

## MSS. Collection #12

**Roberta Porter Hon Collection, 1857–1981 [bulk 1910-1955].  
2 boxes (22 folders), ca. 165 items.**

### INTRODUCTION

This collection contains items relating to William Sidney Porter, better known as O. Henry. These materials were collected over a span of more than fifty years, and they provide information about him and many aspects of his life. No original items in Porter's hand are included, although there are several original photographs. The collection also contains several minor articles about the history of Southport, North Carolina.

**Arrangement:** This collection is arranged into eight series by material type. The series are: **Correspondence**, 1956; **Printed Material**, 1907-1971; **Literary Productions**, 1977; **Scrapbooks**, 1925-1938; **Newspaper Clippings**, 1930s-1981; **Books**, 1857; **Photographs**, ca. 1920-1923; and **Miscellaneous**, 1965-1981.

**Provenance:** This collection was donated in 1981 by a cousin of William Sidney Porter, Roberta Porter Hon of Southport, North Carolina. It was assigned accession numbers 1983.154.1-11.

**Processing:** This collection was processed by Karen C. Carroll., and the finding aid was completed in October 1983.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

For a biographical sketch of O. Henry, see the finding aid for the William Sidney Porter Papers at <http://archives.greensborohistory.org/manuscripts/porter-ws>.

### SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of materials relating to William Sidney Porter. It contains no originals in Porter's hand but rather is composed chiefly of secondary sources, especially newspaper clippings and other printed materials. In addition to the four photographs, the main strengths of the collection are newspaper and scrapbook entries that discuss supplementary elements in the life of William Sidney Porter. Examples are the razing of the Ruth W. Porter house on West Market Street; the use of the "O. Henry cradle"; and the obituary of Porter's daughter, Margaret P.C. Sartin. Also, the research paper (in the Literary Productions series) is an important source for information surrounding the controversy over William Sidney Porter's birthplace.

## **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

### **1. Correspondence. 1 item. (March 9, 1902) 1956.**

This item is a reproduction of a letter sent by William Sidney Porter to George Hall, Editor of *Ainslee's Magazine* from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. He writes of his wish to move to New York and asks for a \$100 advance. Signed "O. Henry," the letter was reproduced and sent as a Christmas card by John F. Mayfield in 1956.

### **2. Printed Material. ca. 25 items. 1907-1971.**

This series includes a wedding invitation (1907) for the Porter-Coleman wedding and several booklets about William Sidney Porter, as well as "O. Henry: a memorial essay" (1914), by Archibald Henderson. It also contains a flyer (1911) by the Review of Reviews Company describing William Sidney Porter's books and providing a biographical sketch; three issues of the *O. Henry Magazine*; three issues of *Greensboro Business* with articles about O. Henry; and a 1924 O. Henry calendar. Also included are several O. Henry postcards; cachets and an invitation to "A Night with O. Henry" (1962); and an invitation to the 30th anniversary of the Greensboro Historical Museum (1954).

### **3. Literary Productions. 1 item. 1977.**

This nine page documented research paper was written in 1977 by Jerry L. Cross and addresses the controversy over William Sidney Porter's birthplace. It disproves the William Worth location on Polecat Creek.

### **4. Scrapbooks. 3 items. 1925-1938.**

These scrapbooks contain articles about William Sidney Porter and his background. They were compiled by Roberta Porter Hon. Book 3 includes an article and two pictures of the O. Henry cradle being used in 1928. Other articles include a description of Margaret Porter Sartin and her death; photographs of the Porter home in San Antonio, Texas; Sarah Porter reminiscences; information about Abiah Swaim (William Sidney Porter's grandmother); a description of the drug store sketch (1937); information about the razing of the Porter house at 424 West Market Street; etc.

### **5. Newspaper Clippings. ca. 120 items. 1930s-1981.**

These clipping files were kept and classified by Mrs. Hon. They provide information about William Sidney Porter as well as about memorial celebrations and artifacts associated with him. Several mentions are made of the Greensboro Historical Museum's acquisition of Porter items, and other articles are about various family members.

### **6. Books. 1 item. 1857.**

This book entitled *Progressive French Dialogues and Phrases...*, by A. G. Collot (1857), is inscribed "W. C. Porter, Jr." and "Roberta Porter/1924."

**7. Photographs. 4 items. ca. 1920-1923.**

The photographs include three of the William Sidney Porter house in San Antonio, Texas, and one of the unveiling of the William Sidney Porter marker at 424 West Market Street on March 27, 1923.

**8. Miscellaneous. 12 items. 1965-1981.**

These items do not relate to William Sidney Porter. A book entitled *Salt—That Necessary Article*, by Isabel Williams and Leora McEachern, was removed to the Staff Reference Library. Most other items are newspaper clippings and relate to Southport, North Carolina, and its environs. Also included are a brochure for the Southport Historical Society, a history of Southport, and an architectural survey (illustrated) of the area.

**FOLDER LISTING**

<b><u>Series</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Contents</u></b>
1	1	Correspondence
2	1	Printed Material -- Booklets
	2	Printed Material -- Calendar
	3	Printed Material -- <i>Greensboro Business</i> (January & December 1967; January 5, 1971)
	4	Printed Material -- <i>O. Henry Magazine</i>
	5	Printed Material -- Miscellaneous
3	1	Literary Productions
4	1	Scrapbook, Book 1 (1925-1936)
	2	Scrapbook, Book 2 (1935-1938)
	3	Scrapbook, Book 3 (1937-1938)
5	1	Newspaper Clippings (1930s)
	2	Newspaper Clippings (1940s)
	3	Newspaper Clippings (1950s)
	4	Newspaper Clippings (1960s)
	5	Newspaper Clippings ( <i>Greensboro Daily News</i> , Section C, Sept. 9, 1962)
	6	Newspaper Clippings (1970s)
	7	Newspaper Clippings (1980s)
	8	Newspaper Clippings (Miscellaneous)
6	1	Books
7	1	Photographs
8	1	Miscellaneous -- Newspaper Clippings
	2	Miscellaneous -- Southport historical information