

Guide to the Betty Zane Grosso Collection of Zane and Dolly Grey Papers

WA MSS S-2705



by Beinecke Staff

2011

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-2705

CREATOR: Grosso, Betty Zane Grey , collector

TITLE: Betty Zane Grosso collection of Zane and Dolly Grey papers

DATES: 1900-1985

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 8 linear feet (17 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection documents the life and work of the American writer Zane Grey and his wife Dolly Grey, and to some extent the lives of their children. The papers chiefly consist of correspondence between Zane and Dolly Grey from the time they met until his death, circa 1900-1939. Their letters document Zane Grey's frequent travels throughout the American West and in the South Pacific, his career as a writer, their marriage, and the growth of their family. The collection also includes some correspondence with others; a draft of Zane Grey's autobiography; Dolly Grey's diaries; photographs and ephemera; and ten films. Many of the films apparently document hunting and fishing expeditions, but the collection also includes a print of the 1936 Australian film "White Death," in which Grey was featured as himself, and two documentaries about Zane Grey produced in 1985 by his family.

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

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.greyz>.

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
 item barcode

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Serendipity Books on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2002-2003; Gift of Gary and Bridget McMahon, 2003; purchased from William Reese Company, 2010.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Boxes 10-17 (motion picture film): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Box 8 (VHS cassettes): Use of originals is restricted. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Conditions Governing Use

The Betty Zane Grosso Collection of Zane and Dolly Grey Papers 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

Betty Zane Grosso Collection of Zane and Dolly Grey Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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. This collection was rehoused into standard archival containers and listed as each accession was acquired. In 2011, the accessions were merged and organized into series.

Formerly classed as Uncat MSS 261, Uncat MSS 529, Uncat MSS 542, and Uncat MSS 1253.

Zane and Dolly Grey

Zane Grey, writer of popular adventure stories about the American West, was born Pearl Zane Gray in Zanesville, Ohio, in 1872, to Lewis M. Gray, a dentist, and Josephine Zane Gray. Changing his name to Zane Grey in early adulthood, he studied dentistry at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1896, and started his own practice in New York City. In November 1905 he married Lina Elise Roth, known as Dolly, a graduate of Hunter College. The couple settled in Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania, where they began a family that grew to include three children: Romer (1909-1976), Betty (1912-2007), and Loren (1915-2007). Dolly Grey strongly supported her husband's ambitions to make his living as a writer, helping to edit his work and manage his career as he became increasingly successful. Despite his long absences from home and several acknowledged extramarital affairs, their marriage remained strong and Dolly Grey continued to champion Zane Grey's work following his death of heart failure in 1939.

Zane Grey's prolific output included best-selling novels such as *Riders of the Purple Sage*, *The Lone Star Ranger*, and *Under the Tonto Rim*, many of which were made into equally successful Hollywood films. Grey lived the adventurous life he wrote about, spending months of each year camping in the Arizona desert or fishing off Tahiti and Australia. He was as famous for fishing as he was for writing about it, holding a number of world records including a 1,036-pound tiger shark.

Dolly Grey died in 1957 at the age of 74 in Altadena, California, where the family had moved circa 1920. She was buried beside her husband in Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania. After her death the Grey children continued stewardship of their father's legacy through management of Zane Grey, Inc., formed in 1933 to manage Grey's assets and the rights to his work. In 1931 Betty Zane Grey married Robert W. Carney, with whom she had two daughters; she married George D. Grosso in 1951.

Scope and Contents

The collection documents the life and work of the American writer Zane Grey and his wife Dolly Grey, and to some extent the lives of their children. The papers chiefly consist of correspondence between Zane and Dolly Grey from the time they met until his death, circa 1900-1939. Their letters document Zane Grey's frequent travels throughout the American West and in the South Pacific, his career as a writer, their marriage, and the growth of their family. The collection also includes some correspondence with others; a draft of Zane Grey's autobiography; Dolly Grey's diaries; photographs and ephemera; and ten films. Many of the films apparently document hunting and fishing expeditions, but the collection also includes a print of the 1936 Australian film "White Death," in which Grey was featured as himself, and two documentaries about Zane Grey produced in 1985 by his family.

