

Finding aid for the Widdicomb collection

Collection 017

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
September 1986
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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title	Widdicomb Company and John Widdicomb Company records
Date [inclusive]	1854-1951
Extent	25.625 Linear feet Approximately 35 boxes, plus six large volumes
Language	English
Abstract	<p>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. The papers in this collection illustrate the every day business of the various companies from 1865 to 1951. In addition, there are some records pertaining to the Halladay Lumber Co., of which Harry Widdicomb was part-owner. The earliest Widdicomb company was organized in 1857 by George Widdicomb. 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.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

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.

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 later 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.

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 Contents note

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 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.

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.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department September 1986

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Accession Numbers: 1986.103, 1986.023, 1986.143

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Halladay Lumber Co..
- John Widdicomb Co..
- Widdicomb Furniture Co..

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Subject(s)

- Furniture industry and trade -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids -- History

Series I. Historical Notes and Oral History

Collection Inventory

Series I. Historical Notes and Oral History

Scope and Contents note

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. Arranged chronologically.

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.

	Box	Folder
Historical Notes - Widdicomb Family.	1	1
Historical Notes - Widdicomb Furniture Co. and John Widdicomb Co.	1	2
Oral History - John Widdicomb.		

Series II. Portraits

Scope and Contents note

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

	Box	Folder
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Series III. Widdicomb Furniture Company. Papers and Records.

George Widdicomb.	1	3
Harry Widdicomb.	1	4
John Widdicomb.	1	5
Ralph Widdicomb.	1	6
William Widdicomb.	1	7

Series III. Widdicomb Furniture Company. Papers and Records.**Scope and Contents note**

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. Arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

Subseries A. Business Correspondence-John Widdicomb**Scope and Contents note**

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

Subseries B. Account Books

Furniture Manufacturers Association, Connerville 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.

	Box	Folder
July 10, 1893 to December 25, 1897.	1	8

Subseries B. Account Books**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Folder
Sep 13, 1854 to Nov 5, 1867; see box 11.	1	9
Nov 25, 1865 to Dec 11, 1868.	1	10
Nov 1868 to July 6, 1972	1	11
Oct 5, 1867 to Jul 27, 1869.	1	11
1869 - 1871.	1	12
Jan 1, 1870 to Nov 29, 1873.	1	13
1871 to 1872.	2	14

Subseries C. Business Invoices - John Widdicomb

1872 to 1875.	2	15
Oct 10, 1872 to Jan 1876.	2	16
Dec 1877 to Nov 6, 1879.	2	17

Subseries C. Business Invoices - John Widdicomb**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Folder
September 10, 1890 to December 16, 1893.	2	18
Jan 14, 1892 to Dec 11, 1903.	2	19
Jan 1, 1894 to Dec 31, 1894.	2	20
Jan 1, 1895 to Dec 29, 1898.	2	21

Subseries D. Cash Books**Subseries D. Cash Books****Scope and Contents note**

Cash Books (1880 - 1899) consist of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements. [Most are oversized and unboxed]

	Box	Volume
"B", Feb. 1875-Dec. 1876 [May have been listed previously as another source in this finding aid.] [6/2001]	28A	B
"F" Nov 22, 1880 to Sep 8, 1881. [6/2001]	28B	1
Dec 21, 1882 to Jul 8, 1884. [6/15/2001]	31	2
Jul 9, 1884 to Jun 7, 1886	30	3
Jun 11, 1886 to Jun 30, 1888.	33	4
1889 to 1892.	UB	5
Jul 3, 1889 to Apr 23, 1891.	UB	6
Jul 1, 1898 to Jun 23, 1900.	UB	7
Jul 1, 1912 to Dec 31, 1914.	UB	8

Subseries E. Widdicomb Co. Cash Journal

Subseries F. Widdicomb Co. Ledgers

Scope and Contents note

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.

	Box	Volume
January 3, 1895 to July 1, 1897.	UB	9

Subseries F. Widdicomb Co. Ledgers**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Volume
1872 to 1873.	33	10
Dec 1879 to Dec 1881.	32	11
Dec 1881 to Dec 1883.	33	12
Blotter 20: Nov 20, 1890 to July 8, 1891. [Note: V. 13 has 2 parts]	3	13
Blotter 19: Nov.19, 1890 to July 7, 1891.? [Note: V. 13 has 2 parts]	30	13
1893 to 1894.	33	14

Subseries G. Widdicomb Co. Mortgage Bonds

Jul 1, 1898 to 1899.	UB	15
Subseries G. Widdicomb Co. Mortgage Bonds		
Scope and Contents note		
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.		
	Box	Folder
Sep 22, 1893 to Jul 1, 1901. Formerly 017-4-22	8	37
Subseries H. Widdicomb Co. Purchase Journal		
Scope and Contents note		
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.		
		Box
Oversize, Feb 1916 to Dec 1926.		29
Subseries I. Widdicomb Co. Stock Receipts		
Scope and Contents note		
Stock Receipts (1881) consists of John and Harry Widdicomb stock receipts from the Adams Graining and Decorating Co.		

