
Guide to the Kate Rennie Archer Papers, 1907-1970

Collection number: MS 66

The University Library

Special Collections and Archives
University of California, Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, California

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Date Completed:

February 2003

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Kate Rennie Archer papers,

Date (inclusive): 1907-1970

Collection number: MS 66

Creator: Archer, Kate Rennie

Extent: 2.5 linear ft

6 boxes

Repository: University of California, Santa Cruz. University Library. Special Collections and Archives
Santa Cruz, California 95064

Abstract: Archive contains correspondence, manuscripts of published and unpublished poems and stories, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, photographs and miscellaneous items documenting the literary activity of a San Francisco Bay area poet and a poetry teacher Kate Rennie Archer.

Physical location: Stored offsite at NRLF: Advance notice is required for access to the papers.

Language: English

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Acquisition Information

Gift of Kate Rennie Archer, 1966.

Outgoing correspondence to Mrs. Specker donated by Mrs. Lewis Specker, 1971.

Biography

Scottish poetess, Kate Rennie Archer (given name Catherine), was born in Glasgow to a traveling shipping family. She spent most of her childhood moving around the Europe, as well as lived both in Malta and Algiers. She married a Scottish Royal Horse Artillery Captain, Douglas Archer in 1912. She was not only a trained teacher specializing in literature, folk lore and music, but she served in the Red Cross as a qualified nurse during the World War I. Her husband's unstable health forced the couple and their young son Douglas Jr. to move from Edinburgh, in search of a milder weather, to California in 1927. Always known for her active spirit, she and her 10-year-old son made history by traveling on a 'shoestring budget from San Francisco to Glasgow' in the 1930's, a voyage which received wide press coverage in the US. At the outbreak of the World War II the Archer's supported the war efforts in the Bay Area while their son Douglas Jr. Archer joined the military serving under the Royal Canadian Air-Force in Great-Britain. Deeply effected by the sights and aftermath of the two wars, many of her writings are about war and portrayals of the psychological effects of these events.

Kate Rennie Archer's lifelong passion for writing poetry started at a very early age. Her first poem was published in "Glasgow Weekly" at 12 years of age. In the Bay Area she devoted over a decade to teaching creative writing at Dominican College in San Rafael, and established a Poetry Workshop at 1515 Gough Street in San Francisco in the 1950's. Never forgetting her roots, she was passionate interpreter and advocate of Scottish poetry through lectures, readings, and radio programs. Authoring either under a name of Kate Rennie Archer or K.R.A., she steadily contributed poetry through out her life to newspapers and journals, such as *New York Times*, *Oakland Tribune*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Maple Leaf*, *The Carmel Pine Cone-Cymbal*. Her main body of work remains the following published collections of poetry:

- *Jock Tamson's Bairns: and other poems*, Glasgow, Gowans, 1934.
- *Tumbleweed Trail*, San Francisco, Ca, Canterbury Press, 1936.
- *Petals of the Quelder-Rose*. Mills College, Oakland, ca, Eucalyptus Press, 1940.
- *Recurrent Vigil*, Berkeley, Ca, Gillick Press, 1943.
- *Coffee Shop*, Berkeley, Ca, Gillick Press, 1947.
- *Persimmon Harvest*, San Francisco, Ca, The Abbey Press, 1955.
- *Night Clerk, Western Union: of time and communications*, Glenwood Edition, 1960's

Kate Rennie Archer on the vocation of a poet:

"We are not spectacular because poetry as an art has no pictures to show, no music to soothe and charm, it is a reserved and solitary process, and only comes to notice as protest or prophecy, as encouragement or condemnation in emergency".

Scope and Content of Collection

The archive covers Kate Rennie Archer's literary and teaching activities between 1930-1960. The bulk of the material consists of manuscripts of poems and stories that portray her observation on regional and world events, especially the Great Wars, and captures various California scenary and locals during her time. The archive also consists of correspondence, personal papers, realia, photographs, scrapbooks and miscellany publications. Negatives and published books have been separated from the archive (see Separated Material for more detailed listing.)

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Archer, Kate Rennie--Archives.

Poets, American--20th century--California.

