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## Thomas W. Copeland Papers

1923-1984  
22 boxes (10 linear ft.)  
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A scholar of eighteenth century British literature and culture, Thomas W. Copeland began what would become more than half a century of research on the statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke while studying for his doctorate at Yale (1933). After publication of his dissertation in 1949 as *Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke*, Copeland was named managing editor of the ten-volume *Correspondence* (1958-1978). After academic appointments at Yale and the University of Chicago, he joined the faculty at UMass in 1957, remaining here until his retirement in 1976. A chair was established in his name in the Department of English.

The Copeland Papers are a rich collection of personal and professional correspondence, journals and writings from Copeland's Yale years, manuscripts, typescripts, notes, and draft revisions of his works on Edmund Burke, and a journal chronicling Copeland's four-year exercise in the daily practice of writing.

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### Background on Thomas W. Copeland



Thomas W. Copeland (l.), 1940

An eminent scholar of the political philosopher Edmund Burke, Thomas W. Copeland was born in Shaker Heights, Ohio, on July 10, 1907, the youngest of two sons of the attorney Mark Anson Copeland and Louise Wellsted. Distinguishing himself during his undergraduate years at Yale (AB 1928), Copeland spent a year sidelined in study at Harvard Law School before returning to Yale to pursue a doctorate in English literature. It was during his third year in the program that he discovered Burke, who would become the subject of his dissertation, *Burke and Dodsley's Annual Register* (1933), and the focus of his scholarly life for the next five decades.

In the Depression's slim job market, Copeland took an Instructor's appointment at Cornell, but he was called back the next year to his alma mater, serving as Instructor (1934-1940) and then Assistant Professor (1940-1949). During the Second World War, he was commissioned in the Navy reserves, retiring in 1945 with the rank of Lieutenant Commander, moving to the University of Chicago in 1949.

The timing of the appearance of Copeland's first monograph -- a much-amplified version of his dissertation, *Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke* (New Haven, 1949) -- proved to be fortuitous. As his reputation rose as an authority on Burke, Eric Spencer Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, the ninth Earl Fitzwilliam, agreed to deposit the papers housed at the family's Yorkshire estate, Wentworth Woodhouse, at the Sheffield Central Library, including the bulk of Burke's correspondence. Copeland became a leader of a multi-national editorial team devoted to the massive collection, issuing the *Checklist of the Correspondence of Edmund Burke* in 1955 and the first of ten volumes of the *Correspondence of Edmund Burke* in 1958.

Devoted himself to his scholarship, Copeland split his time -- and salary -- evenly between Chicago and Sheffield for several years. He came to UMass in 1957 as part of a small wave of academic hires designed to strengthen the humanities, recommended by his close friend from graduate school days and faculty member at UMass, Maxwell Goldberg. He continued his practice of alternating years in Sheffield, and while in Amherst, he devoted about one third of his time to the editorial. Despite splitting his time, he became well known on campus for his wit and sharp memory, and he was often described with the words civilized, erudite, scholarly, and unpretentious. In 1961, in recognition of his scholarly distinction, he was selected to become one of the first faculty members to be designated Commonwealth Professor. Twice a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, he was recognized with honorary doctorates from Burke's alma mater, Trinity College, Dublin, and the University of Sheffield.

Although Copeland formally retired in 1976, he continued in his scholarly pursuits and was completing an edition of the correspondence of Burke and Boswell when he died unexpectedly at Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton on Jan. 28, 1979. He was commemorated with a named professorship, the Thomas W. Copeland Professor of English, which was filled by his friend and colleague Arthur Kinney.

## Scope of collection

Like most of his academic career, the Copeland Papers are centered on five decades of study of the eighteenth century statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke. Volumetrically, the largest portion of the collection is comprised of drafts of Copeland's publications on Burke, but the collection includes significant correspondence relating to his editorial work and scholarly connections, as well as some amusing and occasionally fascinating letters and a journal written while an undergraduate at Yale.

The papers are organized into four series: Personal material, Correspondence, Professional records, and Writings.

## Series descriptions

### [Series 1. Personal material](#)

1923-1979  
2 boxes

Biographical and bibliographical material, family correspondence, journals and writings while a student at Yale.

### [Series 2. Correspondence](#)

1946-1977  
3 boxes

Correspondence with family members, primarily his brother Mark and sister Margaret; UMass faculty members; members of the "Burke factory" in Sheffield, England, where the multi-volume *Correspondence of Edmund Burke* was produced; and other colleagues and friends. Complete names for many correspondents are difficult to determine and a large proportion of the letters are undated.

