

Collection #  
M 0808

## GEORGE K. BRADLEY PAPERS, 1877–1991

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Processed by

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2 March 2004

Revised by Emily Castle  
January 2005

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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### COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 9 manuscript boxes, 2 photograph boxes, 10 negatives, 1 box  
OVA size photographs, 1 box OVB size graphics, 1 slide box, 17  
printed items

COLLECTION  
DATES: 1877–1991

PROVENANCE: George K. Bradley Estate, c/o Shannon O'Neil, Sterling Heights, Michigan, 29 December 2000

RESTRICTIONS: Negatives and slides may only be viewed with assistance of staff.

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Publications by George K. Bradley in the Indiana Historical Society Library:

*Fort Wayne and Wabash Valley Trolleys*. Chicago, Ill.: Central Electric Railfans' Association, 1983. (General Collection: TF725.F7 B73 1983)

*Fort Wayne's Trolleys, 1870-1963: Horse Cars, Street Cars, Interurbans, Trolley Coaches, Motor Buses*. Chicago: O. Davies, 1963. (General Collection: HE4491.F652 B7 1963)

*Indiana Railroad: The Magic Interurban*. Chicago, Ill.: Central Electric Railfans' Association, 1991. (General Collection: TF724.I6 B73 1991)

*Fort Wayne's Fire Department, 1839-1964*. [Fort Wayne, Ind.]: Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, 1964. (Pamphlet Collection: F534.F65 B73 1964)

*Northern Indiana Railways*. Chicago: Electric Railway Historical Society, 1953. (General Collection: E2771.I6 B721 1953)

*Reeves and the Automobile*. Cleveland, Ohio: Reliance Electric Co. [between 1969 and 1983]. (Pamphlet Q Collection: TL215.R4 B7 1969)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2001.0001

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

George Kitching Bradley, railroad history enthusiast and author, was born in 1930 in La Porte, Indiana. He was raised in Northern Indiana, where the Northern Indiana Railroad, an interurban railway based in South Bend, influenced him through stories and memories. Bradley graduated from Purdue University in 1953, and later received a master's degree in history from Purdue.

He taught at Howe Military School and Valley Forge Military Academy. He also worked as an employee of Fort Wayne Transit Inc., was a former fire chief in Ft. Wayne, and served on the Fort Wayne Transit Corporation Board. He retired from teaching in 1993 from Walsh College in Troy, Michigan, where he moved in 1989. In 1999 he became a member of the Midwest Railroad Research Center Advisory Committee.

Bradley was first published in 1953 with *The Northern Indiana Railways*. His best-known work is *Indiana Railroad: the Magical Interurban* (1991), a history of the largest interurban railway system in the nation in terms of route mileage. He also authored *Fort Wayne's Fire Department: 1839–1964* and founded a museum in Fort Wayne, the Fire Fighters Museum.

During his retirement Bradley kept active with the annual Hoosier Traction Meet held in Indianapolis each September, and by playing music for the Detroit Skating Club's Adult Precision Skating Team. He passed away on 21 April 2000, in Royal Oak, Michigan.

#### Sources:

“George K. Bradley.” CERA (Central Electric Railfans’ Association). <http://cera-chicago.org/books%20bradley.htm> (accessed 21 January 2004)

“George Bradley: Turned Love of Trains into Books” [obituary]. *Detroit Free Press*, 24 April 2000, page 5B.

“Bradley, George Kitching.” In Donald Eugene Thompson, *Indiana Authors and their Books, 1917-1966: A Continuation of Indiana authors and their Books, 1816-1916, and Containing Additional Names from the Earlier Period*, page 69. Crawfordsville, Ind.: Wabash College, 1974. General Collection: [Z1281 .B31 1974](#)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains Bradley’s research files and papers on Indiana railroads and public utilities. Included are correspondence; reports and schedules; drafts, notes, and other research materials; property plats; photocopies of magazine articles; magazines and newsletters; books; clippings; and photographs. It has been organized into six series by subject matter. The folders in each series have been kept in the order George Bradley put them in.

**Series 1: Chicago, South Bend & Northern Indiana**, which operated from South Bend to Benton Harbor/St. Joseph, and is not in any way related to the Chicago South Shore & South Bend. The series contains bulletins in *Trolley Sparks* and reports about the line.

**Series 2: Fort Wayne & Wabash Valley Traction Co.**, which later became the Indiana Service Corporation. This company operated interurban service from Ft. Wayne to Peru and Lafayette, Kendalville and Waterloo, and to Bluffton, as well as the local streetcar system in Ft. Wayne. Included are articles from Ft. Wayne area newspapers, employee rules and regulations handbooks, time tables, and an annual report.

