

Ernest William Smith:

An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Smith, Ernest William
Title:	Ernest William Smith Papers
Dates:	1870-1976 (bulk 1890-1935)
Extent:	2 boxes, 1 oversize folder (.82 linear feet)
Abstract:	These papers consist primarily of manuscripts, notes, photographs, correspondence, and memorabilia that reflect the career of the British journalist. The majority of the manuscripts suggest the possibility of the preparation of a second autobiography, tentatively entitled 'From Newsboy to War Correspondent: An Anecdotal Retrospect of Fifty Years of Newspaper Life.' Also present are materials Smith collected from his travels, related especially to his interests in political movements and military history.
RLIN record #:	TXRC94-A22
Language:	English.
Access	Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition	Purchase, 1975 (R6858)
Processed by	Karen Draper, 1983; revised David H. Sparks, 1994
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Ernest William Smith, journalist and special correspondent, was born in 1864 on the Isle of Wight, Hampshire, Great Britain. Except for a few anecdotes from his autobiography, *Fields of Adventure* (1923), very little is known of his early life or family history. As a youth he became a junior reporter on the *Isle of Wight Chronicle* and the *Portsmouth Times* where he, among other duties, reported on the lives and activities of the British Royal Family. In 1886 Smith went to Paris as a foreign correspondent for the *Pall Mall Gazette* as well as several other London papers.

Smith joined the *Daily News* in the 1890s and became assistant to Mrs. Emily Crawford, the paper's Paris correspondent, from 1897 to 1899. During this time, Smith also became associated with the origins of the literary magazine, *Revue des Revues* (1890-1919), which was superseded in 1919 by *La Revue modiale* (1919-1936). Through his journalistic and editorial efforts, Smith corresponded with and met some of the most prominent European literary and dramatic figures of the day, including Sarah Bernhardt, Anatole France, Lord Kitchner, Lord Roberts, Cecil and Frank Rhodes, Victorien Sardou, G. W. Steevens, Oscar Wilde, Emile Zola, and others.

In the early 1890s, Smith traveled to Russia to report on the widespread famine and relief efforts. During these travels he became acquainted with Leo Tolstoy and his daughters. In 1891 Smith published a French translation of Tolstoy's *Khodite v svete*, which was entitled *Marchez pendant que vous avez la lumière: Récit du temps des premiers chrétiens*. After returning to Paris, he continued to report on the volatile political situation in France, especially the infamous trial of Alfred Dreyfus, 1894-1895. At this time he also edited and translated into English the autobiography of Henri Rochefort, *Adventures of my Life* (1896).

Leaving the *Daily News* in 1900, Smith was engaged by the *Morning Leader* and the *Star* as a special correspondent to report on the Boer War (1899-1902) in South Africa. Smith acted as both writer and photographer since the innovations of Ernest Parke (editor of both papers), mandated that all reporters carry cameras. Smith was able to file reports from the siege of Ladysmith and to take photographs of the troops and battle sites during the winter of 1899-1900. Smith was awarded, as a result of his capture, detainment, and personal "eye witness" reports of the Boer War, a medal from Queen Victoria inscribed "Defender of Ladysmith".

Smith acted as war correspondent for the duration of World War I, and also covered the Greek Revolution of 1916. He was especially interested in the initial use of aviation during the war, as well as the introduction of other turn of the century modern inventions such as the telephone and film. In 1930-31 British International Pictures engaged Smith as an advisor for the film *Dreyfus* (1931). Smith also wrote a series of stories for boys which was published in *Chums* magazine. Smith continued to write occasional articles for both newspapers and radio until his death in 1935.

Scope and Contents

The Ernest Smith Papers, 1870-1976 (bulk 1890-1935), consist primarily of manuscripts, notes, photographs, correspondence, and memorabilia that reflect his career as a journalist. The majority of the manuscripts suggest the possibility of the preparation of a second autobiography, tentatively entitled 'From Newsboy to War Correspondent: An Anecdotal Retrospect of Fifty Years of Newspaper Life.' Also present are materials Smith collected from his travels, related especially to his interests in political movements and military history. There are also newspaper clippings collected by Ernest Smith and his son Arthur Smith. The papers are arranged in four series: Works, 1916-1930, nd; Correspondence, 1870-1931, nd; Personal, 1894-1935; and Smith Family, 1939-1976.

The Works series contains manuscripts and related materials possibly gathered together for Smith's second autobiography, 'From Newsboy to War Correspondent: An Anecdotal Retrospect of Fifty Years of Newspaper Life.' These materials consist of drafts in both typescript and holograph versions, along with miscellaneous draft fragments, research notes, and/or outlines. These have been arranged to conform to an outline of the autobiography found among these papers (Folder 1.1). Also found here are several manuscripts and published versions of Smith's journalistic writings (1916-1930). While these also may have been intended as reference material for the new autobiography, their relationship to the other manuscripts is less clear. These articles and press releases are arranged alphabetically, and also are often accompanied by miscellaneous notes and research materials.

