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# Guide to the Elder Olson. Papers 1939-1974



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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Identifier** ICU.SPCL.OLSON

**Title** Olson, Elder. Papers

**Date** 1939-1974

**Size** 1 linear ft. (2 boxes)

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

**Abstract** Elder Olson, poet, literary critic, teacher. The Elder Olson Papers consist of undated typescript poems, reprints of poems and articles (1939-1974), galleys and proofs of Olson's Penny Arcade, manuscripts, and correspondence.

## **Information on Use**

### **Access**

No restrictions.

### **Citation**

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

### **Biographical Note**

Elder Olson was born in 1909 in Chicago, Illinois. He studied at the University of Chicago, where he received his B.A. (1934), M.A. (1935), and Ph.D. (1938).

Olson became a visiting Assistant Professor of English at the University of Chicago in 1942, Professor in 1955, and Distinguished Service Professor in 1973.

Olson published many volumes of poetry and literary criticism. *Things of Sorrow*, Poems (1934), was published while he was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago. Among his other books of poetry are: *The Cock of Heaven* (1940), *The Scarecrow Christ, and Other Poems* (1954), and *Olson's Penny Arcade: Poems* (1975). Olson's literary criticism includes: *The Poetry of Dylan Thomas* (1954), *Tragedy and the Theory of Drama* (1961), and *On Value Judgments in the Arts and Other Essays* (1976).

Elder Olson died on July 25, 1992 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## Scope Note

The Elder Olson Papers consist of undated typescript poems, reprints of poems and articles (1939-1974), galleys and proofs of Olson's Penny Arcade, manuscripts, and correspondence.

## Related Resources

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

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

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

## Subject Headings

- Olson, Elder
- Poets-20th Century-History and Criticism
- Poets, American-20th Century
- English literature-History and Criticism
- Drama-History and Criticism

## INVENTORY

### Box 1

#### Folder 1

Poems, typescript, n.d.

- "Epistle Unearthed at Delos"
- "Hamlet Solus,"
- "Funerailles"
- "The High Place"
- "Abailard Sleeps at His Book"
- "The Christmas Meditation"
- "Ahasuerus and the Children of the Dawn"
- "Anthropos"
- "The Soliloquy"
- "Before Oblivion"
- "The Disputation"
- "Imago Mortis"
- "The Night Journey"
- "Gian Maria Concerning Death"
- "The Wood of Judas"
- "Letter From the Dead"
- "Winter Marketplace"
- "The Passion and Betrayal"
- "Signum Nativitatis"

- "Soul's Journey"

**Box 1**

**Folder 2**

Off-prints and magazine clipping, 1939-1974

- "Rhetoric and the Appreciation of Pope," 1939
- "The Argument of Longinus' On the Sublime," 1942
- "'Sailing to Byzantium'; Prolegomena to a Poetics of the Lyric," 1942
- "Recent Literary Criticism," 1943
- "William Empson, Contemporary Criticism and Poetic Diction," 1950
- "Two Poems," 1950
- "Hamlet and the Hermeneutics of Drama," 1964
- "On Value Judgments in the Arts," 1974
- "In Defense of Superficiality," poem, clipping from The New Yorker, n.d.

**Box 1**

**Folder 3-5**

Olson's Penny Arcade, galleys and proofs, n.d

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Miscellaneous, n.d

- Notes, English 312; History and Theory of English Prosody
- Letter, Olson to Unknown
- Play, "The Blindman," translated by Olson
- Syllabus, "The Analysis of Argument"
- Unpublished essay, "Art and Science"

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

Essays

- "The Poetry of Wallace Stevens," manuscript, n.d
- "Louise Bogan and Lonie Adams," manuscript (n.d)

**Box 2**

**Folder 2**

Correspondence and Pamphlet

- Letter, Jay Macpherson to Olson, 1955
- Letter, Charles Newman to Olson, 1965
- Note, T.C. Lai to Olson, 1976
- Pamphlet, "The Art and Profession of Translation," 1976

**Box 2**

**Folder 3**

Off-prints, Articles by Olson

- "'Mighty Opposites'; Remarks on the Plot of Hamlet," (two copies), n.d.
- "Rhetoric and the Appreciation of Pope," 1939
- "Hamlet and the Hermeneutics of Drama," 1964
- "'Sailing to Byzantium'; Prolegomena to a Poetics of the Lyric," 1969
- "On Value Judgments in the Arts," 1974
- "The Poetic Process," 1975

**Box 2**

**Folder 4**

Article in La Torre

- Elder Olson, "Diologo sobre la funcion del arte in la sociedad," 1953

**Box 2****Folder 5**

Journals with Articles by Olson, 1963-1964

- "The Abstract Tragedy-A Comedy of Masks" First Stage, 1963
- "Taxco; Daguerreotype Chopina" Tematy, 1964
- "Art in Society" Chicago Review, 1964

**Box 2****Folder 6**

Journal with Article by Olson, 1977

- "Morality and Art" Religious Humanism