Arrangement

Organized into five series: I. Correspondence, 1900-1969. II. Writings, 1906-1938. III. Dolly Grey Diaries, 1906-1954. IV. Other Papers, 1905-1950. V. Audiovisual Materials, 1935-1985.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1900-1969

5 linear feet (5 boxes)

The series consists chiefly of correspondence between Zane and Dolly Grey. It also includes letters to Zane and Dolly Grey from family, friends, publishers, and fans. A small amount of correspondence to Betty Zane Grosso is also present.

Dolly Grey's letters to her husband often enclose correspondence from third parties to Zane Grey, bearing her own annotations, as well as snapshots of their children.

Organized into three subseries: Zane Grey to Dolly Grey, Dolly Grey to Zane Grey, and Other Correspondence.

Zane Grey to Dolly Grey		
b. 1	1900-1901 <i>2 Folders</i>	1900-1901
b. 1	Undated early letters	circa 1901
b. 1	1902 <i>5 Folders</i>	1902
b. 1	1903	1903
b. 1	1904 <i>2 Folders</i>	1904
b. 1	1905 <i>2 Folders</i>	1905
b. 1	1906 <i>2 Folders</i>	1906
b. 1	1907-1908 <i>2 Folders</i>	1907-1908
b. 1	1911-1915 <i>2 Folders</i>	1911-1915
b. 1	1916 <i>2 Folders</i>	1916
b. 1	1917 <i>7 Folders</i>	1917
b. 1	1918 <i>6 Folders</i>	1918
b. 1	1920 <i>2 Folders</i>	1920
b. 1	1921 <i>3 Folders</i>	1921

Zane Grey to Dolly Grey (continued)

b. 1	1922 <i>11 Folders</i>	1922
b. 2	1922 <i>8 Folders</i>	1922
b. 2	1923 <i>8 Folders</i>	1923
b. 2	1924 <i>12 Folders</i>	1924
b. 2	1925 <i>5 Folders</i>	1925
b. 2	1926 <i>8 Folders</i>	1926
b. 3	1927 <i>4 Folders</i>	1927
b. 3	1928 <i>8 Folders</i>	1928
b. 3	1929 <i>4 Folders</i>	1929
b. 3	1930 <i>3 Folders</i>	1930
b. 3	1931 <i>4 Folders</i>	1931
b. 3	1933 <i>2 Folders</i>	1933
b. 3	1928-1936 <i>10 Folders</i>	1928-1936
b. 3	Undated <i>3 Folders</i>	Undated
b. 3	Telegrams <i>12 Folders</i>	1920-1928
Dolly Grey to Zane Grey		
b. 4	1900	1900
b. 4	1901 <i>2 Folders</i>	1901
b. 4	1902	1902
b. 4	1903	1903
b. 4	1904 <i>2 Folders</i>	1904

Dolly Grey to Zane Grey (continued)

b. 4	1905 <i>2 Folders</i>	1905
b. 4	1913 <i>2 Folders</i>	1913
b. 4	1914 <i>2 Folders</i>	1914
b. 4	1915	1915
b. 4	1916 <i>2 Folders</i>	1916
b. 4	1917	1917
b. 4	1918 <i>2 Folders</i>	1918
b. 4	1919	1919
b. 4	1920 <i>3 Folders</i>	1920
b. 4	1921 <i>3 Folders</i>	1921
b. 4	1922 <i>2 Folders</i>	1922
b. 4	1923 <i>2 Folders</i>	1923
b. 4	1924 <i>3 Folders</i>	1924
b. 4	1925 <i>2 Folders</i>	1925
b. 4	1926	1926
b. 4	1927	1927
b. 4	1928	1928
b. 4	1929-1931	1929-1931
b. 4	1932	1932
b. 4	1933 <i>3 Folders</i>	1933
b. 4	1934-1935	1934-1935
b. 5	1936 <i>3 Folders</i>	1936
b. 5	Undated <i>4 Folders</i>	Undated

