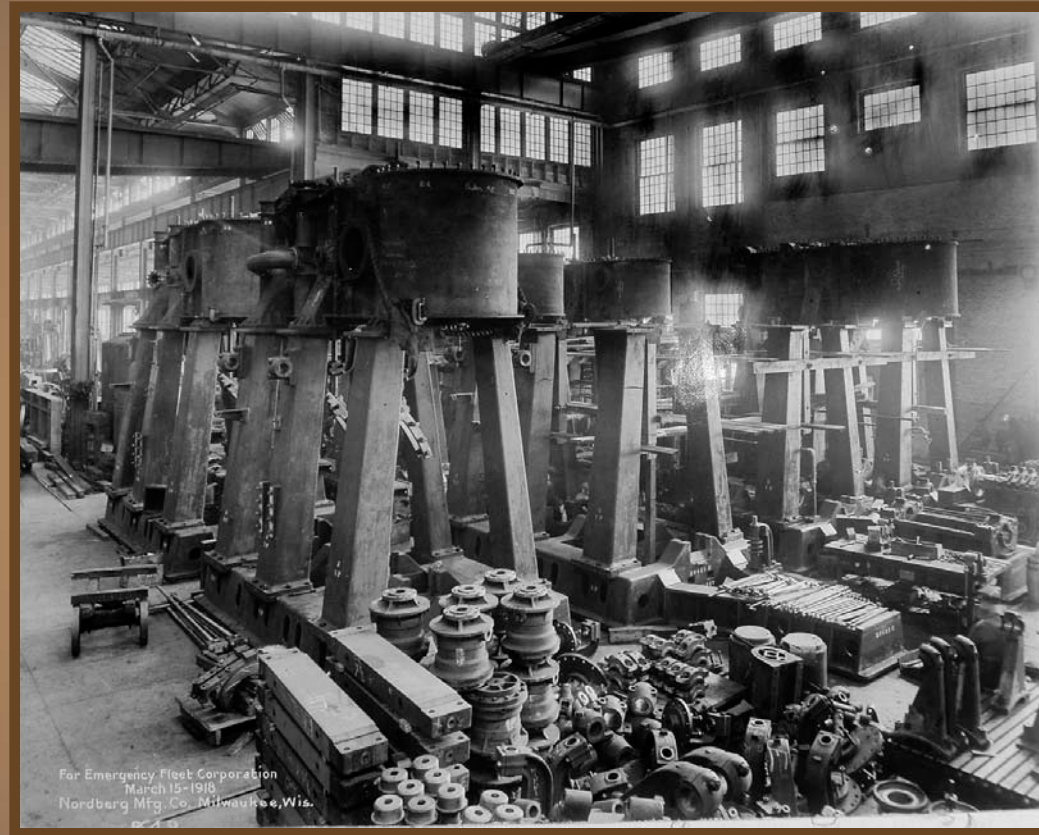


Industrial Business Collections: A Retrospective on Acquisitions Practice



**Erik Nordberg, Doctoral Student
Program of Industrial Heritage and Archaeology
Michigan Technological University
Houghton, Michigan**



