



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Emlyn Williams papers**

1941-1986

\*T-Mss 1993-026

## Summary

**Creator:** Williams, Emlyn, 1905-1987

**Title:** Emlyn Williams papers

**Date:** 1941-1986

**Size:** .25 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** papers: Gift, Walters, Corey (?), 1993

**Abstract:** Emlyn Williams was an actor, director, novelist, essayist, and playwright best known for NIGHT MUST FALL and THE CORN IS GREEN. Born in 1905 in Mostyn, Flintshire, Wales, where most of his family and friends mined coal, Emlyn Williams was inspired by a sympathetic teacher to pursue a theatrical and literary career. He acted in many plays and films, and also directed the movie THE LAST DAYS OF DOLWYN (1949) which marked the film debut of his fellow Welshman Richard Burton. From the early 1950s onward Williams toured in a one-person show in which he portrayed Charles Dickens. In his last years Williams was involved in setting up a film version of his novel HEADLONG. Emlyn Williams died on Sep. 25, 1987, at the age of 81. The Emlyn Williams papers consist of correspondence, clippings, photographs, and various materials relating to the one-person show in which Williams portrayed Charles Dickens. The material relating to Williams' Dickens impersonation dates back to his earliest appearances in the role in 1951, and includes numerous playbills, clippings, press releases, and other documents. Most of the correspondence in this collection is with Robert Crawley and pertains to a proposed film version of Williams' novel HEADLONG. After Williams' death the film was eventually produced under the title KING RALPH (1991), starring John Goodman.

**Access:** Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:  
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

**Preferred citation:** Emlyn Williams papers, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

## Creator History

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## **Scope and Content Note**

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## **Key Terms**

### **Titles**

King Ralph (Motion Picture)

### **Subjects**

Motion pictures -- United States

Theater -- United States

### **Names**

Williams, Emlyn, 1905-1987

Crawley, Robert

Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870