

E. M. Forster:

An Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Forster, E. M. (Edward Morgan), 1879-1970

Title: E. M. Forster Collection

Dates: 1908-1971

Extent: 6 boxes (2.5 linear feet) and 1 galley folder

Abstract: This collection comprises correspondence, primarily with J.R. Ackerley and Malcolm Darling, and drafts of literary works, notably *Passage to India*.

RLIN Record #: TXRC98-A22

Language: English.

Access: Open for research. This collection has been microfilmed.

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Purchases, 1960-1981 (R16, R594, R2030, R3082, R3730, R3731, R5180, 55463, R8497, R8509-12, R9084)

Processed by: Chelsea Jones, 1998

Repository: Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Edward Morgan Forster was born January 1, 1879, in London. His father, also Edward Morgan, was an architect and died of consumption 18 months after the birth of his son, leaving him in the care of his mother, Alice Clara Whichelo and a variety of female relatives. Forster's mother moved with her young son to rural Hertfordshire in 1883 where he lived for most of his childhood before being sent to Kent House preparatory school in Eastbourne. In 1887 a great-aunt left a legacy to Forster which, when combined with his father's estate, paid for Forster's education and later allowed him the leisure to be a writer without needing to worry about income. Forster finished his school days at Tonbridge School, which he attended as a day student rather than as a boarder between 1893-1897.

In the autumn of 1897, Forster entered King's College, Cambridge, where he found liberation from the conformist attitudes of preparatory school. He was elected to the Apostles in 1901, along with Desmond MacCarthy, and became acquainted with the well-known alumni of that society, G.E. Moore, Lytton Strachey, John Maynard Keynes, Leonard Woolf, and Roger Fry, among others, who later introduced him into the Bloomsbury group. It was at Cambridge that Forster began to think of himself as a writer and the years immediately following his graduation were his most productive as a novelist. Between 1903 and 1910 he produced *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *The Longest Journey* (1907), *A Room with a View* (1908), and *Howards End* (1910), all four of which are now regarded as classics.

After 1910 Forster wrote mostly short stories and essays. He also traveled, taking a long trip to India in 1912 and spending a greater part of World War I in Egypt working with the Red Cross. A travel guide to Alexandria and a collection of essays resulted from his time in Egypt and after his second trip to India in 1921 he completed *A Passage to India* (1924). Forster's final novel, *Maurice* (1971) was actually written in 1914 and then frequently revised after 1924, but was not published until after his death. This novel deals with the topic of homosexuality and is thought to be at least partly autobiographical.

After World War I Forster wrote an increasing number of essays on the human condition and more specifically on the state of life in England and the value of democracy, which the onset of the Depression, Nazism, and the impending crisis of World War II seemed to be threatening. His essays brought him a great deal of public notice and in 1934 he was elected president of the National Council for Civil Liberties. He is given credit for playing a large role in having the provisions of the Sedition Bill modified. When World War II broke out, Forster returned to his mother's home in West Hackhurst.

After the war, Forster accepted a fellowship at Cambridge where he maintained a residence for the rest of his life. He began to gain international acclaim after 1945 and wrote copiously through the early 1960s. He suffered a stroke in 1964 and another one the following year which caused his overall health to decline. He suffered a major stroke in May of 1970 and on June 7 he died at the home of friends.

Sources:

Dictionary of Literary Biography -- Volume 48: British Novelists, 1890-1929: Traditionalists. Thomas F. Staley, Ed. (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1985).

Who's Who in Bloomsbury. Alan and Veronica Palmer. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987).

Scope and Contents

Manuscripts of novels and letters to friends and acquaintances comprise the bulk of the E. M. Forster Collection, 1908-1971. The collection is organized into three series, with materials arranged alphabetically by title or author: I. Works, 1910-1960 (2 boxes); II. Correspondence, 1908-1967 (3.5 boxes); and III. Works by Other Authors, 1933-1971 (.5 box). This collection was previously accessible through a card catalog, but has been re-cataloged as part of a retrospective conversion project.

