

## MSS. Collection #11

**William Sidney Porter Papers, 1839-1982. 6 boxes (111 folders), ca. 1500 items.**

This finding aid provides direct links to [portions of the collection digitized in partnership with the Digital Projects Unit at UNCG](#). Additional materials from the Greensboro Public Library, the *News & Record*, and other institutions are available through the library's [O. Henry Portal](#).

NOTE: The numbers cited in parenthesis, e.g. 1:5, refer the researcher to the Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

### **INTRODUCTION**

This collection contains many first editions, as well as correspondence, printed materials, financial/legal documents, and literary productions. It also includes scrapbooks, radio dramalogues, newspaper clippings, sketches and drawings, photographs, magazines, paintings and an audio recording. The bulk of material dates from William Sydney Porter's lifetime, 1862-1910. The books, radio dramalogues, and magazines were indexed individually in 1982 and are ordered alphabetically by title. Magazine articles from allied collections have been incorporated into this index and can be identified by their location.

See also the following allied collections: [Roberta Porter Hon Collection](#); [Earley W. Bridges Collection](#); [Alexander W. McAlister Collection \(O. Henryana\)](#); and the [Paul S. Clarkson Collection](#).

**Arrangement:** The series are: **Correspondence**, 1839-1937; **Printed Material**, 1870-1982; **Financial and Legal Documents**, 1843-1889; **Literary Productions**, 1895-1910; **Scrapbooks**, 1919-1927; **Miscellaneous**, 1890, undated; **Books**; **Radio Dramalogues**; **Newspapers and Clippings**; **Works of Art**, 1879-1888, undated; **Photographs**, 1882-1955; **Magazines**, ca. 1900-1950; **Paintings**; and **Audio Recordings**, 1962.

**Provenance:** This collection was donated by many people between 1947 and 1983. A partial listing of donors includes: Mrs. Sara Coleman Porter; Mrs. Robert L. Beal; Mr. A.E. Weatherly; Mr. Howard Sartin; E.M. Oettinger; Edward Benbow; Mr. W. H. Houston; Travis Callum; Mr. W.A. Stern; Mrs. Bertha Fox Ballinger; Mr. William J. Moore; E.W. Bridges; Mrs. Jessie McPherson; Mrs. C.B. Foster; Mrs. Rose Stone; and Miss Lina Gray. A special contribution to this collection was that of E.M. Oettinger. Also, many of the first editions are from Paul S. Clarkson (see the Biographical Note in the [Paul S. Clarkson Collection](#)).

**Processing:** This collection was organized and described by Archivist Karen Carroll in the early 1980s. It was digitized and reviewed by Archives Assistant Christine Dumoulin in August 2004.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

William Sidney Porter (O. Henry; 1862-1910) was born in Guilford County, North Carolina, on September 11, 1862. His father, Algernon Sidney Porter (1825-1889), was a physician and also maintained a farm that included fourteen slaves. His mother was Mary Jane Virginia Swaim Porter (1825-1865), also of Guilford County. Two other sons were born to the couple: Shirley Worth Porter (1860-1945) and David Weir Porter (1865-1866).

**The Porter Family:** The Porter family moved into Greensboro in 1865 and took up residence in the Ruth Worth Porter house on West Market St. (later 424 W. Market St.). William's grandmother, Ruth, lived with her spinster daughter Evelina (called "Miss Lina"). William (hereinafter referred to as WSP) spent most of his childhood there. After the death of their mother from tuberculosis in 1865, he and his brother were reared by his grandmother and aunt.

**Miss Lina Porter:** In 1867, Miss Lina Porter began giving her nephews basic schooling in the parlor of the Porter home. Soon her reputation as an instructor spread and a small schoolhouse was built on the Porter lot to accommodate other local children. "Miss Lina's School" was the extent of WSP's early education, although he did attend public high school in Greensboro in 1877-1878. Miss Lina was strong-willed and opinionated, and since she served as both a surrogate mother and his teacher, she was a strong influence on WSP's early years. In 1874, a new house was built on the Porter lot, and into this house WSP and his family moved.

In 1879, WSP's schooling ended and he was put to work as a clerk in his uncle's drug store. The W.C. Porter & Company Drug Store was located at 121 South Elm St. in Greensboro, and WSP worked there for three years. In 1881, he was licensed as a pharmacist by the State of North Carolina.

**The Texas Years:** In 1882, at the age of 20, WSP was unmarried, still living at home, and in a profession he found less than exciting. When family friends Dr. & Mrs. James K. Hall invited him to accompany them on a trip to Texas to visit their four sons, he leaped at the opportunity. Lee Hall was managing a large ranch-empire in Texas, and two of his brothers worked under him. WSP stayed with Richard Hall, and what was to have been a visit developed into a two year stay. While on the ranch, his health improved although he never did any regular ranch work. WSP missed North Carolina, though he was determined not to return home until he had "made his fortune." During this period, he did much sketching and at one time it seemed his career might be that of a cartoonist. However, this did not develop. He also wrote some stories during this period but his lack of the confidence, contacts and experience that he would later acquire kept these stories from gaining national prominence.

In 1884, Richard Hall moved to another ranch. While on a stopover in Austin, Texas, WSP decided to stay and the Halls introduced him to a well-connected family. In an attempt to start a career as a druggist, he wrote to Greensboro for references and received two excellent ones. He became a drug clerk in a local establishment but kept the job for only a few months. He spent his time after that sketching (for amusement) and writing skits and verses. As he submitted these to periodicals, he began to establish a large collection of rejection slips. During this period in 1886 appeared his first documented use of the pseudonym "O. Henry" – he wrote it in a lady friend's autograph album. Also while in Austin, WSP became known as a singer and joined the Hill City Quartette (1885).

