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## The Douglas Crase / Frank Polach & Rupert Barneby / Dwight Ripley Archives

The Douglas Crase / Frank Polach & Rupert Barneby / Dwight Ripley Archives are interconnected archives representing the lives of four individual and remarkable men. The archives offer multiple access points into the exploration of the New York School of poets and painters, (especially its connection with the Tibor de Nagy Gallery) and aspects of the New York avant-garde (including Marie Menken, Willard Mass, Peggy Guggenheim, Clement Greenberg, Alfred Leslie, Jane Freilicher, Helen Frankenthaler, Judith Malina, John Bernard Myers, and others); the worlds of botany and gardening through two generations; and gay culture and life from 1925 on.

The archives, in particular, offer the opportunity to explore the life and work of poet, essayist, and critic Douglas Crase (and his botanist and librarian husband Frank Polach), through manuscripts, photographs, research materials, writings, and correspondence with their writer, poet and artist friends (including Trevor Winkfield, John Koethe, Donald Britton, Robert Dash, Marjorie Welish, Ann Lauterbach, Gerard Malanga, Cid Corman, Harold Bloom, Tim Dlugos, Darragh Park, Jed Perl, J.D. McClatchy, Alfred Corn, John Ashbery, James Schuyler, and James Merrill among others).



Left: Dwight Ripley as a surrealist typewriter, ca. 1929–1937. Right: Douglas Crase and John Ashbery during a trip to Niagara Falls, 1975.

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### Biographies (brief)

Full biographies may be found at the bottom of this prospectus.

### **Douglas Ward Crase, 1944–**

Poet, essayist, and critic Douglas Crase was born in 1944 and raised in Michigan. His published works include one book poems, *The Revisionist* (Little, Brown, 1981); *AMERIFIL.TXT: A Commonplace Book* (Poets on Poetry series, University of Michigan Press, 1997); and *Both: A Portrait in Two Parts* (Pantheon, 2004). He has received fellowships from the MacArthur and

Guggenheim foundations as well as an Ingram-Merrill Award, a Whiting Writer's Award, and the Witter Bynner Prize for poetry from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

### Frank Joseph Polach, 1944–

Frank Polach was born in 1944 and raised in Oklahoma. He has a Ph.D. in plant pathology from the University of California at Davis (1971), and an M.S. in library service from Columbia University, School of Library Service (1976). Frank was a Plant Information Officer at the New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York, from 1975–1976 and retired in 1996 as a University Librarian at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

### Harry Dwight Dillon Ripley, 1908–1973

Dwight Ripley was born in London in 1908. His father was a wealthy American and his mother a London actress. He was raised on an estate in Sussex ("the Spinney"), went to the British boarding school Harrow and then Oxford. Primarily known as an artist, he was also an important botanist, poet, philanthropist and polymath who spoke fifteen languages. He was the founding sponsor of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, which played a crucial role in the development of the New York School and which set the stage for many vital and important poet/painter collaborations.

### Rupert Charles Barneby, 1911–2000

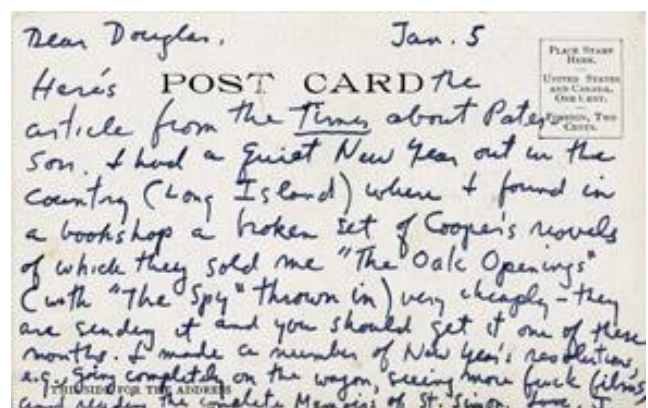
Rupert Barneby was a widely-honored self-taught botanist. According to the New York Botanical Garden, Barneby "has been acclaimed one of the world's leading plant taxonomists, ranked by many with the legendary nineteenth-century taxonomist George Bentham." He named 1,160 plant species new to science. He had at least 25 different species named after him, as well as genera of plants named in his honor—*Barnebya*, *Barnebyella*, *Barnebydendron* and *Rupertia*. His *Atlas of North American Astragalus* (New York Botanical Garden, 1964) took twenty years to complete. The book is 1188 pages, includes 552 taxa and is still considered the field's standard text.

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## Selected Highlights from the Collection

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### Douglas Crase and Frank Polach



Postcard from John Ashbery to Douglas, January 5, [1973?].

This postcard was written very soon after John and Douglas first met. "I had a very quiet New Year out in the country (Long Island) when I found in a bookshop a broken set of Cooper's novels of which they sold me "The Oak Openings" (with "The Spy" thrown in) very cheaply—they are sending it and you should get it one of these months. I made a number of New Year's resolutions, e.g., going completely on the wagon, seeing more fuck films, and reading the complete Memoirs of St. Simon. Love, J."

Douglas met John Ashbery for the first time in 1972 while living and working as a speechwriter for the Eastman Kodak Company, in Rochester, N.Y. In 1974, Douglas and his new partner (now husband), Frank Polach, moved into the same Chelsea neighborhood of New York where Ashbery lived.



First page of 2-page letter from John Ashbery to Douglas, April 9, [1973?].

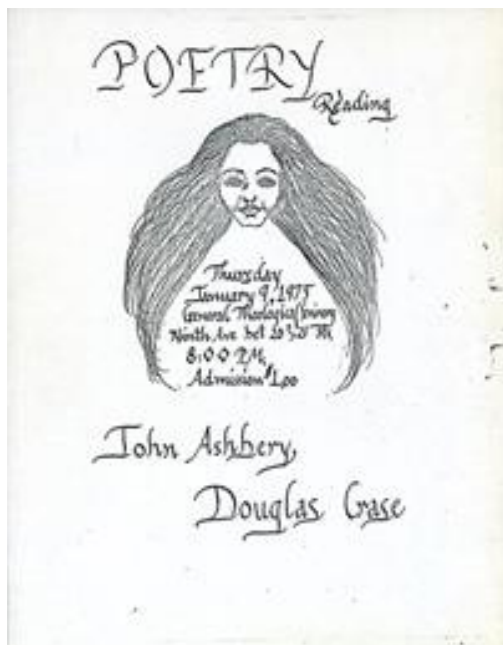
"I don't know how I'll ever be able to work for a living again; I am wholly vitiated by all this leisure time although I actually finished a long (well—12 pages) poem I've been working on lacklustrely since Provincetown. ...The poem is called "Self Portrait in a Convex Mirror" and is based on a painting with that title by Parmigianino—but I shall say no more since I know you don't like me tossing around names of artists you believe to be obscure and recherche. Of course it says very little about me or the painting and may well irritate haters of my work more than anything I've written previously. Meanwhile I have read it outloud to two handpicked auditors who thought it was very good, But who really knows? Not me, in any case, I have a feeling."



Douglas and John Ashbery during a trip to Niagara Falls, 1975.

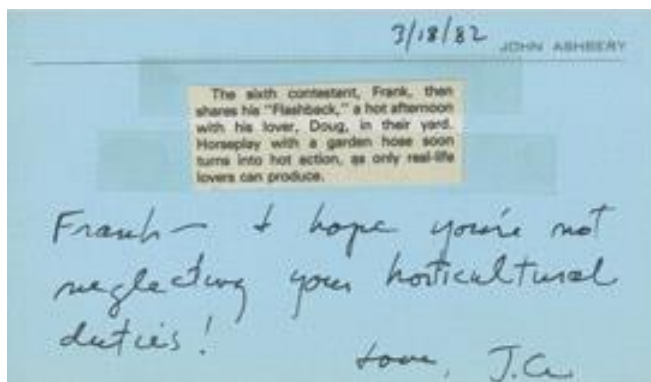
Snapshot taken during a trip to Niagara Falls with Douglas, Tom Smith and John Ashbery.





Flyer for a Douglas Crase and John Ashbery reading, January 9, 1975.

Douglas gave his first poetry reading, with John Ashbery, at the General Theological Seminary in New York on January 9, 1975.



Card to Frank Polach from John Ashbery, March 18, 1982.

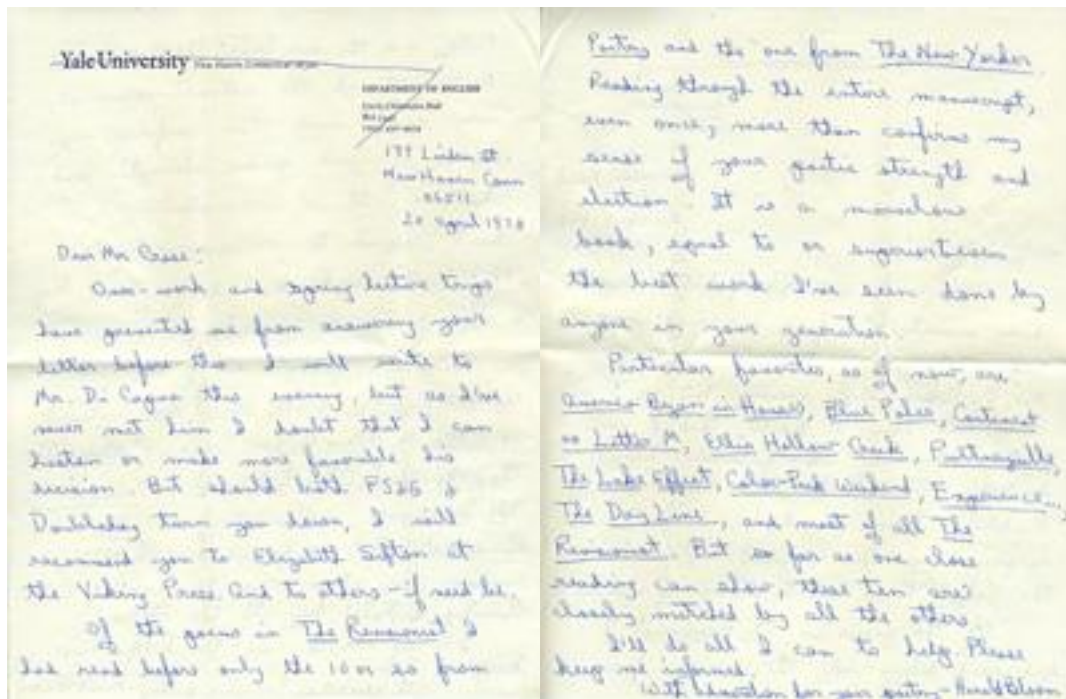
Cut out and taped onto the card: "The sixth contestant, Frank, then shares his 'Flashback,' a hot afternoon with his lover, Douglas, in their yard. Horseplay with a garden hose soon turns into hot action, as only real-life lovers can produce." To Which Ashbery has added by hand: "Frank—I hope that you're not neglecting your horticultural duties! Love, J.A."



