

HARRY RANSOM CENTER

Archive, library and museum specializing in the collection of literary and cultural artifacts. The Ransom Center houses 36 million literary manuscripts, one million rare books, five million photographs, and more than 100,000 works of art.

Role

Archival Technical Writer, Editor + Assistant

Responsibilities

Technical Writer for Archival Finding Aids

Assistant for Outgoing Director

Speechwriter + Editor of Academic Articles

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Technical Finding Aid Example: Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf:

An Inventory of Her Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Creator:	Woolf, Virginia, 1882-1941
Title:	Virginia Woolf Collection
Dates:	1922-1956
Extent:	1 box (.417 linear feet)
Abstract:	The collection documents the life and works of this English Bloomsbury group writer. The bulk of the collection comprises letters written by Woolf.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-04591
Language:	English
Access	Open for research

▾ Scope and Contents

Letters written by Virginia Woolf make up the bulk of this collection. Also included are two manuscripts and a few letters between other people. The collection is organized into three series, with materials arranged alphabetically by title or author: I. Works, 1940, nd, II. Letters, 1922-1940, and III. Miscellaneous, 1923-1956. This collection was previously accessible through a card catalog, but has been re-cataloged as part of a retrospective conversion project.

The Works Series contains typescripts of *Kew Gardens* and "Thoughts on Peace During an Air Raid." Both manuscripts have been edited, with corrections and additions made in pencil.

The Letters Series contains about 80 letters from Woolf to various friends and acquaintances. A few individuals are particularly well represented, among them Richard Aldington, Dorothy and Janie Bussy, Angelica Garnett, and William Plomer.

While the Miscellaneous Series contains three autographs by Woolf, it is composed primarily of letters from her husband, Leonard Woolf, their friends Clive and Vanessa Bell, and Clarence Cline.

▾ Related Material

Available elsewhere in the Ransom Center are a few photographs of Woolf, her husband, and her home, located in the Literary Files of the Photography Collection, and 130 books from her personal library. Letters from Woolf can also be found in the collections of Mary Hutchinson and Ottoline Morrell, as well as others.

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Technical Finding Aid Example: Virginia Woolf

▾ Biographical Sketch

Born early in 1882 to Sir Leslie and Julia Stephen, Adeline Virginia Stephen (Woolf), was the third of four children (Vanessa, Thoby, and Adrian). Though she received little formal education, her father, a writer and editor with strong interests in literary history, encouraged her to read extensively and gave her general advice on writing. Her father's connections to the literary world brought Virginia into contact with many well-known writers, including James Russell Lowell (Virginia's godfather), George Meredith, and Anne Thackeray Ritchie.

The death of her mother in 1895, when Virginia was thirteen, led to the first in a life long series of bouts of "madness" or depression, which plagued Woolf and which she treated with rest, milk, and long walks. The death of her step-sister in 1897 and then her father in 1904, though tragic, gave Virginia and her siblings the impetus and opportunity to move from the family home in respectable Hyde Park Gate to a new home in the less respectable neighborhood of Bloomsbury. It was here that the Bloomsbury group, formed at the Stephen's Thursday evenings "at-home," got its start. Groups of Thoby's friends from Cambridge visited to participate in wide-ranging discussions about politics, economics, and art. In 1906, Thoby died and Vanessa married Clive Bell, leaving Virginia and her younger brother Adrian to set up house together at a new Bloomsbury address.

The next few years were difficult for Virginia. Distressed by the loss of Thoby and the symbolic loss of Vanessa, but also invigorated by the relative independence of her new situation, she began writing her first novel. Also during this period, Lytton Strachey, a friend of her late brother, pointed out Leonard Woolf, another friend and original member of the Bloomsbury group, as a potential match for Virginia. Leonard Woolf, a writer in his own right, encouraged Virginia, a fact much in his favor when he proposed marriage in 1912.

In 1917, the Woolfs purchased a small hand press and set it up on their dining-room table with the idea of printing some of their own work and that of a few friends. From this small beginning grew Hogarth Press, giving Virginia Woolf the advantage of being able to publish everything she wrote, without concern for conventions or conservative editors. Woolf published all of her books through Hogarth Press, including *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *Orlando: A Biography* (1928), and *A Room of One's Own* (1929). The exceptions were Woolf's first two novels, *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919), published by her half-brother's publishing company, Duckworth Press. Most of her works were picked up by Harcourt, Brace and published in America within a year of English publication.

