

**Department of Rare Books and Special Collections  
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library**

**University of Toronto**



**Paul Quarrington  
Papers**  
2024

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Gift of Dorothy Bennie, 2024

**Dates:** 1968-2010

**Extent:** 44 boxes (6.3 metres)

**Biographical sketch:**

Paul Quarrington was a writer, novelist, screenwriter, playwright, and musician. Born in 1953 in Toronto, he spent his childhood in Don Mills, Ontario, before eventually moving back to Toronto. Quarrington attended the University of Toronto for two years, before dropping out to pursue writing and music. Quarrington was a prolific writer, authoring ten novels, seven non-fiction works, several stage plays, and numerous scripts for Canadian films and television shows, as well as contributing work to newspapers and magazines such as the *National Post*. Quarrington was also a musician; he made up one half of the duo Quarrington/Hill with Dan Hill, and later Quarrington/Worthy with Martin Worthy, before becoming the lead singer and guitarist of the band Porkbelly Futures.

Quarrington received numerous awards for his work, including a Genie Award for Best Original Screenplay for *Perfectly Normal*, the Stephen Leacock Award for his novel *King Leary* - which also won the 2008 Canada Reads competition - and the Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction for his novel *Whale Music*. His novel *Galveston* was also nominated for the Giller Prize. In 2009, Quarrington was awarded the Matt Cohen Award by the Writers Trust of Canada for his contributions to Canadian literature.

In May 2009, Quarrington was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. He spent the next months touring with Porkbelly Futures, working on his memoir *Cigar Box Banjo: Notes on Life and Music*, writing screenplays, and being featured in the documentary film *Paul Quarrington: Life in Music*. Quarrington passed away on January 21, 2010.

**Scope and content:**

This fonds includes manuscript drafts of Quarrington's published novels *Home Game* (1983), *The Life of Hope* (1985), *King Leary* (1987), *Whale Music* (1989), *Logan in Overtime* (1990), *Civilization* (1994), *The Spirit Cabinet* (1999), *Galveston* (2004), and *The Ravine* (2008); drafts of his non-fiction books *Hometown Heroes* (1988), *Fishing with My Old Guy* (1995), *The Boy on the Back on the Turtle* (1997), *From the Far Side of the River* (2003), and *Cigar Box Banjo: Notes on Music and Life* (2010); manuscripts for stage plays; screenplays for feature films *Perfectly Normal* (1990), *Giant Steps* (1992), *Camila* (1994), and *Whale Music* (1994); as well as screenplays for short films, television episodes, and scripts and treatments for various unproduced projects. The fonds also contains drafts of short stories and other writing projects; notes and research

materials; records related to professional awards and honours; newspaper and magazine clippings related to Quarrington and other promotional material including posters and catalogues; contracts and financial records; sheet music, lyrics, song books and other records related to Quarrington's activities as a musician; correspondence; as well as various personal records and juvenilia. The fonds also contains a significant amount of audiovisual and digital material, including MiniDVDs and a hard drive related to the production of the documentary *Paul Quarrington: Life in Music*; as well as cassette tapes, DVDs, film reels, and VHS tapes. The fonds also includes notebooks with partial drafts of and notes relating to Quarrington's written work.

**Contains series:**

1. Manuscripts
2. Screenplays, treatments, and outlines
3. Other writing
4. Professional records
5. Correspondence and personal records
6. Audiovisual and digital records
7. Notebooks

**Custodial history:**

Material was donated by Dorothy Bennie to the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library in 2024.

**Notes:**

Some shorthand notations are used throughout the finding and are translated as follows:

- ALS – Autograph letter signed (signed by the author of the letter, handwritten)
- WP – word processed (computer)

**Arrangement:**

Oversize material including awards and posters are stored in box 43 but intellectually arranged within the professional records series. The hard drive is stored in box 44 but intellectually arranged within the audiovisual and digital materials series.

**Series 1: Manuscripts**

**Dates:** 1982-2009

**Extent:** 17 boxes (2.1m)

**Note:** The majority of drafts are undated, most dates given are an approximation based on the publication date of the text.

