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Guide to the Hi Simons Papers 1915-1950



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.SIMONSHI
Title	Simons, Hi. Papers
Date	1915-1950
Size	0.5 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract H. A. (Hi) Simons (1886-1945) had an extended career as a poet and patron of the arts. Simons started a Chicago literary journal called *Musterbooks*. Only two issues appeared, in 1921 and 1922. The first issue contained reproductions of the German expressionist artist, George Grosz. The second issue was a collection of poems by Yvor Winters, cumulatively entitled "The Magpie's Shadow," to which the entire *MUSTERBOOK II* (as it was designated) was devoted. The Simons-Stevens correspondence forms the larger part of this collection. In contemplation of a book about a poet, Simons queried Stevens about his poetry, to which Stevens responded with detailed analyses of his work.

Information on Use

Access

No restrictions.

Citation

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

Biographical Note

H. A. (Hi) Simons (1886-1945) had an extended career as a poet and patron of the arts. The first letter in this collection (April 5, 1915) is to Margaret Anderson, editor of the *Little Review*, to which Simons was submitting some verse. Just a few months later, when he read that the *Little Review* was in financial difficulties and about to fold, Simons offered Anderson the bulk of his meager savings to help rescue the magazine. This gift of \$75 was instrumental in saving the *Little Review*, and Hi Simons was accepted as a friend into the circle of Chicago poets.

Within a few years, Simons turned publisher himself. With the assistance of Steen Hinrichsen, Mitchell Dawson, Adam Lunoe and others, Simons started a Chicago literary journal called

Musterbooks. Only two issues appeared, in 1921 and 1922. The name of the publication was chosen from a quote from John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. Each MUSTERBOOK was to be devoted to a single, theme or artist. The first issue contained reproductions of the German expressionist artist, George Grosz. The second issue was a collection of poems by Yvor Winters, cumulatively entitled, *The Magpie's Shadow*, to which the entire MUSTERBOOK II (as it was designated) was devoted. Further issues of MUSTERBOOK were announced but never reached the press.

In 1937 Simons began an extended correspondence with Wallace Stevens, which lasted until Simons' death in 1945. In contemplation of a book about a poet, Simons queried Stevens about his poetry, to which Stevens responded with detailed analyses of his work. Although Simons published a number of articles on Stevens he did not finish the book before his death.

Hi Simons was professionally active in literary circles throughout his later life. At various times he was president of Year Book Publishers, president of the Society of Contemporary American Art, member of the foreign trade committee of the Book Publishers Association, and a lecturer at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Scope Note

The correspondence, consisting of 176 letters, has been separated into four series. A list of Simons' published articles is included at the end of the collection.

Series I: Miscellaneous Correspondence is a group of letters concerning a variety of subjects from dinner invitations, to criticisms of Simons' work, to comments on the contemporary state of American poetry. The miscellaneous correspondence extends from 1915 to 1944 and contains 71 letters. Among the writers included are Margaret Anderson, Sherwood Anderson, Karl Knaths, Harriet Monroe, Vincent Starrett, Van Wyck Brooks, and Nicholas Moore. The letters in this group are arranged alphabetically.

Series II: Musterbooks contains 27 letters, 22 of which are from the period 1921-1923 and are concerned solely with Musterbooks. Although there are no contemporary letters of George Grosz relating to the issue of Musterbooks devoted to his work, five later letters written during 1941-1942 are included here. Among the MUSTERBOOK correspondence are letters from Harold Monroe, Stanislaw Szukalski and H.L. Mencken. There is also, a sheet containing quotations from reviews and a small circular announcing the forthcoming MUSTERBOOK II. This section is arranged alphabetically.