Letter from Ann Lauterbach to Douglas, February 2, 1984.

"I have just now read, for the first time, your piece in *Beyond Amazement*, [*Beyond Amazement: New Essays on John Ashbery*, edited by David Lehman] and I wanted to let you know how greatly I enjoyed it, not only for its evident insights but also for its disarming clarity."





2-page letter from Harold Bloom to Douglas, April 20, 1978.

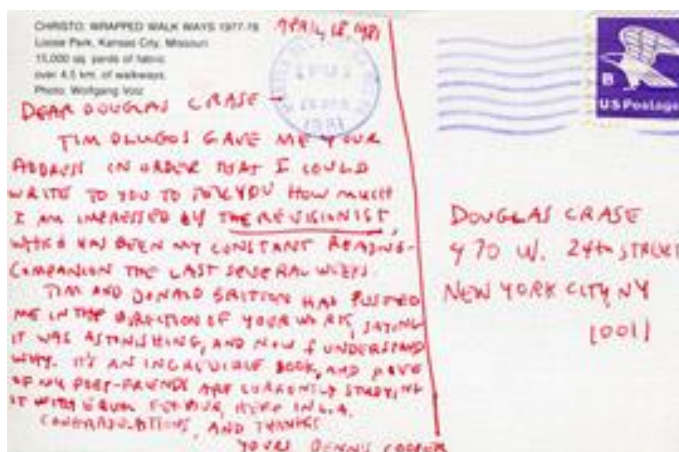
Harold Bloom wrote to Douglas after reading the manuscript of *The Revisionist* "Reading through the entire manuscript, even once, more than confirms my sense of your poetic strength and election. It is a marvelous book, equal to or superior even to the best work I've seen done by anyone in your generation."

Bloom included Douglas Crase's *The Revisionist* in the "Chaotic Age: A Canonical Prophecy" list in his *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (1994).



Letter from Donald Hall, August 27, 1975.

"I think that 'The Revisionist' is the best poem of yours that I've seen, and I think that it's a very, very good poem. I think that it's far too good for Poetry, which doesn't seem to me the magazine it used to be. I find it extremely moving, this poem, and quietly very damned intense."



Postcard from Dennis Cooper, April 18, 1981.

"Tim [Dlugos] and Donald Britton had pushed me in the direction of your work, saying it was astonishing, and now I understand why. It's an incredible book [*The Revisionist*], and five of my poet-friends are currently studying it with equal fervor here in L.A."





Tim Dlugos. "The Cost of Living / for Douglas Crase," March 19, 1981. Typescript.

Dlugos dedicated this poem to Douglas and has inscribed the typescript.

This and approximately 12 other items, including work by Marjorie Welish, John Ash, John Koethe, George Bradley, and Charles North, all dedicated or given to Douglas or Douglas and Frank as a couple, have been compiled in a notebook by Douglas.

Douglas and Tim Dlugos first met in 1977.



Douglas in Bob Dash's studio at Madoo, Sagaponack, NY, ca. 1979.

Douglas first visited Robert Dash's home, Madoo, in Sagaponack, Long Island with John Ashbery in 1973. There he met poet James Schuyler and painter Darragh Park. It was the first of many visits to Madoo and the beginning of many lifelong friendships.

Both Crase and James Schuyler would write poems that used Sagaponack as reference points (Crase's "Sagaponack" and "Sagg Beach" in *The Revisionist* and Schuyler's "Dec. 28, 1974" are based upon a party at Bob Dash's that included Schuyler, Trevor Winkfield, Darragh Park, Douglas, and his then new partner, Frank Polach).



Letter to Frank from Robert Dash, May 23, 1975.

"O shoot, too swallerz jes floo intwo the stewdeeh end I gess I Will hev to leave the dorz open this nyte so thet thay kin git owt and me rapped or robbed. Shoot hit happenz ever yeer and thay drap drappins on migh laytezt paintinz. Oh yes, dis ah tell you I em paintin pikters in ma spair timez, seems mostely, but sometimz peepul an carz and dawgs and othuh hinzidnetal things jest four fon. Can u beet that?"

Robert Dash took good advantage of his close friend Frank Polach's immense knowledge of plants and gardening for information that that he used for his beloved Madoo gardens. Frank is a professionally trained botanist with a Ph.D. from University of California, Davis. In the seventies, he taught at Cornell University, was a researcher at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station and then was a Plant Information Officer at The New York Botanical Garden Library, before ending up at the Rutgers University Libraries (he retired as the Rutgers university librarian in 1995).



Marjorie Welish with John Koethe at Douglas and Frank's London Terrace apartment, 1982.

Douglas first met Marjorie Welish in 1980.



Flyer for "Art: A Poet's Point of View: Poet / Art Critics on Contemporary Representational Art" presented by the Artist's Choice Museum at Cooper Union, November–December 1981.

Marjorie Welish wrote on the flyer: "Fifty percent of these poet / critics consider themselves your friends! An amazing statistic — and an exhausting one for you . . .", postmarked November 14, 1981.

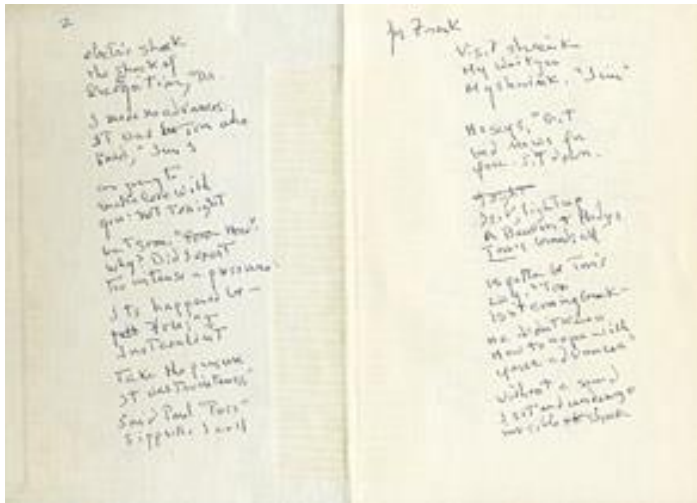


Frank Polach and James Schuyler at Douglas and Frank's London Terrace apartment, 1978.

Frank was in library school at Columbia University, with John Ashbery's partner David Kermani, when he first met James Schuyler at a birthday dinner given for Schuyler by Ashbery and Kermani in 1974.

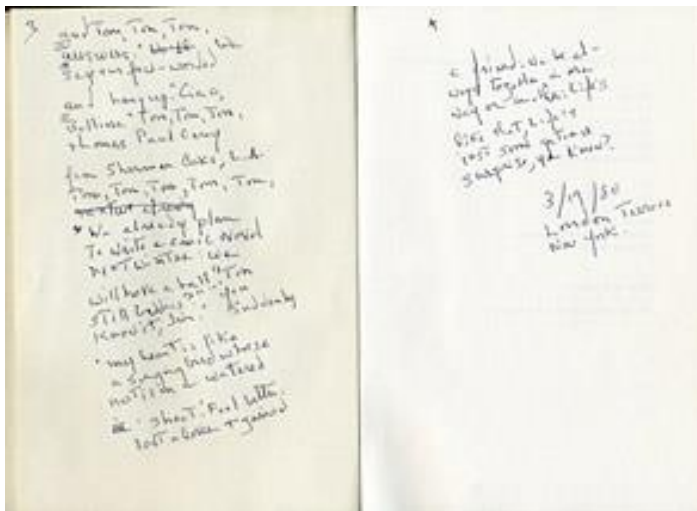
Schuyler would become good friends with both Douglas and Frank. However, as Douglas acknowledged in his classic essay on Schuyler: "Because my name appears once or twice in his *Collected Poems* I should begin by saying that James Schuyler was a friend of mine — though of the two of us, Doug and Frank, it was Frank he really liked." ("A Voice Like the Day," *Poetry* 163, no. 4 (January 1994).



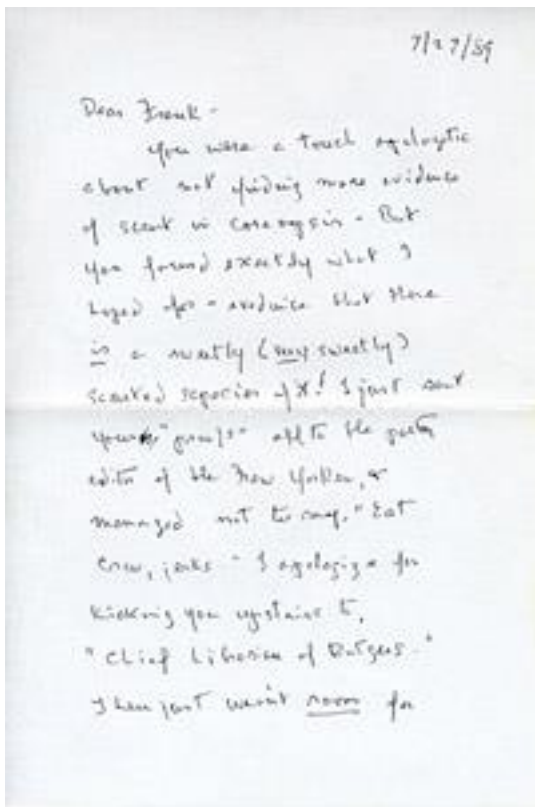


Poem handwritten by James Schuyler for Frank on the inside front pages of Schuyler's *The Morning of the Poem*, March 19, 1980.

