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Guide to the Frank Percy Wilson Papers

OSB MSS 157



by Hugh Kennedy and Beinecke Staff

1990

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	3
Requesting Instructions	3
Administrative Information	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition	3
Conditions Governing Access	3
Conditions Governing Use	4
Preferred Citation	4
Processing Information	4
Frank Percy Wilson (1889-1963)	4
Scope and Contents	4
Arrangement	5
Collection Contents	6
Series I: Correspondence and Research Notes, 1912-1961	6
General	6
"Shakespeare and the New Bibliography"	6
"The English Jestbooks . . ."	7
Tabacco	8
"Table Talk"	9
Facsimile of Shakespeare First Folio	10
British Academy Biography of Sir E. K. Chambers	10
Series II: W. W. Greg's Publications and Estate, 1924-1961	13
Brown, John	15
Series III: Miscellaneous Notes, undated	17
Series IV: Research Cards, undated	18
Series V: Research Slips, undated	19
Selected Search Terms	20

Collection Overview

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

CALL NUMBER: OSB MSS 157

CREATOR: Wilson, F. P. (Frank Percy), 1889-1963

TITLE: Frank Percy Wilson Papers

DATES: 1912-1961

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 13.13 linear feet (28 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The Frank Percy Wilson Papers contain correspondence, research files, and notes for articles and projected longer works, including an edition of *Tabacco*; the British Academy biography of E. K. Chambers; and works on Elizabethan vocabulary and proverbs.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.wilson>

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.wilson>.

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

Purchased by James Marshall Osborn from Mrs. Frank Percy Wilson, 1963; bequest of James Marshall Osborn, 1976.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Frank Percy Wilson Papers are 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

Frank Percy Wilson Papers. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Boxes 1-10 of the Frank Percy Wilson Papers were housed, arranged and listed by a curatorial assistant in the 1980s, and this list has been preserved in this finding aid. Boxes 11-28 received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization, in 2010. The arrangement of the material reflects the order of the files as they were acquired by the library.

Frank Percy Wilson (1889-1963)

Frank Percy Wilson was born in Birmingham, England, the youngest of nine children. He took a first class in English (1911) and an M.A.(1912) at the University of Birmingham, and a B.Litt from Lincoln College, Oxford in the following year. Wilson's thesis was on Thomas Dekker. He volunteered for the Army in September 1914, and was badly wounded at the battle of the Somme in July 1916, spending over a year in the hospital and enduring repeated surgeries. After brief service as the Minister of Food, he returned to his scholarly career. Wilson was appointed as a university lecturer at Oxford in 1923, and as reader in 1927. He was subsequently professor of English at the University of Leeds (1929-1936); Hildred Carlisle Professor of English Literature at Bedford College, London (1936-1947); and finally Merton Professor of English Literature at Oxford (1947-1957).

Wilson's academic specialty was Elizabethan language and literature, and he published many papers and articles on the subject during his lifetime, including *Illustrations of Social Life*, *Shakespeare and the New English Bibliography*, *The Jestbooks of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*, *Shakespeare and the Diction of Common Life*, and *Shakespeare and the New Bibliography*. From 1935 on he served, with Bonamy Dobrée, as general editor of the *Oxford History of English Literature*. His own volume in the series, *English Drama 1485-1585*, appeared posthumously in 1969, edited by G. K. Hunter. He also served as general editor of the Malone Society from 1948 until 1960.

Wilson married Joanna Perry-Keene, one of his Oxford students, in 1924; the couple had four children. Joanna Wilson shared his interest in Elizabethan proverbs and sayings, and worked with him for many years to prepare the third edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs* (1970), which was published after Wilson's death with her introduction.

Scope and Contents

The Frank Percy Wilson Papers document part of Wilson's scholarly career and include research correspondence and subject files, particularly for articles and papers on Shakespearean topics and on the book *Tabacco*. Also included are a large alphabetical file of notes for various publication projects; research material for the *Facsimile of the Shakespeare First Folio* and the British Academy biography of Sir E. K. Chambers; papers relating to the estate of fellow Shakespearean Walter Wilson Greg; and seventeen boxes of note cards and note slips on Elizabethan words and word usage.

