

Title: T.A. Chapman Company Collection

Call Number: Mss-0810

Inclusive Dates: 1881 – 1982

Bulk: 1.2 cu. ft.

Location: WHS, Sh. B023
MV, F28 (1 item)

Historical Note: Timothy Appleton Chapman came to Milwaukee in 1857 and with the assistance of the C. F. Hovey and Company of Boston, established a business on East Water Street under the name of Hasset and Chapman.

By 1865, Chapman was sole owner of the business. He then erected a \$200,000 store at East Wisconsin and Milwaukee streets that was completed in 1872. At the time, it was the largest retail dry goods store in the Northwest until a fire on the night of October 23, 1884 destroyed it. Chapman decided to rebuild immediately and within six months had constructed a new store at the same location. T. A. Chapman remained in control of the store until his death in 1892. Since then, the ownership and management stayed within the family and descendants of the founder. Some of the family members included in the material are George P. Miller, William M. and Norman M. Chester, George W. Johns, and Verne R. Read.

The company went through many changes over the years, including the building of two branch stores, and the modernization and improvement of its downtown store through the building of a parking structure.

Administrative Note: The collection was processed on August 14, 1993 by Steve Daily.

SEE ALSO: T. A. Chapman Company Photo Collection – 0.4 cu. ft.

Subject Cross References

- Business enterprises–Wisconsin–Milwaukee.
- Department stores–Wisconsin–Milwaukee.
- Milwaukee (Wis.)–History–Sources.
- Chester, Norman
- Chester, William M.
- Johns, George W.
- Miller, George P.
- Read, Verne R.
- Milwaukee Seed Company-File 4.
- Milwaukee Rescue Mission-File 4.
- Neptune Frolic Regatta Committee-File 4.

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Abstract of Title, first page only, 1888	1	1

Articles of Association, 1892	1	2
Minutes of Board of Directors meeting, 1967; Memos, 1964, 1965	1	3
Correspondence received by Chapman's, 1883-1973	1	4
Correspondence sent by Chapman's, 1891-1973	1	5
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Business Data	1	6a
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Sales receipts recovered from 1884 fire	1	8
Store improvement expenses, 1911-1912	1	9
Blank business forms, c. 1900	1	10
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SKETCHES OF ART booklets issued at reopening of store, c.1885	1	12
Press releases, 1954, 1964, 1965, 1972	1	13
Advertising, 1881-1968	1	14
Blueprints, 1911 improvements to store	1	15
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William M. and Norman Chester-Handmade WW II era card; Christmas message, 1960; certificates of service and sympathy, 1963-1964	1	17
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News clippings-General misc., 1931-1972.	2	30
<i>Milwaukee Journal</i> Feb. 22, 1895 and Jan. 30 – Feb. 2, 1947.	2	31
Magazine articles-retailing and merchandising, 1884-1970.	2	32
Misc.-Pamphlets, brochures, banquet list, memorial for Mrs. T. A. Chapman (Laura), front page of <i>Early Day Milwaukee</i> newspaper	2	33
Printing and engraving expenses notebook with examples, 1924-1930	2	Loose in box
Forms and Instructions (plastic sheets) taken from scrapbook that was possibly a training guide for sales clerks, 1940s	2	Loose in box
Envelopes that contain more forms and instructions, 1920s, 1940s	2	Loose in box
<i>Milwaukee</i> magazine, Feb. 1970	2	Loose in box
OVERSIZE ITEM	LOCATION	
February 1884 issue of <i>The Style</i> , published for T.A. Chapman & Co.	MV, F28	