

SOUTHWESTERN WRITERS COLLECTION
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TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY - SAN MARCOS

Jay Milner
Papers, 1960-1993

2 boxes (1 linear foot)

Acquisition: Gifts donated by Jay Milner, 1994-1995.

Access: Open for Research.

Processed by: Amanda Thompson, 2002.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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, to live on the family home place. 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.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

Incident at Ashton, Appleton, 1961.

Confessions of a Maddog: A Romp through the High-lying Texas Music and Literary Era of the Fifties to the Seventies. Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Press, 1998.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS

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 (n.d.) and Printed Materials (1970-1977).

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1: Works [1960-1994]

This series includes clippings of columns and reviews which Milner wrote during his days as a contributor to several newspapers, including the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, the *Lufkin Daily News*, and the *Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel*. The clippings are arranged in chronological order, and acid-free photocopies have been made of all clippings.

Series 2: Correspondence [1966-1993]

This series includes Milner's correspondence. Most of the letters are dealing with personal issues between friends. The letters are mostly those sent by friends to Milner. In some cases, Milner attached copies of his replies to the letters. Milner often grouped letters together with staples. These groupings have been retained, and each group is filed by the date of the letter at the beginning of the group.

Subseries A. King, Larry L. [1966-1993] Additional correspondence between King and Milner can be found in the Larry L. King Papers, also in Southwestern Writers Collection.

Subseries B. Shrake, Bud [1967-1991]

Subseries C. John Edward Weems [1981-1993]

Subseries D. General Correspondence [1970-1988] 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 3: Photographs (n.d., circa 1970s)

Five b/w snapshots of Billie Lee Brammer, Bud Shrake, Larry McMurtry, A.C. Greene, and Jay Milner.

Series 4: 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.

INVENTORY

	Box	File
Series 1: Works (1960-1994)		
Photocopies		
1960-1985	840	7
1986-1987		8
1988		9
1989		10
1990		11
1991		12
1992		13
1993-1994		14
Originals		
1960-1992		15
Series 2: Correspondence (1966-1993)		
Subseries A: Larry L. King (1966-1993)	841	1-2
Subseries B: Bud Shrake (1967-1991)		3
Subseries C: John Edward Weems (1981-1993)		4
Subseries D: General Correspondence (1970-1991)		5
Series 3: Photographs (n.d., ca. 1960s)		6
Series 4: Printed Materials (1970-77)		7