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Guide to the Edith Rickert Papers 1858-1960



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.RICKERTE
Title	Rickert, Edith. Papers
Date	1858-1960
Size	13 linear feet (26 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract The papers of Edith Rickert, Professor of English at the University of Chicago (1924-1935), include correspondence; notebooks and journals; manuscripts of unpublished novels; manuscripts and offprints of short stories, poems, and articles; biographical clippings; and memorabilia and photographs. For the most part, the papers date from the period before 1924, and are concentrated in the ten years (1900-1910) when Rickert was best known as a writer of fiction.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

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

Biographical Note

Edith Rickert was born in Canal Dover, Ohio, in 1871. She received an A.B. from Vassar College in 1891 and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Chicago in 1899. From 1897 to 1900, while completing her dissertation, a study of the Middle English romance *Emaré*, she returned to Vassar as an instructor in English.

In 1900, Rickert left the United States for nine years of study, travel, and writing in England and on the Continent. During this period of her life, she edited several medieval texts, prepared translations of medieval literature, published five novels including *The Reaper* (1904), *Folly* (1906), and *The Golden Hawk* (1907), and wrote more than eighty short stories, fifty of which were published in British and American magazines. In 1909, Rickert returned to the United States and settled in Boston, where for several years she was an editor with D. C. Heath and the

Ladies' Home Journal. With the onset of American involvement in World War I, she moved to Washington, D.C. and assumed a position as cryptographer in the War Department, working with John Matthews Manly, a Professor of English at the University of Chicago who had taken a leave of absence to serve as a captain in the military intelligence section. After the War, Rickert and Manly collaborated on *The Writing of English* (1919), *Contemporary British Literature* (1921), *Contemporary American Literature* (1922), and several other popular textbooks. In 1924, Rickert joined the faculty of the University of Chicago as Associate Professor of English; she was appointed Professor of English in 1930 and remained on the faculty until her retirement in 1935.

Rickert's career at the University was devoted largely to the extensive project undertaken with Manly to compile a definitive critical edition of the *Canterbury Tales*. Beginning in 1930, Rickert and Manly spent part of each year in England tracing manuscripts of the *Tales*, researching the details of Chaucer's life, and supervising a staff of workers employed at the Public Records Office in London. The remainder of each year was spent in Chicago, where Rickert taught courses in medieval and modern literature and continued her professional publications, the most notable of which was *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (1927). She also completed three volumes of children's stories and a final novel, *Severn Woods* (1930).

Rickert died in Chicago in 1938. The eight-volume product of her long association with Manly, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, appeared in its final form in 1940, several months before Manly's own death. Rickert's anthology of material illustrating fourteenth-century English life, *Chaucer's World*, was edited by two former students and published in 1948.

Scope Note

Series I: CORRESPONDENCE

This series consists of chronologically arranged correspondence. For the most part, the correspondence is personal, although a few letters from publishers are included as well as a folder of her correspondence with her students. The earliest letters were exchanged between Edith Rickert and her parents while she was a student at Vassar College. Among her later correspondents, the most important were Frederick James Furnivall, the English philologist and founder of the Chaucer Society, and John Burroughs, the American writer and naturalist. Furnivall's correspondence by letter and postcard extended from 1896 to 1909; the letters are found in the main chronological sequence, while the postcards have been placed in a separate folder. The nineteen letters from Burroughs date from 1902 to 1921, the year of his death (see Index); the collection includes two copies of his poem, "Waiting," one a holograph and the other a holograph facsimile printed as a New Year greeting for 1911.

Series II: JOURNALS AND NOTEBOOKS

Eighteen chronologically arranged journals and notebooks at the beginning of this series document Rickert's life and work from 1896 to 1907, including her first trip to Europe, her three years of teaching at Vassar, and her career as a writer in England. These are followed by two folders of miscellaneous notes and notebooks. The journals and notebooks contain vivid and often detailed accounts of Rickert's travels, as well as lists of completed works and ideas for future stories.

