

University of Memphis

University of Memphis Digital Commons

Special Collections Finding Aids

Special Collections

2021

MSS0256. United States Weather Bureau, Memphis Station, records finding aid

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

**University of Memphis Libraries
Special Collections Department**

126 Ned R. McWherter Library

Memphis, TN 38152 - 3250

Phone: (901) 678 - 2210

E-mail: lib_sc@memphis.edu

**United States Weather Bureau, Memphis Station,
records**

Title: United States Weather Bureau, Memphis Station, records
Collection No: MSS.256
Extent: 6 cubic feet
Inclusive Dates: 1871-1952

Abstract: The collection comprises 48 volumes of records of the U.S. Weather Bureau, Memphis Station, Tennessee, from 1871 to 1952.

Processed by: Delanie Ross, 1985.
Access: Open to all researchers.
Language: English
Preferred Citation: United States Weather Bureau, Memphis Station, records, Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

Publication date: 2022 April

Scope and contents

The collection comprises 48 volumes of records of the U.S. Weather Bureau, Memphis Station, from 1871 to 1952 but mainly from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They include recorded comments and meteorological records of weather conditions, as well as river stages, barometer readings, frosts, waterfowl migrations, cloud formations, and precipitation. There are also station memoranda from the early twentieth century

Subject terms

United States. Weather Bureau.

Inventory

Box 1

Daily Journal

These volumes contain daily comments and meteorological records on weather conditions. The recorders note the condition of instruments, changes in personnel, river stages, barometer readings, killing frosts, duck and geese migration, cloud formations, rain and storms.

Volume 1. March 1, 1871 - May 31, 1874.

On p.4 is a hand-drawn map of "Memphis tempest of March 15, 1871, 11:15-30 A.M." It indicates the path of wind and rain during a storm which isolated Memphis for two days; May 3, 1873, entry records "A rumor prevailed today that a slight shock of earthquake had been felt this morning."

Volume 2. June 1, 1874 - March 31, 1877.

June 20, 1874, entry notes that a portion of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the rear of the weather bureau's building lost a portion of its roof; January 30, 1875, Memphis "Daily Appeal" begins publishing meteorological records; November 8, 1876, "Country people are beginning to complain of too much rain as it is injuring the cotton crop."

Volume 3. April 1, 1877 - September 4, 1878.

Yellow fever information is found on pp. 218-224. The entries refer to "yellow fever panic" and the death from the disease of Sgt. McElroy of the Bureau; June 17, 1877, entry describes a tornado.

Volume 4. January 1, 1880 - December 31, 1880. Also wind record.

Volume 5. January 1, 1881 - September 29, 1881. Also wind record.

April 13, 1881, entry reports on a tornado in Hernando, Mississippi, and includes a list of casualties and property damage.

Volume 6. October 1, 1881 - May 30, 1882.

January 20, 1882, entry mentions a smallpox epidemic in Memphis; p. 201 records a buffalo gnat plague; p. 110 lists visitors to the station with their occupation and purpose.

Volume 7. June 1, 1882 - August 31, 1883. Also miscellaneous wind data.

Volume 8. September 1, 1883 - October 31, 1884. Also miscellaneous wind data.

February 6, 1884, entry notes "Flood telegrams received. Heavy rains in Ohio Valley...will reach the Mississippi early part of next week... Property and stock should be moved to points of safety. Give general warning."; wind record for 1883-1884 is on pp.239-252.

Volume 9. November 1, 1884 - November 31, 1885. Also wind record.

March 1885, p. 80 contains a newspaper clipping reporting "that changes indicated in the elements will be sent out on the several railway lines leaving this city."

Box 2

Volume 10. December 1, 1885 - September 1886. Also wind data.

December 24, 1885, entry notes that a telephone was installed in the office; August 31, 1886, records earthquake shocks; many newspaper clippings from the newspapers of Memphis and other cities on the Charleston, South Carolina, earthquake.

Daily Journals

Volume 11. September 1, 1886 - July 31, 1887. Also wind record.

Volume 12. August 1, 1887 - August 31, 1888.

Volume 13. September 1, 1888 - June 30, 1891.