After dinner at Frank and Douglas's London Terrace apartment, James Schuyler sat on the sofa and casually wrote and inscribed this poem inside his Pulitzer prize winning book. The book also includes Schuyler's poem "Dining Out with Doug and Frank (for Frank Polach)," (cited by Geoff Ward in his essay "In the Published City: The New York School of Poets" as one of Schuyler's "key poems").



1977, after James Schuyler's "near death experience" in a fire caused by his smoking in bed, Frank, together with David Kermani and Darragh Park, worked to salvage Schuyler's manuscripts and diaries. Schuyler included poems by both Douglas and Frank in his and Charles North's *Broadway: A Poets and Painters Anthology* (1979).



2-page letter to Frank from James Schuyler, July 27, 1989.

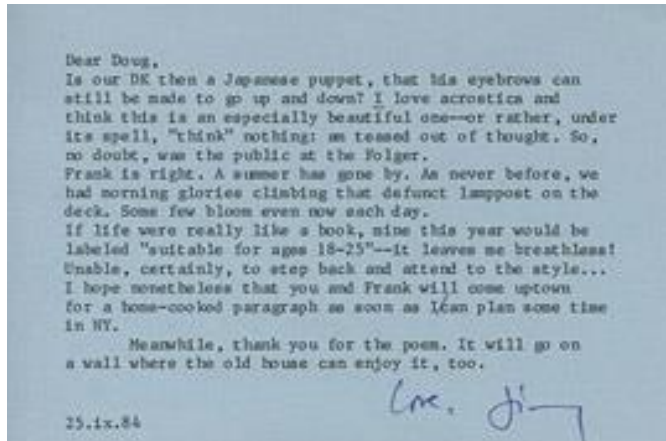
"Here is the poem in question, in a unique copy — nowadays poems are sent one in a mysterious pre-proof state — meaning, 'pre-copy edited.' Why, I'm not sure — maybe to lock the deal."



Frank was also alluded to in several of Schuyler's poems. He is the "you" in "Growing Dark," and in "Dec. 28, 1974" the "someone of a frank good nature" refers to Frank Polach (not Frank O'Hara as some have thought), who was attending a house party at Robert Dash's winter house in Sagaponack, N.Y.,

along with Trevor Winkfield, Darragh Park, Dash, Douglas and Schuyler when the poem was written. Frank read "Growing Dark" at the Poetry Project's memorial for Schuyler, held at St. Mark's Church.

Schuyler often looked to his close friend Frank for botanical information. According to Douglas, when the *The New Yorker's* fact checker questioned Schuyler's "Yellow Flowers" because it referred to a scented coreopsis, he turned to Frank. To Schuyler's "relief and amusement," Frank uncovered research that it was in fact "a (barely) scented variety" and the poem was published in the September 11, 1989 issue.



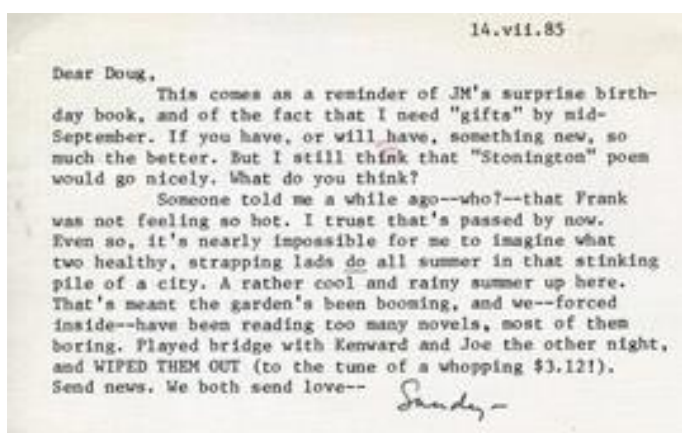
Dear Doug,  
Is our DK then a Japanese puppet, that his eyebrows can still be made to go up and down? I love acrostics and think this is an especially beautiful one--or rather, under its spell, "think" nothing: as teased out of thought. So, no doubt, was the public at the Folger.  
Frank is right. A summer has gone by. As never before, we had morning glories climbing that defunct lamppost on the deck. Some few bloom even now each day.  
If life were really like a book, mine this year would be labeled "suitable for ages 18-25"--it leaves me breathless! Unable, certainly, to step back and attend to the style... I hope nonetheless that you and Frank will come uptown for a home-cooked paragraph as soon as I can plan some time in NY.  
Meanwhile, thank you for the poem. It will go on a wall where the old house can enjoy it, too.  
25.ix.84  
McC. Jimmy

Card from James Merrill, September 25, 1984.

"If life were really like a book, mine this year would be labeled 'suitable for ages 18-25'—it leaves me breathless! Unable, certainly, to step back and attend to the style. . . I hope nonetheless that you and Frank will come uptown for a home-cooked paragraph as soon as I can plan some time in NY."

Douglas first met his friend James Merrill in 1977. Douglas would also become close to others in the Merrill circle such as David Kalstone, Alfred Corn, and J.D. McClatchy. He contributed the poem "Connecticut" to *For James Merrill: A Birthday Tribute*, assembled by McClatchy for Merrill's sixtieth birthday in 1986 (the book is in the archive with a thank you inscribed from Merrill in his *Eight Bits* [folded sheet in wrappers] laid in). In addition to other items, the archive contains a photo album documenting Douglas and Frank's visit to Merrill's Stonington, Connecticut home in 1983.

James Merrill subsidized Herbert Machiz and John Bernard Myers' Artists' Theatre and according to Crase's *Both* "was Myers's final, and by far his wealthiest patron, [Merrill] called him 'a passionate impresario.'"



14.vii.85  
Dear Doug,  
This comes as a reminder of JM's surprise birthday book, and of the fact that I need "gifts" by mid-September. If you have, or will have, something new, so much the better. But I still think that "Stonington" poem would go nicely. What do you think?  
Someone told me a while ago--who?--that Frank was not feeling so hot. I trust that's passed by now. Even so, it's nearly impossible for me to imagine what two healthy, strapping lads do all summer in that stinking pile of a city. A rather cool and rainy summer up here. That's meant the garden's been booming, and we--forced inside--have been reading too many novels, most of them boring. Played bridge with Kenward and Joe the other night, and WIPED THEM OUT (to the tune of a whopping \$3.12!). Send news. We both send love--  
Sandy

Postcard from J. D. "Sandy" McClatchy to Douglas, July 14, 1985.

McClatchy wrote Douglas asking for a "gift" to include in the surprise birthday book that he was putting together for James Merrill. He ended the card by writing of his summer in Vermont: "Played bridge with Kenward and Joe the other night, and WIPED THEM OUT (to the tune of a whopping \$3.12!). Send news. We both send love--Sandy."



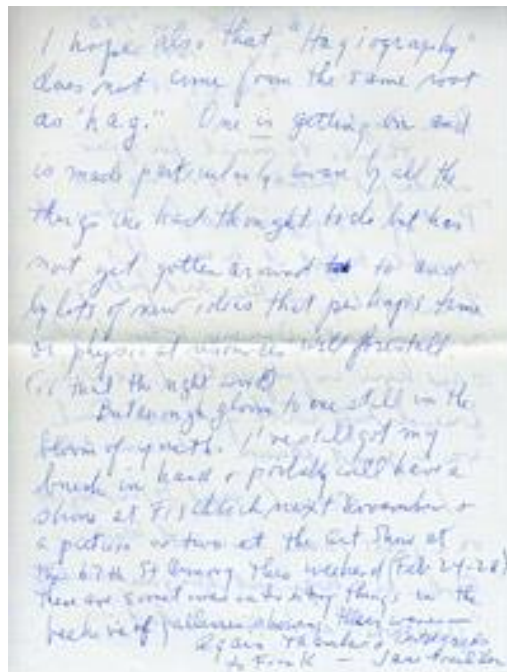
Douglas, Alfred Corn, and J.D. "Sandy" McClatchy at Douglas and Frank's London Terrace apartment, 1982.

Alfred Corn and J.D. McClatchy were partners from 1977 to 1989.



Letter from Alfred Corn, August 15, 1984.

"The trouble is, I'm having more and more difficulty finding any contemporary poetry to read. I had to judge a contest, along with Josephine Jacobsen and Donald Justice (the Lenore Marshall Prize). I can't convey the difficulty I had of getting through the 100 odd volumes. The goals set seem very low indeed. Routine domestic catastrophe [sic]. One more dramatic monologue spoken by Strindberg. One more sestina set in a drive-in movie. One more 'language poem' that just mean[s] that particular sequence of words. Really, it's appalling."



2-page letter from Jane Freilicher, February 23, 1994.

"Thanks so much for your wonderful tribute to Jimmy [Schuyler] in 'Poetry' Magazine and for taking the trouble to get it to me. It's beautifully written and full of moments with Jimmy when I, alas, saw him infrequently. I knew his friendship with you and Frank was a great pleasure & treasure to him."

Freilicher was not alone in praising Douglas's essay on James Schuyler, "A Voice Like the Day." Richard Howard, writing in *The New York Times*, called it "the best single essay on Schuyler I know."





John Koethe and Donald Britton at Douglas and Frank's London Terrace apartment, n.d.

