

HERBERT FAMILY BUSINESS RECORDS
1867-[1912-1942]-1947

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INTRODUCTION

The Herbert Family Business Records span from 1867-1947, but primarily cover the years 1912-1942. They include business contracts, stock share certificates, land documents, sales agreements, and other business correspondence related to companies owned by Herbert family members. The companies that comprise the collection include T. L. Herbert & Sons, W.G. Bush & Co., and the Sangravl Company, Inc., which is still in operation at New Johnsonville, Tennessee, in Humphreys County. The collection is unrestricted, and was donated in 1996 to TSLA by a Herbert family member, John B. Herbert, who is currently employed at Herbert Sangravl in West Tennessee. The papers had been in the possession of T. L. Herbert IV, who was a prominent Nashville businessman. The documents are in good condition, and were kept in the same general order in which they arrived. The collection is small, measuring at 1.3 cubic feet, and all papers were kept except for the original folders and other organizing material.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Herbert family's business involvement in Tennessee dates back to 1866, when William G. Bush (1829-1911), a Confederate veteran, founded a brick company in Edgefield along the Cumberland River. Bush's daughter Sallie married Thomas L. Herbert, Sr. (1852-1913), and either he or his son, William Bush Herbert (1878-1941), started another brickyard across the river. In 1909, the business changed its name to T. L. Herbert & Sons, and expanded its work to include general contracting. Eventually, the Herbert family owned several businesses throughout Tennessee, including three brick plants in North Nashville, one in West Tennessee, and a barge line that dredged gravel and sand out of the Tennessee River. During the family's extended business involvement in Tennessee, there were many different companies in operation, including W.G. Bush & Co., T. L. Herbert & Sons, Herbert Sangravl, and Foster & Herbert Cut Stone Company. Bush Brick president Thomas Herbert was a member of the Nashville Industrial Corporation (NIC), an organization founded in 1919 that was comprised of wealthy and prominent businessmen who joined together to promote various business interests. Significant family members, including William Bush Herbert, attended West End Methodist Church and devoted much of their time to philanthropic efforts for the community.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carey, Bill. *Fortunes, Fiddles, & Fried Chicken: A Nashville Business History*. Franklin, TN: Hillsboro Press, 2000.

Correspondence with Ruth P. Cunningham, genealogical researcher, July 2002

Tennessee State Library and Archives, Bush family vertical file

Tennessee State Library and Archives, Herbert family vertical file

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Herbert Family Business Records span the years 1867-1947, but most of the documents date from 1912-1942. They reflect the workings of several different contracting businesses owned by the Herbert family that were in operation at the turn of the twentieth century and beyond. The majority of the papers are contracts between Herbert family businesses, such as T. L. Herbert & Sons and W.G. Bush & Co., and other companies, such as the L & N Railroad and other contractors.

Other business papers, such as auto insurance information, warranty deeds, sales agreements, and bonds are also included in the collection. Additionally, land documents reflecting transactions (primarily abstracts of title for mortgage loans) involving Robert J. Stone in Cheatham County are included in the collection. It is unknown as to why these papers were included with the Herbert family documents, but it is likely that Robert J. Stone and the Herberts shared business interests. Stone was a prominent citizen in his day; he was active in farming interests in Cheatham County, and he was even a member of the State House of Representatives. Also of note are six books that include stock share certificates for companies related to Herbert business interests, such as the Herbert Stone & Fertilizer Company, the Herbert Realty Co., and the Paducah Sand Company. Many of these certificates are unmarked and unused, but several are signed and dated.

Although the Herbert Family Business Papers may attract scholars interested in early Nashville business history, they are not comprehensive enough to paint a broader picture of day-to-day operations of all of the Herbert family businesses. Certain documents may hold greater interest, however, such as a letter signed by the mayor of Nashville, William Litterer, granting land in downtown Nashville to W.G. Bush & Co. in 1891. Nashville business leaders had been quite intent upon building the city into a major manufacturing center during the turn of the century. The Herbert Family Business Papers are significant in that they document a successful attempt to create new industries in middle Tennessee during a period of significant growth for Nashville and the American South.

