

# WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts

## ARCHIVES

Worcester Cold Storage Fire  
Collection

2003.14

Processed by Alex Mawson  
July 2003

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### **Collection Information**

Abstract : The Worcester Cold Storage fire occurred on December 3, 1999. The fire was started by a homeless couple living in the building who, after accidentally knocking over a candle and watching their room become engulfed in flames, left the building. At 6:13 pm, at the corners of Franklin and Artic streets, alarm 1438 was sounded, calling the first firefighters to the scene. As the fire grew and several other alarms were struck, more and more engine companies were called to the scene. In the smoke and flames that would destroy the building, six Worcester Firefighters perished. They were: FF Jeremiah Lucey, FF James Lyons, Lt. Thomas Spencer, FF Joseph McGuirk, FF Paul Brotherton, and FF Timothy Jackson. These photos, taken by Mark C. Ide, chronicle the fire and its aftermath.

Finding Aid : Finding Aid in print form is available in the Repository.

Preferred Citation : Worcester Historical Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance :Purchased from Mark C. Ide. Note: These photographs are copyrighted. They are the property of Mark C. Ide and may not be copied or used without his consent.

MARC Access : Collection is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings (lcsh, aat, tgm, gmgcp)

### **Historical/Biographical Notes**

The Worcester Cold Storage fire occurred on December 3, 1999. The fire was started by a homeless couple living in the building who, after accidentally knocking over a candle and watching their room become engulfed in flames, left the building. At 6:13 pm, at the corners of Franklin and Artic streets, alarm 1438 was sounded, calling the first firefighters to the scene. As the fire grew and several other alarms were struck, more and more engine companies were called to the scene. In the smoke and flames that would destroy the building, six Worcester Firefighters perished. They were: FF Jeremiah Lucey, FF James Lyons, Lt. Thomas Spencer, FF Joseph McGuirk, FF Paul Brotherton, and FF Timothy Jackson. These photos, taken by Mark C. Ide, chronicle the fire and its aftermath.

### **Scope and Content**

This collection includes photographs of the fire, the clean-up after the fire, and the memorial services and funerals for the six firemen who lost their lives.

### **Series Descriptions**

#### **Series 1: Photographs**

Subseries 1: The fire.

Subseries 2: Memorials and Funerals

Worcester Cold Storage Fire  
2003.14  
Series 1  
Sub series 1, The Fire

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
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1	1	2003.14.1.1.1	Aerial scope sprays water on the fire billowing from the roof of the Worcester Cold Storage Building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.2	Engine Six sprays water on the building as several firefighters look on.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.3	An aerial scope sprays water on the flames.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.4	Silhouette of two firefighters on an aerial scope spraying water on the flames pouring out of the roof of the building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.5	Ladder truck sprays water on the flames at the Worcester Cold Storage Building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.6	Three firefighters watch the blaze across the street from the building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.7	Ladder truck sprays water on the flames.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.8	Silhouette of two men at the top of a ladder.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.9	Photo of ladder truck pouring water into the flames of the building. ("Worcester Cold Storage and Warehouse Co." is painted on the side of the building.)
1	1	2003.14.1.1.10	Five firefighters watch water being sprayed on the fire. (Stretcher and ambulance visible to the right of the men.)
1	1	2003.14.1.1.11	View of the fire behind Engine 5 and across the I-290 overpass.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.12	Silhouette of two firemen in the bucket of an Aerial Scope.

Series 1  
Sub series 1, continued

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	2003.14.1.1.13	View of Aerial Scope pouring two streams of water on the fire.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.14	Two streams of water pour on the fire.

1	1	2003.14.1.1.15	View of the Aerial Scope spraying water on the fire. ("Every Great American City has at least one college" is visible at the bottom of the photo.)
1	1	2003.14.1.1.16	View of water being poured on the fire from the I-290 Overpass.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.17	View of water being poured on the fire.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.18	View of water being poured on the fire, the company sign dominates the lower half of the photo.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.19	View of ladder trucks pouring water on the fire. A large group of firemen are gathered around these trucks. (Ladder 2 is visible on the ladder that is on the right side of the photograph.)
1	1	2003.14.1.1.20	View of smoldering building, left wall is being excavated.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.21	View of smoldering building from the other side of I-290 overpass.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.22	Three firemen stand around streaming hose as an excavator begins to pick up rubble.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.23	View of Engine 16; one fire sprays water on the building as two others stand near the truck.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.24	Photo of a group of men preparing to enter the building at a portion of the wall that has been demolished.

Series 1

Sub series 1, continued

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	2003.14.1.1.25	Firemen stand on the foundation of the half-destroyed building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.26	A large group of firemen stand on the foundation of the Worcester Cold Storage building as a group of

aid workers watch them from the ground.

1	1	2003.14.1.1.27	Photograph through the rubble of District Chief Stewart Howe (in orange vest). Behind him is a group of seated firemen, and one other is standing behind the half destroyed wall on the right of the picture.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.28	Excavator begins picking up the rubble of the Worcester Cold Storage building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.29	A large group of people stand vigil near the Worcester Cold Storage building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.30	A crane lifts rubble at the sight.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.31	A group of firemen scour the rubble near a destroyed wall outside of the smoldering building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.32	An aerial scope pours water on the building as an excavator begins to pick up the rubble.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.33	Firemen work alongside an excavator scouring the debris at the burned out building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.34	A group of firefighters stand next to Engine 3 on the corner of Grafton and Franklin Streets.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.35	Firefighters stand underneath a crane lifting debris.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.36	A firefighter mounts the side of an excavator lifting rubble.

