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# Guide to the William Vaughn Moody Papers 1892-1925



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## **Descriptive Summary**

<b>Identifier</b>	ICU.SPCL.MOODYWV
<b>Title</b>	Moody, William Vaughn. Papers
<b>Date</b>	1892-1925
<b>Size</b>	1.5 linear feet (3 boxes)
<b>Repository</b>	Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
<b>Abstract</b>	American poet, playwright and teacher. Contains correspondence, manuscripts of poems and plays, notebooks, themes written while a student at Harvard, biographical material, reprints, newspaper clippings, reviews of Moody's plays, playbills and programs. Correspondents include Jane Addams, Norman Hapgood, Edwin Markham, Harriet Monroe, Charles Eliot Norton, Edmund C. Stedman, and publishers. Also includes a diary of European trip with Ferdinand Schevill (1897).

## **Acknowledgments**

### **Information on Use**

#### **Access**

No restrictions.

#### **Citation**

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Moody, William Vaughn. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

#### **Biographical Note**

William Vaughn Moody [1869-1910], American poet, play write and teacher, studied painting at the Pritchett Institute of Design in 1885, and did college preparatory work in classics at the Riverview Academy in 1887 before entering Harvard in 1889. He graduated second in his class in 1893. Moody published his first poems in the Harvard Monthly, and while at Harvard became friends with Daniel G. Mason, George Santayana, Norman Hapgood, Robert Herrick, and Robert Morss Lovett. He received his M.A. from Harvard in 1894 and taught English literature there during 1894-5.

In Autumn of 1895, he joined the English faculty of the University of Chicago as Instructor in English and Rhetoric; as Assistant Professor in English and Rhetoric, Moody conducted his last classes at the University in Winter Quarter of 1903--although he remained "on leave" until

his formal resignation in 1908. At Chicago Moody continued his friendships with Herrick and Lovett and established ties with Ferdinand Schevill, John M. Manly, Hamlin Garland, Harriet Monroe, and Mrs. Harriet Brainard [nee Harriet Converse Tilden] who later became his wife.

In 1901--the year after he met Mrs. Brainard--his volume of Poems appeared. The next year saw the publication of A History of English Literature co-authored by Robert Morss Lovett; in 1905 Lovett and Moody published A First View of English Literature. In October of 1906, Moody's play The Great Divide opened in New York; it was a great success and ran for two years. Before his early death in 1910, Moody was considered one of America's leading poets and perhaps her most promising playwright--a judgment sustained until the 1920's. He was honored by Yale University in 1908 when he received the D. Litt. In May 1909, Moody and Harriet Brainard were married; because of his health they settled in Southern California in December of that year. Moody's last prose play The Faith Healer opened in New York in January 1910. On October 17, 1910, Moody died of a brain tumor in Colorado.

### **Scope Note**

Included in these papers are two folders of general correspondence ca. 1896-1910. Among the correspondents are Jane Addams [February 9, 1901], Edwin Markham, Norman Hapgood, Harriet Monroe, Richard W. Gilder, Charles Eliot Norton, Edmund C. Stedman; there is also correspondence from Moody's publishers, and letters from appreciative readers. Box 1, folders 3-6 contain letters from Moody to Robert Morss Lovett ca. 1892-1906 [folder 3 also includes an early Moody poem, "Applause"]. Correspondence from Daniel G. Mason to Moody ca. 1895-1906 are in folders 7-8.

William Vaughn Moody's travel diary for a European trip in 1897, four notebooks, and student themes, are in Box 1, folders 9-14. In 1897, twenty-eight year old William Vaughn Moody set out on his third trip to Europe in five years with a friend and colleague from Chicago, Ferdinand Schevill. Both were instructors at the University of Chicago--Shevill in Modern History, Moody in English. Moody kept a short account of a portion of this trip. It began as his ship approached the Azores on April 2, then it was four days before the second entry was made on April 6. After this faltering start, the account is silent until April 24, when Moody and Schevill were settled in Rome. The diary then covers numerous side trips from Rome and their departure from that city. After April 24 it becomes a daily account of their excursions until May 17, when the account ends abruptly.

The diary is not merely an account of the incidents of the trip, but Moody also records his impressions of Italy--the countryside, the people, its history and its art. The relationship between the accounts given in the diary and the descriptions found in Moody's poetry are of particular interest. Robert Morss Lovett, in his introduction to the Selected Poems of William Vaughn Moody (p. xxxix) comments: "Joining Ferdinand Schevill on a bicycle trip northward, he [Moody] found such joy and hope on a morning ride out of Orvieto as inspired 'Road-Hymn for the Start'". In part, the poem reads:

Down the road the day-star calls;

Touched with change in the wide heavens,  
like a leaf the frost winds touch,  
Flames the failing moon a moment, ere it  
shrivels white and falls;  
Hid aloft, a wild throat holdeth sweet  
and sweeter intervals.

