

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding Aid for the

Grand Rapids Public Library  
Stereo Card Collection

Collection # 076

September 2009 version

Abstract

The Grand Rapids Public Library Stereo Card Collection contains many early views of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The majority of these identify Schuyler C. Baldwin, Grand Rapids & Kalamazoo, Michigan, as the photographer. Included are views of late nineteenth century Grand Rapids, the United States Centennial celebration in Grand Rapids and the Historic Furniture Exhibit in 1928. As of Sept. 2000, there were 361 items in the collection. One of several collections in the Grand Rapids History & Special Collections Center Archives, developed around physical format, this collection is occasionally added to as new accessions of a small number of stereo cards are received. Many of these original images have been reproduced by later photographers, and thus may be seen again in the archival collections for those photographers, including Hooper, Fitch, and Anderson & Winslow. Some historical viewers are also available in the department, though these are rarely used, and may not be fully intact.

Collection #: 076

Accession #: 00.000, 1986.054, 1986.352, 1990.12, 1990.013, Jewett Coll., Lawrence Coll.

Donor: Numerous & various

Span dates: ca. 1880-1928

Original archival processing date June 1988, with several additions.

Size: 1.6 linear feet (19 inches)

Related Collections

Coll. 185 has occasional copy images which appear to be from stereocards, perhaps in this collection. Also, Coll. 185-3-43 has copy photos of ca. 1880 images, with an unidentified man viewing stereographs using a viewer.

Coll. 364, Thomas R. and Debra C. Dilley Collection, includes a series of stereographic photographs and also Dilley 2007 book on stereographs.

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
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Box Inventory 9/2009		
1	Folders 1-43	large shoebox
2	Folders 44-98	gray full lid 5.5x8.5x12.5
3	Copy photos + Holmes article	slim

\*

NOTE: Other copy photos made from the stereographs in this collection may have found their way in generic photo collections 054 & 185, the Fitch, Hooper, Anderson & Winslow collections, as well as other collections where the original source of the copy image is not documented.

## History

The stereo card, or stereograph, as it is often referred to in photographic reference works (also stereo view or stereo window), was introduced to the World at the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition when Sir Charles Brewster's stereoscope, with a twin lens camera, was exhibited. Credit for the invention of the stereoscope is given to British physicist Charles Wheatstone in 1831, by Oliver Wendell Holmes\*, who himself designed a more convenient handheld type of viewer that was widely marketed in the U.S. Stereographs contain two images, produced either by 2 cameras or a double lens camera, which are mounted side on side on a sturdy card. Thus, the images are either identical or nearly identical, and when viewed with the special viewer may present a three-dimensional effect. Interest in stereographs began to wane around 1910, and died out in the 1920's.

The images on the cards provided both recreational and informational content, but were rarely used for portrait photos. National production houses of stereographs sold sets of cards on specific topics. One such late example in this collection is the Keystone (Philadelphia) set of 1928 Grand Rapids furniture exhibit cards. The cards included in this collection provide exterior and interior views of Grand Rapids buildings, street scenes, and other views of general interest to the residence of the area. Some other geographies of Michigan area also represented, including Bay View, Petoskey, and Mackinaw Island, Michigan.

\*A copy of Holmes article from the Atlantic Monthly, June 1859 has been added to Box 3 of this collection.

### Scope and Content

The stereographs in this collection have been collected by a succession of librarians, with about half of the collection a single donation by Ross DeWindt, 1986.054. Where known, the accession number for the item has been recorded with the entry in the finding aid, though much of this information has been lost.

There is evidence the stereographs have been separated from the accession with which they were received, such as those found here which have "Lawrence Collection" on the back. These were probably received along with other material in the Lawrence Collection (Coll. 002).

The collection contains many of the closest-to-first-generation prints of historic Grand Rapids, Michigan photographs (mounted on stereo cards). The images present original views of late nineteenth century Grand Rapids buildings, houses, street scenes, logging, panoramic views, the United States Centennial celebration in Grand Rapids and the Historic Furniture Exhibit.