In 1886, WSP began working for his friend John Maddox as a bookkeeper in Maddox's real estate firm. He learned bookkeeping from Charles E. Anderson of this firm and worked hard for

at least a year. By this time, WSP had also been courting Athol Estes (1868-1897), the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. T.G. Roach. Mrs. Roach strongly objected to the relationship since Athol's father had died from tuberculosis as had WSP's mother. However, with his very adequate salary from his new job as a draftsman at the Texas Land Office and the self-confidence he had gained while in Austin, WSP was undeterred; he and Athol eloped in 1887.

The newlyweds moved in with the Charles Anderson family for six months. Porter continued to write skits and verse and some were published. The Porters soon rented a small house in Austin and in 1888 their son was born. He lived only a few hours, and it was months before Athol recovered from the birth and death of her child. A year later she was pregnant again, and in 1889 Margaret Worth Porter was born. Again, Athol's recovery was long and torturous. In the summer of 1890 and again in 1891, Athol and Margaret visited Miss Lina Porter back in Greensboro. WSP joined them on the 1890 trip.

With the election of 1890, WSP lost his job in the land office (it had been a political appointment). Soon through the efforts of friends he found a job as teller in the First National Bank at Austin. This was a difficult job as loose banking practices (overdrafts were allowed, bank officers withdrew from cash drawers without proper procedure, etc.) were common. Meanwhile, in 1894 WSP had bought the press of the *Iconoclast*, an unsuccessful radical monthly newspaper published in Austin. WSP decided to change it to a comedy sheet to supplement his bank salary. He began weekly publications in April of 1894 and after two issues the name of the paper was changed to the *Rolling Stone*. Porter wrote the vast majority of the eight-page paper himself, producing it after banking hours and at night. WSP lost his banking job late in 1894 when a bank examiner discovered shortages in his account ledgers. He then put all of his energies in the publishing of the *Rolling Stone*. It was never a successful enterprise even after he opened a branch office in San Antonio, Texas. By the end of April 1895, *Rolling Stone* had suspended publication.

In July 1895, WSP was brought before a grand jury under charges of embezzlement for the shortages at the First National Bank. No indictment was returned, and the bank examiner appealed to the Treasury Department of the United States. Meanwhile, in mid-October, WSP moved to Houston, Texas, to take a job as writer for the *Houston Post*. Athol and Margaret joined him after several months. His daily column, which he did in addition to some special work, was entitled "Some Postscripts"; he also did cartooning.

Court reconvened in Austin in early 1896, and a new warrant was drawn against WSP for embezzlement. Four indictments were filed in amounts totaling over \$5000. He returned to Austin where bond was posted two days later. Thereupon he went back to Athol in Houston, who was now seriously ill with tuberculosis. He continued to write sporadically for the *Houston Post* and a request for a continuance for his case was granted. WSP was now due in Austin in July 1896 to stand trial. Athol and Margaret traveled back to Austin independently, but WSP never arrived. Although he left Houston on July 6, 1896, he changed trains en route to Austin and arrived in New Orleans. There he boarded a boat for Honduras (which at the time was the only Central American country that had no extradition laws).

While in Honduras, WSP met Al Jennings, another American fugitive. WSP wrote Athol periodically while away and by early 1897 had decided to return to his now desperately ill wife. Again his bail was posted, and he spent his time nursing Athol. His pending trial was postponed until February 1898. Athol died in July 1897. Also in that year WSP sold his first short story, "**The Miracle of Lava Canyon,**" to a national magazine published by the S.S. McClure Company.

**The Prison Years:** In February 1898, WSP's trial opened. The various indictments were consolidated to the point that he was tried on three indictments of two charges totaling \$854.08. WSP made no effort on his own behalf and was convicted on February 17, 1898. Sentenced to a five-year term, he entered the Ohio State Penitentiary in April. He continued to write short stories and changed the spelling of his name from "William Sidney Porter" to "William Sydney Porter." It was to remain so the rest of his life, and often after this period he dropped the William entirely. His assignment within the prison was as night druggist, a position that he filled conscientiously and that allowed him some freedom of movement within the prison. While in prison, he wrote fourteen of his best known stories, three of which were published while he was incarcerated. During this time and afterwards, he wrote under a pseudonym (usually "O. Henry" but occasionally others). In 1900, WSP was reassigned as secretary to the Steward's Office. The office was physically removed from the prison, and he was allowed freedom of movement with minimal supervision. His sentence was reduced for good behavior to 39 months, and he was released on July 24, 1901.

Meanwhile, his daughter Margaret had stayed with her grandparents, the Roaches, while her father was in prison. The family soon moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Margaret was never told of her father's conviction. WSP returned to Pittsburgh and stayed nearly a year, during which time he published nine stories and had several others were accepted to be published later.

**His Final Years:** In the spring of 1902, WSP moved to New York to firmly establish his writing career. During the remainder of the year he published seventeen stories. His output continued with a dozen stories published in the first four months of 1903, 66 published in 1904, 54 in 1905, 11 in 1907, 29 in 1908, and 8 in 1909. He did not usually use the typewriter for his manuscripts but rather wrote with a sharp pencil on yellow copy paper. He also published collections of stories: *Cabbages and Kings* (1904); *The Four Million* (1906); *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907); *Heart of the West* (1907); *Voice of the City* (1908); *The Gentle Grafters* (1908); *Roads of Destiny* (1909); *Options* (1909); and *Strictly Business* (1910). *Whirligigs* and *Sixes and Sevens* were published posthumously.

