

# **William Carlos Williams research collection**

**Ms. Coll. 396**

**Finding aid prepared by Amey A. Hutchins.**

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Last updated on April 14, 2017.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

October 2001

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Title</b>	William Carlos Williams research collection
<b>Call number</b>	Ms. Coll. 396
<b>Date</b>	circa 1890-1983
<b>Extent</b>	4 boxes
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	Miscellaneous group of letters and materials concerning William Carlos Williams. Includes correspondence with University of Pennsylvania English professor Sculley Bradley and New Directions publisher James Laughlin. A small group of family papers includes material to and about his wife, Florence. Also includes letters to Williams from Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound, Richard Wilbur, John F. Kennedy, Pablo Casals, and Hans Enzenberger, among others. The remainder of the collection consists of a small number of writings by Williams, reviews of and advertisements for his works, announcements of readings or lectures by Williams, newspaper clippings and journal articles about Williams, photographs, awards, and a self-portrait of Williams.

**Cite as:**

William Carlos Williams research collection, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

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## Scope and Contents

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In 1906 William Carlos Williams graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with an M.D. He left Penn with not only medical training but also poetic aspirations. About thirty years later a professor of English at the University began to develop a relationship with the poet that eventually led to the accumulation in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library of materials associated with Williams and his work, although the bulk of his papers reside at the Beinecke Library at Yale University and the Lockwood Memorial Library at SUNY Buffalo.

The professor was Sculley Bradley, who taught Williams' son Paul at Penn and was editor of the University's literary quarterly, *The General Magazine*. The first series contains papers directly connected with Bradley: his correspondence with Florence and William Carlos Williams, his correspondence with others about Williams, and the speeches that he gave on the occasions of the conferral of an honorary Doctorate of Letters on Williams in 1952 and the dedication of the Collection of Books by William Carlos Williams at the library at Penn in 1965, after Williams' death. Bradley had been much involved in encouraging the library toward creating such a collection and acting as a channel of communication between the library and the Williams family. At the dedication, Bradley had a conversation with Williams' younger brother Edgar which in time led to the deposit by Edgar of letters between him and his brother, now Ms. Coll. 395. Of the material in this research collection that had been in the possession of the Williams family, such as correspondence addressed to Florence and William Carlos Williams or reviews of Williams' works gathered by clipping services, most probably came to the library through Bradley. He also may have been responsible for collecting many of the journal articles in the series of publications concerning Williams, in addition to the one he wrote himself.

The second series focuses on another individual's relationship over several decades with Williams. James Laughlin, founder of the publishing company New Directions, was the publisher of many Williams works, beginning with *White Mule* in 1937 and continuing through 1950. Laughlin gave copies of his correspondence with Williams to the Rare Book & Manuscript Library. The first letters are written by Laughlin in 1935, the last by Williams in 1961. They address the publication and sale of his works in these years. Laughlin also contributed copies of a Williams typescript of a preface and a typescript of a story by himself about his relationship with Williams. The remaining series are General Correspondence (family and others), Writings, Reviews and Advertisements for Williams' Works, Programs/Announcements for Lectures or Readings by Williams, Publications concerning Williams (1906 Penn yearbook, journal articles, newspaper clippings), Photographs, Miscellaneous, and an Oversize box containing a large Christmas card from the Williams to Bradley; reviews; photographs; a printed poem; an 1898 passport for Williams, his brother, and his mother; a plaque for the 1949 National Book Award; a gold medal from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; and two other awards. The bulk of this material probably came through Bradley, but there is also correspondence from another English professor (John Miller) that came to the library from a third English professor (Robert Spiller). The 1906 yearbook comes from yet another source. The existence of a "Williams collection" probably also acted as a magnet for miscellaneous material such as newspaper clippings. Also part of this collection is a self-portrait by Williams, ca. 1914. Florence Williams gave this portrait to the library following William Carlos Williams' death, for which Bradley thanked her in a letter in the collection dated April 2, 1963. This portrait currently hangs in the T. Edward Ross Reading Room of the Rare Book & Manuscript Library. This collection documents William Carlos Williams' sporadic relationship with the University of

Pennsylvania, primarily encouraged by Sculley Bradley. It includes some personal papers from the Williams family and a handful of typescripts and galleys for works by Williams. It preserves a few letters to Williams from poets such as Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, and Richard Wilbur, along with notes from Pablo Casals and John F. Kennedy. Through newspaper clippings dating from 1928 to 1958 and journal articles dating from 1952 to 1983, the collection provides a record of the reception of Williams and his work in the United States. The Laughlin papers approach the issue of reception from behind the scenes, in terms of publishing decisions and profits, and also demonstrate Laughlin's commitment to publishing new poetry from Williams and others at New Directions Publishing.

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## **Administrative Information**

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

October 2001

Finding aid prepared by Amey A. Hutchins.

### **Use Restrictions**

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **FORM/GENRE(S)**

- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Writings (document genre)

### **PERSONAL NAME(S)**

- Williams, William Carlos, 1883-1963

**SUBJECT(S)**

- Authors
- Authors, American--20th century
- Poets
- Poets, American--20th century

## Collection Inventory

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### I. WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS/SCULLEY BRADLEY PAPERS. 17 FOLDERS.