The Works Series contains several holograph drafts of essays on topics ranging from liberty to tolerance, and three holograph manuscripts of *A Passage to India*, two of which are fairly complete and are extensively edited by the author, while the third is composed primarily of earlier draft material and represents about one-third of the novel's length. Also contained in the collection is a copy of *The Longest Journey* on microfilm, made from the original manuscript held at the Cambridge University King's College Library, the primary repository for Forster's papers.

The Correspondence Series is particularly interesting as it is almost exclusively composed of personal letters from Forster to various friends and acquaintances. The series is organized into two sections, Outgoing Correspondence, 1908-1967, and Third-party Correspondence, 1925-1937. Outgoing correspondence comprises over 800 letters from Forster to J. R. Ackerley, Morgan's friend and confidante, and over 200 letters to Malcolm Darling, another close friend. Also represented among the recipients of letters are Dora Carrington, Francis King, John Lehmann, Colin Spencer, and others. The Third-party section contains a scant handful of personal letters between people other than Forster. All correspondents in this series are listed in the Index of Correspondents in this guide.

The Works by Other Authors Series contains a small number of writings by other people. Included is a list of the Cambridge University, King's College Library's collection of Forster's papers, a biographical pamphlet about Forster written by Rex Warner, and the Memorandum of Agreement between Albatross Verlag and Forster for publication of *A Passage to India*. Galley proofs for W. Heffer & Sons Ltd.'s *Heffer Catalogue Seven*, prepared for the sale of Forster's collection of books after his death, are also included. Elsewhere in the Ransom Center are five photographs of Forster located in the Literary Files of the Photography Collection and one Vertical File of newspaper clippings about

Forster and his work.

Related Material

Other materials associated with Forster may be found in the following collections at the Ransom Center:

- Aitken, Webster Craig Alec
- Blunden, Edmund Charles
- Brooke, Jocelyn
- Church, Richard
- Connolly, Cyril
- Cunard, Nancy
- Downing, Robert
- Duncan, Ronald Frederick Henry
- Garnett, Edward
- *Harpers Magazine*
- Hutchinson, Mary
- Lehmann, John
- *London Magazine*
- Lowndes, Marie Adelaide
- Maugham, William Somerset
- Morrell, Ottoline, Lady
- Murry, John Middleton
- Nehls, Edward
- P.E.N.
- Priestley, John Boynton
- Prokosch, Frederic
- Scott-James, Rolfe Arnold
- Sitwell, Edith, Dame
- Strong, Leonard Alfred George
- Tomlinson, Henry Major

Index Terms

Correspondents

Ackerley, J.R. (Joe Randolph), 1896-1967.

Carrington, Dora de Houghton, 1893-1932.

Darling, Malcolm Lyell, Sir, 1880-1969.

Lehmann, John, 1907- .

Prokosch, Frederic, 1906- .

Spencer, Colin.

Subjects

Bloomsbury Group.

Places

England--Fiction.

England--Social life and customs.

India--Social conditions.

Document Types

Galley proofs.

Postcards.

Series I. Works, 1910-1960

A-Z

box 1 folder 1

A Definition of Tolerance, holograph, 1953, 6pp

Liberty in England, typescript, 1935, 2pp

Liking Being Alive, holograph, 1910, 7pp

Notes on an unidentified play, holograph, nd, 2pp

Untitled essay re André Gide, holograph and typescript, 1960, 8pp

The Longest Journey, microfilm of holograph including letters and rejected pages (1 reel removed to Microfilm collection)

A Passage to India (1924)

Holograph with author revisions, 1924, 472pp

**box 1
folder 2-4**

Holograph, 472pp (cont.)

box 2 folder 1-2

Holograph with author revisions, nd, 121pp

folder 3

Stray pages, copy of holograph, nd

folder 4

Typescript with author revisions and printer's marks, and nine pages of holograph revisions, 1924, 40pp

