Rex Stout papers 1907-1980 (bulk 1930-1975)

MS.1986.096

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Archives and Manuscripts Department

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Summary Information

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Library Unit Archives and Manuscripts Department

Title Rex Stout papers

Date [bulk] Bulk, 1939-1975

Date [inclusive] 1907-1980, undated

Extent 39.25 Linear feet (67 boxes)

Language English

Language of Materials note Materials in this collection are primarily in English, with television scripts

in Italian.

Abstract The Rex Stout papers concern the family life, writings, and political

activism of detective novelist Rex Stout, author of the Nero Wolfe series. The collection consists of artwork, booklets, carbon copies, certificates, contact prints, comic strips, correspondence, dust jackets, galley proofs, floorplans, ledgers, manuscripts, negatives, posters, radio

scripts, transcripts, and typescripts.

Preferred Citation note

Identification of item, Box number, Folder number, Rex Stout papers, MS.1986.096, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Processed by Annalisa Moretti, June 2016. This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit.

Restrictions on access

Collection is open for research.

Restrictions on use

These materials are made available for use in research, teaching and private study, pursuant to U.S. Copyright Law. The user must assume full responsibility for any use of the materials, including but not limited to, infringement of copyright and publication rights of reproduced materials. Any materials used for academic research or otherwise should be fully credited with the source. The original authors may retain copyright to the materials.

Processing Information note

The Rex Stout papers were first made available to researchers in 1992. In 2016, the collection was reprocessed to current archival standards. Original order has been maintained wherever possible.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Judson C. Sapp papers and collection of Rex Stout, MS.1996.022, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

John J. McAleer papers, BC.1995.016, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

Separated Materials note

This collection included Rex Stout's personal library. These books have been transferred to the John J. Burns Library book collections.

Biographical note

Rex Stout was an American author best known for his detective fiction. He was born December 1, 1886 in Noblesville, Indiana, the sixth of nine children. In 1887 his parents, John and Lucetta Stout, bought a forty-acre farm south of Topeka, Kansas, where Stout grew up. As a young man, Stout tried several trades, including bookkeeping (with a stint in the Navy as a bookkeeper on Theodore Roosevelt's yacht), ushering at an opera house in Topeka, studying law, and working as a cigar store clerk. He also traveled around the United States and began to work seriously at writing.

Stout published serialized novels and short stories throughout the 1910s, mostly in *All Story* magazine, but took a break from writing in 1916 when he settled in New York City, married Fay Kennedy, and started a savings and loan business for students with his brother, called the Educational Thrift Service (ETS), which he left in 1929. He and Fay spend the next couple of years in Europe. He worked on the first of several "straight" novels he would produce, *How Like a God* (1929). He published several more novels in this vein. In 1931, he and Fay divorced. The next year he married Pola Weinbach Hoffman, a textile designer, and together they had two daughters, Barbara (1933) and Rebecca (1937).

In 1934, Stout wrote his first novel featuring the characters Nero Wolfe and his sidekick Archie Goodwin, *Fer-de-Lance*. For the next four decades, he dedicated his career to writing the Nero Wolfe series. During that time, Stout wrote seventy-two Wolfe novels and novellas, which spawned several radio, television, and film adaptations, and built the dedicated fan base that would later become the Wolfe Pack. In 1969, he received the crime-fiction award, the Silver Dagger, from the Crime Writers' Association.

Stout was involved in the operation of many professional organizations, among them the Authors' Guild and Authors' League of America (both of which he served as president), the Dramatists Guild, the Mystery Writers of America, the Screen Writers' Guild, and the Radio Writers Guild. He was also a lead figure in several political groups. During World War II he was chairman of the Writers' War Board. He helped to found the Fight for Freedom Committee and Freedom House and gave a series of radio broadcasts concerning Axis propaganda called "Our Secret Weapon." Following the war he continued his political activism by helping to found and serving as president of both the Society for the Prevention of World War III and the Writers Board for World Government.

Rex Stout died on October 27, 1975 at the age of 89 at his estate, High Meadow, in Connecticut.

Sources:

Anderson, David R. Rex Stout. New York: F. Ungar, 1984.