Moody's diary entry for the same event, the departure from Orvieto, sets a somewhat different mood. He records on April 30: "Started at 9 for Perugia-road apparently 25 miles on map; warning of the padrona that we should find it 160 miles proved well-founded. The whole mortal morning we climbed through the mountains with Orvieto's noble hill always in sight and seemingly exactly the same distance away--comment on instinct and tradition among Italian road builders. About noon the hard hot climb was over and we dashed down a rocky road 8 or 10 miles to Ficulle...."

In the same poem appear these lines:

We have felt the ancient swaying  
Of the earth before the sun,  
On the darkened marge of midnight heard  
Sidereal rivers playing;

This compares with Moody's diary entry for April 29, the eve of the departure from Orvieto: "Wine at dinner and its effects. Our talk and smoke. I felt the swaying of the sun around the earth, Ferd saw the whole of Italy with its rivers and mountains and jewelled cities." This diary is a record of the poet's thoughts and impressions at the beginning of his first fertile artistic period. It consists of 176 pages; however, Moody used only 54 of these. There are notations inside each cover.

The four notebooks contain ideas for plays; notes for a Hopi play and a bibliography of books on the Hopi Indians; Outline of a play about Blairs and Trumans; possible titles and subjects for poems; notes on Prometheus and other classical gods; a list of Greek words and their English meanings; addresses of friends. Some of Moody's student themes are graded and have instructor's comments.

Box 1, folder 15 - Box 2, folder 20 contains literary works by William Vaughn Moody arranged chronologically. Included are manuscripts and typescripts of poems; poetic dramas and plays, The Fire-Bringer, The Masque of Judgment, The Death of Eve, The Faith Healer, and a

fragment of *The Great Divide*; and a galley proof of fifty pages of the book *A First View of English Literature*.

The remainder of Box 2 is devoted to miscellaneous biographical information on W.V.M. including extracts from Daniel Mason's journal ca. 1894-1900; a chronology of Moody's life; some of Harriet Moody's comments on her husband's work; and letters written to Robert Morss Lovett in response to his 1931 *Selected Poems of William Vaughn Moody*. In addition, there are two folders of biographical and critical printed materials about Moody. Included are reprints of critical articles on Moody's work as well as reviews of the posthumous editions of his works; some news clippings about him; and personal tributes, mostly prose but several poetic. Among the authors are Karle Baker, John Grimes, Paul Shorey, Percy MacKaye, Robert Morss Lovett, and two of Moody's students at the University of Chicago, Grace Veeder and Charlotte Wilson.

Additional (and occasionally duplicate) printed material is found in the four scrapbooks, which have been disbound and fill Box 3. The bulk of this material is news clippings--some comments on Moody's poetry but primarily reviews of his plays. These reviews are very extensive, covering both foreign and domestic performances. There are also playbills and programs. Biographical data [supplied by Harriet Moody] is included and there are a number of printed items of related interest: Percy MacKaye's "Uriel," written as a eulogy to Moody, and Ferdinand Schevill's article in a University of Chicago literary magazine, *The Circle*, "A Remembered April: Recollecting a Spring with a University Poet," Vol. 2, No. 8, June, 1924.

## **Related Resources**

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

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

Robert Herrick. Papers

John Matthews Manly. Papers

Harriet Monroe. Papers

Harriet V. Moody. Papers

Department of English. Records

Presidents' Papers, 1889-1925

## **Subject Headings**

- Moody, William Vaughn, 1869-1910
- Schevill, Ferdinand, 1868-1954
- Addams, Jane, 1860-1935
- Hapgood, Norman, 1868-1937
- Markham, Edwin, 1852-1940

- Monroe, Harriet, 1860-1936
- Norton, Charles Eliot, 1827-1908
- Stedman, Edmund Clarence, 1833-1908
- Poets
- Dramatists
- Poetry

## INVENTORY

### Box 1

#### Folder 1

General correspondence 1896-1904

### Box 1

#### Folder 2

General correspondence 1905-1910

### Box 1

#### Folder 3

Correspondence from William Vaughn Moody to Robert Morss Lovett [includes holograph of the poem "Applause"--November, 1893?] 1892-1895

### Box 1

#### Folder 4

Correspondence from William Vaughn Moody to Robert Morss Lovett [includes holograph of the poem "Applause"--November, 1893?] 1896-1898

### Box 1

#### Folder 5

Correspondence from William Vaughn Moody to Robert Morss Lovett [includes holograph of the poem "Applause"--November, 1893?] 1900-1901

### Box 1

#### Folder 6

Correspondence from William Vaughn Moody to Robert Morss Lovett [includes holograph of the poem "Applause"--November, 1893?] 1902-1906

