

Kingston Public Library: Local History Room
Manuscript Finding Aid
July 14, 2003

Ruth Forbes Chandler (1894-1978)
Collection 1932-1978
Manuscript Collection, MC-10

11 Boxes (**55 linear inches**)

Biographical sketch: Ruth Pauline Forbes Chandler was born in New Bedford on July 17, 1894, the daughter of Joseph C. and Alice I. (Reed) Forbes. The widow of George L. Chandler, who passed away in March of 1966, she died on December 29, 1978. According to an obituary notice that appeared in the January 4, 1979 issue of the *Old Colony Memorial*, "Mrs. Chandler, a retired teacher and principal in the New Bedford school system, was author of several children's books and short stories. She moved to Kingston over 30 years ago from Fairhaven." Chandler resided at 228 Main Street in Kingston.

Contemporary Authors Online said; "She was educated at Bridgewater Normal School (now Bridgewater State College), B.S. in Ed., 1942; additional study at Boston University and Columbia University. Memberships included: the Pembroke Reading Club, communicant of the Kingston First Parish, Unitarian-Universalist and several other groups in the church, Jones River Village Club (secretary, 1950-53, 1963), Friends of the Library, Bridgewater Alumnae Association, and Omega Iota Phi'.

Scope and Content Note: The Ruth Forbes Chandler (RFC) papers document the active literary career of a local Kingston children's author. The focus of her numerous manuscripts were of children facing difficult problems. This is especially true of *Ladder to The Sky* about a young black boy facing adversity. Originally published in 1959 and then later reissued in 1965 during which time most books were published about caucasian children. As RFC stated in a letter to a young child "Then came the change in people's thinking and the call for varied racial backgrounds".

The important early influence of Clement C. Maxwell, president of the Bridgewater Normal School (Bridgewater State College), in encouraging RFC to undertake a literary career is seen in his incoming correspondence (1:8). Logbooks of children's stories and novels (3:5) kept by RFC record the dates and publication history of her works between 1943 and 1966, a period of extensive literary output for the author. The original manuscripts for many of these stories and novels make up a large proportion of the papers. RFC was frequently called upon for speaking engagements and regularly attended writer's conferences. She donated part of her manuscript collection to the Grummond Collection at the University of Mississippi. It is because of her donations that her association with the collections' founder, Lena Y de Grummond (2:4), continued through the end of her life.

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Box and Folder List:

| Box | Folder | |
|------------|---------------|---|
| 1 | | <i>Introductory</i> |
| | 1 | Biographical material |
| | 2 | Images: MC10Peo 03 0001-0009: MC10Hou 03 0001-0003: MC10Pla 03 0001-0016: MC10Eve 03 0001-0006. |
| | | <i>Correspondence</i> |
| | 3 | Business – Abelard-Schuman |
| | 4 | Business – Draft letters |
| | 5A/B | Business – General (2 folders) |
| | 6 | Business – Lucile Gulliver – Agent |
| | 7 | Clement Maxwell, 1939-1945 |
| 2 | 1 | Classroom Letters – Kingston |
| | 2 | Classroom Letters – New Bedford |
| | 3 | Classroom Letters – Plympton |
| | 4 | The Grummond Collection, 1972-1978 and Juvenile Miscellany 1970-1978 |
| | 5 | Personal |
| | 6A/B | Readers' fan mail (2 folders) |
| | | <i>Papers</i> |
| 3 | 1 | Book Reviews, 1958-1959 |
| | 2 | Bridgewater State College School Papers, 1932, 1944 |
| | 3 | Literary Clippings Service |
| | 4 | Literary scrapbook |
| | 5 | Log Books, 1943-1967 |
| | 6 | Papers- New Bedford, School and Professional Papers, 1932, 1944 |
| | 7 | Printed programs |
| | 8 | Publishing Contracts – Abelard-Schuman |
| | 9 | Source Material, 1947-1961 |
| | 10 | Writers' Conference Papers |
| | | <i>Manuscripts</i> |
| 4 | 1 | “Aunt Cecilia’s Promise” |
| | 2 | “Betsy Bubbin’s Baskets” |
| | 3 | “Blue Feathers” |
| | 4 | “Carnival Night,” 1959 |
| | 5 | “The Case of the Missing Doll” |
| | 6 | “Cheerp” |
| | 7 | “David’s Decision” |
| | 8 | “Dollars for Dickey” |
| | 9 | “The Easter Secret” |
| | 10 | “Fran to the Rescue” |
| | 11 | “Free Trip To England,” First Copy, 1970-1974 |
| | 12 | “Free Trip To England,” Incomplete Copy, 1970-1974 |
| | 13 | “Free Trip To England,” Final Copy, 1971-1974 |
| | 14 | “The Gentle Brute” |
| | 15 | “The Happy Answer,” 1956 |
| | 16 | “The Hard Forgiving” |

