Harry Houghton Swift was born in Adelaide on 22 July 1891, the eldest son of Dr Harry Swift (born 1858 in Cambridgeshire, England, arrived in South Australia 1887) and his wife, the youngest daughter of Joseph Peacock. He was educated at the Collegiate School of St Peter, Hackney, and the University of Adelaide. Later he became an electrical engineer in England.

Houghton Swift was in Germany when World War One was declared and was interned for the duration of the war at the English Camp, Ruhleben near Berlin. At some stage after his release in 1918 he had the photographs and documents relating to his Ruhleben internment mounted in an album. The album and another bound set of magazines from Ruhleben Camp were purchased by the Mortlock Library in 1993.

A brother of Houghton Smith was the Surgeon Sir Brian Herbert Swift who died in 1969. He served in France and won the Military Cross in 1917. A younger brother was killed in France in 1918 during World War One.

Source
1. PRG 982/1
2. "The Advertiser" Friday 1 October 1937, p. 31 (obituary from Dr H. Swift Senior)

N.H.T.
1993

Album of photographs and documents relating to the English Camp, Ruhleben, Germany. 1914-1918. 5cm. 1 volume

Internment Camp Magazine "In Ruhleben Camp" 1915-1917. 5cm. 1 volume.
[Printed in Berlin, Germany and bound as single volume.]

Photographs c1907-c1910. 4cm. 14 items.
[Photographs of sports teams, rowing, lacrosse and boxing, and St Peter's College student groups in which H.H. Swift appears.]