

Fosher-Meredith Collection

MS.71

Finding aid prepared by Amelia Buccarelli & Taelour Cornett

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Summary Information

Repository	College Archives & Special Collections / Wallace E. Mason Library / Keene State College
Title	Fosher-Meredith Collection
Date [inclusive]	1958-2006
Extent	1.5 Linear feet 1 Record Carton
Language	English

Biography

William Meredith was born on January 9, 1919, in New York City and passed away on May 30, 2007. He attended Lenox School in Massachusetts and went to college at Princeton University. After he graduated from college, he worked briefly for the New York Times as a reporter. He joined the army shortly after, and in 1942 he transferred to the US Navy and became a pilot. He served on aircraft carriers in the Pacific for the duration of World War II. In 1944, his first collection of poems, 'Love Letter from an Impossible Land,' was published in the Yale Series of Younger Poets. His second poetry collection, 'Ships and Other Figures,' was published in 1948. In 1952, Meredith re-enlisted in the US Navy and fought in the Korean War.

After he completed his service in the US Navy, he started his teaching career at Connecticut College, the University of Hawaii, and Princeton University from 1955 to 1983. From 1978 to 1980, William Meredith was the Poet Laureate Consultant (now known as Poet Laureate) for the Library of Congress. In 1983 he suffered a debilitating stroke and started to experience expressive aphasia, which affected his ability to produce language. Directly after he suffered from his stroke, he was unable to communicate, therefore he was unable to write letters or speak with friends and family. As a result, his partner, Richard penned many of the letters from Meredith within this time period. William began to regain his ability to speak and write after months of rehabilitation, but he had no choice but to retire from teaching.

Despite this setback, Meredith continued to write and was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for his 1987 work, 'Partial Accounts: New and Selected Poems.' In 1997, Meredith additionally received the National Book Award for Poetry for 'Effort at Speech: New and Selected Poems.' He and his partner, Richard Harteis, collaborated on several works as well, and they both contributed to works such as 'The White Island,' which was a bilingual collection of English and Bulgarian poetry. President Zhelev of Bulgaria granted Meredith honorary citizenship in 1996, and Meredith spent the last decade of his life travelling between his home in Uncasville, Connecticut, and Bulgaria. After a series of health complications, William Meredith died at the age of 88 in New London, Connecticut, on May 30, 2007.

Scope and Content

The Fosher-Meredith collection documents William Meredith's life, specifically from the 1950s through his death in 2007. The formats represented include written and typed letters, e-mails, cards, photographs, invitations, and poems addressed to Fred Fosher and his family. The documents are housed in a combination of folders and three-ring binders. The contents of the two binders have been preserved in the original chronological order in which they were arranged in order to respect provenance. Objects not in an original order have been rehoused to folders and arranged within 5 series. The series in this

collection include: Correspondence, Audiovisual Material, Newspapers, Photographs, and Related Materials.

Meredith initially met Mary and Fred Fosher through Fred's mother, Dorothy Harbison. Mary and Fred Fosher became good friends with William Meredith and his partner, Richard Harteis, so much so that the Foshers named their son, William, after William Meredith. After Meredith's death in 2007, his partner, Richard Harteis, continued to have correspondence with the Foshers. The collection specifically documents Meredith's time as the Poet Laureate Consultant (now known as Poet Laureate) for the Library of Congress from 1978 to 1980; his time spent with his partner, Richard Harteis; and his time after his stroke, which occurred in 1983 and left him unable to produce language.

The Foshers kept a collection of their correspondence with William Meredith and Richard Harteis, and the Foshers were subsequently responsible for the donation of the documents within this collection. The Foshers both attended Keene State College, as did their children. Therefore, when they found the appropriate time to donate the collection, they chose to donate it to Keene State College.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

College Archives & Special Collections / Wallace E. Mason Library / Keene State College

Revision Description

4/25/2019

Processing Information note

This collection was processed by Amelia Buccarelli of Keene State College. This collection was reprocessed by Taelour Cornett of Simmons University.

Controlled Access Headings

Personal Name(s)

- Meredith, William, 1919-2007

Correspondence

Collection Inventory

1 Correspondence

1 Typed Letter from Michael Collier to Fred Fosher 1985

2 Handwritten Postcard from William Meredith to Fred Fosher 1976

3 Handwritten Letter from Catherine Phinzy to Fred Fosher 1989

4 Typed Letter from William Meredith to Fred Fosher 1958

5 Envelope from Princeton University to Fred Fosher 1989

2 Audiovisual Material

1 Audio Tapes

Collection of Meredith's Poetry on Tape

Meredith's Poetry Set to Music

Untitled Tape of William Meredith

2 CDs

Newspapers

Selected Readings

William Meredith 1959

3 Newspapers

1 Clippings

The College Voice (1982) 1982

The Keene Sentinel (1982) 1982

Connecticut College Magazine (1991) 1991

2 Poem 'Parents' by Meredith in The New Yorker 1978

3 Keene State Sentinel Supplement

4 Photographs

Kurt Vonnegut, William Meredith, and Richard Harteis 1996

Mary Fosher, Dorothy Harbison, William Meredith, Fred Fosher, and Richard Harteis on Surry Porch

