

# Guide to the VERSEtility BOOKS Records

YCAL MSS 700



by Beinecke staff

January 2013

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 700

**CREATOR:** VERSetility BOOKS

**TITLE:** VERSetility BOOKS records

**DATES:** 1985-2001

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 5.05 linear feet (7 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The VERSetility BOOKS Records consist of correspondence, financial papers, computer disks, and other administrative files relating to the bookselling business of VERSetility BOOKS. Correspondence contains letters between Jacob and poets regarding their signed books and subsequent sales. A small portion of the correspondence relates to the appraisal and sale of poets' personal libraries to various universities. Financial papers and administrative files include sales records, bills, invoices, and correspondence regarding the financial operation of the business. Nine computer disks store VERSetility BOOKS catalogs and advertisements for *Poetry Magazine*.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.versetilitybooks>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.versetilitybooks>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Robert Jacob on the Eugene G. O'Neill Memorial Fund, 2002.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Box 7 (computer disks): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies of electronic files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The VERSetility BOOKS Records are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

VERSetility BOOKS Records. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

The collection received preliminary processing at the time of acquisition. Further organization, rehousing, and description were carried out in 2013.

The collection is comprised of material formerly classed as: Uncat MSS 291 and Uncat MSS 376. Various acquisitions associated with the collection have not been merged and organized as a whole. Each acquisition is described separately in the contents list below, according to month and year of acquisition.

Information included in the Description of Papers note and Collection Contents section is drawn from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during basic processing.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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## VERSetility BOOKS

VERSetility BOOKS was a book selling business founded by Bob Jacob in Connecticut. Prior to its founding, Jacob and his wife, Betty Jacob, owned Brook Farm Inn in Lenox, Massachusetts, an inn they dedicated to poetry by housing poets free of charge and hosting poetry events. In 1992, they sold the farm and moved to Connecticut. VERSetility BOOKS's mission was the sale of signed copies of poets' books and donation of most profits to the poets. Through relationships with a few poets, Jacob was asked to appraise their private book collections and broker sales of these collections to universities. VERSetility BOOKS ceased operation in 2001 and Jacob turned his attention to reading poetry to cancer support groups and volunteering his time at the Connecticut Hospice Hospital in Branford and other hospitals.

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## Scope and Contents

The VERSetility BOOKS Records consist of correspondence, financial papers, computer disks, and other administrative files relating to the bookselling business of VERSetility BOOKS. Correspondence contains letters between Jacob and poets regarding their signed books and subsequent sales. A small portion of the correspondence relates to the appraisal and sale of poets' personal libraries to various universities. Financial papers and administrative files include sales records, bills, invoices, and correspondence regarding the financial operation of the business. Nine computer disks store VERSetility BOOKS catalogs and advertisements for *Poetry Magazine*.

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## Arrangement

Organized into two groupings: I. May 2002 Acquisitions, 1985-2001. II. October 2002 Acquisition, 1986-2001.

## Collection Contents

### 1: May 2002 Acquisitions, 1985-2001

*1.84 linear feet (3 boxes)*

Consists of correspondence with various poets regarding the signing and sale of their books and checks made out to various poets.

Former call number: Uncat MSS 291

Correspondence grouped into two alphabetical runs.

Correspondence		
b. 1	Ai	1993-1994, 1998
b. 1	Atwood, Margaret	1993
b. 1	Berrigan, Daniel	undated
b. 1	Bell, Marvin	1993
b. 1	Berry, Wendell	1993
b. 1	Blumenthal, Michael C.	1989, 1990s
b. 1	Bly, Robert	1993-1994
b. 1	Boland, Eavan	undated
b. 1	Bottoms, David	1995
b. 1	Brodsky, Louis Daniel	1993, 1997
b. 1	Buckley, Christopher	1997-1999
b. 1	Burkhard, Michael	1992-1993
b. 1	Carruth, Hayden	1993
b. 1	Citino, David	1993
b. 1	Clewell, David	1998-2000
b. 1	Clifton, Lucille	1993
b. 1	Collins, Billy	1993-1995
b. 1	Connellan, Leo	1993-1995
b. 1	Creeley, Robert	1993-1997
b. 1	Dana, Robert	1997-1998
b. 1	DeFrees, Madeline	1999
b. 1	Doty, Marie	1995-2000
b. 1	Dove, Rita	1993

