

# **TRANKOVICH COLLECTION OF SMITH L. PUTNAM PAPERS**

A Guide to the Collection in Garrett Park Town Archives

Prepared 7/18/2019

**GARRETT PARK TOWN ARCHIVES**

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## **TITLE OF COLLECTION**

Trankovich Collection of the Smith L. Putnam Papers

## **REFERENCE NUMBER(S)**

2014.0003

2014.0004

2014.0005

2014.0006

## **DATES OF CREATION**

1898-1923; 1937-1951

## **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Smith Lee Putnam was born in Pentwater, MI on February 27, 1882. He served in the United States Marines in 1900 and purchased a home in Garrett Park in 1903. He served as a Garrett Park Town Council member from 1907 to 1908 and later as the town clerk from 1910 to 1928. Notably, Putnam was the first clerk in Garrett Park to serve a term exceeding 3 years, following a string of seven predecessors. In addition to serving the town, Putnam founded his own insurance company, which continued until at least 1942. Putnam died in 1949 at the age of 67 and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA. His professional and personal papers were held by various members of his family before their acquisition.

The Town of Garrett Park was founded in 1886 by Henry Copp under the notion of creating an ideal suburb.<sup>1</sup> The town was officially chartered 12 years later in 1898 in response to a serious outbreak of waterborne typhoid. This led to the election of the town's first mayor, Eugene D.F. Brady, and a four-man council to oversee the town. The early years of the charter featured the town's first appointment of a clerk, a sheriff, and a health official. As town clerk, it was Putnam's responsibility to retain the town's records. At the time he was town clerk, it was customary for clerks to keep town records in their homes.

## **EXTENT**

2 cubic feet: 4 letter boxes, oversized materials

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Trankovich Collection contains records dating from 1898 to 1951 and comprises both historical town records and Putnam's personal business-related papers. The town records include decrees, appointment letters, checks, and correspondence with various town residents. Prior to the 1980s, it was customary for town officials, such as the clerk/treasurer, to keep official records in his/her own home, as the town did not have a

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<sup>1</sup> Shidler, Barbara, ed. (1974). *Garrett Park: A History of the Town from its Beginnings to 1970*. Maryland: Town of Garrett Park.

designated office. Highlights of the collection include documents related to the early administration of Garrett Park, construction of the sewage system, construction of a roadway between Garrett Park and Kensington, and early budget and financial documents. Putnam's personal papers consist primarily of bills and business transactions related to his insurance business.

This collection is organized into four boxes: Trankovich Collection I, Trankovich Collection II, Trankovich Collection III, and Trankovich Collection IV.

## **BOX DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Box I: 1898-1919 (0.5 cubic feet)**

These materials document the various aspects of Garrett Park following its charter in 1898. Significant documents include records detailing the administrative dealings of the town. The box includes appointment letters, resignation letters, and paychecks of various officials; citizen complaints; records of tax collection and appropriations; and payments for municipal services, such as construction and electricity. Folders are arranged chronologically by year.

### **Box II: 1920-1952 (0.5 cubic feet)**

These materials consist mostly of financial records of the town and Putnam himself. Significant town records include payments towards the creation of a roadway and a sewer system. Folders are arranged chronologically by date.

### **Box III: Stacked Papers I-VI (0.5 cubic feet)**

This box exclusively contains Putnam's personal and professional financial records. Folders are ordered numerically.

### **Box IV: Stacked Papers & Cash Books (0.5 cubic feet)**

This box exclusively contains Putnam's personal and professional financial records. Folders are ordered numerically for stacked papers and chronologically by year for the cash books.

## **LANGUAGE**

English

## **CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS**

This collection is open for research.

## **USING THIS COLLECTION**

Records in this collection are available primarily in hardcopy form; although, historical town records dating to about 1920 have been digitized. To request use of this collection, please contact the Town Archivist to arrange a visit.

The preferred citation for materials from this collection is:

Garrett Park Town Archives, Garrett Park, MD. "Trankovich Collection of the Smith L. Putnam Papers." Box number and Box name. Folder title.

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## **PROVENANCE**

The Garrett Park Town Archives acquired this collection through a donation from a descendent of Smith L. Putnam. Putnam's records were held by various family members in the years prior to their donation.

## **PROCESSING PROCEDURES**

General processing procedures included discarding unnecessary binders and metal pins or paperclips, as well as arranging and organizing documents. We placed oversized documents in a separate storage box. Separation sheets were inserted in the original location within the folder to indicate the new location of these documents.

We performed preservation copying of newspaper clippings whenever feasible. Records in folders were arranged, unless otherwise indicated, in forward chronological order, with undated records appearing at the end of the folder.

## **ARCHIVES STAFF & FINDING AID AUTHOR**

The collection of printed material was found already processed but without a finding aid. Volunteer Marco Tamara prepared this finding aid under the supervision of Claire McDonald, MLIS, Town Archivist.

## **BOX INVENTORY**

### **Box I – Trankovich Collection I**

Undated

1898-1905

1906-1907

1908-1910

1911-1914

1915-1916

1917-1919

### **Box II – Trankovich Collection II**

1920-1922

1923-1925

1926-1928

1937-1939

1940-1951

Undated

Checks

### **Box III – Trankovich Collection III**

Stacked Papers I

Stacked Papers II

Stacked Papers III

Stacked Papers IV

Stacked Papers V

Stacked Papers VI

**Box IV – Trankovich Collection IV**

Stacked Papers I

Stacked Papers II

Stacked Papers III

Cash Books to June 1, 1905

Cash Books from June 1, 1905 to May 1, 1912

Cash Books from May 1, 1912 to July 1, 1917