Donald Britton died of AIDS in 1994. His one book of poetry, *Italy*, was published by his good friend Dennis Cooper's Little Caesar Press (1981) and was blurb'd by John Ashbery and Edmund White.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
 College of Letters and Science  
 Department of Philosophy

Jan. 3, 1990

Dear Doug,

Thanks for your card, and your letter for the new year. I thought you'd be interested in the article on the "Ninth Reader" - it appears in the historical journal *Studies of the American Renaissance*, and I received it originally. I found it at a neo-futurist party in New York, when one of my neo-futurists, a son of professional right-wing fundamentalism, asked me if I'd read it and if I knew of her. Thinking that he was a bit of a nut, I said I'd read it and that he was a bit of a nut. I was more about her. I began an enthusiastic response - only to learn that for some reason the person had changed her name, and that his name of her party was of the "very kind would paint better than I know of what they do it" variety. I tried to make her by saying something about the nature of contemporary poetry, and about her one of the greatest poets, Wallace Stevens, was an immense inspiration - he had, however, never heard of Wallace Stevens, and at that point commenced a

spiritual revolution of "The Revolution of Don the Lion" - anyway, I say the article out of the book and read it for at a time to see what he'd thought the guy, but I thought you might enjoy it. As said Rob the person who wrote you about getting her name changed, what's the important building?

As an added nice piece - I got another version of the interviewable. It's a paper of Edward Gross's which suggests and suggests in regards about you towards the end. I hope you approve, and that she has so far for herself.

I missed you in New York and saw you and Frank. I hope the year is all the more enjoyable to both, and that I'll see you both before the long.

Love,  
 John

2-page letter from John Koethe to Douglas, January 3, 1990.

John Koethe is a longtime friend of Frank and Douglas's. They all spent many hours together participating in the activities at Robert Dash's Madoo in Sagaponick.

421 Sayer Avenue • Lexington Kentucky • 40508

FROM: 10 JULY 1981

Dear Doug (Frank):

I'm delighted that you've been reading to us - and that of course you've enjoyed it. I'm glad you're delighted, too, for the anniversary publication. It's gratifying that you would read for me. I think you've said before that you'd like to see a book published, having been many like a midnight raid on the university. By first hand of course, I think, in which a variety had been written, from the *Journal of American Studies* to the *Journal of the American Studies*, to the *Journal of the American Studies*, and so on. I'm sure you'll find it.

Over-enthusiastic and deliberate, I should also have said of your poem. There is, I see a rare craft in your work. I hope you will consider the narrative poem (which I think needs to be brought back). You do wonders with putting a spine and four legs on the lyric for your version of the lyric. Among the younger poets you remind me a bit - in precision, in focus of what and feeling - of John Berry. I like your attack on the musical moment; you know how to begin a poem, and how to keep reading the energy in the poem going forward.

Your letter was so kind, showing me up after reading a collection, thoroughly generous and thoroughly easy review of Douglas and the review. It is such a relief to be quoted in unguarded ways, and being cited as an good here, but there, delighted here, William. There, I'm sure you'll find praise in the review.

The answer to the reading of my book. I can't even read myself believe that I've gotten that honor. Another's about to read out the name of "William" (presumably "Doug" or "Frank"), rather than that with good high (read).

Thanks again for the courtesy of The *Journal*.

John

Guy Davenport

Letter from Guy Davenport to Douglas, July 10, 1981.

"Sure-footed and deliberate, I should also have said of your poems. That is, I see a rare craft in your work. I hope you will consider the narrative poem (which I think needs to be brought back). You do wonders with putting a spine and four legs on the lyric (or your version of the lyric)."



2-page letter from Henri Cole to Douglas, April 10, 1994.

"I've read all of Mr. John Keats this winter, his poems, anyhow, and felt rather disappointed by all those nymphs and maids prancing about. It's just too sugarsweet though there are marvelous passages along the way; the total effect is cloying."



Letter from Robert Pinsky, November 25, 1975.

"A while back I wrote to say how much I liked some of your poems (in *Poetry*?). But now a more practical matter: I'm about to begin a term as poetry editor for the *New Republic*, with hopes of making it a good place to publish because of the company.



Letter from Jonathan Williams to Douglas, May 5, 2000.

"Trevor Winkfield rang up yesterday evening, full of his usual lively talk, and somewhere along the line he mentioned that he had seen you recently and then asked me if I knew you. I had to tell him no, that your name was unfamiliar. That's odd, sez Trevor, he's written well about that Wisconsin poet you've published – Lorine Nigh-Decker, or is it Knee-Decker. (It's the latter, Trevor.)"



Douglas and Trevor Winkfield, 2000..

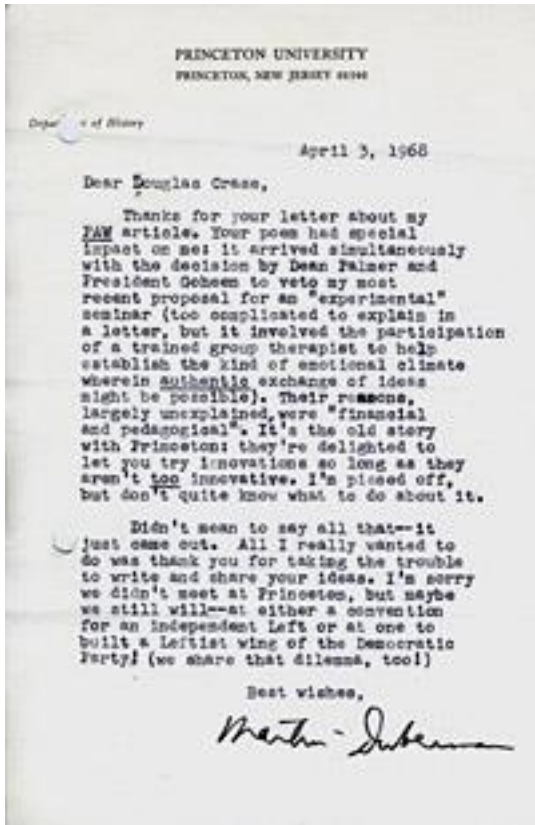
Photo taken during a visit to Douglas and Frank's Carley Brook home in Honesdale, PA.



Letter from Trevor Winkfield, October 10, 2005.

Trevor Winkfield, Douglas and Frank have been friends since their early days (and nights) together at Robert Dash's Madoo. Douglas reflected on Winkfield's 'Cottage Industries' (1980), in his essay "The Hidden History of the Avant-Garde": "...[it] quickly became for me and my friends of a slightly younger generation what 'Washington Crossing the Delaware' must have been to an earlier generation. It all but demanded a change in attitude."



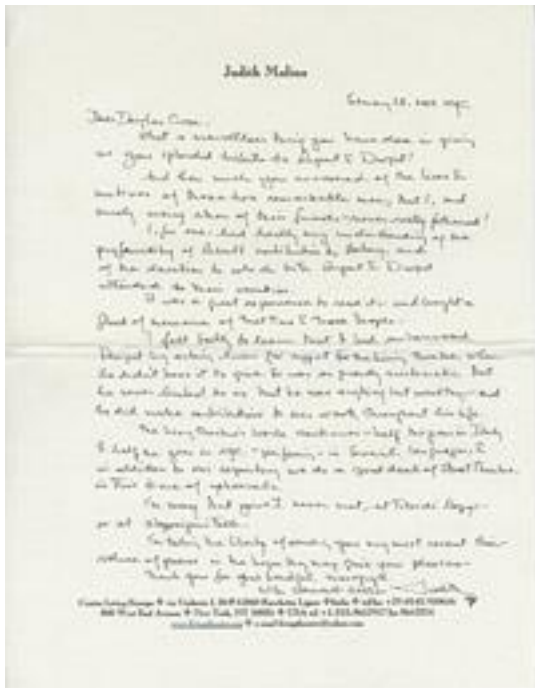


Letter from historian, playwright, and gay-rights activist Martin Duberman, April 3, 1968.

"Your poem had had special impact on me: it arrived simultaneously with the decision by Dean Palmer and President Gosheen to veto my most recent proposal for an 'experimental' seminar (too complicated to explain in a letter, but it involved the participation of a trained group therapist to help establish the kind of emotional climate wherein *authentic* exchange of ideas might be possible)."

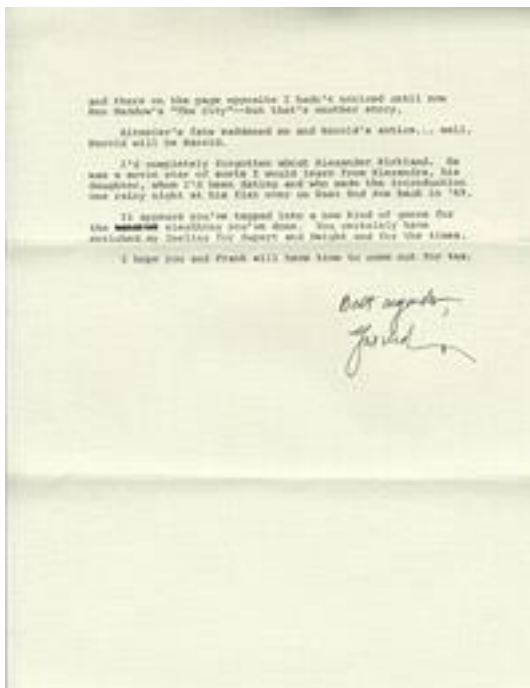
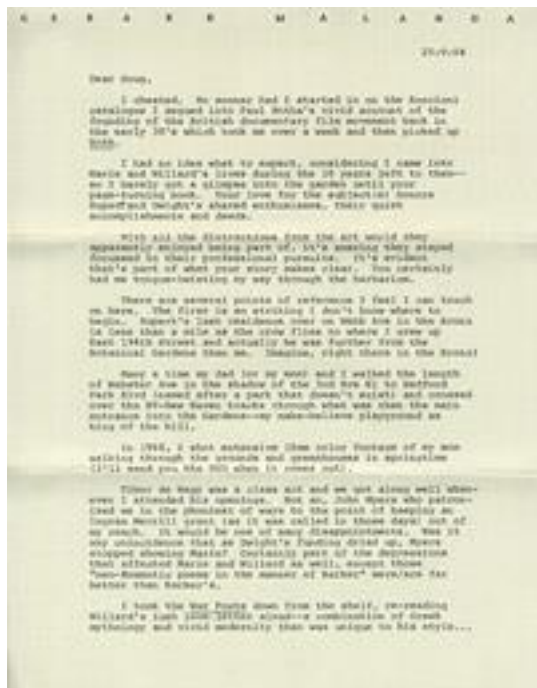
In addition to his interest in poetry, Douglas was also becoming more interested and involved in progressive politics at the time. In 1968 his "Michigan Democrats in Disarray," was published in *The Nation*.

