

WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE

PAPERS

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BRAITHWAITE, WILLIAM STANLEY (1878-1962) PAPERS, 1902-1979.
2 lin. ft.

Biography

William Stanley Beaumont Braithwaite was born in Boston in 1878, the second of five children. His father, William Smith Braithwaite, was a native of British Guiana and his mother, Emma DeWolfe, was the daughter of a mulatto former slave woman. When Braithwaite was six years old, his father died leaving the family destitute. His father's untimely death caused him to leave school at the age of twelve to seek employment to help support his family. His two sisters, Eva and Rosie, formed a musical duo, "Sadie and Rosie" in the 1890s, toured the United States and Europe and joined Sam T. Jack's famous Creole Show at the turn of the century. In 1902, Braithwaite met Emma Kelly while working in New Hampshire; they married the next year. Three daughters and four sons were born from their union: Fiona Lydia Rossetti (Mrs. Merrill Carter), Katherine Keats (Mrs William Arnold), William Stanley Beaumont, Jr., Edith (Mrs. Carman Agard), Paul Ledoux, Arnold DeWolfe and Francis Robinson.

Braithwaite worked for several years as an errand boy and porter, eventually finding employment in the press rooms of Ginn and Company Publishers, where he worked his way up to compositor. It was here that his interest in books developed and he began to write poetry. Braithwaite published his first volume of poetry Lyrics of Life and Love in 1904, after guaranteeing the cost of printing. He sold the small volume door to door. Four years later his second book of verse, The House of Falling Leaves, was published. He also wrote critical essays and occasional poems which were published in periodicals, among them the Atlantic Monthly, the North American Review and Scribner's. In 1906 he began his twenty-five year career as a literary critic for the influential Boston Evening Transcript. During this period he edited several books of poetry, including The Book of Elizabethan Verse (1906), The Book of Georgian Verse (1908) and The Book of Restoration Verse (1909). Braithwaite is best known, however, for the annual anthologies of magazine verse he edited from 1913 to 1939. The early works of Carl Sandburg, Edgar Lee Masters and Vachel Lindsay, among others, appeared in these volumes. In addition he edited: Golden Treasury of Magazine Verse (1918); The Book of Modern British Verse (1919); The Story of the Great War (1919), a children's book; Victory! Contributed by 38 American Poets, with an introduction by former President Theodore Roosevelt; Our Lady's Choir, a Contemporary Anthology of Verse by Catholic Sisters (1931), and The Book of Massachusetts Poets. He also published a volume of his critical writings, The Poetic Year for 1916 (1917). In the early 1920s he founded and headed a publishing firm, B.J. Brimmer Company, which published works by Lucius Beebe, Georgia Douglas Johnson and the early novels of

James Gould Cozzens.

In 1918 Braithwaite was awarded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Arthur B. Spingarn Award for outstanding achievement in the field of literature. Talladega College and Atlanta University conferred honorary degrees on him, also in 1918. He accepted a professorship in creative literature at Atlanta University in 1935, and remained in this post until his retirement in 1945. In 1948 Cowann McCall published his Selected Poems. Two years later, his biography The Bewitched Parsonage: the Story of the Brontes was published to critical acclaim. The book sold poorly, however, and he was unable to find a publisher and the necessary advances to complete several tentative works, including a biography, "Gallant Sir Harry Vale, Apostle of Tolerance and Champion of the People" and a critical anthology of teaching, for which detailed outlines and initial chapters were already written. His last published work, Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1958, co-edited with his friend and writer Margaret Carpenter, was a retrospective anthology from his previous compilations combined with a selection of recent poems.

In his poetry, Braithwaite played on the traditional romantic themes of nineteenth-century British verse and employed traditional forms and meters. During the Harlem Renaissance, he contributed several critical essays on Black poetry, including Alain Locke's anthology, The New Negro (1925). But the body of his critical work and compilations lacked a clear racial identity. This explains, in part, why he has fallen into relative obscurity in the era of African-American studies.

William Stanley Braithwaite died at his home in Harlem on June 8, 1962.

Scope and Content

The Papers of William Stanley Braithwaite consist mainly of several accessions of family and literary correspondence, writings and printed matter documenting his career as a writer, anthologist and educator. The collection is divided into three series: BIOGRAPHICAL, CORRESPONDENCE and WRITINGS.

