

Guide to
the Microfilm Edition
of the

FBI File on Ezra Pound

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Introduction

This FBI file deals with the World War II activities of poet Ezra Pound. Pound, who wrote such major works as the epic *Cantos*, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberly*, and *Seafarer*, was an American expatriate for much of his life. While living in Italy during World War II, he was active in promulgating Fascist ideology, especially through radio broadcasts directed at the United States. Charged with treason by the U.S. government, he was captured after the war in Geneva and brought to the United States for trial. He admitted to voluntarily broadcasting Fascist propaganda for pay. Pound was eventually confined to a mental institution in 1958 after being deemed unfit for trial. Included in this lightly excised collection are radio transcripts, correspondence with Italian and German officials, and a memo from Adolf Hitler.

The documents reproduced here were drawn from the Washington files of the FBI and have been released under the Freedom of Information Act; certain documents or portion of documents have been deleted by the FBI pursuant to provisions of that legislation. The material has been filmed in the exact order and condition in which it was released, and every effort has been made to publish the most legible copies available.

This file is in approximate chronological order, and the FBI did not index documents. The Roll Notes is not a complete inventory of the file; however, it gives an indication of the types of materials or specific documents that may be particularly worthwhile for research.

Roll Notes

FBI File: 100-34099

SECTION 1

Roll 1, 0001-0120

Jul. 1941-Dec. 1942

Allegation that poet Ezra Pound is employed by the Italian government as an agent of propaganda

Transcripts of radio addresses by Ezra Pound include:

"Question of Motive" (Apr. 13, 1942)

"Superstition" (Jul. 20, 1942)

"Disbursement of Wisdom" (Jul. 2, 1942)

"Freedom Forum" (Jul. 12, 1942)

Transcripts of incomplete radio broadcasts are included

Allegation that Ezra Pound, an American citizen, has broadcast anti-American talks via short-wave radio from Italy

SECTION 2

Roll 1, 0122-0243

Jan.-May 1943

Background information on Ezra Pound

Allegation of Ezra Pound's association with the Italian Propaganda Ministry

Treason charges against Ezra Pound for anti-American comments made in radio broadcasts

Information concerning Pound's political and economic writings

Allegation that Pound claims to be a "100% American" but is fighting against Roosevelt. He found he could better air his opinions in the Italian media because the radio and press in America was closed to him.

Interviews with acquaintances of Ezra Pound

SECTION 3

Roll 1, 0245-0376

May 1943-Dec. 1944

Allegation of treason against Ezra Pound

Translation of a law granting the Reich Ministry of

Propaganda jurisdiction over German radio administration

SECTION 3

May 1943-Dec. 1944 (continued)

Translation of Italian Decree revealing State Control by the
Italian government over Italy radio administration

Indictment charging Ezra Pound with his effort to

"dissuade citizens and persons owing allegiance to the
U.S. from supporting the U.S. in conduct of war"

Transcript: District Court of the United States for the
District of Columbia holding a Criminal Term,
July 1943

U.S. resident's attempt to mitigate punishment of Ezra
Pound

News article:

The New Yorker (Aug. 1943)

SECTION 4

Roll 1, 0377-0457

Sept.-Dec. 1944

Allegation of treason against Ezra Pound

Excerpts from Ezra Pound radio broadcasts (Jun. 1944)

Photostatic copy of a letter written in the hand of
Ezra Pound

SECTION 5

Roll 1, 0459-0543

Dec. 1944-May 1945

Discrepancy in findings of Document Examiners in the case
of "Dr. Ezra Pound, Treason"

Excerpts from the files of the Italian Ministry of Popular
Culture including notes on manuscripts written by
Ezra Pound for radio broadcast

Report concerning the arrest of Ezra Pound near Genoa, Italy
News article:

The Sunday Star (May 1945)

"FBI Will Get Pound; May Bring Him Here to Face
Treason Trial"

Photostatic copies of statements signed by Ezra Pound

SECTION 6

Roll 1, 0545-0609

Jun.-Jul. 1945

Report on radio broadcasts by Ezra Pound during 1941-1942
Information regarding Ezra Pound and passport application

SECTION 6

Roll 1, 0545-0609

Jun.-Jul. 1945 (continued)

List of materials found at Pound's Italian residence
Excerpts from manuscripts prepared by Ezra Pound for
broadcast over Fascist radio

SECTION 7

Roll 1, 0611-0804

Jun.-Jul. 1945

Chronology of Ezra Pound radio broadcasts, 1941-1942
List of documents secured from Pound's Italian address
after his arrest