Introduction

Historians rely on surviving material evidence as the basis for their research

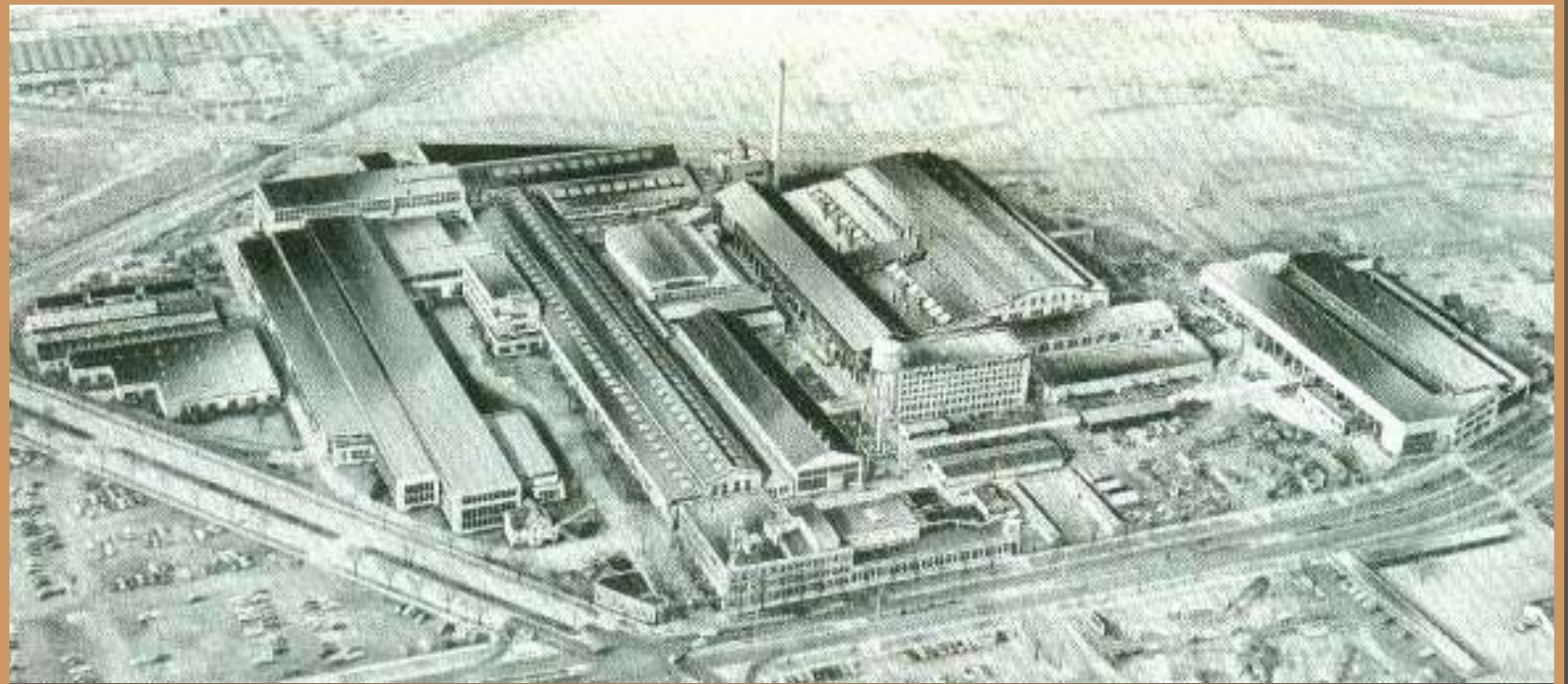
- Which institutions in the United States have taken the lead in collecting and preserving historical records documenting American industry, technology, and business?
- What has been their practice in collecting these materials? Which individual archivists and curators have been involved in this work?
- What factors affect the selection of these materials?
- What lessons can be learned?
- How might this affect current and future practice?

Methodology

- Historic research method
- Examine primary and secondary sources
- Ethnographic component: interviews
- Case studies: institutions
- Case studies: collections
- Analysis
- Compare / contrast practice at different institutions

