Guide to MS041 Wilbert H. Timmons Papers

Leilani Marshall
Guide to
MS 041
Wilbert H. Timmons Papers
Inclusive dates 1584-1992
Bulk dates 1949-1990
15 feet, 8 inches

Prepared by Leilani Marshall
June 1998

Donated by W.H. Timmons

Citation: Wilbert H. Timmons Papers, MS 041, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library

C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department
University of Texas at El Paso Libraries
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Biographical Sketch

Wilbert Helde Timmons was born in 1915 in Springfield, Missouri. He attended Park College in Missouri where he received a B.A. in History. He received an M.A. in European History from the University of Chicago. After serving in the United States Navy as an officer during World War II, he attended The University of Texas at Austin, where he received a Ph. D. in Latin American History in 1949.

That same year, W.H. Timmons arrived in El Paso to teach history at Texas Western College, now the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). During his years at the university, Dr. Timmons was an avid researcher and writer on Mexican and Texan history, particularly El Paso history. He published many articles and scholarly works, as well as several books, including *Morelos of México, Tadeo Ortiz, Mexican Colonizer and Reformer*. His most popular and well-known work is *El Paso: A Borderlands History*.

From 1962-1965, Dr. Timmons served as the Chair of the Department of History at UTEP. He also served as Director of the Mexican Microfilm Project from 1971-1978, during which time 2,000 rolls of microfilmed archives from Chihuahua and Durango were preserved at UTEP library. Active in several national, state and local historical associations, Dr. Timmons contributed greatly to the written record of El Paso history.

After teaching history for nearly thirty years at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), Dr. Timmons took an early retirement in 1978 and became Professor Emeritus of History. His early retirement was due in part to Dr. Timmons' desire to start working on an El Paso celebration that commemorated the four-hundredth year of European presence in El Paso. In 1981, he was unofficially named "Mr. History" for the role he played in creating support for the Four Centuries celebration.

Another distinguished role he has played is as the creator of the Dr. W.H. Timmons Fund of the El Paso Community Foundation. This foundation was established for the promotion of the town of El Paso, such as the publication of area history pamphlets and the marking of historic buildings and sites in the city and county of El Paso. A map project, undertaken by Dr. Timmons in 1981, to teach El Paso history to seventh grade students in El Paso was also made possible through this fund.
SERIES DESCRIPTION

The W. H. Timmons Papers are arranged in six series:

   Arranged in two subseries - Books and Articles. The Books are further divided into five sections: one for each of the books Timmons authored, one for the book Timmons edited. Each section devoted to the individual book includes a file folder containing publisher correspondence and the research materials used on the books and articles Timmons published. The Articles subseries includes copies of articles by Timmons published in journals and newspapers. The material in this series is arranged alphabetically either by the title of the work or by the subject. When searching by name of individual, use the full name (ie, Henry L. Dexter Papers are in the H's, not the D's). Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

Series II. Community/Professional Activities, 1971-1981. 5 linear inches (1 document box).
   Arranged in four subseries - Microfilm Project, Map Project, El Paso Historic Markers, and 4 Centuries '81. This material includes photographs, newspaper clippings, flyers, transparencies of El Paso area maps, and magazine articles. The material in this series documents the achievements and contributions made by Timmons to the city and county of El Paso.

   Arranged in three subseries - Biographical Information, Personal Papers, Certificates and Awards, and Academic Miscellaneous. This material includes newspaper clippings, photos, and writings by Timmons. The Personal Papers includes professional correspondence and legal matter documenting Timmons' history as a professor at the University of Texas at El Paso. Certificates and Awards contains the awards, certificates and diplomas awarded to Timmons by various organizations for his efforts in the El Paso community and for his contributions to these associations. This series includes framed material and some plaques. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

Series IV. Correspondence, 1966-1992. 5 linear inches (1 document box).
   Arranged in two subseries - Literary Works and Academic. The Literary Works contains professional correspondence related to the Texas Western Press as well as minutes of meetings of the board of the Texas Western Press. Other correspondence is of a professional nature and relates to books Timmons wrote. Also included in this series are book reviews written by Timmons. The Academic subseries contains correspondence relating to the UT El Paso library, and other correspondence with colleagues.
Series V. Research Files, 1538-1985. 59 linear inches (9 document boxes, 2 oversize boxes).

