Evelyn Waugh  
Youth, Lancing College, and Oxford

Arthur Evelyn St. John Waugh was born into a prosperous suburban London family on 28 October 1903. His father, Arthur Waugh, was a publisher with lots of literary friends, and his mother, Catherine (Kate) Raban Waugh, was the daughter of a civil servant. Young Evelyn began writing stories when he was five, illustrating quite a few of them as well.

At his public school, he excelled at art and literature but was sometimes troubled by spells of the depression that would dog him for the rest of his life. After winning a small scholarship at Hertford College, Oxford, Evelyn embarked on a less than distinguished academic career in the early Twenties. He participated in Oxford Union debates and contributed to college magazines, but his principal pursuits were drinking and spending money. During those years he made several important friends, such as Peter Quennell, Harold Acton, Cyril Connolly, and Elsa Lanchester. Though Graham Greene was only a year behind him at Oxford (Balliol College), the two future novelists scarcely knew each other.

W3

“Distinguished Author Shows Contempt for the Public,” ca. 1919

This is Evelyn’s caricature of his older brother, Alec, who was kicked out of Sherborne School in 1915 for homosexual activity. The ensuing scandal made it impossible for Evelyn to attend Sherborne, and so he was sent to Lancing College instead. With the publication of a first novel about his school days in 1917, Alec embarked on a literary career of some note, though his novels and travel writings were never as successful as Evelyn’s. There was always some friction in their relationship. Traces of this may be found in Evelyn’s letters to Alec at the Ransom Center as well as in this illustration.

W6
Juvenile Diary (Easter Term 1916): “My Fight with Rostail”

Waugh’s earliest diary—the beginning of a long and revealing series of his journals at the Ransom Center—dates from his years at Heath Mount School in Hampstead. It is illustrated with delightful pen-and-ink drawings, such as this depiction of his fight with an unfortunate boy named Rostail, who insisted on calling him “Wuffles” and suffered the consequences.

W7a

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Dudley Carew, early 1922

In January 1922, Waugh enrolled at Hertford College, Oxford, which he regarded as “a respectable but rather dreary little college.” At first he felt “very shy and a little lonely,” as he put it in a letter to his old Lancing friend Dudley Carew, but soon began to make friends and participate in the usual undergraduate high jinks—some of which found their way into the Oxford chapters of Brideshead Revisited.

W7b

Invitation to a Coffin Club event, November 1921

In his last year at school, Waugh became bored with Lancing. To amuse himself during his last term there, he founded the B.S.A. (Bored Stiff Association), which later metamorphosed into the Coffin Club. It had “a membership of 7—very exclusive.”

W7c

Postcard from Evelyn Waugh to Dudley Carew, 6 April 1921

Waugh’s father, Arthur, kept him on a financial short leash. As a result Evelyn frequently found himself deep in debt during his public school days and even more so at Oxford. He spent enormous sums during his university career. In his final year, his debts were so large
that he had to begin selling off his most cherished books, an experience which became part of the short story “The Balance.”

W9

“At the Sign of the Unicorn: Mr. Harold Acton.” Isis, 7 March 1923

Waugh published cartoons and squibs in Isis under the name of “Scaramel.” At Oxford, Harold Acton was known for declaiming T.S. Eliot’s Waste Land through a megaphone. He cut a dapper figure and attracted students like Peter Quennell, Cyril Connolly, and others who considered themselves avant-garde. Acton served as a mentor and “modernized” Waugh’s own esthetics and taste in art. He later became the model for Anthony Blanche in Brideshead Revisited. Decline and Fall was dedicated to him.

W84

Unidentified photographer
Photograph of Evelyn Waugh in Corfu, 1927
Copyprint

At the time this photograph was made, Waugh was twenty-four and still in the process of finding himself. About this time he wrote in his diary: “It seems to me the time has arrived to set about being a man of letters.”

W11a

“Fires of Youth,” September 1923 (published as “Youth” in the London Mercury, October 1923)

Waugh published numerous reviews, squibs, and art works in Oxford student magazines. Some of his illustrations, such as this wood engraving filled with late-adolescent angst, were good enough to be sold to magazines that paid. For several years, he earned small
amounts of money by designing dustjackets for books published by his father’s firm, Chapman & Hall.

WALL ITEMS
W82

Photograph of Waugh and Evelyn Gardner (“She-Evelyn”) published in the London Sketch, early July 1928

This stylish Twenties portrait appeared shortly after Waugh’s marriage to Evelyn Gardner (referred to by their friends as “She-Evelyn” to avoid the inevitable confusion). Both parties to the marriage were immature, and the union was stressed by She-Evelyn’s illnesses. In July 1929, she announced that she loved another man. The marriage was soon dissolved, affecting Waugh deeply.

W1 and W2

“Battle” and “Scene of the Crime”

These are some of the earliest example of Evelyn’s juvenile artwork. Until he was well into his twenties, Evelyn thought of himself as destined to become an artist, and he is one of the few English novelists (Thackeray is another) to demonstrate real artistic talent.

W4/5 wall

“Illuminated Prayer” (1919) and “Three-Masted Ship,” not dated

This illumination won Evelyn a prize at Lancing School, and as a result, he was able to spend part of the following year studying with the calligrapher Francis Crease. Crease’s devotion to his craft and High Church leanings had a major influence on Waugh, but the relationship soured after the apprentice calligrapher used Crease’s favorite pen nib without permission.
Evelyn Waugh’s cover designs for The Broom, 1923-24

The Broom was founded by Harold Acton, already a sophisticated arbiter of taste at Oxford when Evelyn arrived. He later became a noted art critic. Though they were fundamentally different in manner and appearance, Waugh became fascinated with Acton and his set. Waugh’s cover designs for Acton’s avant-garde magazine show the imprint of the Vorticist movement in English art. During his school years, Waugh was highly appreciative of modernism in both art (he wrote an article in defense of Cubism) and literature (the poetry of T.S. Eliot).

The Pistol Troop Magazine, 1912

A juvenile publication illustrated by Evelyn and his friends, who formed the Pistol Troop, pledged to defend the London suburb of Hampstead against a German invasion. His contribution was a story entitled “Multa Pecunia.” Waugh recalled in his autobiography that as a lad he “wrote a great deal: intermittent diaries and illustrated stories. These were all imitative of the worst of my reading.”

Wood engravings, ca. 1922-1925

Waugh took a course in wood engraving and later produced several bookplates for friends, as well as magazine illustrations.
Evelyn Waugh  
Becoming a Writer

Certain to receive no better than a third-class degree and deep in debt, Waugh left Oxford in 1924. He attended art school, apprenticed with a printer and carpenter, and became a provincial schoolmaster until he was dismissed. In the late Twenties, Waugh met and married the vivacious Evelyn Gardner (“She-Evelyn”), but the marriage soon ended, leaving He-Evelyn depressed and bitter. Determined at last to embark on the family trade of man-of-letters, he published his first book, Rossetti, and his first novel, Decline and Fall. The success of the latter put him squarely in the public eye and Vile Bodies firmly established him as the wittiest chronicler of the age.

W17

Letter from Evelyn Gardner (“She-Evelyn”) to Mrs. Catherine Waugh, 29 December 1927

Following the breakup of a relationship, Waugh began spending time with Evelyn Gardner, a stylish flapper, in late 1927. Waugh was just beginning to embark on a literary career and in the following year would publish his first novel, Decline and Fall, and a biography of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. In this letter, She-Evelyn (as she was known by their friends) introduces herself to Evelyn’s mother Kate Waugh. By mid-1929, the marriage was over.

W24

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to A.D. Peters, ca. 13 December 1928

A.D. Peters, a family friend, became Evelyn’s literary agent in 1928. The Peters firm represented Waugh during his entire career. Following the success of Decline and Fall, Waugh asked Peters to market him to the press as a spokesman for the modern youth
movement. This was a canny strategy, insuring him of a steady stream of newspaper work for the next few years. The letter also refers to the breakdown of his relationship with his wife.

W18

Autograph manuscript of *Decline and Fall*, 1928

Waugh composed his first novel rapidly but discovered that it was too short (he once noted that he had the gift of being able to fit an entire novel on “two postcards”). The manuscript shows evidence of numerous additions, especially to the King’s Thursday section, to which it has been opened.

The opening of *Decline and Fall* is based on Waugh’s own experiences as a less than successful schoolmaster at Arnold House. The antihero Paul Pennyfeather, always acted upon rather than acting, finds himself caught up in various farcical events. Waugh saw fit to remind his readers that “IT IS MEANT TO BE FUNNY.”

