

Yale University Library
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers: Addition

YCAL MSS 95



by Diane J. Ducharme

November 1996

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 95

CREATOR: Thayer, Scotfield, 1889-1982

TITLE: Dial/Scotfield Thayer papers : addition

DATES: 1885-1928

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2 linear feet (5 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of correspondence and personal papers of Scotfield Thayer, including letters from Amy and Robert von Erdberg, Erik von Jurié, R. T. Nichol, and Florence Thayer. Personal papers include school compositions and other writings by Thayer; notes and memoranda; newspaper clippings; and photographs of the Gaston Lachaise portrait bust of Thayer.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.dialadd>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.dialadd>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased in 1987 with the assistance of the Beinecke Foundation and transferred to Beinecke Library in 1996.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research. Box 5: Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

Conditions Governing Use

The Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers: Addition are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers: Addition. Yale Collection of American Literature. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Associated Materials

[Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers YCAL MSS 34](#). Yale Collection of American Literature. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

SCOFIELD THAYER (1889-1982)

Scofield Thayer was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1889 and educated at Milton Academy, Harvard College, and Oxford University. In 1919 Thayer and J. Sibley Watson purchased *Dial* magazine, which under their direction became perhaps the most important "little magazine" in the United States in the 1920s. Thayer withdrew from active participation in *The Dial* after a severe breakdown in 1926. He died in 1982.

For a fuller biography of Scofield Thayer, and a chronology for *The Dial*, see the register for YCAL MSS 34, Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers.

Scope and Contents

The Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers: Addition consists of four boxes of additional material to the Dial/Scofield Thayer Papers purchased in 1987. The Addition was transferred to the Beinecke Library in 1996. The papers span the dates 1885-1928, but the bulk of the material concerns the period 1915-1927. The papers are organized in two series. [Series I, Correspondence](#), is arranged alphabetically by correspondent; Series II, [Personal Papers](#), alphabetically by type of material.

Correspondence consists almost entirely of letters sent to Thayer between 1926 and 1928, when he was hospitalized repeatedly following a mental breakdown. The writers, including Amy and Robert von Erdberg, Erik von Jurié, R. T. Nichol, Eleanor Schermerhorn, Ellen Thayer, and Lizzie Whittemore, send their wishes for improved health and sometimes detail plans for visits to MacLean Hospital. After one such visit, Amy von Erdberg wrote Thayer of her distress at seeing him hospitalized and offered to support his wish to be released. There are also two earlier letters from Thayer to his mother, Florence Thayer, and three third-party letters, two of which are to Florence Thayer also.

[Series II, Personal Papers](#), includes bookplates, calling cards, newspaper clippings about America's entry into World War I, which Thayer opposed, and photographs. Folders 31-39 contain notes and memoranda kept by Thayer, often on small slips of paper, although some were apparently transcribed by a secretary at a later date. These cover a wide variety of subjects, including Thayer's family and friends, his marriage, his analyses by L. Pierce Clark and Sigmund Freud, aesthetic theory, and modern painting and literature.

Folders 23-25 contain correspondence and personal papers of Lucian Cary, including an income tax return for 1917 identifying him as a "journalist" and his wife, Augusta Cary, as executive secretary of the National Birth Control League. The return appears to be in Thayer's hand.

The section "School papers" includes versions of Thayer's Harvard Class Day essay on *Dr. Faustus* and several papers he read to literary societies at Oxford. "Writings" includes two poems, "Spleen anglais" and "Vienna," several essays, and a group of sketches and anecdotes about a figure named "Mercury" or "Mr. Mercury." At least some of the typescripts contained in the "Pending" file in "Writings of Others" may be by Thayer, who frequently employed pseudonyms when submitting work to *The Dial*.

[Oversize](#) material is located in Box 4 and consists of newspaper clippings and seven photographs of Gaston Lachaise's portrait bust of Thayer.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1903-28

0.25 linear feet (.5 box)

Series I, *Correspondence*, is alphabetically arranged by name of correspondent. Correspondence of others has been placed in the subseries Third- Party Correspondence, located at the end of the series, and alphabetically arranged by author.

THAYER CORRESPONDENCE

b. 1, f. 1	Arnold, Gertrude Weld	1926 Dec
b. 1, f. 2	Babbitt, Peter W.	1927 Dec 16
b. 1, f. 3	Erdberg, Amy von With photographs of the von Erdbergs and clippings	1927
b. 1, f. 4	Erdberg, Robert von	1927-28
b. 1, f. 5	Hotchkin Co.	1927 Dec 22
b. 1, f. 6	Jurié, Erik von	1926 Jun 4
b. 1, f. 7	Nichol, R. T.	1928 Jan 29
b. 1, f. 8	North, Ernest Dressel	1927 Dec 19
b. 1, f. 9	Schermerhorn, Eleanor	1927 Oct 25
b. 1, f. 10	Scofield, Myrtis (Mrs. William)	1925 Dec 3
b. 1, f. 11	Scofield, William B., Jr.	1925, 1926
b. 1, f. 12	Thayer, Ellen	1928 Oct 10
b. 1, f. 13	Thayer, Florence	1914, 1917
b. 1, f. 14	Whittall, Matthew Percival	1927
b. 1, f. 15	Whittemore, Lizzie B.	1927 Dec 18
b. 1, f. 16	Unidentified	1927 Dec 6
b. 1, f. 17	Empty envelopes	1903, n.d.

