

# Guide to the Oscar Wilde Collection

GEN MSS 275



by Beinecke Staff

June 1997

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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:** GEN MSS 275

**CREATOR:** Wilde, Oscar, 1854-1900

**TITLE:** Oscar Wilde collection

**DATES:** 1884-1915

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.4 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Letters by Oscar Wilde to various parties, including Leonard Smithers and Frank Harris; letters between persons acquainted with Wilde, several manuscripts of writings by Wilde, including a notebook on Roman history, notes on travels in France and Spain, and "Phrases and Philosophies for the use of the young"; and several ephemeral items relating to Wilde.

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

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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.wilde>.

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

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Ongoing collection of documents acquired by gift and purchase from various sources. Type of accession (gift or purchase) and date of acquisition is noted in the box-and-folder list. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Oscar Wilde 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.

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## Preferred Citation

Oscar Wilde Collection. General Collection. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

This finding aid was produced from previously existing cards in the Manuscripts Catalog, or from another inventory. All pertinent bibliographical information has been retained. This finding aid will be updated periodically to account for new materials that may be added to the collection. The date of the most recent update is noted on the title page. For information on material that may have been added since the last update, please consult the Public Service Desk.

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## Existence and Location of Copies

Microfilm is available for folder 24: Notebook containing notes on Roman history and draft of "Vera, or, the Nihilists." Consult Public Services staff.

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## Scope and Contents

This finding aid encompasses accessions of single manuscripts and small groups of manuscripts and other papers, by or pertaining to Oscar Wilde, which the library has chosen to group and list as an artificial collection. Materials incorporated into the collection prior to June 1997 have been organized into three series. The first series consists of items from the bequest of the estate of Katherine Dreier, principally letters removed from books (cataloged separately). The second series contains items given as a group by Abel Cary Thomas, mainly letters written by Wilde towards the end of his life. The third series, Additional Materials, contains two letters and several manuscripts, including notes by Wilde on his travels in France and Spain, and a draft of his "Phrases and Philosophies for the use of the young."

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Materials given by Katherine Dreier

Gift, 1954

#### Correspondence

Holland, Vyvian Beresford

|            |   |             |
|------------|---|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 1 | 2 ALS to Thomas Werner Laurie<br>Accompanied by photographs of Cyril Holland and Vyvian Holland;<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harbrough. <i>The Real Oscar Wilde</i> ,<br>London 1916, Ip.w644.w916 | 1915 Jul 18 |
|------------|---|-------------|

Sherard, Robert Harbrough

|            |  |            |
|------------|--|------------|
| b. 1, f. 2 | ALS to Thomas Werner Laurie, Norwood<br>Removed from his: <i>The Real Oscar Wilde</i> , London, 1902, Ip.W644.W914 | 1914 Oct 2 |
|------------|--|------------|

Smithers, Leonard Charles

|            |  |             |
|------------|--|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 3 | TLS to Oscar Wilde, London<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harbrough. <i>Oscar Wilde</i> , London,<br>1902, Ip.W644.W902S | 1899 May 25 |
|------------|--|-------------|

Wilde, Jane Francesca (Elgee) Lady

|            |  |             |
|------------|--|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 4 | ALS to Mrs. O'Connell, Chelsea<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harbrough. <i>Oscar Wilde</i> , London,<br>1902, Ip.W644.W902S | n.y. Dec 10 |
|------------|--|-------------|

Wilde, Oscar

|            |  |        |
|------------|--|--------|
| b. 1, f. 5 | ALS to Charles Godfrey Leland, New York<br>Accompanied by a typescript and a photograph of Wilde in 1878;<br>bound in dark blue full morocco | [1882] |
|------------|--|--------|

|            |   |      |
|------------|---|------|
| b. 1, f. 6 | ALS to Sir John Pentland Mahaffy, Chelsea<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harbrough. <i>Oscar Wilde</i> , London,<br>1902, Ip.W644.W902S | n.d. |
|------------|---|------|

|            |   |      |
|------------|---|------|
| b. 1, f. 7 | ALS to Robert Baldwin Ross, Paris<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harbrough. <i>Oscar Wilde</i> , London,<br>1902, Ip.W644.W902S | n.d. |
|------------|---|------|

|            |  |         |
|------------|--|---------|
| b. 1, f. 8 | 6 ALS and 4 telegrams (copies) to Leonard Smithers, London<br>The letters of 1897, Nov 16 and Dec 6 were removed from his: "The<br>Ballad of Reading Gaol," 1899, Ip. W644.W898Bc.; The remaining letters<br>and telegrams were removed from Sherard, Robert Harbrough. <i>Oscar<br/>Wilde</i> , London, 1902, Ip.W644.W902S | 1897-99 |
|------------|--|---------|

#### Other Items

## Other Items (continued)

|             |  |             |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 9  | Extrait des minutes des actes de décès: a copy of the police department's official report of Oscar Wilde's death, Paris. Préfecture de la Seine.<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harborough. <i>Oscar Wilde</i> , London, 1902<br>Ip.W644.S902S | 1905 Aug 22 |
| b. 1, f. 10 | Oscar Wilde's last hotel bill, made put to M. Melmouth, Hotel d'Alsace, Jean Dupoirier, Paris<br>Removed from: Sherard, Robert Harborough. <i>Oscar Wilde</i> , London, 1902,<br>Ip.W644.W902S   | 1900 Dec 2  |

**Series II: Materials given by Abel Cary Thomas**

Gift, 1931[?]

