

MSS. Collection #14

Paul S. Clarkson Collection, 1915-1945 [bulk 1930-1938].

3½ boxes (30 folders), ca. 1000 items.

INTRODUCTION

The Paul S. Clarkson Collection consists of material centering around the publication of *A Bibliography of William Sidney Porter (O. Henry)* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1938). It includes several drafts of the book, correspondence concerning Clarkson's efforts to find a publisher, and promotional materials produced by the publisher. The collection does not contain much research material.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged into six series by material type. The series are: **Correspondence**, ca. 1933-1945; **Printed Materials**, ca. 1915-1940; **Literary Productions**, ca. 1930-1938; **Newspaper Clippings**, 1938; **Photographs**; and **Miscellaneous**.

Provenance: This collection was donated by Paul Clarkson in 1970, and assigned accession numbers 1970.52.1 and 1970.67.1. Clarkson also donated his large collection of O. Henry first editions, but they were not assigned accession numbers at the time and were thus not identifiable as his items. They have been included as part of the William Sidney Porter Papers, and in the museum's file on the Clarkson donation (see general introduction) is a listing of the volumes he donated. The published edition of Clarkson's *A Bibliography of William Sidney Porter (O. Henry)* is housed in the Staff Reference Library.

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>.

Paul Stephen Clarkson was born on October 2, 1905, in Worcester, Massachusetts. He received his B.A. Degree from Clark University in Worcester in 1925. In 1928, he graduated from Harvard Law School and became an attorney for Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power Company. After a long legal career, he became curator of Special Collections and Rare Books at Goddard Library at Clark University. Clarkson served in the United States Navy during World War II. He began collecting O. Henry materials in 1927 and amassed one of the most complete collections in existence.

SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains correspondence, literary drafts and notes, newspaper clippings, two photographs, printed materials, and other items. It is centered around notes and drafts produced in the writing of *A Bibliography of William Sidney Porter (O. Henry)* (1938), and includes several drafts of the work from the manuscript to the galley proof stages. Clarkson was very specific and exacting in his research, and he edited and re-edited the drafts. A large portion of the correspondence concerns Clarkson's efforts to find a publisher for the book and his negotiations with publishers. The work received excellent reviews as noted in the newspaper clipping series. Promotional materials for the *Bibliography*, put out by the publisher, are included in the printed material series along with a few research articles on William Sidney Porter. However, the collection does not contain a large volume of research material.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

1. Correspondence. 5 folders (ca. 700 items). ca. 1933-1945.

The majority of this series consists of correspondence to and from Paul Clarkson regarding the planned publication of his bibliography on William Sidney Porter, with some items congratulating him upon his publication. Other letters include a series to and from Ray Murmann, who used Clarkson as a consultant for his Master's thesis (ca. 1945) on William Sidney Porter's use of the pen name "O. Henry."

2. Printed materials. 4 folders (19 items). ca. 1915-1940.

This series includes promotional literature for Clarkson's *Bibliography*, as well as articles about William Sidney Porter from various periodicals. Several are from *Bruno's Weekly*, a Bohemian magazine out of New York (ca. 1915-1916). Articles include: "O. Henry Returns To His Bagdad" (*New York Times Magazine*, November 24, 1935); "Where O. Henry Found His Stories," by R. H. Davis and Arthur Maurice (*Baltimore Sun*, April 19, 1931); "O. Henry, Prison and Publicity" (*Bruno's Weekly*, November 1, 1916); "Few Traces Left of O. Henry's Bagdad" (*New York Times Magazine*, June 21, 1935); "O. Henry's Wit" (*Bruno's Weekly*, June 24, 1916); "O. Henry In Greenwich Village" (*Bruno's Weekly*, December 11, 1915); "Poe and O. Henry" (*Bruno's Weekly*, July 29, 1916); and "Recalling O. Henry" (*The New Yorker*, July 12, 1930). The issues of the *Saturday Review of Literature* (December 9, 1933; January 13 and February 10, 1934; May 4, May 25 and June 1, 1935) contain only one William Sidney Porter article – "O. Henry, 1898" by Christopher Morley – in the 1933 issue. It includes a little-known photograph of William Sidney Porter said to have been taken just before his entrance into the Ohio Penitentiary.

3. Literary Productions. 18 folders (ca. 250 items). ca. 1930-1938.

The vast majority of this series consists of working notes and drafts produced by Clarkson for *A Bibliography of William Sidney Porter (O. Henry)* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd.,

1938). Other articles, drafts and notes by Clarkson included in this series are “A Decomposition of *Cabbages and Kings*” (*American Literature*, May 1935); a notebook entitled “O. Henry Scrapbook”; research notes on drug names used in William Sidney Porter's stories; and a typescript entitled, “O. Henry's First Story.”

4. Newspaper Clippings. 1 folder (9 items). 1938.

These clippings are reviews of Clarkson's *Bibliography* from various sources.

5. Photographs. 1 folder (2 items).

The photographs are a 7” x 9” print of the profile photograph of Margaret Porter, and a 8” x 10” sepia of the O. Henry residence in San Antonio, Texas.

6. Miscellaneous. 1 folder (1 item).

This item is an engraving plate for a Christmas card utilizing an O. Henry quotation sent by Paul and Wilma Clarkson. The mock-up for the design and one of the cards is included in 2:4.

FOLDER LISTING

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	--	Correspondence	-- <i>Bibliography</i> File
	--	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> File
	3	“	-- Clarkson, <i>Bibliography</i> Congratulations
	4	Correspondence	-- Ray Murmann
	5	”	-- Miscellaneous
2	1	Printed Materials	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Promotional
	2	“	-- <i>Saturday Review of Literature</i>
	3	“	-- Articles
	4	“	-- Miscellaneous
3	1	Literary Productions	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Agenda
	2	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Parts 1 and 2
	3	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Parts 1, 2 and miscellaneous
	4	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Part 3
	5	Literary Productions	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Parts 1, 3 and 4
	6	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Part 5
	7	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Part 6
	8	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Typed draft
	9	Literary Productions	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Index draft
	10	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Indexed copy, Parts 1-4
	11	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Indexed copy, Parts 5-8
	12	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Proofed copy
	13	Literary Productions	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Galley proof
	14	“	-- <i>Bibliography</i> , Miscellaneous
	15	“	-- Research Notes (Drugs)
	16	“	-- “Decomposition of <i>Cabbages and Kings</i> ”
	17	Literary Productions	-- “O. Henry Scrapbook”
	18	“	-- “O. Henry’s First Story”
4	1	Newspaper Clippings	-- <i>Bibliography</i> Reviews
5	1	Photographs	
6	1	Miscellaneous	