

# Francis Berry:

## An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

---

### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator</b>	Berry, Francis, 1915-2006
<b>Title</b>	Francis Berry Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1928-1961
<b>Extent</b>	3 boxes (1.26 linear feet), 1 galley folder
<b>Abstract</b>	Poet and professor of literature Francis Berry published a large number of poetry collections as well as a respectable amount of literary criticism. The papers document Berry's development as a poet from his earliest poetic endeavors to his mature creations, as well as the evolution of his critical ideas.
<b>Call Number:</b>	Manuscript Collection MS-0360
<b>Language:</b>	English.
<b>Access</b>	Open for research. Part or all of this collection is housed off-site and may require up to three business days notice for access in the Ransom Center's Reading and Viewing Room. Please contact the Center before requesting this material: <a href="mailto:reference@hrc.utexas.edu">reference@hrc.utexas.edu</a>

---

### Administrative Information

<b>Acquisition</b>	Purchase, 1964 (R2039)
<b>Processed by</b>	Robert Kendrick, 1994; updated by Kelsey Handler, 2012
<b>Repository:</b>	<a href="#">Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin</a>

---

## Biographical Sketch

Francis Berry, poet and professor of literature, was born March 23, 1915, in Ipoh, Malaya. He graduated with a B.A. from the University of London in 1947; upon completion of his undergraduate studies, Berry obtained a lectureship in English at the University of Sheffield and was promoted to a professorship by 1960, the year he received his M.A. from the University of Exeter. From 1970 to 1980, he taught at Royal Holloway College of the University of London from which he retired professor emeritus. Various visiting professorships took him to Carleton College in Minnesota, to the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, to India and to Japan as a British Council Lecturer, to the University of Glasgow, to the Australian National University in Canberra, and to the University of Malawi. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1968.

Francis Berry's poetic works include *Gospel of Fire* (1933), *Snake in the Moon* (1936), *The Iron Christ* (1938), *Fall of a Tower and Other Poems* (1943), *Murdock and Other Poems* (1947), *The Galloping Centaur* (1952), *Morant Bay and Other Poems* (1961), *Ghosts of Greenland* (1966), and *From the Red Fort* (1984). Berry has also written radio plays such as *Illnesses and Ghosts at the West Settlement* (1965), *The Sirens* (1966), *The Near Singing Dome* (1971; revised as *The Singing Dome*, published 1984), and *Eyre Remembers* (1982), and has published one novel, *I Tell of Greenland* (1977). His *Collected Poems* was published in 1994.

Berry's critical works include *Herbert Read* (1953; revised 1961), *Poets' Grammar: Person, Time and Mood in Poetry* (1958), *Poetry and the Physical Voice* (1962), and *The Shakespeare Inset: Word and Picture* (1965; revised 1971). Two of his lectures, *John Masefield: The Narrative Poet* (1968) and *Thoughts on Poetic Time* (1972), have also been published. He edited issue 22 of *Essays and Studies* in 1969 and contributed essays and reviews to various publications throughout his career.

---

## References

*Contemporary Poets*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985.

Hobsbaum, Philip. *Tradition and Experiment in English Poetry*. London: Macmillan, 1979.

Knight, G. Wilson. *Francis Berry*. In *Neglected Powers: Essays on Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Literature*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971.

---

## Scope and Contents

The papers of Francis Berry, circa 1928-1961, document Berry's development as a poet from his earliest poetic endeavors to his mature creations and also document his concerns as a critic of poetry. The papers are divided into two series: Poetry and Drama, circa 1928-circa 1957; and Critical Works, circa 1953-1961. The Poetry series consists of manuscripts of Berry's poetry and verse drama, including some unpublished work, arranged alphabetically by title. There are holograph and typed drafts of published poems, most signed and some dated by the author, from *Snake in the Moon*, *Fall of a Tower*, *The Galloping Centaur*, and *Morant Bay and Other Poems* as well as fragments of *The Iron Christ*. Berry's unpublished poems are also well represented. There are proof copies of *Snake in the Moon* and *Murdock and Other Poems*. Berry's published and unpublished verse drama is represented by the following works: *Beauty and the Beast*, *Conversation Piece*, *The Death of Beowulf*, *Hans and Gretchen*, *The Harpies*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Also included in this series is correspondence consisting of three letters of reference for Berry and two letters from Berry to G. Wilson Knight.

The Critical Works series consists of manuscripts of Berry's critical assessments of specific writers and technical studies of the mechanics of poetic creation. There are holograph and typed notes and drafts of most of Berry's major academic work, including *Herbert Read, Poetry and the Physical Voice*, *Poets' Grammar: Person, Time and Mood in Poetry*, and *Shelley and the Future Tense*, an article published in *Orpheus*. This series is also arranged alphabetically by title.