Series III: WRITINGS

Rickert's literary work is organized here in six subseries: Books; Short Stories; Poems; Essays, Memoirs, and Reviews; Articles; and Translations and Works by Others. Rickert made extensive notes and corrections on most of these texts, whether holograph or printed, with multiple copies often bearing different sets of corrections.

The first sub-series, Books, consists of materials from five unpublished works: an untitled project on Richard Baines and Christopher Marlowe as well as *Family*, *Lost Legions*, *While Breakfast Waits*, and *Young Alexander*. *Family*, a semi-autobiographical novel dealing with the coming of age of a young woman, was never completed, although the manuscript preserves several stages of work over a period of years. Commenting on this novel, Rickert wrote: "If the theme is worth doing and if my doing of it shows promise, I am willing to work the book over as often as need be, even to forty and four times." This sub-series also includes *The Romance of Emaré*, which originated as Rickert's dissertation but was published in 1906 with an added introduction, glossary, and notes.

The second sub-series, Short Stories, contains an alphabetical sequence of one hundred stories, most of them completed during Rickert's years in England. No attempt has been made to separate manuscript and printed copies. Many of the stories are historical romances or sentimental vignettes based on Rickert's travels and observations. Titled stories are followed by one folder of untitled works and fragments.

Poems, the third sub-series, consists of titled and untitled verse.

Sub-series four, Essays, Memoirs, and Reviews, contains essays drawn from Rickert's visits to European villages, a memoir of her friend F. J. Furnivall, descriptions of manuscript collections at the University of Chicago and British Museum, and a proposal for an Institute for Mediaeval Research. Titled items are followed by a folder of untitled book reviews.

Sub-series five, Articles, contains reprints of many of Rickert's scholarly articles as well as typescript drafts, fragments, and notes related to Chaucer and other medieval authors.

The final sub-series, Translations and Works by Others, includes the manuscripts of three unpublished novels. Priscilla on-Her-Own by "Marjorie Fleming" (8:5-8) may be Rickert's work, given the character of the story and the hand in which corrections were made. Riders in the Night (8:9-9:2) and an untitled historical novel (9:4-7) show Rickert's editorial changes, but no firm attribution of authorship can be made in either case. This sub-series also contains reprints of scholarly articles by Rickert's co-collaborator on the Chaucer Research Project, Professor John M. Manly.

Series IV: BIOGRAPHICAL

This series comprises miscellaneous items documenting Edith Rickert's life and work, including her involvement with the Chaucer Research Project. Seven folders preserve leaves from a scrapbook containing reviews of Folly, The Golden Hawk, and The Beggar in the Heart. These are followed by folders containing reviews of New Methods for the Study of Literature and other books, bibliographies of published works, and biographical clippings. Fred B. Millet's research notes and correspondence for his memoir of Rickert are included here, as are letters from Margaret Rickert seeking a publisher for her sister's stories. The series concludes with memorabilia as well as three books owned by Rickert's mother, Josephine Newburgh Rickert.

Series V: RESEARCH

This series includes Rickert's notes and clippings related to her academic research, as well as notes from other researchers. Additionally, boxes 13 through 25 contain Rickert's notecards that primarily concern Chaucer but also other topics, such as Shakespeare.

Series VI: TEACHING

Materials related to Rickert's teaching compose Series VI. They include a notebook of student writing with Rickert's commentary as well as Rickert's notes concerning Shakespearean plays and poetry.

Series VII: AUDIOVISUAL

The final series, Audiovisual, includes photographs and illustrations related to Rickert's scholarly work as well as photographs of Rickert's family, apartment, and notably, her acquaintance John Burroughs.

