Finding Aid for the Sir Max Beerbohm Papers, 1900-1956

Processed by Janet Madden; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé and edited by Josh Fiala.
UCLA Library Special Collections
UCLA Library Special Collections staff
Room A1713, Charles E. Young Research Library
Box 951575
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1575
Email: spec-coll@library.ucla.edu
URL: http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/special/scweb/
© 2002
The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.
Descriptive Summary

Title: Sir Max Beerbohm Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1900-1956

Collection number: 959

Creator: Beerbohm, Max, Sir, 1872-1956

Extent: 1 box (0.5 linear ft.)

Abstract: Henry Maximilian Beerbohm (1872-1956) was born in London, England. He became a satirical essayist, caricaturist, critic, short story writer, and novelist. The collection consists of correspondence, literary manuscripts, notebooks, unpublished poems, original drawings, and ephemera related to the writings of Max Beerbohm. Includes original manuscripts on William and Mary as well as W.B. Yeats and also manuscripts titled *The Unenterable House* and *Then and Now*. Correspondents include Sir William Rothenstein.

Language of Material: Material is in English.

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.

Los Angeles, California 90095-1575

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Restrictions on Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction

Property rights to the physical object belong to the UCLA Library Special Collections. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or his or her heir for permission to publish where The UC Regents do not hold the copyright.

B.F. Stevens & Brown, Ltd. 1957, purchase.

Bertram Rota, Ltd. 1962, purchase.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Sir Max Beerbohm Papers (Collection 959). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

UCLA Catalog Record ID: 462331

Biography

Henry Maximilian Beerbohm was born on August 24, 1872 in London, England; became satirical essayist, caricaturist, critic, short story writer, and novelist; moved in same literary circle as Oscar Wilde; published his essays as *The Works of Max Beerbohm* (1896); contributor, *Yellow Book*, 1894; drama critic of *Saturday Review*, 1898-1910; moved to Rapallo, Italy, where he continued to publish, including 12 prose volumes, a comic novel, a book of parodies, and ten collections of caricatures; died in Rapallo, May 20, 1956.

Scope and Content

Collection consists of correspondence, literary manuscripts, notebooks, unpublished poems, original drawings, and ephemera related to the writings of Max Beerbohm. Includes original manuscripts on William and Mary as well as W.B. Yeats and also manuscripts titled *The Unenterable House* and *Then and Now*. Correspondents include Sir William Rothenstein.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Beerbohm, Max, Sir, 1872-1956--Archives.

Rothenstein, William, Sir, 1872-1945--Correspondence.

Authors, English 20th century--Archival resources.

Ackerley, Joe Randolph, 1896-1967

Asquith, Lady Cynthia Mary Evelyn (Charteris) 1887-1960

Baring, Hon. Maurice, 1874-1945

959

Finding Aid for the Sir Max Beerbohm Papers, 1900-1956

Manuscripts and a Corrected Typescript

1. W.B. Yeats.

Scope and Content Note
Original manuscript of an essay which was later revised and used as Beerbohm's famous broadcast on Yeats.
Five closely-written foolscap pages, with a number of words blacked out by the author in Indian ink.
Inscribed in pencil "It might amuse Selwyn and Tania to have this MS? It dates back to 1912 or so. It hasn't yet been published. Max."
2. **William and Mary.**

Physical Description: Commencing in ink and continuing in pencil on eight sides of five foolscap sheets. Very closely written indeed in a tiny hand, and very lavishly revised, with many passages crossed out in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
Original manuscript of the first draft of the story of which a later version was published in “And Even Now” in 1920.

3. **The Unenterable House. Two drafts of the end of this essay.**

Scope and Content Note
The first draft, of 770 words, is closely written in ink on one foolscap sheet, with erasure in Indian ink. There is a pencil note to a typist, identifying the piece and giving directions.

The second draft, slightly altered, is written in ink on 1.5 foolscap sheets, with a few words blacked out with Indian ink.

4. **Then and Now.**

Scope and Content Note
Corrected Typescript of this essay, which purports to be “by Vera, Lady Elderton.”

Beneath that ascription Beerbohm has written “(Communicated by Max Beerbohm).”

The essay consists of about 1,700 words, or 7 quarto pages. There are a fair number of alterations and erasures of single words. The typescript bears Beerbohm’s note of instruction to the printer and his signature and address.

Manuscripts of Unpublished Poems, etc.

5. **Utilitarian Verse.**

Scope and Content Note
One autograph, octavo page, five four-line verses.

With a note in pencil signed by Reginald Turner, to the effect that this was a very rare manuscript, “as he used to sign up to his 2nd. year at Oxford and not much later.” ‘H. Maximilian Beerbohm’ written underneath in pencil.

