

University of Memphis

## University of Memphis Digital Commons

---

Special Collections Finding Aids

Special Collections

---

6-28-2021

### MSS0394. Shelby County, Tennessee, collection finding aid

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/speccoll-findingaids>

---

#### Recommended Citation

"MSS0394. Shelby County, Tennessee, collection finding aid" (2021). *Special Collections Finding Aids*. 35. <https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/speccoll-findingaids/35>

This Finding Aid is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections at University of Memphis Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Special Collections Finding Aids by an authorized administrator of University of Memphis Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [khggerty@memphis.edu](mailto:khggerty@memphis.edu).

**University of Memphis Libraries**  
**Preservation and Special Collections Department**

126 Ned R. McWhorter Library  
Memphis, TN 38152 - 3250  
Phone: (901) 678 - 2210  
E-mail: lib\_sc@memphis.edu

## Shelby County, Tennessee, collection

**Title:** Shelby County, Tennessee, collection  
**Collection No:** MSS.394  
**Extent:** 1 cubic foot  
**Inclusive Dates:** 1819-1988

**Abstract:** The collection comprises various documents which include correspondence, legal documents, accounts, plans, broadsides and other ephemera relating to Shelby County, Tennessee, mostly from the nineteenth century.

**Processed by:** James E. Montague, August 1999, October 2002; Gerald Chaudron, September 2014.

**Access:** Open to all researchers.  
**Language:** English  
**Preferred Citation:** Shelby County, Tennessee, collection, Preservation and Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

**Publication date:** September 2014

---

## Scope and contents

The collection comprises various documents which include correspondence, legal documents, accounts, plans, broadsides and other ephemera. Items of note include a justice of the peace commission issued five days after the establishment of the county in 1819. Copies of letters from Tennessee governor and Senator Isham Harris are included as is an 1860 broadside advertises the sale of land belonging to the late Wilson Lurry on LaGrange Road by the county court. A group of materials document the South Memphis Land Company including a notebook with detailed descriptions of properties in south Memphis from around 1913. Included also is an advertising packet for radio station WIDA from 1956.

---

## Provenance

The 1819 commission was purchased from Chickasaw Collectables, Memphis, in 1989. Much of the contents of Box 1: folders 2 and 3 were purchased from George E. Webb, Jr., Paris, Tennessee, in 1991. The provenance of the Jones Brothers account, and the John R. Pepper cards donated in May 2012, is unknown. The North Memphis Coal and Hardware Co., envelope was donated by Mrs. Lynda Carter in 1985. The *Memphis Weekly Appeal*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1859 January, was donated by Chad French, Memphis, in 1995. The Idlewild Club booklet was donated by Mary Louise Clarke, Atlanta, Georgia, in 2004, via John Dugan. The Tennessee Chute Harbor documents and the 1860 "Clerk's Sale" broadside were purchased from Susan Davis Bookseller, Memphis, in 2009. The Nonconnah Valley Grange document (Box 1: Folder 5) also came from Susan Davis. The Post Office organization chart was transferred from the Metropolitan Government Archives, Nashville, in May 2014. The George Washington Gordon broadsheet was purchased from David M. Lesser, Woodbridge, Conn., in 2011. The contents of Box 2, the South Memphis Land Company and WIDA materials, and the *Sporting Record* issues and 1929 *Tattler* were purchased from Susan Davis Bookseller, Memphis, in April 2016.

---

## Related materials

South Memphis Land Company Collection, Memphis & Shelby County Room, Memphis Public Library and Information Center.

---

## Subject terms

Harris, Isham G. (Isham Green), 1818-1897.  
Lee Line Steamers.  
Lurry, Wilson.  
McMinn, Joseph, 1758-1824.  
Memphis (Tenn.)  
Radio stations—Tennessee—Memphis.

