



Allen D. Cardwell Manufacturing Corporation records 2333

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Manuscripts and Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	Manuscripts and Archives
Creator:	Allen D. Cardwell Manufacturing Corporation
Title:	Allen D. Cardwell Manufacturing Corporation records
ID:	2333
Date [inclusive]:	1897-1960
Date [bulk]:	bulk 1920-1960
Physical Description:	2.5 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	The Allen D. Cardwell Manufacturing Corporation was a major producer of radio and telecommunications equipment during the twentieth century. Cardwell sold its products to the United States Government, major corporations, and individual consumers. The records contain technical information such as patents and design drawings, as well as a vast array of sales and promotional material from the 1920s.

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Historical Note

The Allen D. Cardwell Manufacturing Corporation was a leading producer of radio parts from the 1920s through the 1950s. In 1908, Allen Cardwell (1888-1951) began working in the telecommunications industry as an employee of his stepfather's business, American Telegraph Typewriter Company. By the 1920s, Allen Cardwell had taken over the company and began to supply parts to the burgeoning radio industry.

Cardwell made many types of telecommunications equipment, including telegraph transmitters, wavemeters, coils, receivers, and other types of radio equipment. Cardwell was perhaps best known for their condensers (better known today as capacitors), an important electronic component in radios. Cardwell claimed that their sophisticated condensers provided listeners with a smoother sound and less static interference than their competitors' models.

Cardwell designed products for a variety of companies, including Western Union, American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T), Western Electric, and the Radio Corporation of America (RCA).

Cardwell also designed the first automatic stock quotation system for the New York Stock Exchange. Additionally, Cardwell worked closely with the United States Government, designing and manufacturing communications equipment for the United States Navy, the Army Signal Corps, and the Bureau of Standards. During World War II, Cardwell supplied equipment to the Allied forces, and on May 15, 1943, the employees of Cardwell received a telegram from General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) thanking them for their support of the war effort.

Cardwell also sold radio equipment to individual consumers and hobbyists. Products were sold to distributors, who then marketed the parts to electronics supply stores. The company used various promotional methods to build the Cardwell brand in hopes that consumers would request their products by name when visiting retail stores. Consumers could also order specialty versions of parts directly from Cardwell.

In 1944, Cardwell moved its headquarters from Brooklyn, New York, to Plainville, Connecticut. By the early 1950s, the company was known as the Allen D. Cardwell Electronics Productions Corporation, reflecting the company's shift to the design and manufacture of a wider variety of telecommunications products. After the company was bought by Norman Kjeldsen (1916-2003) in 1957, it was renamed the Cardwell Condenser Corporation. In 1959, the headquarters were moved once again, this time to Lindenhurst, New York, on Long Island. From the 1960s through the 1990s, Cardwell purchased many smaller companies and continued to build its business of supplying electronics and telecommunications equipment. In 2004, Cardwell became a part of the Viking group and is now known as Viking Technologies, Ltd.

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Scope and Content

The collection contains a variety of promotional and technical materials, including patents, design drawings, newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, and promotional campaign materials. The majority of the documents in the collection come from the years 1914 to 1955. Most of the promotional and advertising material dates from the 1920s, while a majority of the technical and design drawings are dated from 1940 to 1955. There are also a variety of photographs that document Cardwell's products, facilities, and employees from the 1920s through the 1950s.

Series I. Technical records, contains technical drawings and information, including patents, design drawings, diagrams, instruction sheets, parts lists, and memoranda from the technical divisions of the company.

Series II. Sales and promotional material, contains sales and promotional material, including newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, newsletters, sales ephemera, correspondence with sales staff and distributors, and sales and distribution plans.

Series III. Photographs, consists of a variety of photographs spanning the period from 1920 to 1960. The photographs cover a range of subjects, including the facilities and equipment, employees at work, and the products themselves. There are also several aerial photographs of the plant.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Provenance

Gift of IEEE History Center, Rutgers University

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

The condition of most of the materials within the scrapbooks is good. However, the presence of mold substances on some of the documents as well as the deterioration of newsprint and glue within the scrapbooks confirm that these artifacts will require more extensive conservation at a later date. Therefore, use of the scrapbooks is at the discretion of the archivists and/or conservators.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Electronic industries
- Radio -- Equipment and supplies.
- Amplifiers (Electronics)
- Telecommunication -- Equipment and supplies.
- Telegraph -- Equipment and supplies.
- Capacitors.

- Scrapbooks.
- Cardwell Condenser Corporation

Collection Inventory

Technical Records

Scope and Content

Contains technical drawings and information, including patents, design drawings, diagrams, instruction sheets, parts lists, and memoranda from the technical divisions of the company.

Controlled Access Headings:

- Patents.
- Design drawings.

Title/Description	Instances	
Diagrams and instructions for the PA-240 power amplifier, 1940	box 1	folder 1
Design drawings and parts list for the TS-175 frequency meter, 1942-1945	box 1	folder 2
Design drawings and diagrams of part modifications; memoranda from the engineering department related to part modifications, 1940s-1950s	box 1	folder 3
Small Scrapbook 1: Marconi patents, 1897-1919	box 1	
Small Scrapbook 2: Sidney Brown patents, 1917-1919	box 1	
Small Scrapbook 3: Miscellaneous patents, 1907-1919	box 1	

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Sales and Promotional Material

Scope and Content

Contains sales and promotional material, including newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, newsletters, sales ephemera, correspondence with sales staff and distributors, and sales and distribution plans.

Controlled Access Headings:

- Advertisements

Title/Description	Instances	
Newsletters circa 1923-1924; sales and promotional material; promotional articles; telegram from General Eisenhower, 1920s-1940s	box 2	folder 1

Promotional binder sent to distributors containing the distribution plan, information on an upcoming advertising campaign, sample advertisements, promotional articles, and sample letters from satisfied distributors, retailers, and customers, 1923	box 2	folder 2
Small Scrapbook 4: Advertisements and promotional material, 1922-1924	box 2	
Large Scrapbook 1: Labeled A on the inside cover. Contains advertisements, newspaper and magazine articles, newsletters, and sales ephemera, 1914-1925	box 2	
Large Scrapbook 2: Labeled B on the inside cover. Contains advertisements, newspaper and magazine articles, and correspondence with distributors, 1925-1927	box 2	
Large Scrapbook 3: Sales-related documents, including memoranda from the sales division, copies of form letters, correspondence with dealers and distributors, forms, and sales plans, 1924-1925	box 2	

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Photographs, 1920-1960

Scope and Content

Consists of a variety of photographs spanning the period from 1920 to 1960. The photographs cover a range of subjects, including the facilities and equipment, employees at work, and the products themselves. There are also several aerial photographs of the plant.

Controlled Access Headings:

- Electronics plants
- Electronic industry workers

Title/Description	Instances
Assortment of photographs, 1920-1960	box 3

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