**Three Triolets.**

Scope and Content Note
Two autograph, octavo pages.

“Triolet of Maud, on starting for the Honeymoon.” Eight lines, with ‘Maud Cochrane’ written beside it in pencil. One word underlined.

“Triolet of Oscar.” Eight lines, with pencil note, “circa 1891.”

“Knightsbridge Triolet.” Eight lines, with two words underlined.

**Verses To A Lord.**

Scope and Content Note
Two autograph, octavo pages. Five verses, three of four lines, one of five lines, one of seven lines; pencil note “by Belloc” and “M” underneath.


One erasure, with the word “synagogues” inserted.
**A Ballad of Judges.**

Scope and Content Note

One autograph, quarto page. Three verses of nine lines each, with a four-line Envoi.

A Pencil note in the left margin reads: “N.B. This is for ‘Home reading’ only. I mean don't show it to any one outside the family until it shall have been printed in “The Eye-Witness!”

**A Sheet of Manuscript Notes, Quotations, etc:**

Scope and Content Note

Under headings such as “The Man of December”, “Dandy Wet”, “Variety” and a poem of three verses, each of four lines, signed 'A. Lane,' and with two notes about Northcote, referring to the poem. Two of the amusing notes are descriptions of clothes.

**Ballade Tragique à Double Refrain.**

Scope and Content Note

One autograph, foolscap page. Four verses, the first three of eight lines, the last of four. Set out with instructions in red ink as for a scene in a play.

“She: 'The Queen is duller than the King'
He: 'Death then for you shall have no sting'
(Stabs her, and as she falls dead, produces phial from breast-pocket of coat.)
'Nevertheless, sweet friend Strychnine!' 
(Drinks)
'The King is duller than the Queen!' 
(Dies in horrible agony)"

**The Old Volunteer.**

Scope and Content Note

A parody of a poem by Rudyard Kipling, one foolscap autograph page, with a pen-and-ink sketch of “The Times” head-piece, dated ‘Monday, May 27th, 1918.”

Three verses of eight lines each, signed “Rudyard Kipling”, with an appended apology supposedly printed by the paper the next day: “Mr. Rudyard Kipling informs us that he did not write the verses entitled “The Old Volunteer.” The lines reached us by post from Brighton, signed ‘Rudyard Kipling’ by some one familiar with Mr. Kipling’s signature...we are investigating the forgery.”

**In Humble Imitation of “The Aesthete”, by Mr. W.S. Gilbert.**

Scope and Content Note

One autograph, quarto page, four verses of eight lines each. Signed with a monogram. The sheet is torn at the fold.

“Then everyone will say
As you wend your wondrous way
If this young man gives utterance to thoughts too deep for me, why what a bottomlessly deep young man this deep young man must be!”

**Ballade de Surprise.**

Scope and Content Note

One autograph, octavo page, with ‘August 21, ‘96’ written in pencil. Four verses, the first three of eight lines, the last of four.

Together with a postscript: “Will write at length to-day to you.”
**All In The Day's Work.**

Scope and Content Note
A parody of Shakespeare. Two quarto, autograph pages, written in pencil.
Set out as a scene from a play.

**Ballade of Another Luminary.**

Scope and Content Note
One autograph, foolscap page. Three verses of eight lines each and an Envoi of four lines.
Signed “Max, 1901.”

**Surrey Saws and Sayings.**

Scope and Content Note
Collected and communicated by Sir Max Beerbohm, P.R.A. (Professor of Rural Archaeology).
One autograph, foolscap page, written in pencil, with several of the sayings surrounded in pendil brackets and marked with blue crayon. There are marginal instructions to the printer.

**Music Hall Chorus.**

Scope and Content Note
A mounted letter giving the refrain of a Music Hall song composed by Max Beerbohm.
One autograph, octavo page, signed and dated 'July, 1925'.
Sir Max explains in the letter that the song was performed at a Charity Matinée arranged by William Nicolson, who told him afterwards “that the audience took the song sadly, coldly, politely, not suspecting any insincerity in it.”

**Euphemia, Lady Warberton.**

Scope and Content Note
A parody of an obituary. Two octavo manuscript pages, with some deletions and revisions.
“She is at this moment raising the tone of Heaven.”

**Is Ascot What It Was?**

Scope and Content Note
A letter addressed to 'The Times'. One quarto, autograph page, written the wrong way up on headed paper, June 17, 1931.
“Others, again, held that the leaving-off of collars for coolness' sake was a symptom of deterioration in the bulldog breed.....”

