**Table of Contents**

Descriptive Summary 3  
Information on Use 3  
Access 3  
Citation 3  
Biographical Note 3  
Scope Note 5  
Related Resources 6  
Subject Headings 6  
INVENTORY 6  
Series I: General Correspondence 6  
Series II: Correspondence, Cryptography 8  
Series III: Scholarly Manuscripts 9  
Series IV: Miscellaneous Manuscripts 10  
Series V: Piers Plowman Manuscript 10  
Series VI: Voynich Manuscript and Cryptography 11  
Series VII: Army Cryptography 12  
Series VIII: Miscellaneous Materials and Addenda 13
**Descriptive Summary**

**Title**  
Manly, John Matthews. Papers

**Date**  
1892-1940

**Size**  
7 linear ft.

**Repository**  
Special Collections Research Center  
University of Chicago Library  
1100 East 57th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

**Abstract**  
John Matthews Manly (1865-1940), Professor of English. The John Matthews Manly Papers contain personal and professional correspondence, manuscripts, copies of manuscripts from various libraries, articles, lectures, notes, and student papers. Correspondents include G.L. Kittredge, Barrett Wendell, A.W. Pollard, William A. Craigie, R.B. McKerrow, and H.S. Bennett. Papers document Manly’s work on Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales and his interest in cryptography.

**Information on Use**

**Access**  
No restrictions.

**Citation**  
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Manly, John Matthews. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

**Biographical Note**  
Reputedly, after John Matthew Manly (2 Sept. 1865-2 Apr. 1940) earned his PhD in Philology he then attempted to read the entire holding of the Harvard library. A child prodigy, Manly graduated from Furman University with his masters when he was 18 years old. Getting his early education at the Staunton Military Academy in Virginia and the Greenville Military Institute in South Carolina, Manly earned his MA degree in mathematics in 1883. Just 19 years old he went to teach Mathematics at William Jewel College in Missouri for the next five years. Manly then proceeded to Harvard to earn the PhD (1890). The graduate program at Harvard didn’t provide for the education that Manly sought so he collected Professors from many fields to proctor his Philology degree. During his examination he was interrogated by each professor separately. His colleague at the University of Chicago, Robert Morss Lovett, was also a student at Harvard at the time; Lovett recalled the day of Manly’s exam:
When Manly emerged with triumphant nonchalance, there was eager inquiry to secure data for future use. "What did Stubby ask?" "What did Kitteredge?" When we got to Wendell, I remember Manly's reply was: "He didn't ask me anything. He only gave me a cigar" - an incident which was long cited as an instance of the highest academic chivalry.

After his first year of professorship in the English department at Brown University, Manly returned to Harvard to teach a summer course in Old English. He maintained his position at Brown until 1898 when President William Rainey Harper persuaded him to move to the University of Chicago. Manly's great incentive was that he would be the head of the English Department; he held that position until his retirement in 1933.

In the English department at the U of C Manly pursued studies in English literature and focused on Pier the Plowman, Shakespeare, Chaucer and general education. Manly was the first to theorize that the various versions of Pier the Plowman the work were not by just one author. Manly served as the Chicago Exchange Professor at the University of Göttingen (1909).

Circa 1913 Colonel George Fabyan invited Manly to examine Shakespeare's text to decipher codes placed in the text by the alleged author, Bacon. In six weeks Manly developed a system for deciphering the codes which he concluded did not validate Bacon's authorship. On the reputation of this work he was invited by the US government to join the Military Intelligence Division in the encoding and decoding of messages and the deciphering of enemy codes in 1915. Manly stepped down from the U of C for the duration of the war. As a successful decipher, Major Manly, earned the respect of his military peers before returning to the English Chair in 1919.

Deeply interested in language and mystery Manly turned his attentions toward Chaucer's writings. In the Oxford Lowell Institute lectures (1924) he asserted that Chaucer's characters were based on people that he knew. An idea widely accepted today but Manly had to delve deep into Chaucer's life to find the associates.

A devoted educator Manly published books for all ages and in particular edited texts of poetry for classroom use at various grade levels. As the editor of Modern Philology Manly explored his more complex academic interests. Manly believed he would have been a better scholar if he would have either had fewer interests or loved the English department a little less.