**box 3
folder
1**

Series II. Correspondence, 1908-1967

Outgoing correspondence, 1908-1967

A-K **box 3 folder 2**

Ackerley, Joseph Randolph, 1922-1966

1922-1925 **box 3 folder 3**

1926-1929 **folder 4**

1930-1934 **folder 5**

1935-1938 **box 4 folder 1**

1939-1943 **folder 2**

1944-1953 **folder 3**

1954-1957 **folder 4**

1958-1959 **folder 5**

1960 **folder 6**

1961-1962 **box 5 folder 1**

1963-1964 **folder 2**

1965-1966 **folder 3**

Carrington, Dora de Houghton, 1922-1932 **folder 4**

Darling, Malcolm Lyell, 1908-1967 **folder 5**

Darling, Malcolm (cont.) **box 6 folder 1-2**

L-Z **folder 3**

Lehmann, John, 1935-1961 **folder 4**

Palmer, Edward, 1925-1927 **folder 5**

Spencer, Colin, 1950-1967 **folder 6**

Forster, E. M. (Edward Morgan), 1879-1970

Third-Party Correspondence, 1925-1937

folder

7

Forster, E. M. (Edward Morgan), 1879-1970

Series III. Works by Other Authors, 1933-1971

Ackerley, Joseph Randolph, *Millstones*, typescript, nd;

box 6
folder 8

Albatross Verlag (firm), Memorandum of Agreement for *A Passage to India*, typescript, 1933

Cambridge University, King's College Library, list of the papers of E. M. Forster, 1971

box 6
folder 9

Warner, Rex, *E. M. Forster*, holograph with author edits, 37 pages and two printed editions, 1954 and 1960

folder 10

W. Heffer & Sons Limited Booksellers, *Heffer Catalogue Seven*, galley proofs, nd, 37pp (removed to galley folder 1)

E. M. Forster Collection--Index of Correspondents

Box and folder numbers are followed by a number in parentheses which indicates the number of items written by that person. A single item is indicated where there is no number in parentheses following the box and folder number. Where there is correspondence from E. M. Forster, the number in parentheses is followed by the phrase "from Forster." So in the example

Monroe, Harold--6.3 (10 from Forster), 6.7

there are 10 letters from Forster in Box 6, Folder 3 and one letter from Monroe in Box 6, Folder 7.

- Ackerley, Alfred Roger --3.2 (from Forster)
- Ackerley, J.R. (Joe Randolph), 1896-1967 --3.3-5.3 (849 from Forster)
- Barnes, George --3.2 (from Forster)
- Brander, Laurence --3.2 (12 from Forster)
- Carrington, Dora de Houghton, 1893-1932 --5.4 (31 from Forster)
- Chapman, R.W. (Robert William), 1881-1960 --3.2 (4 from Forster)
- Connolly, Cyril, 1908- --3.2 (3 from Forster)
- Darling, Malcolm Lyell, Sir, 1880-1969 --5.5-6.2 (212 from Forster)
- Daykins, Miss --3.2 (from Forster)
- Dickinson, Patric, 1914- --3.2 (from Forster)
- Dodd, A.W. --3.2 (17 from Forster)
- Doggart, James Hamilton --3.2 (3 from Forster)
- Gambler, Peter --3.2 (3 from Forster)
- Hamilton, Hamish, 1900- --3.2 (from Forster)
- King, Francis Henry --3.2 (7 from Forster)
- Laurie, James --6.3 (from Forster)
- Lehmann, John, 1907- --6.4 (38 from Forster)
- Mauron, Charles --6.3 (from Forster)
- Meyerstein, Edward Harry William, 1889-1952 --6.3 (from Forster)
- Monroe, Harold --6.3 (10 from Forster), 6.7
- Murphy, Joseph C. --6.3 (from Forster)
- Neill, Alexander Sutherland, 1883-1973 --6.7
- Palmer, Edward --6.5 (16 from Forster)
- Partridge, Ralph --6.3 (7 from Forster)
- Patel, ?- --6.3 (from Forster)
- P.E.N. --6.3 (from Forster)
- Prokosch, Frederic, 1906- --6.3 (from Forster)
- *Radio Times* (London, England)--6.3 (from Forster)
- Roberts, Francis Warren, 1916- --6.3 (2 from Forster)
- Robins, Elizabeth, 1862-1952 --6.3 (from Forster)
- Spencer, Colin --6.6 (26 from Forster)
- Warmen, Mr. --See P.E.N.