**Copy Of A Letter To Miss Dawson. June 1, 1927**

Physical Description: (Two autograph, quarto pages, signed)
Scope and Content Note
A letter about a play by Max Beerbohm, which had been set to music. He writes to say that the copy she had sent him and been delayed in the post, and points out that since the play had already been set to music, if she had written to ask his permission to re-write the play: “I should have given you the chastening news that another version already existed, a version made by myself and produced rather successfully 26 years ago - and that naturally I was rather prejudiced in its favour against any other version.”
He goes on to explain that his version was not a ballad-opera but had a good deal of incidental music: “A ballad-opera is of course a very different affair: and if I liked your version very much indeed I shouldn’t be at all opposed to its production ---- You say you 'felt it would be useless to ask for permission' and therefore you can't be surprised at - still less, vexed at - my attitude!”
Miscellanea


Programme of Graduation Ceremonial at the University of Edinburgh, at which Beerbohm received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws. July 3, 1930

Scope and Content Note
Together with a typescript of the Latin address and the list of guests and seating-plan.

“Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree.” An 8pp. pamphlet of press-notices.
A sprig of cypress from Aubrey Beardsley’s grave, contained in a small sealed envelope.

Manuscript copy, made by Max Beerbohm for Reggie Turner, of a poem from W.S. Gilbert’s “Song of a Savoyard.”

Scope and Content Note
18 lines, written in a minute hand on a small sheet of the headed writing-paper of the Myrmidon Club, Oxford.

“An Epic of Hades.”

Scope and Content Note
A typewritten copy of a very long poem (33 four-line verses) in the form of a dialogue. A note at the end records that this was “Written by Palk, Lockites, Charterhouse, in 1885 or 1886. Illustrated with caricatures by Max Beerbohm. This was suppressed but every master had one.”

This is a satire on the masters at Beerbohm’s school.
This typescript bears a small drawing of a head (probably G.B. Shaw) by Max in red pencil on the first of the three foolscap pages.

Ernest Brown and Phillips’ “Leicester Galleries” account for Max Beerbohm of the sales of his drawings at their Beerbohm Exhibition. February 1, 1929

Scope and Content Note
Three foolscap pages, showing a total of 2,219.14.0 pounds realized.

Letters to Sir Max Beerbohm

7. Asquith (Cynthia). January 18, 1942

Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 3 octavo pages)
Scope and Content Note
A letter of congratulation on a good broadcast.

8. Baring (Maurice). December 14, 1939 and March 11, 1940

Physical Description: (2 typewritten, signed letters, 2 quarto pages)
Scope and Content Note
Letters of congratulation on the Christmas number of “John o’ London” and a parody of the “Times” crossword.

9. Belloc-Lowndes (Mrs.). November 27, 1941

Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 4 octavo pages)
Scope and Content Note
A letter of thanks for courtesy to relation.
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 2 quarto pages)
Scope and Content Note
An interesting letter congratulating him on a lecture on Lytton Strachey with a critical comment.

11. Berners (Gerald). August 17, 1941
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 3 octavo pages)
Scope and Content Note
An amusing letter asking that an unlimited edition of “Around Theatres” should be published.

12. Cockerell (Sydney). July 8, 1943
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 1 octavo page)
Scope and Content Note
A letter of praise for the lecture on Lytton Strachey, but pointing out one slight inaccuracy.

13. Craig (Gordon). n.d.
Physical Description: (2 autograph letters, 1 octavo and 2 quarto pages)
Scope and Content Note
1 addressed to Sir Max, the other to Reggie Turner.
In the letter to Sir Max, Gordon Craig returns a sum of money, and the one to Turner he discusses “Zuleika” and suggests that the author should receive more encouragement and recognition of his genius.

14. Craig (Edith). January 19, 1942
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 1 octavo page)
Scope and Content Note
A letter congratulating Sir Max on his broadcast.

15. De la Mare (Walter).
Physical Description: (1 telegram)
Scope and Content Note
The telegram expresses best wishes for a function and De la Mare's regret at being unable to attend it.

16. Forster (E.M.). July 1, 1943 and December 16, 1944
Physical Description: (2 autograph letters, 4 octavo pages)
Scope and Content Note
Letter of congratulation on the Lytton Strachey lecture and a letter introducing a friend who admired Sir Max's work.

