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Guide to the B. Heller & Co. Collection 1896-2003



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.HELLERB
Title	B. Heller & Co. Collection
Date	1896-2003
Size	7.75 linear feet (8 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Founded by Benjamin Heller, whose family practiced sausage-making for generations, Chicago-based B. Heller & Co. began in 1893 as a wholesale manufacturer of dry powders used in the preparation of meat products. Over the years, the company expanded into the manufacture of a variety of food ingredients, as well as insecticides, cleaning agents, and a broad range of kitchen and office supplies. The B. Heller & Co. Collection spans 1896-2003 and documents advances in food technology, marketing, and product design during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The collection includes samples of products and packaging, ephemera, publications, business records and photographs.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: B. Heller & Co. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note

Founded by Benjamin Heller, whose family practiced sausage-making for generations, Chicago-based B. Heller & Co. began in 1893 as a wholesale manufacturer of dry powders used in the preparation of meat products.

Benjamin Heller named his first major brand "Zanzibar," attracted by the exotic sound of the word. He first applied it to the meat additive "Zanzibar Carbon." The brand was later extended to a diverse range of products, from spices to ink thinner. Over the years, the company expanded

into the manufacture of a variety of food ingredients, as well as insecticides, cleaning agents, and a broad range of kitchen and office supplies. Sanitary products such as insecticides were an important secondary line of B. Heller & Co. offerings; many of these were marketed under the "\$1,000.00 Guaranteed" brand.

The company continues today as Heller Seasonings & Ingredients, a wholesale supplier based in Chicago.

Scope Note

The B. Heller & Co. Collection was assembled by Americana collectors Sally and Herb Loeb; Benjamin Heller was Sally Loeb's grandfather. The B. Heller & Co. Collection includes packaging samples, publicity material, business records and photographs spanning 1896-2003, with the bulk of materials concentrated in the 1890-1930s. The collection is divided into five series:

Series I: Products and Packaging, consists of artifacts and ephemera that were used to package or promote B. Heller & Co. products, as well as a small number of product samples. Items in this series include containers, boxes, product samples, container labels, pamphlets, circulars, and catalogs. Well-represented are the Heller brands "\$1000.00 Guaranteed" and "Zanzibar."

Series II: Company Publications, contains books and guides published by B. Heller & Co. Most are recipe books and other instructional guides. There are copies of several editions of *Secrets of Meat Curing and Sausage Making*.

Series III: Business Records, contains material related to product development, customer relations, and employees. This series includes correspondence, notes, corrected proofs of container labels and pamphlets, banquet programs, and payment slips. Of particular interest is a sample mailing for a "\$1000.00 Guaranteed" advertising campaign; the mailing shows how promotional items were marketed to Heller's target customers. There are also notebooks that contain chemical formulas and other product development documentation. This series also contains promotional material produced by two other Chicago companies, Seymour & Peck co., and Sidney Wanzer and Sons.

Series IV: Photographs, contains one photograph of an African woman and girl in traditional dress. The photograph may be related to the design of graphics for the "Zanzibar" brand, which used exoticized and sensationalized images of Africans. It also includes an album of photographs of B. Heller & Co. facilities; the album was originally intended to promote "Bull Meat Brand" products. Additional photographs of B. Heller & Co. facilities and personnel are found in the company's publications and pamphlets, and in secondary research material in Series V.

Series V: Historical Publications, contains secondary material on B. Heller & Co. There are multiple copies of a 2001 issue of Past Times: A Newsletter for Collectors of Popular and Antique Advertising, which focused on B. Heller & Co. Also included are copies of Well Seasoned: A Centennial History of Heller Seasonings & Ingredients, Inc., published in 1993. A copy of Auction News documenting the Wanzer Dairy is also included in this series.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/webexhibits/BHeller/>

Subject Headings

- Heller, Benjamin
- B. Heller & Co.
- Cleaning compounds
- Food additives
- Food industry and trade
- Immigrants -- America -- History
- Industrial design
- Heller

INVENTORY

Series I: Products and Packaging

Box 1

"Freeze-Em," wooden box, undated

Box 1

"Zanzibar Brand Bitter Almond Flavor," glass bottle in cardboard box, 1924

Box 2

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Moth Powder," metal can in cardboard box, two items, 1924

Box 2

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Silver and Chromium Polish," product in glass jar, undated

