

**The New York Public Library
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Charles Hanson Towne Papers
1891-1948
MssCol 3014

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May 1984

Summary

Main entry:	Towne, Charles Hanson, 1877-1949
Title:	Charles Hanson Towne Papers, 1891-1948
Size:	5 linear feet (9 boxes)
Source:	Gift of Mrs. Ora Searle, 1949 and purchase from the Carnegie Book Shop, 1949.
Abstract:	Charles Hanson Towne (1877-1949) was an author, editor and popular New York celebrity. His papers consist of letters from his friends and associates, many of them prominent in the theatre, literature and the arts, as well as Towne's writings, financial papers, press clippings, photographs, and ephemera.
Access:	Apply in the Special Collections Office for admission to the Manuscripts and Archives Division.
Preferred citation:	Charles Hanson Towne Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.
Special formats:	Photographs

Biographical note

Charles Hanson Towne (1877-1949), was an author, editor, and popular New York celebrity. He moved from Kentucky to New York City with his family at the age of three. Towne began his literary career quite early as the eleven year old "publisher" of the *Unique Monthly*, a children's magazine written by and for Towne and his friends. After a year at City College, Towne got his first break as an editorial assistant at *Cosmopolitan* magazine. In 1901 he moved to the *Smart Set*, a new magazine for a sophisticated urban clientele, where he held numerous positions before becoming editor in 1904. *Smart Set* was the first of the many important magazines Towne was to edit, including the *Delineator* (1907-1910), *Designer* (1910-1915), *McClure's* (1914-1920), and *Harper's Bazaar* (1926-1929). In addition to his editorial duties, Towne was a prolific writer. He authored numerous volumes of poetry, novels, plays, travel essays, an etiquette book, song cycles, lyrics for musicals and operettas, and memoirs. Much of his writing celebrates New York City, most notably his work *Manhattan: A Poem* (1909) and his books of reminiscences. Towne was felt by many to be the quintessential New Yorker. From 1931-1937 he wrote a personal and literary column for the *New York American*, taught a poetry course at Columbia University, and in 1940 joined the touring company of the Broadway hit, *Life With Father*. In 1945 Towne summed up his career with the autobiography, *So Far, So Good*.

Scope and content note

The Charles Hanson Towne Papers contain correspondence, his writings, financial papers, press clippings, photographs, and ephemera. The correspondence, 1922-1948, is arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent, and contains letters from Towne's friends and fans, many of them prominent in literature and the arts. His most frequent correspondents represented in the collection include, Gertrude Atherton, Marie Adelaide Belloc, Major Edward Bowes, Royal Cortissoz, Theodosia P. Faulks, Zona Gale, Ellen Glasgow, Carolyn Wells Houghton, Fannie Hurst, Richard Le Gallienne, Edgar Lee Masters, Somerset Maugham and Edgar P. Snow. Following the incoming letters is a small folder of outgoing letters, 1918-1931. However, some copies of Towne's replies can be found filed with incoming letters.

The bulk of the collection consists of Towne's writings. Nine notebooks contain holograph manuscripts of his poems, plays, stories, essays, and newspaper columns, 1915-1944. Following the notebooks are undated typescripts of many of his works arranged by genre. His writings also appear in the scrapbooks of press clippings.

The remainder of the collection contains financial correspondence and documents, papers relating to the poetry course he taught at Columbia, and additional press clippings, ephemera, and photographs. Among his Columbia papers are poems written by his students, among them, J.D. Salinger.

