

# Robert Spradlin:

## An Inventory of His Collection of Charles Lamb Research Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

---

### Descriptive Summary

- Creator:** Spradlin, Robert, 1925-1976
- Title:** Robert Spradlin Collection of Charles Lamb Research Papers
- Dates:** 1936-1977 (bulk 1971-1977)
- Extent:** 3 document boxes, 2 note card boxes (2.1 linear feet)
- Abstract:** Correspondence, bulletins, note cards, copies of text and catalog cards, and handwritten and typed notes, document Robert Spradlin's research for a never-completed bibliography on the English poet and essayist, Charles Lamb.
- Call Number:** Manuscript Collection MS-02367
- Language:** English
- 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.
- Restrictions on Use:** Authorization for publication is given on behalf of the University of Texas as the owner of the collection and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder which must be obtained by the researcher. For more information please see the Ransom Center's Open Access and Use Policies.

**Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation:** Robert Spradlin Collection of Charles Lamb Research Papers (Manuscript Collection MS-02367). Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

**Acquisition:** Gift, 1978 (78-07-012-G (G 8))

**Processed by:** Sheri Miklaski, Amy Nolan, and Betsy Young, 2008

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

---

## Biographical Sketch

Robert Spradlin was born on May 22, 1925. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Houston in 1962, a Master of Education from Sam Houston State Teaching College in 1968, and a Master of Library and Information Science from the University of Texas at Austin in 1973. In 1970, Spradlin began work on a bibliography of the works of English poet and essayist Charles Lamb.

Spradlin died in August of 1976, leaving his book unfinished. His research materials were donated to the Ransom Center in 1978 by Warner Barnes, an English professor at the University of Texas and colleague of Spradlin's.

Charles Lamb was born on February 10, 1775 in London. In 1792, Lamb became a clerk for the East India Company and continued in that position for 33 years. In 1796, Lamb's sister Mary, who struggled throughout her life with mental illness, stabbed their mother to death. The courts declared her temporarily insane and placed Mary in the custody of Charles. The two were close companions and lived together from 1799 until Charles's death.

Charles Lamb began his literary career in 1796 with the help of his good friend and fellow essayist, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Coleridge published four of Lamb's sonnets in his own first volume, *Poems on Various Subjects* (1796). This launched a prolific, though not always successful, career writing essays, plays, and poetry. Some of Lamb's more enduring works were coauthored with Mary, including a very popular collection for children titled *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807). The duo also wrote *Mrs. Leicester's School* (1809) and *Poetry for Children* (1809).

In 1820, Lamb began writing essays under the pseudonym 'Elia' for *London Magazine*. He is best remembered for these essays, published collectively as *Elia* (1823) and *The Last Essays of Elia* (1833). In 1824, Lamb retired from the East India Company due to weakening health. He and his sister moved away from London, living in several areas before eventually settling in Edmonton. He died on December 27, 1834.

---

## Sources:

"Charles Lamb," *Dictionary of Literary Biography Online*, <http://galenet.galegroup.com> (accessed 5 December 2008).

---

## Scope and Contents

Correspondence, bulletins, note cards, copies of text and catalog cards, and handwritten and typed notes, document Robert Spradlin's research for a never-completed bibliography on the English poet and essayist, Charles Lamb. The papers date from 1936 to 1977 and are arranged into six series. I. Manuscript, 1970-1971, undated; II. Correspondence, 1970-1972; III. Bibliographic Material, undated; IV. Charles Lamb Society, 1936-1977, undated; V. Book Front Co., undated; and VI. British History and Literature, undated.

The majority of the material is listed using Spradlin's original folder titles. Dates on the folder labels reflect Spradlin's original subject titles, not the actual dates of the materials within the folders.

The Manuscript series contains preface material, rough drafts, and a small amount of correspondence related to the approval of Spradlin's bibliography work by the University of Texas Libraries. Also present is a personal note to Warner Barnes and a response from Jonathan Cape Limited about *The Book of Ranks*.

The Correspondence series contains five letters about Spradlin's research on Lamb. Of note is the charming exchange between Spradlin and Florence Reeves of the Charles Lamb Society.

Series III. Bibliographic Material is the largest series and is divided into two subseries: A. Lamb and Contemporaries and B. Black Pride. The Lamb and Contemporaries subseries is further divided into two parts, Notes and Copies of Text. The material contained in Notes includes general collation guidelines, specific collation regarding works, note cards with handwritten research notes, and copies of catalog cards. Materials contained in Copies of Text include complete and partial copies of works by or about Charles and Mary Lamb as well as their literary contemporaries. The Black Pride subseries, while wholly different in subject matter, reflects Spradlin's wide-range of research interests.

The Charles Lamb Society series contains bulletins, supplements, annual reports, financial statements, and handwritten notes. The Society proved to be a valuable source of information for Spradlin as indicated by the letters in the Correspondence series.

The Book Front Company series contains ledgers and handwritten notes. There is little information regarding how this material relates to Spradlin or his research.

The British History and Literature series contains material from a history class at the University of Texas and a few items of interest including copies of maps of mail coach routes and post roads in England.

---

## Related Material

Other collections at the Ransom Center containing Charles Lamb materials include the Charles Lamb Papers, the Harry Bache Smith Papers, and the Ransom Center Prints Collection.

Other institutions with significant collections of Charles Lamb materials include the Henry E. Huntington Library; the New York Public Library; the Pierpont Morgan Library; the British Library; libraries at Harvard University, Yale University, Princeton University, and the University of Kentucky; and the Charles Lamb Society Library housed in the Guildhall Library, London.

---

## **Separated Material**

Thirty-two books on bibliography and British literature arrived at the Ransom Center with the Spradlin materials. These books were transferred to the Ransom Center Book Collection and are cataloged separately.

