



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Elisha Gray Collection

NMAH.AC.0014

Robert Harding

1984

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Elisha Gray Collection
Date:	1871-1938
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0014
Creator:	Gray, Elisha, 1835-1901 (inventor)
Source:	National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Electricity and Modern Physics
Extent:	3.6 Cubic feet (10 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The collection documents the Elisha Gray and Alexander Graham Bell controversy over the priority invention of the telephone.

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Original source unidentified.

Provenance

Collection transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Electricity (now known as the Division of Work and Industry).

Processing Information

Collection processed by Robert Harding, archivist in 1984.

Preferred Citation

Elisha Gray Collection, 1871-1938, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

Elisha Gray (1835-1901) was an inventor and the co-founder of the Western Electric Company. Gray is best known for his part in a bitter controversy with Alexander Graham Bell over the priority of invention of the telephone.

Scope and Contents

Legal documents, photographs, articles, copies of correspondence, three folders of original Gray correspondence on the Gray-Bell controversy; most of the collection consists of copies of material, or printed matter, collected by Lloyd W. Taylor of the museum staff.

Arrangement

Divided into 11 series:

Series 1: Memoirs and Unpublished Manuscripts Concerning Gray Memoirs

Series 2: Correspondence Correspondence, 1871-1893

Series 3: Legal Material Legal Material Series

Series 4: Patents Including Telautograph Patents Including Telautograph

Series 5: Sample Telautograph Writings Series 6: Articles, Speeches and Miscellaneous Articles

Series 7: Lloyd W. Taylor Manuscripts, Photographs And Miscellaneos

Series 8: Chicago International World Electrical Congress: Correspondence, 1892-1893

Series 9: Chicago International World Electrical Congress: Responses to Invitations, 1892-1893 Series

Series 10: Sketches, Diagrams, Notes and Clippings Sketches, Diagrams, Notes and Clippings Series

Series 11: Diagrams, Sketches, Drawings, Newsclippings, and Explanatory Notes

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Electric engineering
- Electrical science and technology
- Electricity
- Telegraph

Types of Materials:

- Clippings
- Correspondence -- 1930-1950
- Patents
- Photographs -- 1850-1900
- Photographs -- 1900-1950

Names:

Bell, Alexander Graham, 1847-1922

National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Electricity and Modern Physics

Taylor, Lloyd W.

Western Electric Company.

Functions:

Invention of telegraph

Container Listing

Series 1: Memoirs and Unpublished Manuscripts Concerning Gray

Scope and Contents: Most of the biographical material was written by Lloyd Taylor, C.A. Brown and F.W. Cushing

Box 1, Folder 1	History of Gray Collection at the United States National Museum (USNM)
Box 1, Folder 2	Reference Collection, objects of Elisha Gray at USNM
Box 1, Folder 3	Index of Gray and S&S White Collection at AT&T
Box 1, Folder 4	Index of correspondence
Box 1, Folder 5	"The Study of the Invention of the History of the Telephone" by F.W. Cushing
Box 1, Folder 6	"Professor Elisha Gray's work in Connection with the Telephone" by F.W. Cushing (5 copies)
Box 1, Folder 7	"In the Court of Final Appeal" a paper on the Bell Gray controversy by C.A. Brown, Gray V. Bell
Box 1, Folder 8	"In the Court of Final Resort" a paper on the Bell Gray controversy, by C.A. Brown, Ignorance vs. Genius; Extracts from paper by C.A. Brown written about 1930 entitled "In the Court of Final Resort, Ignorance vs. Genius, In Equity" (3 copies)
Box 1, Folder 9	Memoirs and correspondence of F.W. Cushing 1933
Box 1, Folder 10	Elisha Gray controversy a mock case
Box 1, Folder 11	The Telephone and Elisha Gray, by Professor C.H. Churchill Correspondence from Oberlin College Archives
Box 1, Folder 12	Churchill's letters
Box 1, Folder 13	Oberlin College Catalog, 1860-1861
Box 1, Folder 14	Western Electric Records

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1871-1893

Box 2, Folder 1	Elisha Gray Correspondence, 1871-1876
Box 2, Folder 2	Elisha Gray 1874 Letters of Introduction, certificates and deeds
Box 2, Folder 3	Elisha Gray correspondence, 1877-1879
Box 2, Folder 4	Elisha Gray Banquet, 1878
Box 2, Folder 5	Elisha Gray Correspondence, 1880-1893
Box 2, Folder 6	Elisha Gray notes on trip abroad, 1881
Box 2, Folder 7	Elisha Gray letters by R.E. Gray, 1867 -1868; 1889
Box 2, Folder 8	Elisha Gray letter relatives, 1893; 1894
Box 2, Folder 9	Elisha Gray letters to his wife, 1869
Box 2, Folder 10	Elisha Gray letters by E.H. Gray, 1867; 1868
Box 2, Folder 11	Business letters to Gray, contracts, 1857-1902;
Box 2, Folder 12	Elisha Gray miscellaneous documents, Bell's Appointment Diary of 1876, 1876
Box 2, Folder 13	Elisha Gray's and Delia M. Gray's Wills; and Professor Gray's obituaries

