspaper Clippings, 1930-1963
		Photographs:
9-11		Exteriors and Interiors of Factory Additions, 1909, 1940-1942, 1962-1963; (93, 3 negs.)
12		Factory Interiors, n.d. (17)
13		Identified Machines, (1872-1960) (19)
14		Unidentified Product Shots, n.d. (41, 2 negs.)
15		Unidentified, n.d. (4)
16		Ordnance Plant, 1941-1942 (9)
17		Other Companies, 1967 (3)
Oversize	1 volume	"A Plan for Producing Production Machine Tools in Cooperation with the National Defense Commission" by William W. Barton, 1940
	2 volumes	Record of Shipments, 1919-1940
	1 volume	Financial Charts, 1936-1940

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	6
Oversize	1 volume	Development and Description of the Manufacture of Artillery Ammunition by Automatic Process, 1945	
Oversize Drawer 16,	7-8	Drawings, architectural drawings, photographs, and product pictures, letters, 1919-1958 (55)	