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## Smiths Grove, Kentucky (MSS 321)

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Manuscripts & Folklife Archives  
Department of Library Special Collections  
Kentucky Library & Museum  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1092

*Descriptive Inventory*

**MSS 321 SMITHS Grove, Kentucky**

½ box. 9 folders. 146 items. 1866-2001. Originals and photocopies

2010.92.36

***ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY***

Smiths Grove, Kentucky is located in northeastern Warren County and was incorporated by the Kentucky General Assembly in 1871, however a community had existed there for decades. The town was purportedly named for a grove of trees on a small knob west of town. Urias Rasdall is credited with having the community surveyed and platted. The town was located near the Louisville & Nashville Turnpike, on the mainline of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, and within one mile of Interstate 65. These evolving transportation routes created access to markets for area farmers. This area still relies chiefly on agriculture for its economy; the chief agricultural products are forage crops, wheat, tobacco and beef cattle. In the past the area also yielded significant strawberry harvests and had several flourishing dairies.

Smiths Grove College was established by W. W. Beck in 1875. A commodious, two-story frame building was constructed for the school on College Street, between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. This school was sold to the Methodist Church in 1901 and renamed the Smiths Grove Training School for Vanderbilt University or more commonly known as the Vanderbilt Training School. In 1910 it was purchased by the Warren Association of Baptists and named Warren Baptist Academy. All the secondary schools in the community were eventually consolidated into Smiths Grove High School. This school and Oakland High School consolidated in 1941 and was re-named North Warren High School. When Warren East High School was completed in 1969, there was a movement to keep North Warren High School in Smiths Grove, but it was unsuccessful. North Warren Elementary School is still located on the original land used by Smiths Grove College.

Smiths Grove boasts several homes and churches of architectural significance, as well as a large cemetery (originally administered by the Odd Fellows) and a number of large and productive farms. The present city hall was built in 1946 and houses most city functions. The population of the community remained static during the latter half of the twentieth century, around 750 residents.

## **COLLECTION NOTE**

This small collection contains information about Smiths Grove history, people, churches, schools, and events. A biography folder contains small items related to people from the Smiths Grove area. Additional folders contain more extensive information about three individuals: Virginia Stockton (Beck) Helm, David Maury Helm, and Virginia Wood Davis. In relation to the history of education in the community, the collection includes information about a failed movement (Save Our School) to keep a high school in Smiths Grove in the 1960s and a record book containing the Smiths Grove College Board of Trustees minutes, 1884-1901.

## **SHELF LIST**

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Smiths Grove</b>	<b>1856-2001</b>	<b>146 items</b>
Folder 1	Inventory	n.d.	1 item
Folder 2	Places and events	1871-2001	27 items
Folder 3	Biographies and obituaries	1856-1990	11 items
Folder 4	Materials related to journalist and philanthropist Virginia Wood Davis	1988-1992	21 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, clippings, etc. related to Virginia Helm	1944-1976	38 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, clippings, etc. related to David Murphy Helm	1944	8 items
Folder 7	Campaign to keep a high school in Smiths Grove	1901-1963	17 items
Folder 8	Smiths Grove College – Board of Trustees record book	1884-1901	1 item
Folder 9	Smiths Grove College – Loose items including Board of Trustee minutes	1896-1901	22 items

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD**

MSS SMITHS Grove, Kentucky 1856-2001  
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Information about Smiths Grove, Warren County, Kentucky. Includes material about the community's history, people, churches, schools, and events. Collection contains the original Board of Trustees minutes for Smiths Grove College, 1884-1901.

½ box. 9 folders. 146 items. Originals and photocopies.

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**SUBJECT ANALYTICS**

Allen, Henry D. B1,F2  
 Allen, Riley Harris, 1884-1966 B1,F3  
 Altman, Jean (Beck) B1,F3  
 Avery, O. L., Jr. B1,F7  
 Bohanon family – Relating to B1,F3  
 Chalybeate Springs – Relating to, 1924, 1931 B1,F2  
 Cook, Marlow Webster, b. 1926 B1,F5  
 Covington, Joseph C., 1921-1981 – Mentioned B1,F5  
 Davis, Virginia Wood, 1919-1990 B1,F4  
 Davis, Virginia Wood, 1919-1990 – Relating to B1,F4  
 Ernst, Helen – Correspondence B1,F5  
 Hardy & Son Funeral Homes – Smiths Grove – Relating to B1,F2  
 Harris, Thomas O. – Correspondence B1,F5  
 Helm, David Maury, 1927-1994 – Letters to B1,F6  
 Helm, David Maury, 1927-1994 – Relating to B1,F3  
 Helm, Virginia Stockton (Beck), 1900-1992 – Relating to B1,F3  
 Helm, Virginia Stockton (Beck), 1900-1992 – Correspondence B1,F3,5  
 Helm, Virginia Stockton (Beck), 1900-1992 – Letters to B1,F4  
 Henry, Bill – Correspondence B1,F5  
 Hill, Noble – Letters to B1,F7  
 Huddleston, Walter Darling "Dee," b. 1926 B1,F5  
 Journalists B1,F3-4  
 Keep America Beautiful, Inc. – Relating to B1,F5  
 Madison, Donovan Earl, b. 1914 B1,F3  
 Make Kentucky a Cleaner, Greener Land Committee, Inc. – Relating to B1,F5  
 McFarland, Sarah C. B1,F3  
 McGee, Nora D. B1,F5  
 Miller, Abraham B1,F3

Miss Hall's School – Pittsfield, Massachusetts – Relating to B1,F3  
 Mitchell, Ally B1,F3  
 Mitchell, J. M. B1,F3  
 Oaks, Nellie (Russell), 1911-1991– Relating to B1,F2  
 North Warren High School – Relating to B1,F2  
 Save Our School – Smiths Grove – Relating to B1,F7  
 Smiths Grove Baptist Church – Relating to B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove Christian Church – Relating to B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church – Relating to B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove – Churches B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove College B1,F8-9  
 Smiths Grove – Historic homes B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove – History B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove – Music and musicians B1,F2  
 Smiths Grove – Schools B1,F2,7-9  
 Smiths Grove Woman's Club – Relating to B1,F2,5  
 Snodgrass family B1,F3  
 Terrell, Mary Helen B1,F5  
 Warren County – Relating to  
 Witherspoon, Margaret, 1900-1976 – Relating to B1,F3

Jeffrey 05/25/2010