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MS-086: Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) Papers

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MS-086: Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) Papers

Description

The Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) collection consists of materials relating to her writing career, 1938-1978. These primarily include several versions of typed manuscripts, editions of the journals or magazines in which Taylor (Rood's) stories appeared, several editions of her books, articles, and book reviews.

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Keywords

Author, Literature, Gettysburg College

Disciplines

Creative Writing | English Language and Literature | Nonfiction



**Guide to the
Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) papers**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Processed by Catherine Perry
July 2007**



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Provenance: Donated to Special Collections by Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood).

Biography:

Kathrine Kressmann was born in Portland, Oregon, in 1903 to parents, Charles August Kressmann and Susan Starr Kressmann. She exhibited her literary talents early, when at the age of nine she won her first writing contest. At seventeen, she enrolled in courses at the University of Oregon and studied English literature and journalism. She was on the staff of the college newspaper and wrote a one-act play that was put on by college amateurs. After graduating, Kathrine Kressmann moved to San Francisco to work as an advertising copy writer for the *Emporium* department store, while continuing to write and publish occasionally in small journals. It was in San Francisco that Kathrine Kressmann met and married Elliot Taylor, a journalist and editor.

During the period of the Depression and not long after their marriage, the Taylors moved to a farm in Southern Oregon. In this setting, Kathrine Kressmann Taylor continued her writing by completing book reviews and composing poetry for the journal, *Controversy*. Her literary presence became known in 1938 when, after moving the family to New York, she published the epistolary novel, *Address Unknown*, in *Story* magazine. It appeared under the literary pseudonym, Kressmann Taylor since, at the time, both her husband and her editor, Whit Burnett, advised that the story was “too strong to appear under the name of a woman.” *Address Unknown* won immediate acclaim and popularity in this country as one of the first published works to condemn Nazism. On a deeper level, the work demonstrated how, as Kathrine Kressmann Taylor states in an article written about her for Pittsburgh’s *This Week* magazine, “violence and intolerance breed violence and intolerance” (“The Woman Who Jolted America” 14). The story also appeared in *Reader’s Digest*, a journal that, until the appearance of *Address Unknown*, had printed only non-fiction. Simon & Schuster then published the story in book form a year later, in 1939. Kressmann Taylor would again expose the clandestine actions of the Hitler’s regime in *Until That Day (Day of No Return, 2003)* published in 1942, a novel based on the true story of Leopold Bernhard, a German cleric who sought asylum in the United States after having suffered religious persecution by the Nazis.

Desiring to move from New York to raise their children in the country, Kathrine Kressmann Taylor and her husband moved, in 1947, to an orchard farm in Adams County, Pennsylvania. Shortly thereafter, she took a guest lectureship position at Gettysburg College. In 1953, after the death of her husband, Elliot, she went to work full-time and continued to teach composition, literature and creative writing – a career that would last until 1966. She continued to write as well, composing such notable works as “The Blown Rose” and “The Pale Green Fishes” that were published in magazines such as *Woman’s Day*, *London Magazine*, and *Argosy*. In 1966 Kathrine Kressmann

Taylor retired from Gettysburg College. She was later made Professor *Emerita* of English.

Experiences of Italy during a sabbatical prompted Kathrine Kressmann Taylor to depart for Florence after her retirement with the intention of continuing her writing. The voyage brought an encounter John Rood, sculptor and professor at the University of Minnesota, who would later become her second husband. Her sojourn in Italy allowed her to witness such catastrophic events as the flood of the Arno in 1966. Taylor's record of those days passed in Florence observing the events as they unfolded later became *Diary of Florence in Flood*, also published in England under the title *Florence: Ordeal by Water*.

Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) and her husband divided the year between Minnesota and a villa in Val di Pesa near Florence known as *Il Palazzaccio*. She would continue to do so even after the death of John Rood in 1974. In 1978 she completed *Storm on a Rock*, an unpublished work that deals with the aftermath of the German occupation and the Resistance. For the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the World War II concentration camps, Story Press reissued *Address Unknown*. Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) passed away in 1996 after a year that saw the rebirth of her first published work that gave such profound witness to the events of its time.

Scope and Content notes:

The Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) collection consists of materials relating to her writing career, 1938-1978. These primarily include several versions of typed manuscripts, editions of the journals or magazines in which Taylor (Rood's) stories appeared, several editions of her books, articles, and book reviews. Biographical material as well as photographs are also available.

Series Description:

The collection has been divided into five series. Series I consists of manuscripts, notes, galleys and page proofs, published versions and correspondence relating to Kathrine Kressmann Taylor's (Rood) writings. These have been arranged into the subseries - Books, Poetry and Short Story. All materials are listed in alphabetical order by title. Series II contains biographical information arranged by date. These include copies of press clippings and articles that Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) collected between 1936 and 1968, a copy of a tribute to Taylor (Rood) given at her retirement from Gettysburg College, transcripts from an oral history interview of Taylor (Rood) and biographical information about her second husband, John Rood. Series III consists of one piece of correspondence from Charlotte Seitlin, editor from the publishing house, Simon & Schuster. Series IV contains photographs of Florence in 1966 and of Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) in Florence, ca. 1967. Series V includes a short story by a Gettysburg College student from the Class of 1953, a list of publications by Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) and a typescript poem in German.

