

VERA BRITTAIN/PAUL BERRY Archive

The writer and lecturer Paul Berry (1919-99) was a close friend of Vera Brittain (1893-1970) from 1942 until the end of her life. She appointed him a literary executor, and he later became one of her authorised biographers. This collection comprises his correspondence with VB, and a wide-ranging and varied archive of material gathered and collated by Berry and Mark Bostridge in preparation of their *Vera Brittain: A Life* (Chatto & Windus, 1995). Berry bequeathed the collection to Somerville College, where Brittain was an undergraduate from 1914-15 & 1919-21.

Below is a summary of the collection's contents; a full catalogue is available on request.

Index, by Box number:

- 1 Vera Brittain-Paul Berry: original letters 1942-60, with P B's commentary.
- 2 As above, 1961-9.
- 3 Vera Brittain-Edith Brittain (her mother): original letters, 1902-21; photocopies of correspondence involving VB & her brother Edward (1913 & 1918), her daughter Shirley Williams (1952-7), her fiancé Roland Leighton (1914), and his sister Clare (1918-35).

Misc. Brittain/Bervon (VB's maternal grandparents)/Catlin (VB's husband) family documents, including copies of birth, marriage & death certificates, and family trees.
- 4 Vera Brittain-George Catlin: photocopies of letters 1924-65, with PB's commentary.
- 5 George Catlin: original letters GC-PB 1967-78, typed copies PB-GC, 1968-78; misc biographical material, including a photographic portrait by Karsh.
- 6-10 Vera Brittain's Diaries: photocopies from 1911, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944-5; photocopies from diaries 1939-68; edited typescripts of *World War One Diary* & *Diary of the Thirties*.
- 11 Vera Brittain/John Catlin (her son)/Shirley Williams/Paul Berry correspondence: copies and original letters.

Press cuttings re Shirley Williams, some with annotations by VB.
- 12 Winifred Holtby/Vera Brittain: copies of correspondence, 1921-35; copies of letters to WH from Virginia Woolf, Rebecca West, Elizabeth Robbins, Radclyffe Hall

Phyllis Bentley: original letters re WH to Mrs MH Waley (1973-6) & typescript of Bentley's reminiscences of WH.

- 13-14 Vera Brittain misc. correspondence: original, copied and draft letters. Recipients include VB's housekeeper Amy Burnett, her secretary Anne Hewitt, friends Winifred Eden-Green & AC Barrington; draft letters to her children's American guardian during World War 2 (Ruth Gage Colby), to Dame Sybil Thorndike, Christina Foyle, Livia Gollancz, Dame Janet Vaughan, and Lord Mountbatten; photocopies of letters to authors including Phyllis Bentley, Margaret Storm Jameson, E. Aillie Latchmore, Sarah Gertrude Millin, and Rebecca West.
- 15 VB/Geoffrey Handley-Taylor (VB's joint literary executor): original or carbon-copied correspondence, 1964-6.
- 16-19 Paul Berry: original correspondence, including letters to Shirley Williams (1969-98) and Anne Hewitt (1976-88), and from Ethel Mannin & Lord Soper (1983).

Misc. research notes by PB.

Small notebook with VB's ms. notes for *Testament of Experience* (1957).

- 20 Paul Berry as Literary Executor: misc. correspondence with scholars (principally biographer Deborah Gorham), publishers, and the BBC, including copies of contracts.
- 21 Vera Brittain: personal material including 'Events 1950 - end 1965' (ms. notes in VB's hand), VB's address book, ephemera including the signed receipt for Michael Rothenstein's portrait (1941); PB's notes and correspondence about her Will, funeral, and Thanksgiving Service.
- 22 Biographical articles on VB (offprints & photocopies).
- 23 Vera Brittain in S. Africa, 1960: photocopy of VB's ms. diary, lecture notes, & associated press cuttings & correspondence.
- 24 Publishers' contracts, including Gollancz's for *Testament of Youth* (1933).
- 25 Reviews (posthumous editions of VB's work, 1980-95, including Berry's & Bostridge's *Life*).
- 26 Journalism/lectures by VB, 1943 onwards (photocopies, offprints & cuttings).
- 27 *Citadel of Time* (unpublished): VB's original autobiographical notes.
- 28 Misc. writing, incl. *Semi-Detached Marriage* (as above).
- 29 Misc. writing, incl. *Radclyffe Hall* (1968), *Envoy Extraordinary* (1965) (as above), and PB's file relating to the Imperial War Museum publication of *Verses of a VAD*, 1995.

- 30 *Letters to Peace Lovers*(1940): PB's file of material relating to his treatment of the *Letters...* and *The Rebel Passion* (1964).
- 31 *Testament of Youth* (1933): misc. notes & occasional ms. material by VB (including 2 small notebooks) re PB's & MB's treatment of *Testament of Youth* in the *Life*.
- 32 *Testament of Youth*: BBC adaptation (1979) annotated scripts.
- 33 *Testament of Youth*: BBC adaptation clean script.
- 34 *Testament of Youth*: Reviews of the TV adaptation, the Virago reprint (1978), & correspondence re further adaptations and broadcasts.
- 35 *Testament of Youth*: Welsh Actors' Group stage adaptation, 1991-2.
- 36 *Testament of Youth*: Penguin Audiobook, 1995.
- [unboxed] *Testament of Youth*: 2 sets Isis Audiobook, 1998.
- 37 *Vera Brittain: A Life*. Notes sorted into chapters; both original & copied material (occasionally duplicated elsewhere), some in VB's hand.
- 38-9 *Vera Brittain: A Life*. Misc. editorial notes, with occasional original material.
- 40 Audiotapes of editors' interviews, broadcasts relevant to VB, and of VB on W. Holtby, 28.9.60.
- 41-4 Photographs, including VB on her wedding day (1925), VB in her writing shelter (1949), portrait of VB (1974), other original photos of VB, family & friends; misc. copies.
- 45 Shirley Williams: correspondence re VB, 1982-6; speeches/articles (one in ms.).
- 46 *Vera Brittain: A Life*: notes and chapter drafts.
- 47 *Vera Brittain: A Life*: copy-edited typescript (photocopy).
- 48 *Vera Brittain: A Life*: page-proofs.
- 49 Artwork: three mounted pictures (connection with VB uncertain).

- 1a Misc. biographical material by and about VB, incl. her ts. of *The Faith of a Writer* (1954), notes on religious beliefs, and the approach of old age; original letters from VB to various correspondents incl. Gorge Catlin (1926, 1944, 1952), Virginia Woolf (1935), Edith Brittain (1917), and Shirley Williams (1960).

Copies of letters to VB from Edward Brittain (1913, 1918), Harold Nicholson & others, and to George Catlin from Winifred Holtby (fragment, 1933).

Photocopies of VB's writing incl. *The Breaking-in of Dorothy* (juvenilia).

- 1b Misc. research notes by Berry & Bostridge, including material on the Brittain and Bervon families.

- 1c As above, including Add. Mss. 3 : copy of an essay by Mark Bostridge, *Ipplepen* 269, re the *Life*, and a copy of Bostridge's obituary of PB from the *Independent* (1999).

Letter from VB to Dorothy Lucas (1939), at school with Winifred Holtby. **Gift of John Lucas, 2006.**

Add. Mss. 2

- 2 Misc. material and correspondence (mostly photocopies) by or about VB, Winifred Holtby, Storm Jameson, Roland Leighton, Victor Richardson, and others.