



State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives

Holston River Regional Library Photographs,
1939-1992

RG 444

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:

Tennessee State Library and Archives. Holston River Regional Library

Inclusive Dates:

1939-1992

Scope & Content:

Consists of color slides, color print photographs, black-and-white print photographs, a brochure, a report, a greeting card, and two audiocassettes. The report on the growth of the regional library system yields information central to the expansion of regional libraries.

Amateurish maps of Tennessee comprise part of the report, but later maps appear more professionally printed. The maps date 1939-1992. Each map illustrates counties participating in the system and the region to which they belong.

The last map lists regions as of 1990, when the reports end. At that time, Blue Grass, Caney Fork, Clinch-Powell, Forked Deer, Fort Loudoun, Highland Rim, Nolichucky, Reelfoot, Shiloh, Upper Cumberland, Warioto, Watauga, Davidson County, Hamilton County, Knox County, and Shelby County constituted the Tennessee Regional Library System.

The photographic and slide images provide a record of local and regional scenes, library activities, and community outreach such as the Potpourri Festival in Bristol. Hundreds of color and black-and-white slides and photographs portray period images of children's story hours (one featuring snakes), library patrons and buildings, mountain scenery, Nolichucky Regional Library and Watauga Regional

Library bookmobiles, and a road trip to Elvis Presley's Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee. Photographs of vintage bookmobiles may evoke memories of a simpler time. A boy atop a mule at a bookmobile acts as an important record of rural life in East Tennessee. Another slide shows a country family and child standing in line at a bookmobile.

The audiocassette recording of the 1976 Potpourri Festival singalong features "When Irish Eyes are Smiling," "Little Annie Rooney," "Put on Your Old Grey Bonnet," "Wild Irish Rose," and others. The Bristol Arts Council sponsored the festival as part of the American Revolution Bicentennial Celebration. The other tape bears the label "Regional (Library) Service/Time 18:42/Produced by WETS-FM/9-15-78."

All slides arrived in Kodak Carousel Transvue 140 Slide Trays, but archives staff removed and rehoused them in sleeves.

Physical Description/Extent:

.5 cubic feet

Accession/Record Group Number:

RG 444

Language:

English

Permanent Location:

RG 444

Repository:

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

Administrative/Biographical History

Public and school libraries were virtually nonexistent in Tennessee before the twentieth century. Legislation enacted around 1900 provided for the establishment of city libraries, but few cities took advantage of the law. In 1933-34, only sixteen counties in Tennessee provided public library service. Two-thirds of the state's population was without library service. The country was in the throes of the Great Depression.

In 1934, Mary Utopia Rothrock, the former director of the Lawson-McGhee Library in Knoxville, became the lead librarian at the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Norris Dam project. She set up the first rural library in Norris, the TVA

model town constructed for those building the dam. Her next library was in Meigs County, near Watts Bar Dam. She set up small libraries in post offices, stores and filling stations all over East Tennessee. Rothrock had the hope of making books available to all.

The Tennessee State Library created the Public Libraries Division in 1939 to oversee a library expansion project. The first division consisted of Rhea, Meigs, Roane, and Loudon Counties and represented the first demonstration of a multi-county library region. Here the TVA provided the funds for employees working on the Watts Bar Dam. The East Tennessee Region operated under a three-way contract between the TVA, the State Department of Education, and the Knoxville Public Library. In 1939-1941, the region served 70,379 citizens.

The TVA wanted to upgrade library services for the workforce building the Kentucky, Fort Loudoun, and Cherokee dams. The very first regional service began as “Book Boxes” loaded on the back of tool wagons at the TVA construction sites at Norris and Watts Bar (1939-1941). The service expanded to rural areas and small towns with the first bookmobile in 1941 for the Loudon County Region. Soon other regions operated bookmobiles. Bookmobiles traveled to libraries, industrial sites, county fairs, state fairs, and prison camps. Post offices, country stores, private homes, churches, and funeral homes acted as bookmobile deposit stations.

In 2012, the State Library and Archives reorganized the regional library system from 12 regions to nine. Charles A. Sherrill, the Tennessee State Librarian and Archivist, renamed the new regions after the names of rivers in each part of the state.

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

Records are filed by document type and in original order.

Conditions of Access and Use

Restrictions on Access:

No restrictions.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:

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for obtaining any other permissions and paying associated fees that may be necessary for the intended use.