Some cards have no source identification. Other cards list the photographer. Occasionally, the back of the card is used, for an information note on the images, or for advertising. Occasionally, the name of the firm selling or providing the card is added, along with the photographer. Most of the cards in this collection are from photographer Schuyler C. Baldwin of Grand Rapids or Kalamazoo, Michigan. He used a variety of colored card stock, but most often on a red/orange card or light green, but also pink. His photos are squarely cut, as compared with some from an unidentified source, which cut the top of both views in an arch. Several unidentified cards use the red/orange as well, which overall appears to be the primary color backing for the cards. Other mounting colors in the collection include a cream color or a golden yellow. Baldwin's cards are not all the same size.

There is one set of cards in the collection from a leading national stereography company, Keystone View Company. This set currently contains 50 cards, including #1, the title card, which has an extensive historical note. That card is titled "An Exposition of American Furniture-Making, from 1878-1928, on the occasion of the hundredth semi-annual furniture market at Grand Rapids. The other cards are labeled "Grand Rapids Historical Furniture Exhibit in connection with One Hundredth Furniture Market, Jan. 3-21, 1928." This set has two numbering systems, 1-50, or 4150-4199. This set has no. 5 or 4154, missing, but has two copies of no. 8, or 4157.

Photographers or producers listed on the various stereocards in this collection include:

Child's Art Gallery, Marquette, Mich.  
L.V.Moulton (Grand Rapids)  
Northern Michigan Views / B.D. Jackson, photographer

O.W. Horton, including a set of Centennial Views, and one item with a typed historical note  
on verso

C.L. Merrill & Co., (Grand Rapids)

Merrill, Bayne & Co.

Schuyler C. Baldwin (Grand Rapids or Kalamazoo)

Views of the Valley City / photographed by I.G. Tompkins.

Reproduction note

Reproductions made as close to the original image as possible are generally considered of better quality content. Thus, reproductions made from these stereo cards may be of better quality than those made from one of the second or third generation prints copied by other photographers.

However, some of these cards show their wear & tear, and the “original” presented in these well used versions may not now copy as well.

“L” = Item created to the Lawrence Collection

“R” = A copy photo is in this collection, Box 3.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	Aldrich Building (old) (1) L
1	2	Ball House (2)
1	3	Bay View (Mich.) (6)
1	4	Berkey & Gay Furniture Company Cable Power (1) [86.054]
1	5	Berkey & Gay Furniture Company Showroom (2)
1	6	Bissell Sweeper Floral Arrangement (1) [Bissell Estate]
1	7	Brownell Pharmacy (1)
1	8	Campau Square Views (14) [L=1, 1986.54=5, Jewett=1]
1	9	Centennial Cabin (2) [1986.54=1, Garfield=1]
1	10	Church. Interior (1) [1986.54]
1	11	City Drug Store (2)
1	12	City Drug Store. Interior (2)
1	13	Deer Hunting (2) [1986.54-1]
1	14	Eaton & Lyon Bookstore. Interior (2)[1986.54]
1	14.5	Fife Lake Railroad Station (1) [00.[437].1, 9/5/2001] Original folder missing 2/26/2002
1	15	Fire. 1873 (5) [1986.54=2, Johnston=1]
1	16	Firefighters Review (1)[1986.54]
1	17	First Methodist Church (1) [1986.54]
1	18	First Methodist Church. Interior (1) [1986.54]
1	19	Floods (2) [1986.054=1, 1990.012=1]
1	20	Floral Arrangements (6) [1986.054]
1	21	Fountain Street Baptist Church [1986.054]
1	22	Fountain Street Baptist Church. Interior (4) [1986.054=2]
1	23	Gardens (10)[1986.054] Note: See the Dudley Waters Estate images in Coll. 364, one of which duplicates an image of this set, which may mean that these are images of the Waters Estate, as well.
1	24	Gazebo (2)[1986.054]
1	25	Gilbert House [1986.054]
1	26	Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Building (1)[1986.054] R
1	27	Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Depot (1) [1986.054]
1	28	Grand Rapids Booming Company Grounds (1) [1986.054]
1	29	Grand Rapids Public Library. Interior (Ledyard Bldg., sw cor. Pearl & Ottawa) (3) [1986.054=1]

