



John Tlapek Papers (R0037)

Collection Number: R0037

Collection Title: John Tlapek Papers

Dates: 1897-1935

Creator: Tlapek, John, 1846-1937

Abstract: The John Tlapek Papers contain business correspondence addressed to John Tlapek, as general manager of Louis Houck's Chester, Perryville, Ste. Genevieve and Farmington Railroad. Also included are correspondence for Tlapek regarding his work as a partner in the Southeast Missouri Telephone Company.

Collection Size: (1 roll of microfilm)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *John Tlapek Papers* (R0037); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: The papers were loaned for microfilming to the University of Missouri by Charles Tlapek on October 8, 1980 (Accession No. RA0044).

Other Finding Aid: An index of the correspondence can be found in the administration folder. The index is alphabetical by sender.

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the John Tlapek Papers can be found in the following collections:

Sainte Genevieve Telephone Company Records (R0339)
Chester, Perryville, Ste. Genevieve, and Farmington Railroad Records (R0861)
Kiefner Lumber Company Records (R1198)

Processed by: Processed by John F. Bradbury, October 15, 1980. Revised by Kathleen Seale, March 25, 2020.

Biographical Note:

John Tlapek was born in Bohemia, Austria, in 1846. He was educated in Prague and, after immigrating to the United States, at De Soto, Missouri. In 1865, he moved to St. Marys in Sainte Genevieve County, Missouri. Tlapek was involved in many business and financial enterprises in southeast Missouri. He was associated with Frederick Bartels in the lumber trade at St. Marys, was a partner in sawmills near Perryville with Charles Kiefner, and did business with C.H. Huttig's Sash and Door Company of St. Louis. He was president and general manager at the turn of the century of Louis Houck's Cape Girardeau, Perryville, Sainte Genevieve, and Farmington Railroad. The railroad began operations in 1895, was extended from St. Marys to Ste. Genevieve in 1897, and was taken over by the St. Louis-San Francisco lines in 1902. Tlapek also helped finance the construction of the Crystal City and Uvalde Railroad in Texas. Tlapek and A.R. Ponder, president of the Texas railroad, were partners also in the Southeast Missouri Telephone Company of Sainte Genevieve and Cape Girardeau. Their telephone interests in Southeast Missouri later became part of the Bell System. Tlapek managed his affairs from his home in St. Marys until his death in 1937.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following two series:

Railroad Correspondence
Telephone Company Correspondence

Scope and Content Note:

Railroad Correspondence

This series contains letters from Charles Keifner and C.H. Huttig regarding the lumber trade, and from railroad entrepreneur Louis Houck regarding construction and finance of the Chester, Perryville, Ste. Genevieve and Farmington Railroad, the collection of subscriptions from towns along its right-of-way, and its extension into Farmington and the mining areas of Saint Francois County. Tlapek also corresponded with M.R. Smith, a Farmington attorney and booster of the Saint Francois County extension; and with Charles M. Foreman, receiver of the Centralia and Chesterfield Railroad in Illinois. The correspondence concerns railroad development and the Houck lines in southeaster Missouri, and connections with other lines. This series is arranged chronologically except were letters were originally pinned together.

Telephone Company Correspondence

This series consists of correspondence concerning Tlapek's association with A.R. Ponder in the Southeast Telephone Company, and the Crystal City and Uvalde Railroad in Texas. Tlapek helped finance both projects through the Southeast Missouri Trust Company. Ponder's letters

refer to equipment and fixtures purchased for the telephone company, and to progress on the Texas railway. This series is arranged chronologically except where letters were originally pinned together.

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