Series III: Wallace Stevens-Hi Simons Correspondence is arranged chronologically and consists of 43 letters from Stevens and 28 from Simons, almost all of the latter being carbon copies. A number of the letters contain long and detailed lists of questions from Simons and answers from Stevens. Six notes from Wallace Stevens to Hi Simon's widow are also included. These date from April 13, 1945, when Stevens expressed his condolences to Mrs. Simons on the death of her husband, to December 26, 1950 when Stevens congratulated Mrs. Simons on her remarriage.

Series IV: Wallace Stevens-Helen Simons Correspondence, contains six notes from Wallace Stevens to Hi Simon's widow. These date from April 13, 1945, when Stevens expressed his condolences to Mrs. Simons on the death of her husband, to December 26, 1950 when Stevens congratulated her on her remarriage. In one letter, March 13, 1946, Stevens encloses two earlier letters between himself and Hi Simons.

Series V: Addenda, includes clippings and correspondence and a small number of manuscripts, including a carbon copy of a story by Wallace Stevens and typescripts of several poems by Witter Byner.

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

- Simons, H. A. (Hi)
- Simons, Helen
- Stevens, Wallace
- Poetry

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 1

A

- To Margaret Anderson, April 5, 1915, TLS, 1p
- To Margaret Anderson, Sept. 3, 1915, TLS, 1p
- From Margaret Anderson, Sept. 4, 1915, Telegram
- From Margaret Anderson, Sept. 5, 1915, ALS, 6pp
- To Margaret Anderson, Sept 6, 1915? , Carbon, 1p
- From Margaret Anderson, Sept. 6, 1915, ALS, 1p
- From Margaret Anderson, Dec 4, 1915, ALS, 3pp
- From Margaret Anderson, Jan. 31, 1916, AL, 1p
- From Margaret Anderson, n.d., ALS, 2pp
- From Margaret Anderson, n.d., ALS, 4pp
- From Margaret Anderson, n.d., ALS, 2pp
- From Tennessee Anderson, May, 1922, ALS, 2pp
- From Sherwood Anderson, May, 1922, ALS, 2pp
- To Sherwood Anderson, May 26, 1922, Carbon, 1p
- From Anthony Angarola, Oct. 3, 1922, ALS, 1p

Box 1

Folder 2

B-H

- From Bruno Bramanti, June 7, 1930, TLS, 1p
- From Bruno Bramanti, June 1, 1933, ALS, 2pp
- From Walter Campbell, Dec. 15, 1932, TLS/, ALS, 1p
- From Walter Campbell, March 7, 1934, TLS, 2pp
- From George Constant ?, n.d., ALS. 2pp
- To Waldo Frank, July 21, 1922, Carbon, 1p
- From Waldo Frank, 1922, TLS, 1p
- From Waldo Frank, Sept. 1922?, ALS, 1p
- From Helen West Heller, February, 1923 (poem "March"), AD, 2pp
- To Philip Horton, Nov. 20, 1941, Carbon, 2pp
- From Frank L. Huntley, Fed. 9, 1943, TLS, 5pp
- To Frank L. Huntley Fed. 14, 1943, Carbon, 2pp
- From Philip Horton, Dec. 14, 1941, TLS, 2pp
- To Philip Horton Jan. 10, 1942, Carbon, 2pp
- From Rolfed Humphries, March 31, 1941, TLS, 1p

