

Personal Letter from C.B. Robinson to H.T. Hunter

Hunter Library MSS 80-14

25 March, 1933

**Transcribed by: Whitney Waters
For ENGL 618: Research Methods in English
Western Carolina University
Instructor and General Editor: Dr. Brian Gastle
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Introduction to the Series

This transcription and its attendant annotations, explanatory material, and bibliography were prepared by students in ENGL 618: Research Methods in English, the required gateway class for the MA in English at Western Carolina University. The learning outcomes for this class include the following:

1. Conduct appropriate, effective, and ethical scholarship
 1. Effectively find and use advanced research tools (handbooks, databases, guides, bibliographies, etc.) appropriate to a subject.
 - Students will be able to use a wide variety of such tools and evaluate those tools.
 2. Find appropriate advanced research (print and electronic scholarship) and apply that research to specific disciplinary questions or issues.
 - Students will be able to find a variety of scholarship, evaluate both the appropriateness and rigor of that scholarship, and incorporate that scholarship correctly and effectively.
 3. Develop accurate bibliographies and reference citations.
 - Students will be able to annotate, abstract, and cite materials following standard MLA format.
2. Understand the process by which the texts we use are made available.
 - Students will be able to conduct basic editorial work and evaluate the editorial work of others.

All work is presented as submitted by the students. While these students take great care with their transcriptions and annotations, errors are always possible. As these students learn throughout this class, good scholarship requires checking of sources and corroboration by authoritative sources.

It is hoped that the transcription and annotation of WCU Special Collections materials will be useful to the institution, students, scholars, and other patrons and users of WCU's Special Collections materials.

Introduction

This letter was written by Jackson County businessman C.B. Robinson to the president of Western Carolina Teacher's College, H.T. Hunter. In the letter, Robinson discusses the state of Western Carolina Teacher's College, now Western Carolina University. C.B. Robinson owned Blackwood Lumber Company, a staple of the region's economy and one of the most booming industries of this period (MSS 16-07.5). The handwritten note at the bottom addressed to Dan Tompkins suggests that Robinson was not only a prominent businessman but also a well-regarded member of the community.

Hunter became president of the college in 1923 and served for twenty-four years, until his death (*North Carolina Biography*). He advocated heavily for improved training for public school teachers and emphasized the liberal arts in college curriculum. Hunter received his Masters in Education from Harvard University in 1922, and he held an honorary degree of doctor of education from Wake Forest University in 1942 (*Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*).

During his time serving in the North Carolina House of Representatives, Dan Tompkins was instrumental in securing funds for the expansion of facilities to Western Carolina Teachers College (Austin). Through his political service and heated editorials in the *Jackson County Journal*, he also served an important role in preventing the removal of the college from Cullowhee to Asheville (Austin). The following letter allows the reader insight into the history behind Western Carolina University and some of the important figures who shaped it.

Editorial Statement

In accordance with the regulations of a diplomatic edition, this text has been transcribed to reflect the authenticity of the original document as closely as possible. Any misspellings, grammatical errors, or inconsistencies have been left unchanged. The diplomatic edition style does not interfere with the readability of the document.

Additionally, the placement of the letterhead and greetings attempt to replicate those from the manuscript. This letter was Dan Tompkins's copy of the document, as evidenced by the handwritten letter addressed to him at the bottom of the page. The original letter was typewritten, with the handwritten note from C.B. Robinson at the bottom, which appears in this document in a different font to indicate the distinction

March 25th, 1933

Dear H.T. Hunter,¹

Cullowhee N.C.

Dear Dr. Hunter:

I have just returned from Raleigh, having been there on business for my Company.

While there I was very much pleased to find that our Representative Dan Tompkins² and our Senator Frances³ have been putting up a good strong fight to secure the Western Carolina Teachers College⁴ appropriations fitting to it's needs and to the extent of fairness in comparison to other institutions; and while I am yet of the opinion that from the standpoint of equity, our institution is still lagging, and I want to commend both Senator Francis and Representative Tompkins for their splendid efforts, the result of which you know.

I was informed that you have been ill and unable to be at your office, but trust that you are again well ere this.

With kind personal regards,

I am sincerely yours,

C. B. Robinson⁵

¹ Hiram Tyram Hunter was president of Western Carolina Teacher's College from 1923 until his death 24 years later. For more information, see "H.T. Hunter" in the *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*.

² Dan Tompkins was a politician and journalist in Sylva. He served three terms in the North Carolina House of Representatives from 1938-1944. For more biographical information see Austin, "Dan Tompkins: Mountain Editor."

³ Senator W. Roy Francis of Haywood County, senator of district 32. *North Carolina Government 1585-1979: A Narrative and Statistical History*)

⁴ Now Western Carolina University, Western Carolina Teacher's College began as Cullowhee Academy in 1888 before becoming a four-year institution. It was renamed Western Carolina Teacher's College in 1929. See "Western Carolina University" in the *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*.

⁵ C.B. Robinson was a Jackson County businessman who owned and operated Blackwood Lumber Company. ("Charles B. Robinson in 1930 US Federal Census." Ancestry Library).

[MS Page 1]

c/c Senator Francis
c/c Representative Tompkins

Dear Dan,

Sorry not to have seen you again and thank you for courtesies extended. Had to get home last night but enjoyed my trip.

Charlie

Works Cited

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