GRPL Stereo Cards  
Collection #76

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	30	Grand Rapids Public Museum. Displays (5) [1986.054]
1	31	Grand Rapids Views (24) [1986.054=13, Jewett=1, Thompson=1]
1	32	Grand Rapids Water Pumping Station (1) [1986=054]
1	33	Grand River Road (14) [1986.054=9]
1	34	Grand River Views (8) [1986.054=4, Thompson=1]
1	35	Grand River Views. Log Jam (11 + 1 10/11/2004) [1986.054=7, including Bissell Est.] .12 Transferred from Hooper, H-52, This is an original stereocard, which has GRPL historical markings that indicate its presence in the collections before Hooper. It may or may not be the same view as the original Hooper H-52 image. The image shows a log jam on the Grand Rapids, 1883, from the Bridge Street Bridge. A hut is stranded on a pedestal, which may be the Cable Power building.
1	36	Grand River Views. Logging (9) [1986.054=8]
1	37	Grand Trunk Railroad Bridge (1) [1986.054]
1	38	Graves House. Rev. Dr. Samuel T. Graves & Mrs. Graves, plus two sons. (1) [1986.054]
1	39	Graves House. Interior (1) [1986.054]
1	40	Gull Lake (Mich.) (1) [1986.054]
1	41	Harbor Springs (Mich.) (1) Historic Furniture Exhibit, 100th Furniture Market, Jan. 3-21, 1928
1	42a	(Nos. 1-4, 6-7, 8(2), 9-17) [1986.352]
1	42b	(Nos. 18-33) [1986.352]
1	42c	(Nos. 34-50) [1986.352]
1	43	Horton House. Interior (2) [1986.054=2]
2	44	Houses (8.5) [1986.054=4] Including: Farm house on Ball's Farm Eagle Mills; George W. Allen House, site of Ryerson
2	45	Houses. Interior (2) [1986.054]
2	46	Indian Housing (2)
2	47	Jefferson Avenue Views (3) [1990.013=1, 1986.054=1, L=1]
2	48	Kent County Jail (2) (1986.054=1]
2	49	Ledyard Building (2)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	50	Lowell (Mich.) (1)
2	51	Mackinac Island (Mich.) (10)
2	52	Manistee River Railroad Bridge (1) [photo by James Bayne]
2	53	Market Street Views (1) [1986.054]
2	54	Melon Field (1) [1986.054]
2	55	Michigan Chair Company [1986.054]
2	56	Michigan National Guard Drill (1)
2	57	Miller's Landing, Reeds Lake (4) [1986.054]
2	58	Monroe Center Views (4) [1986.054=2]
2	59	Monroe Street Views (15) [1986.054=5, L=1]
2	60	Morris House (3) [1986.054]
2	61	O-wash-ta-nong Club (1) [1986.054]
2	62	Ogden House (1)
2	63	Park Congregational Church (1) [1986.054]
2	64	Pearl Street Bridge (2) [1986.054=1] 1. Trestle type bridge, on stone(?) supports. View to the east with the Belting Manufactory, F. Raniville, the first building on the left. This is referred to as the Raniville old power building in the 1912 City Directory at 241 to 253 Pearl (formerly 1-5 Pearl). The first eastern intersection east during this time period is Campau Ave. The next intersection is Monroe St., with the Pantlind Hotel on the NW corner. The building with the tower on the hill is the high school.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	65	<p>Pearl Street Views (7) [1986.054=3]</p> <p>1. View west on Pearl toward the covered bridge over the Grand River. Sweets Hotel is the lighter building on the right, on the NW corner of Canal &amp; Pearl. Seen on Pearl are the Grand Rapids Times and the California Wine House, next to the ? Museum. Ca. 1872.</p> <p>2-3. Pearl Street west from Powers Opera House at right. Park Brothers Gun Shop is at 58 Pearl on the left (south side). Sweet's Hotel is the last building on the right, at the corner of Pearl &amp; Canal.</p> <p>4. View east on Pearl from the end of the covered Pearl St. Bridge. Sweet's Hotel is the first building on the left. The twin towers of St. Mark's Church on Division St. at the end of Pearl St., can be seen in the distance.</p> <p>5. Another view east on Pearl the first block east of the bridge. The cross street before Sweet's Hotel is Campau Ave. by this time. The street after Sweet's hotel on the left is Canal St. north, until 1912.</p> <p>6. Bird's eye view east from Campau Square.</p> <p>7. View east on Pearl to St. Marks Church on Division St., with only one of the two towers for that church visible at right. In the background are the high school with bell tower, and a church, which may be the Second Reformed Holland Church on Bostwick between Fountain and Lyon during this time period. Note that this view dates before the first U.S. Government building was constructed between Division &amp; Ionia, and Pearl &amp; Lyon. [before 1880]</p>
2	66	People. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher (1)
2	67	People. Dr. Samuel T. Graves, Pastor, Fountain St. Church (2)
2	68	Petosky (Mich.) (2)
2	69	Phoenix Furniture Company (1) [1986.054]
2	70	Reeds Lake (6) [1986.054=3]
2	71	Sangerfest Hall (2) [1986.054=1]
2	72	Sault Ste. Marie (Mich.) Locks (1)
2	73	St. James Church. Interior (2)
2	74	St. Marks Episcopal Church (3)
2	75	Steamboat. "Alberta" (1)
2	76	Street Views (unidentified) (3) [1986.054]
2	77	Sweets Hotel [Out 8/27/2001]
2	78	Tenting (3) [1986.054=2]
2	79	Tower House. Interior (1) [1986.054]

