



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

DuVivier & Co. records

1851-1935 [bulk 1870-1920]

MssCol 23000

Compiled by Susan Malsbury and Weatherly Stephan, 2015

Summary

Creator: DuVivier & Co.

Title: DuVivier & Co. records

Date: 1851-1935 [bulk 1870-1920]

Size: 12.07 linear feet (4 boxes, 76 volumes, 1 oversized folder)

Source: Purchased from Rabelais Inc., 2014.

Abstract: DuVivier & Co. was a New York City-based importer and distributor of wine and spirits. The company, founded in 1856 and located in lower Manhattan, imported products from France, Portugal, and Britain, and sourced domestic products. In addition to wines and spirits, the company occasionally distributed beer, bitters, olive oil, pickles, glassware, and condiments. DuVivier & Co. folded after the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment made their core business activity illegal. The records, which date from 1851 to 1935, consist of account ledgers, operations journals, salesman journals, and administrative files that document the processes related to the storage, distribution, and sale of goods; the effect of laws on the import and distribution of alcohol; and the market for wine, spirits, and specialty goods in the latter half of the 19th century and early 20th century. There is a small amount of later material from Charles S. DuVivier, a descendent of the company owners, regarding metal depositing processes.

Conditions Governing Access:

Researchers should be aware that materials in the collection are dirty and may have been exposed to mold.

Preferred citation: DuVivier & Co. records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Susan Malsbury and Weatherly Stephan, 2015 Bound volumes were moved into phase boxes.

Creator History

DuVivier & Co. was a New York City-based importer and distributor of wine and spirits. The company, founded in 1856, imported products from France, Portugal, and Britain, including Scottish and Irish spirits, as well as sourced domestic products like ryes, bourbons, and rum. In addition to wine and spirits, the company also occasionally distributed beer, bitters, olive oil, pickles, glassware, and condiments. DuVivier & Co. folded in the early 1920s after the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment made their core business activity illegal.

The company, originally called Brugiére & DuVivier, was founded by Charles Anthony DuVivier (1832-1903) and his relative, William Brugiére. Charles A. DuVivier's younger brother, Edward Alphonse Girault DuVivier (1839-1904), worked for a French import company before joining Brugiére & DuVivier in 1863. Shortly thereafter, the firm's name changed to DuVivier & Co.

DuVivier & Co. imported brands such as Perrier-Jouët, Hennessy, John Walker & Sons, Jameson, Plymouth Gin, Guinness Stout, and Bass Ale. Customers included well-known restaurants, hotels, fraternal clubs, and individuals in and around New York City, including Keens Chophouse, R.H. Macy & Co., the Murray Hill Hotel, the Fifth Avenue Hotel, the New York Athletic Club, the Harvard Club, the Metropolitan Club, and the Lotos Club. From 1863 to 1864, the company temporarily halted importing foreign goods and only dealt in domestic products due to the import duties imposed during the Civil War.

Throughout its existence, DuVivier & Co.'s main office was based in lower Manhattan, beginning at 9 Whitehall Street at its founding, moving to 49 Broad Street in 1881, and finally, to 22 Warren Street in the 1890s. The company held ancillary offices in Chicago, Illinois and Bordeaux, France, as well as additional bonded warehouses in Manhattan and Guttenberg, N.J. DuVivier & Co. also retained a mobile sales force that established accounts across the United States and in parts of Atlantic Canada.

In 1903, Charles A. DuVivier died and his son Charles L. DuVivier took over leadership of the company. Edward A. DuVivier remained on the board of directors until his death in 1904. That same year, the company faced bankruptcy proceedings but remained solvent until the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment, which took effect on January 17, 1920. The company spent the year leading up to ratification attempting to liquidate their inventory, ultimately shipping the remaining wine and spirits to Cuba and Canada in early 1920. While the company explored other products to sell and trade, DuVivier & Co. ultimately folded in 1922.

The DuVivier family is buried in a vault in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The DuVivier & Co. records date from 1851 to 1935 (bulk dates: 1870 to 1920) and document the business activities of the importer and distributor of wine and spirits. The collection consists of account ledgers, operations journals, salesmen journals, and administrative files with correspondence and legal documents. While the collection represents the full scope of DuVivier & Co.'s business activities, obvious gaps in the records reveal that this collection is only a portion of the company's original records.

The collection documents the processes related to the storage, distribution, and sale of goods; the effect of laws on the import and distribution of alcohol; and the market for wine, spirits, and specialty goods in the latter half of the 19th century and early 20th century. While DuVivier's sales are

represented throughout the collection, materials in each series list sales in different manners. In account books and salesman journals, sales are listed by customer name, while in operations ledgers, sales are listed under individual casks or shipments of products. Researchers can trace a product from its import, storage, bottling, pricing, sale, and delivery by working across the series.

