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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Gardens, Smithsonian Institution
Creator: The H. Weber & Sons Co.
Title: The H. Weber & Sons Co. Records
Dates: circa 1879-1962
Quantity: 7 boxes and floral frames
Abstract: The H. Weber & Sons Co. records document the professional activities of The H. Weber & Sons Company, a florist business consisting of a florist shop and greenhouse which was located in Oakland, Maryland. The collection contains business records, photographs, horticultural medals and wire frames used for floral displays.

Administrative Information

Provenance
In 1979, The H. Weber & Sons Co. records were donated to the Smithsonian Institution's Office of Horticulture (now Smithsonian Gardens) by a descendent of Henry Weber.

Related Materials
The Smithsonian Institution’s Botany and Horticulture Library includes two albums of floral designs from The H. Weber & Sons Co. Additional florist trade catalogs compiled by the Weber firm can be found in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History Branch Library Trade Literature Collection.

Processing Information
The records were processed by AAG intern Janet Curll Coleman in 2004.

Preferred Citation

Restrictions on Access
Access to original images by appointment only. Researcher must submit request for appointment in writing. Certain items may be restricted and not available to researchers. Please direct reference inquiries to the Archives of American Gardens: aag@si.edu.

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Historical Note
Henry Weber (1835-1904) was born in Germany and later immigrated to the United States in the 1860s. He was raised on a farm; this experience influenced the course of his life and career. He
showed an affinity for flower growing and in 1870 founded his own firm, H. Weber & Sons, a florist shop and greenhouse. Just prior to that in 1866, he married Catharine Schutz. Together they had eleven children; six later joined him in the company. The company sold cut flowers, especially carnations and roses, annual flowers, perennials, herbs and vegetable plants. In 1880 Weber purchased an additional one hundred acres of land for the company; at the height of his business he held a total of five hundred acres.

Weber sold to a variety of clients including private individuals and large companies. At the turn of the twentieth century, the small town of Oakland, Maryland where his company was based prospered because of the influence of the railroad, agriculture and summer vacationers. The H. Weber & Sons Company’s customer base, however, extended far beyond the boundaries of Oakland and even the state of Maryland. Customers were located in Washington, D.C., West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, North Carolina, and as far away as Illinois, Michigan and Toronto, Ontario.

Henry Weber died in 1904; his sons continued the business until 1978.

**Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>H. Weber &amp; Sons Florists is founded by Henry Weber.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>One hundred acres of land purchased for the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Henry Weber dies; his sons continue the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>The company is incorporated. Company stationery identifies the name of the firm as The H. Weber &amp; Sons Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>The company is dissolved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection documents the professional activities of The H. Weber & Sons Company. The collection contains business records, photographs, horticultural medals and wire frames used for floral displays. The bulk of the collection consists of business records dating from 1903-1907 in the form of accounting journals and ledgers with handwritten entries of sales and payments.

The ledger entries are quite detailed and include the date, customer name and sometimes the location, items purchased (with specific information related to quantity and item description), and unit and total prices. In the case of payments received, the entries include the client, date, amount paid and the method of payment, such as cash, check, money order or p.o. stamps. Some of the journals include sections in which monthly and annual account information was tallied. One ledger appears to contain names of employees, along with information such as hourly wages, hours worked and rent received.

The collection of horticultural medals spans from 1879 to 1905. Most are in their original cases and are engraved. The floral frame collection is extensive; a sampling of the motifs that are represented includes a banner, open book, harp, train, four-leaf clover, cross, star, clock and Masonic symbols. These frames were typically used for funerary flower arrangements.

Please note that this collection contains only a sampling of the records of The H. Weber and Sons Co. and should not be considered comprehensive.

**Arrangement**

The collection is arranged as 4 series:

Series 1: Business records
Series 2: Photographs  
Series 3: Medals  
Series 4: Wire floral frames

Index Terms

This collection is indexed in the catalog of the Archives of American Gardens under the following terms:

Subjects-Topical:
- Carnations
- Florists
- Floristry
- Greenhouses
- Horticulture
- Mail-order business

Types of Materials:
- Floral frames
- Ledgers (account books)
- Account books
- Photographs
- Medals

Names:
- H. Weber & Sons Co., The
- Weber, Henry

Series Descriptions/Container Listing

Series 1: Business records (Boxes 1-5)

This series contains a sampling of the records of The H. Weber & Sons Co. and document financial transactions, clients, and vendors.

Box
1. Ledger (indicates sales and expenses; includes alphabetical list of clients and vendors), 1903-1905
2. Day Book (ledger of sales and expenses), 1904-1905
2. Account Book (indicates household and business sales and expenses; includes several loose handwritten notes), 1904-1909
3. Journal (ledger of sales and expenses), 1905-1907
4. Journal (ledger of sales and expenses), 1914-1916
5. Sales Account Sheets (miscellaneous statements and entries related to business accounts), 1918-1923; 1944 – 1957
5. Purchases and Sales Log (summaries of sales and expense totals by type of plant or service), 1920; 1930-1962
Series 2: Photographs (Oversize Box 6; 4 photographs)

Box
6 (4) b/w oversized photographs of Weber Greenhouse, site of The H. Weber & Sons Co. Florists, in Oakland, Maryland, undated.

Series 3: Medals (Box 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.001</td>
<td>The Agricultural &amp; Mechanical Society of Western Maryland at Cumberland medal, 1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.002</td>
<td>World’s Columbian Exposition medal, 1892-1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.003</td>
<td>Atlanta Flower Fair pin, 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.004</td>
<td>The American Institute, New York’s Medal of Merit, 1897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.005</td>
<td>First Prize for Carnations pin, circa 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.006, 007</td>
<td>The Horticultural Society of Chicago medals (2), 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.008</td>
<td>The Horticultural Society of Chicago medal, 1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.009</td>
<td>American Carnation Society’s Lawson Medal, 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.010</td>
<td>The American Institute, New York’s Medal of Merit, 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.011</td>
<td>Pan American Exposition medal, 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.012</td>
<td>Society of American Florists medal, 1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.013</td>
<td>American Carnation Society’s Lawson Medal, 1904</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.014</td>
<td>Louisiana Purchase Exposition Silver Medal, 1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OH.1979.035.015</td>
<td>Society of American Florists medal, 1905</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Series 4: Wire Floral Frames

This series contains approximately 72 wire frames in a variety of motifs and sizes that were covered with fresh flowers and used for temporary display purposes at funerals. These frames likely date to the early twentieth century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>OH.1979.011</td>
<td>Wire Frames</td>
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