W19

*Decline and Fall* (London, 1928)

Waugh’s first novel was rejected by another firm before being offered to Chapman & Hall, where Waugh’s father, Arthur, was Director. He had scruples about publishing a work by a family member, but the editorial board accepted it anyway. This proved to be a wise decision, since it sold extremely well and brilliantly launched Evelyn’s career as a novelist. The dustjacket design and illustrations (two of which are on the gallery walls) were by Waugh himself.

W12/14 WALL

Waugh’s pen-and-ink illustrations for *Decline and Fall*: “Prof. Otto Silenus” and “Grimes Was of the Immortals,” 1928
Margot Beste-Chetwynde, a predatory noblewoman who sets out to wed Paul Pennyfeather, hires the avant-garde architect Professor Silenus to renovate her country estate. Silenus, who prefers factories to houses, may have been based on the German architect Walter Gropius. Waugh’s satire is directed not only against modernist architecture, but also a society in decline and disconnected from its past, represented by Margot’s Tudor estate.

The homosexual schoolteacher Captain Edgar Grimes is based on Richard Young, who taught with Waugh at Arnold House. Some of the real figures caricatured in Decline and Fall threatened libel suits, and revisions had to be made to later editions.

W21

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Lord Baldwin (“Frisky”), 14 January 1932

“Frisky” (he was given the nickname because it rhymed with “whisky”) was the son of Stanley Baldwin, the Prime Minister, and a member of Waugh’s “fast set” of the early Thirties. This letter shows how hectic the novelist’s social life was at this time. The letter is signed “Boaz,” the nickname used by Waugh’s friends.

W22

Typescript of Vile Bodies, ca. 1930

The autograph of Vile Bodies is the only manuscript of a Waugh novel not held by the Ransom Center, although there is this fragmentary typescript. It is open to the author’s admonition to the “Bright Young Things,” the brilliant but feckless partygoers of the late Twenties and early Thirties, who populate the novel. It is a darker work than Decline and Fall and was influenced by Waugh’s 1930 conversion to Catholicism. The title suggests the vanity of the temporal world (the Bible’s “vile bodies”) in counterpoint with more spiritual values.
Evelyn Waugh’s copy of T.S. Eliot’s *Poems 1909-1925* (London, 1925)

Although by 1930 Waugh had thrown off his earlier enthusiasm for most modernist literature and art, his admiration for the poetry of T.S. Eliot continued. The criticism of modern culture in *Vile Bodies* is strikingly similar to that of *The Waste Land*. Then too, Eliot and Waugh were both converts who regarded the Church—Anglo-Catholicism in Eliot’s case and Catholicism in Waugh’s—as a bulwark in an age of chaos. Graham Greene also greatly admired Eliot.
Evelyn Waugh
When the Going Was Good

The Thirties began with Waugh’s conversion to Catholicism. The imprint of his faith may be seen in *Vile Bodies* but even more clearly in the cultural criticism of *A Handful of Dust*. At times oppressed by London life, Waugh began traveling abroad and writing about his discoveries—but more often about his discomforts. Later expeditions took him to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) to cover the coronation of Haile Selassie and he returned to the country a few years later to write about the Italian invasion. His experiences as a tourist and foreign correspondent provided the raw materials for works of fiction (*Black Mischief, Scoop*) as well as a series of travel books.

**W25**

“Travel—and Escape from Your Friends,” *Daily Mail*, 16 January 1933 Photocopy

Following the publication of *Black Mischief*, Waugh found himself at loose ends. He determined to throw off the constraints of London life by traveling to the jungles of British Guiana and Venezuela. Like his earlier trip to Africa, this voyage demonstrated his need to find “an element of danger and uncertainty in … life.” This newspaper piece sets forth his views on the importance of travel.

Graham Greene traveled for much the same reasons: to escape the rigors of civilization and seek out the stimulation of the primitive.

**W26**

Large paper edition of *Black Mischief* (London, 1932)

This novel emerged from Waugh’s 1930 trip to Abyssinia to cover the coronation of the Emperor Haile Selassie. Seth, the ruler of the primitive country of Azania, attempts to modernize his country and subjects with the help of the Englishman Basil Seal. While Waugh has been accused of racism for his condescending portrayal of
Africa and Africans, his satire is directed just as much against “civilized” European society. Thus Seth’s well-intentioned Westernizing impulses turn out not only to be futile but destructive. The limited edition contains twelve of Waugh’s illustrations in the style of Ethiopian art.

W27

Telegram to Evelyn Waugh from The Daily Mail, September 1935, bound into the typescript of Waugh in Abyssinia, 1936

Waugh returned to Abyssinia in 1935 to cover the Italian invasion. The Mail eventually fired him for incompetence and for being consistently “scooped” by other papers. This episode inspired an incident in Waugh’s novel, Scoop, in which the neophyte journalist, William Boot, is fired by his paper (The Beast) with a very similar telegram.

W28

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to W.N. Roughead (A.D. Peters), 8 May 1932

In this letter, Waugh expresses his high opinion of Black Mischief, which was completed the next month and published in late 1932. However, the book never received the acclaim of Waugh’s first two novels. Many critics perceived a decline in Waugh’s powers.

W90

Evelyn Waugh’s Diary for 1930-31
Open to 4 November 1930 entry

The entry reads “Cable arrived from express: ‘Coronation cable hopelessly late beaten every paper London.’” Waugh was covering the Abyssinian coronation for The Times, but this entry indicates that he
may also have been working on the side for *The Daily Express*, which found that his dispatches were not sufficiently timely and fired him.

W29

*Remote People* (London, 1931)

The map depicts Waugh’s 1930 journey to Abyssinia and other African countries. His experiences in this *terra incognita* were incorporated into *Remote People*. Some of the same events were given a comic twist the next year in *Black Mischief*. In later years, he went on to write books on trips during those prewar years when, as he put it, “the going was good.” Waugh’s travel writing is invariably opinionated, bilious, and politically incorrect by today’s standards, but it is rarely dull.

W30

Photograph of Evelyn Waugh’s bathroom, not dated

When Waugh remodeled Piers Court, his house in Gloucestershire, in the late 1930s, he furnished the bathroom with various souvenirs of his Abyssinian travels, not to mention the central “throne” with leopard skin arms. The door lock was unreliable and a warning sign had to be put up after the distinguished theologian, Father Ronald Knox, was locked in and had to crawl out of the window.
Evelyn Waugh
The Country Squire

By the mid-1930s, Waugh was well established as a writer. Yearning for the stability of a domestic life, he married Laura Herbert, a shy, much younger woman; moved to Piers Court, an eighteenth-century stone house in the country; and began outfitting it with antiques, artwork, books, and children (six in all).

W31

Manuscript and typescript of *A Handful of Dust*, 1934

*A Handful of Dust* grew out of Waugh’s 1933 short story “The Man Who Liked Dickens,” about a man (Tony Last) who is forced to read Dickens over and over again to his captor in South America. This was grafted onto the main part of the novel, and the join is visible at this point in the manuscript. Despite this structural problem, the portrayal of Tony and Brenda Last and their London social set represents Waugh’s best satire of the materialism and spiritual emptiness of the Thirties. The Lasts’ Gothic manor, Hetton Abbey, is also a focus for satire, and its chromium-plated remodeling at the hands of Mrs. Beaver becomes symbolic of England’s cutting itself off from the past.

W32

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to A.D. Peters, 27 February 1934

*A Handful of Dust* was published serially in the U.S. and was given an alternate happy ending, to which Waugh refers in this letter to his agent. At this point, he planned to call the book *A Handful of Ashes*. The final title alludes to Eliot’s *Waste Land*, and the same sense of spiritual desolation pervades the novel.
In 1934, Waugh was introduced to Laura Herbert, following a series of brief and unsatisfactory attachments. He described her to friends as “only 18 years old, virgin, Catholic, quiet & astute.” It took some time to win over her formidable mother, who regarded the divorced writer as an unsuitable prospect. Evelyn wrote his brother Alec that he found Laura to be compatible, although she was his temperamental opposite and was much younger. The couple married in 1937, and the union provided him with domestic stability and a reason to find a permanent residence in the country.

Piers Court, a Georgian stone house in Stinchcombe, Gloucestershire, was a wedding present from Waugh’s mother-in-law. After the Waugh's moved there in 1937, the novelist realized his dream of becoming a country squire. His literary success made it possible to remodel the house and extensively redo its gardens. Teresa, the first of the Waugh's six children (a seventh died soon after birth), was born there in 1938.

Waugh’s satire on journalism remains amazingly fresh after more than six decades. His fifth novel is based on his own experiences as a journalist, particularly his trip to Abyssinia to cover the Italian invasion of the country in 1935. The hapless young reporter William Boot is recruited by the London Daily Beast and is shipped off to Africa, complete with inflatable
canoe, to cover a coup. The incomprehensible telegraphic cables and scrambled messages Boot receives from his paper are not far removed from the ones Waugh received. Similarly, Waugh’s actual experience of translating an important dispatch into Latin to avoid detection and then having it discarded as gibberish comes very close to farce.