Arrangement

Organized into five series: I. Correspondence and Research Notes, 1912-1961. II. W. W. Greg's Publications and Estate, 1924-1961. III. Miscellaneous Notes, undated. IV. Research Cards, undated. V. Research Slips, undated.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence and Research Notes, 1912-1961

3.13 linear feet (9 boxes)

Series I contains extensive correspondence and notes on the articles *Illustrations of Social Life*, *Shakespeare and the New English Bibliography*, *The Jestbooks of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*, and on the book *Tabacco*. Also included are a large file of notes for various projects, and research material for the *Facsimile of the Shakespeare First Folio* and the British Academy biography of Sir E. K. Chambers.

General

b. 1, f. 1-5	Notes and correspondence relating to "Illustrations of Social Life," The Plague in Shakespeare's London; notes on Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne and ms. plays	1912-1960
b. 2, f. 1-4	Photostats and facsimiles, printed articles and reviews, correspondence and notes on almanacs, prognostication, and miscellaneous projects	1912-1960
b. 3, f. 1-4	A-C	
b. 4, f. 1-4	D-G	
b. 5, f. 1-4	H-M	
b. 6, f. 1-4	N-R	
b. 7, f. 1-4	S-Z	

"Shakespeare and the New Bibliography"

b. 8, f. 1	Misc MS notes for article (few typed)	
b. 8, f. 1	<p>Greg, Sir Walter Wilson ALS to F. D. Wilson 1942 June 15, Petworth, Sussex 2 p. 23 x 18 cm Approves piece in present form (criticism attached)</p> <p>1942 June 22 2 pp. 25 x 20 cm Petworth, Sussex General remarks about early Shakespeare critics, texts, editors</p> <p>1942 July 7, Petworth, Sussex 12 p. 25 x 20 cm Petworth, Sussex General remarks on Shakespeare texts</p> <p>1942 Sept 6, Petworth, Sussex 2 p. 23 x 18 cm Queries about imprints; returns typescript (not included)</p>	

"Shakespeare and the New Bibliography" (continued)

- b. 8, f. 1 Ferguson, Frederick Sutherland
LS to F. P. Wilson
1942 June 30, London
2 p. 26 x 20 cm
Remarks on chapters 2 and 3; question on Richard Jones as painter
-
- b. 8, f. 1 Pollard, Graham
ALS to F. P. Wilson
1942 May 30, Oxford
1 p 26 x 20 cm
Offers criticisms on piece

1942 June 12, N/P
4 p. 26 x 20 cm
Reacts to several of Wilson's comments
-
- b. 8, f. 1 Smith, David Nichol
1942 June 21, Oxford
20 p. 21 x 13 cm
Detailed criticisms of piece

1942 July 7, Oxford
16 p. 21 x 13 cm
Detailed criticisms of paper
-
- b. 8, f. 1 Wilson, Frank Percy
ALS to David Nichol Smith
2 p. 26 x 20 cm
Asks for criticisms of sections 2, 3 of piece (typescript wanting)

1942 July 5, Cambridge
3 p. 26 x 20 and 21 x 13 cm
Enclosed (wanting) part 6 of piece for criticisms
-
- "The English Jestbooks . . ."
Full citation for this article is: "The English Jestbooks of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century" HLQ ii, 121-158
- b. 8, f. 2 Misc. MS notes (few typed) relating to Compilations for article
-
- b. 8, f. 2 9 misc. bookseller catalog pages
-
- b. 8, f. 2 Davis, Godfrey
LS to F. P. Wilson
1938 Oct 4, San Marino
1 p. 26 x 21 cm

