

Joan Rodker:

A Preliminary Inventory of Her Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator	Rodker, Joan, 1915-2015
Title:	Joan Rodker Papers
Dates:	1921-2000
Extent:	5 boxes (2.1 linear feet)
Abstract:	This collection contains personal correspondence, diaries, dream notebooks, and personal papers, as well as materials relating to her father, John Rodker, and the Rodker family.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-04871
Language:	English
Access	Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition	Purchase, 2000
Processed by	Liz Murray, 2000
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Scope and Contents

This small but important collection of Joan Rodker Papers contains not only her own personal correspondence evolving around her long-standing friendship with Doris Lessing, but also that of her father, publisher and novelist John Rodker. In addition, the collection contains a number of John Rodker's diaries and dream notebooks as well as personal papers. As such it is an important addition to the Ransom Center's existing collections of John Rodker and Doris Lessing.

The collection is arranged in three series: Series I. Joan Rodker Correspondence, 1920s-2000, Series II. Rodker Family Correspondence, and Series III. John Rodker Papers and Notebooks. The files maintain Rodker's labeling scheme.

The personal correspondence in Series I. reflects Joan Rodker's long-standing friendships with Betty Barnes (wife of Joe Barnes who edited Lessing's Golden Notebook at Simon and Schuster), Mary Campbell, Theodore Draper, Puji Haden-Guest, Doris Lessing, Jessica Mitford, Paddy and Peggy O'Connor, Helen Scott, and Antoinette Sainsbury. Interwoven throughout the correspondence is Rodker's connection with Doris Lessing, as the two shared many friends and acquaintances including: James Aldridge, Ted Allen, John Berger, Jenny Diski, Carole Klein (Lessing's unauthorized biographer), Hymie Levy, Murray Sayle, Clancy Sigal, and Lucille Warner.

The business and general literary correspondence includes queries by researchers interested in obtaining information on John Rodker and his literary associations (second wife Mary Butts, Frederick Etchells, Freud and the Imago Publishing Company, Wyndham Lewis, Isaac Rosenberg, and Wallace Stevens) as well as correspondence related to royalties and the disposition of Rodker's estate upon his death in 1955. Some letters are addressed to Marianne Rodker, John Rodker's fourth and last wife. When Marianne died in 1984, Joan Rodker assisted the heirs in dealing with literary inquiries and the organization and sale of her father's papers.

The family correspondence in Series II dates from the early 1920s to the present. Correspondents include John Rodker, his father David, brother Peter Roker, mother-in-law Ludmilla Savitzky (mother of Rodker's fourth wife Marianne), Marianne's daughter Dominique Tiry, his third wife artist Barbara Stanger McKenzie-Smith, Camilla Rodker Bagg (daughter of second wife, author Mary Butts), Joan Rodker, and her mother Sonia Cohen Joslen.

Important business and personal papers are found in Series III along with John Rodker's diaries, beginning in 1919 through 1940. These provide insight into Rodker's publishing ventures and personal life. Also present is a dream notebook (1926-1927) and a book of notes.

Included in this collection is a VHS video tape of Jessica Mitford's "Memorial Celebrations" at the Lyric Theatre in February 1997. The tape was transferred to the Ransom Center film collection.

Series I. Joan Rodker Correspondence, 1920s-2000

Barnes, Betty and daughter Lila	box 1 folder 1
Business correspondence	
Carcenet Press and Tessa Sayle Literary and Dramatic Agency	folder 2
Christie's	folder 3
Rota, Anthony	folder 4
Royalties	folder 5-6
Crozier, Andrew	folder 7
Diski, Jenny [contains Doris Lessing letters]	folder 8
Draper, Theodore	folder 9
General, literary	folder 10-11
General, literary (cont'd)	box 2 folder 1
Haden-Guest, Jean (Puji)	folder 2
Klein, Carole	folder 3
Leclercq, Léna	folder 4
Leftwich, Joseph	folder 5
Lessing, Doris	folder 6
Lessing-related correspondents	folder 7
Lessing, Peter	folder 8
Luke, Peter	folder 9
Mitford, Jessica (Decca)	folder 10
O'Connor, Patrick (Paddy) and Peggy	folder 11
Sainsbury, Antoinette	folder 12

Scott, Helen

box 3 folder 1

Uhlman, Fred

folder 2

Vedrès, Nicole

folder 3

Warner, Lucille

folder 4

Series II. Rodker Family Correspondence

Rodker, Barbara to John Rodker	box 3 folder 5
Rodker, Camilla	
1920s-1930s	folder 6
1956-1998	folder 7
Rodker, Joan at Wensley House, correspondence with parents	folder 8
Rodker, Joan and John Rodker	folder 9
Rodker, John	
and Sonia Joslen	folder 10
and David Rodker	folder 11
Rodker, Marianne with John and Joan Rodker	box 4 folder 1
Roker, Peter	folder 2-3
Savitzsky, Ludmilla	folder 4
Tiry, Dominique	folder 5

Series III. John Rodker Papers and Notebooks

Birth certificate, declaration of name, last passport, and file on his Légion d'Honneur	box 4 folder 6
Obits and correspondence re his death and estate; last passport	folder 7
Business correspondence and related material	folder 8
Diaries	
April 4, 1919-July 26, 19--?	box 5 folder 1
June 28, 1921-Jan. 30, 1927	folder 2
July 18, 1932-June 24, 1936 [includes dreams]	folder 3
June 13, 1940-Sept. 20, 1940?	folder 4
Dreams, May 10, 1926-Feb. 12, 1927, holograph notebook includes "Diary of Analysis," 3/6/19--?	folder 5
Notes, n.d.	folder 6