For the last 15 years of his life Manly and his former student Edith Rickertt were engaged in an in depth study of the Canterbury tales. They, along with one or more of Manly's four sisters spent 6 months of each year in England examining texts and managed to get photostatic copies of all eighty five known Chaucerian manuscripts; they also discovered sixteen unknown fragments. Rickert and Manly amassed these in Chicago so that they could study them together.
and make them available to other scholars. The death of the young Rickert left Manly to finish the task of editing the eight volume set alone. He published this in 1939, just prior to his own death in 1940. The weight of the volume both intellectually and financially meant that individual scholars were not able to examine the books until after WWII.

Manly was involved in many academic organizations and received five honorary degrees for his work in addition to the honor bestowed on him by the University of Chicago when it named a chair after him.

Manly was groomed for academic success by his lineage. His great grandfather Basil Manly, was President of the University of Alabama and founded the Alabama Historical Society. Manly's grandfather, Basil Manly, Jr. ministered to churches in four states and was President of the Georgetown College of Kentucky in the midst of his fatherly duties to 18 children. The Manly's were a politically invested southern family and Basil Manly, Jr. delivered the inaugural prayer when Jefferson Davis was inducted into the Confederate Presidency. Manly’s father, Charles Manly, carried on the pastoral and educational traditions set by his family and became a Baptist minister and the president of Central College and Furman University in the American south.

Manly’s father married Mary Esther Hellen Matthews who mothered seven children. John M. Manly was born on 2 Sep 1865 in Sumter Co. Alabama. His brothers were quite successful, Charles Matthews Manly, (1876-1927) is noted for inventing the Langley Airplane in 1903. Basil Maxwell Manly was a noted economist with the Federal Power Commission.

A beloved teacher and brother, Manly passed away after a heart attack in Tucson, Arizona on 2 April 1940.

**Scope Note**

The John Matthews Manly Papers contain personal and professional correspondence, manuscripts, copies of manuscripts from various libraries, articles, lectures, notes, and student papers. Correspondents include G.L. Kittredge, Barrett Wendell, A.W. Pollard, William A. Craigie, R.B. McKerrow, and H.S. Bennett. The Papers document Manly’s work on Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales and his interest in cryptography.

The collection is comprised of eight series: Series I: General Correspondence; Series II: Correspondence, Cryptography; Series III: Scholarly Manuscripts; Series IV: Miscellaneous Manuscripts; Series V: Piers Plowman Manuscript; Series VI: Voynich Manuscript and Cryptography; Series VII: Army Cryptography; Series VIII: Miscellaneous Materials and Addenda.
Related Resources
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Subject Headings
• Chaucer, Geoffrey, d. 1400. Canterbury tales
• Chaucer, Geoffrey, d. 1400 - Criticism and interpretation
• Kittredge, George Lyman, 1860-1941
• Craigie, William A. (William Alexander), Sir, 1867-1957
• McKerrow, Ronald Brunlees, 1872-1940
• Bennett, H. S. (Henry Stanley), 1889-
• Wendell, Barrett, 1855-1921
• Pollard, Alfred W. (Alfred William), 1859-1944
• Manly, John Matthews, 1865-1940
• Cryptography

INVENTORY

Series I: General Correspondence

Box 1
Folder 1
Correspondence, n.d. and 1889-92

Box 1
Folder 2
Correspondence, 1893-94 (Especially Agnes Furnivall)

Box 1
Folder 3
Correspondence, 1895 (Especially Agnes Furnivall)

Box 1
Folder 4
Correspondence, 1896 (Especially Agnes Furnivall)

Box 1
Folder 5
Correspondence, 1897-99 (including Lovett and Moody)

Box 1
Folder 6
Correspondence, 1900-03

Box 1
Folder 7
Correspondence, 1904-06 (including responses to the "Lost Leaf of Piers Plowman"

Box 1
Folder 8
Correspondence, 1907 (especially Basil Manly)

Box 1
Folder 9
Correspondence, 1908-1909

Box 1
Folder 10
Correspondence, 1910-13

Box 1
Folder 11
Correspondence, 1916-17

Box 1
Folder 12
Correspondence, 1918-19

Box 1
Folder 13
Correspondence, 1920-22 (including plan for English Department reorganization)