W60

Photographs of Waugh and family

Waugh once wrote: “Of children as of procreation—the pleasure momentary, the posture ridiculous, the expense damnable.” Although he alternated spells of withdrawal from his family with periods of irascibility and was far from a perfect father, he took great pride in his six children and their successes.

The photograph above was taken around 1950 in the garden of Piers Court. The photograph to the right was taken inside Waugh’s last home at Combe Florey not long after the family moved there in 1957.
Evelyn Waugh
Man at Arms

Waugh volunteered for duty in the Royal Marines in 1939 and later was assigned to a Commando unit. He saw active service in Africa, the Middle East, and the withdrawal from Crete in 1940-41 but sat out the middle years of the Second World War. In 1944 he was sent to Yugoslavia to assist Tito’s forces. *Put Out More Flags*, about the “Phoney War,” the *Sword of Honour* trilogy (1952-1962), and to a lesser extent *Brideshead Revisited* draw heavily on Waugh’s wartime experiences.

W50

Autograph manuscript of *Officers and Gentlemen*, 1952-54

Waugh followed *Men at Arms*, the first volume of his wartime trilogy, with *Officers and Gentlemen*, written over a relatively long period. His declining health and low spirits caused him to miss several deadlines. This leaf, showing signs of having been retrieved from Waugh’s wastepaper basket made from an elephant’s foot, may reflect his frustration with the book.

W51/73

Evelyn Waugh’s service patch and military identification cards

The 1941 identification card belongs to Waugh’s service with the Commando No. 8 unit in the Middle East. The Commandos were specialized units designed for hazardous duty, such as raiding parties on the French coast. The other card dates from the beginning of Waugh’s service in Croatia, where he was stationed in order to assist Tito and his partisans. The day after this card was produced, Waugh’s plane bound for Croatia crashed on landing, killing two passengers and sending Waugh to the hospital with burns.
Postcard from Evelyn Waugh to W.J. Igoe of the A.D. Peters firm, 4 August 1961

Waugh comments on two essential themes of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy: the tendency of all of the Crouchbacks, including his principal character Guy, to withdraw from life, and the notion that God has created each person with a special purpose in mind.

Evelyn Waugh’s copy of Cyril Connolly’s *The Unquiet Grave* (London, 1945)

Stationed in Yugoslavia during the last days of the war, Waugh decided to annotate a copy of Connolly’s *The Unquiet Grave*, a book of philosophical musings published under the pseudonym of “Palinurus.” Waugh’s caustic marginalia, some of them almost miniature essays, home in on Connolly’s sentimentality, sloppy theology, and even sloppier writing. In 1971, Connolly visited this institution and discovered the copy in his deceased friend’s library; the experience devastated him, and upon his return home, he sold off all of his inscribed Waugh first editions.

Colin Spencer, British, b. 1933
Portrait of Evelyn Waugh, early 1960s (?)
Pen and ink

Spencer, a multifaceted artist, writer, and cook, drew portraits of Waugh and Greene, both of which are in the Center’s collection.

On perimeter wall

Zdzislaw Czermanski, Polish, 1896-1970
Czermanski was born in Poland and lived in France and Brazil before settling in the United States in 1943. This is one of a series of caricature portraits of British and American literary notables produced by the artist. It shows the novelist with Queen Elizabeth and various English historical figures.
Evelyn Waugh

Brideshead Revisited

*Brideshead Revisited* has become Waugh’s most famous novel in large part because of the popular television adaptation of the 1980s. While it is certainly a “Catholic novel,” in a broader sense it can be regarded as a book about the search for faith in uncertain times. *Brideshead* is also concerned with the condition of England, and beyond that, the state of Western civilization at the end of the Second World War, a time that Waugh refers to as “the age of Hooper.”

A small vignette of a broken column surrounded by wartime destruction that appears on the binding of the American first edition is a visual reminder that *Brideshead Revisited* is about “writing among the ruins.”

Madresfield Court

This great red-brick manor house in the Malvern hills was one of the models for Brideshead, the other being Castle Howard in Yorkshire, the Palladian stone mansion used for the filming of the television series. In the early 1930s Waugh visited the Lygon family’s estate on many occasions in order to escape from London. He and the three unmarried Lygon sisters developed a set of nicknames (Evelyn was “Boaz” or “Bo”) and a private language. The Madresfield Court chapel had been redecorated in a bizarre art nouveau style that closely matches the description of the Brideshead chapel.

W38

Autograph manuscript of *Brideshead Revisited*, 1944

Waugh had a clear sense of purpose and design when he set out to write *Brideshead*, and the novel is more carefully structured than any of his previous works. Despite being sent abroad, he managed to
finish the manuscript in less than six months. On this page, Waugh has indicated to his typist that the name of his principal character (Peter Fenwick) should be changed throughout to Charles Ryder.

W40

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to A.D. Peters, 20 May 1944

Near the end of his work on *Brideshead*, Waugh proposed to add a subtitle (he later decided the same one would appear on both the title page and the dustjacket) and observed that “the whole thing is steeped in theology.” Critics have agreed with his remarks about the enigmatic nature of Lady Marchmain, who behaves erratically and sometimes cruelly toward both her son and the narrator, Charles Ryder.

W78

*Brideshead Revisited* (Privately published edition, 1944)

Waugh regarded this novel as “my first important one” and asked his publisher to prepare an edition of 250 copies for Christmas distribution in England, after which he proposed to make revisions. He waited expectantly for reactions and was pleased that most of his friends regarded it as a masterpiece, although Laura Waugh did not praise it enough to satisfy him.

W41

Brochure for *Brideshead Revisited* television series, 1981

The BBC television production, starring Jeremy Irons as Charles Ryder, was enormously successful and established *Brideshead* as the best known of Waugh’s novels. The miniseries focused on Charles’s Oxford days and his romance with Julia, downplaying the novel’s Catholic themes.
Letter from L.G. Raymond Everitt (A.D. Peters Ltd.) to Little, Brown, 15 August 1944

Writing to Waugh’s American publisher, his literary agent expresses his lack of confidence in the author’s choice of title. However, Little, Brown had every reason to expect that the book would be a major transatlantic success—as indeed it was.

Carbon copy of a letter from Evelyn Waugh to Bill Stirling (Waugh’s commanding officer), 24 January 1944

Back in England after service abroad, Waugh states his reasons for requesting a leave of absence to write Brideshead Revisited, which he felt would take about three months. The request was granted at first and then canceled before he could make much headway. For the rest of the war, Waugh was stationed in Yugoslavia. Remarkably, he managed to complete the novel by June.

Brideshead Revisited (London, 1945)

The dustjacket flap of the English first edition contains Waugh’s warning to the reader regarding his serious intent and his “attempt to trace the workings of the divine purpose in [the] pagan world” of the 1920s. Those workings are shown primarily in the slow drift of the narrator, Charles Ryder, toward the Catholic Church and in the suffering and spiritual rebirth of Sebastian Flyte, the Marchmains’ troubled younger son. Waugh also directs us to look carefully at the writing itself; most readers would agree that from a stylistic point of view, Brideshead is his masterpiece.
Evelyn Waugh

*The Loved One*

Waugh returned from a trip to California and Forest Lawn Cemetery in 1947 armed with plenty of material for a satire on American life. *The Loved One* is black humor at its best, a masterpiece of comic compression. It satirizes not only the commercialization of death but also a whole culture’s worship of temporal things—the “vanity of vanities” of Ecclesiastes.

W44

Autograph manuscript of *The Loved One*, 1947

In this episode, the bemused English expatriate Dennis Barlow must make funeral arrangements for his uncle, who has committed suicide in Hollywood. Dennis arrives at Whispering Glades Memorial Park and is introduced to Aimée Thanatogenos (“loved one” in French plus “born of death” in Greek), an attractive cosmetician. The two discuss choices of casket and cosmetics. It is apparent from the manuscript that Waugh distilled some of his satire of Forest Lawn’s artwork in the process of revision.

W45

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Cyril Connolly, 11 December 1947

*The Loved One* first appeared in a single issue of *Horizon*, edited by Waugh’s old friend Cyril Connolly. Waugh hoped that it could be published by itself and wondered if it would look preposterous if it appeared alongside something by the Catholic apologist Father Ronald Knox.
Evelyn Waugh’s copy of the *Art Guide of Forest Lawn* (Glendale, 1941)

Souvenir postcards and ashtray from Forest Lawn Cemetery

In 1947, the Waugh’s visited California so that Evelyn could discuss a film treatment of *Brideshead Revisited* with Hollywood moguls. He asked to tour the famous Forest Lawn Cemetery and took away the *Art Guide* and a book on embalming. This trip provided the inspiration for *The Loved One*, Waugh’s satire on the American way of death, and by extension, American culture. Some descriptions of the sculpture in Waugh’s “Whispering Glades Memorial Park” are taken almost wholesale from the Forest Lawn guide, as is the fictional cemetery’s sanitizing of death.

