

Collection #
M 0780,
OMB 0090

**INDIANAPOLIS UNION RAILWAY COMPANY
MAINTENANCE OF WAY DEPARTMENT
RECORDS 1885–1956 (BULK 1885–1930)**

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Processed by

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

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION:

9 document cases, 1 oversize box, 23 oversize folders

COLLECTION DATES: 1885-1956 (bulk 1885-1930)

PROVENANCE: Roberta C. Coombs, 1031 Morning Sun Lane, Beech Grove, IN, 46107-2482, 25 June 2001

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Indianapolis Belt Railroad and Stockyard Company Records (M 0067); Samuel E. and Charles S. Rauh Papers (M 0406)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2001.0837

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Indianapolis Union Railway Company was founded in the early 1850s. During the twentieth century the company was operated by a consortium of railroads. These included the Pennsylvania Railroad; the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway (Big Four); the Nickel Plate Railroad; the Monon Railroad; and the Illinois Central Railroad.

The Indianapolis Union Railway Company owned and maintained the Union Railway Passenger Station (Indianapolis Union Station) and approximately one mile of track around the facility. In 1882 the company leased railway equipment, track, and facilities from the Indianapolis Belt Railroad and Stockyards Company. The Belt Railroad line covered fourteen miles of track from North Indianapolis to Brightwood on the eastern edge of the city. Industries along the line included the Indianapolis Stockyards Company, the Westinghouse Lamp Company, the Imperial Drop Forge Company, and the Carter Lee Lumber Company.

Around 1920 the Indianapolis Union Railway Company began a two-phase project to elevate the Union Station tracks and the Belt Railroad. The first phase, the elevation of the Union Station tracks, was completed by 1924. The second phase, approved in April 1925, involved elevation of the Belt track “from a point near West New York Street to a point near English Avenue, and from East Michigan Street to a point near East Thirteenth Street.” (*Annual Report*. Indianapolis Union Railway Company, 1925). The project included construction of new bridges in Marion County, including a bridge over the White River near Raymond Street and Bluff Road. Construction of elevated track continued into the early 1930s.

Sources: Material in the collection

Annual Report. Indianapolis Union Railway Company, 1925 (Indiana State Library)

“Fifty Years of Continuous Service: The Belt Railroad and Stockyard Company,” 1927 (Indiana State Library)

Indianapolis Belt Railroad and Stockyard Company Records (M 0067)

Rehor, John. A. *The Nickel Plate Story*. Milwaukee: Kalmbach, 1965. General Collection: HE 2791.N593 1965

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes correspondence, contracts, financial records, and blueprint drawings created and accumulated by the Maintenance of Way Department of the Indianapolis Union Railway Company, largely between 1885 and 1930. The records concern the planning and execution of the elevation of the Union Station and Belt Railroad tracks, daily activities associated with track maintenance, employee relations, and the maintenance of Indianapolis Union Station.

The records in this collection were originally stored in labeled file folders. These titles were transcribed onto acid-free file folders and the original folders discarded. The folder titles are listed in the Series Contents section of this collection guide. Titles originally assigned to empty file folders are also included in the series list, indicated by the notation "original folder empty."

The records are divided into three series: Correspondence, Financial Records, and Printed Material.

Series 1, Correspondence, is arranged according to the Maintenance of Way Department's original filing order. A large portion of the correspondence is associated with the elevation of the Belt Railroad line. Topics associated with elevation of the Belt Railroad tracks include the purchase and lease of equipment, construction of bridges (including the White River Bridge near Raymond Street and Bluff Road), the purchase of real estate in Marion County, and relations with sub-contractors and the City of Indianapolis.

The correspondence also includes letters exchanged with other railway companies, and industries served by the Belt Railroad. The letters contain details concerning the daily operations of the railroad, including the maintenance of signals and switches, and employee relations. Correspondence associated with Indianapolis Union Station consists largely of contracts, and letters exchanged with builders and contractors regarding improvements to the station, sheds, and railway yard. Material concerning railway personnel includes letters regarding the need for a locker room in Union Station for African-American brakemen (box 2, folder 4), and statistics concerning the daily work of trackmen, section men, and other employees between 1919 and 1922 (box 2, folders 15-18).

The series also includes maps and blueprint drawings associated with the purchase of real estate in Marion County, the elevation of the Belt Railroad line and Union Station tracks, railway operations, and maintenance of Indianapolis Union Station. These drawings were originally stored within the correspondence files. Included is a track diagram dated 1921 (box 9) and a map of Indianapolis showing the Indianapolis Union Railway and connecting railway lines (Flat Files: 14-h, Folder 1).

Series 2, Financial Records, includes payroll statistics (1918-30) and accounts payable and receivable records dating largely from 1920 to 1921. The accounts receivable files include invoices from Indianapolis companies as well as national suppliers of construction materials. Other financial records include inventories of materials owned by the Indianapolis Union Railway Company (1885 and 1893).

Series 3, Printed Material, consists of clippings related to the retirement of Indianapolis Union Railway officials and copies of the *Interstate Commerce Commission Practitioner's Journal* (May, June, and September 1935).

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Series 1: Correspondence, 1901–37

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1520: Cork Flooring for Repairs in Union Station, March.-April 1920	Box 1, Folder 6
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[original folder empty]

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