### [Series 3. Professional material](#)

1948-1979  
2 boxes

Material on Copeland's professional appointments at Yale and UMass, on scholarly organizations and activities in the U.S. and in England, and a journal (1973-1976) that was an exercise at keeping his hand in at writing.

[Series 4. Writings](#)

1933-1984  
15 boxes

Manuscripts, typescripts, voluminous notes and revisions, plans and funding, some correspondence, and lists of Edmund Burke materials (mostly at Sheffield Public Library in England). All are arranged in subseries under the titles of the various works about Edmund Burke. The titles are listed in chronological order beginning with Copeland's dissertation on Burke in 1933 through Portrait of Burke which was to be published in 1987 from these papers, edited by Elizabeth Lambert. A grant application by Lambert contains background information, and descriptions of the editing task and of Copeland's study of Burke scholarship. A letter from Valerie Jobling, Assistant at the "factory", sheds light on the bulk of Burke project materials which were retained in England. A clipping from a Sheffield Library report indicates that all photocopies and microfilm used in the course of the project would be retained there.

## Inventory

### Series 1. Personal material

1923-1979

2 boxes

Guide

undated

Box 1: 1

Biography

1942-1979

Box 1: 2

Copeland Memorial

1979

Box 1: 3

Bibliography of Publications

ca.1963

Box 1: 4

Correspondence: letters to family while student at Yale

1926-1927

Box 1: 5

Journal while student at Yale

ca.1927

Box 1: 6

"Thomas Copeland, An Autobiography"

1923

Box 1: 7

School and college writings

ca.1923-1927

Box 1: 8-10

School and college papers

ca.1924-1927

Box 1: 11-13

"On Reading the Classics of Literature"

ca.1927

Box 1: 14

"Poe in Criticism"

ca.1927

Box 1: 15

"Swift and the Satiric View of Politics"

ca.1927

Box 1: 16

Untitled writings, notes

ca.1927

Box 1: 17

Cards -- quotations and notes (probably while student at Yale)

undated

Box 2:

### Series 2. Correspondence

1946-1977

3 boxes

Family

undated

Box 3: 18

Brogan, Howard

undated

Box 3: 19

Brooke, John (Jack)

undated

Box 3: 20

A-B

undated

Box 3: 21

Case, Grace

undated

Box 3: 22

Chapman, Gerald

undated

Box 3: 23

Commager, Felix and Evan

undated

Box 3: 24

C-F

undated

Box 3: 25

Goldberg, Maxwell H.

undated

Box 3: 26

G

undated

Box 3: 27

Hofer, Ernest H.

undated

Box 4: 28

Jobling, Valerie

undated

Box 4: 29

H-L

undated  
Box 4: 30  
Marshall, Peter J.  
undated  
Box 4: 31  
McLoughlin, Timothy O.  
undated  
Box 4: 32  
Osborn Collection  
undated  
Box 4: 33  
M-O  
undated  
Box 4: 34  
P-R  
undated  
Box 4: 35  
Smith, Milton S.  
1946-1955  
Box 5: 36-37  
Smith, Robert A.  
1949-1967  
Box 5: 38  
Sutherland, Dame Lucy  
1955-1977  
Box 5: 39  
Woods, John A.  
undated  
Box 5: 40  
Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell  
undated  
Box 5: 41  
S-Z  
undated  
Box 5: 42  
Unidentified  
undated  
Box 5: 43  
Miscellaneous  
undated  
Box 5: 44  
Series 3. Professional material  
1948-1979  
2 boxes  
Conference on British Studies  
1966-1978  
Box 6: 45  
Correspondence re professional positions (from folders labeled "Mein Kampf")  
1948-1960  
Box 6: 46  
Historical societies -- England  
undated  
Box 6: 47  
Invitations  
undated  
Box 6: 48  
Journal, Crisis of 1974 (from folders labeled "Mein Kampf")  
1973-1976  
Box 6: 49  
National Endowment for the Humanities, Editing Panelist  
1976  
Box 6: 50  
Organizations: Charity and politics  
undated  
Box 6: 51  
Scholarly  
undated  
Box 6: 52  
Oxford  
undated  
Box 6: 53  
Misc.  
undated  
Box 6: 54  
Trinity College, Dublin  
undated  
Box 6: 55  
UMass Faculty Reports and Applications for Leave  
1968-1975  
Box 7: 56  
UMass Position  
1957-1976  
Box 7: 57  
UMass Teaching  
undated  
Box 7: 58  
Yale  
1966-1979  
Box 7: 59  
Yale Class of 1928, 50th Anniversary  
undated  
Box 7: 60  
Yale Teaching (from folders labeled "Mein Kampf")  
undated  
Box 7: 61  
Series 4. Writings  
1933-1984  
15 boxes  
Edmund Burke's Authorship of the Book Review in the Annual Register for the Years 1758-1770 Dissertation  
1933  
Preface and Introduction  
1933  
Box 8: 62  
Three binders of notes and lists, Catalogue of Burke's Library (see also folder 98)

