

William Hoffer fonds MsC90
Simon Fraser University Special Collections and Rare Books

processed by Carolyn Petrie
May 2006

Fonds-level description

Title: William Hoffer fonds

Date: 1980, 1982 – 1991, predominant 1985 - 1987

Extent: 31 cm of textual records. – 2 photographs. – 9 prints.

Biographical sketch: William (Bill) Hoffer was born on May 29th, 1944 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Saskatchewan, and subsequently enrolled in the Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology department at Simon Fraser University. Hoffer was discharged from SFU for his participation in student rebellions, prior to receiving his Master of Arts degree. He began his bookselling career in 1969 with the opening Falstaff Books, a used bookstore, in Vancouver. He later moved his store to 58 & 60 Powell Street, Vancouver, where Hoffer worked until his retirement.

Hoffer was acknowledged as an authority on Canadian literature in the antiquarian book trade. He published several special edition books, including works by W.P. Kinsella, Susan Musgrave, Robert Bringhurst, Elizabeth Smart, John Metcalf, and Ernest Hemmingway. During his career, Hoffer was engaged in several literary feuds, and was a strong critic of government subsidization of the arts. He was particularly disdainful of Canada Council, and wrote several critiques to this effect.

In 1991, Hoffer closed his bookstore and moved to Russia, where he married and worked in the book trade. He remained in Russia until diagnosed with lung cancer in August of 1998, when he returned to BC for treatment from his father. Hoffer died on September 28th 1998, at the age of 53, in Victoria, BC.

Custodial history: Records were purchased by Stephen Lunsford, likely from Hoffer's estate, and in turn sold to Simon Fraser University Special Collections and Rare Books.

Scope and content: Fonds consists of records reflecting Hoffer's bookselling and publishing activities during the 1980s. Records include correspondence, galleys, proof-sheets, criticisms, articles, and reviews. The fonds is composed of the following series: Correspondence and Publication files.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the provenance of the records.

Immediate source of acquisition: Records were purchased by Simon Fraser University Special Collections and Rare Books from Stephen Lunsford in March 2006.

Terms governing reproduction: Reproduction of material is subject to the approval of the Special Collections librarian.

Finding aids: File level control; box lists available.

Related records in other institutions: The archives of Susan Musgrave are located in the Archives and Research Collection of the McMaster University Library.

General note: Simon Fraser University Special Collections and Rare Books classification number MsC90

Series-level descriptions

Title: Correspondence

Date: 1982 - 1988

Extent: 3.5 cm of textual records

Scope and content: Series consists of Hoffer's incoming and outgoing correspondence with Susan Musgrave and W.P. Kinsella. Records include both personal and business correspondence, including letters and postcards pertaining to Hoffer's sales and publication activities, various articles, and legal documents.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the series.

Title: Publication files

Date: 1980, 1982, 1984 –1991

Extent: 28.5 cm of textual records. – 2 photographs. – 9 prints.

Scope and content: Series consists of records reflecting Hoffer's substantial publishing activities. Records include galleys, proof-sheets, correspondence with authors and printers, publicity material, reviews, criticisms, and personal statements about his work. The series consists of the following sub-series: TANKS and General publications.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the series.

Sub-series level descriptions

Series: Publication files

Title: TANKS

Date: 1980, 1985 - 1987

Extent: 14.5 cm of textual records. – 1 photograph. – 9 prints.

Scope and content: Sub-series consists of records related to Hoffer's publication of *TANKS*, a limited edition anthology of literature including work by Marius Kociejowski, W.P. Kinsella, Norm Sibus, György Faludy, Elizabeth Smart, El Lissitzky, and George McWhirter. Records include galleys, proof-sheets, and mockups, statements documenting the project's aims and progress, and correspondence.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the sub-series.

Title: General publications

Date: 1982, 1984 –1991

Extent: 14 cm of textual records. – 1 photograph.

Scope and content: Series consists of records related to Hoffer's publication activities during the 1980s, with the exception of *TANKS*. Records include proofs and galleys, drafts, and correspondence with authors, publishers and other collaborators.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the sub-series.

