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Robert Gentry's Louisiana
Hayride Collection

**Archives and Special Collections
Louisiana State University in Shreveport
Shreveport, Louisiana**

Biography

Tillman Franks was born in Stamps, Arkansas on September 29, 1920 but moved to Shreveport, Louisiana at the age of two. As a teenager he contracted the flu and was confined to bed. To pass the time he listened repeatedly to Roy Acuff's *Would You Care?* and was impressed with the sincerity of the artist. He decided at that young age to make Country Music his profession.

He graduated from Byrd High School where he formed the band, The Rainbow Boys with Claude King and Buddy Attaway. He volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1942 and was sent to the island of Saipan where he formed another band and had a radio program on WXLN. Discharged in 1945, he came home and married Virginia Suber in 1946.

In 1946, he got a job playing bass on KWKH and worked with Webb Pierce and the Bailes Brothers who invited him to play with them on the inaugural Louisiana Hayride broadcast. That launched his music career and he began making friends with young artists whom he guided or would later manage.

He developed the careers of so many well known artists who are all mentioned in his book which he published in 2000. He died at the age of eighty-six on October 26, 2006, but not without appreciation. A Tillman Franks Appreciation Day was celebrated in 1996 where many famous artists came to pay tribute to his talents and his accomplishments. He was inducted into the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame and had the pleasure of performing on the first Louisiana Hayride broadcast and then fifty years later, appearing at its 50th anniversary celebration.

Scope and Content Note

The Robert Gentry's Louisiana Hayride Collection, 1945-2010 contains photocopied material and scans of photographs that Tillman Franks accessed to write his book, *Tillman Franks, I Was There When It Happened*, published in 2000.

Along with Robert Gentry, owner of the Sabine Index and Sweet Dreams Publishing, Franks tells of his decades of managing and influencing the careers of many country western singers and performers.

The material, most of which is found in the book, is arranged alphabetically. The dated interviews have partial transcripts and the five records and posters are the only original material in the collection, which was donated by Robert Gentry.

Robert Gentry's Louisiana Hayride Collection

Artists

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Bailes Brothers-article 'Remembering the Bailes Brothers'; Letter to Tillman Franks from Walter Bailes	1978 u.d.
1	2	Bradshaw , Terry-correspondence	1975-1976
1	3	Bradshaw , Terry-legal documents for Tillman vs. Bradshaw, et al	1976-1977
1	4	Bradshaw , Terry-newspaper clippings	1976
1	5	Bradshaw , Terry-photographs	u.d.
1	6	Davis , Jimmie-letters to Tillman Franks from Jimmie Davis (3)	1960; 1964; 1975
1	7	Davis , Jimmie-agreements, receipts	1937
1	8	Davis , Jimmie-photographs	u.d.
1	9	Davis , Jimmie-photographs	u.d.
1	10	Davis , Jimmie-newspaper clippings	1948; 1960; 1999
1	11	Davis , Jimmie-programs: Country Road Scrapbook; 98 th Birthday Celebration; Testimonial; 15 th Annual Open Air Gospel Singing	1970; 1998; u.d.
1	12	Davis , Jimmie-program: 100 th Birthday	1999

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	13	Davis , Jimmie-sheet music- <i>You Are My Sunshine</i> (2)	ca. 1930
1	14	Davis , Jimmie-campaign cards	
1	15	Foley , Red-booklet- 'Red Foley's Keepsake Album'	ca. 1950
1	16	Franks , Tillman-honorable discharge	1945
1	17	Franks , Tillman-correspondence	1947-1973
1	18	Franks , Tillman-correspondence	1985-2000
1	19	Franks , Tillman-correspondence and medical bills re: accident (Nov. 5, 1960)	1960-1961
1	20	Franks , Tillman-receipts	1953-1974
1	21	Franks , Tillman-IRS forms	1948-1964
1	22	Franks , Tillman-song agreements	1952, 1962, 1969
2	23	Franks , Tillman-suit: Franks vs 20 th Century Fox re: song <i>North to Alaska</i>	1979
2	24	Franks , Tillman-newspaper clippings	1958-1999
2	25	Franks , Tillman-photographs-Frank, family	
2	26	Franks , Tillman-photographs-Franks	
2	27	Franks , Tillman-photographs-Franks and other artists	
2	28	Franks , Tillman-Franks book tour	2000
2	29	Franks , Tillman-Byrd Hall of Fame	2000