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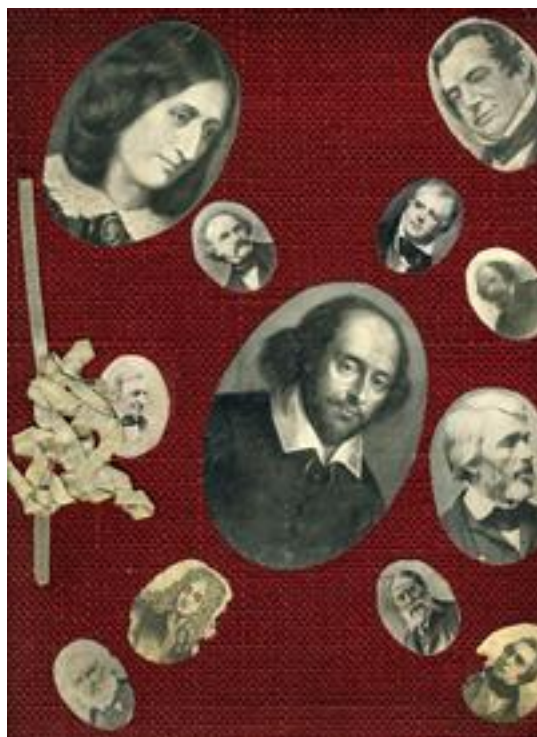
Letter from Judith Malina, a founder of the Living Theatre, to Douglas, February 28, 2002.

Judith praises Douglas's *Both* as a "splendid tribute to Rupert & Dwight." She writes that after reading it "I felt badly to learn that I had embarrassed Dwight by asking him for support for the Living Theatre when he didn't have it to give. He was so proudly aristocratic that he never hinted to us that he was anything but wealthy—and he did make contributions to our work throughout his life."



2-page letter from Gerard Malanga to Douglas, May 25, 2004.

Malanga was friends with Marie Menken and Willard Maas and is mentioned in *Both* due to his appearing in Andy Warhol's *Chelsea Girls* and *Bitch* with them. In this letter Malanga writes about many things, including reminiscing about growing up near Rupert's last home at The New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx. He also remembers: "Tibor de Nagy was a class act and we got along very well whenever I attended his openings. Not so, John Myers who patronized me in the phoniest of way . . ." Enclosed with the letter are manuscripts of 3 Malanga poems.



Collaged cover of Edith Fuller's senior Latin project on Emerson, 1912.

Fuller was Douglas Crase's grandmother. He was raised by her until the age of 5 or 6 and she played a pivotal role in his life. Emerson would also continue to play a role throughout Douglas's life. Most recently, he contributed the introduction to Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Essays: First and Second Series* (Library of America Paperback Classics, 2010).

This item is part of the Crase Family Archive that is contained within the Crase Polach Archive. Included in the family archive are *Six Generations Mother and Daughter* (a matrimonial history prepared by Douglas for his parents' 50th wedding anniversary); letters from Douglas's great great grandfather David Fuller (a wood plane maker from rural Maine) written in the 1850s; and other primary genealogical items.



Rupert Barneby with Frank at Douglas and Frank's London Terrace apartment, 1987.

Frank first met Rupert Barneby in 1975 at The New York Botanical Garden. The two shared an interest not only in botany, but also art and poetry. Both Douglas and Frank soon became close friends with Rupert. In 1998, Douglas and Frank helped move Rupert from his New York Botanical Garden loft into an assisted living home. They shipped many of Rupert and his late partner Dwight Ripley's items to their Carley Brook home in Pennsylvania. Crase began reading Ripley's diaries and found that they illuminated Ripley's extensive role in the postwar art world and his part in the creation of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery. Rupert Barneby died in 2000 and left many of his belongings to Frank, who was also the executor of his estate.

In 2004, Douglas published *Both: A Portrait in Two Parts*, a dual biography of botanist Rupert Barneby and artist Dwight Ripley, that incorporated much of the material that had been willed to Frank Polach.

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## Rupert Barneby and Dwight Ripley



Dwight Ripley. Pencil sketch of Master Rupert Barneby at Harrow, 1925. In frame.

Dwight Ripley, 16, met the younger Rupert Barneby, 14, in 1925 at the British boarding school Harrow. Their friendship scandalized both the headmaster and Rupert's parents. Their boyhood romance became a "lifetime partnership" (as Rupert called it) that lasted 48 years until Dwight's death, at the age of 65, in 1973.



Cover of one of two extant Dwight Ripley's Harrow notebooks in the archive, 1926.

According to Crase's *Both*: "Already in his Harrow School notebooks he [Ripley] had listed twenty-four terms in French for shades of red, seventeen for blue, eighteen for brown."

Dwight and Rupert began their expeditions through Mediterranean Europe and parts of north Africa collecting plants to cultivate at the Spinney, Dwight's Essex estate. In 1939, Dwight and Rupert published *A List of Plants Cultivated or Native at the Spinney, Waldron, Sussex* (Unwin Bros.) that identified 1,138 species in their garden.





**Dwight Ripley as a surrealist typewriter, ca. 1929–1937.**

Dwight was taken by the new Surrealism sweeping England. Upon his return to the Spinney from Oxford (according to Crase's "The Hidden History of the Avant-Garde"): "he buried a boat in the garden, installed a gilded tree in the drawing room, posed for photographs as a creature whose head was a typewriter, and kept a favorite Surrealist totem—an anteater—though his was conveniently stuffed."



**Jean Connolly (wife of Cyril Connolly) at Dwight and Rupert's Wappingers Falls home, ca. 1944. The painting in the background is Yves Tanguy's "Les Portes Tournante (1936)."**

Dwight met Jean Connolly in 1931, the year he left Oxford. She "was to alter his life and affect the lives of everyone ever touched by the Tibor de Nagy Gallery" (according to Crase's "The Hidden History of the Avant-Garde"). When Clement Greenberg entered the army, Connolly took over his column in *The Nation*, to preserve his spot at that magazine. While doing so, she is thought to have been one of the first to focus on Jackson Pollack in print in 1943.



**Rupert Barneby (holding Possum), Dwight Ripley and Helen Frankenthaler at Dwight and Rupert's Wappingers Falls home, 1951.**

In 1943, Dwight and Rupert purchased an old farmhouse with a hundred acres in the Town of LaGrange, Dutchess County, New York. It was twenty miles from Jean Connolly's home in Connecticut. They simply called it "the Falls" after its nearby postal address of Wappingers Falls.

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Rupert Barneby (holding Possum), Dwight Ripley, and Clement Greenberg at Dwight and Rupert's home at Wappingers Falls, 1951.

Dwight and Rupert were introduced to Jean Connolly's new lover, Clement Greenberg, in January 1942 at a New York restaurant. According to Crase's *Both*, Greenberg wrote his friend Harold Lazurus about his relationship with Connolly: "What pushing & pulling, what flipping & flammimg, what jumbling & tumbling, rummying & tummying, fricking & fracking, whipping & whacking."

Ripley arranged a meeting between Clement Greenberg and John Bernard Myers, in 1951, and pledged that he would financially back a gallery that Myers would run with Tibor de Nagy.



Photo by Rupert Barneby. Grace Hartigan, Dwight Ripley (holding a drink), John Bernard Myers next to his business partner Tibor de Nagy, an unidentified friend of de Nagy, and Helen Frankenthaler at Dwight and Rupert's Wappingers Falls home, 1951.

Douglas recounts in *Both* that "[i]t amused Rupert that the literary and artistic figures Frank and I knew as unassailable reputations, he knew when they were youthful aspirants."



Photo by Rupert Barneby. Alfred Leslie and Grace Hartigan preparing to launch a model airplane, Wappingers Falls, 1951.

According to an April 29, 2001 letter to Douglas from Grace Hartigan: "John [Bernard Myers], Tibor [de Nagy], Alfred [Leslie], Helen [Frankenthaler] and I went to Dwight & Rupert's anyhow and made a model airplane to fly." According to Leslie, who built it, it took 250 turns to wind the airplane's rubber band motor propeller.

17014 EASTERN AVENUE  
BACHMERE MD 21221  
APR 29 '01

Dear Mr. Case,

I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR LETTER AND THE PICTURES - WHAT A FLOOD OF MEMORIES THEY EVOKED! DWIGHT SAID HE LIKED SUDANATHAN FIELDS' BETTER, THAN HIS DUBIFFEST. THE MOUNTAIN COMPANION PIERCE, SHERBORN HILLS IS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM - THEIR DWIGHT GAVE IT TO THEM.

IN '51, '52? DWIGHT SUGGESTED THAT WE (SOME OF THE TIBOR GROUP AGAINST JOHN TIBOR) VISIT HIM AND RUPERT IN POUGHKEEPSIE FOR A "FETE CHAMPETRE" AND WE DECIDED TO MAKE KITES IN MY STUDIO FOR THE OCCASION. I REMEMBER, ALBERT CARLIS, HOWARD FERNENTHANGE AND BOB CHAMBERLAIN WERE THERE, HE HAD A KITE "TIBOR RUN" IN CENTRAL PARK AND THE OTHERS (WHICH WERE CORDON ROY INTERESTING) ALL PASSED THROUGH TO FIELDS ON THE GRASS.

JOHN, TIBOR, ALBERT, HOWARD AND I WENT TO DWIGHT ROBERTS ANTON AND MADE FRIENDS AND PLANS TO VISIT THEM WHAT IN GIVING IN ONE OF THE PICTURES. HEARD IS THE OTHER WORD. I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU GOOD LUCKING THING AND IS - PERHAPS HELM WOULD KNOW YOU MIGHT SEND ONE THE PHOTO "A BUCOLIC GARDEN" AND ASK.

