
Jay T. Last Collection of Horticulture: Page Seed Company Business Correspondence: Finding Aid

Finding aid prepared by Charla DelaCuadra.

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens.

Prints and Ephemera

The Huntington Library

1151 Oxford Road

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Overview of the Collection

Title: Jay T. Last Collection of Horticulture: Page Seed Company Business Correspondence

Dates (inclusive): 1897-1956

Bulk dates: 1910-1940

Collection Number: prijLC_HORT_Page

Collector: Last, Jay T.

Extent: approximately 225 items in 2 binders

Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Prints and Ephemera

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Abstract: The Page Seed Company business correspondence, a subset within the Jay T. Last Collection of Horticulture, contains records of the Page Seed Company of Greene, New York, that date from the late 1890s through the 1950s. The approximately 225 pieces of correspondence and related documents focus on the company's sale and distribution of flower, fruit, herb, and vegetable seeds, and its involvement with the horticulture industry and related businesses.

Language: English.

Note:

Finding aid last updated on September 22, 2015.

Access

Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

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Preferred Citation

[Item title]. Jay T. Last Collection of Horticulture: Page Seed Company Business Correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance

This collection forms part of the Jay T. Last Collection of Graphic Arts and Social History, which was donated to the Huntington Library by Jay T. Last in 2005 as a gift in progress. The bulk of the horticulture ephemera was transferred to the Library between 2010 and 2013. The Page Seed Company records described in this finding aid were received by the Library as part of other ephemera within the Jay T. Last Collection and is organized according to correspondent.

Background of the Jay T. Last Collection

The Jay T. Last Collection is an unparalleled archive of printed paper artifacts that documents American lithographic, social, and business history. The collection began in the early 1970s when physicist and Silicon Valley pioneer Jay Last moved to Southern California and started collecting citrus box labels he found at local flea markets and rummage sales. As his collection grew, Last realized that these labels conveyed important information about commercial printing, graphic design, and social history, and he expanded his collection to include other forms of American visual culture. Today this collection contains more than 200,000 lithographic prints, posters, and ephemera of mostly nineteenth and early twentieth century American origin and represents works by more than five hundred lithographic companies.

Background of the Page Seed Company

In 1896, Erford Page and his wife, Cornelia, formed the Page Seed Company in Greene, New York, to sell seeds for fruit, vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Today the company is one of the world's largest seed producers and suppliers of vegetable, herb, and flower seeds.

Scope and Content

The Page Seed Company Business Correspondence, a subset within the Jay T. Last Collection of Horticulture, contains approximately 225 business records spanning the late 1890s through the 1950s. The majority of the collection features correspondence to and from the Page Seed Company of Greene, New York, that documents the company's sourcing and

selling of seeds for fruit, vegetables, flowers, and herbs, along with the supplies necessary to package and sell them. The letters, receipts, and invoices were received primarily from growers and merchants, and concern the purchase of seeds, packaging, and other supplies including issues related to orders, shipments, and payment matters.

The materials include both handwritten and typed correspondence primarily on company stationery from a variety of businesses across the United States. Some letterheads have engraved or lithographed images of plants, seed bags, or commercial buildings. The collection also includes Page seed packets numbering approximately one dozen. These envelopes feature images and descriptions of the mature plants, as well as instructions for sowing and harvesting.

[Jay T. Last Collection of Horticulture Prints and Ephemera](#)

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in binders alphabetically by correspondent.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the [Huntington Library's Online Catalog](#).

Genres

Business records -- United States -- 19th century.

Business records -- United States -- 20th century.

Letters (Correspondence).

Letterheads.

Subjects

Page Seed Company -- Archives.

Advertising -- Agriculture.

Advertising -- Floral products.

Advertising -- Seeds.

Binder 1	Page Seed Company, A-H by correspondent (8 x 10 inches or smaller in size) Physical Description: approximately 90 items
Binder 2	Page Seed Company, I-Z by correspondent (8 x 10 inches or smaller in size) Physical Description: approximately 135 items Scope and Content Note Includes Page seed packets.