

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid RG 6.04

Office of State Auditor

Forrest Smith, 1933-1949

Abstract: Correspondence and subject files of State Auditor Forrest Smith, 1933-1949 (bulk dates, 1933-1945).

Extent: 2.4 cubic ft. (6 Hollinger boxes).

Record Description: Paper.

Alternative Formats: None.

Location: Missouri State Archives.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: Some records contain blueprints, which are closed to the public per RSMO 610.021 (19). In such cases, staff will provide copies in an alternative format.

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Preferred Citation: [Item description], [Date]; [Box and Folder]; [Series]; Forrest Smith, Office of State Auditor RG 6; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

Acquisition Information: Agency transfer. Accession Number 90-029.

Processing Information: Processing completed by Amy C. Nickless on June 9, 2026.

Historical and Biographical Notes

Forrest Smith was born on February 14, 1886, near Hardin in Ray County to James P. and Lillie Hill Smith. He received his secondary education at Woodson Institute in Richmond, Missouri. After graduating from Westminster College in Fulton, Smith taught and served as principal of the Richmond Grammar School. He married Mildred Williams on October 12, 1915, and they raised two daughters.

A Democrat, Smith began his political career in 1910 as deputy assessor for Ray County. He was elected as Ray County Clerk in 1913 and held that position for eight years. From 1921 to 1925, Smith operated a jewelry business in Richmond. Governor Samuel Baker appointed him to the Missouri Tax Commission in 1925. Smith served until 1932 when he was elected State Auditor. He left the State Auditor's office to run in the 1948 gubernatorial election. He won against Murray Thompson and was sworn in as the 42nd Governor of Missouri.

Smith completed his term as governor and retired from public service in 1953. Forrest Lake, located at Thousand Hills State Park near Kirksville, Missouri is named after him. He died March 8, 1962 in Gulfport, Mississippi and is interred in the Sunny Slope Cemetery in Richmond, Missouri.

Timeline

Year	Event
1886	Forrest Smith was born on February 14 in Ray County.
1915	Smith married Mildred Williams on October 12.
1910	Smith became deputy assessor of Ray County.
1913	Smith was elected Ray County clerk.
1921-1925	Smith stepped back from public life to run a jewelry store in Richmond.
1925	Smith was appointed to the Missouri Tax Commission.
1932	Smith was elected State Auditor.
1948	Smith was elected Governor of Missouri.
1953	Smith retired from public service.
1962	Smith passed away on March 8.

Additional Descriptive Information

Bibliography

National Governor's Association, on-line biography of Forrest Smith
<http://www.nga.org/cms/home/governors/past-governors-bios>.

Nelson, Erika K. *Dictionary of Missouri Biography*, edited by Lawrence O. Christensen (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1999), page 701.

Official Manual of the State of Missouri, 1947-1948 (Jefferson City, MO: Office of the Secretary of State, 1948).

Shoemaker, Floyd Calvin. *Missouri and Missourians, Volume IV* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Company, 1943), pages 36-38.

Related Material

[Forrest Smith \(1886-1962\) Papers, 1940-1953 \(C2220\)](#). State Historical Society of Missouri.

[RG3.42 Forrest Smith, 1949-1953](#).

- Finding aid for his term as governor.

Series

The records are organized into the following series:

General Correspondence, 1933-1949
Topical Correspondence, 1933-1949
Subject Files, 1924-1941

General Correspondence, 1933-1949

Extent: 1 cubic ft. (2.5 Hollinger boxes)

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Scope and Content

This series includes correspondence with Auditor's office staff, statewide institutions (educational and eleemosynary), businesses, and the general public. In addition to Smith, half or more of the correspondence is addressed to his Chief Clerk William Allen "June" Holloway. Two topics covered in detail are a budgetary crisis that forced a layoff of most of the county audit team in the late 1930s and the effect of the World War II draft and rationing, mainly gas rationing for field agents and supply rationing for needed machinery replacement and repairs. In 1944-1945 there was copious correspondence regarding delayed federal payments for the Mark Twain National Forest land and federal land around Lake Wappapello. That included correspondence at the local (predominately Wayne County), state, and federal level.

Container List

Box	Folder	Date
1	1	1933, January-March
1	2	1933, April-June
1	3	1933, July-September
1	4	1933, October-December
1	5	1934, January-June
1	6	1934, July-December
1	7	1935, January-June
1	8	1935, July-December
1	9	1936, January-March
1	10	1936, April-June
1	11	1936, July-December
1	12	1937, January-June
1	13	1937, July-December
2	1	1938, January-June
2	2	1938, July-December
2	3	1939, January-June
2	4	1939, July-December
2	5	1940, January-June
2	6	1940, July-December
2	7	1941, January-March
2	8	1941, April-June
2	9	1941, July-December
2	10	1942, January-June

Box	Folder	Date
2	11	1942, July-December
2	12	1943, January-June
3	1	1943, July-September
3	2	1943, October-December
3	3	1944
3	4	1945
3	5	1946
3	6	1947
3	7	1948

Topical Correspondence, 1933-1949

Extent: 1.4 cubic ft. (3.5 Hollinger boxes)

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Scope and Content

The Topical Correspondence series includes correspondence organized by government departments and governmental topics. Some correspondence with the below organizations is also included within the general correspondence. The folder with correspondence from the Governor's office contains correspondence sent by Governors Lloyd Crow Stark (1937-1941) and Forrest C. Donnell (1941-1945) explaining decisions and policy changes that may not appear in their gubernatorial collections, RG 3.39 and RG 3.40. The "State Hospitals" folder includes lists of patients' names from the late 1930s.

