



Guide to the Spirella Corset Company. Traveling saleswoman's kit, 1934-1935

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Summary

Collection Title:

Spirella Corset Company. Traveling saleswoman's kit, 1934-1935

Source:

John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History; Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture

Creator:

Spirella Corset Company.

Abstract:

The Spirella Corset Company was founded in 1904 in Meadville, Pennsylvania, by Marcus Merritt Beeman, William Wallace Kincaid and Jesse Homan Pardee, to manufacture made-to-measure women's corsets and other foundation garments. The firm utilized a force of women sales personnel who directly contacted consumers for fittings and garment orders; the brand was not sold in retail outlets. The collection consists of brochures, catalogs, deposit forms, sales ordering and fitting instructions and other printed materials, along with a sample corset used for demonstrations. Acquired as part of the John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History and the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History & Culture.

Extent:

1.0 Linear Feet

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.11958

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1d73j>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Spirella Corset Company. Traveling saleswoman's kit, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

Collection consists of brochures, catalogs, deposit forms, sales ordering and fitting instructions and other printed materials, along with a sample corset used for demonstrations.

Biographical/Historical

The Spirella Corset Company was founded in 1904 by Marcus Merritt Beeman, William Wallace Kincaid and Jesse Homan Pardee, to manufacture made-to-measure women's corsets and other foundation garments. The company was originally based in Meadville, Pennsylvania, but built a new factory on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls in 1907. It expanded to Great Britain in 1910 and continued in operation there until the 1980s. Spirella was notable for its use of women's labor in its factories as well as for its corsetieres, women sales personnel who made home visits to measure and take orders for its garments.

Source: <https://niagarafallsmuseums.ca/discover-our-history/history-notes/spirella-corset-company>

The sales kit in this collection was addressed to Nellie Mae Hoover, who worked for Spirella Company Western of Oakland, California, in the 1930s. She was born Nellie Mae Chester in 1896 in Missouri and married Alva Otto Hoover (1896-1972), also of Missouri, in 1916. After World War I they relocated eventually to California. Nellie died in 1973 in Riverside, California.

Source: <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/family-tree/person/tree/323880/person/-359802188/facts>

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Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

Acquisition Information

The Spirella Corset Company. Traveling saleswoman's kit was received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a purchase in 2020.

Processing Information

Processed by Richard Collier, Dec. 2021;

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2020-0030.

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Related Materials

Related Material

Related materials may be found in the following collections of the Bingham and Hartman Centers:

Dorothy Allison papers;

Gary P. and Sandra G. Baden Collection of Print Advertisements;

J. Walter Thompson Company. 16mm Microfilm As-Broadcast Scripts;

J. Walter Thompson Company. 35mm Microfilm Proofs;

J. Walter Thompson Company. Iconographic collection;

Lisa Unger Baskin Collection of Photographs;

Roy Lightner Collection of antique advertisements.

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Names and Subjects

- Sales personnel
- Sales promotion
- Direct selling
- Lingerie
- Corsets
- John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History
- Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture

Collection Inventory

Booklet--Hidden Values: You Can Find Them, approximately 1935	Box 1
Booklet--The Spirella Maternity Support, approximately 1935	Box 1
Booklet--Wearing and care of the corset, 1920s	Box 1
Booklet--Your Problem Solved, 1934	Box 1
Booklet--Your Spirella Corsetiere Presents Different Exclusive New, approximately 1935	Box 1

Client receipts for deposit, 1935	Box 1
Letter to saleswomen, 1935	Box 1
Mailer, 1935	Box 1
Retail price lists, 1935	Box 1
Sample corset for demonstration, 1935	Box 2
The Spirella Plan of Individual Service, approximately 1935	Box 1
Wholesale price list, 1935	Box 1