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A Guide to the  
Matthias Adam Shaaber Papers  
1914-1981 (bulk 1940-1978)

2.0 Cubic feet

UPT 50 S524

Prepared by Timothy H. Horning  
December 2012

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**PROVENANCE**

The papers were donated to the University Archives by Margaret L. Shaaber in 1981 (accession number 21: 81).

**ARRANGEMENT**

The papers are organized into five series, Biographical Material, Correspondence, Organizations, Publications, and Miscellaneous, which are arranged alphabetically or chronologically where appropriate.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Matthias Adam Shaaber was born on December 13, 1897 in Reading, Pennsylvania to Harry and Emma Shaaber. After graduating from Reading High School in 1914, Shaaber matriculated to the University of Pennsylvania. As an undergraduate, Shaaber was a member of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity. He earned an A.B. from the University in 1918. After graduation, Shaaber enlisted in

the United States Army, where he reached the rank of second lieutenant before being honorably discharged in 1919. Shaaber then took a position at the University of Pennsylvania as an Instructor in English, albeit only briefly as he soon relocated to New York City where he worked for the National Shawmut Corporation from 1920 to 1922.

Shaaber returned to the University of Pennsylvania in 1922, again as an Instructor in English, and earned an A.M. (1924) and a Ph.D. (1929) from the University. He went on to serve as an Assistant Professor of English (1934-37), Associate Professor of English (1937-42), and, finally, Professor of English (1942-68). Shaaber served terms as both the graduate chair and department chair of the English department, and was responsible for enacting a number of changes to the English curriculum. When he retired from teaching in 1968, he was honored as an Emeritus Professor of English. Shaaber was appointed curator of the University's Horace Howard Furness Memorial Library in 1965, a position he kept until his death more than ten years after his retirement from teaching.

A scholar of Shakespeare and English Renaissance literature, Shaaber wrote numerous books and articles on these subjects, continuing to publish prolifically even after his retirement. He was a founding member of the Renaissance English Text Society, the Renaissance Society of America, and the Shakespeare Society of America.

Matthias Adam Shaaber died on December 10, 1979 only three days shy of his 82nd birthday. He was survived by his wife of 46 years, Margaret Donaldson Shaaber.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Matthias Adam Shaaber Papers document his work with several organizations he was a member of and primarily date from the 1950s to the 1970s. This documentation consists of memoranda, minutes, newsletters, and reports. The papers also document some of the numerous articles and books Shaaber published. There are drafts, some partial and some complete, as well as editorial reviews of the works in progress by Shaaber's friends and colleagues. Lastly, there is some material that is more biographical in nature and some of which appears to have been compiled by Shaaber's wife Margaret after his death.

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**INVENTORY**

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