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
<b><u>Novels</u></b>		
1:1-3:1	WP drafts of <i>Home Game</i> (1983).	[ca. 1982-1983]
3:2-4:13	WP and holograph drafts of <i>The Life of Hope</i> (1985), including drafts with earlier title <i>The Willing Mind</i> .	[ca. 1985]
4:14-6:9	WP drafts of <i>King Leary</i> (1987), including drafts with earlier titles <i>The King of the Ice</i> , and <i>King Leary and the Good Creature</i> .	[ca. 1987]
7:1-8:10	WP drafts of <i>Whale Music</i> (1989).	[ca. 1989]
8:11-9:6	WP drafts of <i>Logan in Overtime</i> (1990).	[ca. 1990]
9:7-10:10	WP drafts of <i>Civilization</i> (1994).	[ca. 1994]
10:11-11:16	WP drafts of <i>The Spirit Cabinet</i> (1999).	1998-1999
12:1-13:3	WP drafts of <i>Galveston</i> (2004).	[ca. 2004]
13:4-14:4	WP drafts of <i>The Ravine</i> (2008).	2006-2008
<b><u>Non-fiction</u></b>		
14:5-14:12	WP drafts of <i>Hometown Heroes</i> (1988).	1988
14:13-14:15	WP drafts of <i>Fishing with My Old Guy</i> (1995).	[ca. 1995]
15:1-15:16	WP drafts of <i>The Boy on the Back of the Turtle</i> (1997).	[ca. 1997]
16:1-16:8	WP drafts of <i>From the Far Side of the River</i> (2003).	2002-2003
16:9	WP draft of <i>Cigar Box Banjo</i> (2010).	7 January 2009
<b><u>Plays</u></b>		
16:10-16:15	WP drafts of <i>The Second</i> .	January 1982, [ca. 1990]

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
16:16-17:17:5	WP drafts of <i>The Invention of Poetry</i> .	1989-1990
17:6-17:9	WP drafts of <i>Heavenfields</i> .	1993
17:10-17:11	WP draft of <i>Dying is Easy</i> .	1997
17:12-17:13	WP draft of <i>Country and Western</i> .	[between 1980 and 1999]
17:14	WP draft of <i>The Pumpkin</i> .	[between 1980 and 1999]
17:15	WP draft of <i>Civvy Street</i> .	[between 1980 and 1999]
17:16	WP drafts of an untitled play.	[between 1980 and 1999]

## Series 2: Screenplays, treatments, and outlines

**Dates:** 1984-2009

**Extent:** 10 boxes (1.25m)

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
<b>Produced screenplays - Films</b>		
18:1-18:10	WP screenplays of <i>Perfectly Normal</i> (1990).	1989-1990
18:11-19:1	WP screenplays of <i>Giant Steps</i> (1992).	1991
19:2-20:8	WP screenplays of <i>Camila</i> (1994), as well as production memos.	1989-1994
21:1-21:7	WP screenplays of <i>Whale Music</i> (1994).	1992-1994
<b>Produced screenplays – Short films</b>		
21:8-21:10	WP screenplays of <i>A Man's Life</i> (2001).	1993
21:11	WP screenplay of <i>The Princess Who Would Not Smile</i> .	[1980-2009?]
21:12	WP screenplay of <i>Pavane</i> (2008).	2008

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
<b><u>Produced screenplays - Television</u></b>		
22:1	WP screenplay of an episode of <i>Power Play</i> titled "The Jumper."	Aug. 1999
22:2	WP screenplay of an episode of <i>1-800-MISSING</i> titled "This Is Your Life."	2003
<b><u>Unproduced screenplays</u></b>		
22:3-24:4	WP screenplays of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Service</i></li> <li>• <i>Fading Flower</i></li> <li>• <i>The Invention of Poetry</i></li> <li>• <i>King Leary</i>, incl. 1 ALS Richard J. Lewis</li> <li>• <i>Home Game</i></li> <li>• <i>Toots in Solitude</i></li> <li>• <i>Booner Spooks</i></li> <li>• <i>The Adventures of Men</i></li> <li>• <i>Barney's Version</i></li> <li>• <i>Our Game</i></li> <li>• <i>Notebooks on Euphoria</i></li> </ul>	1987-2009
24:5-26:2	WP screenplays of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Monster Factory</i></li> <li>• <i>Calenture</i></li> <li>• <i>Pushing Forty</i></li> <li>• <i>A Day in the Life</i></li> <li>• <i>The Man in the Wind and the West Moon</i></li> <li>• <i>The Geography of a Bedroom</i></li> <li>• <i>Home</i></li> <li>• <i>Paige's and Paige's</i> episode "Is That All There Is?"</li> </ul>	[1980-2009?]
26:3-26:10	Miscellaneous untitled screenplays.	[1980-2009?]
26:11	5.25". AES floppy disk labelled "Cam Fella Screenplay"	6 June 1984
<b><u>Treatments and outlines</u></b>		
27:1-27:5	WP treatments and outlines of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Notebooks on Euphoria</i></li> <li>• <i>Distances</i></li> </ul>	2008-2009

