George W. Smith Papers of a Jackson County Resident A&M 0427

George W. Smith, Papers of a Jackson County Resident

1818-1908

Title Statement

George W. Smith Papers of a Jackson County Resident A&M 0427

Author: Staff of the West Virginia & Regional History Center

Publication Statement

Publisher: West Virginia and Regional History Center

1549 University Ave.
P.O. Box 6069
Morgantown, WV 26506-6069
Business Number: 304-293-3536
wvrhcref@westvirginia.libanswers.com
URL: https://wvrhc.lib.wvu.edu

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-18 13:28:25 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID
A&M 0427

Unit ID
Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID
/repositories/2/resources/2734

Unit Date
1818-1908

Unit Date
1818-1885

Language
English .

Abstract
The papers of George W. Smith (1814-1860), a merchant, justice of the peace, land agent, and presidential elector in the town of Ripley, Jackson County, West Virginia. There are also papers regarding other family members. The collection serves as a narrative and record of business, local politics, and social conditions in West Virginia before and after statehood. It includes business and personal correspondence, financial and legal papers, business and political ledgers, and ephemera. The majority of the business and personal correspondence in this collection consists of incoming letters to George W. Smith from his family and business associates. There are a few letters from Nehemiah Smith, a delegate in the Virginia Assembly, some of which discuss efforts to route a proposed turnpike from Staunton to Ripley (ca. 1833-1842); and letters from Confederate prisoners of war, six from Point Lookout prison in Maryland (1864-1865), and one from Elmira, New York (1864). See scope and content note for additional details.

Creator
Smith, George W.

Extent
1.45 Linear Feet 3 document cases, 5 in. each; 1 document case, 2.5 in.

Physical Location
West Virginia and Regional History Center / West Virginia University / 1549 University Avenue / P.O. Box 6069 / Morgantown, WV 26506-6069 / Phone: 304-293-3536 / URL: West Virginia & Regional History Center

Repository
West Virginia and Regional History Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access
No special access restriction applies.

Conditions Governing Use
Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. For more information, please see the Permissions and Copyright page on the West Virginia and Regional History Center website.

Preferred Citation
[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], George W. Smith Papers of a Jackson County Resident, A&M 0427, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Scope and Contents

The papers of George W. Smith (1814-1860), a merchant, justice of the peace, land agent, and presidential

elector in the town of Ripley, Jackson County, West Virginia. There are also papers regarding other family members. The collection serves as a narrative and record of business, local politics, and social conditions in West Virginia before and after statehood. It includes business and personal correspondence, financial and legal papers, business and political ledgers, and ephemera.

The majority of the business and personal correspondence in this collection consists of incoming letters to George W. Smith from his family and business associates. There are a few letters from Nehemiah Smith, a delegate in the Virginia Assembly, some of which discuss efforts to route a proposed turnpike from Staunton to Ripley (ca. 1833-1842); and letters from Confederate prisoners of war, six from Point Lookout prison in Maryland (1864-1865), and one from Elmira, New York (1864).

The financial and legal papers report in depth on the economy during the period, including information regarding taxes, subscription costs, property sales and assessment, and merchandise purchases by a general store owner.

There are two business ledgers that record the day to day sales of livestock and general merchandise, and a ledger of names of voters living in various precincts in southwestern (West) Virginia.

Ephemera includes Civil War picket passes, tickets, advertisements, stock information, and a map of New York (1855); some items are of graphic interest (such as pamphlets, steamboat bills, and railroad tickets).

George W. Smith was an agent for land in Jackson, Wirt, Putnam, and Roane Counties.

There are four record series in this collection:

Series 1. Correspondence; 1818-1885, undated; box 1, folders 1-27 through box 2, folders 1-33.

Series 2. Financial and Legal Papers; 1830-1877, undated; box 3, folders 1-19 through box 4, folder 1.

Series 3. Ledgers; 1849-1867; box 4, folder 2

Series 4. Ephemera; 1855-1908, undated; box 4, folders 3-8.

Keywords

Elmira (N.Y.)
Jackson County (W. Va.)
Morgantown (W. Va.)
Putnam County (W. Va.)
Roane County (W. Va.)
Wirt County (W. Va.)
Civil War - Point Lookout Prison.
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Prisoners and prisons
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Justices of the peace
Prisons -- Point Lookout Prison
Turnpikes. SEE ALSO Roads.
Virginia - General Assembly.
Gilmer, Ripley and Ohio Turnpike Company
Washington and Jefferson College (Washington, Washington County, Pa.)
Camden, Gideon Draper, 1805-1891
Smith, George W.
Smith, Nehemiah.

