

INVENTORY OF THE
PIERCE MANUFACTURING CORPORATION RECORDS
IN THE OLD DARTMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WHALING MUSEUM LIBRARY

Content: Business records of Pierce Manufacturing Corporation and Pierce Brothers, Limited, two New Bedford, Mass. textile mills, and personal papers of Pierce family members, 1868-1948.

Volume: 18 linear feet.

Provenance: Gift of Mrs. A. Russell Pierce, 14 April and 26 May 1978.

Restrictions: None.

Processed By: Patricia J. Albright

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INTRODUCTION

Records and papers in this collection were presented to the Old Dartmouth Historical Society on 14 April and 26 May 1978 by Mrs. A. Russell Pierce as part of a larger group of manuscript and printed material. A complete list of the items in the Pierce gift is available in the Society's accession records, AR 78.8.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Both Pierce Manufacturing Corporation and Pierce Brothers, Limited, the textile firms represented by records in this collection, were essentially family business ventures typical of mills established at New Bedford, Mass., between 1880-1910. The former firm was established in 1892 by Andrew Granville Pierce (1829-1903), a former city mayor and leading New Bedford businessman. Other officials of Pierce Manufacturing Corporation included Andrew Granville Pierce, Jr. (1864-1950), treasurer and manager, and his brother, Albert Russell Pierce (1869-1948). The firm principally manufactured fine cotton and silk goods, although a leading product of the mill during World War I was a coarse cotton developed by Albert Russell Pierce for use in airplane wings. At the peak of its prosperity between 1909-1919, Pierce Manufacturing Corporation was one of the largest textile firms in New Bedford, employing 1,200 people in two mills boasting a total of 3,600 looms and 116,000 spindles. Like most New England cotton mills, however, this corporation experienced increasing competition from textile companies in the southern United States after 1925 and ultimately closed down in 1944.

Pierce Brothers, Limited, was founded in 1909 by Andrew Granville Pierce, Jr., with Albert Russell Pierce and a third brother, Edward Taber Pierce (1855-1937) as manager and treasurer, respectively. This organization supplemented the output of Pierce Manufacturing Corporation by producing silk, rayon, and fine cotton yarn cloth. Always smaller than the parent firm, the company at its peak around 1928 employed about 500 people in one mill with 1,200 looms and 53,000 spindles. Pierce Brothers, Limited, continued to operate until the early 1950s. The mill property was sold to the Crescent Corporation of Fall River, Mass., in 1952.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains business records of Pierce Manufacturing Corporation and Pierce Brothers, Limited, as well as personal papers of several Pierce family members.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE (cont.)

Predominant among the records of both organizations are volumes containing swatches representing cloth produced by each firm. The sixty-two sample books for Pierce Manufacturing Corporation in Sub-group 1, dating from ca. 1892-1944, include very little information concerning the manufacture of the material; however, those sample books in Sub-group 2 for Pierce Brothers, Limited, provide complete statistics relating to cloth produced by that company between 1919-1939. The remainder of Pierce Manufacturing Corporation records in Sub-group 1 consist of minutes of directors' meetings, 1892-1935, reflecting the firm's administrative affairs throughout most of its history; stock records, 1893-1944; account books and bills and receipts for 1892-1919 and 1933-1944; memoranda concerning wages and duties of company employees, ca. 1923-1941; several additional cloth samples; and the corporation's letter book for 1939-1944. Sub-group 2, devoted to Pierce Brothers, Limited, records, consists of a report on machinery and buildings, 1941; memoranda concerning cloth manufacture, supplies, equipment, and employees, 1938; samples of cloth finished for the company by firms in New York and Rhode Island, ca. 1915-1939; and the fifteen sample books for 1919-1939. The Pierce family papers in Sub-group 3 relate to Andrew Granville Pierce, his sons, Andrew Granville Pierce, Jr., and Albert Russell Pierce, and his grandson, Albert Russell Pierce, Jr. Most notable are papers of the family head, particularly a letter book, 1868-1888, 1900, containing copies of outgoing correspondence relating to Andrew Granville Pierce's interest in the New Bedford, Vineyard, and Nantucket Steamboat Co., New Bedford and Fairhaven Street Railroad Co., Morse Twist Drill Co., Potomska Mills, Grinnell Mills, and various banks in New Bedford and Boston. His papers also contain lecture notes of Henry Howard, Jr. (1874-1944), compiled in about 1899 as a student at New Bedford Textile School--an institution that the elder Pierce served as a trustee. Papers for other family members chiefly consist of personal correspondence, notes, memoranda, bills, and related documents, ca. 1886-1948.