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Our Game</i></li><li>• <i>The Big 6</i></li><li>• <i>The Last Cowboy</i></li><li>• <i>Taking Care of Business</i></li><li>• <i>The Heart in a Bottle</i></li><li>• <i>Chip Truck Diaries</i></li></ul>	

**Series 3: Other writing**

**Dates:** [1980-2009?]

**Extent:** 3 boxes (37.5cm)

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
27:6-29:3	<p>Drafts of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The First Part</i></li><li>• <i>An Encyclopedia of All Things Animate</i></li><li>• <i>Whitemoon</i></li><li>• <i>Astronomy</i></li><li>• <i>The Pigeon Boy</i></li><li>• <i>Tight to Something</i></li><li>• <i>The Plunge for Distance</i></li><li>• <i>Waking Up in Distant Places</i></li><li>• <i>Turkey and Mable in 'Stealing Home'</i></li><li>• <i>Wild Man Fayer (Not Truly a Story)</i></li><li>• <i>Jackson's Eskimo</i></li><li>• <i>The Man Who Liked to Fall in Love</i></li><li>• <i>Occasional Verse</i></li><li>• <i>A Man's Life</i></li><li>• <i>What We Do For Love/Fading Flower</i></li><li>• <i>Dolly and the Monsters</i></li><li>• <i>The Television</i></li><li>• <i>Maple Leaf Photography</i></li><li>• <i>An Extraordinary Demise</i></li></ul>	[1980-2009?]

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Billy</i></li><li>• <i>The Childhood Museum</i></li><li>• <i>Egbert, Grace &amp; Kinsman Yp</i></li><li>• <i>Gold Lightning</i></li><li>• <i>Life Among the Turtles</i></li><li>• <i>The Glass Truth</i></li><li>• <i>The Cowboy and the Indian</i></li><li>• <i>The King of the Newsboys</i></li><li>• <i>Where to Jog (and Cough, Retch, Sweat, etc) in Toronto</i></li><li>• <i>Why I Am An Amerkan</i></li><li>• <i>The Conversation</i></li><li>• <i>But... That Is Not What I Wrote</i></li><li>• <i>Down to Zero</i></li><li>• <i>Hollywood Far North</i></li><li>• <i>Never Been Kissed</i></li><li>• <i>Changes</i></li></ul>	
29:4-29:11	Untitled partial WP drafts and notes. Also contains 1 ALS "L.H."	[1980-2009?]

#### Series 4: Professional records

**Dates:** 1976-2009

**Extent:** 6 boxes (1m)

**Arrangement:** Oversized awards and posters are located in box 43.

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
29:12-29:14	Various clippings and periodicals with Quarrington's published writing.	1979-1998
29:15	Two volumes of the newsletter <i>The Canadian Centre</i> , edited by Quarrington.	March 1992, November 1992

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
29:16-29:23	Research for <i>The Boy on the Back of the Turtle</i> . Includes notes, clippings, stacks requests, and photocopies of books.	1996-1997
29:24-29:29	Clippings, printed copies of web research, and a development pitch related to the 1972 hockey summit series between Canada and Russia.	2002
30:1	Holograph and typescript notes on <i>The Life of Hope</i> .	[ca. 1985]
30:2	Holograph notes and diagrams on untitled writing projects.	
30:3-30:8	Miscellaneous typescript and holograph writing fragments and notes.	
30:9-30:15	Materials related to Quarrington's work as a musician; including sheet music, lyrics, songbooks, and music festival programs.	1990-2009
30:16-30:19	Materials related to awards received by Quarrington and celebrations held in his honour.	1981-2009
30:20	Index cards.	[1980-2009?]
Box 43	9 oversized awards.	1986-2008
Box 43	Signed photo of Humber School for Writers staff.	August 1996

**Clippings and promotional material**

31:1-31:8	Clippings and publications with profiles and bios of Quarrington.	1980-2009
31:9-31:25	Clippings and press related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Home Game</i></li><li>• <i>The Life of Hope</i></li><li>• <i>King Leary</i></li><li>• <i>Whale Music</i></li><li>• <i>The Invention of Poetry</i></li><li>• <i>Logan in Overtime</i></li><li>• <i>Perfectly Normal</i></li><li>• <i>Whale Music</i> (1994 film)</li><li>• <i>Fishing With My Old Guy</i></li><li>• <i>The Boy on the Back of the Turtle</i></li><li>• <i>The Spirit Cabinet</i></li><li>• <i>From the Far Side of the River</i></li></ul>	1983-2008

