

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

NAME OF COLLECTION: **ROBERT HARPER AND COMPANY LTD**

ACCESSION NO: **82/104, 89/110**

CATEGORY: Business, organisations
ACTIVITY: Wholesale & Manufacturing Grocers

DATE RANGE: 1896 - 1982

SIZE OF COLLECTION: 85 cm

DATE OF TRANSFER: Dec 1992, 29 Aug 1989

HISTORICAL NOTE: Established in 1865 at Flinders Lane East, Melbourne by Robert Harper who was later joined by his brothers William and later John. The partnership acquired the premises and business of the Oriental Rice Mill Company and subsequently the mills of W Degrave & Co. In 1888 the company transferred its operations from the city to Port Melbourne. Registered as Robert Harper and Company Limited in Victoria 23 Dec 1896. Converted to a public company 1914[?]. The company manufactured starch and a wide range of food products including breakfast cereals and oatmeal, lentils, deserts, spices and bird seed and stock food. The company acquired the business of Malties Pty Ltd in Feb 1955. It operated branch factories in Sydney (1877), Adelaide (1882), Brisbane (1882), and Fremantle (1895). Depots were established at Bendigo, Ballarat, Rockhampton, Townsville & Toowoomba.
The whole of the ordinary share capital of the company was acquired by Ralston Purina Company of St Louis, USA in 1962 and of the preference shares in 1966.

DESCRIPTION: Minutes of meetings, share records, annual reports and balance sheets, grain purchase and stock ledgers, building plans, photographs, memorabilia.

FORM: Plans, photographs, objects

RELATED COLLECTIONS: Lewis Orr & Gibson

ACCESS CONDITIONS: Open

LISTED BY: T J Hart
DATE: 30 March, 2001

Box No.	Series Number	Description
	1	Company Documents
1	1/1	Memorandum and Articles of Association 23 Dec 1896. Jul 1923 print with amendments xerographic copy
1	1/2	Memorandum and Articles of Association adopted 19 Nov 1981
1	1/3	Certificate of Registration as a Foreign Company in Western Australia 31 May 1948
1	1/4	Return by Foreign Company incorporated outside Western Australia Particulars of Directors 27 May 1948 and 8 Jul 1968
	2	Share Register
1	2/1	Share Register 2 Apr 1897 - 5 Dec 1913
	3	Minutes
1	3/1	Minutes of General meetings Rough Minute Book 11 Aug 1897 - 19 Sep 1916
1	3/2	Directors' Minute Book 23 Dec 1896 - 5 Dec 1913
1	3/3	Liquidation of Ralston Co of Australia Miscellaneous papers re preference shares, balance sheets, minutes of directors in which "clean up" of Ralston is mentioned. 23 Jun 1966 - 4 May 1971
	4	Annual Reports and Balance Sheets
1	4/1	Annual Report and Balance Sheet [Acc 82/104] 31 Mar 1916 - 31 Mar 1948 lacks 1925
1	4/2	Annual Report and Balance Sheet 31 Mar 1949 - 31 Aug 1965,
1	4/3	Memoranda to Shareholders [Acc 82/104] 20 Feb 1920 - 1 Jun 1948 Interfiled with series 1
	5	Insurance
1	5/1	Proposal for insurance, WA 1939
	6	Correspondence
1	6/1	Letter from A H Scott (company's unofficial cartoonist) 29 Jun 1952 Reminiscing and enclosing pen and ink cartoons 1905-1906
1	6/2	Correspondence, Aubrey Luce re job application 4- 17 Dec 1937
1	6/3	Miscellaneous Internal Mema 1929-1979 Several memorandums including re-organisation of Marketing Department (1978)

Box No.	Series Number	Description
	7	Accounting Records
1	7/1	Salaries and Wages Register 7 Jan 1927 - 16 May 1930
1	7/2	Grain Purchase Book 21 Feb 1936 - 9 Mar 1953 Peas, Maize, Wheat, Barley, Oats
2	7/3	Grain Purchase Book 9 Mar 1953 - 7 Aug 1970 Peas, Maize, Wheat, Barley, Oats
2	7/4	Grain Stock Book 8 Jan 1947 - 30 Dec 1964 Oats, Barley, Peas
2	7/5	Grain Stock Book 20 Jun 1960 - 20 Aug 1982 Oats, Barley, Peas
2	7/6	Prices Quoted on Various Products 1 Jan 1958 - 6 Apr 1984 Lentils and spices
	8	Personnel
2	8/1	Various Pension Fund Plans, etc 1949 - 1975 Staff superannuation scheme- Deed and Rules, 1953 Trust deed, 1964 Descriptive booklet nd.
2	8/2	National Sales Conference Brochure 11-16 Oct 1981 and Company Banquet menu 15 Oct 1981
2		Personnel Training
2	8/3	Purchasing Department Procedures
2	8/4	Training for Sales Staff includes descriptions of various products
3	8/5	Internal Telephone Directory 1957 - 1982
		Staff Newsletter
3	8/6	“Harp-on” Jun 1979 (One copy only)
	9	Land Titles
3	9/1	Lease and transfer of land Phillimore St, Perth 1912 - 1922 xerographic copies
	10	Trade Marks and Patents
3	10/1	Trade Mark Registration Certificates 18 Sep 1906 - 18 Sep 1948 Trade mark registrations and renewals for various products
3	10/2	Patent Specification 21 Mar 1950 Process and production of a rice product