- Sub-group 1: Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, 1892-1944. Administrative records, general accounts, bills and receipts, memoranda, production records, business correspondence. 17½ linear feet.
- Sub-group 2: Pierce Brothers, Limited, Records, ca. 1919-1941. Report, memoranda, sample books, cloth samples. 2 inches.
- Sub-group 3: Pierce Family Papers, 1868-1948. Correspondence, notes, memoranda, bills, certificates. 4 inches.

DESCRIPTION

Sub-group 1. Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, 1892-1944

Series A. Administrative Records, 1892-1944.

Sub-series 1. Director's records, 1892-1935

Volume 1. Minutes of meetings, 1892-1935, including
balance sheets and accounts

Sub-series 2. Stock records, 1893-1944

Volume 1. Stockholders' register, 1893-1943

" 2. Stock dividend record, 1925-1931

" 3. Stock transfer record, 1927-1944

Folder 1.	Stock certificates, 1892-1944:	Abrahamson-Allen
" 2.	" "	Almy-Atkinson
" 3.	" "	Baines-Boucher
" 4.	" "	Bowen-Burnham
" 5.	" "	Cabot-Clark
" 6.	" "	Coffin-Creamer
" 7.	" "	Doran-Fraser
" 8.	" "	Gardner-Grinnell
" 9.	" "	Hall-Hawes
" 10.	" "	Hawkes-Hobbs
" 11.	" "	Holcomb-Howland
" 12.	" "	Hunt-Hyde
" 13.	" "	Jenney-Luther
" 14.	" "	McCarty-Moors
" 15.	" "	Newton-O'Keefe
" 16.	" "	Paine-Pierce
" 17-18.	" "	Pierce
" 19.	" "	Pierce-Porter
" 20.	" "	R. L. Day-Ryder
" 21.	" "	Sanford-Silva
" 22.	" "	Smith-Sylvia
" 23.	" "	Tanner-Vera
" 24.	" "	Wareing-Winsper
" 25.	" "	Wood-Yaeger

Sub-series 3. Surveys, 1939

Folder 1. Fire insurance survey and appraisal, 1939

Series B. General Accounts, 1892-1944

Sub-series 1. Daybooks, 1940-1942

Folder 1. 1940-1942

Sub-series 2. Ledgers, 1892-1944

Volume 1. 1892-1905

" 2. 1906-1919

" 3. 1936-1944

Sub-group 1, Series B (cont.)

Sub-series 3. Cash books, 1933-1944
Volume 1. 1933-1944

Series C. Purchasing and Receiving Records, 1941-1944

Sub-series 1. Bills and receipts, 1941-1944

Folder 1. 1941
" 2. 1942-1943
" 3. 1943
" 4. 1943-1944

Series D. Production Records, ca. 1892-1944

Sub-series 1. Labor records, ca. 1923-1941
Folder 1. Job descriptions and memoranda regarding
wages for plant employees, ca. 1923-1941

Sub-series 2. Cloth samples, ca. 1892-1944
Volume 1-62. Sample books, ca. 1892-1944
Folder 1. Cloth samples, ca. 1917-1939

Series E. Correspondence, 1939-1944

Volume 1. Letter book, 1939-1944

Series F. Certificate, ca. 1918

Folder 1. Citation from U.S. War Department for
service rendered during World War I

Sub-group 2. Pierce Brothers, Limited, Records, ca. 1919-1941

Series A. Administrative Records, 1941

Folder 1. Report on machinery and buildings, 1941

Series B. Production Records, ca. 1919-1939

Volume 1-15. Cloth sample books, 1919-1939
Folder 1-2. Samples of cloth finished by firms in
New York and Rhode Island, ca. 1919-1939
" 3. Memoranda concerning cloth manufacture,
supplies, equipment, and employees, 1938

