

**The New York Public Library - Stephen A. Schwarzman Building  
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Guide to the

**G. Thomas Tanselle papers**

1960-2005 (bulk 1970-2004)

MsCol 6331

Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2009

## **Summary**

**Creator:** Tanselle, G. Thomas (George Thomas), 1934-

**Title:** G. Thomas Tanselle papers, 1960-2005 (bulk 1970-2004)

**Size:** 83.58 linear feet (199 boxes)

**Source:** Donated by G. Thomas Tanselle, 2006

**Abstract:** The G. Thomas Tanselle Papers contain correspondence, writings, and other materials related to Tanselle's work on bibliographical, bibliophilic, and textual subjects.

**Access:** Advance notice required. Apply at <http://www.nypl.org/mssref>

**Preferred citation:** G. Thomas Tanselle Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

## **Creator history**

G. Thomas Tanselle served for twenty-eight years (1978-2006) as the Vice President of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; since 1980 he has also been Adjunct Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. Before his move to New York in 1978, he had taught at the University of Wisconsin for eighteen years and had held Guggenheim (1969-70), ACLS (1973-74), and NEH (1977-78) Fellowships. He has lectured widely and has published books and articles (amounting in all to over 400 items) in the fields of American literature, printing and publishing history, descriptive and analytical bibliography, book collecting, textual criticism and scholarly editing, and literary and textual theory. He has been especially concerned to publicize the importance of collecting and preserving original materials and to combat the practice of replacing them with reproductions; to show the integral relationship between book-production history (including authorial intention) and reception history; to clarify the issues involved in textual criticism; and to develop new standards for the physical analysis and description of printed books.

## **Scope and content note**

The G. Thomas Tanselle Papers contain correspondence, writings, and other materials related to Tanselle's work on bibliographical, bibliophilic, and textual subjects. Arranged alphabetically by correspondent, the correspondence includes incoming and outgoing letters exchanged with many of the prominent figures in the bibliographical world from 1960-2005.

Writings include manuscripts, proofs, and related correspondence for each of Tanselle's publications.

This series is arranged by date. All correspondence relating to each publication is contained within these files. For example, most of Tanselle's correspondence with Fredson Bowers is contained in the writings series. Tanselle's body of work is quite prolific, and many of the proofs and drafts for these works are represented in this series. His first book, on the early American playwright Royall Tyler (1967), resulted in his being named to the Kennedy Center Advisory Committee for Drama for the Bicentennial in 1974. It was followed by a two-volume *Guide to the Study of United States Imprints* (1971), which won the Jenkins Prize in Bibliography in 1973 and led to his receiving the Laureate Award of the American Printing History Association in 1987. Four volumes of his collected essays have appeared, entitled *Selected Studies in Bibliography* (1979), *Textual Criticism since Greg* (1987; expanded 2005), *Textual Criticism and Scholarly Editing* (1990), and *Literature and Artifacts* (1998; translated into Italian, 2004); and he has also written *The Life and Work of Fredson Bowers* (1993). He has been one of the three co-editors of the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of *The Writings of Herman Melville* since its inception in 1965, and thus far thirteen volumes have appeared. In 1981 he delivered the Hanes Lecture at the University of North Carolina, published under the title *The History of Books as a Field of Study* (1981); in 1987, the Rosenbach Lectures at the University of Pennsylvania, published as *A Rationale of Textual Criticism* (1989); in 1990, the Malkin Lecture at Columbia University, published as *Libraries, Museums, and Reading* (1991); in 1991, the Engelhard Lecture at the Library of Congress, published as *A Description of Descriptive Bibliography* (1992); in 1994, the Lieberman Lecture of the American Printing History Association, published as "Printing History and Other History" in the 1995 volume of *Studies in Bibliography*; in 1997, the Sandars Lectures at Cambridge University, to be published as *Bibliographical Analysis: A Historical Introduction*; and in 2005, the Nikirk Lecture at the Grolier Club, published as *The Pleasures of Being a Scholar-Collector* (2006).

