

# Guide to the John Cowper Powys Collection

GEN MSS 136



by Diane J. Ducharme

February 1995

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

---

## 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
Scope and Contents .....	4
Collection Contents .....	5
Series I: Letters, 1950 Oct 29 .....	5
Series II: Additions Since January 1995 .....	9
HOUGHTON, CLAUDE, 1889- .....	9
POWYS, JOHN COWPER, 1872-1963 .....	9
POWYS, THEODORE FRANCIS, 1875-1953 .....	11
POWYS, JOHN COWPER, 1872-1963 .....	12
Selected Search Terms .....	13

---

## Collection Overview

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

**CALL NUMBER:** GEN MSS 136

**CREATOR:** Powys, John Cowper, 1872-1963

**TITLE:** John Cowper Powys collection

**DATES:** [ca. 1930-1963]

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.83 linear feet (2 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of miscellaneous letters by John Cowper Powys.

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

---

## 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.powys>.

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](mailto: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

Ongoing collection of documents acquired by gift and purchase from various sources.

---

### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

## Conditions Governing Use

The John Cowper Powys 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

John Cowper Powys Collection. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

---

## Processing Information

This register is updated periodically. For information on material added to the collection since the last update, please consult the Public Services desk.

---

## Scope and Contents

This listing encompasses accessions of single manuscripts and small groups of manuscripts pertaining to John Cowper Powys acquired by gift and purchase from various sources by the Beinecke Library. Materials acquired prior to January 1995 have been arranged in [Series I, Letters](#), which consists of letters by John Cowper Powys and is alphabetically arranged by recipient. Materials acquired since January 1995 are located in [Series II, Additions since January 1995](#), and are listed in accession order.

---

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Letters, 1950 Oct 29

b. 1, f. 1	<p>Letter : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Ben Abramson</p> <p>1 item (2 leaves) ; 20cm. ALS containing news of Alyse Gregory. With envelope. With: TLS from Ben Abramson to Norman [Holmes] Pearson, 1953 May 13. 1 item (1 leaf) ; 26cm. "Sent to Rare Book Room 27 N[ov] 1961."</p>	1950 Oct 29
b. 1, f. 2-7	<p>Letters : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to John Badham</p> <p>17 items. 15 ALS and 2 autograph postcards concerning Powys' health, work on <i>Rabelais</i> and <i>Dostoevsky</i>, and the birth of Badham's son. With: 15 envelopes. With: 3 autograph postcards, signed, by P[hyllis] Playter to John Badham, 1945 Sep-Oct. Purchased in 1991.</p>	1944-47
b. 1, f. 8-12	<p>Letters : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to George X. Basarab</p> <p>15 items. 14 ALS and 1 AL containing biographical information on Powys and Phyllis Playter and discussion of his literary tastes. ALS of 1947 Jun 3 includes pen-and-ink caricature of Playter reading Sartre to Powys. With: 14 envelopes (one letter on aerogram form). Purchased in 1995.</p>	1943-59
b. 1, f. 13	<p>Letter : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Juanita [Berlin]</p> <p>1 item (2 leaves) ; 23 cm. ALS. Purchased in 1991.</p>	1957 May 15
b. 1, f. 14	<p>Letter : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Juanita [Berlin]</p> <p>1 item (1 leaf) ; 23 cm. ALS. With: envelope. Purchased in 1992.</p>	1957 May 29
b. 1, f. 15-27	<p>Letters : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Laura Coster</p> <p>64 items. 64 ALS containing biographical and personal information about Powys and commentary on Sappho, the English Romantics, and other authors. With: 63 envelopes. Purchased in 1990.</p>	1959-62

b. 1, f. 28-29	Letters : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Ormond Coulam 11 items. 11 ALS discussing Powys' works, Coulam's 1936 visit to Wales and his subsequent marriage. With: 9 envelopes. Purchased in 1990.	1935-39
b. 1, f. 30-35	Letters : Merionethshire, North Wales, to Curtis Freshel 29 items. 29 ALS discussing Powys' writings, views on European politics of the late 1930s, religious beliefs, and reading. Letter of 17 Jul 1952 in the hand of Phyllis Playter. With: 8 envelopes. Purchased in 1994.	1936-60
b. 1, f. 36	Letter : 148 Waverly Place, New York City, to Mrs. Curtis Freshel 1 item (2 leaves) ; 22 cm. ALS to Mrs. Curtis Freshel concerning a lecture tour. Purchased in 1994.	n.d.
b. 1, f. 37	Letter : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Mrs. G. M. Green 1 item (1 leaf) ; 20 cm. ALS. With: envelope. Purchased in 1992.	1954 Nov 3
b. 1, f. 38	Letter : Corwen, Merioneth[shire], North Wales, to Terence Greenidge 1 item (2 leaves) ; 21 cm. ALS concerning publication prospects of <i>Owen Glendower</i> . With: envelope. Purchased in 1991.	1940 Feb 23
b. 1, f. 39	Letters : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Evelyn Hardy 2 items. 2 ALS concerning Hardy's writing on Swift and Hardy. Purchased in 1964.	1950, 1951
b. 1, f. 40	Postcard: Corwen, Merioneth[shire] to Huw? Menai 1 item (1 leaf) ; 14 cm. Autograph postcard signed. Purchased in 1992.	1953 Oct 9
b. 1, f. 41	Letter : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to F. G. Walker 1 item (1 leaf) ; 20 cm. ALS concerning Llewellyn Powys. With: envelope. Purchased in 1991.	1955 May 6