1938 Oct 27, San Marino
4 p. 26 x 21 cm (with enclosures)

1938 Nov 16, San Marino
1 p. 26 x 21 cm

1938 Dec 16, San Marino
2 p. 26 x 21 cm
-

"The English Jestbooks . . ." (continued)

b. 8, f. 2	Hamilton, George L. LS to F. P. Wilson 1938 Sept 1, Cambridge, Mass. 1 p. 26 x 21 cm Remarks on Madmen of Gotham (1619)
b. 8, f. 2	McManaway, James Gilmer ALS to F. P. Wilson 1938 June 20, Washington 3 p., 26 x 21 cm Answers queries on English jest books; asks for information on Mother Shipton LS to F. P. Wilson 1938 Aug 17, Washington 2 p. 26 x 21 cm
b. 8, f. 2	Nicholon, [Frank Carr?] ALS to F. P. Wilson 1938 Jan 6, Edinburgh 1 p. 18 x 13 cm Answers Wilson's query on "A Foole upon Foole"
b. 8, f. 2	Wright, Lyle Henry LS to F. P. Wilson 1938 June 28, San Marino 1 p. 26 x 21 cm Is unable to aid him in request
Tabacco	
b. 9, f. 1	Wilson, F. P. ed., Tabacco, Oxford; Basil Blackwell & Mott, Ltd, 1961 [An annotated proof copy]
b. 9, f. 1	Shipton, Clifford K. LS to F. P. Wilson 1958, Sept 5, Worcester, MA 1 p. 22 x 14 cm Reports that 1595 Tabacco was sold to Rosenbach Co., which sold it to Arents Collection
b. 9, f. 1	Jackson, William Alexander ALS to F. P. Wilson 1961, Feb 18, Cambridge, MA 1 p. 31 x 19 cm Speculates on Huntington copy of Chute's Tabacco
b. 9, f. 1	Dickson, Sarah Augusta ALS to F. P. Wilson 1960 Nov 9, New York 3 p., 21 x 14 cm Remarks on Arents copy of Tabacco and related works

Tabacco (continued)

b. 9, f. 1	Blackwell, Basil LS to F. P. Wilson 1960 Feb 16, Oxford 1 p. 26 x 21 cm 1960 Nov 9, Oxford 2 p. 26 x 21 cm 1960 Nov 16, Oxford 1 p. 25 x 21 cm
b. 9, f. 1	Fry, Mary Isabel LS to F. P. Wilson 1960 Oct 15, San Marino 1 p. 26 x 21 cm Gives details of Huntington copy of Tabacco
b. 9, f. 1	Halliday, Eleanor LS to F. P. Wilson 1960 Sept 20, Oxford 1 p. 20 x 13 cm
b. 9, f. 1	British American Tobacco Company Limited, Report & Accounts 1960 [issued Feb 27, 1961]
b. 9, f. 1	66 pages of MS notes for Tabacco and concerning aspects of tobacco
b. 9, f. 1	5 pages of photostatic reproductions of 1595 edition
b. 9, f. 1	Sotheby's catalog, pp. 49-50, 3 May items.
b. 9, f. 1	Library Call Slip, Calling for The Armes of the Tobachonists (1630)
b. 9, f. 1	5 p. misc. catalog pages and prints
	"Table Talk"
b. 9, f. 2	MS notes and quotations for "Table Talk"--including notes on Johnson, Boswell, Addison, James I, Pope, Richardson, others
b. 9, f. 2	Leverhulme Reaserach Fellowships LS (by unidentified person) to F. P. Wilson 1940 Nov 27, Watergate, Blackfriars 1 p. 13 x 20 cm Thanks for reprint of "Table Talk"
b. 9, f. 2	Literary and Philosophical Society LS (by unidentified librarian) to F. P. Wilson 1940 Apr 20, Newcastle upon Tyne 1 p., 26 x 21 cm Information on Robert Spence Watson Memorial Lecture, 1931

"Table Talk" (continued)

