

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding Aid for the

Widdicomb Company and John Widdicomb Company Records

Collection # 017

September 2009 version

Abstract

The Widdicomb Company records include correspondence, papers, account books, a few photographs and miscellaneous materials of the various companies associated with the Grand Rapids, Michigan based Widdicomb family furniture companies from 1858 to 1954. Included are at least one item associated with the companies George Widdicomb & Sons (1857-1863), Widdicomb Brothers & Richards Co. (1869-1873), Widdicomb Furniture Co. (1873-1950), Widdicomb Mantel Company(1893-1897), Widdicomb-Mueller Corp.(1950-1960) and John Widdicomb Company(1897-2002). In addition, there are some records pertaining to the Halladay Lumber Co., of which Harry Widdicomb was part-owner. For 145 years, the Widdicomb name has been recognized in the furniture world. The earliest Widdicomb company was organized in 1857, by George Widdicomb, a British trained cabinet maker, employing 12 men, plus his four sons Harry, William, George Jr., and John. Except during the Civil War, a Widdicomb furniture firm was run by the family until 1916. The John Widdicomb Co. was founded in 1897 when John left the parent company to form his own firm. Though he died in 1910, that firm continued under his name until the 1990's, and purchased the title of the original company in the 1970's. The papers in this collection illustrate every day business of the various companies from 1865 to 1951.

Collection #: 017

Accession #: 1986.103, 1986.023, 1986.143

Span dates: 1854-1951

Original archival processing date: Sept. 1986

Size: 25.625 linear ft. (307.5 inches)

Related Collections

The GRPL Archives contains a number of furniture related collections which may contain information on the Widdicomb companies. In particular, see:

Coll. 232, GRPL Trade Catalog Collections

Coll. 233, GRPL Furniture Industry Collection. Includes an address by William Widdicomb and a publication on Mahogany authored by Widdicomb.

Coll. 084, Furniture Manufacturers Association Records.

Box Summary

<u>Box No.</u>	<u>Description of Contents</u>	<u>Box Description</u>
Box inventory 8/4/2009		
Note: Select reboxing 2/13/2007		
Box list revised & corrected 2/14/2007		
1	oral history/portraits/account books	old Blue legal standard
2	papers and records	old blue legal standard
3	ledger [v.13, 2 parts]	gray lid/w 3.5x12x17.5 window
4	Box 4 contents shifted to space in other boxes & old box discarded 2/13/2007.	
5	business correspondence	old blue legal standard
6	business correspondence	old blue legal standard
7	business correspondence	Folio clam
Reboxing for document protection in progress. R. Mayne. 2/12/2007		
8	business correspondence	standard
Box change from legal to standard, 2/13/2007		
9	correspondence(Kahn)	old blue standard
10	correspondence (charities)	old blue legal standard
11	account book	gray lid/w 4x11.5x17.5 window
12	account book	old blue standard
13	audit reports	old blue legal standard
14	business invoices	old blue legal standard
15	check receipts	gray lid/w4x11.5x17.5 window
16	bus.transactions/financial	old blue legal standard
Also included legal sized items formerly in boxes 4 & 8.		
17	ledgers/time books	old blue standard legal
18	trial balance	gray lid/w 4x11.5x17.5
19	map of timber holdings	gray lid/w4x16x20.5
20	Halladay Lumber Co.	full lid 3x10x13
21	Halladay Lumber-index Photos Miscellaneous	old blue standard legal
22	Halladay Lumber-daybook	Folio clam
Box change 2/12/2007		
23	Halladay lumber- journal	gray lid/w 4x16x20.5
24	Halladay Lumber-Cash journal	graylid/w 3.5x11.5x17.5 window
25	Halladay Lumber-ledger	gray lid/w 3.5x11.5x17.5 window
26	Halladay Lumber-ledger	gray lid/w 3.5x16x20.5 window
27	supplement	standard legal
28A	Cash books "B" + Trade cat. Mantels, 1893	small Clam

<u>Box No.</u>	<u>Description of Contents</u>	<u>Box Description</u>
28B	Case book "F" or [v.1]	small Clam
29	purchase jnl.	Oversized shelves 1.5x25x25
30	Cash Books, v. [3]&[13]	gray lidded
31	Cash book v. [2]	gray lidded
32	Volume [11]	3" print.
33	Vols. 4, 10, 12, 14	Bully box

Also, 6 large volumes are unboxed, wrapped in bubble wrap. These are currently numbered [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [15]

Several boxes from this collection are on the oversized shelves.

Reboxing note, 2/13/2007

Item found smashed down in boxes due to extra space and wrong sized boxes. Some oversized items from old boxes 7 & 8 moved to clam shell boxes. Several others boxes consolidated, to free shelf space. Legal sized materials moved to Box 16. Empty Box 4 removed from the box list.

Processing note:

Folders were originally assigned chronologically for the entire collection, which often leads to problems when reboxing is desired later. Reboxing has been done selectively to better protect materials and to consolidate to conserve shelf space. Box and folder numbers changed for the materials rehoused, with some box and folder numbers not reused. 2/13/2007

Business books were ordered chronologically.

Additional processing needs:

- Microfilming priority.
- Correspondence appears to be not always in order as described, and should be completely prepared before microfilming.
- Deteriorating conditions Box 32 Box is too big, and is to be replaced when better fitting box is available.
- The standard boxes are mostly old blue legal which are no longer acid free, and have torn white plastic handles.
- Several legal boxes have only letter sized materials or legal and letter.
- The boxes with window labels, which weakens the box structurally, should also be reboxed in the future.

