

Collection #  
M 1019  
OMB 0132  
BV 4432-4446

## DIAMOND CHAIN COMPANY PAPERS, 1890-1993

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Processed by

Curtis R. Barsic

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Revised

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: **Manuscript Materials:** 26 manuscript boxes; 29 oversize manuscript boxes; 15 bound volumes;  
**Visual Materials:** 11 photograph boxes; 2 color photograph boxes; 4 boxes oversize photographs; 3 folders oversize photographs; 4 folders oversize graphics; 2 boxes acetate negatives; 2 boxes slides; 39 printed items;  
**Artifacts:** 18 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: 1890–1993

PROVENANCE: Diamond Chain Company, Indianapolis, Indiana, June 2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2011.0124

NOTES:

## **HISTORICAL SKETCH**

On Christmas Eve, 1890, Arthur Newby, Edward Fletcher and Glen Howe raised a capital stock of \$5,000 and incorporated the Indianapolis Chain & Stamping Company(ICSC) on December 24, 1890. Originally, the company manufactured bicycle chains to capitalize on the popularization of bicycles at the turn of the twentieth century. ICSC was located on the north side of South Street, between Meridian and Pennsylvania Street in Indianapolis. After moving to Senate Street in 1895, the company was relocated to its present location at the corner of Kentucky Avenue and West Street in 1918.

In 1899, the company became the Diamond Chain Division of the newly created American Bicycle Company. The Federal Manufacturing Company purchased the Diamond Chain Factory in 1901. Lucius M. Wainwright, General Manager of the Diamond Chain Factory, purchased the company in 1905 and renamed it the Diamond Chain & Manufacturing Company. He and his son, Guy A. Wainwright, remained in a leadership role for almost fifty years before Guy sold his shares to American Steel Foundries, now known as AMSTED, Inc.

The father, son team guided the company through many trying times, including two world wars, countless labor disagreements, the Great Depression and many smaller recessions. The family lived in Noblesville and Guy graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Engineering, before serving in World War I. After his father's death in 1931, Guy became the leader of the company and served Diamond Chain in various capacities until his death in 1956.

Diamond Chain Company continues to be an important manufacturer of roller chains and the 'Diamond Chain' is known in the field for its superior quality and performance. Diamond Chain represents an important sector of the local economy and its products have achieved national and international historical significance, as the chains were used in the Wright Bros. Flyer and on military airplanes during World War II.

Sources:

Items in Collection: Box 1

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The majority of the Diamond Chain Company Papers consist of catalogues and technical product information. The collection ranges from the personal correspondence of the company's patriarchs Lucius M. Wainwright and his son, Guy A. Wainwright, to labor strife in the 1910s through the 1970s. The majority of the photographs are employee portraits that were featured in *Chain Gang* to highlight new hires, promotions and retirements. The collection includes the entire range of published employee newsletters and a majority of the published catalogues.

Much of the collection was unorganized, so generally, the materials were organized topically then chronologically. This method was used to structure the collection guide, except when similar titles were grouped together, regardless of date. The collection features all of the financial ledgers for the company from its founding in 1890 to 1962. There also are some materials regarding wartime production, promotional flyers, film reels and department photographs from the early years of the company.

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### **Series 1: Photographs and Graphics**

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Lucius M. Wainwright

Guy A. Wainwright

Past Executive Portraits

Executive Groups

Panoramic Photograph of Entire Staff Outside  
Factory, May 1916

Panoramic Photograph of Employees Outside Factory,  
1 June 1906 (2 copies)

Women's Ten-Years-and-over Service Club

Female Employees, ca. 1900-1930

Female Employees, 1941-1966

Female Employees, n.d., ca. 1950s

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Graphics:  
OVA, Folder 1

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OVB, Folder 1

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OVA  
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PAN 0972

OVC Graphic  
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OVA  
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#### CONTAINER

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Cold Room, 2-24-B

“Quality Makes Cents,” 1970 [2 of 2]

Reel No. 1  
Cold Room, 2-24-B

“Quality Makes Cents:” Film Shows operations in the plant and chain applications, but no Diamond quality features. [Part 1 of 2] (Oct. 2, 1975)

Reel No. 3  
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“Quality Makes Cents:” Film Shows operations in the plant and chain applications, but no Diamond quality features. [Part 2 of 2] (Oct. 2, 1975)

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Unlabeled #1

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Payroll Register, Diamond Chain Factory, 1904-1909;

BV 4444

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& Mfg. Company, 1905-1911, Box 1

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Permanent Transfer General Records, Diamond Chain  
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Untitled Ledger No. 3, 1906-1912

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Burr's Combination Index 2, [printed in 1885, otherwise n.d.]	Box 25, Folder 5



**Series 21: Artifacts**

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Black carrying case with 5 wood-framed employee aptitude tests

Small box of AICO Sprocket Templates

“Roller Chain Drawings in 3 Easy Steps”

Metal Plaque: Accident Prevention Record Award

Small burlap sack: “From Diamond Chain Company, Inc., Indianapolis, Ind.”

Large burlap sack: “From Diamond Chain Company, Inc., Indianapolis, Ind.”

Bicycle Chain Cardboard Case, 1918

Cardboard plaque: Fortune Magazine Advertisement, February, 1940: “1890-1940: 50 Years of Doing One Job Well”

Chain Drive Calculator

Name Plate: E.G. Flaningham

Cardboard sign: “Diamond Chain & Mfg. co., Bicycle Chain”

Metal Coin: “Awarded To: Guy Wainwright- For loyal Hel p in Building The Stadium Ross-Ade Field Purdue University, 1924

4-link roller chain

**CONTAINER**

Artifacts:

Box 192: R2771

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2772

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2773

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2774

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2775

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2776

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2777

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2778

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2779

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2780

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2781

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2782

Artifacts:

Box 193: R2783

Framed Plaque: "Above are Plates From the Vases Which Contained Palms Presented to Our Former President, Mr. L.M. Wainwright, By Our Employees in 1929

Artifacts:  
Box 193: R2784

2 sprockets with connecting roller chain

Artifacts:  
Box 193: R2785

Chrome sign with Diamond Chain Company Logo

Artifacts:  
Box 193: R2786

Gold sign: "This Machine Equipped with Diamond Chains..."

Artifacts:  
Box 193: R2787

Pin: State of Indiana Quality Improvement Award

Artifacts:  
Box 193: R2788