I WAS A LITTLE AWED BY DWIGHT - HE WAS TO SHARP AND A TIGHT SPEAKING MAN. DWIGHT DIDN'T WANT TO SEE SPAIN - BOB FROM DE CONSTRUCTION. HE AND DWIGHT WENT TO SEEING SPAIN LIKE THAT TO GET RARE MOUNTAIN ROCK PLANTS. THEY ASKED ME IF I'D LIKE TO SEE THEM IN THEIR GREENHOUSE AND WHEN I WALKED IN I JUST SAW ROCKS AND FLOWERS - YOU HAD TO

SEEK THEM UP. IF THEY WERE ALL THAT AND ONE MORNING AFTER. BUT THEN I THINK DWIGHT THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL KILLED BY FIRST ONE WINDMILL WHEN THEY HAD A FINGER ON IT.

I ALSO REMEMBER THE HITS WAS FILLED WITH STRONG AND UNHELPFUL SIBBLES BUT NO BARS. I THINK HE HAD A TRIP TO FOR VINTAGE.

I SAW DWIGHT HERE WITH JOHN RIBBET WHO DIDN'T REMEMBER NEW YORK AND IN COURSE DWIGHT ALWAYS DRANK MUCH MORE THAN. HIS DRINKING SET IS BAD HE COULDN'T CARRY AN UNBROUGHT CONVERSATION - AND TIBOR HE WAS BELLIGERENT AND WITTY AND COOLING.

AM I GLAD YOU AND MR. FIELDS HAVE AND LOVE MY PAINTING. I WOULD BE TAKING A \$500000 OF PAINTING SHOW AT MY NEW YORK GALLERY (MMA) IN THE FALL. I'D SEND YOU AN INVITATION AND PERHAPS YOU CAN BOTH COME TO MY OPENING.

IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO ASK FROM FARK TO CALL ME - 410-733-7888

Sincerely,  
Grace Hartigan

US FORENSIC PHOTOGRAPHY - THESE FOR IDENTIFICATION - WITH PHOTO IDENTIFICATION WITH MY HANDWRITING - CALL IT BEAUTIFUL AND UNUSUAL!

2-page letter from Grace Hartigan to Douglas, April 29, 2001.

Letter sent to Douglas responding to photographs that he sent her for help in identifying. ". . . [W]hat a flood of memories they evoke! . . . In '51? 52? Dwight suggested that we (some of the Tibor de Nagy artists & John & Tibor) visit him and Rupert in Poughkeepsie [part of Wappingers Falls is in Poughkeepsie] for a 'Fete Champetre' sp? and we decided to make kites in my studio . . ." The letter also includes some of Hartigan's memories of Rupert and Dwight. Years later Douglas would reflect in *Both: A Portrait in Two Parts*.

7.2.84

Dear Frank: I saw you a long letter, and here it is.

Thank you for the new scene from the garden and for that strong expression, which I will return to you. The scene on 57th was an example of those few things which I have studied and which I have learned to do with a certain skill.

I had a wonderful solitary holiday, spending only a little time in the garden, but the rest of the day was spent in the garden, which was a great joy to me. I had a little more to do in the garden, which was a great joy to me. I had a little more to do in the garden, which was a great joy to me.

Hartigan is showing "Great Queens & Empresses" at Gruenebaum Gallery 57th St. I have the huge pretentious catalog. The paintings seem either to have been made in the rain, or else left out in it afterwards. All superlatively feminine and feminist.

The must tell me all about the garden and what you would like to do with your garden between interest and 'being the smallest'!

Let me know when you go back to work. Your phone gives me nothing but the new numbers. Let me know when you go back to work.

Love,  
Rupert

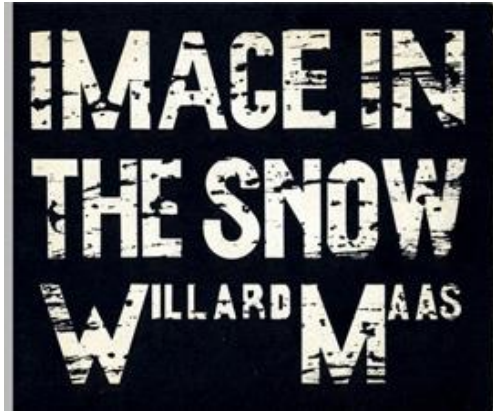
2-page letter to Frank from Rupert Barneby, January 7, 1984.

"Hartigan is showing 'Great Queens & Empresses' at Gruenebaum Gallery e. 57th this week and next. I have the huge pretentious catalog. The paintings seem either to have been made in the rain, or else left out in it afterwards. All superlatively feminine and feminist."

Rupert and Frank's unique and close friendship was formed from their common interests of botany, poetry and art. Another layer to their relationship was that they both had been involved in long-term same-sex partnerships. Rupert responded to Frank's love of poetry and his friendships with Ashbery and Schuyler by introducing him to Tibor de Nagy and John Bernard Myers and sharing his stories about the early years of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery.







Front of tri-folded announcement card from Gryphon Productions for Williard Maas's *Image in the Snow*.

At a 1953 "Poetry and Film" symposium Maya Deren extolled *Image in the Snow* and said that "the development of the film is very largely "horizontal," that is, there is a story line, but this is illuminated constantly by the poetic commentary so that you have two actions going on simultaneously." (Film Culture, No. 29, 1963.) It is now hailed as an example of the Queer Avant-Garde Cinema by institutions such as the Yale University Film Study Center.

Williard met Rupert in 1943 when the 32-year-old Maas was on home leave from Camp Crowder, Missouri. Maas's love sonnet "Letter to Rupert" was published as "Letter to R," in *The War Poets: An Anthology of the War Poetry of the 20th Century*, (John Day, 1945) (in the archive and inscribed to Rupert). The lightly corrected typescript for "Letter to Rupert" (on United States Army letterhead), other Maas typescripts of poems, a letter, and two telegrams from Maas are also in the archive. Unfortunately, the syphilis that Maas contracted at Camp Crowder found its way to Wappingers Falls.

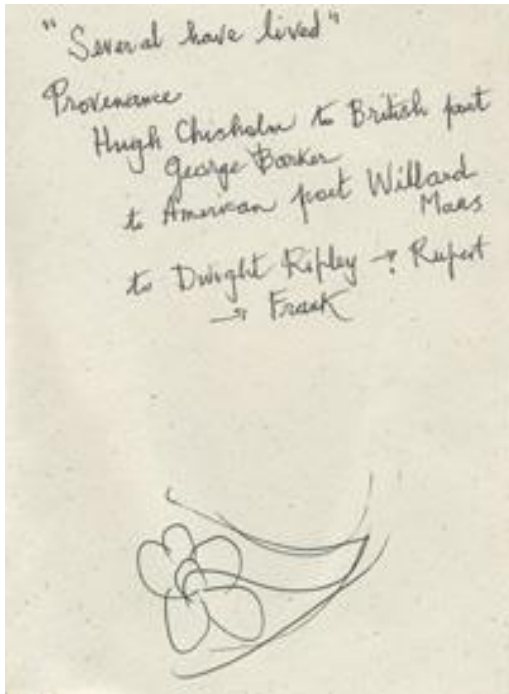


Hugh Chisolm. *Several Have Lived*. Illustrations by André Masson. The Gemor Press, 1942.

With inscriptions from Hugh Chisolm to George Barker and from Barker to Williard Maas. Mass in turn gave the book to Dwight Ripley. It was then given to Rupert, who gave it as a gift to Frank Polach.

Maas's seminal *Geographies of the Body* (made in 1943 with Marie Menken) featured the poet George Barker reading his own text.

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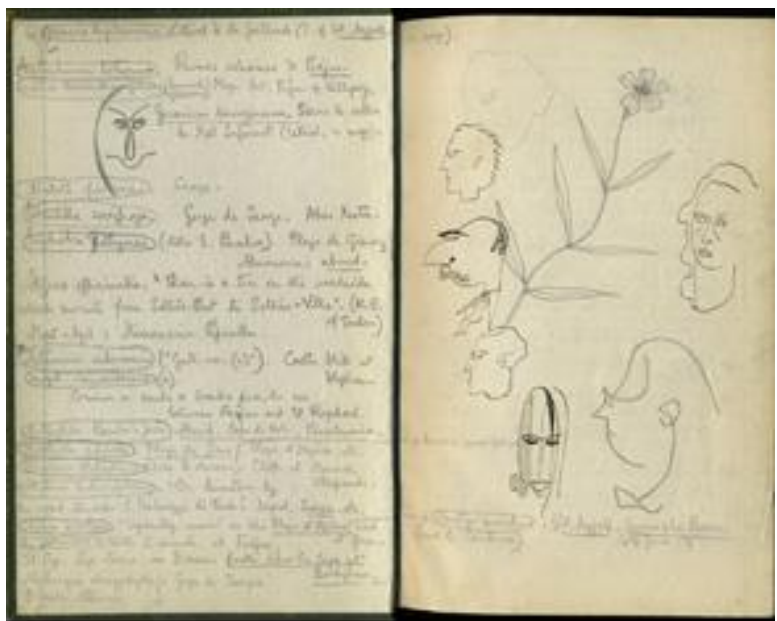
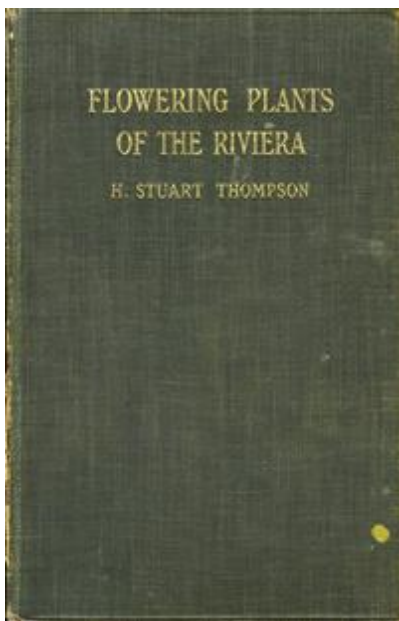
Card with provenance from Rupert Barneby that accompanied the gift of *Several Have Lived*, 1991.

