

REGISTER OF THE FARMERS' STATE ALLIANCE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
1887-1927

MSS 50, 10 boxes, 7 volumes, 6 cu. ft.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. William Hayne Mills, a Clemson faculty member during the 1930's, was instrumental in obtaining this material from Joseph Wightman Reid, for many years Secretary of the South Carolina State Grange, E. M. Livingston and Mrs. Fred Patterson. The organization of the State Alliance followed that of the Patrons of Husbandry, the "Grange," a collection also held by this library. These two collections, together with the library's Benjamin Ryan Tillman collection, provide information about agriculture, economic conditions, education, and politics in South Carolina between 1872 and 1927. This collection was formerly cataloged BB6.5/F234. The register was prepared by Berniece Holt, Manuscript Curator Specialist, in 1984.

HISTORY

The National Farmers' Alliance (1880) is the name commonly given to two groups that were a part of the agrarian movement which swept the United States late in the nineteenth century. This more militant movement followed the decline of the Grange as farmers continued to suffer from depressed crop prices, tight money policies, and the monopolistic power of railroads.

In the South, the dominant agricultural society was the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union/Cooperative Union of America. In South Carolina, several earlier organizations, the State Agricultural and Mechanical Society (1869), the State Grange or Patrons of Husbandry (1872), and the Farmers' Association (1886), preceded the July 11, 1888 organization of the Farmers' State Alliance of South Carolina under the parent organization, the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-operative Union of America. By 1890, more than one million farmers had become members of the Alliance. This non-partisan organization established cooperatives, arranged social gatherings, and disseminated agricultural and economic information. More important, they influenced legislation such as the Interstate Commerce Act. Although non-partisan, the organization aggressively lobbied for the betterment of the farmer by means of resolutions and petitions as well as by supporting candidates without regard to political affiliation. In other parts of the country, such as in Minnesota in 1891, independent farmer's parties made their appearance. Benjamin Ryan Tillman, candidate for governor in 1890 Democratic primary, articulated the South Carolina Farmer's Association's demands for such reforms as a separate school for agricultural education, more farmer representation on the Board of Trustees of what now is the University of South Carolina, enlargement of the

State Board of Agriculture, and transfer of fertilizer fees to the new agricultural college. Tillman also adopted many of the Alliance's positions regarding the regulation of utilities and the banking industry, taxation of all forms of wealth such as the income tax and efforts to halt the exploitation of the farmer by large corporations. The Farmers' State Alliance of South Carolina did not collectively support Tillman because the Alliance also had many opponents of Tillman among its membership. Some of the state Alliances's goals saw their fruition under the administration of Tillman and his immediate successors.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection contains financial and membership quarterly reports from county alliances and the sub-alliances within each county. Some of these reports detail problems which resulted in the rejection or expulsion of individual members. Correspondence includes confidential letters concerning internal problems, receipts, requests of record-keeping outfits, and narrative reports. The records also include some printed materials, advertisements, lists of sub-alliances, lists of delegates elected to state and county alliance meetings. There are copies of various constitutions and charters, the charters having been returned for corrections. Account books, membership rolls, a few scattered death records and disbursement warrant stubs comprise seven oversize boxes. Several issues of the Alliance's semi-monthly agricultural journal, The Cotton Plant, which had been removed from this collection, have been returned to it.

One of the most important items in this collection is a volume of original minutes of the Farmers' State Alliance of South Carolina beginning with the organizational meeting July 11, 1888 through to 1898. The collection also has a carbon typescript of this volume prepared under the Works Project Administration at the University of South Carolina in 1936. These minutes include the president's annual messages.

The alliance opened its sixth annual meeting at Clemson College on July 26, 1893 before moving on to Walhalla for the remainder of the session. Clemson Professor J. S. Newman delivered an address, "The Means and Methods of Agriculture." Elections of officers, committee reports, and resolutions were a part of the annual meeting minutes. A single copy of the 1903 annual meeting minutes indicated that the alliance was very weak and that the Courts had ordered that their Exchange Fund of some \$17,000.00 be returned to those who gave it. This publication is the latest official information contained in this collection. The successful adoption of some of the measures advocated by the Alliance as well as the return to better prices for farm products during the 1900's tended to weaken the Alliance which ceased to be an active force in South Carolina agriculture by the early 1900's.

