

Thomas W. Talley Collection  
Papers, 1891-1951

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The Thomas Washington Talley Collection numbers 18 manuscript boxes of correspondence; legal documents; accounts, bills and receipts; published and unpublished works; notes; notebooks; newspaper clippings; programs; books; music and printed material.

Thomas W. Talley  
(1870-1952)

Thomas Washington Talley was born on October 9, 1870, about four miles out of Shelby, Tennessee. One in a family of eight children, he was the son of Charles Washington Talley and Lucinda Talley. His brothers and sisters were: Mary Elizabeth; Martha Jane; Sylvester Wright; William; Luther Polk; Cynthia Anne; and Ida E.

An alumnus of Fisk University, Talley received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1890, and Master of Science, 1893. Walden University awarded him a Doctor of Science in 1899. He completed his dissertation at the University of Chicago at the age of 61. He, also, studied at Harvard University.

Talley came to teach biology and chemistry at Fisk in 1903. He was instrumental in acquiring a science building for the university called Chase Hall. Today, the Talley-Brady Chemistry Building has been named in his honor. He retired in 1942.

A multi-talented man, he sang with the Fisk Jubilee Singers and the Mozart Society while a student at Fisk. In 1927, he wrote "the first collection of secular folksongs by a black scholar" entitled Negro Folk Rhymes (1922). A later edition of the work, Thomas W. Talley's Negro Folk Rhymes, edited by Charles K. Wolfe (1991) has been published. Talley also wrote "The Origin of Negro Traditions," published in Phylon (1942), and "A Systematic Chronology of Creation" for the Morehouse Journal of Science.

He married Ellen Eunice Roberts on August 28, 1899. They had two daughters, Somona Carolyn, born in 1904 and Thomasina, 1914. Ellen Roberts died in 1939.

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Register

Box 1

- f. 1--Biography--publication--research and creative work  
Correspondence  
2--Allen-Julliard School-1891-1929  
3--Lamb-Hollingsworth-Wood-1938-1939  
4--Legal documents--Carnegie Annuities; Chaucery Court; Talley vs.  
Fisk University; will  
5--Accts., bills, receipts

Box 2

- f 1--Writings--unpublished--Negro Traditions, n.d.

Box 3

- f. 1--Writings--unpublished--Negro Traditions, (cont), n.d.  
2--Writings--unpublished--The Origin of Traditions

Box 4

- f. 1--Writings--unpublished--The Earth's Cosmic History, n.d.

Box 5

- f. 1--Writings--unpublished--A Reclassification of the Chemical Elements, n.d.  
2--Writings--unpublished--A New Systemization of Chemistry, n.d.  
3--Writings--unpublished--The Revolutions of the Earth and Sun, n.d.--  
handwritten  
4--Writings--unpublished--The Revolutions of the Earth Around the Sun, n.d.--  
typescript

Box 6

- f. 1--Writings--unpublished--"Richard Wagner...", n.d.  
2--Writings--unpublished--Free Radicals, Dimorphic..., n.d.  
3--Writings--unpublished--"Age of the Coith...", n.d.  
4--Writings--unpublished--"A New Concept of the Magnetic Atom", n.d.

Box 7

- f. 1--Writings--published--Negro Folk Rhymes, n.d., handwritten  
2--Writings--published--Negro Folk Rhymes, n.d., "Courtship Rhyme Section,"  
n.d.--handwritten  
3--Writings--unpublished--"Leading Themes used in Singing Negro Folk Rhymes,"  
music, n.d.  
4--Writings--unpublished--untitled--folktales, n.d.

Box 8

- f. 1--Notes
- 2--Notes--notebooks
- 3--Notes--notebooks
- 4--Notes
- 5--Notes
- 6--Notes

Box 9

Notebooks

Box 10

Notebooks

Box 11

Notebooks

Box 12

Notebooks

Box 13

Notebooks

Box 14

Notebooks

Box 15

Notebook

Box 16

- f. 1--Scrapbook--reviews of Negro Folk Rhymes
- 2--Photographs
- 3--Memorabilia
- 4--Honors, Awards
- 5--Envelopes

Box 17

- f. 1--Newspaper clippings--collected
- 2--Printed matter--Department of Commerce
- 3--Printed matter--Fisk University
- 4--Printed matter--miscellaneous
- 5--Programs--collected
- 6--Books

Box 18

Charts, marriage license

Addendum

Box 19

Class Notes