

Taylor Roofing Company Records, c. 1921-1931

Collection Summary

Creator: Taylor Roofing Company

Marvin W. Wiles / Wiles Photographers

Title: Taylor Roofing Company Records, c. 1921-1931

Inclusive Dates: c. 1921-1931, bulk 1926-1929

Summary/Abstract: The Taylor Roofing Company Records is a small collection of photographs and copy photographs of customer testimonial letters (approximately 44 items total) that provide a brief history of this local business and a snapshot of life in Nashville in the middle 1920s. Photographs of local residences and other buildings are included in the collection. Customer testimonial letters provide further documentation of local community members, businesses, residences, and organizations. Businesses and organizations that used the company's services during this time period include the Fisk Model Training School, the Phillips Chapel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, Hooser's Pharmacy, Beasley's Corner Grocery, and the Tennessee State Fairgrounds, among others. Evidence of changes in roofing and building practices during this time period are also seen; the transition away from wooden shingles and toward the use of asphalt and slate-surfaced asphalt shingles are noteworthy given the devastating impact of the 1916 East Nashville fire.

Physical Description/Extent: .50 linear ft.

Series: Taylor Roofing Company, Book 1; Taylor Roofing Company, Book 2

Accession Number: RT-100

Language: English

Stack Location: R3, S3 (Note: Items are housed in a one half of a letter-size document case along with the Jersey Farms Milk Service Photographs.)

Repository: Special Collections Division, Nashville Public Library, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219

Biographical/Historical Sketch

The Taylor Roofing Company was a Nashville business operating in the early to middle twentieth century. Resources on the history of the Taylor Roofing Company are limited, however, a search of city directories revealed advertisements and/or listings for the Taylor Roofing Company beginning in circa 1920. Prior to 1920, Leon Taylor is listed as a vice president and later president of the Uncle Hiram Roofing and Paving Company circa 1916 to 1918.

A small number of Nashville residences, businesses, and organizations served by Taylor Roofing Company in the middle 1920s are documented in this collection. Businesses and organizations that used the company's services during this time period include the Fisk Model Training School, the Phillips Chapel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, Hooser's Pharmacy, Beasley's Corner Grocery, and the Tennessee State Fairgrounds, among others. Evidence of changes in roofing and building practices during this time period are also seen; the transition away from wooden shingles and toward the use of

asphalt and slate-surfaced asphalt shingles are noteworthy given the devastating impact of the 1916 East Nashville fire.

Scope and Contents of the Collection

The Taylor Roofing Company Records is a small collection of photographs and copy photographs of customer testimonial letters (approximately 44 items total) that provide a brief history of this local business and a snapshot of life in Nashville in the middle 1920s. Photographs of local residences and other buildings are included in the collection. Customer testimonial letters provide further documentation of local community members, businesses, residences, and organizations.

The collection items were originally loosely-bound in two separate photo albums containing photographs and copy photographs mounted on linen support. The albums were likely used by the Taylor Roofing Company for sales and promotional purposes, and demonstrate the importance of customer testimonials and referrals for local businesses during this time period.

The inside cover of the first book (Book 1) was embossed with text that read “Taylor Roofing Company, Nashville, Tenn. Reward When Returned”, indicating the value of these materials to the company. It is likely that Book 1 may have been a book of master photographs to be re-used by the company as needed since these photographs are identified with local photographer Marvin W. Wiles’ signature label.

Some items in this collection serve as a reminder of the hazards caused by the use of wooden shingles during a time when many homes were heated by wood and coal-burning fire places. One item is a composite photograph of four images originating from sources like the National Fire Prevention Association. In this composite photograph, home and business owners are warned of “the menace of the wooden shingle” (Book 2, Item 4). Given the devastation wrought by the East Nashville fire of 1916, it is not surprising that in this collection we see evidence of local residents, businesses and churches moving to replace fire-prone or leaky shingles with the kind offered by this local business.

