



TITLE: Richard A. Summers research collection

DATE RANGE: 1923-1994

CALL NUMBER: MS 1516

LOCATION: Arizona History Museum, 949 E Second St, Tucson, AZ 85719

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1 linear ft. (2 boxes)

PROVENANCE: Donated by Nancy “Nan” Bell Rollings in 2017.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to Arizona Historical Society, Library & Archives.

PREFERRED CITATION: Arizona Historical Society, Richard A. Summers Research collection, MS 1516

PROCESSED BY: Tory Bellavance, 2019

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Richard A. Summers (1906-1969) was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin to Livingston Lee and Anna Louise Summers. Summers graduated from the University of Arizona in 1925 with a liberal arts degree and served as principal of the Continental Grammar School 25 miles south of Tucson, Arizona. In 1926, Summers was admitted to a Californian Sanatorium after contracting tuberculosis, then took a job as principal at Mountain View School in Ontario, California. In August of 1928 he married Louise McKee and returned to Tucson where he began working at the University of Arizona as an associate professor, teaching Freshman English from 1928-1951. During this time he also served as chairman of Freshman English (1940-1945) and authored several textbooks. He specialized in developing young writing talent and many of his students went on to publish their own works.

Summers' first full length juvenile book, *Our Arizona Gang*, was completed in 1923 when Summers was seventeen. His most prolific work was *Dark Madonna*, hailed by critics and inspired by the Mexican American community living in Tucson in the 1930s. Summers authored several other novels including *Vigilante* in 1949, which was adapted into film three years later with the title *The San Francisco Story*. He also wrote short stories and articles, as well as plays for children and radio plays which were played on a national scale.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: This collection contains biographical information, correspondence and manuscripts related to Richard A. Summers. Biographical materials pertain

to his personal life and education career, as well as a detailed publication history and literary criticism. The collection also includes correspondence between Summers and the Dean of Liberal Arts at the University of Arizona, Richard A. Harvill, regarding his employment at the University, as well as correspondence related to collection materials. Ephemera in this collection consists of newspaper clippings and pamphlets related to Summers' family, life and works.

The collection also contains interviews of Summers' friends, family and coworkers, including Professor Albert Gegenheimer, Louise Summers, and his daughter and son, Amo and Sanford. The oral history format includes transcripts, abstracts and cassette tapes. Manuscripts include a copy of Summers' first work, *Arizona Gang*, as well as a copy of *Earth Not Satisfied*, an unpublished novel written by Summers. Also included are several short stories and articles Summers wrote between 1939-1969, along with an account of Richard and Louise Summers's 1929 trip from Tucson, Arizona to Washington D.C. titled *Our Great Adventure*.

SUBJECT TERMS: Summers, Richard, 1906-1969; Authors -- Arizona -- Tucson; American fiction; American literature -- West (U.S.) -- Bio-bibliography; Mexican Americans in literature

RELATED MATERIALS: "Bold With a Pen: The Writing Life of Richard A. Summers" by Nancy "Nan" Bell Rollings (*Journal of Arizona History*, vol. 35, no. 3); "Joe Pearce-Manhunter: Some Adventures of an Arizona Ranger" by Richard A. Summers (*Journal of Arizona History*, vol. 19, no. 3); Richard A. Summers collection (University of Arizona Special Collections)

CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
1	1	Biographical Materials	1940-1969
	2	Bio-Bibliography and Literary Criticism	1966-1975
	3	Correspondence	1947-1991
	4	Ephemera	1926-1993; undated
	5	Oral History Recordings	1991
	6	Oral History Recordings	1991
	7	Oral History Transcripts and Notes	1990-1991
	8	<i>Arizona Gang</i>	1923
	9	<i>Earth Not Satisfied</i>	undated
2	1	<i>Our Great Adventure</i>	1929
	2	Short Stories and Articles	1939-1969; undated