b. 2, f. 42	Letters : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Lily M. Walsh 2 items. 2 ALS containing biographical information. With: 2 envelopes. With: 2 ALS from Phyllis Playter to Lily Walsh concerning the last illness and death of Powys. Both with envelopes, 1962, 1963. Purchased in 1990.	1957, 1959
b. 2, f. 43	Letter : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Richard Heron Ward 1 item (2 leaves) ; 22 cm. ALS containing news of Powys and his associates. With: envelope. Purchased in 1993.	1945 Jan 30
b. 2, f. 44	Letter : Corwen, Merioneth[shire], North Wales, to Richard Heron Ward 1 item (1 leaf) ; 21 cm. ALS. Purchased in 1993.	1954 Mar 5
b. 2, f. 45	Letter : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales to [John Foster White?] 1 item (1 leaf) ; 20 cm. ALS. With: envelope addressed to "Miss L. M. Walsh," postmarked 1958 Jun 15. With: TL (carbon) from Phyllis Playter to John Foster White, concerning the death of Powys, 1963 Jul 3. Purchased in 1990.	1958 Jul 13
b. 2, f. 46	Letter : Corwen, Merioneth[shire], North Wales, to "Francis" 1 item (1 leaf) ; 20cm. AL. Purchased in 1990.	1951 Dec 18
b. 2, f. 47	Letter : Corwen, Merioneth[shire], North Wales, to "My dear and most gallant and generous friend" 1 item (4 leaves) ; 20cm. AL (possibly incomplete). Purchased in 1992.	1950 May 26
b. 2, f. 48	Letter : Corwen, N[orth] Wales, to "My dear friend" 1 item (2 leaves) ; 21 cm. ALS discussing the writing of Henry Miller. Purchased in 1992.	1950 Oct 9
b. 2, f. 49	Letter : Corwen, Merioneth[shire], North Wales, to "my dearest Nephew" 1 item (1 leaf) ; 20 cm. ALS. Purchased in 1992.	1951 Dec 13

b. 2, f. 50	Letter : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to "my dear friend" 1 item (2 leaves) ; 21 cm. ALS. Purchased in 1992.	1953 Oct 21
-------------	---	-------------

---



**Series II: Additions Since January 1995**

## HOUGHTON, CLAUDE, 1889-

- b. 2, f. 51                      Letters to John Cowper Powys : Savage Club, London                      1958-60
- 6 items.  
6 ALS discussing personal news, friends and family members, and authors including Henry Miller, James Hanley and Theodore Powys. Letter of 10 Oct 1960 mentions an enclosed sonnet (not present). With: 6 envelopes. (One envelope, postmarked 23 Dec 1959, not accompanied by a letter.) Purchased in 1995.
- 

## POWYS, JOHN COWPER, 1872-1963

- b. 2, f. 52                      Letters to Nettie Packer : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales                      1944-48
- 6 items.  
6 ALS discussing personal news, libraries and their users, London during World War II, and authors including Edgar Allan Poe and Aristophanes. With: a pen and ink sketch map of Corwen and the route to Powys's house. With: 6 envelopes. Purchased in 1996.
- 
- b. 2, f. 53                      Letters to Peter Wiener : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales                      1954
- 2 items.  
2 brief ALS commenting on Wiener's arrival with his collection and an introduction to Powys's cousin Trevor Moillet. With: 2 envelopes. Purchased in 1996.
- 
- b. 2, f. 54-56                      Letters to Bill Bax : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales                      1938-45, n.d.
- 25 items.  
25 ALS discussing personal news, friends and family members, World War II and fascism, Powys' writings, and authors including Homer, Sophocles, George Borrow, and Henry James. With: 3 incomplete letters from Powys to Bax and 1 ALS from Phyllis Playter to Bax. Purchased in 1996.
-