Description of Subordinate Components

Series 1. Correspondence (Boxes 1-2)

Unit ID Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/149293

Unit Date 1818-1885, undated

Mixed Materials 1 (Box)

Mixed Materials 2 (Box)

Scope and Contents

The majority of this series consists of incoming letters to George W. Smith from his family and business associates. It is a narrative of business, local politics, and social conditions in West Virginia before and after statehood. Letters from 1818-1860 are to George W. Smith; letters after 1860 are to Nathan Smith, Frederick F. Smith, Ellen Smith, and subsequent family members.

Most letters concern business. Topics include economic conditions, local banking, textile and general store business, land speculation, local politics, the Parkersburg Turnpike (in Gilmer County), and the Ripley and Ohio Turnpike Company.

Other letters regard personal and family matters. Topics include finances, politics (Whig Party), social and recreational events, health (cholera, measles, and whooping cough), and the temperance movement. There are letters from sons in school at Morgantown, and at Washington, Pennsylvania, 1858-1860; a few grade reports are also included. Civil War related items have been collated into a separate sequence of folders (box 2, folders 29-33).

In addition to the letters there are land indentures, plat maps, and printed speeches, among other types of material.

Primary authors include:

Copehart, Joseph (Friend; Cole's Mouth, WV)

Denniston, Charles C. (Friend; Evansville, WV)

Smith, Frederick F. (Son; Washington, PA)

Smith, James (Brother; Iroquois County, IL)

Smith, Jonas (Father; Danville, Iroquois County, IL)

Smith, Mary Jane (Sister; Point Pleasant, WV)

Smith, Nancy (Sister; Point Pleasant, WV)

Smith, Nathan (Brother; Point Pleasant, WV)

Smith, Nehemiah (Brother; Ripley, WV)

Wheeler, Marenus V. (Cousin; Esopus, Ulster County, NY)

Secondary authors include:

Armstrong, Dr. James (Friend; Glensville, WV)

Boyle, Barnet (Friend; Myer's Bottom, WV)

Bureau, J. M. (Business Associate; Gallipolis, WV)

Camden, Gideon D. (Business Associate; Clarksburg, WV)

Church, Samuel (Friend; Pittsburgh, PA)

Cochran, Benjamin (Friend; Pittsburgh, PA)

Cooper, William H. (Friend; Lewisburg, WV)

Craig, C.W. (Business Associate; Beardstown, IL)

Elroy, Wilson M. (Business Associate; Pittsburgh, PA)

Ganey, John (Business Associate; Evansville, WV)

Hampton, Wade (Business Associate; Pittsburgh, PA)

Howard, Edward (Friend; Steubenville, WV)

Howell, John B. (Friend; Morgantown, WV)

Jacion, George B. (Lawyer, Middleport, IL)

Kinnaird, A.L. (Business Associate; Williamsport, VA)

Kirby, P.A. (Soldier; Point Lookout, MD)

Kouns, M.K. (Friend; Point Pleasant, WV)

Mairs, Sr., Benjamin (Business Associate; Steubenville, WV)

Newton, E.W. (Friend; Kanawha, WV)

Otts, R.M. (Family Friend; Point Lookout, MD)

Parker, S.H. (Business Associate; Richmond, VA)

Poindexter, Robert W. (Business Associate; Pittsburgh, PA)

Roseberry, E. (Business Associate; Perrysville, WV)

Shirling, G.W. (Friend; Point Pleasant, WV)

Smith, Adrian Addison (Son; Morgantown, WV)

Smith, Benjamin H. (Friend; Charleston, WV)

Smith, James S. (Nephew; Pittsburgh, PA)

Smith, John P.R.B. (Nephew; Point Pleasant, WV)

Smithç Mary (Sister-in-law; Spring Creek, Iroquois County, IL)

Stanley, M. (Business Associate; Middleport, IL)

Thurman, John. M. W. (Friend; Millbourne, WV)

Walker, J.P. (Family Lawyer; Danville, IL)

Williams, B.D. (Business Associate; Spencer, WV)

