

# WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts

## ARCHIVES

Worcester Lunch Car Company  
Records

1998.163

Processed by William F. Carroll, C.A.  
May, 1999

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### Collection Information

Abstract: The Worcester Lunch Car Company Records illustrate the growth and activities of the company from ca. 1910 to ca. 1950 through financial records, and records of diners designed and constructed.

Finding Aids: Finding Aid in print form is available in the repository.

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

Provenance: Donated by Mrs. Lawrence Leblanc, 66 Plantation Street, Worcester, Massachusetts, April 15, 1998.

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

Worcester Lunch Car Company.  
Worcester Lunch Car and Carriage Company.  
Diners (Restaurants) – Massachusetts – Worcester.  
Diners (Restaurants) – New England.  
Diners (Restaurants) – Design and construction.

Blueprints [gmgpc]

Postcards [gmgpc]

## Historical Background

The Worcester Lunch Car and Carriage Manufacturing Company was founded by Philip H. Duprey and Irving M. Stoddard in 1906. They bought out the lunch car building business organized by Wilfred H. Barriere and Stearns A. Haynes the previous year. The company built a total of 651 diners during its 55 years in business, beginning with serial number 200 through serial Number 851. The serial number assigned at the time of construction stayed with the diner throughout its life, including any subsequent remodeling or rebuilding. Worcester Lunch Car diners were well known for the high quality of the work, and handcrafted wooden elements. The diners were noteworthy because of the monitor roof with clerestory windows to allow ventilation of cooking odors. Many of the diners were decorated with porcelain enamel graphics. Worcester Lunch Car diners were marketed throughout New England, and were found in each of the region's states. The company ceased operations May 23, 1961.

## Scope and Content

The collection illustrates the development of the Worcester Lunch Car Company through employee records, records of design and construction of many of its diners, and lists of diners constructed, their owners and locations.

Employees' time and wage record books are nearly complete from 1911 to 1950, indicating names of employees, hours worked and pay per week for the 40 year period. Plans in the form of blueprints, sketch drafts, and cost estimates and analyses, along with catalogs and material samples provide insight into the process of building a diner, from initial planning to completion with attendant decorative detail and equipment and supplies. Completed diners (of the serial numbers 700-799) are listed on catalog cards, with various details concerning the owners, location, and other information. Postcards illustrate diners in their business environment.

The collection dates range from ca. 1910 to ca. 1960, with the bulk of the material from the 1940s and 1950s.

## Series Descriptions

Series 1: Financial Records. Includes 24 time books listing employees, hours worked, and wages paid, from 1910-1950. Also includes records of employees' annual wages and withholdings, with memoranda and letters re federal and state required withholding taxes. Also includes daybooks and other financial records.

Series 2: Diner Design/Construction. Includes plans and designs for interior and exterior work, cost analyses, draft plans and sketches, and material samples. Divided into three subseries:

Subseries 1: Blueprints. Includes oversize drafts of interior and exterior detail, framing and construction, foundation and support, roof and wall detail. Also includes interior plans, space utilization, placement of equipment and fixtures, etc.

Subseries 2: Interior decor. Includes samples of materials for seats, walls, counter tops, other surface coverings, moldings, etc.

Subseries 3: Cost sheets and estimates, with builders' notes and memoranda.

Series 3: Diners. Includes card index of diners #700 - #799, indicating diner name, owner, location, and other notes, transcribed. Also includes postcard pictures of diners in their business environment.

Series 4: Miscellaneous. Stationery, letterhead bills, etc.

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Series 1, Financial Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	BV	1998.163.1.1	Time Book No. 1, February 1911 through February 1914. Lists employees, hours worked, wages.
1	BV	1998.163.1.2	Time Book No. 2. March 1914 through August 1916.
1	BV	1998.163.1.3	Time Book No. 4. December 1917 through March 1920.
1	BV	1998.163.1.4	Time Book No. 5. April 1920 through December 1922.
1	BV	1998.163.1.5	Time Book No. 6. December 1922 through March 1925, with employees' addresses.
1	BV	1998.163.1.6	Time Book No. 7. March 1925 through April 1927.
1	BV	1998.163.1.7	Time Book No. 8. May 1927 through April 1928.
1	BV	1998.163.1.8	Time Book No. 9. April 1928 through December 1928.
1	BV	1998.163.1.9	Time Book No. 10. January 1929 through December 1929.
1	BV	1998.163.1.10	Time Book No. 11. January 1930 through December 1930.
1	BV	1998.163.1.11	Time Book No. 12. January 1931 through December 1931.
1	BV	1998.163.1.12	Time Book No. 13. January 1932 through December 1932.
1	BV	1998.163.1.13	Record Book No. 14. Includes total wages, receipts, expenses, daybook, 1931-1945.

