

Collection #
BV 2639–2640,
CT 0572–0580

**C. EDWARD HEDSTROM
SIX DECADES OF SERVICE
ON THE SOUTH SHORE LINE
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW, 1990**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 bound volumes, 9 audiotapes
COLLECTION DATES: 1990
PROVENANCE: Indiana Historical Society Field Services, 1 August 1991
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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1991.0629

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Interurban electric railways were built after much technology had been developed for steam railroads in the way of track-building, car construction, switching, and inter-station communication. Electric motors and the transmission of electric power had also been developed for urban trolley lines. Therefore it was possible to construct a considerable network of roads in a comparatively short time.

In Indiana between 1895 and 1910 a network of interurban roads was built totalling 1825 miles, more than in any other state except Ohio, which had 2798 miles. Fast, frequent, dependable service linked many towns large and small, hauling both passengers and freight. The interurban lines were never very profitable for their owners, though they made money for state and local government in the form of taxes and fees, and helped communities by providing freight service. They reached their peak of popularity in the decade 1910-1920.

The proliferation of automobiles in the 1920s, along with the paving of highways, made it possible for people to travel independently, and interurban business fell off rapidly. Line after line was abandoned, and by 1939 only the South Shore Line was left, running from South Bend to Chicago. Even this was a commuter line, active mainly for rush-hour traffic in and out of Chicago.

C. Edward Hedstrom was employed on the South Shore Line, mainly as a motorman, from 1939 until he retired in 1982. His father ran electric trains on the South Shore from 1921 to 1960.

Source: Materials in collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, consisting of two bound volumes and nine audiotapes, documents interviews conducted with C. Edward Hedstrom by John D. Horachek on the subject "Six Decades Service on the South Shore Line." At the time of the interview, Horachek was a former employee of the North Shore Line (discontinued in 1963), and had known Hedstrom for over thirty years. The interviews were conducted under an Indiana Heritage Research Project Grant awarded by Indiana Historical Society and Indiana Heritage Council.

The interviews cover Hedstrom's family history (of Swedish extraction) in Michigan City, Indiana, as well as his experiences as a railroad man. Audiotapes are part of the collection (sides 10 and 11 are missing).

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, BV 2639).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.