

WORCESTER HISTORICAL
MUSEUM

30 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts

ARCHIVES

Wilson, John,
Collection

1999.107

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Collection Information

Abstract: The John Wilson Collection includes items relative to the employment and life of Mr. Wilson, as well as photographs of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson.

Finding Aids: Finding Aid in print for available in the Repository.

Preferred Citation: Archives of the Worcester Historical Museum, 30 Elm Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance: Gift from Peter A. Jolma, Paradise valley, Arizona, June, 1999.

Access: Finding Aid is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings (lcsh, aat, tgm, etc.)

Wilson, John, Jr.

Blacksmiths – Massachusetts – Worcester – 19th century.

Biographical Information

John Wilson, Jr. was a resident of Worcester employed as a blacksmith from the 1840s or earlier at least into the 1860s. He is listed as living on Temple Street in 1844, Charles Street in 1854, and in the late 1850s on Reservoir Street, at the head of Reservoir Street, or on East Street (at Reservoir Street) In 1861 he purchased a fire insurance policy on house and woodshed on East Street (at Reservoir Street), so it can be assumed he was a homeowner at that location by 1861. In a time book dated 1852, John Wilson is listed first with other blacksmiths and machinists. His employment is listed as blacksmith from 1844 through 1861 in Worcester City Directories, with place of employment Exchange Street. Photographs show both John Wilson and his wife in later years, dates unknown.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of grocery and provision receipts, which provide information into the life and habits of Wilson and his family. The collection also includes a time book, providing insight into Wilson's employment as a blacksmith. Throughout the weekly lists of workers and days, Wilson is always listed first, suggesting that he may have been in a supervisory position, or possibly the owner. Wilson's addresses can be tracked through city directories of the period. In 1861 he purchased an insurance policy on house and sheds on East Street, suggesting new ownership at that location. Photographs of both Mr. and Mrs. Wilson show them as an elderly couple, indicating that they were both long-lived.

Series Description

Series 1: Employees' Records. Includes a single manuscript time book listing John Wilson as first of several workers, identified in city directories as blacksmiths and/or machinists. The time book covers most of the year 1852.

Series 2: Receipts. Includes two receipts, one to John Wilson re groceries and provisions, and the second to C. Thayer (identified as a grocer) from a wholesale fish dealer. The reverse of the first receipt has the signature of John Wilson (?). The reverse of the second receipt has an itemized manuscript bill for provisions charged by Wilson, and marked "Paid" by C. Thayer.

Series 3: Insurance Policies. Includes a fire insurance policy on house and sheds on East Street, issued to John Wilson, with additional coverage of furniture and apparel at a different location.

Series 4: Photographs. Includes a photograph of John Wilson, a second photograph of Mrs. Wilson (both reproductions from the originals), with negatives and photocopy.

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Series 1, Employees' Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	1999.107.1.1	Time book. Lists employees, days and hours worked, January 1, 1857 - November 7, 1857, with additional irregular entries for 1858 and 1860. Many of names in time book identified in city directories as blacksmiths or machinists. 1 vol., 11x17 cm.

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Series 2, Receipts

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	1999.107.2.1	Receipt. John Wilson, from Geo. F. Whiting & Co., dealers in ... groceries ... , for provisions, January 19, 1852. (John Wilson's signature on reverse)
1	2	1999.107.2.2	Receipt. C. Thayer, from William Churchill, wholesale and retail fish dealer, for 2 hundred pound lots of fish, April 12, 1852. (Cushman Thayer identified as grocer in 1852 city directory) On reverse: list of provisions charged by John Wilson, receipted by C. Thayer, January 22, 1853.

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Series 3, Insurance policies

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	1999.107.3.1	Insurance policy issued to John Wilson, Jr., by Worcester Mutual Fire Insurance Company, for house and woodshed on East Street, Worcester; and on furniture and apparel in the house of Mr. Moies on Old Grafton Road. November 1, 1861.

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Series 4, Photographs

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	4	1999.107.4.1a	Photograph (reproduction) of John Wilson. 5x7 in., b&w, n.d.
		.1b	Negative.
		.1c	Aqp
1	4	1999.107.4.2a	Photograph (reproduction) of Mrs. John Wilson. 5x7 in., b&w, n.d.
		.2b	Negative
		.2c	Aqp