W48 W49 wall

Lobby poster and publicity stills for the film version of *The Loved One*

Billed as “the motion picture with something to offend everybody,” the Tony Richardson production of Waugh’s novel, as adapted by Terry Southern, featured Jonathan Winters as the unctuous mortician Mr. Joyboy, as well as Milton Berle and Liberace in cameo roles.
Evelyn Waugh
Last Years

When we think of Waugh in the 1950s and 60s, the image that comes to mind is the famous photograph of him sticking his Victorian ear trumpet in someone’s face. For Waugh, old age began early—around fifty. He was overweight, deaf, and suffered from a variety of physical and mental ailments that interfered with writing and frustrated him. An overdose of medications led to the nightmare internal voyage portrayed in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. Waugh’s lifelong pugnacity became even more prominent, leading to increasing social isolation, though he continued to cultivate the relationships that were most dear to him—including, of course, the one with Graham Greene.

W61

Form postcard, 1950s(?)

As the years went by, Waugh wanted to have less and less to do with journalists, admirers, fellow writers, and anyone requesting favors. He seldom saw friends but continued active correspondences with a few people, such as Nancy Mitford. This postcard was used to ward off people who attempted to contact him. On the other hand, drop-in visitors to Waugh’s house at Combe Florey—even Americans—were often received warmly.

W63

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to A.D. Peters, 17 June 1958

The oldest Waugh son, Auberon (“Bron”), was seriously wounded in a military training accident in 1958. Laura Waugh flew overseas to be with him. This was a serious blow to Waugh’s morale, although Bron subsequently recovered and became a well-known essayist, diarist, and raconteur.
Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Alec Waugh, 6 March 1966

Evelyn’s last letter to his brother Alec reflects his dispirited mental condition and poor health. Even in twilight, the wit sparkles: “I think I once saw a play about Oklahoma [where Alec was teaching]. They did not seem a very critical people.”
Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh
Their Friendship

Waugh and Greene were born a year apart (Waugh in 1903, Greene in 1904), went to Oxford University about the same time, and converted to Catholicism as young men. They were temperamentally similar: both suffered from depression (and attempted suicide in their youth) and had a lifelong fear of ennui. In Shirley Hazzard’s words, they were also alike “in some dire aspects of temper, in the force of an angry blue stare, and in an intermittent compulsion to wreak social and emotional havoc.”

From the beginning of the friendship in the 1930s, Greene regarded Waugh and his work almost with reverence. Waugh, on the other hand, respected Greene as a novelist but also was frequently troubled by what he regarded as the latter’s serious theological lapses. Waugh’s political and religious conservatism inevitably came in conflict with Greene’s sympathy with the downtrodden and his liberalism on matters of dogma. Nevertheless, the friendship managed to survive even the writers’ frank exchange of views over Greene’s *Burnt-Out Case* (1961) documented in this case.

W70

Evelyn Waugh’s copy of Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* (Classics Illustrated edition, 1951)

Graham Greene’s inscription to Catherine Walston reads: With so much love to Catherine in Rome after she had finished his book [and] in memory of a level crossing & waiting for a train to go by. June 1952 from Graham. (“I wish I knew a nice man”)

Greene warmly inscribed this comic book to his longtime mistress Catherine Walston, who in turn inscribed it to Waugh for his “collection of Russian novels.” Greene was always grateful to Waugh for receiving Catherine at his house, despite the fact that Greene was still married to Vivien and therefore in an adulterous relationship.
Evelyn Waugh’s copy of Graham Greene’s *A Burnt-Out Case* (London, 1961)


Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Graham Greene, 5 January 1961
From the Waugh papers, Georgetown University Library

Letter from Graham Greene to Evelyn Waugh, 4 January 1961 (facsimile)
From the Greene papers, British Library

Waugh’s comment written below his friend’s inscription becomes less inscrutable when we look at his letter to Greene of the day before. Waugh had been asked by the *Daily Mail* to review Greene’s latest novel, *A Burnt-Out Case*. He refused because the book seemed to him to be almost a “recantation of faith.” In the letter, Waugh refers to Robert Browning’s “The Lost Leader” and quotes bits of it in the inscription. In Browning’s poem, the speaker castigates his former leader, once known for “his mild and magnificent eye” for selling out his followers. Waugh’s implication in both the letter and the inscription is clear: Greene had effectively abandoned his faith. Greene’s letter of 4 January argues that the theological views of his characters are not necessarily the same as his own.

Evelyn Waugh’s copy of Graham Greene’s *Loser Takes All* (London, 1955)

Greene’s inscription reads: “To hell with ‘the conflict between Good & Evil in Mr Graham Greene’s books.’”
Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh
The Cinema

G38, 39, 88, 37

Top left: Unidentified photographer. Image of Graham Greene, David O. Selznick, and Carol Reed meeting in Santa Monica, California, about the film *The Third Man*, ca. August 1948

Bottom left: Telegram from David O. Selznick to Graham Greene, 20 August 1948

Top right: Anton Karas records the zither music for the soundtrack of *The Third Man* (in Charles Draznin’s *In Search of The Third Man*, London: Methuen, 1999)

Bottom right: Dust jacket of Greene’s *The Third Man & The Fallen Idol* (London: William Heinemann, 1950)

Produced and directed by Carol Reed and recognized as one of the best British films ever made, *The Third Man* had its origins in a 1948 trip Graham Greene made to Vienna. His guide was Elizabeth Montagu (later Varley), the daughter of a British Lord who rejected a life of privilege and worked as an actress, musician, journalist, wartime ambulance driver, spy, film writer, dialogue director and librettist.

Alexander Korda and David O. Selznick were co-producers of *The Third Man*. Selznick’s telegram to Greene refers to Greene’s brief indisposition at the end of his visit to Hollywood and plays on the titles of two of Greene’s novels, *The Heart of the Matter* and *The Power and the Glory* (first published in the U.S. as *The Labyrinthine Ways*).

When *The Third Man* opened, the zither twang of “The Third Man Theme” proved a sensation and its composer and performer, Anton Karas, shown top right here, was dubbed the ‘Fourth Man.’ More than 40 million copies of the tune have been sold.
The American edition of the novelized version of *The Third Man* appeared first, but the text omitted any passages that might have offended the Russians. The English edition of the novel, published along with *The Fallen Idol*, contains the complete text as Greene wrote it.

G9

First draft of Graham Greene’s screen adaptation of George Bernard Shaw’s play, *St. Joan*, ca. 1956

When Otto Preminger commissioned Graham Greene to prepare a screen version of Shaw’s play about Joan of Arc, he gave Greene just six weeks to complete the job, unaware that Shaw had actually first adapted his play for film in the 1930s. Released in 1957 under the same title as the play, Preminger’s film is regarded by some as one of the worst films made about Joan of Arc.

Greene found himself accused of de-Protestantizing Shaw’s play, a suggestion he found offensive, as he wrote to the *New Statesman* on September 1957: “No line was altered for the purpose of watering down Shaw’s Protestantism or instilling a Catholic tone.” He had earlier told the *Evening Standard’s* Thomas Wiseman that St. Joan “is one of the few Shaw plays that I like. I’m in sympathy with what he says. I shan’t change any of his ideas.”

G51

Letter from Graham Greene to Tom Stoppard, 9 January 1979

As Tom Stoppard was writing the script for the film of Greene’s *The Human Factor*, released in 1980, he consulted Greene several times. Greene responded thoughtfully and sometimes, as he describes here, in a “self contradictory” fashion.

Greene described his ambitions for the novel and, by extension, the film, in *Ways of Escape*:

My ambition after the war was to write a novel of espionage free from the conventional violence, which has not, in spite of James Bond, been a feature of the British Secret Service. I wanted to present the
Service unromantically as a way of life, men going daily to their office to earn their pensions...an undangerous routine, and within each character the more important private life.

The film, perhaps by adapting the novel too closely, captures, as one critic put it, “the book’s humdrum tone” and, by extension, slows the film’s pace too much for “the average viewer of spy stories.”

In the 1960s Greene traveled widely. His peregrinations included Moscow, East Germany, Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba (he met Fidel Castro in 1964), Israel, Paraguay and Czechoslovakia. As he told one interviewer: “I’ve often been asked what draws me to these places and the only answer I can think of is that politics out there are not an alternation of political parties but a matter of life and death.”

