



# ArchivesSpace

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## Edna St. Vincent Millay collection, 1900-1992

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on December 19, 2024.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library

University of New England

716 Stevens Avenue

Portland, Maine 04103

[mwwc@une.edu](mailto:mwwc@une.edu)

URL: <https://library.une.edu/mwwc/>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Maine Women Writers Collection
<b>Creator:</b>	Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 1892-1950
<b>Title:</b>	Edna St. Vincent Millay collection
<b>ID:</b>	0232
<b>ID [aspace_uri]:</b>	/repositories/3/resources/681
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1900-1992
<b>Physical Description:</b>	1 linear foot 42 folders
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .

### Preferred Citation

Edna St. Vincent Millay collection, Maine Women Writers Collection, University of New England, Portland, Maine

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## Biographical/Historical Note

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Edna St. Vincent Millay was born in Rockland, Maine, on February 22, 1892, the daughter of Henry T. and Cora (Buzzelle) Millay. The first publication of her writing, in 1906 at age 14, was a piece in *St. Nicholas* magazine, which earned her a Gold Badge. Edna graduated from Camden Hills High School in 1909. "Renascence," a verse, was published in *Lyric Year* in 1912. She graduated from Vassar College in 1917, and having written many lyric pieces during her time there, upon graduation she published her first poetry collection, *Renascence and Other Poems*.

She then moved to Greenwich Village, sharing an apartment with her sisters and acting with the Provincetown Players on MacDougal Street. In 1919, Millay's anti-war play *Aria da Capo* was published, followed in 1920 by *A Few Figs from Thistles*, which was controversial due to its overtly sexual and feminist themes. *Second April* was published in 1921, as well as the plays *Two Slatterns and a King* and *The Lamp and the Bell*, a poem written for Vassar College about love between women. Millay was known for having many love affairs with both

men and women. The following year Millay won a Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for *The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver*, the third woman to ever do so.

On July 18, 1923, she married Eugen J. Boissevain, and after traveling around the world together in 1925, they settled at Steepletop in Austerlitz, New York. They later bought Ragged Island in Maine as a summer retreat. In 1927, Millay joined the demonstrations against the conviction and death sentencing of Ferdinando Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in that high-profile trial of two anarchist Italian immigrants accused of murder and armed robbery in Massachusetts. After pleading with the governor in person, she wrote in an appeal to him: "I cry to you with a million voices: answer our doubt...There is need in Massachusetts of a great man tonight."

She wrote *The King's Henchman*, a lyric opera, in 1927 and *Fatal Interview* and *Wine from These Grapes* along with many other poems in the 1930s. Due to reverses in her husband's foreign import business, the Millays experienced serious financial losses during World War II. As a longtime pacifist and activist, Edna St. Vincent Millay used her poetry to protest the Allied actions during the war, for which she received criticism by her readers. Millay suffered a nervous breakdown in 1944, as well as a recurrence after the loss her husband in 1949. Millay died on October 19, 1950, the result of a fall at Steepletop. She was 58.

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## Collection Scope and Content

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The collection consists of photocopies of the poet's early work, copies of biographic sketches, including one by Ramona Barth, and correspondence with her mother and sisters. Also included are a few photographs of a school-aged Millay, an example of her signature, and two volumes of *Tamarack*, a journal edited by her sister, Norma Millay, in the 1980s. Samples of commemorative ephemera in celebration of her Maine birthright and longtime ownership and residency of Ragged Island in Maine's Casco Bay are also present in addition to a silk nightgown owned by Millay.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is organized as a single series

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library  
University of New England  
716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, Maine 04103  
[mwwc@une.edu](mailto:mwwc@une.edu)  
URL: <https://library.une.edu/mwwc/>

### Access

Collection is open for research.

### Publication Rights

For permission to reproduce or publish, please contact the Curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Edna St. Vincent Millay collection of papers, The Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, The New York Public Library, New York, New York

Edna St. Vincent Millay papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Edna St. Vincent Millay papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, New York, New York

John S. Van E. Kohn Edna St. Vincent Millay collection, Archives and Special Collections, Vassar College Libraries, Poughkeepsie, New York

Edna St. Vincent Millay papers, Archives and Special Collections, Vassar College Libraries, Poughkeepsie, New York

Toby Shafter collection, Maine Women Writers Collection, University of New England  
Libraries, Portland, Maine

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Pulitzer Prizes
- American poetry -- 20th century
- Sacco-Vanzetti Trial, Dedham, Mass., 1921
- Camden (Me.)
- Photographs
- Correspondence
- Facsimiles
- Book jackets
- Ephemera
- Posters
- Broadsides
- Drawings
- Sleepwear
- Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 1892-1950

