



ArchivesSpace

## **Parsons, Hinsdill; Papers**

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M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Hinsdill Parsons Papers
<b>ID:</b>	apap293
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1890-1912
<b>Physical Description:</b>	2 cubic ft.
<b>Physical Location:</b>	The materials are located on site in the department.
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Hinsdill Parsons Papers contain materials from Parsons' employment as general counsel at General Electric beginning in 1894, as well as personal and financial papers.

### Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Identification of specific item, series, box, folder, Hinsdill Parsons Papers, 1890-1912. M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York (hereafter referred to as the Parsons Papers).

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## Biographical History

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Hinsdill Parsons, Esq. was born on February 10, 1864 in Hoosick Falls, New York, the son of J. Russell Parsons. One of five sons, he attended Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, graduating in 1884. While in college, Parsons joined Phi Beta Kappa and Delta Psi fraternities. He attended Albany Law School and graduated in 1885; he was admitted to the New York State Bar in the same year. In September 1889, he married Jessie Mary Burchard in Hoosick Falls, NY. In the same year, Parsons also became patent attorney for the Walter A. Wood Harvester Company in Hoosick Falls, of which his father was an incorporator. He worked there until he left for Schenectady to serve as General Counsel for the General Electric Company in 1894. In May, 1901, he was given control of General Electric's legal affairs and was elected vice-president of the company. At this time, Parsons was also elected President of the

Schenectady Railroad Company. During his tenure with General Electric, Parsons was involved with various company anti-trust legal issues.

Parsons served on the board of directors for the Electric Bond and Share, the Washington Water Power, and the Knickerbocker Trust Companies, as a trustee for the General Electric Investment Club, as co-president of the Bully Hill Copper Mining & Smelting Company, and was a member of the University Club and the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

In a letter dated November 22nd, 1897, Parsons divulges to Mr. W. V. Baker of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company that his two life insurance policies held by Northwestern state differing birthdates because he is unsure of his age. No mention of his mother has been found in either Parsons records or in research materials. On April 28th, 1912, Parsons died in a car accident. He is buried in Vale Cemetery in Schenectady, NY.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Hinsdill Parsons collection contains 2 cubic feet of paper records from Parsons employment at General Electric, as well as personal and financial papers. The majority of the collection is comprised of correspondence between Parsons and various professional and personal contacts, but the collection also includes financial reports and spreadsheets from General Electric and other companies on which Parsons served as a board member or trustee. Other areas of particular interest include records of stock and bond transactions both professional and personal and several maps of areas affected by GE-affiliated railway or utilities companies.

This collection covers the years between 1890 and 1912, with the bulk of the documents dating from 1900-1912. The General Electric and other financial documents deal primarily with investments in the United States; the majority of the documents are related to upstate New York matters, although interests in other locations include Pennsylvania, Colorado, and Oregon. General Electric and Parsons were also involved in activities in Europe and Mexico. Parsons also kept records of the various clubs and organizations of which he was a member, including meeting minutes and dues records. Other personal documents include legal documents such as insurance papers and estate records, as well as general correspondence with and financial advice given to friends and family members.

These documents were discovered in the Parsons' previous residence at 21 Front Street, Schenectady. Upon the death of Hinsdill Parsons' wife, Jessie Burchard Parsons, in 1951, this residence and its contents were bequeathed to Saint George's Episcopal Church, 28 North Ferry Street, Schenectady. Saint George's sold the house in 1989, and in 2000, a Mr. Kevin Decker wrote Dr. Gerald Zahavi, University at Albany Professor of History, to inform him of the existence of these documents.

The collection is divided into three series. All three series are arranged alphabetically by subject name and are generally in reverse chronological order within each folder. Series 1: General Electric, Oct. 1900-April 1911, contains correspondence, financial records, and company reports relating to GE business matters. Series 2: Financial Investments, April 1895-April 1912, contains documents regarding Parsons

personal financial matters. Series 3: Personal, June 1890-April 1912, contains all other material of a personal nature not included in Series 2. Subjects in this series include family correspondence, property rights and deeds, Parsons involvement in committees and clubs, and personal investment advice. Two significant subjects in this series involve Parsons automotive interests and family estate communications.

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## Arrangement of the Collection

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The collection is organized into the following series: Series 1- General Electric, 1900-1911, Series 2- Financial Investments, 1985-1912, and Series 3- Personal, 1890-1912

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

### Revision Description

EAD file created Encoded in EAD by Encoded with EADM Machine by Melissa McMullen 2016 2016  
December

### Processing Information

Processed in 2009 by Michelle Scott.

### Access

Access to these records is unrestricted.

### Copyright

The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming with the laws of copyright. Whenever possible, the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives will provide information about copyright owners and other restrictions, but the legal determination ultimately rests with the researcher. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the Head of Special Collections and Archives.