Poets, American--California--San Francisco Bay Area.

Women poets, American--20th century.

Women poets, Scottish--California.

Material Cataloged Separately

Negatives have been transferred to the Negative Collection, McHenry Library.

Books authored by Kate Rennie Archer have been cataloged and physically separately from the archive:

- *Call frae the heather*, Published Mills College, Oakland, Calif., The Eucalyptus press, 1940. [PS3501.R335C3]
- *Night clerk western union (of time and communications)*. [N.p.] Glenwood editions [n. d.] [PS3501.R335N5]
- *Persimmon harvest*. San Francisco, The Abbey Press, 1955. [PS3501.R335P4]
- *Petals of the guelder rose*. Berkeley, Calif., Gillick Press [c1941]. [PS3501.R335P44]
- *Tumbleweed trail*. San Francisco, the Canterbury Press, [c1936]. [PS3501.R335T8]

Collection of Personal Papers

Kate Rennie Archer. Huntington Library and Art Gallery. Manuscript Division (Papers, 1931-1969).

Box-folder 1:1-5 I. Correspondence, 1915-1970,

Physical Description: 5 folders

Scope and Content Note

Consists of outgoing, and incoming correspondence. Correspondents included are Julia Altrocchi, Helen Faulkner, Florence R. Keene, Frona Lane, Arthur L. Price, and Jennette Yeatman. Majority of the outgoing correspondence consists of letters written to Mrs. (Gita) Lewis Specker, a friend from a San Francisco Browning Society.

Arrangement

Incoming letters are arranged alphabetically by a corporate or last name.

Box-folder 1:1	Outgoing, 1932, 1953, 1963-1970
Box-folder 1:2-5	Incoming,
Box-folder 1:2	Letters in regards to publishing & other literary activity, A-Z, 1915,1939-1963
Box-folder 1:3	Letters from friends and fans, A-Z, 1915-1968
Box-folder 1:4	Fan mail redirected from radio KFRC after reading of "The Constant Heart", Feb 1932
Box-folder 1:5	Unknown, 1939-1963, n.d.

II. Biographical, 1914-1962,

Box-folder 1:6-9 **II. Biographical, 1914-1962,**

Physical Description: 4 folders

Scope and Content Note

Contains biographical notes, legal documents, articles written about Kate Rennie Archer, and her business card.

Scope and Content Note

Chronological arrangement.

Box-folder 1:6 **Biographical notes by Mrs. Archer**
Box-folder 1:7 **Finance, contracts & other legal documents, 1914-1955**
Box-folder 1:8 **Newspaper Articles about K.R.A., 1931-1962**
Box-folder 1:9 **Ephemera, 1933, n.d.**

III. Family Papers, 1907-1963,

Box-folder 1:10- **III. Family Papers, 1907-1963,**

Physical Description: 2 folders

Scope and Content Note

Contains material relating to Douglas Archer Sr.'s music activity in Edinburgh, as well as correspondence from the son Douglas Archer Jr. and his family.

Arrangement

Chronological arrangement.

Box-folder 1:10 **Douglas Archer Sr., Opera programs and clippings, 1907, 1910, 1922**

Box-folder 1:11 **Douglas Archer Jr. and his family, Correspondence to his parents, 1942-1963**

Box-folder 2:1-6 **IV. Activity, 1936-1963,**

Physical Description: 6 folders

Scope and Content Note

Correspondence and various printed material regarding to Kate Rennie Archer's literary and teaching activity.

Arrangement

Arrangement chronologically where possible.

Box-folder 2:1	Clubs and Societies:
Box-folder 2:1	Poets of the Pacific, programs, journal, certificate of merit, 1941, 1943
Box-folder 2:1	California Writer's Club, roster, 1951
Box-folder 2:1	California Federation of Chaparral Poets, certificate
Box-folder 2:1	The Poetry Society of America, <i>Bulletin</i>, Dec 1944, Feb-Mar, May 1953, Dec 1956, May 1963
Box-folder 2:2-3	Teaching:
Box-folder 2:2	Technical Adult School, Oakland, printed copy of "Original Poems by Class in Poetry and Verse, 1948-1949
Box-folder 2:3	Dominican Grammar School, Collection of student poems, 1949,1951-1952
Box-folder 2:4-5	Poetry Workshop:
Box-folder 2:4	Incoming & outgoing correspondence, 1955
Box-folder 2:5	Notes, publicity drafts, newspaper clippings, blank contest entry form
Box-folder 2:6	Programs and announcements for lectures and readings, 1936, 1953,n.d.