DuVivier & Co.'s liquidation of their inventory in anticipation of the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment is well documented in Series IV through correspondence and inventories, as well as research files exploring alternative products to legally sell during Prohibition.

There is a small amount of material from the early 1930s created by Charles S. DuVivier, the son of DuVivier & Co.'s last owner, regarding metal depositing processes. Charles S. DuVivier's research into metal depositing was likely another attempt to revive DuVivier & Co.'s operations in a different industry, though it does not appear to have been successful.

The collection is in English and French.

Key Terms

Subjects

Alcoholic beverage industry -- New York (State) -- New York
Distributors (Commerce) -- New York (State) -- New York
Family-owned business enterprises -- New York (State) -- New York
Imports -- United States
Liquor industry -- New York (State) -- New York
Prohibition -- United States
Wine industry -- New York (State) -- New York

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Bankruptcy proceedings
Daybooks
Journals (accounts)
Ledgers (account books)
Merchandise inventories

Geographic Names

Lower Manhattan (New York, N.Y.)

Names

DuVivier, Charles A., 1832-1903
DuVivier, Charles L.
DuVivier, Edward, 1839-1904

Container List

Series I: Accounts 1858-1922 (3 folders, 1 oversized folder, and 30 volumes)

Series I contains checkbooks, ledgers, receipts, invoices, and order memoranda that document DuVivier & Co.'s income and expenses throughout the company's existence.

Checkbooks track DuVivier & Co.'s expenditures from 1906 to 1916 and contain registers, posted checks, and account balances. Some checkbooks also contain deposit slips, invoices, correspondence, and bank statements pasted into the binding. The register provides the date, check number, amount withdrawn, and a memo detailing the transaction while the posted check provides additional information such as the recipient's name. Occasionally there are withdrawal slips or promissory notes for small loans.

Ledgers include account books and daybooks. Account books usually contain an index at the beginning of the volume with entries appearing alphabetically by account or customer name, while daybooks list expenses and income chronologically. One early account book originates from Brugiere & DuVivier, the firm's earlier name. The ledgers were used to balance DuVivier & Co.'s revenue and expenses and contain entries for assets like bank accounts, sales, and merchandise; and expenditures such as duties, consignment, loans, and sundry expenses. There is one sundry ledger that relates to small expenditures like telephone bills, office supplies, and advertisements, as well as two ledgers that list sales only.

Along with the ledgers, this series holds a financial memoranda book, detailing discounts offered to clients, merchandise placed in collateral, and outstanding checks. Two customer indexes list customer names and addresses with references to account books that do not appear to correlate with those held in this collection. A sales file contains receipts, invoices, and order memoranda documenting customer orders as well as warehouse and manufacturing supplies purchased for the business just prior to its dissolution.

Arranged alphabetically by document type, with checkbooks and ledgers arranged chronologically. When available, spine titles of ledgers are noted in quotation marks.

Checkbooks

- v. 1 Colonial Trust Company 1906 February 5-26
Checks 1000-1094.
- v. 2 Colonial Trust Company 1906 February 26-March 3
Checks 1075-1294.
- v. 3 Colonial Trust Company 1906 June 26-1908 August 15
Checks 1576-1767.
- v. 5 Carnegie Trust Company 1908 August 17-October 27
Checks 6300-6584.
- v. 6 Hungarian American Bank 1910 November 5-1911 February 11
Checks 558-624; checks on and after July 6, 1911 are unnumbered.
- v. 7 The Chatham and Phenix National Bank 1911 October 11-1912 January 31
Checks 293-556.
- v. 8 The Chatham and Phenix National Bank 1912 November 19-1913 March 29
Checks 1237-1526.
- v. 9 The Chatham and Phenix National Bank 1914 December 19-1915 July 29
Checks 2868-4045.
- v. 10 The Chatham and Phenix National Bank 1915 August 3-1916 March 28
Checks 4046-4158.
- b. 1 f. 1 Checks 1918-1920
- v. 11 Customer Index circa 1870s-1880s
- o. 1 Customer Index circa 1880s-1900

Ledgers

Series I: Accounts (cont.)

Ledgers (cont.)