Subseries J. Widdicomb Co. Miscellaneous

	Box	Folder
Feb 17, 1881. Formerly 017-4-24	8	38

Subseries J. Widdicomb Co. Miscellaneous**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
Index. Formerly 017-4-25	16	70.5

Series IV. John Widdicomb Company. Papers and Records.**Scope and Contents note**

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. Arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

Subseries A. Business Correspondence - John Widdicomb**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries A. Business Correspondence - John Widdicomb

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 (G6neral 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.

	Box	Folder
Jan 5, 1898 to Dec 30, 1899.	5	26
Jan 1, 1900 to Aug 28, 1900.	5	27
Mar 10, 1900 to May 30, 1901.	5	28
Aug 10, 1900 to Sep 10, 1901.	5	29
Sep 1, 1900 to Sep 20, 1901.	5	30
May 31, 1901 to Dec 15, 1902.	6	31
Jan 17, 1902 to Jan 13, 1904.	6	32

Subseries B. Correspondence - Harry Widdicomb

Jan 23, 1902 to Nov 12, 1909.	6	33
Jan 14, 1908 to Jan 6, 1905.	6	34
Jan 7, 1905 to Aug 10, 1905.	6	35
Jan 3, 1907 to June 1907	7	OVE
June 1907-Jan. 1908.	7	OVE
Nov. 1908-Apr. 1909	7	OVE
Apr. 1909-Sept. 1909	7	OVE
		Box
Jan 14, 1908 to Nov 28, 1908.		22
	Box	Folder
Sep 22, 1909 to Feb 9, 1910.	8	39
Miscellaneous	8	40

Subseries B. Correspondence - Harry Widdicomb**Scope and Contents note**

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

Subseries C. Correspondence John Widdicomb - Jacques Kahn

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.

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

Subseries C. Correspondence John Widdicomb - Jacques Kahn**Scope and Contents note**

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.

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

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

Subseries D. Correspondence, John Widdicomb - Uptegrove & Bros.**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Folder
June 27, 1896 to April 13, 1918.	9	48

Subseries E. Church Charities Correspondence - John Widdicomb**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Folder
Jan 3, 1903 to Dec 26, 1905.	10	49

Subseries F. Personal Correspondence - John Widdicomb

Aug 21, 1903 to May 27, 1907.	10	50
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Jan 4, 1906 to Jan 28, 1909.	10	51
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Subseries F. Personal Correspondence - John Widdicomb**Scope and Contents note**

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.

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

Subseries G. John Widdicomb Co. Account Books**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries H. John Widdicomb Co. Audit Reports

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.

Box

Sept 13, 1854 to Nov 5, 1867.

11

Jan 4, 1905 to Dec 19, 1907.

11

Jan 15, 1908 to Mar 16, 1912.

11

1948 to 1951.

12

Subseries H. John Widdicomb Co. Audit Reports**Scope and Contents note**

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.

Box**Folder**

1910 – 1912.

13

55

May 13, 1911 to Feb 28, 1913.

13

56

Jan 1, 1912 to Dec 31, 1912.

13

57

Audited Invoice Register.

13

58

Subseries I. John Widdicomb Co. Business Invoices

Audits on the Assets (Mich. Cabinet Co., Kent Plant, G.R. Handscrew Co.) 1911 to 1912	13	59
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Subseries I. John Widdicomb Co. Business Invoices**Scope and Contents note**

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. Detenthaler, 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.

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

Subseries J. Business Transactions.**Subseries J. Business Transactions.****Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
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Harry Widdicomb, Aug 11, 1922 - Jan 9, 1924.	16	72
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Subseries K. Bylaws of the John Widdicomb Co.**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
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1897	14	67
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Directors' meeting records and incorporation indenture, May 15, 1897.	14	68
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Subseries L. John Widdicomb Co. Cash Book**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
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Subseries M. John Widdicomb Co. Check Receipts

Apr 1896 to Jan 30, 1897.	14	69
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Jul 1, 1912 to Sep 3, 1913.	14	70
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Subseries M. John Widdicomb Co. Check Receipts

Scope and Contents note

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

		Box
Jan 2, 1917 to Jan 29, 1930.		15
Dec 23, 1921 to Jan 27, 1922.		15
Jan 28, 1922 to Feb 21, 1922.		15
Feb 21, 1922 to Mar 15, 1922.		15
Mar 15, 1922 to Apr 17, 1922.		15
Apr 17, 1922 to May 15, 1922.		15
May 15, 1922 to Jun 15, 1922.		15
Jun 15, 1922 to July 17, 1922.		15
Aug 25, 1922 to Sep 21, 1922.		15

Subseries N. John Widdicomb Co. Cutting Order Records

October 12, 1922 to Nov 10, 1922.

