

Joseph B. Harrison papers, 1910-1985

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Harrison, Joseph B. (Joseph Barlow), -1956
Title	Joseph B. Harrison papers
Dates	1910-1985 (inclusive) 1910 1985 1910-1911 (bulk) 1910 1911
Quantity	.21 cubic ft. (1 box)
Collection Number	0494 (Accession No. 0494-001)
Summary	Diary, 1910-1911, when Joseph Barlow Harrison was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford University. Also includes a handwritten family reminiscence about 1860s Missouri.
Repository	University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Special Collections University of Washington Libraries Box 352900 Seattle, WA 98195-2900 Telephone: 206-543-1929 Fax: 206-543-1931 speccoll@uw.edu
Access Restrictions	Access restricted. Contact the repository for details.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was partially provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Joseph Barlow Harrison was born in Coupeville on Whidbey Island, Washington, in 1886. His pioneer parents, Isaac and Agnes Harrison, both physicians, had come to Washington in the 1880s from Michigan, where they had met at the university medical school. His father's family was originally from Missouri; a partial reminiscence of that family is included in the collection. Professor Harrison was a faculty member of the University of Washington Dept. of English from 1913 until his death of a heart attack, which occurred in 1956, one week before his retirement.

Harrison came to Seattle in 1897 and attended grammar school in the old University Building in downtown (the present site of the Fairmont Olympic Hotel). He graduated from Seattle High School on Madison Street and then attended the University of Washington, receiving his bachelor of arts degree in 1910. At this time he applied for and was granted a Rhodes scholarship for three years (1910-1913) to Oxford, England, becoming only the fifth Rhodes scholar from Washington State. His activities in the first year and part of the second (1910-1911) are documented in the diary contained in this collection. Harrison received a degree from Oxford in the honor school of English Language and Literature. He became a faculty member at the University of Washington upon his return from Oxford in

1913. Harrison taught courses in American literature, playwriting, short story writing, and Shakespeare, among others, and was a popular professor of literature in the UW extension service (night school).

In addition to his classroom work, Professor Harrison composed poetry and was well known as a liberal essayist and editor. When Glenn Hughes began his series of chapbooks in 1926, Harrison's *A Short View of Menckanism in Menckenesese* was the first to be published. Harrison edited a collection of writings of Bret Harte in 1941, and his essay, "The Necessity of Liberalism," received wide attention after its publication in the *Pacific Spectator* magazine in 1955. He also wrote a popular column on word usage and language called "Explaining" in the University of Washington *Daily* newspaper.

Harrison was founder and later president of the university faculty senate. He served on the board of directors of the Repertory Theater and was a member of the American Association of University Professors, the Modern Language Association, and the Phi Gamma Delta social fraternity. He served as an officer during World War I. Harrison and his wife, the former Ellen Shelton, had two daughters.

Content Description

The bulk of the collection is a four-volume personal diary kept for his family (and sent back home periodically) during the school years of 1910-1911, when Joseph Barlow Harrison was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford University. Harrison put forth valiant effort to keep writing, but he left many gaps. Eventually, either he gave up or the remaining volumes were lost.

Description in the first three volumes of the diary covers his initial voyage from Montreal to England, his experiences in London on holiday, and activities as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford during the first year. The fourth volume covers the voyage from Boston to Oxford for his second year. This volume stops in November, 1911. A handwritten summary of the diary was prepared in 1985.

The collection also includes a handwritten Harrison family reminiscence. The earliest date recorded in the reminiscence is 1850. It contains genealogical information about the Harrison family as well as descriptions of farm life and indoor life in Johnson County, Missouri, before and during the U.S. Civil War.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

The creator's literary rights were not transferred to the University of Washington Libraries.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series. Series I. Rhodes Scholar Diary. Series II. Harrison Family Reminiscence.

Acquisition Information

Acquired from Mrs. Ellen Harrison, Oct. 6, 1964.

Processing Note

Collection processed in 1985.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Rhodes Scholar Diary

Four-volume diary of Joseph B. Harrison's experiences as a Rhodes scholar during the academic years 1910-1912. Includes handwritten summary, 1985.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1/1	Volume One: "Montreal to London" This volume covers Harrison's voyage over on the <i>R.M.S. Canada</i> , describes experiences aboard ship, reflects on self. Includes inserted printed maps, menus, passenger lists. Program of onboard musical includes "The Bedouin Love Song," sung by Mr. Harrison. Describes train trips from Liverpool to London, then to Oxford. Getting oriented at Oxford (Lincoln College).	Sept. 10-22, 1910
1/2	Volume Two This volume describes visits to the countryside on bicycles and to London on the train. Spends two weeks in London going to restaurants, galleries, museums, theater, and Westminster Chapel. Returns to Oxford and describes social activities at Oxford, lists expenses. Writes about school work and late-night discussions with friends; comments that although friends from the East complain, he feels at home in the English rain as it reminds him of Puget Sound.	Sept. 30-Oct. 28, 1910
1/3	Volume Three This volume describes his holidays in London over the New Year. Includes a long description of the original production of <i>Peter Pan</i> at the Duke of York's Theatre. Long characterizations of the members of the household in London, including servants and foreign visitors. Descriptions of activities at Oxford, including performances, boat races, and examinations. Setting off for Wales.	Dec. 29, 1910-Apr. 7, 1911
1/4	Volume Four	Sept. 27-Nov. 5, 1911

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	This volume describes the sea voyage on the S.S. <i>Ivernia</i> between Boston and Liverpool for Harrison's second year at Oxford. Forming clubs and renewing friendships on board. Fellows are called by the name of their state of origin (i.e., Louisiana, California, etc.). For his second year he enters a new college (Exeter). Getting to know region and historical places nearby. Describes rowing as strenuous.	
1/5	Diary Summary Fourteen-page hand-written summary prepared in 1985 by Kathleen Munro, volunteer, age 93. Includes descriptions of each volume, noted by date (one note for each date in the diary), along with lists of names and events mentioned. Page and volume order in the summary was corrected by Libby Burke in 2004.	1985

Harrison Family Reminiscence, n.d.

Box-folder1/6

Photocopy of a handwritten Harrison family reminiscence. The earliest date recorded in the reminiscence is 1850. The writer is not named (but states he/she was born in 1856); however it may be the father or uncle of Joseph B. Harrison. Contains genealogical information about the Harrison family as well as descriptions of farm life and indoor life in Johnson County, Missouri, before and during the U.S. Civil War. A list of subjects and locations appears on the first page, but not all appear in the pages that follow. These include pioneer life in Puget Sound, the Klondike Gold Rush, and the Spanish War. The pages stop abruptly in mid-sentence. It appears that the reminiscence is incomplete.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

American students--England--Oxford--Diaries
 College students--England--Oxford--Diaries
 College teachers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Education, Higher--England--Oxford
 English teachers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Foreign study--England--Oxford
 Ocean travel
 Rhodes scholarships
 Universities and colleges--Great Britain
 Voyages and travels--20th century

Personal Names :

Harrison, Joseph B. (Joseph Barlow), -1956--Archives

Corporate Names :

University of Oxford--Funds and scholarships
 University of Oxford--Students--Diaries

Geographical Names :

Johnson County (Mo.)
London (England)--Description and travel
Missouri--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives
Oxford (England)

Form or Genre Terms :

Diaries
Reminiscences

Other Creators :

Corporate Names :

University of Washington. University Archives

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

University Archives/Faculty Papers (University of Washington)

2004 (Last modified: 4/19/2018)



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