## Inventory

### Box 1

#### Folder

- 1 Justice of the peace commission, 1819. Commission signed by Governor Joseph McMinn appointing the following individuals as justices of the peace in Shelby County, Tennessee: Anderson B. Carr, Marcus B. Winchester, William Irvine, Thomas D. Carr, Benjamin Willis and Jacob Tipton on November 29, 1819. The document was issued in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on November 29, 1819, and countersigned by Secretary of State Daniel Graham. This document was issued five days after the establishment of Shelby County.
- 2
  1. Letter: T.B. Haynes, T.B. Haynes & Co. (cotton factors), Memphis, Tenn., to H. Champion, Paris, Tenn., 1878 July 30. Declines to pay debt incurred by Mr. Anderson to Mr. Brown.
  2. Account: Fruit trees supplied by Koen Nurseries Memphis, Tenn., to J.A. Compton, Paris, Tenn., 1887.
  3. Summons: John C. Dunn charged with non-payment of account with A.A., 1847 April 15. Judgment for Burr but appealed.
  4. Account: Evans & Lemmond with W.M Burdeshaw, 1851.
  5. Letter: William Connell to Judge S. Baily, Raleigh?, 1857 October 7. Due to illness will be unable to appear in case White vs. Connell and seeks adjournment.
  6. Notarized declaration of unpaid promissory note by Yeatman, Woods & Co., Nashville, Tenn., on Farmers and Merchants Bank of Memphis, 1842 September 12. Refers to debt of Jesse A. Strange.
  7. Summons: Henry Waldren and William Noble on charge of trespass on case of John B. Knight, 1846.
  8. Tennessee Chute Harbor Project opening celebration, Presidents Island, 1952 August 1: Invitation; Program. Includes plan of Memphis and Shelby County Port Commission's industrial subdivision.
  9. Menu: Wolff's Big Champ restaurant, Home Federal Building, Second & Jefferson, Memphis, undated.
- 3
  1. Clipping: Bryan, Jack, "Walter Malone, Memphis' Lawyer Poet, Is Dead, but 'Opportunity' Has Assured Him Immortality", *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, 1937 June 7.
  2. Walter Malone, Malone & Malone (attorneys), Memphis, Tenn., to John W. Buford, Jackson, Tenn., 1902 April 3. Refers to B.G. Rainsey vs. Memphis and Charleston Rail Road case.
  3. Isham G. Harris (U.S. Senator), Memphis, Tenn., to T.A. Harris, President, National Exposition, 1887 October 1. Declines invitation to attend opening of the Exposition because of other engagements.

**The following are photocopies:**

4. "Extract from the Journal of the Proceedings of the Southern and Western Convention at Memphis, On the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> days of July last, showing the action of the Convention", with statement by General Executive Committee, 1845 October 4.
5. "Parson Brownlow's Farewell Address in View of his Imprisonment by the Rebels", 1861 October 24.
6. Isham G. Harris, Memphis, Tenn., to Thomas G. Reynolds, Mexico, 1868 March 15. Notes his going to England from Mexico with intention of settling there but found prospects for cotton trade limited. Decided to return to Tennessee though under indictment for his actions in support of the Confederacy during the war and surrendered himself in Nashville. He hopes to settle the indictments against him but is in Memphis and has opened a law office. "...politically we are at sea" and suggests President Johnson will be deposed by a strict party vote. Cannot predict what will happen then except that nothing can "materially injure us". Suggests Reynolds return to the United States because there was little risk to him and considering Mexico's "present prostrate and revolutionary condition".
7. Henrietta [illegible], Memphis, Tenn., to Lydia M. Vail (niece), Bridgeton, N.J., 1846 October 2.
8. General Marcus J. Wright, Publications Office, War Records 1861-1865, War Department, Washington, D.C., to Henry W. McCorry, 1882 August 24. Acknowledges receipt of letter and will attend to an unidentified matter.
9. Report: Survey of Shelby County, Tennessee, outlining election districts, 1836. Report to the Tennessee Secretary of State outlining the division of Shelby County into twelve districts to enable the election of justices of the peace and constables, among other purposes. The six page report includes a map of how the districts might look and was signed by John D. Graham, John D. White, John Ralston and B. Booth.

