

UNIVERSITY *of* PENNSYLVANIA



The University Archives
and Records Center

A Guide to the
Smith Family Papers
1827-1922 (bulk 1881-1912)

1.0 Cubic feet

UPT 50 S651

Prepared by Timothy H. Horning
May 2014

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PROVENANCE

The Smith Family papers were donated to the Office of the Vice-President by James Somers Smith, Jr. and transferred to the University Archives (UARC) by William H. DuBarry in February 1956.

ARRANGEMENT

The Smith Family Papers are organized into four series - James Somers Smith (1822-1894), James Somers Smith (1866-1956), James Somers Smith, Jr. (1889-1972), and Other - each of which is arranged alphabetically.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

James Somers Smith (1822-1894)

James Somers Smith was born on February 16, 1822 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to James S. Smith, who earned A.B. (1799) and A.M (1802) degrees from the University of Pennsylvania

and served as a trustee of the university from 1831 to 1861, and Lydia Leaming. He entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1837 and left after his sophomore year. He served as Secretary and Treasurer of The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insuring of Houses from Loss by Fire, America's oldest property insurance company which was founded in 1752. Smith married Anna Maria Welsh, daughter of John Welsh, namesake of the University of Pennsylvania's John Welsh Centennial Professorship of History and English Literature. James Somers Smith died in Philadelphia on March 30, 1894.

James Somers Smith (1866-1956)

James Somers Smith was born on May 26, 1866 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to James Somers Smith and Anna Maria Welsh Smith. He entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1883 and earned an A.B. in 1887. After graduation he was a clerk at The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insuring of Houses from Loss by Fire, and served as Secretary and Treasurer of that organization from 1894 to 1941. He also served as treasurer of the University of Pennsylvania's Athletic Association and of the Society of Alumni, and was director of the General Alumni Society. He married Mary Nixon and had three children: James Somers Smith, Jr., Nancy Smith (Mrs. Joseph Wood), and Cooper Smith. James Somers Smith died in Philadelphia on March 5, 1956.

James Somers Smith, Jr. (1889-1972)

James Somers Smith, Jr. was born on November 16, 1889 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to James Somers Smith and Mary Nixon Smith. He entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1908 and earned an A.B. in 1912. He served as Secretary and Treasurer of The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insuring of Houses from Loss by Fire from 1941 to 1954. In addition, he was treasurer of the University of Pennsylvania's General Alumni Society from 1939 to 1949. On Founder's Day in 1950, the University awarded him an Alumni Award of Merit. His younger brother, Cooper Smith, was also an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania (Class of 1923). James Somers Smith married Katharine Hancock. They had a son, James Somers Smith III, and a daughter, Lydia Leaming Smith (Mrs. James Reid Thomson). James Somers Smith, Jr. died in Philadelphia on January 29, 1972.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This small collection documents three generations of University of Pennsylvania alumni who were all associated with The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insuring of Houses from Loss by Fire, the country's oldest property insurance company.

The James Somers Smith (1822-1894) material consists of semester evaluations from his stint at the University of Pennsylvania and notebooks, some of which date to his time at the University and some which date to earlier.

The James Somers Smith (1866-1956) materials consist of exams and reports, both from his time at the University of Pennsylvania and earlier while he was a student at Philadelphia's Academy of the Protestant Episcopal Church. There is material regarding Smith's involvement with the fundraising for the construction of a gymnasium at Franklin Field, correspondence with Alois P. Swoboda, a mail-order fitness instructor, and a small amount of correspondence pertaining to fundraising to open a University of Pennsylvania alumni club in New York City.

The material pertaining to James Somers Smith, Jr. (1889-1972) consists of two club certificates and semester evaluations from his freshman and sophomore years at the University of Pennsylvania. There is also correspondence regarding a university-wide revision of the "rushing" policies of fraternities which took place during Smith's senior year.

Lastly there is a notebook belonging to Thomas Leaming Smith, older brother of James Somers Smith (1822-1894) and Secretary-Treasurer of the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania from 1838-1841.

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INVENTORY

JAMES SOMERS SMITH (1822-1894)	Box	Folder
Notebook: Art Sketches 1834	1	1
Notebook: English Translations 1835	1	2
Notebook: Final Exams 1838	1	3
Notebook: French 1839	1	4
Notebook: French Translations 1840	1	5
Notebook: Greek Verbs 1836	1	6
Notebook: Greek Verbs 1837 (1)	1	7
Notebook: Greek Verbs 1837 (2)	1	8
Notebook: Penmanship n.d.	1	9
Notebook: Trigonometry 1839	1	10
Semester Evaluations 1837-1839	1	11
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JAMES SOMERS SMITH (1866-1956)	Box	Folder
Exams and Reports 1881	1	12
Gymnasium Fund 1897-1902 (1)	1	13
Gymnasium Fund 1897-1902 (2)	1	14

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Gymnasium Fund 1897-1902 (3)	1	15
New York Clubhouse Fund 1920-1922	1	16
Papers 1885-1887	1	17
Semester Evaluation 1886	1	18
Swoboda, Alois P. 1900-1902	1	19
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JAMES SOMERS SMITH, JR. (1889-1972)	Box	Folder
Certificate: Canteen Club 1908	1	20
Certificate: Sphinx Senior Society 1911	1	21
Inter-Fraternity Agreement 1911-1912 (1)	1	22
Inter-Fraternity Agreement 1911-1912 (2)	1	23
Semester Evaluations 1908-1910	1	24
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OTHER	Box	Folder
Adelphian Society Constitution n.d.	1	25
A Catechism of Chemistry n.d.	1	26
Thomas Leaming Smith: Notebook: Natural Philosophy 1827-1828	1	27
Unidentified Group Photograph [possibly Class of 1887 reunion] n.d.	1	28