History

From 1857 until 2002 the Widdicomb name was synonymous with Grand Rapids furniture making. The first Widdicomb firm was a cabinet shop, George Widdicomb & Sons, and was started in 1857 by the British trained cabinet maker, along with his sons, William, Harry, John & George, Jr. At the outbreak of the Civil War all four sons enlisted, leaving the father to carry on the business, which struggled along precariously until it expired in 1864.

In 1865 the oldest two boys (William and George Jr.) came home and started a small shop near the foot of the East Side Canal. At the close of the war Harry and John returned and became associated with them. All four were skilled craftsmen and possessed a thorough practical knowledge on the making of furniture. On January 1, 1869, Theodore F. Richards bought into the business and the company became known as Widdicomb Brothers & Richards, composed of William, Harry, and John Widdicomb (George Jr. having died in March, 1866), and T. F. Richards. The firm quickly gained a reputation as one of the finest manufacturers of bedroom furniture.

On December 1, 1873, the company was incorporated with \$150,000 and became known as the Widdicomb Furniture Company. The officers of that company were: William Widdicomb, President; T. F. Richards, Vice President; John Widdicomb, Secretary; and Harry Widdicomb, Treasurer. In addition, the brothers were each in charge of separate departments, William having the office management, Harry the power plant problems and John being factory superintendent. The company was located on the corner of Fourth Street and the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad tracks, which afforded adequate transportation facilities. Overall, they had about 150 men on their payroll, turning out approximately \$80,000 worth of goods annually.

In 1883 William Widdicomb retired from the company to accept the position of Cashier in the Grand Rapids National Bank, but in 1894 he returned to the furniture industry. In 1897 he was made president of the company with Roger W. Butterfield as vice president, Roger W. Griswold, secretary and George R. Widdicomb, treasurer (son of ?).

In 1893, the Widdicomb Mantel Company had been established, and with the restructuring of the parent company in 1897, John Widdicomb took this company as the basis of his own new company, the John Widdicomb Co. He started his own plant across the street from the original Widdicomb Furniture Company. It continued under his direction until his death in 1910.

On January 1, 1916, the original family owned Widdicomb Furniture Co. was sold to Joseph G. Griswold, Maynard A. Guest, Godfrey Von Platen, Heber W. Curtis, and Chalmer Curtis. The Widdicombs severed their connection with the company with which they had been identified since 1865, but the name was preserved. The officers of that company were: Joseph Griswold, president; Heber W. Curtis, vice president; Maynard A. Guest, secretary; and Godfrey Von Platen, treasurer.

History continued ...

When John Widdicomb died in 1910, the tradition for quality and fine design was carried on by his son Harry Jr., and their successors with the continuing reputation for making fine furniture products. John L. Stuart and J. Fred Lyon, both of who purchased an interest in the firm, joined Burt A. Hathaway, part owner of the firm, in the 1920's. In 1930 Mr. John L. Stuart was the company's sales manager; in 1939 he became general manager and shortly after that, he became president.

Ralph Widdicombe, a nephew of John who retained the old English spelling of his name, had earlier become interested in the designing of furniture, and when his uncle branched out for himself, Ralph joined him. For 53 years, until his retirement in 1951, Ralph Widdicomb, who was known as the dean of furniture designers, designed all John Widdicomb Co. furniture. Although Ralph is remembered best for his classical designs, it was his modern turn-of-the-century bedroom suite that was awarded first prize at the Paris Exposition in 1900. In 1924, working from models he had procured in Europe, Ralph Widdicombe introduced Louis XV Provincial designs, the first of their kind to be made in the United States. He started a wave of popularity for French Provincial, which still continues. A bombe bureau, the first such design, is still a much sought after pattern in John Widdicomb collection today.

In 1950, John Widdicomb Co. acquired the famous William A. Berkey Co., another old established maker of fine quality English furniture, and Vanderley Bros. in 1951. The Grand Rapids Bookcase and Chair Co. of Hastings, Michigan, was added to its holdings in 1956, but was latter sold.

In July of 1969, Furniture Corp. of America purchased John Widdicomb Furniture Co. In 1964 when Stuart was made chairman of the board, John D. Hanink had been named president of the company. He and his team of officers included: vice presidents, John W. Shockley and Gordon Stuart, son-in-law and son of John Stuart who died in 1966; treasurer, Allen D. Benson, and secretary and counsel, F. William Hutchinson.

The "Widdicomb" name, shared by the two manufacturers since John left the firm in 1897, was brought together again in November 1970 when John Widdicomb Co. purchased the name and goodwill of the Widdicomb Furniture Co., the latter having ceased production several years previously:

In February, 1973, the company was sold to Hickory Furniture Co. of North Carolina; it was operated as a wholly-owned subsidiary. There were no changes made in the administrative level of the company; Hanink kept the president office. Overall, the company was operated as a subsidiary of the Hickory Company.

History continued ...

On September 5, 1986, three men with commercial furniture backgrounds (Michael S. Greengard, David Miller and Michael L. Levitas) and a group of investors bought the 128-year old company from Hickory Furniture Co. The Widdicomb investors each own one-sixth of the firm. Greengard was considered the President of the Co. Other partners and their positions include Miller, vice president of operations; Levitas, vice president of marketing; David Zagaroli, an independent furniture designer and consultant and designer for Widdicomb; and Gerald Mason, a Grand Rapids businessman who helped organize the investor's group.