Box-folder 3:1-5: **V. Manuscripts, [1927]-1967,**

Physical Description: 2 boxes and 7 folders

Scope and Content Note

Contains typed and hand written manuscripts of published and unpublished poems, stories, as well as broadcast scripts and speeches, a score, a notebook, miscellany draft fragments, notes, and writing source material.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by title, where possible. Untitled groups of poems, which were found attached as a set, were kept intact.

- Box-folder 3:1 **Source material; newspaper clippings of stories & publisher information, 1934-1966**
- Box-folder 3:2 **"Afternoon in a park, Bad Sassendorff, Germany, and other works", 1967**
- Box-folder 3:3 **"Broadcast script", KYA, corrected & annotated typescript, Jun 1949**
- Box-folder 3:4 **"Bus Trip", set of 3 poems, typescript, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:5-7 **"Call Frae the Heather":**
 - Box-folder 3:5-6 **Corrected typescript (poems were broadcasted over KYA), n.d.**
 - Box-folder 3:7 **Corrected and edited scripts for a dramatic reading, 1936**
- Box-folder 3:8-9 **"Coffee Shop", corrected typescripts, Oct 1946, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:10 **"Epicure Evening", Handmade pamphlet of poems and sketches in a menu, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:11 **"For One Who Stayed", poems, typescript, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:12 **"Frae the Heather" broadcast outlines of Scottish songs, typescripts, Nov 1949**
- Box-folder 3:13 **"The Gipsy in Me", collection of stories, corrected typescript, [1927]**
- Box-folder 3:14 **"Growth", poem which received a Browning Society Award, 1962**
- Box-folder 3:15 **"Harvest of War", corrected typescript, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:16 **"Make Straight the Way", corrected typescripts, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:17 **"My Son Enlist", a poem, corrected typescript, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:18 **"Night Clerk Western Union", corrected typescript, n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:19 **"Persimmon Harvest", incomplete set of poems, and receipts, 1954**
- Box-folder 3:20 **"Personality", writing of nine different human personalities [by K.R.A. ?], n.d.**
- Box-folder 3:21 **"Return Freight", narrative picture poem, corrected typescript, 1934**
- Box-folder 3:22 **"Roses and Fire: Lyrics", corrected typescript, n.d.**
- Box-folder 4:1 **"Saga of Service: For City Hospitals Everywhere", 3 corrected typescripts**
- Box-folder 4:2 **"Seeing the World at One and Three Fifty Cents per Mile: 8000 miles for 1.22 dollars", article sent to N.Y. Post, typescript, 1931**
- Box-folder 4:3 **"Tumbleweed Trail", 2 corrected typescripts and notes, 1936**
- Box-folder 4:4 **"Song of a Little Brother", complete and incomplete typescript sets, corrected**
- Box-folder 4:5-7 **Single poems by title, A-Z, typed and hand written versions**
- Box-folder 4:8-9 **Untitled groups of poems, corrected and uncorrected typescripts**
- Box-folder 4:10 **Untitled poems, drafts**
- Box-folder 5:1-2 **Short stories and essays by title, B-W**
- Box-folder 5:3 **Story and essay fragments, outlines**
- Box-folder 5:4 **Speeches; "Child Poetry Lines and Laughter", "Old Songs and New", "Poetry Day 1953", "Shakespeare and Stratford Today", "These are Scots"**
- Box-folder 5:5 **Score for "The Gray Ship", music and words by K.R.A, scripted by hand, n.d.**
- Box-folder 5:6 **Notebook, contains drafts for poems, addresses, and misc. notes**
- Box-folder 5:7 **Notes**

Box-folder 2:7-15 **VI. Printed Material, 1934-1960,**

Physical Description: 9 folders

Scope and Content Note

Contains galley proofs, a collection of periodicals and newspaper clippings of K.R.A.'s poems and articles, as well as clippings of miscellany publicity and bookreviews.

