



The Wittliff Collections

Guide to the John Graves Additions. 1800-2013

Collection UPWC-14082

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Graves, John, 1920-2013
Title:	Guide to the John Graves Additions.
Dates:	1800-2013
Abstract:	Materials relating to the literary career of John Graves.
Identification:	UPWC-14082
Extent:	23 boxes
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

Table Of Contents

Biographical / Historical	3
Administrative Information	7
Physical Location	7
Conditions Governing Access	7
Immediate Source of Acquisition	7
Preferred Citation	7
Conditions Governing Use	7
Controlled Access Headings	7
Detailed Description of the Collection	8
Series I: Accession 2014-082	8
Series II: Accession 2015-021	10
Series III: Accession 2015-042	10
Scope and Contents	6
Administrative Information	7
Physical Location	7
Conditions Governing Access	7
Immediate Source of Acquisition	7
Preferred Citation	7
Conditions Governing Use	7
Controlled Access Headings	7
Detailed Description of the Collection	8
Series I: Accession 2014-082	8
Series II: Accession 2015-021	10
Series III: Accession 2015-042	10

Biographical / Historical

Born August 6, 1920 in Fort Worth, Texas, John Alexander Graves III grew up in that city until moving away to attend college in 1938. He graduated from Rice Institute (now Rice University) with a B.A. in English in 1942, then entered the Marine Corps and served in the Pacific theater until being wounded by a Japanese grenade on the island of Saipan. After the service, Graves traveled to Mexico for a few months then attended Columbia University, earning an M.A. in English from there in 1948. He began his professional writing career while still a graduate student by publishing a short story, titled "Quarry," in *The New Yorker* in 1947.

Graves taught English from 1948 to 1950 at The University of Texas at Austin, but left academia and Texas behind to spend a year freelance writing in New York City. From January 1953 to July 1955 he spent abroad, living mostly in Spain, including the Canary Islands for some months on a resident colony of writers and artists. During these years he wrote articles for publications like *Holiday* and *Town and Country* but also worked on fiction, including a semi-autobiographical novel, *The Spotted Horse*. Graves concentrated on finishing the novel after returning to the United States, but his agent rejected the final manuscript and Graves soon came to realize the novel was not publishable as a whole.

In the spring of 1957 Graves returned home to help care for his ill father. In November of that year, Graves completed a three-week canoe trip down part of the Brazos River that he feared was about to be changed forever by dams. His narrative chronicle of the trip was first published as a magazine article in *Holiday*, and later Graves added history, philosophy and folklore which resulted in his first major book, *Goodbye to a River* (1960). The book attracted national attention and critical praise for its original style. It won the Carr P. Collins Award of the Texas Institute of Letters in 1961 and was nominated for a National Book Award that year. In the meantime, Graves took a teaching job at Texas Christian University, married Jane Cole (his second marriage) and purchased the first of his limestone acres in Somervell County near the town of Glen Rose.

After three years assisting in and writing for a U.S. government study of pollution of the Potomac River, Graves returned to Texas and focused on converting his country acreage from a weekend getaway into a permanent home with a manageable farm and cattle ranch. In that time

he also contributed to journals, magazines and books with introductions, articles, and essays—work that has continued to the present day. His observations and ruminations about his relationship with the land as a farmer and rancher led to the publication of his second major book, *Hard Scrabble: Observations on a Patch of Land* (1974). *Hard Scrabble* describes both the promise and adversity of country life, touching on subjects like animals, tools, construction, weather, water, ecology, agriculture, and migrant workers.

Starting in 1976, Graves again focused on life in the country in a series of essays that were published in *Texas Monthly* magazine. The essays examined topics such as fences, meat, tobacco, cows, chickens, dogs, and bees, and were collected and published for Graves' third major book, *From a Limestone Ledge: Some Essays and Other Ruminations about Country Life in Texas* (1980). Some essays follow up topics which he discussed in *Hard Scrabble*, but all focus on the “more or less country things which came to interest” Graves. *From a Limestone Ledge* was nominated for an American Book Award.

