Reference number: MLMSS 5636

Guide to the Papers of Dr Clement Semmler

Mitchell Library,
State Library of New South Wales

Sydney
2000

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This finding-aid is published as part of the Australian Literary Manuscript Collections Project, which has received funding from the Australian Research Council's Research Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities (RIEF) Scheme.

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Summary

Creator: Semmler, Clement, 1914-2000
Title: Papers of Dr Clement Semmler, 1924-1992
Date range: 1924-1992
Reference number: MLMSS 5636
Extent: 3.6m (20 boxes) of ms., typescript, photocopies, newscuttings, printed.
Repository: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Biographical Note

Clement Semmler, author and literary critic, was born in 1914. After graduating from Adelaide University he joined the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1942, eventually becoming deputy general manager, a position he held from 1965-1977. After his retirement from the ABC he was inter alia a member of the Council of the Sydney College of Advanced Education 1982-84, Deputy Chairman of the Library Council of NSW 1981-83, and Chairman of the Board of the Sydney City Art Institute.

**Administrative Information**

**Access**
Collection is partly restricted.

**Restrictions on Use**
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**Preferred Citation**
[Name of item], Papers of Dr Clement Semmler, 1924-1992, MLMSS 5636, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

**Provenance**
The papers were presented by Dr Clement Semmler in 1992.

**Access Terms**

**Personal Names**
- Boake, Barcroft, 1866-1892
- Hardy, Frank, 1917-
- James, Brian, 1892-1972
- Paterson, A. B. (Andrew Barton), 1864-1941
- Slessor, Kenneth, 1901-1971
- Stewart, Douglas, 1913-1985

**Corporate Names**
- Australian Broadcasting Commission

**Subjects**
- Authors, Australian -- 20th century
- Critics, Australian -- 20th century
Series List and Descriptions

A. Correspondence and personal papers, 1924-1992

RESTRICTED.

Mainly letters received and copies of letters sent together with related documents.

1. Lord and Lady Casey, 1963-86 (Box MLMSS 5636/1)
   Includes poems and drawings by Marie, Lady Casey and extracts from Lord Casey’s diaries. (2 files).

2. Andrew Fabiny, Derek Whitelock and others, 1964-68 (Box MLMSS 5636/1)
   Concerning preparation and publication of Literary Australia (Cheshire 1966).

3. Patrick White, Dr Peter Beatson, Manoly Lascaris and David Marr, 1967-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/1)

4. Lansdowne Press and others, 1963-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/2)
   Concerning the writing and publishing of The Banjo of the Bush (1966).

5. David McNicoll, Professor Colin Roderick and Professor E. Morris Miller, 1963-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/2)

6. Kenneth Adam, 1963-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/2)

7. Sir Zelman Cowen, 1967-78 (Box MLMSS 5636/2)

8. Dr Clem Christesen, 1960-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/2)
   Includes letter from A. D. Hope. (4 files).

9. Oscar Mendelssohn, 1964-72 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)

10. Professor Muriel Bradbrooke, 1968-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)

11. Qantas, 1977-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)
   Concerning contributions to magazine Airways in flight.
12. Maslyn Williams, 1974-86 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)

13. Literature Board of the Australia Council, 1977-88 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)


15. Correspondence concerning award of O.B.E., 1972 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)

16. Oxford University Press and others, 1965-69 (Box MLMSS 5636/3)

   Concerning preparation and publicity of *Twentieth century Australian literary criticism*.

17. Twayne Books (New York); Douglas Stewart and others, 1971-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)


18. Biographical material concerning Dr Keith Barry, 1991 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

19. Professors Clive Hart and Joseph Prescott and other scholars, 1959-73 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

   Concerning James Joyce.

20. Frank Dixon, founder and first head of ABC independent news service, 1976-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

21. Publishers (Angus & Robertson) and others, 1963-73 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

   Concerning *The world of Banjo Paterson* (A & R 1967); *A.B. Paterson* in “Australian writers and their work” series (Lansdowne Press and OUP 1965); and “Literary censorship in Australia” (unpublished).

22. Oxford University Press, ABC officers and others, 1954-77 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

   Concerning “Broadcasting and the Australian community”, accepted by OUP but never published.

23. Professor J. I. M. Stewart (“Michael Innes”), 1968-88 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

24. Sir John Medley, former Vice-Chancellor Melbourne University and Vice-Chairman ABC; and Sir James Darling, Chairman ABC, 1960-86 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)
25. Kenneth Slessor and others, 1964-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)
    Concerning preparation and publishing of *Kenneth Slessor*.