CONTAINER LISTING

Box 1:

- Folder 1: Land Documents, Cheatham county, F1-F18 (Abstract of Title for Mortgage Loan to Robert J. Stone, 1867-1924)
- Folder 2: Land Documents, Cheatham county, F19-F93 (Abstract of Title for Mortgage Loan to Robert J. Stone, continued, 1870-1920)
- Folder 3: Land Documents, Cheatham county, F94-F124 (Abstract of Title for Mortgage Loan to Robert J. Stone, continued, 1867-1924)
- Folder 4: Land Documents, Cheatham county, F1-F8, F1-F35, Supplements 1-9 (Stone family abstracts, continued, 1888-1929)
- Folder 5: Land Documents, Davidson county, 1-32, (Deed information and Abstract of Title for W. G. Bush & Company)
- Folder 6: Letter from Mayor and City Council granting downtown Nashville land to W.G. Bush & Co., 1891
- Folder 7: Land acquisition information, T.L Herbert & Company, 1924
- Folder 8: Sales agreement from Fairbanks, Morse & Co., to the Sangravl Company, Inc., 1934
- Folder 9: Deed information for R.D. Herbert regarding Sarah and Edward Summers, 1923
- Folder 10: T.L. Herbert & Sons and lease agreements for Rutherford County properties, 1940
- Folder 11: Warranty deed from H.E. Agerton et al to R.D. Herbert, 1915 & R.D Herbert's tax receipt, 1912-1915
- Folder 12: Contract between L & N Railroad Co. amd T.L. Herbert & Sons regarding Victor Chemical Works, 1938
- Folder 13: R.D. Herbert contract with The MacQueen Service, 1936 & MacQueen letters, 1936
- Folder 14: Ready Mixed Concrete & Supply Company, T.L. Herbert & Sons, and Barrow-Agee Laboratories business correspondence, 1936-1942
- Folder 15: Business contracts between Ready-Mixed Concrete & Supply Company and T.L. Herbert & Sons, 1936 and 1938
- Folder 16: Business contract between L & N Railroad and the Nashville Builders Supply Company, 1904
- Folder 17: Business contract between L & N Railroad and various parties, including the Sangravl Co., 1933
- Folder 18: Assorted business contracts and correspondence involving Nugent Sand Co., Sangravl Co., T.L. Herbert & Sons, 1933-1934
- Folder 19: Assorted business contracts and correspondence involving L & N Railroad and W.G. Bush & Co., 1890-1927
- Folder 20: Fidelity and Casualty Co. of N.Y., Forgery and Check Alteration Bond issued to T.L. Herbert & Sons
- Folder 21: Contract information for T.L. Herbert & Sons and Davidson County Purchasing Commission for crushed gravel, 1940-1941
- Folder 22: Business contracts involving the James Sand & Gravel Co., the Sangravl Co., the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway, 1925-1932

Folder 23: Automobile insurance information for W.G. Bush & Co., T.L. Herbert & Sons, R.D. Herbert & Sons, Ward Roofing & Heating Co., and Sangravl Co., 1946-1947
Folder 24: Envelope for missing contract between L & N Railroad Co. & Napier Slag, 1938

Box 2:

Southland Lime Company, stock share certificates, 1925, signed and unsigned

Southland Lime Company, stock share certificates, 1925-1927, signed and unsigned

Herbert Realty Co., stock share certificates, 1917-1918, signed and unsigned

Paducah Sand Company of Paducah, Kentucky, 1931, stock share certificates, signed and unsigned

Southern Plastering Co., stock share certificates, 1916, signed and unsigned

Herbert Stone & Fertilizer Company, stock share certificates, 1919-1920, signed and unsigned

Folder 1: (oversized materials)

1. Map from Box 1, Folder 1, F14, Composite Plat of R.J. Stone's Land
2. Map from Box 1, Folder 1, F18, Land by Cumberland River, 336 acres
3. Map from Box 1, Folder 2, F61, Surveyors Plat of Gupton-Hunter Land
4. Map from Box 1, Folder 3, F99, Plat of Caption tract of R.J. Stone's Land
5. Map from Box 1, Folder 3, F123, Land by Cumberland River
6. Map from Box 1, Folder 5, downtown Nashville, Herbert family properties near Hume Street, First Avenue, Adams Street, and Vanburen Street.