Series 1, continued

1	BV	1998.163.1.14	Time Book No. 15. Employees' working time and wages, January 1934 through December 1934.
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- 1 BV 1998.163.1.15 Time Book, January-December 1937. Includes employees' hours, wages, and Social Security deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.16 Time Book, January-December 1938. Includes employees' hours, wages, and Social Security deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.17 Time Book, January-December 1939. Includes employees' hours, wages, and Social Security deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.18 Time Book, January-December 1940. Includes employees' hours, wages, Social Security and Old Age deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.19 Time Book, January-December 1941. Includes employees' hours, wages, Social Security and Old Age deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.20 Time Book, January-December 1942. Includes employees' hours, wages, Social Security and Old Age deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.21 Time Book, January-December 1943. Includes employees' hours, wages, Social Security and Old Age deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.22 Time Book, January-December 1944. Includes employees' hours, wages, Social Security and Old Age deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.23 Time Book, December 1943 - January 1946. Includes employees' hours, wages, Social Security and Old Age deductions.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.24 Time Book, January 1946 - December 1950. Includes employees' hours, wages, Old Age and other deductions.
- Series 1, continued
- 2 1 1998.163.1.25 Records Book (loose-leaf). Wages paid and amounts withheld for employees, 1937-1946, with letters and memoranda re state withholding for unemployment compensation, etc.
- 1 BV 1998.163.1.26 Record Book. Employees' annual pay, 1925-1933, with



addresses of diner furnishings and equipment suppliers.

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Series 2, Design/Construction  
Subseries 1, Blueprints/Plans.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
OVS-1	1998.163.2.1.1		Draft plans. Drawings and sketches of diner interior and exterior elevations, floor plans, furnishings, etc. 6 items.
OVS-2	1998.163.2.1.2		Blueprints. Interior elevations, arrangement, floor plans, furnishings, and decor. Most not identified. 47 items.
OVS-3	1998.163.2.1.3		Blueprints. Exterior elevations, roof and window detail, foundation and support, materials, etc. Most not identified. 122 items.

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Series 2, Design/Construction  
Subseries 2, Interior design/decor

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	2	1998.163.2.2.1	Pamphlets, etc. Advertising materials and technical reports re appliances, utensils, interior furnishings, etc. ca. 1940s-ca. 1950s.
2	3	1998.163.2.2.2	Catalog (loose-leaf binder contents). Samples of upholstery, wall coverings, and other surface coverings. Masland Duraleather Company, Philadelphia, 1960. 18 l. with letter.
2		1998.163.2.2.3	Samples. Counter top materials, finishes, colors; moldings, etc.

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 Series 2, Design/Construction  
 Subseries 3, Estimates/Cost sheets

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	4	1998.163.2.3.1	Drafts, sketches of interior arrangement and equipment placement.
2	5	1998.163.2.3.2	List. "Stock, January 1, 1936" (materials for diner construction) including dollar value. 17 p.
2	6	1998.163.2.3.3	Cost sheets and estimates for construction of diners at Lynn, Natick, E. Hartford, Gloucester, Worcester, and other unidentified units.
2	7	1998.163.2.3.4	Memoranda, letters, carbon paper only.

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Series 3, Diners

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	8	1998.163.3.1a-e	Postcards. Mayflower Diner, Quincy, Mass. 5 items.
2	9	1998.163.3.2	List. Diners #700 - #799, with diner name, owner's name, location.
2		1998.163.3.3	File cards. Diners #700 - #799, with diner name, owner's name, location, other information.

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Series 4, Miscellaneous

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	10	1998.163.4.1	Stationery. Bill forms with letterhead.