

CISCO, JAY GUY, COLLECTION

1785-[1850-1912]-1953

Processed by:

Gwynn Thayer
Archival Technical Services

Accession Number: 2000-008
Microfilm Accession Number: 1701
Date Completed: June 20, 2003
Location: IV-F-6, top

MICROFILMED

INTRODUCTION

The Jay Guy Cisco Collection 1794-[1850-1912]-1953 measures one cubic foot and includes articles, letters, two scrapbooks, a map of Tennessee, and various other items collected by Cisco, such as Confederate money and bonds, autographs of famous individuals, and pictures of historical figures. Donated by two sisters, Judith S. Gentry and Mary F. Scoby, the collection is unrestricted and arrived in no particular order; no items were discarded during processing. The condition of most of the papers is excellent, although a few items show signs of age.

To ensure preservation and ease of access, items in the large scrapbook were separated, cleaned, and encapsulated, and then reorganized according to subject. The original order was preserved in microfilm and via a photocopy included in the collection. Materials from the smaller scrapbook were encapsulated for preservation purposes, but the binding and original order was kept intact. Researchers interested in Jay Guy Cisco and his publications should examine the TSLA Tennessee authors collection located at IV-A-1-3, which includes works written by Cisco. TSLA also has some copies of the *Forked Deer Blade*, a Jackson, Tennessee, newspaper published by Cisco in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Works written or edited by Jay Guy Cisco at TSLA:

Tennessee Authors and Writings on Tennessee (artificial collection, see Boxes 2, 2A, 3, & 4, located at IV-A-1-3)

Historic Sumner County, Tennessee: with genealogies of the Bledsoe, Cage, and Douglass families and genealogical notes of other Sumner County families. (Charles Elder, 1909 & 1971)

Historic Sumner County, Tennessee: with genealogies of the Bledsoe, Cage and Douglass families and genealogical notes of other Sumner County families (Folk-Keelin Printing Company, 1909)

West Tennessee: its advantages and its resources. Published for the information of those seeking homes therein. (Cisco & Hawkins, 1885)

Tennessee, its advantages, resources, and possibilities. Published by the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railroad, the Southern Railway. (Marshall & Bruce, no date)

The Forked Deer Blade (Weekly newspaper published by Cisco & Hawkins; TSLA has some of the newspapers from 1884-1888 & 1891)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jay Guy Cisco was born on April 25, 1844, in New Orleans, Louisiana, and is thought to be of German and French descent. He served in the Confederate army with the 6th Louisiana Infantry during the Civil War. Soon thereafter, he toured Europe and briefly worked as a newspaperman. Later, in 1870, he married Mildred George Pursley and fathered eight children.

Cisco moved to Jackson, Tennessee, in 1875 and opened Cisco's Bookstore. He sold books and stationary in addition to displaying various Native American relics in his small office museum. Cisco was fascinated with Native American history as it pertained to their early inhabitation in West Tennessee, and studied many of their archaeological remains and artifacts in Madison County, Tennessee. One site, believed to be an ancient walled city with outer defenses measuring six miles in length, was named "City of Cisco" in his honor. These Native American ruins were relatively unknown in the 1880s, but they attracted widespread interest largely because of Cisco's efforts. Throughout his life, Cisco published numerous works pertaining to American history, politics, and archaeology; he was also a collector of items related to Tennessee, such as autographs of historical figures important to Tennessee's development. For a period of time, Cisco ran a steam printing press when he was a member of the firm of Cisco and Hawkins.

In addition to establishing the *Forked Deer Blade* in Jackson in 1883, Cisco was employed in several other capacities throughout his life. He was the Assistant Special Industrial and Immigration Agent at the L & N Railroad, and he also worked for the Trans-Mississippi Department. During Grover Cleveland's administration in 1888, he was assigned U.S. consul to Mexico.

Cisco established a reputation as a dynamic character during his tenure at the *Forked Deer Blade*. Describing his character, one journalist wrote, "Mr. Cisco was a fearless man. When he thought he was right he stuck to his principles to the end even though things became so warm at times that he packed his gun, for both he and his friends knew that his life was in danger. That was the day when men took their religion and politics seriously." ("History of the Madison County Press," Chapter V in *The Jackson Son*, 10-26-44). Cisco died in 1922 in Nashville, Tennessee.

