

# Guide to the Than Vanneman Ranck Papers

MS 1432



compiled by Diane E. Kaplan, William E. Brown, Jr. and Robert Richards

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1432

**CREATOR:** Ranck, Than Vanneman, 1874-1947

**TITLE:** Than Vanneman Ranck papers

**DATES:** 1916-1947

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 6.25 linear feet (15 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of correspondence, cables, and telegrams which document Than Vanneman Ranck's service as editorial manager for the Hearst newspapers from 1928 to 1937. The papers highlight Ranck's role as editor of the "March of Events" section, a Sunday supplement to which prominent world leaders contributed. Also included are files concerning feature stories which Ranck secured for the Hearst chain, especially on Arctic and Antarctic exploration and pioneering aeronautical flights.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1432>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1432>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Doris Rend, 1985.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

Than Vanneman Ranck Papers (MS 1432). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Than Vanneman Ranck was born in Philadelphia in 1874. In 1896 he began his career as a reporter. He joined the Hearst newspapers as an editor in 1906. Ranck remained with the Hearst chain until his retirement in 1937, achieving the position of editorial manager for all the Hearst papers. He died in Easton, Maryland on July 30, 1947.

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## Scope and Contents

The Than Vanneman Ranck Papers consist of Ranck's files as editorial manager for William Randolph Hearst's chain of newspapers from 1928 to 1937. The papers highlight Ranck's role as editor of the "March of Events" section and his efforts to secure feature stories concerning Arctic and Antarctic explorations and pioneering aeronautical flights. Doris Rend, Ranck's daughter, donated the papers to the Yale University Library in 1985.

The files are arranged alphabetically by topic and include correspondence, telegrams, cables, and occasionally manuscripts for articles. The primary correspondents are members of the Hearst organization: William Randolph Hearst; Frank Knox and Thomas White, the general managers; and foreign correspondents or Berlin, London and Rome bureau heads William Hillman, Valerio Pignatelli, Karl von Wiegand, Robert J. Prew, and Robert Wells Ritchie. Correspondence with these individuals and the bureaus concerns the range of story topics and contains evaluations of a story's newsworthiness, details of finance and contract negotiations, and policy on publishing and marketing various features. The Hearst correspondence in particular illustrates the degree of control exercised by William Randolph Hearst in directing content and overseeing details of finance to shape the character of his papers.

When Ranck took over the "March of Events" section Hearst instructed him to make the section "interesting but impressive" in order to gain prestige for the papers. To this end Ranck sought articles or series by prominent world leaders and publication of memoirs or letters of statesmen of world renown such as William Borah, Winston Churchill, Calvin Coolidge, Edward Herriot, Benito Mussolini, Pope Pius XI, George Bernard Shaw, and Woodrow Wilson. The files contain correspondence concerning related negotiations and publication, but these letters are mainly between Ranck and other Hearst organization staff or literary agents. Seldom is there correspondence with the author. Folders 113-115 contain a few autographed manuscripts of articles.

There are many exchanges in the Hearst correspondence illustrating Hearst's concern for public morals and his interest in exposing the evils of Communism. The Beal files concern one such feature. Ranck's letters to Hearst occasionally concern the quality of the newspaper in the face of Depression era budget cuts.

Many of the other files relate to the Hearst chain's interest in securing and promoting stories involving expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic and pioneering aeronautical flights. The largest file concerns the Hearst-funded expedition by Sir Hubert Wilkins to Antarctica and his later unsuccessful attempt to travel under the Arctic Sea in a submarine. Other files concern articles on the flight of the DoX zeppelin around the world; Umberto Nobile's plans to take an airship to the Arctic; the attempt by Polish flyers Idzikowski and Kubala to fly non-stop from Paris to New York; Commander Burney's proposal for a forty-eight hour airship route between London, New York, and Montreal; Roscoe Turner and Clyde Pangborn's entry in the Robertson international air race from London to Melbourne; and a flight by Roger Q. Williams and Lewis A. Yancey between New York and Rome.

The last folder in the papers includes a small quantity of Ranck's personal papers. These include a few letters, photographs of Mt. Ranck, an autographed manuscript of an Edwin Markham poem, and an obituary.

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## **Arrangement**

Arranged in alphabetical order by topic and/or correspondent.

