



Collection Highlights

Some of the special collections in banking history include:

- The Langenberg Collection; established in 1999, this collection of over 1000 linear feet of financial documents, and over 1000 books helps document twentieth century monetary and economic theory.
- The papers of Tom K. Smith; the noted investment banker who took the reins of Boatmen's Bank in the 1920's and strengthened the banks position enormously in his distinguished career.
- The Archives of Community Federal Savings and Loan, an important St. Louis savings and loan, including records of establishment and growth of the company in the 1960s.
- Model Cities Association Papers; for St. Louis, a comprehensive archive relating to urban development and related questions of finance and funding.
- Newspaper collection; one of the largest in Missouri; with files of most of the major community dailies to the early nineteenth century.

- Early St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Commission records; mid nineteenth century.
- St. Louis Globe Democrat clipping and photo files; including thousands of separate clippings and photos, indexed by name and subject for local, regional, and national banking and financial issues, including comprehensive coverage of the Jefferson Savings /civil rights events.
- Railroad and river historical collections
- Early periodical collections, including strong backfiles of Hunts Merchant Magazine, and Bankers Magazine
- Early paper money and coin collections
- The Eric P. Newman Collection, presently housed by loan agreement with the Mercantile Library, concerning the history of money and finance, and numismatics
- The Robert Campbell Papers; records of the various business ventures of Campbell in St. Louis and the West as a banker, after his return as a trader from the Rockies in the 1830s.
- Mercantile Library Archives

Facilities, Systems, Services & Access

Access to the collections is available free of charge for all inquiries connected with personally conducted research. The Library catalogues its collections on OCLC, the national bibliographic database. Finding aids and guides to the collections are available to researchers; interlibrary loan, Infopass and on-line database searching and Internet services are also available. The Mercantile Library sponsors internships, symposia, lecture series and exhibitions on its history and on its collections. Further programs continue to be developed. Optional membership allows holders borrowing privileges for circulating materials.

A Special Collection within the
ST. LOUIS MERCANTILE LIBRARY
 At the University of Missouri-St. Louis
 (Thomas Jefferson Library Building)
 8001 Natural Bridge Road
 St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4499

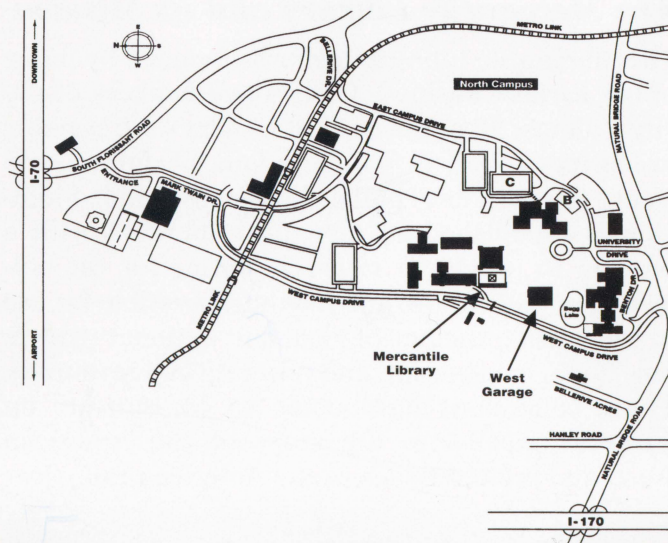
HOURS:

8:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. Mon. – Thurs.
 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Fridays
 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Saturday
 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Sunday

Rare Book and Manuscript Reading Room,
 Intersession and summer school hours
 vary from the above.

Telephone: 314/516-7247
 FAX: 314/516-7241

FEES: Annual \$35 Membership (Student \$15) in the Library allows for certain reduced fees (i.e. photocopying – 15 cents per page; 30 cents non-member); other service fees may be charged depending on the nature of research, such as photographic duplication, and the amount of staff time involved.



Opportunities for Research in Banking and Business Historical Studies



St. Louis Mercantile Library
 at the
 University of Missouri – St. Louis

The Story of Missouri Banking

The origin of banking in St. Louis and on the Missouri frontier is a fascinating story, which involved most of the leading citizens of the region for generations during the transition from a barter economy based on the fur trade, to the first rise of high finance during the days of the earliest trans-Mississippi railroads. This was a hard-won story of failure and success which evolved into a key element in a region at the crossroads of the commercial development of a nation. St. Louis's banks helped in no small way to finance the development and steady growth of half a continent, and the American West today continues to benefit from this economic and business heritage which developed in Missouri through the state's first city.

A Unique Achievement in American Financial History

From humble beginnings on the riverfront and along old Locust Street, and other early trading points, the earliest banks grew and evolved in the West. The Bank of St. Louis, the Bank of Missouri and many other of the first banks became the conduits for the economic growth of the region. St. Louis banking is distinguished for the capital that was generated to build not only innovative savings institutions themselves for the good of early Missouri communities, but also to generate settlement patterns and a far flung economy which built a vast trading empire in the nineteenth century. The great Senator from Missouri, Thomas Hart Benton, in ante-bellum times, among others, saw the failures and successes of the early frontier financial institutions in such a roller coaster of high and low periods – how could it be otherwise in the era when the country itself was resolving its credit, and money issues nationally and globally in the age of the British hegemony? Such individuals as “Old Bullion” set the stage across the nation for bank reform, and for sound, conservative banking principles based on solid footings, not speculation.



The Mercantile Library and its Mission

The Mercantile Library itself was founded by many of the earliest business leaders and bankers of the city – almost all of the earliest leaders were banking executives – such as founders, James Yeatman, and Henry Bacon. These philanthropically minded individuals established a “mercantile library” with a mission to provide a research setting for the collecting, preservation, and making accessible for use to the widest number of local and national readers rare book, manuscript, and other special resources. These collections have come to concentrate on Western Expansion, the story of the American West, and related issues in the American rail, river

and aviation transportation experience, and by extension the history, development, and growth of the St. Louis region, including its business and economic history.

The Mercantile Library: in the Center of Missouri Banking History

The Library was witness to much innovative banking history in its midst in the first great business center of the West – early St. Louis, and documented this history, which covered panics, rail ventures, financing of the city's great landmarks. Everything was collected, from early money to contemporary information on the robberies of Jesse James. The

Library itself rented its lower floors throughout the twentieth century to one of the largest of the banks, First National and its gigantic associated trust company. Just across the street for many years, its neighbor was one of the oldest – Boatmen's Bank. Such close association in leadership and interest between the Library and the early banking community helped create an environment conducive to financial history, and part of the Library's purpose came to document, celebrate, analyze, extol and view the banking world with which it and its leaders and early patrons were deeply involved.

The Scope of the Banking Collections

Today, the Mercantile Library holds a large collection of books, manuscripts and other archival resources, numbering in the thousands of items which can be used by scholars wishing to study St. Louis's and Missouri's distinguished and fascinating banking heritage. Such collections of rare books in the history of business and economics, and crime, as well as related topics such as transportation, the West, and the Civil War will yield much concerning local banking history at the Mercantile.