Erickson, Scott W. "Stout, Rex." In American National Biography Online, February 2000, http://www.anb.org/articles/16/16-02260.html.

McAleer, John J. Rex Stout: A Biography. Boston: Little, Brown, 1977.

Scope and Contents note

The Rex Stout papers document Stout's family life, political activism, and writing career. This includes the writing, publication, and adaptation of his successful Nero Wolfe novels and short stories, as well as other fiction and nonfiction works in print and for radio. His membership and leadership in political and literary organizations such as the Authors' Guild and the Authors' League of America, the Baker Street Irregulars, Freedom House, the Screen Writers' Guild, the Society for the Prevention of World War III, the Writers' War Board, and the Writers Board for World Government is well documented. Also represented are materials about the planning and construction of his family's Connecticut estate, High Meadow, and his hobbies, such as gardening and cooking.

Materials include artwork, booklets, carbon copies, certificates, contact prints, comic strips, correspondence, dust jackets, galley proofs, floorplans, ledgers, manuscripts, negatives, posters, radio scripts, transcripts, and typescripts.

Some of the topics covered in the collection include the Hollywood Blacklist, cooking, communism, gardening, global politics, mystery and detective fiction, unions, and World War II. Items of special interest include correspondence from the actress Marlene Dietrich, writers Upton Sinclair and Phlip José Farmer, and mathematician Norbert Wiener.

Arrangement note

The Rex Stout papers are arranged into four series: I. Literary Life; II. Personal Ephemera; III. Political Activism; and IV. Subject Files.

Series I is arranged into six subseries: A. Literary Ephemera; B. Literary Works; C. Professional Organizations; D. Publicity; E. Publishers; and F. Rights and Royalties. Subseries B is arranged into three sub-subseries: 1. Fiction; 2. Nonfiction; and 3. Poetry. Subseries D. is arranged into three sub-subseries: 1. Bibliographical and Biographical Notes; 2. Newspaper Clippings; and 3. Photographs.

Series III is arranged into five subseries: A. *The Myth That Threatens the World* Theatrical Production; B. Organizations; C. Radio Broadcast Transcripts; D. Works by Others; and E. Writings.

The series are arranged alphabetically, except for Series I. Literary Works subseries B. Fiction subsubseries 2. Nonfiction, which is arranged chronologically.

Collection Inventory

Series I: Literary Life, 1920-1980, undated

Artwork of Nero Wolfe, photocopies, undated	Box 1	Folder 1
Baring-Gould, William Stuart. Nero Wolfe of West Thirty- Fifth Street, reviews, 1969	Box 1	Folder 2
Bulldog named Nero Wolfe, photograph, undated	Box 1	Folder 3
Dust jackets for Where There's a Will, before 1946	Box 1	Folder 4
Dust jackets for <i>The Red Box</i> and <i>The Rubber Band</i> , undated	Box 1	Folder 5
Floorplans of Nero Wolfe's house, undated	Box 1	Folder 6
Posters for The League of Frightened Men, undated	Box 64	Folder 11
Nero Wolfe comic strip character sketches, before 1956	Box 66	Folder 4
Nero Wolfe comic strip correspondence, 1956-1957	Box 1	Folder 7-8
Nero Wolfe comic strip galley proofs, 1956-1958	Box 66	Folder 5
"Time to Kill," proposed film script, undated	Box 1	Folder 9
Watercolor artwork, undated	Box 1	Folder 10
The Wisdom of Nero Wolfe, edited by Pat McGeachy, 1974	Box 1	Folder 11

Sub-subseries 1: Fiction, 1920-1980, undated

Arrangement note

The Fiction subseries is arranged alphabetically, with short stories grouped under the title of the collection they would later be published in.