The final series is *Boards and Committees*. It is arranged alphabetically according to the names of the organizations and institutions. These files contain not only internal documents and minutes, but some related correspondence. Tanselle has been a member of many groups throughout his career. He has been president of the Bibliographical Society of America, the Grolier Club, the Society for Textual Scholarship, the Melville Society, The Johnsonians, and the American Friends of the Bibliographical Society (London); he is currently president of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia. He was on the Council of the Bibliographical Society of America for twenty-four years (1970-94), the Council of the Grolier Club for twenty-one (1980-2001), the Council of the American Antiquarian Society for eighteen (1974-92), and many other councils, boards, and advisory committees for shorter periods. He is presently chairman of the Board of Directors of the Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue / North America, Inc., and a member of the Board of Directors of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing; and he has served on the Executive Committee of the Society for Textual Scholarship since its inception in 1979 and on the Board of Directors of the Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., since its inception the same year. In the early years of his work on the Melville edition he served on the Advisory Committee of the Modern Language Association of America's Center for Editions of American Authors (1970-73), revising its Statement of Editorial Principles and Procedures in 1972, and on the successor Committee on Scholarly Editions (1976-81), writing its Introductory Statement in 1977. And in 1993-95, again for the Modern Language Association, he chaired an Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of the Print Record, which published a statement he drafted on the importance of preserving primary records. He has served, or is presently serving, on the advisory boards of the Borges, Burton, Cooper, Swift, and Mark Twain editions and of a number of journals, including *Abstracts of English Studies*, *American Literature*, *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography*, *Book History*, *Common Knowledge*, *Contemporary Literature*, *Leviathan*, *Literary Research*, *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, *Resources for American Literary Study*, and *Review*. In 2004 he was designated an Honorary Member of the Bibliographical Society of America.

The G. Thomas Tanselle papers are organized into the following series:

- I. General Correspondence
- II. Writings and Related Correspondence
- III. Boards and Committees

**Key terms**

**Subjects**

American literature -- Criticism, textual  
Bibliography -- United States

**Names**

Tanselle, G. Thomas (George Thomas), 1934-

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Arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Includes many of the prominent figures in the bibliographical world from 1960- 2005.

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- b.52 f.6 Tayler, Edward

**I. General Correspondence** (cont.)

b.52 f.7 Taylor, Robert H.  
b.52 f.8 Tebbel, John  
b.52 f.9 Thomas, Ednah  
Thomas, Joseph M.  
b.52 f.10 1990-1996  
b.52 f.11 1997  
b.52 f.12 Thorpe, James  
b.52 f.13 Thrower, Norman J.W.  
b.52 f.14 Tichenor, Irene  
b.53 f.1 Tierney, James  
b.53 f.2 Todd, William B  
b.53 f.3 Tofanelli, John  
b.53 f.4 Towner, L.W.  
b.53 f.5 Traister, Daniel  
b.53 f.6 Travitsky, Betty S.  
b.53 f.7 Trienens, Roger  
b.53 f.8 U  
b.53 f.9 V  
Vander Meulen, David L.  
b.54 f.1 1976-1986  
b.54 f.2 1987-1989  
b.54 f.3 1990-1991  
b.54 f.4 1992  
b.54 f.5 1993  
b.54 f.6 1994  
b.54 f.7 1995  
b.54 f.8 1996  
b.55 f.1 1996  
b.55 f.2 1997  
b.55 f.3 1998  
b.55 f.4 1999  
b.55 f.5 2000  
b.55 f.6 2001  
b.55 f.7 2002  
b.56 f.1 2003  
b.56 f.2 2004  
b.56 f.3 2005  
b.56 f.4 Van Sickle, John  
b.56 f.5 Van Vliet, H.T.M.