Bibliography

Williams, Emma Inman. *Historic Madison: The Story of Jackson and Madison County Tennessee from the Prehistoric Moundbuilders to 1917*. Jackson: Madison County Historical Society, 1946.

“History of the Madison County Press,” chapter 5, in the *Jackson Sun*, by Harris Brown, 10-26-44. page 6.

“Cisco Described Pioneers of This County in Story,” in the *Jackson Sun*, 9-21-43. page 12.

Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture. Dee Gee Lester. Entry on Jay Guy Cisco. (internet listing).

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Jay Guy Cisco Collection 1794-[1850-1912]-1953 includes letters, articles, two scrapbooks, a map of Tennessee, currency, autographs, prints and photographs, and other items collected by Cisco that shed light on diverse aspects of Tennessee’s history. Because of their individual interest, all portions of the collection have been listed on an item-level basis, with as much detail included as possible. This will enable researchers to find quickly documents of particular importance.

A scrapbook entitled *Counties and County Seats of Tennessee* comprises the core of the collection, and includes histories of all Tennessee counties, in addition to the men and women responsible for their creation and success. In order to preserve the scrapbook and ensure convenient access to its materials, the scrapbook has been disassembled and organized according to subject, item type, and alphabetical order whenever necessary. The original order has been preserved on microfilm and with a photocopy that is included in the collection. Many of the items in the scrapbook are autographs of notable Tennessee men, but their context has been lost in most cases, for the majority of autographs have been cut out from letters and other written materials. The images included in the scrapbook are usually prints, many of which are newspaper or magazine reproductions.

The other scrapbook, with the label “Sketches and Drawings,” includes a collection of images picturing gruesome incidents of martyrdom and torture. In this case, the original order has been preserved and the binding left intact, but each image has been encapsulated. Cisco presumably collected and assembled these items, many which were cut out of a Christian periodical, but his motives for doing so are unknown. Most of the prints appear to be copies of some sort, although it is frequently difficult to determine.

The remaining items in the collection (some of which were originally in the scrapbook) include similar documents or ephemera related to Tennessee history, such as a Civil War era letter from Mrs. James K. Polk revealing her concerns about the cotton on her plantation (Box 1, Folder 5); a part of Col. Crockett's speech on the Pension Bill, purportedly written in the hand of David Crockett (Box 1, Folder 27); a list of surveys sent down by Col. Anthony Bledsoe in 1785 (Box 1, Folder 7); John Sevier's autograph on a frank envelope (Box 2, Folder 28); Andrew Jackson's funeral announcement and invitation (Box 2, Folder 30); and James Robertson's official license to keep an 'ordinary' (an inn or tavern) in Nashville, which includes his autograph (Box 2, Folder 31).

The collection is strong in its visual record of important historical figures, but there are only several original photographs, including one of a Melungeon family from around 1910 (Box 2, Folder 33). The Melungeons were early settlers in Tennessee, but their origins are unknown.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1:

1. Cisco's article on the history of Madison County that was published in *American Historical Magazine* (328-348 from Volume 7; 26-48 from unspecified volume)
2. Paper currency and related items such as script:
 - (a) State of North Carolina/50 cents/1861
 - (b) United States/25 cents/1874/comes with envelope explaining its sentimental value to Cisco: "The enclosed 25 cent 'shin plaster' was the first money taken in over my counter after opening my book store at Jackson, Tenn., Oct. 1, 1875"
 - (c) Tax Collector/Madison County, Tennessee/5 cents/circa 1850s
 - (d) Confederate States of America/5 dollars/1864
 - (e) Manufacturers' and Mechanics' Bank of Columbus/3 dollars/1855
 - (f) Bank of Chattanooga/2 dollars/1863
 - (g) Bank of Whitfield in Georgia/2 dollars/1862 or 1913
 - (h) Manufacturers National Bank of Philadelphia/500 dollars/reproduction
 - (i) Confederate States of America/100 dollars/1864 (2)
 - (j) Confederate States of America/50 dollars/1864 (2)
 - (k) Confederate States of America/20 dollars/1864
 - (l) Confederate States of America/10 dollars/1862-1864 (5)
 - (m) Confederate States of America/2 dollars/1862/ (3)
 - (n) Confederate States of America/1 dollar/1862 & unknown date (2)
 - (o) The State of North Carolina/1 dollar/1862-1866 (2)
 - (p) Nashville Bank check/20 dollars/souvenir of Nashville Centennial from 1880
 - (q) Planters Bank of Tennessee/20 dollars/1854
 - (r) The Exchange Bank of Tennessee/5 dollars/1836
 - (s) Bank of East Tennessee/5 dollars/no printed date
 - (t) The City Bank/1 dollar/1855
 - (u) The Agent at the State Armory/1 dollar/1862
 - (v) The Glory Bank in the City of Washington/20 dollars/1834
 - (w) Bank of Chattanooga/5 dollars/1855
3. Voting pass for U. S. House of Representatives (1877)
4. First Ward School (Mattoon, Illinois) report card for George Prusily (?) (1867)
5. Letter from Mrs. James K. Polk to General Hurlburt concerning the cotton on her plantation, about which she is "extremely anxious." She requests this letter to be delivered to General Chalmers by the first "Flag of Truce." (December 20, 1863)
6. A Map of the Tennessee Government (1794) (original kept in map collection)
7. List of Surveys sent down by Col. Anthony Bledsoe (Oct 7th 1785)
8. Letter to Cisco from John Sharp Williams (Yazoo City, Mississippi, Sept. 30, 1905) concerning genealogy and Christopher Harris Williams

9. Postcard receipts from the Library of Congress to Cisco concerning copyright fees (three from 1904; two from 1909; and one from 1917 for his book "Chronological History of Tennessee.") Folder also contains two letters from the Library of Congress copyright office to J. G. Cisco concerning Cisco's publications and copyrights (April 1 and April 12, 1904)
10. Typed essay on John Andrews Murrell by Cisco (8 pages)
11. Untitled essay concerning early North Carolina history by unknown author (perhaps Cisco) (6 pages)
12. Handwritten, untitled essay concerning early North Carolina history by unknown author (perhaps Cisco) (5 pages)
13. Genealogy of the Malone family by Cisco (11 pages typed)
14. Essay on Mexico entitled "United States Consulate at Neuvo Laredo, Mexico, February 1st, 1889" (hand-written, 11 pages, includes envelope with seal)
15. Essay entitled "A Bale of Cotton" by Cisco (typed, 2 drafts of 3 pages each, written for the *Forked Deer Blade*, published at Jackson, Tenn., during the prohibition campaign of 1887)
16. "The Plantation Type of Colony" by L. D. Scisco (sic) in *American Historical Review* (Vol. VIII, No. 2, January 1903, 260-270)
17. *Genealogy: Descendants of David Pursley* by J. G. Cisco (18 pages typed)
18. Letter to Cisco from E. W. Carmack (October 5, 1899)
19. Captain John Smith and Rebecca Rolf, Nee Pocahontas Powhatan. *Being the True Story of an English Adventurer and an Indian Princess, With Some Observations Thereon*. By Jay Guy Cisco. (Typed manuscript with accompanying prints & drawings, some of which are newspaper prints)
20. Letter addressed to "Sir" from L. P. Montgomery (?) (no date, probably early or mid-nineteenth century)
21. "Man-Made Mountain" in *The Nashville Tennessean Magazine*. Julius S. Hurst. November 1, 1953. The article references "Cisco village," a part of an early Native American site in Madison County near the Pinson Mounds.
22. Letter to Cisco from Mary N. Murfree concerning Cisco's work on Tennessee authors (1907)
23. The National Geographic Society membership certificate issued to J. G. Cisco (April 3, 1914)
24. Letter to J. G. Cisco from former U. S. Senator Newell Sanders (May 4, 1912)
25. Copy of a letter addressed to "My Dear Sir" from William Jennings Bryan (December 1, 1900)
26. View of Nashville, Tennessee, from a daguerreotype (print)
27. Part of Col. Crockett's speech on the Pension Bill, purportedly written in the hand of David Crockett, according to penciled-in note (author unknown) on the bottom of the document