## POWYS, JOHN COWPER, 1872-1963 (continued)

b. 2, f. 57	Letter : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to M. J. Dewar 1 item (2 leaves) ; 20 cm. ALS in response to an autograph request. Purchased in 1997.	1938 Jul 29
b. 2, f. 58	Letters to Mrs. Robert Mantner : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales 2 items. 2 ALS concerning Powys' health and daily events. With envelopes. Purchased in 1997.	1946, 1947
b. 2, f. 59	Letters : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Mr. Disspain 2 items. 2 ALS concerning Disspain's request for an autograph. Purchased in 1997.	1956, 1957
b. 2, f. 60	Letters : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Reid Crowell 5 items. 5 ALS discussing Crowell's poetry and that of his mother, Grace Noll Crowell. With: ALS from Powys to Grace Noll Crowell, 1958 Sep 12, and 3 typescript carbons of letters from Reid Crowell to Powys. Purchased in 1997.	1958
b. 2, f. 61	Letter : Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Sheridan Van Dolan 1 item (2 l.) ; 20 cm. ALS praising Van Dolan's poetry and discussing other authors. With: envelope. Purchased in 1997.	1954 Dec 15
b. 2, f. 62-66	Letters : to Mrs. Esther MacMillan 5 items. 5 ALS concerning her search for several of his books and daily news. With: TLS to Macmillan from Bertram Rota, Ltd., 1950 May 18; and ALS to Macmillan from Francis Powys, 1952 Jan 18. Purchased in 1997.	1950-59
b. 2, f. 67	Letter : 439 W. 21 [Street], N.Y., to Mr. Davenport 1 item (2 L.) ; 21 cm. ALS thanking him for an invitation to the theater but sending regrets. Purchased in 1998.	n.d.

## POWYS, JOHN COWPER, 1872-1963 (continued)

b. 2, f. 68	Letters : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Sven Berlin 2 items. 2 ALS, one containing reminiscences of the Powys' brothers lives and friends in New York City. Purchased in 1998.	1957 Oct, Dec
b. 2, f. 69	Letter : Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Merionethshire, North Wales, to Mr. W. Disspain 1 item (1 L.) ; 21 cm.  ALS concerning reading and the history of Guy Fawkes night. Purchased in 1998.	1959 Jun 4
b. 2, f. 70-71	Letters : to Eleanor Johnson 10 items. 7 ALS discussing reading, books by the Powys brothers and family matters. Accompanied by: TLS to Johnson from G. Arnold Shaw, 1936 Feb 9, concerning her collecting of Powys first editions; ALS to Johnson from "Hattie," n.d., concerning a debate between Powys and Bertrand Russell on "Is Marriage a Failure?" and ALS to Johnson from "Pat," 1937 Jan 25. With: envelopes. Purchased in 2001.  Acc #: 20010309-p	1930-58
POWYS, THEODORE FRANCIS, 1875-1953		
b. 2, f. 72	"The Key of the Field" : AMS 1 v. ; 23 cm. Notebook containing fair copy of short story on 36 numbered pages (rectos only). Signature at end. Binding: cloth backed marbled boards. Purchased in 2001.  Acc #: 20010724-b	[1926]

## POWYS, THEODORE FRANCIS, 1875-1953 (continued)

- b. 2, f. 73 "The Dewpond" : AMS [1926]  
 1 item ; 26 cm.  
 Exercise book containing manuscript, corrected and signed, of short story on 31 numbered pages (rectos only).  
 Signature at end.  
 Binding: gray paper wrapper.  
 With: ALS and envelope to Douglas Clayton concerning "The Dewpond," 1929 Sep 12.  
 Purchased in 2001.  
 Acc #: 20010724-c
- 

## POWYS, JOHN COWPER, 1872-1963

- b. 2, f. 74 Letter : 7 Cae Coed, Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to George Moor 1951 Nov 16  
 1 item ; 20 cm.  
 ALS saying that he has enjoyed reading Moor's masque, "The Trial of the Jewelled Peacock" and hopes it will be performed.  
 With: envelope.  
 Purchased in 2001.  
 Acc #: 20020812-j
- 
- b. 2, f. 75 Letter : 7 Cae Coed, Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to "Paulette, John and Michael" 1954 Dec 24  
 1 item; 20 cm.  
 ALS thanking them for Christmas wishes.  
 Purchased in 2002.  
 Acc.: 20020812-k
- 
- b. 2, f. 76 Letter : 7 Cae Coed, Corwen, Merionethshire, North Wales, to "My dear Lady" 1954 Apr 16  
 1 item; 20 cm.  
 ALS thanking her for sending him Huxley's *The Art of Seeing*. Purchased in 2003.  
 Acc.: 20030114-r
-

## **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**

Authors, English -- 20th Century -- Archives

### **Names**

Playter, Phyllis

Powys, John Cowper, 1872-1963

Powys, Llewelyn, 1884-1939