Box 1
Folder 14
Correspondence, 1923

Box 1
Folder 15
Correspondence, 1924-25

Box 1
Folder 16
Correspondence, 1926-27

Box 1
Folder 17
Correspondence, 1928-29

Box 1
Folder 18
Correspondence, 1930

Box 1
Folder 19
Correspondence, Jan. 1931

Box 1
Folder 20
Correspondence, Feb. 1931

Box 1
Folder 21
Correspondence, Mar. 1931

Box 1
Folder 22
Correspondence, Apr. 1931

Box 2
Folder 1
Correspondence, May 1931

Box 2
Folder 2
Correspondence, Jun.-Dec. 1931

Box 2
Folder 3
Correspondence, 1932-35

Box 2
Folder 4
Correspondence, 1937-40

Box 2
Folder 5
Correspondence, family business, re: Manly Corporation, 1930-31

Box 2
Folder 6
Correspondence, family business, C.M. Kendrick, 1930-31

Series II: Correspondence, Cryptography

Box 2
Folder 7
Correspondence, 1916

Box 2
Folder 8
Correspondence, 1917

Box 2
Folder 9
Correspondence, 1918

Box 2
Folder 10
Correspondence, 1919

Box 2
Folder 11
Correspondence, 1920

Box 2
Folder 12
Correspondence, 1921 Jan-May

Box 2
Folder 13
Correspondence, 1921 Jun-July

Box 2
Folder 14
Correspondence, 1921 Aug-Dec

Box 2
Folder 15
Correspondence, 1922 Jan-June

Box 2
Folder 16
Correspondence, 1922 Jul-Dec

Box 2
Folder 17
Correspondence, 1923

Box 3
Folder 1
Correspondence, 1924-26

Box 3
Folder 2
Correspondence, 1927-30

Box 3
Folder 3
Correspondence, 1931 Mar-July

Box 3
Folder 4
Correspondence, 1931 Aug-Dec

Box 3
Folder 5
Correspondence, 1932-38

Series III: Scholarly Manuscripts

Box 3
Folder 6
"Shall and Will in Chaucer," Ms and notes

Box 3
Folder 7
"Shall and Will in Chaucer," Ms, not in JMM's handwriting

Box 3
Folder 8
"Education that Educates," convocation address, Dec. 20, 1927

Box 3
Folder 9
"The Books of Frederic Ives Carpenter"

Box 3
Folder 10
Tribute to Charles R. Baskervill

Box 3
Folder 11
Final e in Chaucer's Legend of Good Women

Box 3
Folder 12
Review of Minutes and Accounts of the Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon

Box 3
Folder 13
Review of The Book of Troilus and Criseyde, ed. by R.K. Root

Box 3
Folder 14
"The Rift in Education"
Box 3  
  Folder 15  
  "The Teaching of Literature"

Box 3  
  Folder 16  
  "Sidney Lanier"

Box 3  
  Folder 17  
  "Tales of the Homeward Journey"

Box 3  
  Folder 18  
  "English in the Public Schools"

Box 3  
  Folder 19  
  "The Place of Language in the English Course"

Box 3  
  Folder 20  
  "Narrative Writing in Anglo Saxon Times"

**Series IV: Miscellaneous Manuscripts**

Box 3  
  Folder 21  
  "Gregory, the Great," unfinished

Box 3  
  Folder 22  
  Notes for Manly-Bailey series of textbooks

Box 3  
  Folder 23  
  Notes from committee on the desirability of purchasing "one of the most notable private libraries in Europe--the Canal's a noble family of Venetia"

Box 3  
  Folder 24  
  Notes and ideas for stories

Box 3  
  Folder 25  
  Poetry

Box 3  
  Folder 26  
  Unfinished stories and essays

Box 3  
  Folder 27  
  "James Morrison," completed story

**Series V: Piers Plowman Manuscript**

Box 3  
  Folder 28
Piers Plowman, Proofs; Jusserand’s reply; bibliography: R.W.