**I. General Correspondence** (cont.)

- b.56 f.6 VerKrujisse, P.J.
- b.56 f.7 Viscomi, Joseph
- b.56 f.8 W - 1978
- b.56 f.9 Wa - We
- b.57 f.1 We - Wi
- b.57 f.2 Wi - Wo
- b.57 f.3 Wo - Wy
- b.57 f.4 Waingrow, Marshall
- b.57 f.5 Webb, Robert
- b.57 f.6 Webb, Thompson
- b.57 f.7 Weiss, Adrian
- b.57 f.8 Wells, James M.
- b.57 f.9 Wendorf, Richard
- West, James L. W. III
- b.57 f.10 1972-1992
- b.57 f.11 1993
- b.58 f.1 White House
- b.58 f.2 Whitesell, David
- b.58 f.3 Whitley, Alvin
- b.58 f.4 Whitley speeches
- b.58 f.5 Wightman, Julia
- b.58 f.6 Wilcox, Maud
- b.58 f.7 Wilder, A. Tappan
- b.58 f.8 Williams, James
- b.58 f.9 Williams, William P.
- b.58 f.10 Williamson, William
- b.58 f.11 Willis, Patricia
- b.58 f.12 Willison, Ian R.
- b.59 f.1 Wilson, Martha
- b.59 f.2 Winans, Robert
- b.59 f.3 Winship, Michael
- Witherell, Elizabeth
- b.59 f.4 1978-1990
- b.59 f.5 1991-2005
- b.59 f.6 Wittriech, Joseph
- b.59 f.7 Wolf, Edwin
- Woodring, Carl and San
- b.59 f.8 1980-1990
- b.60 f.1 1991-2005

**I. General Correspondence** (cont.)

- b.60 f.2 Woodring, Ray
- b.60 f.3 Woodward, David
- b.60 f.4 Wright, Conrad E.
- b.60 f.5 Wrolstad, Merald
- b.60 f.6 Wynne, Majorie
- b.60 f.7 X, Y, Z
- b.60 f.8 Yamashita, Hiroshi
- b.60 f.9 Yannela, Donald
- b.60 f.10 Yerkes, David
- b.60 f.11 Zinman, Michael

**II. Writings and Related Correspondence**

- b.61 1960-1962
- b.62 1962-1964
- b.63 1964-1965
- b.64 1965-1966
- b.65 1966
- b.66 1967
- b.67 1967-1968
- b.68 1968-1969
- b.69 1969-1970
- b.70 1970-1971
- b.71 1971-1972
- b.72 1973-1974
- b.73 1974-1975
- b.74 1975-1976
- b.75 1977-1979
- b.76 1979-1980
- b.77 1980-1981
- b.78 1981-1982
- b.79-80 1982
- b.81 1982-1983
- b.82 1983-1985
- b.83 1985-1986
- b.84 1986-1987
- b.85 1987-1988
- b.86 1988-1989
- b.87 1989
- b.88-90 1990
- b.91 1990-1991

**II. Writings (cont.)**

- b.92 1991-1992
- b.93 1992
- b.94-97 1993
- b.98 1993-1994
- b.99 1994-1995
- b.100-101 1995
- b.102 1996
- b.103 1996-1997
- b.104 1997
- b.105-106 1998
- b.107-108 1999
- b.109 1999-2000
- b.110 2000-2001
- b.111 2001-2002
- b.-113 2002
- b.114 2003
- b.115 2003-2004
- b.116-117 2005

**III. Boards and Committees**

- b.118-119 Abstracts of English Studies, 1964-1978
- b.120-128 American Antiquarian Society
- b.129 f.1-4 American Literature Board
- b.129 f.5 American Literature Section
- b.129 f.6-9 American Printing History Association
- b.130 f.1 American Studies Association
- b.130 f.2 Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography  
Association for Documentary Editing
- b.130 f.3 Conference
- b.130 f.4 Nominating Committee
- b.130 f.5 Convention
- b.130 f.6 Manual Committee
- b.130 f.7 Boydston Prize Committee
- b.130 f.8-10 Beinecke Class  
The Bibliographical Society of America
- b.131 Council, 1970-1984
- b.132-133 President, 1984-1988
- b.133-134 Council, 1988-1994
- b.134 f.5 Committee on Regional Groups
- b.134 f.6 Committee on Bibliographical Projects

**III. Boards and Committees** (cont.)

The Bibliographical Society of America (cont.)