In 1907, WSP married Sara Coleman, a woman he had known as a child in Greensboro. Although they lived in New York for various periods, she later moved to her parents' home in Asheville, North Carolina. WSP remained in New York, although he visited Asheville several times in an attempt to recover his health. While in New York, in addition to organizing his book, he contemplated work on a novel (which was probably never begun) and collaborated on a musical presentation, *LO!* His health, however, continued to decline. On June 3, 1910, he was admitted to a New York hospital where he died two days later of sclerosis of the liver, diabetes and an enlarged heart. He was interred in Asheville, North Carolina.

**Biographical Sources:** The biographical information was gathered from *O. Henry from Polecat Creek*, by Ethel S. Arnett (Greensboro: Greensboro Printing Co., 1966); *A Bibliography of William Sydney Porter (O. Henry)*, by Paul S. Clarkson (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1938); and *Alias O. Henry*, by Gerald Langford (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1957).

## SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

The William Sidney Porter Papers are a multi-faceted collection of items relating to WSP (O. Henry). The collection includes books, magazines, manuscripts, newspapers and clippings, photographs, and other materials.

Several items of correspondence are between WSP and his daughter Margaret (1:2-4) with whom he rarely shared the same residence. Especially interesting are the letters written while WSP was in the Ohio State Penitentiary (1:10). Also interesting is the correspondence between WSP and his New York editor Bill Davis, giving chronic excuses for deadlines missed and urgent pleas for cash advances (1:1). Of the Margaret Porter correspondence, perhaps the most memorable item is a letter written to her father while he was in prison asking why he did not come home. Other letters reveal anecdotes and interesting facts about the life of WSP.

The printed materials consist of items associated with WSP's early life as well as items published after his death. The musical score from *LO!*, a musical on which WSP collaborated in 1909, is included (2:3). A collection of booklets provide a good source of information about WSP (2:9-10). The financial and legal documents contain a tuition bill from Lina Porter's school, a receipt signed by WSP's grandfather Sidney, and documents relating to W.C. Porter's drug store, including an agreement between Porter and Dalton and C.P. Mendenhall to build an addition to the store (2:1-2). Only a few sheets in the literary productions series are in WSP's own hand, but the series does include an interesting memoir written by Shirley Porter (2:4). The scrapbooks relate chiefly to the O. Henry Hotel and the O. Henry/Richardson memorial in the Greensboro Historical Museum (5:1-2).

Series 7 is a collection of books, including numerous O. Henry first editions, and many of the magazines represent the original publication of several short stories. The newspapers and clippings are of a general nature relating to the life of WSP as well as his publications, memorials, etc. The works of art include pencil sketches both by WSP and his aunt Lina. Although many of the photographs are reproductions, there are several original photos, photographs, and tintypes of WSP's family. Xerox copies were made previously of several items in this as well as other collections, and they are filed under the appropriate series.

The weaknesses of this collection are the lack (with few exceptions) of original manuscript stories written by WSP and original material from his years in Texas. However, the collection has several major strengths. The correspondence series is important for numerous reasons. The letters written to daughter Margaret from WSP while in prison are rare evidence of three years that WSP tried to erase completely from his life. The correspondence to Bill Davis points out the stormy push-pull relationship between WSP and his editors. The musical score from *LO!* (2:3) is an excellent example of an effort made by WSP in his years of declining production. The collection of books and magazine publications is one of the more complete in existence, with many first editions. The WSP sketches are rare evidence of his almost-career. Finally, the collection of family photographs is an important element in any study of WSP (11:1-19).

## SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

### **Series 1. Correspondence. 18 folders (ca. 300 items). 1839-1947.**

**Note:** Due to the provenance and uniqueness of this collection, the correspondence series is described at the folder level.

#### **Folder 1. WSP to Robert (Bill) H. Davis. 20 items. 1904-1906, undated.**

The letters in this folder are written to Bob Davis, fiction editor of *Munsey's Magazine*. Most involve requests for various cash advances and also excuses as to why promised manuscripts have not been delivered. Many letters display the wit and humor of WSP. He also mentions typing some stories, although he rarely used the machine for that work. This may have been an excuse for undelivered materials. Many items in this group are ALS (autograph letter signed) by WSP, and several are TLS (typed letter signed) by WSP.

#### **Folder 2. WSP to daughter Margaret. 10 items. 1898-1901.**

This group of letters was written by WSP to his daughter Margaret between April 25, 1898, and July 24, 1901, while he was an inmate in the Ohio State Penitentiary. Margaret was never told of her father's whereabouts. The letters are mainly the chit-chat of a father to his pre-teen daughter. No covers are included with the items; two letters are undated and one is dated only "November 12." Of these three items, two are probably late 1898.

#### **Folder 3. WSP to Margaret. 49 items. 1905-1907.**

These letters were written by WSP to daughter Margaret while she attended Belmont College, a finishing school in Nashville, Tennessee. They speak of Margaret being homesick, of her clothes, family matters, her discontent at school, of sending money, holidays, etc. Some covers include WSP's wax seal. Specific inclusion dates are September 25, 1905, to April 18, 1907.

