

Guide to the Harry Roskolenko Collection

YCAL MSS 142



by Ellen Doon

October 2000

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 142

CREATOR: Roskolenko, Harry, 1907-1980

TITLE: Harry Roskolenko collection

DATES: 1933-1952

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection consists of correspondence and writings of American writer Harry Roskolenko. Correspondents include William Carlos Williams, Marianne Moore, Carl Sandburg, Katharine Anne Porter, John Dos Passos, Dwight Macdonald, William Saroyan, Wallace Stevens, Cleanth Brooks, Archibald MacLeish, Lewis Mumford, John Wheelwright, and James Laughlin, among other American poets, editors, critics, and publishers. Writings include a manuscript poem titled "Perfidious Albion," a typescript play titled "Journey of Five (Of Whom Three Were One)," and a typescript article, "What Poets Do For a Living (A Study of the Poet and his Predicament)." The article summarizes the results of an income survey that Roskolenko sent to fellow poets in April 1949, and is accompanied by response forms from 22 poets. These include Langston Hughes, William Carlos Williams, and Mark Van Doren.

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Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.roskolen>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection of documents acquired by gift and purchase from various sources as indicated on individual folders. The bulk of the letters were purchased on the George B. Alvord fund in 1952; the poet survey forms were purchased on the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of Negro Arts and Letters fund in 1952; the manuscripts of the play and poem were the gift of S. R. Shapiro in 1953. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Box 2: Restricted fragile material. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

Conditions Governing Use

The Harry Roskolenko Collection is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Harry Roskolenko Collection. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

This finding aid was produced from previously existing cards in the Manuscripts Catalog, or from another inventory. All pertinent bibliographic information has been retained.

HARRY ROSKOLENKO (1907-1980)

Harry Roskolenko was born in New York City, the son of Ukrainian immigrants. He was a poet, a novelist, a foreign news correspondent, and a travel writer. He also wrote several volumes of autobiography, including a memoir about his childhood, *When I Was Last on Cherry Street*. After a life of extensive travel throughout the world, he died of cancer in New York.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of correspondence and writings of the American writer Harry Roskolenko, spanning the years 1933-51. It is organized into two series: *Correspondence* and *Writings*.

[Series I, Correspondence](#), is arranged alphabetically, and contains correspondence from publishers, poetry reviews and literary magazines, and many prominent American poets and other writers of the mid-twentieth century, including William Carlos Williams, Marianne Moore, Carl Sandburg, Katherine Anne Porter, John Dos Passos, Dwight Macdonald, William Saroyan, Wallace Stevens, Cleanth Brooks, Archibald MacLeish, Lewis Mumford, John Wheelwright, Thomas Mann, and George Orwell. There are also letters from Edmund Wilson and Lionel Trilling.

Because this list was compiled from previously existing catalog cards, all correspondents are listed by name rather than by affiliation. However, the majority write on behalf of a publisher or publication. For example, James Laughlin writes as publisher of *New Directions*; Edmund Wilson, Bruce Bliven, and Nigel Forbes Dennis write as editors of *The New Republic*; and Peter DeVries, Karl Shapiro, Harriet Monroe, George Dillon and Morton Zabel all write on behalf of *Poetry*. Other publishers and publications represented in the correspondence are *The New York Times*, Houghton Mifflin, Doubleday, Henry Holt, *Pulse*, *Common Sense*, and *The Sewanee Review*, among others.

[Series II, Writings](#), contains three manuscripts. These are a manuscript poem titled "Perfidious Albion!," a typescript play, *Journey of Five (Of Whom Three Were One)*, and a typescript article, "What Poets Do For a Living (A Study of the Poet and his Predicament)," which was published in *Plain Talk*. The article summarizes the results of an income survey that Roskolenko sent to fellow poets in April 1949, and is accompanied by the survey response forms from twenty-two poets. These include Langston Hughes, William Carlos Williams, and Mark Van Doren.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1933-51

