



ST. MARY'S
UNIVERSITY

Digital Commons at St. Mary's University

Finding Aids

Special Collections

Fall 9-2023

Schmitz Collection on the Diplomatic History of the Texas Republic

Lawrence Scrivani SM

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.stmarytx.edu/findingaids>

Inventory of the
**Schmitz Collection on
The Diplomatic History of
the Texas Republic**

Collection Number SC 9
Blume Library Special Collections

StMU

Saint Mary's University of San Antonio
One Camino Santa Maria
San Antonio TX 78228-8530 USA
Phone: 210-436-3441
www.lib.stmarytx.edu

Descriptive Summary

Repository Blume Library, Saint Mary's University of San Antonio, Texas
Donors Brother Joseph Schmitz, SM; donor number: 1900.5
Creator Brother Joseph Schmitz, SM
Title Schmitz Collection on the Diplomatic History of the Texas Republic
Inclusive Dates 1840-1844
Reference Code SC 9
Languages German, French and English
Extent 1 cubic foot
Abstract This collection contains over 1000 pages of documents obtained from the Royal Library of Belgium and from the State Archives of the Hanseatic cities of Germany relating to the diplomatic history of the Texas Republic. Brother Joseph Schmitz of Saint Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas obtained the documents from Belgium in 1947-1948 and those from Germany in 1960. His intention was to published an augmented edition of his earlier book about the statecraft of the Texas Republic. He succeeded in making translations of many of these documents but his project to republish was frustrated by his death from cancer in 1965.

Administrative Information

Restrictions to Access: none
Usage Restrictions: none
Alternative Form of Material: microfilm
Custodial History:
Acquisitions Information: The collection was obtained from its creator.
Processing Information: The material is in its original order
Preferred Citation: Saint Mary's University of San Antonio, Texas
Copyright Notice: Copyright to the translations and other work product of Bro. Joseph Schmitz are retained by St. Mary's University of San Antonio, Texas

Catalog Headings

Belgium--History--1830-1914

Hanseatic League

Texas – Foreign relations

Texas – History – Republic, 1836-1846

Related Collections

The National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States (NAMBUS) in San Antonio, Texas, retains the personal papers of Brother Joseph Schmitz. Among these are the travel documents for his 1960 visit to Europe as well related research notes for his earlier publications.

Biographical Note

Brother Joseph Schmitz, SM, PhD, was chair of the Department of History, St. Mary's University in 1960 when he traveled to archives in Europe in search of documents concerning the diplomatic history of the Republic of Texas. From the beginning of his teaching career at Saint Mary's University in 1933, he had focused on Texas history. His early publications included: *Texas Culture in the Days of the Republic, 1836-1846* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1936); and *Texan Statecraft, 1836-1845* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1941). His dissertation was entitled *The Diplomatic History of Texas* (Loyola University of Chicago, 1939). Schmitz was instrumental in securing the Spanish and Mexican Era Archives of the City of Laredo for Saint Mary's University owing to his connections with other scholars of Texas history. The materials in this collection resulted from an effort to augment and republish his then out-of-print *Diplomatic History of Texas*. In 1947-1948 he used the good services of confreres in Belgium to obtain microfilmed copies of documents regarding negotiations between Texas and Belgium toward a treaty of friendship and navigation. During 1960 he traveled to Europe to search the archives of the Hanseatic Cities in northern Germany to discover new documentation. Returning to Texas, he began translating his findings. However, his work was cut short by the diagnosis of terminal cancer in 1965 leading to his death on February 16, 1966.

Collection Overview

The collection contains two bodies of documentation from European sources about the diplomatic history of the Republic of Texas. The first body is from the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels in the French language. It contains the reports of artillery major, V. Pirson, "charged with a special mission to Texas" (a spy in other words) as well as correspondence between Anson Jones and the Belgian ministry of foreign affairs. The second body of documentation in the German language is from the Hanseatic cities of northern Germany (the Republics of Frankfurt am Main, Lubeck, Bremen and Hamburg) regarding a treaty of Friendship and Navigation. Brother Schmitz obtained the documents on negative microfilm and had these printed as paper positives in the United States. The documents from the Hanseatic League fill three bound volumes with a total of 1044 leaves each measuring 11 by 14 inches. Schmitz's translations into English constitute the third body of documents in this collection. The translations are in typescript format. Finally, there is one folder each of correspondence concerning arranging access to the Belgian and to the Hanseatic archives.