#### **Folder 4. WSP to Margaret. 45 items. 1907-1910.**

These letters speak of family matters, holidays, etc. Most are written to Margaret from New York, but several are from Asheville, North Carolina. Margaret's addresses range from her grandmother's house in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Dwight School in Englewood, New Jersey, to the Coleman home in Asheville, North Carolina. Items are in good to excellent condition and several include WSP's wax seal. The clipping is one WSP sent to his daughter, a publicity clipping for the book *The Four Million*.

#### **Folder 5. WSP to Sara Coleman Porter. 7 items. 1905-1908.**

This folder consists of three photostatic and two typescript copies of letters WSP wrote to Sara Coleman before they were married. The July 15 letter is in response to Sara's contact with WSP and the other item is urging Sara to visit New York on a planned trip to New England. One typescript of each letter and two photostats of the July 15 item are included. Also included is an ALS by WSP to Sara (1908) speaking of possibly returning to Asheville, North Carolina. The "Magnolia Letter" refers to Sara's visit to New York and has a magnolia sketched on it.

**Folder 6. WSP, miscellaneous. 16 items. 1882-1907, undated.**

The items in this folder include a calling card, three letters, and one cover. Three photostats of a letter from WSP in Texas to his friend Dr. Beall in Greensboro (1882) are included along with the original. WSP also wrote to Mrs. J.K. Hall of what he missed about living in North Carolina. Also included is a 1907 letter written by WSP from New York to Ms. Lily Benbow, and an undated letter to "Uncle John" written by WSP while in New York. This folder also contains two ALS by WSP on the stationery of the General Land Office in Texas. Both 1890 items deal with settling the estate (real estate holdings) of William Kerr. A photostat of each letter is included. Also included are a printed page and photograph of the two letters of introduction that WSP presented in Austin (1884).

**Folder 7. WSP (copies), Greensboro History Museum.**

This folder consists of xeroxed copies of the correspondence from WSP to Margaret as described above.

**Folder 8. WSP (copy), Yale University Library. 1 item.**

This item, dated December 1, is a copy of a five page ALS and one page sketch from "O. Henry" to *Ainslee's Magazine* in regards to O. Henry's real identity.

**Folder 9. Margaret Worth Porter (Cesare Sartin): Incoming. 10 items. ca. 1892, 1904, 1924.**

The earliest item is a note to Margaret from her cousin Waldo Porter asking her to come back to Greensboro, written presumably after Margaret and her mother visited in 1890 or 1891. Two of the 1909 items regard publishing stories written by Margaret (she was an authoress), and one is in French from a schoolmate. The final item regards a Santini painting done of WSP.

**Folder 10. Margaret Worth Porter (Cesare Sartin): Outgoing. 16 items. ca. 1899-1910.**

These letters are from Margaret to her father. The early item is written to him while he was in prison and the others are written while Margaret was a student at Belmont College and Dwight School, and later from Asheville, North Carolina.

**Folder 11. Sara Coleman Porter. 10 items. 1907, 1910, 1939, 1947, undated.**

Included is a 1907 letter to Lily Benbow, with cover, in which Sara speaks of her marriage and early family life. Two 1910 letters to Lily speak of the death and last moments of WSP and are on mourning stationery. These letters also discuss Sara's relationship with WSP immediately prior to his death. Also included is a cover, without an address, to Lily Benbow in the handwriting of Sara Coleman Porter. The telegram was sent by Sara Coleman Porter to her mother, Mrs. William Coleman, announcing the death of WSP. An undated letter to Eli Oettinger speaks of WSP's refusal to return to Texas, while the 1939 item to Eli Oettinger was in response to his request for a photograph of her. A 1947 letter to Earl Weatherly declines to his invitation to visit Greensboro and speaks of "one of her treasures," a letter from WSP that she apparently enclosed for him.

**Folder 12. Shirley Worth Porter. 14 items. 1934-1937.**

These letters are addressed to Mrs. Harry Thornton in Greensboro. They speak of Shirley's nickname "Shell" and how it was acquired, mutual acquaintances in Greensboro, a description of the original Porter drug store, a sketch made by Shirley Porter of the Porter home on West

Market St., and Dr. J. K. Hall. They also discuss Shell's birthplace, early childhood, and other items relating to the Porter family in general.

**Folder 13. Lyndon Swaim. 2 items. January 17, 1839 and August 4, 1845.**

Lyndon Swaim followed William Swaim as editor of the *Greensboro Patriot* (1839-1854). He had been apprenticed under William. In 1842, he married the widowed Mrs. William Swaim and became stepfather to Mary Jane Virginia Swaim Porter, WSP's mother. The 1839 item is from Jesse Lindsay to Lyndon Swaim inviting him to return to Greensboro to edit the *Carolina (Greensboro) Patriot*. The other item is from a John Swaim in New Jersey and deals with early Swaim genealogy.

**Folder 14. Al Jennings. 2 items. March 14, 1913 and March 10, 1922.**

The 1913 item is a two page TLS to Mr. Archibald Henderson of North Carolina regarding a lecture and/or contribution for an O. Henry memorial (1913). It has been silk laminated. The 1922 letter is to Eli Oettinger regarding WSP, a watch, and being in Illinois.

**Folder 15. Lina Gray. 3 items. April 1897, undated.**

Included are an Easter card and an ALS (1897) with cover to Lina Gray from her aunt, Lina Porter. The letter discusses general family matters.

