

University of Chicago Library

Guide to the Morton Dauwen Zabel Papers 1901-1964



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.ZABEL
Title	Zabel, Morton Dauwen. Papers
Date	1901-1964
Size	2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Morton Dauwen Zabel (1901-1964), author, critic, editor and scholar of nineteenth-century English and European literature. PhD, University of Chicago, 1933. Associate editor, *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* (1928-1936), full editor (1936-1937). Professor of English, University of Chicago (1947-1964). The Morton D. Zabel Papers follow closely the professional, scholarly life of Zabel through most of his activities from 1928 on, notably his association with *Poetry*, his professorship at the University of Chicago and his chairmanship of the Vaughn Moody Lecture Series and Harriet Monroe Poetry Award committees, and include additional miscellaneous correspondence in respect to his travels and colleagues. The papers are divided into four series.

Information on Use

Access

Files as the end of Series IV are restricted. Faculty appointment files are restricted until 2013. Student files are restricted until 2039.

Citation

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

Biographical Note

Morton Dauwen Zabel was born in Minnesota Lake, Minnesota, on August 10, 1901. He received his A. B. from St. Thomas Military College in 1921, his M.A. from the University of Minnesota in 1922, and his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1933. A scholar, critic, and specialist of nineteenth-century English and European literature, Zabel traveled and studied widely during his lifetime. He authored several books; the most notable being *Literary Opinion in America*, published in 1943.

Zabel served as associate editor of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* from 1928-1936 and full editor 1936-1937. His professional association with the University of Chicago began in 1947 when he was appointed to the English Department and actively continued until his death in 1964.

Scope Note

The Morton D. Zabel Papers follow closely the professional, scholarly life of Zabel through most of his activities from 1928 on, notably his association with *Poetry*, his professorship at the University of Chicago and his chairmanship of the Vaughn Moody Lecture Series and Harriet Monroe Poetry Award committees, and include additional miscellaneous correspondence in respect to his travels and colleagues. The papers are divided into four series.

Series I: Correspondence and Items from *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, 1928-1937

As associate editor of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* under Harriet Monroe from 1928 to 1936 and as full editor of 1936-37, Zabel's abilities as a discriminating critic were allowed full play and resulted in a scintillating correspondence which is here collected as an important and previously unavailable supplement to the files of *Poetry*. His duties as associate editor were concerned primarily with the compilation of the prose section. Thus, a substantial portion of the collection contains letters to critics, editors and poets concerning book reviews and articles as well as *Poetry*. Salient in the letters is the quality of the man-as-man behind the man-as-writer—from that of the unsolicited, unpublished, would-be poet who pleads "you have to eat," to that of an outstanding writer trying to please an editor with revisions and keep his creativity his own. Items such as galley proofs, typed poems, and drafts of articles are often included.

The collection of letters from Harriet Monroe to Zabel is especially notable. Many were written just before Monroe's death in Peru in 1936. They vary in context and tone but add considerable information to an understanding of the founder's conception of the mission of the magazine.

The Ezra Pound folder is also of great interest. The 43 letters range from 1930 to 1936 and were sent from Rapallo. They contain comments on the function of criticism, the task of *Poetry* and the work of contemporary poets.

Unexpected comments such as the following from a letter to Edmund Wilson written by Zabel in 1937 add a touch of serendipity to the collection. Zabel describes the visit of the Tates to Chicago. "The two of them had daughter Nance along...and a dog and a young Harvard sprout called Robert Lowell... a pleasant fellow got up in the best Harvard manner of soiled shoes, unpressed pants, dirty shirt, tousled hair, face slightly broken out, soft voice, and moral earnestness writ large upon his features." Lowell was twenty and unknown at the time.

Series II: Correspondence and Items from William Vaughn Moody Lecture Series

While at the University Zabel served as chairman of the William Vaughn Moody Lecture Series, attracting writers of note and ability to the campus. Prominent in Zabel's letters is his conscientiousness over every detail of the arrangements and his solicitude for the comfort and ease of the traveling lecturers.

