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# THE J.B. PRIESTLEY ARCHIVE: collection description

*Special Collections, J.B. Priestley Library*

**Reference code**

GB 0532 PRI.

**Title**

The J.B. Priestley Archive.

**Dates**

1895-ongoing.

**Level of description**

Fonds.

**Extent**

20 metres.

**Name of creator(s)**

J.B. Priestley, 1894-1984, novelist, dramatist, essayist and broadcaster.

**Biographical history**

Prolific writer and broadcaster John Boynton "Jack" Priestley was born in Bradford, West Yorkshire, in 1894, son of a schoolmaster. After serving in the British Army during World War I, he moved to London to develop a literary career, initially as an essayist and reviewer. The picaresque novel "The Good Companions" (1928) made him famous and during the 1930s he moved into drama and political writing. Among his most admired works are "English Journey", novels "Angel Pavement", and two drawing on his lost Yorkshire childhood, "Bright Day" and "Lost Empires", plays notably "Dangerous Corner", "An Inspector Calls" and "When We Are Married" and his World War 2 broadcasts, the "Postscripts". Priestley was awarded the Order of Merit in 1977 and died in 1984. He was married three times: in 1919 to Emily "Pat" Tempest, who died in 1925, to Jane Wyndham Lewis, and in 1953 to the archaeologist and writer Jacquetta Hawkes.

### ***Immediate source of acquisition***

Most material donated by the Priestley Estate in 1990 and subsequently.

### ***Scope and content***

Correspondence files, publishers' agreements, press cuttings, memorabilia, theatre programmes and other publicity. Personal effects (including pipes) and many photographs. Scripts for plays, films, and TV programmes. Juvenilia. Also includes the responses of others to his work e.g. the J.B. Priestley Society, festivals and celebrations.

### ***Access conditions***

Available to researchers, by appointment. Access to archive material is subject to preservation requirements and must also conform to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act and any other appropriate legislation.

### ***Copyright/conditions governing reproduction***

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### ***Language of material***

English.

### ***Finding aids***

Interim handlist.

### ***Related units of description***

Also in Special Collections at Bradford: an extensive collection of Priestley's published works; the Archive of Jacquetta Hawkes, Priestley's third wife, (Ref: GB 0532 HAW).

Books, typescripts, notes and letters were transferred by the Priestleys to the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, during the 1960s and 1980s.

### ***Archivist's note***

Described by John Brooker and Alison Cullingford.

### ***Rules or conventions***

ISAD(G) 2nd ed.

### ***Date(s) of description***

Original description July 2001, updated April 2008.

## ***Indexing***

### **Persons**

Priestley, J.B., John Boynton, 1894-1984.

Hawkes, Jacquetta.

### **Corporate Bodies**

J. B. Priestley Society.

### **Subjects**

Authors, English – 20th century.

Dramatists, English – 20th century.

English literature – 20th century.

Essayists, English – 20th century.

Novelists, English – 20th century.

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