## Correspondence

Wilde, Oscar

|             |  |               |
|-------------|--|---------------|
| b. 1, f. 11 | ALS to [Mrs. Bernard Beere] telling of his lodging place, and asking for news, Dieppe<br>Signed with an assumed name, Sebastian Melmouth   | n.d.          |
| b. 1, f. 12 | ALS to Bernstein, asking him to bring three copies of the "Ballad" to be signed, Paris<br>Typewritten copy laid in<br>[02/14/2000: Letter appears to be a forgery]                                   | n.d.          |
|             | ALS to Henry-D. Davray<br><a href="#">See: Box 1, folder 16</a>  |               |
| b. 1, f. 13 | 3 ALS to Frank [Harris] the first and second thanking him for money and clothes, the third asking him for money with which to pay the hotel bill, Dieppe, Paris<br>Accompanied by typewritten copies | [1900?], n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 14 | ALS to Pierre Louÿs, in French, [London]<br>Accompanied by typewritten copy  | n.d.          |
| b. 1, f. 15 | 4 ALS to his London publisher, Leonard Smithers, chiefly asking for money, [Paris?]<br>Typewritten copies of 3 letters laid in<br>[02/14/2000: Last letter appears to be a forgery]                  | [1899?]       |
| b. 1, f. 16 | ALS to Henry-D. Davray expressing delight that his poem was to appear with Davray's translation [probably referring to the "Ballad of Reading Goal"], [Paris]<br>Accompanied by a typewritten copy   | n.d.          |
| b. 1, f. 17 | ALS to "Harold" acknowledging some communication and asking Harold to come that evening, Magdalen College, Oxford<br>Typewritten copy laid in  | n.d.          |

## Writings

|             |   |          |
|-------------|---|----------|
| b. 1, f. 18 | "Latin Verses:" holograph copy of four lines in Latin with the name "Oscar Wilde" at the end<br>Accompanied by a typewritten copy of the verse, begins "Laurus cara mihi dando..."  | n.d.     |
| b. 1, f. 19 | "To my friend Luther Munday:" holograph copy signed by Oscar Wilde<br>Published with title "Impression du matin" <i>The World</i> , 1881 Mar 2; reproduced in facsimile in the <i>Picture Magazine</i> , 1895 Feb 26, with the title, "To my friend Luther Munday"; Accompanied by a typewritten copy | 1891 Jan |

Other Items

|             |   |      |
|-------------|---|------|
| b. 1, f. 20 | A photograph [Sarony], a reproduction of a photograph [J. Jacobs, London],<br>and a reproduction of a drawing of Oscar Wilde [Mayer, Merkel, & Ottman,<br>New York] | n.d. |
|-------------|---|------|

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**Series III: Additional Materials**

## Correspondence

Wilde, Oscar

|             |   |               |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| b. 1, f. 21 | Typescript letter (transcript) to an unidentified recipient, Chelsea, S. W.<br><br>Removed from: Wilde, Oscar, 1854- 1900. <i>Happy prince and other tales by Oscar Wilde</i> ; illustrated by Walter Crane and Jacomb Hood, London: David Nutt; London and Edinburgh: Ballantyne Press; Ballantyne, Hanson and Co., 1888<br><br>Bequest of Arnold Askin, 1983. | [18]88 Jul 13 |
| b. 1, f. 22 | Bill, in French, from Auld Reekie, Scotch Tailors, Paris<br><br>Gift of M. Moyca Newell, 1960.  | n.d.          |

## Writings

|             |  |        |
|-------------|--|--------|
| b. 1, f. 23 | "The Ballad of Reading Gaol:" typescript   | n.d.   |
| b. 1, f. 24 | <a href="#">[Notebook], holograph</a><br><br>Notes on Roman history: miscellaneous notes, possibly unpublished; "Vera, or, the Nihilists": early draft of the play privately printed in 1880; and 2 p. of aphorisms on love<br><br>Gift of Mr. and Mrs. W. Robert Blum, 1953.  | n.d.   |
| b. 1, f. 25 | [Notes on travels in France and Spain], holograph<br><br>Ex libris Richard Le Gallienne; laid in col: (1) transcript, typewritten of holograph; (2) 1 negative photostat of p. 2 of holograph<br><br>Bequest of Arnold Askin, 1983.  | n.d.   |
| b. 1, f. 26 | "O loved one lying far away:" holograph ms. poem, 6 stanzas<br><br>Accompanied by TLS from Arthur Brentano and reproduction of sketch of Wilde, 1878<br><br>Source unknown   | n.d.   |
| b. 1, f. 27 | Phrases and Philosophies for the use of the young: holograph, signed, Albemarle Club, London<br><br>Accompanied by: "The Chameleon", London: Gay and Bird, vol. 1, no. 1, 1894. No. 57 of an edition of 100 numbered copies. 1 vol. in a case<br><br>Bequest of Arnold Askin, 1983.  | [1894] |
| b. 1, f. 28 | <a href="#">"Rose Leaves", holograph, signed, of poem</a><br><br>This poem, with revision and an extra stanza, was published under the title "Under the Balcony" in the Shakespearean Show Book, Manchester; accompanied by: typescript of a review published in Pall Mall Gazette, 1884 Jun 3<br><br>Bequest of Arnold Askin, 1983. | [1884] |

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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

Authors, English -- 19th century

### Names

Harris, Frank, 1856-1931

Smithers, Leonard C. (Leonard Charles),  
1861-1907

Wilde, Oscar, 1854-1900

### Contributors

Wilde, Oscar, 1854-1900

Dreier, Katherine S. (Katherine Sophie),  
1877-1952

Thomas, Abel Cary