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### Hamlett (Marg-Riette Montgomery) Papers, 1915-1976

DRT Collection at Texas A&M University-San Antonio

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## A Guide to the Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett Papers, 1915-1976

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### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Montgomery, Marg-Riette, 1896-1993
<b>Title:</b>	Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1915-1976
<b>Creator Abstract:</b>	Teacher, author, composer, and librarian, Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett (1896-1993) was a long-time resident of San Antonio, Texas.
<b>Content Abstract:</b>	Personal and professional papers, musical compositions, and published and unpublished writings provide a sampling of the many interests and activities of Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett.
<b>Identification:</b>	Col 897
<b>Extent:</b>	1.46 linear feet (4 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	Materials are in English.
<b>Repository:</b>	DRT Collection at Texas A&M University-San Antonio

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### Biographical Note

Born in Illinois on 1896 June 17, Marguerite Elenor Montgomery (her first name was changed in college to avoid confusion with another student of the same name) was the first child of Joshua Lyman Montgomery and his second wife, Daisy Spilman Montgomery. Financial difficulties led the family to move to Oklahoma, where Daisy Montgomery died. A year later, Marguerite and her siblings were sent to Stephenville, Texas, to live with her maternal grandparents.

At age fourteen, through money earned by selling books, Marguerite entered Baylor Female College in Belton, Texas, completing the high school course of study and two years of college there. She then taught at schools in Rockdale, Temple, and Austin, Texas, before completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Texas in 1921. She then worked in public relations in Washington, D.C. before returning to Texas, teaching at schools in San Antonio. In 1923, she married William A. Hamlett, a Baptist minister she had met in Austin.

The Hamlett family, which grew to include two children, Stephen B. and Marguerite Anniel, lived in Georgia and Florida during the Depression, where William Hamlett held a number of positions. Marg-Riette Hamlett and her husband legally separated in the 1940s and she returned to San Antonio, where she acted as a Spanish translator for the U.S. government, taught, and wrote for a number of publications. She was appointed librarian at the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library in 1956, remaining there until her retirement in 1961. She then devoted her time to various writing projects, including three novels. Despite several bouts of ill health, she remained active into her 80s. Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett died in San Antonio in 1993.

Despite personal tragedies and frequent financial hardships, Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett maintained a lively intellectual curiosity and turned many of her personal interests - including music, history, feminism, philosophy, and religion - into creative works. She composed and published songs and hymns throughout her life, including a work she proposed as the official hymn of the United Nations. In addition to journalistic work and regular contributions to a number of periodicals, she published *Ten Thousand Texas Daughters*, a fictionalized biography of her “spiritual mother,” Elli Moore Townsend of Baylor Female College (now the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor); wrote and published poetry; and was the rewrite editor of a history of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church of San Antonio.

Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett described her lengthy fictional works, which remained unpublished, as “written for grandmother readers with an appeal to nostalgia or for their immature granddaughters whose emotions thrive on trivial (more or less) details,” though she also felt the “social history” in the novels was “authentic all the way.” The books combine real people and events with San Antonio settings and reflect many of Mrs. Hamlett’s ideas and interests.

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## Scope and Content Note

Personal and professional papers, musical compositions, and published and unpublished writings make up the Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett Papers, providing a sampling of her many interests and activities.

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## Organization of Collection

This collection is organized into five series.

Series 1: Personal papers

Series 2: Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library records

Series 3: Musical compositions

Series 4: Writings

Series 5: Restricted material

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## Restrictions

### Access Restrictions

Some materials in this collection are restricted and closed to researchers.

### Usage Restrictions

Please be advised that the library does not hold the copyright to most of the material in its archival collections. It is the responsibility of the researcher to secure those rights when needed. Permission to reproduce does not constitute permission to publish. The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming to the laws of copyright, literary property rights, and libel.

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## Index Terms

### Personal Names

Montgomery, Marg-Riette, 1896-1993.

Basila, Marie Coudsi, 1887-1973 .

Townsend, Elli Moore, 1861-1953.

### Organizations

Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Library.

Ex-students' Association of the University of Texas.

Mary Hardin-Baylor College.

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

### Subjects

Alamo (Motion picture : 1960)

American fiction--Women authors.

Librarians--Texas--San Antonio/

Women authors, American--Texas.

Women composers--Texas--San Antonio.

Women composers' music.

Women--Social conditions.

### Locations

San Antonio (Tex.)--Fiction.

## Genres/Formats

Personal papers.  
Professional papers.  
Manuscripts.  
Photographs.  
Sheet music.

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett Papers, 1915-1976, Col 897, DRT Collection at Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Marg-Riette Montgomery Hamlett, 1979 February.

### Processing Information

Processed by Warren Stricker, 1998 August.

Finding aid edited and encoded by Caitlin Donnelly, 2010 November.