**Folder 16. E.M. Oettinger. 19 items. 1937-1939.**

This group includes three items addressed to Eli Oettinger, ten carbon letters written from Eli Oettinger, and six memorandum sheets written by Eli Oettinger. The 1937-1939 items relate to Mr. Oettinger's attempts to add to his collection of O. Henry materials. Among the three letters addressed to E.M. Oettinger is a TLS by Upton Sinclair. The memoranda deal with WSP's publications and his pen name.

**Folder 17. Ethel Arnett. 36 items. 1965-1969.**

This folder contains seventeen letters, seventeen covers, and two typed pages of notes dealing with O. Henry, possibly by Mrs. Arnett or possibly sent to her in a letter. These letters are to Mrs. Arnett from members of the Coleman and Porter families. They speak generally of WSP anecdotes and mention the publication of *O. Henry from Polecat Creek*, by Arnett. The information in these letters was probably used in an article written by Arnett on firsthand remembrances of WSP (see literary production series).

**Folder 18. Typed transcriptions. 125 pages. 1898-1910.**

This folder consists of a set of typed transcriptions of correspondence between WSP and his daughter Margaret from approximately 1898 to 1910. The originals are filed in the appropriate folders in this series.

**Series 2. Printed Material. 13 folders (79 items). 1870-1982.**

This series includes two advertisements for patent medicine from Porter Drug Store, three printed report cards from Ms. Lina Porter's school and one set of fourteen items of sheet music with the original portfolio from *LO!*, a musical comedy on which WSP collaborated in 1909. The musical opened in Aurora, Illinois, on August 25, 1909 and ran for fourteen weeks with



performances in Illinois, Wisconsin and Missouri. It folded on the fifth of December. Also included is one copy in poor condition of "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark," by William and Alstyn, 1907. WSP said something to this effect several hours before he died. The marriage invitation of WSP and Sara Coleman is included in this series. [NOTE: Item missing as of August 2004]. Other items are a marriage certificate (with envelope) of Shirley Worth Porter and Emma Vanstory, one O. Henry calendar with the original box (1918), two programs to the Stockholder's Banquet at the opening of the O. Henry Hotel on July 2, 1919. Items associated with O. Henry celebrations include a copy of a bill introduced in the United States House of Representatives requesting a U.S. postal issue; two tickets to *Full House* (a motion picture based on several of O. Henry's stories); a Greensboro Historical Museum brochure; six sets of three each and two additional O. Henry cachets issued by the Greensboro Historical Museum for sale in 1962 (WSP's 100th birthday); a program from a luncheon honoring Thomas Mitchell; three invitations to *A Night With O. Henry* (1962) by the Greensboro Historical Museum; two souvenirs of WSP's *Full House*; and one program from the unveiling of the O. Henry portrait in the Greensboro Public Library in 1939. Thirteen postcards in this series depict various O. Henry artifacts including the Greensboro Historical Museum's Porter Drug Store Exhibit in 1947.

Certificates and broadsides consist of four items including an advertising broadside from O. Henry's *Full House*, as well as two copies of the Guilford County Bicentennial Award (1970) presented to WSP. One copy of a birthday proclamation (1968) is signed by Mayor Carson Bain of Greensboro (2:13).

Twenty-seven booklets are included in the series and are filed alphabetically by title. See the listing below:

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>COPIES</u>
A Christmas Story with Prizes (O'Quinn reprint)	1982	1
<i>Cabbages and Kings</i> (page copy)		1
Catalogs with O. Henry items		2
Little Picture of O. Henry (from <i>The Bookman</i> )	1913	1
My Friend, O. Henry (Seth Moyle)	1914	1
O. Henry (Arthur Bartlett Maurice)	1925	2
O. Henry (William Sydney Porter) (C.A. Smith)	1921	2 (1 w/o cover)
O. Henry in North Carolina (Cathleen Pike)	1957	1
The O. Henry Index (Doubleday Page & Co.)	ca. 1915	5
The O. Henry Index (Doubleday Page & Co.)	ca. 1915	1
O. Henry Lived Here (Early W. Bridges)	1962	4
O. Henry Papers (Doubleday Page & Co.)	ca. 1917	3
The Mystery of O. Henry (Henry James Forman)	ca. 1950	2
The White Plume (Stratton & Burke)	1928	1

Other miscellaneous items in this series are "an O. Henry notebook," probably compiled by E.M. Oettinger, and a copy of "O. Henry and Me," by Ethel Lloyd Patterson, printed in *Everybody's Magazine* (2:12).

**Series 3. Financial and Legal Documents. 3 folders (29 items). 1843-1889.**

This series includes one receipt signed by Sidney Porter (1843), who was WSP's grandfather (3:3). Another bill is for tuition at Lina Porter's school, 1885-1886 (3:1). [Twenty-six items are from the Porter Drug Store from 1853-1889 \(3:2\)](#). The majority are receipts for items purchased and several are signed by W.C. Porter. See the biographical/historical sketch for the various names of this drugstore at different times. Also included is an agreement (1882) between Porter and Dalton and C. P. Mendenhall for fixtures, etc. (with explanatory notes included) as well as the receipt from W.C. Porter to R.F. Dalton (1882) for 1/2 interest in the drugstore. Very interesting are two pages of accounts from Porter and Gorrell to W.C. Porter (debits), 1863, with amounts in "Confederate" and "Gold." Several of the receipts are Civil War era and many have the drugstore letter/billhead.