17. Garnett (David). July 13, n.d
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 2 quarto pages)
Scope and Content Note
Garnett praises the Lytton Strachey lecture but takes Sir Max up on his statement that “a writer who has not... been well-grounded in Latin is at a grievous disadvantage... he will be diffuse, he will be sloppy, as was, for example, D.H. Lawrence.” Garnett goes on to quote a biography of Lawrence which proves that he did study Latin and points out that the statement was a rash generalization.
18. Guedalla (Philip). July 2, 1943
   Physical Description: (2 autograph letters, 4 octavo pages)
   Scope and Content Note
   A letter of praise on the Lytton Strachey lecture and personal news.

   Physical Description: (4 autograph letters, 15 octavo pages)
   Scope and Content Note
   Amusing and friendly letters, talking of mutual friends, discussing Sir Max's book, and one letter in which she explains the relationship of a dear friend "F.R." with another lady of unattractive character.

20. Macaulay (Rose). October 20, 1938
   Physical Description: (1 typewritten, signed letter, 1 octavo page)
   Scope and Content Note
   A covering letter for an article she had written on “Ouida”, which she hoped would retrieve her character in Sir Max's eyes, as he had said that she had been very harsh in her criticism of Ouida.

   Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 2 octavo pages)
   Scope and Content Note
   A letter praising the lecture on Lytton Strachey.

   Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 2 octavo pages)
   Scope and Content Note
   Letter of congratulation on his knighthood.

23. Morgan (Charles). July 1, 1943
   Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 2 foolscap pages of Admiralty paper)
   Scope and Content Note
   A moving letter of thanks for a gift, which gives some indication of the pleasure that Max Beerbohm's company gave to many people.

24. Rothenstein (Sir William). 1937-1944
   Physical Description: (30 autograph letters, 2 typewritten, signed letters and 1 postcard. 10 quarto and 71 octavo pages)
   Scope and Content Note
   This group of affectionate letters span the Second World War and the old age of Sir William Rothenstein, and contain much personal and family news, constant reference to new books and other authors such as E.V. Lucas, Maurice Baring, Guedalla and G.B.S. Sir William speaks about the Battle of Britain pilots and the political situation in 1939. In that year Sir Max corrected the proofs of Men & Memories, for Sir William, and the letters show that his corrections and suggestions were acceptable. The letters give evidence of a deep affection, formed in undergraduate days.

25. Rutherston (Albert). 1936-1944
   Physical Description: (9 autograph letters, 2 quarto and 11 octavo pages)
   Scope and Content Note
   A group of very friendly letters, congratulating Sir Max on his broadcasts, asking for two of his drawings, and introducing a friend. One letter, dated 18th January, 1942, bears a pen drawing of Sir Max singing during his broadcast.
Physical Description: (1 typewritten, signed letter)
Scope and Content Note
An amusing letter congratulating Sir Max on his extremely popular broadcast.

Physical Description: (2 autograph octavo pages)
Scope and Content Note
With a pen-and-ink caricature of Reggie Turner by Max on the last page and Max's note “Do you like Latin?”

28. Beerbohm (Florence).
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 1 quarto page)
Scope and Content Note
This letter to Reggie Turner was amended in manuscript by Max, and signed, to make it a joint letter from Florence and Max.
A letter of thanks, wishing Reggie Turner “Goodnight.” 1 typed letter to Regie Turner, April 12, 1904.

29. Beerbohm (Max). December 10, 1934
Physical Description: (1 autograph letter, 2 closely written quarto pages)
Scope and Content Note
To Albert Burney, and headed “Villino Chiaro, Rapallo.”
A long letter congratulating Burney on a donation to Merton College, Oxford, and explaining that his letter asking for permission to quote Albert Burney had been lost in transit. He gives an imaginary picture of a second-year man telling a Freshman about Burney's portrait hanging in Hall, and invites Burney to stay and “let us talk over those memories (of Oxford) here.”

30. The Listener. March 14, 1940
Physical Description: (1 typewritten, quarto page, signed)
Scope and Content Note
Asking Sir Max to review “Roman Fountain” by Hugh Walpole. Appended is the draft of Sir Max’s reply, written in pencil.
“Many thanks for your brisk little note. But I'm not, as it were, on the cab-rank.”

31. “A Nightmare Of 1940.”

Scope and Content Note
A cutting from The Times of a crossword puzzle parody made up by Sir Max, which was printed by The Times and reprinted on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

Together with 6 typewritten, signed letters from The Times about the crossword. 5 quarto pages, 2 octavo pages. 1940.

The first letter gives high praise to the crossword, the second suggests a method of printing it, the third is a carbon-copy of a letter to a Mr. Parr, defending the veracity of Sir Max's statements, and the last letters suggest that he should do another such crossword.