15

Subseries N. John Widdicomb Co. Cutting Order Records**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
Feb 10, 1897 to October 20, 1899. Formerly 017-16-72	8	44
Nov 6, 1899 to Feb 10, 1903.	16	73

Subseries O. John Widdicomb Co. Financial Statements**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
Jan 28, 1907 to Jan 14, 1913.	16	74

Subseries P. John Widdicomb Co. Ledgers**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries Q. John Widdicomb Co. Minutes of the Efficiency Committee

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.

	Box	Folder
Nov 30, 1913 - Feb 28, 1914.	17	76

Subseries Q. John Widdicomb Co. Minutes of the Efficiency Committee**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Folder
Jun 14 - Dec 27, 1921.	17	77

Subseries R. John Widdicomb Co. Time Book**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box
1917 - 1919.Oversized.	22

Subseries S. John Widdicomb Co. Trial Balances, 1900-1908?**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries T. Maps of Timber Holdings.

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.

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

Subseries T. Maps of Timber Holdings.**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries U. Stockings Second Addition

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

Box

Maps of Timber Holdings (25 total 9/99)

19

Newspaper Clipping, Grand Rapids Press 12/26/1927

19

Subseries U. Stockings Second Addition**Scope and Contents note**

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.

Box**Folder**

Journal, May 1, 1912 to Aug. 29, 1913. W14:BA4.12

17

75

Box

Passbooks to Stockings Second Addition, City-of Grand Rapids, #61 books, 1912.

20

Series V. Halladay Lumber Company**Scope and Contents note**

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. Arranged chronologically.

Subseries A. Index**Subseries A. Index****Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
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Index	21	83
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Subseries B. Day Books**Scope and Contents note**

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.

	Box	Folder
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Jan 1, 1896 to Feb 23, 1899.	21	84
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Dec 1, 1902 to Jun 9, 1905.	22	85
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Subseries C. Journals**Scope and Contents note**

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

	Box	Folder
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Subseries D. Cash Book.

1896 to 1897.	21	86
		Box
1898 to Mar 13, 1897.		23
Jan. 3, 1898-Mar. 13, 1907 [sic Dec. 7, 1907?]. W14:BA 14.6		23
Subseries D. Cash Book.		
Scope and Contents note		
Cash Book (1900 to 1907) consists of records pertaining to cash receipts and disbursements.		
		Box
July 12, 1900 to Apr. 21, 1907. W14:BA 14.7		23
Subseries E-G. Cash Journal/Lumber Sales by Company/Lumber Sales by Individual. (All in one volume)		
Scope and Contents note		
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 H. Ledgers (1893 - 1912)

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

Cash Journal, Feb 14, 1893-Sep1, 1908. Pages 1-200.

Box

Subseries F. Lumber sales by company, May 31 to Dec 30, 1912. Pages 200-400

24

Subseries G. Lumber sales by individual, May 31, 1893 to Jan 1, 1908. Pages 405-500.

24

Subseries H. Ledgers

24

Subseries H. Ledgers (1893 - 1912)**Scope and Contents note**

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

Box

1893-1897.

25

1896-1897.

25

1898-1905. Oversized. [Has 1901 penciled on cover, but not correct.]

26

1905-1912.

26

Series VI. Miscellaneous

Certificates for Anna Elizabeth Workman nee Fairchild (4) Old Coll. W18 No...

Scope and Contents note

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. No arrangement.

	Box	Folder
Furniture industry history research notes.	21	87
Edwin Widdicomb papers	21	88
Misc. company papers.	21	89
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.	21	91.1

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.

	Collection	Box
Anna Elizabeth Workman. Grand Rapids Public Schools. Primary School. June 24, 1898	216	5

Series VII. Photographs

Anna Elizabeth Workman. Michigan Seminary, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Junior College Department. June 15, 1904.	216	5
Anna Elizabeth Workman. University of Michigan. Special Diploma, Dept. of Literature, Science and the Arts. BA. June 21, 1906.	216	5
Anna Elizabeth Workman. University of Michigan. BA. Literature, Science and the Arts. June 21, 1906.	216	5
	Box	Folder
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	91.2
Miss Widdicomb 1896 letter?	21	90
Mantel designs / Widdicomb Mantel Co. (1893)	28	v.16

Series VII. Photographs**Scope and Contents note**

Consist of a couple photographs regarding Plant #1 of John Widdicomb Co. (1952), and Widdicomb Furniture Co. No arrangement.

Plant exteriors and interiors. (2 12/8/2007)

Box Folder

Series VIII. Supplement

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.	21	91
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.	21	91

Series VIII. Supplement**Scope and Contents note**

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. Arranged chronologically.

John Widdicomb Company(?) Documents

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