

Collection #  
SC 3256

**CINCINNATI CAR CORPORATION  
COLLECTION ADDITION, 1902-1930**

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 1 manuscript folder

COLLECTION  
DATES: n.d.

PROVENANCE: Anonymous; May 2007

RESTRICTIONS: None

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RELATED  
HOLDINGS: Cincinnati Car Corporation Collection P 0376

ACCESSION  
NUMBER: 2007.0114

NOTES:

## **HISTORICAL SKETCH**

The Cincinnati Car Corporation, a subsidiary of the Ohio Traction Company, designed and manufactured interurban railway cars, streetcars, and busses in Cincinnati, Ohio between 1902 and 1931. The company mainly supplied passenger and freight interurban cars, and Birney-type engines to city and commuter railway lines across the United States and into Canada. The business operated as the Cincinnati Car Company until a merger with the Versare Corporation of Watervliet, New York in December 1928. The new company was named the Cincinnati Car Corporation.

Versare made gas-electric busses and electric trolley-coaches. Oliver F. Warhus became vice president in charge of engineering and sales for the new company. Sales orders for busses in 1929 included gas-electric busses for the Cincinnati Street Railway Company. These may have been the only gas-powered vehicles built by the Cincinnati Car Corporation. It is not known if this model saw active service. Between 1929 and 1931 sales of trolley-coaches totaled nine cars. Customers included the Utah Light and Traction Company, the United Traction Company (Albany, New York) and the Louisville Railway Company.

In 1921 chief engineer Thomas Elliot designed the curved-side car, a lightweight model that used curved steel plates rather than conventional flat steel plates in body construction. The side plates and side sills, rather than the floor, bore the bulk of the weight load. Longitudinal floor supports were no longer needed, which made the cars lighter than conventional cars. Curved-side cars were also called "Balanced Lightweight Cars." The company completed production of the first curved-side cars for the Kentucky Traction and Terminal Company in February 1922. The Cincinnati Car Corporation dropped the curved-side design for interurbans after July 1929. The West Penn Railway Company ordered the last cars of this model, which were completed in December.

Interurban production continued until the company ceased operations in 1931. A number of factors contributed to the demise of the company, including the Great Depression and competition in the trolley-coach and gas-powered bus markets. Traditional customers that were able to avoid bankruptcy became judicious with their funds and purchased secondhand railway equipment rather than new cars. Other customers abandoned rail systems altogether in favor of busses and trolley-coaches, but the Cincinnati Car Corporation was not able to compete in this market. The corporation's assets were liquidated in 1938.

Sources:

Original collection guide.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection addition contains compiled information on shop orders of the Cincinnati Car Corporation from 1902 to 1930, as compiled by Kenneth L. Douglas.

## **CONTENTS**

CONTENTS

Shop orders, n.d.

CONTAINER

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