

**Descriptive Summary:**

<b>Creator:</b>	Robert Darden, Jr.
<b>Title:</b>	Robert Darden, Jr. Collection
<b>Inclusive Dates:</b>	1938-1975, undated
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	1938-1952, 1973-1974
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Robert Darden, Jr. Collection contains correspondence, literary productions, and photographic materials belonging to Darden, a veteran of the Korean War and a resident of Texas.
<b>Accession #:</b>	3805
<b>Extent:</b>	0.90 linear feet (2 document boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	Collection is in English.
<b>Repository:</b>	The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

**Biographical Note:**

Robert F. Darden, Jr. was a career Air Force veteran from Beaumont, Texas. He was born in Beaumont on 1929 December 19. His father, Robert Darden, Sr., was a veteran of the United States Navy (1919-1923) and often regretted his decision to retire from military service. His mother, Esther Jane Perkins, struggled with various health conditions that forced her to live in Colorado for a time. Robert's parents divorced in 1946.

Darden's adolescence was one of constant change and movement. His family lived primarily in Beaumont, Texas, but his mother's health problems forced Robert and his sister Peggy Sue to live with their paternal grandmother and Aunt Bebe. In elementary school, Robert and Peggy were incorrectly diagnosed with infectious diseases and forced to live in Jefferson County TB Hospital for two years.

In ninth grade, Robert moved to Patagonia, Arizona, to attend a "ranch school" named Little Outfit. This was a private school that trained Boy Scouts in formal education as well as outdoor activities such as ranching and riding horses. Some of the correspondence in this collection deals with Robert's adjustment to life in Arizona.

At age 16, Robert graduated from Schreiner Institute, a Presbyterian military high school and junior college in Kerrville, Texas. He then enrolled in Lamar College as a freshman engineering major. While there, Darden met his wife Jo Ann Owens whom he married on 1953 May 5. The couple had three children: Robert III (1954), Steven (1956), and Danni (1957).

Darden was adamant about education and furthering his career. He earned a B.G.E. from the University of Nebraska, a Master's of Education from American University, and a Master's from Air Command and Staff College. In 1952, Darden joined the U.S. Air Force's Aviation Cadet Program. During his thirty-one years of service, Darden worked at Hondo Air Base (Texas), Reese Air Base (Texas), Smoky Hill Air Base (Salina, Kansas), Fairchild Air Base (Spokane, Washington), Maxwell Air Base (Alabama), and Itazuke Air Base (Japan). He also led the Civil Engineering School at Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas. Darden retired as a Colonel from the U.S. Air Force on 1981 October 1. He spent the remainder of his life teaching and enjoying life with his family. Darden passed away in Waco, Texas, on 2011 December 28.

Robert F. Darden III, the donor of this collection, is the oldest son of Robert Darden, Jr. and his wife Jo Ann. He attended Baylor University, graduating in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism. In 1978, he earned his Master's degree in journalism at the University of North Texas, and served as the Arts and Entertainment Editor for the *Waco Tribune-Herald* from 1978 to 1986. In 1988, Darden began teaching telecommunications and professional writing at universities and received tenure at Baylor University in 2005, where he continues to teach as an associate professor of journalism.

**Sources:**

"Jo Ann Darden." Available at

<http://www.lakeshorefuneralhome.com/sitemaker/sites/lakesh0/obit.cgi?user=367367Darden>. Accessed 2012 May 9.

"Robert F. Darden." Available at <http://www.baylor.edu/lib/poage/index.php?id=57018>. Accessed 2012 May 9.

"Robert F. Darden, Jr." Available at

<http://www.lakeshorefuneralhome.com/sitemaker/sites/lakesh0/obit.cgi?user=543543DardenJr>. Accessed 2012 May 9.

**Scope and Content:**

The Robert Darden, Jr. Collection spans from 1938 to 1975. The materials, primarily consisting of correspondence, provide an overview of Darden's life in Texas, the Boy Scouts, and the U.S. Air Force. Correspondence between Robert and his mother Esther accounts for most of the collection, but there are also holiday cards, a graduation invitation, and photographs.

**Organization and Arrangement:**

This collection was unorganized when it came to The Texas Collection. Currently there are three series: I. Correspondence, II. Literary Productions, and III. Photographic Materials. Correspondence comprises most of the collection.

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

**Literary Rights Statement:**

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**Index Terms:**

Darden, Bob, 1954-

Little Outfit School (Patagonia, Ariz.)