73 Folders

b. 1, f. 1	Adams, James Donald	1939 May 15
b. 1, f. 2	Alsberg, Henry G. (Henry Garfield)	1940 Apr 3
b. 1, f. 3	Benét, Stephen Vincent	n.d.
b. 1, f. 4	Bliven, Bruce	1943 Jun 3
b. 1, f. 5	Breit, Harvey	1948 Aug 12
b. 1, f. 6	Brinnin, John Malcolm	1935-36
b. 1, f. 7	Brooks, Cleanth	1936
b. 1, f. 8	Céline, Louis-Ferdinand (Destouches)	1935 Nov 21
b. 1, f. 9	Chamberlain, John	1951 Apr 3
b. 1, f. 10	Crichton, Kyle Samuel	1933 Dec 20
b. 1, f. 11	Damon, S. Foster (Samuel Foster)	1934 Dec 30
b. 1, f. 12	Dennis, Nigel Forbes	1941 Dec 19
b. 1, f. 13	De Vries, Peter With letter from Roskolenko 1942 Jan 27	1936-42
b. 1, f. 14	Dillon, George	1939 Jan 28
b. 1, f. 15	Dos Passos, John	n.d.
b. 1, f. 16	Eastman, Max Forrester	1934 Aug 9
b. 1, f. 17	Elder, Donald B.	1948 Apr 28
b. 1, f. 18	Farrar, John Chipman	1948 Jan 29
b. 1, f. 19	Farrell, James T. (James Thomas)	1942-44
b. 1, f. 20	Fearing, Kenneth	n.d.
b. 1, f. 21	Ford, Charles Henri	1939-40
b. 1, f. 22	Foujita, Tsugouharu	1947-49
b. 1, f. 23	Gosling, Glenn	1949
b. 1, f. 24	Hicks, Granville	1940-52
b. 1, f. 25	Hillyer, Robert Silliman	1949 Jun 19
b. 1, f. 26	Hutchens, John K.	1951 Dec 13
b. 1, f. 27	Jarrell, Randall	1941 Aug 8

b. 1, f. 28	Jolas, Eugene	1936 Apr 4
b. 1, f. 29	Laughlin, James	1938-41
b. 1, f. 30	Leggett, John	1950 Aug 23
b. 1, f. 31	Levine, Isaac Don	1949 Sep 7
b. 1, f. 32	Lovett, Robert Morss	1941-43
b. 1, f. 33	Macdonald, Dwight	[1939] May 30
b. 1, f. 34	MacLeish, Archibald	1941-42
b. 1, f. 35	Mann, Thomas	1941
b. 1, f. 36	Marshall, Margaret	1939, n.d.
b. 1, f. 37	Mason, James	1947 Oct 20
b. 1, f. 38	Merz, Charles	1951 Oct 9
b. 1, f. 39	Monroe, Harriet	1931-35
b. 1, f. 40	Moore, Marianne	1939 Jul 27
b. 1, f. 41	Mumford, Lewis Letter of 1938 Nov 26 encloses corrected typescript of a comment on Roskolenko's poems, signed and dated Nov 27, 1938	1938-48
b. 1, f. 42	Munson, Gorham Bert With TLS to Donald Thompson referring to HR, and typed copy of a "Foreword" for HR's poems	1937-38
b. 1, f. 43	Orwell, George Orwell, Sonia	1949 Dec
b. 1, f. 44	Palmer, John Edwin	1947 Oct 18
b. 1, f. 45	Patchen, Kenneth	1938-39
b. 1, f. 46	Payne, Robert	n.y. Feb 15
b. 1, f. 47	Pearce, Charles Albert	1941
b. 1, f. 48	Porter, Katherine Anne	1940 Sep 13
b. 1, f. 49	Ransom, John Crowe	n.y. Mar 22
b. 1, f. 50	Read, Herbert Edward, Sir	1946 Oct 14
b. 1, f. 51	Rexroth, Kenneth	1948, n.d.
b. 1, f. 52	Riding, Laura	1939 Feb 12
b. 1, f. 53	Rodman, Selden	1941-42
b. 1, f. 54	Rorby, James	1939
b. 1, f. 55	Rosenfeld, Paul	1935-41

b. 1, f. 56	Rovere, Richard Halworth	1943 Mar 25
b. 1, f. 57	Sandburg, Carl	1951
b. 1, f. 58	Saroyan, William	1939 Apr 28
b. 1, f. 59	Shapiro, Karl Jay	1950-51
b. 1, f. 60	Stevens, Wallace	1938 Oct 10
b. 1, f. 61	Summers, Mrs. U. T.	1948 Jul 8
b. 1, f. 62	Swallow, Alan	1951 Feb 14
b. 1, f. 63	Tate, Allen	1945 Mar 16
b. 1, f. 64	Trilling, Lionel	1948 Jul 7
b. 1, f. 65	Untermeyer, Louis	1940 Aug 12
b. 1, f. 66	Van Doren, Irita Bradford	1939, 1951
b. 1, f. 67	Van Gelder, Robert	1945 Jun
b. 1, f. 68	Walker, Ann	1939, n.d.
b. 1, f. 69	Wheelwright, John Some of the letters have typed poems on their versos	1938-39
b. 1, f. 70	Williams, William Carlos	1934-49
b. 1, f. 71	Wilson, Edmund	1938-41
b. 1, f. 72	Zabel, Morton Dauwen	1937 Aug 27
b. 1, f. 73	Zaturenska, Marya	n.d.
b. 1, f. 74	Zukofsky, Louis	1930-31

