

HUGHES, OLWYN.

Olwyn Hughes papers, 1951-1997

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Hughes, Olwyn.
Title: Olwyn Hughes papers, 1951-1997
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 980
Extent: 1 linear feet (2 boxes) and 2 oversized papers boxes (OP)
Abstract: Letters from Ted Hughes to his sister, Olwyn Hughes, from 1951 to 1997, and to his parents from 1954 to 1960. The topics include discussions of his activities during his undergraduate years, his life with Sylvia Plath and their children Frieda and Nicholas, and his career including teaching and writing.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction. Special restrictions also apply: writings by Ted Hughes (letters and literary works) and photographs may not be reproduced without the written permission of Carol Hughes.

Related Materials in This Repository

Ted Hughes papers, Ted Hughes: Letters to Janos Csokits; 1960-1998, Ted Hughes: Letters to Gerald Hughes; 1952-1991, Ted Hughes: Letters to W.S. and Dido Merwin; 1958-1969, Ted Hughes: Letters to Lucas Meyers; 1955-1988, Ted Hughes: Letters to Peter Redgrove; ca. 1966-1984, Ted Hughes: Letters to Ben Sonnenberg; 1961-2000, Ted Hughes: Letters to Edna Wholey; ca. 1947-1951, Peter Fallon/Gallery Press collection; Medbh McGuckian papers; Paul Muldoon papers; Edna O'Brien papers; Tom Paulin papers; Emma Tennett papers; and the Daniel Weissbort papers.

Source

Purchase, 2004.

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Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Olwyn Hughes papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by Kathy Shoemaker, August 2004.

Collection Description**Biographical Note**

Olwyn Marguerite Hughes, the sister of Ted Hughes, was born in Mytholmroyd, Yorkshire, on August 26, 1928. When the family moved, she attended Mexborough Grammar School and went on to London University to read English literature, graduating in 1950. She worked briefly as an editor of the magazine of the Coal Utilization Research Association near London, before moving to Paris in 1952. There she had various secretarial jobs with embassies and international organizations until she joined Martonplay, a theater and film agency representing such writers as Ionesco and Billetdoux.

In the autumn of 1963, after the death of Sylvia Plath in February of that year, she returned to England, to live in Ted Hughes's Devon house to help with the children, Frieda aged 3 and Nicholas, not yet a year old. She stayed with them for two years and during this time translated a novel from French, *The Return* by Michel Droit and published by Andre Deutsch in 1966. She also became a literary agent, initially looking after Ted Hughes's writings and the work of such authors as Jean Rhys (who lived nearby) and Robert Nye. Moving to London in the autumn of 1965 she worked as an agent for the Plath estate and for various British authors and represented some distinguished foreign poets, including Yehuda Amichai, Janos Pilinszki, and Vasco Popa.

Olwyn and Ted Hughes inaugurated a fine, limited, first editions press, Rainbow Press, that released sixteen titles between 1970 and 1981. It published various works by Hughes and Plath, Thom Gunn, Seamus Heaney, Ruth Fainlight and Alan Sillitoe. Olwyn managed the press, helped by the advice from Hughes, from Leonard Baskin who illustrated several of the books, and from various printers, notably Sebastian Carter of Rampant Lions Press. She married Richard Thomas in 1979. The marriage ended in divorce some years later.

She collaborated on the research and writing of Anne Stevenson's biography of Sylvia Plath, *Bitter Fame* (1989). In the early nineties she ceased acting for the Plath estate.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of primarily letters from Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes from 1951 to 1997, and to his parents from 1954 to 1960. There are brief messages from Sylvia Plath appended to six of these letters. The letters were written while Hughes was an undergraduate from 1951-1954 at Pembroke College, Cambridge, after his graduation, when he was working various odd jobs around London, while he was married to Sylvia Plath and shortly after her death in 1963. The topics include discussions of his activities during his undergraduate years, his life with Sylvia Plath and their children Frieda and Nicholas, and his career including teaching and writing. The letters often include astrological charts, sketches, and drafts of poems.

The collection also includes the unpublished poem "For Olwyn Each Evening," Hughes's translation of *Phedre* by Jean Racine, a portrait of Ted Hughes and a self-portrait drawn by Assia Wevill, and photographs.