28. "Sketches & Drawings" scrapbook with prints of martyrdom, torture, punishment, and various forms of suffering (no date listed, probably nineteenth century)
 - a. Auto-da-fé (Engraving)
 - b. No title included, victim being tortured (print)
 - c. No title included, victim being whipped (print)
 - d. No title included, victim being tortured (print)
 - e. Christians Being Torn to Pieces by Dogs (print)
 - f. No title included, victim being mocked by crowds (print)
 - g. No title included, victim being whipped (print)
 - h. No title included, chair and tools of flagellation (print)
 - i. No title included, victim being stretched on a rack (print)
 - j. No title included, demon whipping victim (print)
 - k. No title included, woman forcing man to submit (print)
 - l. No title included, victim being tortured and questioned (print)
 - j. No title included, victim being burned and questioned (print)
 - k. No title included, victim being tortured and questioned (print)
 - l. No title included, victims being questioned (print)
 - m. No title included, three figures (print)
 - n. No title included, religious procession (print)
 - o. No title included, victims thrown to the fire (print)
 - p. Scenes of Jewish martyrdom woven into medieval tapestries (print)
 - q. Spanish treatment at Carthage (print)
 - r. Bone breaker (print)
 - s. Iron Mask and Thumbscrew (print)
 - t. Roasting wheel, Spanish collar, and the Heretic Catcher (print)
 - u. A Gastly (sic) Group (print)
 - v. Heart of the Iron Virgin (print)
 - w. The Iron Boot (print)
 - x. The Knobby Crown (print)
 - y. No title included, victim being tortured and questioned (print)
 - z. The Spider (print)
29. "Sketches & Drawings" scrapbook (listed above, photocopy of original)
30. Envelope addressed to J. G. Cisco (April 18, year not legible)
31. Official seal from the state of Tennessee (unidentified origin and date) & James K. Polk's calling card (appears to be a copy)
32. Official state seal with Governor James B. Frazier's signature (1904)
33. Photocopied scrapbook (scrapbook has been disassembled and integrated into the collection; the scrapbook has also been microfilmed in its original order)

34. Assorted prints and photographs from scrapbook
- (a) General Putnam's Escape (engraving)
 - (b) Jackson-Dickinson Duel (print)
 - (c) Building where Gov. Sevier was captured (print)
 - (d) Hiwassee Loop (print)
 - (e) Governor John Sevier's cabin (print)
 - (f) Monroe County gold find (newspaper photograph)
 - (g) Scene on the Tennessee (engraving)
 - (h) First Brick House Built West of the Cumberland Mountains (newspaper photograph)
 - (i) Andrew Jackson Tailor Shop (newspaper photograph)
 - (j) Old Nashville Railroad Bridge (engraving printed in newspaper)
 - (k) Mountain schools (newspaper photographs and print)
 - (l) Surrender of Russell Bean (print)
 - (m) House where Ku-Klux Klan held their meetings in Pulaski (newspaper photograph)
 - (n) Battle Ground at Trenton (engraving)
 - (o) Emigrants Descending the Tennessee River (print)
 - (p) Old Nashville Inn (newspaper print)
 - (q) House (unidentified title) (newspaper photograph)
 - (r) The Old John Ross house near Chattanooga (photograph)

Box 2:

1. Newspaper article on the "State of Franklin" from scrapbook (includes newspaper prints and newspaper photographs)
2. Newspaper article on "Counties and County Seats of Tennessee" by Cisco from scrapbook (includes article #1 and article #8, & includes one newspaper photograph)
3. Newspaper article on Anderson County from scrapbook
4. Newspaper articles on Bedford County, Bell County, Benton County, Bledsoe County, Blount County, and Bradley County from scrapbook
5. Newspaper articles on Campbell County, Cannon County, Carroll County, Carter County, Caswell County, Cheatham County, Chester County, Christian County, Claiborne County, Clay County, Cocke County, Coffee County, Crockett County, and Cumberland County from scrapbook (includes three images)
6. Newspaper articles on Davidson County, Decatur County, DeKalb County, Dickson County, and Dyer County from scrapbook
7. Newspaper article on Etheridge County from scrapbook
8. Newspaper articles on Fayette County, Fentress County, and Franklin County from scrapbook (includes one newspaper photograph)
9. Newspaper articles on Gibson County, Giles County, Grainger County, Greene County, and Grundy County from scrapbook

