Guide to the Henry Clay Branson Salisbury Plain Typescript and Correspondence

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Note
Arts and Humanities--Literature--American Literature
Guide to the Henry Clay Branson *Salisbury Plain* Typescript and Correspondence

**Collection number:** MS-L018

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**Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Henry Clay Branson *Salisbury plain* typescript and correspondence,  
**Date (inclusive):** ca. 1962-1965

**Collection number:** MS-L018  
**Creator:** Branson, H.C. (Henry C.)  
**Extent:** 0.4 linear feet (1 box)  
**Repository:** University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.  
Irvine, California 92623-9557

**Abstract:** This material comprises an unbound typescript of Branson's *Salisbury Plain* and correspondence between Branson and author Kenneth Millar (also known by his pseudonym Ross Macdonald), consisting of 24 holograph and typescript letters written between 1963 and 1966. These letters concern Millar's revisions and editorial comments, the subsequent publication of the book, and its reception by the public. The typescript contains Branson's holograph annotations, incorporating Millar's editorial comments as detailed in 16 pages of holograph notes included with the correspondence. Many of Millar's suggestions documented here were incorporated into the final text of *Salisbury Plain*, first published in 1965. Branson composed this Civil War novel largely between 1958 and 1959. E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., of New York accepted Branson's revised typescripts for publication in 1964.

**Language:** English.

**Access**  
Collection is open for research.

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**Preferred Citation**

For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.

**Acquisition Information**

**Processing History**
Processed by Adrian Turner in 2001.

**Biography**
Henry Clay Branson was the author of a number of crime novels written primarily during the 1940s and 1950s featuring detective John Bent, including *The Pricking Thumb* and *The Leaden Bubble*. *Salisbury Plain* was one of his later works. He was born in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1904, and received his B.A. from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 1937. He died in 1981.

His correspondent, Kenneth Millar (1915-1983), was well known by his pseudonym Ross Macdonald. He was the author of twelve classic novels of detective fiction. His extensive writings include reviews, short stories, poetry, plays, screenplays, and essays. In the 1940s, Millar met and befriended Branson and his wife Anna. The Bransons and Millar were active correspondents through the 1970s.

**Collection Scope and Content Summary**
This material comprises an unbound typescript of Branson's *Salisbury Plain* and correspondence between Branson and author Kenneth Millar (also known by his pseudonym Ross Macdonald), consisting of 24 holograph and typescript letters written between 1963 and 1966. These letters concern Millar's revisions and editorial comments, the subsequent publication of the book, and its reception by the public. The typescript contains Branson's holograph annotations, incorporating Millar's editorial comments as detailed in 16 pages of holograph notes included with the correspondence. Many of Millar's suggestions documented here were incorporated into the final text of *Salisbury Plain*, first published in 1965. Branson composed this Civil War novel largely between 1958 and 1959. E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., of New York accepted Branson's revised typescripts for publication in 1964.

The donor to UC Irvine, Donald A. Yates, is a scholar of Latin American literature who was a close friend of the Bransons and the Millars.

**Related Collections**
A related collection of Branson's drafts of *Salisbury Plain* is housed in the Special Collections Division of the Michigan State University Libraries. Numerous letters sent from Millar to Branson from 1944 to 1974 can be found in the Kenneth Millar Papers (MS-L01), Special Collections and Archives, the UC Irvine Libraries.

**Separation Note**
A copy of *Salisbury Plain* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1965) with Branson's ownership inscription was cataloged separately.

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

**Subjects**
American fiction--20th century--Archival resources.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Fiction--Archival resources.

**Occupations**
Authors.

**Other Index Terms Related to this Collection**
Millar, Kenneth, 1915-.
Yates, Donald A., former owner.

| Box 1 : 1-2 | Correspondence |
| Box 1 : 1 | 1963 |
| Box 1 : 2 | 1964-1965 |
| Box 1 : 3-4 | *Salisbury Plain*, unbound typescript, ca. 1962 |