Box 1

Folder 3

J-ZM

- To Eugene Jolas, Aug. 31, 1940, Carbon, 1p
- From Eugene Jolas, Sept. 4, 1940, TLS, 1p
- To Eugene Jolas, Sept. 15, 1940, Carbon, 1p
- From Karl Knaths, Nov. 12, 1942, ALS, 1p
- From Karl Knaths, Dec. 24, 1942, ANS, Postcard (with sketch)
- From Karl Knaths, Jan. 2, 1943, ANS, Postcard
- To Karl Knaths, Feb. 24, 1943, Carbon, 1p
- From Harriet Monroe, April 10, 1920, ALS, 2pp
- To Nicholas Moore, Aug. 6, 1942, Carbon, 1p
- From Nicholas Moore, Sept. 22, 1942, ALS, 7pp
- To Nicholas Moore, Nov. 4, 1942, Carbon, 2pp
- From Nicholas Moore, Feb. 5, 1943, ALS, 4pp
- From Nicholas Moore, May 15, 1943, ANS, Postcard
- To Nicholas Moore, Aug. 26, 1943, Carbon, 1p
- From Nicholas Moore, Sept. 25, 1943, ALS, 2pp
- From Nicholas Moore, Jan. 2, 1944, TLS, 1p
- To Nicholas Moore, March 19, 1944, Carbon, 1p
- From Nicholas Moore, June 2, 1944, TLS, 2pp
- From Nicholas Moore, Oct. 3, 1944, TLS, 1p

Box 1

Folder 4

P-T

- From Arthur G. Powell, April 8, 1940, TLS, 5pp
- To Arthur G. Powell, April 19, 1940, Carbon, 2pp
- To Arthur G. Powell, Nov. 14, 1942, Carbon, 1p
- From Arthur G. Powell, Nov. 19, 1942, TLS, 1p
- To Arthur G. Powell, Nov. 21, 1942, Carbon, 1p
- From Arthur G. Powell, Dec. 15, 1942, TLS, 2pp

- From Burton Rascoe, July 10, 1922, TLS, 1p
- From Vincent Starrett, Dec. 23, 1922, ALS, 2pp
- From Vincent Starrett., n.d.
- (poem "Hi's Pie"), ADS, 1p
- (enclosed with #
- From Fiswoode Tarleton, Aug. 23, ?, ALS, 1p

Box 1

Folder 5

V-Variou Editors

- From Van Wyck Brooks, Nov. 1, 1920, ALS, 1p
- From Van Wyck Brooks, Dec. 3, 1921, ALS, 1p
- To William C. Williams, Nov. 15, 1937, TLS, 1p, (on same sheet, Williams' answer to Simons, Nov. 17, 1937,, TLS, 1p)
- To William C. Williams, Nov. 28, 1937, TLS, 1p, (on same sheet, Williams' answer to Simons, n.d., ALS
- To various editors and their replies (Irita Van Doren, W. R. Benet, Louis Untermeyer), March 23, 1940, ff Typed draft/3, TLS, 6pp
- From unidentified person, Dec. ? 1933, ANS, Postcard
- From Raymond ?, June 11, 1922, ALS, 2p
- From Raymond ?, Aug. 3, 1922, ALS, 4pp
- From Raymond ?, Sept. 30, 1922, ALS, 2pp (with sketch)

Series II: Musterbooks- Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 6

Bynner-Monro

- From Witter Bynner ("Hal"), Oct. 11, 1922, TLS, 1p
- To Witter Bynner, Oct. 22, 1922, Carbon, 1p
- From Witter Bynner ("Hal"), Oct. 27, 1922, TLS, 1p
- From Witter Bynner ("Hal"), Jan. 19. 1923, TLS, 2pp
- From Witter Bynner ("Hal"), Nov. 20, 1922, TLS, 1p
- From John Farrar, June 9, 1922, TLS, 1p
- From Iwan Goll, June? 16, 1922, ALS, 1p
- From George Grosz, Feb. 26, 1942, ALS, 1p
- From George Grosz, June 4, 1941, TLS, 1p
- From George Grosz, Dec. 31, 1941, ALS, 1p
- To George Grosz, Nov. 24, 1941, Carbon, 2pp
- From Georg Grosz, Dec. 5, 1941, ALS, 1p
- To H. L. Mencken, Dec. 3, 1921, Carbon, 1p
- From H. L. Mencken, Dec. 8, 1921, TLS, 1p
- From H. L. Mencken, Dec. 17, 1921, TLS, 2pp
- From Harold Monro, May 31, 1922, TLS, 1p