Arrangement

Newspaper clippings are divided into groups by a periodical title.

- Box-folder 2:7-8 **Galley proofs:**
- Box-folder 2:7 **"Frae the Heather", 2 corrected copies**
- Box-folder 2:8 **"Petals of the Guelred-Rose", 3 corrected copies**
- Box-folder 2:9 **"Night Clerk Western Union", Glenwood ed. [pamphlet], 1960's**
- Box-folder 2:10 **Cards, 1947, 1959**
- Box-folder 2:11 **Poems in journals; "Daphne in Change", *Envoi*, and "Wild Halcyons", *The Navy*, v.61:10, Oct 1956**
- Box-folder 2:12 **Poems; newspaper clippings from:**
- Box-folder 2:12 ***The Albany Herald*, featured in "The Red Kite", 1937-1942**
- Box-folder 2:12 ***The Carmel Pine Cone-Cymbal*, featured in "Poetry", 1942-1952**
- Box-folder 2:12 ***The Courier*, featured in "The Poetic View", 1933-1934**
- Box-folder 2:12 ***The Maple Leaf*, n.d.**
- Box-folder 2:12 ***The Oakland Tribune*, featured in "Other Fellows", 1928-1958**
- Box-folder 2:12 ***The San Francisco Examiner*, 1939, 1941-1942**
- Box-folder 2:13 **Poems; newspaper clippings from misc. publications, 1935-1958, n.d.**
- Box-folder 2:14 **Articles in journals and newspapers, 1934, 1954, n.d**
- Box-folder 2:15 **Book publicity and book reviews, flyers & clippings, 1935, 1937, 1941, 1943, 1955**

Box-folder 6:1-2 VII. Scrapbooks, 1933-1937, 1951-1952,

Physical Description: 2 books

Scope and Content Note

Contains two scrapbooks of newspaper clippings documenting Mrs. Archer's and her son's budget travel across the Atlantic in 1930's, and miscellany publicity in regards to her literary activity in early 1950.

Scope and Content Note

Chronological arrangement.

Box-folder 5:8 VIII. Photographs, [1890-1960],

Physical Description: 1 folder

Scope and Content Note

Contains 30 photographs, including individual and group portraits of Kate Rennie Archer (1910's, 1960's), Douglas Archer Sr. ([1890], 1930's, 1960's), and Douglas Archer Jr. (1930-1960). Negatives removed from the archive, see separated material.

Arrangement

Arranged by size; 8x11, 5x7, and 4x5

Box-folder 2:16 IX. Realia, 1912, n.d.,

Physical Description: 1 folder

Scope and Content Note

Contains a framed drawing of Kate Rennie Archer and a package of wedding rice.

Arrangement

No arrangement.

Box-folder 5:10-12. **Miscellany, 1928, 1944-1956,**

Physical Description: 3 folders

Scope and Content Note

Collection of writings by other than K.R.A. and other miscellany publications.

Arrangement

No arrangement.

- Box-folder 5:10 **Poetry by other than K.R.A., booklets and copies:**
- Box-folder 5:10 ***A Dozen New Poems*, by Gavin Arthur, [inscribed by author], 1954**
- Box-folder 5:10 ***Tropic Earth*, by Clifford Gessler, [inscribed by author], 1944**
- Box-folder 5:10 **Typed and hand written copies of Nora May French's poems**
- Box-folder 5:11 **Writings by other than Kate Archer:**
- Box-folder 5:11 **"Yada Lecture", unknown author, Feb 1956**
- Box-folder 5:11 **"Fire & Ice: The Two Satan's", by Jennette Yeatman, carbon copy**
- Box-folder 5:12 **Miscellany publications:**
- Box-folder 5:12 ***The West Minster Magazine*, v.35:3, Autumn 1946**
- Box-folder 5:12 **"The Truth About the War", Major George A. Drew, reprint of MacLean's, Canada's National Magazine, Jul 1928**