

Yale University Library
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Guide to the Legal Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis

YCAL MSS 1104



by Susan Brady

December 2016

P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 1104

TITLE: Legal Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis

DATES: 1919-1984

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 4.0 linear feet (10 boxes + 1 broadside)

LANGUAGE: In English.

SUMMARY: The Legal Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis consist of records maintained by Melville H. Cane, Pincus Berner, Paul Gitlin, Eugene Winick and other attorneys affiliated with the law firm of Ernst, Cane and Berner and its later iterations. In addition to correspondence between Lewis and his attorneys, the records include drafts and copies of Sinclair Lewis's will; correspondence and documents concerning his death and estate; records regarding his writings, including contracts and agreements, and permissions and rights inquiries handled by attorneys after Lewis's death.

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

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.lewisleg>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Glenn Horowitz Bookseller, Inc. on the Sinclair Lewis Fund, 2015.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Legal Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Legal Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis. Yale Collection of American Literature.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

The records were removed for preservation purposes from original accordion file folders maintained by attorneys. Labels and file numbers have been transcribed and included in the finding aid.

Scope and Contents

The Legal Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis consist of records maintained by Melville H. Cane (executor of Lewis's estate), Pincus Berner, Paul Gitlin, Eugene Winick and other attorneys affiliated with the law firm of Ernst, Cane and Berner and its later iterations. In addition to correspondence between Lewis and his attorneys, the records include drafts and copies of Sinclair Lewis's will; correspondence and documents concerning his death and estate; records regarding his writings, including contracts and agreements, and permissions and rights inquiries handled by attorneys after Lewis's death. Also included is a photograph of Lewis and his wife, the journalist Dorothy Thompson (1893-1961), and photographs of an unidentified exhibition of Sinclair Lewis books and manuscripts. Additional records received in 2017 include legal and financial documents relating to the divorce of Sinclair Lewis and his first wife, Grace Hegger Lewis, and subsequent alimony issues, and correspondence relating to the publication of a biography of Lewis by Mark Schorer.

Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Wills and Estate Records, 1919-1982. II. Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis's Writings, 1935-1984. III. May 2017 Addition Regarding the Estate of Sinclair Lewis, 1927-1968.

Collection Contents

Series I: Wills and Estate Records, 1919–1982, undated

1.5 linear feet (4 boxes + 1 broadside)

Includes correspondence, drafts and copies of wills; documents relating to Lewis's death; records relating to Thorvale Farm, Lewis's home in Williamstown, Massachusetts; estate tax proceedings and probate papers; income tax records; photographs; a script of a stage play written by Henry S. Bloomgarden and Malcolm Wells about Lewis and his second wife Dorothy Thompson, and correspondence regarding the script.

Arranged in subseries based on file names and numbers assigned by attorneys.

Will of Sinclair Lewis (8510)		
b. 1, f. 1	Melville H. Crane and Sinclair Lewis correspondence	1944–1948
b. 1, f. 2-7	Copies of wills and notes regarding changes	1919-1948, undated
Williamstown, Massachusetts [Thorvale Farm] (8511)		
b. 1, f. 8-11	Correspondence Includes correspondence between Sinclair Lewis, Melville H. Crane, and Sanborn G. Tenney.	1946–1950
b. 1, f. 12	Contracts and agreements	1946–1951
b. 1, f. 13	Plaza Art Galleries sale of estate	1952
b. 1, f. 14	Income tax returns	1947–1949
b. 1, f. 15	Thorvale Farm sales brochures, postcards and maps	1948, 1951, undated
b. 8 (Broadside)	Thorvale Farm map and house plans	
b. 1, f. 16	Thorvale Farm sale	1951–1952
b. 1, f. 17	Williamstown National Bank checkbook	1951
Estate Tax Proceedings and Probate Papers (9864)		
b. 2, f. 18-21	Estate tax proceedings	1928–1980
b. 2, f. 22	Williamstown, Massachusetts property	1944-1952, undated
b. 2, f. 23	Probate papers	1951–1964
b. 2, f. 24	Plaza Art Galleries sale of estate	1952
b. 2, f. 25	Academy of Arts and Letters exhibition lists	1951
b. 2, f. 26	Ledger sheets	1951–1956
Income Tax and Statements (9863)		

Income Tax and Statements (9863) (continued)

b. 3, f. 27	1970	1970-1971
b. 3, f. 28	1971	1971-1972, undated
b. 3, f. 29	1972	1972-1973
b. 3, f. 30	1973	1973-1974
b. 3, f. 31	1974	1974-1975
b. 3, f. 32	1975	1975-1976
b. 3, f. 33	1976	1976-1977
b. 3, f. 34	1977	1977-1978
b. 3, f. 35	1978	1978-1979
b. 3, f. 36	1979	1979
b. 3, f. 37	1980	1980-1981
b. 3, f. 38	1981	1981
b. 3, f. 39	1982	1982
b. 3, f. 40	Lewis IRS tax lien	1954-1982
Sinclair Lewis Estate ("Dorothy and Red" Play) (9323)		
b. 4, f. 41	Correspondence, typescript photocopy of script, "Dorothy and Red" by Henry S. Bloomgarden and Malcolm Wells,	1964-1967
Miscellaneous Files (no file numbers)		
b. 4, f. 42	Grace Hegger Trust	1951
b. 4, f. 43	Miscellaneous Lewis estate papers	1931-1949, undated
b. 4, f. 44	Photographs Includes photograph of Sinclair Lewis and Dorothy Thompson and unidentified photograph of an exhibition of Sinclair Lewis books and manuscripts.	undated
b. 4, f. 45	Clippings	1932, 1971

Series II: Records Relating to Sinclair Lewis Writings, 1935-1984, undated

1.3 linear feet (3 boxes)

Includes correspondence, contracts and agreements, and permissions and rights inquiries related to Sinclair Lewis's writings. *The Man from Main Street* was a collection of non-fiction articles by Sinclair Lewis edited by Melville H. Cane and Harry E. Maule, published by Random House in 1953.