The small but unique correspondence, 1879-1931, is alphabetically arranged and consists primarily of correspondence relating to Smith's editorial duties on the *Revue des Revues* and as a special correspondent. Also found here is outgoing correspondence by Smith that includes a first day issue postcard of the "First United Kingdom Aerial Post, 1911." Significant correspondents include Sarah Bernhardt, Maxime Ducamp, Alexandre Dumas (fils), Kamel al-Husseini (Grand Mufti of Jerusalem), Henrik Ibsen, Maurice Maeterlinck, Helmut Graf von Moltke, Emile Ollivier, Ouida (Maria Louise Ramé), Henri Rochefort, Tatiana Sukhotina-Tolstaia, Alexandra Tolstoy, Leo Tolstoy, and Jules Verne, among others.

The Personal series, 1894-1935, comprises materials related to Smith's works and travels as a journalist. Found here is memorabilia of the Boer War (1899-1902), which includes two manuscripts by J. Stuart (1900), and printed flyers, as well as a broadside of song lyrics by Rudyard Kipling (ca. 1900). Photographs found here include those taken by Smith in the field during the siege of Ladysmith and other campaigns of the Boer War. Also present are the souvenir booklet and photographic stills for the 1931 British International Pictures film, *Dreyfus* for which Smith was an advisor. Original materials from the Dreyfus trial era are also found here including a circular entitled "Testament Officiel d'Emile Zola." Included in this series are several early socialist/anarchist leaflets (translated into Russian, French and Italian) and Greek revolutionary newspapers (1916). This series also includes textbooks as well as other school papers in essay form of unknown date, origin, and authorship.

The last series, Smith Family, 1939-1976, consists of material collected by Arthur W. Smith, son of Ernest W. Smith, and includes correspondence, newspaper clippings and miscellaneous notes. These materials focus on exhibits of the Smith Papers, as well as their potential sale to the HRC and other institutions. In this series are also found two works of fiction of unknown date, origin, and authorship. A note found in the miscellaneous materials here suggest that these manuscripts were written by Arthur Smith's brother, who was killed while working for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in Persia.

Index Terms

Correspondents

Bernhardt, Sarah, 1844-1923.
Dufferin and Ava, Harriot Georgina Blackwood, Marchioness of, 1843?-1936.
Dumas, Alexandre, 1824-1895.
Du Camp, Maxime, 1822-1894.
Garibaldi, Giuseppi, 1807-1882.
Husseini, Kamel al-, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.
Ibsen, Henrik, 1828-1906.
Maeterlinck, Maurice, 1862-1949.
Moltke, Helmuth, Graf von, 1800-1891.
Ouida, 1839-1908.
Parke, Ernest.
Rochefort, Henri, 1831-1913.
Stanley, Henry M., (Henry Morton), 1841-1904.
Sukhotina-Tolstaia, T. L. (Tatiana Lvovna), 1864-1950.
Tolstoy, Alexandra, 1884-1979.
Tolstoy, Leo, graf, 1828-1910.
Verne, Jules, 1828-1905.

Subjects

Revue des revues, 1890-1919.
Anarchism--History--Sources.
Antisemitism--History.
Dreyfus, Alfred, 1874-1934--Trials, litigation, etc.

Smith, Ernest William

Journalists, English.

Ladysmith (South Africa)--History--Siege, 1899-1900.

South African War--1899-1902--Press coverage.

Document types

Artifacts.

Autobiographies.

Broadsides.

First drafts.

Manifestoes.

Maps.

Newspapers.

Passports.

Postcards.

Photographs.

Series I. Works, 1916-1930, nd

'From Newsboy to War Correspondent: An Anecdotal Retrospect of Fifty Years of Newspaper Life' (autobiography)

'Apologia per vita sua,' typescript and holograph manuscripts with corrections and notes, nd [Boyhood] **box 1 folder 1**

Untitled typescript and holograph manuscripts with corrections and notes, nd [Drifting into Journalism, Early Newspaper Life] **folder 2**

'Paris' holograph manuscript with corrections and notes, nd; untitled typescript and holograph manuscripts with corrections and notes, nd [Paris calls] **folder 3**

'Chapter XV, Hunger Typhus Attacks the Wanderers,' holograph manuscript with corrections and inserts; 'Russia,' holograph manuscript with corrections, nd; untitled manuscript with corrections and notes, nd; untitled typescript [1 p.] with corrections [In Tsarist Russia] **folder 4**

'Paris,' holograph manuscripts with corrections and notes; 'A Page of History: Seeds Sown in London Bears Fruit,' holograph manuscript with corrections and notes [Back to Paris with its Scandals] **folder 5**

'Verona,' holograph manuscripts with corrections and notes, nd; 'Gemonia,' holograph manuscript with corrections and notes, nd; untitled holograph manuscript with corrections and notes, nd; 'Kaiser's Speeches,' holograph manuscript and notes, nd [What Europe was like a half century ago; Italy, the Pope, Germany, Bismarck] **folder 6**

'Zola,' holograph notes; untitled holograph manuscript, nd [First Impressions of War] **folder 7**