And Be a Villain, annotated and revised typescript, before 1948	Box 1	Folder 12-13
And Be a Villain, corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1948	Box 1	Folder 14-15
And Four to Go: "Christmas Party," annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1957	Box 1	Folder 16
And Four to Go: "Murder Is No Joke," revised carbon copy, before 1958	Box 2	Folder 1-2
Before Midnight, annotated and revised typescript, before 1955	Box 2	Folder 3-4
Before Midnight, annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1955	Box 2	Folder 5-6
Before Midnight, revised typescript, incomplete, before 1955	Box 2	Folder 7
The Black Mountain, revised typescript, before 1954	Box 2	Folder 8-9
Champagne for One, revised carbon copy, before 1958	Box 2	Folder 10-11
Champagne For One, annotated and revised typescript, 1958	Box 3	Folder 1-2
Curtains for Three: "Bullet for One," corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1948	Box 3	Folder 3
Curtains for Three: "Disguise for Murder," annotated and	Box 3	Folder 4

Death of a Doxy, annotated carbon copy, before 1966	Box 3	Folder 5-6
Death of a Doxy, annotated and corrected typescript, before 1966	Box 3	Folder 7-8
	Box 65	Folder 1
Death of a Dude, revised manuscript and photocopies, before 1969	Box 3	Folder 9
Death of a Dude, revised carbon copy, before 1969	Box 3	Folder 10-11
The Doorbell Rang, corrected carbon copy, before 1965	Box 4	Folder 1-2
The Doorbell Rang, annotated and revised typescript, 1965	Box 4	Folder 3-4
	Box 65	Folder 2
The Doorbell Rang, annotated galley proof, 1965	Box 66	Folder 1
The Doorbell Rang (Il Pesce Piu Grosso), television script, 1969	Box 4	Folder 5-8
A Family Affair, revised manuscript and photocopies, before 1975	Box 4	Folder 9
A Family Affair, annotated and revised typescript and photocopies, before 1975	Box 5	Folder 1
A Family Affair, annotated and revised typescript, before 1975	Box 5	Folder 2
A Family Affair, corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1975	Box 5	Folder 3-4
A Family Affair, galley proofs, 1975	Box 66	Folder 2
The Father Hunt, revised manuscript and notes, incomplete, before 1968	Box 5	Folder 5
The Father Hunt, corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1968	Box 5	Folder 6-7

The Final Deduction, revised carbon copy, before 1960	Box 5	Folder 8-9
Forest Fire, corrected and revised manuscript, before 1933	Box 5	Folder 10-11
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Gambit, annotated and revised typescript, before 1962	Box 6	Folder 2-3
Gambit, corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1962	Box 6	Folder 4-5
Golden Remedy, revised manuscript, before 1931	Box 6	Folder 6-8
The Golden Spiders, carbon copy, before 1953	Box 6	Folder 9-10
"His Own Hand," corrected typescript, before 1955	Box 7	Folder 1
Homicide Trinity: "Counterfeit for Murder," revised typescript, incomplete, before 1961	Box 7	Folder 2
Homicide Trinity, "Counterfeit for Murder, revised carbon copy, incomplete, before 1961	Box 7	Folder 3
Homicide Trinity, "Counterfeit for Murder, revised carbon copy, before 1961	Box 7	Folder 4
Homicide Trinity, "Death of a Demon," revised carbon copy, before 1961	Box 7	Folder 5
Homicide Trinity, "Eeny Meeny Murder No," revised carbon copy, before 1962	Box 7	Folder 6
Homicide Trinity, annotated and revised carbon copy, 1962	Box 7	Folder 7-8
	Box 64	Folder 1
How Like a God, corrected and revised manuscript, before 1969	Box 7	Folder 9-10
	Box 8	Folder 1
If Death Ever Slept, corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1957	Box 8	Folder 2-3

