



Alexander Brothers Leather Company ephemera collection 1995.277

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Audiovisual Collections

PO Box 3630
Wilmington, Delaware 19807
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URL: <http://www.hagley.org/library>

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Summary Information

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| Repository: | Audiovisual Collections |
| Creator - dsr: | Purcell, William Gray, 1880-1965 |
| Creator: | Alexander Brothers, Inc |
| Title: | Alexander Brothers Leather Company ephemera |
| ID: | 1995.277 |
| Date [inclusive]: | 1916-1920 |
| Physical Description: | 13 item(s) |
| General Physical Description: | 9 items : cover illustrations, color ; 12 x 9 in. or smaller. 2 items : 11 x 8.5 in. 2 items : leaflets ; 8.5 x 3.5 in. |
| Physical Location: | GL Box 2. |
| Language of the Material: | English . |
| Abstract: | William Gray Purcell (1880-1965) was an architect who was hired by Alexander Brother's Leather Belting Company. In addition to architectural duties, Purcell acted as their advertising manager from 1916 to 1918. These colorful items in this collection were possibly covers designed for trade catalogs or publications. They are all copyrighted 1917, designed in a modern style, and may have been commissioned for the company's commemorative fiftieth anniversary that year. |

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Biographical Note

William Gray Purcell (1880-1965) was an architect. During World War I, architectural work in America dried up because of the war except for certain priority industries like Alexander Brothers Leather Belting Company, which made leather belting used in factories. Alexander Brothers hired Purcell's architectural firm, Purcell and Elmslie. During the war years of 1916-1918, Purcell served in additional capacities for Alexander Brothers, including advertising manager. Purcell functioned in his new role by collaborating with artists he knew, including Charles Livingston Bull (1874-1932), Charles S. Chapman (1879-1962), and John W. Norton (1876-1934). These collaborations led to innovative graphic materials.

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Historical Note

Alexander Brothers was a Philadelphia company established in 1867 that produced leather belting and sole leather. It eventually acquired Charlotte Leather Company and renamed the expanded enterprise the International Leather Belting Corporation. "For almost three quarters of a century Alexander Brothers, Inc. has been a leader in the manufacture of Leather Belting and Industrial Leathers, as always maintaining an organization and facilities to give industry the standard of quality adopted by its founders in 1867." Alexander Brothers, Inc., catalog, 1937.

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Scope and Content

These colorful items were possibly covers designed for trade catalogs or publications. They are all copyrighted 1917, designed in a modern style, and may have been commissioned for the company's commemorative fiftieth anniversary that year. The designer is William Purcell. The collection also includes a price list and blank contract and a blank quotation for leather belting. In addition, there are two leaflets for the International Leather & Belting Corporation (New York, New York): *Location: a factor in distribution and service* and *The International Idea*.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Alexander Brothers Leather Company photographs (1981.221), Audiovisual Collections and Digital Initiatives Department, Hagley Museum and Library.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Graphic design (Typography)
- Leather industry and trade
- Belts and belting