

MORLEY-CAIN
PAPERS, 1935-1957

In four boxes

Gift of Helen Hare Cain through Steven Rothman, May-June, 1990

The collection includes correspondence and manuscripts.

The correspondence consists of two series: one business, the other personal. The former series is composed chiefly of letters from Christopher Morley. Many are letters of thanks for correspondence as well as about manuscripts sent to him for publishing in his "Bowling Green" column or other publications. The business correspondence was on acidic, crumbling paper and has been photocopied onto acid-free paper.

The latter series includes letters primarily written by Christopher Morley to his secretary, Helen Hare, later Cain, which refer heavily to his literary work, to personal friends, such as Buckminster Fuller and personal philosophy. Among other items, there is a telegram and copies of letters from Ginger Rogers.

The arrangement of the correspondence is chronological; there is manuscript material that accompanies some of the correspondence. Christopher Morley's manuscripts include poems, essays, novelettes, chapters from his books and aphorisms.

Box Contents List

- Box 1 - Business correspondence
Personal correspondence, 1935-1937
- Box 2 - Personal correspondence, 1938-1946
- Box 3 - Personal correspondence, 1947-1957
- Box 4 - Manuscripts

Business correspondence:

There are approximately 70 business letters, chiefly from Christopher Morley, dating from 1936-38. These are primarily letters of thanks for correspondence or about manuscripts sent to him for publishing in his "Bowling Green" column or in other publications.

Personal Correspondence

Personal correspondence dates from 1935 to 1957.

Letters are from Christopher Darlington Morley (1890-1957) to Helen Hare, later Cain, unless otherwise noted. Morley often addressed Hare Cain as "Bronzina" or "Bzina" and occasionally as "Hershey". Christopher Morley is abbreviated as CDM; Helen Hare Cain as HH or HHC.

Items marked + may be useful for History 361.

Letters noted below are highlights of the collection which totals approximately 365 items.

1936:

June 5. [Bucky Fuller will drive him to Providence in his car "shaped like Moby Dick and is celestial riding"]

to W.S. Dix. July 8. [always had hankering to be a sports writer because most rewarded of newspaper work and most encouraged for originality]

Aug. 6. [working hard on *Bartlett's*]

Nov. 2. [has made 2 broadcasts at Columbia]

Nov. 24. [on an interstate lecture tour]

1937:

Jan. 12. [averted the grippe by liberal applications of Scotch; working on *Bartlett's*]

Mar. 1. [completed *Bartlett* copy, must read galley proofs and write preface and give speech]

Apr. 12. Poem (H.Ms.): "Retreat"

Apr. 14. [getting started on new book]

Aug. 19. [writing "in the thick of the lays of ancient Troy"]

Sept. 7. [finishing up *Trojan Horse*]

Oct. 17. [loves his book *Trojan Horse*, but believes many reviewers will pan it; George Abbott wants to produce *Where the Blue Begins*]

Oct. 23. [CDM's father has died]

1938:

Jan. 3. ["one gets so weary around here, of seeing healthy Yiddish girls..."; death of Don Marquis]

Jan. 12. [in trying to arrange a meeting between them, refers to HH as his secretary, Miss Hershey]. In a note by HHC attached, Cain says CDM did call her that sometimes.

Jan. 24. [CDM also has bladder infection "and who gave it to whom, I can't imagine"]

Feb. 4. [CDM and brother, Frank, will be going to Haverford to arrange for their father's final interment "at the old Quaker burial ground there"]

May 30. [something CDM hoped would be done by Lippincott (publishers) didn't work out] In a note HH says the idea was to have her sell his books to college bookstores; booksellers aren't even trying to sell his books "the great future of the bk biz lies in Mail Order"; John Dickson Carr was a student of CDM's at Haverford

July 13. [went to Chicago with Bucky Fuller; wrote a story about the Broadway Limited which was turned down; working on new novel (*Kitty Foyle*); loves his daughter, Louise, enormously]

to Norman Sabel. Oct. 31. [CDM wrote *Kathleen* just after he left Ladies' Home Journal and went to Philadelphia Evening Ledger. That summer, he and friend Earl Derr Biggers made a dramatization of it. Then after World War I, changed script to post-war version. This was called *Three's a Crowd* and was produced by John Cort]