Box 1

Folder 7

Sachs-Szukalski, publicity

- From Herman Sachs, April 4, 1922, TLS, 1p

- From Herman Sachs, Dec. 7, 1921, TLS, 1p
- To Herman G. Scheffauer, Jan. 7, 1921, Carbon, 3pp
- From Herman G. Scheffauer, Feb. 14, 1922, TL, 3pp
- To Stanislaw Szukalski, Jan. 17, 1921, Carbon, 2pp
- To Stanislaw Szukalski, Nov. 28, 1921, Carbon, 1p
- To Stanislaw Szukalski, Dec. 3, 1921, Carbon, 2pp
- To Stanislaw Szukalski, Dec. 18, 1921, Carbon, 4pp
- From Stanislaw Szukalski, n. d., ALS, 11p, (includes several poems)
- From Stanislaw Szukalski, n.d., ALS, 2pp
- From Stanislaw Szukalski, n.d., ALS, 6pp, (includes several poems)
- From Stanislaw Szukalski, n.d., ALS, 6pp, (includes one poem)
- Quotes from MUSTERBOOK reviews n.d., ,TD, 1p
- Announcement for MUSTERBOOK for Feb. 25, 1922, D, 1p

Series III: Correspondence of Hi Simons and Wallace Stevens

Box 1

Folder 8

1937-1940

- From W. S., Nov. 16, 1937, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Nov. 20, 1937, Carbon, 1p
- W. S., Dec. 30, 1937, TLS/note, 1p
- W. S., Jan. 14, 1938, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Jan. 23, 1938, Carbon, 1p
- H. S., Mar. 21. 1938, Carbon, 1p
- W. S., Mar. 23. 1938, TLS, 1p
- W. S., Sept. 26. 1938, TLS, 2pp, (Enc., list of magazines in which W. S.'s poetry appeared)
- W. S., Oct. 7, 1938, TLS, 1p
- W. S., Oct. 11, 1938, TLS, 1p
- W. S., Oct. 2, 1939, TLS, 1p
- W. S., Dec. 29, 1939, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Dec. 31, 1939, TL (draft), 1p
- H. S., Jan. 6, 1940, TL (draft), 1p
- W. S., Jan. 9, 1940, TLS, 4pp, (Enc., list of 20 questions about "Ghosts" and "Like Decorations in a Nigger Cemetery," which Stevens answers, plus transcript of correspondence between Stevens, Dr. Mario M. Gossi, and Eliz. Yates.)
- W. S., Jan. 12, 1940, TLS, 3pp
- H. S., Jan. 14, 1940, TL (draft), 2pp
- W. S., Jan. 18, 1940, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Jan. 23, 1940, TL (draft), 2pp
- H. S., March 17, 1940, TL (draft), 2pp

Box 1

Folder 9

1940

- W. S., March 28, 1940, TLS, 1p
- From W. S., April 22, 1940, TLS, 1p

- H. S., April 30, 1940, Carbon, 1p
- H. S., April 30, 1940, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Aug. 3, 1940, TLS, 1p
- W. S., Aug. 8, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 1 sheet of questions by H. S., 1 1/2 sheets answers by W. S. plus autograph note.)
- W. S., Aug. 9, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc. 1 1/2 sheets of answers continued from above)
- From W. S., Aug. 10, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 5 p of notes explaining "The Man With The Blue Guitar")
- H. S., Aug. 15, 1940, Carbon, 1p

Box 1

Folder 10

1940

- From W. S., Aug. 27, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 4 pages commentary on the statute poems and "The Old Woman")
- W. S., Aug. 28, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 1 1/2pp commentary on "The Greenest Continent")
- W. S., Aug. 29, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 2 1/2 sheets commentary on "A Duck for Dinner")
- W. S., Aug. 30, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 3 1/2 sheets commentary on "Sombre Figuration")
- H. S., Sept. 8, 1940, Carbon, 3pp
- W. S., Oct. 28, 1940, TLS, 1p, (Enc. H. S. to W. S., Oct. 22, 1940, carbon, 1p; W. S. to H. S. OCT. 18, 1940, TLS 1p)

Box 1

Folder 11

1940-1942

- From W. S., Nov, 16, 1940, TLS, 1p, Enc., carbon of letter W. S. to Bowden Broadwater re Simons' bibliography of himself)
- W. S., Nov. 28, 1940, Carbon, 1p
- W. S., Dec. 27, 1940, TLS, 1p
- H. S., July 5, 1941, Carbon, 2pp
- W. S., July 8, 1941, TLS, 2pp
- From H. S., July 13, 1941, TLS, 1p
- W. S., July 18, 1941, TLS, 1p
- W. S., Oct. 2, 1941, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Feb. 15, 1942, TL (draft), 2pp
- W. S., Feb. 18, 1942, TLS, 2pp
- W. S., Aug. 17, 1942, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Aug. 22, 1942, Carbon, 2pp
- W. S., Aug. 27, 1942, TLS, 1p

Box 1

Folder 12

1942-1945

- From W. S., Aug. 28, 1942, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Sept. 24, 1942, Carbon, 1p
- W. S., Nov. 25, 1942, TLS, 1p

- H. S., Oct. 26, 1942, Carbon, 1p
- H. S., Jan. 7, 1943, Carbon, 2pp, (Questions about "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction")
- W. S., Jan. 12, 1943, TLS, 3pp, (Answers to Jan. 7, 1943)
- H. S., Jan. 25, 1943, Carbon, 1p
- W. S., Jan. 28, 1943, TLS, 1p
- H. S., Mar. 17, 1943, Carbon, 1p
- W. S., Mar. 29, 1943, TLS, 1p, (Enc., 4pp notes analyzing "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction")
- H. S., Oct. 1, 1943, Carbon, 2pp
- W. S., Oct. 11, 1943, TLS, 2pp
- H. S., Sept. 1, 1944, Carbon, 2pp
- From W. S., Sept. 6, 1944, TLS, 2pp
- H. S., Sept. 9, 1944, Carbon, 2pp
- W. S., Sept. 12, 1944, TLS, 1p
- W. S., March 6, 1945, TLS, 1p
- H. S., March 25, 1945, TLS, 1p

Series IV: Correspondence from Wallace Stevens to Helen Simons

Box 1

Folder 13

W.S to Mrs. Hi. Simons, 1945-1950

- April 13, 1945, ALS, 4pp
- March 13, 1946, ALS, 4pp, (Enc., H. S. to W. S. Apr. 12, 1944, TLS, 3pp; W. S. to H. S. Apr. 18, 1944, TLS, 2pp)
- Dec. 22, 1947, ALS, 2pp
- Dec. 19, 1949, TLS, 1p
- Dec. 21, 1950, TLS, 1p
- Dec. 26, 1950, ALS, 1p

Series V: Addenda

Box 1

Folder 14

Poems

- Sherwood Anderson, Untitled story, Dec. 15, 1916, T carb, 3pp
- Maxwell Bodenheim, "The Dance", TS, 1p
- Maxwell Bodenheim, "Study of Face in Images", T, 1p
- From Witter Bynner, Post card, March 27, 1925, AS, 1p
- Witter Bynner, "What Was Lazarus?", TS, 3
- "Perhaps You Have Faults", T, 1p
- "Railroad Map", TS, 1p
- "Grenstone Pond", TS, 1p
- "Swinburne", TS, 1p
- "Two Poems from Wang Wei", T carb, 1p
- Tr. by Witter Bynner and Nieh Shih-chang
- "O for a Witless Age", TS, 1p

- Jessica Nelson North, Untitled poem, T carb, 7pp
- Clippings, 1920-21 (primarily about Musterbooks)
- Catalogue for an exhibit of paintings by Raymond Jonson, May, 1922. Introduction by Hi Simons