**Series 3: Indiana Railroad**, which acquired the Indiana Union Traction Company, interurban operations of the Terre Haute Indianapolis & Eastern line, and leased the interurban operations of the ISC and Interstate (later Public Service of Indiana). This series contains the bulk of the collection and includes Bradley’s correspondence and notes dealing with his book, *The Indiana Railroad*. There are photocopies of photographs of railroads and interurbans that include images of railway stations, railway cars, and engineers from the Indiana Railroad Company, the Indiana Union Traction Company, and other railroad companies.

There are many journal and newspaper articles that Bradley assembled. These articles document advances in the railway industry, the rise in use of buses as a service transportation vehicle, and directly pertain to railroads—a railway line closing or an accident on the railroad, for example, from around the state and western Ohio. Most of these articles date from the 1930s and 1940s, with some from earlier and later, up to the 1960s.

Photocopies of miscellaneous papers from railroad companies (among them the Indiana Union Traction Company and the Indiana Railroad Company), including financial reports, train schedules, and train routes. There are also original railroad tickets.

**Series 4: Early Traction Industry Developments**, includes articles and copies of patents from innovators such as C.J.

Van Depoele and Frank Sprague on electric railways, electric railway motors, contact switches for electric railways, overhead conductors for electric railways, and controllers for an electric motor.

**Series 5: Miscellaneous**, has articles, time tables, maps, and annual reports from other companies. There are also ten photograph books of trains and three of boats, plus a book of plans for model railroaders.

**Series 6: Photographs**, represent the interurban railway system throughout much of the state of Indiana, and include Louisville, Kentucky as well. Photographers include Edwin P. Belknap, Dr. Howard R. Blackburn, P.E. Buchert, James F. Cook, Clyde E. Helms, John F. Humiston, William C. Janssen, G.E. Lloyd, M.D. McCarter, Robert V. Mehlenbeck, Glenn W. Niceley, Ralph A. Perkin, James P. Shuman, Charles A. Smallwood, C.J. Stanley, and George H. Yater.

Photographic prints have been organized into three groups. The first is arranged by location, with towns in the same vicinity grouped together. The majority of these photographs show interurban trains passing through town or at railway facilities. There are also some of the facilities themselves, such as car barns, dispatch offices, and terminals. A few images are of people working at these various facilities.

The second group of photographs is arranged by subject, and includes the following: accidents/derailments; Binkley Mining Company; bridges (some are identified, some are not); cars; car interiors; cars with personnel; crossings, sidings, and tracks; Dayton and Muncie power station (at Winchester); equipment; Indiana Railroad logo; map; personnel; stations, depots, and shops; street scenes with railcars; and yards.

The third group of photographs consists of two personal collections removed from albums. The Edwin P. Belknap album pages include photographs of interurban cars, snow removal equipment, and stations from the Eastern Division (Richmond), the Crawfordsville Division, and the Terre Haute Division. This does not appear to be Belknap's complete album. The other album pages appear to be from the collection of George Krambles. Photographers include Krambles, W.B. Cox, and Glenn W. Niceley. Some photos from Belknap and from the Krambles collection can also be found in the other series of photographs in this collection.

There are also four mounted photographs in oversized photo storage (OVA). One shows a small waiting shelter with a sign that says "Jackson's" beside a track with a train in the distance. Another shows crates being transferred between an interurban car and a horse-drawn cart. There are two photographs of the #306 car from the New Castle line, with buildings in the background. The destination sign on the car reads "Newcastle, Kennard, Shirley, Maxwell, Indianapolis." The K of P Block building can be seen in the background in one of these photographs.

There are 366 slides in the collection, many of which seem to be the same images as the prints in this collection. There are ten 4" x 5" black-and-white negatives. One is of the THI&E #38 car of the Indianapolis–Mooresville–Brooklyn–Martinsville line and another is a train pulling out of the terminal in downtown Indianapolis. The remaining eight negatives are of fire houses in Ft. Wayne from 1939 and 1893.

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Newspaper Clippings: Last street car, Fort Wayne newspapers, 27 June 1947

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Indiana Service Corporation, Description of Equipment, 1939–40

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Indiana Railways and Light Company, *Rules and Regulations for the Government of Employes [sic] of the Indiana Railways and Light Company Interurban Department*. Lebanon, Indiana: Shumate Railroad Printer, 1915.

Printed Collections:  
Accession no. 2001.0001

Indiana Service Corporation, *Rules and Regulations for the Government of Employes [sic] of the Indiana Service Corporation, Fort Wayne and Decatur Traction Co., The Fort Wayne, Van Wert & Lima Tr. Co.* Lebanon, Indiana: Shumate Railroad Printer, 1923.

Printed Collections:  
Accession no. 2001.0001

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35mm slides

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35 mm. Slides  
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THI&E #38 Martinsville line car, n.d.

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Train pulling out from the Traction Terminal, n.d.

Visual Collections:  
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Fire House on Columbia St., Trucks, 1939 (7 negatives)

Visual Collections:  
4 x 5 Acetate negative

Fire House #3, Fort Wayne, 1893

Visual Collections:  
4 x 5 Acetate negative

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2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
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5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.