

Harry Hunt Ransom:

An Inventory of His Personal Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Ransom, Harry Hunt, 1908-1976

Title: Harry Hunt Ransom Personal Papers

Dates: 1895-1983

Extent: 4 boxes, 1 oversize flat file

Abstract: The personal papers consisting of preparatory school and college-level student papers (essays, tests, and class notes), photographs, correspondence, and memorabilia document the academic career of this professor of English and chancellor of The University of Texas.

RLIN Record #: TXRC97-A23

Language: English

Access: Open for Research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 1989

Processed by: Bob Taylor, 1997

Repository: [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

Biographical Sketch

Harry Hunt Ransom, the most significant library builder and educator of the University of Texas' last half century, was born in Galveston on 22 November 1908. From his parents, Harry H. and Marion G. Cunningham Ransom, he early formed habits of public-spiritedness and diligence that characterized his entire life. After graduating from the University of the South in 1928, Harry Ransom received the master's and doctoral degrees in English from Yale. Ransom arrived on the University of Texas campus in 1935 as an instructor in the English Department and continued his association with the university until his death in 1976.

Harry Ransom was made an assistant professor in 1938, and upon his return from military service--he left the Army Air Forces in 1946 with the rank of major--he became an associate professor. Marriage to Hazel Louise Harrod in 1951 and increasingly responsible administrative posts followed, and by 1961 Harry Ransom had been named chancellor of the University of Texas system. He held that post until 1971.

It was during the middle 1950s that Harry Ransom first articulated his desire to "make a good library better." He succeeded in convincing the University's Board of Regents of the need for improved library facilities, leading directly to the 1958 establishment of the Humanities Research Center and, in 1963, to the opening of the Undergraduate Library and Academic Center. The revolution Harry Ransom wrought on the libraries of the UT Austin campus, together with his advocacy of the individual student, are his enduring legacies.

Scope and Contents

The personal papers of Harry Ransom comprise, in the main, his preparatory school and college-level student papers (essays, tests, class notes), photographs of family and school life, some correspondence, and a good deal of memorabilia. While the collection spans the years from 1895 to 1983 the bulk of it is concentrated in the period 1924 to 1953 and appears to represent items Marion Ransom kept to document her son's academic career. The papers therefore give a fair idea of the nature of Harry Ransom's education--and his success as a student--but they are not otherwise especially informative.

The papers have been organized into several series: Academic papers, 1924-47 (1 box); Correspondence, 1895-1983 (1 folder); Memorabilia, 1908-76 (1 box); Photographs, 1895-1975 (1 box); and Printed materials, 1924-75 (6 folders).

Class notes, essays, graded examinations, and a commonplace book are found in the Ransom academic papers, documenting his student life at Sewanee Military Academy, the University of the South, Harvard, and Yale. There is a small group of teaching notes and a grading book for his first year of postwar teaching at the University of Texas. The materials are arranged chronologically and clearly demonstrate Ransom's aptitude and diligence as a student.

The small body of correspondence centers around Ransom's student life in the 1920s and '30s. His own letters are few in number, and most of these were addressed to his mother. Apart from giving some idea of his scholarly and extracurricular interests as a student and his relationship to his mother the series is slight.

Materials as different as Harry Ransom's baby book (with verse by his mother and notes by Ransom upon her death) and the tape recording of the 1976 commemorative assembly held to mark his passing are found in the Memorabilia series. Documents touching upon Ransom's early academic career, together with numerous diplomas are present, as are some materials relating to his editorial work in wartime military service and to Marion Ransom's 1953 funeral. A small group of miscellaneous manuscripts and printed matter and clippings are also housed in the series.

Apart from several family photographs made between 1915 and 1930 and a few photographs dating from after the Second World War the great majority of the images in the Photographic series depict Ransom's school and early professional life. A number of photographs of Hazel Ransom dating from 1938 into the 1960s, as well as photographs of various campuses complement the series. A considerable number of negatives is found in the series for which prints are not present. Additional photographs are present in the Memorabilia series in folders 2.3 and 2.9.

Minor printed materials relating to Sewanee, a group of unused stationery, envelopes, and postcards from the bulk of the final series. Also to be found here is a number of art prints and ephemera.

Index Terms

People

Ransom, Harry Hunt, 1908-1976

Ransom, Hazel H.