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Instances	
Outlook "Fear", 1927 November 27 <u>Language of the Material</u> : English.	Box 1	Folder 001
Reflections on the Sacco-Vanzetti Tragedy - includes "Fear" reprint	Box 1	Folder 002
"Fear" folio reprint (2 copies), 1927 <u>Language of the Material</u> : English.	Box 1	Folder 003
"The President with a Candidate's Face" clipping, undated	Box 1	Folder 004
Poetry "Eight Poems", 1938 October <u>Language of the Material</u> : English.	Box 1	Folder 005
Copies of published poems and articles	Box 1	Folder 006
Harper Brother's advertising folio includes "Fatal Interview", 1931	Box 1	Folder 007

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ESVM signatures	Box 1	Folder 008
The Forge : A Midwestern Review presents Edna St. Vincent Millay in a Reading of her own poems. Nov. 27 [1920s], [1920s] November 27	Box 1	Folder 009
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
"Song of a Second April" reprint	Box 1	Folder 010
"Thanksgiving 1950" Camden Herald, 1966 November 24	Box 1	Folder 011
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Toby Shafter correspondence	Box 1	Folder 012
ALS George W. Perry to Mrs. George Jackson	Box 1	Folder 013
Dust jackets	Box 1	Folder 014
Articles, reviews, 1930-1939	Box 1	Folder 015
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Articles, reviews, 1940-1949	Box 1	Folder 016
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Articles, reviews, 1950-1959	Box 1	Folder 017
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Articles, reviews, 1960-1969	Box 1	Folder 018
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Articles, reviews, 1970-1979	Box 1	Folder 019
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Articles, reviews, 1980-1989	Box 1	Folder 020
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Tamarack: Journal of the Edna St. Vincent Millay Society II(1); III(1), 1982-1983, 1985-1986	Box 1	Folder 021
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Articles, reviews, 1990	Box 1	Folder 022
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Commemorative stamps and envelope, 1981	Box 1	Folder 023
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Commemorative postage/Renascence, 1981	Box 1	Folder 023a
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Photos; ephemera	Box 1	Folder 024
"Mayflowers" by Norma Millay, together with "Who Will Go A-Maying?" by E.S.V.M [broadside], 1969	Box 1	Folder 025

<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Centennial celebration - Camden, 1992 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 026
Poster advertising boat trip to Ragged Island Aug. 15, ?? for Millay poetry reading, Undated	Box 1	Folder 026a
Millay celebrations, 1981, 1992 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 027
Crayon drawing by Noriko Sakamishi <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box OVS 1	Folder 028
Millay nightgown <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 2 (OVS)	Folder 029
"I thought I would write to you..." Letter from Millay to her mother [photocopy], 1900 November 7 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 030
"Am remailing a letter and card from Aunt Clem." Letter from Millay to her mother [photocopy], 1912 August 21 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 031
"We are so glad you like there." Letter from Millay to her mother [photocopy], 1913 January 4 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 032
"I kept my letter open thinking that perhaps the girls would write." Letter from Millay to her mother [photocopy], 1913 January 6 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 033
"There's nothing much to write about today." Letter from Millay to her mother [photocopy], 1913 January 10 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 034
"Letter from Miss Dow just came." letter from Millay to her mother [photocopy], 1913 January 11 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 035
"This is the first chance I've had to write..." Letter from Millay to her mother and girls [photocopy], 1913 February 5 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 036
"I have so very much to tell you..." Letter from Millay to her family [photocopy], 1913 February 12 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 1	Folder 037
1923 Pulitzer Prize letters [photocopy], 1928 April 30	Box 1	Folder 038



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"I have just seen Margaret Schuyler..." Letter to Millay from Berenice Abbott [photocopy], 1929 February 11	Box 1	Folder 039
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
Bill from Berenice Abbott [photocopy], 1940 February 6	Box 1	Folder 040
<u>Language of the Material</u> : English.		
"Renaissance" poem ms [photocopy], undated	Box 1	Folder 041
"God, let there be no whispered word" poem ms [photocopy], undated	Box 1	Folder 042
Millay poems set to musical scores, 1927-1972	Box 1	Folder 043
"There are no islands, anymore" chapbook, 1940	Box 1	Folder 044
"The Angel Intrudes," play by Floyd Dell, 1918	Box 1	Folder 045
"Two Slatterns & a King," play by Millay, 1921	Box 1	Folder 046
"Invocation to the Muses" by Millay, broadside read at Carnegie Hall, 1941	Box 1	Folder 047
"Poem & Prayer for an Invading Army" by Millay, 1944	Box 1	Folder 048
Galley proofs of Millay's play "The King's Henchmen", 1926	Box 2 (OVS)	Folder 049
"There Are No Islands Anymore" (Millay broadside poem) & "The Little Tavern" (poem by Millay, music by Ruth Vanderslip), 1929, undated	Drawer 10	Folder 050
Vassar cloth boxes -- Class songs, Sophomore Tree Ceremonies, Baccalaureate Hymns, 1915-1917	Box 3	Folder 051
Broadsides in cloth boxes, 1918, 1940	Box 3	Folder 052
The Vassarion yearbook, 1917	Box 3	Folder 053
Edward Maeder research on Millay nightgown, 2024	Box 1	Folder 054