Index Terms

Personal/Family Names:

Presley, Elvis, 1935-1977
Rothrock, Mary U. (Mary Utopia)

Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:

Graceland Mansion (Memphis, Tenn.)
Milligan College
Tennessee State Library and Archives
Tennessee State Library and Archives. Holston River Regional Library
Tennessee State Library and Archives. Nolichucky Regional Library
Tennessee State Library and Archives. Reelfoot Regional Library
Tennessee State Library and Archives. Tennessee Regional Library
System

Subjects:

Bookmobiles -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Dams -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Festivals -- Tennessee -- 20th century
General stores -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Librarians -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Libraries and puppets -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Regional libraries -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Storytelling -- Tennessee -- 20th century
Voter registration -- Tennessee -- 20th century

Geographic Names:

Blountville (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Bristol (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Carter County (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Clinch Mountain (Tenn. and Va.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Greeneville (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Hancock County (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Johnson County (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Memphis (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Sullivan County (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Tennessee, East -- 20th century -- Sources
Unicoi County (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources
Washington County (Tenn.) -- 20th century -- Sources

Document Types:

- Audiocassettes
- Black-and-white photographs
- Brochures
- Color negatives
- Color photographs
- Color slides
- Greeting cards
- Instructional materials
- Maps (documents)
- Photograph albums
- Reports

Acquisition and Appraisal**Provenance and Acquisition:**

The Holston River Regional Library donated the records in 2020.

Processing and Administrative Information**Preferred Citation:**

Holston River Regional Library Photographs, 1939-1992, RG 444,
Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Processing Information:

Completed by Susan Gordon, May 2020.

DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date	Box	Folder
Brochures -- Tennessee Regional Library Service	undated	1	1
Color negatives --Watauga Regional Library	1979	1	2
Greeting cards -- Horton, Jim and Sue to Don Reynolds	1992	1	3
Instruction sheets -- Kodak Transvue 140 Slide Tray	approximately 1975	1	4
Maps -- Regional Library System (35)	1939-1992	1	5
Photographs -- Annual dinner -- Milligan College	1978-1979	1	6
Photographs -- Book drop -- Elizabethton	undated	1	7
Photographs -- Bookmobiles	undated	1	8
Photographs -- Clinch Valley, Sullivan County, Unicoi County, and Washington County.	undated	1	9
Photographs -- Christmas party, etc.	undated	1	10
Photographs -- Christmas party (3 packets)	undated	1	11
Photographs -- Unidentified banquet	undated	1	12
Photographs -- Cold Spring Library	1957	2	1
Photographs -- Graceland road trip (2 packets)	undated	2	2
Photographs -- Hancock, Johnson, Sullivan Unicoi, and Washington Counties	1978	2	3
Photographs -- In-service training	Dec. 10, 1987	2	4
Photographs -- Unidentified	undated	2	5
Photographs -- Unidentified	1970s	2	6
Photographs -- Unidentified	undated	2	7
Photographs -- Unidentified	undated	2	8
Photographs --- Unidentified (contact sheet)	June 15, 2003	2	9
Photographs -- Watauga Regional Library	undated	2	10
Photographs -- Watauga Regional Library Center	undated	2	11
Slides (Photographs) -- Beryl & Cathy -- Greene County	1978	2	12
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount County	1978	2	13
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Carter Counties; Johnson City	1978	2	14
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Carter, Greene Counties	1978	2	15
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Greene Counties	1978	2	16
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Greene, Hancock Counties	1978	2	17

Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Green, Johnson Counties	1978	2	18
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Greene, Hancock, Johnson Counties; Clinch Mountain	1978, undated	2	19
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Greene, Hancock, Sullivan, Unicoi, Washington Counties	1978	2	20
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Greene, Hancock, Johnson, Washington Counties	1978	2	21
Slides (Photographs) -- Blount, Hancock, Johnson, Washington Counties	1978	2	22
Slides (Photographs) -- Boone Dam, Boone Lake	1978	2	23
Slides (Photographs) -- Carter, Washington Counties	undated	2	24
Slides (Photographs) -- Carter, Hancock, Johnson Counties	undated	2	25
Slides (Photographs) -- Carter, Greene, Unicoi, Washington Counties	undated	2	26
Slides (Photographs) -- Carter, Hancock, Johnson, Sullivan, Washington Counties	1978	2	27
Slides (Photographs) -- Greene, Sullivan Counties	approximately 1981	2	28
Slides (Photographs) -- Sullivan County, Unidentified	approximately 1981	2	29
Slides (Photographs) -- Nashville (Tenn.)	1978	2	30
Slides (Photographs) -- Potpourri Festival (first ½ of box); Not necessarily in order: AVOCA building; Blount County reading hour; Blountville story hour snakes program; bookmobiles (old and newer); bookmobile patrons; boy on mule borrowing from bookmobile; Clinch Mountain scenery; Elizabethton; Girls Club story hour; Greeneville; Hancock County; Johnson County; Washington County; Watauga Regional Library	approximately 1950s-1977	3	1
Audiocassettes: Potpourri Festival (WBLC, Lenoir City); Tennessee Regional Library Service (WETS, Johnson City)	1977-1978	4	1