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Series 3: Legal Material

Box 3, Folder 1	Elisha Gray U.S. Patent Index
Box 3, Folder 2	Elisha Gray Legal material Patent Suits
Box 3, Folder 3	Legal Material con't.
Box 3, Folder 4	Elisha Gray U.S. and British Patent Specifications
Box 3, Folder 5	Patents U.S. & Great Britain
Box 3, Folder 6	Elisha Gray Patent Suits: statements and affidavits (original copies)
Box 3, Folder 7	Elisha Gray Gray vs. Bell, 1879
Box 3A, Folder 1-2	Betts and Fish Patent Suit of, 1899
Box 3A, Folder 3	Payson's Transcript of Patent Suit, 1899
Box 3A, Folder 4	E. Gray Patents, 1875-1907
Box 4, Folder 1	Betts and Fish Transcript of Patent Suit, 1899
Box 4, Folder 1	American Bell vs. National Telephone Manufacturing Co.
Box 4, Folder 1	American Bell Telephone vs. Country Telephone Co.
Box 4, Folder 3	American Bell Telephone vs. National Telephone Manufacturing Co.
Box 4, Folder 3	American Bell Telephone vs. Century Telephone Co.

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Series 4: Patents Including Telautograph

Box 4, Folder 1	Elisha Gray: McPhersons Lab Record Book
Box 4, Folder 2	Elisha Gray: Deteriorated telautograph papers (needs conservation)
Box 4, Folder 2	Elisha Gray: Sample writing of Telautograph (needs conservation)
Box 5, Folder 3	Elisha Gray Patent Interferences Specifications, hand written
Box 4, Folder 4	Elisha Gray Patents, including specifications, caveats, drawings
Box 4, Folder 5	Elisha Gray Patent specifications Indexes

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Series 5: Sample Telautograph Writings

Box 4A

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Series 6: Articles, Speeches and Miscellaneous

Box 5, Folder 1	Elisha Gray lectures and speeches from Western Electric
Box 5, Folder 2	Elisha Gray Family Tree
Box 5, Folder 2	Andrew Moore and his descendants
Box 5, Folder 2	Children of Winifred Linsley Blackman and Edward Elisha Gray
Box 5, Folder 3	Bell Pamphlet to Gray, 1876
Box 5, Folder 3	Elisha Gray pamphlets
Box 5, Folder 4	Elisha Gray magazine articles
Box 5, Folder 5	Elisha Gray newspaper clippings

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Series 7: Lloyd W. Taylor Manuscripts, Photographs and Miscellaneous

Box 6, Folder 1	Legal material Bell vs. Dowd
Box 6, Folder 1	US vs. Bell
Box 6, Folder 1	Affidavits of Z.F. Wilbur
Box 6, Folder 2	Newspaper clippings
Box 6, Folder 3	Early version of Taylor's The Untold Story of the Telephone by Lloyd William Taylor
Box 6, Folder 4	Lloyd William Taylor, The Untold Story of the Telephone, early draft
Box 6, Folder 5	An Untold Part of the Telephone Story, by L.W. Taylor
Box 6, Folder 6	<p>Lloyd William Taylor's manuscript final draft The Untold Story of the Telephone</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CChapter 1 page 1, Bell vs. Gray for filing of a patent the first telephone didn't have speech through it page 7, Court litigation was far too advanced for Gray become involved at such a late date page 8, Bell won the case for inventing the telephone Chapter 2 page 1, Bell and Gray's competition with various inventions page 2-4, short biography of Gray (schooling, inventions, & business partnerships) page 8, letter from Gray accusing Bell of being very suspicious page 9, Bell and Gray would have gotten along if left to themselves Chapter 3 page 2, decision of S.C. was four to three in favor of Bell with 2 judges abstaining page 3, Dowd case compromise decisions consent decree page 6, Gray's feelings of the Compromise Chapter 4, page 2, Gray received a British patent in June 1874 for transmitting interrupted corrupts and converting them into sound page 5 & 6 Gray was handicapped because he had a caveat and not a patent Chapter 5 page 3 Gray had constructed a telephone receiver earlier than Bell Chapter 7, Discussion of Gray's telephone transmitter and the inadequacy of Bell's transmitter Taylor writings <p>Taylor Writings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 page 2, Bell vs. Gray on filing for a patent The first telephone didn't have speech through it

page 7, The Bell interests took full advantage of Gray and his feeling of discontentment. The court litigation was to far advanced for Gray to appeal and become re-involved with the case

page 8, Bell won the case for inventing telephone

Chapter 2 page 1, Gray's title to the invention of the harmonic telegraph which is a device for simultaneously several messages over one wire, and both filed patent applications in 1875 prevailed over Bell's. Bell and Gray both competed over the telautograph which is a device for transmitting handwriting by wire. Gray was awarded the patents in 1888 and 1891. He exhibited it at the Columbian Exposition in 1893.

