Guide to the Standard Iron Works Collection MS 96

Finding aid prepared by Samantha Mills
Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.
San Diego History Center Document Collection
1649 El Prado, Suite 3
San Diego, CA, 92101
619-232-6203
February 29, 2012
Title: Standard Iron Works Collection
Identifier/Call Number: MS 96
Contributing Institution: San Diego History Center Document Collection
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet (1 box)
Date (inclusive): 1885-1964
Abstract: This collection consists of business papers pertaining to the formation and operation of Standard Iron Works, founded in San Diego, California in 1891.
creator: Standard Iron Works.
Arrangement
Items in the collection are arranged by subject.
Biographical / Historical Notes
In 1885, business partners Moses Hughes and W. G. Riffenberg began to buy up real estate in Block 137 of Horton’s Addition to San Diego, with an interest to starting a local iron works company. Ownership fluctuated over the next several years in a series of partnerships and dissolutions involving Moses Hughes, W. G. Riffenberg, A. Ames, Patrick Joseph Wallace, and William Gehring. In 1888 Hughes & Co. was officially formed. In 1891 that partnership was dissolved and Standard Iron Works was announced in its stead.
The shop, originally located at the corner of Seventh and L Streets, focused on metal casings, house fronts, agricultural castings, and mill and mining machinery. In 1909, they moved to 1821 Colton Ave at the foot of Beardsley Street. A fire swept the plant on Christmas Day in 1912, and they had to rebuild.
At the end of the 1890s, the company was taken over by Enoch Winsbey. The company was later passed on to his son, Charles Winsbey, and then his grandson Charles Winsbey Jr. Under their care the company expanded considerably. During World War I, they made cast iron water fittings for nearby Camp Kearny. By 1938, they were making gold mining machinery, Dodge transmission machinery, and other specialty items. By the 1950s, the company was best known for making all of the equipment used in commercial fishing industry processing plants, including automatic tuna flakers and can washing machines. They sold their products all along the Pacific coast line, as well as to canneries in Maine and South America.
In 1964, Charles Winsbey Jr. sold 15% of the operation (their share in San Diego fire plugs and manhole covers) with plans to start making “space-age” items of stainless steel and aluminum. In the same year the plant was part of a strike by the Iron Workers Union Local 627.
Conditions Governing Access
This collection is open for research.
Conditions Governing Use
The San Diego History Center (SDHC) holds the copyright to any unpublished materials. SDHC Library regulations do apply.
Separated Materials
Immediate Source of Acquisition
Accession number 780531.
Preferred Citation
Standard Iron Works Collection, MS 96, San Diego History Center Document Collection, San Diego, CA.
Processing Information
Collection processed by Samantha Mills on February 29, 2012.
Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.
Scope and Content
The collection consists of business papers of Standard Iron Works, founded in San Diego in 1891. Papers include hand-written deeds, bills of sale, and other county recorder documents leading up to the formation of Standard Iron Works, including the creation and dissolution of its previous incarnation, Hughes & Co. There are also project proposals and apprentice contracts, as well as financial documents including city, state, and federal tax returns. Correspondence includes inquiries from potential clients in the fish canning industry and publicity correspondence from Pacific Fisherman magazine.
Clippings of magazine and newspaper articles and advertisements are also included.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

- Ames, A.
- Hughes & Co.
- Hughes, Moses
- Iron Workers Union Local 627 (San Diego, Calif.).
- Riffenberg, W. G.
- Standard Iron Works.
- Winsbey, Charles, Jr.
- Winsbey, Enoch
- Advertising, Magazine
- Advertising, Newspaper
- Camp Kearny
- Canning and preserving -- Equipment and supplies
- Commercial correspondence
- County government -- Records and correspondence
- Gold mines and mining
- Iron foundries
- Land titles
- Machine shops
- Mining machinery
- *Pacific Fisherman*
- Receipts (Acknowledgements)
- San Diego (Calif.)
- Tax returns
- Tuna canning industry

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