The company, located at 601 Fifth Street NW, still produces the top-of-the-line residential furniture, but is also expanding in the area of executive office furniture.

The papers and records portray the economic history of the Widdicomb furniture business. The audit reports, account records, cash books, ledgers, business invoices and transactions, and financial statements illustrate the every day business proceedings of the companies from 1865 to 1951. The business correspondences and other papers show the personal and professional side of how the companies were operated. The collection also contains check receipts, by-laws of the John Widdicomb Co., time book, trial balance, day book, maps of timber holdings, cutting order records, mortgage bonds, cash journal, purchase journal, passbooks to Stockings Second Addition-city of Grand Rapids, lumber sales by company and individual, historical notes, and portraits. Photographs pertain to the companies. Miscellaneous materials include autograph cards, papers pertaining to Edwin Widdicomb, Practical Book-Keeping Key, Mantel Designs Book, and letters pertaining to the Widdicomb Furniture Co. and John Widdicomb.

The John Widdicomb Company, closely woven with family history and harmony, is recognized for its rich heritage in the manufacture of exquisite furniture products. For 128 years the specialties of the company included chamber suits, chiffoniers, bedsteads, and bedroom furniture in quarter oak, ash, birch, and maple.

Scope and Content

Nine cubic feet of papers and records pertain to Widdicomb Furniture Co., while eight cubic feet of papers and records pertain to John Widdicomb Co. The Halladay Lumber Co. series contains one cubic feet of records. The papers and records cover 1854 to 1951.

On December 1, 1873, the Widdicomb Furniture Co. was incorporated, and John Widdicomb Co. was incorporated in 1897. In 1970 John Widdicomb Co. purchased the Widdicomb Furniture Co. name.

A majority of the invoices pertain to John when he was with Widdicomb Furniture Co.

The collection consists of five series, Historical Notes, Portraits, Papers and Records of the Widdicomb Furniture Co., Papers and Records of the John Widdicomb Co., and Records of the Halladay Lumber Co. In addition, it consists of sub-series: audit reports, business correspondence, account books, business invoices, business transactions, cash book, cash journal, day book, financial statements, ledgers, mortgage bonds, purchase journal, stock receipts, correspondence (John Widdicomb-Jacques Kahn, and John Widdicomb-Uptegrove & Bros.), by-laws of the John Widdicomb Co., church charities correspondence, check receipts, cutting order records, time book, trial balance, maps of timber holdings, passbooks to Stockings Second Addition-city of Grand Rapids, lumber sales by company and individual, and miscellaneous.

The papers and records of the Widdicomb Furniture Co., and John Widdicomb Co. are most valuable for tracing the economic history of their businesses. These series provide the debits, credits, cash or notes receivable, financial expenditures, and statements of transactions showing the everyday business proceedings of the companies. Basically, the everyday business proceedings of the companies from 1865 to 1951 are provided through the sub-series: account books, cash books, cash journals, business transactions, financial statements, ledgers, trial balances, and day books. The business correspondences include letters from customers, suppliers, transporters, and stockholders. The collection also portrays the human side of the furniture companies. The church charity correspondence consists of letters pertaining to donations made by the companies to the churches in the format of furniture. Overall, these series provide an understanding of how the Widdicomb companies were operated, how they treated their customers and suppliers and vice versa, and their involvement in the community.

Series Descriptions

Series I. Historical Notes & Oral History Box 1, folders 1 – 2.

Arranged chronologically.

Describes the history of the Widdicomb family and their furniture business. In addition, there is a tape cassette of an oral interview done by Gordon Olson (city historian of Grand Rapids) with John Widdicomb. This interview contains information pertaining to the history of the family business, and the reasons why the John Widdicomb Co. wasn't successful in the later years.

Note: No cassette tape has been found with this collection. There is an oral history with John Widdicomb in Coll. 164-10-38, done in 1981. This may be the same referred to above, or a separate interview.

Series II. Portraits Box 1, folders 3 - 7.

Arranged alphabetically.

Portraits of the family members (George, Harry, John, Ralph, and William).

See also the Photographs Series below.

Series III. Papers and Records - Widdicomb Furniture Company. Box 1 - 4, folders 8 - 25, and 15 volumes. Arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

This series is divided among the following sub-series A-J: business correspondence - John Widdicomb, account books, business invoices John Widdicomb, cash books, cash journal, ledgers, and mortgage bonds, purchase journal, stock receipts, and miscellaneous.

Subseries A. Business Correspondence - John Widdicomb (July 10, 1893 to December 25, 1897) consists of letters from customers with orders, letters pertaining to purchasing and transporting equipment, letters in regards to the purchasing of timber land, letters pertaining to purchasing of wood and lumber products, letters regarding the shipment of logs to the mill, and letters regarding the settlements of accounts. Most valuable for tracing the economic history of the Widdicomb Furniture Co. are the incoming and outgoing letters with Ashton and Grand Rapids mills of the Halladay Lumber Co., Fox Machine Company, Mahony, Harlan and Hollingsworth Company, Michigan Central Railroad Co., Grand Rapids and Indiana Railway Co., Mosely Folding Bath Tub Co., Belknap Wagon Company, Michigan Furniture Manufacturers Association, Connersville Furniture Co. of Indiana, and Foster Stevens and Co. In addition, there are letters from Robert M. Ferris and Mr. L. M. Bailey regarding freight charges, and letters regarding the purchase of Widdicomb Mantle Co. by the Massachusetts National Bank of Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Subseries B. Account Books (1854 - 1876) consist of debit and credit with other companies, and transactions involving particular items. Most valuable in showing the company expenses and sales account.