“You have put a glorious and terrible temptation in our way.” “There would be a massacre here and history would have nothing to compare with the tale of our ending...”. “The sham clues are quite perfect, diabolical, in fact...”. “Have you though any more about the project of a misspelt or malaprop crossword puzzle?”


Physical Description: (1 typewritten, signed letter, 2 quarto pages)

Scope and Content Note
Written as a manager of Macmillans, the publishing company.

Thanking Sir Max for the privilege of meeting him, offering hospitality, and suggesting he should “construct a volume of reminiscences of an informal kind.”


Physical Description: (25 items, holograph and typescript)

Scope and Content Note
Includes:
Fry of Wadham (6 leaves, typescript carbon).
Mr. George Street (2pp., holograph).
Mr. Arthur Wing Pinero (1 leaf, holograph).
Drawing of dust jacket for “A Christmas Garland” (1 leaf).
Original drawing.
Various pencil sketches.
34. Beerbohm (Sir Max) Extensive collection of Notes and Drafts (mostly fragmentary) for various projected essays, etc.

Physical Description: (Autograph Manuscripts c.60pp., various sizes, largely in pencil; together with some typescripts)

Scope and Content Note

This miscellaneous collection includes inter alia notes for essays to be entitled: The Art of Shaving, Growing Old, Beautiful Things, Eating and Drinking, Practical Joking, etc. Several blank spaces are decorated with caricatures, among them one of Sir Winston Churchill. The typescripts include a few jeux d’esprit composed by Max on the typewriter.

Also included is a printed article on the ‘Gex’ portrait of Lord Byron, extracted from a magazine and annotated by Max.

35. Beerbohm (Sir Max) Max’s Nineties.

Scope and Content Note

Autograph Drafts concerning the Book, including the draft of his reply to the letter of Rupert Hart-Davis proposing the book (with the letter from Mr Hart-Davis), drafts of other letters from Max concerning the selection of drawings, lists of proposed drawings with his comments, etc., c. 15 pp., in pencil: together with a ‘Rough midget dummy’ of the book (not in Max’s hand).

40. Beerbohm (Sir Max) Autograph Manuscript Pocket Books (with a few entries in other hands). 1906-36 and n.d.

Physical Description: (6 vols. Original limp leather or cloth [one vol. lacking covers], duodecimo)

Scope and Content Note

The contents of these volumes are miscellaneous: they consist partly of notes of social engagements and of names and addresses, and partly of rough notes for Max’s essays and broadcast talks. Two of the volumes are printed Memorandum books for the years 1935 and 1936 respectively, and another volume contains notes apparently made during Max’s tour of Italy in 1906 for his articles in The Daily Mail.

The remaining three volumes are less easily dateable.

36. Correspondence between Max Beerbohm and Geoffrey Dawson. ca. 1927-1936

Physical Description: (4 leaves, typed copies)

37. Original drawings by Max Beerbohm.

Physical Description: (5 items)


Physical Description: (10 leaves, typescript)
39. Ephemera relating to Max Beerbohm.
   Physical Description: (6 items)

40. Epistle dedicatory to Edward Gordon Craig.
   Physical Description: (4 leaves, holograph)

41. Benson (A.C.) Beside Still Waters. 1907
   Physical Description: (Octavo)

   Scope and Content Note
   First edition, four triolets in parody of A.C. Benson, headed ‘Triolets by A.C.B.’ in the hand of Max Beerbohm on inner cover and front fly-leaf; the title-page ‘improved’ by the addition of a woodcut of a scavenger at work, signature of Max Beerbohm on fly-leaf, original cloth.

   Note
   (see lot 276)

   Physical Description: (261pp.)

   Scope and Content Note

   Note
   Ex libris: Majl Ewing.

“Decorated” by Max Beerbohm.

   Scope and Content Note
   Wilde (Oscar). Intentions, 1891. First edition, original cloth, covers a little worn. Reginald Turner’s copy with his signature in pencil on the fly-leaf and with his bookplate.

   The first fly-leaf and three of the fly-title pages bear full-page pencil drawings by Max. One is a brilliant caricature of Wilde, one illustrates a scene from “The Picture of Dorian Gray”, one is an elegant figure of the ‘nineties and the fourth is a very amusing caricature.

   These drawings are notable for being in a very unusual medium for Max, being very softly shaded.
After Reggie Turner's death this volume passed to Tania Jepson, for whom Max added two long and very amusing comments to the drawings, in 1952.

This copy contrasts interestingly with the copy decorated by Max with line drawings and sold as Lot 240 in the Beerbohm sale at Sotheby's on December 12 and 13, 1960, for 420 pounds.

Note

In the Oscar Wilde Collection in the William Andrew Clark Memorial Library.