4 **Note: The folder's contents are all photocopies.**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit Court, No. 183, 184: Memphis Gayoso Gas Company vs. I.M. Williamson, et al, and countersuit, 1872, re: right to supply gas to Memphis.
2. Program: Organ dedication, Memphis Municipal Auditorium, 1929 April 9.
3. Appeal bond: David Hamer was charged with "running & drumming" and fined \$25 on December 9, 1866.
4. Circuit Court of Shelby County, request to settle estate of Isiah Baugh by Jeremiah Baugh, 1847.
5. Appeal bond and judgement, Washington Bolton suing for the use of McChristy M. Sanderlin vs. Isaac S. Bolton and Wade H. Bolton, 1846 May.
6. Receipt: 25 cent toll for crossing Wolf River, 1847.
7. Opinion by Judge Sneed re: suit against late Joel Peel for loss of two boatloads of lumber being transported from Chestnut Bluff on the Forked Deer River to Memphis, 1860.
8. Grand jury indictment: Wade H. Bolton for assault of John M. Bond May 6, 1850, 1850 September.

9. Grand jury indictment: James M. McDonald for gambling on a cock fight on December 25, 1856, 1857 January.
  10. Constable appointment bond for Joseph S. Hood for \$1000, 1828 January 22.
  11. Commissioner appointment bond for Marcus B. Winchester for \$5000, 1832 October 19.
  12. Charge of being disorderly and disturbing the peace on Sunday morning against Francis M. Gailor, 1860 August 27. 4 Chickasaw City documents including proceedings and appeal.
  13. Liquor license for G.B. Ramazzotti, 1861 August 31.
  14. Charge of selling liquor without a license against Joseph Fransioli, Chickasaw City, August 28, 1860. 3 documents including witness statement and appeal.
  15. Charge against Thomas J. Noland of selling liquor on Sunday, November 26, 1854, 1855 May.
  16. Charge of selling liquor on Sunday against L. Lazzaretto, May 26, 1867. Deposition and appeal.
  17. Lease (incomplete?): To P. Pieratti & Co., saloon and store on Main Street opposite Mississippi and Tennessee Rail Road Depot, previously run by Christopher Pidgeon, 1872 April 1.
  18. Letter: S.G. Estes, Memphis, Tenn., to father, 18?? June 4?. Refers to working for *Avalanche* newspaper.
  19. Letter: J.P. Young, Memphis, Tenn., to Hobart S. Cooper, University YMCA, Madison, Wis., 1925 January 29. Refers to German families settling in Memphis area.
  20. Photographic plates (12) from unknown publication about Memphis, late nineteenth century.
- 5
1. Resolution: Nonconnah Valley Grange thanks G.F. Farrow for his service to the Grange, undated. Signed by E.A. Edmondson, U.M. The Nonconnah Valley Grange was organized in 1873, succeeding the White Haven Agricultural and Mechanical Society.
  2. Booklet: "The Idlewild Club, Memphis, 1894-1907". Lists members, rules and discussion topics. This men's club met almost monthly to discuss political, economic and social topics of interest.
  3. Account: Jones Brothers, Cotton Factors, Memphis, Tenn., 1867 April 12, re: sale of cotton on behalf of A. White to John P. Hill.
  4. Envelope: North Memphis Coal and Hardware Co., 1171 Thomas Avenue, Memphis, Tenn., 1942. A coal shovel is illustrated with the text: "A Black Business Handled White".
  5. Booklet: Tennessee Department of Finance and Taxation, toll bridge coupons, 1941. Issued to Shelby County Schools.
- 6
1. Cards: "J.R.P.", by Mrs. Susie A. Mathis, 1923. Set of trivia cards, questions and answers, on the subject of John R. Pepper of Memphis.
- 7
- Order of Worship: Homecoming Service, East Side Cumberland Presbyterian Church, South Prescott Street, Memphis, 1987 April 5.
- Checks: Sledge & Norfleet Co., Cotton Factors, Memphis, 1931-1936 (3).
- Booklet: "Minutes of the Sixth Annual Convention of the Churches of God in Christ (White), at Memphis, Tennessee, November 21, 1919."

