



State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives
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**TENNESSEE CENTENNIAL AND INTERNATIONAL
EXPOSITION
(1897)
COLLECTION
1895-1900**

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition (1895-1900) were given to the Tennessee State Library and Archives by the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway Company at the time of its consolidation with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. This collection is comprised of financial records, correspondence, scrapbooks, photographs, and memorabilia collected from the exposition company and the event itself.

The materials in this finding aid measure 5 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition Collection may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition, celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of the admission of Tennessee into the Federal Union, are composed of approximately 2,500 items and 4 volumes. They contain financial records, correspondence, minutes of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, clippings, souvenirs, programs, speeches, lists of subscribers, exhibits, register of visitors, transportation figures, and other items dealing with the exposition during the period 1895-1900. John W. Thomas (1830-1906), president of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway, was made President of the Tennessee Centennial Exposition, and Eugene Castner Lewis was the Director General. A million dollars were expended in preparation for the celebration. In his opening address, Thomas stated that the celebration was prompted by reverence for the past as well as a desire to advertise the advantages of Tennessee. The correspondence is largely that of Thomas, both incoming and outgoing, dealing with the preparations and operations of the exposition. Careful records of expenditures and receipts were reported by the auditor, Frank Goodman. The chief correspondents include John H. Averall, William B. Bate, Joseph M. Brown, Julius L. Brown, W.H. Bruce, John B. Castleman, S.A. Champion, W.V. Cox, Charles W. Dabney, Jr., W.L. Danley, J.L. Dickey, W.L. Dudley, W.B. Earthman, W.W. Finley, J.T. Harahan, C.E. Harman, A.W. Harris, Oscar R. Hundley, Edgar Jones, Herman Justi, J.B. Killebrew, S.R. Knott, E.C. Lewis, J.L. McCollum, John T. Patrick, John H. Peebles, Thomas K. Scott, M.J. Smith, E.B. Stahlman, Henry C. Ward, J.E., Washington, A.W. Willis, and M.J.C. Wrenne.

The exposition ground contained two hundred acres in an elevated area about two miles west of the State Capitol, later known as Centennial Park. The buildings included Administration, Woman's, Commerce, Fine Arts (the Parthenon), Minerals and Forestry, Transportation, Machinery, Horticulture, History, Negro, Children's, Live Stock, an auditorium, and another smaller building. A reproduction of the Rialto at Venice spanned an arm of one of the lakes. The History Building was in the form of a Greek Cross and it housed in its four wings exhibits of the Colonial Period, early times in Tennessee, and Confederate and Federal relics. Of these buildings, the only one now standing is the Parthenon, which was restored in synthetic granite in the 1920s. It is the only exact reproduction of the Greek Parthenon in existence. All of the buildings housed fine exhibits from all parts of the world. Congress appropriated money for the Centennial and the United States was represented by a large building and some very fine exhibits. The exhibits in the Women's Building were especially complimented. The settings, implements, and achievements of women were traced from early settlers to the women of the 1890s. The "Negro Building" contained exhibits showing the progress of the African-Americans.

Major J.W. Thomas was President of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway Company, and the railroads played an important role in the celebration, featuring excursions and special rates. Gate receipts and railroad tickets were tabulated, and the

various lines competed with each other. These papers containing the financial records were the property of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway Company and were given by the Company to the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Three large attendance books containing the names of visitors to the following buildings have been added to the collection:

- (1) Illinois Building – May-October, 1897
- (2) Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway Exhibit – two volumes with overlapping dates, May-October, 1897

In the back of one volume Joseph Buckner Killebrew wrote an historical sketch about the Tennessee Centennial Exposition as it closed, describing some of its outstanding exhibits.

Two items belonging to the Tennessee Historical Society (THS) were added to the souvenirs and mementos materials (Box 10, f. 3) but were not microfilmed. The THS items consist of a color print of the Parthenon in Nashville's Centennial Park and a color booklet titled "Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition, Nashville, Tenn." The Parthenon print was produced by Brandon Printing Company of Nashville. The souvenir booklet contains images and descriptions of the buildings at the exhibition.

CONTAINER LIST

Microfilm Reel # 1

Box 1

Accounts

1. Daily report of admissions and receipts, May-November 1897
2. Admissions at Terminal Station Turnstiles, daily, May-October 1897
3. Comparison of receipts from concessions, Atlanta and Nashville Expositions
4. Concessions – May-November 1897
5. Concessions – Daily Reports – May-July 1897
6. Concessions – Daily Reports – August-November 1897
7. Concessions – Monthly Reports – June-July 1897
8. Concessions – Monthly Reports – August-September 1897

Box 2

Accounts

1. Financial Statements – June-August 1897
2. Financial Statements – September-December 1897
3. Frank Goodman – July 1895-December 1896
4. Frank Goodman – January-May 1897
5. Frank Goodman – June 1897
6. Frank Goodman – July 1897
7. Frank Goodman – August 1897-June 1898
8. Freight expenses
9. Gate receipts – May-November 1897
10. General – December 1896-November 1897
11. Liabilities and assets – February-November 1898
12. Railroad – Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway – April 1897-March 1898
13. Receipts and disbursements – February 1894-June 1898
14. Stocks and bonds

Box 3

Correspondence – Incoming

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2. Babcock - Barthell
3. Bate, William B.
4. Baxter - Braid
5. Brandon - Brown
6. Brown - Brownlow
7. Bruce, W.H.
8. Brumit - Candler
9. Card - Chambers
10. Champion, S.A.

