

A Guide to the W. L. Dechert Corporation Records, 1890-1943 SC 0311

W. L. Dechert Corporation Records
1890-1943



Title Statement

A Guide to the W. L. Dechert Corporation Records, 1890-1943 SC 0311

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0311

Unit ID

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Unit Date

1890-1943

Language

English

Abstract

The W. L. Dechert Corporation Records, 1890-1943, comprise two bound volumes containing historical information, financial records, meeting minutes, bylaws, and administrative information concerning Harrisonburg's W. L. Dechert Corporation.

source

Tim Abbott Americana

Creator

W. L. Dechert Corporation

Extent

0.2 cubic feet 2 folders

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open to research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

Acquired from Tim Abbott Americana's Virginia Catalog #3, December 2019.

Processing Information

Straight pins used to secure loose items together were removed. All loose items were left in place in the bound volumes.

W.L. Dechert Corporation changed its name to W. L. Dechert Company on April 1, 1919. W. L. Dechert Corporation was still widely used after 1919 (in meeting minutes and correspondence) and may have been used interchangeably with W. L. Dechert Company. In this finding aid, for the purposes of clarity, the business will be described as W. L. Dechert Corporation.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], W. L. Dechert Corporation Records, 1890-1943, SC 0311, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Administrative History

Wilmer Lee Dechert (1866-1935) was the founder of W. L. Dechert Corporation, an insurance agency in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Dechert began his insurance career in 1890 when Charles E. Lupton, James R. Lupton, Robert E. Sullivan, and Dechert formed Lupton, Sullivan & Co. The company was dissolved in 1892 and Sullivan & Dechert was formed. Sullivan & Dechert was dissolved in 1893 and Dechert took over the business completely. On January 1, 1909, the W. L. Dechert Corporation was established with Dechert as president and E. L. Dechert as secretary. W. L. Dechert Corporation sold fire, life, accident, casualty, and health insurance, and served businesses and private individuals. The name changed to W. L. Dechert Company on April 1, 1919. W. L. Dechert Corporation was still widely used after 1919 (in meeting minutes and correspondence) and may have been used interchangeably with W. L. Dechert Company. W. L. Dechert Corporation's certificate of incorporation was issued by the State Corporation Commission on September 24, 1934. At the June 15, 1935 meeting, after W. L. Dechert's April 1935 death, Laura W. Dechert, W. L. Dechert's daughter-in-law, was unanimously elected president of W. L. Dechert Corporation. She resigned from this position in 1937.

The corporation was dissolved on January 29, 1943 by an order of the State Corporation Commission and at the request of the three stock holders - John R. Grattan, D. Y. Grattan, and J. G. Yancey. The certificate of dissolution is included as a loose item in the first bound volume.

W. L. Dechert Corporation and its predecessors moved its Harrisonburg office several times and was located in the E. Warren Nelson building (28 Court Square), Kent Building (32 Graham Street), and Newman Building (2-6 North Main Street).

For a more detailed timeline of W. L. Dechert Corporation's history, researchers are encouraged to review the incomplete chronology (1890-1930) found at the beginning of the first bound volume in this collection.

Scope and Content

The W. L. Dechert Corporation Records, 1890-1943, comprise two bound volumes containing historical information, financial records, meeting minutes, bylaws, and administrative information concerning Harrisonburg's W. L. Dechert Corporation.

The first bound volume, 1890-1943, is embossed "W. L. Dechert Company Historical Statistical Memoranda" and begins with a January 1, 1924 typed introduction written by W. L. Dechert describing the contents of the book as "facts, statistics and things jotted down." It includes a chronology of W. L. Dechert Corporation (1890-1930); list of sub-agents and solicitors; list of ledgers, daybooks, and registers created by the corporation; financial records including gains, losses, and premiums; insolvent accounts; inventory of office furniture; and a list of stockholders. The volume also includes a tipped in copy of the corporation's plan of organization and an 1890 insurance policy for Mrs. O. B. Roller (Margaret Irick Roller) issued by Agricultural Insurance Company with Lupton, Sullivan, and Co. acting as the issuing agency. The January 29, 1943 certificate of dissolution is included as a loose item along with correspondence.

A listing of fires \$5,000 and over documents significant local fires at private residences and business including The Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia (1901); Stuarts Draft Milling Company (1916); Continental Leather Company (1922 in Augusta Springs and 1925 in Elkton); Woodberry Forest School (1923); and Shenandoah County School Board (1925).

The second bound volume, 1934-1943, is largely blank, but includes a typed copy of the certificate of incorporation, bylaws, and meeting minutes.

Keywords

Timelines (chronologies)
Minutes (administrative records)
Financial Records
Charters
Bylaws (administrative records)
Business records
Insurance companies -- 19th century
Insurance companies -- 20th century
Business records -- 19th century
Business records -- 20th century
Harrisonburg (Va.) -- History
Tim Abbott Americana

Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically into two folders.

Description of Subordinate Components

W. L. Dechert Company Historical Statistical Memoranda bound volume

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25499

Unit Date 1890-1943

Mixed Materials [1000898631] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Bound volume

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25500

Unit Date 1934-1943

Mixed Materials [1000898631] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

