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## **Finding Aid to the Wright Morris Manuscripts**

Processed by The Bancroft Library staff; Lara Michels in 2014

The Bancroft Library

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**Language of Material:** English

**Contributing Institution:** The Bancroft Library

**Title:** Wright Morris manuscripts

**creator:** Morris, Wright, 1910-1998

**Identifier/Call Number:** BANC MSS 72/246 c

**Physical Description:** 22 linear feet (15 cartons, 12 volumes)

**Date (bulk):** approximately 1934-1980

**Location of Materials:** For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

**Abstract:** Manuscript drafts of Wright Morris' novels, essays, and stories along with a small amount of correspondence.

**Language of Material:** English

#### **Publication Rights**

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#### **Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Wright Morris manuscripts, BANC MSS 72/246 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

#### **Biographical Sketch**

Wright Marion Morris (1910-1998) was a novelist, essayist, and photographer known for his portrayals of the Great Plains, especially Nebraska. Morris was also recognized as a experimentalist in narrative forms. He studied at Pomona College in Southern California and lived for many years in Mill Valley, California. He authored more than 40 books and many essays. Morris published his first novel, *My Uncle Dudley*, in 1942. He was finalist for the National Book Award three times and won the award in 1956 for *The Field of Vision* and in 1980 for *Plains Song: For Female Voices*. From 1962 to 1975, Morris was a Professor of Creative Writing at San Francisco State University.

#### **Scope and Content**

Draft manuscripts of Wright Morris' novels, non-fiction, short stories, and essays. Also includes notes and a small amount of correspondence.

#### **Related Materials**

Wright Morris' photographic archive is held by the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Wright Morris papers are also housed at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln special collections (MS 049).

Some of Morris' correspondence and taped interviews are held by the Lincoln City Libraries of Lincoln, Nebraska.

#### **Acquisition Information**

This collection of his papers and correspondence was begun in 1954, when the author presented drafts, typescripts, and manuscripts of his novels to the University Library. These materials have been augmented from time to time with later manuscripts from Mr. Morris and with items from his correspondence given by Professor James Hart of the Department of English, U.C. Berkeley.

#### **Processing Information**

Processed by Lara Michels in 2014.

#### **Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Morris, Wright, 1910-1998--Archives

Authors, American--20th century

Great Plains--Fiction

Online Archive of California

Series 1: **Typescript manuscripts, proofs, and notes approximately 1934-1977**

**Physical Description:** Carton 1-15, volumes 1-10

carton 1, folder 1-2	<b>So He 1935</b> <b>Scope and Content</b> Early draft of first novel. Alternatively titled The Stars Came Otherwise (begun in 1934).
carton 1, folder 3-4	<b>The Stars Came Otherwise 1935-1936</b> <b>Scope and Content</b> Second novel--complete.
carton 1, folder 5	<b>The Little One 1936-1937</b> <b>Scope and Content</b> Alternate version.
carton 1, folder 6	<b>This Day Before Dawn 1936</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Early novel.
carton 1, folder 7-8	<b>Profiles and Refrains 1937</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Unpublished. Material incorporated into The Inhabitants. Digest episodes that appeared in first novel, unpublished.
carton 1, folder 9-22, carton 2, folder 1-4	<b>The Madmen of Ranna 1936-1958</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Various drafts.
carton 2, folder 5	<b>My Uncle Dudley 1940</b> <b>Scope and Content</b> First draft of first published novel (published in 1942). Draft of jail scene included (1941).
carton 2, folder 6-9	<b>A Journal of the Plague Year 1940-1941</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Various drafts of manuscript
carton 2, folder 10	<b>The Inhabitants and The Journal of the Plague Year 1940-1941</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Miscellaneous draft materials and text in support of the Guggenheim Fellowship for The Inhabitants.
carton 2, folder 11	<b>The Inhabitants and Profiles and Refrains 1940-1941</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Miscellaneous materials.
carton 2, folder 12-13	<b>The Inhabitants 1936-1944</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Drafts and other material. Wright's note: "Final draft with experimental drafts with and without Sound Track. Long period of gestation accounts for unevenness of material. Some of text from 1936."

carton 2,  
folder 14-16

**Furman Young 1940-1941**

**Scope and Contents**

Partial early draft and finished draft. Also carbon copy of final draft. Also includes a related fragment for My Uncle Dudley.

carton 2,  
folder 17-20

**The Vision of Private Reagan and The Ordeal of Gussie Newcomb 1942-1943**

**Scope and Contents**

Drafts of material later incorporated into The Man Who Was There (1945). The Vision of Private Reagan is also titled the Ordeal of Christian Reagan.