Notable Items in the Correspondence Series include: a letter regarding measles outbreak in Point Pleasant, WV and cholera in Charleston, WV (located in box 1, folder 1; letter of undated/05/27);

a letter including written invitation to attend and gamble at a horse race (located in box 1, folder 6; letter of 1834/08/05);

a letter concerning outbreak of whooping cough in Point Pleasant, WV (located in box 1, folder 8; letter of 1836/07/24);

a letter regarding land speculation information from a contact among Van Buren's Cabinet (located in box 1, folder 9; letter of 1836/10/14);

a letter regarding banking reforms disputed in Congress that undermine local banks, blame put on Van Buren, and fears of him being elected (located in box 1, folder 9; letter of 1836/10/31);

a letter regarding effort to avoid residents in tri-state area that support Jacksonism, and effort to evade

districts containing Van Buren supporters (located in box 1, folder 10; letter of 1837/06/20);

a letter containing Charles C. Denniston's statement that John Quincy Adams views himself as "little more than considerable of a Van Buren man" (located in box 1, folder 10; letter of 1837/08/08);

a letter including report on a vote for a proposed (Ripley and OH) turnpike that resulted in a tie in a local government meeting, and then voted down (located in box 1, folder 12; letter of 1839/03/21);

a letter mentioning deer skins that sold for less in Philadelphia than originally estimated (located in box 1, folder 14; letter of 1840/07/06);

a letter reporting that cotton prices are up from 37 1/2 cents to one dollar (located in box 1, folder 14; letter of 1840/09/03);

a letter reporting election results in support of the Whig Party in Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Maine, Oklahoma, Delaware, Maryland, OH, and Georgia (located in box 1, folder 14; letter of 1840/10/19);

a letter reporting election results of the congressional delegation in OH, favoring Whigs over Van Burenism (located in box 1, folder 14; letter of 1840/10/19);

a letter referring to results in Illinois of presidential election of 1840 -- "swayed by pledged Roman [Catholic] ethnic Irish and foreigners in support of Van Buren" (located in box 1, folder 14; 1840/12/04);

a letter including reference to land grant signed by James Monroe for Levi Jobbet (facsimile of land grant in box 1, folder 4) (letter located in box 1, folder 16; letter of 1842/03/28);

a letter containing plea from James Smith's widow, Mary (sister-in-law), for George W. Smith to send money to her for her doctor's bill, as well as for food, clothing and schooling for her children (located in box 1, folder 17; letter of 1843/06/25);

a printed copy of the speech of Mr. Summers of Virginia entitled "the Contested Election" that had been delivered before the U.S. House of Representatives (located in box 1, folder 18; document of 1844/02/10);

documentation of the appointment of George W. Smith as an elector for the Commonwealth of Virginia for a presidential election (located in box 1, folder 18; document of 1844/07/06);

a letter referencing Whig politics (located in box 1, folder 19; letter of 1845/01/29);

a letter referring to the hiring of Kit Carson as a guide to California via the Rocky Mountains for gold speculation (located in box 1, folder 26; letter of 1849/03/08);

a letter regarding the "borrowing" of an enslaved woman, "Betia," from her owner Peter Kelly (located in box 2, folder 15; letter of 1857/12/18);

a letter referring to Professor Morse, superintendent of the Washington Female Seminary (in Washington, Pennsylvania), and to social events (located in box 2, folder 18; letter of 1858/11/03);

a report card of A.A. Smith from Monongalia Academy in Morgantown, Virginia (located in box 2, folder 18; document of 1859/04/15);

a letter to Frederick Smith from Phi Kappa Psi student at Washington College (Washington and Jefferson College) describing social event that included dancing and fiddle (violin) music; names are included with reference to "Maiden Street crowd" (located in box 2, folder 20; letter of 1860/07/05);

a commencement program of Washington College (Washington and Jefferson College) (located in box 2, folder 20; 1860/09/05);

a letter referencing boring for oil near Dunkard Creek (in Greene County, Pennsylvania) (located in box 2, folder 21; letter of 1861/03/10);

a letter reporting the late shipment of tobacco to Clark and Carr commission merchants in Cincinnati, OH (located in box 2, folder 21; letter of 1862/01/22);

and a letter regarding political status of country: "...the political condition of the Country has changed a great deal since we met but it is impossible that such noble structure as our government presented only a year ago, should be destroyed. The ambition of men, the folly of others may for a while endeavor to injure the edifice, but it will soon be repaired" (located in box 2, folder 21; letter of 1862/06/03).

