

**Descriptive Summary:**

<b>Creator:</b>	James Warren Smith Sr.
<b>Title:</b>	James Warren Smith Sr. Papers
<b>Inclusive Dates:</b>	1929-2001
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	1929-1949
<b>Abstract:</b>	The James Warren Smith Sr. Papers consist of a diary, scrapbooks, and literary productions. The scrapbooks contain many photographs. Smith was a Texas Ranger in the early 1900s.
<b>Accession #:</b>	3800
<b>Extent:</b>	0.45 linear feet (1 document box)
<b>Language:</b>	Collection is in English.
<b>Repository:</b>	The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

**Biographical Note:**

This collection of Texas Ranger manuscripts and photographs about James Warren Smith Sr. provides information about Ranger activities along the Texas-Mexico border in the early 1900s.

James Warren Smith Sr., Texas Ranger and deputy sheriff of Frio County, Texas, was born on 1900 May 22 in Carrizo Springs, Texas, about 82 miles northwest of Laredo. His family settled in Frio County, Texas, around 1880. James' father Robert Smith was a farmer and rancher in Dimmitt and Frio counties through the 1920s. It is not known what, if any, school James acquired in his youth, but he began his life's work at twenty-four years old when he was commissioned as a Texas Ranger.

For his first four years as a Ranger in Company D, James Smith patrolled the Texas-Mexico border, scouting for drug and alcohol smugglers during Prohibition. James also married Normadale Adams Smith in 1925. The couple had two children. In 1928, James was promoted to sergeant of Company A. This company operated around Fort Stockton in West Texas, enforcing the law in oil boom towns. While there were fewer smuggling problems, Smith was presented with a whole host of new challenges, including gambling, bank robberies, and cattle rustling. Smith resigned from the Texas Rangers in 1933.

After his work with the state, Smith was hired by various people, mostly ranchers, to act as game warden and protect their property as a commissioned Special Texas Ranger. He also was elected sheriff of Frio County for twelve years, 1937-1949. After one year on the job, Smith captured the designated public enemy number one, Robert McDonald, in 1938. During World War II he served as captain in the Texas Frontier Guard. After his time as sheriff, James returned to his private practice as a Special Texas Ranger until his retirement in 1985 at eighty-five years old. Smith enjoyed retirement for just five years, until his death in 1990. He is buried in the Pearsall Cemetery.

**Sources:**

"James Smith Remembered." Pearsall *Leader*, 1990 August 23.

**Scope and Content:**

The James Warren Smith Sr. Papers were acquired by gift in one transaction from Carolyn Nicholson, granddaughter of James Warren Smith, in 2012 March 16.

The collection begins in 1929 and ends in 2001. Records include correspondence, legal, literary, and photographic materials in scrapbooks and a diary. One rapidly acidifying scrapbook was scanned and copied to preserve the content.

**Organization and Arrangement:**

Currently, the James Warren Smith Sr. Papers are arranged in two series: I. Diary and II. Scrapbooks.

**Restrictions:** The collection is open for research.

**Literary Rights Statement:**

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**Index Terms:**

Frio County (Tex.)--History.  
 Frontier and pioneer life--Texas.  
 Law enforcement--Texas--History--20th century.  
 Outlaws--Texas--Photographs.  
 Peace officers--Texas--Photographs.  
 Texas Rangers--History--20th century.  
 Texas Rangers--Photographs.  
 Texas--History--1846-1950.

**Related Materials:** None.

**Separated Materials:** None.

**Custodial History:**

<b>Acquisition:</b>	Collection was acquired by gift in one transaction in 2012 March 16. Gift of Carolyn Nicholson in 2012 March 16.
<b>Citation:</b>	James Warren Smith Sr. Papers, Accession #3800, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

**Processing Information:** Finding aid completed by Paul Fisher, 2012 March 27.

**Container List:**

**Series I: Diary, 1929, 1 folder.**

This series contains Smith's diary. There are only a few diary entries, but there is a long list of cattle brands for specific Mexican ranchers along the Texas-Mexico border. This series is in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	1	Diary	1929

**Series II: Scrapbooks, 1929-2001, 0.45 linear feet (1 document box).**

This series contains letters, a marriage license, various bills and receipts, and a Civil War muster roll. The majority of the bills and receipts have to do with Neil McLennan Jr.'s ranching business. The muster roll does not refer to the unit that was being recruited, but it does list names of people who were interested in enrolling. The series is in average to good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	2	Scrapbooks: Loose Materials: Pages 1-4	1929-2001
	3	Scrapbooks: Loose Materials: Pages 5-7	1929-2001
	4	Scrapbooks: Loose Materials: Pages 8-10	1929-2001
	5	Scrapbooks: Loose Materials: Pages 11-13	1929-2001
	6	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (1 of 7)	1930-1948
	7	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (2 of 7)	1930-1948
	8	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (3 of 7)	1930-1948
	9	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (4 of 7)	1930-1948
	10	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (5 of 7)	1930-1948
	11	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (6 of 7)	1930-1948
	12	Scrapbooks: Scrapbook: (7 of 7)	1930-1948
	13	Scrapbooks: Loose Materials	1930-1948

**Series III: Literary Productions, 1990, 1 folder.**

This series contains a program from a Texas Ranger Memorial Cross Dedication ceremony for James Warren Smith. The program contains a brief biography of Smith along with the ceremony activities list. The series is in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	14	Literary: Program	1990

Appendix A: James Warren Smith Sr. Family Tree