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miscellaneous film and TV projects</li> </ul>	
31:26-31:27	Publisher catalogues.	1978-1990
31:28	Poster for "A Homecoming Event: Paul Quarrington," hosted at Hart House.	20 October 1984
Box 43	Oversized poster for <i>Whale Music</i> .	1989
31:29	Promotional ephemera related to Quarrington's play <i>Checkout Time</i> .	June-July 1997
31:30	Miscellaneous news clippings unrelated to Quarrington.	1981-1982
<b><u>Contracts and financial records</u></b>		
32:1-32:16	Contracts related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Home Game</i></li> <li>• <i>The Life of Hope</i></li> <li>• <i>Logan in Overtime</i></li> <li>• <i>Whale Music</i></li> <li>• <i>The Spirit Cabinet</i></li> <li>• <i>King Leary</i></li> <li>• <i>Hometown Heroes</i></li> <li>• <i>Fishing With My Old Guy</i></li> <li>• <i>A Natural History of Fatherhood</i></li> <li>• <i>[Luck?]</i></li> <li>• <i>The Original Six</i></li> <li>• <i>Dying is Easy</i></li> <li>• <i>The Invention of Poetry</i></li> <li>• <i>Not Wanted on the Voyage</i></li> <li>• <i>Galveston</i></li> </ul>	1981-2005
32:17-32:23	Contracts for screenplays.	
33:1-33:4	Contracts related to screen adaptations of Quarrington's written work.	1991-2003
33:5	Miscellaneous contracts.	
33:6-33:15	Royalty statements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Home Game</i></li> <li>• <i>The Life of Hope</i></li> <li>• <i>Logan in Overtime</i></li> <li>• <i>Whale Music</i></li> </ul>	1985-2002

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Civilization</i></li> <li>• <i>The Spirit Cabinet</i></li> <li>• <i>Fishing with My Old Guy</i></li> <li>• <i>Boy on the Back of the Turtle</i></li> <li>• <i>Hometown Heroes</i></li> <li>• <i>Dying is Easy</i></li> <li>• <i>King Leary</i></li> <li>• <i>From the Far Side of the River</i></li> </ul>	
33:16	Canada Council cheques.	1986
33:17	King Leary film adaptation financial records.	1990-1995

### Series 5: Correspondence and personal records

**Dates:** 1968-2010

**Extent:** 3 boxes (37.5cm)

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
<b><u>Correspondence</u></b>		
33:18-33:37	Correspondence.	1979-2009
34:1	Postcards.	[1979-1986?]
34:2-34:3	Greeting cards.	[1970-2009?]
34:4-34:8	Sympathy cards.	January- February 2010
<b><u>Personal records</u></b>		
34:9	High school yearbook.	1968
34:10-34:11	High school and university essays.	[1967-1972?]
34:12	“A Story for Megan from Uncle Paul.”	[1990-2009?]
34:13	“The Seismic Primer.”	[1990-2009?]
34:14	Cartoons and drawings.	[1980-1999?]
34:15	Last will and testament of Agatha L. Corbett.	[1980-199?]
34:16	Printed copy of a digital address book.	[200-?]
34:17	Personal financial records.	1990-2004

Box:Folder Number	Contents	Date(s)
34:18	Travel related ephemera.	1990-1996
34:19	Quarrington's passport.	1997-2002
34:20	Miscellaneous ephemera.	[1980-1983?]
34:21	9 photographs. 2 strips of negatives. 1 ALS "Chuck"	[19--?]
34:22	Flannery Quarrington coursework (Quarrington's daughter).	2019
<b>Publications and writing by other authors</b>		
35:1	Typescript draft of "Curry and Core" by Larry Hill.	1983-1984
35:2	Photocopies of miscellaneous publications.	[1984?], 1994
35:3	"Sing a Song of Six Packs" by Donna McCaw.	1996
35:4	<i>New York Times Magazine.</i>	15 September 1996
35:5-35:11	WP draft of "Sicko" by Greg Taylor. Also includes 1 CD-R labelled "Sicko".	2 March 2004

## Series 6: Audiovisual records

**Dates:** 1988-2010

**Extent:** 5 boxes (93cm)

**Scope and content:** Series consists of audiovisual records relating to Quarrington's work and as a screenwriter, author, and musician. Series contains 103 MiniDV's filmed from 2008-2009 as part of the production of the documentary *Paul Quarrington: Life in Music* (2010, dir. Bert Kirsch). These MiniDV's contain footage of rehearsals and performances by Quarrington's band, Pork Belly Futures; songwriting sessions; various events and workshops; readings of Quarrington's works; tributes to and conversations with Quarrington. The series contains other types of AV materials related to the production of *Life in Music* including DVD-Rs, and CD-Rs. The series also includes CDs and VHS tapes of films and television shows written by or featuring Quarrington; as well as one audiobook and two reels of film.

