

Guide to the Century of Progress International Exposition - New York World's Fair Collection

MS 820



compiled by Susan Grigg

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 820

TITLE: Century of Progress International Exposition - New York World's Fair collection

DATES: 1931-1940

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 41 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection includes printed matter and publicity material related to the Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago (1933-1934) and the New York World's Fair (1939-1940), including such miscellaneous administrative records of the New York World's Fair as the annual report for 1938 and organizational charts. A main strength of the collection is the printed material from more than one thousand exhibitors at both fairs, comprising business, non-profit institutions, and governments. The manufacturers' catalogues in many cases offer lists of specifications and illustrations of both capital and consumer goods, which also provide a broad sampling of advertising and design of the period.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0820>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0820>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

These items were brought together by Yale Librarian Sherman Kent, who solicited most of them from the exhibitors. Much of the administrative material for the New York World's Fair was contributed by its Director of Research, Frank Monaghan, also an assistant professor of history at Yale.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

Century of Progress International Exposition - New York World's Fair Collection (MS 820). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Scope and Contents

The Century of Progress International Exposition - New York World's Fair Collection consists of forty-one linear feet of printed matter and publicity material related to the exhibits at the Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago (1933-1934) and the New York World's Fair (1939-1940). These items were brought together by Yale Librarian Sherman Kent, who solicited most of them by mail from the exhibitors. He received not only material prepared for distribution at the fairs, but also other current publications, some of which were not available to visitors at the exhibits. From the fair administrations he obtained guidebooks, newspapers, press releases, photographs, and other publicity and administrative material. Much of the administrative material for the New York World's Fair was contributed by its Director of Research, Frank Monaghan, who was also an assistant professor of history at Yale.

Many exhibitors do not appear in the collection because they did not respond to the Library's request or did not have anything to send, but the thousand or more exhibitors who are included are broadly representative of the two expositions. Most belong to one of three categories: businesses, non-profit institutions, and governments. Among the businesses are such major corporations as General Motors and Republic Steel and such smaller firms as the Coatesville Plate Washer Company and American Bird Products, Inc. The non-profit institutions include schools (Tri-State College), charities (The American Committee for the Control of Rheumatism), and churches (the Seventh-Day Adventists). Among the governments are those of American states and of many countries in Europe and Latin America, although the beginning of the Second World War led to the cancellation of some foreign exhibits in 1940. There is a separate series for each exposition, and each series is arranged alphabetically by exhibitor.

The contents of the exhibitors' publications can be summarized under three headings: explanation of the exhibit; description of the exhibitor's product or service; and general information related to the product or service. The nature of the material in the first category is self-evident. The second category has some items prepared for distribution at the fairs but consists mainly of catalogs and brochures intended for general

use in public or customer relations. The third category is exemplified by a booklet, *Cleanliness through the Ages*, offered by the Cudahy Packing Company, distributor of Old Dutch Cleanser.

This collection is a valuable source of information about the expositions, the exhibits, and the ordinary activities of individual exhibitors. Especially important from the latter point of view are the catalogs and brochures of manufacturers, which provide lists, specifications, and illustrations of such capital and consumer goods as industrial machinery, automobiles, and furniture. The representation of activities other than manufacturing is less comprehensive but still useful. Researchers seeking specific information about exhibits or exhibitors will find it helpful to consult the index boxed at the beginning of each series, which lists both exhibitors and their major products.

The collection is also an important resource for the study of American society and, culture in the 1930s, whether the historian chooses to address the subject directly or to use either fair to epitomize certain themes. The Century of Progress International Exposition and the New York World's Fair were showcases for American institutions, and the publications in this collection offer massive evidence of their ideas about their nation and their time. Historians undertaking this kind of study may want to orient themselves by examining the guidebooks and other general material boxed at the beginning of each series or by consulting the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Times* on microfilm.

Arrangement

Arranged in two series: I. Century of Progress. II. New York World's Fair.

Collection Contents

Series I: CENTURY OF PROGRESS INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION, 1931-1934

17 linear feet (37 Boxes)

Boxes 1 and 1A contain an index to the exhibitors represented in this series with some cross-references from product to exhibitor. It is not guaranteed to be entirely accurate or complete.

Boxes 2-4 contain general publications and miscellaneous publicity and administrative material.

Boxes 4-34 contain publications, printed novelty items, and photographs related to individual exhibits. The arrangement is alphabetical by exhibitor.