Dolly Grey to Zane Grey (continued)

b. 5	Empty envelopes <i>2 Folders</i>	1901-1936
Other Correspondence		
b. 5	Associated Sunday Magazine	1914
b. 5	Bailey, Mary Hilliard	undated
b. 5	Bowen, Ed	1934
b. 5	Campbell, Berenice	1931
b. 5	Carney, Robert <i>4 Folders</i>	1928-1933, undated
b. 5	Cevallos y Lupio	1925
b. 5	Cleveland, Elizabeth	1934
b. 5	Country Gentleman	1924
b. 5	Dawson, Betty	1935
b. 5	Field and Stream	1922-1928
b. 5	Grey family	undated
b. 5	Grey, Ida	1917-1933, undated
b. 5	Grey, Loren	1928
b. 5	Grey, R.C. <i>2 Folders</i>	1901-1932, undated
b. 5	Grey, Romer <i>2 Folders</i>	1914-1961
b. 5	Grosset and Dunlap	1923
b. 5	Grosso, Betty Zane <i>7 Folders</i>	1919-1955
b. 5	Grosso, George, to Betty Zane Grosso	1944
b. 5	Harper and Brothers	1913-1928
b. 5	Hearst Newspapers	1928
b. 5	James, Alvah	1915
b. 5	Kerr, Christopher to Betty Zane Grosso	1969
b. 5	Ladies' Home Journal	1924-1926
b. 5	McGowan, John	1924
b. 5	The Popular Magazine	1914

Other Correspondence (continued)

b. 5	St. Louis Public Library	1925
b. 5	Smith, Hildred	undated
b. 5	Stratton-Porter, Gene	1924
b. 5	Summers, J. L.	1926
b. 5	Ussher, Kathleen	1925
b. 5	Witt, Diane Gray to Betty Zane Grosso	1969
b. 5	YMCA Publishing House of Denmark	1924
b. 5	"Emmeline"	circa 1916
b. 5	"Katcha"	1932
b. 5	Other correspondents	1901-1962
b. 5	Fan Mail	1913-1932
b. 5	Fan Mail (Australia)	1936
b. 5	Empty envelopes	
b. 5	Blank stationery	

Series II: Writings, 1906-1938*8 Folders*

Series II contains writings of Zane Grey, including a typescript draft of his unfinished autobiography, a notebook in which he discusses writing style, and two untitled short pieces.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 6	Notebook	1906-1908
b. 6	"The Living Past: The Autobiography of Zane Grey", typescript carbon <i>5 Folders</i>	1938 November 10
b. 6	"Out of the fog [...]," autograph manuscript	no year December 27
b. 6	"One of Dad's description of women," autograph manuscript	undated

Series III: Dolly Grey Diaries, 1906-1954*1 linear foot (1 box)*

This series contains Dolly Grey's diaries. The first volume documents the first year of her marriage, after which there is a large gap. The rest of the diaries chronicle her daily life from 1924 to 1939, and then with gaps from 1940 to 1954.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 6	Diary	1906
b. 6	Diaries <i>5 Folders</i>	1924-1938
b. 6	Wall calendar	1939
b. 6	Diaries <i>7 Folders</i> None present for 1942-1943, 1946, 1949-1951, 1953	1940-1954

Series IV: Other Papers, 1905-1950*0.21 linear feet (1 box)*

Series IV contains photographs of Zane Grey including formal portraits, images of him camping and fishing, and images of the Grey family, including some publicity photos taken some time after Zane Grey's death. The series also contains miscellaneous other papers such as clippings, notes, shopping lists, writings by Dolly Grey and Betty Zane Grosso, and a reflection about Zane Grey by a college classmate.

