

# Earle Birney fonds

Last revised by Erwin Wodarczak (March 2013)



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# Fonds Description

**Earle Birney fonds.** – 1948-1952, 1961.

19.5 cm of textual records.

## Biographical Sketch

Born in Calgary, Alberta, Earle Birney (1904-1995) was educated at Universities of British Columbia, Toronto and California. He lectured in English at the University of Toronto from 1936 to 1941 when he left to serve overseas in World War II. On return, he worked for the CBC in 1945 and in 1946 he joined the Department of English at University of British Columbia, where he taught the first credit course in creative writing offered by a Canadian university. During the next two decades Birney added more writing courses and tutorials to the curriculum. In 1964 he became editor of the literary magazine *Prism International*, and affiliated it with the creative writing programme. Birney retired from UBC in 1965 to become writer-in-residence at Scarborough College at the University of Toronto – soon after he left, UBC officially established the programme he founded as the Department of Creative Writing.

Well known as a poet and writer, Earle Birney published novels, volumes of poetry, short stories, essays and plays. His honours include the Governor General's medal for poetry (twice); the Lorne Pierce gold medal for Literature, the University of Ontario President's medal for poetry; and the Stephen Leacock medal for humorous writing (for his novel *Turvey*). Birney died in September 1995.

## Scope and Content

The fonds consists of the original typescript and proofs of *Trial of a City* and drafts and page proofs of *Turvey*. The manuscripts date from 1948 to 1952. Also included is some correspondence between Birney and Stephen Vicinczey, along with a poem that Birney submitted to Vicinczey's magazine *Exchange*.

## Notes

Researchers are strongly advised to check with the University Archives regarding permission to publish or otherwise use materials from this fonds.

The drafts of *Turvey* are a combination of the first drafts and revisions; in some cases as many as three drafts are discernable. It was not possible to arrange the sheets as first draft and revised texts because in many cases Birney used the backs of the first draft sheets for his later revisions and many first draft sheets are missing. Therefore they have been arranged as a run of preliminary drafts, the result being a mixture of amended first draft sheets, together with the second and third drafts. This closely

approximates the original order in which the manuscripts were received -- presumably the order from which the fourth draft was taken. The fourth draft is self-explanatory, except that there is no Chapter III. Birney's pagination indicates that there was a Chapter II, pages numbering from 3-1-3- to 3-6-36. The material relating to *Trial of a City* consist of a typescript, galley proof and page proof.

Title based on the contents of the fonds.

Related materials can be found in the [Esther Birney fonds](#) and the [Prism International fonds](#).

For more information see his UBC [honorary degree citation](#).

The Vicinczey correspondence was found among other unrelated materials, and added to the fonds in 2010.

# File List

Box 1

*Turvey*

## Drafts

1-1	1st - Chapter 1
1-2	2nd - Chapter 1
1-3	3rd? - Chapter 2
1-4	1st - Chapter 2
1-5	1st - Chapter 3
1-6	2nd? - Chapter 3
1-7	3rd? - Chapter 4
1-8	1st - Chapter 5
1-9	2nd - Chapter 6 (partial)
1-10	1st - Chapter 6
1-11	1st - Chapter 6
1-12	1st - Chapter 7
1-13	1st - Chapter 8
1-14	1st - Chapter 9
1-15	1st - Chapter 10
1-16	1st - Chapter 12
1-17	2nd - Chapter 12
1-18	1st/2nd - Chapter 13
1-19	1st - Chapter 14
1-20	1st - Chapter 15
1-21	1st/2nd - Chapter 15
1-22	1st - Chapter 17
1-23	1st - Chapter 18
1-24	2nd - Chapter 18
1-25	2nd - Chapter 18
1-26	1st - Chapter 19
1-27	Late - Chapter 16

*Turvey* - Fourth Draft

	Chapter
1-28	1
1-29	2
1-30	4
1-31	5
1-32	6
1-33	7
1-34	8
1-35	9
1-36	10
1-37	11
1-38	12
1-39	13
1-40	14
1-41	15
1-42	16
1-43	17
1-44	18
1-45	19

Box 2

*Trial of a City*

2-1	Typescript (1952)
2-2	Galley Proof (1952)
2-3	Page Proof

*Turvey*

2-4	Page Proof
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Correspondence

2-5	Vicinczey (1961)
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