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Guide to the Martin Flavin Papers 1902-1966



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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

Folder 5

Master's Thesis, "The Plays of Martin Flavin," by Robert Williams, 1950

Box 1

Folder 6

Memoirs, "Play by Play," 1960

Box 1

Folder 7

Memoirs, "Play by Play," 1960

Box 1

Folder 8

Memoirs, undated

Box 1

Folder 9

Travel Diary, Germany and Russia, 1933

Box 2

Folder 1

Travel Diary, Africa, 1948

Box 2

Folder 2

Travel Diary, Japan, 1950

Box 2

Folder 3

Travel Diary, Korea, 1950

Box 2

Folder 4

Travel Diary, China, 1950

Box 2

Folder 5

Travel Diary, Thailand, 1950

Box 2

Folder 6

Travel Diary, Indonesia, 1950-1951

Box 2

Folder 7

Travel Diary, Malaya, 1951

Box 2

Folder 8

Travel Diary, India, 1951

Box 2

Folder 9

Travel Diary, Europe, 1951

Box 2

Folder 10

Travel Diary, Haiti, 1952

Box 2

Folder 11

Travel Diary, Egypt and Greece, 1954-1955

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

Box 2

Folder 17

"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

Box 3

Folder 8

"The Road to the City," undated

Box 3

Folder 9

"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

"Egypt's Liberation Province, the Beginning of a Beginning," 1955 Folder 10: "The End of a Party," 1915

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