

Morey Mercantile Company Collection



HISTORY *Colorado*

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May 06, 2013

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Summary Information

Repository	History Colorado. Stephen H. Hart Research Center
Title	Morey Mercantile Company Collection
Date	1884-1955
Extent	1.0 Linear feet .5 + 1 flat box
Language	English
Collection [Box]	1
Collection [Box]	2
Abstract	<p>The Morey Mercantile Company Collection (1884-1955) contains company correspondence, invoices, photographs, employee information and catalogues. A partial scrapbook containing information on the company and its second president John. W. Morey is also found in the collection. The Morey Mercantile Company, originally known as the C. S. Morey Mercantile Company, was founded by Chester S. Morey in 1884 and grew to be one of the largest wholesale grocers in Colorado. The company served many of the largest retailers in the state and sold many items including coffee, cigars, canned goods, appliances, and cutlery. John W. Morey sold the company in 1956.</p>

Preferred Citation note

Cite as: Morey Mercantile Company Collection, Mss.00714, History Colorado. When appropriate cite with individual accession numbers such as, Catalogue 1889, Morey Mercantile Company Collection, Mss.00714 (accession 19651), History Colorado.

Historical note

The Morey Mercantile Company, originally known as the C. S. Morey Mercantile Company, was established in 1884 by C. S. (Chester Stephen) Morey. Chester was born in Dane County, Wisconsin on March 3, 1847. Before he was seventeen he enlisted in Co. I. 36th Wisconsin Infantry and took part in several Civil War battles. Later he attended Eastman's Business College in Chicago in 1867. He obtained work in the retail grocery of Cobb & Thorne. In 1873, he became a western representative for Sprague, Warner & Co. He soon became their top salesman and later partner. He handled the sales for Sprague, Warner & Co. and later established the C.S. Morey Mercantile Company, out of his office at 1809 Blake Street in Denver.

The C. S. Morey Mercantile Company soon outgrew the Blake Street building and moved to 1537 Market Street followed by a move to Wazee and 19th Streets. In 1896 Morey began the construction of a much larger building at the corner of Wynkoop and 16th Streets. The six story building sat on five lots and included a "mill" with a twenty-five foot frontage that housed the roasting plant, spice grinding department, extract laboratory, and print shop. In 1907, again in need of more space, Morey purchased the property across the alley facing Wazee Street. A bridge was constructed over the alley. More buildings on Wynkoop Street were acquired at various times. By 1925, a total of 253,000 square feet in Denver were in use by the company.

The company grew to an organization employing roughly 500 people in Denver and in its eighteen branches in Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico and Nebraska. In 1902, Morey started the Solitaire Brand, which became the company's top seller in top quality canned goods. Canned fruits, vegetables, and coffee started the line. Items were added from time to time, including such varied products as matches, cigars, writing tablets, brooms, jar rings and a complete assortment of food products such as cereals, fish, cheese, and macaroni.

C. S. Morey's son John W. Morey began to work in the company in 1901. John was born on December 22, 1878 in Denver and graduated from Yale University. John became president of Morey Mercantile in 1913. His father Chester died on January 22, 1922. The Morey company grew to become the largest grocery business in sales, territory and number of employees. The company eventually bought out other companies such as the Struby-Estabrook Mercantile Company and the J.S. Brown & Brother Mercantile Company. In 1956 the Board of Directors met to discuss arrangements regarding the sale of the company to Consolidated Foods Corporation, a national grocery company in Chicago. Just eight days after the sale of his company on November 3, 1956 J. W. Morey passed away.

Scope and Contents note

This collection (1884-1955) contains information related to the Morey Mercantile Company. The correspondence and company account information are sparse. The employee related material is significant in that it includes lists of employees along with their years of service. Morey Mercantile product catalogues are also included in the collection along with salesman price books for the Struby-Estabrook Mercantile Company and the J. S. Brown Mercantile Company. Aside from a partial scrapbook relating to John W. Morey, little personal information on Chester and John is found in the collection.

