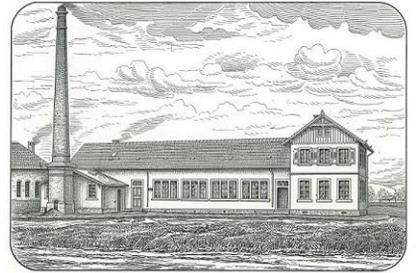


THE HISTORY OF **KROMER**

SINCE 1868



COMPANY HISTORY **KROMER**

The English state theorist of the Enlightenment, Thomas Hobbes, describes the "original state" of man as a "war of all against all". If his theory that human behavior is purely selfish by nature was later decisively rejected, it must nevertheless be borne in mind that he has pointed out an essential feature of man here. Man's striving for security for property and life gave rise to the desire for locks to protect himself and his property.

Centuries, yes one can say millennia of development - wooden locking devices were already known in ancient Egypt, later they were always made better from metal - have contributed to the current state of the art in this field. The development is not complete, it is constantly progressing.

The lock was made by hand until around the middle of the 19th century. Each individual piece received its own security features and a special appearance. Many security locks from ancient times, especially the Gothic and the Renaissance, have not only a technical, but also an artistic value. With the rapid advancement of civilization, the desire for security also increased. In the 19th century the security locks were mass-produced and the first lock factories were built.

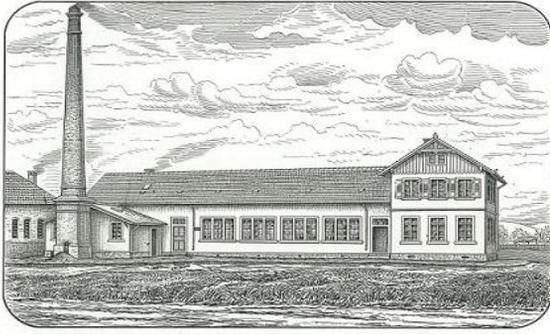


Theodor Kromer

It was necessary to achieve great variation possibilities for the only lock type. Efforts were made to create a lock that could be described as ununlockable. In England and Italy, locks were developed almost simultaneously that contained new types of brackets to achieve this goal. The American Hobbs succeeded in unlocking these locks at the lock exhibition in Chicago in 1851 using a special method he had invented, so that new improvements were necessary to render this "hobb unlocking system" ineffective.

The trader Carl Kromer and his brother Theodor founded a company in Neustadt in the Black Forest in 1868. That dealt with devices for the watch industry and the manufacture of security locks. The two brothers came from a respected trading family.

Theodor Kromer was born on October 21, 1839 in Neustadt. A mechanic by trade, he gained special knowledge in the castle area in North America and England. His experience and ideas gave the young company groundbreaking impulses.



The owners moved their business to the more conveniently located city of Freiburg (Breisgau) in 1872. Carl Kromer died in 1874.



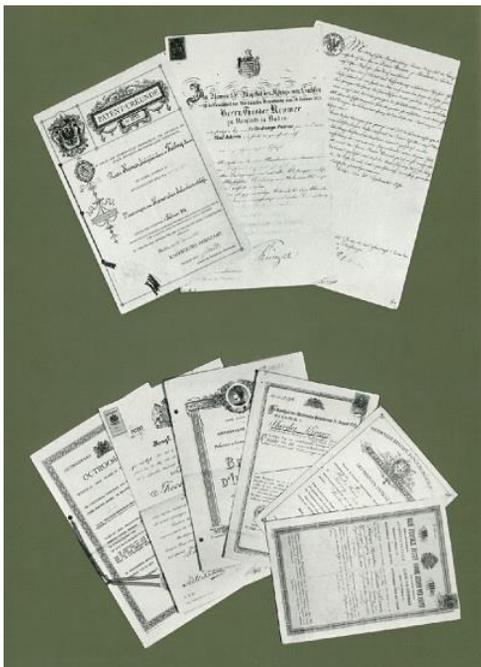
Before 1872 the company was transformed into "Theodor and Cie".