In 1919, the Woolfs moved to Monk's House in Rodmell, maintaining a flat in Tavistock Square, Bloomsbury for the work week. Through the twenties and thirties Woolf continued to write, not just novels, but essays on feminism, literary criticism, and some biography. During the early years of World War II, she spent most of her time at Monk's House on the Sussex coast, and it was there that she committed suicide, drowning herself in the Sussex coast on March 28, 1941.

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Technical Finding Aid Example: Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf Collection--Folder List		
Series I. Works, nd, 1940		
<i>Kew Gardens</i> , typescript with revisions, nd, 12pp	box 1 folder 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Thoughts on Peace During an Air Raid," typescript with corrections, 1940, 8pp	box 1 folder 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire box 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Series II. Letters, 1922-1940		
A-Z	box 1 folder 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aldington, Richard, 1922-1926	box 1 folder 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bussy, Dorothy Strachey, 1923-1937	box 1 folder 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bussy, Janie, 1931-1936	box 1 folder 6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Garnett, Angelica Bell, 1937-1940	box 1 folder 7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lehmann, John, 1931-1935	box 1 folder 8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plomer, William Charles Franklyn, 1929-1940	box 1 folder 9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhondda, Margaret Haig Thomas Mackworth, 2nd Viscountess, 1930-1938	box 1 folder 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robins, Elizabeth, 1929	box 1 folder 11	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire box 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Series III. Miscellaneous, 1923-1956		
Miscellaneous correspondence between others, and three Woolf autographs, 1923-1956	box 1 folder 12	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire box 1	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Technical Finding Aid Example: Virginia Woolf

▸ Virginia Woolf Collection--Index of Correspondents

Index entries that include the notation (from Woolf) indicate that the person is the recipient of correspondence from Virginia Woolf.

In general, the box and folder number are followed by the recipient of the letter(s) and the date of the letter(s) when known. Where there is no number, there is only one letter. So in the example

Bell, Clive, 1881-1964--1.12 (3 to Francis Hackett, 1931-1934)

Bell sent 3 letters to Francis Hackett between the years 1931 and 1934 and they are located in box 1, folder 12.

When a correspondent received as well as sent letters, or sent letters to more than one recipient, the sender and/or recipients are listed beneath the name of the sender and the date or span of dates of the correspondence are followed by the box and folder number. So in the example

