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Finding aid to the Charles E. Wilde papers Collection 465

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Department

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Summary Information

Repository:	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title:	Charles E. Wilde papers
ID:	Collection 465
Date [inclusive]:	1884-1950
Physical Description:	4 Linear Feet
Abstract:	Charles E. Wilde moved to Grand Rapids, Mich. in 1904 to become the district commercial manager of West Michigan for the Michigan Bell Telephone Company. He is partly responsible for bringing widespread telephone service to West Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. Wilde worked for Michigan Bell for fifty years and was an important member of Grand Rapids society.

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Biographical / Historical

Charles E. Wilde played a major role in bringing telephone service to Grand Rapids, Mich., West Michigan, and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. He was born in Battle Creek, Mich. on Christmas Day, 1869. He became a telephone operator at the age of 15 in Petoskey, Mich in 1884. Within two years he was promoted to manager. He stayed in Petoskey for five years before moving on to manage the Battle Creek, Alpena, Muskegon, Kalamazoo, and Marquette offices. In 1899 he was appointed district superintendent for the southern district of Michigan and was later transferred to the superintendency of the Upper Peninsula.

After moving to Grand Rapids, Mich. in 1904 he would advance further to district commercial manager of the western part of the state. Charles E. Wilde would spend his entire career, fifty years, at the Michigan Bell Telephone Company. Charles E. Bell also belonged to the Free Masons, the Rotary Club, and was a member of the Grand Rapids, Mich. Peninsular Club. In his free time, he enjoyed hiking and spending time in nature. It was said that, "No one enjoys nature more than he does." In 1890, Charles married Emily A. Peet of Iowa, they had three daughters.

He died Saturday, February 4th, 1950.

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Scope and Contents

Included in this collection are the correspondence, telephone industry records, photographs, and press clippings related to Charles E. Wilde's career. An interesting piece of this collection is the blueprints for a telephone, lines, and connectors. Also included is a piece of realia, an award Charles E. Wilde received for his fifty years of service for the Michigan Bell Telephone Company.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Donation of the Michigan Bell Co. [1987.035]

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Controlled Access Headings

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- Telephone--United States--History
- Telephone--History--Grand Rapids

Collection Inventory

Correspondence

Scope and Contents

Subseries includes letters between G. W. Courter Esq. of Charlevoix and S. E. Watson, Superintendent of the Western District, regarding telephone service in Charlevoix, Mich. Their correspondence includes a number of interesting drawings for phone systems and services. Also in this subseries are letters from Charles E. Wilder and to him regarding business matters.

Title/Description	Instances	
Correspondence, 1884-1885 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1884-1885	Box 1	Folder 1
Correspondence, 1885-05-1885-06 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1885-05-1885-06	Box 1	Folder 2
Correspondence, 1885-07-1885-10 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1885-07-1885-10	Box 1	Folder 3
Correspondence, 1885-11-1885-12 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1885-11-1885-12	Box 1	Folder 4
Correspondence, 1886-1887 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1886-1887	Box 1	Folder 6
Correspondence, 1888-1889 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1888-1889	Box 1	Folder 7
Correspondence, 1901-1905 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1901-1905	Box 1	folder 8
Correspondence, 1907 <u>Date:</u> 1907	Box 1	Folder 9
Correspondence, 1909 <u>Date:</u> 1909	Box 1	Folder 10
Correspondence, 1910 <u>Date:</u> 1910	Box 1	Folder 11
Correspondence, 1911-1912 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1911-1912	Box 1	Folder 12
Correspondence, 1926 <u>Date:</u> 1926	Box 1	Folder 13
Correspondence, 1928-1932		

<u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1928-1932	Box 1	Folder 14
Correspondence-Postcards, 1886-1889 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1886-1889	Box 1	Folder 15
Correspondence-George E. Luther, 1926-09-24-1928-12-21 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1926-09-24-1928-12-21	Box 1	Folder 16
Court Papers/Subpoena,, 1888-11-03 <u>Date:</u> 1888-11-03	Box 1	Folder 18
Letter from Michigan Telephone Co, 1902-05-09 <u>Date:</u> 1902-05-09	Box 1	Folder 19
United States Senate Letter, 1940-06-08 <u>Date:</u> 1940-06-08	Box 1	Folder 21

