

K Manley Inc. Records, 1922-2012
0621 0.26 cubic feet

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INTRODUCTION

The records of Manley Inc. contain photographs of the company's products, offices and manufacturing plants. Additional materials include a sales manual, price lists and publications used for sales and reporting the latest news in the popcorn industry.

DONOR INFORMATION

The records were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Dale Monaghan on August 5, 2009 (Accession No. KA1730).

INSTITUTIONAL SKETCH

Julian Burch first began producing popcorn machines around 1922, and in 1923, under Missouri state law, Burch Manufacturing Company was incorporated with the purpose of manufacturing popcorn machines. Charles T. Manley, an inventor from Butte, Montana, joined him six months later. The partnership lasted less than 12 months with Burch moving on to start the Star Manufacturing Company in St. Louis, leaving Manley as president and principle owner of the company. However, Manley didn't change the original company name to Manley, Inc. until 1940.

In 1925, Manley perfected the first electric popcorn machine and began selling it to movie operators. By 1933, the company dominated the field becoming the leading providers of popcorn poppers and supplies to theaters and candy counters worldwide. In addition to popcorn machines, the company also produced soda fountains, counter ice cream freezers, and beer dispensing equipment, (before prohibition forced its discontinuance) as well as a brand of popcorn – Hi Pop. During World War II, a government contract enabled Manley to make machines that created treats for American servicemen overseas, and by the 1950s, Manley was offering a full line of snack food processing equipment.

Manley Inc. housed its main office on the northwest corner of 19th Terrace and Wyandotte Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri. This building was renovated in 1998 to become the Popcorn Lofts in the Crossroads Arts District in downtown Kansas City. Other office locations in Kansas City include 919 Baltimore. A drying plant and cribs in North Kansas City with 3,000,000 pounds capacity was destroyed in a fire. Other plant locations included Middlebury, Indiana; a 320-acre popcorn experimental farm in Lakeview, Iowa; and the largest popcorn processing and storage plant in the world, with a 9,000,000 pound capacity, in Tarkio, Missouri.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records have been arranged into the following two series:

Photographs Publications

The **Photographs** series contains photographs of exterior views of Manley Inc.'s main office in Kansas City, processing plants, equipment, and equipment shown in use in various locations.

The **Publications** series consists of material pertaining to sales and advertising products manufactured by Manley, Inc. Also, materials relating to the history of the company and the family's estate sale.

PREFERRED CITATION:

Specific item; box number; folder number; *Manley Inc. Records, 1922-2012 (K0621)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

FOLDER LIST

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| f. 1-7 | Photographs |
| f. 1 | Main office and factory, n. d. (1920 Wyandotte St.) |
| f. 2 | Manufacturing plants and offices, n.d.
Lakeview and Odebalt, Iowa
Indiana
North Kansas City, Missouri
Tarkio, Missouri |
| f. 3 | Equipment and products on location, n.d.
Red X Supermarket, Riverside, Missouri
York, Pennsylvania
Rockford, Illinois
El Paso, Texas
Santa Fe, New Mexico |
| f. 4-5 | Equipment (from sales book), n.d.
Main Street Theatre, Kansas City, Missouri |
| f. 6 | Popcorn machines - models 101-109 (in book), n.d. |
| f. 7 | Popcorn machine advertisements, 1932-1939, n.d. |
| f. 8-12 | Publications |
| f. 8 | Manley, Inc. newsletters & sales brochures, 1922-1947, n.d. |
| f. 9 | Manley, Inc. history and product booklet, c. 1940s |
| f. 10 | Price lists and sales manual, 1926-1943 |
| f. 11 | <i>Popcorn is a food</i> , data booklet, 1950 |
| f. 12 | Family estate sale clipping and company history article, 2006, 2012 |

SUBJECTS

Popcorn industry
Food service equipment industry
Manufacturing – Missouri – Kansas City