Box 4
- Folder 1
  - Thomas A. Knott "The Ms of Text A `Piers the Plowman' Used as the Basis of the Revision Known as Text B”; notes on Text B

Box 4
- Folder 2-18
  - Student papers on Piers Plowman

Series VI: Voynich Manuscript and Cryptography

Box 4
- Folder 19
  - Table of Latin Syllables

Box 4
- Folder 20-21
  - Photographs of Voynich Ms

Box 4
- Folder 22
  - "Key to the Library” (JMM’s?)

Box 5
- Folder 1
  - Worksheets

Box 5
- Folder 2
  - Photographs of Mss (Including Français 24306, incomplete) and of one printed label

Box 5
- Folder 3
  - Three working notebooks, labelled "Bacon Cipher"

Box 5
- Folder 4
  - Notes on code for article; other notes on Sloane 830 and 414

Box 5
- Folder 5
  - Worksheets on related ciphers: "Galen’s Anatomy" and "Kazwini"

Box 5
- Folder 6
  - Articles on the Voynich Roger Bacon Ms

Box 5
- Folder 7-8
  - Notes: ciphers in other Mss; other notes on printed sources

Box 5
- Folder 9
  - Notes on alchemical Mss, etc.

Box 5
- Folder 10
  - Notes for Bacon Cipher; "Key to Aggas"
Box 5
  Folder 11
  Notes on texts in cryptography

Box 5
  Folder 12
  Miscellaneous notes and worksheets

Box 5
  Folder 13
  Bibliographies

Box 5
  Folder 14
  Photostats of Mss: John Dee (Sloane 3188, 3189, 2599): unidentified

Box 5
  Folder 15
  Notes on Vatican Latin Ms 3102

Box 5
  Folder 16
  "Notes on an Inquiry into the Validity of the Baconian Bi-Literal Cypher for the Interpretation of Certain Writings Claimed for Francis Bacon"

Box 5
  Folder 17
  Comments on "Sixty Drops of Laudanum," by E.A. Poe

Box 5
  Folder 18-19
  "The Bi-formed Alphabet Classifier" of the Riverbank Laboratories

Box 5
  Folder 20
  Notes on Shakespeare/Bacon cipher

**Series VII: Army Cryptography**

Box 6
  Folder 1
  Tratado de Cryptogragia (in Spanish) 1894

Box 6
  Folder 2
  Wörter-Verzeichniss (in German)

Box 6
  Folder 3
  Army War College 1917 materials; word frequently charts

Box 6
  Folder 4
  Confederate Cipher Code (Beauregard's?)

Box 6
  Folder 5
  Articles, circulars on codes, etc.
Folder 6-7
War College problem sheets

Box 6
Folder 8
Miscellaneous, including Maroon article on "Our Faculty at War" on JMM

Box 6
Folder 9
Miscellaneous notes

Box 6
Folder 10
Sliding letter scales

Series VIII: Miscellaneous Materials and Addenda

Box 6
Folder 11
Photographic copy of Ms of Bayle's King John (Oxford?), pp 1-37, incomplete

Box 6
Folder 12
Photographic copy of Ms of Bayle's King John (Oxford?), pp 39-63, Incomplete

Box 6
Folder 13
Facsimile of Ms of Bayle's King John, leaf 8 only. 6 copies

Box 6
Folder 14
Photographs of stages and scenes, some from printed sources

Box 6
Folder 15
Photographs of first pages of several plays by Shakespeare

Box 6
Folder 16
Photographs of Greene's James IV of Scotland, 2pp, printed

Box 6
Folder 17
Texts

Box 6
Folder 18
Printed matter on dry-air blast furnace

Box 6
Folder 19
Bibliographical Society of Chicago

Box 6
Folder 20
Simplified Spelling Board: pamphlets

Box 6
Folder 21
Sarah Murray Manly, obituaries
Box 6
Folder 22
  Charles Manly: Sketches of School and College Life, 1845-65"

Box 6
Folder 23
  Address book and diary, ca 1901, of JMM

Box 7
Folder 1
  JMM's bookplate

Box 7
Folder 2
  Chaucer project, 1937 correspondence with J.S.P. Tatlock; introductory note; note on the
  Hengwrt Ms

Box 7
Folder 3
  "The Service of a Small College"

Box 7
Folder 4
  1933 English 301 syllabus

Box 7
Folder 5
  Miscellaneous notes: inventories and account rolls of Jarrow and Monk, etc.