Related Resources

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

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

Chaucer Research Project. Records

Manly, John Matthews. Papers

University of Chicago. Department of English Language and Literature. Records

Subject Headings

- Rickert, Edith, 1871-1938
- Manly, John Matthews, 1865-1940
- Bates, Katharine Lee, 1859-1929
- Burroughs, John, 1837-1921
- Furnivall, Frederick James, 1825-1910
- Rickert, Edith, 1871-1938
- Chaucer, Geoffrey, -1400
- Chaucer, Geoffrey, d. 1400. Canterbury tales
- Chaucer, Geoffrey, d. 1400 -- Manuscripts -- Facsimiles
- Redstone, Lilian J. (Lilian Jane), 1885-1955
- Redstone, Vincent B. (Vincent Burrough)
- Manuscripts, Medieval -- England
- Manuscripts, English
- Paleography

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 1

1886-1887

Box 1

Folder 2

1888

Box 1

Folder 3

1889

Box 1

Folder 4

1890

Box 1

Folder 5

1891

Box 1

Folder 6

1896-1906

Box 1

Folder 7

Postcards from Frederick J. Furnivall, 1898-1909

Box 1

Folder 8

1908-1910

Box 1

Folder 9

1911-1927

Box 1

Folder 10

1928-1936

Box 1

Folder 11

Student letters, 1936-1937

Box 1

Folder 12

Undated letters

Series II: Journals and Notebooks

Box 1

Folder 13

July 11 - August 11, 1896

Box 1

Folder 14

August 12 - October 16, 1896

Box 2

Folder 1

October 19, 1896 - March 12, 1897

Box 2

Folder 2

March 13 - September 8, 1897

Box 2

Folder 3

September 9, 1897 - April 12, 1898

Box 2

Folder 4

June 23 - November 1, 1898

Box 2

Folder 5

November 2, 1898 - June 15, 1899

Box 2

Folder 6

June 15, 1899 - April 30, 1900

Box 2

Folder 7

May 1, 1900 - April 19, 1901

Box 2

Folder 8

January 10, 1901 - January 9, 1902

Box 2

Folder 9

April 12-16, 1901

Box 2

Folder 10

May 10 - July 27, 1901

Box 2

Folder 11

February 24 - April 27, 1902

Box 3

Folder 1

August 4 - October 25, 1902

Box 3

Folder 2

February 12 - September 11, 1904

Box 3

Folder 3

June 19 - December 11, 1905

Box 3

Folder 4

December 13, 1905 - January 26, 1906

Box 3

Folder 5

July 28 - August 16, 1907

Box 3

Folder 6

Three small notebooks, circa 1923-1930

- Notes for the collection of "Sketches" ER wished to write, undated

Box 3

Folder 7

Disbound signature from journal, undated

Series III: Writings

Subseries 1: Books

Box 3

Folder 8

Richard Baines/Christopher Marlowe project – draft fragments and notes, circa 1910

Box 3

Folder 9

Richard Baines/Christopher Marlowe project – draft fragments and notes, circa 1910

Box 4

Folder 1

Family, undated

Box 4

Folder 2

Family, undated

Box 4

Folder 3

Family, undated

Box 4

Folder 4

Family, undated

Box 4

Folder 5

Lost Legions, undated

Box 4

Folder 6

Lost Legions, undated

Box 4

Folder 7

Lost Legions, second copy, undated

Box 4

Folder 8

Lost Legions, second copy, undated

Box 4

Folder 9

The Romance of Emaré – reprint, manuscript draft, and notes, circa 1906

Box 4

Folder 10

The Romance of Emaré – reprint, manuscript draft, and notes, circa 1906

Box 4

Folder 11

The Romance of Emaré – reprint, manuscript draft, and notes, circa 1906

Box 4

Folder 12

While Breakfast Waits, undated

Box 5

Folder 1

While Breakfast Waits, undated

Box 5

Folder 2

While Breakfast Waits, second copy, undated

Box 5

Folder 3

While Breakfast Waits, second copy, undated

Box 5

Folder 4

Young Alexander, undated

Box 5

Folder 5

Young Alexander, undated

Box 5

Folder 6

Young Alexander, second copy, undated

Box 5

Folder 7

Young Alexander, second copy, undated

Box 5

Folder 8

Young Alexander, alternate pages, undated

Subseries 2: Short Stories

Box 5

Folder 9

Art Sketches, circa 1934

- Silence
- The Charioteer
- Portrait of an Unknown Man
- Obelisk
- Palimpsest
- Wings
- The Broken
- Vase