Broadside: "For the citizen. In memoriam. Gen. G. Wash. Gordon—a name familiar to many—a name respected, cheerished [sic], and loved as he who bore it unblemished so proudly through life—a King among men!", by M.F., circa 1911. Epitaph for George Washington Gordon (1836-1911), former Confederate general, lawyer, Ku Klux Klan leader, and U.S. Congressman for 10<sup>th</sup> district of Tennessee (1907-1911).

**Box 2**

- 1 Register: Rex Hotel, 200 Union, Memphis, 1970 January-1971 April.
- 2 Receipts: School commission, for tuition of pauper children by Mrs. K. Hays and William Horn (3) and census of children by John W. Hawthorn (1) in 14<sup>th</sup> civil district, Shelby County, 1851-1853. Signed by Chairman of commissioners F.M.E. Faulkner.
- 3 Court documents: Summons: George G. Allen, William M. and Jesse R. Irwin on behalf of John Canavan, 1843 June; Bond: appointment of Hugh McAdan (McAden) as constable of Shelby County, 1835 October 19.

Lee Line Steamers:

- Captain James Lee, Sr., operated steamers before the Civil War on the Cumberland River but had to rebuild his company, now based in Memphis, after the war. Between 1862 and 1926, when the line was liquidated in the face of land-based competition, Lee Line Steamers operated 36 steamers through nine states as far north as Cincinnati. Many of the boats were named after family members.
- 4 Correspondence and documentation re: order with Allen Engineering Company, Memphis, for steam boat engine, 1910-1911.
  - 5 Correspondence re: engine, induced draft, and vacuum pump on steamer "Bob Lee, Jr.", 1911-1913.
  - 6 Correspondence and documentation on steamer "Bob Lee, Jr." machinery including vacuum pump, 1912-1913.

**Box 3**

South Memphis Land Company:

- The South Memphis Land Company was an important real estate company in Memphis in the early twentieth century. Cotton factor Barton Lee Mallory (1865-1938) served as president from 1905 until his death in 1938.
- 1 Abstracts of title, 1919-1922. Includes Woodland subdivision.
  - 2 Articles of agreement, 1922: W.M. & L. McWhorter, 2351 Florida Street; R.J. & Sarah M. Cullins, 528 E. Mallory Avenue; Alvin & Olga Tedder, 21 W. Norwood Avenue. Also includes payment statement for R.J. Cullins, 1932.
  - 3 Insurance policy: Mattie, Thomas F. and Edna Keyser property on Florida Street, 1921.
  - 4 Mortgage and letter regarding property of C.J. and Sue Sanders Reneau, 1928-1932. The property was foreclosed.
  - 5 Affidavit: Mary Moreno Pierini suit against Merio Pete Pierini (minor son) and South Memphis Land Company to be able to sell land on Lauderdale Street, 1921.
  - 6 Letter: Realtors Association of Memphis to Governor Henry Horton,

