

Richard Aldington:

An Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Aldington, Richard, 1892-1963
Title:	Richard Aldington Collection
Dates:	1913-1963
Extent:	2 boxes (.83 linear feet) and 1 galley folder
Abstract:	The collection contains a few examples of Aldington's poetry and a typescript of <i>Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry</i> (1955), but is composed primarily of correspondence between Aldington, 1892-1962, and fellow poets, publishers, editors, and friends. An Englishman, Aldington left his homeland in 1928 and divided his time between France and Italy with a brief stay in the United States during World War II.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-00058
Language:	English.
Access	Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition	Purchases, 1962-1966 (R1202, R1611, R2088, R2722, R3082, R3319, R3660)
Processed by	Chelsea S. Jones, 1999
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Born in 1892 in Portsmouth, England, Richard Aldington, the son of a middle-class lawyer, grew up with an unwavering devotion to literature. After reading Keats's "Endymion" at fifteen, he spent two years absorbing major English poets and the complete canon of Elizabethan drama. A sudden decline in his family's fortune in 1911 forced Aldington to select his career path at an early age. Leaving the University of London after one year, Aldington began to actively pursue a literary career.

Getting his start as a sports reporter, Aldington soon made friends and contacts in the literary world. He wrote reviews and essays, worked on translations, and finally began selling his own poems. He soon made friends with a group of three other young poets: Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, and Harold Monro, editor of the *Poetry Bookshop*. Aldington married Hilda Doolittle, or H.D. as she was known, in 1913, and in the years before World War I, they traveled to Paris and Italy and made themselves known to the larger literary world. During this period, Aldington became associated with the burgeoning "modernist" movement, largely through his association with Ezra Pound. His poetry appeared in Pound's 1914 anthology *Des Imagistes* and in Amy Lowell's annual anthology *Some Imagist Poets*, (1915, 1916, 1917). He published his first volume of poetry, *Images (1910-1915)*, in 1915.

In 1916 Aldington enlisted in the British Army, saw active combat, and emerged in late 1918 with a captain's commission and severe shell-shock. Shortly after his return to London in 1919 he divorced Doolittle and by the end of the same year had left the hustle and bustle of city life for a more aesthetic lifestyle in a Berkshire village. He continued to write poetry, publishing *Images of Desire* (1919) and *Exile and Other Poems* (1923) but with a changed style expressing his negative experiences during the war.

By 1928 Aldington's writing provided him with enough income to allow him to leave England and lead a life of expatriatism, mostly in France and Italy. During the 1930s he turned his energies away from poetry and towards fiction and satire. With World War II looming at the end of the decade, Aldington found satire to be ignoble and wrote his memoirs, *Life for Life's Sake* (1941).

Aldington waited out the war in the United States, settling first in Connecticut and then in Hollywood where he wrote film scripts. In 1946 he returned to France and turned his pen to biographies, writing about his good friend D.H. Lawrence in *Portrait of a Genius, But...* (1950) and producing a blunt volume about T.E. Lawrence named *Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry* (1955). Both of these volumes were controversial and offended many readers and the reaction to the T.E. Lawrence book left Aldington bitter towards the English literary establishment. However, he continued to write and encourage other writers. In 1962 he visited Russia at the invitation of the Soviet Writer's Union, an invitation by which he was deeply honored. Two weeks after his return to France from Moscow, Aldington contracted an undiagnosed illness and died suddenly.

Source

Dictionary of Literary Biography -- Volume 20: British Poets, 1914-1945. Donald E. Stanford, Ed. (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1983).

Scope and Contents

Correspondence makes up the bulk of the Richard Aldington Collection, 1913-1963, with the addition of typescript works and a number of memoranda of agreement. The collection is organized into four series, with materials arranged alphabetically by author and chronologically where possible: Series I. Works, 1926-1956 (.5 box); Series II. Correspondence, 1913-1962 (1 box); Series III. Legal Documents, 1934-1954 (2 folders); and Series IV. Third Party Works and Correspondence, 1936-1963 (3 folders). This collection was previously accessible through a card catalog, but has been re-cataloged as part of a retrospective conversion project.