Series III: Correspondence and Items in Relation to the Harriet Monroe Poetry Award, 1946-1954

As Chairman of the Harriet Monroe Poetry Award Zabel exhibited this same conscientiousness in the selection of committee members and potential winners. This five hundred dollar award, to be given whenever that sum accrued from her five thousand dollar bequest, was founded by Harriet Monroe in conjunction with the University and actually presented approximately every two years beginning in 1941. The agreement establishing the award is included in Box IV, folder 12. Zabel served as chairman from 1946 to 1954 and selected new jury members for each occasion.

Series IV: University of Chicago and Miscellaneous Material

This portion of the collection represents a variety of events, the more important being papers relating to Zabel's appointment to the University, his rather lengthy correspondence with Katherine Anne Porter in an effort to bring that writer to the campus as a visiting lecturer, copies of exams and student correspondence, manuscripts of articles and lectures, and European travel notes made immediately after World War II with accounts of meeting T.S. Eliot and George Santayana. Also included, and of interest to bibliographers and students of Zabel's thought, is a list prepared by Zabel of his publications for the years 1943 to 1961, with projected book publications for 1962 and 1963 and the names of periodicals in which well over a hundred contributions were published from 1943 to 1963.

Related Resources

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

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html> Harriet Monroe. Papers Poetry: A Magazine of Verse. Records

Subject Headings

- Zabel, Morton Dauwen, 1901-1964
- Bogan, Louise, 1897-1970
- Bunting, Basil
- Cowley, Malcolm, 1898-
- Crane, Hart, 1899-1932
- Fletcher, John Gould, 1886-1950
- Ford, Madox Ford, 1873-1939
- Kunitz, Stanley J., 1905
- Moore, Marianne, 1887-1972
- Monroe, Harriet, 1860-1936
- Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972
- Stevens, Wallace, 1879-1955
- Tate, Allen, 1899
- Warren, Robert Penn, 1905-
- Wilder, Thornton, 1897-1975

- Yeats, William Butler, 1865-1939
- Zaturenska, Marya, 1902
- Zukofsky, Louis, 1904-1978
- Poetry: A Magazine of Verse
- Poetry (Chicago, Ill.)
- American poetry -- 20th century -- History and criticism
- Literature publishing -- Illinois -- Chicago -- History -- 20th century
- Poetry -- Periodicals
- Poets, American

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence and Items From Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, 1928-1937

Box 1

Folder 1

A-general 1932-1937

- Abernathy, Milton A.
- Adamic, Louis
- Adams, J. Donald
- Adams, Leonie
- Adamson, Gordon
- Alberts, Sydney S.
- Allen, Charles A.
- Alling, Kenneth Slade
- American Poetry Journal
- Anderson, Forrest
- Andrews, Don
- Angert, E.H.
- Ashley, Winston
- Auden, Wystan Hugh

Box 1

Folder 2

Aiken, Conrad 1934-1937

Box 1

Folder 3

B-general 1932-1937

- Barber, Solon R.
- Barnard, Mary
- Bean, Donald PP
- Beckwith, Russell
- Benton, Walter
- Bind, Laura Lee
- Bishop, Elizabeth
- Bonner, Amy
- Book (N.Y. Herald Tribune)

- Books Abroad
- Bottrall, Ronald
- Boyden, Preston
- Brand, Millen
- Brewer, Joseph
- Bridson, D.G.
- Brown, Harry
- Bruncken, Herbert
- Brynes, Oscar
- Buckley, Homer J.
- Bullock, Hugh
- Butcher, Fanny
- Buttitta, Antony J.
- Bynner, Witter

Box 1

Folder 4

Balloting - items pertaining to selections of prizewinners for the Levinson, Guarantors, Blumenthal, Davis, and Midland Authors awards

Box 1

Folder 5

Beckett, Samuel (Includes typed copy of 4 poems)