#### A. BRADLEY CORRESPONDENCE WITH WILLIAM CARLOS AND FLORENCE WILLIAMS. 10 FOLDERS.

##### Description & Arrangement

Letters to Bradley interfiled with carbons of outgoing letters, arranged chronologically.

	Box	Folder
Bradley, Sculley, 1897-. Bradley, Sculley, 1939-1965. 44 items (75 leaves).	1	1-10

#### B. BRADLEY CORRESPONDENCE RE WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. 4 FOLDERS.

##### Description & Arrangement

Letters to Bradley interfiled with carbons of outgoing letters, arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

	Box	Folder
Angell, Donald K., 1952. 3 items (4 leaves).	1	11
New Directions Publishing Corp., 1948. 3 items (3 leaves).	1	11
Fogg, John M., 1950. 2 items (2 leaves).	1	11
Lockwood, Dean Putnam, 1951. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	11
Thirlwall, John C., 1953-1961. 9 items (9 leaves).	1	12
Westlake, Neda M., 1957. 1 item (7 leaves).	1	13

Williams, Edgar I., 1965. 2 items (2 leaves).	1	14
Williams, Virginia Carnes, 1950. 2 items (3 leaves).	1	14
Woollcott, Joan, 1961. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	14

**C. BRADLEY/UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA/WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS MATERIALS. 3 FOLDERS.**

	Box	Folder
Citation for Williams' honorary Doctorate of Letters, 1952.	1	15
Materials connected with Williams books at Van Pelt.	1	16
Dedication of Williams collection at Van Pelt, 1965.	1	17

**II. WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS/JAMES LAUGHLIN PAPERS. 17 FOLDERS.**

**A. COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN WILLIAMS AND LAUGHLIN. 15 FOLDERS.**

	Box	Folder
Laughlin, James, 1935-1961, undated. 69 items (111 leaves).	1	18-32

**B. COPIES OF WRITINGS BY WILLIAMS FROM LAUGHLIN. 1 FOLDER.**

	Box	Folder
Copy of typescript of prefatory note by Williams for a re-issue of <i>The White Mule and In the Money</i> .	1	33



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Copy of typescript of Williams poem, "Strengthened by Famine" .	1	33
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**C. WRITING BY LAUGHLIN RE WILLIAMS. 1 FOLDER.**

	Box	Folder
"A Visit (to William Carlos Williams)" .	1	34

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**III. WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS CORRESPONDENCE. 21 FOLDERS.**

**A. FAMILY PAPERS. 3 FOLDERS.**

	Box	Folder
Notes from Williams' trip in Europe with his brother, 1910. 1 leaf with notes and sketches, 3 postcards.	1	35
Letter to Florence from William Carlos Williams, May 25, 1920. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	35
Valentine to Florence from William Carlos Williams, February 14, 1941. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	35
Valentine to Florence from William Carlos Williams, Late 1950s-early 1960s?. 1 item (2 leaves).	1	35
Note from William Carlos Williams' teacher to his mother concerning cards with pictures of women, along with the confiscated cards, circa 1890?. 1 item (2 leaves, 15 cards).	1	36
Papers certifying Florence and William Carlos Williams as godparents of	1	37

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Brian Fornari, August 11, 1951. 2 items (4 leaves).

**B. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE. 18 FOLDERS.**

**Description & Arrangement**

letters to William Carlos Williams, arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

	Box	Folder
Barnard, Mary, 1963. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	38
Beacon Press, 1958. 2 items (1 booklet, 1 leaf).	1	39
Casals, Pablo, 1957. 1 item (3 leaves).	1	40
Enzensberger, Hans Magnus, 1962. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	41
Kennedy, John F., 1961. 1 item (2 leaves).	1	42
Knollenberg, Bernhard/ Yale University Library, 1940. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	43
Lee, Muna, 1959. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	44
McDowell, Obolensky Inc., 1957. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	45
Miller, John G. (including letters from Williams), 1951-1967. 4 items (4 leaves).	1	46
Moore, Marianne, 1950-1953. 2 items (4 leaves).	1	47
Moore, Merrill, 1953. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	48
"Philena", 1959. 2 items (3 leaves).	1	49
Pound, Ezra, 1955. 1 item (2 leaves).	1	50

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The Shoe String Press, 1959. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	51
Thomas Y. Crowell, Publishers, 1959. 1 item (2 leaves).	1	52
Wells, Ken, 1959. 1 item (2 leaves).	1	53
Wilbur, Richard, 1951. 1 item (1 leaf).	1	54
[unknown correspondents], 1891, 1951. 2 items (2 leaves).	1	55

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**IV. WRITINGS. 5 FOLDERS.**

	Box	Folder
<i>The First President</i> (libretto), galley, 1936.	2	56
<i>Selected Essays of William Carlos Williams</i> Uncorrected proof, 1954.	2	57
Typescript of an unpublished scene for <i>A Dream of Love</i> , [undated].	2	58
Typescript of sketches for the Tyro Theater Group.	2	59
Reviews by Williams.	2	60

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**V. REVIEWS AND ADVERTISEMENTS FOR WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS' WORKS. 12 FOLDERS.**

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically by date of publication or performance.