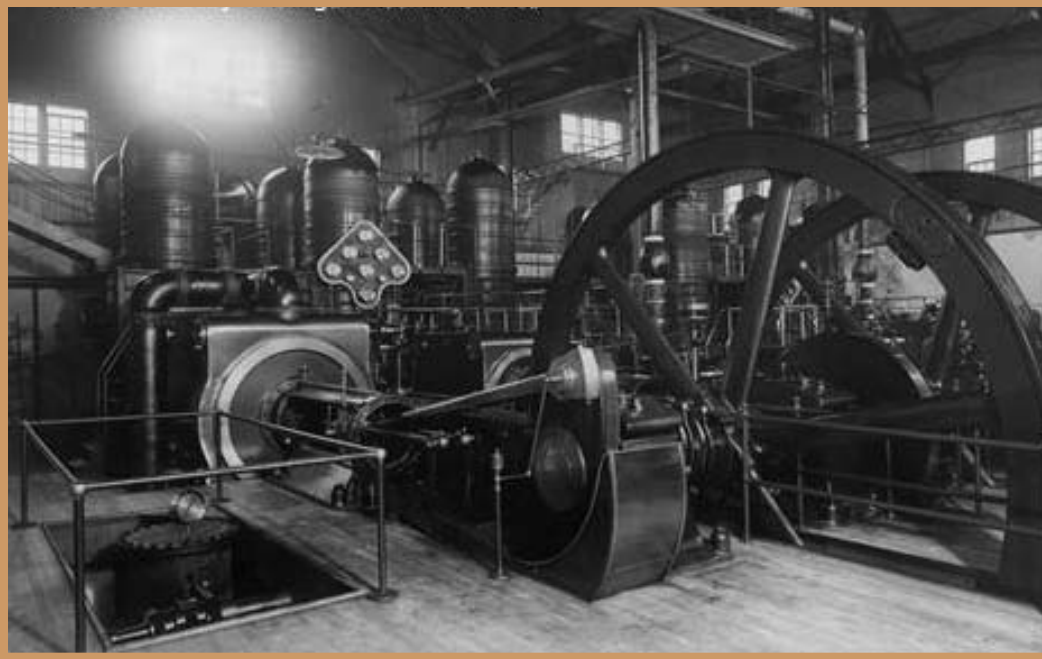
Sample Case Study

Nordberg Manufacturing Company
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1890-1970



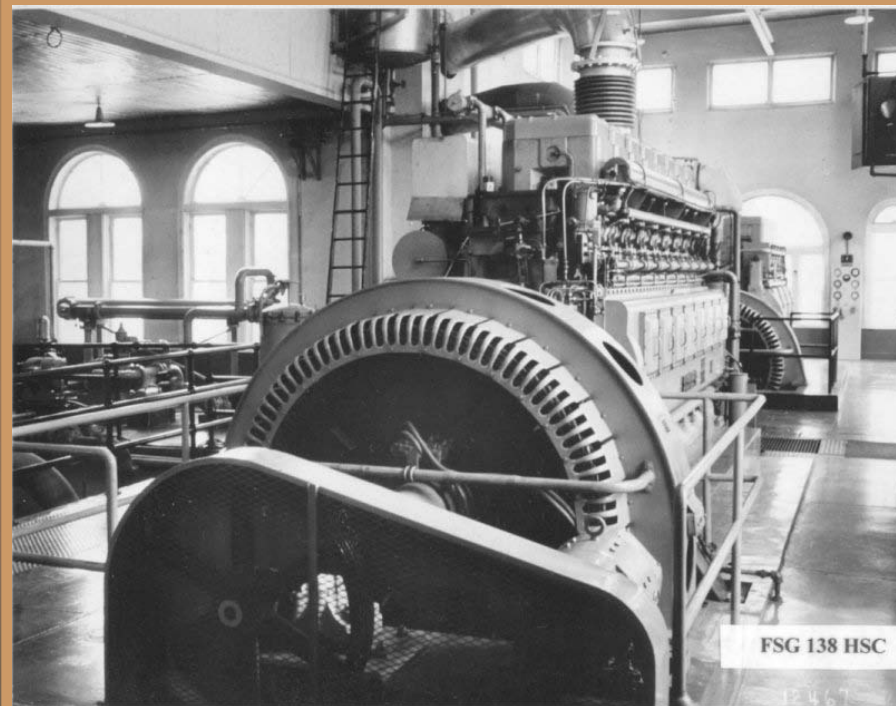
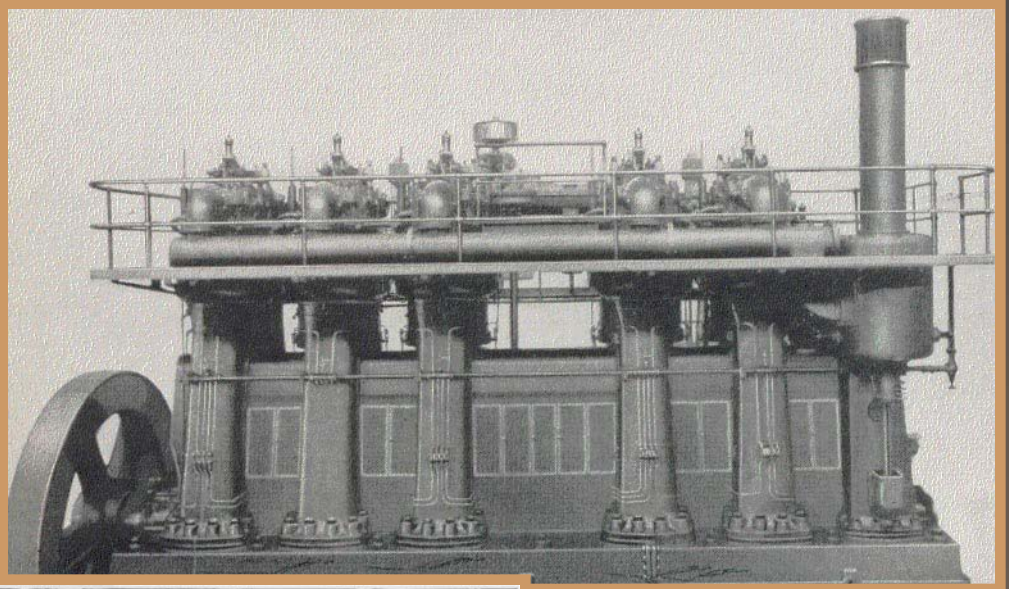
Company History