Volume 14. July 1, 1891 - December 31, 1893.

Volume 15. January 1, 1894 - July 20, 1895.

Volume 16. July 1, 1895 - December 1900. Also some corrections to weather station records.

Volume 17. January 1901 - December 1904.

Station Forms and Copies of Forms

These volumes record daily time of observations, barometer, thermometer, hygrometer, relative humidity readings, wind, lower clouds, upper clouds, rain or snow, cold wave records, river observations, and wind velocity.

Volume 18. February 28, 1871 - April 13, 1872.

Box 6

Volume 19. April 20, 1872 - June 1873.

Volume 20. June 21, 1873 - September 19, 1874.

Volume 21. September 1874 - September 31, 1875.

Volume 22. January 1, 1876 - March 31, 1877.

Box 3

Volume 23. April 1877 - June 1878.

Volume 24. July 13, 1878 - October 11, 1879.

Volume 25. October 18, 1879 - September 30, 1881.

Box 6

Volume 26. February 1882 - January 1886.

Volume 27. 1890 - 1892, Miscellaneous 1872.

Contains sunshine records, 1887-1889; river gauges, 1871-1889.

May 23, 1891, copy of letter concerning the transfer of the weather service from the Army Signal Corps to the Department of Agriculture.

Box 5

Volume 28. January 1893 - June 30, 1900.

Pages 395-404 contain the 1897 annual report, noting station activity during the flood of March

and April; annual reports for 1893-1900 are on pp.409-438.

Volume 29. January 1896 - 1900.

Contains a list of persons injured and killed by lightning, a list of maps and bulletins issued, addresses of Memphis companies and individuals to be added to the forecast card list.

Station Forms and Copies of Forms

Volume 30. January 1897 - December 1900.

Volume 31. September 1898 - 1904.

Contains a brief history of the station on pp.255, 463.

Volume 32. 1901 - 1903.

Volume 33. January 1904 - December 1904.

Volume 34. 1904.

Box 4

River Stages

Contains reading of gauge, above high water and above low water, changes in last 24 hours, direction of wind, state of weather, rainfall, and remarks.

Volume 35. Daily river stages at Helena, Arkansas, November 1, 1874 - April 30, 1882.

Volume 36. River Stages, Memphis, Tennessee, November 1874 - September 1881.

Volume 37. Daily River Stages, Memphis, Tennessee, October 1881 - July 1889.

Volume 38. Daily River Stages, Memphis, Tennessee, August 1889 - December 1894.

Volume 39. Daily River Stages, Memphis, Tennessee, January 1895 - December 1902.

Box 7

Volume 40. January 1903 - December 1905.

Meteorological Summary

Contains monthly and annual temperature, dew point, relative humidity, wind, precipitation in inches and hundredths, rain gauge above ground, clouds and weather.

Volume 41. Meteorological Summary, February 28, 1871 - December 31, 1890.

Volume 42. Means Book, January 1891 - 1904.

Continuation of Meteorological Summary.

Monthly Meteorological Report

Volume 43. Monthly Meteorological Report, August 1881 - January 1882.

Climatological Record

Pressure (highest and lowest in inches and hundredths, each month), temperature (absolute minimum, monthly mean maximum), degree days, weather (number of clear, cloudy and partly cloudy days), wind (prevailing direction and average hourly velocity), daily precipitation and snowfall.

Volume 44. Climatological Record, 1891 - 1910.

Volume 45. Climatological Record, 1911 - 1930, Records killing frosts since 1871.

Volume 46. Climatological Record, 1931 - 1950.

Records killing frosts, visibility, instrumental equipment from 1871 to 1952.

Station Memorandum

Daily notes pertaining to the arrival of new equipment, problems with equipment, the use of Bureau records in court cases and other administrative matters.

Volume 47. Station Memorandum, January 7, 1905 - December 31, 1925.

February 20, 1905, reference, "Informed that efforts are being made by U.S. marshal to occupy

rooms in Custom House assigned to this Bureau."

Volume 48. Station Memorandum, January 1926 - July 1934.

January 26, 1933, reference to a visit to the station by the 8th grade class of Ernest Adam School.