Summary of Series

- 1: Texas Republic and the Kingdom of Belgium
- 2: Texas in the Hanseatic Archives

Series 1: Texas Republic and the Kingdom of Belgium, 1839-1845

Content Note: Brother Joseph Schmitz obtained the documents on microfilm from the *Bibliothèque Royale* in Brussels with the assistance of Brother Clarence Saunders. Upon receiving the microfilm in Texas, Brother Schmitz printed paper copies and then obtained translations of the French possibly completed by Father Joseph Ei, SM (1875-1961). Schmitz described the goal of his research as: “the essential thing I am trying to demonstrate is that no treaty was ever made” between Texas and Belgium.

- Box 1/1 Correspondence with Brother Clarence Saunders, SM, 1947 Dec to 1948 May
Content note: The worldwide headquarters of the Society of Mary (Marianists) was located in Nivelles near Brussels during these years. Brother Clarence Saunders served as secretary there and Brother Bernard Schad served on the council. Both were Americans personally known to Brother Joseph Schmitz so he used their good services to obtain microfilm copies of documents in the Royal Library of Belgium. This correspondence concerns their efforts. In addition to the diplomatic correspondence, Brother Schmitz also sought documents concerning the buildings on the downtown campus of St. Mary’s College in San Antonio during the 1870s which he believed were in the archives of the Marianist headquarters.
- Box 1/2 “Rapport sur le Texas: Commerce” / par Le major d’artillerie
chargé d’une mission spéciale au Texas, V. Pirson; *Moniteur Commercial de*
1843. Tome VII: 259-275, [Bruxelles or Antwerp]; Considerations generals sur le
Commerce du Texas
Folder contains the photographs of the originals made by the *Bibliothèque Royale* in Brussels’s
and a translation into English in typescript format.
- Box 1/3 Translations of documents in typescript format 1841-1843
The original documents are from the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur
Service des Archives, Bruxelles; Dossier 2218 *Négociations avec la Texas and Dossier 2013*
Mission Pirson
- Box 1/4 Translations of documents in manuscript format 1841-1843
The translated documents herein are the same as in preceding folder
- Box 1/5 Translations of documents in typescript format 1841-1843
The original documents are from the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur
Service des Archives, Bruxelles; Dossier 2218 *Négociations avec la Texas and Dossier 2013*
Mission Pirson
- Box 2/1 Photostats of five letters 1842
The letters are between Anson Jones and the foreign ministry of Belgium.
Translations into English are attached to two of the five

Series 2: Texas in the Hanseatic Archives

Content Note: The Hanseatic cities with documents in this collection include: Hamburg, Frankfurt am Main, Bremen, and Luebeck

Box 1/6	Correspondence between Schmitz and Hanseatic archives	1960-1961
Box 1/7	Correspondence with University Microfilms Inc. Negotiations for printing and binding paper positives of the microfilm negatives from the Hanseatic archives	1960
Box 1/8	“Partial Translations taken from the Archives of Bremen and Hamburg” / by Joseph Schmitz; with Contents and Notes; Format: spiral-bound typescripts	no date
Box 1/9	“Partial Translations taken from the Archives of Bremen and Hamburg” unbound typescript translations without contents and notes	
Box 1/10	Ephemera and manuscript notes found with the collection	no dates
Box 2	Staatsarchiv Hamburg leaves 1 to 347 Bound volume of facsimiles printed from microfilm measuring 11 by 14 inches. Manuscript adhesions found at leaves 59, 61, 62, 76, 78, 80, 100, 103, 110, 114, 115, 121, 129, 132, 135, 190, 209, 221, 222, 224, 229, 230, 231, 234, 260, 261, 284, 289 (translation) 292, 294, 295, 299, 300, and 311. Beginning at leaf 262 is a “Convention of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation between the Republic of Texas and the Hanseatic Republics of Lubeck, Bremen and Hamburg,” in alternating pages of English and German Luebeck leaves 348 to 362 Comerzbibliothek Hamburg leaves 363 to 369 Frankfurt leaves 370 to 372	
Box 3	Staatsarchiv Bremen, Volume 1 Bound volume of facsimiles printed from microfilm, on leaves numbered 1 to 343, measuring 11 by 14 inches Staatsarchiv Bremen, Volume 2 Bound volume of facsimiles printed from microfilm, on leaves numbered 344 to 697, measuring 11 by 14 inches Typescript adhesions (translations) at leaves: 359, 362, and 363 Lubeck Frankfurt Hamburg, Comerzbibliothek de Handelskammer	