Container List

Correspondence, 1918-1948

Only one or two items per correspondent except where noted.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1		Abbott, C.D., 1939
		Abbott, Sid, undated
		Adams, George Matthew, 1931
		Adams, Samuel Hopkins, 1945
		Alda, Frances, 19-- Jan 26
		Alexander, Grand Duke of Russia, 1931
		Allen, Hervey, 1935
		Althouse, James H. W., 1945
		Anderson, Lee
		Anglin, Margaret, 1938 and undated
		Astor, Helen, 1938
		Atherton, Gertrude, 1924-1945 (two folders)
		Auslander, Joseph, 1939
		Bachelor, Addison Irving, 1935
		Bacon, Josephine Daskam Dodge, 1936, 1945
		Baldwin, Ellis K., 1937 (Includes reply from Towne)
		Baldwin, Faith, 1936
		Barnes, Margaret Ayer, 1937
		Bara, Theda, 1936
		Becker, I.S.
		Beer, Arthur W., 1937
		Belle, Hattie, 1945
		Belloc, Marie Adelaide, 1933-1939 (13 items)
		Benefield, Barry, 1936
		Black, Alexander, 1937
		Bogert, William Russell, 1948
		Borie, Lysbeth Boyd, 19-- Jul 6
		Bowes, Edward
		1936-1943 and undated
		Letter from radio audience, 1942-1943
		Letters from listeners in response to reading of Towne's poem, "Around the Corner"
		94 items
		Brady, William A., 1937
		Brady, William A. (Mrs.), 1935 and undated (Grace George)
		Branch, Anna Hempsted, 1933
		Branson, James R., 1931
		Brentano, Frances, 1946
		Briggs, William Harlowe, 1945
		Brock, William, 1937
		Bromfield, Louis, undated
		Brown, John Mason, 1941, 1945
		Burke, Billie, 1945, undated
		Burke, Thomas, undated
		Burt, Struthers, 1927
		Carlton, W.N.C., 1937
		Carter, Juanita, 19-- Aug 29
		Case, Frank, 1933, 1938 (Includes carbon of letter from Towne)
		Chrysler, Walter P., Jr., 1932
		Cobb, Irwin S., undated
		Coffin, Tristram, 1938

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>
1	

Connell, William E., 1931

Cooper, Courtney Ryley, 1937
Cortissoz, Royal, 1924-1943 (11 items)
Covici, Pascal, 1938
Cowl, Jane, 1936; 1945
Criswell, Charles J., 1945
Cross, Wilbur L., 1937
Davis, Elmer, 1939
Daly, Thomas Augustine, undated
Damrosch, Walter, 1940
Derleth, August, undated
Draper, Dorothy, undated
Dreiser, Theodore, 1936
Easterbrook, Norman S., 1933
Eichhorn, Hermene Warlick, 1935
Engle, Paul, 1939
Engler, Robert, 1931
Eyre, Harold, 1945
Faulks, Theodosia P., 1930-1943 and undated
Fayant, Frank H., undated
Ferber, Edna, 1933 and undated
Fisher, William Edgar, undated
Fiske, Minnie Maddern, 1924
Forbes, James, 1937
Fox, Lyttleton, 1936
Fried, Johnny
Frohman, Daniel, undated
Gale, Zona, 1924-1933 and undated (8 items)
Garland, Hamlin, 1933 and undated
Gelbfish, Abraham, 1945
Genthe, Arnold, undated
George, Grace (see Mrs. William A. Brady)
Gibbons, Douglas, 1945
Gibbons, Lee Wallis, 1945
Glasgow, Ellen, 1934-1944 (16 items)
Gogarty, Oliver St. John, 1934 (Poem)
Golding, Louis, undated
Gordon, Avery, 1935
Gray, Henry G., 1945
Greene, Belle da Costa, 1924, 1928
Guest, Edgar A., 1941
Guiterman, Arthur, 1925
Hale, Nancy, 1937
Hamilton, Florence, 1945
Hampden, Walter, 1945
Harrison-Irving, Jessamine, undated
Haslett, Elmer, 1936
Henderson, Daniel, 1938
Herford, Beatrice, 1933
Hoover, J. Edgar, 1936
Houghton, Carolyn Wells, 1933-1941 and undated (11 items)
Hoult, Geneva F., 1945
Houston, Carol and James, 1932
Howard, Sidney, 1938
Howells, John Mead, 1945