Series II: Writings, 1948-[51]

27 Folders

b. 1, f. 75	<i>Journey of the Five (Of Whom Three were One)</i> , typescript mimeograph play "A dramatic verse play establishing and examining certain motives, elements, and attitudes of a poet best known as Thomas Stearns Eliot." Read at a T.S. Eliot evening, Oxford poetry society, Fall 1951	[1951]
b. 1, f. 76	"Perfidious Albion!," manuscript poem Written for S. R. Shapiro	1948 Mar 7
b. 1, f. 77	Typescript carbon of article With rejection letter from <i>The Saturday Review of Literature</i>	[1949]
b. 1, f. 78	Blank survey form and cover letter with list of participants on verso Survey Responses	1949 Apr 3
b. 1, f. 79	Chisolm, Hugh	[1949]
b. 1, f. 80	Creekmore, Hubert	[1949]
b. 1, f. 81	Eberhart, Richard	[1949]
b. 1, f. 82	Fearing, Kenneth Typed letter	[1949]
b. 1, f. 83	Goodman, Paul	[1949]
b. 1, f. 84	Griffin, Howard With autograph letter	[1949]
b. 1, f. 85	Holden, Raymond P.	[1949]
b. 1, f. 86	Holmes, John Clellon Typed letter, with additional, unrelated letter 1949 Apr 5	1949 Apr 9
b. 1, f. 87	Hughes, Langston With carbon copy of Hughes' curriculum vitae	1949
b. 1, f. 88	Humphries, Rolfe	[1949]
b. 1, f. 89	Ignatow, David With separate "Statement of Motives" and "Description of Living Conditions"	[1949]
b. 1, f. 90	Kees, Weldon Autograph letter	1949 Apr 5
b. 1, f. 91	Nims, John Frederick	[1949]
b. 1, f. 92	Moss, Howard	[1949]

"What Poets Do For a Living (A Study of the Poet and his Predica [...] > Survey Responses (continued)

b. 1, f. 93	Raiziss, Sona (Sonia) With typed note	[1949]
b. 1, f. 94	Rexroth, Kenneth	[1949]
b. 1, f. 95	Schwartz, Selwyn S. Typed letter	1949 Apr 7
b. 1, f. 96	Scott, Winfield Townley	[1949]
b. 1, f. 97	Van Doren, Mark	[1949]
b. 1, f. 98	Vazakas, Byron Typed letter	1949 Apr 8
b. 1, f. 99	Viereck, Peter Robert Edwin	[1949]
b. 1, f. 100	Villa, Jose Garcia Typed note from HR, with autograph note in reply from Villa on same leaf	1949 Apr 4
b. 1, f. 101	Williams, William Carlos With typed letter	1949 Apr 5

Restricted Fragile*7 Folders*

Restricted fragile material. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

b. 2, f. 102	Box 1, folder 43
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b. 2, f. 103	Box 1, folder 55
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b. 2, f. 104	Box 1, folder 69
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b. 2, f. 105	Box 1, folder 70
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b. 2, f. 106	Box 1, folder 73
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b. 2, f. 107	Box 1, folder 78
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b. 2, f. 108	Box 1, folder 89
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Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Poets, American -- 20th Century -- Archives
Wages -- United States -- Poets
Writers, American -- 20th Century

Occupations

Poets -- United States

Names

Brooks, Cleanth, 1906-1994
Dos Passos, John, 1896-1970
Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967
Laughlin, James, 1914-1997
Macdonald, Dwight, 1906-1982
MacLeish, Archibald, 1892-1982
Moore, Marianne, 1887-1972
Mumford, Lewis, 1895-1990
Porter, Katherine Anne, 1890-1980
Roskolenko, Harry, 1907-1980
Sandburg, Carl, 1878-1967
Saroyan, William, 1908-1981
Stevens, Wallace, 1879-1955
Van Doren, Mark, 1894-1972
Wheelwright, John, 1897-1940
Williams, William Carlos, 1883-1963