The Works Series contains a typescript of *Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry* and typescript and galley files of "Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot: A Lecture." Also found in this series are a number of typescript poems including "Dusk at the Louvre," "Fatigues," "Journalism in the Seventeenth Century," and "The Silent Age." Individual titles are all listed in the Index of Works at the end of this guide.

The Correspondence Series is divided into two sections, Outgoing and Incoming. The Outgoing Correspondence section contains letters from Aldington to Pascal Covici, Giuseppe Orioli, Brigit Patmore, and others. a number of Enclosed with Aldington's letters to Covici are a number of reproductions of drawings by M. André Rouveyre and a second copy of *A Tourist's Rome*. The smaller Incoming Correspondence section holds letters from Rémy de Gourmont, Ottoline Morrell, Leonard Woolf, and other friends and associates. Individual correspondents are listed in the Index of Correspondence at the end of this guide.

The Legal Documents Series is composed of Memoranda of Agreement between Aldington and Albatross Verlag in addition to legal notes and agreements between Aldington and William Collins Sons & Company, Ltd.

The Third Party Works and Correspondence Series is also organized into two sections, Works and Correspondence. The Works section contains typescript reviews and notes on Aldington's Lawrence biography, as well as a description of his later years by Harry Moore. Individual titles are listed by author in the Index of Works at the end of this guide. Correspondence in this series is composed primarily of letters between legal firms and publishers as well as friends and associates of Aldington.

Individual correspondents are listed in the Index of Correspondence at the end of this guide.

Elsewhere in the Ransom Center are over 200 travel photos in two photo albums in addition to a dozen individual photographs located in the Literary Files of the Photography Collection. There are five Vertical Files containing newspaper clippings with biographical information and literary criticism in addition to published articles by Aldington.

Related Material

Other materials associated with Richard Aldington may be found in the following collections at the Ransom Center:

- Armstrong, Terence Ian Fytton
- Church, Richard
- Croft-Cooke, Rupert
- Cunard, Nancy
- Dahlberg, Edward
- Eliot, Thomas Stearns
- Flint, Frank Stewart
- Garnett, David
- *Harpers*
- Hughes, Glenn Arthur
- Huxley, Aldous Leonard
- Hynes, Samuel Lynn
- Joyce, James
- Lawrence, David Herbert
- Lawrence, Frieda
- Lawrence, T.E.
- Lehmann, John
- Lewis, Wyndham
- Lindsay, Philip
- Maugham, William Somerset
- Morrell, Ottoline Violet Ann, Lady
- Murry, John Middleton

- Nehls, Edward
- Norman, Charles
- Orioli, Guiseppi
- Patmore, Brigit
- Patmore, Derek
- Pound, Ezra
- Sitwell, Osbert, Sir
- Woolf, Virginia Stephen

Index Terms

Correspondents

Gourmont, Remy de, 1858-1915

Holroyd-Reece, J. (John)

Lawrence, Frieda von Richthofen, 1879-1956

Morrell, Ottoline Violet Ann Cavendish-Bentinck, Lady, 1873-1938

Subjects

Authors, British--20th century

English Literature--20th century

English poetry

Document Types

Galley proofs

Series I. Works, 1926-1956

A-Z

box 1 folder 1

"Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot: A Lecture," typescript with author emendations, 1939, 24pp, two sets of galley proofs, 1954, 16pp (galley proofs removed to galley folder)

**folder
2**

Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry, typescript bound into three volumes, nd, 672pp

**folder
3-5**

A Tourist's Rome, page proofs with corrections, nd, 24pp

folder 6

Series II. Correspondence, 1913-1962

Outgoing Correspondence

A-Z	box 1 folder 7
Atkins, John, 1957-1958	folder 8
Barnes, M.W., 1958-1960	folder 9
Covici, Pascal, 1927-1962	folder 10
Harrison, Michael, 1957-1962	folder 11
Johnson, martyn, 1917-1919	folder 12
Orioli, Giuseppe, 1931-1938	box 2 folder 1
Patmore, Brigit, 1928-1935	folder 2-4
Titus, Edward W., 1929-1932	folder 5
Incoming Correspondence, A-Z	folder 6

