

Washington State Saved It All! World's Columbian Exposition Memorabilia

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Digging in the Allen Library Special Collections at the University of Washington—Seattle brought forth an unexpected fountain of World's Columbian Exposition memorabilia. From abbreviated hand- and type-writ-

ten notations in index books, a vast and well organized collection was uncovered, and it does not appear in the library's electronic catalog.

A librarian at the new (and vibrantly colorful) Seattle Public Library had been a university librarian and knew of an uncataloged collection there. She highly recommended that we visit.

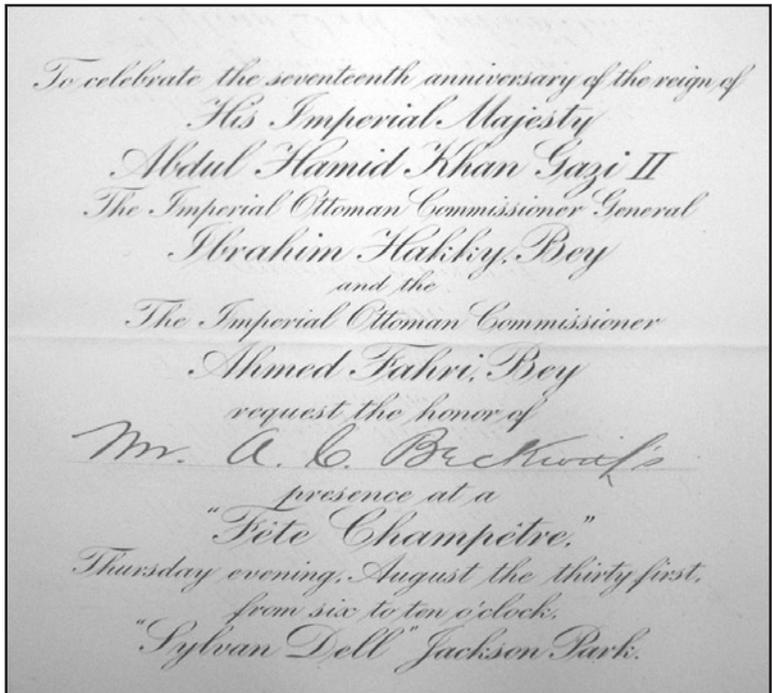
Without her prompting, we would not have persisted in our search because in addition to not finding electronic listings, there is meager notation of World's Columbian Exposition items in a paper index to the special collections accessions.

After the first special collections librarian set us on the correct course, the department's librarians took turns manning the desk and each added helpful input to our search. Once the numerous accession boxes were opened, we found that each contained a typed table of contents for the box and represented excellent archiving of the treasures inside by an organized librarian of yesteryear. In addition, correspondence has been preserved on forty reels of microfilm.



The Washington State Building was constructed from native logs and stone.

The volume of saved correspondence and other records from the World's Columbian Exposition is astounding. Among the surprises at the University of Washington were the following: A collection of Asa S. Mercer, Commissioner from Wyoming, containing many pristine and rare invitations to various state and foreign receptions held at Jackson Park, Chicago, and numerous handout booklets and pamphlets all located within the Dorothy Weintz papers; files from 1890 through 1894 appearing to document all activity of the Washington Commission and containing hundreds of letters arranged chronologically; papers including most especially those with fisheries, mines, state buildings, and Washington exhibit themes; the mammoth Washington State Visitors' Register, illustrated and described more fully below; a large 6½-cm-thick scrapbook of World's Columbian Exposition newspaper



