

University of Victoria Special Collections

O'Hagan, Howard

SC087

Title

Howard O'Hagan fonds

Dates

1931-1981

Extent

1.1 m of textual records
ca. 100 photographs
1 sound cassette

Biographical Sketch

Howard O'Hagan was born in Lethbridge, Alberta. When he was 18, his family moved to Jasper, Alberta, where his father, Thomas O'Hagan, became the village's first doctor. Howard worked in Jasper for several years as a mountain guide. He attended McGill University in Montreal, studying Political Science (under Stephen Leacock) and then law, graduating with a law degree in 1925. In the early 1930s, O'Hagan studied at Berkeley, where he met and married Margaret Peterson. O'Hagan's first novel "Tay John" was published in 1939. Other works include "The School-Marm Tree", "Wilderness Man", and "The Woman Who Got on at Jasper Station". In 1958, he and his wife moved to Victoria. O'Hagan received an honorary doctorate from McGill University in 1982.

Scope and Content

The fonds consists of personal, business and publishing correspondence (1953-1982), and also five handwritten letters to Arthur William Wallace (1931-1978); typescripts of O'Hagan's unpublished autobiography, proposed novels and unpublished short stories and articles; notes, variant drafts and page proofs of "The School-Marm Tree"; photographs of O'Hagan and other O'Hagan family members and friends; published articles about O'Hagan and his work, programmes of ceremonies, greeting cards, and bibliography of O'Hagan's works; audio tape interview with O'Hagan, conducted by E.J. Hart in Victoria. Also included is a small amount of Margaret Peterson (O'Hagan) material, consisting of a typescript of "My Life with Howard O'Hagan" and manuscript poetry drafts.

Finding Aids

Finding aid available with series and file level control.

Title Source

Title based on the contents of the fonds.

O'HAGAN, HOWARD

INVENTORY

Accessions 82-50

86-13

86-33

University of Victoria Special Collections
July 1991

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Howard O'Hagan was born in Lethbridge, Alberta, on 17 February 1902, the only son of Dr. Thomas O'Hagan and Mary McNabb. When he was eighteen he moved with his parents and sister to Jasper, where his father was the doctor at Jasper Park Lodge. Howard worked in Jasper for several years as a mountain guide. In the mid-1920's he attended McGill University in Montreal, first studying political science under Stephen Leacock and later working toward a law degree. After leaving McGill O'Hagan turned down promising jobs, preferring to travel. He worked as a reporter in Australia and a publicity man for a railroad company in Argentina, and came in contact with a wide variety of people, including native Indians and pioneers. In the early 1930's he attended the University of California at Berkeley and there met Margaret Peterson, "a tall blonde who became my destiny", whom he married a few years later. They had no children.

They lived at Berkeley where Margaret taught art for 22 years, but in the early 1950's she resigned in protest over the McCarthy controversies and never taught at Berkeley again. She and O'Hagan went to New York, where Margaret staged a successful one-person exhibition of her paintings. After a brief sojourn in Central America they moved to Vancouver Island, living for five years at Green Point near the Cowichan River and then moving to Victoria in 1958. In 1963 they went to Sao Paolo, where Margaret had been chosen as one of four Canadians represented at their Biennale; in 1964 they went to Italy where Margaret studied mosaic techniques on a Canada Council grant, and lived at Lingua on the island of Salina for the next 11 years. They returned to Victoria in the mid-1970's.

O'Hagan began writing in the 1930's; his novel, *Tay John*, was published in London in 1939 and remains one of his best-known works. He also published two collections of short stories, *Wilderness Man* (1958) and *The Woman Who Got on at Jasper Station* (1963). O'Hagan corresponded with many fellow writers (including Gary Geddes and George Woodcock) and was admired by his peers, but his work never achieved the wide recognition many people felt it deserved. O'Hagan received an honorary doctorate degree at McGill University in June 1982, and died in Victoria in the autumn of that year. O'Hagan's widow, Margaret Peterson, now lives in Sidney, B.C.