**Series 4. Literary Productions. 5 folders (ca. 40 items). 1895-1910.**

Included are fourteen typed transcriptions of "Postscripts" written by WSP for the *Houston Post* (1895-1896), from the Joseph Katz Collection. [NOTE: where is this collection housed?] Also included are published booklets of "Roads of Destiny" and "The Exact Science of Matrimony," an original of "Two Women," a photograph of the last three pages of "A Cactus Thorn," and an unidentified story manuscript page in the handwriting of WSP and four photocopies of the same. The group of photocopied sheets is copies of WSP's manuscripts from The Library of the University of Virginia. They include original manuscript copies of "Adventures in Neurasthenia," "Mammon and the Archer," "The Crucible," "The Shamrock and the Palm," and "The Lonesome Road." Also in the University of Virginia collection is an ALS by Sydney Porter from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (4:2). The Shirley W. Porter file contains manuscript memoirs of his and WSP's early life and anecdotes and memories of WSP (4:3). The Arnett file contains a typescript of "Live Recollections of O'Henry for his 107th Birthday" (1969; 4:4), 21 pages, as well as the first carbon copy of *O. Henry from Polecat Creek*, by Ethel Arnett. Three pages of manuscript by WSP are the final three pages of "A Cactus Thorn," written in Austin, Texas.

**Series 5. Scrapbooks. 2 folders (2 items). 1919-1927.**

The Oettinger Scrapbook consists of letters and newspaper clippings, circa 1919-1927. Many of the 1919 items relate to the opening of the O. Henry Hotel. Autographs include Henry Louis Smith, C. Alphonso Smith, and C.B. Benbow. The Benbow letter speaks of the "privy" sketch (Pritchett mineral spring) executed by WSP. The O. Henry-Richardson Memorial Scrapbook was compiled in September 1947 at the opening of the memorial in the Greensboro Historical Museum. It consists chiefly of newspaper clippings but also has several photographs and autographs of R. Gregg Cherry (TLS, 1947), Frank T. Graham (President of the University of North Carolina, TLS, 1947), L. L. Gobbel (President of Greensboro College, TLS, 1947), and Josephus Daniels (former Secretary of the Navy, Ambassador to Mexico & publisher of the *Raleigh News & Observer*, TLS, 1947).

**Series 6. Miscellaneous. 1 folder (4 items). 1890, undated.**

This folder contains two calling cards of Dr. A.S. Porter, a ledger page from an unidentified school and a manuscript fragment by Shirley Porter on WSP's use of "O. Henry."

**Series 7. Books. 205 items. Unarranged. Various dates.**

This collection includes a large number of O. Henry first editions, authorized editions, and several books about O. Henry. See the rare book inventory sheets for specific titles, storage locations and further information.

**Series 8. Radio Dramalogues. 16 folders (53 items). Various dates.**

These items are typed scripts of radio versions of O. Henry stories. See the inventory sheets for specific information.

**Series 9. Newspapers and Clippings. 26 folders (ca. 425 items).**

Note: Items are filed separately with the news clippings in file cabinet by accession number.

These items contain information about WSP (there are no "Postscripts," etc.). Many are from Greensboro newspapers, 113 items being duplicates. They are generally classified as to subject and located in the vertical clipping file indexed by subject. Several accession numbers were reassigned, and the folder listing provides a partial listing of titles of clippings.

**Series 10. Works of art. 1 folder (10 items). 1879-1888, undated.**

This series includes an original pencil drawing (12 inches by 15 inches) entitled "the pet fawn," by Lina Porter (1888), the tombstone sketch, probably by WSP, and the Pritchett Spring sketch by WSP. Copies of originals include a photocopy of the Pilot Mountain sketch (1879), three copies of the "sword and cat" sketch, and a copy of the "Tourgee" sketch, all by WSP. The original of the "sword and cat" sketch is included, as is a sketch by Shirley Porter of the Porter house on West Market Street. Finally, the series contains a copy of a cartoon showing the interior of the Porter drugstore and sketches of several Greensboro citizens with accompanying rhymes.

**Series 11. Photographs. 20 folders (20 items). 1882-1955.**

These photographs are arranged by subject, and many items are duplicates of originals in this or other collections. Many negatives are included as well as a steel cut of the Barritt Portrait (1955; 11:19). The Van der Weyde folder contains copies of photographs by Van Der Weyde or photos adapted from the Van der Weyde works (the Van der Weyde photographs were taken in New York in 1909 and are a rare group of studio portraits of WSP; 11:1). Interesting originals include an early carte de visite of Lina Porter; a tintype of Ruth Worth Porter; photos of Dr. Algernon S. Porter and Mary Jane Virginia Swaim Porter; tintypes of Shirley Porter with Tom Tate and WSP, and one of WSP; and a cabinet card of Dr. James K. Hall (11:11). Other originals are of Lina Porter and the Porter School (11:6), as well as ones of Sara C. Porter and Margaret

Porter (11:12-13). A photo of WSP (probably from the Van der Weyde series) is signed by Sara C. Porter. There is also a photograph of the house in San Antonio, Texas, where the *Rolling Stone* was published. The folder from *A Full House* contains publicity photos for the world premier at the Carolina Theatre in Greensboro of a movie based on five of WSP's stories (circa 1952; 11:16). A 23 1/2" x 27" framed copy from a Van der Weyde portrait is located in the framed photograph storage.

### **Series 12. Magazines. 2 folders (190 items). ca. 1900-1950.**

These items, forty-three of which are duplicates, contain both stories by WSP and stories about him. See the inventory sheets for specific titles, etc. In addition several editions of short stories by Alphonse Daudet are included.

