University of Oklahoma Libraries
Western History Collections

Vance Trimble Collection

Journalist and author. Correspondence (1937–1995); research files (1986–1990); manuscripts (1953–1990); newspaper clippings, magazines, and scrapbooks (1899–1997) from the life and career of journalist and 1960 Pulitzer Prize winner Vance H. Trimble. In 1960, Trimble was awarded a journalism “triple crown”: the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting, the Sigma Delta Chi award for distinguished Washington correspondence, and the Raymond Clapper Award for the year’s best Washington reporting, for an investigation of nepotism and payroll abuses in Congress. The collection also includes publicity and book reviews for Trimble’s biographies of Happy Chandler, E. W. Scripps, and Sam Walton.

Biographical Note:
Newspaper editor and author Vance Henry Trimble was born to Guy L. and Josephine (Crump) Trimble, July 6, 1913 in Harrison, Arkansas. He attended public schools in Wewoka, Oklahoma, during childhood. Married Elzene Miller January 9, 1932, and had one daughter, Carol Ann (Nordheimer). Trimble won the “triple crown” in 1960 by receiving a Pulitzer prize in journalism, the Raymond Clapper award, and the Sigma Delta Chi award for distinguished Washington correspondence for a series of investigational articles on Congressional nepotism. Trimble began his news career as a cub reporter for the Okemah Daily Leader in 1927, and had a successful career in news reporting and editing in Oklahoma, Texas, Washington D.C., and Kentucky. Most notable among the positions Trimble held are reporter and managing editor for the Houston Press, news editor of the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, and editor of the Kentucky Post and Times-Star. He was inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame in 1974. Trimble retired from news writing and editing in 1979, but also conducted a second career as a freelance writer of detective stories (1938-1958), and investigational books and biographies of American businessmen (1974-1995). As a biographer, he is perhaps best known for his works on Wal-Mart’s founder in Sam Walton: The Inside Story of America’s Richest Man (1990), and on Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance’s founder in The Astonishing Mr. Scripps: The Turbulent Life of America’s Penny Press Lord (1992).
Extent: 7 c.f.


Scope and Content: This collection includes professional correspondence (1949-1998), personal correspondence (1903-1987), research files (1894-1995), manuscripts (1953-1998), and publicity and reviews (1959-1997), and other related materials from the life and career of Vance H. Trimble.

Record Group I: Professional Correspondence, 1949-1998. This record group is comprised of correspondence to and from Vance Trimble concerning his investigational reporting activities, his editorial work for various newspapers, and his freelance writing of books.

Record Group II: Personal Correspondence, 1903-1987. This record group contains personal correspondence to and from Vance Trimble with family members, primarily with wife Elzene and daughter Carol Ann.

Record Group III: Personal Records, 1944-1973. This record group contains receipts, invoices, and other personal records pertaining to medical services, insurance policies, memorabilia, and maintenance of the Trimble family’s homes.

Record Group IV: Research Files, 1894-1995. This record group is comprised of news clippings, publications, photocopied materials, and notes compiled by Trimble in the course of his research on Congressional nepotism, and research for his published books.


Record Group VI: Speeches, 1974-1991. This record group is comprised of typescripts of speeches by Trimble given to various organizations and groups.

Record Group VII: Publicity and Reviews, 1959-1997. This record group is comprised of news clippings and magazine articles publicizing or
reviewing Trimble’s works. See also Record Group XI, Newspapers and Magazines.

**Record Group VIII: General Files, 1937-1992.** This record group includes records of royalties earned by Trimble; Scripps-Howard Newspapers’ personnel directories; inventories and related materials on the Vance Trimble Collection and E. W. Scripps Papers at the University of Ohio; general event programs and invitations; and news clippings of articles by writers other than Trimble.

**Record Group IX: Honors, Awards, and Societies, 1960-1998.** This record group contains Trimble’s entry packet for the Raymond Clapper Memorial Award, programs for Pulitzer Prize Awards, and programs and news clips regarding Sigma Delta Chi, the Kappa Tau Alpha Award, the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, and others.

**Record Group X: Travel Files, 1970-1985.** This record group includes travel guides, maps, receipts, and memorabilia from Vance and Elzene Trimble’s trips abroad.

**Record Group XI: Newspapers and Magazines, 1899-1998.** This record group is comprised of news clippings, full issues of newspapers and magazines, artwork, and editor’s bylines. These items primarily feature stories and articles by Trimble, and articles about Trimble’s accomplishments. Also included are news clippings of articles by Trimble’s father, Guy L. Trimble. See also Record Group VII.
Chronology of Vance Trimble’s career, 1927-1995:

1927:  
Okemah Daily Leader cub reporter (after school and during summer).

1928-31:  
Wewoka Times-Democrat cub reporter, sports writer, courthouse reporter, deskman, wire editor (before and after high school and Saturday nights, vacations, etc.).
Maud Daily Enterprise news editor.

1931-32:  
Seminole Morning News news editor
Seminole Producer reporter
Seminole County News editor
The Wewoka Weekly advertising manager, editor and publisher
Wewoka Times-Democrat, rural circulation solicitor
Shawnee Morning News, Konawa correspondent and circulation man.