Old Age Assistance, 1933-1935, contains policy-related correspondence, which was retained, and requests for applications, which were sampled. Old Age Assistance, 1936-1938, 1940 includes more requests, inquiries into pensions, and listings of pension payouts sent to the State Treasurer; the pension requests were sampled.

Container List

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
3	8	61 st General Assembly, Senate Chamber	1941-1942
3	9	Board of Pharmacy	
3	10	Central Missouri State Teachers College	1933-1946
3	11	Children's Bureau and State Home for Children (also includes Training School for Girls)	1934-1943
3	12	Circuit Courts	1944-1945
3	13	Department of Liquor Control	1934-1944
3	14	Department of Oil Inspection	1933-1943
3	15	Department of Penal Institutions	1934-1945
3	16	Escheats	1932-1935
3	17	General Assembly Claims	1934-1942
4	1	General John J. Pershing National Military Park Association	1933-1935
4	2	Governor's Office	1933-1943
4	3	Income Tax (Missouri Naval Militia)	1944
4	4	Inheritance Tax	1930-1936
4	5	Insurance Department	1941-1944
4	6	Labor & Industrial Inspection Unit	1933-1941
4	7	Lincoln University	1933-1945

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
4	8	Missouri Bureau of Mines	1933-1945
4	9	Missouri State School	1933-1938
4	10	Missouri Training School for Boys	1933-1942
4	11	National Guard	1933-1945
4	12	Northeast Missouri State Teachers College	1933-1943
4	13	Northwest Missouri State Teachers College	1933-1945
4	14	Old Age Assistance	1933-1935
4	15	Old Age Assistance	1936-1938, 1940
4	16	Old Age Assistance Agencies	1936-1938
4	17	Old Age Assistance Ledger	No date
4	18	Old Age Assistance, List of Pensioners for Jefferson, Madison, Mercer, Putnam, St. Francois, and Ste. Genevieve Counties	1936-1938, 1940
4	19	Permanent Seat of Government	1936
4	20	Public Service Commission	1935-1945
4	21	Ste. Genevieve School	1940
4	22	Sales Tax Commission	1935-1943
6	3	Sales Tax Reports	March, 1943-September, 1945
4	23	School of Mines & Metallurgy	1933-1945
4	24	Secretary of State	1933-1948
5	1	Social Security Commission	1937-1946
5	2	Southeast Missouri State Teachers College	1933-1945
5	3	Southwest Missouri State Teachers College	1933-1945
5	4	State Board of Embalming	1937-1943
5	5	State Board of Health	1933-1945
5	6	State Board of Nurse Examiners	April 17, 1934
5	7	State Board of Optometry	1933-1942
5	8	State Board of Osteopath Registration & Examination	1935-1947
5	9	State Fair	1933-1943
5	10	State Highway Department	1933-1948
5	11	State Highway Patrol	1938-1943
5	12	State Historical Society of Missouri	1935-1944
5	13	State Hospitals	1933-1943
5	14	State Poultry Experiment Station	1933-1933

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
5	15	State Purchasing Agent Records	1933-1943
5	16	State Revenue Reports	1940-1942
6	1	State Sanitarium	1933-1944
6	2	State Tax Commission	1936-1944
6	4	Treasury Department	1937-1945
6	5	Trustees-Public School System	December 20, 1945
6	6	Unemployment Compensation Commission	1936-1946
6	7	University of Missouri	1933-1945
6	8	Work Projects Administration	1937-1938
6	9	Writs of Sequestration	1943-1944
6	10	Writs of Sequestration	1945-1948

Subject Files, 1924-1941

Extent: 5 folders and 1 oversized folder

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Scope and Content

Smith's subject files include a mix of documents, including reports and legal documents. Some of these files predate his term in office but were found in his files.

Blueprints are closed due to RSMo 610.021 (19).

M.C. stands for map cabinet. Substitute box for drawer.

Container List

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
6	11	Appropriations	February, 1935
4	4	Capitol Landscaping (Closed)	December 28, 1937
6	12	Costs Billed to the State Auditor	January-March, 1933
6	13	Missouri Commission for the Blind Expense Reports	December, 1940-April, 1941
6	14	Mixed Legal	1924 and No Date
6	15	State Vehicle List and Care Instructions	1931 and 1933