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Guide to the Eaton Engravers Company Records

1892-1943

Collection Number 2019_21



*Printing plate showing two fonts styles 207 and 208.
Photo by John Jermain Memorial Library Local History Archive Center.*

by Catherine Tremblay, Local Content Librarian

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Collection Overview

Repository:

John Jermain Memorial Library
Local History Archive Center
201 Main Street
Sag Harbor, NY 11963
Phone: (631) 725-0049
Email: historyroom@johnjermain.org

Collection Number: 2019_21

Creators: Eaton, William S. and activities surrounding Eaton Engravers and Machinery Co.

Title: Eaton Engravers Company Records

Dates: 1892-1943

Bulk Dates: 1918-1922

Abstract: The Eaton Engravers Collection consists of a variety of companies with the same or similar functionality founded by William Sylvester Eaton of Brooklyn and Sag Harbor, New York. He is the founder and inventor of Eaton Engravers. As an inventor and holder of many patents who lived and worked in Sag Harbor, New York during the late 1800s into the first quarter of the twentieth century, the business struggled, failed, and was reborn with great success.

Physical Description: 7 legal folder 2.5" deep boxes; 4 large clamshell boxes; 4 single document folders; 3 special ephemera boxes; total 1.75 30" wide shelves

Language: Material mainly in English. Some patents written in Dutch, French, German, and Italian. Finding aid written in English using Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

Immediate Source of Acquisition: Gift of Ken (Kenneth) Conrad, the great-grandson of William S. Eaton.

Conditions Covering Access:

The Eaton Engravers Records are open to all researchers under the guidelines for handling and viewing material in the History Room and Archives at the John Jermain Memorial Library.

Conditions Covering Use:

John Jermain Memorial Library owns the physical material. Permission to publish must be obtained from John Jermain Memorial Library. Please contact historyroom@JohnJermain.org for more information.

Preferred Citation:

[Item] [Box Number] [Folder Number] Eaton Engravers Collection, 2019_21. Local History Archive Center, John Jermain Memorial Library (Sag Harbor, NY).

Processing Information:

Rebecca Grabie, Local Content Librarian, accessioned this gift by retrieving items and personally choosing which ones were capable to be salvaged from an unconditioned garage of a home that had been sold.

The items were processed by Catherine Tremblay, Archivist and Local Content Librarian in 2022.

Access Terms:

Subject Terms:

Engraving
Engraving – Printing
Engraving Machines
Inventions -- Marketing
Inventions -- Patents
Machine Design

Geographical Terms:

Sag Harbor (N.Y.)
Sag Harbor (N.Y.) -- History – 1890-1925

Names:

Eaton & Glover Engraving Machine Company, Inc.
Eaton Dial Company
Eaton Dial Manufacturing Company
Eaton Engravers
Eaton Engravers Machinery Corporation
Eaton, William Sylvester
Engravers and Printers Machinery Company
Engravers Service Company
Engraving
Glover, Frank B.

Kiernan, George
Lyon, B
Pierson, Charles A.
Raynor, George C.
Suffolk Dial Company

Biographical:

Eaton Engravers Collection was founded by William Sylvester Eaton who was a pivotal figure in the American watch industry.

In 1892, Eaton started the Eaton Dial Manufacturing Company while still serving as superintendent at the Fahys factory, a significant industrial employer in Sag Harbor. An innovative method of creating the dial designs was derived from his expertise in the engraving industry. After a promising start, the company quickly failed within a few years. It went through a number of iterations over the years, and finally the engraving machinery found success.

As the company expanded, it reorganized as the Engravers and Printers Machinery Company, and in 1910, the "Model C" pantograph machine was introduced, practically revolutionizing the steel and copper engraving industry.

Scope and Content Note:

The majority of the content is patents and marketing materials in support of the patents or the business itself. The scope is wider than you might think, given how the records were taken in by the library piecemeal and in very poor physical condition.

Arrangement:

The collection is organized in five series. Series II, Subseries I-V are arranged by function and within that alphabetically.

- I. Inventions paperwork
 - i. Patents – machinery, Patents – chemical processes
 - 1. U.S.
 - 2. International
 - ii. Deeds
- II. Financial Documents
 - i. Bookkeeping
 - ii. Invoices
 - 1. AP
 - 2. AR

III. Communications

- i. Requests for materials
- ii. Marketing materials
- iii. Other

IV. Examples of work

- i. Scrapbooks
- ii. Individual/loose items

V. Artifacts

- i. Eaton Award
- ii. Engraving blocks
- iii. Pieces of machine