

SMITH-RIFFE COLLECTION

"The Smith-Riffe Collection represents a half century of genealogical and local-history research in the New River counties of southern West Virginia and adjacent Virginia. Although its owners over the years have always been willing to share its contents with interested people, the nature of the collection prevented its direct use by the general public. Plans were initiated in 1972 but not consummated until 1979 to have the entire collection organized and microfilmed. The microfilming was carried out by the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah. As requested by Mrs. Nell Smith, before her death on 24 June 1979, the original collection was donated to the Archives and History Division, Department of Culture and History, Charleston, West Virginia.

The collection was assembled by Aubrey O. Smith, a lifelong resident of Beckley, West Virginia, with the assistance of his longtime friend, Judge Winton A. Riffe, also of Beckley. Beginning about 1930, the two began collaborative investigation of New River genealogy and local history; this joint effort over the next thirty years provided the beginnings of the collection and brought recognition to them as authorities on the pioneer families of the area. Partnership in the collection continued until the death of Judge Riffe in 1962, about which time sole ownership was transferred by purchase and assignment to Mr. Smith. In his will dated 20 July 1960, Judge Riffe devised to Aubrey O. Smith various personal items including "my stationery cabinet and its contents of whatever kind." During the period of 1962-78, the collection was greatly enlarged by the continuing efforts of Mr. Smith.

Final editing, arrangement, and minimal contribution to the collection have been provided by the author, a relative of Mrs. Nell Smith and a descendant of many New River pioneer families. Materials deleted from the collection during the editing and preparation for microfilming were limited to duplicates, extraneous materials, and illegible materials not capable of restoration. Some materials deemed not pertinent to the collection but of general historical value were not microfilmed but later submitted to the West Virginia Archives and History Division along with the original documents. A minimum of materials from my personal collection pertaining to my New River ancestors which had been placed in the collection for microfilming was subsequently removed.

The collection has been divided into two major divisions: the family section and the locality section. The family section includes all materials readily classified by family surname and has been arranged alphabetically under family surnames. Materials pertaining to the 189 major families have been placed in separate packets. Materials pertaining to the secondary families--i.e., families for which minimal or no active

SMITH-RIFFE continued

research was carried out--were arranged alphabetically by surname in key letter packets and inserted at the beginning of each pertinent surname letter section. Materials filed by family include personal memoirs, Bible records, family sketches, pedigree charts and family group records, interviews with early settlers and their descendants, obituaries, newspaper clippings, correspondence, unclassified notes, and abstracts by family taken from county courthouses, cemeteries, and other sources. The family section comprises about three-fourths of the collection.

The locality section comprises the remaining one-fourth of the collection and includes all items best classified on a locality basis. These include complete cemetery transcriptions; church records; local or community histories; and abstracts, compilations, or original records of county courthouses and other local and regional records. In past years records of primary genealogical value in West Virginia county courthouses have been microfilmed by the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City.

No restrictions have been placed by the heirs on access and use of the Smith-Riffe Collection for genealogical and local history research, thereby permitting its widest possible use. Although the Genealogical Society has maintained the original microfilm negatives in its holdings, positive microfilm copies can be purchased by historical societies and libraries. However, in giving full title in the original collection to the West Virginia Archives and History Division, no limitation is implied that would in any way interfere with the proper handling and preservation of the originals by accepted archival procedures.

It has been a privilege to assist in the preparation of the collection for microfilming, and its great value has been very evident. During the nearly twenty years I have collaborated with Aubrey O. Smith on New River genealogy, shared the thrills of new discoveries with him, and enjoyed the hospitality of him and his wife Nell in their home on frequent occasions, they were confirmed not only as choice relatives but as special friends as well. In acknowledging Aubrey O. Smith as a principal authority on New River history, genealogy, and geography, I take pride in my opportunity to formalize his contributions through this collection as a memorial to him."