1933  
Box 8: 63  
Manuscript  
1933  
Box 9: 64-68  
Burke's First Ten Years  
1933  
Box 9: 69  
Burke and English  
1933  
Box 9: 70  
Notes, typescripts, correspondence  
1933  
Box 9: 71  
Books and authors lists  
1933  
Box 9: 72  
By year (1758-1770) and by subject  
1933  
Box 9: 73  
Introduction and reviews  
1933  
Box 9: 74  
Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke  
1949-1950  
Typescript  
1949-1950  
Box 10: 75-80  
Yale University Press  
1949-1950  
Box 10: 81  
Publication: Jonathan Cope  
1949-1950  
Box 10: 82  
Reviews  
1949-1950  
Box 10: 83  
Paine and Jefferson letters  
1949-1950  
Box 10: 84  
Misc.  
1949-1950  
Box 10: 85  
Checklist of the Correspondence of Edmund Burke  
1955  
Bound volume, annotated  
1955  
Box 11: 86  
Correspondence  
1955  
Box 11: 87  
Correspondence of Edmund Burke  
1958-1976  
Planning  
undated  
Box 12: 88  
Style, book and notes  
undated  
Box 12: 89  
"Additional letters"  
undated  
Box 12: 90  
"New letters"  
undated  
Box 12: 91  
Burke family letters  
undated  
Box 12: 92  
Revised Checklist of the Correspondence of Edmund Burke  
undated  
Box 12: 93  
Index: Barbara Lowe  
1969-1977  
Box 12: 94  
Errata and Addenda  
undated  
Box 12: 95  
Misc.  
undated  
Box 12: 96  
History of the Project  
1963-1974  
Box 12: 97  
Catalogue of the Library of Edmund Burke (see also folder 63)  
undated  
Box 13: 98  
Sheffield Library  
1949-1955  
Box 13: 99  
Sheffield Library: Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments  
undated  
Box 13: 100  
Calendars and Lists of Holdings at Sheffield, Northampton, and other libraries  
undated  
Box 13: 101  
Smith, Robert A., "Burke's Use of History"  
1952  
Box 13: 102  
Athlone Press  
1952  
Box 13: 103  
Reviews and news releases  
undated  
Box 13: 104

Queries from scholars, publishers  
1967-1977  
Box 13: 105  
Rockefeller Foundation  
1952-1953  
Box 13: 106  
Carnegie Account  
1956-1958  
Box 13: 107  
Carnegie Account  
1970-1976  
Box 13: 108  
Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke  
1970-1984  
Advisers and editors  
undated  
Box 14: 109  
Consultant: William B. Todd, Correspondence  
1973-1978  
Box 14: 110  
Correspondence  
undated  
Box 14: 111  
Editor: J. T. Boulton, Correspondence  
1970-1978  
Box 14: 112  
Editor: D. C. Bryant, Correspondence  
1974-1978  
Box 14: 113  
Editor: Paul Langford, Correspondence  
1971-1979  
Box 14: 114-115  
Parliamentary speeches  
undated  
Box 15: 116  
Paul Langford, Editor  
undated  
Box 15: 117  
Planning  
undated  
Box 15: 118  
Development  
undated  
Box 15: 119  
Financing  
undated  
Box 15: 120  
Publishing  
undated  
Box 15: 121  
Portrait of Burke  
ca.1987?  
Elizabeth Lambert, Editor  
undated  
Box 16: 122  
Typescript with notes and revisions  
undated  
Box 16:  
Introduction  
undated  
Box 16: 123  
Abdiel  
undated  
Box 16: 124  
Aristocracy  
undated  
Box 16: 125  
Attachment  
undated  
Box 16: 126  
In Serried Ranks  
undated  
Box 16: 127  
A Guardian Watch  
undated  
Box 16: 128  
So Spake the Fervent Angel  
undated  
Box 16: 129  
Reflections  
undated  
Box 16: 130  
Among the Faithless  
undated  
Box 16: 131  
Revolution  
undated  
Box 16: 132  
Tragedy  
undated  
Box 16: 133  
Criticism/Epilogue  
undated  
Box 16: 134  
Plan of project  
undated  
Box 17: 135  
Project notes, criticism  
undated  
Box 17: 136  
First draft  
undated  
Box 17:  
Introduction, An Age of Portraits

