

Alice Tisdale Hobart papers, 1916-1967

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Hobart, Alice Tisdale
Title	Alice Tisdale Hobart papers
Dates	1916-1967 (inclusive) 1916 1967
Quantity	19.5 linear feet, (10 containers)
Collection Number	Ax 197
Summary	Alice Tisdale Hobart was a writer who wrote about her life in China; her most successful book is <i>Oil for the lamps of China</i> . The Alice Tisdale Hobart papers consist of correspondence, manuscripts, galley proofs, source materials, reviews, publicity materials, and copies of all books written by Alice Tisdale Hobart.
Repository	University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives. UO Libraries--SPC, 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 Fax: 541-346-3485 spcarref@uoregon.edu
Access Restrictions	Collection is open to the public. Collection must be used in Special Collections & University Archives Reading Room.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Historical Note

Alice Tisdale Hobart was born Alice Nourse in Lockport, New York on January 28, 1882, the second of three children of Edwin Henry and Harriett Augusta Beaman Nourse. When she was two years old her family moved to Chicago, where her father became a music teacher in the Chicago public school system. Her mother died when Alice was ten. Spinal meningitis in infancy and a fall when she was seventeen left Alice Nourse with frail health and back trouble which caused her to be semi-invalid at periods throughout her life.

Alice Nourse attended public schools in the Chicago area and after graduating from high school she enrolled at Northwestern University. Her father's death and her own poor health led her to withdraw before she had completed a full year. She entered the University of Chicago in 1904, but left without graduating to accept a position with the YWCA.

In 1908, Alice went to China to visit her sister, Mary, who was teaching at a girls' school in Hangchow. Entranced with the beauty and exoticism of China, Alice returned two years later to teach English at the

same school. In Hangchow she met Earle Tisdale Hobart, an executive of the Standard Oil Company of New York. They were married in Tientsin in 1914, and were posted by the company to Manchuria. They spent the early years of their marriage amid the turbulent events that followed the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty in 1912. Spurred by her experience, Alice Hobart began writing about her life in China.

In 1916, Mrs. Hobart submitted an account of her encounter with Manchurian bandits to the *Atlantic Monthly* where it was enthusiastically accepted by editor Ellery Sedgwick. Published as the first in a series called "Leaves From a Manchurian Diary," it was the beginning of Hobart's long career as an author. Her first book, *Pioneering Where the World is Old*, was based on the *Atlantic* series. It was published by Henry Holt in 1917.

Ill health and the demands of housekeeping in remote regions of China kept Hobart from writing for publication for several years thereafter. Her experiences as an oil executive's wife in Changsha provided material for her second book, *By the City of the Long Sand*, published by Macmillan in 1926.

In 1927 the Hobarts were forced to flee their home in Nanking when anti-foreign Nationalist soldiers attacked the city. Their hairbreadth escape over the city wall to waiting American gunboats was the climax of Alice Hobart's next book, *Within the Walls of Nanking* (1928).

After the Nanking incident, during which Earle Hobart broke his ankle, the Hobarts went to Shanghai to recuperate. When it became apparent that the oil company was not going to give Earle a long-awaited position in Shanghai but was going to transfer him to a town which was in the path of approaching Communist troops, he resigned from the company and the Hobarts returned to the United States in the summer of 1927.

Earle's subsequent jobs took the Hobarts to Europe and then back to this country; Alice continued to write wherever they lived. *Pidgin Cargo* (1929), a novel about trade on the Yangtze River, was written while the Hobarts were still in China. The manuscript was rescued from the Nanking debacle by a servant and Hobart finished it during the months of recuperation in Shanghai. *Oil For the Lamps of China* (1933) told the story of an American businessman in China and how his and his wife's lives were consumed by the company for which he worked. Largely autobiographical, it was Hobart's most popular book, and her first to be made into a movie.

