

**Collection #
SC 3097**

**THOMAS K. TAGGART
LETTER, 1892**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript folder

COLLECTION DATES: 1892

PROVENANCE:

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Taggart Family Materials, SC 3005, BV 4949, Taggart for US Senator political button, R 2163; *History of French Lick Springs Hotel*, GT 3811.F835 H28 1953; 1904 Political Ribbon: Parker for President, Kern for Governor, Taggart as Chairman, R 1632; 1904 Scrapbook, OMB 0030; 1929 Scrapbook, OMB 0031; Scrapbooks 1926-27 BV 3202-3208; *Thomas Taggart: public servant, political boss*, F526.T3 F33 1997; Thomas Taggart residence photographs ca. 1937, P 0111

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2012.0229

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born 17 November 1856, in Amyvale County in Monaghan, Ireland, young Thomas K. Taggart (and family) journeyed to the United States where they settled in Xenia, Ohio. As a teenager, he worked at the Depot Hotel and restaurant in Xenia until 1875 then continued to work in the hotel and restaurant business in Garrett, Indiana, which was owned by the same company he worked for in Xenia, the N. & G. Ohmer Company. In 1877, he moved to Indianapolis and worked at another of their restaurants at Union Station. Ten years later he became the sole proprietor of the Union Station eatery and later served as manager of the city's Denison Hotel. Hard work led to his proprietorship and managing of restaurants and hotels—ventures which made him wealthy. He owned and operated the Union Depot Hotel, the Grand Hotel and controlling interest in the Denison.

His political career began when, as a Democrat, he was elected (1886) auditor in the Hoosier capital and re-elected in 1890. He served as city, county and state Democratic chairman while fulfilling his duties as auditor. As county chairman of his party, he carried Marion County for Grover Cleveland (1888), defeating the locally popular Benjamin Harrison. He took the Indianapolis mayoral ticket in 1894 and the next two elections. As mayor, his public improvements and fiscal efficiency included the city's purchase of 900 acres along White River, which formed the nucleus of an expanding park system.

In 1901 Taggart organized a group of individuals who purchased French Lick Springs Hotel where he served as president of the hotel's governing board. In due course he bought out his partners and developed spas in the hotel which attracted many, as did also its illegal gambling, which was later outlawed. He also served on the boards of Fletcher-American National Bank and Indianapolis Light, Heat and Power; acted as treasurer of the Indiana Lincoln Union; and sat on the George Rogers Clark Memorial Commission.

In the winter of 1928–29 illness and surgery took their toll, silencing his voice and charismatic personality. On 6 March 1929, the *Indianapolis News* declared in bold front page headlines his passing in the capital city. Politicians and journalists both locally and around the country praised his contribution to society. Editorially the *Indianapolis News* on March 6, 1929 declared, "He was a shrewd and capable politician, knowing men as have few political leaders in this state . . . a real leader in the best sense of the word." Surviving him were his widow Eva (from Garrett, Indiana) whom he married in 1877, a son, and four daughters.

Sources:

Biographical sketch taken from P0111

Bodenhamer, David J., Robert G Barrows, and David Gordon Vanderstel. *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Johnson, Allen. *Dictionary of American Biography*. New York: Scribner, 1964.

Indianapolis News, March 6, 1929.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains a letter from Thomas K. Taggart, state and county Democratic chairman, in Indianapolis to Herbert Brooks in Orleans, Indiana dated November 2, 1892. The letter calls on all Indiana Democrats to vigilantly promote voting on election day, stating that Indiana could provide the electoral votes needed for [Grover] Cleveland and running mate [Adlai] Stevenson to win the upcoming presidential election.

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ALS from T. Taggart to H. Brooks, 1892

CONTAINER

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 3097).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.