Mss 50 Farmers' State Alliance of South Carolina

CONTAINER LIST

FOLDER

1	CONSTITUTIONS Florence, S. C., July 12, 1888; National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, St. Louis, MO., Dec. 7, 1889; Spartanburg, July 23, 1891; Virginia, August 18-20, 1891
2	CORRESPONDENCE undated
3	1887 November
	1888
4	February-June
5	July-August
6	September
7	October
8	November
9	December
	1889
10	January 1-15
11	January 16-31
12	February 1-14
13	February 15-28
14	March
15	April
16	May
17	June
18	July
19	August
20	September
21	October
22	November 1-15
23	November 16-30
24	December
	1890
25	January
26	February
27	March
28	April
29	May-June
30	July-August
31	September-October
32	November-December
	1891
33	January-March
34	April-June
35	July-October
36	1893

CONTAINER LIST

FOLDER

	1894
37	January-June
38	September-December
	1895
39	January-June
40	July-December
41	
42	1896
	1927 To William H. Mills (provenance)
	FINANCIAL RECORDS
43	Acknowledgements for receipt of supplies, 1888-1889
44	Contracts. Unused examples
	ORDER BLANKS FOR SUPPLIES
45	1889 January-June
46	July-December
	ORDER LETTERS FOR SUPPLIES
47	1889
	ORDER BLANKS FOR SUPPLIES
48	1890
	ORDER LETTERS FOR SUPPLIES
49	1890
	PURCHASES
50	1890-1891
	RECEIPTS
51	1890-1891
52	1890-1894 (bound volume of receipts for payment to lecturers, Secretary, Treasurer, executive committee chair- man, newspaper advertising, mileage to delegates, etc.)
53	1894-1896 (mileage and per diem, president's and Secretary-Treasurer's salary)
	WARRANTS (AUTHORIZATION TO PAY)
54	1888-1894 (bound record of disbursements)
55	1892-1895 (disbursement stubs)
	MEETINGS. ANNUAL
56	National, Ocala, Florida, December 2-8, 1890
	STATE
57	1888-1899 (one volume, original minutes)
58	1888-1889 (typed carbon of original minutes)
59	1891 (typed portions of president Stoke's message, July 22, at Spartanburg)
60	1893 (July 26-27, Walhalla, S. C.) 1903 (July 22, Columbia, S. C. one of 500 copies of the minutes printed)
	MEMBERSHIP
61	1889-1890 Credentials and Dimit forms

CONTAINER LIST

FOLDER

	PRINTED MATERIALS
62	Addresses L. L. Polk, April 22, 1890 and April 14, 1891; Ben Terrell, 1891
63 ←	Advertisements, circular letters, lottery ticket, newsclippings, ritual (<i>see oversize</i>)
64	Seals from other state alliances
	REPORTS. MISCELLANEOUS
	Counties
65	Abbeville
66	Chester
67	Chesterfield
68	Clarendon
69	Darlington
70	Horry
71	Kershaw
72	Lancaster
73	Marion
74	Marlboro [ough]
75	Orangeburg
76	Spartanburg
77	Sumter
78	Union
79	Williamsburg
80	York
	QUARTERLY (COUNTIES, SUB-ALLIANCES MEMBERSHIPS AND DUES REPORTED TO STATE)
81	1888 September; December
82	1889 March; December
	1890
83	March
84	June
85	September
86	September
87	December
88	December
	1891
89	March
90	March
91	June
92	June
93	September
94	September
95	September
96	December
97	December
98	1892 March; September; December
99	1894 September

CONTAINER LIST

FOLDER

	SUB-ALLIANCES
100	List of (original volume and typed carbon)
101	Report (one example, July-October, 1888)
102	Secretary's Minute Books and Application Book, Orangeburg's Pen Branch, 1889-1893)
103	<u>The National Economist</u> , 1890

OVERSIZE CONTAINER LIST

	CHARTERS (By sub-alliance)
1	A-B
2	C-D
3	E-H
4	I-L
5	M-O
6	P-Z

NEWSPAPERS

The Cotton Plant
April 19, 1890
February 13, 1892
September 17, 1896

VOLUMES OF RECORDS

1	Account book, January 2, 1889-December, 1896
2	Death Records 1888-1889
3	Death Records 1888-1889
4	Numerical rolls of sub-alliances 1-417
5	Numerical rolls of sub-alliances 418-851
6	Sub-alliance rolls by number, date, place, October 1887-1888
7	Warrant stubs, 452-603

SEPARATION LIST

1. Negative:

W. S. Morgan, editor, The National Reformer, taken from a January 27, 1891 letterhead. Filed in Mss Negatives and Positives.