

Descriptive Summary:

Creator:	Texas Cotton Palace Association, Second Texas Cotton Palace Association
Title:	Texas Cotton Palace Records
Inclusive Dates:	1894-1931, undated
Bulk Dates:	1910-1930
Abstract:	This collection contains correspondence, legal and financial documents, literary productions, photographs, and an artifact pertaining to the Texas Cotton Palace.
Accession #:	792
Extent:	0.9 linear feet (2 document boxes)
Language:	Collection is in English.
Repository:	The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Biographical Note:

By the end of the nineteenth century, Waco had become an important inland market for Texas cotton. In 1893, for example, 120,000 bales were marketed in the city. To celebrate the source of their prosperity, the citizens of Waco raised \$40,000 by public subscription and built the Texas Cotton Palace. On November 8, Governor James Stephen Hogg opened the first Texas Cotton Palace exhibition and crowned the first King Cotton and Queen Texas. Despite its successful beginning, the Palace did not last long; on 1895 January 19, the Palace burned to the ground.

Intentions to rebuild and restart the Texas Cotton Palace did not materialize until 1910. That year, the newly-formed Young Men's Business League (YMBL) helped to raise money for the new Palace by selling stock—an effort that culminated in a downtown parade, \$100,000 raised, and the formation of the Second Texas Cotton Palace. Albert C. Clifton, president of the YMBL, was elected president of the board of directors of the new Cotton Palace.

Padgitt Park was purchased from Tom Padgitt in 1910 to serve as the home for the Palace and expositions. The grounds eventually featured a 10,000-seat coliseum, a racetrack, a football field, livestock fields, an auditorium called Maennerchor Hall, carnival grounds known as “The War Path,” a small zoo, and buildings to display automobiles and poultry,.

The Texas Cotton Palace exhibition was held every autumn for the next twenty-one years. It showcased Texas agriculture and livestock, and featured parades, art exhibits, dairy shows, canning, baking and needlework competitions, horse and car racing, athletic events, concerts and operas, and the city's biggest social event—the Queen's Ball. Certain days of the exposition were set aside for particular purposes, like Children's Day, Flower Day, Dallas Day, Fireman's Day, Wheelman's Day, Labor Day, Railroad Day, and Secret Society Day.

The expositions continued unabated during World War I. In fact, the 1918 Texas Cotton Palace exposition featured a war exhibit, mock battles, and an air review including 148 planes.

On 1923 November 3, 117,208 people visited the exhibition—the most to attend the festivities in a single day. Attendance remained strong until the very end: in 1930, 350,000 people visited the Palace. The Palace was financially unable to continue,

however, and when the exposition gates closed on the evening of 1930 October 19, they did so for the last time. In all, eight million people attended the Texas Cotton Palace exhibitions. In 1940, the Palace's cornerstone was mounted at Lovers' Leap in William Cameron Park.

Sources:

Conger, Roger N. "Cotton Palace." *Handbook of Texas Online*.

[Http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lbc02](http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lbc02). Accessed 2012 June 14.

Barnes, Lavonia Jenkins. "Texas Cotton Palace." In *The Handbook of Waco and McLennan County, Texas*, edited by Dayton Kelley. Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1972.

Barnes, Lavonia Jenkins. *The Texas Cotton Palace, Waco, Texas*. Waco, TX: Heritage Society of Waco, 1964.

Scope and Content:

The Texas Cotton Palace collection was obtained through eight gifts and transfers from 1972 to 1986. The bulk of the collection covers the life of the Second Texas Cotton Palace, from 1910 to 1930. Correspondence, legal and financial documents, photographs, and many literary productions provide insight into both the operations and festivities of the Texas Cotton Palace expositions. The collection is in good condition.

Organization and Arrangement:

This collection is organized into six series: I. Correspondence, II. Legal Documents, III. Financial Documents, IV. Literary Productions, V. Photographs, and VI. Artifacts. Prior to this processing, the literary productions were organized according to event and item-type. This organization has largely been maintained, although items have been placed in chronological order. The undated photographs were previously divided into three groups: the Palace and its grounds, rides and exhibits, and parades. Now, the dated photographs have been placed in chronological order and the undated photographs have been divided into four categories: Texas Cotton Palace, Grounds, Exhibits and Events, and Parades.

Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Literary Rights Statement:

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Index Terms:

Gildersleeve, Fred A.
 Texas Cotton Palace (Waco, Tex.)--History.
 Waco (Tex.)--Exhibitions.
 Waco (Tex.)--History.

Related Materials: None.

Separated Materials: None.

