

# **Morley Roberts papers**

**Ms. Coll. 726**

**Finding aid prepared by Violet Lutz.**

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Last updated on July 25, 2017.

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

2009

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## Table of Contents

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Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	3
Administrative Information.....	4
Controlled Access Headings.....	4
Other Finding Aids.....	5
Collection Inventory.....	6
Correspondence: to and from Morley Roberts.....	6
Memorabilia.....	6
Writings of Morley Roberts.....	8

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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>Creator</b>	Roberts, Morley, 1857-1942
<b>Title</b>	Morley Roberts papers
<b>Call number</b>	Ms. Coll. 726
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1884-1965
<b>Extent</b>	10 boxes
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	Correspondence; memorabilia; manuscripts, galleys, offprints, and clippings of published and unpublished writings; and books written, edited, or annotated by Roberts. About one third of the correspondents in the collection are physicians and/or scientists with whom Roberts consulted about cancer research.

**Cite as:**

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

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## Biography/History

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Born in London on 29 December 1857, Morley Charles Roberts was the eldest son of William Henry Roberts (ca. 1831-1908), superintending inspector of income tax, and Catherine, née Pullen (b. ca. 1830). Roberts attended the Bedford Free Grammar School and Owens College, Manchester, after which he traveled to Australia, the first of many journeys spanning continental Europe, North and Central America, South Africa, and the Pacific Islands. His writing career began with *The Western Avernus* (1887), which relates his American adventures and remains the best-known of his eighty or so volumes—novels, short stories, verse, plays, essays, travel narratives, and semi-scientific, semi-sociological studies. On 16 May 1896 he married Alice Bruce Hamlyn, née Selous (ca. 1852-1911), a stockbroker's widowed daughter with three children. After her death, Roberts was cared for by Alice's daughter, Naomi Hamlyn, who died in 1941.

Roberts was an outdoorsman as well as a raconteur. His sociability earned him the friendship of many writers at the Authors' Club. Among the many themes of his colorful and fast-paced narratives are bohemian and seafaring life, politics—his imperialist leanings are in evidence in *The Colossus* (1899) and *A Son of Empire* (1899)—and degeneration, which he came to explore in its biological aspects. He is well remembered as a friend and biographer of George Gissing, the hero of Roberts' roman-à-clef, *The Private Life of Henry Maitland* (1912), and *W. H. Hudson: A Portrait* (1924).

Morley Roberts died of haemopericardium rupture at his home, 5 Manor Mansions, Belsize Park Gardens, London, on 8 June 1942, and was cremated at Golders Green.

**Note:** The biographical sketch derives from Peter Osbourne's entry for Morley Roberts in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (OUP, 2004).

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## Administrative Information

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

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Finding aid prepared by Violet Lutz.

### Source of Acquisition

Gift of Margaret Storm Jameson, 1961; additional gift of Hannah Gluck, 1978

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## Controlled Access Headings

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FORM/GENRE(S)

- Manuscripts for publication
- Manuscripts, English--19th century
- Manuscripts, English--20th century

**PERSONAL NAME(S)**

- Gissing, George, 1857-1903
- Hudson, W.H., (William Henry), 1841-1922

**SUBJECT(S)**

- Cancer -- Research

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**Other Finding Aids**

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For a complete listing of correspondents, do the following ns2:title search in Franklin: Morley Roberts Papers.

## Collection Inventory

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### I. CORRESPONDENCE: TO AND FROM MORLEY ROBERTS.

	Box	Folder
A-Gi.	1	1-49
Gl-L.	2	50-93
M-W; unidentified.	3	94-144

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### II. MEMORABILIA.

	Box	Folder
<b>Letters to Morley Roberts concerning his attempt at war service during World War I, circa 1915.</b>	3	145
<b>Contents</b>		
Charlton, Edward, Sir, 1865-1937		
Kennedy, William Robert, Sir, 1838-1916		
Pott [or Potts?], Arthur		
Wood, Evelyn, 1838-1919		
Unidentified correspondent in War Office		
<b>Documents related to Morley Robert's Civil List Pension.</b>	3	146
<b>Contents</b>		
1. Testimonials from 24 signatories of "memorial," in support of a Civil		

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List Pension for Morley Roberts, n.d. [before 1922]

2. Letter from Anthony Bevir (Private Secretary to the Prime Minister), regarding application of Morley Roberts for a supplemental pension, 1941

