



The Wittliff Collections

Guide to the Jay Milner Papers 1960–1994

Collection SWWC-064

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Milner, Jay Dunston, 1923-2001
Title:	Guide to the Jay Milner Papers
Dates:	1960–1994
Abstract:	The Jay Milner papers cover 1960-1994 and consist of newspaper clippings of columns and reviews written by Milner, personal correspondence, photographs, and print materials. Series include I. Works (1960-1994,) II. Correspondence (1960-1993,) III. Photographs (undated) and Printed Materials (1970-1977).
Identification:	SWWC-064
Extent:	1 Linear Feet, 2 boxes
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

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Biographical Notes

J. Dunston Milner was born near Muleshoe, Texas on October 30, 1926. The son of John and Nina Milner, "Jay" moved with his family around small towns in West Texas, following the development of cotton farms. The Milner family settled in Lubbock while Jay was in the second grade, and he later became a member of the Lubbock High Westerners state champion football team. After graduating from high school, Milner attended college at Lubbock's Texas Technological College, but then entered military service because of World War II. While in the Navy, Milner also attended school at Pittsburgh College. After his discharge from military service, Milner earned his Bachelor's degree from Mississippi Southern University in 1948, later earning his Master's degree, also from MSU, in 1951.

After college, Milner taught at the high school level and coached football for three years, and then moved to the Mississippi Delta area during the racially turbulent 1950s, working at the Hattiesburg, Mississippi Hattiesburg American, and the Pulitzer-Prize winning Democrat-Times of Greenville, Mississippi. In 1959 Milner moved to New York to join the staff of the now-defunct New York Herald Tribune to serve as the assistant to the editorial page editor. In 1961, having recently published his first novel, *Incident at Ashton*, Milner quit his job and returned to Texas to concentrate on his writing. It was at this time that Milner met and became friends with a group of Texas men who were also becoming writers: Bud Shrake, Gary Cartwright, Dan Jenkins, and Billy Lee Brammer.

After a few years as a freelance writer, in 1965 Milner joined the faculty of Texas Christian University in Fort Worth as a professor of journalism, and three years later moved on to Southern Methodist University to serve as the Acting Chair of the Journalism Department. After leaving his job at SMU, Milner worked as a news anchor for the Fort Worth PBS affiliate for one year. After resigning his news anchor job, for a brief time Milner took over editorial responsibilities for *Iconoclast*, a Dallas weekly newspaper that had been created as an underground paper in the 1960s.

Milner was the founding editor of the short-lived Texas Music magazine, but the magazine folded quickly due to financial problems. After the bankruptcy of Texas Music, Milner moved with his mother and daughter to Lufkin. While in Lufkin, Milner began to write a column for the

Lufkin Daily News. The Daily News was eventually bought by Cox Newspapers, and Milner wrote for the newspaper and Cox for over fifteen years. Since 1995, Milner has lived in Fort Worth with his wife Gail, whom he married in 1983. Upon his move to Fort Worth, Milner began to concentrate on a memoir of his days as a Texas writer in the sixties and seventies. The book, *Confessions of a Maddog: A Romp through the High-flying Texas Music and Literary Era of the Fifties to the Seventies*, was published in 1998.

Scope and Contents

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Administrative Information

Physical Location

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use:
<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html>.

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Jay Milner, 1994-1995

Preferred Citation

Jay Milner Papers, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University.

Conditions Governing Use

Materials from the Wittliff Collections are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study. The user assumes responsibility for determining copyright status, obtaining permission to publish, and abiding by U.S. copyright laws.
<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/visit/policies/publication.html>

Controlled Access Headings

- Authors, American -- Texas
- Journalists
- Texas -- Newspapers

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Works, 1960 - 1994

Photocopies, 1960 - 1994

Box	Folder	
1	1	Photocopies, 1960 - 1985
1	2	Photocopies, 1986 - 1987
1	3	Photocopies, 1988
1	4	Photocopies, 1989
1	5	Photocopies, 1990
1	6	Photocopies, 1991
1	7	Photocopies, 1992
1	8	Photocopies, 1993 - 1994

Originals, 1960 - 1992

1	9	Originals, 1960 - 1992
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Series II: Correspondence, 1966 - 1993

1	10-11	Larry L. King, 1966 - 1993
2	1	Bud Shrake, 1967 - 1991
2	2	John Edward Weems, 1981 - 1993
2	3	General Correspondence, 1970 - 1991

Includes correspondence from writer Billie Lee Brammer, Jim Fain, John Henry Faulk, Jody Gent, Grace, Keith Gregory, Dorys C. Grover, John O. Lumpkins, Otto Mullinax, Lloyd A. Storrs, M.D., W.K. Stratton, Frances B. Vick, and Susan Walker.

Series III: Photographs, circa 1970

2	4	Photographs, circa 1970
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Photographs Series consists of five black and white snapshots of Billie Lee Brammer, Bud Shrake, Larry McMurtry, A.C. Greene, and Jay Milner.

Series IV: Printed Materials, 1970 - 1976

2 5 Printed Materials, 1970 - 1976

Programs and invitations for Willie Nelson's 4th of July Picnics, one copy of Texas Music magazine, one copy of The Nieman Reports, one copy of The Quill, and the original manilla envelope in which the materials were originally kept by Milner. The majority of the articles relate to Willie Nelson.