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# Finding aid for the Fitch photo collection

## Collection 018

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on March 23, 2018.  
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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

111 Library Street NE  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

[localhis@grpl.org](mailto:localhis@grpl.org)

URL: <http://www.grpl.org>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
<b>Title:</b>	George E. Fitch photographs collection
<b>ID:</b>	Collection 018
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1857-1925
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4.46 Linear Feet Seven boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The George E. Fitch Photographs Collection contains images of the Grand Rapids and Kent County, Michigan area. The images are mostly copy photos collected by George Everett Fitch, a local historian and amateur photographer. A few original family photos are also included. The images depict Grand Rapids scenes from the 1850s into the 1920s. Though most are second generation images, they are believed to be closest to first generation that are extant in some cases. George Everett Fitch (1868-1941) was the son of George Clay Fitch, local wagon maker, and Cadette Everett, daughter of Franklin Everett. See also the separate Cadette Everett Fitch Collection.

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## Biographical / Historical

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George Everett Fitch (1868-1941), photographer of Grand Rapids, Michigan scenes, was the son of George Clay Fitch, local wagon maker, and Cadette Everett, daughter of Franklin Everett. Fitch graduated from local schools and from the University of Michigan in 1892. A real estate dealer, Fitch was also an avid amateur historian.

Fitch was a charter member of the Grand Rapids Camera Club and an avid canoeist. He used his photographic talents to duplicate historic views of Grand Rapids located in the Grand Rapids Public Library and the Grand Rapids Public Museum and other private sources. In 1925 he published *Old Grand Rapids* which includes many of these images. A copy of this book has been added to this collection (Dec. 2003).

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## Description

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The image numbers are summarized in the Folder Summaries section.

Following this are 3 separate indexes: 1) a numerical list for each item, with a brief description 2) an alphabetical list by subjects or key terms 3) a separate chronological index [not all date known]

Full item level descriptions are not available at this time. This means that that actual visual contents of many items initially described as "Grand Rapids views," is not given.

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## Scope and Contents

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The collection documents Grand Rapids scenes from the late 1850s into the 1920s. The images include street scenes, panoramas, buildings, logging activities, the fire of 1873 and the log jam of 1883. Included are original photos of Fitch family members.

Some numbers are missing from the numerical list of photos below. This means that the item (image unknown) was either never given to the library, or has disappeared over the years. This finding aid inventory is believed to be accurate as of the 1986 archival processing of the collection. No list of images is known to have been provided by Fitch.

See the alphabetical and chronological indexes at the end of this finding aid.

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## Arrangement

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Fitch numbered his images and that numbering scheme has been retained. Some numbers are missing, other numbers have been used multiple times, with an alphabetical extension, e.g. #166a. This alternative number may indicate a variant image or a different image. The reason for this alternative numbering is not known.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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

111 Library Street NE  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

[localhis@grpl.org](mailto:localhis@grpl.org)

URL: <http://www.grpl.org>

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Accession Number: 00.000 i.e. date given unknown; Donor: George E. Fitch

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Coll. 40 Cadette Everett Fitch Collection

Coll. 263-14 has: In Commemoration of the Spirit of the Pioneer / by Katharine Aldrich Blake.  
Pictures by George E. Fitch. Note that the images are missing from this typescript, but items from this collection may, in fact, have been used.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History -- 19th Century
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History -- Photographs
- Fitch, George E.
- Fitch, George E.

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## Series II: Scrapbooks, Copies, and Contact Prints

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Grand Rapids History scrapbook (including the best image of Maris House on S. Division between Oaks and Cherry, c.1865).	Box 5
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