Box 1

Folder 6

Belitt, Ben 1936-1946

Box 1

Folder 7

Bishop, John Peale 1933-1937

Box 1

Folder 8

Blackmur, Richard PP 1931-1937

Box 1

Folder 9

Blake, Howard 1934-1937

Box 1

Folder 10

Bogan, Louise 192?-1937

Box 1

Folder 11

Bryher, Winifred MacPherson 1934-1937

Box 1

Folder 12

Bunting, Basil 1932-1937

Box 1

Folder 14

Burnshaw, Stanley 1933-1934

Box 1

Folder 15

C-general 1933-1937

- Campaign, John
- Chubb Thomas Caldecot
- Circoli (Magazine)
- Clapp, Frederick Mortimer
- Collins, Seward
- Coming, Howard McKinley
- Conrad, Sherman
- Cooperman, Hasye
- Coward McCann (publishers)
- Criterion (magazine)
- Curry, Elsa

Box 1

Folder 16

Calhoun, Lucy

Box 1

Folder 17

Cowley, Malcolm 1932-1936

Box 1

Folder 18

Crane, Hart 1928-1932

Box 1

Folder 19

Cunningham, J.V. 1932-1933

Box 1

Folder 20

D 1931-1937

- Daley, Jim
- Damon, S. Foster
- Davidman, Donald
- Davidman, Joy
- Deis, Dora C.
- Denney, Revel
- Direction (magazine)
- Doubleday publishers
- Doughty, Le Garde S.
- Downey, Harris
- Dresbach,?
- Dublin (magazine)
- Dupee, Helen
- Dutton and Company

Box 1

Folder 21

Dejong, David

Box 1

Folder 22

Deutsch, Babette 1935-1936

Box 1

Folder 23

Dillon, George 1936-1937

Box 1

Folder 24

E-general

- Edgerton, Gladys
- Evans, Abbie Huston

Box 1

Folder 25

Eberhart, Richard 1936-1937

Box 1

Folder 26

Eliot, T. S. 1937

Box 1

Folder 27

England, Robert

Box 1

Folder 28

F-general 1931-1936

- Faber and Faber
- Fack, Hugo R.
- Farrell, Jim
- Fergeson, Francis
- Fetcher, Margaret
- FitzGerald, William
- Flaccus, Kimball
- Freer, Agnes Lee
- Friedrich, Ralph
- Friend, Robert

Box 1

Folder 29

Fitts, Dudley

Box 1

Folder 30

FitzGerald, Robert 1931-1939

Box 1

Folder 31

Flanner, Hildegard

Box 1

Folder 32

Fletcher, John Gould 1932-1937

Box 1

Folder 33

Ford, Ford Madox 1937

Box 1

Folder 34

Frost, Lesley 1934-1936

Box 1

Folder 35

Frost, Robert 1934-1935

Box 1

Folder 36

G-general 1934-1937

- Giniger, K.S.
- Glenn, J.
- Gorman, William
- Green, Nora A.
- Greenhood, David
- Gund, Herman

Box 1

Folder 37

Gill, Eric 1930)

Box 1

Folder 38

Gregory, Horace 1933-1937

Box 1

Folder 39

Grigson, Geoffrey

Box 2

Folder 1

H-general 1931-1937

- Ham, Roswell Gray
- Hamill
- Hamblin, Arthur T.
- Harrison of Paris and New York
- Harrison, Henry (publisher)
- Hartly, Marsdin
- Hays, H. R.
- Henderson, (Mrs.)
- Henrikson, Rose (Mrs. Carl I.)
- Heppenstall, Rayner
- Herbert T. Walter
- Herdman, Ramona
- [Heyward, Dubose; see Whitman-Publishing Co.]
- Hogarth Press
- Hollenell, Grace Baer
- Holmes, John Albert
- Hoptner, J. B.
- Horton, Philip

- Hosken, Raymond
- Hound and Horn Inc.