Although Graves has not published an extensive number of books, his contributions to magazines, books and anthologies spans over five decades. He has written introductions and narratives for a number of books and reports, often on Texas history and Texas environment, such as *Cowboy Life on the Western Plains*, *Texas Heartland: A Hill Country Year* and *The Water Hustlers*. Two of Graves' most famous magazine pieces, “The Last Running” and “Blue & Some Other Dogs,” later became their own books, published first by Encino Press. Another well-received essay, “Recollections of a Texas Bird Glimpser,” written for the art book, *Of Birds and Texas* (1986), transformed into a limited edition book, *Self-Portrait, With Birds* (1991).

In 1996 the University of Texas Press published *A John Graves Reader*, which gathered together fiction and non-fiction pieces, both published and unpublished, including a long, reworked excerpt from his failed novel, *The Spotted Horse*. More recently, Graves wrote text for the photography books *Texas Rivers* (2002) and *Texas Hill Country* (2003), and in 2004 Knopf published his memoir, *Myself and Strangers*, which focused on his years abroad as a freelance writer.

John Graves is one of the most important Southwestern writers. Three of his early short stories were collected in the O. Henry award series. He received a Guggenheim fellowship in 1963 and

a Rockefeller fellowship in 1972. Numerous awards and recognitions have followed him throughout his writing career. Although he is generally considered a regional and nature writer due to his settings and subjects, his style, which incorporates fiction, folklore, autobiography, philosophy, and observation, defies provincial or topical boundaries. Perhaps the best example of this is *Goodbye to a River*, which has never gone out of print since first being published in 1960, and is still celebrated for its keen ruminations on the historical, attitudinal and natural worlds that intertwined around Graves as he canoed down the river.

Graves was married to the former Jane Cole of New York, and they had two daughters, Helen and Sally. John and Jane lived and worked on Hard Scrabble near Glen Rose until Graves' death in 2013.

Scope and Contents

Materials retrieved from Hard Scrabble in June 2014. Personal papers of John Graves includes his letters home to his family from Rice University, 1938-1939; significant correspondence with Samuel Hynes and John Schaffner; letters from his time spent in Spain, 1953-1954, as well as travel documents and receipts, and correspondence from his latter years, 2006-2013. Also included are magazines featuring articles by Graves, original Russell Waterhouse drawings for *Goodbye to a River*, and some family papers. Original folder titles are in (“) quotation marks.

Administrative Information

Physical Location

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use: .
<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html>.

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gifts of John Graves, 2014-2015.

Preferred Citation

John Graves Additions, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University.

Conditions Governing Use

Materials from the Wittliff Collections are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study. The user assumes responsibility for determining copyright status, obtaining permission to publish, and abiding by U.S. copyright laws. .
<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/visit/policies/publication.html>

Controlled Access Headings

- Authors, American -- Texas -- 20th century
- Natural history literature
- Rivers in literature
- Texas -- Description and travel

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Accession 2014-082

Box	Folder	
1854	1	Correspondence – Letters home from Rice University, 1938-1939
1854	2	Personal Letter File – Parents , undated
1854	3	Personal Letter File – A through G, undated
1854	4	Personal Letter File – Samuel Hynes, undated
1854	5	Personal Letter File – J through M, undated
1854	6	Personal Letter File – P, undated
1854	7	Personal Letter File – Abe, undated
1854	8	Personal Letter File – John Schaffner, undated
1854	9	Personal Letter File – S through Z, undated
1854	10	“Criticism, etc.” Correspondence with John Schaffner, 1950s
1854	11	Correspondence, 1950s
1854	12	Letter announcing the new Time Inc. Sport magazine, Sports Illustrated, 1954. The reverse side of the letter contains Grave’s notes on bullfights, 1954
1854	13	“For Jane Cole” Letters from Ecuador, Peru, Columbia, etc., 1954
1854	14	Correspondence with Stephen Jones, 1978-1983
1854	15	“Ilse” Correspondence and essay re: Ilse Skipsna Rothrock, 1982
1854	16	Correspondence, 1976-1979
1854	17	Correspondence, 1978-1986
1854	18-20	Correspondence, 1976-1986
1854	21	Correspondence re: fundraising for the Admiral Nimitz Foundation, 1977
1854	22	Correspondence re: Texas Committee for the Humanities Lecturer, 1983
1854	23	Letter from Philip Montgomery with “Answers to Interrogatories”, 2003
1854	24	Correspondence relating to the sale of manuscripts to HRHRC, 1969-1985
1854	25	“Remarks for Richard Brown Memorial Service, 11/9/1979” at Kimball Art Museum, November 9, 1979
1854	26	“P.E.N. – Memberships, Participation, Etc.”, undated
1854	27	“Mark Morris Benmarl Winery Material and Corr.”, undated
1854	28-30	Correspondence, 2006-2013
1855	1-8	Correspondence, 2006-2013
1855	9	Travel wallet, vaccination card, 700 Francs, 90 Pesetas, 1950s
1855	10	Receipts for hotels, travel etc. in Spain and England, 1954
1855	11	Military payment certificates, 1954
1855	12	Legal documents including John Graves birth certificate, undated
1855	13	Calling cards, undated

