

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞
for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ **Inshield Die and Stamping Company Records, 1920-1995** ◀

MSS-158

Size: 2.5 lin.ft.

Provenance: Norman Thal, Jr., Toledo, OH

Access: The collection is open to the public with no restrictions

Collection Summary: Collection contains the administrative and financial records of Inshield Die and Stamping as well as an Inshield driving light invented by Norman Thal Sr.

Subjects: [Business and Commerce](#)

Related Collections: Acklin Stamping Company Records, MSS-139

Processing Note: Box 2 contains an example of an Inshield driving light. Use caution when opening box.

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Completed by: Ryan Eickholt, February 2002; last updated: June 2014

Inshield Die and Stamping Company Records, 1920-1995

Historical Sketch

Skilled die-makers Roy Thal and Reuben Bitter formed a partnership in Toledo, Ohio, on August 16, 1920 known as the Thal and Bitter Machine Company. This company's primary purpose was to build tools and dies for the Willys-Overland (Jeep) and Electric Auto-Lite companies. During the "Harding Depression" of 1921, Mr. Thal invented the Inshield driving light, which fit against the inside of windshields on cars of the time. Throughout World War II, the Thal and Bitter Machine Company, now the Inshield Die and Stamping Company, manufactured munitions-related parts, including bomb carriers used by planes.

In 1946, Roy Thal and his family bought out Reuben Bitter's share of the company. Norman Thal, Roy's son, was elected President and his brother Irwin was elected Vice President. In 1948 the company constructed a new building located in the growing industrial area of Toledo. Norman Thal Jr. became President in 1975 and, with his background in computers, helped to modernize Inshield. In 1994, Inshield was sold by the Thal family to Branson Stampings, Inc. Today, Inshield manufactures products for various industries, such as automotive and electric.

Inshield Die and Stamping Company Records, 1920-1995

Scope and Content Note

The records of Inshield Die and Stamping are divided into two main series: Administrative and Financial. A third series, Artifacts, is also included in the records. The records provide nearly complete documentation of the company from its founding in 1920 until its sale in 1994.

The first series, Administrative, contains advertisements for the Inshield Spotlight, a movable light that could be attached to the inside of windshields of older closed cars. With the addition of this light to an automobile, the driver had better vision while driving at night, and the light produced no glare for oncoming traffic. Another component of this series is the company's history. A book by Alexander S. Carlson, entitled Factory Hand to Executive: the Story of Ralph Divins, describes the "rags-to-riches" life of Divins, who left school at an early age and eventually became the Vice President of Inshield. There is also a brief history of how the Inshield Spotlight came to be, and a sales brochure that gives a little background of the company. Former Inshield President Norman R. Thal Jr., in his manuscript Inshield: Three Generations of a Small Business, provides the last part of the company's history. This personal account details the people and events that made Inshield what it has come to be. Also in this series is an Environmental Site Assessment, and guest-books listing persons who visited the company during special occasions. A major component of the Administrative records is the Company Minutes, which range all the way from 1920 to 1995. Lastly, the Administrative records include photographs of the Inshield driving light and of the factory.

The Financial series contains chronologically arranged Audit Reports from 1920 to 1993. Also in this series are Bank Books from 1920 and 1924 to 1953, and a Trial Balance Book from 1929 to 1933. A Statement of Title issued in 1948 and the Sale and Purchase Assets from 1994, when Branson Stampings, Inc. bought Inshield Die and Stamping Co., can also be found in the Financial series. Another element of this series is the Stock Certificates that date from 1923 to 1992. Finally, a small clue as to how many people Inshield employed can be obtained by looking through the company's Weekly Time Records of the employees. However, these records only date from 1930 to 1940.

In this collection there is one artifact: the Inshield driving light. The idea for this innovative light came from Norman Thal Sr., who complained to his father, founder Roy Thal, about the treachery of driving along a certain road at night. The desire to produce a driving light more efficient and less cumbersome than the outside driving light also fueled its invention. Improvements were made to this high-quality product, and the Inshield Senior was born. This light took up less space and had a wider range of illumination than the original Inshield. Another feature of the Inshield was that it was easily installed and could be instantly detached and used as a handy trouble light when needed. Overall, the Inshield provided people with a safer, more enjoyable way to drive at night.

**Inshield Die and Stamping Company
Records, 1920-1995**

Series List

S1 Administrative records

Advertisements for Inshield spotlight; Articles from Metalworking Economics, MetalForming, and Minster Impressions; Company History, including brochures, The Story of Ralph Divins by Alexander S. Carlson, and a history by Norman R. Thal Jr.; Environmental Site Assessment (1993); Guestbooks from 1948, 1975, & 1989; Minutes, ordered chronologically 1920 to 1995; Photographs of Inshield driving light and of the factory.

S2 Financial records

Audit reports, ordered chronologically 1920 to 1993; Bank Books from 1920, 1924-1953; Sale and Purchase of Assets (1994); Statement of Title (1948); Stock Certificates from 1923 to 1992; Trial Balance Book, 1929 to 1933; Weekly Time Records of Employees, 1930 to 1940.

S3 Artifacts

Inshield driving light (ca. 1926)

**Inshield Die and Stamping Company
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Folder List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Arrangement</u>
		S1. Administrative records
1	1	Advertisements/Articles
1	2	Company History
1	3	Environmental Site Assessment
1	4	Guestbook (1948)
1	5	Guestbook (1975)
1	6	Guestbook (1989)
1	7	Minutes (1920-1948)
1	8	Minutes (1949-1974)
1	9	Minutes (1975-1981)
1	10	Minutes (1975)
1	11	Minutes (1976)
1	12	Minutes (1977)
1	13	Minutes (1978)
1	14	Minutes (1979)
1	15	Minutes (1980)
1	16	Minutes (1981)
1	17	Minutes (1982)
1	18	Minutes (1983)
1	19	Minutes (1984)
1	20	Minutes (1985)
1	21	Minutes (1986)
1	22	Minutes (1987)
1	23	Minutes (1988)
1	24	Minutes (1989)
1	25	Minutes (1990)
1	26	Minutes (1991)
1	27	Minutes (1992)
1	28	Minutes (1993)
1	29	Minutes (1994)
1	30	Minutes (1995)
1	31	Photographs

**Inshield Die and Stamping Company
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S2. Financial records

1	32	Audit Reports (1920-1924)
1	33	Audit Reports (1932-1933)
1	34	Audit Reports (1939-1944)
1	35	Audit Reports (1947-1952)
1	36	Audit Reports (1953-1959)
2	1	Audit Reports (1960-1966)
2	2	Audit Reports (1967-1972)
2	3	Audit Reports (1973-1977)
2	4	Audit Reports (1978-1981)
2	5	Audit Reports (1982-1987)
2	6	Audit Reports (1987-1993)
2	7	Bank Book (1920)
2	8	Bank Books (1924-1953)
2	9	Statement of Title
2	10	Weekly Time Records (1930-1936)
2	11	Weekly Time Records (1936-1940)
3	1	Sale and Purchase of Assets
3	2	Stock Certificates (1923-1966)
3	3	Stock Certificates (1966-1992)
4	1	Trial Balance Book

S3. Artifacts

2	12	Inshield Driving Light
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