Series 1

Sub series 1, continued

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	2003.14.1.1.37	A large crowd gathers underneath the I-290 overpass near the fire.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.38	A firefighter comforts a grieving woman.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.39	A shot of various types of machinery cleaning up around the smoldering warehouse.



1	1	2003.14.1.1.40	An elevated look at the half-destroyed building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.41	A group of firemen and families of the missing
	stand		outside the fire site. (Kathy Spencer-wife of missing Lieutenant Thomas Spencer-stands between the two men in white coats; her son, Daniel, stands to the right in the Red Sox hat; James Lyons-father of missing firefighter Jay Lyons-is seen clapping behind Daniel.)
1	1	2003.14.1.1.42	A shot of various types of machinery cleaning up around the smoldering building.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.43	Two District Chiefs address the media at the sight
	of		the fire.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.44	Several firefighters look at the destroyed building the morning after the fire.
1	1	2003.14.1.1.45	A view of a crane excavating the building the morning after the fire.

Worcester Cold Storage Fire  
2003.14  
Series 1  
Sub series 2, Memorials and Funerals

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	2003.14.1.2.1	A sign and flowers commemorating the six fallen Worcester Firefighters.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.2	A sign with "The Fireman's Prayer" and hundreds of signatures.

1	2	2003.14.1.2.3	A wreath with six WFD patches.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.4	A Worcester Fire Department Lieutenant stands with James and Joan Lyons, parents of Firefighter Jay F. Lyons.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.5	A casket is carried through a cemetery on the back of a Worcester Fire Engine.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.6	Engine 16 carries a casket draped with an Irish flag.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.7	Engine 16 leads a funeral procession down I-290.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.8	Three chiefs stand at attention as one man holds the helmets of a fallen firefighter.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.9	The Worcester Fire Department Color Guard marches past the Centrum Centre.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.10	Michelle Lucey holds the helmet of her husband, Jeremiah Lucey.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.11	The casket at the funeral of one of the two members of Engine 3 who passed away in the Warehouse fire.
1 in	2	2003.14.1.2.12	A billboard commemorating the six men who died in the Warehouse tragedy.

Series 1  
Sub series 2, continued

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	2003.14.1.2.13	Members of the Boston fire department drape an American flag between the raised ladders of Worcester Fire's Ladder 1 and Ladder 2.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.14	Six of Worcester's fire chiefs march past the Centrum.

1	2	2003.14.1.2.15	Rescue 1 passes beneath the flag draped between Ladders 1 and 2.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.16	A Worcester Fire Engine is covered with flowers.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.17	Four Firefighters, including Frank Raffa (right, with plaque) leave a church after the funeral of one of the six fallen men.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.18	A group of people, including members of the Holyoke Fire Department Emerald Bagpipe Brigade, pass beneath Ladders 1 and 2 outside of the Centrum.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.19	A group of Worcester firemen stand at attention on the back of one of the ladder trucks, in front of a large American flag.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.20	Engine 16, draped in black, passes beneath the flag held up by Ladders 1 and 2.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.21	The men of Ladder 1 either take up or put down the American flag attached to the truck's ladder.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.22	The casket of a member of Engine 3 at the cemetery.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.23	Several mourners hold signs that praise the fallen firefighters.

Series 1  
Sub series 2, continued

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	2003.14.1.2.24	Linda McGuirk, wife of late firefighter Joseph McGuirk, stands with her son Everett, daughter Emily, and Worcester Fire Lieutenant Edward Ryan.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.25	Worcester Firemen (including District Chief Michael McNamee, with glasses, in the back left of the

photo) and a Massachusetts State Trooper carry the casket of Joseph F. Lyons III.

1	2	2003.14.1.2.26	The rear of Engine 16, carrying the casket of one of the late firemen.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.27	A pile of flowers surround the sign outside of the Central Division Fire Station, home of fallen firemen Jerry Lucey and Paul Brotherton, and their truck, Rescue 1.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.28	A bouquet of flowers from Worcester Firefighters Union 1009.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.29	Boston Firefighters remove the American flag from Ladders 1 and 2.
1 Honor	2	2003.14.1.2.30	Members of the Lexington Fire Department's Guard stand at attention.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.31	Hundreds of firefighters gathered outside of the Centrum.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.32	An honor guard stands at attention in a cemetery.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.33	A Worcester Fire Truck surrounded by flowers.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.34	A Catholic clergyman stands behind Engine 16.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.35	Engine 16, carrying a casket, drives through a cemetery.

Series 1  
Sub series 2, continued

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	2003.14.1.2.36	Engine 16, draped in black and surrounded by firemen, leads a funeral procession.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.37	Engine 10, Aerial Scope 3, and Engine 4, with their crews standing at attention, are parked outside the Park Avenue Fire Station.

1	2	2003.14.1.2.38	A flag draped between Ladders 1 and 2, with ladder two's crew standing at attention.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.39	The Worcester Fire Department Color Guard marching.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.40	Firefighters bearing the casket of one of the fallen firemen.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.41	From left to right, Lieutenant David Halvorsen, Firefighter Frank Raffa, and Firefighter Joseph LeBlanc at Paul A. Brotherton's funeral.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.42	Frank Raffa (top left) and others at Jerry Lucey's funeral.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.43	Engine 16, bearing a casket, drives beneath a flag at a cemetery.
1	2	2003.14.1.2.44	Worcester firefighters carrying a casket either on or off of a Worcester Fire Engine.