

**A Guide to the  
Jefferson Street Photo Project Collection**

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**Background:** In 1979, the Fisk University Department of Art solicited photographs pertaining to the history of Jefferson Street. The photos collected were used to establish an archive on local history and subsequently served as materials for an exhibit held in the Van Vechten Gallery.

Jefferson Street, so named for Thomas Jefferson, in many ways typifies the cultural growth of Nashville. Over the years, it has been a witness to the horse drawn carriages, street cars, the depression era, the turbulent 1960s, and so much more.

Jefferson Street began in the 1800s. As testament to its longevity, the John Geist and Sons Blacksmith Shop called Third Ave home for than one hundred years; 1886-2006. Aldolphus Heiman, an architect and Confederate Army colonel was also among the early inhabitants.

Continuing with the 1900s, there were many sights to behold: cobblestone streets, department stores, movie theaters, food markets, drugstores, churches, riots, parades, doctor's offices, and residences. During the 1950s and 1960s, entertainment spots electrified the street with the sounds of B.B. King, Aretha Franklin and such novelty acts as Ironing Board Sam. Firehouse No. 11, once located on Twelfth Avenue, was one of the first black companies organized in the United States.

Of significant importance are the presence of Fisk University, Tennessee State University, and Meharry Medical College; all institutions of higher learning. These institutions have continued to reach out to the local and national communities through educational programs and activities.

The Jefferson Street Photo Project was directed by Robert Hall, former curator of the Van Vechten Gallery at Fisk University.

**Scope and Content Note:** The Jefferson Street Photo Project Collection consists of three archival boxes (1.5 linear feet). The small collection contains information concerning the formulation of the project, correspondence, taped interviews, and an abundance of photographs depicting historical Jefferson Street.

## Jefferson Street Photo Project Collection

### Inventory

#### Box 1

#### Purpose of Project – Local History Research Syllabus

- f. 1. Purpose of Project
- 2. Project Submission Form
- 3. Correspondence -- 1979-1982
- 4. Photographs -- Advertisement from the Blue Book of Colored Progress (Price's Pharmacy) 1932
- 5. Photographs -- Advertisement from the Blue Book of Colored Progress (.L. Whittaker) 1932
- 6. Photographs -- Beauty Parlor of Mrs. E. B. McLinn
- 7. Photographs -- Firemen of Company #11
- 8. Photographs -- John Geist Sr. and Family, circa 1889
- 9. Photographs -- John Geist and Sons, circa 1910
- 10. Photographs -- Green's Store
- 11. Photographs -- Hale Grocery
- 12. Photographs -- Hemphill Press
- 13. Photographs -- Homes -- W. D. Fowler
- 14. Photographs -- Homes -- Adolphus Herman
- 15. Photographs -- Ed Reardon
- 16. Photographs -- Homes -- J. W. Russell
- 17. Photographs -- Homes -- Nick Stuart
- 18. Photographs -- Homes -- 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue North
- 19. Photographs -- Jefferson Street Festival
- 20. Photographs -- Lewis Cab Company
- 21. Photographs -- Otey's Discount Super Market (Sign)
- 22. Photographs -- Otey's Quality Market
- 23. Photographs -- Pearl High School Homecoming Parade, 1941
- 24. Photographs -- People's Pharmacy
- 25. Photographs -- Pleasant Green Baptist Church
- 26. Photographs -- R & R Drive In Market
- 27. Photographs -- Mrs. J. B. Singleton (in front of home)
- 28. Photographs -- Terry's Market
- 29. Photographs -- Whites Creek High School Marching Band (TSU Homecoming Parade, 1980)
- 30. Photographs -- Unidentified
- 31. Photographs -- Negatives
- 32. Photographs -- Xerox Copies with Identification Forms
- 33. Interviews -- Businesses -- 1979
- 34. Interviews -- Residents -- 1979-1980, n.d.
- 35. Proposal for Honors Colloquium

- 36. Student Papers Submission for Honors Colloquium
- 37. Local History Research Course -- Syllabus

Box 2

Notes – Miscellaneous Materials

- f.
  - 1. Notes
  - 2. Permission to Use Photographs
  - 3. References/Sources
  - 4. Photograph Loan Form (completed)
  - 5. Forms (blank)
  - 6. An Historical Analysis and Redevelopment Proposal for the Jefferson Street and Fisk University Environs 1981
  - 7. List of Nashville's Black Businesses -- 1925-1927, 1941
  - 8. Miscellaneous Materials

Box 3

Books, Cassette Taped Interviews, and Resource Material

- f.
  - 1. Book --+ Nashville Business Directory by Rev. John P Campbell (1857)
  - 2. Book -- North Nashville and Germantown: Yesterday and Today by John L. Connelly (1982)
  - 3. Book -- The Negro in Tennessee Politics and Governmental Affairs by Mingo Scott, Jr. (1965)
  - 4. Book -- Nashville: A Pictorial History by George R. Adams and Ralph J. Christian
  - 5. Cassette Taped Interviews (10 tapes) – Pearl Bryant, I.T. Creswell, James Crowder, George Dobbins, Alfred Galloway, Albert Gunter, Melba Marshall, O.R. Jackson, J.B. Singleton, C.J. Walker, Edith Work
  - 6. Resource Materials