The collection also contains photographs of Morey employees, offices, and John and Chester Morey. Collection documentation states that eighty photographs were included in the original donations. The location of most of these is still unknown. Many of the photographs include notations on the back presumably made by longtime Morey employee William Myatt when he wrote his article for Colorado Magazine.

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access note

Open to researchers without restrictions.

Provenance

This collection is of mixed provenance. Items were donated in 1961 and 1964 by Mrs. John Ferguson, Jr. (Katherine Laura Morey Ferguson), daughter of John W. Morey, and William Myatt, a longtime employee of the Morey Mercantile Company.

Processing Information note

Reprocessed by Leigh Jeremias, May 2013.

Related Materials

Related Materials note

See also 2012.50

Mixed Collection note

The Morey Mercantile Company Collection is part of a larger donation of material. After reviewing documentation found it is likely that William Myatt met with individuals for his 1961 Colorado Magazine article, *The Morey Mercantile Company: The Home of Solitaire* and that resulted in donations of artifacts and archival materiel made by Katherine Ferguson, Myatt, and a hand colored picture of "Morey's Cabinet" donated by John Rogers. See accessions H.6444 and H.6465. Please contact Research Center staff for more information. Click [here](#) for Related Materials Morey Mercantile Company Collection.

Indexing Terms

Subjects - Corporate Bodies

- C. S. Morey Mercantile Company. (Denver, Colo.)
- J. S. Brown Mercantile Company. (Denver, Colo.)

- Morey Mercantile Company. (Denver, Colo.)
- The Struby-Estabrook Mercantile Company. (Denver, Colo.)

Genres and Forms of Materials

- Catalogs
- Correspondence.
- Invoices
- Menus.
- Newsletters.
- Periodicals
- Photographs.
- Price lists.
- Receipts.
- Scrapbooks.

Occupation(s)

- Grocer
- Merchants

Subjects - People

- Ferguson, Katherine Laura, 1907-1978
- Morey, C. S., (Chester Stephen), 1847-1922
- Morey, J. W., (John William), 1878-1956
- Myatt, William L., (William Lawrence), 1884-1972
- Myatt, William L., (William Lawrence), 1884-1972

Subjects - Topics

- Wholesale trade.

Accession numbers

19651, 22954, H.6444 (other number 35513)

Collection Inventory

FF 1 Correspondence 1912-1913 3.0 Item(s)

FF 2 Invoices and receipts 1884-1909 6.0 Item(s)

FF 3 Company letterhead and pass 1910- ca. 1913 3.0 Item(s)

FF 4 Employee 50yr Certificates 1951-1955 6.0 Item(s)

FF 5 Salesman's meeting menus 1916-1919 3.0 Item(s)

FF 6 Employee recognition booklets 1934-1944 3.0 Item(s)

FF 7 Notice to employees 1922 1.0 Item(s)

FF 8 Want book, Solitaire ca. 1930 1.0 Item(s)

FF 9 Catalogue 1889 1.0 Item(s)

Accession number

19651

FF 10 Catalogue 1914 1.0 Item(s)

Accession number

22954

FF 11 Catalogue 1955 1.0 Item(s)

FF 12 Salesman price book: The Struby-Estabrook Merchantile Company ca. 1910-1913 1.0 Item(s)

Photographs

FF 13 Salesman price book: J. S. Brown Mercantile Company ca. 1935-1937 1.0 Item(s)

FF 14 Newsletter: Pace of Morey Mercantile Compnay, Vol. 1, nos. 1-5 1947-1948 5.0 Item(s)

FF 15 Scrapbook: partial, loose pages ca. 1924-1927 1.0 Item(s)

Photographs 1879-1951 9.0 File folder(s)

FF 16 Morey Mercantile Company and employees 1879-1910 4.0 Photograph(s)

Accession numbers and other numbers

H.6444.9, scan number 10049605; H.6444.7, scan number 10049607; H.6444.10, scan number 10049606; H.6444.8, scan number 10027931.