page 2, 3, Gray lived in Western Reserve. He carried on farm work after his father died, and then became an apprentice to a blacksmith. He then turned to carpentry at the age of 22 through a self help program he was given the opportunity to go to Oberlin College (1857 1862) by working his way through school.

He invented a self adjusting telegraph relay. With the help and facilities of General Stager, Gray perfected the relay, and then developed the typewriter telegraph, the telegraph repeater, and annunciator for hotels, a printing telegraph and a number of lesser inventions. In 1869 he formed a partnership with Enos M. Barton which later became the Western Electric Co. Gray didn't have much business sense which is why the company was reorganized.

Box 6, Folder 7	Taylor correspondence
Box 6, Folder 8	Photographs collected by Lloyd W. Taylor
Box 6, Folder 8A	Photographs (unknown)
Box 6, Folder 9	Copy for final draft of Bell Gray transcript

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Series 8: Chicago International World Electrical Congress: Correspondence, 1892-1893

Box 7, Folder 1	Initial of A
Box 7, Folder 2	Initial of B
Box 7, Folder 3	Initial of C
Box 7, Folder 4	Initial of D
Box 7, Folder 5	Initial of E
Box 7, Folder 6	Initial of F
Box 7, Folder 7	Initial of G
Box 7, Folder 8	Initial of H
Box 7, Folder 9	Initial of I & J
Box 7, Folder 10	Initial of K
Box 7, Folder 11	Initial of L
Box 7, Folder 12	Initial of M
Box 7, Folder 13	Initial of N & O
Box 7, Folder 14	Initial of P & Q
Box 7, Folder 15	Initial of R
Box 7, Folder 16	Initial of S
Box 7, Folder 17	Initial of T,U,V
Box 7, Folder 18	Initial of W,X,Y,Z
Box 7, Folder 19	Miscellaneous correspondence

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Series 9: Chicago International World Electrical Congress: Responses to Invitations, 1892-1893

Box 8, Folder 1	A
Box 8, Folder 2	B
Box 8, Folder 3	C
Box 8, Folder 4	D
Box 8, Folder 5	E
Box 8, Folder 6	F
Box 8, Folder 7	G
Box 8, Folder 8	H
Box 8, Folder 9	I & J
Box 8, Folder 10	K
Box 8, Folder 11	L
Box 8, Folder 12	M
Box 8, Folder 13	N
Box 8, Folder 14	O
Box 8, Folder 15	P & Q
Box 8, Folder 16	R
Box 8, Folder 17	S
Box 8, Folder 18	T, U, & V
Box 8, Folder 19	W, X, Y, & Z
Box 8, Folder 20	Miscellaneous

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Series 10: Sketches, Diagrams, Notes and Clippings

Box 9	Business Card
Box 9	Correspondence, 1887-1901
Box 9	Form of Subscription, The General Press Cutting Association, Ltd, London
Box 9	News clipping from the Chicago Daily Tribune, Electrical World, Evangelist of New York City, the Herald, New York Times, New York Tribune, Republican, Telegraph, and the Times.
Box 9	Notes re: samples of work done by Elisha Gray's Telautograph
Box 9	Obituaries re: death of Elisha Gray
Box 9	Receivers and unidentified equipment
Box 9	Sketches, doodles, floor plan, diagrams and notes concerning Gray's inventions; including magnets, transmitters, paper shifter, and pen lifter.
Box 9	Submarine signal
Box 9	The Telautograph: Judgment of the Press, being excerpts culled from the comments of representatives of many newspapers at an exhibition of the Telautograph given simultaneously in New York and Chicago, March 21, 1893.

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Series 11: Diagrams, Sketches, Drawings, News clippings and Explanatory Notes

Box 10 Frame for mounting "Direct Pull" magnets for telautograph, Gray's Duplicate Wiring Machine, Gray's self propeller telautograph, Improvement in Telautograph two wire system, Laminated magnet, method of putting train on escapement, Paper friction device, Paper shifter, Pen Lifting, Plan for reversing main current, Receiver paper carrier, Transmitter frame, Three wire Transmitter, Two Wire Telautograph.

Box 10 Folder containing some diagrams of Gray's inventions (These are in bad shape)

Box 10 Map showing the lines of the Mutual Union Telautograph Co. and Connections, October, 1882. Portrait of Elisha Gray

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