Subseries C. Business Invoices - John Widdicomb (1890 - 1903) consist of business statements to Widdicomb Furniture Co. from companies with which they had accounts. Included in the list of said companies are: Butterfield and Keeney, Foster Stevens & Co., Weatherly & Pulte,

Widdicomb Mantle Co., Ocker & Ford Manufacturing Co., Fuller & Rice Lumber & Mfg. Co., E.G.D. Holden & Son (Insurance Co.), Church & West Morton House Pharmacy, E. Kilstrom Coal and Wood, Palace Livery Co., Hutchinson & Haynes Practical Horse Shoes, Edgar S. Morse, E. B. Moore & Co., Jacob Herrman (Mason Contractor), and Fox Machine Co. In addition, there are invoices with groceries, cemeteries, tailor shops, horse stables, and other misc. businesses. A majority of the invoices pertain to John when he was with Widdicomb Furniture Co. However, there are a few invoices that pertain to his work at his own firm.

Subseries D. Cash Books (1880 - 1899) consist of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements.

Series III. Papers and Records - Widdicomb Furniture Company continued ...

Subseries E. Cash Journal (1872 - 1897) similar to cash books, it consists of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements. It covers business transactions that could not be recorded in specialized journals.

Subseries F. Ledgers (1872 to 1899) consist of records that summarize the company accounts. Most valuable in tracing the company's business transactions with other companies. There are headings for each company in the ledger, arranged alphabetically.

Subseries G. Mortgage Bonds (1893 to 1901) consists of series of bonds which pertain to the company's payments to its trustee, or bearer, Michigan Trust Company.

Subseries H. Purchase Journal (1916 to 1926) - Monthly records pertaining to the expenses of the company. These are most valuable in tracing the expenses in the area of fuel, sales, hardware, repairs, freight, expense general, and expense factory.

Subseries I. Stock Receipts (1881) consists of John and Harry Widdicomb stock receipts from the Adams Graining and Decorating Co.

Subseries J. Miscellaneous. There is an index, arranged alphabetically by surname that pertains to the company; possibly it might be an index to the employees.

Series IV. Papers and Records - John Widdicomb Co. Boxes 5-20.

Arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

This series is divided among the following sub-series A-U : business correspondence - John Widdicomb, correspondence (John Widdicomb-Jacques Kahn, and John Widdicomb-Uptegrove & Bro.), business correspondence - Harry Widdicomb, church charities correspondence-John Widdicomb, personal correspondence-John Widdicomb., account books, audit reports, business invoices, by-laws of the John Widdicomb Co., cash book, check receipts, business transactions, cutting order records, financial statements, ledgers, minutes of the efficiency committee, time book, trial balance, maps of timber holdings, and a journal & passbooks to Stockings Second Addition-City of Grand Rapids.

Subseries A. Business Correspondence-John Widdicomb (January 5, 1898 to February 9, 1910) consist of letters from customers with orders, letters pertaining to purchasing and transporting equipment, letters regarding the acquisition of timber property and warehouse property, letters pertaining to the court case of Frank Bellows, letters pertaining to the Paris Exposition of 1900, letters pertaining to the shipment of logs, and letters to the Board of Directors in regards to the destruction of Widdicomb Furniture Co. Warehouse No. 1. These letters portray the difficulties that the company was up against in the early years of operation. Most valuable in tracing the economic history of the company are the incoming and outgoing letters with Ashton Mill of the Halladay Lumber Co., Limuall, Bodley and Doolan Attorneys at law, Gustafsen & Olson (General Merchandise), Grand Rapids & Indiana Railway Company, The Cobb-Buzzell Co., Charles Henry Davis, Board of Directors of the Widdicomb Furniture Co., Kent County Savings Bank, Conkling & Grovt Attorneys, Thayer, St. Rayner & Schabel Attorneys, Gunn Furniture Co., H. E. Scholle & Co., C. C. Chittenden Attorney at law, W. P. Williams (Manufacturer Agent), Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Co., J. B. Van Sciuer Co., First State Savings Bank, and the United States Commission to the Paris Exposition of 1900.

Subseries B. Business Correspondence - Harry Widdicomb (December 21, 1908 - October 23, 1950) consists of letters from customers with orders, letters pertaining to purchasing and transporting of logs, letters pertaining to the inspection of railroad freight cars, letters pertaining to the purchase of property and renting of freight yards, letters pertaining to stockholders, letters pertaining to the purchase and selling of timber land, and letters pertaining to the Tax History of the company. These letters help to portray the operation of the company while under Harry's leadership. Most valuable in tracing the economic history of the company are the incoming and outgoing letters with William Horner, Skillman Lumber Co., S. B. Ardis Land & Lumber Co., Mr. Claud Strickland, Mr. J. A. Morrell, Chas. Bennett Furniture Co., Travis Merrick, Warner and Johnson Attorneys, Mr. W. R. Brott, Standardized Furniture Co., Stow & Davis Furniture Co., Egbert Veneklasen, Citizens State Bank, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Hugh Shay Forest Products, Bromley Forest Agency, Bay De Novet Company, Connor Lumber and Land Co., and Richard A. Cross.

Subseries C. Correspondence: John Widdicomb - Jacques Kahn (January 14, 1897 to September 21, 1901) consists of incoming and outgoing letters in regards to the purchase and shipment of mirror plates. Most valuable in tracing the history of the company's account with Jacques Kahn.