Woolf, Leonard, 1880-1969--

to Angelica Garnett, 1941--1.12

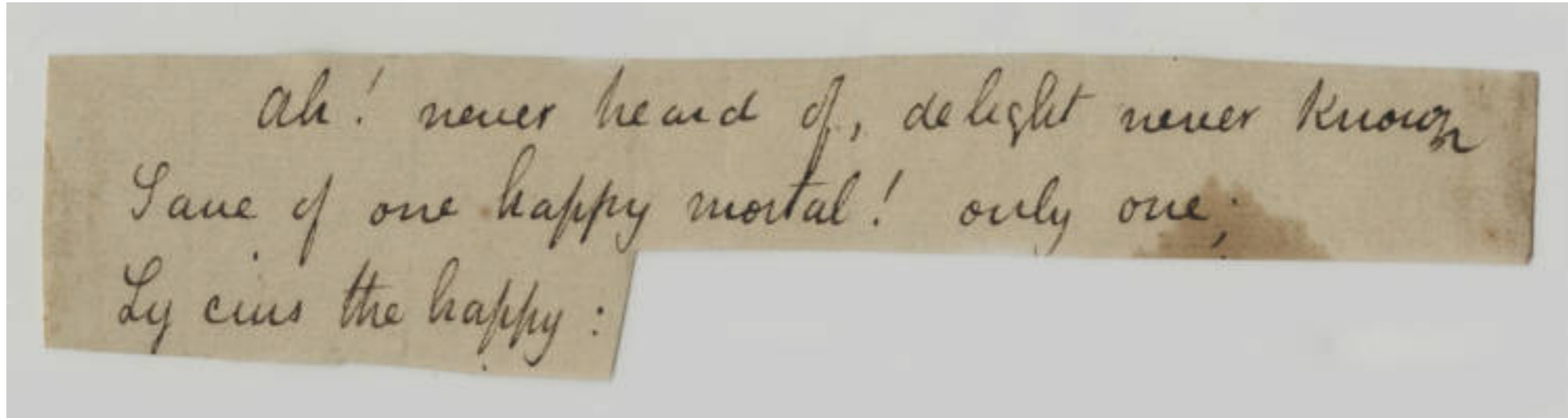
6 to Francis Hackett, 1932-1934--1.12

Leonard Woolf sent one letter to Angelica Garnett in 1941, located in box 1, folder 12, and six letters to Francis Hackett between 1932 and 1934, which are also located in box 1, folder 12.

- Aldington, Richard, 1892-1962--1.4 (16 from Woolf, 1922-1926)
- Bell, Clive, 1881-1964--1.12 (3 to Francis Hackett, 1931-1934)
- Bell, Quentin--1.3 (from Woolf, nd)
- Bell, Vanessa, 1879-1961--1.12 (3 to Clarence Cline, 1954-1956)
- Bussy, Dorothy--1.5 (14 from Woolf, 1923-1937)
- Bussy, Janie--1.6 (7 from Woolf, 1931-1936)
- Cline, Clarence Lee--1.12 (3 to Vanessa Bell, 1954)
- Échanges*--1.3 (from Woolf, 1931)
- Garnett, Angelica--1.7 (19 from Woolf, 1937-1940)
- Harper, Allanah--1.3 (from Woolf, 1929)
- Lehmann, John, 1907- --1.8 (4 from Woolf, 1931-1935)
- Mackworth, Margaret Haig Thomas, Viscountess Rhondda, 1883- --1.10 (4 from Woolf, 1930-1938)
- Plomer, William, 1903-1973--1.9 (35 from Woolf, 1929-1940)
- Roberts, Denys Kilham, 1903-1976--1.3 (from Woolf, 1937)
- Robins, Elizabeth, 1862-1952--1.11 (3 from Woolf, 1929)
- Woolf, Leonard, 1880-1969--
- to Angelica Garnett, 1941--1.12
- 6 to Francis Hackett, 1932-1934--1.12

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Technical Finding Aid Example: John Keats



John Keats:

An Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Center











Creator:	Keats, John, 1795-1821
Title:	John Keats Collection
Dates:	1816-1895, undated
Extent:	1 box (.42 linear feet)
Abstract:	Includes manuscripts and letters by the English Romantic poet John Keats. Present are fragments of poems "Isabella" and "Lamia," as well as a manuscript of his verse tragedy "Otho the Great." Two letters by Keats are included, written to his sister-in-law, Georgina Keats, and to John Hamilton Reynolds.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-2251
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research



[DIGITIZED MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS COLLECTION. CLICK HERE TO EXPLORE.](#)

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Technical Finding Aid Example: John Keats

Works:		
 Isabella: XLIII, XLVI, handwritten manuscript / fragment, 2 pages on 1 leaf, undated. Endorsed "Mss of John Keats presented by Joseph Severn 21 August 1845."	Container 1.2	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Isabella, or the pot of basil: verses 54 and 62, handwritten manuscript with revisions, 2 pages on 1 leaf, 1818.	Container 1.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Lamia, handwritten manuscript / fragment, 1 page on 1 leaf, undated.	Container 1.2	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Otho, handwritten manuscript / fragment, 1 page, undated. Removed from Wn K226 818eab. From the Wrenn Collection.	Container 1.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Otho, the great, handwritten manuscript / fragment, 1 page, undated.	Container 1.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Otho the great, bound handwritten manuscript and photocopy, approximately 70 pages, undated. From the Stark Collection.	Container 1.3	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire Container 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letters:		
 AL to Keats, Georgiana, 13-17 January 1820. With typed transcription. From the Stark Collection.	Container 1.4	<input type="checkbox"/>
 ALS to Reynolds, John Hamilton, 28 February 1820. From the Stark Collection.	Container 1.5	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire Container 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous:		
 Handwritten document signed by brothers John Keats, George Keats, and Thomas Keats, authorizing a payment to Joseph Burch from the estate of their grandmother, Alice Jennings, 13 June 1816. From the Stark Collection.	Container 1.6	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Van Dyke, Henry. The influence of Keats, signed handwritten manuscript with emendations, 20 pages, undated (1895?). From the Stark Collection.	Container 1.7	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Technical Finding Aid Example: John Keats

▾ Explanatory Note Concerning Manuscript Collections Cataloged in the Card Catalog

Prior to 1990 when archival cataloging procedures were adopted at the Ransom Center, all manuscript collections were described in a card catalog.