"Mum," Kumins, and William Meredith on Lake Sunapee

Related Materials

William Meredith, Mary Fosher, and Dorothy Harbison

William Meredith and "Mum"

William Meredith and Fred Fosher

William Meredith and Dorothy Harbison

William Meredith, Dorothy Harbison, and Lynn Zimmerman at Surry Kitchen

William Meredith with Dorothy Harbison

William Meredith

William Meredith Receiving Honorary Degree at Keene State College 1982

5 Related Materials

1 Egbert Starr Library Exhibit (1988-1989)

2 Boojy Book by Robert Gray from Bread Loaf School of English

3 Keene State College Commencement Pamphlet (1982) 1982

4 Handwritten Notes

5 Handwritten Card from Mary Fosher

Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings"

6 Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings" 1962-2003

'Fables about Error' Note from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1962

'For Guillaume Apollinaire' Note from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1962

'The Wreck of the Thresher' from William Meredith to Fred and Marry Fosher

'Winter Verse' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1964

'Walter Jenks' Bath' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1965

'Whorls' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1966

'In the Canyon' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1967

'Literary Uncle, Worldly Niece' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1968

Notes from Lake Como from William Meredith to Mary, Fred, Bill, and Kerry Fosher

'His Students' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1971

'Hazard, The Painter' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher First Letter 1972

'Hazard, The Painter' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher Second Letter

Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings"

'In Loving Memory of the Later Author of the Dream Songs from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher First Letter 1973

'In Loving Memory of the Later Author of the Dream Songs from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher Second Letter 1973

'Country Stars' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1975

'Examples of Created Systems' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1976

'Midnight' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1978

'Homage to Paul Mellon, I.M. Pei, Their Gallery, and Washington City' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1979

'On Jenkins' Hill' from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1980

'On Jenkins' Hill' by William Meredith Poetry and Literature Flier

October Letter from William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1980

December Letter from William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1980

'The Jain Bird Hospital in Delhi' from William Meredith to Mary, Fred, Beth, and Bill Fosher 1982

Commencement Address at Keene State College from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher First Letter 1982

Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings"

Commencement Address at Keene State College from William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher
Second Letter 1982

Notation from William Meredith with Comments from Fred Fosher

Postcard from William Meredith to Kerry Beth Fosher 1982

'In the Rif Mountains' from William Meredith to Mary, Fred, Kerry, Dorothy, and Bill Fosher 1982

'The Illiterate' by William Meredith 1983

Typewritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1985

Typewritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1990

Typewritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1987

Handwritten Letter from William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1991

Typewritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1991

Handwritten Letter from William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison 1991

Typewritten/Handwritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Dorothy
Harbison February 1991

Typewritten/Handwritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison June
1991

Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings"

'Report from the Middle of the Pack' from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Dorothy Harbison March 1993

Typewritten/Handwritten Letter from Dorothy Harbison to Richard Harteis and William Meredith 1994

'Meredith Honored for Life of Poetry' The Day Newspaper Clipping 1996

Announcement for William Meredith Tribute in The New London Gazette October 1996

Christmas Letter to Friends from Richard Harteis and William Meredith 1997

Postcard from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher 1998

The Quality Paperback Book Review May 1998

Christmas Letter to Friends from Richard Harteis and William Meredith 1998

Connecticut College Bulletin's 'Meredith on the Web' Article 1999

Connecticut College's Endowed Lecture Series Featuring William Meredith March 1999

'Poet and Dancer Share Limelight at Conn' Article from New London Day March 4, 1999

'Bulgarians Join Poet Meredith for Readings at Lyman Allyn' Article

'Poet Meredith Honored by his Peers'

Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings"

Handwritten Card and Typewritten Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher March 1999

'Meredith, Bulgarian Colleagues Read their Works' Article Photocopy March 1999

'Meredith an Inspiration at Poetry Reading' Article March 1999

'Meredith, Bulgarian Colleagues Read their Works' Article Original March 1999

Envelope from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher October 1999

'Poet William Meredith Presented with Prestigious Bulgarian Award' Article from The Day November 1999

Christmas Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Mary and Fred Fosher December 1999

'Echoes: Etched Poems, Poetic Etchings' Exhibit at Connecticut College Pamphlet November 2000

Opening Reception for 'Window on the Black Sea' by Stoimen Stoilev at Lyman Allyn Art Museum including invitation, directions, and four pictures from Richard Harteis and William Meredith September 2000

Letter from Laurie Deredita to Fred Fosher

Christmas Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher 2000

'Trees of Bucks County' Book by Tom Slaughter and William Meredith from William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher

Blue Binder "From WMM Christmas/New Year's Greetings"