Subseries D. Correspondence: John Widdicomb - Uptegrove & Bros. (June 27, 1896 to April 13, 1918) consists of incoming and outgoing letters in regards to the purchase and shipment of Mahogany lumber. Most valuable in tracing the history of the company's account with the Uptegrove & Bro. Co.

Subseries E. Church Charities Correspondence - John Widdicomb (January 3, 1903 to January 28, 1909) consist of letters regarding the company's charity work for churches. The company furnished several churches without any charge. Incoming and outgoing letters with Rev. John Forsberg of Traverse City, Mich., E. W. Jones of Harrietta, Michigan, W. H. Parsons of New Buffalo, Edwin W. Davis, and Robert Forbes of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Subseries F. Personal Correspondence - John Widdicomb (October 27, 1902 to June 4, 1910) consists of incoming and outgoing letters pertaining to John Widdicomb, and the company. As well, there is a folder of sympathy letters from companies and friends of the family on the death of John. Most valuable are letters pertaining to the State of Michigan Supreme Court case of Peter W. Decker vs. John Widdicomb, letters regarding renting of cottages, letters regarding payments, letters pertaining to his involvement in the Republican party, letters pertaining to his appointment to the Board of Public Works of Grand Rapids, and letters pertaining to his protest of the Hepburn Bill. Incoming and outgoing letters include those-with Kappen, Kleinhans & Knappen, Pere Marquette Railroad Co., R. J. Horner & Co., Holson Motor Patents Co., O. B. Starkwather & Co., Harrison Wagon Co., Charlotte, Michigan Republican, and the Michigan Trust Company.

Subseries G. Account Books (January 4, 1905 to March 16, 1912) consist of debit and credit with other companies, and transactions involving particular items. These are valuable in showing the company's expenses and sales account.

Subseries H. Audit Reports (1910 - 1912) consists of reports that examine and verify the accounts and other records of the company at the end of the fiscal year. Most valuable in tracing the assets, liabilities, insurance, income, bills payable, loans, deduct cost of production, and merchandise purchase of the company.

Subseries I. Business Invoices (1899 to 1910) consist of business statements to John Widdicomb Co. from companies with which John Widdicomb Co. maintained accounts. Some of the companies included are: F. J. Dettenthaler, Reinders & De Hoag, E. D. Ellis, Palace Livery, Adolph Leitelt Iron Works, Knappen, Kleihans & Knappen, M. B. Wheeler Electric Co., Schneider Co., Fox Typewriters Co., Grand Rapids Gas Light Co., Baxter Co., Alden & Judson

Hardware Co., Peck Brothers Druggist, and etc.

Subseries J. Business Transactions (1922 to 1924) consist of records pertaining to Harry Widdicomb buying and selling of items.

Subseries K. By-laws of the John Widdicomb Co. (1897) consist of documents that describe the law under which the company was operated.

Subseries L. Cash Books (1897 - 1913) consist of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements. Most valuable in tracing the company's expenditures.

Subseries M. Check Receipts (1917 - 1922) consists of receipts acknowledging the company's payments.

Subseries N. Cutting Order Records (1897 to 1903) consist of records pertaining to the cutting of Oak, Birch Maple, Maple, Mahogany, and Toona.

Subseries O. Financial Statements (1907 - 1913) consist of records pertaining to the expenditures of the company.

Subseries P. Ledgers (1913 - 1914) consist of records that summarize the company accounts. Most valuable in tracing the company business transactions with other companies. There are headings for each company in the ledger.

Subseries Q. Minutes of the Efficiency Committee (June 14 - December 27, 1921) consist of official records regarding the transactions or proceedings made at the Efficiency Committee meetings.

Subseries R. Time Book (1917 - 1919) A book in which the hours of the workers are kept.

Subseries S. Trial Balance (1900 -1908) consist of listings of the debit and credit balances of all open accounts of the corporation. The listings are arranged chronologically.

Subseries T. Maps of timber holdings consist of maps pertaining to the timber land in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Subseries U. Stockings Second Addition, City of Grand Rapids. Includes a journal, May 1, 1912 to Aug. 29, 1913 and Passbooks (1912) of records pertaining to the selling of land by Harry Widdicomb to the City of Grand Rapids.

Series V. Halladay Lumber Co. Box 21 - 26, folders 82 – 85.

Arranged chronologically.

This series is divided among the following sub-series: index, day book, journal, cash book, cash journal, lumber sales by company, lumber sales by individual and ledgers.

Subseries A. Index pertains to the company, arranged alphabetically by surname. Most valuable in tracing the names of the employees of the company.

Subseries B. Day Book (1896 - 1905) consists of record debts, credits, and accounts of the day, in their order. Most valuable in describing the income and expenditures on each business day.

Subseries C. Journals (1896 to 1913) consist of recorded cash, sales, and purchases of the day. Most valuable in describing business transactions.

Subseries D. Cash Book (1900 to 1907) consists of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements.

NOTE: Series E-G are all in the same bound volume.

Subseries E. Cash Journal (1893 to 1908) similar to cash book, it consists of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements. It covers business transactions that could not be recorded in specialized journals.

Subseries F. Lumber Sales by Co. (1893 to 1912) consist of recorded sales according to companies, arranged in chronological order. Most valuable in tracing the sale of lumber to the Widdicomb Furniture Co., and John Widdicomb Co..

Subseries G. Lumber Sales by Individual (1893 to 1908) consist of recorded sales of lumber, according to individuals such as L.M. Cutcheon.