---

**Series I. Manuscript, 1970-1971, undated**

Articles, 1971	<b>Container 1.1</b>
Handwritten Draft, undated	<b>Container 1.2</b>
Preface and General, 1970	<b>Container 1.3</b>
Preface for Dr. Barnes, undated	<b>Container 1.4</b>

**Series II. Correspondence, 1970-1972**

Incoming and outgoing letters, 1970-1972

**Container 1.5**

**Series III. Bibliographic Material, undated**

## Subseries A. Lamb and Contemporaries

## Notes:

'Adventures of Ulysses, 1808'	<b>Container 1.6</b>
'Adventures of Ulysses New ed., 1819'	<b>Container 1.7</b>
'Adventures of Ulysses Hinman'	<b>Container 1.8</b>
'Album Verses article, 1830'	<b>Container 1.9</b>
'Album Verses, 1833'	<b>Container 1.10</b>
'Annual Anthology, 1799'	<b>Container 1.11</b>
'Antonio, 1800'	<b>Container 1.12</b>
'B. M. Catalog'	<b>Container 1.13</b>
'Beauty and the Beast, 1811'	<b>Container 1.14</b>
'Bibliography Gen'	<b>Container 1.15</b>
Binders	<b>Container 1.16-19</b>
Blake Checklist	<b>Container 1.20</b>
'Blake Circle'	<b>Container 1.21</b>
'Blank Verse, 1798	<b>Container 1.22</b>
'Book of Ranks, 1805'	<b>Container 1.23</b>
Catalog card copies	<b>Container 1.24</b>
Catalog cards	<b>Container 5</b>
'The Champion'	<b>Container 1.25</b>
'Contributions'	<b>Container 1.26-27</b>
'Contributions Reprints'	<b>Container 2.1</b>
'Contributions to Proof read'	<b>Container 2.2</b>



'Debtor and Creditor, 1814'	<b>Container 2.3</b>
'Elia, 1823'	<b>Container 2.4</b>
'Elia 2nd series (Philadelphia), 1828'	<b>Container 2.5</b>
'English Literature Bibliography'	<b>Container 2.6</b>
'Falstaff's Letters, 1796'	<b>Container 2.7</b>
'Faulkener,1807'	<b>Container 2.8</b>
'First Book of Poetry, 1811'	<b>Container 2.9</b>
'General Bibliography Lamb'	<b>Container 2.10</b>
'Get'	<b>Container 2.11</b>
'Hinman Collations'	<b>Container 2.12</b>
'John Woodvil, 1800'	<b>Container 2.13</b>
'Keepsake, 182_'	<b>Container 2.14</b>
'Last Essays of Elia, 1833'	<b>Container 2.15</b>
'Laughing Philosopher, 1825'	<b>Container 2.16</b>
'Letter Typescript'	<b>Container 2.17</b>
'London Articles'	<b>Container 2.18</b>
'Mr. H.,1813'	<b>Container 2.19</b>
'Mrs. Leicester's School, 1809'	<b>Container 2.20</b>
Note card removals	<b>Container 2.21</b>
Note cards	<b>Container 4</b>
'Notes, Questions, Assorted Material'	<b>Container 2.22</b>
'Piccolomini, 1800'	<b>Container 2.23</b>
'Poems by STC, 1797'	<b>Container 2.24</b>
'Poems on Various Subject, 1796'	<b>Container 2.25</b>
'Pop. Fallacies - see Dr. Barnes about'	<b>Container 2.26</b>

'Prince Dorus, 1811'	<b>Container 2.27</b>
'Reflector'	<b>Container 2.28-29</b>
'Remorse, 1813'	<b>Container 2.30</b>
'Rosamund Gray, 1798'	<b>Container 2.31</b>
'Satan in Search of a Wife, 1831'	<b>Container 2.32</b>
'Selective Bibliography of John Keats'	<b>Container 2.33</b>
'Short Bibliography of the Regency Period'	<b>Container 2.34</b>
'Specimens, 1808'	<b>Container 2.35</b>
'Stark Books Lamb file'	<b>Container 2.36</b>
'Stark Mss. Lamb file'	<b>Container 2.37</b>
'Tales from Shakespeare, 1807'	<b>Container 2.38-39</b>
'Tales from S 2nd ed., 1809'	<b>Container 2.40</b>
'Time's a Tell-Tale, 1807'	<b>Container 2.41</b>
'Tolerances in Bibliographical Description'	<b>Container 2.42</b>
'Works, 1818'	<b>Container 2.43</b>
Copies of Text:	
'Bibliography of Charles and Mary Lamb, 1903'	<b>Container 2.44</b>
'Bibliography of the Writings of C&M Lamb, 1908'	<b>Container 2.45</b>
'Charles Lamb and The Laughing Philosopher'	<b>Container 2.46</b>
'Lucas's Letters'	<b>Container 2.47</b>
'A New Review'	<b>Container 3.1</b>
'Notes on Letters'	<b>Container 3.2</b>
'Pauline by Robert Browning'	<b>Container 3.3</b>
'A Propos de William Blake'	<b>Container 3.4</b>

Various Works

**Container 3.5**

Subseries B. Black Pride

Catalog cards

**Container 5**

**Series IV. Charles Lamb Society, 1936-1977, undated**

Annual Report and Financial Statement, 1970-1972

**Container 3.6**

Bulletins and Supplements, 1936-1977

**Container 3.7-11**

Notes and research materials, undated

**Container 3.12**

**Series V. Book Front Co., undated**

Ledger sheets and notes, undated

**Container 3.13**

**Series VI. British History and Literature, undated**

History 350K, syllabus and printed material, undated

**Container 3.15**

Notes and printed material, undated

**Container 3.14**