MSS0111. Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot controversy records finding aid

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Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot controversy records finding aid

Title: Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot controversy records
Collection No: MSS.0111
Extent: 0.25 cubic feet
Inclusive Dates: 1955-1968

Abstract: Correspondence, clippings, histories of the depot, reports, minutes of meetings, petitions, photographs, maps, and press releases documenting the history of what was the oldest railroad depot in continuous use in the United States, and the determined, yet unsuccessful efforts of Memphis organizations to save it from destruction, 1964-1968.

Access: Open to all researchers.
Language: English
Preferred Citation: Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot controversy records, Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis

Publication date: 2022 December
Organizational information

The Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot was constructed in Memphis, Tennessee, at Adams and Lauderdale Streets around 1854 by the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. It later changed its name to the Southern Railroad Depot following the sale of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. The depot figured prominently in the Civil War Battle of Memphis. The organizations trying to save the depot from the Memphis Housing Authority's urban renewal plan included the Citizens Advisory Committee, Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities, West Tennessee Historical Society, Shelby County Historical Commission, the Downtown Auxiliary Unit of the Model Railroaders, Good Earth Garden Club, and Memphis branches of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and Colonial Dames of America. Although they were unable to prevent the destruction of the depot in 1968, the combined work of the groups did result in the 1967 formation of the Memphis Landmarks Council (Commission) by the City of Memphis.

Scope and contents

The records, 1955-1968, of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot controversy in Memphis, document the unsuccessful four-year effort of a coalition of citizens groups to preserve the depot. The records include correspondence, clippings from the Memphis daily newspapers, The Commercial Appeal and The Memphis Press-Scimitar, unpublished reports of the Memphis Landmarks Council of the current and projected use of the depot, histories of the depot, minutes of meetings of the united citizens groups, publications of the Southern Railway system, maps, photographs, and a petition and press releases from the newly formed Memphis Landmarks Council. This material presents a detailed picture of the efforts by the citizens groups to document the historic and cultural importance of the depot and thereby to preserve it for possible use as a downtown visitor’s center.

Subject terms

Historic preservation—Tennessee.
Memphis Landmarks Commission
Railroad depots
Shelby County Historical Commission

Processing information

This collection was acquired by the West Tennessee Historical Society which received a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for processing.
## Inventory

**Box 1**

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<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>General correspondence, articles regarding the railroad yard and depot, 1955-1968</td>
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<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Memphis Landmarks Council, 1967</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
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<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Clippings, 1967-1968</td>
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