26. Sir Henry Bland, Chairman ABC 1976, 1976-77 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)

27. University of New England and others, 1969 (Box MLMSS 5636/4)
    Concerning conferring of degree of D. Litt.

28. Professor Richard Gerber (Free University, Berlin), 1956-88 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

29. Douglas Stewart, 1964-84 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

30. Professor G. Wilkes; Sir John Kerr, Governor General of Australia, 1964-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

31. James Hamilton, former secretary Victorian Fellowship of Australian Writers; National Book Council, 1974-86 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

32. Reviews of *The war despatches of Kenneth Slessor* (UQP 1987), 1987-88 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

33. Correspondence with heads of overseas broadcasting organisations and broadcasting personalities including former BBC directors-general, 1963-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

34. Foundation of Australian Literary Studies, James Cook University, also Professors Colin Roderick, Harry Heseltine and others, 1965-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)
    Concerning participation as visiting lecturer and judge of the awards.

35. Cyril Pearl, author and editor, and Mrs Paddy Pearl; Professor James McAuley, poet and editor, 1964-67 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

36. Frank Hardy and Harper Row (publishers), 1965-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)
    Concerning preparation and publishing of *A Frank Hardy swag* (1982).

37. Kenneth Tribe, former Chairman of Musica Viva, 1969-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

38. Richard Magoffin, author and balladist, 1966-85 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)
39. Professor P. K. Elkin, 1977-78 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)
  Concerning contribution to his anthology *Australian poets in perspective*.

40. Hon. Thomas McKay, former MLC, NSW, 1970-90 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

41. Geoffrey Serle; Society of Women Writers; Phillip Adams, 1970-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

42. Universities, writers groups etc., 1976-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)
  Concerning speeches and papers given at commemorations, seminars, etc. Includes letter from Sir Donald Bradman.

43. *Australian Women's Weekly*, 1982-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)
  Concerning column “The romance of words” (1982-87) dealing with word derivations etc.

44. Irish writers and personalities including Niall Sheridan; Kevin McCourt, former head of RTE and Irish Distillers; Lord O'Neill of the Maine, former Ulster PM; Irish Ambassadors etc., 1972-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/5)

45. Professor William Walsh, Chair of Commonwealth Literature, Leeds University; Robert Ross, editor U.S. literary magazine *Antipodes*, 1974-88 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

46. "C. H. Rolph" (Bill Hewitt) of the *New Statesman*; Molly Panter-Downes, author and London correspondent for the *New Yorker*, 1970-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

47. Dr Grace Perry, former editor *Poetry Australia*, 1965-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

48. *Canberra Times* and others when acting as judge in the National Short Story Competition, 1975 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

49. Laurie Lee, writer, poet, author of *Cider with Rosie*, 1974-1991 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

50. Scriptwriting for the ABC and correspondence etc. relating thereto, 1947-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

51. Various typescripts of lectures, papers, essays and published abstracts of speeches and articles, 1967-72 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)
52. Membership of state and federal advisory committees and councils, 1971-85 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

53. Dr Derek Whitelock, author, historian and environmentalist, 1965-80 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

54. David Forrest, author and short-story writer; Sir Walter Crocker, author and former Australian ambassador, 1965-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/6)

55. University of Queensland Press and others, 1978-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

      Concerning the publication of *The war diaries of Kenneth Slessor* (1985). (2 files).

56. Spike Milligan; also Milligan's biographer, Pauline Scudamore, 1968-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

57. Professor Ken Inglis, 1977-83 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

      Concerning his writing of *This is the ABC*.

58. Reviews of *A Frank Hardy swag* (1982), 1982 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

59. Charles Wicks, later Bishop and former ABC manager S.A.; Len Barsdell, 1956-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

60. Stuart Sayers, former literary editor *The Age*; Dennis Haskell, Kenneth Slessor critic and anthologist, 1973-90 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

61. "Brian James " (John Tierney ), 1967-73 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

      Concerning the writing of *The art of Brian James* (UQP 1972).

62. Various publishers, 1976-89 (Box MLMSS 5636/7)

      Concerning books, submissions etc.

63. Robert Stead, former BBC Controller, North Region, 1989-90 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

64. Transcript of oral history tape of life and career recorded by Clement Semmler for ABC, 1979 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

      RESTRICTED. Extracted and filed in Box 20.
65. Report of Independent Inquiry into Radio Australia chaired by Sir Keith Waller; History of the ABC Children's Program by Lyn Gash (Monash University thesis), 1975 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

66. Hazel de Berg, archivist and oral history interviewer, 1967 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

67. Transcript of interview recorded by C. Semmler with Douglas Stewart, 1973 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)


68. Aisling (Irish) Society of NSW, 1970-86 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

69. Various universities and colleges of advanced education, 1987-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

70. Bill Strutton and others, 1976-83 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

   Concerning alleged plagiarism of his novel Island of terrible friends by Thomas Keneally in his novel Season in purgatory.