"'Several have lived' / Provenance / Hugh Chisholm to British poet / George Barker / to American poet Willard Mass / to Dwight Ripley —> Rupert / —> Frank"



Rupert Barneby. Dwight Ripley at Frenchman Flat, May 13, 1941, the day *Cymopterus ripleyi* var. *saniculoides* was found.

Douglas wrote about its discovery in *Both*: "At Frenchman Flat they encountered an unidentified *Cymopterus*, a parsley-like plant noticed first by parsley aficionado Dwight for its unusually dark flower heads, the reminders, he thought, 'of chocolate truffles from some pre-war *confiserie*'." Dwight wrote of Nevada's appeal to himself and Rupert that "one might well be in south-eastern Spain."





Cover and hand-written endpapers of H. Stuart Thompson's *Flowering Plants of the Riviera* (1914).

On the endpapers of *Flowering Plants of the Riviera* Dwight Ripley entered the itinerary for his and Rupert's Iberian trip, ca. 1935 along with lists of species that would hopefully be collected for the gardens back at Dwight's Sussex estate the Spinney. The book is a journal of their exploration and a record of species.



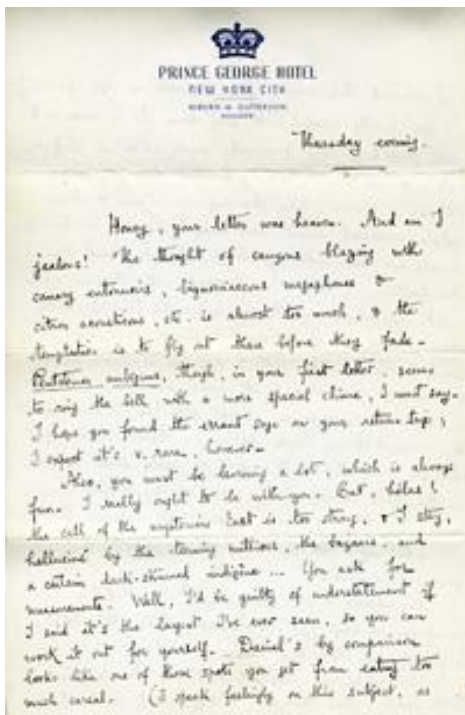
Vasculum used by Dwight and Rupert on expeditions to Spain and North Africa prior to 1939.

This small ornate vasculum held many samples, including *Limonium asparagoides* that Rupert and Dwight brought back with them from Algeria. There is also a larger vasculum in the archive, used in 1941 and later when they discovered *Cymopterus ripleyi* and other plants in Nevada.



Dwight Ripley letter to Rupert's sister Geraldine, December 5, 1970. Handwritten letter with a ballpoint drawing.

"Rupert, thank God, works with demonic zeal at his various monographs. His collaborator on the Menispermaceae, the formidable Dr. Krukoff, has finally gone back to Guatemala (again: thank God), so R. can get on with the Daleas (which is what I'm interested in)."



First page of a 4-page letter from Dwight Ripley in New York to Rupert Barneby in New Mexico, October 1939.

"Honey, your letter is heaven. And I am jealous. The thought of canyons blazing with canary entonnoirs, bignoniaceous megaphones & citron acousticons, etc. is almost too much, & the temptation to fly out there before they fade.

*Pentstemon ambiguus*, though, in your first letter, seems to ring the bell with a more special chime, I must say. I hope you found the errant sage on your return trip; I expect it's v. rare, however."

The archive contains approximately 23 handwritten letters from Dwight to Rupert from October 1939–September 1941. The letters have been transcribed by Douglas Crase.



Dwight Ripley. "Ponty and Pinty," 1950.

Typewritten poem with ink and colored pencil drawing and collaged element in frame. The drawing is on the back of an order form from a New York City tea store on East 55th Street.

One of a series of birdcage drawings, all done on the back of stationery. Many of these became part of Dwight's first exhibition, "Birds, Fish and Cages," at Tibor de Nagy Gallery in 1951. (This was one was not in the exhibition.) In the series, Dwight has named the finch Pinty (pronounced ponch) and the goldfish Ponty (pronounced pinch), in tribute to de Nagy (pinty is finch in Hungarian and ponty is carp). Dwight went on to have five solo exhibitions at Tibor de Nagy (the first was in 1951) and was included in a group exhibition at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of the Century Gallery (1946).



Front and back of announcement card addressed to Dwight Ripley for the 1953 "Season in Review" exhibition at Tibor de Nagy Gallery.

The exhibit included drawings by Ripley, paintings by Harry Jackson and selected works by Grace Hartigan, Alfred Leslie, Helen Frankenthaler, Elaine de Kooning, Fairfield Porter, Larry Rivers, Jane Freilicher and Robert Goodnough.





Dwight Ripley. "Boom, No. 1," 1951. Ink and gouache on stationery in frame.

The names clockwise represent John Bernard Myers, poet Harold Norse, poet and filmmaker Willard Maas, art critic and editor Tony Bower, art and antiques dealer Russell Carrell, Tibor de Nagy, Ripley, Peggy Guggenheim, collector Colby Walworth, Marie Menken, Barneby, Ripley's handyman Giles Shipley, and playwright Waldemar Hansen.



Rupert Barneby. "Self-Portrait," 1944. Collage in frame.

Barneby made two collages that can be viewed as "family portraits" in the style of French poet, critic and collagist Georges Hugnet. There is also a companion portrait of Dwight, from 1944, in the archive.



Page from a Ripley-Barneby photo album.

This page is from one of six photo albums in the archive that were kept by the two during their travels. There are numerous additional photos, including color photographs taken by Dwight Ripley in Mexico in the 1960s, and six 3-ring binders with Ripley and Barneby photographs organized by Douglas Crase.





Ruthven Todd. "Lament for Alpine Plants," an illuminated poem, 1957.

Ruthven Todd was a Scottish poet, writer, publisher, artist and novelist. Among other things, he introduced Dylan Thomas to the White Horse Tavern, but is perhaps best known as an expert in William Blake.



Dwight Ripley. *Spring Catalogue: A Poem*, The Weekend Press, 1952.

This copy is number 1 of 200 and is inscribed to Peggy Guggenheim from Dwight.

*Spring Catalogue* is a long poem with three drawings. It is both a memoir of Dwight and Rupert's botanical expeditions and parody of garden catalogs. The book is designed and set by Ruthven Todd. (That same year Todd also set up and pulled Frank O'Hara's first book, *A City Winter and Other Poems*, for Tibor de Nagy Gallery.)

Dwight was introduced to Peggy Guggenheim by Jean Connolly in 1943 and he helped write Guggenheim's *Out of This Century* (1946). She was ten years older than Dwight when the two began their affair in 1944 and she would introduce him as her fiancé at parties. According to *Both*: "She fell abruptly out of love with Dwight," said Rupert. "He was staying at her house at East Sixtyfirst and she'd gone out to some party, and Dwight came back in a cab with a very handsome driver, and Peggy found them in bed together." In spite of the end of their affair the two continued to be friends. A year after the cabdriver incident, she included six of Dwight's colored pencil drawings in an end-of-the-year group exhibition at her Art of This Century Gallery (1946).

## Biographies (full)

### Douglas Ward Crase, 1944–

Poet, essayist, and critic Douglas Crase was born in 1944. His published works include *The Revisionist* (Little, Brown, 1981), *AMERIFIL.TXT: A Commonplace Book* (Poets on Poetry series, University of Michigan Press, 1997), and *Both: A Portrait in Two Parts* (Pantheon, 2004). He has received fellowships from the MacArthur and Guggenheim foundations, as well as an Ingram-Merrill Award, a Whiting Writer's Award, and the Witter Bynner Prize for poetry from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Douglas Crase's early years were spent on a dairy farm in Michigan, raised by his grandparents and eventually by his parents. After graduating *magna cum laude* from Princeton (1966), Crase's plans

for a career as a lawyer and living a conventional lifestyle were disrupted by the turbulence of the sixties. He became involved in progressive Democratic politics, visited his first gay bar, became disillusioned with Democratic politics, dropped out of law school, got divorced from his wife, moved to Rochester and then to New York City. Douglas met Frank Polach, who was a botanist in Geneva, N.Y., in a bar in Rochester in 1974. The two found their way to New York that same year. Together they moved into the London Terrace apartment complex in Chelsea. They continue to live in the same apartment and were married in 2011.

*The Revisionist* is the lone book of Douglas Crase's poetry. According to the *Encyclopedia of New York School of Poets* the book "won such wide acclaim that it immediately established him as a poet of significance beyond the narrow confines of a 'school.'" In 1984, David Kalstone spoke of *The Revisionist* when he introduced John Ashbery and Crase at their Guggenheim Museum reading, February 21, 1984: "*The Revisionist* came out in 1981. I think I speak for many in saying it appeared with that sense of completeness of utterance and identity that must have come with the first books of Wallace Stevens—*Harmonium*—and Elizabeth Bishop—*North and South*."

Douglas Crase's most recent book, *Both: A Portrait in Two Parts*, is the dual biography of Dwight Ripley, an artist and founding sponsor of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, and his lifelong partner, botanist Rupert Barneby. Reflecting on *Both*, the *Encyclopedia of the New York School of Poets* says: "Crase has composed both a history of the times in which Ripley and Barneby lived and a meditation on what it means to live in a long-term relationship such as his own with [Frank] Polach."

#### **Frank Joseph Polach, 1944–**

Frank Polach was born in 1944 and raised in Oklahoma. He has a Ph.D. in plant pathology from the University of California at Davis (1971), and an M.S. in library service from Columbia University, School of Library Service (1976). Frank was a Plant Information Officer at the New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York, from 1975–1976 and retired in 1996 as a University Librarian at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

He has had poems published in James Schuyler and Charles North's *Broadway: A Poets and Painters Anthology* (1979), *The World* (#32, 1979), and *Poetry Now* (1978). His writings on library research and plant pathology have appeared in numerous scholarly journals and publications.