Accession 86-13 Margery Fee and Christopher Petter

Box 1

- 1.1 Correspondence re. collecting and researching the O'Hagan papers, 1985-1986. Correspondents include George Woodcock, Prof. Robert Gish, Gage Educational Publishing Company, the Writers' Union of Canada, the University of California at Berkeley, Glenn Clever and Keith Maillard. Also includes original correspondence from O'Hagan to Clever.
- 1.2 Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies. Correspondence re. O'Hagan interview with E.J. Hart, 1985. Includes copy cassette and tape summary.
- 1.3 Correspondence re. O'Hagan papers, 1988.

Accession 86-33 Published Articles by or about O'Hagan, collected by Pat Fraumeni

Box 1

- 1.1 Gwen Cash, "Howard O'Hagan: Man of the Mountains"; "Statements Disclaimed" by O'Hagan, n.d.
- 1.2 "Except for Young Lovers Breakfasts Must be Eaten Alone", n.d.
- 1.3 "Cruise Party Crashers", n.d.
- 1.4 "The Man Who Stayed Invisible for Thirteen Years ... Gun-an-noot", *Maclean's Magazine*, 5 July 1958.
- 1.5 "Cold Disasters", [Victoria *Colonist?*], 3 January 1960.
- 1.6 "The Long Night", Victoria *Colonist*, ca. 1961.
- 1.7 "The Cougar's a Killer But Should the Species be Condemned?" Victoria *Colonist*, 8 January 1961.
- 1.8 "Dwellers in the Dusk", [Victoria *Colonist?*], 4 June 1961.
- 1.9 "Charting the Wilderness - In Reality, In Man, In Human Relationships", *Globe & Mail*, 4 March 1978, p. 41.

HOWARD O'HAGAN

Accession 1997-164

Prose

-unpublished, except where noted.

1.1	“At the Tabaris” -cts, only last few pages corr.	29 l.	n.d.
1.2	“Cats That Pass By Night” -cts, corr., signed	8 l.	n.d.
1.3	“Cats That Walk By Night” -cts, signed -earlier version of 1.2	6 l.	n.d.
1.4	“Cubs from the Swiftwater” -cts, corr. -published article 1961	18 l.	1961
1.5	“ -cts, corr. -fragment	3 l.	1961
1.6	“A ‘Dead Man’ Speaks” -cts, corr., signed	10 l.	n.d.
1.7	“The Doctor’s Son” -tss, corr., signed	2 l.	n.d.
1.8	“The Editor Wore Shoes” -cts, corr., signed	7 l.	n.d.
1.9	“ -cts, corr., signed	7 l.	n.d.
1.10	“The Forbidden Plateau” -cts, corr., signed -clipping enclosed	8 l.	n.d.
1.11	“The Grizzly” -cts, corr., signed	11 l.	n.d.
1.12	“ cts, corr. -fragment	1 l.	n.d.

Prose (cont.)

1.13	“Grown Men in Burma” -cts, corr. -fragment	14 l.	n.d.
1.14	“The Guide and the Woman” -cts, corr. -several versions, most are fragments	70 l.	n.d.
1.15	“Her Name Was Mary” -cts, corr. -published short story, 1976	19 l.	1976
1.16	“In September.....As Usual” -cts, corr. -fragment	15 l.	n.d.
1.17	“Journey For Maria” -cts, corr.	10 l.	n.d.
1.18	“ -cts -fragment	5 l.	n.d.
1.19	“Kemano” -cts, corr.	15 l.	n.d.
1.20	“ -cts, corr. -three talks about the Alcan project	22 l.	n.d.
1.21	“ -cts, corr. -fragments of several versions	13 l.	n.d.
1.22	“Land Warmed By The Sun” -cts, corr., signed	24 l.	n.d.
1.23	“The Love Story of Mr. Alfred Wimple” -cts, corr., signed (from “The Woman Who Got On At Jasper Station & other stories) -originally published as “The Love Story of Mr. Wimple” in “Berkeley 2” (1948)	22 l.	1963

Prose (cont.)