Arranged roughly by type of material.

b. 7	Photographs <i>7 Folders</i> Also stored in: Box 9 Oversize	1920-1950
b. 7	Wedding announcement	1905
b. 7	"Zane Grey the Man" by Wiborn, typescript carbon, corrected	1924
b. 7	Postcards, bookmark with Zane Grey portrait	undated
b. 7	Poems by Dolly Grey and Betty Zane Grosso	undated
b. 7	Notes and shopping lists <i>4 Folders</i>	1925, undated
b. 7	Clippings	undated
b. 7	Printed ephemera Also stored in: Box 9 Oversize	1902, undated
b. 7	Documents regarding claim against McClure's Magazine	1922
b. 18 (Broadside)	Poster: "Sol Lesser presents Zane Grey (himself) in South Sea Adventures"	1932

Series V: Audiovisual Materials, 1935-1985, undated*(10 films)*



This series consists of eight reels of film including home movies of the Grey family, footage of Grey in Australia and New Zealand, and the commercial film "White Death." It also includes two documentary films in the VHS format apparently made by Gary McMahon, husband of Betty Zane Grosso's granddaughter Bridget Kerr McMahon.

Boxes 10-17: Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Box 8: Use of originals is restricted. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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b. 10 (cold storage)	"White Death R.5" 1 Film Reel (16mm) 16mm film, 300 feet Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	[1936]
b. 11 cold storage	"Color / Dad / Tahiti / few feet" 1 Film Reel (16mm) 16mm film, 300 feet Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 12 cold storage	"16mm 1935-36 Australia Shots of the girls shell gathering / Shooting 'White Death' / 16mm Australia B&W cut outs" 1 Film Reel (16mm) Several 16mm film rolls, length unknown Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1935-1936
b. 13 cold storage	"Zane Grey / 35 mm [illegible word(s)] / NZ INC Sharks. / Maco (?) Shark / Fish [illegible word(s)] / Part 2 Eastman Neg Safety Film 16mm [etc: printed label]" 1 Film Reel (35mm) 35mm film, 700 feet Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 14 cold storage	"Color UTAH-WYO 1937 / ZG UMPQUA only color / Quest PRODS Zane Grey #2" 16mm film, 250 feet Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1937
b. 15 cold storage	"RG [Romer Grey] ORE-COLO some [illegible, possibly "rivers"]" 1 Film Reel (16mm) 16mm film, 175 feet Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated

b. 16 cold storage	<p>"Neg Loren & RG [Romer Grey] - UMPQUA 1953 / June 1953 / B&W Neg / LG & RG 1953 June Umpqua Point"</p> <p><i>1 Film Reel (16mm)</i></p> <p><i>16mm film, 375 feet</i></p> <p>Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	
b. 17 cold storage	<p>Unidentified</p> <p><i>1 Film Reel (16mm)</i></p> <p><i>16mm film, 175 feet</i></p> <p>Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	undated
b. 8,  39002102300242	<p>"Zane Grey: An American Legend." Zane Grey / Collector's Series, 1985. A Gary McMahon Production, Copyright 1985. "...a fresh and revealing look into the life of America's premier storyteller."</p> <p>WAMSSS2705_0001</p> <p><i>1 Videocassette (VHS) 00:29:14 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>[Aviary] WAMSSS2705_0001</p>	1985
b. 8,  39002102300259	<p>"Zane Grey's Outdoor Adventures" Zane Grey / Collector's Series, 1985. "Two complete rare travelogues of the legendary Zane Grey, with an introduction by Loren Grey."</p> <p>WAMSSS2705_0002</p> <p><i>1 Videocassette (VHS) 00:59:55 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>[Aviary] WAMSSS2705_0002</p>	1985

Oversize Materials

b. 9 Oversize	Photographs (in Series IV) <i>2 Folders</i>	circa 1950
b. 9 Oversize	"Zane Grey," broadsheet of profile of the author (in Series IV)	undated

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 -- Archives
Western stories

Genres / Formats

Motion pictures (visual works)
Photographic prints
Videocassettes

Occupations

Authors

Names

Grey, Lina Elise, -1957
Grey, Loren, 1915-2007
Grey, Romer, 1909-1976
Grey, Zane, 1872-1939
Grosso, Betty Zane Grey

Contributors

Grosso, Betty Zane Grey, collector
Grey, Zane, 1872-1939
Grey, Lina Elise, -1957