The Biographical Series is comprised of individual files on Braithwaite and his family, and includes biographical sketches, school records, memorabilia of his wife, children and relatives, and a holograph account of his father's life in British Guyana written by his uncle Edward Braithwaite. Braithwaite's file contains brief curricula vitae published in Who's Who in America, biographical and autobiographical sketches, memorial tributes and obituaries, notations copied from the Bible and religious scholarly texts. Edith Agard's file includes an autographed signed postcard from her godfather Alain Locke, postmarked in

Germany in 1923.

The Correspondence Series is divided into Family and General subseries and is arranged chronologically into incoming and outgoing files. The Family Correspondence provides important insights into his private life and feelings and relationship to his family. Having been conferred an honorary degree at Atlanta University in 1918, he confided to his wife his satisfaction at the success of his acceptance speech, and his impressions of Atlanta as a very northern city but with a "difference of attitude toward the race." During his tenure at Atlanta University, he communicated to his family in New York many poetic and literary impressions of southern landscape and campus life. The letters also bear frequent references to monetary prospects and budgetary difficulties.

The bulk of Braithwaite's outgoing letters in the General Correspondence date from his retirement, and relate to issues of author's rights, translation of his verses to other languages, speaking engagements, comparative literature, publications and literary criticism. The earliest letter in this file is addressed to an unnamed author soliciting her patronage for the publication of his first collection of verses. Later, Braithwaite wrote frequently to younger authors seeking his advice and opinion of their works. The files of incoming letters in this subseries are more voluminous and span the six decades of the collection. The Alain Locke Memorial folder, for instance, consists of printed matter, eulogies and letters, and includes a March 28, 1912 letter from Booker T. Washington to Locke. Other correspondents include Arna Bontemps, W.E.B. Du Bois, Rufus Clement, Carl Murphy, William Rose Benet, Burton Kline, Robert Willis, Joseph Auslander, George Schuyler, Arthur Spingarn, Helen Pollock, Carl Van Vechten, and several publishing concerns.

The Writings Series comprises holograph and typescript drafts of Braithwaite's works, both published and unpublished, including an extensive autobiographical essay in which he discusses his relationship with poets he championed -- Robert Frost, Amy Lowell and Edwin Arlington Robinson (1956). There is also a subseries of Other Writers consisting of selections from the Anthologies, graduate student papers at Atlanta University and the typescript of Leigh Hanes's "Selected Lyrics." (A Selected List of Writings in this collection appears on pp. 7-15.)

WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE PAPERS IN OTHER REPOSITORIES

Cornell University Library: William Stanley Braithwaite Papers, 1916-1962. Three linear feet.

Columbia University, Oral History Research Office: Memoirs.

Harvard University, Houghton Library: William Stanley Braithwaite Collection. 28 boxes.

Syracuse University, Carnegie Library: William Stanley Braithwaite Literary Papers, 1916-1962. Three linear feet.

Yale University, Sterling Memorial Library: James Weldon Johnson Collection.

Provenance

SCM76-17, purchased from University Place Bookshop, 1976.
SCM78-32, purchased from University Place Bookshop, 1978.
SCM82-78 from the Miscellaneous American Letters and Papers.
SCM87-67 Gift of the Braithwaite family.

D. Carter /A. Elizee /D. Lachatanere
November 1989
Janice Quinter, December 23, 2010

Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
1		BIOGRAPHICAL
	1-4	William Stanley Braithwaite
	5	William Smith Braithwaite
	6	Emma (Kelly) Braithwaite
	7	Francis Braithwaite
	8	Arnold Braithwaite
	9	William Stanley, Braithwaite, Jr.
	10	Edith (Braithwaite) Agard
	11	Lillian (Kelly) Coleman
	12	Peter Agard
		FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE
	13	William Stanley Braithwaite to Emma Braithwaite, 1914-1957
	14	William Stanley Braithwaite to Children, 1939-1956
	15	William Stanley and Emma Braithwaite, letters received, 1929-1976
	16	Edith Agard to William Stanley and Emma Braithwaite, 1947- 1956
	17	Arnold Braithwaite, 1944, 1947
	18	Emma Braithwaite, letters received, 1907, 1920-1977
		William S. Braithwaite, Jr.
	19	Re Father, 1962-1979
	20	Letters re Braithwaite in Other Repositories, 1966- 1973
	21	Letters re Reference and Publication (Copyright) of Braithwaite Writings, 1969-1978
	22	Library of Congress re Father's Papers, 1971-1974
		GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE
	23	Condolences, 1962 Letters sent
	24	Alain Locke Memorial, 1956
	25	Margaret Carpenter, 1956- 1958
2	1	1898, 1914-1956, n.d.
	2	1956-1962, n.d.
	3	Fragments
		Letters received
	4	1905-1919

Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
2	5	1920s	
	6	1930s	
	7	1940s	
	9	1950s	
	10	1960s	
	11	Margaret Carpenter, 1956-1962	
	12	Publishing	
	13	n.d., Fragments	
		WRITINGS	
	14	Academic	
	15	Academy of American Poets, 1958, 1960	
	16	Addresses and lectures	
	17	"The Reserves of Peace" - Commencement Address, 1918	
	18	Anthologies	
	3	1-3	Articles and essays
		4	Article - "Memories of a Great Newspaper and its Staff"
		5	Article - "The Negro's Place in American Literature"
		6-7	Autobiographical "The House Under Arcturus"
8-11		Oral History Transcription, 1956	
4	1	The Brontes	
	2	Fragments	
	3	Notes on the Negro in Boston	
	4	Notes	
	5	<u>Phylon Magazine</u> , reprints	
	6	Printed matter	
	7	Prose and short stories	
	8	Short Story - "Her Silver Sands" (Unpublished)	
	9	Publishing projects	
	10	"Sir Harry Vane..."	
	11	"The Testament of Teaching"	
	Verses		
	Holograph poems		
12	Titled, A-Z		
13	Untitled, A-Z		
5	1	Typescript poems A-N	
	2	O-Z, fragments	

Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
5	3	"The Age of Ebony"
	4	"Epigrams"
	5	Vignettes
	6	Miscellaneous
	7	Printed Material - News Articles and Reviews, 1950
		OTHER WRITERS
	8	A-Z
	9	Anonymous, "The Priest," fragment.
	10	Beavers, Lillian, "A Brief Survey of American Negro Literature," 1941
	11	Braithwaite, Arnold
	12	Brookins, Jerry, "Bibliography of American Literature."
	13	Hanes, Leigh, "Selected Lyrics."
	14	Hughes, Langston - Poem
	15	Jamison, Roscoe C.
	16	O'Brien, Edward J. "William Stanley Braithwaite"
	17	Rogers, Eleanor, "A Short Story of the Negro in American Literature," 1941
	18	Smith, Chard Powers, "Gettysburg Gita"
	19	Wells, Barbara Johnson, "Edwin Arlington Robinson's Use of the Arthurian Narratives..." 56 pp.
	20	Printed Matter

SELECTED LIST OF WRITINGS
IN THE WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE PAPERS

ANTHOLOGIES

"Pandora's Garden: an Anthology of Women Poets in America, 1900-1950." Introductory text and index of authors.

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

Boston Transcript. Reprints of articles, with yearly selections of books, preceding publication of the anthologies.

A Critical History of English Poetry, by Herbert J.C. Emerson and J.C. Smith. A Review.

"The Contemporary Negro Novelist, a Symposium with an Introductory Historical and Critical Essay on the Negro Novelist from the Beginning in 1853." Unfinished project. Holograph notes, incomplete.

"Ember Light," a review of Roy Rolfe Gilson's novel published in 19- ?

"The First Negro Novelist," a critical essay on William Wells Brown. Holograph and typescript.

"Frances Ellen Watkins, the 'Bronze Muse'," Typescript.

"The 'Miracle' of Industry," Short essay.

"Notes from 'Cosmic Consciousness' by Richard Burke" (1901), a review. Holograph, 15p.

"Portrait of a Boy's Memory," a personal recollection of Frederick Douglass. Holograph and typescript.

Preface to Pauline Hanson's Forever Young (Swallow Press, 1948).

"The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament," typescript.

Society, its Structure and Changes, by Robert Morrison McIver (1931). A review.

"War and 'A Lonely Daisy in a Garden of Roses'," typescript. Chapter one of an unfinished literary biography of Ellen Glasgow.