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If Death Ever Slept, annotated and revised typescript, 1957	Box 8	Folder 4-5
If Death Ever Slept (Circuito Chiuso), television script, 1969	Box 8	Folder 6-7
"Letter to Dr. Watson," carbon copies, undated	Box 8	Folder 8
Might as Well Be Dead, revised carbon copy, before 1956	Box 8	Folder 9
	Box 9	Folder 1
Might as Well Be Dead, television script, 1980	Box 9	Folder 2
The Mother Hunt, annotated and revised typescript, 1963	Box 9	Folder 3-4
The Mother Hunt, revised carbon copy, before 1963	Box 9	Folder 5-6
Murder by the Book, annotated and corrected typescript, before 1951	Box 9	Folder 7-8
Murder by the Book, television script, 1981	Box 9	Folder 9
The Nero Wolfe Cookbook, revised photocopy, before 1973	Box 9	Folder 10
	Box 10	Folder 1
"Nero Wolfe Takes a Ghostly Client," revised carbon copy and manuscript, undated	Box 10	Folder 2
Not Quite Dead Enough: "Not Quite Dead Enough," revised typescript, before 1942	Box 10	Folder 3
Please Pass the Guilt, revised manuscript, before 1973	Box 10	Folder 4
Please Pass the Guilt, carbon copy, before 1973	Box 10	Folder 5-6
Please Pass the Guilt, corrected and revised carbon copy and typescript, before 1973	Box 10	Folder 7-8
Please Pass the Guilt, annotated and revised typescript and correspondence, before 1973, 1976	Box 10	Folder 9-10

Plot It Yourself, annotated and revised typescript, before 1959	Box 11	Folder 1-2
Plot It Yourself, revised carbon copy, before 1959	Box 11	Folder 3-4
Plot It Yourself, galley proof, 1959	Box 66	Folder 3
Prisoner's Base, annotated and revised typescript, before 1952	Box 11	Folder 5-6
Prisoner's Base, annotated and revised carbon copy, incomplete, before 1952	Box 11	Folder 7-8
Prisoner's Base, carbon copy, incomplete, before 1952	Box 11	Folder 9
The Red Box (Veleno in Sartoria), television script, 1969	Box 12	Folder 1-4
A Right to Die, annotated and revised typescript, 1964	Box 12	Folder 5-6
A Right to Die, annotated and revised carbon copy, 1964	Box 12	Folder 7-8
A Right to Die, galley proof, 1965	Box 66	Folder 3
The Rubber Band (Il Patto Dei Sei), television script, before 1969	Box 12	Folder 9-11
	Box 13	Folder 1
The Second Confession, annotated and revised typescript, before 1949	Box 13	Folder 2-4
Seed on the Wind, revised manuscript, before 1930	Box 13	Folder 5-7
Seed on the Wind, annotated and revised typescript, before 1930	Box 13	Folder 8-10
Some Buried Caesar (Per la Fama di Cesare), television script, 1969	Box 14	Folder 1-5
Three at Wolfe's Door: "Method Three for Murder," revised carbon copy, before 1960	Box 14	Folder 6

Three at Wolfe's Door: "Poison á la Carte," revised carbon copy, before 1960	Box 14	Folder 7-8
Three at Wolfe's Door: "The Rodeo Murder," corrected and revised carbon copies and typescripts, incomplete, before 1960	Box 14	Folder 9
Three at Wolfe's Door: "The Rodeo Murder," corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1960	Box 14	Folder 10-11
Three at Wolfe's Door, annotated and revised typescript and carbon copy, 1960	Box 15	Folder 1-3
Three Doors to Death: "Door to Death," corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1949	Box 15	Folder 4
Three Doors to Death: "Man Alive," revised carbon copy, before 1947	Box 15	Folder 5
Three for the Chair: "Immune to Murder," annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1955	Box 15	Folder 6
Three for the Chair: "Too Many Detectives," corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1956	Box 15	Folder 7
Three for the Chair: "A Window for Death," revised carbon copy, before 1956	Box 15	Folder 8
Three Men Out: "Invitation to Murder", annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1953	Box 15	Folder 9
Three Men Out: "The Zero Clue," corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1953	Box 15	Folder 10
Three Witnesses: "Die Like a Dog," revised carbon copy, before 1954	Box 15	Folder 11
Three Witnesses: "The Next Witnesses," annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1955	Box 15	Folder 12
Three Witnesses: "When a Man Murders," corrected and revised carbon copy, before 1954	Box 15	Folder 13