   RESTRICTED. Extracted and filed in Box 20.

71. Professor Guy Howarth, poet and literary critic, 1959-73 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

72. Andrew Fabinyi, publisher, and others, 1962-72 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

   Concerning preparation and publishing of literary essays, For the uncanny man (1963).

73. Max Fatchen, children's book writer and former literary editor, Adelaide Advertiser, and others, 1966-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

   Concerning participation of C. Semmler as judge in the Advertiser novel competition.

74. Arthur Calwell, Gough Whitlam, Jim Cairns, and other Australian politicians, 1961-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)

75. Public Lending Right authority, 1987-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/)

76. Career advancement of C. Semmler papers and documents etc. also academic papers and references, 1938-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/8)
77. Famous overseas and Australian jazz musicians, 1970-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)

78. Leonard Miall, BBC controller of Overseas and Foreign Relations, 1971-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)

79. Frank Hardy, 1971-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)

80. Dr W. W. Grave, former master of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, 1968-86 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)

81. Harold Lewis, author of *Crow on a barbed wire fence*; and publishers Angus & Robertson, 1972-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)

82. *Quadrant*, 1977-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)

83. University of Queensland Press and others, 1984-89 (Box MLMSS 5636/9)


84. Reviews of *The ABC - Aunt Sally and sacred cow* (M.U.P. 1981), 1981 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

85. Lord David Windlesham, 1976-77 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

86. Speech and Drama Association of Queensland, 1981-84 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

87. Newspaper cuttings etc., 1966-77 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

   Concerning career and activities of C. Semmler.

88. University of Queensland Press and others, 1966-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

   Concerning reviews of *The Banjo of the bush*.

89. Reviews of *The war diaries of Kenneth Slessor* (1985), 1985-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

90. Geoffrey Dutton and others concerning the book on Barcroft Boake by C. Semmler; Max Harris, writer and columnist, 1963-66 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)
91. University of Queensland Press, 1984-90 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

    General correspondence.

92. Book reviews, articles etc. in *Southern Highland News*, 1988-89 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

93. Diary pages, including those of overseas visits 1955-75, also reports, 1955-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

94. BOAC (now British Airways), 1976 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

    Concerning introduction of Concorde.

95. Murray Bridge High School, 1963-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

96. Helen Garner, Leonie Kramer, Marjorie Barnard, Harry Heseltine, Geoffrey Blainey, Elizabeth Harrower, Dal Stivens, Kit Denton and others, 1958-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/10)

    Concerning books, articles etc. by Semmler.

97. English publishers, concerning Irish writer "Flann O'Brien " (Brian O’Nolan ); also Irish Embassy, Canberra, 1971-90 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

98. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1956-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

    Concerning TV criticism columns (1977-81) and book reviews (1956-81).

99. E. O. Schlunke, short story writer, and publishers Angus & Robertson (Douglas Stewart) concerning editing of *Stories of the Riverina* (1956); also with Angus & Robertson and various writers concerning editing of *Coast to Coast*, anthology of Australian short stories, 1965-66, 1959-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

100. C. Semmler - retirement from ABC 1977: papers and correspondence, 1975-79 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

101. Melbourne University Press and others concerning writing and publication of *The ABC - Aunt Sally and sacred cow*; also with Sir Charles Moses, solicitors and others concerning defamation suit brought by Moses, 1980-84 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

102. Publisher John Cody (Cape ), 1978-79 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

    Concerning memoirs.
103. *Bulletin*, 1982-88 (Box MLMSS 5636/11)

Concerning contributions.

104. Bernard Hesling, author, painter, enamellist, cartoonist, etc., 1964-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

105. Reviews in magazine *Hemisphere*, 1971-75 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

106. University of Queensland Press, 1985-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)


107. Viking-O'Neil, publishers, 1990-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)


108. Dr Len Green, Sydney radiologist and noted versifier, 1989-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)


110. Geoffrey Dutton, author, poet, editor etc., 1966-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

111. Dr Stephen Murray-Smith, former editor *Overland* and Barrett Reid, editor *Overland*, 1961-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

112. Professor Russel Ward, author and historian, 1969-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

113. *The Australian*, 1983-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

Concerning book reviews, feature articles, etc.

114. Robin Slessor, brother of Kenneth Slessor, and former prominent Sydney journalist, 1983-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

115. ABC personnel, various, in years following retirement of C. Semmler from ABC including Bruce Webster and Geoffrey Whitehead, 1983-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)
116. American scholars, Professors Herbert Jaffa and Joseph Prescott (noted Joycean authority), 1971-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

117. *Australian quarterly*, *Australian literary studies*, *Hemisphere*, 1964-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)
   
   Concerning contributions.