Microfilm Reel # 2

11. Chamney - Chrystie
12. Clayton - Collier
13. Compton - Coppori
14. Cowardin - Currey
15. Dabney - Danley
16. Davis - Donnelly
17. Dortch - Dudley
18. Eakin - Earthman
19. Eaton - Evans
20. Falkner - Fink
21. Finley - Fizer
22. Flanagan - Fuller

Box 4

Correspondence - Incoming

1. Cage - Green
2. Griffin- Hally
3. Harahan, J.T.
4. Harman, C.E – December 1896-April 1897
5. Harman, C.E. – April 1897-December 1897
6. Harris, A.J.
7. Harris - Hixson
8. Hoefer - Hough
9. Houk - Hurt
10. Innes - Hurt
11. Justi, Herman
12. Kelly - Killebrew
13. Kilvington - Latimer
14. Lewis, E.C. – December 1896-February 1897
15. Lewis, E.C. – February 1897-July 1897
16. Lewis, E.C. – July 1897-January 1898
17. Lewis, E.C. – January 1898-May 1901
18. Lindsley - McCall
19. McClung - McCulloch
20. McDaniel - Aurelian
21. Mechanics National Bank - Moyes
22. Newman - Owens
23. Paisley - Patrick

Box 5

Correspondence – Incoming

1. Patterson - Peck
2. Peebles - Phelps
3. Pierce - Quarrier
4. Randolph - Reppy
5. Rhett - Rutland
6. Sain - Savage
7. Scott - Shwab
8. Simmons - Smith
9. Spaulding - Sykes
10. Tanner - Toliver
11. Toney - Viring
12. Wakefield - Ward
13. Ward - Washburn
14. Washington, J.E.
15. Wattles - Whitting
16. Wickes - Willson
17. Wilson - Woodward
18. Wrenne, M.J.C. – March 1897-June 1897
19. Wrenne, M.J.C. – July 1897-September 1897
20. Wrenne, M.J.C. – September 1897-February 1898
21. Wright - Young

Box 6

Correspondence – Outgoing

1. 1896
2. January 1897

Microfilm Reel # 3

3. February 1897
4. March 1897
5. April 1897
6. May 1897
7. June 1897
8. July 1897
9. August 1897
10. September 1897
11. October 1897
12. November 1897
13. December 1897
14. 1898-1902

Box 7

Correspondence

1. Outgoing – July 1895-April 1897

Microfilm Reel # 4

2. Outgoing – April 1897-May 1900
3. General – author unknown
4. General – Abby - Brown
5. General – Bruce - Chapman
6. General – Colston - Currey
7. General – Dabley - Duncan
8. General – Earthman - Goodman
9. General – Gunnison - Justi
10. General – Keeble - Lowan
11. General – McBee - Morgan
12. General – Parker - Seay
13. General – Security Bank Note Company - Webb
14. General – Weiss - Wrenne

Box 8

Minutes

1. Board of Directors – Stockholders – February 1896
2. Board of Directors – December 1896-November 1897
3. Executive Committee – November 1895
4. Executive Committee – December 1895
5. Executive Committee – January-February 1896
6. Executive Committee – July 1897-February 1906
7. Minutes (extracts) – Executive Committee – 1896-1897

Box 9

1. Address of J.W. Thomas – May 1, 1897
2. Clippings
3. Committees
4. Exhibits
5. List of subscribers
6. Memorabilia
7. Memoranda

Microfilm Reel # 5

8. Memorial volume – J.W. Thomas
9. Miscellaneous
10. Newspapers (located in MSS draw #4, Eighth Stack, TSLA)
11. Other expositions – Centre County, Pennsylvania

12. Photographs – Merrill family
13. Printed material
14. Photographs – Theodore Roosevelt visiting the Centennial, the Hermitage (10)

Box 10

1. Programs and invitations
2. Register of visitors – April 1899-January 1900
3. Souvenirs and mementos
4. Statement – Trouble between Louisville soldiers and Centennial guards
5. Suggestion of scheme of Tennessee Centennial Exposition with cost estimate
6. Tennessee Fair Association
7. Transportation

Accretions

1. Official programs of the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition, 1897 (3) (VI-D-2, Box 10, f1, MSS ac. No. 91-063)
2. Newspaper article from the *Chicago Times Herald*, April 28, 1897, concerning the opening of the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition (VI-D-top, MSS ac. no. 92-032)

NAME INDEX

This is a name index of the correspondence only in the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition Collection, together with the dates of the correspondence. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The last numbers refer to the box and folder in which the material is to be found.

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