1.24	“A Man Goes Home Again” -tss, corr., signed	9 l.	n.d.
1.25	“Parks CBC Talk” -cts, corr.	8 l.	n.d.
1.26	“The Pool” [The Promised Land] - cts, corr. -published in <u>“Story”</u> [1939]	11 l.	1939
1.27	“A Stranger” -cts, corr. -fragments of several versions	30 l.	n.d.
1.28	“ -cts, corr. -fragments of several versions	14 l.	n.d.
1.29	“Too Fast For His Own Good” -tss, corr., signed	8 l.	n.d.
1.30	“When The Willows Danced” -cts, corr. -rejection slip included	10 l.	1977
1.31	untitled - begins “Jake Dugald...” -cts, corr.	5 l.	n.d.
1.32	untitled - about Duncan & Mt. Tzouhalem -cts, corr. -fragment	4 l.	n.d.
1.33	“ -cts,corr. -fragment	2 l.	n.d.
1.34	untitled - about Donald Burton Gillis, miner -cts	5 l.	1955
1.35	untitled - about Jasper -cts, corr. -fragment	1 l.	n.d.

Prose (cont.)

- | | | | |
|------|--|-------|------|
| 1.36 | untitled - about a cougar in Victoria
-cts, corr.
-fragments of several versions | 13 l. | 1961 |
| 1.37 | unidentified fragments | 6 l. | n.d. |

Awards & Degrees

- | | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|------|---------|
| 1.38 | from McGill University, Montreal | 4 l. | 1923-24 |
|------|----------------------------------|------|---------|

Photographs

- | | | | |
|------|--|--|-----------|
| 1.39 | Bear cubs on signpost, Mount Robson, B.C. | | |
| 1.40 | 26 photos, 1 negative
-some of O'Hagen, rest from an album, mostly unidentified | | |
| 1.41 | framed photo of O'Hagen & his father? | | ca. 1920? |
| 1.42 | photo album - most unidentified
-includes O'Hagan's Argentine passport - 1932 | | |

Clippings

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| 1.43 | "The Cry of the Owl" by Robert John Williamson
-from "The Daily Colonist", March 1 & 8, 1959 (photocopy) | 2 l. | |
| 1.44 | "a Canadian classic" by C.D. Minni
-review of "The School-Marm Tree" & The Woman Who Got On At Jasper Station & other stories"
-from "The Vancouver Sun", March 17, 1978 | 1 l. | |

Posters

- | | | | |
|------|--|--|--|
| 1.45 | 2 posters to advertise "The School-Marm Tree", "The Woman Who Got On At Jasper Station" from Talonbooks (neither complete) | | |
|------|--|--|--|

Correspondence

- 1.46 a) hls to Howard O'Hagan from Edith Fitzell 1 l.
-n.d.
- b) tls " " George Towill (CNR) 2 l.
-May 29, 1956
- c) tls to Margaret (Peterson) from Marnie (Harper's Bazaar) 2 l
-November 12, 1957
-photocopy of original
-mentions returning "Ursus" story to Howard
- d) tls to Howard O'Hagan from Helen Morrison (Gage) 1 l.
-November 19th, 1961
-returns "Ursus" as unsuitable for "Writing for Young Canada"
program
- e) tls to Margaret Peterson from Karl Siegler (Talon) 1 l.
-27/04/1979
-statement of royalties paid to H.O'H. in 1978
-photocopy also included, plus envelope
- f) typed royalty statement 1987 sent to Margaret Peterson from
Talon (H. O'H.s)
-envelope included, dated 29 II '88

Margaret Peterson Material

- 1.47 "My Life With Howard O'Hagan" 321 l. 1985
-mostly mss drafts, a small amount of tss
- 1.48 mss poetry drafts 79 l. 1990-1991