Product Lines:
Mining Machinery



Company History

Product Lines:
Large Diesel



Surviving Documents

And potential
for research

Steam Engines
Antique Machinery - Tools
Restoration Millwrighting
19th-Century Crafts and Manufactures
Custom Stringed Instruments - Wood Turning
Old Trade Catalogues and Books on Technology
Industrial Archaeology

Whistles In The Woods

The Museum of Early Technology

Purveyors of Rare Domestic and Imported Hardwoods
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Special Woods for Instrument-Makers - Carvers - Turners
African Blackwood - Bonies - Rosewoods - Saffwoods
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404 375-4326

August 11, 1979

Complete Museum Services
Displays
Appraisals
Restoration
Consultation
Documentation

Ms. Theresa Spence
M.T.U. Archives
Michigan Technological University
Houghton, Michigan 49931

Dear Ms. Spence:

It was a distinct pleasure to have the opportunity to meet with you, and to learn of the establishment of an archive at Michigan Technological University. I am certainly glad to learn that the materials we discussed can be preserved there for posterity. I trust that things accepted by the Calumet and Hecla office collection of materials and to break it up would be tragic. I am sure that the groups of blueprints from Nordberg, which document much better than I had realized when I first saw them. Since I returned to Rexnord, and we sorted out these groups of blueprints with each and every one individually. There was even more machinery sent to the copper range than I had realized before inspection; therefore it certainly seemed most appropriate to send the materials to your archive.

Enclosed is the MTU copy of the appraisal that this writer prepared. The term "bunches" will be met with from time to time, and I am sure it is simply a term that Nordberg/Rexnord uses for the blueprint groups pertaining to a given subject.