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## Collection Contents

### Correspondence

b. 1, f. 1-7	Andrée expedition	1930-1931, undated
b. 1, f. 8-11	Beal, Fred E.	1935, undated
b. 1, f. 12-19	Berlin bureau	1928-1931
b. 2, f. 20-30	Berlin bureau	1932-1935, undated
b. 2, f. 31	Borah, William E.	1928-1929, undated
b. 2, f. 32-34	Bowman, Isaiah	1928-1931, undated
b. 2, f. 35-36	Churchill, Winston	1930-1931, undated
b. 2, f. 37-38	Coolidge, Calvin	1930-1931, undated
b. 2, f. 39	Coolidge, Grace Goodhue	1929-1930, undated
b. 2, f. 40	Dornier DoX expedition	1928-1929
b. 3, f. 41-50	Dornier DoX expedition	1930-1931, undated
b. 3, f. 51-54	Foreign statemen articles	1930-1933, undated
b. 3, f. 55	Gandhi, Mahatma	1931-1932, undated
b. 3, f. 56	Harbord, J. G.	1935, undated
b. 4, f. 57-73	Hearst, William Randolph	1928-1932
b. 5, f. 74-89	Hearst, William Randolph	1933-1935 May
b. 6, f. 90-104	Hearst, William Randolph	1935, June-1936
b. 7, f. 105-112	Hearst, William Randolph	1937, undated
b. 7, f. 113	Herriot, Edouard	1928
b. 7, f. 114-115	Hillman, William	1929-1932, undated
b. 7, f. 116	Joffre, Joseph Jacques Césaire	1931, undated
b. 7, f. 117-118	Knox, Frank	1928-1930, undated

b. 7, f. 119	Kreuger, Ivar	1932, undated
b. 7, f. 120-121	London bureau	1928
b. 8, f. 122-140	London bureau	1929-1937, undated
b. 9, f. 141-145	London bureau	undated
b. 9, f. 146	Mawson, Douglas	1929-1930
b. 9, f. 147-148	Mears, John Henry	1928-1931
b. 9, f. 149-152	Mussolini, Benito	1930-1933, undated
b. 9, f. 153-156	Nobile, Umberto	1928-1929
b. 10, f. 157	Nobile, Umberto	undated
b. 10, f. 158-159	Painlevé, Paul	1930-1931, undated
b. 10, f. 160	Pershing memoirs	1930-1931
b. 10, f. 161	Pignatelli, Valerio	1930-1931
b. 10, f. 162	Polish flyers	1928-1929
b. 10, f. 163-167	Pope Pius XI	1929-1931, undated
b. 10, f. 168	Riisser-Larsen, Hjalmar	1932-1933
b. 10, f. 169-170	Rome bureau	1928-1932
b. 11, f. 171-172	Rome bureau	1933-1935
b. 11, f. 173	Roosevelt, Eleanor	1932
b. 11, f. 174	Sandino, Augustino	1931
b. 11, f. 175-177	Sarfatti, Marguerite G.	1929-1934
b. 11, f. 178-179	Shaw, George Bernard	1928
b. 11, f. 180	Shearer, W. B.	1924-1932
b. 11, f. 181	Stalin, Josef	undated
b. 11, f. 182-183	Transatlantic flight R-100	1928-1930
b. 11, f. 184	Tunney, Gene	undated
b. 12, f. 185	Turner-Pangborn	1934-1935
b. 12, f. 186-188	White, T. J.	1931-1937
b. 12, f. 189-197	Wilkins, Sir Hubert	1928-1931 March

b. 13, f. 198-208	Wilkins, Sir Hubert	1931 March-1935, undated
b. 13, f. 209-211	Williams, Roger Q. and Lewis A. Yancey	1928-1931
b. 13, f. 212-216	Wilson, Woodrow	1927-1935, undated
b. 13, f. 217	von Buelow memoirs	undated
b. 14, f. 218	von Huenefeld, Baron Ehrenfried Gunther	1928
b. 14, f. 219-236	von Wiegand, Karl	1928-1929 June
b. 15, f. 237-250	von Wiegand, Karl	1929 July-1932, undated
b. 15, f. 251	Personal	1916-1947



## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Aeronautics -- Flights  
Journalism  
Journalists  
Newspaper publishing  
Voyages and travels

### **Geographic Names**

Antarctica -- Aerial exploration

### **Names**

Hearst, William Randolph, 1863-1951  
Knox, Frank, 1874-1944  
Markham, Edwin, 1852-1940  
Ranck, Than Vanneman, 1874-1947  
Sarfatti, Margherita, 1880-1961  
Wilkins, George H., Sir (George Hubert),  
1888-1958