## Correspondence (continued)

b. 1	Dubie, Norman	1993
b. 1	Dukes, Carol Muske	1995
b. 1	Dunn, Stephen	1990-1999
b. 1	Elmslie, Kenword	1993
b. 1	Enslin, Theodore	1992
b. 1	Eshleman, Clayton	1993
b. 1	Ferlinghetti, Lawrence	1993-1994, undated
b. 1	Fixel, Lawrence	1992-1995
b. 1	Forché, Carolyn	1998
b. 1	Fulton, Alice	1997
b. 1	Gallagher, Tess	1993-1998
b. 1	Garris, Mildred	1993
b. 1	Green, Stan	1995
b. 1	Gregg, Linda	1995, 1997
b. 1	Gilbert, Jack	1995, 1997
b. 1	Gildner, Gary	1993-1994
b. 1	Gioia, Dana	1995
b. 1	Giovanni, Nikki	1993
b. 1	Glück, Louise	1993
b. 1	Grennan, Eamon	1993-2000
b. 1	Haas, Robert	1993
b. 1	Hall, Donald <i>2 Folders</i>	1994-2000
b. 1	Haines, John	1995-1998
b. 1	Hall, Joan Joffe	2000
b. 1	Harper, Michael S.	1986-1988
b. 1	Hathaway, William	1993
b. 1	Heaney, Seamus	1985
b. 1	Heyen, William <i>2 Folders</i>	1994-2000

## Correspondence (continued)

b. 1	Hoffman, Daniel <i>2 Folders</i>	1993-2001
b. 1	Hollander, John	1995
b. 1	Hongo, Garrett Kaouru	1995
b. 1	Ignatow, David	1993
b. 1	Jabes, Edmond	1988, 1991
b. 1	Justice, Donald	1993-1997
b. 1	Kennedy, X. J.	1993
b. 1	Kherdian, David	1995, undated
b. 1	Kizer, Carolyn	1993
b. 1	Kinnell, Galway	1986-1999
b. 1	Knott, Bill	1998, undated
b. 1	Knudson, Jan	1995
b. 1	Koch, Kenneth	1993
b. 1	Kumin, Maxine	1993
b. 1	Kunitz, Stanley	1993-1995
b. 1	Langland, Joseph T.	1995-1999
b. 1	Laughlin, James	1987
b. 1	Levertov, Denise	1993
b. 1	Levine, Philip	1993-1999
b. 1	Logan, William	2000
b. 1	Macklin, Elizabeth	1995
b. 1	Merwin, William S.	1997-1999
b. 1	Muske, Carol	1995, 1999
b. 1	Nims, John Frederick	1994-1999
b. 1	Olds, Sharon	1989-1997
b. 1	Pastan, Linda	1993-2001
b. 1	Perlman, John	2001
b. 1	Piercy, Marge	1990-1997
b. 1	Rakosi, Carl	1993-1999
b. 1	Sarton, Mary	1993-1995



## Correspondence (continued)

b. 1	Schreiber, Ilse	1995
b. 1	Schulman, Grace	1995, 1997
b. 1	Seidman, Hugh	1995-2001
b. 1	Simic, Charles	1993, 1995
b. 1	Smith, William Jay	1999-2000
b. 2	Snodgrass, W. D.	1993-2001
b. 2	Soto, Gary	1995
b. 2	Stern, Gerald	1993
b. 2	Strand, Mark	1993
b. 2	Snyder, Gary	1995
b. 2	Wagoner, David	1993
b. 2	Wakoski, Diane	1993-1998
b. 2	Wiebe, Dallas	1990
b. 2	Wieners, John	1993
b. 2	Wilbur, Richard	1993-2001
b. 2	Williams, Aubrey L.	1997
b. 2	Wright, Charles P.	1993
b. 2	Wright, Franz	1990
b. 2	Valentine, Jean	1997-2000
b. 2	Zimmer, Paul	1997-2001
b. 2	Checks, A-Z <i>11 Folders</i> Made out to various poets	
	Correspondence	
b. 3	Bly, Robert	1996
b. 3	Buckley, Christopher	1996-1997
b. 3	Collins, Billy	1996
b. 3	[Corn], Alfred	1996
b. 3	Creeley, Robert	1997
b. 3	DeFrees, Madeline	1997
b. 3	Espada, Martin	1996