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	30	Franks , Tillman-Tillman Franks Appreciation Day-booklet	2000
2	31	Franks , Tillman-sheet music	
2	32	Franks , Tillman-song notes, miscellaneous	
3	33	Horton , Billie Jean-correspondence, news clips	1960-1964; 1986;1996
3	34	Horton , Johnny-correspondence	1956-1962
3	35	Horton , Johnny-newspaper clippings and correspondence re: wreck and death	November 5, 1960
3	36	Horton , Johnny-photographs	
3	37	Horton , Johnny-news clips	1953-1960
3	38	Houston , David-mini bios from press releases	1967; u.d.
3	39	Houston , David-correspondence and news releases	1957-1988
3	40	Houston , David-contracts	1955-1986
3	41	Houston , David-financials	1967-1970
3	42	Houston , David-photographs	1960s-1970s
3	43	Houston , David-newspaper clippings	1966-1984
3	44	KDAV -radio station in Lubbock, Texas brochure	
3	45	Kennedy , Jerry-newspaper clippings	

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	46	King , Claude-correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs	1961-2007
3	47	Logan , H.L. 'Hoss'-newspaper clippings	1997
3	48	Louisiana Hayride -newspaper clippings	1957-2003
3	49	Louisiana Hayride -photographs	u.d.
3	50	Louisiana Hayride -program, contracts, receipts, miscellaneous	1955; 1960; 1998
3	51	Sherril , Billy-newspaper clippings	1970s
4	52	Smith , Harmie-booklet	u.d.
4	53	Stuckey , Nat-photographs	u.d.
4	54	Tabuchi ,Shoji-letter, contract, photograph	1971-1973
4	55	Tomlinson , Tommy-correspondence re: accident Nov. 5, 1960	1961
4	56	Williams , Hank-correspondence, contracts	1946-1951
4	57	Williams , Hank-newspaper clippings	1950-1953
4	58	Williams , Hank-receipts, cancelled checks	1949-1951
4	59	Williams , Hank-photos and posters	
4	60	Williams , Hank-Wedding booklet: "Hank Williams & Billie Jean Jones" Sheet music: <i>KAW-LIGA</i> by Hank Williams & Fred Rose	ca. 2010

Transcripts

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
4	61-63	Partial transcripts from interviews - used in writing book <i>I Was There When It Happened</i>	1995-2000
5	64-70	Partial transcripts from interviews - used in writing book <i>I Was There When It Happened</i>	2000
6		Frank's daily planners used to write book	1952-1981

Audio Tapes, disks and CDs

7-8 Audio Tapes - Tillman **Franks** - more than 69 hours of taped interviews from 1998, 1999, and 2000. Tapes are dated.

Audio Tapes - Tillman **Franks**-interviews concerning Franks by Ann Stuckey, Durwood Haddock, Homer Bailes, Jay Thompson, Lucky Brazeal Davis, Merle Kilgore, Jerry Kennedy, Country No.1 Show with Durwood Haddock and Eddy Arnold. Tapes are dated.

Zip discs: 15 discs of book chapters and photos.

9 **Oversized items:**

Records:

Roy **Acuff**, U.S. Air Force Recruiter Record, 16 inch.

Decca Record 6105, autographed, Jimmie **Davis**, *Ten Tiny Toes* b/w *High Geared Daddy*

Decca Record 46003, autographed, Jimmie **Davis**, *Nobody'd Darling But Mine* b/w *Sweethearts or Strangers*

Decca Record 6100, autographed, Jimmie **Davis**, *Is It Too Late Now* b/w *There's a Chill On the Hill*

Conqueror Record 8096, autographed, Gene **Autry**, *The Yellow Rose of Texas* b/w *Gosh I Miss you All the Time*

United Recording of Nevada, Gordon **Gentry**, *Four Winds* b/w
Wish I Hadn't

Posters:

6 Jimmie **Davis** 100th Birthday Posters, Color, 1999, 24 x 28
2 Jimmie **Davis** 99th Birthday Party and Concert, 1998, 18 x 12
2 Jimmie **Davis** - "He's One of Us", political poster, 18 x 12
3 posters - "Hank **Williams** In Person The Sensational
Radio-Recording Star Playing for Dance with Blacky Crawford
and the Western Cherokees, October 17th 1952 at Cains, 423 N.
Main Tulsa, OK \$1.25 per person tax included" Color, 12 x 24"

12 reprints from Billboard Magazine 1960 re: Johnny **Horton**

Separated to **Louisiana Collection**

Gill, Kenny, Jimmie Davis More Than Sunshine. Edited by Robert Gentry and Patricia Martinez, Sweet Dreams Publishing Company, Many, Louisiana, 2000

Turpin, Brian, Ramblin' Man Short Stories from the Life of Hank Williams. Foreword by Robert Gentry, Edited by Laurie Gentry, Old Paths, New Dreams Publishing, Many, Louisiana, 2007.

Turpin, Brian and Robert Gentry, Hank Williams & Billie Jean Jones A Country Music Wedding Extravaganza. Edited by Laurie Gentry, Old Paths New Dreams Publishing Company, Many, Louisiana, 2010.