Boxes 35 and 35A contain oversize publications related to individual exhibits.

| | Index |
|-------------|--|
| b. 1 | A - National R |
| b. 1A | National S - Z |
| b. 2, f. 1 | Reference works used in preparing the collection |
| b. 2, f. 2 | J.K. Wilcox: "Checklist of the Official Publications of the Century of Progress International Exposition and its Exhibitors, 1933," John Crerar Library, Reference List no. 27, Chicago, 1933 A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy. |
| b. 2, f. 3 | Harold H. Laskey: lists of publications about Chicago and the Century of Progress, 1933-1934 A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy. |
| b. 3, f. 4 | General official publications |
| b. 3, f. 5 | Programs for days in honor of foreign countries |
| b. 3, f. 6 | Pamphlets for special exhibitions |
| b. 3, f. 7 | Hall of Science publications |
| b. 3, f. 8 | Official photographs |
| b. 3, f. 9 | Miscellaneous correspondence |
| b. 3, f. 10 | Lists of exhibitors and concessionaires |
| b. 3, f. 11 | Press releases |
| b. 3, f. 12 | <i>Progress</i> (the exposition newsletter), 1931 Apr 1 - Dec 30 |
| b. 3, f. 13 | <i>Progress</i> , 1932 Jan 6 - Dec 28 |
| b. 4, f. 14 | <i>Progress</i> , 1933 Jan 4 - 1934 May 15 |
| b. 4, f. 15 | <i>World's Fair Clip Sheet</i> (for use by newspaper editors), 1934 Mar 12 - Oct 8 |
| | <u>Exhibitors</u> |

Exhibitors (continued)

| | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| b. 4 | Ab - American D |
| b. 5 | American E - As |
| b. 6 | At - Bo |
| b. 7 | Br - Can |
| b. 8 | Cap - Chicago Te |
| b. 9 | Chicago Tu - Col |
| b. 10 | Com - Cz |
| b. 11 | Da - Diebold |
| b. 12 | Diebold - Do |
| b. 13 | Du - El |
| b. 14 | En - Fre |
| b. 15 | Fri - General E |
| b. 16 | General F - Ham |
| b. 17 | Har - Hz |
| b. 18 | Il - Ir |
| b. 19 | Is - Ker |
| b. 20 | Kew - Lif |
| b. 21 | Lig - Ma |
| b. 22 | Mc - National C |
| b. 23 | National D - Nz |
| b. 24 | Oa - Oz |
| b. 25 | Pa - Pf |
| b. 26 | Ph - Ren |
| b. 27 | Rep - Sea |
| b. 28 | Sen - Sta |
| b. 29 | Ste - Tra |
| b. 30 | Tri - United States C |
| b. 31 | United States D - United States M |
| b. 32 | United States P - Wau |
| b. 33 | Way - Wilb |

Exhibitors (continued)

| | |
|--------|----------|
| b. 34 | Will - Z |
| b. 35 | Oversize |
| b. 35A | Oversize |

Series II: NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR, 1938-1940*24 linear feet (54 Boxes)*

Boxes 36A-D contain an index to the exhibitors represented in this series with some cross-references from product to exhibitor. They are not guaranteed to be entirely accurate or complete.

Boxes 36-40 contain general publications and miscellaneous publicity and administrative material.

Boxes 40-86 contain publications, printed novelty items, and photographs related to individual exhibits. The arrangement is alphabetical by exhibitor except that Boxes 83-86 contain miscellaneous and oversize items.