Subseries H. Ledgers (1893 - 1912) consist of records that summarize the company accounts with other companies.

Series VI. Miscellaneous. Box 21, folders 86 - 89.

No arrangement.

This series consist of miscellaneous items such as research notes on the history of the furniture industry, Edwin Widdicomb papers, autograph cards, miscellaneous letters pertaining to Widdicomb Furniture Co. and John Widdicomb, and an 1896 letter of Miss Widdicomb. Moreover, there is a (1893) Mantel Designs Book from the Widdicomb Mantel Company.

Series VII. Photographs Box 21, folder 91.

No arrangement.

Consist of a couple photographs regarding Plant #1 of John Widdicomb Co. (1952), and Widdicomb Furniture Co.

Subseries VIII. Supplement Box 27, folders 92 - 97.

Arranged chronologically.

Consisting of business correspondences regarding R. J. Horner & Co. business with the John Widdicomb Co., 1901 - 1903. There are personal correspondences to John Widdicomb from friends and business clients, 1888 - 1904. And, there are financial statements regarding John Widdicomb Co. financial history or background from 1899 to 1902.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
		Series I. Historical Notes & Oral History
1	1	Historical Notes - Widdicomb Family.
1	2	Historical Notes - Widdicomb Furniture Co. and John Widdicomb Co. Oral History - John Widdicomb.
		Series II. Portraits
1	3	George Widdicomb.
1	4	Harry Widdicomb.
1	5	John Widdicomb.
1	6	Ralph Widdicomb.
1	7	William Widdicomb.
		Series III. Widdicomb Furniture Company. Papers & Records.
		Subseries A. Business Correspondence-John Widdicomb
1	8	July 10, 1893 to December 25, 1897.
		Subseries B. Account Books
1	9	Sep 13, 1854 to Nov 5, 1867; see box 11.
1	10	Nov 25, 1865 to Dec 11, 1868.
1	11	Nov 1868 to July 6, 1972 Oct 5, 1867 to Jul 27, 1869.
1	12	1869 - 1871.
1	13	Jan 1, 1870 to Nov 29, 1873.
2	14	1871 to 1872.
2	15	1872 to 1875.
2	16	Oct 10, 1872 to Jan 1876.
2	17	Dec 1877 to Nov 6, 1879.
		Subseries C. Business Invoices - John Widdicomb
2	18	September 10, 1890 to December 16, 1893.
2	19	Jan 14, 1892 to Dec 11, 1903.
2	20	Jan 1, 1894 to Dec 31, 1894.
2	21	Jan 1, 1895 to Dec 29, 1898.

Series III. Widdicomb Furniture Company. Papers & Records.

- Subseries D. Cash Books** [Most are oversized and unboxed 6/2001]
28A V. B “B”, Feb. 1875-Dec. 1876 [May have been listed previously as another source in this finding aid.] [6/2001]
28B v. 1 /”F” Nov 22, 1880 to Sep 8, 1881. [6/2001]
31 v. 2 Dec 21, 1882 to Jul 8, 1884. [6/15/2001]
30 v. 3 Jul 9, 1884 to Jun 7, 1886
33 v. 4 Jun 11, 1886 to Jun 30, 1888.

Still unboxed volumes 5-9 & 15 6/5/2007
UB v. 5 1889 to 1892.
Bully box order July 2001 – SP 19 x 14 (vol. 18 x 13)
UB v. 6 Jul 3, 1889 to Apr 23, 1891.
UB v. 7 Jul 1, 1898 to Jun 23, 1900.
UB v. 8 Jul 1, 1912 to Dec 31, 1914.

Subseries E. Widdicomb Co. Cash Journal
UB v. 9 January 3, 1895 to July 1, 1897.

Subseries F. Widdicomb Co. Ledgers
33 v. 10 1872 to 1873.
32 v. 11 Dec 1879 to Dec 1881.
33 v. 12 Dec 1881 to Dec 1883.

[Note: V. 13 has 2 parts]
3 v. 13 Blotter 20 Nov 20, 1890 to July 8, 1891.
30 v. 13 Blotter 19 Nov.19, 1890 to July 7, 1891.?
33 v. 14 1893 to 1894.

UB v. 15 Jul 1, 1898 to 1899.

Subseries G. Widdicomb Co. Mortgage Bonds
8 37 Sep 22, 1893 to Jul 1, 1901.
Formerly 017-4-22

Subseries H. Widdicomb Co. Purchase Journal
Box 29 Oversize Feb 1916 to Dec 1926.

Series III. Widdicomb Furniture Company. Papers & Records.

8	38	Subseries I. Widdicomb Co. Stock Receipts Feb 17, 1881. Formerly 017-4-24
16	70.5	Subseries J. Widdicomb Co. Miscellaneous Index. Formerly 017-4-25

Series IV. John Widdicomb Company. Papers & Records.

Subseries A. Business Correspondence - John Widdicomb

5	26	Jan 5, 1898 to Dec 30, 1899.
5	27	Jan 1, 1900 to Aug 28, 1900.
5	28	Mar 10, 1900 to May 30, 1901.
5	29	Aug 10, 1900 to Sep 10, 1901.
5	30	Sep 1, 1900 to Sep 20, 1901.
6	31	May 31, 1901 to Dec 15, 1902.
6	32	Jan 17, 1902 to Jan 13, 1904.
6	33	Jan 23, 1902 to Nov 12, 1909.
6	34	Jan 14, 1908 to Jan 6, 1905.
6	35	Jan 7, 1905 to Aug 10, 1905.
7	OVE	Jan 3, 1907 to June 1907
7	OVE	June 1907-Jan. 1908.
7	OVE	Nov. 1908-Apr. 1909
7	OVE	Apr. 1909-Sept. 1909
22		Jan 14, 1908 to Nov 28, 1908. Formerly housed at 017-7-37, rehoused for better physical protection, 2/12/2007

Note: Box 8, folder 36 moved to new box 7. No new folder 36 assigned, at this time 2/13/2007

Box 8, new folders 37-38 assigned to Widdicomb Co. items above.