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

The collection is housed in one half of a letter-size document case; the items are divided within the box as they originally appeared in two separate, loosely-bound photograph albums. A number of the homes or buildings remain unidentified; some images are duplicates.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access: In library use only. Available by appointment.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction: Some items may be protected by copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code).

Index Terms

Personal Names:

Taylor, Leon
Wiles, Marvin W.

Corporate Names/Organizations:

Colored Methodist Episcopal Church
Eastman Hotel
Fisk University
Methodist Episcopal Church, South
Taylor Roofing Company
Wiles Photographers

Subjects:

Building materials
Buildings—Tennessee—Nashville
Business—Tennessee—Nashville—History—Sources
Church buildings—Tennessee—Nashville
Dwellings—Tennessee—Nashville
History—20th century—Tennessee—Nashville
Labor—Tennessee—Nashville—History—20th century—Sources
Roofing
Roofs
Roofs—Fires and fire prevention
Working class—Tennessee—Nashville

Places:

Nashville (Tenn.)—Buildings, structures, etc.
Nashville (Tenn.)—Commerce
Nashville (Tenn.)—History—Sources
Hot Springs (Ark.)—Buildings, structures, etc.
Hot Springs (Ark.)—History—Sources

Genre/Document Types:

Black-and-white photographs, aat
Blueprints, aat
Documents, aat
Photographs, aat

Occupations:

Roofing—Installation, lcsh

Administrative Information

Copyright: This material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code).

Preferred Citation: Taylor Roofing Company, Special Collections Division, Nashville Public Library.

Immediate Source of Acquisition: Unknown

Ownership and Custodial History: Unknown

Processing Information: This collection was processed by Tracey Howerton, September-November 2012, with assistance from volunteer Marty O'Reilly.

Accruals: No further accruals are expected.

References to Works by or about Collection Creator/Topic

Cohen, Rodney T. *Fisk University*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Press, 2001.

Nashville City Directories

Detailed Description of the Collection

SERIES I. TAYLOR ROOFING COMPANY, BOOK 1

Container List

Item No.	Description of item	Date	Name, Affiliation		Addresses
Item 1	Copy photograph of testimonial letter	Jan. 16, 1929	Alfred, H. A.	Residence	709 25 th Avenue North
Item 2	Copy photograph of testimonial letter	Dec. 16, 1926	Hooser, W. E.	Residence	2400 Capers Avenue
			Hooser's Pharmacy	Business	14 th and Woodland Streets
Item 3	Copy photograph of testimonial letter	Sept. 1, 1926	Carter, Cullen T.	Residence	2400 Pierce Ave.
			Conference Superintendent, Sunday School Board, Tennessee Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South	Organization	810 Broadway
Item 4	Copy photograph of	Dec. 8, 1926	Beasley, R. C.	Residence	1009 Grove Avenue

	testimonial letter				
			Beasley's Corner Grocery	Business	900 Acklen Avenue
Item 5	Copy photograph of testimonial letter	Dec. 10, 1926	Coleman, P. J.	Residence	69 Wharf Avenue
			Phillips Chapel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church	Church	86 Wharf Avenue
Item 6	Copy photograph of testimonial letter	Dec. 12, 1926	Sparks, C.	Residence	915 Chicamauga Avenue
			President, Nashville Pottery Company	Business	[844] Cleveland Street Viaduct
Item 7	Copy photograph of letter re: guarantee	May 4, 1924	Becker Asphaltum Roofing Company	Business	n/a
Item 8	Copy photograph of guarantee policy	Undated	Becker Asphaltum Roofing Company	Business	n/a
Item 9	Photograph of damaged wooden shingle roof	Undated	Campion, John	Residence	[323] 22 nd Avenue North
Item 10	Photograph of section of roof with new shingles	Undated	Johnson home	Residence – roof only	Murfreesboro Pike
Item 11	Photograph showing new roof	Undated	Johnson home	Residence – full view of home	Murfreesboro Pike
Item 12	Photograph showing new roof	Undated	Campion, John	Residence	[323] 22 nd Avenue North
Item 13	Photograph of bungalow-style home w/ new shingles	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified
Item	Photograph	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified

