

Finding aid for the Chicago and West Michigan Railway Co. collection Collection 191

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May 11, 2013

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	Chicago and West Michigan Railway Company.
Title	Chicago and West Michigan Railway Company collection
Date [inclusive]	1887-1892
Extent	0.21 Linear feet One box
Language	English
Abstract	This small collection documents the business affairs of the Chicago & West Michigan Railway Company during the late 19th century (circa 1887-1892). It contains primarily annual reports and a few promotional brochures for resort tours in Northern Michigan in the 1890s.

Biographical/Historical note

The Chicago & West Michigan Railway Company (C&WM) was created in October 1881, by combining the prior Chicago & West Michigan Railroad, the Grand Rapids, Newaygo & Lake Shore Railroad and the Indiana and Michigan Railroad. The latter company, which planned to build a line from New Buffalo, MI to LaCrosse, IN, was organized just before the C&WM consolidation.

The White River Railroad was organized in 1879 to provide access to the region between the C&WM's northern terminal at White Cloud and Baldwin, MI. At Baldwin, the White River Railroad was to meet the Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad. By 1883 the route was completed and the C&WM, which held the White River Railroad stock, formally took over the line.

In 1890 the C&WM completed a line north from Baldwin to Traverse City and in 1894 from Traverse City to Petoskey, where it connected with the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad. The Traverse City to Petoskey route was built as the "Chicago and North Michigan Railroad." In 1899, the C&WM, just prior to its inclusion into the newly organized Pere Marquette Railroad, formally absorbed the Chicago North Michigan Railroad

At its apex, the C&WM main line ran from LaCrosse, IN to Bay View, MI via New Buffalo, Benton Harbor, Holland, Grand Rapids, Baldwin, Traverse City, and Petoskey. Major branches included lines to Pentwater via Muskegon; Muskegon to Big Rapids; Holland to Allegan and Williamsburg to Elk Rapids.

Scope and Contents note

Annual reports (1887-1892) document the company's financial affairs including earnings, expenses and balance statements. Also status of structures, bridges, locomotives and equipment. The 1890-1892 reports include information on the Petoskey extension. The promotional brochures (1895, 1897) detail summer resort opportunities on or near the line in Lower Michigan.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

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

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Library purchase, accession number 00.000

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Michigan Railroads.com website

<http://www.michiganrailroads.com/>

<http://www.michiganrailroads.com/RRHX/Railroads/RailroadMenu.htm>

William Alden Smith. U.S. Senator bio (Biographical Directory of the United States Congress)

<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000629>

Alden, MI.

<http://user.mc.net/~louisvw/depot/alden/alden.htm>

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Chicago and West Michigan Railway Company.

Genre(s)

- business records

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Subject(s)

- Railroads -- Michigan
- Tourism -- Michigan -- History

Annual Reports

Collection Inventory

Series I Annual Reports 1887-1888, 1890-1892

	Box	Folder
7th Annual 1887	1	1
8th Annual 1888	1	2
10th Annual 1890	1	3
11th Annual 1891	1	4
12th Annual 1892	1	5

Series II Brochures 1895, 1897

	Box	Folder
Tours This Year, Chicago & West Michigan, Detroit, Lansing & Northern Passenger Department. April 1, 1895	1	6

General note

Published by Dean Hicks, Grand Rapids, 2nd edition. Accompanying map: Chicago & West Michigan Ry and Detroit, Lansing & Northern Railroad and leased lines and connections. "Millions of Brook Trout"

Brochures

Summer Tours, 1897, Passenger Department, Chicago & West Michigan and Detroit, Grand Rapids & Western.	1	7
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General note

Published by Dean Printing and Publishing Co., Grand Rapids. Route map attached inside front cover, and illustration on verso: Lindsay park, Charlevoix, Mich. [Bird's eye sketch, with labeled streets]

	Collection	Box
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C. & W. M. R. Y. Co. [Chicago & West Michigan Railway Co.] Special Train Service between Grand Rapids and the Soldier's Home Dedication December 30, 1886	224	14
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General note

[Small broadside, encapsulated] 1986.393. Added 1/15/2007.