

University of Chicago Library

Guide to the J. C. M. Hanson Papers 1892-1943



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.HANSON
Title	Hanson, J. C. M. (James Christian Meinich). Papers
Date	1892-1943
Size	2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract J. C. M. Hanson, librarian. The J. C. M Hanson papers contain correspondence, memoranda, speeches, articles, and book reviews. The papers are concerned primarily with Hanson's career before his appointment as Associate Director of the University Library in 1910 and with his professional activities outside the Library thereafter. Hanson's work at the Library is documented in Series II of the University of Chicago Library records.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Hanson, J. C. M. (James Christian Meinich). Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

James (or Jens) Christian Meinich Hanson was born in the Nordre Aurdal district of Norway in 1864. At the age of nine, he emigrated to the United States and entered the preparatory department of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. After graduating from the College with a B. A. in 1882, he attended Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis for two years and pursued further graduate studies at Cornell University in 1889-1890. Influenced by Cornell librarian George W. Harris to enter a career in library work, Hanson accepted a position as apprentice on the staff of the Newberry Library in Chicago in 1890. Three years later, he moved to Madison, Wisconsin, to become head of the cataloging department at the University of Wisconsin Library. While at the Newberry and Wisconsin, Hanson developed cataloging and classification as his professional specialization.

In 1897, Hanson was named chief of the cataloging division of the Library of Congress, a position he held until coming to the University of Chicago in 1910. During his years at the Library of Congress, Hanson played a major role in developing its general catalog, particularly through the creation of a new classification scheme for books which later became the basis for the Library of Congress classification system. Under his supervision, the Library of Congress initiated its influential program of printing and distribution of catalog cards for use by other libraries. Hanson was also instrumental in drafting the code of cataloging rules which was disseminated in 1908 as the familiar "Anglo-American Code."

On October 18, 1910, Hanson was appointed Associate Director of the University of Chicago Library, where he worked as the chief assistant to Director Ernest D. Burton. He remained Associate Director until 1927, served briefly as Acting Director (1927-1928), and was subsequently Professor (1928-1930) and Professor Emeritus (1930-1934) in the Graduate Library School. In 1928, Hanson was granted a leave of absence to assist in the reorganization of the Vatican Library in Rome being conducted under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation; there, in collaboration with Charles Martel, he contributed to the drafting of the Vatican's revised cataloging code, *Norme per il catalogo degli stampati* (1931). Hanson died in 1943.

Scope Note

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The collection is made up of three series: Series I: Correspondence; Series II: Writings; and Series III: Personal.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Subject Headings

- Hanson, J. C. M. (James Christian Meinich), 1864-1943
- Cataloging
- Librarians

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

The first series of Hanson papers consists of alphabetically arranged personal and professional correspondence. Although most of the correspondence is in English, some letters received from friends are in Norwegian. Major professional correspondents include J. Christian Bay, William Warner Bishop, Ernest D. Burton, Theodore W. Koch, Charles Martel, Carl H. Milam,

Theodore A. Mueller, Herbert Putnam, Thorvald Solberg, Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, Thorstein Veblen, and C. C. Williamson. Among Burton's letters (1:3) are several from 1910 discussing Hanson's title and duties at the University of Chicago Library. Two letters from Thorstein Veblen (1:15) concern Veblen's attempt to secure a position at the Library of Congress in 1908.

Box 1

Folder 1

Adde, Gustav--Ashbery, Ray S.

Box 1

Folder 2

Bäfverfeldt, Sigurd--Bishop, William W.

Box 1

Folder 3

Blanchard, Edith R.--Butler, Pierce

Box 1

Folder 4

Carlton, W. N. C.--Cushman, S. A.

Box 1

Folder 5

Diserund, J.--Dorf, A. N.

Box 1

Folder 6

Espelie, Ernest M.--Fontaine, Everett O.

Box 1

Folder 7

Garrett, Joseph R.--Greer, Agnes F. P.

Box 1

Folder 8

Hachmeister, Herman--Joslyn, L. W.

Box 1

Folder 9

Kempf, Placidius S.--Lund, L. H.

