



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company Records and Blumenthal Family Papers

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by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Creators:	Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company (Philadelphia, Pa.). Blumenthal, Barbara B. Blumenthal, Joseph Blumenthal, M.L.
Title:	Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company Records and Blumenthal Family Papers
Dates:	1856-2010
Bulk Dates:	1900-1969
Quantity:	2 cubic feet, 6 boxes
Abstract:	Records from Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company, manufacturers of chocolate and cocoa products, including well-known candies such as Snocaps, Raisinets, and Goobers. They were located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The company was sold to Ward Foods Incorporated in 1969. This collection also includes material collected by and about the Blumenthal family and from M.L. Blumenthal, noted illustrator of the early 20th century.
Language:	Collection is in English.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated to the Archives Center in 2015, by Joseph and Barbara B. Blumenthal.

Separated Materials

Materials at the National Museum of American History

The Division of Work and Industry holds the following objects: one metal tin stamped "Sweet Milk Chocolate Raisinets"; one small pasteboard box marked, "Raisinets", circa 1960; and one metal tin stamped, "Sunny South Sweet Milk Chocolate Peanuts", circa 1930. See accession 2015.0112.

Processing Information

Processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., archives specialist, 2015; supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist.

Preferred Citation

Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company Records and Blumenthal Family Papers, 1856-2010, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research use. Researchers must handle unprotected photographs with gloves.

Ownership & Literary Rights

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Biographical Note

According to family research, Samuel Blumenthal entered the United States from Bavaria, Germany in 1849 and his future wife, Henrietta Sternberger, entered the United States in 1859. They married in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1864 and settled in Wilmington, North Carolina where they began a family. They moved to Philadelphia in 1887.

Samuel and Henrietta's son, Joseph, founded the Peerless Extract Company in 1895, and by 1900 the business has become Blumenthal Brothers Extract Company. Brothers Joseph, Abraham, Aaron, Jacob, and Moses signed a partnership agreement in 1905. By 1909 they began cocoa cake and powder production. In 1910 they purchased land in the Bridesburg section of Philadelphia for a new factory and by 1911 the building was in use. This site was expanded over the years and was the main office and plant for the company.

Over the course of the next fifty years, the company developed and introduced well-known chocolate candies such as Goobers (1925), Raisinets (1926) and later Snocaps and Buddy Bars. Blumenthal Brothers products and their logo B*B became familiar to the chocolate-buying public. The brothers ran the company collectively with Joseph Sr. as president and material buyer, Aaron as factory manager, Jacob as coating department sales manager, Meyer as the New York City sales manager, Abraham as the southern states salesman, and Moses as a part-time employee. Moses' primary career was as the illustrator, M.L. Blumenthal, doing work for such publications as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The National Magazine*, *Collier's*, the Associated Press, and others.

Blumenthal Brothers candies took advantage of the burgeoning motion picture business. One of their early molded chocolates was in the shape of Jackie Coogan who had become famous playing "the Kid". The B*B candies were boxed and portioned perfectly for the sale to and enjoyment of the movie going public. They also produced cocoa and coating products for the industrial and home markets.

In the late 1930s and 1940s the second generation of Blumenthals joined the company, sons of the founding brothers. These were Bernhard "Bud", Samuel, Joseph Jr., Lawrence, Mike, J. Robert, and Jack. Joseph Jr., Bud, and Larry joined the armed forces during World War II. Additional real estate was purchased in 1948 as the company expanded and sales grew. By 1950, the company's Golden Jubilee, sales topped \$10,000,000. They began producing holiday specific candies in 1951 and issued public bonds for investors beginning in 1958.

The 1960s saw the company employing television advertisements beginning in 1961 on the National Broadcasting Network (NBC). In 1968 papers for a merger with Ward Foods Incorporated were signed

and as of January 30, 1969 the sale was finalized. By May 1969 the company name was changed to Ward Chocolate Company and was out of Blumenthal family control.

Scope and Content Note

The collection documents the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company (B*B) business from its founding in 1900. The collection also documents Blumenthal family history and contains material collected by them pertaining to the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company. Family papers also include land indenture and real estate documents; photographs; letters, writings and ephemera relating to various family members, including papers relating to M.L. Blumenthal's (Moses Lawrence Blumenthal) career as an illustrator during the early 20th century.

The collection is organized in two series.