carton 2,  
folder 21,  
carton 3,  
folder 1-4

**Journey Through a Landscape 1943**

**Scope and Contents**

Material later incorporated into The Man Who Was There (1945).

carton 3, folder 5

**Untitled first novel written after Uncle Dudley 1942-1943**

**Scope and Contents**

Unpublished novel (complete draft) later integrated into The Man Who Was There (1945).

carton 3,  
folder 6-12

**The Man Who Was There 1943-1946**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts and other materials.

carton 3, folder 13

**The Cruise of the Dolphin 1945-1946**

**Scope and Contents**

Unfinished novel featuring Mr. Hapgee (Furman Young) and a fragment of a story also with Hapgee.

carton 3,  
folder 14-15

**Man and Boy 1945-1951**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 3,  
folder 16-18

**Consider the Lilies 1946-1950**

**Scope and Contents**

Early version of Man and Boy; revised draft materials for Man and Boy and fragments.

carton 3,  
folder 19-21

**The Home Place 1947**

**Scope and Contents**

Drafts and galley proofs.

carton 3, folder 22

**A Day in the City 1947-1948**

**Scope and Contents**

Early draft.

carton 4,  
folder 1-19

**The Works of Love 1946-1950**

**Scope and Contents**

Drafts, fragments, and proofs.

carton 5,  
folder 1-3

**The World in the Attic 1948**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 5, folder 4	<b>The World I Made For Myself 1949-1950</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> A treatment of the Chicago materials of The Works of Love from the son's point of view.
carton 5, folder 5	<b>The Colonel (or Knock, Knock, Knock) 1950-1951</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> First draft.
carton 5, folder 6-9	<b>The Deep Sleep 1952</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> First and final drafts.
carton 5, folder 10-11	<b>The Pillar of Cloud 1952</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Various drafts. Early version of Scanlon.
carton 5, folder 12-19, carton 6, folder 1-4	<b>The Huge Season 1953-1955</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Various drafts of entire novel and chapters of novel.
carton 6, folder 5-8	<b>Scanlon (or McKee and Scanlon) 1951-1955</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Drafts of Scanlon and McKee and Scanlon. Scanlon is described as "an early novel dramatizing the idea of Scanlon, the illusion of the Past as the Territory Ahead."
carton 6, folder 9-18	<b>The Field of Vision 1954-1956</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Drafts and other materials.
carton 6, folder 19-21	<b>War Games 1951-1970</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Originally "Knock, Knock, Knock". Made into War Games and published by Black Sparrow Press in 1972. The novel was written in 1951-52.
carton 7, folder 1-3	<b>Salt Lake novel approximately 1955</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Various drafts.
carton 7, folder 4	<b>The Lovers approximately 1955</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Novel featuring The Colonel and Miss Tomlin one night in a lift. "A further exploration of the transformation idea. Only fiction is a fact, etc."
carton 7, folder 5-8	<b>Babe Ruth's Pocket 1955-1956</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Drafts and fragments.
carton 7, folder 9-10	<b>The Gospel Truth (Babe Ruth's Pocket) 1955-1956</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Babe Ruth's Pocket with two lectures, Time Past and Time Present, given at Amherst in Fall 1958. "Fiction and Fact in my fiction--the imaginative process."

carton 7,  
folder 11-13,  
volume 1

**Love Among the Cannibals 1956-1957**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 7,  
folder 14-16

**The Nostalchix 1957**

**Scope and Contents**

Draft and materials from proposed sequel to Love Among the Cannibals.

carton 7,  
folder 17-24,  
carton 8,  
folder 1-5,  
volume 2-3

**Ceremony in Lone Tree 1952-1960**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 8,  
folder 6-12,  
volume 4-5

**The Territory Ahead 1959-1960**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts and draft materials.

carton 8,  
folder 13-20

**Fish Below the Thighs 1960**

**Scope and Contents**

Title became What a Way to Go. Various drafts and other materials.

carton 8, folder 21

**Small Town approximately 1960-1961**

**Scope and Contents**

Long essay commissioned by Holiday magazine, where it appeared in 1961.

carton 8,  
folder 22,  
carton 9,  
folder 1-4

**One Day 1964-1965**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 9,  
folder 5-6

**Toward the Way Things Are 1965-1971**

**Scope and Contents**

Non-fiction comments and lectures.

carton 9,  
folder 7-20

**A Bill of Rights, A Bill of Wrongs, A Bill of Goods 1965-1968**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts and other materials.

