

**Harris County Archives  
Houston, Texas**

*Finding Aid*

**HOUSTON COTTON EXCHANGE AND  
BOARD OF TRADE RECORDS  
1880 - 1949 (Bulk: 1909 - 1933)**

**Manuscript Collection:** MC005

<b>Size:</b> 28 items	for Harris County and transferred to the
<b>Restrictions on Access:</b> None	Harris County Records Center
<b>Restrictions on Use:</b> None	<b>Accession Number:</b> 2004.007,
<b>Acquisition:</b> Records recovered in 1993	2005.021
from the Anderson Clayton Building by	<b>Processed by:</b> Sarah Canby Jackson,
J. E. McCain, Building Superintendent	2004, 2005

**Citation:** [Identification of Item], Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade Papers, MC005, Harris County Archives, Houston, Texas.

**Creator Sketch:**

The Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade actively promoted the commercial interests of Houston from its inception in 1874 until its demise in the 1970s. Prior to the Civil War, Houston exported over 100,000 bales of cotton per year. The export of cotton after the war soon surpassed the prewar figures. According to the Charter filed with the State of Texas in 1877, the purpose of the association would be to provide rooms for the Exchange, inculcate just and equitable principles of trade and commerce, establish rules, regulations and standards of classification, and promote the interests of trade, facilities, and business in Houston. The Constitution and By-laws provided for a board of directors and a system of ten standing committees (later expanded to twelve) to carry out the functions of the Exchange. As early as 1885, the Exchange lobbied for what would become the Houston Ship Channel.

In 1884 the three-story Cotton Exchange Building was completed on the corner of Franklin and Travis. Later expanded to four floors in 1907, the building became a center for business and civic events. It was completely renovated in 1973 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1924 the Exchange moved to the new 1.5 million dollar sixteen-story Cotton Exchange Building at 1310 Prairie. Complete with a trading floor on the top story and a 50 car garage in the basement accessed by a lift, the building housed a majority of the offices of the members of the Exchange. Harris County

purchased the (Cotton Exchange) Anderson-Clayton Building in the early 1990s and began renovation in 1993. It currently houses county offices.

### **Bibliography:**

“COTTON EXCHANGE BUILDING (1884), HOUSTON.” Texas Historic Sites Atlas. [http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/scripts/pub\\_search.cgi](http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/scripts/pub_search.cgi) [Accessed June 1, 2004].

“HOUSTON COTTON EXCHANGE AND BOARD OF TRADE.” The Handbook of Texas Online. <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/HH/drh1.html> [Accessed June 1, 2004].

### **Scope and Contents Note:**

Organizational records, printed materials, a financial report, and correspondence document the Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade from 1880 – 1933. Organizational records (1880 – 1933) record the structure, functions, and membership of the Exchange. The *Charter, Constitution, By-laws and Rules* include the membership for the years 1880 and 1889. The 1909 yearbook, *Officers, Members, Constitution, By-laws and Rules of the Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade*, includes a copy of the 1899 Articles of Incorporation and the officers and directors of the Exchange from 1874 to 1909. Twenty-one membership lists (1911 – 1933) contain names of the officers, directors, and standing committee members in addition to the members with their firms and addresses. By 1929 the date of admission to the Exchange is included in each member’s information. Printed materials include a stock certificate from 1888, a 1923 membership certificate in the United States Chamber of Commerce, a congratulatory certificate from the New Orleans Cotton Exchange on HCE’s Diamond Anniversary, and a 1924 *Houston Post* supplement devoted to the opening of the new Cotton Exchange Building and the cotton industry in Houston. The single financial report documents the cotton industry in Houston for the years 1919 – 1923. A letter from the Secretary to the membership of the Exchange (February 4, 1924) concerns impending publication of a 100 page yearbook commissioned by the Board of the Exchange.

### **Archivist’s Note:**

The **Houston Metropolitan Research Center** has the bulk of the Houston Cotton Exchange Records (Collection Number RG D 016). The collection consists of 150 volumes, 9 cubic feet of manuscripts, and approximately 25 photographs. The subject matter consists of Board of Directors meeting minutes, correspondence, and financial records. Part of the collection has been microfilmed.

## Inventory

Series: Description	Date	Location
Correspondence:		
To the Membership from the Office of the Secretary	1924, 02/04	0026-X-01
Financial:		
<i>Houston Cotton Statement</i> - 2 copies	1923, 07/31	0026-X-02
Organization Records:		
Charter, Constitution, and By-laws,	1880, 1898	0026-X-03
Year Book	1909	0026-X-04
Membership Lists	1911 - 1923	0026-X-05
Membership Lists	1924 - 1933	0026-X-06
Printed Materials:		
Certificate of stock, 1 share, Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade	1888, 05/21	0000-V-08
Certificate, membership in Chamber of Commerce, United States	1923, 12/16	0001-M-06
Newspaper supplement - "The Houston Cotton Exchange," <i>The Houston Post</i>	1924, 04/03	0000-V-08
Certificate, from New Orleans Cotton Exchange Board of Directors	1949, 05/06	0001-M-06
Lock Box:		
Tin, black with gold and orange trim	n.d.	