1855	14	Photographs (5): 2 [college] portraits of Graves; 2 Graves portraits by David Stark, and 1 wedding photo of an unidentified couple, undated
1855	15	Untitled novel fragment, undated
1855	16	Untitled novel, undated
1855	17-18	"Bird Records" [originally housed in a 3-ring binder; binder was discarded due to deteriorated condition], undated
1855	19	"G-10" Railroad Commission of Texas blank forms [original envelope discarded due to condition], undated
1855	20	"Logue Land Appraisals, etc", 1983
1855	21	Mineral lease, August 24, 1977
1855	22	"4801-C Boyle Street" Apartment in Forth Worth, undated
1855	23	"Tompkin Papers: Important", undated
1855	24	McGhee's Stories and Moore History, undated
1855	25	"Watt Reynolds corrected first draft" Interview by Ellen O'Neil, 1978
1855	26	"Oak Decline", undated
1855	27-28	Article and newspaper clippings, undated
1856	1	Published items: The Cavalier; Dinosaur Valley State Park; 51st Anniversary "Golden State" Reunion 4th Marine Division, Assoc.; Frontier Guns, undated
1856	2	Journal of the Conference on College Composition and Communication- 2 issues, bulk: 1961:1963
1856	3	"Bull Adams – the Paluxy Eccentric" by Robert J. Duncan, undated
1856	4	Various essays by others, undated
1856	5	"Answers to Interrogations" By John O. Meusebach, undated
1856	6	"Papers relating to the estate of J.A. Graves, Sr. Died 1937", undated
1856	7	"NKG Estate – Current documents" Nancy K. Graves [mother], 1970s
1856	8	"NKG Estate – Will, letters, testimonies, etc.", 1970s
1856	9	"NKG Estate – Old material", undated
1856	10	"NKG" financial, 1960s
1856		Framed drawing of man with fish on his head, undated
1856		Financial material [sealed; determine if family would like returned], undated
1856		Books [sealed due to condition & concern over silverfish], undated
1987		Magazines with John Graves articles, 1959-1995
		Travel Holiday, December 1994/January 1995. "Watching the Gulf" [2 copies] The Water Hustlers (book jacket only) Texas Parks and Wildlife December 1992. "State of Nature" October 1992. "Outdoor Heritage Series: John Graves," by Kristi G. Streiffert
		The Atlantic, March 1975 [Texas: A Special Issue]. "The Hard Used Land" [2 copies] Esquire, September 1973. "Confessions of a Landowner" [poor condition] Southern Living, January 1990. "Our South in Words and Pictures"
		Holiday November 1959. "Drifting Down the Brazos" March 1964. "The Overlap Land – Mexican Border Country" June 1964. "Rice University: The Pangs of Change"
		Time, December 1960. Review of Goodbye to a River (p. 90)
		Quest/77, May/June 1977. [Not sure of the connection]

The Texas Humanist, March-April, 1984. "John Graves: A Master of Details and Ruminations" by Joe Holley. [2 copies]