- v. 12 **1858-1860**
"Brugiere & DuVivier."
- v. 13 **1871-1875**
"Volume 2."
- v. 14 **1872-1876**
- v. 15 **1878-1882**
"Volume 3."
- v. 16 **1881-1882**
Daybook.
- v. 17 **1883-1907**
Sales--New York City.
- v. 18 **1887-1890**
"Volume 5."
- v. 19 **1889-1890**
Daybook.
- v. 20 **1890-1892**
Daybook.
- v. 21 **1891-1894**
"Volume 6."
- v. 22 **1894-1896**
"Volume A7."
- v. 23 **1895-1896**
"Volume B7."
- b. 1 f. 2 **1899, 1913-1915**
Loose items removed from volume 30.
- v. 24 **1900-1902**
- v. 25 **1906-1908**
- v. 26 **1909-1911**
"Sundry."
- v. 27 **1909-1913**
- v. 28 **1909-1915**
Daybook.
- v. 29 **1911-1913, 1919**
Sales.
- v. 30 **1913-1915**
See also: box 1, folder 2 for loose items.
- v. 31 **Memoranda Book 1895-1898**
- b. 1 f. 3 **Sales 1919**

Series II: Operations 1860-1921 (1 box and 19 volumes)

Series II documents the import, storage, bottling, and distribution operations of DuVivier & Co. with mixing formulas, inventories, merchandise delivery records, and journals. Operations journals contain entries arranged by product vintage or spirit type and list inventories of spirits, wine, and beer, with less frequent entries for bitters, pickled fruits and vegetables, olives, sardines, olive oil, vinegar, and prepared foods like tomato and cucumber sauces. Each page in an operations journal records a particular shipment of a product, the delivery date, and the subsequent sales with customer names listed. Some journals also list the formulas used in mixing and the costs of duties, shipping, storage, bottling, and freight for each product, with calculations for sales prices. One operations journal, as well as files for formulas and general operations, identify mixing and bottling operations by a unique identification number rather than by product shipment.

Arranged alphabetically by document type or subject. Journals are arranged chronologically, with spine titles noted in quotation marks when available.

- b. 1 f. 4-5 **Formulas 1870s-1910**
- b. 1 f. 6 **Imports 1917-1918**
- v. 32 **Inventory--Wine and Spirits 1905-1907**
- Journals**
- v. 33 **1860-1862**
 "Brugiere & DuVivier, Volume 1."
- v. 34 **1879-1882**
- v. 35 **1884-1888**
- v. 36 **1885-1889**
 "Champagne, Volume 1."
- v. 37 **1889-1892**
- v. 38 **1890-1898**
 "Operations 1-192."
- v. 39 **1891-1895**
 "Perrier-Jouët."
- v. 40 **1891-1904**
 "Spirits Casks, Volume 5."
- v. 41 **1892-1902**
- v. 42 **1894-1903**
 "Chicago, Volume 2."
- v. 43 **1895-1902**
 "Wine Casks, Volume 6."
- v. 44 **1895-1907**
 "Caps and Labels, Volume 2."
- v. 45 **1898-1900**
 "Foreign Spirits."
- v. 46 **1899-1902**
 "Wines and Spirits."
- v. 47 **1899-1903**
 "Plymouth Gin."
- v. 48 **1899-1906**
 "Wines."
- v. 49 **1900-1904**
 "Spirits Cases."

Series II: Operations (cont.)
Journals (cont.)

- v. 50 1902-1904
"Domestic Spirits, Volume 6."
- b. 1 f. 7 Merchandise Delivery 1919-1920
- b. 1 f. 8-9 Operations--General 1906, 1919-1921

Series III: Salesman Journals 1852-1899 (1 folder and 21 volumes)

Salesman Journals documented sales calls, solicitations, and reconnaissance visits to liquor stores, grocers, taverns, restaurants, druggists, and tobacconists, showing the unique characteristics of markets for alcohol and specialty goods in North America during the mid-to-late 19th century. Each journal corresponds to an individual city, state, or region, and contains alphabetical entries for each establishment visited. Entries primarily list date of visit, product name and quantities sold, and method of payment. More detailed entries include the salesman's narrative descriptions of the premises, the proprietor, and his perceived character. Most of the journals include an index of customers and the salesman's impressions of the city, including its key industries, appearance, character, and population.

The journals vary in completeness, and for some regions, only portions of the journal are extant. Salesman journals for Cincinnati, O.H.; Louisville, K.Y.; Memphis, T.N.; Richmond and Petersburg, V.A.; and Newburgh, Nyack, and Yonkers, N.Y. are particularly detailed. It is unclear as to how DuVivier & Co. collected journals from individual salesmen, or why the journals were retained.

Arranged alphabetically by state or country name. For some regions, multiple states are listed in one journal.

