



OBJECT ID	2011.7.138
OBJECT NAME	Box
OBJECT COLLECTION	Alex's Candy Shop (is part of)
DATE CREATED	1920 – 1940
MATERIAL	Brass; Cardboard; Wood
OBJECT ENTITIES	Rassogianis/Franks families, By (owned by) Franks, Rassogianis; (is related to)

### OBJECT DESCRIPTION

This box is made of wood and has been carved in the shape of a heart. The entire exterior has been stained to make it more durable and long lasting. On the lid of the box, the grain of the wood runs vertically but on the sides of the base the grain is horizontal. On the bottom part of the heart there is a metal latch in order to close the two pieces. There are very small nails holding it in place and the connecting piece has a slot for the base attachment to adhere to. On the two curves of the heart there are two hinges. The left one has come loose. The hinges are attached by prongs on the outside being embedded in the wood to hold it in place.

The interior of the box is covered in a red fabric that is meant to look like satin but is thicker and more durable. The interior of the base is completely flush with the wood but the top has a rippled effect to add some class. A cardboard piece, also in the shape of a heart, has been placed in the base to help keep the fabric from wearing away if objects are placed inside. The cardboard is a plain white color.

### ORIGIN

Paulina Franks' grandfather, John Rassogianis, came to Chicago in the 1890s. He began his life in the new city by peddling fruits and later, with the help of his sons Alex and George, would open a candy store. In the 1920s Paulina Franks' father Constantine became a part of the family business and the store was able to prosper. When the second business closed Paulina Rassogianis chose to hold as many of the candy store's items as possible and, later, donate them to the National Hellenic Museum.

The Rassogianis family began their candy business in Chicago proper, working out of their own shop named "St. Louis Ice Cream Parlor." Eventually, the shop was closed and the Rassogianis' chose to continue their candy store venture in Berwyn, Illinois. The new shop they chose to open was named Alex's Sweet Shop.

Paulina Franks' father was a key contributor to the success of the Rassogianis candy stores. While Constantine Rassogianis was a noteworthy entrepreneur, he also had many other accomplishments. Among these was his four years of involvement in the Greek national military during World War I wherein he obtained the rank of sergeant. Also, he was a published author and poet, an experienced mandolin player, a church officer and had extensive knowledge of psalti.

Although there is no mark from the maker of this piece, many of these types of boxes are used for jewelry or keepsakes. Some have been engraved on the back with a message for the receiver, or just the name of the owner, however, this one has not been engraved, or marked with any distinguishing features. Most of these boxes were made in America with a hard wood such as Noth American Cherry or American Black Walnut so this one was probably made of a harder wood as well so whatever was in it would have been kept more safe and secure.

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**CITATION**

Box, 1920 – 1940, Alex's Candy Shop, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 05/05/26.

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