



The New York Public Library
Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and
American Literature

Guide to the

W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman letters to Irving and Anne Weiss

1940s-2000

Berg Coll MSS 185670

Processed by Amy Lau in 2021.

Summary

Creator: Weiss, Irving, 1921-

Title: W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman letters to Irving and Anne Weiss

Date: 1940s-2000

Size: 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Gift from the Estate of Irving and Anne Weiss in 2021.

Abstract: The W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman letters to Irving and Anne Weiss, dating from the 1940s to 2000, consist primarily of handwritten and typed letters and poems, as well as photographs exchanged between the couples from the 1940s to the 1970s. The collection also contains some posthumous newspaper clippings, dating from the 1970s to 2000, about Auden and Kallman's relationship.

Preferred citation: W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman letters to Irving and Anne Weiss, Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: Multiple languages Materials in English and Italian.

Processing note: Processed by Amy Lau in 2021.

Separated Materials:

Seven books and one magazine were received with the original gift and have been separated from the letters for cataloging. All materials remain in the Berg Collection.

Creator History

Irving Weiss (born September 11, 1921 in the Bronx, New York) was a professor of literature and published poetry, stories, translations, and essays. In the 1930s, he won a scholarship to Brooklyn College, where he met the American poet, librettist, and translator, Chester Kallman. Weiss achieved degrees from Brooklyn College and Columbia University, and eventually studied under W. H. Auden, the British poet.

Anne de la Vergne Weiss (born 1926) was a writer, editor, and translator, who frequently collaborated with her husband. In the 1940s, the Weisses lived to Ischia, Italy for four years and reunited with Kallman and Auden. The two couples exchanged personal and professional correspondence for approximately thirty years.

Irving Weiss died on June 13, 2021, at Dix Hills, New York. He was predeceased by Anne Weiss, who died in 2000 at Chestertown, Maryland.

Scope and Content Note

The W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman letters to Irving and Anne Weiss date from the 1940s to 2000, and consist primarily of handwritten and typed personal correspondence between the two couples. Most of the letters, dating from the 1940s to the 1970s, are addressed from Auden and/or Kallman to the Weisses. There are letters from the Weisses to Auden; a letter from the Weisses to Edward Mendelson regarding Auden's poems; as well as a letter from Alan Ansen to Wayne D. Cogswell about W.H. Auden's death. In addition to the letters, the collection includes exchanged birthday invitation cards from Auden to the Weisses; drafts of poems; newspaper clippings; and photographs of Kallman and Auden. Of note are drafts of Auden's poems *Up There* and *Down There* and drafts of various poems by Kallman.

The collection also features a folder of posthumous newspaper articles and clippings, dating from the 1970s to 2000, that the Weisses compiled about Auden and Kallman's personal lives.

Key Terms

Subjects

Authors, American -- 20th century -- Correspondence
Poets, American -- 20th century -- Correspondence
Poets, English -- 20th century -- Correspondence

Occupations

Authors.
Poets.
Teachers.

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Correspondence
Negatives (photographs)
Photographs

Names

Auden, W. H. (Wystan Hugh), 1907-1973
Kallman, Chester, 1921-1975
Weiss, Anne, 1926-2000
Weiss, Irving, 1921-

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Auden, W. H 1950s-1970s
- b. 1 f. 2 Kallman, Chester 1940s-1975
- b. 1 f. 3 Auden, W. H. and Chester Kallman 1972-2000