

# **J. D. (Jerome David) Salinger:**

## **An Inventory of His Collection in the Manuscript Collection at the Harry Ransom Center**

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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Salinger, J. D. (Jerome David), 1919-2010  
**Title:** J. D. (Jerome David) Salinger Collection  
**Dates:** 1940-1982, undated  
**Extent:** 2 document boxes, 1 galley folder (.84 linear feet)  
**Language:** English  
**Access:** Open for research

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### **Administrative Information**

**Acquisition:** Purchases and gift, 1968-2013 (R3852, R4113, R12087, G8737, 2010-04-003-G, 2013-10-17-P)  
**Processed by:** Megan Barnard, 2007; 2014  
**Repository:** The University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center

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## Biographical Sketch

Jerome David Salinger was infamously reclusive, and there are few known facts about his life. He was born on January 1, 1919, to an upper-middle-class family in New York City. His Jewish father, Sol, worked as an importer of ham. His mother, Miriam (born Marie Jillich), was of Scotch-Irish descent. His one sister, Doris, was eight years his senior. As a child, Salinger attended schools near his home in Manhattan. In 1932 he was enrolled in the McBurney School, a private institution that he attended for one year before being dismissed for poor grades. He was then enrolled in Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, Pennsylvania, from which he graduated in 1936. He was social and active at Valley Forge, participating in clubs and school organizations and serving as editor of the school's yearbook. He began writing short stories during his years at Valley Forge, and expressed interest in one day selling his work to Hollywood.

The years immediately following Salinger's graduation are not well documented. He attended a summer session at New York University in 1937. He also lived briefly in Vienna and Poland to improve his German language skills and to learn about the ham importing business, in preparation to join his father in the trade. In the fall of 1938, Salinger enrolled in Ursinus College in Collegetown, Pennsylvania, but he quit school mid-year and returned to New York City. In 1939, he attended Whit Burnett's short-story writing seminar at Columbia University. Salinger's first published story, "The Young Folks," appeared in Burnett's magazine, *Story*, in 1940 when Salinger was just twenty-one years old.

In 1942, Salinger was drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II. He participated in five European campaigns during the war, including the D-Day invasion of Normandy, before being discharged in 1945. While in Europe, he met and married a French doctor named Sylvia. They divorced in 1946.

Salinger continued to write and publish stories during the war and in the two decades following. On December 22, 1945, the first story to feature his most famous character, Holden Caulfield, was published in *Collier's*. Scenes from the story, called "I'm Crazy," were later incorporated into Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. In 1946, Salinger's story "Slight Rebellion off Madison," another precursor to *Catcher*, was published in *The New Yorker*, beginning a long relationship between the author and the magazine. Between 1946 and 1965, thirteen of Salinger's stories were published in *The New Yorker*.

Salinger's early dream to have his work translated to film was realized in 1950 when the Samuel Goldwyn studios released the motion picture *My Foolish Heart*, based on Salinger's story "Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut." Despite Salinger's interest in Hollywood, he was disappointed by the studio's treatment of the story and refused to sell screen or television rights for any of his other works.

Salinger's most celebrated work, his novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, was published in 1951 and quickly gained wide popular and critical interest. The novel, which explores Holden Caulfield's difficulty coming to terms with the "phoniness" of the adult world, has been cherished by generations of adolescents and celebrated critically as one of the great postwar coming-of-age stories. The attention Salinger received from journalists and

fans following the novel's success, however, soon became unwanted and overwhelming to the author, prompting him to move from Westport, Connecticut, to a secluded home off a dirt road in the quiet town of Cornish, New Hampshire.

Salinger followed *Catcher* with *Nine Stories* in 1953, collecting in one volume the early short stories he wished to preserve. From 1955 forward, the remainder of Salinger's published works related to the fictional Glass family, whose central figure, Seymour, was first introduced in 1948 in "A Perfect Day for Bananafish," which later became the opening of *Nine Stories*. The final stories of the Glass saga were published first in *The New Yorker* -- "Franny" and "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters" in 1955, "Zooney" in 1957, and "Seymour: An Introduction" in 1959. These stories were later published in pairs in two books: *Franny and Zooney* in 1961 and *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters; and Seymour: An Introduction* in 1963. The final segment of the Glass story and the last of Salinger's published works, "Hapworth 16, 1924," appeared in *The New Yorker* on June 19, 1965.

Few other details are known about Salinger's life. In 1955, he married Claire Douglas, a London-born, Radcliffe graduate who had settled in Cornish. They had a daughter, Margaret Ann, in 1955, and a son, Matthew, in 1960 before they divorced in 1967. Although Salinger reportedly continued to write, he published no new material. Salinger died on January 27, 2010.

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## Sources

French, Warren.

- *J. D. Salinger*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1963.
- *J. D. Salinger, Revisited*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988.

Grunwald, Anatole, ed. *Salinger; A Critical and Personal Portrait*. New York: Harper, 1962.

Hamilton, Ian. *In Search of J. D. Salinger*. New York: Random House, 1988.

Lundquist, James. *J. D. Salinger*. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1979.

Miller, James E., Jr. *J. D. Salinger*. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1965.

Starosciak, Kenneth. *J. D. Salinger: A Thirty Year Bibliography*. St. Paul, Minnesota: The Croixside Press, 1971.

Sublette, Jack R. *J. D. Salinger: An Annotated Bibliography, 1938–1981*. New York: Garland, 1984.

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## Scope and Contents

The J. D. Salinger Collection, circa 1940-1982, consists largely of manuscripts, galleys, and page proofs of works by Salinger (both published and unpublished), and correspondence. Portions of this collection were previously accessible through a card catalog but have been re-cataloged as part of a retrospective conversion project. The collection is arranged in two series: Works, circa 1941-1963 (1 box) and Correspondence, 1940-1982 (1 box).