14	of bungalow-style home w/ new shingles				
Item 15	Photograph of three men installing new roof	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified
Item 16	Photograph of home with new roof	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified
Item 17	Photograph of house on corner of residential intersection. City street and sidewalks visible.	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified
Item 18	Photograph of two-and-one-half story house, number "1503" visible over front door. Columned front entrance.	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	[1503?] Unidentified
Item 19	Photograph of bungalow-style house; "3615" visible as address. Sidewalk visible in front.	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	[3615] Unidentified
Item 20	Photograph of one-and-one half story house w/ wrap-around porch. Sidewalk and street visible.	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	[1200?] Unidentified

Item 21	Photograph	Undated	Trabue, Charles C., Sr.	Residence	Bonaventure, 4815 Harding Road
Item 22	Photograph	Undated	Fisk Model Training School building	Organization	Unidentified [Fisk University campus]
Item 23	Photograph of fire-damaged home	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified
Item 24	Photograph of two fire-damaged homes	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	[1807?] Unidentified
Item 25	Photograph	Undated	Tennessee State Fairgrounds, Women's Building (background)	Organization	Tennessee State Fairgrounds
Item 26	Photograph of house needing new roof	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified
Item 27	Photograph of house with new roof	Undated	Unidentified	Residence	Unidentified

SERIES II. TAYLOR ROOFING COMPANY, BOOK 2

Container List

Item No.	Description of item	Date	Name, Affiliation		Addresses
Item 1	Photograph (duplicate)	Undated	Johnson home	Residence	Murfreesboro Pike
Item 2	Photograph (duplicate)	Undated	Johnson home	Residence	Murfreesboro Pike
Item 3	Photograph (duplicate)	Undated	Campion, John	Residence	[323] 22 nd Avenue North
Item 4	Composite photograph—“evil wooden shingle”	Undated	n/a	Residences	n/a

Item 5	Photograph (duplicate)	Undated	Johnson home	Residence	Murfreesboro Pike
Item 6	Copy photograph of directions for laying asphalt shingles	Undated	n/a	Residences	n/a
Item 7	Copy photograph of section of advertisement for the Barrett Company, N.Y., N.Y.	Undated	Barrett Company, N.Y., N.Y.	Business	n/a
Item 8	Photograph of Eastman Hotel (Note: see telegram – Item 11)	Undated	Eastman Hotel	Business	Hot Springs, Arkansas
Item 9	Copy photograph of letter of inquiry for roofing repair to new house	July 15, 1931	A. Horne	Residence	Dickson, Tenn.
			Dickson Planing Mill Company	Business	Dickson, Tenn.
Item 10	Copy photograph of letter of satisfaction with “ever lock” shingles	Feb. 11, 1929	Martin Johnson, Asst. to Vice-Chancellor	Organization	University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn.
Item 11	Copy photograph of telegram	Dec. 1921 (?)	J. M. Williams	Business	Eastman Hotel
Item 12	Copy photograph of testimonial letter (duplicate)	Dec. 16, 1926	C. Sparks	Residence	915 Chicamauga Ave.
			President, Nashville Pottery Company	Business	[844] Cleveland Street Viaduct

Item 13	Copy photograph of testimonial letter (duplicate)	Jan. 16, 1929	Alfred, H. A.	Residence	709 25 th Avenue North
Item 14	Copy photograph of testimonial letter re: rental house in Chattanooga, and displeasure with Genasco's Lay Tite shingles	Feb. 16, 1929	W. L. Acuff	Residence	347 22 nd Ave. N.
Item 15	Photocopy of Taylor Roofing Company Everlox Shingle Guarantee and Maintenance Agreement	Undated	n/a	n/a	n/a
Item 16	Small blueprint of installation instructions - detail of valley construction (approx. 6 x 7")	Undated	n/a	n/a	n/a
Item 17	Small blueprint of installation instructions - detail of starter strip (approx. 6 x 7")	Undated	n/a	n/a	n/a