### **Series 13. Paintings. 2 items.**

The painting of WSP on permanent exhibit in *Voices of a City* hung in the O.Henry Hotel in Greensboro. The other painting in this collection was done by Barritt around 1955 and is in Collections storage.

### **Series 14. Audio Recording. 1 folder (1 item). 1962.**

This recording is a 15-minute British Broadcasting Company tape used on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WSP's birth.

## **FOLDER LISTING**

<b><u>Series</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Contents</u></b>
1	1	Correspondence -- WSP to Robert (Bill) H. Davis (1904-1906, undated)
	2	" -- WSP to Margaret (1898-1901)
	2.1	" -- WSP to Burges Johnson (March 2, 1903) [2003.118.1]
	3	" -- WSP to Margaret (1905-1907)
	4	Correspondence -- WSP to Margaret (1907-1910)
	5	" -- WSP to Sara Coleman Porter (1905-1908)
	6	" -- WSP, miscellaneous (1882-1907, undated)
	7	" -- WSP (copies), Greensboro Historical Museum
	8	Correspondence -- WSP (copy), Yale University Library
	9	" -- Margaret Worth Porter: Incoming (ca. 1892, 1904, 1924)
	10	" -- Margaret Worth Porter: Outgoing (ca. 1899-1910)
	11	" -- Sara Coleman Porter (1907, 1910, 1939, 1947, undated)
	12	Correspondence -- Shirley Worth Porter (1934-1937)
	13	" -- Lyndon Swaim (1839, 1845)
	14	" -- Al Jennings (1913, 1922)
	15	" -- Lina Gray (April 1897, undated)

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	16	Correspondence	-- E.M. Oettinger (1937-1939)
	17	"	-- Ethel Arnett (1965-1969)
	18	"	-- Typed Transcriptions -- WSP & Margaret (1898-1910)
2	1	Printed Material	-- Porter Drug Store
	2	"	-- Lina Porter School
	3	"	-- Music
	4	Printed Material	-- Shirley Worth Porter
	5	"	-- Calendar
	6	"	-- O.Henry Hotel
	7	Printed Material	-- O. Henry Celebration
	8	"	-- Postcards
	9	"	-- Booklets, A-N
	10	Printed Material	-- Booklets, "O. Henry-O. Henry Index"
	11	"	-- Booklets, "O. Henry Lived..."- Z
	12	"	-- Miscellaneous
	13	Printed Material	-- Certificates and Broadside
3	1	Financial and Legal Documents	-- Lina Porter School (1885-1886)
	2	"	-- Porter Drug Store (1853-1889)
	3	"	-- Sidney Porter (1843)
4	1	Literary Productions	-- WSP, General
	2	"	-- WSP, copies from University of Virginia Library
	3	"	-- Shirley Worth Porter
	4	Literary Productions	-- Ethel Arnett
	5	"	-- Ethel Arnett, <i>O. Henry From Polecat Creek</i>
5	1	Scrapbook	-- Oettinger
	2	"	-- O. Henry/Richardson Memorial
6	1	Miscellaneous	
7		Books	
8	1-16	Radio Dramalogues	
9	83.88.1	Newspaper Clippings	-- WSP -- General
	83.88.1a	"	-- WSP -- Early Background
	83.88.1b	"	-- WSP -- W.C. Porter Drug Store
	83.88.1c	"	-- WSP & foreign recognition
	83.88.2	Newspaper Clippings	-- Lina Porter
	83.88.3	"	-- Sara Coleman Porter
	83.88.4	"	-- WSP -- Trial and Prison
	83.88.5	"	-- WSP -- Stories and reviews
	83.88.5a	Newspaper Clippings	-- <i>A Full House</i> premier
	83.88.6	"	-- Opening of O.Henry Hotel
	83.88.7	"	-- O. Henry Blvd. dedication
	83.88.8	"	-- WSP celebrations

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
9	83.88.9	Newspaper Clippings	-- <i>A Night with O. Henry</i> (100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary)
	83.88.10	“	-- WSP obituaries
	83.88.11	“	-- WSP -- general (duplicates)
	83.88.12	“	-- WSP -- early background (duplicates)
	83.88.13	Newspaper Clippings	-- WSP -- Porter Drug Store (duplicates)
	83.88.14	“	-- Foreign recognition (duplicates)
	83.88.15	“	-- Lina Porter (duplicates)
	83.88.16	“	-- Sara Coleman Porter (duplicates)
	83.88.17	Newspaper Clippings	-- WSP -- Stories and reviews (duplicates)
	83.88.18	“	-- <i>A Full House</i> premier (duplicates)
	83.88.19	“	-- Opening O. Henry Hotel (duplicates)
	83.88.20	“	-- O. Henry Blvd. dedication (duplicates)
	83.88.21	Newspaper Clippings	-- O. Henry Celebrations (duplicates)
	83.88.22	“	-- <i>A Night with O. Henry</i> (duplicates)
	83.88.23	“	-- Works of art (duplicates)
10	1	Works of Art	
11	1	Photographs	-- WSP -- Van der Weyde
	2	“	-- WSP (1882-1898)
	3	“	-- WSP -- Other
	6	“	-- Lina Porter School
	7	Photographs	-- Porter Drug Store
	8	“	-- Austin Residence (WSP), Texas
	9	“	-- Lina Porter
	10	“	-- W. Clark Porter
	11	Photographs	-- Other Porter family members
	12	“	-- Sara Coleman Porter
	13	“	-- Coleman family
	14	“	-- Greensboro Historical Museum exhibits
	15	Photographs	-- O. Henry marker, 424 W. Market St. Greensboro
	16	“	-- <i>A Full House</i>
	17	“	-- Miscellaneous
	18	“	-- Negatives
	19	Photographs	-- Steel cut
	20	“	-- framed (large)
12	1	Magazines	-- <i>Daudet</i>
	2	“	-- WSP
13		Paintings	
14	1	Audio Recording	