Ottoman Empire Invitation

"Fete Champetre": August 21, 1893, at the Sylvan Dell

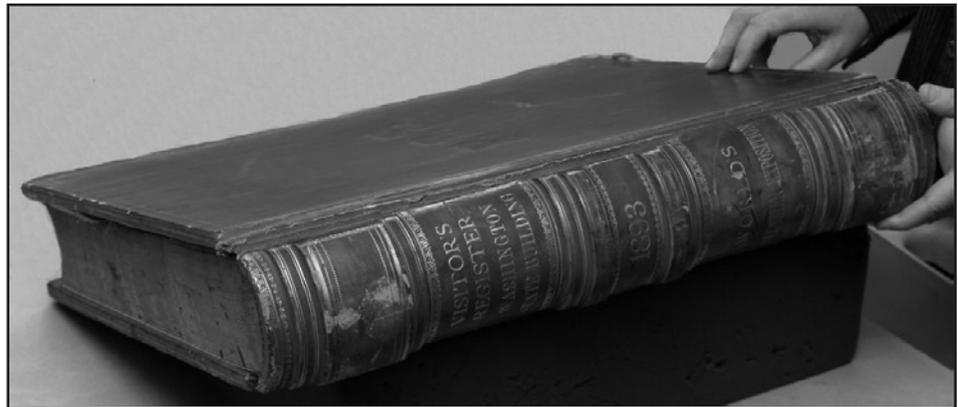
clippings from various Washington cities which were written contemporaneously with the fair; a scrapbook of the official news columns issued by the commission for public dissemination; papers related to the suit brought against the Washington Commission for alleged improper expenditures in Chicago; and Thomas Burke's papers and correspondence.

Thomas Burke, a resident of Seattle, was a World's Columbian Commissioner-at-Large. His papers include a request from Moses P. Handy's Department of Publicity and Promotion for a portrait to be reproduced in the *Official Directory* of the fair. Among Burke's papers is a rather sad letter from Ed Meaney, Washington State Commissioner, declaring Washington "worse than bust" regarding its financial condition at the end of the fair. Meaney could not afford it and asked for his and his wife's fare home from Chicago. Meaney's financial embarrassment is not only indicative of the State of Washington's pecuniary woes but also of funding problems experienced by many of the states. The woes were compounded by failed banks and the stock market crash of 1893.



Thomas Burke
Portrait from the *Official Directory*
Dybwad & Bliss *Bibliography* #1207

Constructed of leather-covered heavy wood boards, the impressive Washington State Building Visitors' Register (right) measures 59½ x 50 x 11 cm thick. Following its debut at the World's Columbian Exposition, the ledger came out of storage to be used again in 1909 (as dated in the illustration) for registering visitors to the Washington Building at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition.



VISITOR'S REGISTER
WASHINGTON STATE BUILDING WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION
MAY 1ST - CHICAGO - OCT. 31ST

COMPLIMENTS OF THE **PIONEER BINDERY** TACOMA, WASHINGTON
BLANK BOOK MAKERS, PRINTERS AND LITHOGRAPHERS

1909 1878 1893

DATE	NAME	ADDRESS	STATE	DATE	NAME	ADDRESS	STATE
MONTH	DAY	CITY		MONTH	DAY	CITY	
Aug 31	Wm J. Schwartz	Birmingham Ala.	Ala.	Sept 15	D. A. Link & Mrs	Tacoma	Wash.
"	Frank J. Brundage	Danversville	Calif.	" 14	David W. Bradley	La Crosse	Mich.
"	Mrs. Frank J. Brundage	"	"	"	Harry Hurley	Idaho	Idaho
"	Wm J. Brundage	"	"	"	Mrs. Harry Hurley	"	"
Aug 31	Mrs. A. E. Burk	Interville	Wash.	"	Ernest H. Peterson	Everett	Wash.
"	"	"	"	"	Annie Peterson	"	"
"	E. Anderson	St. Louis	Mo.	"	Ole Anderson	Silvana	Wash.
"	Wm & Mrs. G. L. Corbett	Salmon	Idaho	"	Rob. Longley	Seattle	Wash.
"	Rob. Corbett	Olympia	Wash.	"	J. B. Longley	"	"
"	C. S. Munter	Bellevue Wash.	Wash.	"	W. B. Hammond	Tacoma	Wash.
"	Mrs. Mary Jones	Seattle	Wash.	"	Chas. A. Wright	Bellevue	Wash.
"	George J. Fisher	"	"	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	David M. Crowley	Seattle	Wash.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	Bessie M. Crowley	Seattle	Wash.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	E. L. McLean	Los Angeles	Calif.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	John J. McLean	Everett	Wash.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	J. G. Spilke	Caton	Calif.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	Jas J. G. Spilke	"	"	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	Wm. H. Nelson	Seattle	Wash.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	Mrs. Emma Amundson	Everett	Wash.	"	Wm. A. Wright	Premier City	Idaho
"	L. Struendel	"	"	Sept 1	Mary Gunn	Wenatchel	Wash.
"	Mrs. A. H. Hubert	"	"	"	Leatherine Gunn	"	"

Washington State Visitor's Register

University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections [Visitor's Register Acc. 4305-1; Invitation Acc. 2697].