

# Guide to the James Thurber Papers

YCAL MSS 546



by Beinecke staff

2011

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	4
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
Processing Information .....	4
Associated Materials .....	4
James Thurber (1894-1961) .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Arrangement .....	5
Collection Contents .....	6
Selected Search Terms .....	7

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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:** YCAL MSS 546

**CREATOR:** Thurber, James, 1894-1961

**TITLE:** James Thurber papers

**DATES:** 1944-1961

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2.92 linear feet (7 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The James Thurber papers contain drafts and other material relating to three writing projects. The papers feature material relating to Thurber's biographical memoir *The Years With Ross* (Boston: Little Brown, 1959), about New Yorker founder and publisher Harold Ross. Materials include research material, correspondence, drafts, and proofs. There are also drafts and fan mail for two children's books, *Many Moons* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1943) and *The 13 Clocks* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950).

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

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## 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.thurber>.

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](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

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

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Mrs. James (Helen) Thurber, 1969 and 1971.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The James Thurber 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.

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## Preferred Citation

James Thurber Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

The collection received preliminary processing around the time of acquisition in 1969 and 1971. Further organization, rehousing, and description were carried out in 2010-2011.

Formerly classed as Za Thurber.

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## Associated Materials

James Thurber Papers (Spec.cms.4), Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Ohio State University.

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## James Thurber (1894-1961)

James Thurber, humorist, cartoonist, illustrator, and playwright, was born December 8, 1894 in Columbus, Ohio. He graduated from Ohio State University in 1919 and served as a code clerk at the Department of State, Washington, D.C., and at the American Embassy in Paris from 1918 to 1920. In 1927, he joined the staff of *The New Yorker*, serving first as managing editor, then as a staff writer (1927-1933) and regular contributor (1933-1961). Thurber's writings covered a wide range of genres, including essays, short stories, plays, and children's books, but he is best known for his stories concerning middle-class domestic situations, often based on actual events in his own life. Thurber's book *The Years with Ross* (1959) is an informal biography of Harold Ross, founder and editor of *The New Yorker*, as well as a history of the magazine and an account of Thurber's friendship with Ross.

Thurber married twice, in 1922 to Althea Adams (they divorced in 1935) and in 1935 to Helen Muriel Wismer. He had one child, a daughter Rosemary, from his first marriage. Thurber died in New York City on November 2, 1961.

Biographical information drawn from *Contemporary Authors Online*, Thomson Gale, 2005, s.v. "James Thurber" (accessed 12 May 2011).

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## Scope and Contents

The James Thurber papers contain drafts and other material relating to the writing projects *The Years With Ross*, *Many Moons*, and *The 13 Clocks*. The papers feature material relating to Thurber's biographical memoir *The Years with Ross* (1959), about *The New Yorker* founder and publisher Harold Ross. Materials include research material, correspondence, drafts, and proofs. There are also drafts and fan mail for two children's books, *Many Moons* (1943) and *The 13 Clocks* (1950).

## **Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by title.

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## Collection Contents

### *Many Moons*

b. 1	Drafts, holograph and typescript Includes drawings and proof	undated
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b. 1	Fan mail	1944-1961, undated
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### *The 13 Clocks*

b. 1	Drafts and discards, holograph and typescript <i>6 Folders</i>	1951, undated
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b. 1	Fan mail	1951-1961, undated
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### *The Years with Ross*

b. 2	"Correspondence about Ross series"	1957-1959
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b. 2	"Fan mail"	1958-1960
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b. 3	Draft, typescript, corrected	undated
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b. 3	"Original Manuscript Setting Copy," corrected	1959
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b. 4	"Ross-Thurber letters" <i>2 Folders</i>	1944-1957
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b. 4	Galley proofs <i>2 Folders</i>	1959
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b. 5	"Discarded material"	1957-1958, undated
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b. 5	"A note in conclusion"	undated
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b. 5	"Source material and notes for Ross series"	[circa 1953-1958]
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b. 5	"Atlantic Monthly correspondence"	1956-1959
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b. 5	"Thurber discards Ross book"	1958
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b. 6	"Copyrights on drawings for Ross book"	1959
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b. 6	Ross foreword and dedication	1958, undated
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b. 6	Drafts, corrected, Chapters I-VIII <i>10 Folders</i> Includes galley proofs	1958, undated
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b. 7	Drafts, corrected, Chapters IX-XVI <i>8 Folders</i> Includes galley proofs	1958, 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**

American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors, American -- 20th Century -- Archives

### **Occupations**

Authors

### **Names**

Ross, Harold Wallace, 1892-1951  
Thurber, James, 1894-1961