Box:Folder Number	Contents:	Date(s):

**Records related to Paul Quarrington: Life in Music (2010)**

Box 36	60 MiniDV.	[ca. 2008-2009]
Box 37	39 MiniDV. 3 DVD-Rs. 5 DVCPRO tapes. 1 Hi8MP120 camcorder tape.	[ca. 2008-2009]
Box 38	4 MiniDV. 9 DVD-Rs. 4 CD-Rs.	[ca. 2008-2010]
Box 44	750GB LaCie hard drive labelled “Paul Quarrington Biography Documentary Hard Drive.”	[2010]

**Other AV records**

Box 39	Contains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Here &amp; Now. Quarrington’s Guest Toronto Story. 25 March 1998. Cassette tape</li><li>“Paul Quarrington/Basic Black.” Cassette tape.</li><li><i>Fishing with My Old Guy</i> audiobook, narrated by Timothy Weber. 1999. Cassette tape.</li><li><i>Pavane</i>, a short film written and directed by Quarrington. 2008. Empty DVD case.</li><li>“Chip Truck Diaries.” DVD.</li><li>“The Seal.” 2 DVD-Rs.</li><li>Paul Quarrington’s “Her Biographer.” 2 8mm film reels.</li></ul>	1998-2008
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**VHS tapes**

40:1 - 40:2	<i>Fading Flower</i> , Test Read, Tape 1 and Tape 2.	28 August 1988
40:3	<i>Perfectly Normal</i> .	1990
40:4	<i>Camilla</i> .	1994
40:5	<i>Whale Music</i> , Day 9, Cam Rolls 22-25.	25 October 1993
40:6	<i>Whale Music</i> , Day 18, Cam Rolls, 62-65	4 November 1993
40:7	<i>Whale Music</i> , Reels 1-10, Tape 1 of 2.	18 December 1993

40:8 - 40:9	<i>Whale Music</i> , Part 1 and Part 2.	1 January 1994
40:10	<i>Due South</i> , Episodes "Bird in Hand" and "We Are The Eggmen."	1996
40:11	<i>Due South</i> , Episode 143, "Seeing is Believing."	1 May 1997
40:12	<i>Once a Thief</i> , Episode 111, "That Old Gang of Mine."	1998
40:13	<i>Once a Thief</i> , Episode 112, "Last Temptation of Vic."	12 January 1998
40:14	<i>Once a Thief</i> , Episode 116, "Shaken Not Stirred"	1998
40:15	<i>Once a Thief</i> , Episode 117, "Liann's Choice."	1998
40:16	"A Shot Rings Out."	1999
40:17	"Moon Man"	1 December 1999
40:18	<i>Power Play</i> , Episode 24, "The Crucible."	19 January 2000
40:19	<i>Tom Stone</i> , Episode 104, "Good Cop Bad Cop."	2 November 2001
40:20	<i>Chilly Beach</i> , Episode 16, "Hollywood Far North."	30 September 2003
40:21	Giller Prize, Master Elements Tape.	11 November 2004
40:22	1) Quarrington/Worthy of Dodger 2) Joe Hall Video Demo (6 Songs) 3) TQ, Dave Young Perry White Play "Yesterdays" : Blue Angel	[198-?]
40:23	"Moon and Mann."	[1980-200-?]
40:24 - 40:25	"The Princess Who Wouldn't Smile." 2 copies.	[1980-200-?]
40:26	"Mump + Smoot in 'The Princess...'"	[1980-200-?]
40:27	<i>The Writing Life</i> , Episode 'Paul Quarrington.'	[1980-200-?]
40:28 – 40:30	"The Boston Bruins' Eddie Shore." 2 copies.	[1980-200-?]
40:31	"The Art and Magic."	[1980-200-?]
40:32	<i>Canadian Living</i> , "Paul Quarrington at Zoo."	[1980-200-?]
40:33	"Paul at Japanese Tea Ceremony (?)"	[1980-200-?]

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**Paul Quarrington Papers**

**Series 7: Notebooks**

**Dates:** [1980-2009?]

**Extent:** 2 boxes (62cm)

<b>Box:Folder Number</b>	<b>Contents:</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Box 41, Box 42	32 notebooks with holograph notes and drafts.	[1980-2009?]