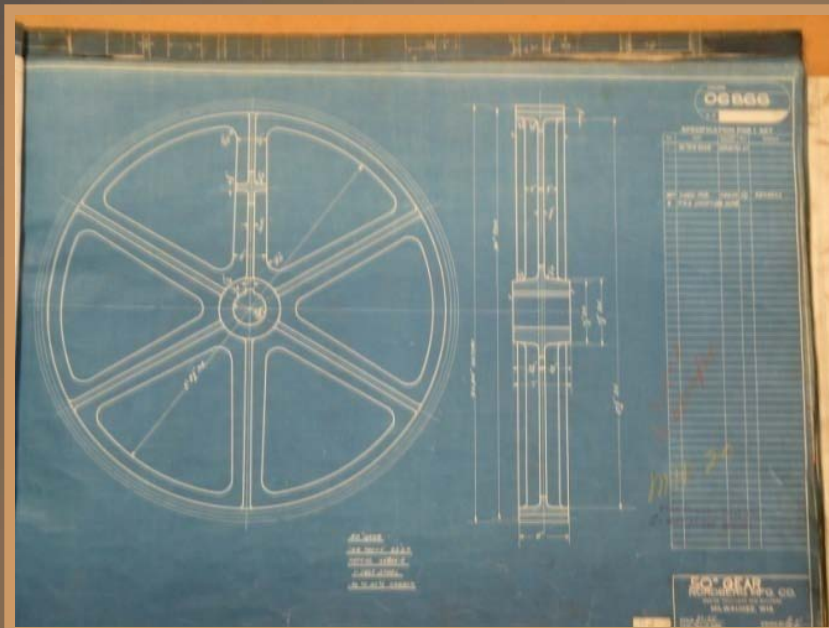
The appraisal is in two parts; an 8-page appraisal report in total amount in dollar value and count of the groups or bunches to MTU, and a 4-page report which describes blueprints and in detail. The appraisal report is primarily centered around experience for historic engineering documents. I fear these make rather a new to antique collecting and its marketplace, it might be

I look forward to working with you on the C&H materials on a regular basis. If you have any questions relative to engineering history, please contact me.