- 3 **11 History of the Company**
11/1 “The Great Australian Industries - Robert Harper & Co Pty Ltd
1913, ms & ts
Outline history of the business and its products.
- 3 **12 Marketing Material**
12/1 Location Book of Artwork etc. for Labels, Cartons etc.
1951 - 1979
- 3 12/2 “Chow” and Spices Directory
Jan 1975
Descriptions of dog foods, spices, lentils and other grocery items
- 3 12/3 “Facts worth thinking about” nd
- 3 12/4 “Our Business Premises” nd
- 3 12/5 “Herlock Solmes - a detective story”, 10pp pamphlet in which Solmes
discusses ‘Silver Star Starch’ and ‘Empire Cocoa’. nd
- 3 12/6 “Reliable Recipes for Using Harper’s Empire Brand Self Raising Flour” nd
- 3 12/7 “Starch Trade Slanders Refuted” nd
- 3 12/8 “List of Goods Sold & Manufactured by Robert Harper & Co Pty Ltd” nd.
(with ink amendments)
- 3 12/9 “List of Goods Sold & Manufactured by Robert Harper & Co Pty Ltd” 1 Jul
1912
- 3 12/10 “The Great Empire Puzzle Mystery” Grand prize competition sponsored by
Empire Cocoa. Pre 1914
- 3 12/11 “Birds of Paradise and Bower Birds Album” Collector album published for
40 cards by Malties. Nd (A previous album was issued for collector cards of
cars.)
- 3 12/12 13 of a set of 14 Swap Cards of Australian war ships issued by “Easi-Oats”
nd
- 3 12/13 1980s reproduction in postcard size of “Silver Star Starch” poster
- 3 **13 Code Books**
13/1 Private Codes
1918 - 1982
- 3 **14 Plans of Premises**
14/1 Blueprints and drawings for Port Melbourne factory
1920 - 1959
(Includes various layout for processing plant)
- 4 **15 Stationery**
4 Various forms used
- 4 **16 Ralston Purina Company**
4 Annual Report 1981
Purina Kennel News 1982, Vol 82 No 1
R P Magazine 1981 No 4
- 4 **17 Melbourne Corn Exchange**
4 17/1 Rules 1946 - 1975
4 17/2 List of members
1934 - 1973
- 4 **18 National Packaging Association**
4 18/1 Constitution
c1965
- 4 **19 Articles re Harper**
4 “The Right to a Fair and Reasonable Wage”
Poor quality Photostat copy from ‘Australia’s Heritage’. Nd
“A Look at Now from Then - Sugar and Starch, then all things nice”. *The*

Emerald Hill, Sandridge and St Kilda Times, 29 Jun 1989

Extract re Robert Harper & Co Copy of ts from *Aldine's History of Queensland*, 1888. Xerographic copy of ts

- 20 Illustrations**
- BWP 9000 20/1 Fremantle building with staff
Building on cnr of Phillimore & Pakenham Streets, Fremantle, WA before fire destroyed the building on 5 May 1922. Staff left to right : "Sonny" Lutmann (clerk), Arthur Dendy (traveller), A G Knox (manager), Jack Liliey (traveller), Jack Roane (clerk), ? (office boy), W J Webb (store boy), Jack W[est]on [name illeg] (storeman), Malcolm Livingstone (store foreman)
19 x 24 cm
- BWP 9009 20/2 Mills & Factory: Beach Street, Port Melbourne
4 x 11 cm screen printed image
- BWP 9002 20/3 Port Melbourne No 1 Factory 133 Rouse St, Port Melbourne - Left Entrance
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9003 20/4 Port Melbourne No 1 Factory 133 Rouse St, Port Melbourne - Weighbridge
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9004 20/5 Port Melbourne No 1 Factory 133 Rouse St, Port Melbourne - Right Entrance
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9005 20/6 Oatmill (backed onto Beach St, Port Melbourne)
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9006 20/7 Fremantle Branch, cnr Phillimore & Pakenham Sts
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9007 20/8 Melbourne branch from the wharf
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9008 20/9 Ballaarat Depot
1950
9 x 13 cm
- BWP 9001 20/10 Fremantle Building following fire
May 1922
Photographer: Nixon, Fremantle
15 x 21 cm
- OSBA/ 61 20/11 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922
Photographer: Nixon, Fremantle
15 x 21 cm
- OSBA/ 61 20/12 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922
Site cleared for new building
20 Nov 1922
6.5 x 10.5 cm
- OSBA/ 61 20/13 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922
Progress of Building
23 Jan 1923
6.5 x 20.5 cm
- OSBA/ 20/14 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922

