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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.MFLAVIN
Title        Flavin, Martin. Papers
Date         1902-1966
Size         7.5 linear feet (8 boxes)
Repository   Special Collections Research Center
             University of Chicago Library
             1100 East 57th Street
             Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract     Martin Archer Flavin, author and playwright. Flavin wrote short stories, novels, screenplays, essays, and several plays that were produced on Broadway. Flavin won the Pulitzer Prize in 1943 for his novel, Journey in the Dark. The Martin Flavin Papers contain manuscripts, plays, memoirs, travel journals, essays, novels, short stories, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, and scrapbooks. These papers document Flavin’s writing career, family, and personal life.

Acknowledgments
The Martin Flavin Papers were processed and preserved as part of the "Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project," funded with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Information on Use
Access
The collection is open for research.

Citation
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Flavin, Martin. Papers, [Box#, Folder#], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note
Martin Archer Flavin was born in San Francisco on November 2, 1883. Flavin was married three times and had three children from his first two marriages. He attended the University of Chicago from 1903-1905 where he was active in student theatre as well as the Sigma Chi Fraternity. For a short time he served in the United States Army in field artillery. He was a business man for a period of twelve years, beginning as an office boy and working himself up to the vice presidency of a wallpaper company, but left in 1929 to fully devote his life to writing.
As a playwright, Flavin had numerous plays appear on Broadway between 1923 and 1937. His play, "Children of the Moon" (1923) was praised by critics and saw nearly 100 performances. In 1929 he had three plays on Broadway simultaneously, including "Broken Dishes" which featured the debut of Bette Davis. After several plays failed on Broadway, Flavin concentrated on writing screenplays. He was a script writer for MGM from 1930-1934 and several of his plays were adapted for movies. The first cinema version of his play "The Criminal Code" starring Walter Huston and Boris Karloff was nominated for an Oscar in 1931 for Best Writing, Adaptation.

Flavin completed his first novel, Mr. Little-John, in 1940. In 1943 Flavin won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel Journey in the Dark, which also won a $10,000 Harper Prize. Flavin also wrote numerous short stories and essays, many of which were published in popular magazines. Flavin was a member of the Players Club, the Dutch Treat Club, and the Old Capital Club.

Martin Flavin died in Carmel, California on December 28, 1967.

Scope Note

The Martin Flavin Papers are divided into four series: Series I, Personal; Series II, Plays and Novels; Series III, Essays and Short Stories; and Series IV, Oversize. The Martin Flavin Papers contain manuscripts, plays, memoirs, travel journals, essays, novels, short stories, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, and scrapbooks. These papers document Flavin’s writing career, family, and personal life.

Series I, Personal, contains correspondence, memoirs, travel journals, a master’s thesis, and theater programs. The correspondence includes letters to Flavin concerning his play "Blue Jeans" as well as letters from editors of various publications, mostly from The Reader’s Digest. His memoir, "Play by Play" recounts Flavin’s career as a playwright; the other documents his personal life.

Series II, Plays and Novels, contains manuscripts and drafts of Flavin’s plays and books. Three books and seven plays are included.

Series III, Essays and Short Stories, contains short stories and essays that appeared in publications such as The Popular Magazine, Harper’s Magazine, The Reporter, The Writer and House Beautiful, as well as manuscripts and drafts of short stories and essays. Also included is a collection of essays and short stories titled "Sketches: Here and There."

Series IV, Oversize, includes three scrapbooks which contain newspaper and magazine clippings, reviews, photographs, telegrams, and programs from many of his plays.
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
• Flavin, Martin, 1883-1967
• Theater--United States

INVENTORY
Series I: Personal

Box 1
Folder 1
Correspondence, "Blue Jeans", 1937
Box 1
Folder 2
Correspondence, Publication Editors, 1948-1966
Box 1
Folder 3
Current Biography, 1943
Box 1
Folder 4
Grade School Paper, undated
Box 1
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Memoirs, "Play by Play," 1960
Box 1
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Memoirs, "Play by Play," 1960
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Memoirs, undated
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Travel Diary, Germany and Russia, 1933
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Box 2
Folder 12
  Travel Diary, Mexico, 1956
Box 2
Folder 13
  Travel Diary, Turkey, 1959
Box 2
Folder 14
  Travel Diary, Russia, 1961
Box 2
Folder 15
  University of Chicago, 1904-1906

Series II: Plays and Novels

Box 2
Folder 16
  "Blue Jeans," undated
"The Cock Crowed" Act I, undated
Box 2
Folder 18
"The Cock Crowed" Act II, undated
Box 2
Folder 19
"The Cock Crowed" Act III, undated
Box 3
Folder 1
Conversations With a Child, 1959
Box 3
Folder 2
Conversations With a Child, 1959
Box 3
Folder 3
"The Diamond Bracelet," undated
Box 3
Folder 4
Make Her a Louse, 1934
Box 3
Folder 5
Make Her a Louse, 1934
Box 3
Folder 6
"Pro Bono Publico," 1958
Box 3
Folder 7
"The Road to Damascus," undated
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"The Road to the City," undated
Box 3
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"Shucks," undated
Box 4
Folder 1
There Will Always be Rabbits, 1957
Box 4
Folder 2
There Will Always be Rabbits, 1957
Box 4
Folder 3
"Too Young to Marry," undated

Series III: Essays and Short Stories
Box 4
Folder 4
   "Aunt Liza," 1909
Box 4
Folder 5
   "The Baby Mint," 1909
Box 4
Folder 6
   "Conversation with Shilendra," 1951
Box 4
Folder 7
   "Discipline Fromo Playwriting," 1946
Box 4
Folder 8
   "The Durban Deep," 1949
Box 4
Folder 9
Box 4
Folder 11
   "Half Jew: Reminiscence in Munich," 1962
Box 4
Folder 12
   "'Incident' in Israel," 1963
Box 4
Folder 13
   "Kallico Dick and His Cactus Bat," 1907
Box 5
Folder 1
   "The Little White Box," 1906
Box 5
Folder 2
   "London in December," 1956
Box 5
Folder 3
   "The Magic Cane," undated
Box 5
Folder 4
   "The Man From the Soviet Zone," 1951
Box 5
Folder 5
   "The Other Man," 1906
Box 5
Folder 6
   "Red Blunders in Berlin," 1951
Box 5
Folder 7
"Report After a Whirlwind Week at Pebble Beach," 1962

Box 5
Folder 8
"Sketches: Here and There," undated

Box 5
Folder 9
"Sketches: Here and There," undated

Box 5
Folder 10
"Tales From the Canteen – 'Tom'," 1902

Box 5
Folder 11
"Trictrac," 1958

Box 5
Folder 12
"Two Nights in 1855," 1955

Box 5
Folder 13
Untitled, Undated

Series IV: Oversize

Box 6
Scrapbook, 1923-1930

Box 7
Scrapbook, 1929-1930

Box 8
Scrapbook, 1933-1937