Hat Making
(slide - animal fur and felt making)
(image of plant layout)
every aspect of hat production was done at plant
contrast to contemporary)
Felt as Hat material
- 2000 years older than woven fabric
- made from animal fur
(will show factory plans and diagram of production process)
“carroting”
chemical applied to fur
before removal from skin
After removal from skins, fur is shrunk through repeated immersion in hot water, then air dried and rolled into mats ready for “sizing”
(distribution of labor force and gender roles in factory)
Life at The Stetson factory
INDENTURE

Daniel Petrella

Seizing Department

Date: Oct 21st 1916

Expires: Dec 28th 1919

Residence: 2606 E. Cambria

This Indenture Witnesseth,

That David Petrella, born Feb 12th 1876

through the medium of his Agent and friend

bought for him and by his agents, David Petrella, his own free will and accord,

that he will be apprenticed to the John H. Stockton Company of Philadelphia, to learn the art, trade and mystery of Folk Art Seizing

and will observe the statutes and regulations of the John H. Stockton Company

for and during the full and term of his apprenticeship, which will be the

28th of December 1919.

The said Master hereby waives the right to terminate this agreement, if said Apprentice shall refuse to obey his proper commands, or shall be found physically unable to attend to his work. During all which time the said Apprentice shall mature and promise that he will serve his Master faithfully, keep these secret and obey their lawful commands, that he will do them no damage, nor use it done by others without giving them notice thereof; that he will not waste their goods, nor lend them unluckily; that he will not contract any engagement within the said term; that he will not play at cards, dices or any other unlawful game, wherein his Masters may be injured; that he will neither buy nor sell, with his own goods nor the goods of others, without license from his Master and that he will not alın himself to or night from his Masters' service without their leave, nor leave the house, tavern or play house, nor in any thing believe himself as a faithful Apprentice with the exception of the said term. He shall observe in and abide by all rules and regulations hereunto before and hereby adopted by his Masters for the government of their Apprentices. And the said Masters on their part do covenants and promise, that they will not use theire Apprentices in such or cause to be wrongfully or unnecessarily, the said Apprentice in the art, trade or mystery of Folk Art Seizing

and shall receive as compensation, when working, twelve dollars per week.

This agreement being made to and signed by the said John H. Stockton Company.

In Witness Whereof, the said John H. Stockton Company has hereunto affixed their Seal and indented parties and these indented parties.

The undersigned,

Dated: December 28th 1919

Leonard Petrella

Frank Petrella

Tacher

Dated: March 11 1919

1217 S. Belgrade St

Address

Address

Seizing Department

Seizing Department

INDENTURE

Leonard Petrella

Seizing Department

Address: 1217 S. Belgrade St

Seizing Department

INDENTURED BY

Frank Petrella

Address: 1217 S. Belgrade St

Tacher

Dated: March 11-1919

Expire: Jan 18th 1919

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Introducing the New
STETSON RE-ENFORCED EDGE

THE John B. Stetson Company has introduced a new type of edge which may be obtained in their felt hats priced at $10 and higher, under the name of the Stetson Re-enforced Edge. Not only the edge, but the process and machinery for producing it, involve a radical departure from past methods of hat making, and patents covering both machinery and process have been applied for.

The Stetson Re-enforced Edge is an edge of felt which is actually thicker than the remainder of the brim—but two separate thicknesses felted together, as has been the case with similar edges of this type in the past, is an integral part of the brim and is made in the original process of forming the hat. There is no stitching or artificial means of holding it together. It adds strength and lasting beauty of line to the brim.

Our President, Mr. McCausland, conceived the idea that a re-enforced edge could be made without folding the edge of the hat after it has been formed. With the assistance of department heads and mechanics the necessary equipment was created and process was developed. The new process presents many possibilities in felt hat construction and styling. It is mechanically unanswerable. The Re-enforced Edge represents the first application of this new principle, and, as its name implies, furnishes a hat which, without stiff or binding, has the stability and dressiness of hats so treated.
(image of Stetson hospital)
Stetson goes bust
Decline of the Stetson Factory

1915-1920 - Stetson at peak production

Factory expands to 25 buildings on 9 acres, employs 5000, produces 3,000,000 hats a year

1930’s - Great Depression

1940 - 45 WWII (industrial production to war effort)

1950’s hat wearing becomes an option

1960 - President Kennedy elected
(Truman and Eisenhower wore hats)
(JFK did not wear a hat)
(Stetson closes 1971, demolished 1979)
(Will have outlines of factor)
(Will have outlines of factory area and walking route for field exercise)
(Will have outlines of factory area and walking route for field exercise)
(Next few slides will juxtapose contemporary images of [mostly vacant] site, with historic photographs of factory complex)