"What the Publishers have to Say and Offer," an essay.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

"The House Under Arcturus," an Autobiography. Multiple copies of chapters I and II. Part III, V and VI, incomplete.

THE STORY OF THE BRONTES

Research notes and typescript of chapters 3, 4 and 5. Also photos of Ann, Charlotte, Emily and Patrick Bronte.

PRINTED MATTER

Reviews of The Bewitched Parsonage: the Story of the Brontes.
Publication circulars for the yearly Anthologies. Articles by and about Braithwaite.

PROSE AND SHORT STORIES

"Autumn Foliage," Holograph and Typescript. 5p.

"The Beloved Deep," Typescript. Incomplete, 11p.

"Blake's `Song of Innocence' and `Song of Experience'"

"Chimes for Barbara"

"Diary of a Girl Graduate," Holograph and Typescript.

"The Most Unforgettable Character I Have Met." Holograph, 15p.

"Negro Literature in New York." Typescript, 5p.

"Portrait of Spring" Holograph and Typescript.

Untitled. On Arthur Upson's death, holograph. First page missing. Leaves numbered 2 to 9.

Untitled. A meeting between Lucius Beebe and Edwin Arlington Robinson. Typescript, 2p.

"Where Is the Poetic Vision in this War?" Typescript, 2p.

"Why I Have Faith in God," Holograph and Typescript.

PUBLISHING PROJECTS

"The Fabric of a Dream." Abstract for a novel.

"Gallant Sir Harry Vane, Apostle of Toleration and Champion of the

People." Abstract for a biography.

Glascow, Ellen, a literary biography. Outline of chapter one.

"Sandy Star, a Book of Poems," publication circular.

"Social Implications in Robinson's Arthurian Narratives." One page outline.

"The Story of the United States." Holograph, 2p.

"The Testament of Teaching." Holograph and Typescript drafts of outlines and introductory texts for this proposed anthology on teaching and the humanities, from Antiquity to the 20th century.

VERSES (Alphabetically, by titles)

"Advent," Typescript, unpublished.

"The Age of Ebony," Holograph and Typescript. Unpublished.

"Air Hostess," holograph, unpublished.

"A. Mary Robinson," Holograph and Typescript, unpublished.

"Apple Orchard and Orange Grove," Typescript,

"The Arsenal of the Lord," Typescript, (Selected Poems)

"A Bit of Chat," Typescript.

"Black Berries," Typescript.

"Christopher Cinicampius Writes a Letter in Memory of His Friend Erasmus," Typescript.

"Del Cascar," Typescript.

"A Dream," Holograph, unpublished.

"An Easter Song," Typescript, unpublished.

"Ecstasy," Typescript.

"Ever Old, Ever New," Typescript.

"Fear of Russians," Typescript.

"A Feeble Echo," Holograph.

"Feminity," Typescript.

"Five Women and a Pendent," Holograph and Typescript, unpublished.

"For a Birthday," Holograph, unpublished.

"For Margaret Bond," Typescript.

"For Martha Finkler," Holograph, unpublished.

"For Rose Z. Goldsten," Holograph, unpublished.

For the Seventieth Birthday of William Edward Burghardt Du Bois,"
Typescript, unpublished.

"A Fragment: Biographic," Typescript, (Selected Poems).

"The Gift," Typescript.

"The Greek Lost the Word For It," Typescript.

"Haunted Village," Holograph.

"If I Were Prickled By the Scratch of Rhyme," Typescript,
unpublished.

"Immortality," Typescript.

"In a Sunken Pool," Typescript, (Selected Poems).

"In the Forest of My Dreams," Typescript.

"Isle So Beloved," Typescript.

"Knoll Thrall - His Song," Holograph, 1918.

"June 28th," Holograph.

"Keats' Birthday," Holograph.

"The Lady and the Census Taker," Typescript.

"Laurel Hill," Typescript.

"A Little Song," Holograph.

"Messianic," Typescript, (Selected Poems).

"Michel's Song to Licite," Typescript.

"Myth of the Circumference," Typescript, (Selected Poems).

"Not Wise Enough," Typescript.

"O Crudelis Tyrannus," Typescript, unpublished.

"October on Lookout Mountain," Typescript.

"October XXIX, 1975, Keats' Birthday," Typescript, (The House of Falling Leaves, The New York Times Review of Books, (1907), Selected Poems).