In 1966 Greene published one of his grimmest novels, *The Comedians*, which was written as an indictment of Papa Doc’s brutal regime in Haiti. The issue of Railliement on display, annotated as an “extreme left-wing” underground newspaper that “speaks for communist parties in Haiti,” lampoons Duvalier as a yo-yo-ing despot in a front-page cartoon.

Duvalier’s Department of Foreign Affairs reacted to Greene’s novel by issuing a pamphlet titled *Graham Greene Unmasked* that depicted Greene as a sadist, spy, torturer, and drug addict. Greene, in turn, was flattered that his writing had “drawn blood.”

Working with the Director Peter Glenville, Greene wrote the screen adaptation of *The Comedians* himself. A more intellectual film than Greene’s films of the 1940s the script was, in Judith Adamson’s words, “full of the kind of complex dialogue usually reserved for the theater.” Perhaps
not surprisingly since it was Peter Glenville who had staged Greene’s play _The Living Room_ in 1953.

The film starred Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, Alec Guinness, and Peter Ustinov who, as he writes in this letter, took on the role of Ambassador Pineda, characterizing himself as “among the most understanding Paraguayan cuckolds on the market.”

G6

Letter from Robert Vogel of MGM to Peter Glenville, 2 September 1966

Vogel outlines the objections of the Hollywood Production Code Administrators (with reference to The National Catholic Office for Films) with the script for _The Comedians_.

The film met with mixed reviews, perhaps because the plot was less straightforward and the situations described left ambiguous. The critic Dilys Powell complained about the altered ending and Andrew Sarris faulted the director with missing cues clearly given in Greene’s script. But both Arthur Knight and Ian Christie thought the adaptation skillful and well written.

W76 (cinema case shared with GG)

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Dudley Carew, January 1921

This early letter to his Lancing school friend, Carew (who had sent him the draft of a novel for comment), sets forth Waugh’s views on the relationship between the cinema and the novel; both must “make things happen” by showing rather than telling. Three years later, Waugh acted in Terence Greenidge’s amateur film “The Scarlet Woman.”

Though Waugh did not know as much about the medium as Greene, he was keenly interested in the ability of film to capture multiple perspectives. This kind of simultaneity is characteristic of the narrative technique in _Vile Bodies_, to take one example.
Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh

Catholicism

Greene once said that Waugh came to the Catholic Church because he needed a bulwark against the world’s chaos and his own sense of despair. Once he had converted, Waugh never wavered in his view that the Church was the principal civilizing, ordering force operating in the ruins of the modern world. Greene’s converted partly for practical reasons (so that he could marry a Catholic woman) and partly because it led him to “faith in the possibility that we have eternal importance. A religious sense makes the individual more important.” For the rest of his life, he struggled to retain that faith, like so many of his characters. Not surprisingly, his letters show that his perspective on the Church, its rituals, and its teachings was constantly shifting.

G10 and Life photocopy

Autograph manuscript of Greene’s “The Mother of God,” September 1950, and part of the published article: “The Assumption of Mary” (photocopy), Life, 30 October 1950

Greene writes about his personal belief in the Assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven as a cornerstone of Christian belief. This article was occasioned by the Pope’s proclamation of the Assumption as dogma of the Catholic Church. He also examines some of the visions and miracles associated with the Virgin and is inclined to believe in these supernatural events, as he did in the miracles of Padre Pio.

G71

Letter from Graham Greene to Marcel Moré, 12 July 1950

Moré was the editor of a Catholic magazine and the translator of The Heart of the Matter into French. Here Greene responds in some detail to some of Moré’s questions regarding the character of Scobie, the Commissioner of Police who is caught between two women and finally commits suicide. While some readers exonerated Scobie, Greene intended to portray him as a
victim of his own pride. In later years, the novelist regarded the book as a technical failure: “The scales to me seem too heavily weighted, the plot overloaded, the religious scruples of Scobie too extreme.”

G78

Letter from Graham Greene to George Barker, 13 September 1967

The eccentric Catholic poet Barker had sent Greene a candle and Greene responded by confessing that “I half-believe myself in prayers & candles, & at least they do no harm.” In 1925, he had written to Vivien, before his conversion and their marriage, “I went [to church] and lit the candles, although I felt fearfully nervous, as I thought I ought to be doing genuflexions and things.” Greene’s feelings about the outward trappings of the Catholic faith were ambivalent, as the key verb “half-believe” suggests.

G8

Letter from Graham Greene to Tom Burns, 15 May 1978

Tom Burns was the publisher of the Catholic magazine *The Tablet*. Greene served for many years as one of its trustees. This letter proposes an article to be based on contemporary responses to a religious questionnaire that Greene had discovered in the letters of William James (the author of *Varieties of Religious Experience*). The proposed topic indicates something of Greene’s continuing interest in the borderlands between “honesty and self-deception” in religious experience.

G89, G90

Letter from Graham Greene to Vivien Greene, 10 December 1949
Letter from Graham Greene to Mr. Brian, 27 November 1974

In the letter to his wife, Greene describes a mass led by the Italian priest and miracle-worker Padre Pio. Greene was deeply moved by viewing his stigmata (crucifixion wounds) and the service remained one of his strongest memories. The later letter is much more matter-of-fact in tone and notes that
Greene never attempted to arrange an interview with Padre Pio; as he wrote elsewhere: “I don’t want to change my life by meeting a saint. And I felt that there was a good chance that he was one.”

W55

Letter from Arthur Waugh to Sir Compton Mackenzie, 22 June 1922

This letter from Waugh’s father reminds us that his family had strong Anglo-Catholic roots. In short, Waugh’s conversion to Catholicism in 1930 did not come ex nihilo.

W56

Helena (London, 1950)

Waugh often insisted that Helena was his best novel. Hardly anyone agrees with that verdict, but the work is certainly among his most pious. St. Helena was born in Britain and was the mother of the Emperor Constantine. She converted to Christianity and led a search for the True Cross, leading to her canonization. Waugh had written a short story about Helena in 1945 that became the basis for the novel.

W57

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Edith Sitwell, 9 August 1958

In 1955, Waugh’s friend Edith Sitwell decided to convert to Catholicism, with Waugh serving as her sponsor. In this revealing and intimate letter, Waugh refers to some of the tenets of his personal faith (“I know I am awful. But how much more awful I should be without the Faith.”) Father Philip Caraman was a Waugh confidante who converted Sitwell and the novelist Muriel Spark.
The “Victorian Blood Book”

This large oblong scrapbook contains twenty collages consisting of carefully cut out and assembled engravings from books embellished with hand-colored drops of “blood” and handwritten religious commentaries. The emphasis throughout is on images of the Crucifixion, birds, and snakes. The album, familiarly known as the “Victorian Blood Book,” is an object of fascination, horror, and mystery. We know that it was created, or at least commissioned by, a Victorian businessman and politician named John Bingley Garland, an Englishman who was one of the founding fathers of Newfoundland, and was given to his daughter Amy in 1854 as a wedding present. How and when Waugh acquired it is unknown.

This astonishingly grotesque book (at least to modern eyes), appealed to Waugh’s well-known and lifelong obsession with collecting the bizarre, whether books or bric-a-brac. “By choosing preposterous objects as possessions I keep them at arm’s length,” Waugh once confided to his diary.
Graham Greene was born in 1904 in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. His mother was a first cousin of Robert Louis Stevenson, one of Greene's early literary heroes, and Greene was himself a cousin of the novelist Christopher Isherwood. When he was fourteen, Greene became a border at Berkhamsted School where he was bullied and torn between his loyalties to his fellow students and to his father who was its headmaster. Greene later acknowledged that this experience of divided loyalties provided a key theme in his work as a writer.

Greene began his writing career during the modernist movement, an exciting period of literary experiment and innovation whose leaders included James Joyce, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot. In a period of ideological conflict and of political struggle and unrest that included two great world wars, Greene followed his own personal vision as a writer and, unlike many other writers of comparable achievement, communicated with a worldwide popular audience over his entire career. He had a passion for the cinema and many his works were filmed. His great technical achievement was the elevation of the “thriller” into a medium for serious fiction.

_Babbling April, Poems_ (London: Basil Blackwell, 1925), inscribed by Greene to his aunt Maud Greene

This was Graham Greene's first published book, its title taken from a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay. He entered Balliol College, Oxford in 1922 and began contributing poems to little magazines, wrote his first unpublished novel (“Anthony Sant,”1924), and was an editor of and contributor to the _Oxford Outlook_. Nearing the end of his student days he briefly joined the Communist Party of Great Britain.
The Little Wings: Poems and Essays by Vivienne Dayrell (Vivienne Dayrell-Browning), with an introduction by G.K. Chesterton (London: Basil Blackwell, 1921)

This book by Graham Greene’s wife (she later shortened her name to Vivien) was published when she sixteen years old. She had worked at the Blackwell publishing firm for a year before they published her book. G.K. Chesterton, a prolific man-of-letters, in his introduction says: “I should not write an introduction to any work which I did not think promising and beautiful; and I think this work very beautiful and still more promising.” Vivien Greene converted to Catholicism when she was seventeen and remained devoted to the Church until her death.