File-level descriptions

Series: Correspondence

Title: Susan Musgrave

Date: 1982 - 1988

Extent: 2.5 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of incoming and outgoing correspondence between Hoffer and poet Susan Musgrave. Records consist primarily of letters concerning Hoffer's involvement with McMaster University's purchase of Musgrave's archives, including negotiations and detailed inventories of the material. Records also include letters of a personal nature, copies of Musgrave's poems, various articles, and a copy of Musgrave's will naming Hoffer her literary executor.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Kinsella

Date: 1982 - 1988

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of correspondence between Hoffer and writer W.P. Kinsella. Records include letters and postcards with accompanying material for publication consideration, receipts for shipped goods, and a copy of *Cross-Canada Writers' Magazine*, featuring an article on the patronage of Canadian arts.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Series: Publication files
Sub-series: Tanks

Title: “Autobiographies”

Date: [ca. 1986]

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to Hoffer’s publication of Elizabeth Smart’s *Autobiographies* as part of the *TANKS* anthology. Records include an edited photocopy of the text, and a draft list of contents.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Norm Sibus – Five Poems

Date: [ca. 1986]

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to the publication of Norm Sibus’s *Five Poems* for inclusion in the *TANKS* anthology. Records include copies of numerous poems for potential selection.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Continuation of title: These are poems for selection.

Title: Tamio Wakayama – Made in Japan

Date: [ca. 1986]

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of a mock-up of Wakayama’s *Made in Japan*, which may have been considered for inclusion in *TANKS*. Records include a mockup of the book with pasted text and images. The book was never published.

Source of title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Tanks archives/clippings

Date: 1985 - 1986

Extent: 2 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to Hoffer’s publication of *TANKS*, including newspaper clippings, correspondence, invoices, reviews, and copies of poems and short stories. File also includes a copy of *Harper’s Magazine* featuring an article on government subsidies of the arts.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Tanks content as of 18 June 1986

Date: [ca. 1986]

Extent: 3 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of potential content for inclusion in *TANKS*. Records include copies of short stories and poetry, edited text, advertisements, draft introductions to the project, correspondence, and contact information. Records also include galleys for several works which were not ultimately included in *TANKS*.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Orders awaiting Tanks books

Date: 1980, 1985, 1987

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to customer orders of *TANKS*. Records include invoices and requests, as well as reviews of other material, articles, newspaper clippings, and a copy of the *Literary Storefront Newsletter*.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Tanks promotion - originals

Date: 1985, 1987

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to Hoffer's advertisement of *TANKS* in the *Globe and Mail*. Records include newspaper clippings of advertisements and accompanying invoices, as well as a *Globe and Mail* literary supplement from 1985.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Tanks promotion - copy

Date: 1985 - 1986

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to the creation of advertising material pertaining to the publication of *TANKS*. Records include original advertisement copy, logo prints and the original negative, advertisement rates information, a short diary, and copies of a *TANKS* prospectus.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: “Five Stories”

Date: 1986

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of a set of unbound sheets of W.P. Kinsella’s *Five Stories*, published by Hoffer for inclusion in *TANKS*. Sheets include text and illustration, as well as publishing, copyright, and colophon information.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Proof of “The Machine Minders”

Date: 1986

Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of a proof of Marius Kociejowski’s *The Machine Minders*, published by Hoffer for inclusion in *TANKS*. Includes illustrations by Maureen Sugrue, and editorial comments.

Source of title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: The Natural History of Tanks

Date: 1986

Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of a statement by Hoffer entitled “The Natural History of Tanks”, in which he discusses government sponsorship of literature and the aim of *TANKS*. File also includes a draft prospectus.

Source of title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Faludy photograph

Date: 1985

Extent: 1 photograph : b&w ; 20 x 25 cm. – 3 prints : b&w ; 10.5 x 13 cm.

Scope and content: File consists of a photograph of György Faludy, taken by Trelawney Watson as the frontispiece for Faludy’s work. File also contains three smaller prints of the image.

Source of title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Herb Steiner – Artist Proofs I and II

Date: [ca. 1986]

Extent: 2 prints : some watercolour ; 19 x 28 cm.

Scope and content: File consists of two prints by Herb Steiner, for illustration of Faludy's work. Prints are signed by the author, and hand-painted.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Kinsella – Five Stories

Date: 1986

Extent: 2 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to the publication of W.P. Kinsella's *Five Stories*, included in *TANKS*. Records include edited proofs of the works and mockups.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Maureen Sugrue prints

Date: 1985

Extent: 4 prints : b&w

Scope and content: File consists of four limited edition prints of varying sizes, created by Maureen Sugrue. Prints were used in the publication of Marius Kociejowski's *The Machine Minders*.