b. 9, f. 2	Davies, Godfrey LS to F. P. Wilson 1940 May 24, San Marino 1 p 26 x 21 cm Reports that he is pleased to print "Table Talk"
b. 9, f. 2	Crissey, M. H. LS to F. P. Wilson 1940 June, San Marino 2 p., 20 x 21 cm Corrections to "Table Talk" noted
b. 9, f. 2	ALS from unknown writer 1940 Apr 23, Oxford 7 p., 21 x 13 cm Praise and Queries for "Table Talk"
b. 9, f. 2	Clippings, TLS 11 June 1931 and 14 March 1935
Facsimile of Shakespeare First Folio	
b. 9, f. 3	Davin, Daniel Marcus LS to F. P. Wilson 1951 Aug 9, Oxford 1 p. 26 x 21 cm Responds to comments on reproduction techniques in facsimile samples 1951 Aug 15, Oxford 1 p. 17 x 21 cm Comments on size of pages and method of reproduction 1951 Nov 21, Oxford 1 p. 17 x 21 cm
b. 9, f. 3	Wilson, Frank Percy AL to D. M. Davin N/D, Oxford 3 p., 18 x 11 cm Comments on specimen pages
b. 9, f. 3	Six specimen pages (annotated)
British Academy Biography of Sir E. K. Chambers	
b. 9, f. 4	40 Pages of MS notes concerning Chambers [2 are annotated by J. D. Wilson]
b. 9, f. 4	2 pages of Typescript draft [Annotated by T. D. Wilson]
b. 9, f. 4	Blackwells catalog 606, pp. 17-18 [Contains books by Chambers]
b. 9, f. 4	Obituary, TLS 1954, ? 22
b. 9, f. 4	Newspaper clippings from Times and TLS, 1940-1945 [several relate directly to Chambers]

British Academy Biography of Sir E. K. Chambers (continued)

b. 9, f. 4	Chambers, E. K. Review of George Gascoigne, Elizabethan Courtier, Soldier and Poet pp. 125-26
b. 9, f. 4	8 pages of MS notes in Chambers's hand
b. 9, f. 4	Wilson, Frank Percy ALS [draft] to F. P. Wilson 1955 Sept 11, Middle Carn Notes on Chambers, esp. work on Coleridge 1956 Oct 11, Middle Carn 4 p., 26 x 21 cm Response and criticism of biography 1956 Oct 14, Middle Carn Comments on revisions to biography 1956 Oct 26, Middle Carn Further comments on biography
b. 9, f. 4	Harley, ? LS to F. P. Wilson 1956 Sept 21, London (letter attached)
b. 9, f. 4	Twentyman, A. F. ALS to F. P. Wilson 1955 July 6, Styhgate 2 p. 18 x 14 cm Regrets being unable to say anything about Chambers
b. 9, f. 4	Wheeler, Sir Mortimer LS to F. P. Wilson 1956 Oct 24, London 1 p., 23 x 18 cm Thanks for biography
b. 9, f. 4	Chambers, Lady Eleanor (Nora) ALS to F. P. Wilson 1956 Oct 20, Poutrailas 2 p. 18 x 12 cm Answers Wilson's questions on husband's portrait
b. 9, f. 4	Davin, Daniel Marcus LS to F. P. Wilson 1956 Oct 17, Oxford 1 p., 26 x 21 cm Gives details on Chambers

British Academy Biography of Sir E. K. Chambers (continued)

b. 9, f. 4	Wilson, John Dover ALS to F. P. Wilson 1954 Dec 8, Balerno 1956 Jun 23, Balerno 1956 Jul 29, Balerno 1956 Aug 29, Balerno 1956 Sept 21, Balerno 1956 Oct 2, Balerno (LS-typed) 1956 Oct 10, Balerno 1956 Oct 10, Balerno 1956 Oct 15, Balerno 1956 Oct 18, Balerno 1957 Jan 15, Balerno (LS typed)
b. 9, f. 4	D. M. ALS (frag) N/D Probably details relating to life of Chambers
b. 9, f. 4	Chapman, Robert William ALS to E. K. Chambers (postcard) 1941 Feb 22, Park Town Textual Notes to ?

Series II: W. W. Greg's Publications and Estate, 1924-1961*2 Folders*

This series contains documents relating to the settlement of the estate of Shakespeare scholar Walter Wilson Greg (1875-1959); Frank Percy Wilson was one of the executors of his will.

