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## Whitcomb Locomotive Company Records

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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Whitcomb Locomotive Company Records

**Dates:** 1906-1952

**Collection Number:** MS 99

**Creator/Collector:** George D. Whitcomb

**Extent:** 700+ linear feet

**Repository:** California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Abstract:** Records include manufacturing and sales records, drawings, and photographs generated by the Whitcomb Locomotive Company and its predecessor the George D. Whitcomb Company.

**Language of Material:** English

### **Access**

This collection is open for research at our off-site storage facility. Please contact Library staff one month in advance of your visit to make an appointment so we can make arrangements to reserve the Research Room for you.

### **Publication Rights**

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### **Preferred Citation**

Whitcomb Locomotive Company Records. California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives

### **Acquisition Information**

Gift of the Baldwin - Lima - Hamilton Company, 1979

### **Biography/Administrative History**

The Whitcomb Locomotive Company was a builder of gasoline and diesel powered industrial locomotives that supplied companies around the world with a variety of configurations for moving cars within factory environments. The George D. Whitcomb Company was incorporated by George D. Whitcomb on May 6, 1896 in Illinois. George's son George Card Whitcomb replaced George D. Whitcomb as General Manager in 1907, and after George senior's death in 1914 he took over the company. The company sold its first gas-mechanical locomotive in 1906. In October of 1914 Whitcomb introduced and shipped its first electric storage battery locomotive. Its first gas-electric locomotive was manufactured in 1928. Whitcomb introduced its first diesel-electric locomotive in 1929. A friendship between Baldwin President Samuel L. Vauclain and Whitcomb President George Whitcomb led to Baldwin taking a financial interest in the George D. Whitcomb Company. In 1927, Baldwin Locomotive Works began representing Whitcomb in the sales division. Baldwin acquired a half-interest in Whitcomb stock in 1928. After suffering a downturn in orders during the Great Depression, Whitcomb lost control of the company to Baldwin Locomotive Works. After declaring bankruptcy on behalf of Whitcomb in 1931, Baldwin reorganized it as the Whitcomb Locomotive Company and operated it under that name until 1940. Starting in 1934 the Baldwin Locomotive Works took over the sales, repair, and renewal parts business from the Whitcomb Company. In July 19, 1932, Whitcomb acquired the Milwaukee Locomotive Manufacture Company. Whitcomb became a division of Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1940. During World War II, Whitcomb supplied the United States Army Transportation Corps with diesel-electric switchers. In December 4, 1950, Baldwin Locomotive Works bought the Lima-Hamilton Company and became the Baldwin - Lima - Hamilton Corporation. Whitcomb construction facilities moved from Rochelle, Illinois to Eddystone, Pennsylvania. BLH continued to use the Whitcomb name until December 1952.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The Whitcomb Locomotive Company records include drawing indexes, manufacturing records, specifications, photographs, drawings and other material generated by Whitcomb between 1914 and 1952. This collection was donated by the Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton Company who kept the corporate records of the Whitcomb Locomotive Company and the Sterling Engine Company at their manufacturing plant in Honey Brook, Pennsylvania. These records have been arranged into the following series: Series 1. Card Files Series 2. Manufacturing Records Series 3. Specifications Series 4. Drawings Series 5. Bills of Material Index Sheets and Drawings Lists Series 6. Operations, Maintenance and Parts Manuals Series 7. Sales Department Records Series 8. Vendors Files Series 9. Customer Relations and Promotion Series 5 to 9 are in process. The material in these series are available by appointment. Several thousand Whitcomb builder's photographs have been removed from this collection and are available at the CSRM Library & Archives Research Room in Old Sacramento.