## Correspondence (continued)

b. 3	Ewert, William and Mary	1996
b. 3	Fulton, Lice	1996
b. 3	Gallagher, Tess	1996
b. 3	Gilbert, Jack	1996-1997
b. 3	Gioia, Dana	1995
b. 3	Grennan, Eamon	1996
b. 3	Haines, John	1996
b. 3	Hall, Donald	1996-1997
b. 3	Heyen, William	1996
b. 3	Hoffman, Daniel	1996
b. 3	Jama, Stephen	1997
b. 3	Kelly, Brigit Pegeen	undated
b. 3	Kherdian, David	1997
b. 3	Kinnell, Galway	1996
b. 3	Kumin, Maxine	1996-1997
b. 3	Langland, Joseph	1996
b. 3	Lee, Lee Young	undated
b. 3	Levine, Philip	1996-1997
b. 3	Merwin, William S.	1996-1997
b. 3	Muske, Carol	1996
b. 3	Nims, John Frederick	1996-1997
b. 3	Pasten, Linda	undated
b. 3	Pierce, Marge	1996
b. 3	Rakoski, Carl	1995-2001
b. 3	Sirmons, Michael	1997
b. 3	Snodgrass, W. D.	1996
b. 3	Swenson, May (R. Knudson)	undated
b. 3	Valentine, Jean	undated
b. 3	Wakoski, Diane	1996-1997
b. 3	Wieners, John	1997

## Correspondence (continued)

b. 3	Wilbur, Richard	1996
b. 3	Williams, Aubrey	1997
b. 3	Zimmer, Paul	1996

**2: October 2002 Acquisition, 1986-2001****3.21 linear feet (4 boxes)**

Consists of sales files, invoices, bills, correspondence regarding various sales, and computer disks storing *VERSEtality BOOKS* catalogs and a print ad copy for *Poetry Magazine*.

Former call number: Uncat MSS 376

Box 7 (computer disks): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies of electronic files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

b. 4	Sales files 13 Folders	1993-1997
b. 5	Sales files 9 Folders	1997-2000
b. 5	Invoices 3 Folders	1993, 1999-2001
b. 5	Bills 2 Folders	1994-1995
b. 6	Bills 3 Folders	1996-1999
b. 6	Correspondence regarding various sales 19 Folders  Includes letters with John F. Nims and William Jay Smith regarding the sale of their personal libraries.	1986-2001
	Computer media (9 3.5" computer disks)  The disks are labeled: CAT A-L; CAT M-L; CAT 20; CAT 21; CAT 26; CAT COVER, B. CAT; WEB 3; and 3d WEB LIST. The disks store <i>VERSEtality BOOKS</i> catalogs and a print ad copy for <i>Poetry Magazine</i> .  Restricted fragile material. Reference copies of electronic files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 7	WEB 3 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0001 1 3.5_floppy_disk  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	
b. 7	B CAT. 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0002 1 3.5_floppy_disk  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	
b. 7	3d WEB LIST 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0003 1 3.5_floppy_disk  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	

## Computer media (continued)

b. 7	CAT. COVER 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0004 <i>13.5_floppy_disk</i>  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.
b. 7	CAT. A-L 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0005 <i>13.5_floppy_disk</i>  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.
b. 7	CAT. -- M-Z 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0006 <i>13.5_floppy_disk</i>  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.
b. 7	Cat 20 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0007 <i>13.5_floppy_disk</i>  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.
b. 7	CAT 20 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0008 <i>13.5_floppy_disk</i>  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.
b. 7	CAT 21 2002-ycal-1010-ay-0009 <i>13.5_floppy_disk</i>  Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Preferred Titles

*Poetry (Chicago, Ill.)*

### Subjects

American poetry -- 20th Century  
Poets, American -- 20th Century

### Genres / Formats

Born digital

### Occupations

Poets -- United States -- 20th Century

### Names

Jacob, Betty  
Jacob, Bob, 1932-

### Corporate Body

VERSEtility BOOKS