1933:  
On the road as itinerant typewriter, adding machine, and cash register repairman, ranging from Florida to Colorado.

1934:  
Muskogee Phoenix reporter and deskman
Seminole Daily Reporter deskman

1935:  
Okmulgee Daily Times city editor and news editor

1936:  
Tulsa Tribune financial editor and Saturday night slotman
Beaumont Enterprise waterfront reporter and deskman

1937:  
Port Arthur News telegraph editor

Aug. 15, 1939 Houston Press copyreader

Spring 1940 Houston Press city editor

Summer 1942 Houston Press reporter on wide range of beats from city hall to criminal courts.

WWII – Mar. 4, 1944 – Oct. 31, 1945:  
U.S. Signal Corps, assigned as editor of newspaper at Camp Beale, CA

Fall 1945 Houston Press reporter

Spring 1946 Houston Press city editor

July 22, 1949 Houston Press managing editor
April 1955  Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, Washington D.C., news editor, subsequently congressional investigative reporter and economics writer


1960  Recipient of the Pulitzer prize for national reporting
Recipient of the Raymond Clapper Award
Recipient of the Sigma Delta Chi award for distinguished Washington correspondence

Oct.-Dec. 1962  *Houston Press* trouble shooter, temporary acting managing editor

Jan. 14, 1963  *Kentucky Post and Times-Star* editor

1974  Published *The Uncertain Miracle: The Little-Known Maverick Medical Treatment Which Has Saved the Lives of Thousands of People.*
Named to the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame

July 6, 1978  Reached retirement age of 65, but was asked to continue as editor for an additional year

July 27, 1979  Retired from newspaper career.

1981  Edited the *Scripps-Howard Handbook*

1989  Co-authored *Heroes, Plain Folks and Skunks: The Life and Times of Happy Chandler*
Edited *Faith in My Star*

1990  Published *Sam Walton: The Inside Story of America’s Richest Man*

1992  Published *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps: The Turbulent Life of America’s Penny Press Lord*

1993  Published *Overnight Success: Federal Express and Frederick Smith, Its Renegade Creator*

1995  Published *Empire Undone: The Wild Rise and Hard Fall of Chris Whittle*
Box 1: Professional Correspondence, 1949-1998.
Folder:
1. Professional Correspondence, 1949.
2. Professional Correspondence, 1950.
3. Professional Correspondence, 1951.
4. Professional Correspondence, 1952.
5. Professional Correspondence, 1953.
7. Professional Correspondence, 1956.
8. Professional Correspondence, 1957.
15. Professional Correspondence, 1966.
17. Professional Correspondence, 1969.
23. Professional Correspondence, Jan.-May 1974.
27. Professional Correspondence, 1975.
32. Professional Correspondence, 1979. A scrapbook of letters from colleagues presented to Trimble upon his retirement.
33. Professional Correspondence, 1980.
34. Professional Correspondence, 1981.
35. Professional Correspondence, 1983.
36. Professional Correspondence, 1986.
41. Professional Correspondence, Apr.-July 1989.
44. Professional Correspondence, Jan.-Apr. 1990.
45. Professional Correspondence, May-June 1990.
46. Professional Correspondence, July-Aug. 1990.

Box 2: Professional Correspondence, 1949-1998, continued.
Folder:
12. Professional Correspondence, 1996.
15. Professional Correspondence, undated.
**Personal Correspondence, 1903-1987.**


17. Personal Correspondence, 1955.

18. Personal Correspondence, 1956-1962.


20. Personal Correspondence, undated.


22. Personal Correspondence. Greeting cards from Elzene Trimble to Vance, n.d.

23. Personal Correspondence. Greeting cards from Carol Ann Trimble to others, n.d.

24. Personal Correspondence. Greeting cards from friends and family, n.d.

**Personal Records, 1944-1973.**


**Box 3: Research Files, 1894-1995.**

Folder:


4. Research Files: Congressional nepotism. Resolutions of and statements before the U.S. Congress regarding nepotism and payroll abuse; and copy of lawsuits filed by Trimble to obtain related public records, 1959.

5. Research Files: Congressional nepotism. Resolutions of the U.S. House of Representatives, notes, and news clipping regarding payroll abuse, and the “A.A. Bill,” which permitted members of the House to hire an administrative assistant for their staff.


11. Research Files: Sam Walton… Biographical information, and Linton Weeks’s “Aw Shucks—I’m the Richest Man in America,” n.d.


14. Research Files: The Astonishing Mr. Scripps: The Turbulent Life of America’s Penny Press Lord. Photocopied research material and biographical information

15. Research Files: The Astonishing Mr. Scripps…. Correspondence to and from E. W. Scripps, 1894-1904.


36. Research Files: Miscellaneous. Hand written and typed notes on various subjects, n.d.

37. Research Files: Writing Tips. List of helpful books on writing; and photocopied pages from a published guide on how to succeed in news writing, 1975 and n.d.


