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COLLECTIONS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND MANUSCRIPT DOCUMENTS

NAME OF COLLECTION: Ernest W. Nelson - Manuscripts and papers

SOURCE: Purchase -- 612838

SUBJECT: Art and poetry; ethics, politics, and Nietzschean  
philosophy

DATES COVERED: 1899 - June 1921 NUMBER OF ITEMS: 198

STATUS: (check appropriate description)  
Cataloged: x Listed:        Arranged:        Not Organized:       

COMPOSITION: (give number of vols., boxes, or shelves)  
Bound: 16 vols. Boxed: 3 boxes Stored: Box 224 FLAT Box 15:23:31

LOCATION: (Library) Rare Books/Mss CALL-NUMBER Ms Coll Nelson, E.W.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE         
        
        
      

DESCRIPTION:

Ernest W. Nelson, born in Norway, came to America at age fifteen. His attendance at an art school in Washington, D.C., was financed by an Aunt, who withdrew her support from him when this school was over. Forced into lithography to earn a living, Nelson never again pursued a career in fine arts, and his burgeoning talent in poetry was stunted at this same time. His interests continued, however, and these notebooks are filled with his ideas and notes on art and poetry, as well as various other subjects, such as translations, women, liberty and democracy, and Americanization, which last shows his bitterness at not having achieved recognition as a creative artist in this country.

Also included are quotations from numerous writers (including Samuel Loveman's "The triumph of anarchy," copied from the author's manuscript), with his criticisms on several of them (Stagnelius, a Swedish poet, Amy Lowell, Swinburne, Ezra Pound), on Gounod and Berlioz, on the sculptor Flaxman, and on Nietzsche.

There are drafts of letters to various people, and to newspaper editors. Of particular interest is the letter to Hart Crane [ca. May 1921], on whom he had considerable influence, even though their friendship was of brief duration. He is known to have built a fine private library which was open to many, including Hart Crane.

## Contents of Notebooks:

[ca.1910-1912]: Berlioz, Gounod and Liszt; Leconte de Lisle; Carducci or Swinburne. "The individual," Millet's drawings, The angel with the flaming sword ("Of Heaven"), Prelude to the "Lyric years," "Morning vision," "Marconi," "Hexameters," "To a Puritan." Illustrations.

Oct 1915 - Oct 1917: On Stagnelius, William Watson, J.A. Symons; poetic style, composition in art, modern translation; "Inscription in Paphos," "Man has been too generous to his Gods," "The speculators," "1917." "A drama of modern love," "Notes on Osiris for the sonnet called The speculators," "The sonnet," "War and poetry," "The governors - 1917." Illustrations.

May - June 1917: "The triumph of anarchy," by Samuel Loveman. Illustrations.

1918: On bronze and flesh; "Cecilia." Illustrations.

Jan - Feb 1918: On reading poetry, Dithyrambic, Women in poetry; "Poetry," Introduction for a Essay on women; Letter to Poetry, letter to the Plain Dealer.

March - Aug 1918: Arthur Henderson, Ezra Pound, Stagnelius; Spiritual ecstasy, "Ode to a cocktail," "O lilac-season," "Economic ode;" On advertising, Horace.

July - Dec 1918: Amy Lowell, Harriet Monroe; Ethical relations of men and women, Puritans, World War I, Prostitution; Letter to the New Republic. Illustrations.

Aug 1918: On Gounod, Charles Ferguson; On democracy, love: "To Gladys," To his mother, Sonnet (written in 1899, copied 1918), The new death. Illustrations.

Nov - Dec 1918: On Katherine Lee Bates; Letter to H.M.

1918 - Sept 1919: Flaxman, Amy Lowell; Masfield Sonnet; Rhythm, revolution by due process of law, World War I, painting and sculpture; Criticism of article in the Nation; Letter to editors of The Nation; "Parents and child," "Meditation of an exile." Illustration.

Sept 1919 - Jan 1920: Flaxman, Blake; On marriage, genius from aristocracy?, education, Christianity and pagans, British railway strikes, truth and the majority, "The liberty spree," "Plato."

1920 - March 1921: Schopenhauer, Swinburne; Hellenic studies, substitutes for Christianity, Mechanism of the human brain; Letter to Rev.Mr. Scotford; "An Easter song," "Liebknecht" (draft). Illustrations.

Feb - Sept 1920: Moonlight, On portraiture. his mother-in-law, Over the color-lines, business trade - the circulation of civilization; Letter to editor of the Plain Dealer, Letter to editor of the Freeman. Americanization. Illustrations.

May - June 1920: Swinburne; On Americans, women, art exhibition, the Swedish Academy and the Nobel Prize. Illustrations.

Nov 1920 - June 1921: Swinburne, Kno Lu; On Harding's election, liberty, electron-atom, evolution, rhythm, creation and liberty; Letter to Hart Crane; "Of last day scenes..."

Dec 1920 - Feb 1921: Flaxman; "Sonnet." Illustration.

## Notes with the Sketchbook:

"Grandmother," "Praeludium," "On Flaxman," "Jewelry," "The Master (To Luther Burbank)."