Box 1:

- 1-1 Inventory compiled by Kathrine Kressmann Taylor Rood of papers to be given to Gettysburg College Archives (Note - donation of papers to Special Collections did not include correspondence).

Series I – Works by author

Subseries A – Books

- 1-2 *Address Unknown* – first printing, *Story* magazine, 1938 September-October; copy of first printing
- 1-3 *Address Unknown* – printed version, condensed in *Reader's Digest*, 1939 January
- 1-4 *Address Unknown* – signed book, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1939. (given by Prof. Fred Shaffer, Gettysburg College)
- 1-5 *Address Unknown* – printed version in *Decade 1931-1941: A Commemorative Anthology*, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1941.

Box 2:

- 2-1 *The Story of 'Story Magazine,' a Memoir by Martha Foley* - excerpts from the introduction and afterword, edited and with an Introduction and Afterword by Jay Neugeboren, W. W. Norton & Company, London, New York (copy)
- 2-2 *Address Unknown* – article from the Sunday supplement of *This Week*, Pittsburgh Press, pp. 4 and 14, 1939 May 14.
- 2-3 *Address Unknown* – Book reviews (photocopies):
-*The Saturday Review*, 1939 January 28
-*The New Yorker*, 1939 January 28
-*The New York Times Book Review*, 1939 January 29
-*The New Republic*, 1939 February 8
-*The Book Forum*, 1939 March
-*The New Statesman and Nation*, 1939 March 25
-*The Times literary supplement*, 1939 April 22
-*Book Review Digest*, 1939
- 2-4 *Address Unknown* – letter from Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) to David Hedrick, Special Collections, Gettysburg College with copy of the advertisement for the 1995 Simon & Schuster edition of *Address Unknown*, 1995 April 5
- 2-5 *Address Unknown* - German translation, *Adressat Unbekannt* by Dorothee Bohm, Hamburg, Hoffmann und Campe Verlag, 2000
- 2-6 *Address Unknown* – Italian translation, *Destinatario Sconosciuto* by Ada Arduini, Milano, RCS Libri, 2000

- 2-7 *Address Unknown* - Korean and English, bilingual edition, Seoul, Sejong Books and Simon & Schuster, 2005
- 2-8 *Address Unknown* - DVD of performance at the Kibbutz Theatre, Tel Aviv, Israel. Hebrew translation by Asher Tarmon; Adapted for the stage by Avi Malkah. Rafi Kalmar as Martin Schuse and Zvi Schwartzberg as Max Eisenstein. Directed by Avi Malkah.

Box 3:

- 3-1 *Diary of Florence in Flood* – typescript carbon of original manuscript interspersed with proof corrections, layout pages of chapter 1, and notes, 1967
- 3-2 *Diary of Florence in Flood* - letter (copy), Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) to Patricia White, 1967 April 22
- 3-3 *Diary of Florence in Flood* - notes (typed), summary of correspondence with Patricia White and telegram to Hamish Hamilton regarding galleys and reconsideration of the title, *Firenze Devastata*. Telegram, envelope attached, 1967 May 29
- 3-4 *Diary of Florence in Flood* – manuscript returned after publication with note from Simon & Schuster editor, Pat White, 1967 August 30
- 3-5 *Diary of Florence in Flood* – book, published in England with title, *Florence: Ordeal by Water*, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1967
- 3-6 *Diary of Florence in Flood* - book review (copy), the *Gettysburgian*, 1967 October 6
- 3-7 “Piero Bargellini, Scrittore – Sindaco di Firenze,” 1967 January 21 – biography, typed, of the mayor of Florence, author unknown, (with translation, 2007)

Box 4:

- 4-1 *Until That Day* – book, New York; Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1942.
- 4-2 *Until That Day* - dust jacket from edition by Duell, Sloan and Pearce.
- 4-3 *Until That Day* – book reviews (copies):
 - The New York Times Book Review*, 1942 August 30
 - The Saturday Review of Literature*, 1942 September 12
 - The Churchman*, 1942 November 1
 - The Nation*, 1942, November 7
 - Book Review Digest*, 1942
- 4-4 *Until That Day* – letter from Leopold W. Bernhard to Kathrine Kressmann Taylor, 1960 July 7
- 4-5 *Until That Day* - Italian translation, *Senza Ritorno* by Fabrizio Ascari, Milano, RCS Libri, 2003.