Box 6

Folder 1

Art Sketches, alternative versions, circa 1934

Box 6

Folder 2

Art Sketches, alternative versions, circa 1934

Box 6

Folder 3

Art Sketches, alternative versions, circa 1934

Box 6

Folder 4

Short Stories, circa 1901-1911

- As To Wooing-There Was None
- Barney of Bruges
- Bats
- The Boiling of the Kettle

Box 6

Folder 5

Short Stories, undated

- The Book of My Island

Box 6

Folder 6

Short Stories, circa 1897-1910

- The Broader Outlook
- Bruges-la-Morte
- Caesar in Servitude
- The Capitulation of Her Parents
- A Castle in Spain
- The Christmas Thorn
- Clothes and the Man
- Cockle Money
- The Coward
- The Cry of the Soil
- Cynthia Brought to Earth

Box 6

Folder 7

Short Stories, circa 1908

- The Dragon Who Liked Dumplings
- Dutch Courtship (originally A New Way of Wooing)
- Eileau Pria

Box 6

Folder 8

Short Stories, circa 1908-1910

- Empty Shells
- The End of the Story (originally The Diary Girl)
- Escape
- The Fertile Hand
- The Freedom of the City
- The Gift of the Sea
- The Giftie
- The Girls

Box 6

Folder 9

Short Stories, circa 1901-1906

- Gloup
- God
- The Golden Isle
- Grandfeythers Both
- The Guardian of the Flame
- Heather-Ber
- Her Wedding Day
- The Hermit of St. James (Jacques)

Box 6

Folder 10

Short Stories, circa 1914

- Home
- The Home-Coming
- The Hoofs of the World
- Hotel Beaurepos
- The House of Afternoon
- The House of the Star
- Julius

Box 7

Folder 1

Short Stories, circa 1905-1915

- Katie-on-the-Step
- The Knocking at the Door
- Leaning on Her Broom
- The Lifting of the Burden
- The Lilac Lady
- A Little Game of War
- Little Sister to Old Ladies
- The Lords of the World
- Luck!

Box 7

Folder 2

Short Stories, circa 1899-1909

- Mac, the Divil an' His Dip'ties
- Madcap Charlotte: Her Book
- The Man Who Was Drowned
- Mary-of-the-Sea
- The Night Bird
- The Old Things
- On a Park Bench
- The Ordered House
- Osla Whale Hunting
- Patagonia

Box 7

Folder 3

Short Stories, undated

- The Pilgrim

Box 7

Folder 4

Short Stories, undated

- The Pilgrim, second copy

Box 7

Folder 5

Short Stories, circa 1905-1911

- Pink Sugar
- Poor Susan!
- The Pot on the Fire
- The Princess Steps Down

Box 7

Folder 6

Short Stories, circa 1897

- The Queen of Hearts
- A Question of Adjustment
- The Ranees' Children
- Return Through the Snow

Box 7

Folder 7

Short Stories, circa 1905

- The Rice-Bag
- The Rocking-Chair
- The Room at the End of the Passage
- Saturday
- She Is Mary-Gold
- The Ship That Was Late
- Soft Jock (originally Jock's Victory)
- Soundings; Off Barra Head and Elsewhere
- Southern Pride
- The Stable
- Strayed - A Princess

Box 7

Folder 8

Short Stories, circa 1910

- The Telephone
- The Three Bears
- Tiger Tail
- To-morrow
- The Tone of the Cracked Chimes
- Tow'ead
- Toy Town
- The Two Fears