- b.134 f.7 Newsletters
- b.134 f.8 Policy Guidelines for Joint Meetings
- b.134 f.9 Statement for ACLS
- b.134 f.10 Fellowship Committee
- b.135 f.1-3 Printing and Publishing History Resources Project
- b.135 f.4-8 Publications Committee
- b.136-137 Publications Committee
- b.138 f.1-6 Publications Committee
- b.138 f.7-10 Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia
- b.139-143 Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia
- b.144 f.1-3 Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia
- b.144 f.4 Black Fiction Project
- b.144 f.5-6 Blake Archive Advisory Board
- b.144 f.7 Borges Edition
- b.144 f.8 British Library (The American Trust)
- b.145 f.1-10 Bulletin du Bibliophile
- b.145 f.11-12 Burton Edition
  - b.146 Center for Computer Assisted Textual Analysis
  - b.147 Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies
  - b.148 Center for Scholarly Editions
  - b.149 Center for Scholarly Editions
- b.150 f.1-7 Center for the Book
- b.150 f.8 CUNY Task Force
- Columbia University
  - b.150 f.9 1983-1985
  - b.151 f.1 1986-1998
  - b.151 f.2 1999
  - b.151 f.3 Course Descriptions
  - b.151 f.4 Center for American Culture Studies
  - b.151 f.5 Columbia Libraries Friends
  - b.151 f.6 Library School
  - b.151 f.7-9 Rare Book School
  - b.152 f.1-3 Rare Book School
  - b.152 f.4-7 Students
  - b.153 Students
  - b.154 Commission on English
- b.155 f.1-2 Common Knowledge Editorial Board
- b.155 f.3 Contemporary Literature
- b.155 f.4 Cooper Edition

**III. Boards and Committees** (cont.)

- b.155 f.5-6 Council of Editors of Learned Journals
- b.155 f.7-8 Council on Library and Information Resources
  - b.156 English Short-Title Catalog
  - b.157 English Short-Title Catalog
  - b.158 English Short-Title Catalog
  - b.159 English Short-Title Catalog
- Grolier Club
  - b.160 Council
  - b.161 Council
  - b.162 Council
  - b.163 Council
  - b.164 President
  - b.165 President
- b.166 f.1-5 Library Committee
  - b.166 f.6 Nominating Committee
- b.166 f.7-13 Committee on Public Exhibitions/ Publications
- b.167 f.1-2 Centennial Meeting
- b.167 f.3-4 Biography Project
- b.167 f.5-9 Renovation Project
  - b.168 Renovation Project
- b.169 f.1-5 Renovation Project
- b.169 f.6-8 Indiana University Institute for Advanced Study
- b.170 f.1 Independent Research Libraries Association
- b.170 f.2-3 Johnsonians
  - b.170 f.4 Kennedy Center Bicentennial Drama Committee
  - b.170 f.5 Leviathan Editorial Board
  - b.170 f.6-7 Lilly Library
  - b.170 f.8-9 Literary Classics of the United States
    - b.171 Literary Classics of the United States
    - b.172 Literary Classics of the United States
    - b.173 Literary Classics of the United States
- b.174 f.1-2 Literary Classics of the United States
  - Library of America
    - b.174 f.3-4 1987
    - b.174 f.5 1988
    - b.175 1988-1990
    - b.176 1990-1992
    - b.177 1993-1995
    - b.178 1996

**III. Boards and Committees** (cont.)

Library of America (cont.)

b.179	1997-1998
b.180	1999-2000
b.181	2001-2002
b.182	2002-2003
b.183 f.1	2004
b.183 f.2-3	2005
b.183 f.4-5	Editorial Committee
b.184 f.1	Editorial Committee
b.184 f.2-3	Textual Standards Committee
b.184 f.4-7	Publications Committee
b.185 f.1-8	Publications Committee
b.185 f.9	History
b.185 f.10	Procedures Committee
b.185 f.11	Art Project
	Publications by Subject Name
b.185 f.12	Adams
b.186 f.1	Alcott
b.186 f.2	American Crime
b.186 f.3-4	American Poetry: The 19th Century
b.186 f.5-6	American Poetry: The 20th Century
b.186 f.7	American Revolution
b.186 f.8	Audubon
b.186 f.9	Baldwin
b.186 f.10	Bartram
b.186 f.11	Bellow
b.187 f.1	Bowles
b.187 f.2	Brown
b.187 f.3	Cather
b.187 f.4	Chandler
b.187 f.5	Chesnutt
b.187 f.6	Chopin
b.187 f.7	Civil Rights
b.187 f.8	Clemens
b.187 f.9	Constitution
b.187 f.10	Cooper
b.187 f.11	Crane
b.187 f.12	Dana
b.187 f.13	Dewey
b.187 f.14	Dickinson

**III. Boards and Committees** (cont.)

Library of America (cont.)

