

CLIFTON F. SMITH PAPERS Finding Aid

Administration Information

Acc. Number: MSS-05

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (SBBG), Blaksley Library
1212 Mission Canyon Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
805-682-4726

Descriptive Summary

Collection Dates: 1861-1998

Extent: 15 linear feet (23 boxes, including ~~380~~ 365 photos, and 2 oversize folders of maps)

Creator: Smith, Clifton F.

Acquisition Information: Several hundred books were acquired in 1988 from Clif Smith. The rest of the materials were a bequest from the estate of Clif Smith in 1999.

Restrictions: The collection is available for research use.

Copyright Status:

Finding aid created by: Laurie Hannah, 2004

History/Biography

Clif Smith was probably the most well-known taxonomic botanist in Santa Barbara. He wrote the definitive book on plants of the Santa Barbara region and was consulted by botanists from far and near. He was equally known for being an avid collector of artifacts about the history of Santa Barbara and the central coast region. Besides books, magazines, and other publications which augmented the botanical history of the area, his collections also included postal covers, post cards, fine art created by local artists, cattle brands, bottles, and other ephemera that documented the businesses and activities of the city, county, and surrounding region from the mid-1800s to recent times. Most of these collections were dispersed to friends, local libraries, or sold at auction.

Chronology

1920, Feb. 25	Born in Santa Barbara, CA
1938	Graduated from Santa Barbara High School
1943	Enrolled in the Tree Study Course at SBBG
1943-1952	Worked at SBBG
1949	First article <i>Botanical Relicts</i> published
1952	<i>A Flora of Santa Barbara</i> published
1953	Graduated from Santa Barbara State College (now UCSB)
1955	Herbarium curator at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (SBMNH)
1956	Became librarian and botanist at SBMNH
1976	Published <i>A Flora of the Santa Barbara Region</i>
1985	Retired from SBMNH
1985	Became Herbarium Associate at SBBG
1998	Published second edition of <i>A Flora of the Santa Barbara Region</i>

1999, Mar. 6

Died at home in Santa Barbara, age 79

Scope and Content

Research notes, correspondence, publications, photographs, maps, printed matter, and memorabilia are included in this collection. The bulk of the textual materials constitute two series: 1) regional history files, illustrating the history of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura counties; and 2) research materials and drafts for Smith's main publication *A Flora of the Santa Barbara Region*, in its two editions. Smith interfiled notes, correspondence, and published materials into subject folders, instead of keeping separate files for different types of materials. Ephemeral materials, such as advertisements, newspaper clippings, promotional brochures, menus, napkins, invitations, and stationery are interspersed throughout the subject files, although there are several separate ephemera folders. Subjects pertaining to regional history represented in the collection include education, events, missions, ranching, art, organizations, and business. Research materials for Smith's books focus on the natural history and vegetation of Santa Barbara County and the northern Channel Islands, with an emphasis on plant distribution, ethnobotanical uses of native plants, rare plants, and the history of exploration and plant collection in the region. A separate series of field notebooks and card files on individual plants is kept in the Garden Herbarium and corresponds to plant specimens collected by Smith.

The photograph series contains approximately 380 items depicting the Santa Barbara region from the late 1800s to the present. Topics include landscapes, plants, buildings, missions, transportation, events, and people. Formats are mostly black and white prints of various sizes with some transparencies.

The memorabilia series contains personal items used by Smith, such as his typewriter, or items, often humorous, created for him by friends.

Arrangement

Materials are arranged according to the following series:

- Series 1: Biographical materials
- Series 2: Correspondence
- Series 3: Regional history files
 - Subseries 3.1: General subject files
 - Subseries 3.2: Channel Island files
- Series 4: Publications
 - Subseries 4.1: Research materials
 - Subseries 4.2: *A Flora of the Santa Barbara Region*
 - Subseries 4.3: Other Publications
- Series 5: Field notebooks and card files
- Series 6: Photographs
- Series 7: Oversize materials [maps, clippings]
- Series 8: Memorabilia

Subject files are arranged alphabetically and usually chronologically within folders. Other series are arranged alphabetically with the exception of folders relating to Smith's *A Flora of the Santa Barbara Region*. These are arranged according to chapters in the

book, from botanical history, vegetation, plant communities, and localities, to individual plant descriptions. Drafts with corrections follow.

Indexing Terms

Smith, Clifton F.
 Santa Barbara County – California – History
 Santa Barbara County – California – History – Photographs
 Santa Barbara County – California – Description and travel
 San Luis Obispo County – California – History
 Ventura County – California – History
 Channel Islands – California
 Plants – California – Santa Barbara County

Container List

Item	Box	Folder
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Series 2: Correspondence		
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Series 3: Regional History Files		
<u>Subseries 3.1 General Subject Files</u>		
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Series 5: Field notebooks

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Series 6: Photographs

Photographs	4 boxes
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Series 7: Oversize materials

Maps, clippings	8	2 folders
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Series 8: Memorabilia

Memorabilia	9-11
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Related Material

A selection of over 400 books on botany and California history from Smith's personal collection have been added to the Library. Research materials on fire and the chaparral are located in the Library office vertical files, and several reprint collections acquired by Smith are interspersed between the Herbarium and Library reprint files. The photograph collection is has been scanned and index and is available at http://sbbgphotos.org/search_advanced_results_pfh.php?collection_id=17.