

Finding aid for the H. Kuizema and Son ledgers Collection 418

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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

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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator	Kuizema, Harm, 1852-1939
Creator	Kuizema, Henry, 1892-1991
Title	H. Kuizema and Son ledgers
Date [inclusive]	1905-1927
Extent	0.3 Linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Kuizema Hardware was a family owned and operated hardware store in Grand Rapids, Michigan for three generations. Opened in 1905, it was run by Harm Kuizenga (1852-1939), Henry Kuizema (1892-1991) and Harold Kuizema. In approximately 1989, majority ownership was sold to an employee, Jack Huizinga. The store closed in 1999, after operating for 94 years. This small collection consists of two financial ledgers from the store, covering the years 1905 through 1927. The ledgers note receipts and expenses, with brief notes given for expenses in many of the years. The ledgers show the financial life of a small business and the owner's household over a period of 22 years. They could be used to examine the types of purchases made, to study the beginning of a successful small business in the early 1900s or to examine how economic conditions such as the Great Depression affected local stores.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

Kuizema Hardware was a family owned and operated business for three generations. Opened in 1905, it was run by Harm Kuizenga (1852-1939), Henry Kuizema (1892-1991) and Harold Kuizema. In approximately 1989, majority ownership was sold to an employee, Jack Huizinga. The store closed in 1999, after operating for 94 years.

Harm Kuizenga and his family immigrated to Grand Rapids from the Netherlands in 1881. After working as a hardware wholesaler, Harm opened his own store in 1905, with the help of his son, Henry, then 13-years-old. Harm and Henry ran the store together into the 1930s. Henry's son, Harold, joined the family business in 1950, after serving in World War II and attending college.

For the first couple of years, the store was located at the corner of Kalamazoo Avenue and Hall Street. They quickly moved to a larger location at 805 Oakdale Avenue SE (formerly 1269 Oakdale) in 1907. The store remained at the Oakdale location until it closed.

According to a Grand Rapids Press article (1989), a ledger was kept in the back of the store that showed receipts (\$4.50) from the first day of business. That ledger is included in this collection.

Sources:

Roelofs, T. (1989, January 15). True Value. Grand Rapids Press, Wonderland (3).

Grand Rapids Press. (1991, June 13). Hardware store owner, Henry Kuizema, dies at 98.

Radigan, M. (1993, April 4). Hardware hardball: little guys stick to nuts-and-bolts as big players move in. Grand Rapids Press (E1).

Kirkbride, K. (1999, October 23). Changing times: hardware store throws in trowel - a sign of the times. Grand Rapids Press (A1).

Scope and Contents note

This small collection consists of two financial ledgers from H. Kuizema and Sons hardware store. The ledgers cover the years 1905 through 1927. The ledgers note receipts on the left-hand page, with expenses on the right-hand page. The receipts appear to consist of the total amount received by the store each business day. No notations are given. The expenses are separated into house and business expenses. These are sometimes indicated by notations, sometimes by separate columns. In the first ledger (1905-1911), brief notations are given indicating what each expense is (church, Board of Trade, cigars, whips, interest

on house, lamp glass, etc.). Occasionally, a yearly summary of receipts and expenses by month is given. Some of these are found in the loose material.

The ledgers show the financial life of a small business and the owner's household over a period of 22 years. They could be used to examine the types of purchases made (in the first ledger), to study the beginning of a successful small business in the early 1900s or to examine how economic conditions such as the Great Depression affected local stores.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department October 2014

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Harold Kuizema, accession number 1990.020

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- business records

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History -- 20th Century

Personal Name(s)

- Kuizema, Harold

Subject(s)

- Business records -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Hardware stores -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids

Collection Inventory

	Box	
Ledger 1905-1911	1	
Ledger 1911-1927	1	
	Box	Folder
Loose papers	1	1