Box 7

Folder 9

Short Stories, circa 1904-1911

- Unwilling Burglars
- Up Ardnamurchan Way
- The Way of the Wind
- When the Fever Was at Uist
- When the Time Came
- Which Floor?
- White Lucy

- Wishes Are Horses
- The Wishing Ball
- The Wonderful Day

Box 7

Folder 10

- Short Stories, undated
- Yankees All

Box 8

Folder 1

Untitled stories and fragments, undated

Subseries 3: Poems

Box 8

Folder 2

- Poems, circa 1907-1912
- And Pity 'Tis, 'Tis True
 - A Ballad of Heather
 - A Christmas Carol
 - L'Envoi
 - Lullaby
 - March
 - The Master Beggar
 - Nobody Knows the Trouble I See
 - Sea Thistle
 - Spring
 - To a Thrush in the Tower
 - To an Intruder
 - Zoo

Box 8

Folder 3

Untitled poems, circa 1903

Subseries 4: Essays, Memoirs and Reviews

Box 8

Folder 4

- Essays, Memoirs and Reviews, undated
- The Bacon Manuscripts at the University of Chicago
 - Cliff-Climbing in Cornwall
 - Closing In
 - Du Côté de chez Proust
 - Espiñal
 - An Essay on Pageantry
 - Experiments in Primitive Life
 - F. J. Furnivall
 - Foundations

Box 8

Folder 5

Essays, Memoirs and Reviews, circa 1904-1932

- The Fraternity Idea Among College Women
- Hermann Heijermans
- The Hidden Force
- Holland, From a Freight-Steamer
- Homer in the Far North
- Humors of an Old Dutch Town
- Illuminated French and Flemish MSS in the British Museum
- In the Land of the Golden Goat (with a shorter version, At the Sign of the Golden Goat)
- King Richard II's Books

Box 8**Folder 6**

Essays, Memoirs and Reviews, circa 1903-1909

- The Land of the Doones
- An Old "Book of Friends"
- Old Christmas Carols
- On the Desirability and the Possibility of an Institute for Mediaeval Research at the U of C
- Provençal Friendships (Making Friends in Provence)

Box 8**Folder 7**

Essays, Memoirs and Reviews, circa 1909-1925

- Roads
- A Sail to Fuiay
- Skagen; The Danish Painters' Village in Jutland
- Some Questions on Graduate Work
- Tennyson; A Generation After
- To Whom It May Concern; A Hint or Two on the Study of Poetry
- Ultima Thule
- What I Am Most Thankful For

Box 8**Folder 8**

Untitled book reviews, undated

Subseries 5: Articles**Box 8****Folder 9**

Article fragments – typescript drafts, undated

Box 8**Folder 10**

Philippe de Mézières – typescript draft fragments and notes, undated

Box 8**Folder 11**

Reprints, 1905-1933

Box 8

Folder 12

Reprints, 1905-1933

Box 8

Folder 13

"Thomas Chaucer and John of Gaunt," – typescript draft, undated

Box 8

Folder 14

Unidentified notes, undated

Box 8

Folder 15

"The Wedding Present of Chaucer's Duchess," – typescript draft, undated

Subseries 6: Translations and Works by Others

Box 8

Folder 16

About the King's Daughter, anonymous Lithuanian tale Letters to a Lover, translated by ER from the French, undated

Box 9

Folder 1

About the King's Daughter, typescript of French originals, undated

Box 9

Folder 2

John M. Manly – Chaucer article, review, and lecture reprints, 1908-1934

Box 9

Folder 3

Priscilla-on-Her-Own, by Marjorie Fleming, undated

Box 9

Folder 4

Priscilla-on-Her-Own, by Marjorie Fleming, undated

Box 9

Folder 5

Priscilla-on-Her-Own, by Marjorie Fleming, undated

Box 9

Folder 6

Priscilla-on-Her-Own, by Marjorie Fleming, undated

Box 9

Folder 7

Riders in the Night, by Jacob Blount, Jr., undated

Box 9

Folder 8

Riders in the Night, by Jacob Blount, Jr., undated

Box 9

Folder 9

Riders in the Night, by Jacob Blount, Jr., undated

Box 9

Folder 10

Riders in the Night, by Jacob Blount, Jr., undated

Box 10

Folder 1

Tales of the Other World and of This, translated by ER from the Provençal of Joseph Roumanille, undated