THIRD-PARTY CORRESPONDENCE

b. 1, f. 18	Lane, F. E. To Hermann P. Riccius With copies of two articles by Scofield Thayer that appeared in the Milton Academy <i>Orange and Blue</i>	1926 Jan 20
b. 1, f. 19	Richardson, Margery to Florence Thayer	1913 Sep 22
b. 1, f. 20	Sheehan, Vesta Blake to Florence Thayer	n.y. Sep 16

Series II: Personal Papers, 1885-1927*1.75 linear feet (3.5 boxes)*Series II, *Personal Papers* is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

b. 1, f. 21	Bookplates (with printing plate)	1913
b. 1, f. 22	Calling cards and address slips	n.d.
b. 1, f. 23-25	Cary, Lucian: papers Includes correspondence between Lucian Cary and Henry Ford's office; a letter to "Dear Bertie" signed "D. C." dated 18 Aug 1918; a request to French military censors for permission to publish an article in <i>Collier's Weekly</i> from Doris Cart; Liberty War Loan card and lapel pin; Cary's income tax return for 1917; and two unidentified photographs	1917-18, n.d.
b. 1, f. 26	Financial papers: inventory (Scotfield family?)	1885-1907
	Newspaper clippings	
b. 1, f. 27	World War I: Monroe Doctrine See also: Oversize	1917
b. 1, f. 28-29	World War I: Press conspiracy charges See also: Oversize	1917
b. 1, f. 30	Miscellaneous clippings	1917, n.d.
b. 1, f. 31-35	Notes and memoranda	n.d.
b. 2, f. 36-39	Notes and memoranda	n.d.
	Photographs	
b. 2, f. 40	Erdberg, Robert and Amy	n.d.
b. 2, f. 41	Thayer, Scotfield: passport photos With notes and safety deposit box receipt dated 1928	n.d.
	Thayer, Scotfield: portrait bust by Gaston Lachaise See: Oversize	n.d.
b. 2, f. 42	Unidentified	n.d.
	Printed material	
b. 2, f. 43	<i>Dial</i> magazine, Vol LXXVI, 5	1924 May
b. 2, f. 44	<i>Dial</i> magazine, Vol. LXXXIII, 2	1927 Aug
	School papers: Bancroft School	
b. 2, f. 45	History themes	1903 Feb
	School papers: Harvard College	
b. 2, f. 46	English 14: "Marlowe's Dr. Faustus," typescript	n.d.

School papers: Harvard College (continued)

b. 2, f. 47-48	Greek 6: " <i>Dr Faustus</i> and Greek Tragedy," typescript	n.d.
b. 2, f. 49	Harvard College Scholarship award	1912
b. 2, f. 50	"A Valentine (Pale regent of a thousand fragile dreams)," holograph and typescript	n.d.
School papers: Oxford University		
b. 2, f. 51-52	"Aesthetics" (paper read before an Oxford club, perhaps the Heretics), holograph	n.d.
b. 3, f. 53	"Aristotle's Ethics," typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 54	"Compton Mackenzie" ("read before the Nineties Club of Oxford on June 11, 1915"), typescript	[1915]
b. 3, f. 55	Notebook on [the <i>Novum Organum</i> of?] Sir Francis Bacon, holograph	n.d.
Writings: Poems		
b. 3, f. 56	"Spleen anglais," holograph	n.d.
b. 3, f. 57	"Vienna," holograph	n.d.
Writings: Prose		
b. 3, f. 58	"Authority," holograph and typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 59	"Chicago," holograph	n.d.
b. 3, f. 60	"Dear Llewellyn," typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 61	"Done Into the English Tongue," typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 62	Essay on Hugo Von Hofsmannthal, typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 63	Essay on English music, typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 64-67	"Mercury--Literary Notes," holograph and typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 68-69	"My Neighbor, Mr. Mercury": various sketches, typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 70	Review of the <i>Harvard Monthly</i> for January 1916, holograph	n.d.
b. 3, f. 71-72	Unidentified	n.d.
Writings of Others		
b. 3, f. 73	"By Lieut. Harold G. Peterson...," typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 74-76	"Pending" file: includes typescripts attributed to "B. Beasley," "Israel Solon," and a manuscript, "A College President Denounces the Voluntary System"	[1917, n.d.]

Oversize

Oversize material has been placed here in series order.

b. 4, f. 77	Newspaper clippings	1917, n.d.
b. 4, f. 78-84	Photographs: portrait bust of Thayer by Gaston Lachaise	n.d.

Restricted Fragile Papers

0.4 linear feet (1 box)

Box 5, Restricted Fragile Papers, contains fragile originals. The material is arranged in folder order and may only be seen with the permission of the appropriate curator.

Box 5: Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

b. 5, f. 85	Box 1, folder 4
b. 5, f. 86	Box 1, folder 6
b. 5, f. 87	Box 1, folder 13
b. 5, f. 88	Box 1, folder 19
b. 5, f. 89	Box 1, folder 23
b. 5, f. 90	Box 1, folder 27
b. 5, f. 91	Box 1, folder 28
b. 5, f. 92	Box 1, folder 30
b. 5, f. 93	Box 3, folder 58
b. 5, f. 94	Box 3, folder 60
b. 5, f. 95	Box 3, folder 62
b. 5, f. 96	Box 3, folder 63
b. 5, f. 97	Box 3, folder 64
b. 5, f. 98	Box 3, folder 65
b. 5, f. 99	Box 3, folder 66
b. 5, f. 100	Box 3, folder 68
b. 5, f. 101	Box 3, folder 69
b. 5, f. 102	Box 3, folder 71
b. 5, f. 103	Box 3, folder 76
b. 5, f. 104	Box 4, folder 77

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

American literature -- 20th Century
Modernism (Literature)
Publishers and publishing

Names

Erdberg, Robert von
Jurié, Erik von
Nichol, R. T.
Thayer, Scotfield, 1889-1982

Corporate Bodies

Dial Magazine
Harvard University -- Class of 1913