

Simplex Pennant Collection

Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Provenance: Unknown

Collection ID: CHC026

Dates: February 1945- September 1945

Extent: 1 oversize flat box

Processing and finding aid by: Elise Riley, February 2018

Access: Collection is available for research under the CHC rules of use.

Collection Description:

The Simplex Pennant Collection is composed of the Simplex Wire and Cable Company's employee newsletter, The Simplex Pennant, from February to September of 1945. The newsletter was published weekly by employees for other employees detailing company life, war efforts, and WWII news.

Historical Context:

In 1840 Charles A. Morss and Oliver Whyte became partners founding the Morss & Whyte Company. Morss & Whyte incorporated the Simplex Electrical Company in 1895 changing the name to Simplex Wire & Cable. At the time Simplex produced insulated wires and cables for electrical use. In 1902 the offshoot company, Simplex Electrical Heating Company, was created which produced heating appliances such as flat irons and ranges.

Simplex Wire and Cable Company specialized in producing and innovating modern cable systems based in Cambridge, MA. They provided cables specifically used during war times including The Spanish War of 1898, World War I, and World War II. At its height in the mid-1940s, Simplex Wire and Cable Company employed over 2000 people and had branches in several other cities including New York, San Francisco, Detroit, and Philadelphia. During this time 90% of company products were sold to war agencies. The company played a principle role in WWII by manufacturing the innovative deep-sea telegraph cables and was the sole provider of these cables to the United Nations.

The general offices were located in Boston and moved to the company's plant at 79 Sidney Street, Cambridge, in 1932. The company moved to North Berwick, ME in 1969.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains 18 issues of the Simplex Pennant published weekly from February 9, 1945 and ends September 7, 1945 published weekly. Within this run there are 9 issues missing. Each issue is six pages long front and back divided into four columns. Each issue can include department updates, employee updates, war updates, cartoons, advertisements, birthday and wedding anniversary announcements, committee reports, attendance reports, opinion pieces, and trivia. Each issue also includes black and white photographs next to the by-lines or supplementing the articles.

Some illustrations and terms used in the newsletters would now be considered offensive. Such terms and attitudes do not reflect language deemed appropriate by the CHC or its employees.

Box List:

The Simplex Pennant

Issues February 9, 1945- September 7, 1945

1. Volume 3 #52, February 9, 1945
2. Volume 4 #1, February 16, 1945
3. Volume 4 #2, February 23, 1945
4. Volume 4 #3, March 2, 1945
5. Volume 4 #4, March 9, 1945
6. Volume 4 #5, March 16, 1945
7. Volume 4 #6, March 23, 1945
8. Volume 4 #7, March 30, 1945
9. Volume 4 #9, April 13, 1945
10. Volume 4 #11, April 27, 1945
11. Volume 4 #12, May 4, 1945
12. Volume 4 #14, May 18, 1945
13. Volume 4 #16, June 1, 1945
14. Volume 4 #18, June, 15, 1945
15. Volume 4 #21, July 6, 1945
16. Volume 4 #23, August 3, 1945
17. Volume 4 #25, August 31, 1945
18. Volume 4 #26, September 7, 1945

Added Entries

Electric wire and cable industry – Cambridge – Massachusetts
Employees' magazines, newsletters, etc – Cambridge -- Massachusetts
World War, 1939-1945 – Cambridge – Massachusetts
White collar workers – 20th Century