
Paul Engle letters and enclosures to Alex Williams
1947-1962

Abstract: American poet Paul Engle (1908-1991) wrote to Canadian book collector Alex Williams regarding his published poems and frequently enclosed copies of his privately printed work.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 099, F943
Title: Paul Engle letters and enclosures to Alex Williams
Inclusive Dates: 1947-1962
Extent: 14 items
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 099, F943, Paul Engle letters and enclosures to Alex Williams, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 65, F943: Shelved in SPEC MSS 099 manuscript boxes
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Biographical Notes

Paul Engle

American poet and educator Paul (Hamilton) Engle (1908-1991) is perhaps most widely known as the founder and longtime director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop and as the founder of the International Writing Program, both at the University of Iowa. Engle was nominated for a 1976 Nobel Peace Prize for his work with the International Writing Program.

Paul Engle’s first published book of poetry, Worn Earth, received the Yale Series of Younger Poets Prize in 1932. Engle continued to write poetry during the remainder of his life, contributing to numerous periodicals, publishing fourteen volumes of poetry, and editing the collected poetry of other poets.

In 1990, Engle, who also wrote several novels and works of nonfiction, was honored with the Award for Distinguished Service to the Arts by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Alex Williams

Alex Williams, who lived in Toronto, Canada, collected work written by Paul Engle. His correspondence seems to have begun in 1947 when he inquired about Engle's book Worn Earth. Over the next fifteen years Engle wrote to Williams and enclosed a number of his printed pieces, such as Christmas poems, reprints, and booklets.

Sources:


Information derived from the collection.
American poet Paul Engle (1908-1991) wrote to Canadian book collector Alex Williams regarding his published poems and frequently enclosed copies of his privately printed work.

In addition to the printed pieces of poetry written by Paul Engle (and frequently inscribed to Alex Williams), this collection includes two substantive letters, one postcard and two brief notes written by Engle.

The brief notes conveyed greetings and accompanied the items which Engle had enclosed. The postcard was sent in 1953, from New York City, where Engle was spending a year writing and enjoying the East Coast.

The first letter of substance was written on February 22, 1947, in response to Alex Williams’s inquiry about *Worn Earth*. Engle wrote that *Worn Earth* has been out of print since 1933, but he also enclosed "a handful of sonnets as a token of friendly feeling."

In the second substantive letter, written on May 26, 1951, Engle thanked Williams for a poem, handwritten by English poet Edmund Blunden, which Williams had sent to him. Engle further discussed a dedicatory poem he had written in a book which he had given to American author and anthologist Edward J. O’Brien, and which Williams had recently acquired. The remainder of the letter focused on Engle’s recent publications and the items he had enclosed with this letter.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Engle, Paul, 1908-1991--Correspondence.
Williams, Alex--Correspondence.

Topical Terms

Poets, American--20th century--Correspondence.
Book collectors--20th century--Correspondence.

Form/Genre Terms

Correspondence.
Booklets.
Leaflets.
Broadsides.
Postcards.

Occupation

Poets.
Collectors.

Personal Contributors

Williams, Alex, correspondent.

Related Materials in this Repository

This item forms part of MSS 099 Miscellaneous Literary and Historical Manuscripts.
MSS 191, Donald Justice papers
MSS 103, John Malcolm Brinnin papers
Arrangement

Arranged in chronological order.
Detailed Description of the Collection

Paul Engle typed signed letter to Alex Williams, 1947 February 22 [Box 65 F943]
2 items (2 p.)

Enclosed with the letter is a printed broadside, "Christmas 1946," which is a poem by Engle and inscribed: "For Alex Williams - Paul Engle, Iowa City, 1947."

Paul Engle printed leaflet inscribed to Alex Williams, 1947 December [Box 65 F943]
1 item (3 p.)

Printed leaflet, which is an untitled poem by Engle with the first line: "Speaking of you is the denial of speech," is inscribed: "This is for Alex Williams, Paul Engle, December 1947."

Paul Engle reprint inscribed to Alex Williams, 1950 December 1 [Box 65 F943]
1 item (7 p.)

Reprint of "Three Poems" by Paul Engle, from Poetry, Volume 77, No. 2 (November 1950)." Engle has signed and dated the front cover of the reprint.

Paul Engle printed booklet signed, 1950 December [25] [Box 65 F943]
1 item (16 p.)

This printed booklet, titled "American Child," includes ten poems written by Engle and is signed and dated on the verso of the title page.

Paul Engle typed signed letter to Alex Williams, 1951 May 26 [Box 65 F943]
2 items (4 p.)

Enclosed with the letter is a another copy of the leaflet, which is an untitled poem by Engle with the first line: "Speaking of you is the denial of speech." It is inscribed: "This one is for Alex Williams, Paul Engle, Iowa City, 1951 - May 26."

Paul Engle typed signed postcard to Alex Williams, 1953 January 1 [Box 65 F943]
1 item (1 p.)

Paul Engle typed signed letter to Alex Williams, [1955] January 16 [Box 65 F943]
2 items (2 p.)
Enclosed with the letter is a printed broadside, titled "A Name," which is inscribed: "For Alex Williams, Paul Engle, 1954."

Paul Engle printed booklet signed with envelope, [1957 January 24] [Box 65 F943]
1 item (6 p.)

This printed booklet, titled "Book and Child," includes three sonnets written by Engle and was privately printed for his friends at Christmas 1956. It is inscribed: "For Alex Williams, all good wishes - Paul Engle."

Paul Engle typed signed note to Alex Williams, 1959 June 1 [Box 65 F943]
2 items (5 p.)

Enclosed with the letter is a printed pamphlet, titled "Robert Frost," which is signed and dated by Paul Engle.

Paul Engle printed booklet signed, 1962 [December 25] [Box 65 F943]
1 item (6 p.)

This printed booklet, titled "Christmas Poems," includes twelve poems written by Engle and privately printed for Christmas 1962. It is signed and dated on the front cover.