

Finding aid for the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad Company collection Collection 190

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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

June 1996

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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator	Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad Company.
Creator	Grand Rapids and Indiana Railway Company.
Title	Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad Company collection
Date [inclusive]	1875-1950
Extent	1.8 Linear feet Five boxes
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company collection is a small representation of the operations of this regional transportation business, which had its home office in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was initially known as the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railway Company. The collection includes documents of the operations and business affairs of the railroad during the last quarter of the 19th century, and the first four decades of the 20th century. The bulk of the collection is the annual reports of the firms, from 1872-1940. Also included are representative employee timetables, public timetables, advertising and miscellaneous corporate documents. A map of the rail lines effective March 21, 1904 can be found housed in Collection 240, box 2.3, showing service from Cincinnati, Ohio north to Chicago and through Michigan to Mackinaw City. Lines also ran east and west. The GR&I used at least two generations of the Union Station as its depot in Grand Rapids.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

The Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad (GR&I) was begun by a group of businessmen in Hartford City, In. in 1854. Their goal was a road to the Michigan border, near Sturgis, to tap timber reserves. When they were unable to raise the necessary funding, the project was taken over by a group in Ft. Wayne, In.

The Ft. Wayne group's goal was a line from Ft. Wayne to a point on Michigan's Little Traverse Bay, also hoping to tap timber reserves. Financial problems and the Civil War prevented completion of any of the line until 1867, when the first 20 mile segment from Grand Rapids, Mi. north to Cedar Springs was opened.

Financial problems resurfaced in 1869. The Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) saw the line as a feeder to its newly acquired right of way into Chicago via purchase of the Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne & Chicago Railroad (PFW&C). The PRR set up the continental Improvement Company (Continental) to complete construction. For its efforts, the PRR received \$8 million in GR&I bonds, which gave the PRR full control of the GR&I.

Over the next four years Continental completed construction north from Cedar Springs to Petoskey, via Big Rapids, Cadillac, Elmira and Melrose. South of Grand Rapids, the link to Ft. Wayne was completed in October 1870. In 1871, the GR&I gained control of the Cincinnati, Richmond & Ft. Wayne Railroad. This road ran from Richmond, In. to Adams, In., which had trackage rights over the PFW&C, to reach Ft. Wayne.

On July 3, 1882, the GR&I opened the last link in its mainline from Petoskey to Mackinaw City, completing the 460-mile north-south line. By the early 1890's financial problems became severe and creditors foreclosed on the line in 1896. The PRR again came to the rescue, but began exerting greater influence over GR&I operations.

The financially reorganized road became the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railway. In 1920 the PRR administratively combined all its lines west of Pittsburgh into divisions of the parent road. Though the PRR maintained separate entries for the GR&I for another 20 years, this combination ended the GR&I's visibility as a separate entity.

For additional history see the draft paper by Lewis B. Clingman, included in the collection. [1/2002]

Scope and Contents note

Most noteworthy in the collection are the various annual reports, ranging from 1872 to 1940, and employee timetables for the period 1887 to 1919.

The early annual reports give details on equipment and construction, as well as past accomplishments. The latter reports are primarily summarized accounting balance sheets. The remainder of the collection provides data on timetables, efforts by the GR&I to promote patronage by extolling the various recreational amenities in Northern Michigan and a small sampling of legal issues that face the railroad.

The collection provides unique insights into the operation of a turn-of-the century Michigan railroad. Since the GR&I operated under direct control of the PRR, however, most of the GR&I detailed records became part of the PRR records.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department June 1996

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Library purchase and unknown, accession numbers 00.000, 00.[1987].1

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad Company.
- Grand Rapids and Indiana Railway Company.

Genre(s)

- business records

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Subject(s)

- Railroads -- Michigan

Series I. Annual Reports. 1872-1940

Collection Inventory

Series I. Annual Reports. 1872-1940

Scope and Contents note

Providing the bulk of this collection, annual reports from 1872 to 1940, incomplete, are found in the collection. There are years missing from the 1870s and 1880s, but the holdings for most of the later decades are complete.

	Box	Folder
1872	1	1
1873	1	2
1874	1	3
1875	1	4
1876	1	5
1879	1	6
1885	1	7
1886	1	8

Series I. Annual Reports. 1872-1940

1887	1	9
1888	1	10
1889	1	11
1890	1	12
1891	1	13
1893	1	14
1895	1	15
1896	1	16
1897	1	17
1898	1	18
1899	1	19
1900	2	1
1901	2	2
1903	2	3

Series I. Annual Reports. 1872-1940

1904	2	4
1905	2	5
1906	2	6
1907	2	7
1908	2	8
1909	2	9
1910	2	10
1911	2	11
1912	2	12
1913	2	13
1914	2	14
1915	2	15
1916	2	16
1917	2	17

Series I. Annual Reports. 1872-1940

1918	2	18
1919	2	19
1920	3	1
1921	3	2
1922	3	3
1925	3	4
1926	3	5
1927	3	6
1928	3	7
1929	3	8
1930	3	9
1931	3	10
1932	3	11
1933	3	12

Series II. Employee Timetables, 1875-1899.