b. 9, f. 5	Income and expense account, 1924-1933, for English Literary Autographs, 1550-1650. 1 p., 21 x 26 cm. [with copy]
b. 9, f. 5	Royalty statement for half-year ended 31 Dec, 1960
b. 9, f. 5	Royalty statement for half-year ended 30 June, 1960
b. 9, f. 5	10 MS pages of notes for Shakespeare quarto editions
b. 9, f. 5	One catalog leaf, pages 20-21
b. 9, f. 5	Childs, C. E. N. LS to W. W. Greg 1959 June 17, London 1 p. 21 x 17 cm Request to microfilm section of Henslowe Papers
b. 9, f. 5	Roberts, R. J. LS to F. P. Wilson 1959 June 22, London 1 p. 21 x 17 cm Thanks for reproduction permission of Henslowe Papers
b. 9, f. 5	Davin, Daniel Marcus LS to F. P. Wilson 1959 Jan 12, Oxford 1 p. 17 x 21 cm
b. 9, f. 5	Gosling, Bernard LS to F. P. Wilson 1959 May 22, Oxford 1 p. 26 x 21 cm Comments on Shakespeare quarto fascimiles
b. 9, f. 5	Dafford, J. W. P. LS to F. P. Wilson 1959 10 April, London 1 p., 26 x 21 cm Requests to buy a number of Greg's books

- b. 9, f. 5 Keep, G. P.
 LS to F. P. Wilson
 1960 Sept 13, Oxford
 1 p. 26 x 21 cm
 Comments on English Literary Autographs, 1559-1650
- LS to E. M. Dring (copy)
 1960 Nov 15, Oxford
 1 p. 26 x 21 cm
 Concerns stock and prices of)English Literary
 Autographs 1550-1650)
-
- b. 9, f. 5 Elizabeth, J. M.
 ALS to F. P. Wilson [David]
 1960 Dec 7, Oxford
 4 p. 18 x 14 cm
 His comments on royalty check and problems with
 Greg's estate
-
- b. 9, f. 5 Knapp-Fisher, James S.
 LS to F. P. Wilson
 1959 June 26, London
 1 p., 21 x 13 cm
 Publication offer for Greg's Pastoral Poetry and
 Pastoral Drama
- 1959 2 July
 1 p. 26 x 21 cm
 Publication details for Greg's Pastoral Poetry and
 Pastoral Drama
- 1959 6 July
 1 p. 21 x 13 cm
 Publication details, and method of reproduction
- 1959 13 July
 1 p. 26 x 21 cm
 Publication details, and offer to publish The
 Henslowe Diaries v. II
- 1959 15 July
 1 p. 21 x 13 cm
 1960 15 August
 1 p. 21 x 13 cm
 Permission to microform The Henslowe Diaries
- 1961 May 30, London
 1 p. 21 x 13 cm
 Royalty payment from Russell & Russell
-
- b. 9, f. 5 Greg, Lady Elizabeth
 ALS to F. P. Wilson
 1959 Mar 18, Petworth, Sussex
 3 p., 18 x 13 cm
 Thanks for visit and management of Greg's library
-

- b. 9, f. 5 Newsam, Peter
ALS to F. P. Wilson
1959(?), Mar 18, Oxford
1 p., 18 x 13 cm
[attached to LS from M. F. Pearson]
-
- b. 9, f. 5 Pearson, Michael F.
LS to F. P. Wilson
1959 Mar 17, London
1 p. 21 x 18 cm.
Concerns Greg's personal papers
-
- b. 9, f. 5 Brown, John
Letter (by secretary) to Messrs Janson, Cobb, Pearson
& Co.
1959 July 28, Oxford
1 p. 20 x 13 cm
Request to reprint 670 lines of "A Critical Mousetrap"
- Firm of Janson, Cobb, Pearson & Co.
LS (by unidentified person) to F. P. Wilson
1859 Mar 18, London
1 p. 26 x 21 cm
Reference to Greg's will
- Letter to F. P. Wilson
1959 Mar 23, London
Assignment of Wilson as literary executor
- 1959 June 15, London
Duties as executor
- 1959 July 29, London
Reference to letter of 15 June
- 1959 Aug 18, London
Deed of assignment enclosed for signature
- 1959 Sept 15, Lond
Deed of Assignment enclosed for signature
- Parolow, B. M.
LS to Messrs Janson, Cobb, Pearson & Co.
1959 June 10, London
1 p. 26 x 21 cm
Reports request of Russell & Russell to publish
Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama
- West, O. B.
LS to F. P. Wilson
1960 Aug 8, London
Asks permission to xerograph sections of Greg's books
(permission form enclosed)
- 1960 Sept 28, London
Thanks for permission to publish
- Cain, P. L.
LS to F. P. Wilson
1961 May 30, London

1 p. 18 x 21 cm
Royalties check correction notice

University Microfilms Ltd.
LS (by unidentified person) to F. P. Wilson
1961 May, London

1 p. 18 x 21 cm
Royalty check for U. S. A. sales

8 invoice forms from University Microfilms, Inc.