Sub-group 3. Pierce Family Papers, 1868-1948

Series A. Andrew Granville Pierce Papers, 1868-1902

- Volume 1. Letter book, 1868-1888, 1900
- Folder 1. Incoming business and personal correspondence, 1887, 1894, 1897-1898
- Volume 2. Lecture notes of Henry Howard, Jr., ca. 1899, as a student at New Bedford Textile School
- Folder 2. Certificate of appointment as a trustee of New Bedford Textile School, 1902

Series B. Andrew Granville Pierce, Jr., Papers, ca. 1899, 1921

- Folder 1. Memorandum concerning cloth, ca. 1899
- " 2. Letter relating to Crompton & Knowles loom, 1921

Series C. Albert Russell Pierce Papers, ca. 1886-1948

- Folder 1. Memoranda book, ca. 1886
- " 2. Two letters from William H. Bassett, a chemist at Swain Free School, New Bedford, Mass., 1889
- Volume 1. Notes on textile machinery, 1895
- Folder 3. Telephone service contract, 1900
- Folder 4. Obituary, 1948

Series D. Albert Russell Pierce, Jr., Papers, ca. 1930

- Folder 1. Paper on cost finding, ca. 1930

Plan of ship UNION mss3 Separation
Flat File Drawer 29

ADDED ENTRIES

Account books--New Bedford, Mass.--1892-1944
 Business records--Mass.--New Bedford
 Businessmen--Mass.--New Bedford
 Cotton manufacture--Mass.--New Bedford
 Cotton textiles
 Cotton trade--Mass.--New Bedford
 Cotton yarn
 Howard, Henry, Jr., 1874-1944
 New Bedford, Mass.--Industries
 New Bedford Textile School, New Bedford; Mass.
 Pearce family SEE Pierce family
 Peirce family SEE Pierce family
 Perce family SEE Pierce family
 Pierce, Albert Russell, 1869-1948
 Pierce, Albert Russell, Jr.
 Pierce, Andrew Granville, 1829-1903
 Pierce, Andrew Granville, Jr., 1864-1950
 Pierce, Edward Taber, 1855-1937
 Pierce Brothers, Limited, New Bedford, Mass.
 Pierce family
 Rayon industry and trade--Mass.--New Bedford
 Sample books SEE Textile fabrics--Sample books
 Silk manufacture and trade--Mass.--New Bedford
 Students--Mass.--New Bedford
 Textile fabrics--Mass.--New Bedford--Sample books
 Textile industry--Mass.--New Bedford
 Textile schools--Mass.--New Bedford
 Textiles, Cotton SEE Cotton textiles
 Wages--Textile workers--Mass.--New Bedford

SEPARATIONS LIST

Removed to objects collection:

Linen measuring gauge used by Albert Russell Pierce
Three combs used in weaving machinery

Removed to photographs collection:

Photograph of Andrew Granville Pierce, ca. 1892
Photograph of Edward Taber Pierce, n.d.
Three photographs of airplanes used by the U.S. in World War I, ca. 1917-1918, probably with Pierce Manufacturing Corporation cotton in wings.
Twelve photographs and blueprints of loom manufactured by Crompton & Knowles Loom Works, Worcester, Mass., 1921.
Blueprint for UNION (Ship), A. R. Pearce, 1815.

Removed to printed collection:

- PW* Comparison of the Cost of Manufacturing Cotton in the New England Mills for the Years 1875-1939, n.d.
W Dobson & Barlow, Ltd. Machinery Calculations . . ., 1897
W Forbes, Allan. Other Indian Events of New England, 1941
W Frank P. Bennett & Co., Inc. Cotton Fabric Glossary, 1907
W Haswell, Charles H. Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1885
W Hyde, James. Science of Cotton Spinning, n.d.
W Nasmith, Joseph. Students' Cotton Spinning, 1893
W Old Colony Railroad. Time Table . . ., 1888
W Pierce Manufacturing Corp., New Bedford, Mass. Specifications for Building a Mill . . ., 1892
W Scovell, Clinton H. Textile Cost Methods, 1913
W Walmsley, Herbert E. Cotton Spinning and Weaving, 1893
W World Premiere Program, "Down to the Sea in Ships," 1922
W Yates, Thomas. Practical Treatise on Yarn and Cloth Calculations . . ., 1901