**Index to the William Sidney Porter Papers (1839-1982)**

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**W.C. Porter Drug Store**: 2:1, 3:2, 11:7



## APPENDIX- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### A) The Porter Drug Stores of Greensboro, 1846-1900

- 1846 - A.S. PORTER, DRUGGIST (later practiced medicine)  
The father of O. Henry. This store was also known as "New Drug Store." It was located four doors north of the old courthouse.
- 1846 - A.S. PORTER – “GREENSBORO DRUG STORE”  
A.S. Porter adopted several names for his drug store. These names occasionally show up in his advertisements in the *Greensboro Patriot*. The name appearing most was A.S. Porter, Druggist. Same location as above.
- 1849 - WEIR AND PORTER, DRUGGIST  
Druggist D.P. Weir also operated a drug store at this time, but he formed a partnership with A.S. Porter. Later on in the year, Weir purchased Porter's interest and operated it under the name of D.P. Weir, druggist.
- 1853 - W.C. PORTER, DRUGGIST  
Younger brother of A.S. Porter and uncle of William Sidney Porter (O. Henry). He opened a drug store on East Market St. (then East St.) a few doors from the corner on the site of the present Southeastern Building.
- 1859 - PORTER AND GORRELL, DRUGGISTS  
Henry Gorrell, son of Ralph Gorrell, purchased an interest and a second store was opened on West Market St. (then West St.) just west of the courthouse, which was then located at the present intersection of Elm St. and Market St.
- 1861 - PORTER AND GORRELL, DRUGGISTS  
Same location. War Between the States began. Henry Gorrell, a member of the Guilford Grays, departed for war and was killed in action in 1862. His father, Ralph Gorrell, continued his interest with Porter until about 1868. The store on East Market St. was closed and consolidated with the West Market St. store.
- 1868 - PORTER AND ECKEL  
Eckel acquired the Gorrell interest. Same location as above.
- 1870 - W.C. PORTER, DRUGGIST  
Porter and Eckel had dissolved their partnership by this time. Same location as above.
- 1872 - W.C. PORTER DRUGGIST  
The drug store and nearby courthouse were destroyed by fire. Plans for a new store were made.

- 1873 - W.C. PORTER AND COMPANY, DRUGGISTS  
A new name and a new location on the east side of Elm St. between Market and Sycamore streets. O. Henry worked in this store from 1876 until 1881 then departed for Texas.
- 1882 - R.F. Dalton bought one-half interest in the drug store. Cyrus P. Mendenhall, owner of the drugstore building, agreed to build a second story for doctors' offices. This agreement (concerning fixtures, the building, financial arrangements, etc.) is included in this collection.
- 1883 - PORTER AND DALTON, DRUGGISTS  
Will Dalton had acquired an interest. Same location.
- 1886 - PORTER AND TATE, DRUGGISTS  
F.A. Tate had acquired Dalton's interest. Same location.
- 1888 - W.C. PORTER, DRUGGIST  
Porter was without a partner once again. Same location.
- 1890 - Porter sold the store to Lunsford Richardson and John Fariss, who operated it under the name of Richardson & Fariss.
- 1898 - Richardson and Fariss remodeled their store. They sold most of the old fixtures to G.W. and G.A. Kestler, who opened Asheboro Street pharmacy and employed W.C. Porter as pharmacist. He worked in the store for about one year and died in 1902.

**B) Pen names used by William Sydney Porter**

O. Henry (used as early as 1886)  
Olivier Henry (used temporarily when *Ainslee's* demanded a fuller signature)  
Sydney Porter  
John Arbuthnott (used while in prison)  
Howard Clark  
T.B. Dowd  
S.H. Peters  
James L. Bliss

**C) Miscellaneous Information**

1. The O.Henry Hotel opened in 1919 and was considered one of the finest in the Piedmont of North Carolina. When Charles Lindbergh visited Greensboro in 1927, he stayed at the O.Henry. Located at the corner of Elm and Bellemeade streets, the hotel converted an adjacent tobacco warehouse into an annex. The hotel was razed in 1979.
2. Included in this collection is a first issue, first edition of O. Henry's *The Gentle Grafter*. On page 226 of this book, a typographical error is present that distinguishes this edition. The

error was corrected in future printings. (This information was taken from an old Museum label.)

3. The Porter Drug Store at 121 South Elm Street operated under various proprietorships well into the 20th century.
4. Eli M. Oettinger (1880-1953) was born in Kinston, NC, and moved to Greensboro in 1906 with his cousin J.R. Oettinger to form the Oettinger Buggy Company. In 1917, he opened a Lumber Company. He was active in Greensboro civic circles and director of Sternberger Hospital. His collection was considered a "pioneer" collection of O. Henryana. His donations to the Museum included first editions of all but three O. Henry books, several photographs, and manuscripts. He is credited with naming the O. Henry Hotel and was one of the original investors. (This information is from an obituary in the collection.)