Guide to the Baldwin Locomotive Works
Engine Registers and Order Books

NMAH.AC.0157
NMAH Staff
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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: Baldwin Locomotive Works Engine Registers and Order Books
Identifier: NMAH.AC.0157
Date: 1822-1956
Extent: 7 Cubic feet
       6 Microfilm (35 mm)
Creator: Baldwin Locomotive Works.
Language: English

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donate to the Museum's Division of Transportation by the Baldwin Hamilton Corporation in 1976.

Ownership and Custodial History


Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

Baldwin Locomotive Works Drawings (NMAH.AC.0353)
Consists of builder's drawings of locomotives and tenders, 1870-1890.

The DeGolyer Library of Southern Methodist University

University has a collection of 8,500 original Baldwin engineering drawings; the library has published three guides to their records.

Processing Information

Collection processed by NMAH Staff, undated.
Biographical Note

The Baldwin Locomotive Works was the largest and most successful locomotive building firm in the world. It was begun as a machine shop owned and operated by Matthias W. Baldwin in 1831. Baldwin turned out its first locomotive engine from its shop in Philadelphia in 1832; within a few years the company was producing two a month and employed 240 men. By 1852, 500 engines had been produced; by 1861, 1,000; and by 1868, 2,000. At that point, the company employed between 1,600 and 1,700 men, and was one of the very largest machine works in the nation. In 1906 Baldwin began construction of a large auxiliary plant in the Philadelphia suburb of Eddystone. In 1928 the Broad Street plant was closed and all work transferred to the Eddystone Plant.

Baldwin had been forced by hard financial times to take on a series of partners between 1839 and 1846, and the firm's name changed repeatedly as a result. It was known as Baldwin, Vail & Hufty (1839-1842); Baldwin & Whitney (1842-1845); M. W. Baldwin (1846-1853); and M. W. Baldwin & Company (1854-1866). After Baldwin's death in 1866 the firm was known as M. Baird & Company (1867-1873); Burnham, Parry, Williams & Company (1873-1890); Burnham, Williams & Company (1891-1909); it was finally incorporated as the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1909.

The company's phenomenal growth ended with in the mid 1920s as the United States railroad industry began its long decline. Despite various mergers and acquisitions and an increased attention to the development of diesel engines a slow but sure decline set in. Baldwin declared bankruptcy in 1935. World War Two brought a temporary respite, but after the war the steam locomotive was obsolete and orders rapidly diminished. The Westinghouse Corporation bought Baldwin in 1948 but was unable to turn the company around. In 1950 the Lima Hamilton Corporation and Baldwin merged but in 1956 the last of some 70,541 locomotives was produced.

Source

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of Engine Registers and Engine Order Books. The Engine Registers list all locomotives built by the company from 1833 through 1956. They provide information on the purchasing railroad, date of trial, engine name, construction number, class, track gauge, number of wheels, size of cylinders, number of valves and fuel type. The Order Books, dating from 1854 1900, provide the same sort of information on specifications, as well as prices and delivery. The records in both sets of books are arranged chronologically and the information within each is arranged numerically by construction number.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:
- Locomotive industry -- Pennsylvania
- Locomotives -- Registers
- Railroads
- Transportation

Types of Materials:
- Ledgers (account books)

Names:
- Baldwin, Matthias W. (industrialist)

Geographic Names:
- Pennsylvania
Container Listing

Series 1: Engine Registers, 1833-1956

Box 1, Volume 1  Numbers 1-2659, 1833-1871
Image(s)

Box 1, Volume 1  [Engine Register Volume 1: ledger], 1833-1871
1 Item (Ink on paper.; 12.3" x 14.0").
Image(s): [Engine Register Volume 1: ledger].
Baldwin Locomotive Works., Creator
Partial scan of page 1 dated January 1833.

Unrestricted research use on site, except that slides may be in cold storage
and require warm-up period. Unprotected photographs must be handled with
gloves.

Local Numbers
AC0157-0000002 (AC scan no.)
Topic: Locomotive builders
Locomotives -- Registers
Genre/ Form: Ledgers (account books)

Box 1, Volume 2  Numbers 1-5980, [marked "Duplicate"], 1833-1881

Box 2, Volume 6  Numbers 5981-11,947, 1882-1891

Box 3, Volume 10  Numbers 11,948-24,274, 1891-1904
Image(s)

Box 3, Volume 10  [Engine Register Volume 10: ledger], June 6, 1891 to May 25, 1904
1 Item (Ink on paper.; 15.7" x 12.3").
Image(s): [Engine Register Volume 10: ledger].
Baldwin Locomotive Works., Creator
Partial scan of page 59 "Register of engines made by Burnham, Williams &
Co., 1895.

Unrestricted research use on site, except that slides may be in cold storage
and require warm-up period. Unprotected photographs must be handled with
gloves.

Local Numbers
AC0157-0000006 (AC scan no.)
Topic: Locomotive builders
Locomotives -- Registers

<table>
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<th>Box</th>
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<th>Years</th>
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<td>Box 4, Volume 11</td>
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<td>11,948 -15,320 [incomplete],</td>
<td>1891-1897</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 5, Volume 14</td>
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<td>24,275-36,697,</td>
<td>1904-1911</td>
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<td>Box 6, Volume 15</td>
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<td>49,178 -61,600,</td>
<td>1918-1930</td>
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<td>Box 8, Volume 17</td>
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<td>61,601-76, 150,</td>
<td>1931-1956</td>
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Series 2: Order Books, 1854-1900

Box 9, Volume 3  Order Book, 1854-1869

Box 9, Volume 4  Order Book, 1870-1877

Box 9, Volume 5  Order Book, 1878-1883

Box 10, Volume 7  Order Book, 1884-1886

Box 10, Volume 8  Order Book, 1887-1889

Box 11, Volume 9  Order Book, 1890-1892

[Engine Order Book Volume 9: ledger], 1890-1891
1 Item (Ink on paper.; 12.3" x 14.0").
Image(s): [Engine Order Book Volume 9: ledger].
Baldwin Locomotive Works., Creator
Partial scan of page 184 dated January 1891.

Unrestricted research use on site, except that slides may be in cold storage and require warm-up period. Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

Local Numbers
AC0157-0000001 (AC scan no.)

Topic: Locomotive builders
        Locomotives -- Registers

Genre/ Form: Ledgers (account books)

Box 12, Volume 12  Order Book, 1893-1897

[Engine Order Book Volume 12: ledger], 1893-1897
1 Item (12.3" x 14.0").
Image(s): Baldwin Locomotive Works Engine Registers and Order Books
Baldwin Locomotive Works., Creator
Partial scan of page 315, engines ordered in 1895.

In series 2, box 12 (or 4), volume 12?

Unrestricted research use on site, except that slides may be in cold storage and require warm-up period. Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.
Ink on paper.

Local Numbers
    AC0157-0000007m (AC scan no.)

Topic:  Locomotive builders
        Locomotives -- Registers

Genre/ Form:  Ledgers (account books)

Box 13, Volume 13    Order Book, 1898-1900

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