G 24

Letter from Graham Greene to Vivienne Dayrell-Browning, 10 September 1925

The Ransom Center holds nearly eight hundred letters Graham Greene wrote to the woman he declared himself "frantically in love" with soon after meeting in 1925. Vivian Dayrell-Browning, a year younger than Greene, wrote a letter to the Oxford Outlook correcting religious terminology Greene used in an article he had written. Greene wrote her, apologizing for his mistake and inviting her to tea. Thus began a tremendous epistolary outpouring by Greene, often very long letters written at three times during a single day, as is the case with this one. He first proposed to her in June 1925.

One gathers she turned him down, then and later, because of a fear of marriage and its sexual component on her part, and because she perceived in him a certain emotional instability. But her overriding objection seems to have been grounded in the issue of religious unbelief. Greene's conversion to Catholicism in 1926 overcame that objection. They were married in 1927.
“For Vivienne. Christmas 1926. A Private Book, which will never have an end. All the verses, indiscriminate of value, which you have caused”

This album contains forty-nine pages of manuscript poems by Graham Greene, the earliest ones in his hand, with some later poems in Vivien’s hand and some printed poems pasted in until 1932. These pages reveal Greene’s fondness for epigraphs. He published a small book with the Nonesuch Press in 1989 called Why the Epigraph? in which he printed, with notes, the many epigraphs he used in his books. He advises novelists to respond in this way to readers asking what their book is about: “Save your obviously valuable time and read only the epigraph, which is usually printed on the title page, for the epigraph is what the novel is about.”

Letter from Vivien Greene to Selina Hastings, 10 April 1996

In this letter to the biographer of Evelyn Waugh, Nancy Mitford and Rosamond Lehmann, Vivien Greene writes concerning an account in Anthony Powell’s Journals of a dinner in the Greenes’ Clapham Common house in 1938. Powell writes that the other guests were “a minor civil servant and wife of infinite dreariness.” He also notes that “Vivien Greene, a woman of considerable pretentiousness, middlebrow views, was presumably responsible for insisting on evening dress. One is surprised Graham managed to stand living with her as long as he did, which indeed, was not long.”

Vivien Greene also refers to two of Greene’s mistresses, Dorothy Glover and Catherine Walston for whom Greene left his family in 1947.
Manuscript of Greene’s *The Man Within*, ca. late 1926

Greene’s first published novel bears the following dedication: “For Vivienne/My Wife/In Wonder.” The epigraph is taken from Sir Thomas Browne: “There’s another man within me that’s angry with me.”

Greene described the novel in *A Sort of Life* (1971) as “the story of a hunted man, of smuggling and treachery, of murder and suicide.” Later in his life he told an interviewer that his first books were “very bad, full of metaphors which I chose for their extravagance, influenced as I was by my readings in the ‘twenties, when I was attached to the English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century. There’s nothing worse than poetic prose.”

The novel was enthusiastically accepted and published with great success in 1929 by the London firm of William Heinemann. Two reprints were sold before publication, six impressions issued within six months, and it was published in this country by Doubleday and translated into five languages.

But its success, which later mystified Greene, was temporary. It was not reprinted until it appeared in this 1947 edition by Viking with Greene’s revisions: “but when I had finished my sad and hopeless task, the story remained just as shamefully romantic, the style as derivative, and I had eliminated the only quality it may possess—youth and the morbidity of youth.” Greene inscribed the copy to his long-time friend at Heinemann: “This attempt to eliminate sentimentality from this terrible book.”

Unknown photographer. Image of Graham Greene, ca. 1926

Early in 1926 *The Times* of London hired Greene as a subeditor. Happily married in 1927, he worked in the evenings at *The Times* and in the mornings on *The Man Within* (1929), his first published novel. Then his
publisher, on the strength of the success of *The Man Within*, guaranteed him £600 a year for three years, allowing him to resign from *The Times* and devote himself full-time to writing. Poor sales of Greene’s next two novels, *The Name of Action* (1930) and *Rumour at Nightfall* (1931), impelled him to aim for a sure-fire crowd-pleaser. *Stamboul Train* (1932) was the result.

G 53

Letter from Graham Greene to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 19 November 1931

Lady Ottoline Morrell—an eccentric friend and patron of artists, writers, philosophers and politicians—was the model for unflattering characters in novels by an number of writers, most notably D.H. Lawrence and Aldous Huxley. Graham Greene drew a sympathetic portrait of her in *It’s a Battlefield*. Here he thanks her for an encouraging letter about that novel: “I think myself the book to be my best, but I seem doomed to please no one after *The Man Within.*”
Unidentified photographer. A Mexican priest who was first shot and then hanged. A sheet of paper, stating his crime of being a priest, is nailed to his body, ca. early 1930s

In an interview in 1973 Graham Greene was asked which of his books meant the most to him. He answered: “I think probably The Power and the Glory… Because I think. . technically perhaps . . . it’s my best book.” Many would agree with this evaluation. It is a theological thriller about a Mexican whiskey priest with an illegitimate daughter who believes he has lost his soul. He is running for his life from an anti-clerical government that has outlawed the Church and is killing priests.

Greene said that nothing was further from his thoughts than a novel before or during his trip to Mexico. But a month after the publication of The Lawless Roads he began writing this novel, the only one he said was written to a thesis: “It is really an attempt to understand a permanent religious situation. The function of the priesthood. I was much more interested in the theological point of view than in the political one.”

The Lawless Roads was Graham Greene’s second travel book. The first was Journey Without Maps (1936), Greene’s account of an arduous trek he made through Liberia with his twenty-three-year-old cousin Barbara Greene.

In 1937 Greene was literary editor of the short-lived Night and Day, in which he published a review of a Shirley Temple film that provoked a successful libel case against the magazine. The magazine’s closure allowed Greene to accept a commission to write this book about the plight of the
Mexican Catholic church. In it he offers his impressions of the 1938 trip, largely in the states of Tabasco and Chiapas, shortly after, as he described it, “the country suffered at the hands of President Calles—in the name of revolution—the fiercest persecution of religion anywhere since the reign of Elizabeth.” He said that before this trip his religious belief was largely intellectual. “I felt no emotional attachment to Catholicism until I went to Mexico during the Persecution there and that gave me a sense of sympathy for the persecuted, which gave an emotional attachment to my faith.”

G 50

Letter from Graham Greene to Elizabeth Bowen, 13 April 1938

In this letter from Mexico to the Anglo-Irish novelist, Greene mentions that he had recently been “driven distracted by rats” in a “wretched village” when he found in the house of a Norwegian widow the only novel by Bowen he had not read. “So all of two nights I was able to sit up & read by an electric torch & drink bad brandy & quite forget the rats.” He also mentions he has received a cable asking him “to agree to apologize to that little bitch Shirley Temple.”

The widow, with two young daughters, was trying to carry on her husband’s coffee farm. Her elder daughter was the model for Coral Fellows, the brave girl who feeds and shelters the whiskey priest in The Power and the Glory. An exchange of views about writing between Greene, Elizabeth Bowen and V.S. Pritchett, entitled Why Do I Write, was published in 1948.

G 32

Graham Greene manuscript diary, 1933

The diary is opened to typical pages. The left-hand page sums up Greene’s activity in the month of February, and on the following page he begins his entry for March 1st. In February he had written “8,500 words of Opus V. (26,000 words completed),” referring to what would become his fifth published novel (1934) and given the title It’s a Battlefield. He notes word counts and fees received for reviews and articles he wrote for magazines and lists the ten novels and twelve other books he had read that month. On March 1st he wrote 500 words of the novel (his usual strict daily quota early
in his career), “passed a sticky patch for the moment & am sailing in easy waters,” and comments on the development of two of the novel’s characters. He read Elizabeth Bowen’s “brilliant & beautiful” To the North.

G 34

Letter from Graham Greene to Christopher Hawtree, 18 November 1987

Christopher Hawtree, a young literary journalist whom Greene admired, compiled an anthology of Greene’s magazine Night and Day, and edited Yours Etc., a selection of Greene’s letters to the press. In an earlier letter to Hawtree in the Ransom Center, Greene encourages him to do a film treatment of It’s a Battlefield (1934), a novel strongly influenced by Joseph Conrad’s The Secret Agent. He notes that it had never been filmed “although it is the only book of mine which I definitely wrote with films in mind. Simenon wanted to do it but never did.” In this letter Greene says he feels Hawtree has been “a little too faithful to the book” in cutting away from characters in short scenes.