Box 2

"Bull-Meat-Brand Flour," cardboard box, 1923

Box 2

"Ozo Dry Cleaner," metal can, 1929

Box 2

"Ozo Dry Cleaner," cloth in paper envelope, undated

Box 3

"Extra-Strength Savory Jell-Jell," metal can, 1922

Box 3

"Zanzibar-Carbon Non-Sour Blue," wooden box, undated

Box 3

"Zanzibar-Carbon Laundry Blue," metal box, undated

Box 3

"Zanzibar Brand Ground Allspice," metal drum, 1927

Box 4

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Ant Syrup and Ant Traps," cardboard box containing glass ant traps and jar of ant poison, undated

Box 4

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Bed Bug Killer," metal can, 1938

Box 4

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Ant-Bane Poison," metal can, 1948

Box 4

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Ozo Waste Pipe Opener," metal can, 1930

Box 4

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Contento," cardboard box containing glass bottle, undated

Box 4

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Enamel Cleaner," metal can, 1936

Box 4

"C.I.L. Bed-Bug Powder," metal can, undated

Box 4

"Frapine," metal can, 1924

Box 4

"Heller's Deodorine," metal can, 1921

Box 4

"Heller's New Boiling Thermometer," glass thermometer in wooden case, undated

Box 4

"Heller's Royal Zest Poultry Seasoning," metal can, 1927

Box 4

"Vanheller Imitation Raspberry Flavor," cardboard box, 1920

Box 4

"Zanzibar Brand Pure Ground Nutmeg," metal can, undated

Box 4

"Zanzibar-Carbon Indelible Ink Eradicator and Thinner," glass bottle, undated

Box 5

Folder 1

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed," container labels and price list, 1932-1947

Box 5

Folder 2

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed Roach Killer," container label and pamphlet, 1931

Box 5

Folder 3

\$1000.00 Guaranteed Roach Killer," newspaper advertisement, 1915

Box 5

Folder 4

Container labels, undated

- "All-Purpose Blue"

- "Aniline Dye"
- "B. Heller & Co."
- "Bakers' Friend Imitation Vanilla Flavor"

Box 5

Folder 5

"Benalia: A Positive Headache Cure," circular, undated

Box 5

Folder 6

"Bull-Meat-Flour," pamphlets and circulars, undated

Box 5

Folder 7

Container labels and use directions, undated

- "Butter-Zest"
- "Candy Makers' Friend"
- "Ceylon Cola"

Box 5

Folder 8

"Cold-Storine," container label and pamphlet, undated

Box 5

Folder 9

"Colors, Extracts and Bakers' Specialties," price lists, 1910-1917

Box 5

Folder 10

"Cream Thickener," pamphlets, circulars and product sample in paper envelope, undated

Box 5

Folder 11

Container labels and pamphlets, undated

- "Creozone"
- "Dr. Heller's Bug Killer"
- "Dr. Heller's Lice Killer"
- "Dr. Heller's Magnetic Sweeping Fluid"
- "Dr. Heller's Poultry Tonic"
- "Dr. Heller's Sanitary Fluid"
- "Eagle Brand Milk and Cheese Color"

Box 5

Folder 12

"Fancy Pastry," container labels, 1923-1936

Box 5

Folder 13

"Formaldehyde," container label, undated

Box 5

Folder 14

"Freeze-Em," container labels and pamphlets, 1901-1927

Box 5

Folder 15

"Freezine," pamphlets and circulars, circa 1899

Box 5

Folder 16

"French-Pastry Flavoring," container label, undated

Box 5

Folder 17

"Grocers Sundries," price list, undated

Box 5

Folder 18

Pamphlet, postcards and circulars, undated

- "Heller Fire Extinguisher"
- "Heller's Puddings"
- "Hog Scald"

Box 5

Folder 19

"Ice-Berg," pamphlets and container labels, circa 1937

Box 5

Folder 20

"I.C.M. Special Pure Vanilla Extract," pamphlet and container label, undated

Box 5

Folder 21

Container labels and pamphlets, circa 1890s-1936

- "Jell-Jell Gelatin Dessert"
- "Konservirungs Salz"
- "Lard Bleacher"
- "Lard Purifier"

Box 5

Folder 22

"Malaboza Brand," container labels, 1922

Box 5

Folder 23

"Malaboza Brand," container labels, 1922

Box 5

Folder 24

"Meloine: The Wonderful Ice Cream Improver," pamphlets and price list, 1921

Box 5

Folder 25

Circulars, pamphlet, container labels and postcard, circa 1903-1937

- "Mello-Freeze"
- "Mercerine"
- "Minute Gelatine"
- "Ozo"
- "Prize Quality Hamburger Style Patty Maker"
- "Prize Quality Mock Chicken Leg Dressing"
- "Prepared-Dry-Pickle"
- "Punchola Beverage Base"