Box 1

Folder 10

Martel, Charles--Metcalf, K. D.

Box 1

Folder 11

Milam, Carl H.--Munthe, Wilhelm

Box 1

Folder 12

Nelson, Knute--Preus, Herman A.

Box 1

Folder 13

Raberg, H.--Rose, Marc A.

Box 1

Folder 14

Salmonsens, Ella M.--Sustrac, Charles

Box 1

Folder 15

Tauber, Maurice F.--Ver Nooy, Winifred

Box 1

Folder 16

Walter, Frank K.--Woodward, Frederic

Series II: Writings

Series II consists of typescript drafts of Hanson's autobiography, *What Became of Jens*. The autobiography was subsequently published as *What Became of Jens? A Study in Americanization Based on the Reminiscences of J. C. M. Hanson* (Decorah, Iowa: Luther College Press, 1974). The Series also includes an alphabetically arranged group of manuscripts dealing with such topics as the American Library Association Catalog Code Revision Committee, the Anglo-American cataloging agreement of 1908, the administration of departmental libraries, the Library of Congress, patriotism and war service, and the University of Chicago Graduate Library School. These sub-series are followed by miscellaneous book reviews and tributes to professional colleagues.

Box 2

Folder 1

What Became of Jens (Autobiography) Typescript carbon with corrections, pp. 1-95

Box 2

Folder 2

Typescript carbon with corrections, pp. 96-200

Box 2

Folder 3

Typescript carbon with corrections, pp. 201-284 and index

Box 2

Folder 4

Typescript, second copy, pp. 1-111

Box 2

Folder 5

American Library Association, Catalog Code Revision Committee

Box 2

Folder 6

American Library Association, Conference, 1918

Box 2

Folder 7

Cataloging, general

Box 3

Folder 1

Cataloging, alphabetization and capitalization

Box 3

Folder 2

Cataloging, cooperative

Box 3

Folder 3

Cataloging, international agreements

Box 3

Folder 4

Cataloging, Anglo-American agreement of 1908

Box 3

Folder 5

Classification, general

Box 3

Folder 6

Classification, Catholic libraries

Box 3

Folder 7

Departmental libraries

Box 3

Folder 8

Dissertations

Box 3

Folder 9

Foreign libraries

Box 3

Folder 10

History of books and libraries

Box 4

Folder 1

Librarianship

Box 4

Folder 2

Library administration

Box 4

Folder 3

Library of Congress, general

Box 4

Folder 4

Library of Congress, classification and cataloging

Box 4

Folder 5

Library school curricula

Box 4

Folder 6

Patriotism and World War I

Box 4

Folder 7

Periodicals

Box 4

Folder 8

Scandinavian imprints

Box 4

Folder 9

University of Chicago, Graduate Library School, general

Box 4

Folder 10

University of Chicago, Graduate Library School, courses

Box 4

Folder 11

University of Chicago, Graduate Library School, student papers

Box 4

Folder 12

University of Chicago, Graduate Library School, student papers

Box 5

Folder 1

University of Chicago, Library

Box 5

Folder 2

Use of libraries

Box 5

Folder 3

Vatican Library

Box 5

Folder 4

Book Reviews, Bjørnson, Bjørnstjerne--Stein, Henri

Box 5

Folder 5

Bay, John Christian

- Biscoe, Walter Stanley
- Brandt, Margrethe
- Hastings, Charles H.
- Roosevelt, Theodore
- Solberg, Thorvald

Series III: Personal

Series III contains four folders of memorabilia concerning Hanson's work at the Newberry Library and University of Chicago Library and the decoration he received in 1928 from the King of Norway.

Box 5

Folder 6

Tribute from colleagues at the Newberry Library, 1892

Box 5

Folder 7

Admission to the Superior Order of the Grey Towers, JCMH response, and Harper
Library staff songs, 1925

Box 5

Folder 8

Congratulations on appointment by the King of Norway as Commander of the Order of
St. Olav, Second Class, 1928

Box 5

Folder 9

Humorous autobiographical speech, 1936