1939:

Feb. 17. ["struggling hellishly with my Irish woman" (*Kitty Foyle*)]

June 21. [CDM's mother has died]

Oct. 5. [struggling to get script of the play version of Trojan Horse to Theatre Guild]

1940:

Jan. 10. [..."I've got hold of the biggest idea for a story that I've had in years (*The Man Who Made Friends With Himself?*); had to "pinchhit for Carl Sandburg at the Bksellers League..."]

Mar. 21. [has been working on a satirical novelette (*Miss Libby*) "which probably noone will like"]

Dec. 10. [refers to a refugee family living with him (Dr. and Mrs. Steven George), producing a play (*Trojan Horse*), writing a book (*Thorofare*)]

1941:

Rogers, Ginger to CDM. Jan. 29. [telegram (probably of best wishes) after appearance of the movie *Kitty Foyle*]

Oct. 24. [working on "the longest and toughest (I mean most difficult) novel I ever attempted"]

1942:

Correspondence of CDM, Bennett Cerf and Ginger Rogers (only copies of latter). March 3-May 29. [about sending and receiving CDM's books and possibility of Ginger Rogers in a screen version of *Human Being*]

1943:

Short poem: "The British Grenadier". H.Ms.

1944:

"The Beck and Call Club" founded by James Carroll and CDM

June 26. [must go to Haverford College to do a library job]

to Tommie Newman. Sept. ? [re continuing BBC broadcasts and Information Please]

Nov. 28. [having portrait painted for Book of the Month Club]

Dec. 20. [includes (typed) poem]

1945:

Apr. 12. [helped dedicate the Lockwood Library at the University of Buffalo; N.Y. Times to publish his poem about Buffalo]

May 24. [was tapped for an overseas job, but didn't accept; writing Chinese (poems) instead]

July 9. [sends typed copies of "Chinese" poems]

Aug. 13. [getting Scottish refugee family ready to return to Scotland, closing house at Lloyd Harbor and getting more requests from BBC for his broadcasts]

Nov. 2. [a piece turned down by the New Yorker, but bought by Ellery Queen magazine]

1946:

Jan. 2. includes some poems

Jan. 4. [Baker Street Irregulars meeting coming up]

to Roger Scaife. June 11. [in defense of *Bartlett's Quotations*]

June 22. [one of several letters describing activities, including *Bartlett's*, BBC, Book of the Month Club, legalities re E.D. Biggers estate]

Sept. 30. [has written a piece on American literature in 1946; Canadian radio broadcast of *Trojan Horse*]

Dec. 3. poem: "Forever Ambrosia". Typed.

to Bruce Bliven at The New Republic. Dec. 10. ["...if anything could make...me...an anti-Zionist, it would be the New York Times"; makes prognostications about world politics] +

to William Rose Benet. Dec. 15. [the foibles of Drew Pearson, Molotov, T.S. Eliot, Bernard Baruch et al and poetry] +

Dec. 29. "Thought in Process", 5 p. of aphorisms

1947:

to Gordon K. Chalmers. Jan. 4. [a wonderfully interesting letter full of ethereal things]

Jan. 5. a short poem

Jan. 8. [re Robert Louis Stevenson]

to Norman Dodge. Feb. 12. [about books and Keats and philosophizing]

to Louise Thomas (Tommie). Mar. 4. [mentions Haverford] copy sent to HHC notes that he would sell script of *Libby* to the movies

Mar. 4. ["wildly busy" working on *The Man Who Made Friends With Himself*]

Mar. 19. attached is 4 p. essay in draft "Everyman his own Sec'y of State"

May 4. [lunch with T.S. Eliot; winning in BBC radio contest]

Sept. 25. [after writing *Kitty Foyle*, cast about for something to write and came up with a series about Mrs. Forsooth]