Too Many Clients, annotated and revised typescript, before 1960	Box 16	Folder 1-2
Too Many Clients, revised carbon copy, before 1960	Box 16	Folder 3-4
Too Many Women, annotated and revised typescript, before 1947	Box 16	Folder 5-7
"Tough Cop's Gift," corrected carbon copies and clippings, 1953	Box 16	Folder 8
Trio for Blunt Instruments, annotated and revised typescript, before 1963	Box 16	Folder 9-11
Triple Jeopardy: "Home to Roost," annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1952	Box 16	Folder 12
Triple Jeopardy: "The Squirt and the Monkey," revised carbon copy, before 1951	Box 17	Folder 1
Triple Jeopardy: "The Cop-Killer," annotated and revised carbon copy, before 1951	Box 17	Folder 2
Triple Jeopardy, annotated and revised carbon copy, 1952	Box 17	Folder 3-5
Trouble in Triplicate: "Before I Die," revised carbon copy, before 1947	Box 17	Folder 6
Trouble in Triplicate: "Help Wanted, Male," annotated and revised typescript, incomplete, before 1945	Box 17	Folder 7
Trouble in Triplicate: "Help Wanted, Male," revised typescript, before 1945	Box 17	Folder 8
Trouble in Triplicate: "Instead of Evidence," revised carbon copy, before 1946	Box 17	Folder 9
Where There's a Will (Un Incidente di Cacccia), television script, 1969	Box 17	Folder 10-12

Sub-subseries 2: Nonfiction, 1942-1973, undated

Arrangement note

The Nonfiction subseries is arranged chronologically.

•	nat It Means to Be a Negro," in <i>The New Tribune Weekly Book Review</i> , photocopy,	Box 18	Folder 1
•	Tales," in <i>The Saturday Review of Literature</i> , n copy and photocopy, 1949 April 2	Box 18	Folder 2
"The Mystery	Novel," revised carbon copy, 1949 June 18	Box 18	Folder 3
"The Case of no. 9, 1950 N	the Lacking Law," in <i>The Friend</i> , vol. 124 ovember 2	Box 18	Folder 4
	The Later Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, n copy, before 1952	Box 18	Folder 5
	Varied Menu," review in <i>The New York</i> eview, carbon copy and photocopy, 1953	Box 18	Folder 6
-	ant Detictive," in <i>House and Garden</i> , vol. opy, proof, and clipping, 1953 October	Box 18	Folder 7
		Box 64	Folder 2
	Like — Brewster, NY," in <i>The Lincolnes</i> , carbon copy, 1954	Box 18	Folder 8
	e about John Watson, manuscript and carbon copy, 1954 April 24	Box 18	Folder 9
The New Yor	h Sauce," review of <i>The Art of Eating</i> in k <i>Times Book Review</i> , manuscript and 1954 September 19	Box 18	Folder 10
	e Alice B. Toklas Cook Book, manuscipt and 1954 November 8	Box 18	Folder 11
Review of Int	ernational Chef, carbon copy, 1955 May 11	Box 18	Folder 12

"How the Seed Sprouted," carbon copy, 1955 August 1	Box 18	Folder 13
"Let's Take the Mystery Out of Cooking," in <i>The American Magazine</i> , vol. 162, corrected carbon copy, 1956 May 7	Box 18	Folder 14
Review of <i>Creative Cooking</i> , carbon copy, 1956 August 2	Box 18	Folder 15
"Tri-Country Robin," typescript, 1956 March 1	Box 18	Folder 16
Introduction and summary, Eat, Drink, and Be Buried, manuscript and carbon copy, 1956 April 9-July 10	Box 18	Folder 17
"A Great Singer's Self-Portrait," in <i>The New York Herald</i> , manuscript and carbon copy, 1956 October 18	Box 18	Folder 18
"He Got His Man," in <i>The New York Times Book Review</i> , carbon copy and photocopy, 1957 January 24-March 24	Box 18	Folder 19
"Wine-Cellar Companions," in <i>The New York Times</i> , carbon copy and photocopy, 1957 September 12-29	Box 18	Folder 20
Introduction, <i>Sleuth Mystery Magazine</i> , carbon copy, 1958 June 6	Box 18	Folder 21
"Cinderella Paperback," in <i>Writers Roundtable</i> , carbon copy, 1958 June 20	Box 18	Folder 22
Untitled review of <i>The Land God Gave to Cain</i> , carbon copy, 1958 October 10	Box 18	Folder 23
"My Maiden Effort," in <i>The Authors Guild Bulletin</i> , manuscript and revised carbon copy, 1959 February 26	Box 18	Folder 24
"With All the Bouquet," review of <i>In Praise of Wine</i> and Certain Noble Spirits in The New York Times Book Review, corrected typescript and photocopy, 1959 September 11-October 11	Box 18	Folder 25
Untitled article on Caryl Chessman, manuscript, carbon copies, and research materials, 1959 October 22	Box 18	Folder 26