Box 10

Folder 2

Untitled historical novel, anonymous, undated

Box 10

Folder 3

Untitled historical novel, anonymous, undated

Box 10

Folder 4

Untitled historical novel, anonymous, undated

Box 10

Folder 5

Untitled historical novel, anonymous, undated

Series IV: Biographical

Box 10

Folder 6

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 10

Folder 7

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 10

Folder 8

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 10

Folder 9

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 10

Folder 10

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 10

Folder 11

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 10

Folder 12

Press clipping scrapbook, 1905-1909, disbound

Box 11

Folder 1

Miscellaneous press clippings, 1907-1949

Box 11

Folder 2

Publisher's contract for *The Golden Hawk*, 1906

Box 11

Folder 3

Bibliographies of published works by ER, circa 1911-1934

Box 11

Folder 4

Miscellaneous biographical clippings, 1904-1932

Box 11

Folder 5

Address book, undated

Box 11

Folder 6

Fred B. Millet, correspondence with John M. Manly, Clair C. Olson, and others regarding ER, 1938-1940.

Box 11

Folder 7

Fred B. Millet, Edith Rickert: A Memoir, 1944

Box 11

Folder 8

Margaret Rickert, correspondence concerning ER, 1955-1960 (includes bibliography of ER's works)

Box 11

Folder 9

Locket portraits of ER and her mother, Josephine Newburgh Rickert Foster Medal awarded to ER, 1883

- Phi Beta Kappa key awarded to ER, Vassar College, 1891

Box 11

Folder 10

Casts of seals of Thomas Chaucer and others from the Public Record Office, undated

Box 11

Folder 11

Commonplace book of Josephine Newburgh Rickert, 1858

Box 11

Folder 12

Autograph album of Josephine Newburgh Rickert, 1862

Box 12

Folder 1

Bible of Josephine Newburgh Rickert, 1859

Series VI: Research

Box 12

Folder 2

April 20, 1920 notebook

Box 12

Folder 3

Clippings, undated

Box 12

Folder 4

Mansell's Series of Portraits of British Worthies and Notorieties -- booklet, 1923

Box 12

Folder 5

Notes from M.H. Mills and Jamison, undated

Box 12

Folder 6

Notes, undated

Box 12

Folder 7

Notes, undated

Box 13

Notecards -- Persons, undated

Box 14

Notecards -- Provenance, undated

Box 15

Notecards -- Paleography and MS Records, undated

Box 16

Notecards -- Scribes, undated

Box 17

Notecards, undated

Box 18

Notecards -- Shakespeare references, undated

Box 19

Notecards -- Redstone cards, 1931

Box 20

Notecards -- Scribes, undated

Box 21

Notecards, undated

Box 22

Notecards -- Persons A - Ha, undated

Box 23

Notecards -- Persons I - Z, Subjects 1-28, undated

Box 24

Notecards -- Places, undated

Box 25

Notecards -- MHM Customs, undated

Series VII: Teaching

Box 26

Folder 1

"Early Sketches, Probably from Vassar Period," circa 1897-1900

Box 26

Folder 2

Shakespeare notes, undated

Series VIII: Audiovisual

Box 26

Folder 3

Chaucer-related images – photographs and drawings, undated

Box 26

Folder 4

Photographs – John Burroughs, circa 1905

Box 26

Folder 5

Photographs – illustrations by W. T. Benda for The Golden Hawk, circa 1907

Box 26

Folder 6

Photographs – ER's apartment, undated

Box 26

Folder 7

Photographs – Rickert family, undated

Box 26

Folder 8

Pilgrim's Way – photostat negative map and drawing, undated