---

## Related Material

Additional Francis Berry materials may be found in the following HRC collections: Edmund Charles Blunden, Richard Church, John Lehmann, Edward Lucie-Smith, Christopher Darlington Morley, Dame Edith Sitwell, and Henry Treece.

---

## Index Terms

### Subjects

English poetry--20th century  
English poetry--History and criticism  
Read, Herbert Edward, Sir, 1893-1968

### Document Types

First drafts  
Galley proofs

---

**Series I. Poetry and Drama, circa 1928-circa 1957**

A-D

**Box 1 Folder 1**

"Ares and Aries"

Beauty and the Beast

"Bil's Journey South"

"Cardiac Confidence"

"Church's Lightning Conductor"

"The Climber"--see "The Elm"

"Closed Works"

"The Coming Year"

"Conversation"--see "The Elm"

Conversation Piece

"Coventry"

"Cremation"

"Damp Air"

"A Day in Summer"

The Death of Beowulf

"The Devil"

E-J

**Box 1 Folder 2**

"Easter"

"Eighteen"

"The Elm" and 5 other poems: "Conversation," "The Climber," "Nihil, Nullus, Non," "9th Hour," "Prophecy"

"End of Another Summer"

"Esplanade"

"Evidence of Scierter"

"For Birthe Lieberkind"

"A Fork's a Fork"

"Friday: Lascaux"

"The Hanging of One Hudders"

Hans and Gretchen

The Harpies

"Heart's Spark"

"Idol, a Tree"

"In Honour of London"

"Intoxication"

"The Iron Christ"

"The Iron Horse"

"El Jardín del Arcipreste" translated as "The Garden of the Archpriest"

L-W

**Box 1 Folder 3**

"Lama Sabacthani?"

"Lines for a Christmas Card"

"Lines in Imitation of Gerard Manley Hopkins"

"Maritime"

"The Miracles and Mysteries"

"Morant Bay"

Murdock and Other Poems

"A Naming of Wicked Ones"

"Nihil, Nullus, Non"--see "The Elm"

"Nihilism"

"9th Hour"--see "The Elm"

"Nocturne"

"November"

"Opposite Moods"

"Ordeal"

"Passing Shores Once Visited"

"Phoenix"

"The Plagues, Passover, and Exodus from Egypt"

"Prophecy"--see also "The Elm"

"A Recognition to G. Wilson Knight"

"Release"

"The Rival Cousins"

"Russia"

"Sebastian"

The Sleeping Beauty

Snake in the Moon

"Snap-Shot"

"South Again After North"

"Spain, 1939: From Devon"

"The Spleen Sickness"

"Sunrise"

"To--"

"The Tomb"

"Train Talk"

"The Week's Good Cause"

Correspondence, 1934-1959, undated

**Box 1 Folder 4**

**Series II. Critical Works, circa 1953-1961**

<i>Herbert Read</i> [book, 1953]. Draft, nd	<b>Box 1 Folder 5</b>
<i>Poetry and the Physical Voice</i> [book, 1962]	
Preliminary notes and observations, undated; and correspondence, 1958	<b>Box 1 Folder 6</b>
Holograph draft in 14 notebooks, 1959	<b>Folder 7-8</b>
Holograph and typed draft, undated	<b>Box 2 Folder 1</b>
Typed draft, undated	<b>Folder 2</b>
Final draft, 1961	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
Page proofs, 1961	<b>Folder 5</b>
Galleys	<b>Location gf 1</b>
<i>Poets' Grammar</i> [book, 1958]	
Notes and fragments, undated	<b>Box 2 Folder 6</b>
Holograph draft, undated	<b>Folder 7-8</b>
Typed and holograph draft, 1956, undated	<b>Box 3 Folder 1-2</b>
Final draft, undated	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
Author's corrected typescript, bound, undated	<b>Folder 5</b>
Page proofs, [1958?]	<b>Folder 6</b>
"Shelley and the Future Tense" [essay, 1955]	
Draft, undated; and issue of <i>Orpheus</i> with essay, titled "Shelley and the Action of Hope," 1955	<b>Box 3 Folder 7</b>

**Francis Berry Papers--Index of Correspondents**

- Burns, Kevin--1.4
- Hainsworth, John--1.6
- Knight, G. Wilson--1.4
- Strickland, Mabel (*Times of Malta*)--1.4
- Warren, E. (Malta Amateur Dramatic Club)--1.4

**Francis Berry Papers--Bar Code List**

- 1--059188000055201
- 2--059188000055212
- 3--059188000055223