10. Newspaper articles on Hamblen County, Hamilton County, Hancock County, Hanover County, Hardeman County, Hardin County, Hatchie County, Hawkins County, Haywood County, Henderson County, Henry County, Hickman County, Houston County, and Humphreys County from scrapbook (includes three newspaper photograph and prints)
11. Newspaper articles on Jackson County, James County, Jefferson County, Johnson County, and Jones County from scrapbook
12. Newspaper article on Knox County from scrapbook
13. Newspaper articles on Lake County, Lauderdale County, Lawrence County, Lewis County, Lincoln County, and Loudon County from scrapbook (includes one newspaper photograph)
14. Newspaper articles on Macon County, Madison County, Madrid Bend County, Marion County, Marshall County, Maury County, McNairy County, Meigs County, Montgomery County, Moore County, and Morgan County from scrapbook
15. Newspaper article on Neshoba County from scrapbook
16. Newspaper article on Obion County and Overton County from scrapbook
17. Newspaper articles on Perry County, Pickett County, Polk County, Powell County, and Putnam County from scrapbook (includes one newspaper photograph)
18. Newspaper articles on Rhea County, Roane County, Robertson County, and Rutherford County from scrapbook (includes three newspaper prints and drawings)
19. Newspaper articles on Scott County, Sequatchie County, Sevier County, Shelby County, Smith County, Spencer County, Stewart County, Sullivan County, and Sumner County from scrapbook (includes three newspaper photographs)
20. Newspaper articles on Taylor County, Tennessee County, Tipton County, and Trousdale County from scrapbook
21. Newspaper article on Unicoi County and Union County from scrapbook (includes one newspaper photograph)
22. Newspaper article on Van Buren County from scrapbook (includes one newspaper photograph)
23. Newspaper articles on Warren County, Washington County, Wayne County, McMinn County, Weakley County, Webster County, White County, Williamson County, Wilson County, Wisdom County, and Monroe County from scrapbook (includes two newspaper prints)
24. Scrapbook index and title page, which reads *A Series of Papers Written by J. G. Cisco*, and Published in the *Nashville American*, *Knoxville Sentinel*, *Memphis Commercial Appeal* (1904)
25. Silhouette and autograph of Andrew Jackson from scrapbook

26. Silk ephemera (2 items: Portrait of William Carroll, Esq. with a Latin inscription: "Possunt quia posse videntur virtute ac labore" (They are able because they seem to be able because of valor and toil) & a funerary piece or "mourning ribbon," "Sacred to the Memory of Gen. Andrew Jackson, the Seventh President of the United States of America/Died 8th June 1845 Aged 78 Years" Includes the poem, "We tell his tale without a sigh/For he is Freedom's now, and Fame's - /One of the few immortal names/That were not born to die."
27. Autograph collection (All of the autographs have been cut out from their original context in the scrapbook) The names include Andrew Johnson, R. J. Meigs, Andrew Jackson, Ben B. Lindsey, Joseph Higgins, Nevell Sanders, J. D. Porter, William Haskell, B. Cheatham, W. E. Myer, John Sneed, Samuel C. Williams, Washington Barrow, Atkins, Richard Currey, McGavock, Willie Blount, William Blount, W. B. Campbell, N. Brown, I. Harris, Nathaniel Cross, W. B. A. Ramsey, J. B. Reynolds, Daniel Graham, William Turner Haskell, E. W. Carmack, J. Whiteside, James Phelan, E. E. Barnard, John Buchanan, F. B. Fogg, James Trimble, J. Dickinson, John Trotwood Moore, W. Williams, John C. McLemore, E. E. Hoss, John Donelson, Charles D. McLean, Felix Grundy, A. O. P. Nicholson, H. Tatum, James Trimble, A. H. Roberts, Cordell Hull, E. W. Rucker, F. K. Zollicoffer, John C. Brown, Luke Lea, Joseph Byrns, Peter Cartwright, J. C. McReynolds, and several other names that are difficult to decipher.
28. Autograph collection (These autographs have not been cut out (or have only partially been cut out) from their original context in the scrapbook. The items include: (a) Former Tennessee governor's autograph (A.H. Roberts) (b) John Sevier's autograph (c) the signatures of Robert Weakley and Edwin Hickman on a document dated 1789 (d) note to Doctor Ramsey from Charles McClung dated 1822 (e) portion of a letter from Walter Malone (historian of Tennessee history)
29. Andrew Jackson's funeral announcement and invitation from scrapbook (1845)
30. Ball invitation in honor of General La Fayette from scrapbook (Broadside print from April 7, 1825)
31. James Robertson's official license to keep an ordinary in Nashville, from scrapbook, (1791)
32. Images of monuments from scrapbook: (a) Engraving of General Andrew Jackson on his steed dated 1855 (b) Copy of a photograph of the Jasper monument in Savannah, Georgia
33. Images of women from scrapbook: (a) Print of a painting of Charlotte Robertson (b) Photograph of a woman and a girl, with the term "Melungeons" written under them in pencil (c) Newspaper caricature of a "colonial dame"
34. Printed photograph of Jay Guy Cisco from scrapbook
35. Image from scrapbook: print of Joseph Anderson
36. Images from scrapbook: engraving of a photograph of John Bell, published print of a painting of Governor William Blount, engraving of Aaron V. Brown, print of Neill S. Brown, print of Simon Bolivar, print of Jacob Brown, print inspired by a painting of Thomas Benton, engraving of Martin Van Buren

