

U DX45

Letters to Frank Noble Wood

1913-1945

Biographical Background:

Frank Noble Wood was a poet and member of the Hull Literary Club for fifty years, acting as President between 1918 and 1931. He published two books of verse: *Songs and Strife: A Selection of poems written during the Great War* (1917) and *Lines written on a visit to Wilberforce House, Hull and other verses* (1912). He died on 11 November 1962, aged 84.

Edmund Charles Blunden, born on 1 November 1896, was an English poet, author and critic. Blunden was educated at Queen's College, Oxford and entered the army as a second lieutenant of the Royal Sussex Regiment in August 1915. He saw action in Ypres and the Somme and was awarded the Military Cross. Blunden wrote about his experiences during the First World War in both his poetry and his prose. In 1919, he left the army and began studying at Oxford until he left in 1920 to pursue a literary career. His first book of poems was published in 1920 to be followed by many other books. In 1920 he also helped edit the poems of John Clare, mostly from Clare's manuscripts. Blunden was a prolific writer and he published numerous works between 1914 and 1967.

Initially unable to support himself as a full-time writer, in 1924 he accepted the post of Professor of English at the University of Tokyo. In 1931, he became a Fellow of Merton College, Oxford and in 1944 became assistant editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*. He returned to Japan in 1947 as part of the British liaison mission in Tokyo and in 1953 he took the post of Professor of English Literature at the University of Hong Kong. His last position was the Oxford Professorship of Poetry which he accepted in 1966 but resigned two years later. Blunden was married three times and was awarded a CBE (1951) and the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry (1956). He is also commemorated as one of the 16 Great War poets on a stone memorial in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. He died on 20 January 1974.

Sir William Watson was born 2 August 1858 and died 13 August 1935. He was born in Burley, Yorkshire and was a poet, particularly known for the political content of his poetry. He published several works between 1880 and 1919 and was also a contributor to *The Yellow Book*. He was a strong candidate for the post of Poet Laureate on two occasions. He was given a knighthood in exchange for writing a panegyric of Lloyd George (1917). After the First World War his work fell into obscurity. In 1935 a public appeal was made to produce a fund to support him in his old age, however, after his death that year his widow was forced to seek employment in domestic service.

John Redwood Anderson was born in Salford in 1883; he was educated on the Continent and later studied for a year at Oxford University. He took several teaching positions in different parts of the country before he settled in Hull where he taught at Hymers College from 1916 to 1942. He was the English master for the Junior School. During and after his time in Hull he wrote a considerable amount of poetry. He was a member of the Hull Literary Club, the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society and he also acted as president of the Hull Chamber Music Society.

When he retired from teaching he moved to Wales and then to London in 1953. Over his poetry career he wrote more than 20 books. He left two unfinished books, one which was on philosophy. His last book of poetry, published in 1962, was *'While the Fates Allow'*. He also wrote the play *'Babel'* which was produced several times. He was known as one of the leading modern English poets. He died in Sible Hedingham, Essex on 29th March 1964.

Hull History Centre: Letters to Frank Noble Wood

Custodial history:

Donated by J.B. Wood, 30 Nov 1962 (U DX45/1-2) and 26 May 1964 (U DX45/3)

Description:

This collection contains several poems written to Frank Noble Wood by other poets and relate to each other's works, particularly to the praise and critique of their verse. The correspondents include J Redwood Anderson, William Watson and Edmund Blunden.

Extent: 11 items

Related material:

Hull Literary Club [U DLC]

Letters of John Redwood Anderson [U DX59]

Papers relating to John Redwood Anderson [U DX80]

Papers of Howard Sergeant [U DSG]

Access conditions:

Access will be granted to any accredited reader

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| U DX45/1 | <p style="text-align: center;">Hull History Centre: Letters to Frank Noble Wood</p> <p>Letters from (Sir) William Watson to Frank Noble Wood</p> <p>Four handwritten letters from William Watson. The first two letters contain praise from Watson for sonnets that Wood had sent him. The third letter contains brief advice for Wood on writing and the fourth is a reply to praise by Wood of Watson's poems, thanking him effusively for Wood's comments.</p> <p>4 items</p> | 1913-1923 |
| U DX45/2 | <p>Letters and postcards from J. Redwood Anderson to Frank Noble Wood</p> <p>This item consists of three handwritten postcards, one letter card and two letters, one of which is typed. The postcard dated 1 December 1919 is a note from Anderson enquiring whether Wood had received the copy of Walls and Hedges he had sent. The letter dated 4 December 1919 thanks Wood for his praise and critique of Anderson's work but also contains some of Anderson's views on his own work. The letter card dated 29 July 1919 refers to Anderson throwing out all his verse except his work of the last two years. The postcard dated 18 April 1920 is a short note telling Wood to look out for the April edition of Chapbook which contains Anderson's Hull Fair poems and the postcard of 3 January 1922 is a note to ask Wood to call at Anderson's house. In the typed letter, dated 18 January 1945 written from Merioneth, Anderson thanks Wood for his praise of Lazarus but notes that his ability to write has been severely restricted by an eye condition and also mentions that he misses the Wolds, North Yorkshire Moors and Holderness.</p> <p>6 items</p> | 1919-1945 |
| U DX45/3 | <p>Letter from Edmund Blunden, Stansfield, Near Clare, Suffolk, to Frank Noble Wood</p> <p>One short handwritten note from Edmund Blunden. Blunden comments that Wood's Hull magazine has begun well and gives his thanks for Wood's note relating to an early poem of John Clare's.</p> <p>1 item</p> | 6 Nov 1922 |