In 1878 the entries in the Freiburg court register show the Schloss Fabrik as the "Brothers Kromer" with owner Theodor Kromer and his brother Wilhelm.

Wilhelm Kromer also dealt with the manufacture of screw bung. He left the company in 1889, making Theodor Kromer the sole owner.

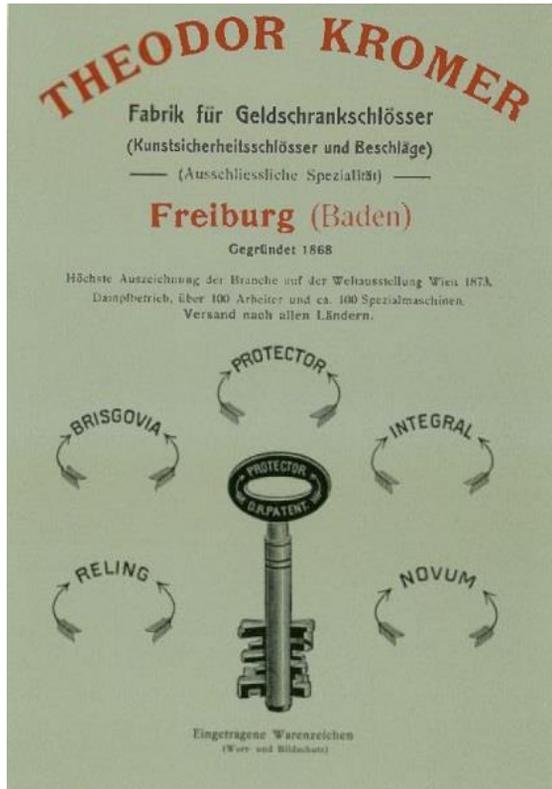
The designations "patent cash register lock factory" and "factory for safe locks" (artificial security locks and fittings) indicate the character of the products.

A basic requirement for the economic existence and the progress of the company has always been the redesign and further development of products which had to show considerable progress compared to the existing ones. Theodor Kromer endeavored to create locks that were characterized by the following properties: Unbreakable - compulsory function, i.e. as springless as possible to achieve maximum security.



He was granted numerous patents for his inventions at home and abroad.

The idea of the double-bit key, which allowed the construction of particularly secure locks, brought great success. Each individual lock type manufactured in-house at Kromer was given a brand name, of which the locks known under the names "Novum" and "Protector" are still being manufactured in large numbers. By 1914 the company developed into a company known all over the world.



The industry's highest award
at the World Exhibition in
Vienna in 1873

The climb was not without difficulty. On several occasions, Theodor Kromer resolutely turned against traditional but no longer valid terms.

An example of this is the fight against the "Bramah" or "Bramah Chubb" lock. In one of his first catalogs he published e.g. a comparison of these two locks with his "Protector" lock to illustrate the difference in quality – with success.

During and after the First World War, the political tension had a significant impact on international relations and the economic potential of the Kromer house. A major setback for the company. Theodor Kromer, a pioneer in the field of the lock industry, died in 1928, almost 90 years old, without direct descendants.

The new time

Although there were great economic difficulties in those days, Ing. Otto Sellin, born on 3rd of October 1890 in Schramberg, the Theodor Kromer company acquired in April 1929 and continued after conversion into a GmbH in the spirit of the founder.



Otto Sellin



Alfons Speck

Alfons Speck became authorized signatory and co-owner in 1929.

He served the company well until his retirement in 1953.

Otto Sellin succeeded in consolidating and expanding the economic power and importance of the company, which has now been in existence for sixty years. He not only developed the design of the "Protector" locks for maximum security, but also expanded the range of safe locks by manufacturing combination locks and time locks. Security locks for buildings - as a specialty the "Supra" model with asymmetrical locking mechanism - and electric door openers were added to the production; wood grinding machines and spring balancers (weight balancers) followed.

