



BHC-MSS 0179

## Guide to the Records of the Huntington Telephone Company

by Meg Rinn

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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Huntington Telephone Company

**Title:** Records of the Huntington Telephone Company

**Dates:** 1903-1948

**Quantity:** .8 linear feet, 1 ½ manuscript boxes

**Abstract** The Huntington Telephone Company was founded in 1903 and operated out of Huntington, Connecticut for the whole of its existence. It began in response to the need for a local phone exchange, the records in the collection document the finances and activities of the company until it was sold to the Southern New England Telephone Company in 1948, offering insight into the early days of telecommunications in Connecticut.

**Language:** English

**Repository:** Bridgeport History Center

### **Biographical History:**

The Huntington Telephone Company was founded in 1903 and operated out of Huntington, Connecticut for the whole of its existence.

Early telephones relied on switchboards to direct calls, where one could call into the switch board operator, ask to be connected to a particular business (home telephones were very uncommon in the early 1900s), and then be put through. For regions outside of cities, it was not uncommon for only one or two businesses to have telephones.

Phone companies ran on a subscriber-based system, which helped cover installation costs and system coverage. This was how the Southern New England Telephone Company (SNET) began in the late 1870s.

In the case of the Huntington Telephone Company, it began with a push from Huntington Farmill River Grange. There was only one telephone in Shelton at the time, and there was a clear need for expansion. Owner O.C. Shelton began the telephone exchange with 19 subscribers, who helped to cover start up costs. It was based in his home in Huntington, Connecticut.

At it's peak, the Huntington Telephone Company had 121 subscribers. It was sold to SNET in 1948, which took over the exchange.

### **Scope and Content note:**

The collection contains the account book of the company from 1903 into 1954, along with articles of agreement and minutes help to document the founding of the company, as well as how phone companies and switch boards operated in the early days of telephones, providing local insight to

the telecommunications revolution.

**Arrangement Note:**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title

**Administrative information:**

**Provenance:** 1978.79, donation of the West family.

**Preferred Citation:**

Records of the Huntington Telephone Company (BHC-MSS 0179), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

**Names and Subject Tracings**

*Corporate names*

Huntington Telephone Company

Southern New England Telephone Company

*Subject tracings*

Telephones

Telephone exchanges

**Detailed box/folder listing**

Box 1

1. Account book, 1903-1918
2. Account book, 1929-1942
3. Account book, 1942-1954
4. Articles of agreement, minute book, 1903-1904
5. Certificate books, 1906, undated
6. Clippings, 1948, undated

Box 2

1. Daybook, 1906-1921
2. Index of telephone numbers, c. 1932
3. Public Utilities Commission filing, 1932
4. Receipts, 1903-1904
5. Reports, 1915, 1937
6. Stock certificates, 1948