Container List

Correspondence

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Olwyn Hughes, notes on correspondence
1	2	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [early 1950s]; 7 items
1	3	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [ca.1955 or 1956]; 2 items
1	4	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [1956]; 8 items
1	5	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [1957]; 16 items
1	6	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [1958]; 13 items
1	7	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [ca. 1957 or 1958]; 2 items
1	8	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [1959]; 11 items
1	9	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [1960]; including two appended notes from Sylvia Plath; 33 items
1	10	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [1962]; 18 items
1	11	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [ca. 1963]; 5 items
1	12	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, [ca.1963 or 1964]; 2 items
1	13	Ted Hughes to Olwyn Hughes, 1993, 1997; 2 items
1	14	Ted Hughes to parents and Olwyn Hughes, [1954/1955]; 5 items
1	15	Ted Hughes to parents, [1956]; including one appended note from Sylvia Plath; 11 items
1	16	Ted Hughes to parents, [1957]; including one appended note from Sylvia Plath; 22 items
1	17	Ted Hughes to parents, [1958]; including one appended note from Sylvia Plath; 15 items
1	18	Ted Hughes to parents, [1959]; 13 items
1	19	Ted Hughes to parents, [1960]; including one appended note from Sylvia Plath; 3 items
1	20	Sylvia Plath to William and Edith Hughes, November 5, 1957; 2 items
1	21	Ted Hughes to Secretary of The Somerset Maugham Award, [1959]; 2 items
1	22	Ted Hughes and Olwyn Hughes with Faber and Faber including royalty statements, 1964-1965, 14 items
1	23	Ted Hughes and Olwyn Hughes with William Heinemann Ltd. Publishers including 1 note to Sylvia Plath and royalty statements, 1964-1966, 15 items
1	24	Ted Hughes with Harper and Row, 1965-1966, 7 items
1	25	Ted Hughes with Knopf, 1964-1965, 17 items
1	26	Christmas card to Sylvia Plath, [1960]; 1 item

Writings by Ted Hughes

- 1 27 *Birthday Letters*, photocopied pre-publication text with handwritten changes and a note to Olwyn from Ted Hughes, 1997 [1 of 2]
- 1 28 *Birthday Letters*, photocopied pre-publication text with handwritten changes and a note to Olwyn from Ted Hughes, 1997 [1 of 2]
- 2 1 Poem: "For Olwyn Each Evening," MS and TS, [before 1952]
- 2 2 Untitled poems by Ted Hughes [signed E. Hughes], [1954-1955]

Translations by Ted Hughes

- 2 3 *Phedre* by Jean Racine, draft prose translation with notes by Olwyn Hughes, no date
- 2 4 *Phedre* by Jean Racine, final version, translation, January 6, 1997

Photographs

- 2 5 Ted Hughes, [holding mirror reflecting photographer, Olwyn Hughes?], black and white, [1940s?]
- 2 6 Ted Hughes standing outside Pembroke College, Cambridge, black and white, 1952
- 2 7 Ted Hughes, seated with back against window, black and white, [1950s?]
- 2 8 Ted Hughes, formal pose, b/w, July 12, 1977; photographer: Layle Silbert
- 2 9 Ted Hughes with calf and cow, color, [1970s]
- 2 10 Ted Hughes, [in Alaska?], color, [1980s]
- 2 11 William Hughes, father of Ted Hughes, black and white, [1930s?]
- 2 12 Ted Hughes, and Olwyn Hughes, color, 1980
- 2 13 Ted Hughes, Carol Hughes, and [Frieda Hughes], color, [1970s]
- 2 14 Ted Hughes and [Nicholas Hughes], color, [1980s]
- 2 15 Ted Hughes and unidentified woman, black and white, [1950s]
- 2 16 Ted Hughes, Stephen Spender, W.H. Auden, T.S. Eliot, and Louis MacNeice, "A Pride of Poets," black and white, April 21, 1960
- 2 17 Sylvia Plath, seated on rock wall, black and white, no date, Yorkshire

Other papers

- 2 18 Appointment memorandum concerning Ted Hughes's employment as instructor of English, University of Massachusetts, January 1958
- OP1 1 Assia Wevill self-portrait, [1967-1968]
- OP2 1 Assia Wevill, portrait of Ted Hughes, [1967-1968]
- 2 19 Check registers, 1956-1957
- 2 20 Corrections by Olwyn Hughes of Diane Middlebrook's *Her Husband*
- 2 21 Cunard Steam-Ship Co. Ltd., 1956-1957, confirmation of reservation for passage on "Queen Elizabeth," June 20, 1957
- 2 22 Edith Hughes' handwritten biography [photocopy]
- 2 23 Receipts for bills, 1956-1957

2 24 Notes
