

Collection #  
M 1479

**INDIANAPOLIS UNION RAILWAY COMPANY  
RECORDS ADDITION, 1853-1918**

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** 69 manuscript boxes

**COLLECTION DATES:** 1853-1918

**PROVENANCE:** C. Edward Wesselman, Plainfield, Indiana, December, 2013

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

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**ALTERNATE FORMATS:**

**RELATED HOLDINGS:** Indianapolis Union Railway Company Records (M 0899)

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 2013.0399

**NOTES:**

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

In 1847 the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad came to Indianapolis. This was followed by other railroads serving Indiana that also came to the city. With this influx of rail lines and service came two realizations. First, Indianapolis would be the first major city that would depend on railroads for its growth, rather than water transportation. Second, this dependence on rail transport and the increasing number of railroad companies serving the city would require an efficient means of linking these routes to allow for passenger and freight exchange between lines. In 1850 the Union Track Railway was created. Three years later, in 1853, its name was changed to The Indianapolis Union Railway Company and a union depot was built for the multiple railroads coming into Indianapolis. This entity was officially incorporated in 1872 by an agreement between the following railroad companies: the Jeffersonville, Madison & Indianapolis Railroad Company; the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railway Company; the Columbus, Chicago and Indiana Central Railway Company, the Pittsburg, Cincinnati & St. Louis Railway Company; the Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad Company; and the Indianapolis, Cincinnati & Lafayette Railroad Company. Since its creation, "The Indianapolis Union Railway Company" was its official name. This mutually created railroad entity was brought into existence for the purpose of easing and streamlining the exchange of freight and passengers between these railroad companies. On October 17, 1882 and May 1, 1884 the Union Railway obtained leases from the Belt Railroad and Stock Yard Company that allowed them to operate the Belt Railroad for a period of nine hundred, ninety-nine years. The incorporation of The Indianapolis Union Railway was officially recognized in on March 2, 1885 by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana. The Indianapolis Union Railway provided both terminal facilities for the railroads that incorporated it and owned part shares in it, and also provided switching services for these same railroads. In 1888 the union depot was replaced by Union Station which still stands today, but is looking for another long-term use of its space. In April of 1976 The Indianapolis Union Railway Company changed ownership. It was transferred from its previous owner, Penn Central, to its new owner, Conrail. After this transfer of ownership, The Indianapolis Union Railway Company became a Conrail entity. By contrast, Penn Central had kept the Indianapolis Union Railway as a completely owned, but separately operated subsidiary

Sources: Indiana Historical Society Collection Guide for M 0899

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The records contain a mostly complete set of the accounting records (accounts paid and received) for the Indianapolis Union Railway Company located at Union Station in Indianapolis, 1853-1918. Listed are recipient, amount, and reason for payment as well as receipts and bills. Missing are the Civil War Years, 1862-1867, and from September, 1906 through 1917. Records for 1918 are from the period when the railroad was under government control because of the First World War. These records were formerly housed in Indianapolis' Union Station prior to its remodeling.

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