Box 5

Folder 26

"Pure Food Products for Packers, Butchers and Sausage Makers," price list, undated

Box 5

Folder 27

"Royal Extract," container labels, undated

Box 5

Folder 28

"Royal Zest," container labels, undated

Box 5

Folder 29

"Royal Zest Cocoa," metal label, undated

Box 5

Folder 30

"Rudolf-Gebhard's Berliner Konservierungs Salze," pamphlets, undated

Box 5

Folder 31

"Salesmen's Confidential Pricelists," 1899-1917

Box 5

Folder 32

Sanitary supplies catalog and price list, undated

Box 5

Folder 33

Pamphlets and container labels, undated

- "Scale Solvent"
- "Snow"
- "Standard 100 Degree Hydrometer"
- "Stock Tonic"

Box 5

Folder 34

"Supplies for Confectioners, Bakers, Butchers, Laundries and Ice Cream Makers," price list, 1921

Box 5

Folder 35

"Thermometers for Packing-House Use," price list, 1896

Box 5

Folder 36

Container labels, circulars and pamphlets, circa 1902

- "Urinoid Tablets"
- "Vacuum Garlic"
- "White Berliner Konservierungs-Salze"

Box 5

Folder 37

"Vanheller Flavoring," container labels and advertising cuts, undated

Box 5

Folder 38

"Zanzibar-Brand," container labels, 1924

Box 5

Folder 39

"Zanzibar-Brand," container labels, 1924

Box 5

Folder 40

"Zanzibar-Brand," container labels, 1924

Box 5

Folder 41

"Zanzibar-Brand," container labels, 1924

Box 5

Folder 42

"Zanzibar-Brand Crushed Fruits and Syrups," pamphlet, undated

Box 5

Folder 43

"Zanzibar-Carbon," container labels, pamphlets and circulars, undated

Box 5

Folder 44

"Zanzibar Fly Chaser," circular, undated

Series II: Company Publications

Box 5

Folder 45

Bottler's Guide, 1908

Box 5

Folder 46

Heller's Guide for Ice Cream Makers, 1918

Box 6

Folder 1

The History of Ice Cream, 1921

Box 6

Folder 2

Ice Cream Makers Guide, 1909

Box 6

Folder 3

Our Family Medical Adviser, undated

Box 6

Folder 4

Recipes for Preparing Meat Loaves, 1925

Box 6

Folder 5

The Scientific Meat Industry, 1904-1905

Box 6

Folder 6

Secrets of Meat Curing and Sausage Making, 1904

Box 6

Folder 7

Secrets of Meat Curing and Sausage Making, 3rd edition, 1916

Box 6

Folder 8

Secrets of Meat Curing and Sausage Making, 4th edition, 1918

Box 6

Folder 9

Secrets of Meat Curing and Sausage Making, 7th edition, 1928

Box 6

Folder 10

Secrets of Meat Curing and Sausage Making, 8th edition, 1929

Box 6

Folder 11

Success with Meat, 1915, 1928

Series III: Business Records

Box 6

Folder 12

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed" advertising campaign mailing sample, 1915

Box 6

Folder 13

"\$1000.00 Guaranteed," correspondence with Yopp Seed Company, 1928

Box 6

Folder 14

"Zanzibar Carbon Laundry Blue," correspondence with American Laundry, 1909

Box 6

Folder 15

Pamphlet and container sample proofs, circa 1920s

- "\$1000.00 Guaranteed Ant-Bane"
- "Asepticine"
- "Secrets of Easy and Sure Results"

Box 7

Folder 1

Product development, notebook, circa 1919

Box 7

Folder 2

Product development, notebook, undated

Box 7

Folder 3

Customer contact information, notebook, undated

Box 7

Folder 4

Salesmen's banquets, programs, 1914, 1916

Box 7

Folder 5

Payments slips, undated

Box 7

Folder 6

Seymour & Peck Co., price list, and Sidney Wanzer and Sons, pamphlet, undated

Series IV: Photographs

Box 8

Folder 1

African woman and girl, undated

Box 8

Folder 2

"Bull Meat Brand Binder," album, undated

Series V: Historical Publications

Box 8

Folder 3

Past Times: A Newsletter for Collectors of Popular and Antique Advertising, 2001

Box 8

Folder 4

Well Seasoned: A Centennial History of Heller Seasonings & Ingredients, Inc., 1993

Box 8

Folder 5

Auction News, 1983