Civil War items include:

a letter concerning the threat of Western Virginia invasion from OH and political opponents (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of 1861/06/03);

a letter referring to trouble in Jackson County, including rumors of Rangers deserting, and federal troops in the area (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of 1862/07/20);

a letter reporting that the men of Capt. Frederick F. Smith's Company H of the 17th Virginia Cavalry are in good spirits; and that Company H is attached to French's Battalion of General Jenkins' Brigade (Frederick F. Smith is George W. Smith's son) (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of 1862/12/20);

a letter referencing that Company H is afflicted by sickness (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of

1863/01/21);

a letter regarding hopes the war will be over by end of fall (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of 1863/09/10);

a letter regarding the sale of Army horses, mares, and oxen at auction (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of 1863/09/09);

a letter reporting that two men of Company H have been killed, two taken prisoner, and four deserted (located in box 2, folder 29; letter of 1863/09/10);

a letter requesting money needed for assistance at Point Lookout (prison) in Maryland, care of Major Brady, Company D, 1st Division (located in box 2, folder 30; letter of 1864/09/26);

and a letter thanking Ellen Smith (George Smith's daughter) for money given to a previously unknown soldier at Point Lookout (prison), MD, and his appreciation of it (located in box 2, folder 30; letter of 1864/09/26).

Series 2. Financial and Legal Papers (Boxes 3-4)

Unit ID Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/149294

Unit Date 1830-1877, undated

Mixed Materials 3 (Box)

Mixed Materials 4 (Box)

Container 1 (Folder)

Scope and Contents

The financial and legal papers report in depth on the economy during the period, including information regarding taxes, subscription costs, property sales and assessment, and merchandise purchases by a general store owner.

Most of this series consists of legal contracts, organizational subscriptions, tax and business receipts of George W. Smith, his family and business associates. Some of the items include: balance sheets for the general stores (livestock, textiles, hardware and agricultural implements), tax receipts, property transferences, and various other investments, such as the Parkersburg Turnpike (in Gilmer County), and the Ripley and OH Turnpike Company.

Series 3. Ledgers (Box 4)

Unit ID Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/149295

Unit Date 1849-1867

Mixed Materials 4 (Box)

Container 2 (Folder)

Scope and Contents

This series consists of three ledgers that record a variety of business transactions and political notes. They include records of livestock trade (cattle), labor (hired help), newspaper subscriptions (The Sun), textile sales (clothing and cloth), and voter records (1859 precincts for Ripley, Fishers, Ravenswood, Sandyville, Slavin's Hollow, Murrysville, Moon Mills, Angerona, and Jones Mill, [West] VA, and Cleek, VA).

Series 4. Ephemera (Box 4)

Unit ID Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID Previous Archival Resource Key

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/149296

Unit Date 1855-1908

Mixed Materials 4 (Box)

Container 3-7 (Folder)

Scope and Contents

This series includes Civil War picket passes, tickets, advertisements, stock information, and a map of New

York [1855]); some items are of graphic interest (such as pamphlets, steamboat bills, invoices, and railroad tickets).

Civil War items include:

a picket pass for E. H. Rader allowing travel from Charleston to Supper Creek and back from the headquarters of the Kanawha Brigade signed by Colonel J. D. Hines (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1862/01/07);

a picket pass for Rader, Armstrong, Armstrong and Thompson for twenty days from the headquarters of the Kanawha Brigade signed by Colonel J. D. Hines (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1862/03/15);

a handwritten pass for E.H. Rader and M.B. Armstrong to travel from headquarters in Parkersburg, WV to Hamubae, MO; document also includes that the two are on a business tour and loyal to the government and signed by Lt. Colonel Daniel Frost of the 11th Regiment Virginia Volunteer Infantry (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1862/11/02);

a picket pass for E. H Rader from the Provost Marshal's Office signed by Captain W. H. Ward, Captain and Provost Marshal of the 47th OH Volunteer Infantry in the Great Kanawha District (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1862/11/26);

a picket pass for E.H. Rader for four days travel from Charleston, WV to Elk, WV without goods by the Provost Marshal's Office by order of Colonel John H. Oley and William Gramm (printed), Major and Provost Marshal of the Eighth (West) Virginia Infantry. (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1864/12/12);

a picket pass for J.N. Rader for two days travel from Charleston, WV to Elk, WV without goods by the Provost Marshal's Office by order of Colonel John H. Oley and signed by William Gramm, Major and Provost Marshal of the Eighth (West) Virginia Infantry. (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1864/12/13);

and an invoice for the sale of one 8-year-old roan horse to E.H. Rader located in Gallipolis, OH from the Assistant Quartermaster's Office. Horse is branded "I.C." and sold for $76.00 (located in box 4, folder 4; document of 1865/06/20).