8	39	Sep 22, 1909 to Feb 9, 1910.
8	40	Miscellaneous

Subseries B. Correspondence - Harry Widdicomb

8	41	Nov 21, 1908 to Dec 3, 1921.
16	71	Jan 8, 1922 to Dec 30, 1922. OVE Formerly 017-8-24
8	42	Jan 3, 1923 to Nov 13, 1925.
16	71.2	Oversized item dated Sept. 13, 1933
8	43	Nov 26, 1934 to October 23, 1950.
16	71.1	Oversized item dated Aug. 14, 1945 Box 8 Folder 44 assigned to Cutting Tools folder, 2/13/2007

Series IV. John Widdicomb Company. Papers & Records.

Subseries C. Correspondence John Widdicomb - Jacques Kahn

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 9 | 45 | Jan 14, 1897 to Dec 31, 1898. |
| 9 | 46 | Jan 7, 1899 to Dec 28, 1899. |
| 9 | 47 | Jan 4, 1900 to Sep 21, 1901; April 19, 1910. |

Subseries D. Correspondence, John Widdicomb - Uptegrove & Bros.

- | | | |
|---|----|----------------------------------|
| 9 | 48 | June 27, 1896 to April 13, 1918. |
|---|----|----------------------------------|

Subseries E. Church Charities Correspondence - John Widdicomb

- | | | |
|----|----|-------------------------------|
| 10 | 49 | Jan 3, 1903 to Dec 26, 1905. |
| 10 | 50 | Aug 21, 1903 to May 27, 1907. |
| 10 | 51 | Jan 4, 1906 to Jan 28, 1909. |

Subseries F. Personal Correspondence - John Widdicomb

- | | | |
|----|----|----------------------------------|
| 10 | 52 | October 27, 1902 to May 17, 1907 |
| 10 | 53 | Jun 1907 to Dec 11, 1909. |
| 10 | 54 | Feb 5, 1910 to Jun 4, 1910. |

Subseries G. John Widdicomb Co. Account Books

- | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------------|
| 11 | x | Sept 13, 1854 to Nov 5, 1867. |
| 11 | x | Jan 4, 1905 to Dec 19, 1907. |
| 11 | x | Jan 15, 1908 to Mar 16, 1912. |
| 12 | x | 1948 to 1951. |

Subseries H. John Widdicomb Co. Audit Reports

- | | | |
|----|----|--|
| 13 | 55 | 1910 – 1912. |
| 13 | 56 | May 13, 1911 to Feb 28, 1913. |
| 13 | 57 | Jan 1, 1912 to Dec 31, 1912. |
| 13 | 58 | Audited Invoice Register. |
| 13 | 59 | Audits on the Assets (Mich. Cabinet Co.,
Kent Plant, G.R. Handscrew Co.) 1911 to 1912 |

Subseries I. John Widdicomb Co. Business Invoices

- | | | |
|----|----|------------------------------|
| 13 | 60 | Jan 1, 1899 to Aug 1, 1901. |
| 13 | 61 | Jan 1, 1904 to Dec 31, 1906. |
| 14 | 62 | Jan 1, 1907 to Dec 31, 1907. |
| 14 | 63 | Jan 1, 1908 to Dec 28, 1908. |
| 14 | 64 | Jan 1, 1909 to Dec 27, 1909. |
| 14 | 65 | Jan 1, 1910 to May 23, 1910. |
| 14 | 66 | Business Invoices (Misc.). |

Series IV. John Widdicomb Company. Papers & Records.

		Subseries J. Business Transactions.
16	72	Harry Widdicomb, Aug 11, 1922 - Jan 9, 1924.
		Subseries K. Bylaws of the John Widdicomb Co.
14	67	1897.
14	68	Directors' meeting records and incorporation indenture, May 15, 1897.
		Subseries L. John Widdicomb Co. Cash Book
14	69	Apr 1896 to Jan 30, 1897.
14	70	Jul 1, 1912 to Sep 3, 1913.
		Subseries M. John Widdicomb Co. Check Receipts
15	x	Jan 2, 1917 to Jan 29, 1930. Dec 23, 1921 to Jan 27, 1922. Jan 28, 1922 to Feb 21, 1922. Feb 21, 1922 to Mar 15, 1922. Mar 15, 1922 to Apr 17, 1922. Apr 17, 1922 to May 15, 1922. May 15, 1922 to Jun 15, 1922. Jun 15, 1922 to July 17, 1922. Aug 25, 1922 to Sep 21, 1922. October 12, 1922 to Nov 10, 1922.
		Subseries N. John Widdicomb Co. Cutting Order Records
8	44	Feb 10, 1897 to October 20, 1899. Formerly 017-16-72
16	73	Nov 6, 1899 to Feb 10, 1903.
		Subseries O. John Widdicomb Co. Financial Statements
16	74	Jan 28, 1907 to Jan 14, 1913.
		Subseries P. John Widdicomb Co. Ledgers
17	76	Nov 30, 1913 - Feb 28, 1914.
		Subseries Q. John Widdicomb Co. Minutes of the Efficiency Committee
17	77	Jun 14 - Dec 27, 1921.