Publications by Subject Name (cont.)

b.187 f.15	Dos Passos
b.187 f.16	Douglass
b.187 f.17	Dreiser
b.187 f.18	Emerson
b.188 f.1	Farrell
b.188 f.2	Faulkner
b.188 f.3	Fitzgerald
b.188 f.4	Franklin
b.188 f.5	Frost
b.188 f.6	Grant
b.188 f.7	Hamilton
b.188 f.8	Hammett
b.188 f.9	Hawthorne
b.188 f.10	Hemingway
b.188 f.11	Howells
b.188 f.12	Hurston
b.188 f.13	Irving
b.188 f.14	James, Henry
b.188 f.15	James, William
b.189 f.1	Jefferson
b.189 f.2	Jewett
b.189 f.3	Johnson, J.W.
b.189 f.4	Kaufman
b.189 f.5	Lewis
b.189 f.6	Lincoln
b.189 f.7	Library of American Lives
b.189 f.8	London
b.189 f.9	Longfellow
b.189 f.10	Lovecraft
b.189 f.11	Madison, James
b.189 f.12	McCullins
b.189 f.13	Melville
b.189 f.14	Millay
b.189 f.15	Miller
b.189 f.16	Muir
b.189 f.17	Nabokov
b.189 f.18	Norris
b.189 f.19	O'Connor
b.189 f.20	O'Neill

**III. Boards and Committees** (cont.)

Library of America (cont.)

Publications by Subject Name (cont.)

b.189 f.21	Paine
b.189 f.22	Parkman
b.190 f.1	Poe
b.190 f.2	Pound
b.190 f.3	Powell
b.190 f.4	Reporting Vietnam
b.190 f.5	Roosevelt
b.190 f.6	Roth
b.190 f.7	Sea Writings
b.190 f.8	Sermons
b.190 f.9	Sherman
b.190 f.10	Singer
b.190 f.11	Slave Narratives
b.190 f.12	Stein
b.190 f.13	Steinbeck
b.190 f.14	Stevens
b.190 f.15	Stowe
b.190 f.16	Thoreau
b.190 f.17	Thurber
b.190 f.18	Tocqueville
b.191 f.1	Twain
b.191 f.2	Vintage
b.191 f.3	Washington
b.191 f.4	Welty
b.191 f.5	West
b.191 f.6	Wharton
b.191 f.7	Whitman
b.191 f.8	Williams
b.191 f.9	World War II
b.191 f.10	Wright
b.191 f.11	Literary Research
b.191 f.12	Manuscript Society
b.192 f.1-4	Manuscript Society
b.192 f.5-6	Melville Society
	Modern Language Association
b.192 f.7	American Literature Section
b.192 f.8	Hubbell Award Committee
b.192 f.9	Bibliographic Evidence Group
b.192 f.10	Division on Methods of Literary Research



**III. Boards and Committees** (cont.)

Modern Language Association (cont.)

- b.192 f.11 Future of the Print Record
- b.193 Future of the Print Record
- b.194 f.1 PMLA
- b.194 f.2-5 Prize for Independent Scholars
- b.194 f.6 National Council of Teachers of English
- b.194 f.7 NEH Panels
- New York Public Library
- b.194 f.8 Lenox and Lydenberg Societies
- b.194 f.9-11 Search Committee
- b.194 f.12 Newberry Library Search Committee
- b.194 f.13-14 North American Imprints Program
- b.195 f.1 Printing Historical Society
- b.195 f.2 Resources for American Literary Study
- b.195 f.3 Review Editorial Board
- b.195 f.4 Rosenbach Museum and Library
- b.195 f.5 St. Bride's Library
- b.195 f.6 Sharp
- b.196 Society for Textual Scholarship
- b.197 f.1-6 Society for Textual Scholarship
- b.197 f.7 Swift Edition
- b.197 f.8 Twain Edition Advisory Board
- b.198 f.1 Twain Edition Advisory Board
- b.198 f.2 Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English
- b.198 f.3-6 Wisconsin, University of
- b.199 f.1-4 Wisconsin, University of