SECTION 8

Roll 1, 0805-0919

Jul. 1945

List of Ezra Pound radio broadcasts during 1943
Excerpts from radio broadcasts attacking Ezra Pound
Excerpts of Pound's answers to questions from the Counter
Intelligence Corp
Translations from Italian of documents found at Pound's
Italian address
Copy of a letter from Ezra Pound to Olga Rudge
Interviews concerning the recording of Ezra Pound's radio
broadcasts and his association with Italian radio station
EIAR

SECTION 9

Roll 1, 0921-0973

Jul.-Aug. 1945

Bureau File of Ezra Pound Case

SECTION 10

Roll 1, 0975-1080

Jul.-Sept. 1945

List of manuscripts allegedly written and broadcast by
Ezra Pound

Interviews with associates of Ezra Pound

Transcripts of radio broadcasts by Ezra Pound (1941, 1942)
provided by the *Boston Globe*

Translations of letters between Ezra Pound and Alessandro
Pavolini, head of the Italian Ministry of Popular Culture

Translations of documents prepared by Ezra Pound for
radio broadcast

SECTION 11

Roll 1, 1082-1288

Aug.-Nov. 1945

Allegation of Treason against Ezra Pound

List of payment ("mandati") received by Ezra Pound from
Italy's Ministry of Popular Culture in 1942

Copies of letters by Ezra Pound to Carl Goedel of Italy's
Ministry of Popular Culture, containing propaganda
material

List of available recordings of Ezra Pound radio broadcasts

Transcripts of Ezra Pound radio broadcasts, Feb.-May 1943

List of contents from an Ezra Pound folder found at the
Ministry of Popular Culture of the Republican Fascist
Government, Salo, Italy

List of documents and translation of documents found at
Ezra Pound's Italian residence

Interviews of technicians with EIAR radio, Rome

Agent's report on the difficulty of finding any two
witnesses to the same act of treason conducted by Ezra
Pound

News article:

Washington, DC Times Herald (Oct. 1945)

"Seek Witnesses in Pound Case"

Conference with Department Representatives re:

Ezra Pound Case

SECTION 12

Roll 1, 1290-1463

Nov. 1945

List of documents taken from the Italian residence
of Ezra Pound

News article:

Washington, DC Times Herald (Nov. 1945)

"Seven Italians Imported as Witnesses"

Transcript: "Testament of Confucius," as translated by
Ezra Pound and Alberto Luchini

Translation of a summary of the book:

"The Banker's Conspiracy"

Request for permission to send a large print Bible to
Ezra Pound

List of documents identified as being in the handwriting of
Ezra Pound

Transcripts of radio broadcasts and speeches made by
Ezra Pound

SECTION 13

Roll 1, 1466-END

Nov. 1945-Jan. 1946

Roll 2, 0003-0114

Investigation of books written by Ezra Pound and published
in Italy

Excerpts from: *L'America: Roosevelt e le cause della guerra
presente*

News article:

PM (Nov. 1945)

"The Case for and against Ezra Pound"

Department of Justice indictment against Ezra Pound

Documents from the Italian Ministry of Popular Culture include: telegrams to Ezra Pound and a list of individuals who made radio broadcasts and the sums they received

SECTION 14

Roll 2, 0116-0282

Jan. 1946-Jun. 1971

Attorney Julian Cornell claims insanity defense for Ezra Pound

District Court jury finds Ezra Pound incompetent to stand trial

Six witnesses in Ezra Pound case seek fair exchange rate of 225 lire per U.S. dollar

Report concerning Ezra Pound's typewriter shipped from Italy and apparently damaged in transit

List of radio broadcasts made by Ezra Pound during 1943 held by Laboratory Files Unit

News article:

Washington News (Oct. 1947)

"Ezra Pound, Accused Traitor, Makes St. Elizabeth's Here a Mecca for the Literati"

List of exhibits of file for the Ezra Pound case

News article:

New York Journal American (Sept. 1955)

"Ezra Did Things That Others Didn't"

Directive to reinterview psychiatrists who gave testimony at Ezra Pound sanity hearing to ensure that no pertinent testimony was omitted during those hearings

Motion filed to dismiss the indictment against Ezra Pound

Indictment against Ezra Pound dismissed Apr. 1958, and

Pound released from St. Elizabeth's Hospital

Requests to the FBI for information re: Ezra Pound

REFERENCES

Roll 2, 0284-END

News article:

New York Daily Mirror

"Hucksters of Hate" (Nov. 1947)

"Man About Town" (Jul. 1947)

Letter to Syria from Ezra Pound bears Austrian address
(Oct. 1944)

News article:

Chicago Daily Tribune (May 1945)

"Justice Office Probes Record of Donald Day"

Washington Post

"Broadway Bulletins" (Apr. 1942)

"Kasper's Role Is Recounted" (Jul. 1957)

New York Times (Feb. 1946)

"Hunt 22 Americans for Aiding the Foe"