Box 7
Folder 6
  D.C. Heath and Co. contracts

Box 7
Folder 7
  Data on private libraries in Chicago collected by the Chicago Bibliographical Society

Box 7
Folder 8
  Course outlines, notes, etc., Brown University, etc.?

Box 7
Folder 9
  Collance Ms--copies

Box 7
Folder 10
  Notes and texts

Box 7
Folder 11
  Writings

Box 7
Folder 12
  Schedule of lectures, Gen. Lit. 110

Box 7
Folder 13
  Student papers
Box 7
Folder 14
Oscar L. Olson papers, including "A Contribution to the History of Saga Development in England and the Scandinavian Countries"

Box 7
Folder 15
Tracings from Mss rubrications

Box 7
Folder 16
Miscellaneous non-Manly papers

Box 8
Folder 1
Lectures on Pre-Shakespearean Drama by JMM (student course notes?)

Box 8
Folder 2
Ms copy of Guilietta e Romeo by Luigi da Porto. Introduction and biographical information by JMM (?)

Box 8
Folder 3
"A Copy of a Letter Written by Our Blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Ein Himmelsbrief. n. b. see 1922 correspondence for more information.)

Box 8
Folder 4
Incomplete photostat of Ms Junius 1

Box 8
Folder 5
"A True and Approved Art"

Box 8
Folder 6
J.M.H. Walden's 1906 report on Duke of Brunswick's Library at Wolfenbuttel

Box 8
Folder 7
Photostats of Mss; Bodl. Misc Mss Lit 346; Sloane 2357; Huntington Vices and Vertus

Box 8
Folder 8
R.B. Baselden, 1933 correspondence on Piers Plowman

Box 8
Folder 9
Summary of "The Science of Poetry and the Philosophy of Language" by Hudson Maxim

Box 8
Folder 10
"Education that Educates"

Box 8
Folder 11
Photostates of Ms Bodl. 581; Ms BM 23986; Sloane 3192
Folder 12
Miscellaneous photographs

Box 8
Folder 13
F.I. Carpenter (?): "Apropos of Aim and of Method in Literary Studies"

Box 8
Folder 14
Baker Brownell: "Problems of Contemporary Thought"

Box 8
Folder 15
Gertrude Schottenfels (student?) papers

Box 8
Folder 16
Student papers

Box 8
Folder 17
Otto Stahlen: "Editorial Technique"

Box 8
Folder 18-20
T. Atkinson Jenkins papers: notes on Paris Ms 902, etc.; Resurrection play

Box 9
JMM Diplomas

Box 9
Photostat of Ballades of Deschamps

Box 9
Chaucer project notecards

Box 10
Chaucer project notecards, scribal errors chapter

Box 11
Folder 1
JMM papers given by D.H. Stevens, 1970, correspondence, 1933-1935; photos; reprint of Lippotopo, 1934, etc.

Box 11
Folder 2
JMM papers given by F.B. Millett, 1970, correspondence, 1928-1936; clippings; reprints

Box 11
Folder 3
"Bopeep: A Song-cycle from the English Poets" parodies of Chaucer, Milton, Gray, Browning, Scott and Longfellow, signed by CSC and MGC (relationship to JMM unknown)

Box 11
Folder 4
Family and financial correspondence, 1931-32

Box 11
Folder 5
Notes on printing; Caxton, Colet, More, Tyndale, Erasmus, Johnson, Vikings (essay in German)

**Box 11**

**Folder 6**
- List of Master’s Dissertations in English to 1921

**Box 11**

**Folder 7**
- Clippings from The Atheneaum and The Nation

**Box 11**

**Folder 8**
- Essays by Philippine students (relationship to JMM, if any, unknown)

**Box 11**

**Folder 9**
- "Roger Bacon and the Voynich Ms" by JMM, reprint

**Box 11**

**Folder 10**

**Box 12**
- Chaucer project notecards

**Box 13**
- Chaucer project notecards