The P.S. of this letter concludes: “you do. What I hadn’t realized was that in a longer scene the camera can move even though the scene remains the same. P.P.S. I like the ending!

G 80

Draft typescript for the Introduction to A Gun for Sale in the Collected Edition of Greene’s works, 4 October 1972

Greene said that in Stamboul Train (1932) he for the first and last time in his career “deliberately set out to write a book to please, one which with luck might be made into a film. The devil looks after his own and I succeeded in both aims.” He notes that the two subsequent novels met with relatively little commercial success, and he decided, with A Gun for Sale (1936), to alternate his novels with thrillers that he called “entertainments.” Later novels which bore the subtitle “An Entertainment” included The Confidential Agent ((1939), The Ministry of Fear (1943), and Our Man in Havana (1958). Eventually, however, this distinction was rescinded.
Revised page proofs for *Brighton Rock* in the Collected Edition of Greene’s works, 1969

*Brighton Rock* (1938) was a milestone in Greene’s career, the first of his novels that specifically dealt with a Catholic theme, although Catholicism figured significantly in some earlier novels. Greene noted that all his published novels had been written after his conversion in 1926, “but no one had noticed the faith to which I belonged before the publication *Brighton Rock*."

The novel is set in one of England’s most popular seaside resorts, a city which had a hold on Greene’s affections. He insisted that in other novels he had “carefully and accurately” described the settings: “‘This is Indo-China,’ I want to exclaim, ‘this is Mexico, this is Sierra Leone,’” but suggested the setting of this one book may in part belong to an imaginary geographic region. The novel deals with sin, damnation, and salvation. “I tried,” Greene said, “to present the reader with a creature whom he could accept as worthy of hell. . .I wanted to instill in the reader’s mind a fundamental doubt of hell.”

The first American edition of the novel lacks some of the Jewish allusions of the first British edition, and in these revised proofs for the Collected Edition Greene, among other changes, removed various Jewish references.

Letter from Richard Church to Graham Greene, 8 September 1938

Richard Church, whose large archive is in the Ransom Center, was a poet, prolific novelist, and literary critic. He was a regular contributor to *The Spectator*, as was Graham Greene, who wrote both film and book reviews for it. In 1937 Greene had reviewed in *The Tablet* the first volume, entitled *The Porch*, of Church’s trilogy of novels based on his early life.
Graham Greene’s journal of the London Blitz, titled “The Defenders,” 1940-41

Londoners who survived the German raid on London on April 16, 1941, called it “The Wednesday,” when, in a single night, 100,000 homes were destroyed and 2,000 civilians lost their lives. Graham Greene’s journal for that day records the pandemonium.

Graham and Vivien Greene had lost their own home in Clapham Common in the fall of 1940, although Vivien took the loss much harder than Graham, who Malcolm Muggeridge suggested, was relieved by the house’s destruction of both a financial and a moral burden.

During the blitz of London in 1940-1941, Greene served in the Air Raid Precautions (ARP) along with Dorothy Glover, his mistress, who was assigned as a shelter warden. Although the were both involved in some harrowing rescues, the two passed calmer blackout times by making up children’s stories; the text being provided by Greene and the illustrations by Glover who published under the name Dorothy Craigie.

Manuscript diary of a voyage to Sierra Leone, 1941

Greene joined the British Secret Intelligence Service in August 1941, and was assigned to Freetown, Sierra Leone, in December. This record of the outbound trip is the only one that Greene, for security reasons, was able to keep of what he called “this bizarre period of my life.” The work was ill-defined and boring but Sierra Leone became the setting for The Heart of the Matter. Edited version of this and another African journal of Greene’s were published in 1961 as In Search of A Character; Two African Journals.

Disbound copy of Greene’s The Heart of the Matter (1948) in the 1951 Uniform Edition
When Greene had an opportunity to revise *The Heart of the Matter* for the 1970 Collected Edition of his novels, he added a substantial amount of dialogue in Book One of the novel, in one instance reinserting a passage he had cut from the book when preparing the first edition for publication. In *Ways of Escape* he explained his original reason for excising it: “By eliminating it I thought I gained intensity and impetus, but I had sacrificed tone. In later editions I reinserted the passage.”

Evelyn Waugh wrote about this novel of Greene’s: “To me the idea of willing my own damnation for the love of God is either a very loose poetical expression or a mad blasphemy, for the God who accepted that sacrifice could be neither just nor lovable.”

G35


Although *The End of the Affair* was largely based on the break-up of Greene’s affair with Catherine Walston, this copy is inscribed to another of his mistresses.

Greene met Dorothy Glover in 1939 when he rented rooms from her mother in order to complete work on his novel *The Power and the Glory*. War was about to reach Britain and Greene and Glover, three years his senior, began an affair that lasted for more than nine years.

G11

Printer’s proof copy of Greene’s *The End of the Affair* (London: William Heinemann, 1951) with corrections by Graham Greene, also read and emended by Evelyn Waugh, 1951

Greene, in *Ways of Escape*, writes about the difficulty he had in creating narrative interest in *The End of the Affair* once he had made the decision to write it in the “I” voice. He found it very difficult to vary the tone with just one narrative voice but the exercise ultimately benefited him. He wrote: “I was later grateful for the two years’ practice I had had in the use of the first person or I might have been afraid to use it in *The Quiet American*, a novel which imperatively demanded it.”
Waugh, in his review of this novel, remarks that in writing about sexual relations “any writer, however skilful, is gravely handicapped by the lack of suitable words. Our language took form during the centuries when the subject was not plainly handled with the result that we have no vocabulary for sexual acts which is not quaintly antiquated, scientific, or grossly colloquial. To say that lovers ‘sleep together’ is an absurdity in describing the hasty incidents of passion which occur in this book. Normally that is an inoffensive euphemism, but here, where love is as often used in its high spiritual sense, there is an ironical twist in the phrase which frustrates the writer’s aim.”

G12

Program for opera of Greene’s *The End of the Affair*, 2004

The world premiere of this operatic treatment of Greene’s novel, with music by Jack Heggie and a libretto by Heather MacDonald, took place at the Houston Grand Opera in March of this year.

G33

First sketches for Greene’s play *The Living Room* written in his copy of *Devotional Poets of the XVII Century* (London: T. Nelson, 1929)

Graham Greene’s first play premiered at the Wyndhams Theatre in London on April 16, 1953. When asked about trying his hand at drama, Greene told the *Picture Post*: “One must try every drink once.”

The play explored, in essence, a relationship between a younger woman and an older man. It was described by Anthony Cookman in the *Tatler* as a “terrific sermon on sin.”

The play enjoyed a long London run and transferred to New York the following year. Other plays by Greene included *The Potting Shed* (1957) and *The Complaisant Lover: A Comedy* (1959).
Greene Case 4
G13

Corrected draft of Greene’s resignation letter from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, early 1968

In April 1968, Greene tendered his resignation as an honorary member of the prestigious Academy and encouraged other honorary members, such as C.P. Snow, to do the same. He took this action to protest the American escalation of the Vietnam War, a conflict that he felt was both immoral and unwinnable. Although Greene has been criticized for being anti-American, his animosity was directed less against the country and its citizens than the government, which he regarded as a bully on the international scene. As always, his sympathies were with the underdog.

G85

*Tikhii amerikanets* [Russian translation of *The Quiet American*] (Moscow, 1956) Inscribed by Greene to A.S. Frere

Between 1951 and 1955 Greene intermittently served as a war correspondent and observed the Viet Cong insurgency against the French in Vietnam. *The Quiet American* emerged from his first-hand experiences of the war and is dedicated to his friend and fellow correspondent René Berval and his girlfriend Phuong, who gave her name to a character in the book.

Frere was Greene’s editor at Heinemann. Greene’s inscription reads “Dear Frere, what about this for a [dust]jacket? Love [in Cyrillic characters:] Grem Grin.” The Soviet government no doubt enjoyed Greene’s negative portrayal of the American Pyle as well as the novelist’s implication that the C.I.A. was already deeply involved in the Indochina conflict.

G29


John Hayward was a severely handicapped scholar and critic whom the young Graham Greene approached for advice on writing a biography of
the late seventeenth-century rake and poet Lord Rochester. After Hayward’s death, Greene wrote this memoir of their long friendship.

In the early 1970s, Greene learned that the unpublished manuscript of *Lord Rochester’s Monkey*, which he had long thought to be lost, now belonged to the Humanities Research Center. It was finally published in 1974.