"Genesis of Detective," review of <i>The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes</i> in <i>The New Republic</i> , manuscript, carbon copy, and photocopy, 1960 April 15-May 9	Box 18	Folder 27
"Composition by Pola Stout," carbon copy, 1960 September 27	Box 18	Folder 28
Untitled review of <i>The Doomed Oasis</i> , manuscript and carbon copy, 1960 October 4	Box 18	Folder 29
"The Case of the Politician," in <i>The Baker Street Journal</i> , carbon copy, 1960 November 23	Box 18	Folder 30
Untitled review of <i>The Bachelors</i> , manuscript and carbon copy, 1961 January 25-February 7	Box 18	Folder 31
Speech introducing "A Study in Scarlet" radio broadcast, transcript, 1961 January 28	Box 18	Folder 32
Untitled review of <i>The Sportsman's Cookbook for the Hunter and the Fisherman</i> , manuscript and carbon copy, 1961 February 21	Box 18	Folder 33
Untitled review of Cooks, Gluttons, and Gourmets, carbon copy, 1962 January 20	Box 18	Folder 34
Introduction to <i>The Stories of Sherlock Holmes, Read by</i> Basil Rathbone, carbon copy, 1963 February 15	Box 18	Folder 35
"Why Nero Wolfe Likes Orchids," in <i>Life</i> , manuscript, carbon copy, and clipping, 1963 February 25-April 19	Box 18	Folder 36
"Capital Gains and Cultural Losses," in <i>Book Week</i> , manuscript, carbon copy, photocopy, and correspondence, 1963 August 6-1964 March 22	Box 18	Folder 37
"Was the Murderer in the Jury Box?" review of <i>The Minister and the Choir Singer</i> , carbon copy and photocopy, 1964 January 8-February 2	Box 18	Folder 38
"Wrong Side Up," carbon copy, 1964 February 3	Box 18	Folder 39

"The Man Who Came In from the Cold," in Mademoiselle, manuscript, carbon copy, and photocopy, 1964 May 7 Untitled review of La Bonne Table, manuscript and carbon copy, 1964 October 4 "Ages 9 to 12: Stories Past and Present," review of Chitty- Chitty-Bang-Bang, manuscript and carbon copy, 1964 October 6 Untitled article about John Hersey, manuscript and carbon copies, 1964 October 20 Foreword from French Cooking for Americans, carbon copies, 1964 December 30 Untitled article on the Connecticut State Commission on the Arts, carbon copies, 1965 March 23 Untitled review of Invitation to an Inquest, manuscript and carbon copies, 1965 October 27 "A Murderer's Milieu," review of The Boston Strangler in The Saturday Review, manuscript and carbon copy, 1966 Foreword, The Game of Croquet: Its Appointments and Laws, carbon copy, 1967 September 20 Untitled introduction in Reader's Digest, carbon copy, 1968 April 16 Untitled article in Holiday, carbon copy, 1969 October Intitled article in Holiday, carbon copy, 1969 October Box 18 Folder 51 Folder 51			
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Untitled review in <i>Reader's Digest</i> , carbon copy, 1973 Box 18 Folder 52 March 28	~	Box 18	Folder 52
"Why Can't a Woman," corrected and revised Box 18 Folder 53 typescript, undated	•	Box 18	Folder 53

b-subseries 4: Poetry, 1956, undated		
"Tri-Country Robin," manuscript and carbon copy, 1956 August 3	Box 18	Folder 54
Untitled poem, carbon copy, undated	Box 18	Folder 55
bseries C: Professional Organizations, 1932-1975		
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