volume 6-7

**What a Way to Go approximately 1962**

**Scope and Contents**

Last draft and printer's copy.

volume 8-10

**Cause of Wonder approximately 1963**

**Scope and Contents**

Early and final drafts; fragments.

carton 9, folder 21

**Green Grass, Blue Sky, White House 1968**

**Scope and Contents**

Draft.

carton 10,  
folder 1-10

**In Orbit 1966**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts and other materials.

carton 10,  
folder 11

**Doing Time approximately 1967**

**Scope and Contents**

Autobiographical fragments.

carton 10,  
folder 12-19

**About Fiction 1968-1974**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 11,  
folder 1-2

**The Little Death 1970**

**Scope and Contents**

Typescript of unfinished novel.

carton 11,  
folder 3-4

**Fire Sermon 1970-1971**

**Scope and Contents**

Drafts and fragments.

carton 11,  
folder 5-8

**A Life (or Old Man) 1971-1972**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts.

carton 11,  
folder 9-20

**Fork River Space Project 1974-1977**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts and other materials.

carton 14,  
folder 1-13

**Plains Song 1975-1979**

**Scope and Contents**

Various drafts, proofs, and other materials.

carton 12, folder 1

**Early short fiction approximately 1935-1936**

**Scope and Contents**

We Me Il Duce (two drafts); Freighter Trip to Antwerp; Want a Ride Boy?.

carton 12,  
folder 2-3

**Short stories approximately 1935-1945**

**Scope and Contents**

Drafts and final copies of published short stories. Includes: Since When Do They Charge Admission; In Another Country; Drrdla; Magic; Green Grass Blue Sky, White House; Trick or Treat; A Fight Between a White Boy and a Black Boy; The Cat's Meow; How I Met Joseph Mulligan, Jr.

carton 12, folder 4

**Early sketches and stories approximately 1935-1945**

**Scope and Contents**

Includes manuscripts for: The Triumph; A Night in Bowling Green; There's No Bones in Hash; The Bird Cage; Good Morning, Grandmother; The Spectator; The Dead Wagon; A Dream of Fair Woman; My Visit with the Spaceman; The Sound Tape; Take This Robin.

carton 12, folder 5  
carton 12, folder 6

**A Short History of My Childhood approximately 1935**

**Sketches, stories, fragments approximately 1935-1945**

**Scope and Contents**

Includes manuscripts and fragments of manuscripts for: a late 1930s re-working of childhood autobiographical reminiscences; a piece written just before Uncle Dudley; part of Journal of the Plague Year; a sketch for a story in the mid-1930s; Brady-Mrs. Horst; materials related to The Works of Love; The Deep Sleep; Mulligan; Babe Ruth's Pocket; Where's Justice?: The West Window.

carton 12,  
folder 7-9

**Assorted fragments approximately 1935-1955**

**Scope and Contents**

Late 1930s fiction; draft of materials relating to The Huge Season; Mr. Bloom's Story (from The Man Who Was There); The Home Place (play version); notes for a proposed television program (1957); outline for fiction never written; early 1940s fiction fragment; Miss Oberholzer and Miss Teppich (draft of novel never completed in the mid-1940s); excerpted pages from The Man Who Was There; How They Put in the Time (preliminary run for Ceremony in Lone Tree); The Cruise of the Dolphin (1939); from The Works of Love; early idea.

carton 12,  
folder 10-12  
carton 12,  
folder 13-14

**Assorted non-fiction pieces approximately 1935-1960**

**Drafts of essays approximately 1945-1965**

**Scope and Contents**

Out Endless Plains (published 1958); One Law for the Lion (published 1961); Point of View: An Interview...(published 1959); Editorial matter for The Mississippi Reader (published 1962); The Cars In My Life (published 1958); Mexican Journey (notes only)(published 1959).

carton 12,  
folder 15

**Non-fiction approximately 1940-1965**

**Scope and Contents**

Article ideas (early 1950s); early drafts of critical commentary; Territory Ahead; early drafts of The Man in the Moon (published in the Partisan Review); The Cars in My Life (published in Holiday); The Plains (published in Holiday); notes for article; The Open Road; In the American Grain; Thoreau; Death by Toleration.

carton 12,  
folder 16  
carton 12,  
folder 17  
carton 12,  
folder 18  
carton 12,  
folder 19  
carton 12,  
folder 20-22  
carton 13,  
folder 1-2  
carton 13, folder 3  
carton 13,  
folder 4-5  
carton 13, folder 6  
carton 13, folder 7  
carton 13, folder 8  
carton 13, folder 9  
carton 13,  
folder 10  
carton 13,  
folder 11-19  
carton 15, folder 1  
carton 15, folder 2

