

Ezra Pound Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2001

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79005676>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms006050>

Prepared by Karen Linn Femia

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2006
Revised 2010 April

Collection Summary

Title: Ezra Pound Papers

Span Dates: 1945-1986

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1951-1958)

ID No.: MSS5676

Creator: Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972

Extent: 550 items

Extent: 1 containers

Extent: .4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79005676>

Summary: Poet and critic. Primarily correspondence with Stephane de Yankowska, a Polish friend living in England, written during the time Pound was confined to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C., after having been declared mentally incompetent to stand trial for treason. Also includes legal papers pertaining to the motion to dismiss the treason charges and secure Pound's release from the psychiatric hospital

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

De Yankowska, Stephane--Correspondence.

Pound, Dorothy--Correspondence.

Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972.

Subjects

Culture.

Economics.

History.

Literature.

Politics, Practical.

Occupations

Critics.

Poets.

Provenance

The papers of Ezra Pound, poet and critic, were given to the Library of Congress by Herman A. Sieber in 1958. Additional material was purchased by the Library in 2001.

Processing History

The original gift was part of the division's Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection. With the addition of the Yankowska correspondence, the papers were reprocessed and a finding aid created.

Transfers

Five sketches of Pound were transferred to the Library's Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of these papers

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Ezra Pound is governed by -the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Ezra Pound are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Ezra Pound Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Ezra Loomis Pound (1885-1972) span the years 1945-1986, with the bulk of the material dating from 1951 to 1958, the years of his confinement at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C.. The papers are in English, French, and Polish and primarily contain correspondence. Ezra Pound was one of the most influential voices in English language poetry of the twentieth century both through the force of his own poetry and through his work as an editor and critic and as an advocate for the poetry of others. When World War II began, Pound, an American citizen, and his wife Dorothy had been long-time residents of Italy. Pound gave regular radio broadcasts during the war from Italy. In 1945 United States occupying forces in Italy arrested Pound, and he was charged with treason. He was declared mentally incompetent to stand trial and confined to St. Elizabeth's Hospital, a mental institution in Washington, D.C. After his release in 1958, he returned to Italy.

The papers are almost entirely composed of Pound's letters to Stephane de Yankowska and carbon copies of her letters to him written during his time at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Yankowska was a Polish friend living in England who worked for his release from St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Many of the notations on Pound's letters are hers. Several letters have postscripts from Dorothy Pound. Ezra Pound assumed the role of mentor to Yankowska, imparting his political and literary views and suggesting what she should be reading. The style of his letters is idiosyncratically "Poundian" with invented spellings, rambling thoughts, wordplay, and caustic commentary. In addition to politics, culture, history, and economics, Pound's publication projects are also discussed in the correspondence.

Other papers include a 1957 letter to the *London Times Literary Supplement* and a set of legal papers from the 1958 motion to dismiss the charges of treason. The motion secured his release from custody in 1958.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by heading and chronologically therein.

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|------------------|--|
| BOX 1 | <i>London Times Literary Supplement</i> , letter to, 1957 |
| BOX 1 | <i>United States v. Pound</i> , motion to dismiss, 1945, 1958, undated |
| BOX 1 | Yankowska, Stephane de |
| BOX 1 | Correspondence |
| BOX 1 | From Pound, 1951-1958 (14 folders) |
| BOX 1 | To Pound and to others concerning Pound, 1951-1958 (7 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Lists and descriptions of correspondence, 1986, undated |