"Oh, I Have Asked," Typescript, (Selected Poems).

"On a Candidate for the Vice-Presidency," Four holograph drafts.

"On Adoration," Typescript.

"On Being Threatened with Blindness," Typescript.

"On the Jiffy Bag," Typescript.

"On the Centenary of the Birth of Booker T. Washington," Typescript.

"Out of the Sunset's Red," Holograph, (Lyrics of Life and Love).

"The Palm," Typescript, unpublished.

"Phantasms of War," Typescript.

"The Praying Hands," Holograph and Typescript. Published in Selected Poems.

"Priest's Song: Father of Light Receive Our Poor Mougali," Typescript.

"Race Prejudice," Typescript.

"Remembrance of Elizabethan Springtide," Typescript.

"Saint Rose of Lima," Holograph and Typescript. Unpublished.

"The Septuagenian Approaches Christmas," Holograph and Typescript. Unpublished.

"Shadows," Typescript.

"Signal," Holograph.

"Slumber Song for a Sea Child," Holograph.

"So, My Song Saith," Typescript.

"Spring in the Country," Holograph.

"Stardust Vendor," Typescript.

"Time for a Change," Holograph and Typescript, 1952.

"To --," Holograph, unpublished.

"To /," Holograph, 1956.

"To B.," Typescript, unpublished.

"To a Little Girl on her Birthday from her Mother's Friend,"
Holograph, unpublished (1941).

"To H.P.P.," Holograph, unpublished.

"To Jane on her Birthday," Holograph.

"To M.C. on her Birthday," Holograph, unpublished.

"To One In Whose Speeding Lurks Danger," Holograph.

"To Robert Herrick in the Spring," Holograph and Typescript, 1952.

"To Smith, Her Dog," Holograph.

"To Tennyson," Holograph.

"The Way," Holograph.

"To William Dean Howells," Holograph.

"Two Songs," Typescript, unpublished.

"Was It Fair and Kind," Typescript.

"The Wayward Muse," Typescript.

"Who Makes the Wind?" Typescript, unpublished.

"At Yuletide," Holograph, unpublished.

HOLOGRAPH POEMS, UNTITLED (Index of first lines).

"Between Dante and Beatrice."
"Built this house in your heart."
"Dear child the wonder now unfolds."
"Each of these bells ring a special chime."
"Friend of flowers and lover of all beauty."
"In antique Greece a man proclaimed."
"I wish I were as wise as you."
"My heart holds fast."
"On flattened pillows of feverish clouds."
"Rose, against the Dark Encounter."
"The spring came - and she came with the spring."
"We prey Deliver us, but the deliverer."
"When a gentle air from paradise."
"When I came to you in the spring."
"Who do you walk with in the winter night."
"Will there be another april."
"You brought me love and light."

EPIGRAMS

Adams, Henry
Alcott, Bronson
Anderson, Sherwood
Benet, Stephen
Bierce, Ambrose
Bradstreet, Ann and Phylis Weatley
Bryant, William Cullen
Carman, Bliss
Cather, Willa Sibert
Chesnutt, Charles W.

Crane, Stephen
Cullen, Countee
Dickinson, Emily
Drieser, Theodore
Dunbar, Paul Lawrence
Emerson, Ralph Waldo
Evans, Donald
Field, Eugene
Fitzgerald, F. Scott
Glasgow, Ellen
Hawthorne, Nathaniel
Hovey, Richard
Howells, William Dean
Irving, Washington
James, Henry
Jewett, Sarah Orne
Kilmer, Joyce
Lanier, Sydney
Ledoux, Louis V.
Lewis, Sinclair
Lindsay, Vachel
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth
Lowell, Amy
Lowell, James Russell
Masters, Edgar Lee
Melville, Herman
Mencken, Henry L.
O'Neill, Eugene
Oppenheim, James
Poe, Edgar Allen
Reese, Lisette Woodworth
Robinson, Edwin Arlington
Santayana, George
Spinarn, Joel E.
Teasdale, Sara
Thoreau, Henry David
Torrence, Ridgely
Twain, Mark
Wharton, Edith
Whitman, Walt
Whittier, John Greenleaf
Wyllie, Elinor

VIGNETTES OF THE CIVIL WAR

Miss Marsh
Mrs. Washburn