G30

Postcard from Graham Greene to John Hayward, 18 January 1955
[postmark]

Greene enjoyed sending the wheelchair-bound Hayward “racy” postcards. He must have taken particular pleasure in selecting this card, with its references to the color green. On the message side, Greene has pasted a slyly amended newspaper headline about a modern Lord Rochester—a reference to Hayward’s assistance with his biography of the priapic poet Lord Rochester.

G3

Graham Greene’s dream diary for 1972-1974

Greene underwent extensive psychoanalysis as a teenager—he was even required to tell his analyst what he had dreamed about every morning—and remained fascinated by dreams and the unconscious sources of creativity. In his later years, each time he was awakened by a dream, he jotted down its contents for later entry in one of his dream diaries. These diaries were then provided with detailed indexes. The entry for 1 October 1973 concerns the (by then deceased) Evelyn Waugh, who in the dream is living in a madhouse, while Greene is a prisoner in a concentration camp. The reader is invited to analyze this dream on an exhibition comment card.

G70

A year after Greene’s death, a selection from his dream diaries was published with an introduction by his mistress, Yvonne Cloetta. In 1964, Greene began keeping records of his dreams in blank books with printed covers, known as publishers’ dummies. The novelist sold five of them to the bookseller Rick Gekoski, and they were in turn acquired by the Ransom Center in the mid-1990s (Gekoski retains one given to him by the author). The diaries offer fascinating insights into Greene’s subconscious and the writing process.

G69

Letter from Yvonne Cloetta to Michael Richey, 1992

Yvonne Cloetta met Greene in 1959, when the novelist was fifty-five; she was twenty years younger and the wife of a French business executive. Cloetta may be said to have finally “cured” Greene of his long fixation with the ultimately unattainable Catherine Walston. She was a major influence on the last three decades of his life, providing companionship, comfort, and emotional stability. While Greene was alive, she was largely shielded from inquiries by journalists and biographers but has been the subject of considerable attention in the last decade.

Cloetta’s letter to one of Greene’s friends attests to her devotion to the novelist’s memory and records the same anecdote (about Greene reciting a Browning poem) that begins Shirley Hazzard’s memoir Greene on Capri.

G54


During the last two decades of his life, Greene enjoyed traveling with the young Spanish priest Leopoldo Durán. The relationship began when Durán, then a literature student, wrote Greene about one of his novels. The two immediately became fast friends and took regular vacations in Spain and Portugal. These adventures and their discussions about faith and doubt inspired one of Greene’s Monsignor Quixote, later made into a film starring Alec Guinness.
Corrected typescript of Greene’s address upon the award of the Shakespeare
Prize by the University of Hamburg, 1969

In accepting the prize, Greene reflects upon Shakespeare as a poet of the
Elizabethan “Establishment” and the similarities of his age and ours (“times
full of the deaths of tyrants, a world of secret agents, assassinations and plots
and torture chambers”). In their concern with such figures and events, the
novelist and playwright are similar, although Greene always regarded
himself as an enemy of the Establishment. He urges writers to “maintain that
one virtue of disloyalty,” and goes on: “Isn’t it the story-teller’s task to act as
the devil’s advocate, to elicit sympathy and a measure of understanding for
those who lie outside the boundaries of State approval? . . . Thomas Paine
wrote, ‘We must guard even our enemies against injustice.’”

Kim Philby, My Silent War (London, 1968)

During World War II, Greene worked for MI6 (the British foreign
intelligence service, also known as SIS), serving under Kim Philby in the
Iberian section. Philby was long suspected of being a Soviet double agent
and defected in 1963. Greene continued to stand by his former boss and was
widely criticized for doing so. In an interview late in life, Greene remarked,
“I think Philby genuinely believed in Communism….He lived out his belief
and I admire him for that.” Given his lifelong interest in espionage, Greene
was probably fascinated with the psychological aspects of Philby’s double
existence as well.
THE ANGLO—TEXAN SOCIETY

Corrected typescript of Greene’s “The Joke that Went Wrong,” 29 January 1974

This article, giving an exhaustive historical account of the solemn founding of the celebrated Anglo-Texan Society, was published in the *Daily Telegraph Magazine* late in 1974 under the title “A Thorn on the Yellow Rose.” It was accompanied by a blow-up copy of Greene’s founding document—his 1953 letter to *The Times*—and a photograph of some of the 1,500 Texans, members, and guests who attended the barbeque at Denham Film Studios.

In 1963 the Anglo-Texan Society placed a plaque at the corner of No. 3 St. James’s Place to mark the location of the Texan Legation in Great Britain during the final years of the Republic of Texas, 1842-45. It is now the only monument to the existence of the Anglo-Texan Society, which in a special meeting in 1979 voted to disband.

G 26


Greene inscribed the book to Gillian Sutro, the wife of his friend John Sutro, the co-founder of the Anglo-Texan Society. Greene dedicated *A Sense of Reality* (1963) to John and Gillian Sutro. It was a collection of stories, containing one that may be Greene’s only attempt at science fiction. With this is a note by Gillian Sutro about Greene’s relationship with Allegra Sander.
EVELYN WAUGH’S LIBRARY

The Ransom Center owns not only Waugh’s 3,500-volume library but also his desk, chair, several works of art which hung in the room, and even a few of the items on his desktop. Waugh’s library arrived in Austin in 1967, along with most of his manuscripts.

Waugh had been an active collector of books since his school days. His early successes as a writer allowed him to purchase books, art, and antiques. In 1937, the novelist and his wife Laura moved into Piers Court, a Georgian stone house in Gloucestershire, and he at last had a proper home for his books. In 1957, the contents were moved to Waugh’s last home, Combe Florey. The enlarged photograph on the wall shows the Combe Florey library as it looked in the late 1950s.

We have displayed a few items from the library that provide a sense of the man and the collector:

Waugh #?

Rebecca Solomon, British, 1832-1886
The Virtuous Undergraduate, not dated
Oil on canvas

Rebecca Solomon (1883-1886) was the sister of the pre-Raphaelite painter Simeon Solomon and of the genre painter Abraham Solomon. In Waugh’s day, Victorian narrative paintings of this sort were disparaged but in recent years have attracted new interest.

Waugh #?

Rebecca Solomon, British, 1832-1886
The Dissolute Undergraduate, not dated
Oil on canvas

Rebecca Solomon (1883-1886) was the sister of the pre-Raphaelite painter Simeon Solomon and of the genre painter Abraham Solomon. In Waugh’s
day, Victorian narrative paintings of this sort were disparaged but in recent years have attracted new interest.

Waugh #?

Martin Battersby, British, 1914-1983
*Trompe l’oeil* painting on tin featuring elements from Waugh’s books, *not dated*

This painting was presented to Evelyn Waugh by his publisher, Chapman & Hall, in the 1950s.

Waugh #?

Paravicini
Stone bust of Evelyn Waugh, ca. 1945

Waugh commissioned this portrait bust in early 1945, shortly before he returned to England after service in Yugoslavia. Nothing is known about the sculptor, identified in Waugh’s diaries only as a “Mr Paravicini.” Here it is displayed on an Eastlake wooden pedestal originally used for a marble sculpture of Romeo and Juliet.

[with postcard blowup in library]

Waugh was particular about the condition of the books he purchased for his library, as may be seen in this postcard he sent to the bookseller Anthony Newnham (9 August 1960). The text reads: “Could you please tell me, does ‘spine repaired’ mean rebacked by a competent binder or plastered with scotch tape by a governess? If the former please send.”
Rear shelf: 

Waugh’s own copies of his books. Beginning in the early 1930s, Waugh’s publisher produced limited editions of his books on large paper. The author had these copies specially bound in morocco leather with his coat-of-arms in gilt on the front cover. Waugh had all the manuscripts of his novels bound in a similar fashion.

Front shelf: 

Waugh’s diary, open to an entry for 7 April 1947, along with his Queen Victoria inkwell and agate pen staffs

Waugh kept a diary for most of his life. This entry was made following his return to England from his California trip. Waugh is anxious about the condition of his home, relates some of his experiences in Hollywood, and notes: “I found a deep mine of literary gold in the cemetery of Forest Lawn and the work of the morticians and intend to get to work immediately on a novelette [The Loved One] staged there.”
Feliks Topolski, British, b. Poland, 1907-1989
Oil portraits of Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, 1963

Letter from Evelyn Waugh to Warren Roberts, 25 April 1963

Topolski was born in Poland and immigrated to England. He illustrated Greene’s short-lived magazine *Night and Day* was known for his exuberant, expressionistic, and highly unrealistic paintings. In the early Sixties the Humanities Research Center commissioned a series of portraits of British authors, including both Greene and Waugh, from Topolski. Waugh made his opinion of his own portrait known in a letter to the Center’s then director.