FF 17 Morey Mercantile Company board members January 11, 1947 1.0 Photograph(s)

FF 18 Morey's Cabinet 1960 1.0 Photograph(s)

Accession number

H.6444.11

Existence and Location of Originals note

See H.6444.4, original artifact

FF 19 The Solitaire Cowboys 1930-1931 2.0 Photograph(s)

Other numbers

Neg number F.37,078 and scan number 10040070

FF 20 Chester S. Morey ca. 1900 1.0 Photograph(s)

FF 21 John W. Morey January 2, 1951 1.0 Photograph(s)

Photographs

FF 22 John W. Morey ca. 1940 1.0 Photograph(s) Oversized. See Box 2

FF 23 William L. Myatt December 1900 1.0 Photograph(s)

Tim Ryan 1879 1.0 Photograph(s)

Accession number and other number

H.6444.12, scan number 10048637

Object Report

5/6/2013

Object ID: H.6444.1
Synopsis: roll-top desk - American Store and Tool Co. - New York, New York | Chicago, Illinois - United States of America - oak | walnut | top ~ Leatherette ~ black | plaque ~ metal - Morey Mercantile Co. | Denver, Colorado
Date:
Dimensions: H: 45 in, W: 59 5/8 in, DO: 34 1/4 in
Collection: DFA 3-D COLLECTION
Department: Art & Design



Object ID: H.6444.2
Synopsis: paperweight | Door knob - Board of Education | C. S. Morey | Arapahoe County, Colorado
Date:
Dimensions:
Collection: DFA
Department: Art & Design

Object ID: H.6444.3
Synopsis: tray - Slaves of the Silver Serpent - United States of America ~ uncertain - Metalwork | technique ~ lead ~ copper ~ coated ~ embossed ~ made ~ machine | shape ~ rectangular | materials ~ lead ~ copper | color ~ copper - text | Serpent | people | stars | wings | smoke - Ceremonial Artifact | souvenir
Date: 1897
Dimensions: L: 9 in, W: 6 in, D: 1/2 in
Collection: DFA 2-D COLLECTION
Department: Art & Design



Object Report

5/6/2013

Object ID: H.6444.4

Synopsis: sign ~ photograph ~ painting - Painted Sign with Photographs: Morey's Cabinet - Robitzer ~ artist - Morey Mercantile Co. ~ uncertain - Colorado - United States of America - Paintings | Photographs | technique ~ framed ~ assembled ~ painted ~ attached ~ photographs ~ printed ~ ink ~ made ~ machine | shape ~ rectangular | materials ~ cardboard ~ paint ~ photographs ~ frame ~ hooks ~ picture | color ~ blue ~ dark blue ~ yellow ~ white ~ maroon ~ gold ~ sepia ~ brown - text | men | mountain | columbine | mountain | rocks | water | trees | sky | clouds | Mount of the Holy Cross | photograph ~ Charles Platfoot | photograph ~ W. H. Dozier | photograph ~ Fred Ruble | photograph ~ J. W. Lowerre | photograph ~ H. F. Ware | photograph ~ J. A. Grant | photograph ~ Charles Hatfield | photograph ~ W. W. Harris | photograph ~ John Fairbanks - Art | display | Communication Artifacts



Date: 1800-1899

Dimensions: FH: 36 in, FW: 41 1/2 in, FD: 2 1/2 in

Collection: DFA 2-D COLLECTION

Department: Art & Design

Object Report

5/6/2013

Object ID: H.6465.1

Synopsis: jar - Solitaire Brand Blackberry Preserves - C. S. Morey Mercantile Co. - Denver, Colorado - Denver County, Colorado - United States of America - Advertising | Glassware | Household Products | technique ~ Applied ~ label ~ paper ~ printed ~ ink ~ shape ~ bottle ~ glass ~ manufactured ~ machine | shape ~ rectangle | materials ~ paper ~ ink ~ glass | color ~ clear ~ red ~ brown - text | fruit - Food Service T&E | Container

Date: 1900-1910

Dimensions: H: 6 1/4 in, DIA: 2 1/4 in, W: 3 in

Collection: DFA 3-D COLLECTION

Department: Art & Design



Object ID: H.6465.2

Synopsis: Tool - Metal | Pronged | Lever | Handle

Date: 1884-1910

Dimensions: L: 9.25 in

Collection: MC

Department: MC