United States. Air Force.

**Related Materials:**

Robert Darden Items, #2334.

[Waco] Branch Davidians: Robert Darden III Collection, # 2334.

**Separated Materials:** None.

**Custodial History:**

<b>Acquisition:</b>	This collection was acquired by gift in 2012 May.  Gift from Robert Darden III, 2012 May.
<b>Citation:</b>	Robert Darden, Jr., Accession #3805, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

**Processing Information:** Finding aid completed by Thomas A. DeShong, 2012 May 9.

**Container List:**

**Series I: Correspondence, 1938-1975, undated, 0.9 linear feet (2 document boxes).**

This series contains correspondence written from Robert Darden, Jr. to various people including his mother Esther Darden (also Esther Chatelain) and his sister Peggy Sue. These letters talk about his daily life while attending Little Outfit Ranch School in Arizona as well as his time in the Air Force. The majority of the letters are addressed to his mother who lived in Beaumont, Texas for much of her life. These materials are in good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	1	Correspondence: General	1940-1943
	2	Correspondence: General	1973-1974
	3	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Darden	1938-1943 October 13
	4	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Darden	1943 October 23- December
	5	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Darden	1944, undated
	6	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1945-1949 March
	7	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1949 April-1951 May 9
	8	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1951 May 13- June

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	9	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1951 July-September
	10	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1951 October-November
	11	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1951 December-1952 February 24
	12	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1952 February 28-April
	13	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1952 May-June
	14	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1952 July-September
	15	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1952 October-1953 January
	16	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1953 February-1954
	17	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1955-1958
2	1	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1973 September
	2	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1973 October-December
	3	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1974 January-March
	4	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1974 September-November
	5	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Esther Chatelain	1975, undated
	6	Correspondence: Jo Ann Darden to Esther Chatelain	1953, undated
	7	Correspondence: Robert Darden, Jr. to Peggy Darden	1943
	8	Correspondence: War Department to Esther Chatelain	1951-1952

**Series II: Literary Productions, 1940-1949, undated, 7 folders.**

This series contains literary productions produced throughout Robert Darden, Jr.'s life. Most of the materials are cards from the 1940s (Christmas, Valentine's Day, etc.). Also included is an invitation for Darden's high school graduation in 1946. The materials are in average to good condition.

<b>BOX NUMBER</b>	<b>FOLDER NUMBER</b>	<b>FOLDER TITLE</b>	<b>DATES</b>
2	9	Literary Productions: Newsletters: Boy Scouts: Troop 222	1943
	10	Literary Productions: Printed Materials: General	circa 1946, undated
	11	Literary Productions: Cards: General	undated
	12	Literary Productions: Cards: Birthdays	1940-1941, undated
	13	Literary Productions: Cards: Christmas	undated
	14	Literary Productions: Cards: Valentines	1949, undated
	15	Literary Productions: Invitation: Commencement: Schreiner Institute	1946

**Series III: Photographic Materials, 1968-1971, undated, 1 folder.**

This series contains six photographs of Robert Darden, Jr. and his wife Jo Ann. They were taken in various locations, but in each one Darden is wearing his military uniform. These materials are in good condition.

<b>BOX NUMBER</b>	<b>FOLDER NUMBER</b>	<b>FOLDER TITLE</b>	<b>DATES</b>
2	16	Photographic Materials: Photos: Robert Darden, Jr. and Jo Ann Darden	1968-1971, undated

**Appendix: Family Tree**

The following list of individuals comprises the immediate family of Robert Darden, Jr. The individual's relation to him is listed in parentheses.

Robert F. Darden, Sr.	(father)
Esther Jane Perkins/Darden/Cartelain	(mother)
Burt Darden	(uncle)
Bebe	(aunt)
Samuel Earl Perkins	(maternal grandfather)
Rosa Mae Fuegg	(maternal grandmother, Swiss immigrant)
Maggie Mae McGinty	(paternal grandmother)
Robert F. Darden, Jr.	
Jo Ann Owens Darden	(wife)
Robert F. Darden, III	(son)

Mary	(daughter-in-law)
Steven L. Darden	(son)
Ellen	(daughter-in-law)
Danni L. Mayfield	(daughter)
Dan Mayfield	(son-in-law)
Peggy Sue Brammer	(sister)
Chalmus A. Brammer	(brother-in-law)
Chris Brammer	(nephew)
Joyce Brammer	(niece)