

Ms. Kahn, Laurie (Frank Plumpton Ramsey) papers
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Correspondence and research about Frank Plumpton Ramsey (1903-1930), mathematician, philosopher, economist. Ramsey biographer Laura Leavitt-Kahn gathered letters from old school friends of Ramsey, from Winchester School to colleagues and students at Cambridge. Included are her notes and research for the biography, which was never completed. Correspondence from Ramsey's wife, Lettice, is also present. Copies of some of his work and correspondence to his parents, Wittgenstein and others form part of this material. Originals of these are held by Ramsey's grandson.

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Gift of Laurie Kahn 2016

Extent: 15 boxes (2.5 metres)

NOTE: There will be no copying of audio cassettes. Onsite listening only.

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Biographical note (excerpted from “Cambridge Philosophers I: F.P. Ramsey”, D.H. Mellor in the *Ramsey Biography*):

Frank Plumpton Ramsey was born in February 1903, and he died in January 1930 – just before his 27th birthday. In his short life he produced an extraordinary amount of profound and original work in economics, mathematics and logic as well as in philosophy: work which in all these fields is still, over sixty years on, extremely influential.

Ramsey was a member of a distinguished Cambridge family, in which he was the eldest of two brothers and two sisters. Their father (Arthur Stanley Ramsey, 1867-1954) was the mathematician A. S. Ramsey, who was President – i.e. Vice-Master – of Magdalene College; and Frank’s younger brother Michael went on to become Archbishop of Canterbury. His mother was Mary Agnes Wilson (1875-1927).

In 1915, Ramsey went to Winchester College where he was considered something of a phenomenon. He then won a scholarship to Trinity College Cambridge to study mathematics. Ramsey became a senior scholar in 1921, graduating as a Wrangler in the Mathematical Tripos of 1923.

Becoming interested in the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), Ramsey went to Vienna to spend some time with him discussing his work and working on a translation together of his *Tractatus LogicoPhilosophicus*. The two became good friends. Upon his return to Cambridge, Ramsey was elected a fellow of King’s College Cambridge in 1924, the second person ever to be elected to a fellowship at King’s, not having studied there.

Ramsey produced work in a remarkable range of topics over a short period. His officially recognized theories include the Ramsey-Lewis method, the Keynes-Ramsey rule, the Ramsey-Dvoretzky-Milman phenomenon, and the Ramsey growth model. He began a new area of mathematics known as ‘Ramsey theory’. In economics, some of his ideas became known as the ‘Ramsey Rule’ or exercise, which included the invention of ‘bliss points’ in economic calculation and theory. Ramsey recognized that society is composed of everybody in every generation, current and future, and that they all should be given equal weight in the social welfare function. The problem here is that this sum can be infinite, and infinities cannot be compared. A solution was suggested in the form of time discounts or preference. Ramsey recognized problems with time discounts while noting that by omitting time preference, the problem of non-comparability of infinite sums emerges. To solve this problem he introduced the concept of ‘bliss points’, where B is the ‘bliss’ level of utility, assumed to be the maximum utility achievable for a generation. This remains the same across generations. The equation continues with the achievement of ‘bliss’ through effective calculations, while side-stepping the problem of infinite sums.

In 1925, Ramsey married Lettice C. Baker (1898-1985), who later became a well-known photographer of subjects such as Virginia Woolf, C.P. Snow and Guy Burgess. They had two daughters, Sarah and Jane. In 1926 Ramsey was appointed university lecturer in mathematics, later becoming Director of Studies in Mathematics at King’s College. Ramsey died during surgery following an attack of jaundice. Friends and contemporaries included Wittgenstein, John Maynard Keynes, Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, Leonard Woolf and many others. Some of his published works include *The Foundations of Mathematics* in 1925 and *Foundations – Essays in Philosophy, Logic, Mathematics and Economics* in 1931.