undated  
Box 17: 137  
A Portrait of Burke  
undated  
Box 17: 138  
Abdiel  
undated  
Box 17: 139  
Aristocracy  
undated  
Box 17: 140  
Attachment  
undated  
Box 17: 141  
In Serried Ranks  
undated  
Box 17: 142  
A Guardian Watch  
undated  
Box 17: 143  
So Spake the Fervent Angel  
undated  
Box 17: 144  
Reflections  
undated  
Box 17: 145  
Among the Faithless  
undated  
Box 17: 146  
Sedition in Heaven  
undated  
Box 17: 147  
Revolution  
undated  
Box 17: 148  
Tragedy  
undated  
Box 17: 149  
First draft II -- Fragment  
undated  
Box 17: 150  
Complete Typescript  
undated  
Box 18:  
Introduction-Aristocracy  
undated  
Box 18: 151  
Attachment-Tragedy  
undated  
Box 18: 152  
Partial Typescript  
undated  
Box 18:  
Preface, Portraiture, Abdiel, Aristocracy  
undated  
Box 18: 153  
Introduction, An Age of Portraiture, A Portrait of Burke, Abdiel, Aristocracy  
undated  
Box 18: 154  
Abdiel  
undated  
Box 18: 155  
Aristocracy  
undated  
Box 18: 156  
Attachment  
undated  
Box 18: 157  
Fragment  
undated  
Box 18: 158  
Note card file  
undated  
Box 19:  
Copeland writings and lectures  
undated  
"Boswell's Portrait of Burke" from the Age of Johnson  
undated  
Box 20: 159  
"Burke on Taste"  
undated  
Box 20: 160  
Dissertation on Burke  
undated  
Box 20: 161  
Festschrift for James M. Osborn, Yale  
undated  
Box 20: 162  
Lectures various places  
1954-1978  
Box 20: 163  
Lecture, Univ. of Bonn  
1955  
Box 20: 164  
Paper, American Historical Association  
undated  
Box 20: 165  
Published articles, reviews  
undated  
Box 20: 166  
The Scholarly Factories, Lecture  
undated  
Box 20: 167  
Paper, Conference on British Studies

1965  
Box 20: 168  
Miscellaneous  
undated  
Essays from an envelope marked "Margaret"  
undated  
Box 21: 169  
William Burke (213 p. book) poetry, essays, etc.  
undated  
Box 21: 170  
"Unsorted reading notes"  
undated  
Box 21: 171  
"Burke - miscellaneous"  
undated  
Box 21: 172  
Photocopies of unidentified handwritten material  
undated  
Box 21: 173  
Burke and the Academic Ideal  
undated  
Box 21: 174  
Original manuscripts, brittle paper (copied)  
undated  
Edmund Burke's Authorship of the Book Reviews in the Annual Register for the Years 1758-1770  
undated  
Box 22: 175-178  
Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke -- typescript  
undated  
Box 22: 179-184  
Paine and Jefferson letters  
undated  
Box 22: 185  
"Unsorted reading notes"  
undated  
Box 22: 186

## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Acquired from Mrs. Chads O. Skinner, 1981.

### Processing Information

Processed by Virginia Conrad, 1987.

### Language:

English

### Copyright and Use ([More information](#) )

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## Search terms

### Subjects

- Burke, Edmund, 1729-1797
- Great Britain--History--19th century
- University of Massachusetts--Faculty
- University of Massachusetts. Department of English
- Yale University--Students

### Contributors

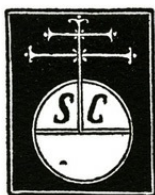
- Copeland, Thomas Wellsted, 1907-1979 [main entry]
- Goldberg, Maxwell

### Genres and formats

- Diaries

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