Series III. Legal Documents, 1934-1954

A-Z

box 2 folder 7

William Collins Sons and Company, Ltd., 1953-1954

folder 8

Series IV. Third Party Works and Correspondence, 1936-1963

Works

A-Z

box 2 folder 9

Moore, Harry T., "Richard Aldington in His Last Years," typescript, 1963 24pp

**folder
10**

Correspondence, A-Z

folder 11

Richard Aldington Collection--Index of Correspondents

Box and folder numbers are followed by a number in parentheses which indicates the number of items by that person. A single item is indicated where there is no number in parentheses following the box and folder number. Where there is correspondence from Richard Aldington, the number in parentheses is followed by the phrase "from Aldington." So in the example:

Kershaw, Alister--1.7 (from Aldington), 2.11 (13)

there is 1 letter from Aldington in Box 1, folder 7 and 13 letters from Kershaw in Box 2, folder 11.

- Atkins, John Alfred, 1916- --1.8 (15 from Aldington)
- Barclays Bank--2.5 (with letter to Edward Titus)
- Barnes, M.W.--1.9 (7 from Aldington)
- Bird, Alan--2.11
- Blaber, -, Mr.--1.7 (from Aldington)
- Cockburn, Frank B.--2.11 (2)
- Collins (Firm: London, England)--2.11
- Covici, Pascal, 1885-1964--1.10 (5 from Aldington), 2.6
- Eliot, Vivien, 1888-1947--2.6
- Gamble, Peter, fl. 1938-1.7 (from Aldington)
- Gourmont, Jean de, 1877-1928--2.6
- Gourmont, Rémy de, 1858-1915--2.6 (38)
- Hall, Babette Plechner--see Hughes, Babette
- Harrison, Michael--1.11 (4 from Aldington), 2.6 (2)
- Heinemann (Firm)--2.11
- Holroyd-Reece, J. (John)--1.7 (3 from Aldington), 2.6, 2.11 (7)
- Horne & Birkett (Firm)--2.11 (7)
- Hughes, Babette, 1906- --1.7 (from Aldington)
- Johnson, Martyn--1.12 (4 from Aldington)
- Joynson-Hicks (Firm)--2.11 (3)
- Kershaw, Alister--1.7 (from Aldington), 2.11 (13)
- Lawrence, Frieda von Richthofen, 1879-1956--1.8
- Loving, Pierre, 1893- --1.7 (from Aldington)
- Morrell, Ottoline Violet Ann Cavendish-Bentinck, Lady, 1873-1938--2.6
- Orioli, Giuseppe, 1884-1942--2.1 (8 from Aldington)
- Palmer, Herbert E. (Herbert Edward), 1880- --1.7 (from Aldington)
- Patmore, Brigit, 1883-1965--2.2-4 (150 from Aldington), 2.11
- Patmore, Derek, 1908- --1.7 (from Aldington)
- Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972--1.7 (from Aldington)
- Sharman, A.--2.11
- Titus, Edward W., 1880- --2.5 (20 from Aldington, 3)
- Walker, C.C.--2.11
- William Heinemann, Ltd.--see Heinemann (Firm)
- Woolf, Leonard, 1880-1969--2.6

Richard Aldington Collection--Index of Works

- Aldington, Richard
 - • *The Berkshire Kennet*--1.1
- "Dusk at the Louvre"--see Four Poems
- "Everyman's Poets. Robert Burns: The Natural Man"--1.1
- *Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot*--1.2; Galley Folder 1
- "Fatigues"--1.1
- Four Poems--1.1
- "In the Trenches"--1.1
- "Journalism in the Seventeenth Century"--see Four Poems
- *Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry*--1.3-5
- The Love Poems of Myrrhine and Konallis--1.1
- "Regrets"--see Four Poems
- "The Silent Age"--see Four Poems
- *A Tourist's Rome*--1.6, 1.10

- Gourmont, Rémy de
 - La Casane--2.9

- Moore, Harry T.
 - "Richard Aldington in his Last Years"--2.10

- Patmore, Derek
 - "The Poetry and Prose of Richard Aldington" (radio broadcast)--2.9

- Unknown Author
 - Reader's report and notes re
T.E. Lawrence: A Biographical--2.9

- *Enquiry*
 - Review of
T.E. Lawrence: A Biographical Enquiry by Richard Aldington--2.9
- Summary of Wills and Settlements made by various members of the Chapman family--2.9