

Ruth Ainsworth Collection:

An Inventory of Her Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Ainsworth, Ruth
Title:	Ruth Ainsworth Collection
Dates:	circa late 1930s-1985, undated
Extent:	7 document boxes (2.94 linear feet)
Abstract:	The collection includes manuscript material documenting Ainsworth's career as a children's literature writer from the 1930s to the late 1980s. Items include typescripts, handwritten drafts, correspondence, proofs, clippings, notes, and an award (Dutch).
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-00041
Language:	English; one document in Dutch
Access:	Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials.
Use Policies:	Ransom Center collections may contain material with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in the collections without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g., a cause of action under common law 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 Ransom Center and The University of Texas at Austin assume no responsibility.
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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation Ruth Ainsworth Collection (Manuscript Collection MS-00041).
Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

Acquisition: Purchase, 1985 (R 2283), and gift, 1988 (G 4088)

Processed by: Irene Lule, 2018>

Repository: [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

Biographical Sketch

Ruth Gallard Ainsworth Gilbert was born in Manchester, England, on October 16, 1908. After the death of her father in 1909, Ainsworth and her family moved to Felixstowe, Suffolk. She later moved to Leicester, where she worked as a nursemaid, teacher, and a junior school mistress. She married Frank Gilbert on March 29, 1935, in Leicester and had three sons. Throughout her career, Ainsworth used her maiden name professionally. During World War II, the family left London for Wales. The Gilberts later moved to Harpenden before settling in Corbridge, Northumberland, where Ainsworth remained for the rest of her life.

Ainsworth's first publication came with *Windfalls* (1928), which was focused on her poetry. She began her career as a writer of children's literature with the publication of her stories in *The Kiddies' Magazine* in the 1930s. Over the course of over 50 years, Ruth published a wealth of material geared towards children. Her works included both original stories and re-telling of classic tales. Ainsworth also collaborated with Ronald Ridout for a series of educational books. She also contributed numerous scripts to British Broadcasting Corporation programs, *Listen with Mother*, and contributed material to several anthologies. Along with children's literature, Ainsworth also published *The Evening Listens* (1953), a book of poetry geared towards adults.

Ruth Ainsworth Gilbert died on May 16, 1984, in Corbridge, Northumberland.

Sources:

"Ruth (Gallard) Ainsworth." *Contemporary Authors Online*, <http://galenet.galegroup.com> (accessed July 2018).

"Life with Ruth Ainsworth." *Ruth Ainsworth*, <http://www.ruthainsworth.co.uk/bio.html> (accessed July 2018).

Scope and Contents

The collection includes manuscript materials documenting Ainsworth's career as a children's literature writer from the late 1930s to the late 1980s. Items include typescripts, handwritten drafts, correspondence, proofs, clippings, and one award (Dutch). It is arranged into two series: A. Works, circa 1930-1980s, undated and B. Personal and Career Related, 1975-1984, undated. The Works series is further divided into two subseries: A. Manuscripts and B. Book Withdrawals.

The material in the collection was arranged into parcel envelopes labeled by Frank Gilbert, Ruth Ainsworth's husband, using the English alphabet. Each envelope contained detailed notes providing information and context about Ainsworth's work. Also included in the parcels were books that were separated and transferred to the Ransom Center library and form the Ruth Ainsworth Book Collection. A concise order could not be determined from Gilbert's original arrangement, but as the notes provide information about the material in the specific parcels, the arrangement was maintained. For parcels that contained only books, Gilbert's notes and the envelopes remain with this material. The dates of materials were taken from the notes as a vast majority of the material is undated. Excluding one note, all of the notes are also undated.

Subseries A. Manuscripts contains Ainsworth's drafts, notes, and correspondence. A bulk of the materials are typescripts and handwritten drafts of Ainsworth's work. Much of the handwritten drafts are in notebooks, notepads, and a couple of planners. There is some correspondence with publishers, scripts for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), a few illustration proofs, and a very small number of clippings. In addition to providing notes and arranging the collection, Gilbert also annotated some of the material in pen (typically, red) and pencil. He also transcribed or copied some of Ainsworth's material.