Finding aid updated by Rebeka Delgado, 2020 March.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series 1: Personal papers

This series contains miscellaneous correspondence, some correspondence with Elli Moore Townsend, scattered academic records, and printed material. Also part of this series are letters, printed material, and clippings associated with Mrs. Hamlett's friend Marie Coulsi Basila and similar material connected with Mary Hardin-Baylor College, the University of Texas Alumni Association, and Universidad Autónoma de México. Photographs include a variety of formal and informal items, including several taken at the Alamo and on the Brackettville, Texas, set during the filming of the John Wayne Alamo motion picture.

#### Box Folder

1	Correspondence, 1921-1972
1	General, 1921-1972
2	Elli Moore Townsend, 1942-1952
3	Letters of recommendation, 1915-1921

4	Academic records, 1919-1948
5	Biographical notes, 1955-1976
6	General printed material
7	Clippings, 1955 and 1975
8	Marie Coudsi Basila, 1944-1974 Mary Hardin-Baylor College Alumni and Ex-Students Association, 1963-1976
9	Correspondence, 1964-1976
10	Newsletters, 1963 and 1965
11	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1958-1964
12	University of Texas Ex-Students Association, 1971-1975
13	Photographs

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### **Series 2: Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library records**

The second series gathers correspondence, printed material, and notes associated with Hamlett's work at the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	14	Employment records, 1955-1961
	15	Correspondence, 1957-1961
	16	Newsletters, 1960
	17	Clippings, 1955-1961
	18	General printed material
	19	Notes

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### **Series 3: Musical compositions**

This series includes files on songs and hymns composed or adapted by Hamlett, arranged alphabetically by title. In addition to the music, these files contain material dealing with copyright, correspondence, clippings, and printed items.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
2	20	Lists of titles
	21	"Christ Lives Today"
	22	"Christmas Bells"
	23	"Christmas Lullaby with Chimes"
	24	"Church Bells and Chimes"
	25	"Davy and the Alamo"
	26	"The Day and the Work"
	27	"De Profundis"

28	“Free in the Sky”
29	“A Glory Song”
30	“The Glow Within”
31	“HemisFair Roundelay”
32	“How Roses Came Red”
33	“Hymn for a Free World”
34	“I’m A-goin’ Back to Texas in the Mo’nin”
35	“An Irish Ballad of 1942”
36	“The Light Behind the Shadows”
37	“Litterbugs Galore”
38	“Little Girl Lullaby”
39	“Lovely Lady Mine”
40	“My Heart is Telling Me of Love”
41	“Ole Pecos Bill”
42	“Pan American Hymn”
43	“Them Gone-Away Blues”
44	“Training Union Theme Song”
45	“United Nations Hymn”
46	“Wynken and Blynken and Nod”

#### Series 4: Writings

The fourth series, Writings, gathers published and unpublished articles, poetry, and monographs and related material. Some of the published volumes are represented only by ancillary material. Unpublished manuscripts include two novels, *Brides of War* and *Mona Lisa’s Secret*. The former Hamlett described as a “nonfiction novel,” its characters fictionalized versions of actual individuals. Set in San Antonio, it describes the tragedies and difficulties faced by a group of family members and friends during World War II. The latter, also with a San Antonio setting, takes place against the backdrop of the events of 1913, as told in flashback fifty years later. At the heart of both books is Hamlett’s interest in the role and status of women, and the plots suggest some of her ideas for broadening the opportunities available to women.

Another item included with the manuscripts is a short proposal submitted in response to a contest soliciting “a practical program to achieve economic justice for homemakers,” and attaches documents and clippings in support of her plan to acknowledge the legal and economic status of the partners to a marriage.

The final manuscript is a novella, “Arabian Romance,” written by Hamlett and Marie Coudsi Basila and based on Basila’s experiences in the Middle East. Three brief articles attributed to Basila are also included.

#### Box Folder

2 Published volumes

47		<i>A Homage to Mrs. Rosaura Quesada de Martinez Garza</i>
48		<i>A Ninety-Year Record of Madison Square Presbyterian Church</i> , notes and printed material
49		<i>Singing in the Wilderness</i>
50		<i>Ten Thousand Texas Daughters</i> , correspondence, legal documents, and printed items
		Published articles
51		<i>The Emancipator</i> articles
52		<i>Gate Way: Journal of the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship</i>
53		<i>Mary Hardin-Baylor News</i>
54		<i>Presbyterian Tribune</i> articles
55		<i>San Antonio Express Magazine</i> articles
56		<i>Sun-Up</i>
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
3		Manuscripts
		Marg-Riette Montgomery
57		<i>Brides of War</i>
58		<i>Mona Lisa's Secret</i>
59		"A Practical Program to Achieve Economic Justice for Homemakers"
60		Marg-Riette Montgomery and Marie Coudsi Basila: "Arabian Romance"
61		Marie Coudsi Basila
		"Sight-Seeting in Canadian Cities"
		"To a Woman I Admire"
		"The Battle of Flowers—San Antonio"
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	62	Miscellaneous writings

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### Series 5: Restricted material

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
4		Restricted files; closed to researchers

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