Box 2

Folder 2

Hayakawa, S.I.

Box 2

Folder 3

Healy, John Vincent

Box 2

Folder 4

Holden, Raymond

Box 2

Folder 5

Hone, Joseph 1933-1937

Box 2

Folder 6

Hoyt, Helen 1931-1936

Box 2

Folder 7

Humphries, Rolfe 1931-1937

Box 2

Folder 8

J-general 1930-1936

- Jeremy (Finnegan), Sister O.PP
- Johns, Richard
- Johnson, Josephine
- Johnson, A.E.
- Jolas, Eugene
- Jones, Neel
- Joyce, ?

Box 2

Folder 9

K-general 1933-36

- Keller, Martha
- Kaas, Josephine
- Kidd, Walter E.
- Knights, L.C.
- Kosmos (magazine)

Box 2

Folder 10

Kunitz, Stanley J. 1930-1937

Box 2

Folder 11

L-general 1932-37

- Larsson, Raymond E.F.
- Latham, H.S.

- Lattimore, Richmond
- Laughlin, James
- Leach, Henry Goddard
- Leavis, Frank R.
- Lee, Muna
- Leighton, Louise (Mrs. B.G.)
- [Leseman, Maurice; see Whitman-Publishing Co.]
- Levinson, Salmon O.
- Lewis, H.H.
- Lewis, May
- Life and Letters To-Day
- Lind, L. Robert
- Lippmann, Alice D.
- [Liveright, Horace; see Whitman-Publishing Co.]
- Lowenfels, Walter
- Little, Brown and Company

Box 2

Folder 12

Laing, Gordon J.

Box 2

Folder 13

Lindsay, Vachel 1930)

Box 2

Folder 14

Lovett, Robert Morss 1932-1937

Box 2

Folder 15

M-general 1931-37

- Maas, Willard
- Machado, Rose
- Macleod, Joseph
- Macmillan Company
- Magaret, Helene
- Maher, John S.
- Mansfied, Margery
- Manuel, C.H. (?)
- Marshall, Margaret
- Martin, James B.
- Mason, August N.
- Masters, ?
- Matthiessen, Francis Otto
- Mayfield, Mrs. George
- Mayor, A. Hyatt
- MacIntyre, Carlyle F.
- Meynell?
- Michigan State Federation of Women's Clubs

- Midwest Writers Association
- Miles, Josephine
- Miller, Fred R.
- Mitchell, Burroughs
- Mitchell, Marion (Mrs. J. H.)
- Molloy, Mervyn
- Moore, Agnes D.
- Morang, Alfred
- Morrissette, p, At
- Morse, Samuel French
- Moses, W.R.

Box 2

Folder 16

MacLeish, Archibald 1931

Box 2

Folder 17

MacLeod, Norman 1931-1935

Box 2

Folder 18

Mangan, Sherry 1931-1936

Box 2

Folder 19

Millspaugh, C.A. 1932-1937

Box 2

Folder 20

Monroe, Harriet 1930-1936

Box 2

Folder 21

Monroe, William S.

Box 2

Folder 22

Moore, Marianne 1931-1936

Box 2

Folder 23

N-general 1935

- New Quarterly (publication)
- Nutt, Howard

Box 2

Folder 24

North, Jessica 1930-1943

Box 2

Folder 25

O-general 1933-1937

- O'Donnell, Father
- O'Donnel, George Marion
- O'Sullivan, Seumas

- Oxford University Press

Box 2

Folder 26

Olson, Elder James 1936-1937

Box 2

Folder 27

P-general 1936-1937

- Parsons, Geoffrey
- Partisan Review
- Price, Richard
- Putt, S.

Box 2

Folder 28

Pound, Ezra 1926-1936

Box 2

Folder 29

Q-general 1935-1936

- Quinn, Kerker

Box 3

Folder 1

R-general 1930-1937

- Rakosi, Carl
- Random House, Inc.
- Rankin, Hilda
- Rennow, O.
- Rice, Philip Blair
- Rickert, Edith
- Rolfe, Edwin
- Rollins, George A.
- Roskolenkier, Harry
- Rovere, Richard H.
- Rubinstein, Harry
- Russell, Don
- Russell, S.K.