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
		Hughes, Rupert, 1934
1		Hurst, Fannie, 1933-1946 and undated (35 items)
2		Jackling, Daniel C., 1938 Jacobs, Catherine H., 1945 Janis, Elsie, undated Johnson, Owen, 1927-1940 (4 items) Jones, Frederic M., 1931 (1 item plus enclosure and reply from Towne) Kahler, Hugh McNair, 1944 Kane, Whitford, undated Kemp, Harry, undated (two items and typescript of sonnet) Kuerr, Harry Q., 1945 Kucharsky, Mitchell, undated La Farge, Christopher, 1943 Larremore, Thomas A., 1936 La Rue, Grace, 1945 Lee, Muna, 1931 Le Gallienne, Eva, 1945 and undated (4 items) Le Gallienne, Hesper, 1932-1948 (4 items) Le Gallienne, Irma, 1932-1935 and undated (8 items) Le Gallienne, Richard, 1926-1945 (??) Lincoln, Joseph C., 1938 Little, Arthur W., 1938 Luce, Clare Boothe, 1942 Lurton, Douglas E., 1945 McCutcheon, John Tinney, undated McEvoy, Alice, undated McFee, William, 1932 McIntyre, O.O., 1936 MacKaye, Percy, 1940 McRaye, Walter, 1945 Malone, Ted, 1938 Marbury, Elizabeth, undated Markham, Edwin, 1921 Marsh, Edward, 1921 Martin, Virginia C., undated Masters, Edgar Lee, 1936-1946 and undated (22 items) Maugham, W. Somerset, 1922-1946 and undated (20 items) Mencken, H. L., 1936 Meredith, Grace, 1931 (1 item with reply from Towne) Merritt, George Franklin, 1945 Middleton, George, 1936 Mile, Dorothy, 1931 Monroe, Harriet, 1932-1933 Morgan, Anne, 1924
3		Nathan, George Jean, undated Nesbit, Evelyn, 1932 Nevin, Ethelbert (Mrs.), undated Norburn, Hope R., 1945 Norris, Charles G., 1932 Noyes, Alfred, 1928-1933 (7 items) Osbourne, Lloyd, 1928-1930 (3 items) O'Shaughnessy, Sarah, 1945 Peelle, Stanton C., 1931

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
		Pickering, Ada, undated
		Pollock, Channing, 1945
		Pollock, Helen Channing, 1946
		Ranlett, N. A., 1935
4		Rascoe, Burton, 1936
		Reese, Lizette Woodworth, 1935 and undated
		Rhodes, Harrison, 1926
		Rhodes, June Hamilton, undated
		Richardson, Anna Steese, 1945
		Rickman, Maxine
		Rinehart, Mary Roberts, 1936, 1941
		Robinson, Edgar A., 1932
		Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1933, 1935
		Roosevelt, Theodore, {1917
		Roosevelt, Theodore, Jr., 1936-1937 (4 items)
		Rose, Ruth
		Skinner, Cornelia Otis, 1937 and undated (4 items)
		Skinner, Otis, 1938, 1940 and undated (4 items)
		Smith, Alfred E., 1931
		Smith, Henry Clapp, 1931
		Smith, Richard R., 1939
		Snow, Edgar P., 1938-1941 and undated (10 items)
		Street, Julian, 1931, 1938
		Streeter, Edward, 1931 (1 item plus reply from Towne)
		Streitbert, Theodore
		Strong, Austin, 1934, 1938
		Sullivan, Frank, 1931
		Swinnerton, Frank Arthur, 1926
		Taylor, Laurette, 1936
		Terhune, Alice, 1945
		Thompson, Dorothy, 1936
		Torrence, Frederick Ridgely, 1945
		Townsend, Madeleine, 1945
		Townsend, Ray, 1929 (1 item plus reply from Towne)
		Tritz, W. B., 1927
		Tully, Jim, 1934
		Tunney, Gene, 1927-1937 and undated (6 items)
		Walker, John Brisben, 1926 and undated (4 items)
		Wheeler, John Neville, 1937-1938
		White, K. S., 1933
		White, T. J., 1929 (5 items)
		White, William Allen, 1939
		Whitty, May (Dame), 1942
		Wierdsma, J. Rypperda, 1929
		Winslow, Myra Samter, 1927, 1932
		Wolcott, Robert T., 1946
		Woollcott, Alexander, 1936-1941 (3 items)
		Young, Stark, 1935
		Unidentified, 1924-1946 and undated (30 items)
		Outgoing letters, 1918-1931

Writings

Box

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4 | Notebooks 1-9, 1915-1944
Stories and articles, A-S |
| 5 | Stories and articles, T-Z
<i>So Far, So Good</i> (autobiography)
Radio broadcasts
Poems
Plays |
| 6 | Plays
Musical works with lyrics by Towne |

Financial correspondence and documents

Columbia University poetry course materials

Clippings and memorabilia about Towne

Includes twelve issues of *The Unique Monthly*

Photographs

7	Writings by others, clippings, lists, etc.
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Scrapbooks of clippings

Mostly by and about Towne

- | | |
|---|---|
| 8 | #1 1902-1914
#2 1924-1926
#4 1926-1928 |
| 9 | #2 1921
#5 1934-1935
#6 1918-1920 (clippings not about Towne) |