Folders with Gilbert's notes and envelopes were arranged in Subseries B. Book Withdrawals.

Series II. Personal and Career Related contains biographical material and an award.

The condition of the collection is fair with some minor wear and discoloration. A number of the notebooks and notepads are difficult to open or the pages have loosened from the binding.

Related Material

The Harry Ransom Center also has the Ruth Ainsworth Book Collection, which includes over 150 cataloged titles in English, French, German, Swedish, Dutch, and Norwegian.

Separated Material

Books were transferred to the Ruth Ainsworth Book Collection. Any corresponding notes and envelopes were left with the collection.

Index Terms

People

Ainsworth, Ruth.

Subjects

Authors--Britis--20th century.

Children's literature.

Poetry.

Document Types

Correspondence.

Drafts (documents).

Notebooks.

Notes (documents).

Proofs.

Typescripts.

Series I. Works, circa 1930s-circa 1980s, undated

Subseries A. Manuscripts, circa 1930s-circa 1980s, undated

'Kiddies Magazine Stories.' (Christmas Day). Note, correspondence, and typescripts with revisions, 1958, undated	Container 1.1
Poetic Scribbles, Look About You, All Different. Notes, notebook with poems and handwritten drafts of Look About You, and photocopies of poems in All Different, undated	Container 1.2
Evening Listens and Adult Poetry. Notes, handwritten draft with revisions, typescript with revisions, poem titled 'A Carol,' correspondence related to a poetry contest, clippings related to the poetry contest and Ainsworth, untitled handwritten poem, and flyers of the poetry contest, 1949-1953, undated	Container 1.3
'Unpublished Additional Adult Poems.' Typescripts, handwritten drafts, typescripts with revisions, and handwritten drafts with revision, 1943-1951, 1975, undated	Container 1.4
The Evening Listens. Note, typescripts and typescripts with revisions, undated	Container 1.5
'The Charles Stories.' Notes, clipping about the closing of Listen With Your Mother, and partial correspondence from Thames Televisions, 1977, 1982, undated	Container 1.6
'Charles Stories (1 of 2).' Notes, typescripts with revisions of Charles stories, and correspondence, 1953, 1978, undated	Container 1.7
'Charles Stories (2 of 2).' Typescripts with revisions and correspondence, 1978, undated	Container 1.8
'Puppet Plays.' Notes and typescripts with revisions, circa 1955, undated	Container 1.9
'Plays.' Notes and typescripts with revisions, circa 1953-circa 1960s, undated	Container 1.10
'Ruffy Tufty Makes a House.' Notes and handwritten draft with revisions in a planner, 1964, undated	Container 1.11
'Lucky Dip and Another Dip.' Notes, and handwritten draft with revisions and typescript of a poem titled 'A Writer (1978) to a Child (2078),' circa 1978, undated	Container 1.12
'Snow Bear and other stories.' Notes, order forms for 'A.B. Sackett – A Memoir,' and notebook, undated	Container 1.13