- Nashville, 1929 May 6 (copy). Requests change of route no. 14 so it crosses the Illinois Central Railroad at Frank Avenue. South Memphis Land Company will donate right of way.
- 7 Share certificates: South Memphis Brick Company, 1906; American Bag Company, 1913.
- 8 Notebook: Record of ownership of land in South Memphis compiled by Ernest Adams, 73 Madison Avenue, circa 1913. Includes lists of owners of properties on bounded by the following streets: Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Arkansas, Indiana, Georgia, South Fourth, Calhoun, Broadway. Includes prices paid for some properties and date purchased.
- 9 Miscellany. Includes mileage ration card and coupons, 1941; mortgage coupons; cotton marketing cards, 1938-1942; checks, 1922-1952.
- OS 1**
1. Certificate: "The 1988-89 Channel Three Knowledge Bowl". Includes distinguished scholars' roll, roster of schools and corporate sponsors.
  2. Plan: Tenn. 169. Handwerker Gingerbread Playhouse, 865 North Thomas Street, Memphis, Tenn., Sheet 2, West Tennessee Project, National Park Service, 1972.
  3. Plan: Postal facility on block bounded by Second, Third, Calhoun and Carolina, Memphis, Tenn., U.S. Post Office Department Office of Research and Engineering, undated (c.1968?). Includes added notes on suggested railroad passenger station on Second and Carolina corner.
  4. Chart: Post Office Department, Memphis Regional Office, organization chart, 1962 November 5. Includes names of individuals and their job titles.
  5. Broadside: "Clerk's Sale of a Valuable Tract of land in Shelby County", 1860 February 12. Advertises the sale of 72.43 acres of land on LaGrange Road, Shelby County, by the County Court on February 28, 1860. The broadside was issued on February 12, 1860, by County Court Clerk John P. Trezevant to settle debts as a result of the case A.W. Lurry, et al, vs. Thomas Lurry, et al, the heirs of Wilson Lurry. The elder Lurry was born circa 1788 in Camden County, North Carolina to Thomas and Mary Lurry. He married Letisha Pritchard (c.1795-1844) and they had eight children: Mary (Sallie), Elizabeth, Lucy L., Harriet, Sarah, Thomas W., Olive Green, and Abner W. In the 1830s the family moved to Shelby County and bought land in the 9th Civil District, the area of Bethany and Fisherville. Wilson Lurry died on December 18, 1854.
  6. Poster: "Memphis Goes Forward! Do You Want to Go With It?", from Memphis Chamber of Commerce, with excerpts from the *Commercial Appeal* in May 1928 with comments by the following businessmen: Colonel J. Walter Canada, Robert R. Ellis, J.H. Townsend, Oscar Johnston, C. Arthur Bruce, Lloyd T. Binford, Frank Hayden.
- OS 2** Promotional materials: WDIA radio station, Memphis, 1956. Includes sales, demographic, audience and programming information sent as a packet to Elbert C. Wicks. Though white-owned, WDIA was from 1949 the first station programmed by and for African Americans. Also includes empty business envelopes from WHHM and WHBQ.



---

## Separated materials

The following material has been separated from the collection and disposed of as follows:

*The Sunday Times*, Memphis, Tenn., Vol. 8, No. 10, 1891 November 8.

*The Memphis Appeal-Avalanche*, Vol. 51, No. 215, 1891 August 30.

*Memphis Press*, 1918 November 7, 6 pp.

*Memphis Weekly Appeal*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1859 January 19.

*Daily News*, Memphis, Tenn., Vol. 101, No. 1, 1986 December 15, 100<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary ed.

*Hera Sees*, Memphis, Tenn., No. 14, 1994 Spring.

*Women's News of the Mid-South*, Memphis, Tenn., Vol. 6, No. 4, 1998 April.  
Features article on Carol Lynn Yellin and Janaan Sherman's book *The  
Perfect 36*.

*Commercial Appeal*, Memphis, Tenn. (bound volumes):

1937 November 1-30; 1939 August 1-31; Vol. 101, No. 1, 1940 January 1,  
Centennial ed. (2); 1949 August 1-31; 1975 March 1-31.

*Memphis Press-Scimitar* (bound volumes), 1948 August 2-31; 1948 December 1-  
31.

*The Sporting Record*, Memphis, Tenn., Vol. 1, No. 6-34, 1936 June 13-July 22.  
(20 issues). Daily newspaper published by Jack C. Bursey, 409 South  
Second Street, Memphis, which mainly focused on dog and horse racing  
but also covered other sports.

*The Tattler*, Memphis, Tenn., Vol. 1, No. 4, 1929 May 25. Weekly, published at  
113 Monroe Avenue and edited by J.C. Caruthers, which featured local  
political, sports and society news, commentary, photographs and cartoons.

Transferred to Special Collections newspaper collection.