

1956

0075: Floyd J. Smith Diaries, 1887-1892

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FLOYD J. SMITH DIARIES

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FLOYD J. SMITH DIARIES, 1887-1893

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Explanatory notes:

Bx refers to "box" in which papers are filed

Bk refers to "book".

CONTENT AND SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

The Floyd J. Smith diaries were written between 1887 and 1893, when Floyd Smith was a young man of 16 to 21 years of age. The entries are concerned primarily with his great interest in reading, music, painting, photography, and hunting. Included in the collection are two medical notebooks from the University of Maryland, where Mr. Smith was a student. Of particular interest in the diaries are the passages describing holiday activities in Grafton, West Virginia, and others. The last diary describes his first year at the University of Maryland Medical School in Baltimore.

FLOYD J. SMITH, 1871-1910

Floyd J. Smith was born in 1871. He was raised in Pruntytown, West Virginia and was a boyhood friend of G. H. A. Kunst (Ms 8) and Samuel Jenkins (Ms 5). He attended Grafton High School and the Medical College at the University of Maryland. He died in a Fairmont, West Virginia, hospital on February 5, 1910 (see Ms 5 Bk 21 - Feb. 6, 1910).

FLOYD J. SMITH DIARIES

I. Diaries

Bk 1 Diary, Dec. 27, 1887 - Feb. 4, 1888; Nov. 23 - Dec. 27, 1888

Jan. 17, 1888 - A lengthy entry describing new studies at school and a robbery at Hull's jewelry store.

Nov. 24, 1888 - Intended to go to Grafton, but didn't. Still looking for "The Pathfinder" through the mail. Got a catalogue of new and old novels from George P. Humphrey.

Bk 2 Diary, Dec. 28, 1888 - March 18, 1889

Dec. 29, 1888 - John Deck and Harry Rogers passed through on their way home from the country with guns but no game. Began reading "Pendennis" and likes it as well as "Vanity Fair".

Feb. 22, 1889 - Went hunting and came across Behen in the woods making shingles. "It reminded me very strongly of some of Scott's delightful descriptions of the 'merry greenwoods'...Miss Minnie McClelland says, 'I pity the child who is not brought up on Scott'. I think that they gain much romantic beauty from the reading of Scott. And who can fail to appreciate the beauties of nature after reading Irving."

Bk 3 March 19, 1889 - July 8, 1889

March 28, 1889 - "Finished 'The Old Curiosity Shop' today...It is no mystery to me now why Dickens shut himself up after writing the death scene of 'Little Nell'. After reading the book she becomes a living reality..."

June 1, 1889 - "Couldn't write last night as I had a very severe spell of neuralgia. Had to take a large dose of morphine to obtain relief."

July 8, 1889 - "Pruntytown is attempting to have the Boy's Reform School located in the old Courthouse. Sullivan was the winner in his bout against Kilrain - 75 rounds."

Bk 4 July 9 - Aug. 7, Dec. 21, 28, 1889

July 15, 1889 - Interesting description of feather bed men and the technique they use to clean feather beds.

Aug. 5, 1889 - "Am giving the Shorthand more time than anything else not."

Dec. 21, 1889 - Orders a 12 volume set by Sir Walter Scott; goes to hear the Boston Quintet Club with Sam.

Bk 5 Jan. 16, 1892 - March 22, 1892

Feb. 9, 1892 - "Got a letter from Sam today...Talked to a man today about renting my farm. He talks very favorable. Had a little talk with Albert about supertime..."

Feb. 18, 1892 - Description of a woods near Fetterman where the boys used to go swimming. Smith goes to get a good negative.

Bk 6 March 23, 1892 - May 30, 1892

April 2, 1892 - "Started to Grafton about 11 o'clock...Saw Mary on the back porch. Told me to go in. Saw Sam and Leps. They both have pipes, and are great smokers. Jenks can simply eat tobacco! Stayed until 3 or 4 o'clock and both of them came down in town with me...Mary stays in the telephone office in the daytime now...Kunst was down a short time tonight."

May 12, 1892 - "Was down at gran's again this afternoon. He made four pipes, before stopping...He makes them out of black walnut and uses the stems found in the woods that I have spoken of before. This makes good clean smoke, and when they become a little dirty, both the pipe and the stem can be thrown away."

Bk 7 July 16, 1892 - Aug. 29, 1892

Aug. 3, 1892 - "Got the announcement of the University of Maryland Medical School today...An entrance examination is required consisting of an English composition of not less than 200 words and exam in higher arithmetic...Read 5

chapters in “Martin C.” today...”

Aug. 24, 1892 - “My acquaintance from the R. S. (Reform School) was over and used my dark room for developing a plate. From some cause his negative was a failure.”

Bk 8 Nov. 14, 1892 - March 28, 1893

Nov. 14, 1892 - Lengthy entry describing his return to school in Baltimore, a dissecting room at the medical school, and the Lexington Street Market.

Jan. 3, 1893 - Description of a stop in Washington, D.C.: the capital, “the consummation of architecture, the Washington Monument,...It is indeed of very lonesome walk out there at night and when you are there you are quite out of the city...”, Ford’s theatre, and other sites. The rest of the entry describes his return to Grafton and Pruntytown for Christmas.

March 26, 1893 - “Cabel and I took a long walk this morning...Went out through Eutaw Place first...We went out on St. Charles Street this afternoon, and to the Mr. Vernon M. E. Church tonight.”

Bk 9 - 10 Medical Notebooks - University of Maryland Medical School, October, 1893.