**Manuscripts, 1953-1998.**

42. Manuscripts: Proposals for books to be written by Trimble, 1973, and n.d.


44. Manuscripts: “Amorous Divorcee and the Vanishing Butcher.”
47. Manuscripts: “I Made Love—And Headlines,” by Sheppard W. King, III.
48. Manuscripts: “Last Caper of the P08.”

**Box 4: Manuscripts, 1953-1998, continued.**

Folder:


20. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 2, 3, and 4.

21. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 5, 6, and 7.

22. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11.

23. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 12, 13, 14, and 15.

24. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20.

25. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 21, 22, 23, and 24.

**Box 5: Manuscripts, 1953-1998, continued.**
Folder:
1. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 25, 26, and 27.

2. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 28 and 29.

3. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 30 and 31.

4. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 32, 33, and 34.

5. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 35 and 36.

6. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 37 and 38.

7. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 39 and 40.

8. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... First draft of chapters 41 and 42.

9. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... Drafts of afterword, and editing notes.

10. Manuscripts: *The Astonishing Mr. Scripps*... Draft of chapter endnotes.


**Speeches, 1974-1991.**


**Publicity and Reviews, 1959-1997.**


**Box 6: General Files, 1937-1992.**

Folder:


4. General Files: Deed of gift, inventory, and related materials regarding Trimble’s donation of the Vance Trimble Collection to the Ohio University Libraries, Department of Archives and Special Collections, 1988. The collection is comprised of research materials and a typescript biography of E.W. Scripps.

5. General Files: Inventory of the E. W. Scripps Papers, Ohio University Libraries, Department of Archives and Special Collections.


12. General Files: News clippings of various articles by writers other than Trimble, 1947-1997

**Honors, Awards, and Societies, 1960-1998.**


**Box 7: Honors, Awards, and Societies, 1960-1998, continued.**
Folder:


5. Honors, Awards, and Societies: Recognitions from the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce; the city of New Orleans; and Covington, Kentucky, 1948-1976, and n.d.

**Travel Files, 1970-1985.**


**Box 8: Newspapers and Magazines**

Folder:

1. Newspaper clippings regarding Congressional nepotism by Trimble and others, 1959.


**Box 9: Newspapers and Magazines, continued.**

Folder:


   *Oil Newsmagazine*, August 1947.
   *Editor & Publisher*, 1959-60, 1981.
   Various issues of *Time*, 1959.
   Various issues of *Newsweek*, 1950, 1959-60.
   *Texas’ Houston Town*, May 1959 (2 copies)
   *Houston*, August 1949.
Box 10: Newspapers and Magazines, continued.
Folder:

Box 11: Newspapers and Magazines, continued.
Folder:
   
2. a. Unbound news clippings of articles by Vance Trimble from *The Kentucky Post*, 1966-1967
   
   b. Bound scrapbook of article news clippings by Trimble from Muskogee and Beaumont, n.d.
4. Large-format newspaper cartoon rendering of Trimble exposing Congressional nepotism, 1959; and a pencil sketch of “Vance Trimble at the Mike, ‘59”.

Box 12: Newspapers and Magazines, continued.
[See also index of story titles in Box 12, created by Trimble.]
Folder:
1. Detective magazines with stories by Trimble, small format:
   *Pageant*, December 1946.
2. Detective magazines with stories by Trimble, medium format:
   *1944 Detective Yearbook.*
   *Complete Detective*, March 1943.
   *Crime Detective*, October 1942
   *Crime Detective*, March 1943
   *Crime Detective*, Fall 1945
Crime Detective, June 1948
Feature Detective, October 1942.
Front Page Detective, February 1946
Front Page Detective, March 1946
Front Page Detective, January 1947
Front Page Detective, May 1947
Headline Detective, January 1944
Headline Detective, March 1944
Inside Detective, September 1943
Inside Detective, October 1943
Inside Detective, December 1943
Inside Detective, April 1944
Inside Detective, June 1944
Inside Detective, August 1944
Inside Detective, March 1945
Inside Detective, March 1947
Inside Detective, May 1947
Master Detective, March 1943
Master Detective, June 1943
Real Detective, December 1938
Real Detective, January 1939
Real Detective, January 1942
Real Detective, February 1942
Real Detective, May 1942
Real Detective, September 1943
Real Detective, August 1946
Revealing Detective Cases, November 1942.
Sensation, April 1942
Sensation, September 1942
Sensation, December 1942
Sir! August 1958.
True Cases of Women in Crime, September 1954.
True Police Cases, December 1953.

3. Detective magazines with stories by Trimble, large format:
Crime Confessions, November 1941.
Crime Confessions, March 1942.
Crime Confessions, April 1942.
Crime Confessions, May 1942.
Crime Confessions, July 1942.
Crime Confessions, August 1942.
Crime Confessions, September 1942.
Crime Confessions, December 1942.
Crime Confessions, January 1943.
Crime Confessions, February 1943.
Crime Confessions, March 1943.
Crime Confessions, Summer 1943.
Crime Confessions, September 1943.
Intimate Detective Stories, March 1943.

Box 13
Folder: