

Walter Hart Blumenthal papers

Ms. Coll. 1104

Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.

Last updated on October 05, 2015.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2015 July 21

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Blumenthal, Walter Hart, 1883-1969
Title	Walter Hart Blumenthal papers
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1104
Date [inclusive]	1899-1965
Extent	0.2 linear feet (1 box and 1 oversized folder)
Language	English
Abstract	This collection contains some papers of the Jewish American scholar, writer and editor, Walter Hart Blumenthal (1883-1969). Although composed primarily of Blumenthal's short stories and poetry, the collection includes one scholarly article published in 1960, titled "Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture" with some accompanying research materials. In 1965 Blumenthal compiled his poetry into the typescript of "Exit Laughing" and his short stories into "Perspectives: Stories of This Brief Tenement Wherein the Spirit Dwells", both ultimately unpublished.

Cite as:

Walter Hart Blumenthal papers, 1899-1965, Ms. Coll. 1104, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Walter Hart Blumenthal was a Jewish American scholar, writer and editor. Born in Clinton, Iowa in 1883, Blumenthal moved with his family to Philadelphia as a young child and was educated at the Brown Preparatory School. Walter Blumenthal's father, Hart Blumenthal, was an trustee of the Jewish Publication Society, chairman of the Keneseth Israel Free Library and a noted collector of Lincolniana. At the age of sixteen, Blumenthal was accepted into the freshman class of the University of Pennsylvania, from which he graduated in 1903. Blumenthal first served as an editor at *The New and Complete Universal Self-Pronouncing Encyclopedia* which was released in 1905, before moving on to *The National Encyclopedia of Reference* and, in 1922, *The American Hebrew*, a weekly magazine based out of New York City. Throughout this time, Blumenthal wrote poetry, fiction and a number of scholarly essays. Blumenthal's published writings reflect his many academic interests including book collecting, Judaism and history, as do his published works which include *Brides from Bridewell: Female Felons Sent to Colonial America* (1962), *Bookman's Bedlam: An Olio of Literary Oddities* (1955) and *Women Camp Followers of the American Revolution*, published five years after Blumenthal's death in 1969. Sources: I. George Dobsevage, "Jews of Prominence in the United States," *American Jewish Year Book*: 109-218. Accessed July, 2015, http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1922_1923_5_SpecialArticles.pdf Joseph H. Hagedorn, "Hart Blumenthal: A Biographical Sketch," *American Jewish Year Book*: 384-390. Accessed July, 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=19377>

Scope and Contents

The Walter Hart Blumenthal papers consist mainly of scholarly research on Shakespearean portraiture and the typescripts of two unpublished volumes of poetry and short stories. The earliest dated item in the collection is an 1899 notebook of Greek and Roman history, handwritten and illustrated with thirteen detailed maps and diagrams. Completed when Blumenthal was sixteen, this volume served as his entrance examination to the University of Pennsylvania. Blumenthal's research on portraits and sculptures depicting William Shakespeare is almost entirely undated and consists of photographs, photostats and negatives of artworks and a few relevant articles and papers. This research seems to have culminated in *Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture*, an article published in *The American Book Collector* in 1960 (a copy of which is included in this collection). The typescript of "Exit Laughing," the preferred title of a volume of poetry Blumenthal sought to have published in 1965, contains lightly annotated verse as well as clippings of poems published in various newspapers and magazines. A portrait sketched in charcoal by the Czech artist Ivan Sors (spelled 'Evan Sors' by Blumenthal) was originally housed with "Exit Laughing" and submitted for publication with the volume. The typescript of "Perspectives: Stories of This Brief Tenement Wherein the Spirit Dwells," a collection of short stories, was also compiled in 1965. This compilation features a short preface by Louis Golding as well as two 1958 newspaper clippings

commemorating Golding at his death. Although this collection contains many of Blumenthal's literary works, it lacks information on most of the writer's published interests.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

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Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

At the American Jewish Archives: Walter Hart Blumenthal Papers. 1931, Manuscript Collection No. 229
At the Center for Jewish History: Walter Hart Blumenthal papers, undated, 1882, 1900-1969, P-83.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- University of Pennsylvania.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Notebooks
- Poems
- Short stories, American--20th century.
- Typescripts

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Golding, Louis, 1895-1958
- Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616

SUBJECT(S)

- Poetry--20th century

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Greek and Roman history notebook submitted as entrance exam to the University of Pennsylvania, 1899.	1	1
<i>Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture</i> , magazine clipping and caption list, 1960, undated.	1	2
<i>Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture</i> , photographs and negatives of portraits of Shakespeare, undated.	1	3
<i>Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture</i> , booklet of Shakespeare portraits from The Folger Shakespeare Library and negatives of Shakespeare portraits, 1935, undated.	1	4
<i>Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture</i> , photographs and negatives of articles and art concerning Shakespeare, undated.	1	5

<i>Spurious Shakespeare Portraiture</i> , photostats of <i>The Stowe Catalogue</i> with a letter from The New York Public Library, and clipping, 1960, undated.	1	6
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Biography of Blumenthal's early writings, 1910-1936, undated.	1	7
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Typescript of <i>Exit Laughing</i> , an unpublished volume of poetry, 1965.	1	8
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		Box	Fold
Portrait by Evan Sors (originally housed and submitted to publishers with <i>Exit Laughing</i>), 1928.		49	

	Box	Folder
Collection of Blumenthal's stories with a preface by Louis Golding, 1965.	1	9