## Acquisition Information

These documents were discovered in the Parsons' residence at 21 Front Street, Schenectady. Upon the death of Hinsdill Parsons' wife, Jessie Burchard Parsons, in 1951, this residence and its contents were bequeathed to Saint George's Episcopal Church, 28 North Ferry Street, Schenectady. The papers remained in the home until the Vestry of Saint George's Church sold the house in 1989. Later the Vestry passed a resolution granting a Mr. Kevin Decker the authority to dispose of the papers as he thought best. He subsequently gave them to Dr. Gerald Zahavi, University at Albany Professor of History, who in turn transferred them to the University Libraries, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, in 2006.

## Access

Access to this record group is unrestricted.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Business and Industry
- Albany, New York
- Parson, Hinsdill

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## Collection Inventory

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### General Electric, 1900-1911

Physical Description: 0.33 cubic ft.

#### Arrangement

Arranged Alphabetically.

#### Scope and Contents

This series contains correspondence, financial records, and company reports relating to GE business matters. This series includes administrative correspondence within the company, as well as correspondence with other GE affiliates and outside corporations.

Title/Description	Instances
Birmingham Gas Co., Consolidated Electric Light Co., & Birmingham Railway, Light & Power Co., 1901 May- June	

	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 1
Binghamton General Electric Bonds sales & communications., 1901 December- 1902 January	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 2
Culver, A. I. Phone conversation memorandum re: Railroad Rate Regulating Commission, 1905 May 16	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 3
Chicago City Railway Company. GE rebate contracts; correspondence re: contracts, Chicago mayoral bookkeeping investigation/audit, Chicago co. personnel issues; newspaper clippings re: audit, contract cancellations., 1907 Febraury- 1909 May	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 4
Chicago Edison Company. Royalty contract memorandum/ clarification, 1904 July 16	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 5
Electric Properties Company. Confidential advance copy of prospectus of new Westinghouse Company, 1906 April	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 6
Electric Undertakings Company. Prospectus., Undated	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 7
The Egyptian Petroleum Company, LTD. Annual general meeting report, 1908 December 30	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 8
GE Finances. Audit, collections/delinquent accounts, company expense statements, P&L reports, communications re: delinquent companies accounts & personnel issues, executive committee report., 1905 February- 1910 February	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 9
GE Investment Club. Correspondence, financial reports/ summaries, stock/bond purchases, minutes, 1904 April- 1911 April	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 10
Greene Copper. Business transactions, 1901 December- 1904 November	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 11
Hotel (unnamed). Property sale, correspondence., 1904 May-June	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 12
Houston Municipal Plant. Letter re: proposed municipal plant, 1900 October 16	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 13
Hudson River Telephone Company. Proposed ordinance, 1902 January 31		

	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 14
Magee, Louis J. Business correspondence, foreign companies, 1906 May- 1907 April	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 15
Manhattan Railway Company. Bill cancellation, 1903 June 15	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 16
National Electric Lamp Company. Bonds. New York State National Bank, 1901 July- 1911 July	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 17
Niagara County Irrigation & Water Supply Company. Legislative monitoring expense, 1906 March	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 18
Nicholls, William S. Personal contact, business communications., 1903 July- 1904 December	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 19
Peabody, George Foster. The Otis Inclined Railway, 1905 May- June	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 20
Proposed Incandescent Lamp Company. Company proposal., 1909 December 18	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 21
Schenectady Railway Company. Financial statements, trolley line, bonds, 1903 August- 1912 January	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 22
The Schenectady Star Printing Company. Consolidation with The Daily Union (Schenectady Union-Star). Stock purchases., 1902 January- 1911 August	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 23
Standard Light & Power Company. Stock purchase & communications. United Electric Securities Company, 1901 October-November	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 24
Special Collection Department. GE customer debt collection, 1907 August- 1908 October	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 25
Unnamed. Magazine advertisement, paid confirmations, communications re: viaduct licensing/right-of-way issue., 1901 October- 1904 July	Box 1 (1- General Electric)	Folder 26

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## Financial Investments, 1895-1912

Physical Description: 1.12 cubic ft.



## Arrangement

Arranged Alphabetically.

## Scope and Contents

This series contains documents regarding Parsons personal financial matters. In some cases, the demarcation between Parsons personal and professional financial involvement is blurred, and a number of the financial documents in this series involve colleagues at General Electric. The series contains correspondence relating to personal loans and debts, stock and bond transactions, cancelled checks and receipts, insurance and tax information, property rights information, and various companies financial statements and plans.