John F. Vallentine's article SMITH-RIFFE COLLECTION OF NEW RIVER GENEALOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY is from the GENEALOGICAL JOURNAL, VOLUME 8, NUMBER 4, DECEMBER 1979.

COLLECTION, ca. 1700's-1900's 16 rolls of microfilm

This collection was purchased in 1980 from the Genealogical Society of Utah.

16 reels. A collection of genealogical material compiled by Aubrey O. Smith and Winton A. Riffe. The Collection includes transcripts of original records, Bible records, compiled family research notes, newspaper clippings, etc. Empahsis is on the New River area of Virginia and West Virginia.

Reel 1 (1036965) contains folders on the following families:

BLANKENSHIP
BOULDEN
BOWLING
BOYD
BRAGG
BRAMMER
BROWN
BROYLES
BRYSON
BURDETT
BURGESS
BURKE
BURNSIDE, BYRNSIDE
CA-CZ miscellaneous families
CALFEE
CALLAWAY
CAMPBELL
CANTERBURY
CAPERTON
CARPER

Reel 2 (1036966) contains:

CARPER (continuation of reel 1)
CHAMBERS
CHAPMAN
CHRISTIAN
CLARK
CLAY
COLE
COOK
COOPER

Reel 3 (1036967) contains:

COVEY
COX
CURTIS
D miscellaneous families
DANIEL
DAVIDSON
DAVIS
DERIUX
DICKENS

Reel 3 (1036967) continued

DILLON
DINGESS
DUNBAR
DUNN
E miscellaneous families
EADES, EADS
ELLISON
EVANS
EWART
F miscellaneous families
FARLEY (4 folders)
FERGUSON
FERRELL
FINK
FITZPATRICK
FLESHMAN, FLEISCHMAN

Reel 4 (1036968)

Descriptive material about the collection, its origin and arrangement:

SMITH-RIFFE COLLECTION OF NEW RIVER GENEALOGY
ORIGIN, ORGANIZATION AND DISPOSITION
FAMILY PACKETS
BIOGRAPHIES OF AUBREY SMITH, WINTON RIFFE, AND JOHN
VALENTINE
DATA SHEETS ON THE FAMILIES OF AUBREY SMITH AND JAMES DELVIN
CARTER

A miscellaneous families
ABBOTT
ACORD
ADKINS
ALDERSON
ALLEN
ASHWORTH
B miscellaneous families
BAILY
BALL
BALLARD
BARKER
BARTON
BECKLEY (2 folders)
BENNETT
BIBB

Reel 5 (1036969) contains:

FLINT

Reel 5 (1036969) continued

FLOYD
FORD
FOSTER
FRENCH
G miscellaneous families
GARRETSON
GARTEN
GATLIFF
GODBEY
GORE
GRAHAM
GRANGER
GRAY, GREY
GRIFFITH
GUNNOE
GWINN, GUINN
H miscellaneous families
HALSTEAD

Reel 6 (1036970) contains:

HARLESS
HARPER
HARVEY
HATCHER
HAWLEY
HATFIELD
HENDERSON
HENDRICKS
HENSLEY
HINCHMAN
HOKE
HONAKER
HOUCHINS
HOWARD
HUFF (2 folders)
HUGHES
HULL
HUNT
HUNTER
HURT
HUTCHISON, HUTCHINSON
I miscellaneous families
J miscellaneous families
JARRELL
JARRETT

Reel 7 (1036971) contains:

K miscellaneous families
KAYLOR
KEATLEY
KEATON

Reel 7 (1036971) continued

KELLY
KESSINGER
KIDD
KINCAID
L miscellaneous families
LAFFERTY, LAVERTY
LEACH
LEE
LEMON
LESTER
LEWIS
LILLY (5 folders)

Reel 8 (1036972) contains:

LILLY (continuation from reel 7)
LIVELY (5 folders)
M miscellaneous families
MADDY
MANKIN
MANN
MARTIN
MASSEY
MAXWELL
MAYNOR
MCCAUSLAND
MCCLURE
MCCREERY, MCCREARY
MCDANIEL
MCDONALD
MCDOWELL