Subseries B – Poetry

- 4-6 Poetry written by Kathrine Kressmann Taylor and printed under the initials K. K. published in *Controversy*
 - Broadside of poetry, untitled, undated
 - “Cantos for Consumers,” 1935 March 15 (copy)
 - “Jingles with a Joker,” 1935 February 1 (copy)
 - “The Morals of the Pig,” published in *Controversy*, 1935 January 15
 - “Odes to the Omniscients,” 1935 April 15 (copy)
 - “Triumphal to Toil,” 1935 July 15 (copy)
 - “Rhyme with a Reason,” January 1935 (copy)

Box 5:

Subseries C – Short Story

- 5-1 “The Blown Rose” – working manuscript with early title, “The Tevises,” undated
- 5-2 “The Blown Rose” – edited manuscript, typed, with copies of pp. 1-5, 1953
- 5-3 “The Blown Rose” - printed version, *Woman's Day*, September 1953 (1 clipped copy; 2 copies of complete issue of *Woman's Day*)
- 5-4 “The Blown Rose” - printed version, unknown publication, 1961
- 5-5 “The Blown Rose” – revised manuscript, typed, unpublished, 1963
- 5-6 “First Touch of Spring” – clipping of printed version, unknown English publication, undated
- 5-7 “Girl in a Blue Rayon Dress” – working manuscript, typed, undated
- 5-8 “Girl in a Blue Rayon Dress” – second manuscript, typed. Version that was published in *Argosy*, May 1961
- 5-9 “Girl in a Blue Rayon Dress” - printed version, *Woman's Day*, 1958 April (1 clipped copy; 1 copy of complete issue of *Woman's Day*)
- 5-10 “Girl in a Blue Rayon Dress” – printed version, *Argosy*, under title “Girl in a Blue Dress,” 1961 May
- 5-11 “Goat Song” – working manuscript, typed (2 copies) and working sheets, undated
- 5-12 “Goat Song” – manuscript, typescript carbon, 1993
- 5-13 “Goat Song” – printed version, *The London Magazine*, 1956 February

Box 6:

- 6-1 “A Gray Bird” – working manuscript, typed, undated
- 6-2 “A Gray Bird” - printed version, *Woman's Day* under the title “First Love,” 1957 November (1 clipped copy; 1 copy of complete issue of *Woman's Day*)
- 6-3 “A Gray Bird” - printed version, unknown publication under the title “The Grey Bird,” London 1961
- 6-4 “Mr. Pan” - working manuscript, typed, undated

- 6-5 "Mr. Pan" – printed version, *Argosy*, 1961 March 3
- 6-6 "The Pale Green Fishes" - incomplete manuscript, typed, undated
- 6-7 "The Pale Green Fishes" – edited manuscript, typed, used for printed version in *Best American Short Stories, 1954*
- 6-8 "The Pale Green Fishes" – letter, typed, from Patricia Montgomery, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954 December 1. Montgomery communicates that she is returning the manuscript of the printed version that appeared in *The Best American Short Stories, 1954*.
- 6-9 "The Pale Green Fishes" - printed version, *Woman's Day*, 1953 May (1 clipped copy; 2 copies of complete issue of *Woman's Day*)
- 6-10 "Passing Bell" - finished manuscript, typed, undated
- 6-11 "Passing Bell" – manuscript, typescript carbon, undated
- 6-12 "Passing Bell" – printed version, *University of Kansas City Review*, 1956 October
- 6-13 "The Red Slayer" - printed version, *Woman's Day*, 1956 February (1 clipped copy; 2 copies of complete issue of *Woman's Day*)
- 6-14 "The Red Slayer" – edited manuscript, typed, 1963 December
- 6-15 "Take a Carriage, Madam" published under the pseudonym, Sarah Bicknell Kennedy in *Controversy*, 1935 April 1 (copy)

Box 7:

Series II – Biographical Information

- 7-1 Scrapbook of Press Clippings compiled by Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood), 1938-1968 (copies)
- 7-2 "A Tribute to Kathrine Taylor on the Occasion of Her Retirement from the Faculty," Gettysburg College, 1966 (copy)
- 7-3 -Interview of Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood) 1993 December 6, conducted by David Hedrick – transcript (first draft); copy of audiocassette (original with Oral History Collection);
-Transcript with Taylor's (Rood) revisions; Letter about the interview and transcript, 1994 May 16.
- 7-4 *Who was Who*, p. 350 containing biographical information of John Rood (copy), undated
- 7-5 DVD of interview with Kressmann Taylor (Kathrine Kressmann Taylor Rood) author of *Address Unknown* interviewed in her home by Marilyn J. Mason, 2 June 1995, Northern Lights & Insights #342, Hennepin County Library, Minneapolis.

Series III – Correspondence

- 7-6 Seitlin, Charlotte, Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1959 January 4. Seitlin communicates that she is sending Taylor extra copies of her stories.

Series IV – Photographs

- 7-7 Photographs taken in Florence, Italy
 - Flood in the streets of Florence near the Duomo, 1966 November 4
 - Kressmann Taylor (Rood) on north bank of the Arno, between the Uffizi Galleries and the Ponte Vecchio, Florence, 1967 - photo for Simon & Schuster book cover
 - Kathrine Kressmann Taylor (Rood), on north bank of the Arno, between the Uffizi Galleries and the Ponte Vecchio, Florence, 1967

Series V – General

- 7-8 List of publications by Kressmann Taylor (copy), undated
- 7-9 “The Dancing Island” by Dorothy Jordan, Gettysburg College, Class of 1953 - manuscript, typed, undated
- 7-10 “Weltrand” – Poem, typed, author unknown, undated