

# **Finding Aid for the R.C. Allen Corporation records Collection 095**

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department  
January 1989  
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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>Creator</b>	Allen, Ralph C, 1884-1967
<b>Creator</b>	R.C. Allen Corporation.
<b>Title</b>	R.C. Allen Corporation records
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1948-1962
<b>Extent</b>	6.0 Linear feet 5 boxes
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The firm of R.C. Allen was begun by Ralph C. Allen (1884-1967) in 1932 in Grand Rapids, Michigan to produce low cost adding machines. During World War II, the firm learned about integrating electronics into their systems. At the time of Allen's retirement in 1963 the company enjoyed international sales and had some 500 employees. During the 1980s the firm was sold to out-of-state interests and eventually production was moved to California. Including documents from 1948 to 1962, the records of the collection primarily provide insight into the growth of the corporation during the 1950s with detailed financial reports, correspondence and other assorted documents. In addition to adding machines, typewriter and calculators manufactured by the corporation, the firm also expanded into real estate investment south and west of Holland, Michigan. The real estate activities are documented with abstracts, correspondence and attorney opinions.</p>

## Biographical/Historical note

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The R.C. Allen Company was begun by Ralph C. Allen (1884-1967), a former employee of Burroughs Adding Machine Company, in 1932 producing a low cost adding machine. Later a cash drawer was added to adding machines so that they could also serve as cash registers. These early machines were all mechanical. Following World War II, during which the firm learned about integrating electronics into their systems from their war time government contracts for manufacturing aircraft instruments, the company began replacing mechanical segments of their machines with the more maintenance free electronic components. During the 1950s the corporation added typewriters to their product line with acquisition of the Woodstock Typewriter Company. By the early 1960s the firm employed upward of 500 people in its Grand Rapids factories and had a sales network throughout North America, Europe and the Orient.

During the late 1950s the corporation expanded its scope into real estate development. This took the form of Anchorage Plantation in North Carolina and two plats south and west of Holland.

Allen directly and firmly controlled the corporation until 1963 when he retired from active control. Allen died in 1967 near his home outside Holland.

During the 1980s the firm was sold to out-of-state interests and eventually production was moved to California. The Allen Building remains on the west side of the Grand River near 6th Street having been converted to office space.

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## Scope and Contents note

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Of the three series in this collection, Series II and III are real estate endeavors, the firm's growth during the 1950s. The documentation, though sporadic, details the financial growth, the management style in the firm, the reorganization of the early 1950s with a Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan, sales, real estate acquisitions and product lines.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department January 1989

## **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

R.C. Allen Corporation, 1982, accession number 1986.220

## **Unprocessed materials**

Boxes 6-11, accession number 1993.036. No description of these materials listed in the body of the finding aid; no physical processing.

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## **Related Materials**

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### **Related Archival Materials note**

Coll. 246, GRPL Trade Catalog Collection, for trade catalogs for R.C. Allen, and other Grand Rapids area manufacturers.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Genre(s)**

- business records

### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

### **Subject(s)**

- Business Enterprises -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids Region
- Office equipment and supplies industry -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Real property -- Michigan -- Holland

## Series I. Allen Machines

## Collection Inventory

<b>Series I. Allen Machines 1948-1962</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Automobiles 1959	1	1
Comptroller's Correspondence 1949, 1958-1959	1	2
Employee Benefit Programs 1958-1962	1	3
Financial Reports 1947-1957	1	4
		<b>Box</b>
Financial Reports, unfolded 1957-1959		4
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
History 1948, 1956	1	5
Meeting Minutes 1954	1	6
Modernization Study 1949	1	7
Organization, Officers, Background 1949-1950, n.d.	1	8
Product Flyers, n.d.	1	9

## Subsidiary Reports

<b>Subsidiary Reports</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
New York Business Machines 1957	1	10
R.C. Allen Corp. of Delaware 1957-1958	1	11
Woodstock Typewriter, c.1957	1	12
Woodstock Co. Agreements 1948-1950	3	2
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Incorporation Papers 1949-1959	2	1
<b>Securities and Exchange Documents</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Prospectus 1952	2	2
Reports 1952-1959	2	3-4
Reconstruction Finance Corporation Loan 1949-1950	2	5
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Volume</b>
Ledger and Journal 1948-1956	5	1
Ledger and Journal 1954-1962	5	2

**Series II. Anchorage Plantation, Inc.****Series II. Anchorage Plantation, Inc. 1957**

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Mortgage Loan 1957	2	6

**Series III. Stone house Corporation**

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Statements 1952-1958	2	7

Allen Acres Sale 1959	2	8
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Leases 1954-1955	3	1
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**Real Estate. [095-3-2 See Subsidiary Reports above].****Diekema Homestead Addition, Holland**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
3	3

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
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Lots 346-50 1955-1956	3	4
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Lot 349 1956	3	5
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Lots 351-2 1955	3	6
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Lots 354-7 1955	3	7
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**Lugers Addition, Holland**

Lots 358-61 1955	3	8
Lots 362-3 1955	3	9
Lots 364-5 1956	3	10
Lots 366-7 1955	3	11
Lots 368-70 1955	3	12
Lot 371 1956	3	13
<b>Lugers Addition, Holland</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Lot 92 1955-1958	3	14
Lot 113 1955-1957	3	15
Lots 114-5 1955	3	16
Lots 116-7 1955	3	17
Lot 118 1955	3	18
Lot 119 1955	3	19

**Lugers Addition, Holland**

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Lot 120 1955	3	20
Lot 121 1955	3	21
Lot 122 1955	3	22
Lot 123 1955	3	23
Lots 128-9 1955	3	24
Lot 131 1955	3	25
Lot 132 1955	3	26
Lot 133 1955	3	27
Lot 137 1955	3	28