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	Box	Folder
<i>A Voyage to Pagany</i> , 1928.	2	61
<i>The Complete Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams, 1906-1938, [1938?]</i> .	2	62
<i>Paterson</i> , Book 1, 1946.	2	63
<i>Paterson</i> , Book 2, 1948.	2	64
<i>A Dream of Love</i> , performances, 1950-1960.	2	65
<i>The Desert Music and Other Poems</i> , 1954.	2	66
<i>Selected Essays of William Carlos Williams</i> , 1954.	2	67
<i>The Dog and the Fever</i> , [1954?].	2	68
<i>I Wanted to Write a Poem</i> , 1958.	2	69
<i>Paterson</i> , Book 5, 1958.	2	70
<i>The Farmers' Daughters</i> , [1961?].	2	71
<i>Many Loves</i> , performances, 1959-1963.	2	72

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**VI. PROGRAMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR LECTURES OR READINGS BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. 1 FOLDER.**

	Box	Folder
Flyers for three events, 1952-1955.	2	73

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**VII. PUBLICATIONS RE WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. 16 FOLDERS.**

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

	Box	Folder
<i>The 'Scope</i> , Yearbook, Medical Department, University of Pennsylvania, 1906.	2	74
Wells, Henry Willis, 1895-. "Poet and Psychiatrist: Merrill Moore" , 1952.	2	75
Norton, R. A. "Doctors Afield: William Carlos Williams" , 1953.	2	76
"Caedmon Recordings of the Spoken Word" , after 1956.	2	77
Sutton, Walter. "Dr. Williams' 'Paterson' and the Quest for Form" , 1960.	2	78-79
Garvin, Henry Raphael, 1917-. "William Carlos Williams' Journey to Marriage" , 1961.	2	80
Sereni, Vittorio. "W. C. W.: An Italian View" , after 1961.	2	81
Bradley, Sculley, 1897-. "William Carlos Williams, Poet-Physician" , 1962.	2	82
Unterecker, John Eugene, 1922-. "The Architecture of " , 1962.	3	83
Brinnin, John Malcolm, 1916-. "William Carlos Williams" , 1963.	3	84
Duncan, Robert. "Notes on Poetics" , 1964.	3	85
Slate, Joseph Evans. "William Carlos Williams, Hart Crane and ' " , 1965.	3	86
Dewey, Nicholas. "Dr. William Carlos Williams: The Writer as a Physician" , 1970.	3	87
Wallace, Emily Mitchell. "Penn's Poet Friends" , 1973.	3	88

William Carlos Williams commemorative issue <i>Journal of the Medical Society of New Jersey</i> , 1983.	3	89
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Newspaper clippings re William Carlos Williams, 1949-1963.	3	90
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**VIII. PHOTOGRAPHS. 4 FOLDERS.**

**A. PHOTOGRAPHS OF WILLIAMS CARLOS WILLIAMS. .**

	Box	Folder
<b>Photos.</b>	3	91
<b>Description</b>		
11 photographs, 4 negatives, 1 color transparency [1 negative and the transparency are of the self-portrait]		

**B. PHOTOGRAPHS OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS.**

	Box	Folder
Identified subjects, including Ezra Pound (also 1 negative), James and Nora Joyce, and Robert McAlmon. 9 items.	3	92
Unidentified subjects. 6 items.	3	93

**C. OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS.**

	Box	Folder
Landscapes and 1 print of Williams' Pulitzer citation.	3	94

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	Box	Folder
<b>IX. MISCELLANEOUS: PAMPHLET WITH HISTORICAL IMAGE OF THE PASSAIC RIVER; TWO PUBLICATIONS DEALING WITH POETRY BUT NOT DIRECTLY WITH WILLIAMS. 1 FOLDER.</b>	3	95

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<b>X. OVERSIZE. 1 BOX.</b>	Box	4
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### **Contents**

- \* Williams' translation of Sappho, printed by Poems in Folio, signed and numbered by the poet
  - \* 7 reviews of Williams' work; 3 newspaper clippings re Williams
  - \* Photograph of Williams
  - \* photograph of Williams' portrait
  - \* 1898 passport for William Carlos, Edgar, and Rachel Williams
  - \* Christmas card from the Williams to Sculley Bradley
  - \* Envelope from W. T. Ellis to Williams; plaque honoring Williams' National Book Award for the most distinguished book of poetry in 1949
  - \* 1957 Brandeis University Creative Arts Award
  - \* Pin commemorating Williams' election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1958
  - \* Gold medal presented by the American Academy of Arts and Letters
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**XI. WILLIAMS, WILLIAM CARLOS, 1883-1963. SELF-PORTRAIT (ON DISPLAY IN T. EDWARD ROSS READING ROOM, RARE BOOK & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY), CIRCA 1914.**