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(box and folder list continued...)

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|----|----|--|
| | 17 | “How Did Jerry Know?” |
| | 18 | “Jerry’s Secret” |
| | 19 | “Thanksgiving is Giving” |
| 5 | 1 | “Ladder to the Sky,” 1951-1966 (Inc. book cover; 4 copies) |
| | 2 | “The Loyal Mactavishes,” First Copy, 1961 |
| | 3 | “The Loyal Mactavishes,” Second Copy, 1961 |
| | 4 | “Make Mine Music” |
| | 5 | “The Man Had Roots” |
| | 6 | “Melissa’s Good Ideas” |
| | 7 | “Old John Henry’s Silver Bricks,” 1961 |
| | 8 | “Old John Henry’s Silver Bricks,” 1961 |
| 6 | 1 | “The Pansy Place” |
| | 2 | “A Picture of a Garden” |
| | 3 | “The Pilgrim Progress,” Story and Photos, 1955 |
| | 4 | “Pony Auction” |
| | 5 | “The Princess’s Big Party” |
| | 6 | “A Promise is to Keep,” first copy, 1955 |
| | 7 | “A Promise is to Keep,” second copy, 1955 |
| | 8 | “Promises to Keep” |
| | 9 | “Rosa’s Perfect Plan” |
| | 10 | “Sandy’s Wish Comes True.” |
| | 11 | “The Shy Twin Sister” |
| | 12 | “Silver Bricks Mystery” |
| | 13 | “Sing a Song of Sunflower Seeds” |
| 7 | 1 | “Tabby Two Does it Right” |
| | 2 | “Tangles Web” |
| | 3 | “The Terrible Noise” |
| | 4 | “Thanksgiving is Giving,” 1972 |
| | 5 | “Three Cheers for the Captain” |
| | 6 | “Three Trumpets” (Inc. book cover) |
| | 7 | “The Top of the Hill” |
| | 8 | “Triple Test for Trudy” (Inc. book cover; 1 copy) |
| | 9 | “Two Surprises” |
| | 10 | “The Worrying Guy” |
| | 11 | Current Writing, Incomplete Stories. 1952-1954 |
| | 12 | Untitled Manuscript, n.d |
| | 13 | Poetry |
| | | <i>Public Speaking, 1956-1970</i> |
| | 14 | Outlines for Talks, 1956-1970 |
| | | <i>Published Stories, 1955-1978</i> |
| 15 | | Published Stories 1956-1977- |
| | | “Middle Island Mystery” book cover (6 copies) |

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(box and folder list continued...)

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2 | Jack and Jill Magazine | May 1954, January 1963 September 1966 November 1976 and 1951 |
| 3 | Story-A-Day Magazine | Volume 1 no 11 Volume 1 no 15 September 24, 1953 October 22 and 29, 1953 November 5, 1953 |
| 4 | Bread Loaf Writer's Conference and Robert Frost | 1958-61, 1963-72, 1978 |
| 5 | Writer's Conference in NH | 1960-1961 |
| 6 | University of Southern Mississippi- Special Children's Collection Medallion | 1969, 1970-75, 1977-78 |

Acquisition: The Ruth Forbes Chandler collection was donated in two accessions.

Access: Unrestricted.

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Processor: Thomas R. Doyle, Intern 2001; supplemental material was listed by Andrew Pollock on November 14, 2001. New materials incorporated and finding aid updated by Karen Arnold July 2003.

Note: Box 9 is a flat storage box and located separately from the rest of the collection. Items that were discarded from the collection include envelopes (correspondence was saved) and newspaper and magazine clippings pertaining to fashion or other children authors.