Box 3

Folder 2

Robert, Michael 1936-1937

Box 3

Folder 3

Rosenberg, Harold

Box 3

Folder 4

Rukuyser, Muriel 1934-1937

Box 3

Folder 5

S-general (1930-37)

- Salinger, Herman
- Salt, Syd S.
- Sarrett, Lew
- [Sassoon, Sigfried; See Whitman-Publishing Co.]
- Saturday Review
- Schacht, PP, L.
- Schilplin, Maude C.
- Schubert David
- Schware, Herman Charles
- Schwartz, Delmore
- Scott, Evelyn
- Scott, Winfield Townley
- Scrutiny (publication)
- Shards (publication)
- Sherry, Laura
- Sherry, Pearl Anderson
- Simon and Schuster, Inc.
- Slobod, Fay
- Smith, A.J.M.
- Smith, Caroline Parker
- Smith, George Smedley
- Spencer, Theodore
- Stedman, J.W.
- Stephens, Pauline Francis
- Stifler, James M.
- Still, James
- Sulkie, Thomas
- Sullivan, A.M.
- Swaine, Ruth
- Symons, Julian
- Symphonist Press

Box 3

Folder 6

Sandburg, Carl 1936-1937

Box 3

Folder 7

Schappes, Morris U. (includes edited 3 pp article)

Box 3

Folder 8

Seiffert, Marjorie 1930-1937

Box 3

Folder 9

Stevens, Wallace 1933-1937

Box 3

Folder 10

Strobel, Marion 1936-1937

Box 3

Folder 11

- T-general (1932-37)
 - Tallman, Robert
 - Taylor, Otis E.
 - Thayerman, Edward
 - Theatre Guild
 - Thoma, Richard
 - Thomas, Keith
 - Troy, William
 - Trueblood, Charles K.
 - Twentieth Century (publication)
 - Tyler, Parker

Box 3

Folder 12

Tate, Allen 1931-1934

Box 3

Folder 13

Tietjens, Eunice 1934-1937

Box 3

Folder 14

Udell, Geraldine 1935-1950

Box 3

Folder 15

- W-general (1929-37)
 - Walton, Eda Lou
 - [Ward, May Montgomery; see Whitman-publishing Co]
 - Warren, Austin
 - Warriston, R.B.
 - Welles, Winifred
 - Wheelock, John Hall
 - Whitman-Publishing Co.
 - Wickes, E.A.
 - Wiggam, Lionel
 - Wilder, Charlotte
 - Windsor Quarterly (publication)
 - Worth (Curry), Kathryn
 - Wren, Paul

Box 3

Folder 16

Warren, Robert Penn 1931-1936

Box 3

Folder 17

Wheelwright, John B. 1932-1937

Box 3

Folder 18

Wilder, Thornton 1937

Box 3

Folder 19

Williams, William Carlos 1933-1937

Box 3

Folder 20

Wilson, Edmund 1935-1937

Box 3

Folder 21

Wilson, T.C. 1932-1937

Box 3

Folder 22

Winters, Yvor 1927

Box 3

Folder 23

Y-general (1933-36)

- Yaddo
- Young, Kathleen Tankersley
- Young, Marguerite V.

Box 3

Folder 24

Yeats, William Butler 1931-1937

Box 3

Folder 25

Zabel, Morton Dauwen, Poem; "The Dead City", 1 p, T

Box 3

Folder 26

Zaturensky, Marya 1934-1937

Box 3

Folder 27

Zukofsky, Louis 1930-1936

Series II: Correspondence and Items from William Vaughn Moody Lecture Series

Box 4

Folder 1

A

- Adams, Leonie
- Amis, Kingsley
- Anderson, Hedli
- Auden, W.H.
- Barr, Alfred H., Jr.
- Bentley, Eric
- Berlin, Isaiah (David Grene)

Box 4

Folder 2

B-CL

- Blunt, Anthony
- Bogan, Louise
- Bowen, Elizabeth
- Butler, Reg
- Cairns, Huntington
- Cary, Joyce
- Cleland, Robert G.