The Works series includes manuscripts of some of Salinger's short stories, many of which are corrected by hand, and proofs of his books. Manuscript fragments are available for the short story "I'm Crazy," Salinger's earliest published work about Holden Caulfield. Revised versions of scenes from this story later appeared in Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. The collection also includes manuscripts of two of Salinger's unpublished stories. The first, titled Birthday Boy, is about a young man in the hospital for depression who is visited by his girlfriend on his birthday. The other unpublished story is untitled, though in letters Salinger wrote to Elizabeth Murray (also in the collection) he refers to the story both as "Mrs. Hincer" and "Paula." Salinger sold the story to *Stag* magazine in 1941 or 1942, but it remained unpublished for unknown reasons. A full manuscript is also available for the short story "Last Day of the Last Furlough."

The collection also includes page proofs of *The Catcher in the Rye* and bound galley proofs of *Franny and Zooey* and *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters; and Seymour: An Introduction*. A hand-corrected fragment of the page proofs of *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters; and Seymour: An Introduction* is also available, along with a promotional publisher's dummy of the book.

Much of the Correspondence series consists of letters written by Salinger to his long-time friends Elizabeth Murray and Ruth Maier. This correspondence spans from 1940 to 1982 and covers such topics as Salinger's writing and the publication of his works, the break-up of his first marriage, their children, and his relationship with Oona O'Neill, daughter of Eugene O'Neill and the fourth wife of Charlie Chaplin. This series also includes letters to and from Cris Maier, to Elizabeth Murray's daughter, Gloria Murray, and a small batch of correspondence between Salinger and New York bookseller Andreas Brown of Gotham Book Mart.

Most of this collection, including the manuscripts of Birthday Boy, "I'm Crazy," "Last Day of the Last Furlough," the untitled story, and the quotations about Nazi Germany, as well as the correspondence to Elizabeth and Gloria Murray, was acquired in 1968 from bookseller Lew David Feldman. Separate, smaller acquisitions of the page proofs, galleys, and additional correspondence were made in 1973, 1990, 1991, 2010, and 2013.

This collection offers material for critical, biographical, and textual studies of Salinger and his works. Especially important and rare are the manuscripts of previously unknown and unpublished stories and the extensive personal correspondence to Elizabeth Murray.

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## Related Material

Other collections at the Ransom Center containing materials related to J. D. Salinger include:

- John Lehmann Collection: Includes typed carbon letter from Lehmann to Salinger (dated 16 October 1953) and a typed letter signed to Lehmann from Salinger (dated 29 October 1953).
- Harpers Collection: Includes carbon copy letter to Salinger (dated 5 January 1954) and two carbon copy letters to Salinger (dated 20 and 27 July 1953) with a handwritten letter signed from Salinger to Harpers.

The Ransom Center also holds a large selection of books by and about J. D. Salinger.

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## **Index Terms**

### **Subjects**

American literature--20th century.

Authors, American--20th century.

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**Series I. Works, circa 1941-1963, undated**

Birthday Boy, typescript with handwritten editorial corrections and notes, 9pp, undated	<b>Box 1 Folder 1</b>
<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> (novel, 1951), uncorrected advance page proofs, 279pp, 17 May 1951	<b>Folder 2</b>
<i>Franny and Zooey</i> (stories, 1961), bound galley proof, 118pp, August 1961	<b>Folder 3</b>
"I'm Crazy" (short story, <i>Collier's</i> , 22 December 1945), incomplete typescript fragments with handwritten emendations, 8pp, undated	<b>Folder 4</b>
"Last Day of the Last Furlough" (short story, <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> , 15 July 1944), carbon typescript, 21pp, undated	<b>Folder 5</b>
<i>Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters; and Seymour: An Introduction</i> (stories, 1963)	
Three pages of text on single proof sheet with handwritten correction, 30 October 1962, with two letters from Salinger to John E. Woodman, Jr. (Little, Brown and Company) (*removed to galley files)	<b>Folder *</b>
Bound galley proofs, 146pp, publication date 28 January 1963	<b>Folder 6</b>
Promotional dummy, undated	<b>Folder 7</b>
Untitled story [referred to as "Mrs. Hinchel" or "Paula" by Salinger in letters to Elizabeth Murray], incomplete typescript fragments with handwritten emendations, 10pp, circa 1941	<b>Folder 8</b>
Quotations about Nazi Germany, typescript, 1p, undated	<b>Folder 9</b>

Salinger, J. D. (Jerome David), 1919-2010

**Series II. Correspondence, 1940-1982**

Brown, Andreas (Gotham Book Mart), 1973-1974

**Box 2**  
**Folder 1**

Dorrill, Becky, 1975

**Folder 4**

Maier, Cris, 1977-1978; Maier, Ruth, 1941-1982

**Folder 5**

Murray, Elizabeth, 1940-1963

**Folder 2**

Murray, Gloria, 1962

**Folder 3**

## **Index of Correspondents**

- Brown, Andreas (Gotham Book Mart) --2.1 (4 from Salinger; 4 to Salinger)
- Dorrill, Becky --2.4 (1 from Salinger)
- Maier, Cris --2.5 (1 to Salinger, 5 from Salinger)
- Maier, Ruth --2.5 (10 to Salinger, 16 from Salinger)
- Murray, Elizabeth (fl.1940-1963)--2.2 (38 from Salinger)
- Murray, Gloria (fl.1962)--2.3 (1 from Salinger)
- Woodman, John E., Jr. (Little, Brown and Company) --Salinger galley file (2 from Salinger)