118. Miscellaneous literary figures including John Betjeman, Chris Koch, Kylie Tennant, Geoffrey Lehmann, 1961-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/12)

119. Personal papers, cuttings etc., 1938-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/13)
   
   2 folders.

120. ABC papers, memoranda, cuttings, etc., 1971-78 (Box MLMSS 5636/13)
   
   2 folders.

121. ABC papers, memoranda, cuttings etc., 1953-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/14)
   
   3 folders.

122. *Australian dictionary of national biography* editors, 1979-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/14)
   
   Concerning contributions on John Bede Dalley, Will Ogilvie, A. B. Paterson, etc.

123. John Millett, editor *Poetry quarterly* and Leslie Rees, author and playwright and former head of ABC Drama, 1979-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/14)

124. Miscellaneous articles, essays, reviews etc., 1959-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/14)

125. University of Queensland Press and others, 1990-92 (Box MLMSS 5636/14)
   

126. Oxford University Press, 1959-87 (Box MLMSS 5636/15)
   
   Concerning publications etc.
127. Papers, cuttings etc. kept by W. J. Cleary, second chairman of the ABC, 1924-31 (Box MLMSS 5636/15)

**B. Book reviews and literary articles, 1938-1991**

1. Reviews of books by C. Semmler, 1963-72 (Box MLMSS 5636/15)
   
   Books reviewed: *The art of Brian James and other literary essays; Twentieth century literary criticism; The world of Banjo Paterson; Coast to coast 1965/66; The Banjo of the bush; Literary Australia; For the uncanny man.*

2. *Sydney Morning Herald* book reviews, 1957-72 (Box MLMSS 5636/15)

3. *Sydney Morning Herald* book reviews, 1973-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/16)

4. Brisbane *Courier-Mail* book reviews and various literary articles, 1981-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/16)

5. *Australian* book reviews 1981-91; also *Bulletin* TV criticism columns 1981-86, 1981-91 (Box MLMSS 5636/16)

6. M.A. Thesis on Thomas Hardy: University of Adelaide, 1938 (Box MLMSS 5636/17)

7. Miscellaneous articles and reviews, 1949-82 (Box MLMSS 5636/17)

8. *Sydney Morning Herald* TV criticism columns, 1978-81 (Box MLMSS 5636/17)

**C. Literary manuscripts, 1981-1991**

1. *The war despatches of Kenneth Slessor* (UQP 1987), 1987 (Box MLMSS 5636/17)
   
   Parts 1, 2 & 3.

2. *The war diaries of Kenneth Slessor* (UQP 1985), 1985 (Box MLMSS 5636/18)
   
   Parts 1 & 2.

4. *Pictures on the margin* (UQP 1991), 1991 (Box MLMSS 5636/19)
   
   Includes holograph first drafts of Chapters 4, 6, 7 and 9.

**D. Miscellaneous material, 1951-1974**

1. *Encyclopaedia Britannica Australia* Awards, 1963-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/19)
   
   Personal file of C. Semmler as member of Awards Council. (2 folders).
   
   RESTRICTED. Extracted and filed in Box 20.

2. *Follow the river*: The story of the Charles Sturt Murray River exploration enactment, by Peter Macgregor, ABC Talks Officer, 1951 (Box MLMSS 5636/19)
   
   (This idea was suggested by C. Semmler as part of the Commonwealth Jubilee celebrations).

3. Transcript of taped interview with T. W. Bearup, former ABC wartime acting general manager and later European representative, on his life and career, 1968-70 (Box MLMSS 5636/19)

4. Transcript of various taped interviews, 1968-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/19)
   

**E. Restricted material extracted from other series, 1938-83**

1. Transcript of oral history tape of life and career recorded by Clement Semmler for ABC, 1979 (Box MLMSS 5636/20)
   
   RESTRICTED. Extracted from Box 8.

2. Bill Strutton and others, 1976-83 (Box MLMSS 5636/20)
Concerning alleged plagiarism of his novel *Island of terrible friends* by Thomas Keneally in his novel *Season in purgatory*.

RESTRICTED. Extracted from Box 8.

3. Career advancement of C. Semmler papers and documents etc. also academic papers and references, 1938-76 (Box MLMSS 5636/20)

RESTRICTED. Extracted from Box 8.

4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica Australia* Awards, 1963-74 (Box MLMSS 5636/20)

Personal file of C. Semmler as member of Awards Council. (2 folders)

RESTRICTED. Extracted from Box 19.