Reel 9 (1036973) contains:

MCGINNIS
MCGRAW
MCKINNEY
MCVEY
MEADOR
MEADOWS
MILAM
MILBURN
MILLER
N miscellaneous families
NEELY, NEALEY
O miscellaneous families
O'NEAL, O'NEILL
P miscellaneous families
PACK

Reel 10 (1036974) contains:

PACK (3 folders) see also CARPER

Reel 10 (1036974) continued

PARKER
PAYNE see also BOULDEN
PEARIS
PECK--BORDEN
PETERS
PETTRY
PEYTON
PHILLIPS
PHIPPS
PINE
PITTMAN
PLUMLEY
PRICE
PRINCE--HULL
Q miscellaneous families
R miscellaneous families
REDDEN
REED, REID

Reel 11 (1036975) contains:

RICHMOND
RIFFE
ROACH
ROGERS
RORRER
S miscellaneous families
SAUNDERS, SANDERS
SCARBOROUGH
SCOTT
SHREWSBURY
SHUAMTE (4 folders)
SKAGGS
SMITH

Reel 12 (1036976) contains:

SMITH (continued from reel 11)
SNUFFER
SOVAIN
SPANGLER
STEWART
STOVER see also WILLIAMS
SWEENEY
SWOPE
TERRY
THOMPSON, THOMSON
THURMOND
TOLLY, TULLY
TONEY
TRAIL
TRUMP
TURNER

Reel 12 (1036976) continued

TYREE
U miscellaneous families
UNDERWOOD
V miscellaneous families
VASS
VINSON
W miscellaneous families
WALKER
WARD

Reel 13 (1036977) contains:

WARDEN
WATTS
WEBB
WHITE
WILEY
WILLIAMS see also STOVER
WILLIAMS
WILLIS
WILLS
WILSON
WISEMAN
WOOD
WOODRUM
WORKMAN
WRISTON
WYATT, WAITE
X - Y - Z- miscellaneous families
NEW RIVER AND THE NEW RIVER AREA
NEW RIVER AREA
BOONE COUNTY RECORDS
KITH AND KIN OF BOONE COUNTY
BOTETOURT COUNTY RECORDS

Reel 14 (1036978) contains:

CABELL COUNTY RECORDS
FAYETTE COUNTY CEMETERY RECORDS
FAYETTE COUNTY RECORDS
FLOYD COUNTY, KENTUCKY RECORDS
FRANKLIN COUNTY RECORDS
GILES COUNTY RECORDS (2 folders)
GREENBRIER COUNTY CEMETERY RECORDS
GREENBRIER COUNTY RECORDS (2 folders)
HENRY COUNTY RECORDS
KANAWHA COUNTY RECORDS
LINCOLN COUNTY RECORDS
LOGAN COUNTY RECORDS
MERCER COUNTY RECORDS

Reel 15 (103679) contains:

MONROE COUNTY CEMETERY RECORDS
MONROE COUNTY NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS (includes Court of Appeals at
Union)
MONROE COUNTY MISCELLANEOUS (2 folders)
MONROE COUNTY RECORDS
MONROE COUNTY MILITIA RECORDS
MONROE COUNTY RECORDS (Courts, surveys)
MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECORDS
NICHOLAS COUNTY RECORDS
PULASKI COUNTY RECORDS
PUTNAM COUNTY RECORDS

Reel 16 (1036980) contains:

RALEIGH COUNTY MAPS
RALEIGH COUNTY CEMETERY RECORDS
RALEIGH COUNTY (Beckley) RECORDS
RALEIGH COUNTY RECORDS (5 folders)
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY RECORDS
SUMMERS COUNTY CEMETERY RECORDS
SUMMERS COUNTY RECORDS
WAYNE COUNTY RECORDS
WEBSTER COUNTY RECORDS
WIRT COUNTY RECORDS
WYOMING COUNTY RECORDS