Subjects

Educators--Texas

Document Types

Broadsides

Cartoons (humorous images)

Commonplace books

Diaries

Photographs

Postcards

Sound recordings

I. Academic papers, 1924-1947

Student papers

Sewanee Military Academy	Box 1 Folder 1
University of the South	Folder 2
Yale	Folder 3
Graduate work, 1929-36	Folder 4
Commonplace- and notebook, 1928-35	Folder 5
Teaching notes and related material, 1946-47	Box 2 Folder 1

Ransom, Harry Hunt, 1908-1976

II. Correspondence, 1895-1983

Incoming and outgoing, A-Y

Box 2 Folder 2

III. Memorabilia, 1908-1976

Baby book	Box 2 Folder 3
Documents relating to HHR, 1921-54	Folder 4
Marion Ransom's funeral, 1953	Folder 5
Diplomas and awards, 1924-75	Folder 6
<i>Sewanee Calendar</i> , 1976	Folder 7
Gremlins (articles for USAAF, c. 1942)	Folder 8
Miscellaneous manuscript and printed materials; clippings	Folder 9
Commemorative Assembly, 1976	
Reel-to-reel tape; regents' resolution	Box 2 Folder 10
Cassette tapes	Box 3 Folder 1

IV. Photographs, ca. 1895-1975

Ethel C. McIntosh?; woman and child, ca. 1915	Box 3 Folder 2
HHR and others, ca. 1910-25	Folder 3
HHR's family	
1920s	Box 3 Folder 4
1910-30	Folder 5
Marion Ransom	Folder 6
HHR at Sewanee Military Academy	Folder 7
University of the South	
Small format prints	Box 3 Folder 8
Campus scenes	Folder 9
Sports and postcards	Folder 10
Negatives	Folder 11
Large format prints	Folder 12
HHR at Valley City, N.D., 1934	Folder 13
Hazel Harrod, Marion Ransom, Mauretania, other 1939 prints and negatives	Folder 14
1939 trip negatives	Folder 15
Hazel Ransom, 1938-1950's; HHR, 1950's and '60s	Folder 16
Miscellaneous, ca. 1930-ca. 1950 (prints and negatives)	Box 4 Folder 1
Hazel Harrod and USAAF personnel, 1940-46	Folder 2
Hazel and Harry Ransom, 1960s	Folder 3

V. Printed materials, 1924-1975

SMA and University of the South ephemera, 1924-28

Box 4
Folder 4

Art prints; mock-up for HHR bust plaque

Folder
5

The Marriage Service (pamphlet) and related

Folder 6

Place cards, tickets, etc.

Folder 7

Stationery and envelopes (unused)

Folder 8

Postcards (unused)

Folder 9

Harry Ransom collection--Index of Correspondents

Names in **bold** appear in the RLIN record.

- Associated Press (Niel Kinsey, Brian Bell)--2.2
- Avery, C. N., Jr.--4.3
- Barron, Jean--2.2
- Battle, William James, 1870-1955 (University of Texas)--2.2
- Brewster, Kingman, 1919- --2.2
- Claiborne, William Stirling, 1871- --2.3
- Cline, Henriette F.--2.2
- Colorado State College (Fort Collins, Colo.). Board of Control (L.M. Taylor)--2.2
- Crosby, Kathryn, 1933- --2.2
- Dabney, Virginius, 1901- --2.2
- Davant, Jimmy--2.2
- Groves, John Stuart--2.2
- Guthke, Karl Siegfried, 1933- --2.2
- Hoover, J. Edgar (John Edgar), 1895-1972--2.2
- McCormick, W. G.--2.2
- Newton, A. Edward (Alfred Edward), 1864-1940--2.2
- Nixon, Pat Ireland, 1883-1965--2.2
- Nixon, Robert R.--2.2
- O'Connor, Kate S.--2.2
- Ransom, Harry Hunt, 1868- --2.2
- **Ransom, Harry Hunt, 1908- --2.2**
- **Ransom, Hazel H.--2.2**
- *St. Andrew's Cross, a Church Magazine for Laymen* (George H. Randall)--2.2
- Sewanee Military Academy. Headmaster (Stuart Maclean)--2.2
- Sewanee Military Academy. Office of the Superintendent (DuVal Cravens)--2.2
- Shuffler, R. Henderson (Ralph Henderson), 1908- --2.2
- Smith, Christian--2.2
- State Teachers College (Valley City, N.D.) (C. E. Allen)--2.2
- Tobin, Robert L. B.--2.2
- University of Texas. Dept. of English. Budget Council (L. L. Click)--2.2
- University of the South. College of Arts and Sciences. Office of the Dean (H. M. Gass)--2.2
- Wildy & Sons--2.2
- Willard, Rudolph, 1893- --2.2
- Willcox, Mark, Jr.--2.2
- Yale University. Graduate School (Edgar S. Furniss; Margaret T. Corwin) --2.2
- Unidentified correspondents:
 - Abbott, ---- (Sewanee teacher)--2.2
 - Jewel (Knoxville, Tenn., 1923)--2.2
 - Max (friend of Walter P. Webb, c. 1950)--2.2
 - Natalie--2.2
 - Smith, ---- (*The Birmingham News; The Montgomery Advertiser*)--2.2