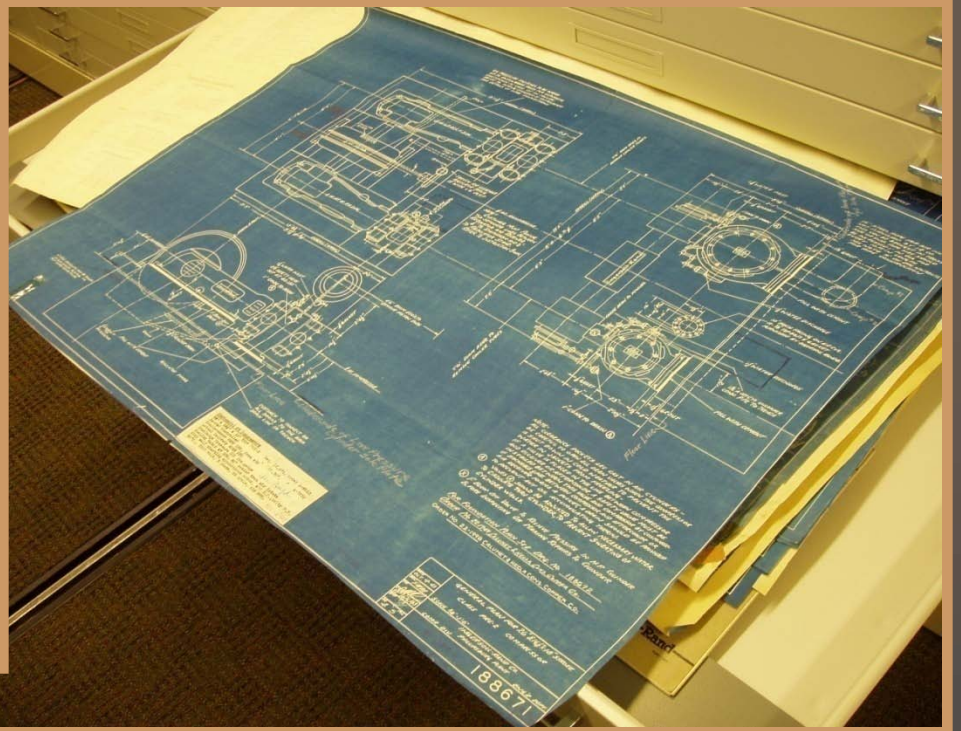
cc: Mr. Richard R. Bains, c/o Rexnord



Surviving Documents



Surviving Documents



Nordberg Corliss Cylinders

June 15th Baker & Friedrich ^{35 Hrs each for first} 12 " " " " ^{9th Hours}
 1 Cylinder 30 x 60 1.1 ft per 12535
 off 34" pattern G301

June 16th Baker & Friedrich ^{15 Hrs each for first} 10 " " " " ^{50 Hours}
 1 Cylinder 20 x 44 G301 361st

June 29th John Anderson ^{30 Hours}
 1 16 x 36 Cylinder G351

July 11th Friedrich
 1 16 x 40 Cylinder G351

John Anderson 30

32 x 60

Friedrich 10

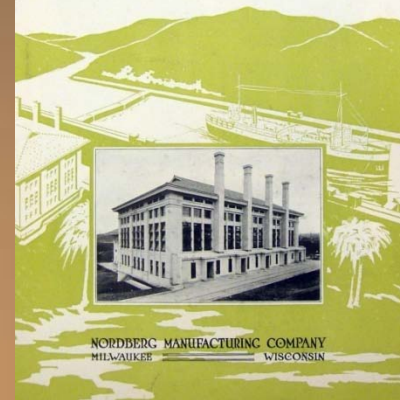
Cylinder G351

73 Hrs

G1001

60 off 1/2" part

The Panama Canal Diesel-Engined Power Plant



NORDBERG MANUFACTURING COMPANY
 MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN

1-9-99 9722 Osceola Consolidated Mining Co. Calumet Mich.

For Osceola # 5 shaft. Speecher Mich.

180 days.