Organization of Collections:

Manuscripts for each author collection were organized into four categories:

Works: manuscripts by the author, arranged alphabetically by title;

Letters: the author's outgoing correspondence, arranged alphabetically by recipient name;

Recipient: the author's incoming correspondence, arranged alphabetically by the author of the letter; and

Miscellaneous: all other manuscripts and correspondence, arranged alphabetically by creator.

Materials that did not fit into these categories, such as art, photographs, books, and near-print materials such as newspaper clippings, were dispersed to other Ransom Center collections for cataloging and storage.

Abbreviations Used in Descriptions:

The symbols below were used in combinations. For example **ALS** means autograph letter signed; **Tccms** means typed carbon copy manuscript, etc.

A = autograph (i.e., handwritten)

T = typed

S = signed

I = initialed

Ms = manuscript

Mss = manuscripts

L = letter

FL = form letter

N = note

D = document

C = card

PC = post card

cc = carbon copy

p = page

pp = pages

l = leaf

ll = leaves

nd = no date

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Technical Finding Aid Example: Mark Twain

Samuel Langhorne Clemens:

An Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Creator:	Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910
Title:	Samuel Langhorne Clemens Collection
Dates:	1861-1963, undated
Extent:	3 boxes (1.26 linear feet), 2 galley folders (gf)
Abstract:	Includes manuscripts and letters written by Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who was better known as the American author Mark Twain. Letters written by Clemens to P. T. Barnum, Frank Bliss, William Bowen, Wattie D. Bowser, Karl Gerhardt, Bram Stoker, and many others are present.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-0809
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research

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Technical Finding Aid Example: Mark Twain

Works:	
... among us does not miss the gentle ministrations..., handwritten manuscript / incomplete with few revisions, 1 page (numbered 9), undated.	Container 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/>
A cruise in the dark, Chapter XII, A tramp abroad, handwritten manuscript / original draft, 25 pages bound, undated. Included also is a portrait of Twain and typed pages from the original edition, bound.	Container 1.2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Following the equator, Chapter 51, handwritten manuscript with ANS at end / facsimile, 8 pages, 14 April 1897. Not included in published volume.	Container 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/>
A ghost story, newspaper clippings with handwritten revisions, 10 pages bound, undated. Bound with this: Speech to the Scottish corporation, London.	Container 1.3 <input type="checkbox"/>
The gilded age by Mark Twain and Charles Warner, excerpts, handwritten manuscript, 6 pages, undated.	Container 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Life on the Mississippi, suppressed chapter, 2 carbon typescripts / copies, 12 pages each, undated.	Container 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire Container 1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Mark Twain at Carnegie Hall, galley proof, 2 pages, undated. An address Taxes and morals delivered in New York, 22 January 1906.	Container gf 1 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Request entire Container gf 1 <input type="checkbox"/>
A murder, a mystery, and a marriage, signed handwritten manuscript, 99 pages bound, undated.	Container 1.4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Notebook with handwritten notes, addresses, and manuscripts, 128 pages bound, 1892-1893.	Container 1.5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Officers of Millicent Library, signed handwritten manuscript with revision, 22 February 1894. Page 3 on verso of ALS James S. Metcalfe to Rodney Lee.	Container 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/>
An open letter to Commodore Vanderbilt, proof with few handwritten corrections, 8 pages, undated (published 1956). Removed from PS 1322 O636 1956 HRC. Not described in card catalog (Transfer, Library).	Container 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Speech to the Scottish Corporation, London, newspaper clippings with handwritten comments, bound, undated. Bound with this: A ghost story.	Container 1.3 <input type="checkbox"/>