Photographs

Title/Description	Instances	
Photograph-C.E. Wilde, 1880 <u>Date:</u> 1880	Box 1	Folder 17
Photograph-W.S. Gifford, 1907-01-07 <u>Date:</u> 1907-01-07	Box 1	folder 39
Photograph-Banquet at Kalamazoo-C.E. Wilde General Superintendent, 1901-02-21 <u>Date:</u> 1901-02-21	Box 3	Folder 2

Directories

Title/Description	Instances	
Rural Telephone Service Booklet, n.d. <u>Date:</u> n.d.	Box 1	folder 30
Michigan Independent Telephone Association Booklets, 1901-1904 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1901-1904	Box 1	folder 33
Kalamazoo Telephone Exchange Directories, 1894-1898 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1894-1898	Box 1	Folder 36
Muskegon Telephone Exchange Directories, 1892-1898 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1892-1898	Box 1	Folder 37
Petoskey Telephone Exchange Guide, n.d.	Box 1	Folder 38

Date: n.d.

Newspaper Clippings and Articles

Title/Description	Instances	
Obituary-C.E. Wilde, 1950-02-05 <u>Date</u> : 1950-02-05	Box 1	Folder 22
Article from Grand Rapids Eagle, 1887-11-04 <u>Date</u> : 1887-11-04	Box 1	Folder 23
Article from Grand Rapids Democrat, 1889-04-28 <u>Date</u> : 1889-04-28	Box 1	folder 24
Miscellaneous Newspaper Articles, 1894 <u>Date</u> : 1894	Box 1	folder 25
Newspaper Article-James F. Land, 1914 <u>Date</u> : 1914	Box 1	Folder 26
Article-Phone Company Rates, 1926 <u>Date</u> : 1926	Box 1	Folder 27
Michigan Tradesman Weekly Magazine, 1923-11-28 <u>Date</u> : 1923-11-28	Box 3	folder 5
Michigan Tradesman Weekly Magazine, 1935-01-09 <u>Date</u> : 1935-01-09	Box 3	folder 6

Telephone Company Records

Title/Description	Instances	
"The Telephone in Michigan" by the Michigan Bell Telephone Company, n.d. <u>Date</u> : n.d.	Box 1	Folder 29
"The Telephone in Grand Rapids" by the Michigan Bell Telephone Company, n.d. <u>Date</u> : n.d.	Box 1	Folder 29
"History of the Telephone in Michigan" by the Michigan Bell Telephone Company", n.d. <u>Date</u> : n.d.	Box 1	Folder 29
Historical Chronology of the Michigan Telephone, n.d. <u>Date</u> : n.d.	Box 1	Folder 28
Rural Telephone/Historical Paper, 1906-03-22 <u>Date</u> : 1906-03-22	Box 1	folder 31
Citizens Telephone Co., 1913-06-26-1916-12-01	Box 1	Folder 32

Date [inclusive]: 1913-06-26-1916-12-01

Michigan State Telephone Co. Annual Report, 1909-12-31 <u>Date:</u> 1909-12-31	Box 1	Folder 34
Union Telephone Co. Annual Reports, 1903-1904 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1903-1904	Box 1	Folder 35
Ledger for Telephone Lines by Michigan Office, 1884-12-1887-01 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1884-12-1887-01	Box 3	Folder 1
Ledger of the Big Rapids Lilley & Bitiley Telephone Co., 1905-12-26-1958-01-31 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1905-12-26-1958-01-31	Box 3	Folder 3
Blueprint of telephone and lines and connections - Michigan telephone co., 1897-10-15-1900-03-09 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1897-10-15-1900-03-09	Box 4	Folder 1
Financial Record of Leases, 1886-1889 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1886-1889	Box 4	Folder 2

Realia and Ephemera

Title/Description	Instances	
Certificate of Service, 1937-02-09 <u>Date:</u> 1937-02-09	Box 1	Folder 20
Badge from Telephone Pioneers of America, 1911-11-02 <u>Date:</u> 1911-11-02	Box 2	
Peninsular Club in Grand Rapids Honoring C.E. Wilde, 1934-12-27 <u>Date:</u> 1934-12-27	Box 3	Folder 4