

AMHERST CENTER FOR RUSSIAN CULTURE

**The A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* Manuscripts
1960s**

Summary: The A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* Manuscripts consists of a photocopy of the original Russian typescript of *The First Circle* (blown up from from microfilm smuggled out of Russia by the author), three copies of the first Russian edition of *The First Circle* and an uncorrected proof of the novel's English translation by Thomas Whitney.

Quantity: 2.00 linear feet

Containers: 2 record storage boxes

Processed: October 2012

By: Ethan Gates
Stanley Rabinowitz

Listed:

By:

Finding Aid: October 2012

Prepared by: Ethan Gates, Russian Center Assistant

Edited by: Stanley Rabinowitz, Director, Center for Russian Culture

Access: There is no restriction on access to the A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* manuscripts for research use. Particularly fragile items may be restricted for preservation purposes.

Copyright: Requests for permission to publish material from the A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* Manuscripts should be sent to the Director of the Amherst Center for Russian Culture. It is the responsibility of the researcher to identify and satisfy the holders of all copyrights.

INTRODUCTION

Historical Note

Following the publication of his short novel *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* in 1962, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was met with suspicion and resistance upon his attempts to publish further works in the Soviet Union. His next novel, *Cancer Ward*, was denied publication pending excision of perceived anti-Soviet insinuations, and the author was increasingly harassed by the KGB, who seized many of his papers.

Thus when Solzhenitsyn completed *The First Circle* in the mid-1960s, he attempted to make the fiercely anti-Soviet work more palatable to censors by cutting almost ten chapters' worth of material. The manuscript, however, was still rejected. Out of options in the USSR, the author converted the shortened manuscript to microfilm and smuggled the book to West Germany. The first Russian edition of *The First Circle*, containing only 87 chapters, appeared in the West in 1968, followed soon after by an English version, translated by Thomas Whitney and published by Harper & Row.

A complete, 96-chapter version of *The First Circle* was published in Russian in the West in 1978, but an English translation did not follow until 2009.

History of the Papers and Their Organization

In 1992, the A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* Manuscripts were donated to the Amherst Center for Russian Culture by Thomas Whitney, AC Class of 1937.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Scope and Content Note

The A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* Manuscripts consist of photocopies of the original Russian manuscript, a typescript blown up from microfilm smuggled out of Russia by the author, three copies of the first edition of *The First Circle*, and an uncorrected proof of an English translation of *The First Circle*.

Organization and Arrangement

The A. Solzhenitsyn *The First Circle* Manuscripts are organized into two series:

1. Manuscript photocopies (no date)
2. Publisher's materials (1968)
 - Sub-Series 1: Uncorrected proof for English translation (1968)
 - Sub-Series 2: Copies of first edition (n.d.)

Series Descriptions

Series 1, MANUSCRIPT PHOTOCOPIES (n.d.) contains photocopies of Solzhenitsyn's original typescript (blown up from microfilm) – includes one complete copy, one incomplete copy of poor quality, and miscellaneous fragments and duplicates.

Series 2, PUBLISHER'S MATERIALS (1968)

Sub-Series 1: Uncorrected proof for English translation – Thomas Whitney's personal copy of the proof for his own translation.

Sub-Series 2: Copies of first edition – contains three copies of the first edition of *The First Circle* in Russian (title misspelled by the publisher).

Container list

Series 1, MANUSCRIPT PHOTOCOPIES (n.d.)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	n.d.	Photocopy of original Russian typescript of <i>The First Circle</i> , with some notes by Thomas Whitney
1	2	n.d.	Photocopy of original Russian typescript, incomplete, poor quality
1	3	n.d.	Miscellaneous duplicates, fragments

Series 2, PUBLISHER'S MATERIAL (1968)

Sub-Series 1: UNCORRECTED PROOF OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION (1968)

2	1	1968	Thomas Whitney's uncorrected proof of his own English translation of <i>The First Circle</i>
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Sub-Series 2: COPIES OF FIRST EDITION (n.d.)

2	2	n.d.	Copy of Russian first edition of <i>The First Circle</i>
2	3	n.d.	Copy of Russian first edition of <i>The First Circle</i>
2	4	n.d.	Copy of Russian first edition of <i>The First Circle</i> , missing title page