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	80	United States Centennial Celebration (25) [1986.054=12]
2	81	United States Post Office (2)
2	81.5	Universalist Church (1868-1892), btw. Ionia & Ottawa on Pearl St. Interior View toward alter/organ) (1, 8/9/2001) [Putnam]
2	82	Veterans Park (2) [1986.054]
2	83	Voigt Mill [1986.054]
2	84	Water Reservoir (3) [1986.054=2]
2	85	Waters House. Garden [1986.054]
2	86	Wood Turnings (2) [1986.054]
		<b>Additions</b>
2	87	Amberg House (1)
2	88	City Hall in construction (1)
2	89	Norton Indian Mounds (1)
2	90	St. Andrews Cathedral (3) [1986.054=1]
2	91	South Division School (1)
2	92	Voigt, Herpolsheimer & Co. Interior (1, 7/1/2005) 1. View with the line of decorative pillars to the right. A stairway to the second floor is toward the end of the store at left, and the circular shape before the stairway may indicate a doorway. Neg. 3417. For a view which may be from the other end of the store, see Coll. 248-9-15 or 185-2-11
2	93	Circus Parade (2)
2	94	L.J. Rindge & Co. (1)
2	95	Store. Interior (1)

**Series II. Publications**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 3 | x | Grand Rapids in Stereographs, 1860-1900 / Thomas R. Dilley.<br>Charleston, S.C. : Arcadia, 2007.<br>P2007.061.1 Added 8/8/2007 |
| 3 | x | “Stereograph book tells story of early GR” by Erin Albanese. East Grand<br>Rapids Cadence, July 25, 2007. Photocopy.           |

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