London, n.d. [Clare Luce and CDM's *Screwtape Letters* and the possible making of a movie]

Dec. 16. [turns rights to *Miss Libby* over to HHC]

1948:

Jan. 22. 3 p. draft of an essay or part of a chapter

[ca. 1948]. [*Human Being* has three times the stuff *Kitty (Foyle)* ever was dreamed of"; never meant *Miss Libby* for publication, but rather for movie about the French]

to Betty Parsons (of McCall's Magazine). Feb. 9. [suggests that McCall's should consider publishing his novel *Miss Libby* in cartoon form] [Parsons' response was that it was a good idea and that Al Capp might execute it]

to William Rose Benet (Bill). Feb. 16. [about Truman Capote, Logan Pearsall Smith, the beauty of *Cry the Beloved Country*, etc.]

Apr. 11. [encloses draft of a chapter of *The Man Who Made Friends With Himself*]

July 31. [...Stalin was raised on Frank Norris and O. Henry, and maybe Henry Wallace; Joseph Conrad one of CDM's heroes]

Aug. 31. [CDM a profound admirer of W.S. Maugham]

Sept. 8. [his next volume of essays will be the *Ironing Board*]

[1948]. CDM's review of *The Red Danube* by Bruce Marshall]

Nov. ? [encloses letter from agent who expresses great interest in making movies from some of CDM's books]

1949:

Apr. 7. a short poem: "On first looking into the transatlantic air schedules"

July 11. [prefers only to speak of his poems with the New York Times; has finished a poem about Mallarmé]

1949? [CDM a voting Democrat]

1950:

? 21. [comments on Hiss-Chambers trial]

to Louise Thomas. 1950. [about to see televised version of his *Parnassus on Wheels*; sends first draft of his *The Country Without a Man*; "I am keeping fingers crossed about Iran. Oil is something people will really fight for"]

1951:

Feb. 13. [television production of *Kitty Foyle*]

1952:

to HHC & Louise Thomas. May 10. [encloses sonnet "Shakespeare liked Ike"; acknowledges lack of interest in his work by American public]

1953:

Jan. 23. [always hoped she (HHC) would compile a concordance to his works]

Feb. 9. [*The Man Who Made Friends With Himself* may have been a flop because too Proustian]

July 20. [the gist of the satire of *Miss Libby*, written in 1940 is that we only pay lip-service to, but secretly despise and fear liberty]

1954:

to HHC & Louise Thomas. May 3. [comments on Edna St. Vincent Millay]

July 31. [getting ready to publish a new book of poems (*Gentlemen's Relish*)]

to Louise Thomas. Oct. 19. ["a sweet needly-sharp ecstasy for the mind: that so-neglected female organ"]

1955:

to HHC & Louise Thomas, but written in his nurse's hand. Dec. 20. [since his latest paralytic stroke in July, has written no letters]

Manuscripts:

Spirit Level and other poems, 1947. Typescript.

Apparently sent to Harvard University Press, but publication was in Morley's column for The Saturday Review, one in May, 1945, 2 others in Commonweal in February, 1946 and July 1945, etc.

Miss Libby. Typescript

Includes idea outline, typescript, clippings and correspondence re

Four chapters (annotated typescripts): "The Trestle", "Plenty of Time", "Souffle Potatoes" and "Postscript"

"Screwtape" (*Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis). Annotated typescript.

This is a rough draft of possible film treatment done by CDM. Also "Interview with an author" by Shirley Salzenkorn which is really written by CDM.

Miscellaneous manuscripts:

Ballad of New York, New York. Typescript.

Poem

"The Adventure of Foggy Bottom", "Bronzino's Mixture", "Murder in Red and Green". Annotated typescript.

Appear to be three connected parts to a story.

Nine poems. Annotated typescripts.

"Collyrium Tremens"

"Quercus, Soliloquizing on Book Merchandizing"

"Meditations after a Philosophical Tiffin"

"A Bookseller's Catalogue"

Untitled

"The Optimist"

"Peace of the Augustans"

"Good Laborhood"

"Toulemonde: Intermezzo"

