

# ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

## A Guide to the Albany Hardware and Iron Company Records

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### Summary Information

**Repository**

Albany Institute of History & Art Library

**Creator**

Donald Eberle

**Title**

Albany Hardware and Iron Company Records

**Identifier**

MG 139

**Date**

1797-1986

**Physical Description**

9 boxes

**Physical Location**

The materials are located onsite in the Museum.

**Language of the Material**

English

**Abstract**

This collection contains the records of the Albany Hardware and Iron Co., a wholesale hardware distributor in Albany, New York. The collection contains administrative records, photographs, catalogs, and scrapbooks, along with newspapers ads and articles on the company and the men who ran it.

## **Preferred Citation**

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Albany Hardware and Iron Company Records, 1797-1986, MG 139. Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Albany, New York.

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## **Conditions Governing Access and Use**

### **Restrictions on Access**

None

### **Copyright**

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## **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Accession: # LIB.2001.321

Accession Source/Date: Gift of Donald and Ann Eberle, April 2001

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## **Processing Information**

Processed by H. Harrington and S. Deen-Clingan, November 2003 - February 2004; finding aid updated by H. Cox, June 2021.

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## **Biographical/Historical**

The Albany Hardware and Iron Company began as The Sign of the Golden Hinge in 1797. In the 1790s, Samuel Hill received a land grant for his business at 39-43 State Street. This was the location of its retail division. The business passed down to different owners over the years, first the Pruyn family, then Maurice Viele. Eventually, in 1913, the company consolidated to form Albany Hardware and Iron Company.

The Albany Hardware and Iron Company had a long history of promoting from within. Many of the Board members and those in higher positions were filled from employees moving up in the company. A warehouse facility was located on Dallius Street, but eventually, with growing demand for products, in 1926, a new site was found, near the river at Broadway and Arch Streets. Beginning in the 1950s, discount stores came into fashion, and changed the way business was done. Soon, there was no room for wholesale businesses, as retailers were now buying from co-ops. This forced the shutdown of the retail division of the Albany Hardware and Iron Company at 41 State Street in 1960. The next five years yielded losses. In 1966, a special meeting of the Stockholders voted for dissolution of the company, and in 1967, the properties and bills were settled. The donor, Don Eberle, the company's last secretary and board member, was put in charge of liquidating assets.

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## Scope and Contents

There are four series in this collection: The Administrative Files, Photographs, Catalogs, and Scrapbooks. The records cover the history of the business from its incorporation in 1891 until its sale and dissolution in 1967. The records consist of stock certificates; board meeting minutes, correspondence with stockholders, catalogs, advertisements, photographs and scrapbooks.

**Administrative Files** contains files relating to the legal and business aspects of the Albany Hardware and Iron Company. This series contains the by-laws, incorporation papers, stock certificates, board meeting minutes, correspondence, proxy voting and newspaper ads not found in the scrapbooks and details how the business was run.

**Photographs and Drawings** contains photographs and drawings of the business and its customers and employees. The photographs are in different sizes and from different time periods, the majority from the 1920s-1930s. There is also a drawing done in pencil of the new warehouse building. Other categories include warehouse photos, retail store photos, board and employee pictures, and different Albany events.

**Catalogs** contains seven catalogs from the Albany Hardware and Iron Company. Two catalogs are identical, save for the inscribed name on the fronts. One belonged to Wm. I. Baker; the other belonged to Jasper K. Dunscomb. There is also a Toy catalog, and a copy of a newsmagazine/catalog published by the Albany Hardware and Iron Company. A wholesale catalog and a hardware supplies catalog are included, as well as William Dearstyne's Warehouse Data Notebook, which contains handwritten notes on warehouse stock.

**Scrapbooks** contains three different scrapbooks. One is W.I. Baker's Scrapbook; the second scrapbook is a book marked *Invoices*, and contains news clippings, correspondence and other miscellaneous papers. The third scrapbook is unnamed. This contains material largely relating to the opening and building of the new warehouse building on Broadway and Arch Streets in the 1920s.

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## Contents List

The following section contains a listing of the materials in the collection.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
<b>Administrative, 1891-1986</b>		
Certificates of Incorporation, 1891	1	1
Stock Certificates, 1891		2
List of Stockholders, 1891		3
Miscellaneous Stockholder Information, 1891		4
By-Laws, undated		5
Blank Letterhead		6
Correspondence and Press Releases, 1946-1965		7
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 1964-1966		8
Information on Note Taking, undated		9
Waiver of Directors Meeting (blank), 1964		10
Correspondence with Dudley Patterson, 1965-1966		11
Correspondence with Addison and Juliette Clark, 1959-1965		12
Correspondence with Ruth Flanagan, 1959-1962		13
Correspondence with Susanna Deal, 1959-1964		14
Proxies for Annual Meeting of Stockholders, 1966		15
Dissolution Meeting Proxy Votes, 1966		16
Proxies for Division of Assets Meeting, 1967		17
Advertisements and Newspaper Articles, 1959, 1960, 1986		18
New Warehouse Plans and Survey, 1920s		19
Warehouse Real Estate Ad, late 1960s		20
Dallius Street Real Estate and Rentals, 1901-1917, 1957-1963		21
Port of Albany Dedication, 1932		22
Newspaper Ads, 1895, 1927, and undated	7	1
<b>Photographs and Drawings, 1806-1966</b>		
Presidents and Board Members Photographs	1	23
New Warehouse Building Invitation Photographs, 1920s		24
New Warehouse Building and Construction Photographs, 1920s		25
Warehouse photographs, circa 1930s	2	1
Retail Store photographs, circa 1920-1930s		2
Photographs removed from frames, undated		3
Albany Event Photographs, circa 1920s-1930s		4
Photographs of Employees and Board Members, circa 1920s	7	2
Photographs of Warehouse and Retail Store, circa 1920s-1930s		3
Drawing of New Warehouse Building, undated		4
Photographic Reprints of Receipts of Samuel Hill and Spencer Stafford Co., 1797, 1806, and 1822		5
Photographs of Albany Waterfront, 1966		6

**Catalogs, 1909-1953**

Good Hardware, 1922	2	5
W.C. Dearstyne's Warehouse Data Notebook, 1923		6
Wm. I. Baker's Automobile and Shop Catalog, A-9, undated		7
Jasper K. Dunscomb's Automobile and Shop Catalog, A-9, undated		8
Toy Catalog, 1953		9
Wholesale Catalog, circa 1933	3	
Hardware and Supplies Catalog, 1909	4	
<b>Scrapbooks, undated</b>		
<i>Invoices</i> Scrapbook, undated	5	
Front Cover Material, undated		1
Back Cover Material, undated		2
Unidentified Scrapbook, undated	6	
Front Cover Material, undated		1
Back Cover Material, undated		2
W.I. Baker's Scrapbook oversized material, undated	7	7
W.I. Baker's Scrapbook, loose material, undated	8	1
Page 1 - 43, undated		2-24
Page 44 - 71, undated	9	1-12