**Telling It Like It Is (Princeton) 1971**

**Reflections on the Death of the Reader**

**Book review of The Vanishing Hero by Sean O'Faolain**

**Non-fiction fragments approximately 1945-1965**

**Lectures approximately 1968**

**Fragments of materials incorporated into later novels 1957-1959**

**Fragments and notes for miscellaneous unpublished stories, novels, and articles**

**Draft materials for miscellaneous unpublished essays, articles, and reviews**

**Miscellaneous fragments of published stories, reviews, and essays**

**Early miscellaneous fragments (Uncle Dudley) approximately 1940**

**Trains (stories; Princeton) 1971**

**The Mulligan Saga (original draft and sketches) approximately 1948**

**Oddments 1973-1976**

**Assorted notes approximately 1940-1970**

**One Law for the Lion-Hemingway 1961**

**Introduction to Windy McPherson's Son 1964**

**Scope and Contents**

3 drafts.



carton 15, folder 3	<b>Origins: Reflections on Emotion, Memory and Imagination 1977</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> For The Art of Wright Morris published by the University of Nebraska Press.
carton 15, folder 4	<b>Mexico 1958-1959</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> For Holiday Magazine.
carton 15, folder 5-6 carton 15, folder 7	<b>Ball Games; Earthly Delights, etc. 1976-1977</b> <b>The Word Between Them (writer as teacher) 1969</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> First draft.
carton 15, folder 8	<b>Lectures: Literature and Life; Real Toads, Imaginary Gardens 1968-1970</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Lectures delivered at Notre Dame and University of California, Santa Cruz.
carton 15, folder 9	<b>Fragments undated</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Made in USA; early non-fiction anticipating The Territory Ahead.
carton 15, folder 10	<b>Reflections on Troubled House of Fiction 1970-1971</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Full title: Real Toads, Imaginary Gardens: Reflections on the Troubled House of Fiction.
carton 15, folder 11	<b>Oddments approximately 1977-1978</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Earthly Delights; Faber, a story (draft); short pieces.
carton 15, folder 12	<b>Short pieces 1978-1979</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Closing the Gap, a story; Medley; Crazy Rhythm; Return of the Region.
carton 15, folder 13 carton 15, folder 14-15	<b>Harry, a story 1966</b> <b>Kid Stuff, a story 1969-1971</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Unpublished.
carton 15, folder 16	<b>Lover, Is That You? undated</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Published in Harper's Bazaar.
carton 15, folder 17	<b>Stories 1968-1969</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Draft of Blue Sky, Green Grass, etc., draft of Molloy (unfinished); One Crow in a Million (first draft); draft of Harry (unpublished).
carton 15, folder 18	<b>Trick or Treat, a story 1971</b> <b>Scope and Contents</b> Draft of Blue Sky, Green Grass, etc., draft of Molloy (unfinished); One Crow in a Million (first draft); draft of Harry (unpublished).

carton 15,  
folder 19

**Fragments 1970-1971**

**Scope and Contents**

View from Space; Pages of lecture; Pages of a story; One Crow in a Million; early draft of Since When Do They Charge Admission.

carton 15,  
folder 20-24

**Einbaum (unfinished novel) 1969**

**Scope and Contents**

Various stories and drafts.

carton 15,  
folder 25

**The Schoolhouse approximately 1955**

**Scope and Contents**

A fact-fantasy drama--the first--in which fiction, my own, displaces fact. First examples of this obsession. (2nd is Babe Ruth's Pocket-novel-length).

carton 15,  
folder 26  
carton 15,  
folder 27

**The Cost of Living (unfinished novel) 1968-1970**

**Acceptance speech for Bay Area Book Reviewers Award 1986**

Series 2: **Correspondence and other material approximately 1953-1969**

**Physical Description:** Volume 11-12; carton 15, folder 28

**Scope and Contents**

8 letters from Wright Morris to James D. Hart (1953-1959); 1 letter from Wright Morris to Kenneth Carpenter (1955); 1 letter from Wright Morris to Leslie S. Clarke (1969); and 1 letter from Mimi Robinson to James D. Hart (1959); also includes, in volume 12, a dissertation prospectus by Jack R. Cohn for his study on Morris' midwestern novels. A bookseller's inventory of the Wright Morris papers that went to the University of Nebraska is also included in Carton 15, Folder 28.