1 Direct Hoisting Engine
 2- 32 x 72 Corliss (Cylinders) Engines
 Steam Reverse, Safety Stop,
 4 Brakes, Minutemen.

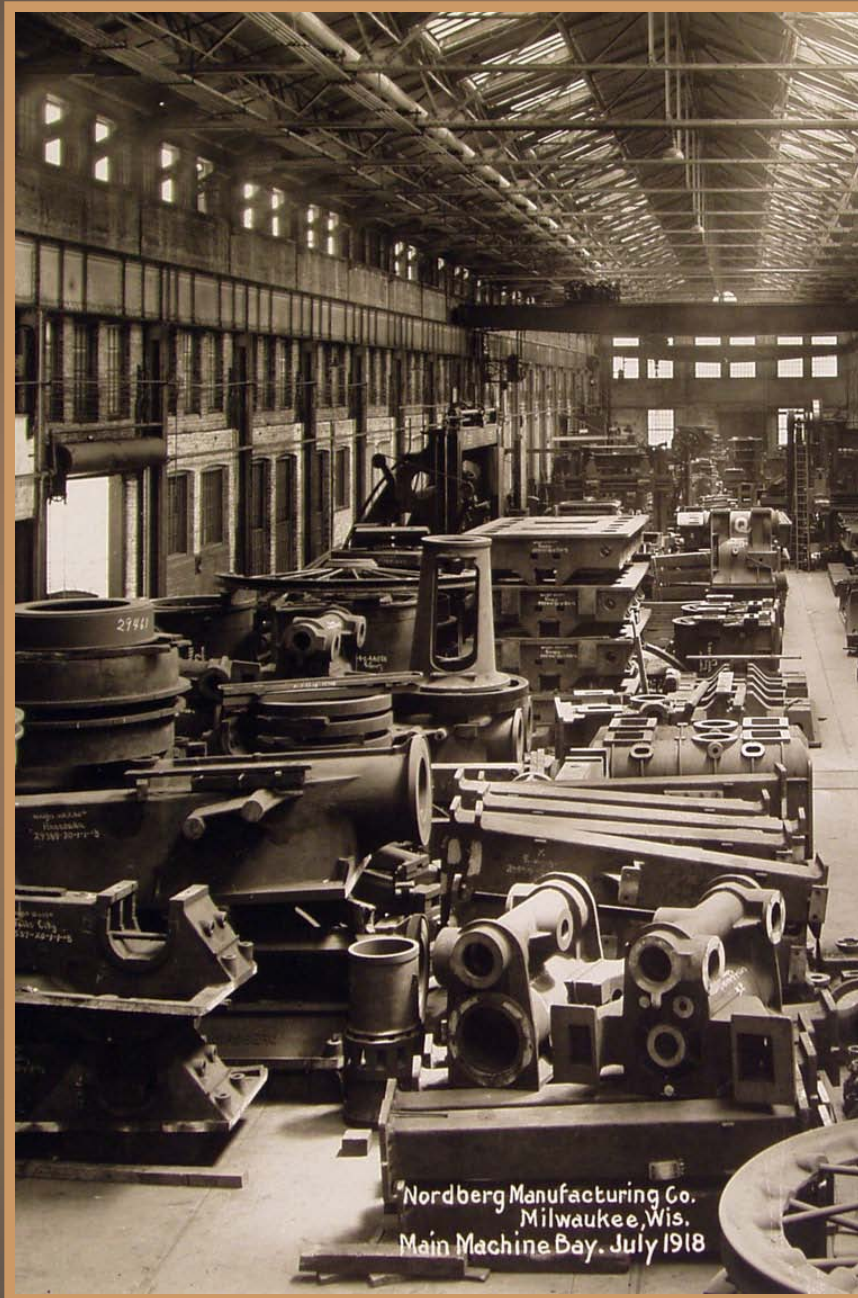
2 Conn. rods 15' 6" and 17' 9" 1411
 1 rope 27' 6" long " " 17' 5" 1418 conical & straight face drum,
 2 pistons 18' 6" long } essentially a duplicate of
 1 beam rope 18' 5" } the Osceola hoist we furnished
 1 v. can rope 20' 2" } G1428 in 1897
 1 " " 20' 2" }

Grooves in drums for 1 3/8" Rope
 B.M. Jan'y. 31-99.