1858 Various computer disks, undated

Series II: Accession 2015-021

1947	1	Family letters and clippings, undated
1947	2	Family letters and papers, undated
1947	3	Family photographs, circa 1800s-1900s
1947	4	Family photographs in an album, early 1900s
1947	5	Family photographs in an album-vacation and family photos, early 1900s
1947	6	Family photographs in an album, early 1900s
1947	7-10	Family photographs, undated
1947	11	Family photographs-William E. Graves (II), undated
1947	12	Family photographs, undated
1947	13	Photographs of John Graves and others, undated
1947	14-16	Photographs of John Graves, undated
1947	17	Photographs-"Mug shots and other pictures of self," photographs of John Graves, undated
1947	18	Photograph of John Graves by Michael O'Brien, 2006
1947	19	"Mainly Dog Photos (Hup and Hodge)", undated
1948		John Graves's silver "infinity" belt buckle and leather belt, undated
1948		Three family photographs, 12" x 13", undated
1948		Ceramic jug made by Bill Worrell, engraved "John Graves The Old Fart of Hard Scrabble," 8" tall, undated
1948		Ceramic jug made by Bill Worrell, engraved "Exclusive Property of the Hard Scrabble Old Fart," 8" tall, undated
1949		Wooden camp box made by John Graves and used during his canoe trip for Goodbye to a River. Camp box contains two wooden trays, and a paper glued to the lid that reads "This Box" with a list of food supplies. Box is a faded blue, has some water damage, and is missing handles, 20" x 13" x 11.5", undated
1950		7 weight Loomis fly rod made by John Graves. Two pieces in green canvas case, case is 59" long. Written on the fly rod: "Loomis F1087 IMX J. Graves" plus Graves's infinity symbol. According to Bill Wittliff, this was the last fly rod that Graves used, and the fishing line is crinkled at the end where Graves removed the last fly. , undated

Series III: Accession 2015-042

1980	11" Wooden Pipe; 7" Wooden Pipe, undated
1980	5 "Snuff" and Tobacco Boxes, undated

1980	3 Copper Cowbells, undated
1980	8" Porcelain Bowl with Painting of American Bald Eagle, undated
1980	Texas Literary Hall of Fame Award to John Graves, May 2004
1980	4 Metal Spurs with Leather Straps, undated
1981	2 Beige Fishing Hats, Labeled "Graves", undated
1981	Box Labeled "Leeches" [Empty], undated
1981	Three Boxes of Various Lures, undated
1981	Bag of Bait, undated
1981	Box of Plain Hooks, Various Sizes, undated
1981	Pouch [Empty, Clasp Broken], undated
1981	Pouch of Lures, undated
1981	Pouch Labeled "Eelworms", undated
1981	Pouch Labeled "Hare Pups", undated
1981	Three Spools in Cases, undated
1981	Two Spool Cases [Empty], undated
1981	One Spool, undated
1981	Spool in Leather Pouch Labeled "S II 89", undated
1981	Spool in Linen Pouch Labeled "Spare Spool 1494", undated
1981	Three Fabric Cases for Poles, undated
1981	Wooden Knife, Broken at the Hilt, undated
1981	One Zebco De-Liar, undated
1981	One Brown Duck Call, undated
1982	Various Metal Pieces, Including 5 International Coins and 3 Medals, undated
1982	Knife, undated
1982	Rusted Wrist piece [no watch attached], undated
1982	Belt Buckle, undated
1982	Sunglasses in a Leather Case, undated
1982	Duck Call in a Black Leather Pouch, undated
1982	Leather Wristwatch [broken], undated
1982	Leather Wallet, undated
1982	Square Leather Pouch Labeled "Mexico" and Decorated, undated
1982	9" x 8.5" Red Metal Tin Labeled "Happy Week-end", undated
1982	Wooden Barrel Cup, undated
1982	Two Blocks of Flint, undated
1982	Track Measuring Tape Labeled "Favorite Wyteface", undated
1982	Marble Book Paperweight, undated
1982	4" Maroon and Gold Tube Labeled "45", undated
1983	Bovine Skull [Cracked], undated
1984	Bovine Jaw [One Tooth Missing], undated
1984	Deer Skull with Antlers [Fragmented on one side], undated

1984	Bovine Femur, undated
1985	21" x 17" Framed Photograph of Hard Scrabble House, undated
1985	9" x 12" Plaque of Distinguished High School Diploma, undated
1985	11" x 9" Framed Photograph of John and Jane Graves Eating, undated
1986	Large Armed Forces Backpack [Rusted Buckles], undated
1986	Fishing Vest, with Hanger, undated
1987	Small Armed Forces Backpack [Rusted Buckles], undated
1988	Graves' Marine Hat, undated
1989	Green Military Trench Coat, undated
1989	White Master's Hood, undated
1989	Yellow Graduation Tassel , undated
1990	35" Cattle Brand , undated
1991	Smith-Corona Typewriter with Black Case, undated
1992	Royal Typewriter, with extra Porelon nylon ribbon, undated
1993	Army Trunk, rusted clasps, undated