Title/Description	Instances	
American Gas & Electric Co./Electric Bond & Share Co. Stock shares communication, purchase agreements, plan & reports. Railroad rights/eminent domain, 1906 December- 1912 January	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 1
Brooklyn City Railroad. Stock purchases & communications, 1910 July- 1911 July	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 2
Cohoes Gas Light Company. Stock purchase, communication with brother Willard P. Parsons, Anson Burchard, 1910 February- 1911 January	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 3
Central Colorado Power Company. Purchase agreements, financial plans, annual reports, collections letters. Financial insolvency, Knickerbocker Trust Company, 1906 October- 1912 March	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 4
Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company. Blueprint map Schenectady railroad route. Leases between Cincinnati Co. & Union Gas & Electric Company, 1905 March- 1912 April	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 5
Carnegie Trust Company. Account book, cancelled checks, personal investments., 1909 January- 1910 December	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 6
United States Mortgage & Trust Company.. Charles Coffin investments, IOUs, receipts., 1903 March- 1910 November	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 7
Chicago & Milwaukee Electric Railroad Company.. Stock shares., 1905 March-April	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 8
Chesapeake & Ohio Company.. Stock shares., 1899 July- 1900 November	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 9
Fisher, A.M. Debt correspondence, IOU., 1908 August- 1911 February	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 10
F.J.&G. (Fonda, Johnstown & Gloversville Railroad Company). . Stock & bonds., 1903 April- 1904 January		

	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 11
Great Northern Power Development Company. . Underwriters agreements, subscription correspondence, invoice letters., 1904 December- 1908 May	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 12
Grenfell Syndicate. . Subscription; Grenfell Mexican Exploration Co. (copper mine)., 1906 May-August	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 13
Guanajuato Power and Electric Company. . Stockholder reports, banking & loan documentation, subscription/stock communication. Stone Canon Consolidated Coal Company of Maine stocks., 1899 December- 1910 November	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 14
Golf Club Realty Company. . Stock communications., 1907 January	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 15
Harrington, F.A.. Investment correspondence (New York Air Brake Co., Electric Bond & Share Co.), memorandum, news clipping., 1905 March-June	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 16
Huston, Ernest. . Loan correspondence., 1906 November- 1908 September	Box 2 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 17
Home insurance policies, tax bills. . Receipts & correspondence., 1903 May- 1912 July	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 1
Home electrical inspection. . Reports, correspondence., 1905 March- 1910 March	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 2
Hyatt, Marshall. . Loan correspondence., 1909 November- 1911 May	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 3
Lindsay, Charles. . Handwritten paid note., Undated	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 4
The Citizens Lighting Company of Louisville. . Stock/bond communications., 1901 July- 1903 March	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 5
Miller, Elmer A.. Bank note communication, Schenectady Trust Company., June 3rd 1908	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 6
Miller, John H. . Loan communications., 1907 December- 1908 January	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 7
National Commercial Bank. . Payments/deposits., 1911 June- 1912 February		

	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 8
Nicholson, James. (Parsons chauffeur). . Expense accounts. Mortgage & deed. Receipts & bills., 1908 October- 1912 March	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 9
Pennsylvania Water & Power Company. . Stock communications., 1911 October- 1912 April	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 10
Parsons, Hinsdill (A). . Assorted financial reports, communications, cancelled checks, receipts., 1895 April- 1908 October	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 11
Parsons, Hinsdill (B). . Assorted financial reports, communications, cancelled checks, receipts, 1895 April- 1908 October	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 12
Philadelphia Electric Company. . Annual reports, trust & land title documents. Stock purchases, communications. Documented rumor of GE takeover, 1896 March- 1912 April	Box 3 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 13
Portland Gas & Electric Company/City & Suburban Railway Company of Portland, Oregon/Portland Street Railway Company.. Company consolidation (Portland Consolidated Railway Company). Stock purchases & communications, stock pool., 1904 March- 1909 December	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 1
Portland-Salem (Oregon) Electric Railway Company Syndicate. . Syndicate shares communications, 1905 December- 1910 February	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 2
Schenectady Trust Company (A). . Stock shares. Financial receipts, communications. Loans, IOUs, cancelled checks. Washington Water Power Company stocks., 1902 April- 1912 April	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 3
Schenectady Trust Company (B).. Stock shares. Financial receipts, communications. Loans, IOUs, cancelled checks. Washington Water Power Company stocks., 1902 April-1912 March	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 4
Security Savings & Trust Company. . Stocks., 1911 June- 1912 April	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 5
Southern California Edison Company. . Stock purchase & communication. Annual report., 1911 January- 1912 April	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 6
Stanislaus Power Development / Stanislaus Electric Power Company (A).. Prospectus, underwriters agreements, financial plans. Electric Bond and Share Company. Knickerbocker Trust Company. Sierra & San Francisco Power Company., 1905 September- 1912 April	Box 4 (2-Financial Investments)	Folder 7
Stanislaus Power Development / Stanislaus Electric Power Company (B). . Prospectus, underwriters agreements, financial plans. Electric Bond and Share Company. Knickerbocker Trust		