| | Index cards | |
|-----------------|--|---|
| b. 36A | A - He | |
| b. 36B | Ho - Pa | |
| b. 36C | Ph - Za | |
| b. 36D | Information manual | |
| b. 37, f. 1 | <i>Information Manual</i> (two editions) English | 1939 |
| b. 37, f. 2 | <i>Official Guide Book</i> (three editions) English | 1939 |
| b. 37, f. 3 | <i>News Release</i> English | 1938 January 2 - 1939 February 5, undated |
| b. 38, f. 4 | <i>World of Tomorrow</i> | 1938 December 1 - 1939 January 19 |
| b. 38, f. 5 | <i>Today at the Fair</i> | 1939 April 30 - May 18 |
| b. 38, f. 6 | <i>Information Bulletin</i> English | 1939 |
| b. 38, f. 7 | Press releases of the Department of Feature Publicity | 1939 |
| b. 38, f. 8 | <i>Fair Almanac</i> English | 1939 |
| b. 38, f. 8 | Calendar of special days and events | 1939 |
| b. 38, f. 9 | <i>Teaching the New York World's Fair</i> , no. 1-4 | 1939 |
| b. 38, f. 9 | <i>Teaching the New York World's Fair</i> , no. 1-6 | 1940 |
| b. 38, f. 10 | <i>World's Fair Daily</i> | 1940 June 8-17 |
| b. 38, f. 11 | Bulletins of the Department of Public Education, no. 1-16B | 1940 |
| b. 38, f. 12-13 | Miscellaneous publications | 1939-1940 |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----------------------|
| b. 38, f. 14 | <i>Fun at the Fair: A Trip to the New York World's Fair of 1940 with Bobby and Betty</i> English | 1940 |
| b. 38, f. 15 | Mayor's Official World's Fair Rooming Bureau, Inc.: leaflet | 1940 |
| b. 38, f. 16 | Maps | 1938-1940, undated |
| b. 39, f. 17 | Invitations, programs, and menus | 1939 |
| b. 39, f. 18 | Photographs, n.d. | |
| b. 39, f. 19 | Publications on art exhibits | 1939-1940 |
| b. 39, f. 20 | Lists of murals and sculptures | 1939, undated |
| b. 39, f. 21 | Miscellaneous publicity material | 1938-1939 |
| b. 39, f. 22 | Miscellaneous papers related to the re-enactment of Washington's inaugural journey | 1939 |
| b. 39, f. 23 | Annual Report | 1938 |
| b. 39, f. 24 | <i>Third Attendance Survey</i> | 1939 November 13 |
| b. 39, f. 25 | Staff directories | 1939, undated |
| b. 39, f. 26 | Organizational charts | 1939 |
| b. 39, f. 26 | Lists of personnel | 1939, undated |
| b. 40, f. 27 | Lists of chairmen of advisory committees | 1939, undated |
| b. 40, f. 28 | Sherman Kent: form letters to exhibitors | 1939-1940 |
| | <u>Exhibitors</u> | |
| b. 40 | Ac - American Bi | |
| b. 41 | American Br - American Te | |
| b. 42 | American To - Bab | |
| b. 43 | Bak - Bel | |
| b. 44 | Bet - Brazil | |
| b. 45 | Brazil - British Pavilion | |
| b. 46 | British Pavilion | |
| b. 47 | British Pavilion - Buf | |
| b. 48 | Bur - Cad | |
| b. 49 | Canada | |
| b. 50 | Car - Coa | |

Exhibitors (continued)

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| b. 51 | Con - Cz |
| b. 52 | Da - Del |
| b. 53 | Den - Douglas Fir |
| b. 54 | Douglas Fir - Electric Utilities |
| b. 55 | Electric Utilities - Fer |
| b. 56 | Fin - Florida |
| b. 57 | Florida - Franc |
| b. 58 | Frank - General F |
| b. 59 | General M - Gla |
| b. 60 | Gle - Hoo |
| b. 61 | Hou - International B |
| b. 62 | International C - Ireland |
| b. 63 | Ireland - Italy |
| b. 64 | Ja - Lak |
| b. 65 | Lan - Lin |
| b. 66 | Lon - Mes |
| b. 67 | Met - National AI |
| b. 68 | National Au - Nev |
| b. 69 | New D - New York Air Brake |
| b. 70 | New York Air Brake - New York T |
| b. 71 | New York Z - Owens-Corning |
| b. 72 | Owens-Corning - Pi |
| b. 73 | PI - Rad |
| b. 74 | Rai - Rz |
| b. 75 | Sa - Sh |
| b. 76 | Si - Su |
| b. 77 | Sw - Tam |
| b. 78 | Tay - Turk |
| b. 79 | Turn - Val |
| b. 80 | Van - West |

Exhibitors (continued)

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| b. 81 | Western - Wheeling Steel |
| b. 82 | Wheeling Steel - Yugoslavia |
| b. 83 | Yugoslavia - Z, Miscellaneous |
| b. 84 | Oversize |
| b. 85 | Oversize |
| b. 86 | Oversize |

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Advertising
Exhibitions
Industrial arts
Manufactures
Popular culture
Technology

Geographic Names

Middle West
New York (State)

Corporate Bodies

Century of Progress International Exposition
(1933-1934 Chicago, Ill.)
New York World's Fair (1939-1940 New York,
N.Y.)