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Box 1 29 folders	Research correspondence for proposed biography of Frank Ramsey by Laura Leavitt-Kahn
Folder 1	Research for biography of Frank Ramsey by Laura Leavitt-Kahn Book proposal
Folders 2-8	Research correspondence for biography Laura Leavitt-Kahn 1982
Folder 9	Holograph and typescript notes on Ramsey by Leavitt-Kahn
Folder 10	Leavitt-Kahn research and holograph notes for Ramsey biography
Folder 11	'Cambridge Traveller' Article on Mrs. Lettice Ramsey <i>The Times</i> May 25, 1970
Folder 12	Leavitt-Kahn research and notes for Ramsey biography
Folder 13	Notes and research – Ramsey by James Hamilton Doggart
Folders 14-16	Notes and research – Ramsey
Folder 17	Research correspondence 1982
Folders 18-19	Correspondence re: King's College Choir School and Sandroyd School survivors (those who had been at school with Ramsey), 1980s

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Folder 20	King's College School Cambridge Centenary Address Book 1978
Folder 21	Correspondence re: King's College Choir School and Sandroyd School survivors, 1980s With pencil sketch of Sandroyd school and grounds
Folders 22-26	Correspondence re: Winchester School, 1980s
Folders 27-28	Correspondence re: Ramsey's teaching career at King's College
Folder 29	Trinity College – Cambridge
Box 2 10 folders	Research correspondence Trinity College Cambridge material
Folder 1	Trinity College Cambridge
Folders 2-4	Research correspondence re: Trinity College Cambridge
Folder 5	Cambridge material Scholarship exams and schedules
Folders 6-10	Cambridge material
Box 3 26 folders	Writings by Ramsey Research G.E. Moore
Folder 1	Writings by Ramsey (copies)
Folder 2	Writings by Ramsey, letters to his mother, 1920s (copies)

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Folders 3-6	Letters to mother and father, 1920s (copies)
Folder 7	Letters to mother and father, 1920s (copies) Includes family trees
Folder 8	Family trees 1925 class list
Folder 9	Notes by Ramsey (copies) Research, some in German
Folder 10	Copies of correspondence with Leonard Woolf 1925, with remarks
Folders 11-14	Ramsey material
Folder 15	Ramsey paper on identity
Folders 16-17	Research on Ramsey from Trinity College Oxford
Folder 18	'Notes on the Keynes-Ramsey Rule' by Christopher Bliss
Folders 19-21	Research various
Folders 22-25	Leavitt-Kahn research on Ramsey
Folder 26	G.E. Moore Copies of notes and correspondence
Box 4 21 folders	G.E. Moore continued Wittgenstein/Ramsey correspondence Research notes and copies
Folders 1-3	G. E. Moore material

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Folder 4	Winchester School
Folder 5	<i>Winchester College, 1901-1911</i> Spencer Leeson
Folder 6	'Xeroxes from McGuinness' Copies of correspondence between Wittgenstein and Ramsey
Folders 7-9	Wittgenstein and Ramsey correspondence
Folder 10	Eulogy of Oxford Philosopher Gareth Evans
Folder 11	Leavitt-Kahn research notes
Folder 12	Bertrand Russell to Ramsey February 4 th , 1928, copy
Folder 13	King's College Register of Admissions, 1919-1929
Folder 14	Sandroyd School Old Boys List
Folders 15-21	Research from Russell Archives and Royal Economic Society
Box 5 5 items in box	5 microfilm reels of Ramsey's work
Box 6	5 large black and white class photographs Winchester School, 1916-1920
Box 7 3 items in box	Cerlox bound copy <i>The Foundations of Mathematics</i> Cerlox bound copies of early letters to Lettice 1 large format floppy disc

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Box 8 22 folders	Correspondence Index of documents research
Folders 1-3	Lettice Ramsey to Laura Leavitt-Kahn 1980s
Folder 4	Day planner, Laura Leavitt-Kahn 1981-1982
Folders 5-6	L. H. Thomas' notes from Ramsey's 'Foundation of Mathematics' lectures
Folders 7-14	Ramsey Index of Documents Holograph notes
Folder 15	Notes from Wittgenstein's pocket diary
Folder 16	Holograph research notes
Folders 17-20	Cambridge Philosophical Society minutes