1934	3	13
1935	3	14
1936	3	15
1937	3	16
1938	3	17
1939	3	18
1940	3	19

Series II. Employee Timetables, 1875-1899.**Scope and Contents note**

Scattered holdings, mostly for 1887 and 1889.

	Box	Folder
System Timetable #13, Oct. 31, 1875 I(copy)	4	1
Northern Division #58, June 26, 1887.	4	2
Northern Division #59, Oct. 2, 1887.	4	3
Northern Division #64, May 12, 1889.	4	4

Series III. Public Timetables, 1915-1919.

Northern Division #65, June 16, 1889.	4	5
Southern Division #60, June 26, 1887	4	6
Southern Division #61, Oct. 2, 1887.	4	7

Series III. Public Timetables, 1915-1919.**Scope and Contents note**

Includes a handful of examples from 1915 to 1919.

	Box	Folder
Fall Schedules, Nov. 7, 1915.	4	8
Grand Rapids to Pittsburgh, Nov. 7, 1915.	4	9
“36 Hours to Florida”, Nov. 22, 1915.	4	10
Summer Schedules, June 25, 1916.	4	11
U.S.R.A. Form 1, Nov. 21, 1918.	4	12
U.S.R.A. Form 1, Mar. 1, 1919.	4	13
U.S.R.A. Form 2, Aug. 1, 1919.	4	14

Series IV. Business Documents

Subseries A. Annual Passes, 1917-1919.**Scope and Contents note**

Included are a small group of documents and publications, with the largest representation being in the rules and regulations.

Subseries A. Annual Passes, 1917-1919.

	Box	Folder
GR&I 1917, 1919 and USRA 1919	4	15

Rules, 1875-1910.

	Box	Folder
Rules & Regulations 1875 (copy)	4	16
Book of Rules 1893, updated to Apr. 15, 1895.	4	17
Book of Rules 1910, effective May 29, 1910.	4	18

Subseries B. Tax Documents, 1873?, 1906.

	Box	Folder
Land Grant Taxation, 1873?	5	1
Tax Assessment Case, 1906.	5	2

Subseries C. Mutual Benefit Assoc., 1882.

Subseries D. LEASE, 1920.

	Box	Folder
Proceedings of Fifth Annual Convention, May 17, 1882.	5	3
Subseries D. LEASE, 1920.		
	Box	Folder
Proposed Lease to PRR, 1920.	5	4
Series V. Ephemera. Brochures, Advertising, 1874-1912.		
Scope and Contents note		
Mostly related to summer holiday and resort travel, including advertising.		
	Box	Folder
One Million Acres of Land for Sale, 1874.	5	5
Guide to Health Pleasure Resorts, 1879.	5	6
N. Michigan Lakes & Summer Resorts, 1881.	5	7
N. Michigan Lakes & Summer Resorts, 1882.	5	8
Half Million Acres of Lands for Sale, 1883.	5	9
Where to Go Fishing, 1897.	5	10

Series VI. Miscellaneous Documents, 1870's, 1907.

Where to Go Fishing, 1903.	5	11
Michigan IN Summer 1903.	5	12
Michigan In Summer 1904.	5	13
Michigan In Summer 1905.	5	14
Michigan in Summer, 1910.	5	15
Indian Play-Hiawatha, 1912.	5	16

Series VI. Miscellaneous Documents, 1870's, 1907.

	Box	Folder
Conductor's Memoranda, 1870s	5	17
Summary of Michigan Statutes on Railroads as Common Carriers, Sept. 1907.	5	18
Excursion ticket, Thanksgiving, 1912.	5	19
Governor Henry H. Crapo letters, 1866.	5	20
Newspaper articles, 1910-1929 [found in collection May 2002 source unknown]	5	21

Series VI. Miscellaneous Documents, 1870's, 1907.

Draft paper: The Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, 1854-1896 / Lewis B. Clingman, n.d. 00.[1987].1 1/22/2002	5	22
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	Collection	Box
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Map of the GR&I in Michigan, Indiana & Ohio. March 21, 1904 / Map of GR&I in Upper Michigan [found in collection 5/2002 source unknown]	240	2.3
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