Frank first met Rupert Barneby in 1975 at The New York Botanical Garden. The two shared an interest not only in botany, but also in art and poetry. Both Douglas and Frank became close friends with Rupert. In 1998, they helped move Rupert from his New York Botanical Garden loft into an assisted living home. They shipped many of Rupert's and his late partner Dwight Ripley's items to their Carley Brook home in Pennsylvania. Frank was Rupert's heir and executor when he died in 2000.

#### **Harry Dwight Dillon Ripley, 1908–1973**

Dwight Ripley was born in London in 1908. His father was a wealthy American and his mother a London actress. He was raised on an estate in Sussex ("the Spinney"), went to the British boarding school Harrow and then Oxford. Primarily known as an artist, he was also an important botanist, poet, philanthropist and polymath who spoke fifteen languages. He was the founding sponsor of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, which played a crucial role in the development of the New York School and which set the stage for many vital and important poet/painter collaborations.

In 1925, while at Harrow, sixteen-year-old Dwight Ripley met fourteen-year-old Rupert Barneby. Their friendship scandalized both the headmaster and Rupert's parents, but their boyhood romance became a "lifetime partnership" (as Rupert called it) that lasted 48 years, until Dwight's death in 1973 at the age of 65.

Dwight, as an artist, had numerous exhibitions, including five solo shows (the first was in 1951) at Tibor de Nagy Gallery, and was included in a 1946 group exhibition at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century Gallery. Most recently he has been the subject of the exhibition "Unlikely Angel: Dwight Ripley and the New York School" curated by Douglas Crase (Poets House, 2006), a featured portfolio of his "Travel Posters" with an introduction by Douglas Crase in *Esopus* magazine (2008) and a showing of his "Travel Posters" and "Language Panels" at Tibor de Nagy Gallery (2012).

Dwight Ripley's pivotal role in the history of the postwar avant-garde, the creation of the New York School and the Tibor de Nagy Gallery has only recently been fully revealed and understood. It was Ripley who arranged a meeting between Clement Greenberg and John Bernard Myers in 1951, and then pledged that he would financially back a gallery that Myers would run with Tibor de Nagy. According to Douglas Crase's essay, in the catalog for the 2006 Poets House "Unlikely Angel: Dwight Ripley and the New York School" exhibition that he curated: "It's true that Ripley was a 'silent backer,' as he has been called in a biography of Clement Greenberg. But friends of the gallery understood, all the same, where the money was from. The poet Harold Norse remembered that it was simply 'Dwight Ripley's gallery.'" Ripley's philanthropy was not limited to just the backing of Tibor de Nagy Gallery, but also included backing projects by his friends, the filmmakers Wilfred Maas and Marie Menken; donating money to Dylan Thomas's widow; supporting the Living Theatre; and subsidizing Thurairajah Tambimuttu's magazine *Poetry London-New York*.

In the botany world, Dwight Ripley is known, along with Rupert Barneby, for their many plant expeditions and species that they collected and grew at their Sussex estate the Spinney. In 1939, their book, *A List of Plants Cultivated or Native at the Spinney, Waldron, Sussex* (Unwin Bros.) identified 1,138 species in their garden. Dwight and Rupert also built two magnificent rock gardens at their homes in New York (one at Wappingers Falls and the other in Greenport, Long Island). In 1974, the two men received the American Rock Garden Society's Marcel Le Piniec Award for their plant explorations and in recognition of the rare plants they had introduced into cultivation. Together, they also discovered 74 species of plants previously unknown to science. Six species are named after Ripley: *Cymopterus ripleyi*, *Aliciella ripleyi*, *Astragalus ripleyi*, *Eriogonum ripleyi*, *Omphalodes ripleyana* and *Senna ripleyi* (he co-discovered the first three with Rupert Barneby). He was almost finished with his multilingual *An Etymological Dictionary of Vernacular Plant Names* when he died in 1973.

### **Rupert Charles Barneby, 1911–2000**

Rupert Barneby was a widely honored self-taught botanist. According to the New York Botanical Garden, Barneby "has been acclaimed one of the world's leading plant taxonomists, ranked by many with the legendary nineteenth-century taxonomist George Bentham." He named 1,160 plant species new to science. He had at least 25 different species named after him, as well as genera of plants named in his honor—*Barnebya*, *Barnebyella*, *Barnebydendron* and *Rupertia*. His *Atlas of North American Astragalus* (New York Botanical Garden, 1964) took twenty years to complete. The book is 1188 pages, includes 552 taxa and is still considered the field's standard text.

Rupert Barneby was born in 1911 at Trewyn, a 17th-century country house near the edge of the Brecon Beacons mountain range on the England-Wales border, in Monmouthshire, Wales. Like his father before him, he attended Harrow where he met Dwight Ripley. After Harrow, he went to Cambridge while Dwight went to Oxford. The two began their joint plant expeditions to the Mediterranean and northern Africa while they were both in university. Rupert's father did not think that it was appropriate for his son to spend time among flowers by studying botany. He also did not approve of his relationship with Dwight. After completing his studies at Cambridge in 1932, Rupert was told to meet his father at Hyde Park. Douglas Crase briefly tells this story in *Both*: "Relinquish the attachment, he [Rupert's father Philip] said, and come home as before." However, the story is much more dramatic. In Crase's unpublished "Notes for Red Alerts" (they are in the archive) for *Both*, the full story is presented:

"According to L. Budd Myers [writer, editor and fellow rock-gardener, Myers was a close friend of Rupert as well as a good friend of Douglas and Frank] Rupert's father instructed him to sit on a bench at the edge of the Serpentine lake and reflect on what he had done to the family and his prospects for the future. During this time of reflection the father, Philip Barneby, would walk the entire perimeter of the lake, returning eventually to the bench where Rupert was to wait. On seeing his father approach, Rupert was to rise, greet him joyfully as though they had just met by chance, and they would go home together never mentioning Dwight or the sordid affair again. Otherwise, Rupert could never return. Rupert did as instructed, with one exception. When his father returned from his long walk around the lake Rupert refused to rise and ignored his father completely. Not until Philip Barneby finally left, alone, did Rupert rise and go home ... to Dwight. He never saw his father again."



Dwight would continue supporting Rupert and their "lifetime partnership" (as Rupert called it) lasted 48 years, until Dwight's death in 1973 at the age of 65.

The two men together were a part of the New York art world that included the constellation of artists and writers surrounding the first generation of the New York School and the Tibor de Nagy Gallery (such as Grace Hartigan, Helen Frankenthaler, Alfred Leslie, John Ashbery, Frank O'Hara, and Kenneth Koch), the avant-garde world of filmmakers Marie Menken and Willard Maas and Judith Malina of the Living Theatre, as well as writers and critics Clement Greenberg and Jean Connolly.

Beginning in 1936, Rupert and Dwight began their expeditions to the western United States and Mexico. After a brief flirtation with living in Hollywood, they moved to Wappingers Falls, N.Y. in 1943, where they built the first of their celebrated rock gardens with plants that had been collected in the Southwest. (They would later build the second of their equally renowned rock gardens when they moved to Greenport, N.Y. in 1959.) John Bernard Myers published Rupert's "Botanical Journal" (*Parenthèse: A Magazine of Words and Pictures*, Spring 1975) about an expedition in Oregon that he and Dwight had taken in 1944. According to Myers (and quoted in *Both*), when he would visit Wappingers Falls, "Rupert spent most of his day peering through his microscope."

After Dwight's death in 1973, the president of The New York Botanical Garden arranged for him to live on the grounds of The New York Botanical Garden in a loft above Pierre Lorillard's old stone stable. He lived there until 1998, when Douglas and Frank helped their friend move into an assisted living home just minutes from the Garden. According to his *New York Times* obituary, "He worked every day until this July [2000], when he could no longer open his seemingly endless drawers of legumes."

## Summary of the Douglas Crase / Frank Polach & Rupert Barneby / Dwight Ripley Archives

### Series I: Douglas Crase: Correspondence

Subseries A) General (11 boxes)  
Subseries B) From Douglas Crase (1 box)

### Series II: Douglas Crase: Writing

Subseries A) Prose (3 boxes)  
Subseries B) *Both* ( 4 1/2 boxes)  
Subseries C) Poetry (1 box)  
Subseries D) Assorted (8 1/2 boxes)

### Series III: Douglas Crase: Writing and Publications by Others

Subseries A) Assorted (3 boxes)  
Subseries B) James Schuyler and John Ashbery (1 box)

### Series IV: Douglas Crase: Audio-Visual

Subseries A) Photo Notebooks (1 box)  
Subseries B) Robert Dash (2 boxes)  
Subseries C) Assorted (1 box)

### Series V: Douglas Crase: Crase Family Geneological Archive

(1 box)

### Series VI: Douglas Crase: Assorted Oversize

(1 box)

## Series VII: Frank Polach

Subseries A) Correspondence (2 boxes)  
Subseries B) Garden Journals (1 box)  
Subseries C) Assorted (2 boxes)

## Series VIII: Dwight Ripley

Subseries A) Primary (1 box)  
Subseries B) Ripley Research (1 box)  
Subseries C) Assorted (1 box)  
Subseries D) Art (2 oversize framed items)

## Series IX: Rupert Barneby

Subseries A) Primary (1 box)  
Subseries B) Barneby Research (1 box)  
Subseries C) Art (9 oversize framed items)

## Series X: Dwight Ripley and Rupert Barneby

Subseries A) Ripley-Barneby Research Files (2 boxes)  
Subseries B) Photographs (3 boxes + oversize)  
Subseries C) Books by Others and Assorted (3 boxes + oversize)  
Subseries D) Publications (2 boxes)  
Subseries D) Art by Others (9 framed items)

Total of 60 boxes (plus oversize), approximately 80 linear feet.