'Jack Frost, Jenny and Penny, and Far Away Children et al.' Note and notebooks, circa 1956-1961, undated	Container 2.1
Miscellaneous Stories and Shellover. Notes, notebook, loose handwritten drafts with revisions, and typescripts with revisions, circa 1945-circa 1950, undated	Container 2.2
'The Phantom Books by Deutsch.' Note, correspondence, photocopies, 1976-1978, undated	Container 2.3
'The Phantom Roundabout.' Note and notebooks, undated	Container 2.4
'MSS of The Phantom Cyclist and other material.' Note, notebook, and handwritten drafts with revisions, circa 1958-1966, undated	Container 2.5
'Ghost Stories.' Note, handwritten drafts with revisions, research notes for ghost stories, clippings, circa 1970s, undated	Container 2.6
Talking Room. Typescript, 1977	Container 2.7
'Mysterious Baba.' Note, notebook, typescript with revisions, correspondence, and illustration proofs, 1979, undated	Container 2.8
'Roly and the Railway Mouse.' Note and typescript with revisions, undated	Container 3.1
'Horse on Wheels.' Note and notebook, undated	Container 3.2
The Mud Boy. Note and notebook, undated	Container 3.3
'Car Who Wouldn't Go To Sleep and The Bedtime Book.' Notes and typescripts with revisions, undated	Container 3.4
Five Fairy Tales. Typescript with revisions, circa 1979	Container 3.5
'Fairy Tale Sequels.' Note, handwritten drafts with revisions and typescripts with revisions, circa 1982-circa 1983, undated	Container 3.6
'Mermaids Tales MSS.' Note, notebooks, typescript with revisions, and a book proof, 1980, undated	Container 3.7
The Noah's Ark and The Little Yellow Taxi and His Friends, and Other Stories. Notes, notebook, a handwritten draft with revisions, and typescripts with revisions, circa 1969-circa 1982, undated	Container 3.8
'The Fox and Hound (1980).' Note, notebook, correspondence, typescript with revisions, and a book proof, circa 1980-1981, undated	Container 3.9

Fox's Hole and Dodo's Day. Note, notebooks, notepad, and typescript with revisions, undated	Container 3.10
Magazines and Anthologies. Notes, compliments card from Methuen Children's Books, and correspondence, 1975-1979, undated	Container 4.1
Snow House, White Haired Children, A Strange Christmas, The Invisible Rope. Notes, handwritten drafts with revisions in notepad, notebook, and a notebook, circa 1977-circa 1978, undated	Container 4.2
'Stories and Rhymes.' Note, typescript with revisions, and a script, 1959, undated	Container 4.3
'Minnow Stories.' Notes and notebooks, undated	Container 4.4
'The Key (and Spa Garden).' Note and notebooks, circa 1980, undated	Container 4.5
Broadcast Adaptations of Classic Stories and Original Essay of Eyes. Notes, handwritten draft, typescripts with revisions, and correspondence, circa 1950-1962, undated	Container 4.6
'B.B.C.'B.B.C. Note, pamphlet, and a book titled 'The Ugsome Thing,' 1977, undated	Container 4.7
'Boy Who Was Used To Children.' Note and typescript with revisions, circa 1959, undated	Container 4.8
'The Box in the Attic.' Note, notebook, correspondence, and typescript with revisions, 1978-1982, undated	Container 4.9
'Sexism and Racism in Children's Books.' Note and photocopies of articles (1980-1981), undated	Container 4.10
'Unpublished typescripts, Some MSS, MSS of Adult Poem.' Notes, notebook, handwritten drafts with revisions, typescripts with revisions, circa 1958-circa 1980, undated	Container 4.11
Miscellaneous Typescripts and Nurse World (1 of 5). Notes, notebooks, handwritten drafts with revisions, typescripts with revisions, correspondence, circa 1945-circa 1955, undated	Container 5.1
Look Ahead Readers, Tim and I Stories, and Other Stories (2 of 5). Notes, typescripts, typescripts with revisions, and a typescript of a poem titled 'Wild Strawberries,' circa 1959-circa 1961, undated	Container 5.2
'MSS Miscellanea (3 of 5).' Note and notebook, undated	Container 5.3