Other items include:

a printed envelope from Washington College of Washington, PA (later Washington and Jefferson College) to G.W. Smith, Esq. of Jackson County, VA (West Virginia) (located in box 4, folder 5; undated);

an advertisement for C.G. Sargent featuring scrolled and engraved stationary denoting the "office of C.G. Sargent" (located in box 4, folder 5; undated);

a subscription invoice for the Kanawha Republican to George W. Smith featuring engraved sides and title of the Kanawha Republican Office; and signed by G.W. Newton (located in box 4, folder 5; undated);

a booklet entitled "The Sunday School Gem. For Young Folks, Volume I, Number 1," published by David C. Cook of Chicago, IL, featuring engravings captioned "The Sunday Sail," "Tommy's Pic Nic Day," and "Sour Grapes" by Stillman Adams of Cincinnati, OH (located in box 4, folder 5; undated);

a printed "Miniature Plan of the City of New York" map engraved by J.P. Morin and published by Disturnwell New York, NY. (located in box 4, folder 5; 1855)

a purchase invoice from Prall and Coburn, Manufacturers of and Dealers in Tin-Ware, Stoves, Hardware, Agricultural Implements, Etc., Pomeroy, OH for Hart Rader; featuring engraving of business name and names of proprietors: W.J. Prall and Sylvester Coburn (located in box 4, folder 5; 1871/05/09) (1 of 5);

a letter referring to the purchase of plows by Hart Rader from W.J. Prall and Sylvester Coburn (located in box 4, folder 5; 1871/05/09) (2 of 5);

the envelope of a letter from W.J. Prall and Sylvester Coburn to Hart Rader featuring an embossed 3 cent stamp of George Washington (located in box 4, folder 5; 1871/05/09) (3 of 5);

a shipping invoice regarding the shipment of plows via the Regular Parkersburg and Gallipolis Tri-Weekly United States Mail Packet to Hart Rader aboard the steamer "Emma Graham" featuring an engraved steamboat in the upper left corner; J.N. Williamson, Captain; T.J. Wetherell, Clerk; also lists shipping times and destinations (located in box 4, folder 5; document of 1871/05/10) (4 of 5);

a shipping invoice from Downie and Wallace, Forwarding and Commission Merchants, dealers in Cement, White and Gray Lime, and Wharf-Boat Proprietors, Pomeroy, OH for plows to Hart Rader in Ravenswood, WV aboard the "Emma Graham"; features an engraving of a steamboat and names of proprietors, W.L. Downie and J.T. Wallace (located in box 4, folder 5; document of 1871/05/10) (5 of 5);

a shipping invoice featuring an engraved steamboat from Roots and Kilbreth of goods shipped to E.H. Rader from Mason City to Ravenswood by steamboat (located in box 4, folder 5; 1877/04/24);

a business card of J.P. Campbell, County Surveyor and Land Agent of Sandy, Jackson County, WV (located in box 4, folder 6; undated);

a printed ticket admitting one person for the Ladies' Supper in Ripley, WV, managed by Mrs. F.A. Holt, Mrs.

L.M. Keeney, Mrs. Robert Mate, Mrs. J. L. Armstrong, Mrs. B.F. Armstrong, and Mrs. E.B. Wright. (located in box 4, folder 6; 1860/05/08);

a printed Drover's ticket for free transportation on the Baltimore and OH Railroad for Mr. J. Thompson to attend to his stock from Parkersburg, WV to New York, NY; issued by the Baltimore and OH Railroad, Transportation Department; signed by W. Whennich, Baltimore and OH Agent, and F. Stribling, witness (located in box 4, folder 6; 1871/12/08);

a printed pass for the Chesapeake and OH Railroad for H. Rader in the state of West Virginia; signed by B.P. Huntington; printed by Gillis Printers of Richmond, VA (located in box 4, folder 6; 1872/12/31);

a printed statement of the Continental Insurance Company of the City of New York including information on capital assets, directors, and representatives; includes reference to the disasters of the Boston and Chicago Fires; it also refers to the State of New York's Act to "provide security against extraordinary conflagrations, and for the creation of Safety Funds by Fire Insurance Companies," passed 16 April 1874 (located in box 4, folder 6; 1877/01/01);

a printed advertisement for merchants and agents to sell J.C. Boyd's Miniature Galvanic Battery, promising quick sales and enormous profits (located in box 4, folder 6; 1880);

a printed advertisement for J.C. Boyd's Miniature Galvanic Battery, promising the cure of nearly all diseases (located in box 4, folder 6; 1880);

an envelope imprinted with the New York, NY address of J.C. Boyd (located in box 4, folder 6; document of 1880);

and an issue of the "State Journal of Parkersburg, WV," including stories regarding France's invasion of North Africa, the funeral of former President Grover Cleveland with President Theodore Roosevelt in attendance, the near fatal automobile injury of Governor Hughes, and a legal case involving Charles Brown, an African-American male charged with assault, and his armed protection after the threat of a lynch mob (located in box 4, folder 7; 1908/06/26).