

Norman Smith Collection

c. 1849-2014

234 textual records, 2 scrapbooks, 42 photographs, 12 artifacts / 3 linear feet / 3 boxes

Norman Raney Smith was born March 6, 1951 in Orange County, California. He was the son of G. Abbott Smith and Levora Raney. His grandparents were Norman V. Raney, brother of Letha Raney, and Frances Songer, sister of Clark Songer. Over the years Mr. Smith collected photographs, documents, scrapbooks, and various artifacts regarding his great-aunt Letha Raney and Robert B. Taylor to whom he was related by marriage.

The collection includes correspondence, scrapbooks, articles, and photographs about Letha Raney's work during World War II, her teaching career, and work as a principal at Corona Junior High School. The Raney portion of the collection documents the impact that Letha Raney had the community and the development of Corona schools. There are twelve photographs of the Taylor and Mason families from the mid-to-late 1800s. The Taylor images provide early glimpses of Corona's founding father and his family.

Shelving Location: A-30, 47

Repository:

Corona Public Library
W.D. Addison Heritage Room
650 S. Main Street
Corona, CA 92882
(951) 279-3593

Heritage.Room@CoronaCA.gov
<https://history.coronapubliclibrary.org/>

Access: Open, no restrictions. Call or email to verify Heritage Room hours or to schedule a research appointment.

Gifts of: Smith, Norman; and Orange County Archives (09/30/2021)

Inventory

*Call # is the Manuscript #/Box #

Call Number	Folder	Description of Records	Leaves
M162/1	1	Finding Aid & Accession Records	
Series 1		Documents	
M162/1	2	U.S. Army Air Forces Certificate, certifying that Letha Raney served 478 hours in the Aircraft Warning Service during World War II. Letter to Letha Raney from the Aircraft Warning Service verifying that she has a Blackout Driving Permit.	2
M162/1	3	Poetry collected by Letha Raney.	6

M162/1	4	Corona Junior High School Student Body Awards list, 1936 - 1952. Handwritten by Letha Raney.	15
		Typed poem titled "Directions" about Corona Junior High School.	
		Corona Junior High School staff handout with the following headings: Organization 1951-1952, Where Is It?, Master Program, and Miscellaneous.	
		Corona Junior High School Faculty Members list 1952 - 1953.	
		Desert Trek, March 18 - 1905, Corona Junior High School Faculty. A handmade pamphlet outlining a faculty visit to Calico.	
M162/1	5	Letha Raney: Personal Correspondence, 1926 - 1961 Included in this folder is a typed letter titled "Jarbidge Nevada November 20th, 1935", addressed to Letha and Gladys. The letter is from R.E. Baty.	47
M162/1	6	Letha Raney: Professional Correspondence, 1935 - 1953	29
		Included in this folder is a letter on Corona Unified School District letterhead, dated April 15, 1952. The letter is addressed to "Miss Letha Raney, Principal". It is a request that she reconsider her resignation from the District. It is signed by George M. Kibby, Secretary, Board of Education.	
		Included in this folder is a letter on Corona Unified School District letterhead, dated May 8, 1952. The letter is addressed to "Miss Letha Raney". It is an acknowledgement of her resignation. It is signed by George M. Kibby, Secretary, Board of Education.	
M162/1	7	Letha Raney: Miscellaneous Documents	42
M162/1	8	Newspaper clippings and three copies of the Corona Daily Independent Golden Jubilee Edition of the newspaper dated Monday, April 27, 1936.	18
M162/1	9	Photographs and Postcards	10
		A black and white photograph mounted on blue cardstock. It is an image of a young woman holding a sleeping infant. The people in the photograph are not identified.	
		Sepia toned photograph of Elkowna Lodge. Written on the back of the photograph is the following note: Elkowna Lodge. The cabin at Barton Flats of the Kimbell Family. "Elkowna" is a made-up word using the first letter of the last names of those present at the opening party in 1917.	
		Corona High School 1912 graduating class postcard	
		Grand Boulevard houses c. 1910 postcard	
		Hotel del Rey postcard	
		Hotel Edinburg in Beaumont, CA postcard.	
		Carnegie library postcard.	
		Glen Ivy Hot Springs postcard.	
South Riverside businesses postcard.			

		Temescal Tin Mines postcard.	
M162/1	10	Emma J. Songer correspondence: A letter from the County of Los Angeles to Mrs. Emma J. Songer (misspelled Souger), thanking her for the recent letter regarding the Colombian idols found in mining operations by Robert B. Taylor [March 9, 1961].	2
		Donation acknowledgement from Board of Governors and Director of the Los Angeles County Museum Acknowledging receipt of a collection six items from Colombia, and Robert B. Taylor [April 18, 1961].	
M162/1	11	Titled "Trip Made by Robt. B. Taylor to Mines in May, 1892". The typed document consists of a diary entry detailing Taylor's trip the Gold Hill mines in the desert near Death Valley.	5
M162/1	12	Booklet "Corona, California / The Circle City" from the Corona Chamber of Commerce produced in 1975.	1 booklet
M162/1	13	A handwritten note, made by Norman Smith, describing the framed watercolor, included in this collection. The note also mentions that his mother's brother was Clark Songer who married to Robert B. Taylor's daughter [note dated, c.2014].	1
M162/1	14	Photographs and Postcards Corona Road Race postcard. Aerial photograph of Corona on a postcard. Corona's Main Street postcard. Boulevard and Ramona postcard. Sixth Street Corona postcard. Letha Raney childhood portrait photograph, 1899. 1512 S. Main with snow 1949. Flooding in Corona on 03/03/1938 photograph. Flooding in Corona March 1938 photograph. Flooding on West Sixth Street 03/03/1938 photograph.	10
M162/1	15	Photographs and Postcards Flooding in Corona on 03/03/1938 photograph. Flooding in Corona on 03/03/1938 photograph. Flooding on W. 6th St. Corona March 3-4-5, 1938 photograph. Corona High School 1910 photograph. Washington School photograph. Lincoln School class photograph. Letha Raney - 3rd row, 5th from right. Corona Junior High Cafeteria Staff photograph. Mrs. Sloan at center. Letha Raney in Corona Junior High School office. Lincoln School students, October 2, 1892 photograph.	9
M162/1	16	Letha and Fred Raney birth and death information.	27
M162/1	17	Letha and Fred Raney school diplomas.	5
M162/1	18	Letha and Fred Raney school report cards and certificates.	18
Series 2 Photographs			
M162/2	PER-aaa-1931	Ambrotype photo of R. B. Taylor's father, James Taylor. The photo is in an embossed frame with a lock and red velour interior. Date of photo: circa 1856	12

	PER-aaa-1932	Ambrotype photo of R. B. Taylor's father, James Taylor (in a top hat and smoking a pipe), in an embossed frame with a lock and red velour interior. Date of photo: circa 1862	
	PER-aaa-1933	Ambrotype photo of James Taylor Jr., brother of Robert B. Taylor, in an embossed frame with a lock and red velour interior. Date of photo: circa 1862	
	PER-aaa-1934	Ambrotype photo of Mary Taylor, sister of Robert B. Taylor. Mary later married James P. Mathes. She died in Chula Vista, CA in December 1929. Date of photo: circa 1863	
	PER-aaa-1935	Ambrotype photo of Mary Taylor, sister of R.B. Taylor. Mary later married James P. Mathes, she passed away in Chula Vista, CA in December 1929. Date of photo: circa 1862	
	PER-aaa-1936	Ambrotype photo of Robert B. Taylor (1849-1940), a founder of Corona, California. Date of photo: circa 1863	
	PER-aaa-1937	Ambrotype photo of R. B. Taylor's mother, Sarah Brown Taylor. Date of photo: circa 1856	
	PER-aaa-1938	Ambrotype photo of R. B. Taylor's mother, Sarah Brown Taylor in an embossed 3-1/4" by 2-3/4" yellow color frame/preserver, mat, glass and backing. The case is missing. Image is difficult to see. Date of photo: circa 1856	
	PER-aaa-1939	Ambrotype photo of a woman peeling potatoes, the woman may be Sarah Brown Taylor. The image is yellow in color and measures 3-1/8" by 2-3/4", with no backing. Very fragile, the image is tied together. Date of the photo: circa 1865	
	PER-aaa-1940	Daguerreotype photos of Sarah Brown Taylor, with James Jr on the left. R. B. Taylor is in the photo on the right. Date of the photos: circa 1856	
	PER-aaa-1941	Daguerreotype photo of Sarah Brown Taylor with James Jr. in an embossed frame with lock and velour interior. Date of the photos: circa 1857	
	PER-aaa-1942	Daguerreotype photo of Warren Mason and Emma S. Mason. Emma would later marry South Riverside founder R. B. Taylor. The cover and lock are missing. Date of photo: circa 1849	
M162/2	19	Photo description forms for each of the photographs in M162/2.	12
Series 3 Scrapbooks and Artifacts			
M162/3		Scrapbook: "The Good Old Days at Corona Junior High / Compiled and edited by You, We Us and Company / -1952-". The album/ scrapbook has a blue cover with gold trim. Inside there are a number of handwritten notes addressed to Letha Raney, photographs, sketches, and other ephemera. [50 pages]	1
		A large book 19" by 11.5" made of wood front and end covers with bronze like embossed metal, shape of a school façade and a banner (still in metal) that says " With all thy knowledge get understanding" on the cover. Contains, roughly, 640 handwritten notes addressed to Miss Raney, dated May 27, 1952. [165 pages]	1