**Biographical material. Includes: financial diary, circa 188.** 3 147

**Contents**

Handwritten and typed biographical notes about Morley Roberts by one of his sisters; catalogs and clippings from his art exhibitions; program (bibliography) and clippings related to Authors' Club event in his honor on 7 October 1935; and obituaries and other clippings

Photographs of Morley Roberts in later life, undated. 2 items. 3 148

**Memorabilia related to Naomi Hamlyn. 3 items.** 3 149

**Contents**

Includes narrative by Storm Jameson about Naomi's death (typed and handwritten); handwritten draft of eulogy by Morley Roberts, 11 November 1941; undated photograph of Naomi (signed by E. O. Hoppé)

**Clippings concerning Morley Roberts's scientific work, 1934-1935. 13 items.** 3 150

**Contents**

Includes letters to the editor by Roberts, and letters or articles by the following authors: Sir Arthur Keith, G. W. Nicholson, W. Langdon-Brown, W. Sampson Handley, Arthur F. Hurst, Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter, A. H. B. Kirkman, Charles M. Beadnell, W. Blair Bell.

**Clippings of notices and reviews of Morley Roberts's books, 1940-1965. 4 items.** 3 151

**Description**

Clippings of notices and reviews of Morley Roberts's books

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<b>Items removed from Morley Roberts's personal copy of W. H. Hudson. <i>A Portrait</i> (see box 8).</b>	3	152
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**Contents**

Includes draft manuscript pages of *A Hind in Richmond Park*, in hand of Hudson; Morley Roberts's drafts of the book's dedicatory poem (handwritten draft, October 1922; carbon typescript, n.d.); electrocardiogram of Hudson; photographs of Hudson's homes on St. Luke's Road and on North Parade, Penzance, and related to commemoration of him in Buenos Aires; clippings about Hudson (dated 1922-1936), including Spanish-language clippings from Buenos Aires; mementos (wood tile, dried leaves) related to Hudson's home in Quilmes (sent by Fernando Pozzo); reproduction of portrait medallion of Hudson by Theodore Spicer-Simson; and photograph of Morley Roberts (dated 1936).

*Note:* For other items removed from the book, see the correspondence files of R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Huberto R. Hudson, Fernando Pozzo, and Frederick William Price.

<b>Scrapbook of Morley Roberts, circa 1891-1894.</b>	4	
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**Contents**

Includes a pencil drawing by Roberts, and diverse items related to his travels (Europe, Australia, North America, South Africa), such as receipts or bills (hotels, restaurants, post office, railroad), tickets, and items and fragments of correspondence (notes and letters, often on hotel stationery; addressed envelopes; telegrams).

Loose items found with the above scrapbook (similar types of items), circa 1895-1938.	4	153-154
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### III. WRITINGS OF MORLEY ROBERTS.



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A. MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
<b><i>Hearts of Women</i>, autograph manuscript, first draft, dated 20 October 1918 - 17 January 1919. 136 leaves.</b>	5	
<b>Note</b>		
Written on the verso of used pages bearing drafts or manuscript versions of other writings (including poems and scientific writing), handwritten, typed, or as clippings.		
<b>“The Mask and the Last Night [?].” Typescript with handwritten emendations, accompanied by handwritten note to Storm Jameson with return address of Morley Roberts., 1941-1942. 307 leaves.</b>	6	
<b>Note</b>		
Unpublished book about Naomi Hamlyn begun after her death (9 November 1941). Lacks title page; first page bears only the title “This Book,” as Roberts also refers to it in correspondence to Jameson in 1942 (in an earlier letter he makes reference to “Naomi’s Other People”). Handwritten annotation by Jameson on last page.		
<b>“A Farewell to Letters.” Typescript with handwritten emendations. In paper cover., undated. 189 leaves.</b>	7	
<b>Note</b>		
Pencilled note by Roberts on title page: “Alternative title: The Round Table. Should be glad of suggestions. MR.” Unpublished sketches of writers who were Roberts’s contemporaries. Table of contents (f. ii): I. Introductory; II. Meredith and James; III. John Galsworthy; IV. John Davidson; V. Cunninghame Graham; VI. John Barlas; VII. Stevenson and Doyle; VIII. Hudson; IX. Gilbert Murray; X. George Gissing.		
Poem "To George Gissing," autograph manuscript, 1884. 4 leaves.	8	155
Poems to Naomi, autograph manuscripts, 1914-1916. 3 items (3	8	156

