



BHC-MSS 0167

Guide to the Records of A.H. Nilson Machine Company

By Meg Rinn

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: A.H. Nilson Machine Company

Title: Records of A.H. Nilson Machine Company

Dates: 1911-1999

Quantity: Currently 1 record carton, 1 film box, oversized wrapped material.

Abstract: One of the earliest Swedish owned businesses in Bridgeport, A.H. Nilson Machine Tool Company was founded by Axel Nilson and operated as a general machine shop before becoming known for making lathes, four-slides, and other machine tools. This collection primarily features patents, blue prints, and product photographs of their material from about 1900 to the 1980s.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

The A.H. Nilson Machine Company company was founded by Axel H. Nilson in 1898, a Swedish immigrant, and was one of the earliest owned Swedish businesses in the city. Nilson came to Bridgeport in 1881, and lived in a house on the current site of the Burroughs-Saden building of the Bridgeport Public Library.

Originally, Nilson was a general machine shop and did repairs. It made lathes and other metal working tools, as well as wire products, but became especially known for creating four-slides. Four-slides are machine tools used to create stamped components from bar or wire stock. The machine's moving slides allow for the piece to be stuck in a specific sequence order from four different angles, hence the name.

During World War I, the company subcontracted for Remington Arms and Bridgeport Brass, and trimmed artillery shells. In World War II, it did the same.

A.H. Nilson's son was Jacob Nelson, and he went on to run the business. He was succeeded by Hilmer Nelson who oversaw the company's move from Railroad Ave. to Shelton, Connecticut. The company's intellectual property and machinery was sold to Baird in the late 1990s.

Scope and Content note:

The Records of the A.H. Nilson Machine Company contains no corporate documents from the manufacturer. Instead, it is primarily focused on the products produced, including patents, blueprints, and photographs of machines the company produced. There is also some marketing material gear towards the industry, as well as employee and factory photographs.

Included are small machine parts made by Nilson.

Arrangement Note:

The collection is divided into four series: patents and blueprints; products; advertisements; and additional material. Series I is arranged chronologically.

Series II, products, is further split into three subseries. The first is design and catalogs, featuring catalogs that the company produced and some blueprints or specifications for specific machines, specifically four-slides. Subseries 2 contains photographs. Photographs of the earliest product lines have been placed first, followed by an alphabetical grouping of identified machines. Folders of smaller identified machines and then unidentified machines follow. Subseries 3 contains actual samples of products and parts made by A.H. Nilson.

Advertisements are arranged chronologically, with product information for salesmen and trade catalogs given precedence. Series IV contains additional material, including photographs. It is arranged alphabetically by title.

Administrative information:

Provenance: Donation, 2021.45

Preferred Citation:

Records of A.H. Nilson Machine Company (BHC-MSS 0167), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Names and Subject Tracings

Corporate names

A.H. Nilson Machine Company

Subject tracings

Four-slides

Machine-tools

Machine-tool industry

Machine-tool industry--United States

Detailed box/folder listing

Box 1

Series I, Patents and Blueprints

1. Patents, 1916-1938
2. Patents, 1927-198
3. Blueprints and sketches, 1965
4. Blueprints and sketches, 1967-1968

Series II, Product line

Subseries 1, Design and catalogs

5. Fourslide catalogs, including foreign languages, 1961
6. Fourslide instructions, 1965-1967
7. Blueprints, 700-L fourslide, 1970s
8. Operation instructions, 700-L, 1970s

9. Diagrams, U.S. Baird corporation, 1999

Subseries 2, Photographs

10. Photographs, early product line, undated
11. Photographs, early product line, undated
12. Special machine book II, photos, undated
13. Artist's rendering of machines, undated
14. Early fourslides, undated
15. Fourslides, undated
16. Fourslides, undated
17. Fourslides, undated
18. Fourslides, undated
19. Fourslides, undated
20. Garment hanger machine, undated
21. 1100 metal forming machine, undated
22. Paperclip machines, undated
23. Staple machines
24. Wire machines
25. Gem clip machines, undated
26. H. Goodman and Son's hair curler machine, 1941
27. Loshbough and Jordan, undated
28. Slidefeed for presses, undated
29. Special S-2 fourslide, undated
30. S-3 fourslide, 1943
31. S-3-F fourslide, undated
32. Various machines, identified, 1941, undated
33. Various machines, identified, undated
34. Various machines, identified, undated
35. Various machines, identified, undated
36. Various machines, identified, undated
37. Unidentified machines, undated
38. Unidentified machines, undated
39. Unidentified machines, undated
40. Unidentified machines, undated
41. Unidentified machines, undated
42. Unidentified machines, undated
43. Unidentified machines, undated
44. Unidentified machines, undated
45. Unidentified machines, undated
46. Unidentified parts, undated
47. Unidentified parts, undated
48. Close up of machines, undated
49. Welding, tools on machines, undated

Series III, Advertising

50. Product specifications for sellers, 1964, undated
51. Bulletins, 1930s-1940s
52. Untitled binder with equipment information and photographs, 1940s
53. Bulletins, 1966-1985
54. Catalogs, 1970s-1980s
55. Parts list, undated
56. Competitor bulletins, 1920s-1930s

57. Advertisements, undated
58. Advertisement reprints, 1960s-1970s
59. Trade magazines, 1970s-1980s
60. Trade magazine advertising, 1950s-1980s
61. Around the forming post [newsletter], 1974, 1985
62. Additional correspondence, 1911-1918
63. Clippings, 1960s-1980s
64. Factory photographs, 1960s-1980s
65. Manufacturing photographs, undated
66. Employee photographs, 1920s-1980s
67. Negatives, undated

Box, 2 Nilson Machine work print, undated [film reel]

Box 3, Award to A.H. Nilson Machine Company from Metalworking Magazine for Best Metalworking Catalog, 1961

Box 4, Plaque with portrait of A.H. Nilson, undated

Box 5

- 1.
2. Sample machine parts, undated
3. Sample machine parts, undated
4. Sample machine parts, undated
5. Sample machine parts, undated
6. Sample machine parts, undated

Large painting of A.H. Nilson factory facility

Flat file D, drawer 7, folder 1

Nilson Machine Tool Company advertisements