Box 4

Folder 3

CO-D

- Copland, Aaron
- Cummings, E.E.
- Daiches, David
- Dos Passos, John
- Draper, Ruth

Box 4

Folder 4

E-KI

- Eliot, T.S.
- Faulkner, William
- Forster, E.M.
- Gielgud, John
- Hale, Nancy
- Hansen, Harry
- Kermode, Frank
- Kimball, Fiske

Box 4

Folder 5

KN-MACD

- Knight, G. Wilson
- Kray, Elizabeth
- Kronenberger, Louis
- Le Galliene, Eva
- Levin, Harry
- Lewis, C. Day
- Macdonald, Dwight

Box 4

Folder 6

MACN-MO

- MacNeice, Louis
- Moore, Douglas
- Moore, Marianne

Box 4

Folder 7

MU

- Muir, Edwin
- Mumford, Lewis

Box 4

Folder 8

O-P

- O'Faolain, Sean
- Parker, Dorothy
- Piston, Walter
- Porter, Katherine Anne
- Pryce-Jones, Alan

Box 4

Folder 9

R-SE

- Raine, Kathleen
- Rowse, A.L.
- Salinger, J.D.
- Sessions, Roger

Box 4

Folder 10

SH-T

- Sheean, Vincent
- Snow, C.PP
- Spender, Stephen
- Storey, Graham
- Tate, Allen
- Thomas, Dylan
- Trilling, Lionel

Box 4

Folder 11

W

- Warren, Robert Penn
- Welty, Eudora
- Williams, Ralph Vaughn
- Wilson, Angus
- Wilson, Colin

Series III: Correspondence and Items in Relation to the Harriet Monroe Poetry Award, 1946-1954

Box 4

Folder 12

Agreement establishing the Award; 1946 Award correspondence

Box 4

Folder 13

1948 Award correspondence

Box 4

Folder 14

1950 Award correspondence

Box 4

Folder 15

1952 Award correspondence

Box 4

Folder 16

1954 Award correspondence; Report on Award for 1941-55

Series IV: University of Chicago and Miscellaneous Material

Box 5

Folder 1

Correspondence re Zabel's appointment to University of Chicago faculty, 1934-1958

Box 5

Folder 2

Correspondence relating to selection of visiting writers

Box 5

Folder 3

Syllabuses, reading lists (alphabetically by course)

Box 5

Folder 4

Examinations for courses (alphabetically by course)

Box 5

Folder 5

Special and Ph.D. examinations (alphabetically by student)

Box 5

Folder 6

Comprehensive examinations for M.A. degrees (arranged chronologically)

Box 5

Folder 7

Miscellaneous reports prepared by Zabel

Box 5

Folder 8

Manuscripts and notes for articles and speeches; Items concerning contemporary American criticism, Joseph Conrad, Graham Greene, Rudyard Kipling, H. G. Wells

Box 5

Folder 9

Manuscripts and notes for articles and speeches; Travel memoranda and notes on Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, and others and fragments of three articles

Box 5

Folder 10

Harriet Monroe Modern Poetry Collection, books and manuscripts; Copy of agreement establishing Modern Poetry Library, correspondence concerning requests for use of manuscript collection

Box 5

Folder 11

Miscellaneous letters

Box 5

Folder 12

Diploma for MA, University of Minnesota, 1922

Box 5

Folder 13

Correspondence relating to appointment of other faculty members, 1947-1963

RESTRICTED

Box 5

Folder 8-10

Student recommendations, thesis evaluations, coursework (alphabetically by student);

1949-1959 RESTRICTED