Series IV. John Widdicomb Company. Papers & Records.

Subseries R. John Widdicomb Co. Time Book

- 22 x 1917 – 1919. Oversized.
Formerly 17-17-77 Was getting damaged in a box too small for the articles size. 1/9/2008

Subseries S. John Widdicomb Co. Trial Balances, 1900-1908?

Note: A recent inventory cannot match the holdings to the description. However, this may be a question of the dates discovered in the materials from one review to the next. It is possible that items are missing, but more probably that the description is variable, or that items have shifted elsewhere within the collection.

- 17 78 Jan 1, 1900 to Apr 27, 1907. [Is this actually the Halladay Cash Book?]
17 79 Sept., 1905 to Jan 1, 1914.
18 x Sept., 1905 to Aug, 1906.
17 80 Nov, 1905 to Jun, 1906.
17 81 Jan, 1906 to October 1, 1908.
18 x October, 1906 to Sept., 1907.
17 82 Jan, 1907 to Mar 29, 1916.
18 x October, 1907 to Sept., 1908.

Subseries T. Maps of Timber Holdings.

- 19 x Maps of Timber Holdings (25 total 9/99)
Newspaper Clipping, Grand Rapids Press 12/26/1927

Subseries U. Stockings Second Addition

- 17 75 Journal, May 1, 1912 to Aug. 29, 1913. W14:BA4.12
20 x Passbooks to Stockings Second Addition, City-of G Grand Rapids, #61 books, 1912.

Series V. Halladay Lumber Company

21	83	Subseries A. Index Index
21	84	Subseries B. Day Books Jan 1, 1896 to Feb 23, 1899.
22	85	Dec 1, 1902 to Jun 9, 1905.
21	86	Subseries C. Journals 1896 to 1897.
23	x	1898 to Mar 13, 1897. Note: Did not find here. May not exist, but the documentation may be variable, or the item may have shifted elsewhere in the collection, without sufficient markings to return here.
23	x	Jan. 3, 1898-Mar. 13, 1907 [sic Dec. 7, 1907?]. W14:BA 14.6
23	x	Subseries D. Cash Book. July 12, 1900 to Apr. 21, 1907. W14:BA 14.7
24	x	Subseries E-G. Cash Journal/Lumber Sales by Company/Lumber Sales by Individual. (All in one volume) <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cash Journal, Feb 14, 1893-Sep1, 1908. Pages 1-200.● Subseries F. Lumber sales by company, May 31 to Dec 30, 1912. Pages 200-400● Subseries G. Lumber sales by individual, May 31, 1893 to Jan 1, 1908. Pages 405-500.
25	x	Subseries H. Ledgers 1893-1897. 1896-1897.
26	x	1898-1905. Oversized. [Has 1901 pencilled on cover, but not correct. Consolidate this volume with Box 19, in order to discard one unneed oversized box.]
26	x	1905-1912. [Legal sized in oversized box. Move to smaller box. Has scotch tape!]

Series VI. Miscellaneous

- 21 87 Furniture industry history research notes.
- 21 88 Edwin Widdicomb papers
- 21 89 Misc. company papers.
-
- 21 91.1 Autograph cards. Appear to be from Central High School teacher to a colleague moving to Missouri to get married. Addressed to Anna Workman (Fairchild), most of the cards have a picture, apparently of the teacher, but these may be identified with a contrived name, rather than the real ID of the writer of the card. Other illustrations, poems and remembrances are included on the cards. Their association with Widdicomb is unknown.
-
- 216-5 Certificates for Anna Elizabeth Workman nee Fairchild (4)
Old Coll. W18
Note: These items are housed with other oversized certificates in the GRPL Ephemera Collection.
- Anna Elizabeth Workman. Grand Rapids Public Schools. Primary School. June 24, 1898
 - Anna Elizabeth Workman. Michigan Seminary, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Junior College Department. June 15, 1904.
 - Anna Elizabeth Workman. University of Michigan. Special Diploma, Dept. of Literature, Science and the Arts. BA. June 21, 1906.
 - Anna Elizabeth Workman. University of Michigan. BA. Literature, Science and the Arts. June 21, 1906.
-
- 21 91.2 Mayhew's Practical Bookkeeping Key / by Ira Mayhew. Boston : Charles H. Whiting ; Philadelphia : E.H. Butler & Co., 1880. Has ID label for Mrs. Stanley T. Lowe, Battle Creek.
-
- 21 90 Miss Widdicomb 1896 letter?
- 28 v.16 Mantel designs / Widdicomb Mantel Co. (1893)

Series VII. Photographs

- 21 91 Plant exteriors and interiors. (2 12/8/2007)
1. Plant #1, 601 Fifth St., N.W., John Widdicomb Co., 1952. Bird's eye view of the factory complex with the water tank prominent in the center of the image. The Cathedral and other area buildings are visible through a fog. Rail tracks in the foreground with rail cars lower right.
 2. Scene in Lathe Dept., Widdicomb Furniture Co. Man working on turned wood legs at right, with a cart full of the legs lower right.

Series VIII. Supplement

		John Widdicomb Company(?) Documents
27	92	R.J. Horner Co. correspondence, 1901-1903.
27	93-96	John Widdicomb personal correspondence, 1888-1904 .
27	97	Financial statements. 1899-1902.
27	98	Newspaper Articles and Store Brochure.