- v. 51 Canada--St. John, Quebec, and Halifax 1856-1857
- v. 52 Colorado--Denver; Nebraska--Omaha 1900
- v. 53 Colorado--Pueblo 1881
- v. 54 Colorado--Leadville undated
- v. 55 Connecticut--Bridgeport, Danbury, and South Norwalk 1894-1899
- v. 56 Connecticut--Merrow, New London, Norwich, and Willimantic 1869-1873
- v. 57 Illinois--Belleville 1881
- v. 58 Illinois--Chicago and Hollis 1855-1857
- v. 59 Iowa--Muscatine, Dubuque, and Davenport; Illinois--Rock Island and Quincy 1855-1857
- v. 60 Kentucky--Louisville 1855-1859
- v. 61 Missouri--St. Louis 1853-1859
- v. 62 New Jersey--Hoboken and Newark 1901
- b. 2 f. 1 New York (State) 1868-1875
Fragments only.
- v. 63 New York (State)--Lockport; Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh 1856-1857
- b. 2 f. 1 New York (State)--New Rochelle and Port Chester; Connecticut--Stamford, Norwalk, and Bridgeport undated
Fragments only.
- v. 64 New York (State)--New York 1873-1875
- v. 65 New York (State)--Newburgh, Nyack, and Yonkers 1894
- v. 66 Ohio--Cincinnati 1867-1873
- v. 67 Ohio--Cleveland, Toledo and Sandusky; Michigan--Detroit 1856-1958
- v. 68 Tennessee--Memphis 1852-1856
- b. 2 f. 1 Virginia--Alexandria and Richmond 1855-1856
Fragments only.

Series III: Salesman Journals (cont.)

- v. 69 Virginia--Danville and Lynchburg 1869-1872
- v. 70 Virginia--Petersburg and Richmond 1869-1879
- b. 2 f. 1 Wisconsin--Milwaukee and Kenosha; Illinois--Galena undated
Fragments only.
- v. 71 Wyoming--Cheyenne; Colorado--Denver 1881

Series IV: Administrative Files 1851-1924 (3 boxes and 6 volumes)

Administrative Files contain correspondence, legal documents, insurance statements, and product research that document DuVivier's business activities, primarily from 1903, when Charles L. DuVivier assumed ownership of the firm, to its dissolution in 1922.

The correspondence, in both French and English, documents business transactions of the New York office, especially the liquidation of DuVivier & Co.'s inventory in anticipation of the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment. A letterpress copybook belonging to Charles L. DuVivier contains letters to his father and the home office during business trips to France. Correspondents include remote employees, primarily Victor Fisher in France and Fulgence Nolan in Guttenberg, N.J.; importers; and companies DuVivier contracted for goods and services, including bankers John Munroe & Co. and Meacham-Buxton, a collections agency.

Legal documents originate from lawsuits about ownership of the company and bankruptcy filings. Product and supply inventories and other asset listings that detail the value of the company immediately preceding Prohibition are contained within the bankruptcy documents, as the inventories and listings were created for the court proceedings.

Product research includes inquiries into alternatives to alcoholic beverages like tea, coffee, and chicory as well as other possible business ventures using chemical or mechanical processes. Reference publications were kept by office staff and provide documentation of the larger alcohol bottling and distribution industry. This series also contains sample labels for DuVivier-imported wines, and blank stationery from the lower Manhattan office.

Arranged alphabetically by subject or document type.

Correspondence

- b. 2 f. 2-3 1914-1922
 - v. 72 Letterpress Copybook 1896-1905
- b. 2 f. 4 Fischer, Victor 1919
- b. 2 f. 5 John Munroe & Co 1917-1919
- b. 2 f. 6 Meacham-Buxton Mercantile Agency 1912
- b. 2 f. 7 Nolin, Fulgence 1918-1920
- b. 2 f. 8 Customer Addresses 1880s-1910s
- b. 2 f. 9 Exportation of Wine 1920
- b. 2 f. 10 Insurance 1904-1920
- b. 2 f. 11 Labels 1880s-1910
- b. 3 f. 1-5 Legal Files 1888-1922
- b. 4 f. 1-3 Legal Files 1918-1922
 - v. 73 Merchant Addresses--London 1870s-1900
- b. 4 f. 4 Product Research 1920-1923

Reference Publications

Bonfort's Wine and Spirits Circular

- v. 74 1896-1898
- v. 75 1899-1902
- v. 76 1905-1906
- v. 77 *Engineers' and Mechanics' Pocketbook* 1851

Series IV: Administrative Files (cont.)

Reference Publications (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 5 *L'Oenophile* 1899
- b. 4 f. 6-7 Stationery 1880s-1910s
- b. 4 f. 8 **Series V: Charles S. DuVivier Files 1931-1935 (1 folder)**

Charles S. DuVivier was the son of the Charles L. DuVivier. His files include correspondence and research on a Swedish method for aluminizing metals, which may have been related to an unsuccessful attempt to revive DuVivier & Co.'s operations in a different industry, and also include undated geography homework.