After *Oil for the Lamps of China*, Alice Hobart published a new novel every two or three years. Always well received by critics and readers, her novels often were set in China and dealt with the relationships and tensions between East and West. She was not confined by this theme, however, and after she settled in California in the 1940s her topics included twentieth-century Mexico in *The Peacock Sheds His Tail* (1945), and agriculture in California in *The Cup and the Sword* (1942) and *The Cleft Rock* (1948).

By the time she died in 1967, Alice Tisdale Hobart had published more than a dozen major novels, of which almost four million copies were sold.

Content Description

The Alice Tisdale Hobart papers consist of correspondence, manuscripts, galley proofs, source materials, reviews, publicity materials, legal papers, and artwork. A collection of her books is catalogued separately from this collection. Many of the books in the collection are first editions inscribed by the author to her husband or brother.

Correspondence is arranged chronologically and is largely comprised of letters between Alice and Earle Hobart and Hobart's publishers. Manuscripts and galley proofs of her later books are included, as well as manuscripts by Alice Hobart's sister, Mary Nourse, and the screenplay for *This Earth Is Mine*, a movie based on her novel *The Cup and the Sword*. Source materials include letters written by Alice Hobart from China in the 1920s.

Use of the Collection

Alternative Forms Available

A complete collection of books by Alice Tisdale Hobart is located in the University of Oregon Libraries and can be accessed under separate headings in the online catalog.

Restrictions on Use

Property rights reside with Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries. Copyright resides with the creators of the documents or their heirs. All requests for permission to publish collection materials must be submitted to Special Collections & University Archives. The reader must also obtain permission of the copyright holder.

Archival may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal and/or state right to privacy laws and other regulations.

Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in this collection without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g. a cause of action for invasion of privacy may arise if facts concerning an individual's private life are published that would be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person) for which the University of Oregon assumes no responsibility.

If a researcher finds sensitive personal information in a collection, please bring it to the attention of the reading room staff.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Alice Tisdale Hobart Papers, Ax 197, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

Collection is organized into the following series: Correspondence; Manuscripts; Source Materials; Reviews; Publicity; Legal Papers; and Artwork and Publicity.

Custodial History

The collection was a gift of Alice Hobart in 1964.

Processing Note

Collection processed by staff.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Correspondence, 1916-1967

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Box	Folder		
1	1		1916-1929
1	2		1933-1934
1	3		1936-1945
1	4		1946-1949
1	5		March, 1951- August, 1951
1	6		September, 1951-December, 1951
1	7		January, 1952- July, 1952
1	8		August, 1952- December, 1952
1	9		January, 1953- June, 1953
1	10		July, 1953- December, 1953
1	11		January, 1954- September, 1954
1	12		October, 1954- December, 1954

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1	13	January, 1955- March, 1955
1	14	April, 1955- December, 1955
2	1	1956-1957
2	2	January, 1958- June, 1958
2	3	July, 1958- September, 1958
2	4	October, 1958- December, 1958
2	5	January, 1959- March, 1959
2	6	April, 1959-May, 1959
2	7	June, 1959- September, 1959
2	8	October, 1959- December, 1959
2	9	January, 1960- April, 1960
2	10	May, 1960- December, 1960
2	11	1961-1962
2	12	April, 1963- October, 1963
2	13	November, 1963-December, 1963

Container(s)	Description	Dates
2	14	1964/1967

Series II: Manuscripts

Container(s)	Description
	By Alice Tisdale Hobart

The Cleft Rock

Box	Folder
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3	1	Fragments
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The Cup and the Sword

Box	Folder
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3	2	Pages 1-75
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3	3	Pages 76-150
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3	4	Pages 151-225
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3	5	Pages 226-300
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3	6	Pages 301-375
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3	7	Pages 376-450
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3	8	Pages 451-551
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3	9	Page Revisions
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Gusty's Child