Series 1: Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company Records, 1856-2009, undated. This series contains historical writings about the company; advertising; photographs of employees, packaging, machinery, and display of the products and the production process. There are also photographs of the company's buildings. This series also includes business papers such as correspondence, contracts, legal and financial documents; reports and papers relating to production; annual reports; account books, bound volumes of the company's newsletter, "Chocolate Chat"; news clippings, and deeds. There are also annual reports for Ward Foods Incorporated, the successor to Blumenthal Brothers after its purchase of the company in 1969. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 2: Blumenthal Family Papers, 1902-2010, undated. This series includes material collected by various family members pertaining to Blumenthal Brothers as well as family history. These items include correspondence, photographs, advertising, e-mails, and family information in many forms. This series includes copies of formal histories compiled by Mike Blumenthal. This series also includes material relating to the career of Moses Lawrence (M.L.) Blumenthal as an illustrator, including correspondence with major publications of the early 20th century, travel writings, personal correspondence, and a letter from James Montgomery Flagg, creator of one of the iconic depictions of "Uncle Sam". The series is arranged chronologically.

Arrangement

The collection is organized in two series.

Series 1: Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company, 1856-2007, undated

Series 2: Blumenthal Family Papers, 1902-2010, undated

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Candy

Chocolate
Chocolate factories--Pennsylvania
Chocolate industry--History--United States
Cocoa
Factories--Pennsylvania
Real property

Types of Materials:

Advertising--20th century
Articles--20th century
Business records--20th century.
Clippings--20th century
Contracts--20th century
Correspondence--20th century
Family papers--19th century
Family papers--20th century
Financial records--20th century.
Indentures--19th century
Indentures--20th century
Legal records--20th century
Newsletters--1940-1950
Photographs--Black-and-white negatives--20th century
Photographs--Black-and-white photoprints--20th century
Reports--1910-1940
Reports--1970-1980
Writings

Names:

Blumenthal, Moses Lawrence

Container Listing

Series 1: Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company Records, , 1856-2009, undated (bulk 1900-1969)

English

Box 6, Folder 1	Deeds, bonds, warrants, 1856-1924
Box 5, Folder 1	Account book, 1900-1901
Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence, 1903-2007
Box 2, Folder 11	Sternberger, Jesse, 1906-1924
Box 1, Folder 10	News clippings, 1907-2009, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Financial statements, 1911-1929
Box 1, Folder 3	Tax bills, 1913-1927
Box 6, Folder 2	Insurance policy, 1914
Box 1, Folder 4	Production reports, 1917-1931, undated
Box 1, Folder 5	Advertising, 1917, undated
Box 1, Folder 6	War Industries Board reports, 1918
Box 5, Folder 2	Corporate legal papers, 1919-1927
Box 1, Folder 7	"Census of Manufactures", Department of Commerce, 1920-1931
Box 1, Folder 8	"Annual Information Return", United States Internal Revenue Service, 1922
Box 5, Folder 3	Deeds, 1924-1927
Box 5, Folder 4	Sales and account book, 1925-1926
Box 1, Folder 9	Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, 1928
Box 1, Folder 12	"Chocolate Chat", volumes 1 and 2, 1944-1945
Box 1, Folder 13	"Chocolate Chat", volumes 3 and 4, 1946-1947
Box 1, Folder 14	"Chocolate Chat", volumes 5 and 6, 1947-1948
Box 1, Folder 15	Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company sale to Ward Foods Incorporated, correspondence, 1969-1970
Box 1, Folder 16-17	Ward Foods Incorporated, annual reports, 1971-1979
Box 4	Photographs and photographic negatives, 1910-1960, undated

Series 2: Blumenthal Family Papers, 1902-2010, undated

Box 2, Folder 1	Blumenthal, Aaron, undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Blumenthal, Abraham, 1902-1943, undated
Box 2, Folder 3	Blumenthal, Bernard S. (Bud), 1956-1998, undated
Box 2, Folder 4	Blumenthal, Joseph, Jr. and Blumenthal Brothers, 1965-2004, undated
Box 2, Folder 5	Blumenthal, Louis, 1904
Box 2, Folder 6	Blumenthal, Meyer (Mike), 1917-2007
Box 2, Folder 7	Blumenthal, Moses Lawrence (M.L.), ephemera, 1906-1946
Box 2, Folder 8	Blumenthal, Moses Lawrence (M.L.), correspondence written, 1908-1909, undated
Box 2, Folder 9	Blumenthal, Moses Lawrence (M.L.), correspondence received, 1902-1926, undated
Box 2, Folder 10	Blumenthal, Moses Lawrence (M.L.), travel writing, undated
Box 2, Folder 12	Ephemera, 1902-1910, undated
Box 2, Folder 13	Photograph, unidentified, undated
Box 2, Folder 14	Photographs, copies, 1905-1910, undated
Box 2, Folder 15	<i>A History of The Peerless & The Blumenthal Bros. Extract & Flavoring Companies</i> , Blumenthal, Mike, 2003
Box 3, Folder 1	<i>All You Ever Wanted to Know About Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania And Its Relationship With The Blumenthal Family</i> , Blumenthal, Mike, 2004
Box 3, Folder 2	Blumenthal Brothers history, research file, 2005, undated
Box 4	Photographs and photographic negatives, 1905-1959, undated