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leaves).		
Autobiographical sketch on scientific career, autograph manuscript, undated [after 1935]. 25 leaves.	8	157
"Autobiography," typescript with handwritten emendations (2 versions), undated. 64 leaves.	8	158
Outline for autobiography, typescript with one handwritten emendation, undated.	8	159
"A Sussex Year-Book," carbon typescript, circa 1905. 16 leaves.	8	160
"Reminiscences," carbon typescript with handwritten emendations, undated; and printed version from <i>Strand Magazine</i> , 1914 (20 + 5 leaves).	8	161
"A Writer's Novitiate," carbon typescript with handwritten emendations, undated. 12 leaves.	8	162
"The Letters of George Gissing," typescript with handwritten emendations [article published in <i>Virginia Quarterly Review</i> , July 1931], circa 1931. 23 leaves.	8	163
<b>B. GALLEY PROOF, OFFPRINTS, AND CLIPPINGS.</b>		
	Box	Folder
"Trades I Have Followed," galley proof, undated. 2 leaves.	8	164
"Olympos," offprint from <i>Folklore: Transactions of the Folklore Society</i> (vol. 28, no. 2), 30 June 1917. Inscribed to Gluck, 3 March 1942. 4 leaves.	8	165
"My First Book: 'The Western Avernus,'" clipping from <i>The Idler</i> , August 1893. 5 leaves.	8	166

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“George Gissing and his Critics” (letter from Gissing to Morley Roberts, 10 February 1895), clipping from *The Bookman*, January 1915 (1 leaf). 8 167

“H. Gawen Sutton, M.D., F.R.C.P., Late Physician to the London Hospital, An Appreciation,” offprint from *The Medical Press and Circular*, 19 and 29 August 1925 (10 leaves). Inscribed to Gluck (“To the Artist of Miller’s Mead”) 3 March 1942, and note to her, last page. 8 168

“The Hudson Memorial. A Defence of Mr. Epstein” (letter to the editor), clipping from *The Morning Post*, circa 1925. 1 leaf. 8 169

“The Sea in Fiction,” offprint or pamphlet of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, weekly evening meeting, 18 May 1928. 8 leaves. 8 170

**“John Hunter and Evolution,” offprint from *The Medical Press and Circular*, 29 May and 5 and 12 June 1929. 18 leaves.** 8 171

**Note**

Labeled with handwritten return address of Morley Roberts.

**C. BOOKS BY MORLEY ROBERTS.**

Box

***Land-Travel and Seafaring* , 1891.**

9

**Note**

Inscribed by Morley Roberts to Alice [Hamlyn] (last name blocked out), his later wife, 20 December 1891. Photograph of Morley Roberts pasted onto inside front cover.

***W. H. Hudson. A Portrait* [1924], hardcover.**

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**Note**

Personal copy of Morley Roberts, accompanied by memorabilia related to Hudson.

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The following items remain affixed inside the book: letters to Roberts from Horace Wingrave and Sir James Mackenzie, and telegram from Mrs. McDougal (Hudson's housekeeper); certified copy of marriage certificate of Hudson and Emily Wingrave; photograph (verso "Sitting room, Penzance"); check signed by Hudson. Loose items that were removed from the book can be found in Memorabilia (folder 152); and in the correspondence folders of R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Huberto R. Hudson, and Frederick William Price.

***W. H. Hudson. A Portrait [1924], paperback.*** 9

**Note**

Inscribed by Morley Roberts with a letter to Gluck, 15 November 1941.

***The Western Avernus: Toil and Travel in Further North America (London: Smith, Elder, 1887).*** 10

**Note**

Personal copy of Roberts's wife Alice (pencil note on title page "Glo's copy"). Pressed reed sewn onto verso of table of contents (pencil note: "Brought from Lago Averno by Gissing"). Photograph of Morley pasted onto inside front cover.

***The Western Avernus: Toil and Travel in Further North America (new edition, Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1896).*** 10

**D. BOOKS EDITED OR ANNOTATED BY MORLEY ROBERTS.**

Box

***Women and Ships: Being Some Reminiscences and Comments on Life at Sea and Ashore by Geordie Armstrong, A.B., revised and edited by Morley Roberts (London: Nash & Grayson [1932]).*** 10

**Note**

Return address of Roberts is handwritten on cover.

***Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development, by Francis Galton (London:*** 10

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**Dent, 1907, reprinted 1911; Everyman's Library).**

**Note**

Inscription by Gluck on page preceding title page, indicating that the book was owned by Roberts and that the pencil annotations are his.

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