Source of title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Series: Publication files
Sub-series: General publications

Title: Galleys of Norm Sibus's "10 Poems"

Date: 1985

Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of folded galleys of Sibus's *10 Poems*, published by Hoffer.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Glenn Goluska/Norm's Book – Galleys and unbound copies

Date: 1985 - 1986

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to Goluska's typesetting and design work for the publication of Norm Sibus's *10 Poems*. Records include incoming and outgoing correspondence between Hoffer and Goluska, sample prints, and pamphlets for Goluska's "Imprimerie Dromadaire".

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Norm Sibus

Date: 1986 – 1988, 1990 – 1991

Extent: 3 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of correspondence between Hoffer and Norm Sibus concerning Oberon Press' publication of a collection of Sibus's poetry. Records include both personal and business correspondence, photocopies of poems and short stories, photocopied and marked-up galleys of *Five Poems*, postcards, and reviews of Sibus's *Narratives and Continuations*.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Oberon Press

Date: 1985, 1987

Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of correspondence between Hoffer and Oberon Press regarding the publication of a collection of Norm Sibus's work.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Metcalf's new book

Date: 1989, 1991

Extent: 0.5 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to the publication of Metcalf's work. Records include correspondence between Hoffer and Metcalf, invoices, content lists, and a proof-sheet with images to be included in the work.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: "Freedom from Culture"

Date: [ca. 1987]

Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of corrected proofs of Metcalf's *Freedom from Culture*, published by Hoffer. Records include the text and colophon information.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Brian Fawcett

Date: 1985 - 1986

Extent: 1.5 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to Hoffer's publication of *A Correspondence*, featuring a series of lively correspondence between Hoffer and Brian Fawcett. Records include letters and postcards, samples of Fawcett's writing, information about the "Canada Poetry Now" fair, and copies of the published correspondence.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Brian Fawcett correspondence

Date: 1985 - 1986

Extent: 2 cm of textual records

Scope and content: Records consists of the original incoming and copies of outgoing correspondence between Hoffer and Brian Fawcett, which Hoffer later published as *A Correspondence*. Records include letters and postcards, as well as edited proofs of *A Correspondence*.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: “The Death? and Resurrection (?) of Pulp Press”

Date: 1982

Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of a copy of *The Death? and Resurrection (?) of Pulp Press*, written by Hoffer, and an accompanying rejection letter from *Interface* magazine.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Printed proofs and galleys

Date: 1985

Extent: 1.5 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of records related to Hoffer’s writing and publication of *A Tribute and a Story for DM Fraser*. Records include drafts, edited proof sheets, galleys, and sample title pages.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Page proofs for DM Fraser tribute

Date: 1985

Extent: 0.5 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of two copies of proofs for *A Tribute and a Story for DM Fraser*, written and published by Hoffer. One copy contains pasted text and editorial comments.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Reviews of WH publications

Date: 1984 – 1986

Extent: 1.5 cm of textual material. – 1 photograph : col. ; 11.5 x 16 cm.

Scope and content: File consists of various reviews of works published by Hoffer. Records relate primarily to Robert Bringhurst’s *Ocean, Paper, Stone*, and include a photograph, articles, newspaper clippings, media transcripts, and reviews from *Canadian Literature* and *BC Studies*.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: Criticism – literary – copies
Date: [ca. 1985]
Extent: 0.25 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of a copy of a review article written by Hoffer pertaining to Ken Norris' *One Night*, Bronwen Wallace's *Common Magic*, and Richard Outram's *Man In Love*.

Source of title: Title transcribed directly from the original file folder.

Title: A Poem for Bill
Date: [between 1944 and 1997]
Extent: 1 textual record

Scope and content: File consists of a poem written by Steve Lunsford on the occasion of Hoffer's birthday. The poem is signed by the author.

Source of title: Title based on the contents of the file.

Title: Untitled manuscript
Date: [between 1969 and 1991]
Extent: 1 cm of textual records

Scope and content: File consists of an untitled text, written by an unidentified author. Records include the printed text with edits in red and blue pen.

Source of supplied title: Title based on the contents of the fonds.