Custodial History:

Acquisition:	<p>This collection was created by eight gifts and transfers from 1972 to 1986:</p> <p>Transfer from Texas Collection Library, uncatalogued holdings, 1972 December.</p> <p>Transfer from Texas Collection Library, vertical files, 1975 April.</p> <p>Gift from Roger N. Conger, 1980 September 22.</p> <p>Gift from Mrs. Jane Dudgeon, 1981 March 20.</p> <p>Gift from Mrs. Robert Cameron Milam, 1985 March 18.</p> <p>Gift from Mrs. Spencer Brown, 1986 July.</p> <p>Gift from Waco Cotton Palace Pageant, Inc., 1986 summer.</p> <p>Gift from Robert Schaadt, undated.</p>
Citation:	<p>Texas Cotton Palace Records, Accession #792, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.</p>

Processing Information: Finding aid completed by Jonathan D. Riddle, 2012 June 18.

Container List:**Series I: Correspondence, 1912-1931, undated, 2 folders.**

This series contains correspondence regarding the business and financial administration of the Texas Cotton Palace and its properties. There is also a copy of a letter of invitation to Woodrow Wilson and a publicly-circulated letter regarding taxpayer support for the Texas Cotton Palace. These items are in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	1	Correspondence: General	1912 March 5-1929 July 3
	2	Correspondence: General	1931 January 19-27, undated

Series II: Legal Documents, 1894-1910, 0.45 linear feet (1 document box).

This series contains two contracts regarding land purchased and leased by the Texas Cotton Palace, the Second Texas Cotton Palace Association's minutes for 1910, and an official copy of the Waco city commissioners' resolutions regarding the creation of William Cameron Park. This series is in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	3	Legal Documents: Contracts	1894 April 28- 1895 July 27
	4	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (1 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	5	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (2 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	6	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (3 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	7	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (4 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	8	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (5 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	9	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (6 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	10	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (7 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	11	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (8 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	12	Legal Documents: Minutes: Second Texas Cotton Palace Association (9 of 9)	1910 March 15- December 17
	13	Legal Documents: Resolutions: Creation of William Cameron Park	1910 May 24

Series III: Financial Documents, 1894-1929, 2 folders.

This series contains certificates for shares in the Texas Cotton Palace, as well as a bond certificate. They are in average condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	14	Financial Documents: Stocks and Bonds	1894 November 20-1911 June 2
	15	Financial Documents: Stocks and Bonds	1911 August 5- 1929 January 1

Series IV: Literary Productions, 1911-1930, 0.9 linear feet (2 document boxes).

This series is comprised of catalogs, invitations, programs, promotional material, clippings, and other printed materials pertaining to the Texas Cotton Palace and its events. This series is in average to good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	16	Literary Productions: Art Catalogs	1911, 1914, 1922
	17	Literary Productions: Art Catalogs	1924-1930
	18	Literary Productions: Booklet: Premium List	1919
	19	Literary Productions: Booklet: Premium List	1929
	20	Literary Productions: Booklet: Premium List	1930
	21	Literary Productions: Dance Books	1916, 1917, 1922
	22	Literary Productions: Dance Books	1924, 1926
	23	Literary Productions: Invitations	1921-1927
	24	Literary Productions: Invitations	1928, 1930
2	1	Literary Productions: Pamphlets: Young Men's Business League	undated
	2	Literary Productions: Programs: Children's Day	1923-1930, undated
	3	Literary Productions: Programs: Coronation Ceremony	1917-1926
	4	Literary Productions: Programs: Coronation Ceremony	1927-1930, undated
	5	Literary Productions: Programs: Events held at the Texas Cotton Palace	undated
	6	Literary Productions: Programs: Society Ball	1922, 1923, 1924
	7	Literary Productions: Programs: Woman's Department	1921
	8	Literary Productions: Promotional Material	1894-1917
	9	Literary Productions: Promotional Material	1918, 1925, undated
	10	Literary Productions: Tickets	1912, 1923, 1930
	11	Literary Productions: Clippings: General	1913 November 17-1919 October 21, undated
	12	Literary Productions: Clippings: Cotton Palace Boll	1916 November 14
	13	Literary Productions: Clippings: Texas Cotton Palace News	1914 October 31-November 15

Series V: Photographic Material, 1984-1930, undated, 0.45 linear feet (1 document box).

This series contains miscellaneous photographs of the Texas Cotton Palace and its grounds, exhibits, parades, and other events. Most of the photographs were taken and processed by noted Waco photographer Fred Gildersleeve. There is also a group of photographs of Texas Cotton Palace medals and buttons. The items are in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
2	14	Photographic Material: General	1894-1913
	15	Photographic Material: General	1914-1917
	16	Photographic Material: Coronations	1927
	17	Photographic Material: Medals and Buttons	1894-1923
	18	Photographic Material: Medals and Buttons	1924-1930, undated
	19	Photographic Material: Texas Cotton Palace	undated
	20	Photographic Material: Grounds (1 of 2)	undated
	21	Photographic Material: Grounds (2 of 2)	undated
	22	Photographic Material: Exhibits and Events	undated
	23	Photographic Material: Parades	undated

Series VI: Artifacts, 1914, 1 folder

This series is comprised of W. H. Hoffmann's 1914 Texas Cotton Palace director's medal. It is in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
2	24	Artifacts: Director's Medal	1914