### Box 1

#### Folder 7

Correspondence from Daniel G. Mason to WVM 1895-1899

### Box 1

#### Folder 8

Correspondence from Daniel G. Mason to WVM 1900-1906

### Box 1

#### Folder 9

William V. Moody, Diary of European trip, April 2- May 17, 1897

### Box 1

#### Folder 10

William V. Moody, Notebooks

### Box 1

#### Folder 11

William V. Moody

### Box 1

**Folder 12**

William V. Moody

**Box 1**

**Folder 13**

William V. Moody

**Box 1**

**Folder 14**

William V. Moody, Student themes written at Harvard for English 5, ca. 1889-1892

**Box 1**

**Folder 15**

Poems, miscellaneous fragments

**Box 1**

**Folder 16**

Poem, "Harmonics" (1891), holograph draft

**Box 1**

**Folder 17**

Poem, "Sea Shells" (1892), holograph draft

**Box 1**

**Folder 18**

Poem, "The Hawthorn Bush" (1893), holograph draft

**Box 1**

**Folder 19**

Poem, "Song-My love is Gone into the East" (1894), holograph and typescript

**Box 1**

**Folder 20**

Poem, "Wilding Flower" (1896), holograph draft [variant reading]

**Box 1**

**Folder 21**

Poem, "The Moon Moth" (1897), holograph draft with corrections and typescript

**Box 1**

**Folder 22**

Poetic drama, The Masque of Judgment (1900), holograph fragment

**Box 1**

**Folder 23**

Poem, "The Menagerie" (1901), holograph draft [much longer than printed version]

**Box 1**

**Folder 24**

Poem, "Old Pourquoiis" (1904), 1 version, holograph draft; 2nd version, holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

Poem, "I am the Woman" (1904), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 2**

Poem, "The Fountain" (1904), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**



**Folder 3**

Poetic Drama, *The Fire-Bringer* (1904), holograph draft

**Box 2**

**Folder 4**

Poem, "The Second Coming" (1905), 1 version, holograph draft; final version, typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 5**

First View of English Literature, by William V. Moody and Robert M. Lovett, 1905, Galley proofs corrected

**Box 2**

**Folder 6**

Poem, "A Prairie Ride" (ca. 1906), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 7**

Poem, "The Three Angels" (1906), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 8**

Poem, "Musa Meritrix" (1906), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 9**

Poem, "The Death of Eve" (1906), holograph draft [entitled "The Return of Eve" with variations from the printed text] and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 10**

Poem, "Thammux" (1906), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 11**

Play, *The Great Divide* (1906), typewritten fragment with holograph corrections

**Box 2**

**Folder 12**

Poem, "The Counting Man" (1909), holograph draft and typescript copy

**Box 2**

**Folder 13**

Play, *The Faith Healer* (1909), typescript with holograph correction

**Box 2**

**Folder 14**

Poetic Drama, *The Death of Eve* (1909-1910), holograph draft of prose summary

**Box 2**

**Folder 15**

Poetic Drama, holograph draft in verse with corrections

**Box 2**

**Folder 16**

Poetic Drama, holograph fragments of verse and prose versions

**Box 2**

**Folder 17**

Poetic Drama, typescript of prose version

**Box 2**

**Folder 18**

Poetic Drama, typescript of verse version with holograph corrections and typescript copy.

**Box 2**

**Folder 19**

Poetic Drama, copy by Harriet Moody

**Box 2**

**Folder 20**

Poetic Drama, typescript

**Box 2**

**Folder 21**

Reprints of William Vaughn Moody's writings; "A Prelude in Purgatory" (1899) and selected letters to Daniel G. Mason

**Box 2**

**Folder 22**

Extracts from the journal of Daniel G. Mason bearing on W.V.M., April, 1894-December, 1900 [with covering letter from D.G.M. to Ferdinand Schevill, June 3, 1912]

**Box 2**

**Folder 23**

Poem, ["Bringer of Fire"], October 18, 1910, by Percy [MacKaye] Eulogy written the day after W.V.M.'s death.

**Box 2**

**Folder 24**

Harriet Moody's analysis of W.V.M.'s unfinished trilogy; "The Fire-Bringer," "The Masque of Judgment," "The Death of Eve."

**Box 2**

**Folder 25**

Chronology of William Vaughn Moody's life [compiled by Harriet Moody?]

**Box 2**

**Folder 26**

Marriage certificate of William V. Moody and Harriet Converse Tilden Brainard, May 7, 1909, and wedding announcements.

**Box 2**

**Folder 27**

Letters to Robert Morss Lovett in appreciation and comment on his 1931 edition of William Vaughn Moody's poems, [correspondents include Daniel G. Mason]

**Box 2**

**Folder 28**

Harriet Moody's comments on Lovett's Selected Poems of William Vaughn Moody

**Box 2**

**Folder 29**

Typescript and printed essays, reminiscences, articles, news clippings, and reprints about the work and personality of W.V.M.

**Box 2**

**Folder 30**

Typescript and printed essays, reminiscences, articles, news clippings, and reprints about the work and personality of W.V.M.

**Box 3**

**Folder 1-3**

Scrapbook

**Box 3**

**Folder 4**

Scrapbook

**Box 3**

**Folder 5-7**

Scrapbook of news clippings reviewing WVM's plays