A large number of domestic and foreign patents were granted to protect the inventions. The expansion of the plant was continuously promoted in terms of both construction and production technology. In 1936 the GmbH was transformed into a limited partnership.

Due to the uninterrupted expansion of the production program, the spatial conditions were no longer sufficient after a few years, which is why a branch factory was set up in Todtnau (Black Forest) in 1939.

In 1940 Karl Steinsiek, Dipl. Ing., was given management of the branch. The efforts to further develop the company were successful.

The company, which was mainly run as a family company, hoped for future management by the son of Otto Sellin, Hartmut Sellin, and the daughter Ingeborg Sellin.

Hartmut Sellin unfortunately died in Russia in 1943 at the age of 19.



Hartmut Sellin



Ingeborg Sellin

In a bomb attack on November 27, 1944, the main plant in Freiburg was destroyed by more than 90%. The clean-up work, which was started the day after the destruction under the direction of Ing. Otto Sellin, testifies to the tenacity and creative power of the company.



After the war, the facilities of the Todtnau branch were dismantled - the rest of valuable facilities were also confiscated in Freiburg. It wasn't until 1949 that the entrepreneurial spirit was able to develop freely again due to the consequences of the war.



As was the case after the end of the First World War, major difficulties had to be overcome in close cooperation between the management and the workforce. Through tough little work business connections at home and abroad could be revived and re-established. It was again possible to supply customers with Kromer's well-known quality products.

Otto Sellin was particularly keen to offer his employees social facilities. A support fund was founded, which is financed exclusively by the company. Pensioners are regularly granted a monthly pension from this. In addition, employees receive financial support in special emergencies. Employees have the opportunity to participate in the company's economic return through fixed-interest savings. The "Otto Sellin Housing Association" created affordable apartments for employees. The site and building of the Todtnau branch were sold in 1951. The proceeds were used to rebuild the Freiburg plant.

In 1953, the company became the sole owner of the Sellin family by taking over the business shares of the retired Alfons Speck. Completely new paths were broken in the rebuilding. The total usable area of the plant has been increased to over 7.000 square meters. Around 250 people are currently employed.

Modern machines and equipment contribute to efficient production.

The factory program has been expanded. That the entire industry needs locks and fittings can be offered to the safe industry. The tried-and-true tradition is of particular concern to the management and their employees.

Some of the pictures on the following pages may give an impression of the company's status after 100 years, despite many setbacks...



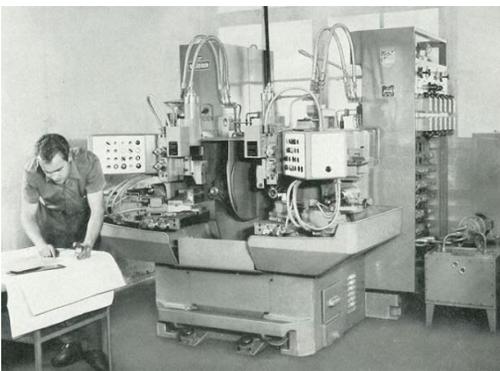
1917:

Design an development of spring balancer and zero gravity balancer in the former MM class with up to 60 kg load capacity. The production technology allowed only constructions made of solid castings or steel parts.



1924:

The use of spring balancer further increased the productivity through improved ergonomics at workplace.



1956:

Two-spindle automatic lathe for machining parts with special surface quality and accuracy, electro-hydraulic program-controlled.



1956:

Partial view of an assembly department at the Kromer factory.

The importance and potential of the spring balances in production was constantly increasing. That's why the company more and more focused on further optimizations of their spring balancer:



From 1972 – 1976:

Complete modernization of all Kromer spring balancer. By using modern plastics, the weight of the devices could be partially reduced by more than 60%.

1996:

Patent submission of the world's only high-security double-cable balancer. By using a second cable, the crash of the load can be reverted without external accessories in the event of a possible breakage of the suspended cable. The market launch of the new product took place one year later.



