

# Carson McCullers Research

The Archives works closely with the [Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians](#) to acquire and preserve manuscript, print, photographic, and audio materials which document the life and work of the author. The Archives contains a wide variety of both primary and secondary source materials produced by or about the writer. Materials are collected in a variety of formats, and several individual manuscript collections contain pertinent information. Some of the holdings related to Carson McCullers include:

- Papers of Mary E. Mercer, MD, who was McCullers' psychiatrist, friend, companion, advocate, and the heir to 1/3 of McCullers' estate. These materials include medical and psychoanalytic records, legal records regarding McCullers' estate, and information about McCullers' art, furniture, photos, manuscripts, and other items which Dr. Mercer left to Columbus State University.
- Research collections from preeminent McCullers scholars such as Carlos Dews, Margaret Sullivan, and Virginia Carr.
- Carson McCullers' personal library of books she owned given to the Archives by Mary Mercer. These are cataloged and searchable in [GIL](#) and available in the Archives Reading Room.
- Carson McCullers research and reference collection, which include materials both by and about the author. These are cataloged and searchable in [GIL](#) and available in the Archives Reading Room.
- Photographs and videos
- Audio cassettes and records
- Carson McCullers Society Newsletters

In addition, a variety of archival collections are available for research, including:

- [Ballad of the Sad Café Playbill, SMC 60](#)
- [Carlos Dews Collection, MC 175](#)
- [Clason Kyle Collection, MC 86](#)
- [John Zeigler and Edwin Peacock Collection, MC 182](#)
- [Jordan Masee-Carson McCullers Collection, MC 170](#)
- [Loretto Chappell Collection, MC 29](#)
- [Margaret S. Sullivan Papers, MC 298](#)
- [Mary Martha Johnson Photograph Collection, SMC 53](#)
- [McCullers, Carson Society Records, MC 192](#)
- [Mercer, Dr. Mary E. /Carson McCullers Collection, MC 296](#)
- [Reflections: A Carson McCullers Symposium Collection, MC 183](#)
- [The Bradley Memorial Library Carson McCullers Collection, MC 184](#)
- [The Valley Reads \*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter\* Collection, MC 179](#)
- [Virginia Spencer Carr Collection, MC 23](#)

## Brief Biography of Carson McCullers

Born Lula Carson Smith in Columbus, Georgia on February 19, 1917, the author-to-be spent her childhood and teenage years in the town of her birth. After graduating from Columbus High School, the aspiring author moved to New York City. In 1937 she married James Reeves McCullers and at the age of 23 published her first novel, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940). This novel established McCullers as an author, and she continued to write, completing four other novels: *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1941), *The Member of the Wedding* (1946), *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1951), and *Clock Without Hands* (1961). Her other works include a number of short stories and a play, *The Square Root of Wonderful*. McCullers, who suffered a series of three strokes which eventually left her partially paralyzed, died in Nyack, New York on September 29, 1967.