'Miscellanea (Early Stories, Mostly Unpublished or Unfinished) (4 of 5).' Notes, notebook, notepad, handwritten drafts with revisions, and a typescript, circa 1949-circa 1965, undated	Container 5.4
'Miscellaneous MSS and Typescripts, Mainly Unpublished (5 of 5).' Note, handwritten drafts and typescripts with revisions, undated	Container 5.5
'MSS of Brightness Falls (1 of 2).' Note and handwritten draft of Brightness Falls in four notepads, circa 1935, undated	Container 5.6
'MSS of Brightness Falls (2 of 2).' Note and handwritten draft of Brightness Falls in four notepads, circa 1935, undated	Container 5.7
Note and typescript with revisions of Brightness Falls, circa 1935, undated	Container 6.1
'Little Yellow Taxi.' Note, correspondence, and typescripts with revisions, 1973, undated	Container 6.2
'The Bear Who Liked Hugging People.' Note, typescripts with revisions, correspondence, and illustrations proofs, circa 1973, undated	Container 6.3
'Three Bags Full (1 of 2).' Illustrations for Three Bags Full and correspondence, 1975, undated	Container 6.4
'Three Bags Full (2 of 2).' Note, correspondence, music sheets, and typescripts with revisions, 1973-1975, undated	Container 6.5
'Up The Airy Mountain.' Note and typescripts with revisions, undated	Container 6.6
'Phantom Roundabout.' Note and typescripts with revisions, undated	Container 6.7
'Bancroft/Purnell Fairy Tales.' Note and typescripts with revisions, undated	Container 6.8
'Baron Bluff.' Note, correspondence, and typescripts with revisions, 1978, undated	Container 6.9
Wake Me Up At Seven (or Twice Two), Hinx Minx, The Top of the Tree, and Pussy Willow. Note and typescript with revisions, circa late 1950s, circa 1977, undated	Container 6.10
'BBC Drama Stories and Ruth Ainsworth Bedtime Book.' Notes, correspondence, scripts with revisions, and typescripts with revisions, 1974, undated	Container 6.11
Laughter in the Tress and Miscellaneous Children's Poems. Notes and typescripts with revisions, circa 1963, undated	Container 7.1

'Additional Adult Poems.' Note, handwritten drafts and typescripts with revisions of poems, and original folder titled 'Poems,' circa 1946, undated	Container 7.2
'Poems to Music.' Note, typescript with revisions, and sheet music, circa 1946, undated	Container 7.3
'Additional Prose Stories for Children (1 of 2).' Typescripts with revisions, circa 1950s-circa 1978, undated	Container 7.4
'Additional Prose Stories for Children (2 of 2).' Note and typescripts with revisions, circa 1950s-circa 1978, undated	Container 7.5
'Look About You Books.' Note, correspondence, and typescripts with revisions, circa 1965, undated	Container 7.6
Subseries B. Book Withdrawals, 1969, 1983, undated	Container 7.7

Series II. Personal and Career Related, 1951, 1973, 1985, undated

General, biographical notes, and personal details. Notes, memorial program for Ruth Ainsworth, biographical note about Ainsworth written by Gilbert, correspondence, biographical note written by Ainsworth, 1951, 1985, undated

Container
7.8

'The Dutch Silver Slate-Pencil Award Certificate 1973.' Certificate, 1973

Container
7.9

Index of Correspondents

- Amos, Janice (Purnell and Sons)--3.9
- André Deutsch Children's Books--1.1, 2.3, 2.8, 4.1, 4.9, 5.1
- Arts Council of Great Britain--1.3
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)--1.7, 4.6, 6.2, 7.2
- Chatto and Windus--6.9
- Davies, Rosemary (Heinemann)--6.3, 6.4, 6.5
- Follett Publishing Company--2.3
- Green, Sheila G. (on behalf of Jean Sutcliffe, BBC)--1.7
- Heinemann--6.3, 6.4, 6.5
- Hobson, Wendy (Purnell and Sons)--1.8
- McKellar, Shona--4.1
- Methuen Children's Books Ltd.--4.1
- Owen, Caroline (Andre Deutsch)--2.3, 4.1
- Pearce, Philippa (BBC)--4.6
- Purnell and Sons--3.9, 1.8
- Royds, Pamela (Andre Deutsch)--2.8, 4.9
- W.H. Smith and Son--7.10
- Whitehead, Mary (Heinemann)--1.1, 5.1
- Worsley, Jenyth (BBC)--1.7, 6.2, 7.2
- The Writers Directory--7.10
- Unidentified (Thames Television)--1.6
- _____, Jones--7.8
- _____, Thomas--6.8