'In the Canyon' Poem from William Meredith to Fred, Mary, Bill, and Lynn Fosher

E-Mail from Richard Harteis to Mary and Fred Fosher June 2001

Two Cards from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred Fosher, Mary Fosher, and Friends August 2001

Picture of Fred Fosher, William Meredith, Mary Fosher, Daisey, and William Harteis August 2001

Five Pictures of William Meredith, Richard Harteis, Fred Fosher, Mary Fosher, Lucey, Bill Fosher, and Kerry Fosher

Picture of Fred Fosher, Richard Harteis, Kerry Fosher, and William Harteis

Picture of Bill Fosher, Mary Fosher, Fred Fosher, Richard Harteis, Beth Fosher, and William Meredith

Picture of Richard Harteis and William Meredith

Picture of William Meredith

Christmas Letter and Envelope from William Meredith and Richard Harteis to Mr. and Mrs. Fosher and Family December 2001

Greeting Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to 'Friends'

Picture of Mary Fosher, Fred Fosher, and William Meredith

Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens"

Picture Postcard with Envelope from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher 2002

Christmas Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher December 15, 2002

'The Bright Watchers' with William Meredith Booklet

Westminster Abbey London Postcard from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fosher Family

Picture of Richard Harteis and William Meredith in Pool

American Heritage Magazine March 2003

'Thank You' Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher

'A Walk in the Poet's Garden' Newspaper Article Written by Richard Harteis About William Meredith

Greeting Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher 2003

Christmas Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher 2003

Christmas Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher 2003

7 Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens" 1984-2006

Letter from William Meredith to Lou April 22, 1984

Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens"

Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to 'Friends' February 21, 1986

'The Legacy of American Poetry' with Richard Harteis Flier

Picture of William Meredith and Bander in Surry, New Hampshire August 1987

First Picture of William Meredith's Home in Uncasville, Connecticut

Second Picture of William Meredith's Home in Uncasville, Connecticut

Runner's World Magazine November 1989

Christmas Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith December 1989

Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to 'Friends' 1990

'Thank You' Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Mr. and Mrs. Fosher and Mrs. Harbison 1990

Letter Written on Recycled Paper from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Mr. and Mrs. Fosher and Mrs. Harbison October 12, 1993

Brithday Invitation for William Meredith's 75th Birthday Party January 8. 1994

'Contemporary Authors Biography Series,' Volume 26, Richard Harteis Article July 5, 1996

'La Vie en Mimosa: Poems from Provenence and Selected Others' Bound Book by Richard Hartis
Inscribed to Fred and Mary Fosher

Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens"

'Greetings from Provence' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher July 1, 2002

'Back Home' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher August 3, 2002

'Ola and Gracias' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher August 27, 2002

'Poem' E-mail from Richard Harteis to Fred and Mary Fosher September 12, 2002

'Silence of the Fred' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher October 2, 2002

'Ola' E-mail from Richard Harteis to Fred and Mary Fosher October 14, 2002

'Back from Bosnia' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher November 4, 2002

'Welcome Back' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher November 11, 2002

'Generic Ghricsmas Card Greeting' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher December 15, 2002

Picture of Richard Harteis and William Meredith

Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens"

'Winter Greeting' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher February 19, 2003

'Easter Greeting' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher March 26, 2003

Easter Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher 2003

'Greetings' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher August 20, 2003

'Generic (sorry) greetings from R and W' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher September 14, 2003

'Greetings from Richard and William' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher October 11, 2003

'A Walk in the Poet's Garden' Online Article from the Norwich Bulletin by Richard Harteis October 12, 2003

'Winter Plans' E-mails from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher November 4, 2003

'January Birthday for William' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher November 18, 2003

'Holiday Greeting and Shameless Plug for William's New Book' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher December 26, 2003

Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens"

'Meredith Birthday' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary
Fosher January 16, 2004

'Meredith Birthday' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher
Copy January 16, 2004

'Surry News' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher March 28,
2004

'A Cheer for Poet Meredith' Connecticut College Magazine Article Sent from Susan Dunnington to Fred
Fosher June 8, 2004

'Surry Update' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher December
21, 2004

Holiday Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher January 2005

'Surry News' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher August 18,
2005

'Message for Kerri' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to 'Carrie' August 30, 2005

'Merci' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher August 30, 2005

Kerri's E-Mail Address Inquiry E-mail from Richard Harteis to Fred Fosher

'Hello' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher November 3, 2005

Green Binder "From WMM and Richard Hartens"

Christmas Letter from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher December 2005

Christmas Card from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fosher Family December 16, 2005

'Poetry in the Dark Presents Meredith and Harteis 8/10' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred and Mary Fosher August 8, 2006

'Possible Visit' E-mail from Richard Harteis to Fred Fosher September 11, 2006

Bulletin Article E-mail from Richard Harteis to Fred and Mary Fosher 2006

'Repeat Message' E-mail from Richard Harteis and William Meredith to Fred Fosher September 26, 2006