Arranged in two subseries - Holdings Lists and General Research. This material includes lists of archival holdings, library holdings, indexes to archival holdings, photostats, photocopies and photographs of Spanish documents, transcriptions of letters, journal and magazine articles, photographs, maps, student and faculty papers, and oral histories. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

Series VI. Realia. 28.75 linear inches (1 document box, 2 flat boxes)

This series contains a set of Mexican spurs, a replica of the Aztec calendar, and four reels of film about Mexico.
Scope and Content Note

The Wilbert H. Timmons Papers (15 feet, 8 inches) is composed primarily of the research papers used by Dr. Timmons during his decades of study of the El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua area. These documents include photocopies and photostats of published material, maps, transparencies, transcriptions of letters, official documents, oral histories, newspaper clippings, student papers, theses, computer disks, and photographs. Most material of a more personal or family nature were not donated. The collection is organized into six series.

The first series is Literary Endeavors, which contains the research notes and material used by Timmons in the books and articles written and edited by him. Included are bound copies of two of Timmons' works and a copy of another work on disk. There are also copies of Timmons' journal, newspaper, and magazine articles, some of which are typed copies. Newspaper clippings, reviews of Timmons' books, and photographs of Timmons are a part of this series. The material is arranged in alphabetical order by title of document or by subject. Some large material and documents are filed separately in an oversize box.

The second series contains information about Timmons' Community and Professional Activities. Timmons was very active in the El Paso area community, especially in areas of historical importance. This series contains photographs of some of the historical markers around El Paso that Timmons was responsible for getting erected, transparency maps he used in educating the children of El Paso, and newspaper clippings and flyers reporting on and advertising the 4 Centuries '81 celebration that took place in El Paso in 1981, in which Timmons played a large part in bringing together. Included in this series is information about Timmons' role in the microfilm project that took place in the Chihuahua Archives, Mexico.

The Biographical series contains the bulk of Timmons' personal information that can be found in the collection, most of which is professional. Correspondence between Timmons and the University of Texas at El Paso make up a significant part of this series. Also included here are copies of Timmons' resume and vita, newspaper and magazine articles written about Timmons, and a bound copy of Timmons' Master thesis. This series also contains the awards, certificates, and diplomas awarded to Timmons by various organizations for his efforts in the El Paso community and for his contributions to these associations. Information on Timmons' life apart from the University and his community activities is scarce. This series includes framed material and some plaques. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.
The fourth series contains the majority of Timmons’ Correspondence, both personal and professional. Most of the correspondence is professional in nature, between colleagues, and relates to Timmons’ work and writings. Included in this series are book reviews written by Timmons. Two file folders contain some correspondence relevant to the Texas Western Press publishing company, and include minutes of meetings of the board of the Texas Western Press.

The bulk of research material Timmons used in writing his books and articles is in the Research Files series. The subseries Holdings List includes indexes to various archive and library collections, calendars of microfilm in archives and libraries, and guides to the holdings of various libraries. The subseries General Research includes various other types of research material, such as copies of letters, photographs of historic documents, journal articles, and papers. The material is arranged in alphabetical order by title of the document or by subject. Some large material and documents are located in an oversize box.

The final series, Realia, contains objects of various sizes. They include a set of Mexican spurs that dates back to the turn of the century, a replica of the Aztec calendar, and four reels of film, three about the Mexican Revolution and one about México.
PROVENANCE
In 1993, Dr. W.H. Timmons donated his research material and personal papers to the Special Collections Department of the University of Texas at El Paso Library. The first of the material arrived that same year, and a second accession was added in 1998. A formal gift deed was signed in 1993.

RESTRICTIONS
Photocopying of unpublished manuscripts is prohibited due to copyright restrictions.

LITERARY RIGHTS
Permission to publish material from the W.H. Timmons Papers, MS 041, must be obtained from the C.L. Sonnichson Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library.

RELATED COLLECTIONS
Texas Western Press Records, MS 366, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library.
# LITERARY ENDEAVORS

## BOOKS written by Timmons

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| **8** | El Paso: A Borderlands History on thirty-two 5 1/4 diskettes, and on two 3 1/2 diskettes
| **9** | El Paso: A Borderlands History
| **10** | El Paso Area Fact Book, 1983
| **11** | El Paso History: Individuals
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*John F. Finerty Reports Porfirian México 1879*

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<td>Correspondence relating to Mexican spurs</td>
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<td>Replica of the Aztec calendar</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>Reels of film--three of the Mexican Revolution</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>Reel of Film--&quot;Mexico's History&quot;</td>
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