2000:

Another important milestone in the company's history was the takeover of the handling technology division by the international operating Carl Stahl Group with over 1.800 employee and 70 locations worldwide.



2011:

The company moved into a new building in Gottenheim near Freiburg im Breisgau. In the course of this, investments were made in additional new machines in order to raise the production of spring balancers to a new level.

2017:

Kromer celebrates 100 years of producing spring balancers.



Today:

Even if Kromer doesn't produce security locks anymore, the values and the quality thinking have been maintained until today. Kromer is producing sustainable, long-lasting products in regard to their customers and also to the environment.

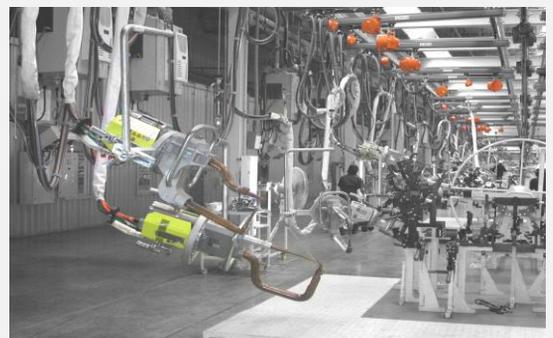
Today, Kromer is the global quality leader in the field of spring balancer manufacturing.

Customers from all over the world are using Kromer spring balancers to make their workplaces in assembly and production more ergonomic and safe.



2017:

Kromer balancer holding heavy special construction in assembly up to 300 kg.



2018:

Car assembly plan: Welding line with Kromer Balancer.

Kromer today

Industrial Equipment

-
For more ergonomic
at workplace

Carl Stahl KROMER I N D U S T R Y



Sport Equipment

-
Training with spring
technology

Carl Stahl KROMER S P O R T S



Sun Protection

-
Spring construction
for big sun sails

Carl Stahl KROMER L I V I N G



Kromer today

With 32 employees, Carl Stahl Kromer GmbH produces over 60,000 devices annually and is in the production facilities of many industries such as e.g. listed in the automotive industry and its suppliers, meat processing, food industry, electrical or in the furniture industry as preferred production equipment or even strictly prescribed.

The flexibility to respond to customer requests and the distinctive international structure of this company has not only helped to overcome small and large crises, but also to always be one step ahead of the competition.

Date 12/2019:

Carl Stahl Kromer GmbH

CEO: Thomas Steinle

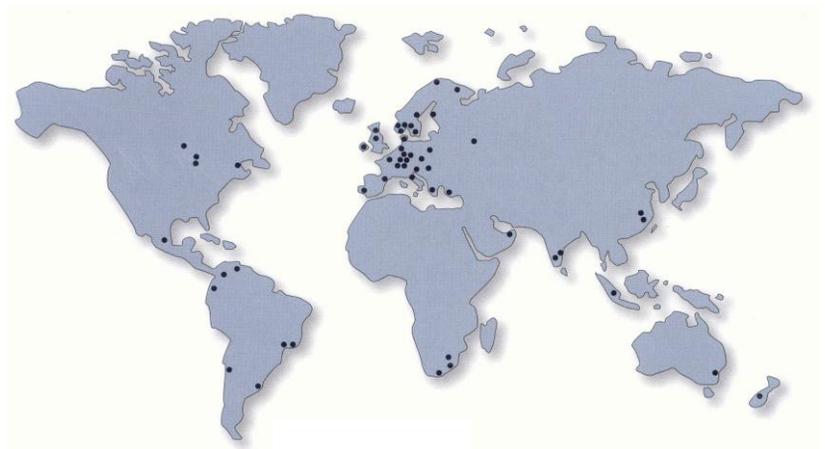
Company Locations:

Neustadt 1867/68,
since 1872 in Freiburg,
since 1979 in Umkirch,
Since 05/2001 in Freiburg,
Since 05/2011 in Gottenheim

Employee:

Carl Stahl Group: ~ 1.800

Carl Stahl Kromer: 33



• word wide partnerships



Carl Stahl

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