Arranged by title of work and file number assigned by attorneys.

<i>Angela Is Twenty-Two</i> (9862)		
b. 5, f. 46-51	Correspondence	1938-1947
b. 5, f. 52-55	Contracts and agreements	1938-1942, undated
<i>Cass Timberlane</i> (9869)		
b. 5, f. 56	Correspondence and royalty report	1945-1946
<i>Elmer Gantry</i> motion picture (9859)		
b. 6, f. 57-59	Correspondence	1954-1982, undated
b. 6, f. 60-63	Contracts and agreements	1954-1959
<i>The Man from Main Street</i> (9324)		
b. 6, f. 64	Correspondence	1952-1963
b. 6, f. 65	Melville H. Crane editorial notes, lists, and introduction to volume	1951, undated
b. 6, f. 66	"Notices, etc."	1953
b. 6, f. 67	"Pieces agreed upon," sample dust jacket, and photostatic copy of "Self-Conscious America" by Sinclair Lewis from the <i>American Mercury</i> , October, 1925	undated
b. 6, f. 68	Miscellaneous Writings	1935-1947, undated
Permissions and Rights Inquiries (9871)		
b. 7, f. 69	<i>Arrowsmith</i>	1966-1981
b. 7, f. 70-73	<i>Babbitt</i>	1964-1981, undated
b. 7, f. 74	<i>Cass Timberlane</i>	1968-1981
b. 7, f. 75	<i>Dodsworth</i>	1973-1983
b. 7, f. 76	<i>Elmer Gantry</i>	1968-1982
b. 7, f. 77	<i>Go East, Young Man</i>	1967-1971
b. 7, f. 78-80	Miscellaneous writings	1968-1984, undated

Series III: May 2017 Addition Regarding the Estate of Sinclair Lewis, 1927–1968

1.25 linear feet (3 boxes)

Includes correspondence, legal and financial records relating to the divorce of Sinclair Lewis and Grace Hegger Lewis; the biography of Sinclair Lewis by Mark Schorer; and financial records relating to bank accounts and securities.

Arranged in subseries based on file names and numbers assigned by attorneys.

"Grace H. Lewis v. S. Lewis (papers only)" (5691)		
Includes legal and financial documents relating to the divorce of Sinclair Lewis and Grace Hegger Lewis, and subsequent alimony issues		
b. 9, f. 81-86	Legal documents	1927–1932
b. 9, f. 87-88	Notes, financial documents, and clippings	1927–1930
"Re: Mark Schorer" (9322)		
Includes correspondence between McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., attorneys Melville Cane and Pincus Berner, and author Mark Schorer, and other material relating to the writing and publication of Schorer's biography, <i>Sinclair Lewis, an American Life</i> (New York: McGraw-Hill, c1961)		
b. 10, f. 89-92	Correspondence	1952-1957, undated
b. 10, f. 93	"Sinclair Lewis at Home: 1942" by Mark Schorer	undated
b. 10, f. 94	Correspondence regarding <i>Esquire</i> magazine article	1958
b. 10, f. 95	Legal agreements	1952
b. 10, f. 96	Reprints and clippings	1945–1966
b. 10, f. 97	Royalty statements	1961–1966
b. 10, f. 98	Yale University Library	undated
b. 10, f. 99	Requests for permission to publish photographs from Schorer biography	1972–1980
b. 10, f. 100	Correspondence between Edward C. Aswell and Sinclair Lewis Typed copies of letters from Lewis to Edward C. Aswell regarding book recommendations	1938 October
"Income and Securities" (9328)		
b. 10, f. 101-106	Bank statements and cancelled checks	1950–1956
b. 11, f. 107-108	Bank statements and cancelled checks	1956–1961
b. 11, f. 109-113	Dividend and interest reports and securities and credit advises Includes Guaranty Trust Company of New York deposit passbook (1951-1960)	1951–1961
b. 11, f. 114	Michael Lewis trust	1968

"Income and Securities" (9328) (continued)

b. 11, f. 115	Curtis Brown, Ltd. Cover letter and television script adaptation of Sinclair Lewis's <i>World So Wide</i> by Arnold Schulman	1952
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"Miscellaneous Papers and Newspaper Clippings" (9857)

b. 11, f. 116-120	Miscellaneous notes, legal and financial documents, and newspaper and magazine clippings concerning Sinclair Lewis	1922-1929, undated
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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

Authors, American -- 20th Century
Executors and administrators -- New York
(State) -- New York
Lawyers -- New York (State) -- New York

Genres / Formats

Photographs

Occupations

Authors -- United States -- 20th Century
Lawyers -- New York (State) -- New York --
20th Century

Names

Berner, Pincus
Cane, Melville, 1879-1980
Gitlin, Paul
Lewis, Sinclair, 1885-1951
Schorer, Mark, 1908-1977
Thompson, Dorothy, 1893-1961
Winick, Eugene