- 62 Progress practically stopped owing to girders not being available, delay being caused by engineer's strike
23 Mar 1923
6.5 x 11 cm
- OSBA/ 20/15 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922
62 Contractors received first deliveries of girders after engineers strike
9 Apr 1923
6.5 x 11 cm
- OSBA/ 20/16 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922
62 Position of Contract on 20 July 1923
20 Jul 1923
6.5 x 11 cm
- OSBA/ 20/17 Old Buildings Phillimore Street, Fremantle Destroyed by Fire May 5th, 1922
62 Position on 24 September 1923 [The building was occupied 3 November 1923]
24 Sep 1923
6.5 x 11 cm
- BWP 20/18 [Laneway beside the new building, Phillimore Street]
9014 No date
20 x 16 cm [corners torn]
- BWP 20/19 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9010 Tractors and Scrapers, Area "B" No 1 Cut Looking N/E. No 1 of 8
Jan 1950
13 x 17 cm
- BWP 20/20 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9011 Taken from the same position as 20/19. No 2 of 8
Feb 1950
13 x 17 cm
- BWP 20/21 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9015 Double header Diesel Electric Loco's - aggregating 3,000HP - hauling the first trip of 1,300 ton on the 1 in 48 grade section of the road to Ballarat. Maddingley Coal Handling Plant in foreground, Bacchus Marsh township in middle distance, the chimney stacks are those of the Lifeguard Milk Company. No 3 of 8
20 Aug 1952
20 x 25.5 cm
- BWP 20/22 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9016 No 2 Cut. View looking North from main entrance road. Excavator in right hand distance is back filling overburden. Overburden in background 65' ; Coal to water 100'. No 4 of 8
1 Oct 1952
20 x 25.5 cm
- BWP 20/23 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9017 Company's Fleet of 24 Thornycroft Trucks at Coal Handling Plant. View to the North East overlooking Bacchus marsh township in the middle distance; and the Railway Station on the extreme right of the picture. No 5 of 8
1 Oct 1952
20 x 25.5 cm
- BWP 20/24 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9018 [Panoramic View of the Open Cut Mine comprising photograph nos 6, 7 & 8 of 8
1952

- Photographer: Laurie Richards
20 x 25.5 cm
- BWP 20/25 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9020 [Panoramic View of the Open Cut Mine comprising photograph nos 6, 7 & 8 of 8
1952
Photographer: Laurie Richards
20 x 25.5 cm
- BWP 20/26 Maddingley Brown Coal Deposits, Bacchus Marsh, Vic
9021 [Panoramic View of the Open Cut Mine comprising photograph nos 6, 7 & 8 of 8]
1952
Photographer: Laurie Richards
20 x 25.5 cm
- 4 20/27 [Harper family group]
xerographic copy with annotation
pre 1919
- 4 20/28 [Aerial view of Harper's factory, Port Melbourne from the south east]
xerographic copy
No date
- 4 20/29 [Aerial view of Harper's factory, Port Melbourne from the north east]
xerographic copy
No date
- 4 **21 Memorabilia**
- Packaging materials**
- 4 21/1 Silver Star Starch - 56 lbs
Printed Hessian Bag 92 x 43 cm
- 4 21/2 Unpolished Pearl Rice
Printed Hessian Bag 64 x 46 cm
- 4 21/3 Star Brand Calf Food 28 lbs
Printed Calico Bag 70 x 36 cm
- 4 21/4 Avena Rolled Oats 7 lbs
Printed Calico Bag 46 x 28 cm
- 4 21/5 Avena Rolled Oats 2kg
Printed paper bag 36 x15 x 7.5 cm
- 4 21/6 Empire Plain Flour 25 lbs
printed Calico Bag 55 x 36 cm
- Mail Bags**
- 4 21/7 Calico Mail Bags addressed to Robert Harper & Co Ltd from Oceanic,
Colombo, Ceylon/Sri Lanka (One franked 1982) about 20 x 29 cm
- 4 21/8 Small collection of business cards collected by Ken Lloyd. c1978-1980
- 4 21/9 The First Dog Biscuit made by Harpers but not issued. Nd
- 22 Miscellaneous Non-Company Material**
- 4 Includes
Sample: Schumacher Mill Furnishing Works Pty Ltd. Genuine Swiss Silk
Bolting Cloth. Milling Silk Samples and Price List. 1 Jul 1929
Sample: Andrew Jack, Dyson & Co Pty Ltd.. Writing papers, etc
Comparative Table for Prof. E Brauer's Grain Tester. Nd
Grain Sieve. Jabez Burns & Sons New York, 1864 - 1914, Souvenir Sieve
metal case with various sizes of sieve plate

END