37. Images from scrapbook: print of John Cocke, engraving of William C. C. Claiborne (includes autograph), print of Henry Clay, engraving of John Caldwell Calhoun, print of William Clark & Meriwether Lewis, print inspired by a painting of George Rogers Clark, print of Governor Newton Cannon, print of David Crockett, print of a painting of William H. Carroll (includes autograph), print of John Coffee, print of William Bowen Campbell, engraving of Archer Cheatham, photograph of Robert I. Chester (includes autograph)
38. Images from scrapbook: engraving of G. M. Dallas and print of Stephen Decatur
39. Image from scrapbook: print of the Earl of Loudoun
40. Image from scrapbook: print of Benjamin Franklin
41. Images from scrapbook: print of Meredith Poindexter Gentry, print of Nathaniel Greene, print of Edmund Pendleton Gaines, print of Albert Gallatin, engraving of Felix Grundy
42. Images from scrapbook: print of Patrick Henry, print of a photograph of Governor B. W. Hooper, print of Alexander Hamilton, print of Robert Hatton, print of John Hancock, print of General Sam Houston, print of General Harrison (includes autograph of Andrew Jackson), print of a painting of John Haywood
43. Images from scrapbook: print of Thomas Jefferson (includes his autograph), print of Andrew Johnson, two prints of Andrew Jackson, print of Cave Johnson
44. Images from scrapbook: print of Henry Knox and print of Johann DeKalb
45. Images from scrapbook: prints of Edward Livingston, LaFayette, Benjamin Lincoln, James Lawrence
46. Image from scrapbook: print of Return J. Meigs, print of John Marshall, print of James Madison (includes his autograph), print of Abram Maury, engraving of Andrew J. Marchbanks, print of James Monroe, engraving of a drawing of Daniel Morgan, print of Horace Maynard, engraving of General Francis Marion
47. Image from scrapbook: engraving of John Overton
48. Images from scrapbook: engraving of James K. Polk, print of O. H. Perry, photograph of H. L. Pickett (includes his autograph)
49. Images from scrapbook: print of Governor Archibald Roane, print of James Robertson
50. Images from scrapbook: Governor John Sevier (two prints), engraving of Isaac Shelby, print of Sequoyah, print of John Sullivan, printed photograph of Dewitt Clinton Senter, print of Winfield Scott
51. Images from scrapbook: newspaper photograph of Robert L. Taylor, print of a painting of Governor William Trousdale
52. Images from scrapbook: print of Levi Woodbury (includes autograph), print of a painting of General James Winchester (includes his autograph), print of Daniel Webster, print of Robert Weakley (includes his autograph), print of George Washington, print of Marcus J. Wright (includes his autograph), print of Joseph Warren, print of Anthony Wayne

Oversized Folder:

1. Confederate bonds (1864)