Newspaper announcement of Greg's will

Series III: Miscellaneous Notes, undated

Included here are notes on printed books and manuscripts; Stationer's Registers; sales, public and private; and collections, public and private in England and the United States

b. 10, f. 1	Notes on Stationer's Registers 1557-1639
b. 10, f. 2	Notes on Rawlinson MSS F (Poetry) at Bodleian
b. 10, f. 3	Notes on Tanner MSS 167-169
b. 10, f. 4	Notes on Guildhall Library MSS and misc.
b. 10, f. 5	Notes on Privy Council Register, 1612-31
b. 10, f. 6	Notes on Ashmole Mss 36, 37, 38, 857, 1030, 1147
b. 10, f. 7	Notes on Huntington Chronological Catalog
b. 10, f. 8	Misc. notes on MSS and printed books held by private collectors in England and U. S. A.; sale catalogs.
b. 10, f. 9	Notes relating to Dekker's works (bibliographical)
b. 10, f. 10	Misc. notes on public library collections of MSS and printed books
b. 10, f. 11	Notes on texts and classification records from Public Record Office, esp. Court of Chancery records

Series IV: Research Cards, undated*2.92 linear feet (7 boxes)*

This series contains 3x5" index cards with annotations in F. P. Wilson's hand on thousands of Elizabethan words and phrases. The notes were perhaps compiled as part of his research on Elizabethan word usage and phraseology. Boxes 11-15 are in roughly alphabetical order; Box 16 and Box 17 are each in alphabetical order as well.

b. 11	A - Coxcomb
b. 12	Cozen - Hungerly
b. 13	Holland, Hugh - Pack-penny
b. 14	Pacalet - Spettle
b. 15	Spiders' webs - Zone
b. 16	Academic plays-Yver, Jacques
b. 17	APES - Yver, Jacques

Series V: Research Slips, undated*5.83 linear feet (10 boxes)*

Series V contains 5x7" paper slips with annotations in F. P. Wilson's hand on thousands of Elizabethan words and phrases. The notes were perhaps compiled as part of his research on Elizabethan word usage and phraseology. Many of the slips are on previously used letterhead and contains portions of letters, article drafts, bills and other documents on their reverse sides. Boxes 18-21 appear to be in a single alphabetical order; the remaining boxes appear to be in roughly alphabetical order within each box.

b. 18	Anchor - Cockalondlinge wake
b. 19	Daglings - Gentilize
b. 20	Gentlecraft - Musician
b. 21	Musk - Tony
b. 22	Penny raised... - Zisia
b. 23	P. 36 - Yeoman 4
b. 24	As dry as a kex - Plays and Players 36
b. 25	Audeley - Integrate, witty and
b. 26	Colaiois- To be in a tale
b. 27	FOOD - Twenty...

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

Early printed books
English drama -- Bibliography
English drama -- Early modern and Elizabethan,
1500-1600
English literature -- Bibliography
Publishers and publishing -- Great Britain
Scholars

Names

Chambers, E. K. (Edmund Kerchever), 1866-1954
Chapman, R. W. (Robert William), 1881-1960
Davin, Dan, 1913-1990
Ferguson, F. S. (Frederic Sutherland), 1878-1967
Greg, W. W. (Walter Wilson), 1875-1959
Knapp-Fisher, James S.
McManaway, James Gilmer, 1899-1980
Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616 (Bibliography)
Shipton, Clifford Kenyon, 1902-1973
Smith, David Nichol, 1875-1962
Wilson, F. P. (Frank Percy), 1889-1963
Wilson, John Dover, 1881-1969

Corporate Bodies

Bibliographical Society (Great Britain)
Janson, Cobb, Pearson and Co