<p>One 12" by 15" picture frame containing "10.5 by13.5" watercolor of R.B. Taylor's House on Grand Blvd. in Corona, with a pocket park across the street. There are two cyanotype photos in the lower left corner of the framed artwork. The watercolor is signed with a 'c' which has a superimposed 'Z' over it and the numbers '90' in the lower right corner. Date: circa 1890.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Decorative piece of wood engraved with: "For Your Cabin. C. R." Dimensions: 2 7/8" x 1 1/8". Found with the framed watercolor of R.B. Taylor's house.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Aluminum plaques issued January 1946, for the sale of United States Savings Bonds during World War II. The front of the plaque reads: "To ___ in appreciation of volunteer service in financing World War II through sale e of United States bonds to 85,000,000 American. Fred Vinson Secretary of the Treasury." Each of the 10 plaques has a name etched into it: Miss Mildred Click, Miss Gayle Harris, Mrs. Irene Pock Holmes, Miss Elizabeth Marquis, Mr. Robert Stauffacher, Mr. Ralph Ambrose, Mr. Ernest Root, Mrs. Catherine Robinson, Miss Hazel Smith, and Miss Sarah Thrasher. The plaques were found in two envelopes tucked into the blue scrapbook.</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>Black and white photograph, "Corona, Calif. High School Graduating Class 1912. Letha Raney - fourth from left - top row."</p>	<p>1</p>

Norman Smith Collection
1948-1952

List of Relocated Items

Location	Resource ID	Description	Item Type
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-060	Corona Junior High School Ceremony. Date: November 7, 1948. Dedication ceremony for Corona Junior High. The ceremony took place on the lawn behind the newly constructed school. Letha Raney, dressed in black, is at the microphone.	Photo
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-061	Corona Junior High School Ceremony. Date: November 7, 1948. Dedication ceremony for Corona Junior High. The ceremony took place on the lawn behind the newly constructed school. The school band is preparing for the ceremony.	Photo
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-062	Corona Junior High School Ceremony. Date: November 7, 1948. Dedication ceremony for Corona Junior High. The ceremony took place on the lawn behind the newly constructed school. The school band is on the left, while attendees stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.	Photo
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-063	Corona Junior High School Ceremony. Date: November 7, 1948. Dedication ceremony for Corona Junior High. The ceremony took place on the lawn behind the newly constructed school. The man at the microphone may be Superintendent Kibby from the Corona Unified School District.	Photo
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-064	Set up or clean-up for the Corona Junior High School Dedication Ceremony. Date: November 7, 1948.	Photo
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-065	Corona Junior High School's Queen and Court. Date: circa 1952. The program may have been part of the school's annual Spring Festival.	Photo
Photograph Drawers	SCH-jun(III)-066	Corona Junior High School Commencement Ceremony. Date: circa 1952.	Photo