Box	Folder
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3	10	Bound Manuscript
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4	1	Page Revisions
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Container(s)		Description
4	2	Page Revisions
4	3	Page Revisions
<i>Fifty Years of Writing</i>		
Box	Folder	
4	4	First Draft
4	5	Second Draft
4	6	Final Draft
4	7	Edited for <i>Call Number</i>
<i>Innocent Dreamers</i>		
Box	Folder	
4	8	First Draft
4	9	Pages 1-50
4	10	Pages 51-100
4	11	Pages 101-150
4	12	Pages 151-200
4	13	Pages 201-250
5	1	Pages 251-300
5	2	Pages 301-350
5	3	Pages 351-384
5	4	Galleys
5	5-6	Proof pages

Container(s)	Description	
<i>The Peacock Sheds His Tail</i>		
Box	Folder	
5	7	Radio Script-Parts 1-2
5	8	Radio Script-Parts 3-5
Box	Folder	
5	9	<i>Son of the Far Border</i>
<i>Venture into Darkness</i>		
Box	Folder	
6	1	Title page-50
6	2	Pages 51-100
6	3	Pages 101-150
6	4	Pages 151-200
6	5	Pages 201-250
6	6	Pages 251-281
6	7	Galleys
<i>Yang and Yin</i>		
Box	Folder	
6	8	Title page-40
6	9	Pages 41-80
6	10	Pages 81-122
By Mary Nourse		

Container(s)		Description
<i>Ferment in the Far East</i>		
Box	Folder	
6	11	Pages 1-50
6	12	Pages 51-100
6	13	Pages 101-150
7	1	Pages 201-250
7	2	Pages 251-300
7	3	Pages 301-331
Box	Folder	
7	4	<i>Wu Yi-Fang, Woman of Old and New China</i>

By Other Writers

Box	Folder	
7	5	Scenario, "Turn to the Sun"
7	6	Screenplay, "This Earth is Mine" - First draft
7	7-8	Screenplay, "This Earth is Mine" - Final draft

Series III: Source Materials

Container(s)		Description
Box	Folder	
7	9-10	<i>Innocent Dreamers</i>
7	11	<i>River Supreme</i>
8	1-2	<i>The Serpent-Wreathed Staff</i>

Container(s)	Description
8 3-5	<i>Within the Walls of Nanking</i>
8 6	Miscellaneous

Series IV: Reviews

Container(s)	Description
Box Folder	
8 7	<i>By the City of the Long Sand</i>
8 8	<i>The Cleft Rock</i>
8 9	<i>Gusty's Child</i>
8 10-11	<i>Innocent Dreamers</i>
9 1	<i>Oil for the Lamps of China</i>
9 2	<i>The Peacock Sheds His Tail</i>
9 3	<i>The Serpent-Wreathed Staff</i>
9 4	<i>Venture Into Darkness</i>
9 5-6	<i>Yang and Yin</i>

Series V: Publicity

Container(s)	Description
Box Folder	
9 7	<i>The Cleft Rock</i>
9 8-10	<i>The Cup and the Sword (The Earth is Mine)</i>
10 1	<i>Gusty's Child</i>
10 2-3	<i>Oil for the Lamps of China</i>

Container(s)	Description
10 4	<i>The Peacock Sheds His Tail</i>
10 5	<i>Pioneering Where the World is Old/River Supreme</i>
10 6-7	<i>The Serpent-Wreathed Staff</i>
10 8	<i>Venture Into Darkness</i>
10 9	<i>Yang and Yin</i>
10 10	General

Series VI: Legal papers

Container(s)	Description
Box	Folder
10 11-12	Contracts
10 13	Wills and Royalties
10 14	Miscellaneous

Series VII: Artwork and Publicity

Container(s)	Description
Box	
10	Artwork and Publicity

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

American literature--20th century
 Authors, American--20th century
 China--Fiction

Personal Names :

Hobart, Alice Tisdale--Archives

Form or Genre Terms :

Manuscripts for publication
Screenplays

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2004



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