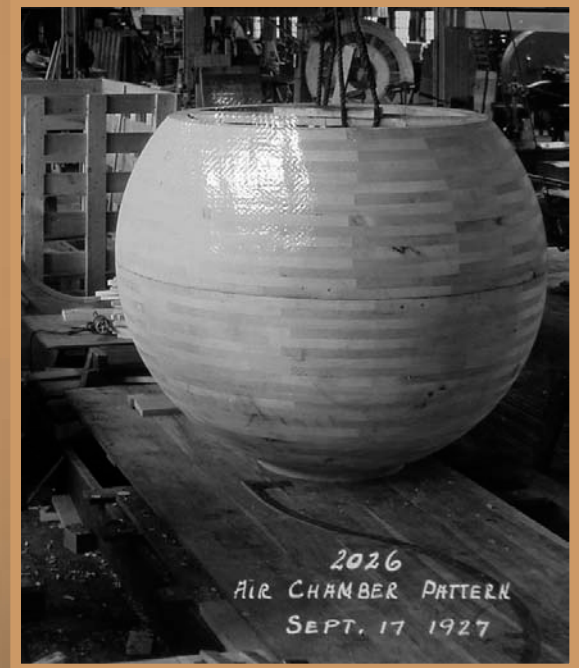
Surviving Documents

Photographs



Surviving Documents

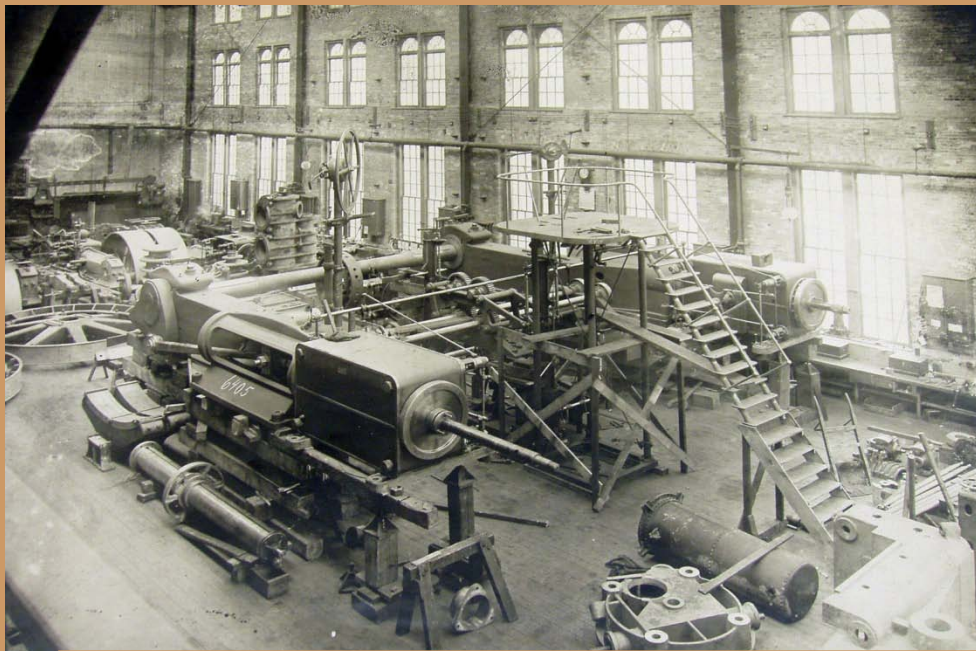
Photographs



Surviving Documents Photographs



Surviving Documents



NORDBERG MANUFACTURING Co.

DESIGNERS AND BUILDERS OF
DIESEL ENGINES, MINE HOISTS, SYMONS CRUSHERS
UNIFLOW, POPPET, BLOWING, AND ROLLING MILL ENGINES
TRACK MACHINES, UNDERGROUND LOADERS
AIR AND GAS COMPRESSORS, SPECIAL MACHINERY

GENERAL OFFICE & WORKS
MILWAUKEE, WIS. U.S.A.

November 21, 1929

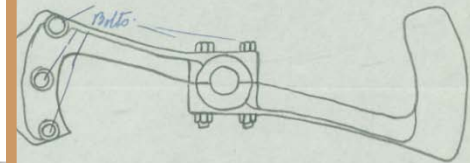
Quincy Mining Company,
Hancock, Michigan

Attention: Mr. Chas. L. Lawton, General Mgr.

Gentlemen:-

This is in reply to a part of your letter dated November 18 dealing with the matter of overwind safety devices for your No. 2, No. 6 and No. 8 hoists.

I have just looked into the question of re-adjusting the setting of No. 2 hoist so that the steam throttle can be closed at an earlier point down the shaft. I find this is a very easy thing to do. In the back of each of the indicators on No. 2 hoist there is a cam shaped as I am sketching below:



On one of the outer edges of this "S" shaped casting there are three bolts which clamp it to the worm driven revolving ring on the indicator. There are also two bolts which clamp to the center shaft. By loosening the two bolts in the center and the three bolts on the outer diameter this cam can be moved either upward or backward and thus effect the turning off of the steam





Discoveries & Discussion

- Is any collecting activity idiosyncratic by its very nature?
- Do existing archival collections adequately document industrial sites, processes, and community?
- Are we falling short?

Next Steps

- Study acquisitions and appraisal literature
- Examine recent publication in fields of history
- Select additional case studies
- Follow an existing industrial collection from corporate ownership through appraisal, selection, and transfer to a public repository.

*I welcome input, sources, informants, and
additional institution & collection case studies*



Questions?

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