Company. Sierra & San Francisco Power Company., 1905 September- 1912 April	Box 4 (2- Financial Investments)	Folder 8
The Tehuantepec Rubber Culture Company. . Mortgage bonds, life insurance. Rubber plantation investment., 1901 August- 1904 November	Box 5 (2- Financial Investments)	Folder 1
The Tiffin Edison Electric Illuminating Company. . Syndicate subscription., 1909 October- 1911 October	Box 5 (2- Financial Investments)	Folder 2
Walter A. Wood Mowing & Reaping Machine Company. . Reorganization, stock/bond transactions., 1895 October- 1912 January	Box 5 (2- Financial Investments)	Folder 3
Washington Water Power Company. . Stock transactions & communications. By-laws, financial statements., 1909 January- 1912 April	Box 5 (2- Financial Investments)	Folder 4

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## Personal, 1890-1912

Physical Description: 0.55 cubic ft.

### Arrangement

Arranged Alphabetically.

### Scope and Contents

This series contains all other material of a personal nature not included in Series 2. Subjects in this series range from family correspondence to property rights and deeds to Parsons involvement in committees and clubs, to personal investment advice. Two significant subjects in this series involved Parsons automotive interests and family estate communications.

<b>Title/Description</b>	<b>Instances</b>	
Automobile interests. . Parts/purchases, accidents, arrest, miscellaneous., 1908-1912	Box 5 (3- Personal)	Folder 5
Blodgett, Katherine Burr. . Investments, 1908 June- 1910 November	Box 5 (3- Personal)	Folder 6
Burchard, Anson.. Communications, personal financial dealings, 1902 February- 1912 April	Box 5 (3- Personal)	Folder 7
Coffin, Charles A. (President, GE). . Land purchase in Maine title dispute, legal proceedings correspondence, 1911 January-1912 April	Box 5 (3- Personal)	Folder 8
Cranston, William Jr. family correspondence.. Personal loan repayment, Farmers Loan & Trust Co., 1908 November-1911 December	Box 5 (3- Personal)	Folder 9

Copeland, William H.. Correspondence., 1897 March- 1901 June	Box 5 (3-Personal)	Folder 10
Down Town Association. Annual dues, receipts., 1904 July- 1911 May	Box 5 (3-Personal)	Folder 11
Committees & Clubs.. Knickerbocker Trust Company committee. Resumption of business, staffing/appointments, committee meeting minutes. Clubs list. Hoosac Club dues notices & payments. Cancelled checks. Miscellaneous., 1904 July- 1911 December	Box 5 (3-Personal)	Folder 12
Ives, J. M. . Estate dispute papers. Southern New England Telephone Company., 1905 January- 1909 July	Box 5 (3-Personal)	Folder 13
Legal documents. . Life insurance policies & correspondence, property deeds, titles, & bonds, loan payments, house & auto insurance, 1892 January 1912 April	Box 5 (3-Personal)	Folder 14
Merritt, Charles H. . Personal correspondence, 1900 December-1903 July	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 1
The Noble & Wood Machine Company. . License contract, 1906 May	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 2
Parsons, James Russell Jr. (brother). . Property sale correspondence. Elevator repairs at the NY State Library. Schenectady Superintendent of Schools appointment. Death while serving as Consul General of the United States to Mexico., 1895 January- 1905 December	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 3
Parsons, Willard P. (brother). . Correspondence, 1897 November-1905 March	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 4
Parsons, James Russell Sr. . Life summary. Estate, legal proceedings, 1890 June- 1900 June	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 5
Peck, S. . Estate, 1913 March 1	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 6
Piping Rock Club. . Membership, dues communications, 1912 March-April	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 7
Potter, Nathaniel Bowditch M.D. . Financial, medical communications, 1904 July- 1911 January	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 8
Starr, Howard W. . Personal correspondence, 1905 January- 1906 May	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 9
Shearon, John & Bridget. . Property title legalities. Mortgages & deeds records., 1903 June- October	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 10
Steele, Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. . Personal correspondence, medical issues, 1910 July- 1911 November	Box 6 (3-Personal)	Folder 11
Van Voast, James A. . Nicholson mortgage, 1911 February- May		

	Box 6 (3- Personal)	Folder 12
Knickerbocker Trust Company stocks communications, Board of Directors appointments & communications, 1908 March- 1910 September	Box 6 (3- Personal)	Folder 13
Knickerbocker Trust Company. Deposit communications & receipts, 1910 December- 1912 January	Box 6 (3- Personal)	Folder 14

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