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Wolverine Mechanical Toys: A Collector's Journal

By Terry Mowrey

Tarentum, Pa.: Word Association Publishers, 2013

186 pps., 400+ illustrations

\$69.95, \$49.95

In stores or at www.tintypetoys.com

Reviewed by Anne Madarasz, Museum Division Director

As a center for the manufacture of metals, especially steel, in the late 19th and 20th centuries, this region attracted or supported many ancillary industries. *Wolverine Mechanical Toys: A Collector's Journal* tells the sometimes surprising story of one of those companies—the Wolverine Supply & Mfg. Co., later known as the Wolverine Toy Co., and its founder Benjamin Bain. Originally a manufacturer of household goods, the company also designed, produced, and repaired tools and dies for stamped sheet metal parts for other firms. Bankruptcy at the Sand Toy Co. of Pittsburgh launched Wolverine (who inherited its dies and patents) in the toy business, an enterprise it would continue on the North Side at 1212 Western Avenue until 1971.



Kitchen cabinet and box, made by Wolverine Toy Co., 1964. Wolverine produced a line of toy appliances that illustrate the changes in consumer tastes and lifestyles. They also served as instructional tools that taught socially acceptable behavior or reinforced gender roles.

HHC Collections, gift of Spang & Co., 98.17.252. Photo by Paula Andras.