Folders 21-22	Winchester College Archives
Box 9 26 folders	Laura Leavitt-Kahn correspondence, 1980s Oxford Interview notes
Folders 1-4	Laura Leavitt-Kahn correspondence, 1980s
Folders 5-7	Research related 1980s
Folders 8-19	Ramsey interviews (about) holograph notes and sketches
Folder 20	Charles Plumpton Wilson Family Records

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Folder 21	'In My Young Days' Phebe R. Ramsey (copy)
Folder 22	'The Nature of Mathematics' Harold Jeffreys – offprint
Folder 23	Ramsey research – various
Folder 24	Wittgenstein research
Folder 25	About Michael Ramsey
Folder 26	The Malting House School: 1924-9
Box 10 Item in box	G.E. Moore's copy of Foundations of Mathematics Cerlox-bound research copy
Box 11 4 items in box	1. Winchester Memories Charles Stevens 2. Early American, Catalogue Thirty-One 3. Ludwig Wittgenstein diary, 1929 4. Eighty Years and More A.S. Ramsey Cerlox-bound copies
Box 12 7 items in box	1. Moral Science Club Minutes, October 1919-May 1922 2. Moral Science Club Minutes, October 1922- February 1930 3. F.P. Ramsey daybook 1920 4. various letters and documents 5. Papers for the Society 6. Winchester College Calendars, 1916-1920 7. Winchester Memories, Charles Stevens Monty-Llewellyn-Smith

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<p>Box 13 19 items in box</p>	<p>Audio cassettes (interviews and other research conducted by Laura Kahn Leavitt):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Russell show/Ramsey show2. Braithwaite, January 21, 19823. About Braithwaite/Lettice Ramsey, January 21, 19824. Mrs. I.A. Richards5. Margaret Paul, February 15, 19826. Max and Margaret Newman7. Lettice Ramsey, 3.1.828. Lettice Ramsey continued, 3.1.829. Barcrofts, 3.5.8210. Richard Braithwaite continued, January 1982/Lettice Ramsey, January 21, 198211. Frances Partridge, March 11, 198212. Frances Partridge, March 11, 198213. Phillip Hall, April 22, 198214. Joan Robinson, April 22, 1982/ Brian Reddaway, April 25, 198215. Sir Frederick Harmer (master damaged, only end of B), April 16, 198216. Professor Brian Reddaway, April 23, 1982/ Dr. and Mrs. Edward Bevan, April 27, 198617. Sir Harold Jeffries, April 30, 198218. Alistair Watson, June 1, 1982, his home, Beacon Hill, Hindhead, Surrey19. Alistair Watson, June 1, 1982, continued
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<p>Box 14 18 items in box</p>	<p>Audio cassettes (interviews and other research conducted by Laura Kahn Leavitt):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Kreisel, June 19, 19822. Hugh Sykes Davies, July 3, 19823. Michael Ramsey, July 13, 19824. Michael Ramsey, 7.14.825. Michael Ramsey, July 14, 19826. Patrick Duff, July 23, 19827. Henry Lintott, July 24, 19828. G.C.W. Dicker, July 30, 19829. Igor Vinogradoff, August 2, 198210. Igor Vinogradoff and Julian with photos (?), part 2, August 2, 198211. Professor E.M. Hugh-Jones, August 4, 198212. Professor E.M. Hugh-Jones, August 4, 198213. Gilbert Simon, August 6, 198214. Professor Hawkes, August 20, 198215. L.P. Wilkinson, August 26, 1982/ Lettice Ramsey, August 30, 198216. Milo Keynes, September 18, 198217. Lord Richard Kahn, September 2, 1982/ Sir Richard Penrose, October 2, 198218. Beacus and Roland Penrose, October 2, 1982
<p>Box 15 9 items in box</p>	<p>Audio cassettes (interviews and other research conducted by Laura Kahn Leavitt):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dr. Thomas Stonborough, October 9, 19822. Dr. Thomas Stonborough, October 9, 19823. Lockett interview with I.A. Richards4. Max Newman, October 14, 19825. Austin Robinson, October 18, 19826. Richard Braithwaite, October 21, 19827. Richard Braithwaite, October 21 and 22, 19828. Richard Braithwaite, October 22, 1982

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	9. Richard Braithwaite continued, October 22, 1982