'What I believe to be the Truth of the Dreyfus Case,' typescript with corrections, nd; 'The Story of the Case in Brief,' typescript with corrections, nd; 'An Epilogue,' typescript with corrections; untitled typescript with incomplete carbon copy, nd [The Dreyfus Case] **folder 8**

'Death of Prince Consort of Holland,' holograph manuscripts, nd; 'Monte Carlo,' holograph manuscript with corrections, nd; untitled typescript and incomplete holograph manuscript with corrections, nd [End of Victorian Era; Europe at Beginning of 20th Century] **folder 9**

'The Coming of the Superplane--and others,' typescript with corrections, nd; untitled typescripts, nd; and newspaper clippings, 1930, nd [Inventions that Closed the 19th Century] **folder**
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'How the Great War Came,' typescript with corrections and notes, nd; 'Udine,' holograph manuscript with corrections and notes, nd [Europe on the Eve of the Great War; How the Calamity Came] **folder**
11

'Ideas for Correspondent Chapter,' holograph manuscript; untitled holograph manuscript, nd; miscellaneous holograph notes; 'Ladysmith,' holograph manuscript with corrections and illustrations, 1900; 'Johannesburg,' holograph manuscript with corrections, nd; 'Pretoria,' holograph manuscript, nd; untitled manuscripts with corrections, nd; duplicate copy of untitled typescripts, 1930 [Four Years of War Time Adventures in Many Countries] **folder**
12

'Christian Arabs,' holograph manuscript with corrections, nd; untitled holograph manuscript with corrections, nd [Cairo and Jerusalem] **folder**
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Untitled typescript with corrections, nd [Amid the Collapse of Austria and Germany about 1927-1928] **folder**
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Journalistic writings, 1916-1930, nd

"The Aeroplane Comes of Age,"(1930) *The Listener*, clipping **box 1**
folder
15

'By the Man Who Never Changed His Collar,' typescript with corrections and notes, nd **folder**
16

"Making the V. C., "(1929) newspaper clipping **folder** 17

Press Releases, July-December 1916 [Greek revolution] **folder** 18

'Slipping into the sea,' typescript with corrections and holograph notes, nd; untitled holograph manuscript with corrections; research material (ca. 1929)--map, newspaper clipping, photographs, and post card **folder**
19

'Tolstoy, or Tolstoi,' typescript with corrections, nd; untitled holograph manuscript with corrections, nd **folder**
20

Smith, Ernest William

Series II. Correspondence, 1870-1931, nd

Outgoing, 1911, 1928, 1931

box 1 folder 21

Incoming, B-V, 1870-1919

folder 22

Series III. Personal, 1894-1935

- [Boer War Memorabilia] holograph manuscripts, 'An Elegy on Long Tom,' 1899, and 'On Field Service,' 1900 by J. Stuart; 'The Ladysmith Bombshell,' 1899 (flyer); "Be Welcome to our hearts tonight," by Rudyard Kipling, broadsheet [1900]; "Survivor Ladysmith Chervril" (newspaper clipping); Widows' and Orphans' Fund, 1900 (benefit concert flyer) **box 1 folder 23**
- Dreyfus*, film souvenir booklet (1931); "Death of Dreyfus," and "Dreyfus Play Fight," newspaper clippings (1935, nd); *L'Affaire Dreyfus: Cinq Semaines á Rennes*, nd (pamphlet cover only); "The Complete Illustrated History of the Dreyfus Affair," nd [removed to oversize] **folder 24**
- "Fields of Adventure," newspaper clipping, *John O'London's Weekly* (1923); *First Atlantic Airway Link*, newspaper clipping, *The Daily Mail* (Monday, Dec. 1, ny) **box 2 folder 1**
- French, Greek, and Russian Socialist/Anarchist leaflets, broadsides, and newspapers, 1894, 1898, 1916, and nd [see also oversize] **folder 2**
- Passports (issued 1915, 1917, 1919); obituary (1935); and press armbands, nd **folder 3**
- Photographs
- Dreyfus* stills from British International Pictures film version (1931) **box 2 folder 4-6**
- Smith in Italy, Egypt, and South Africa (Boer War, 1899, and nd) **folder 7**
- School Papers
- 'Assyria,' 'Chronology,' 'A History of the Interval Between the Old and New Testament Periods,' and Untitled holograph manuscripts on blue paper, nd **box 2 folder 8**
- Mathmatics and Astronomy textbook bound together with a daybook, nd **folder 9**

Smith, Ernest William

Series IV. Smith Family, 1939-1976

Smith, Arthur

Correspondence

Outgoing, 1975-1976, nd

box 2 folder 10

Incoming, 1970, 1972

folder 11

Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, notes and photograph, 1939, 1968, 1970, 1972,
1975

**folder
12**

Untitled typescripts with corrections, nd [author unknown]

folder 13

Ernest William Smith Papers--Correspondents Index

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- Ibsen, Henrik, 1828-1906--1.22
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- Tolstoy, Leo, graf, 1828-1910--1.22
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- Yakoblev, L. (Central Archival Administration, USSR)--2.11