



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Washington Irving papers

1759-1898 [bulk 1805-1866]

MssCol 1524

Summary

Creator: Irving, Washington, 1783-1859

Title: Washington Irving papers

Date: 1759-1898 [bulk 1805-1866]

Size: 15 linear feet (25 boxes, 10 v.); 7 microfilm reels

Source: Gift, purchase, Seligman, Mrs. Isaac N.; George S. Hellman; others, 0192

Abstract: Washington Irving (1783-1859), the American author, wrote his first popular work, *A History of New York*, under the pseudonym Diedrich Knickerbocker. He continued to write stories and essays which made him the outstanding figure in American literature of his time and established his reputation abroad. In 1826 Irving went to Spain to work at the American embassy in Madrid, then at the American legation in London, before returning to New York in 1832. In 1842 he was sent back to Madrid as U.S. minister. After traveling extensively in the U.S. and Europe, he established himself at his estate "Sunnyside" near Tarrytown, N.Y. where he continued to write historical and biographical works. He also served as the first president of the Astor Library in New York City from 1849 until his death in 1859. Collection contains correspondence, writings by Irving, family papers, pictorial materials, and published works about Irving. Correspondence, 1805-1863, consists of Irving's letters to and from family, friends and colleagues as well as correspondence and other documents signed in his capacity as charge d'affaires of the American legation in London and as president of the Astor Library. Literary manuscripts include holograph drafts, manuscripts, revisions, and notes for many of Irving's literary and historical works. Journals consist of his diaries kept between 1804 and 1842; notebooks contain personal and literary notes made between 1807 and 1844; family papers include letters and documents written or received by members of the Irving family (except Washington Irving); related letters and documents are items that were not generated or received by Irving or his family but which relate to Irving or his associates; and pictorial materials contain original drawings, oil portrait of Irving, etchings, lithographs, photographs, and many engravings. Also, rare editions of Irving's writings and translations and works about him (many are extra-illustrated).

Access: Advance notice required.

Conditions Governing Access:

Researchers must use microfilm and/or photocopies of Irving materials.

Alternative Form Available: Selected materials available on microfilm; New York Public Library

Preferred citation: Washington Irving papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Creator History

Washington Irving (1783-1859), the American author, wrote his first popular work, *A History of New York*, under the pseudonym Diedrich Knickerbocker. He continued to write stories and essays which made him the outstanding figure in American literature of his time and established his reputation abroad. In 1826 Irving went to Spain to work at the American embassy in Madrid, then at the American legation in London, before returning to New York in 1832. In 1842 he was sent back to Madrid as U.S. minister. After traveling extensively in the U.S. and Europe, he established himself at his estate "Sunnyside" near Tarrytown, N.Y. where he continued to write historical and biographical works. He also served as the first president of the Astor Library in New York City from 1849 until his death in 1859.

Custodial History

The Washington Irving Papers are an amalgamation of three previously separate collections: the Isaac N. Seligman Collection, the George S. Hellman Collection and the Washington Irving Collection.

Scope and Content Note

Collection contains correspondence, writings by Irving, family papers, pictorial materials, and published works about Irving. Correspondence, 1805-1863, consists of Irving's letters to and from family, friends and colleagues as well as correspondence and other documents signed in his capacity as charge d'affaires of the American legation in London and as president of the Astor Library. Literary manuscripts include holograph drafts, manuscripts, revisions, and notes for many of Irving's literary and historical works. Journals consist of his diaries kept between 1804 and 1842; notebooks contain personal and literary notes made between 1807 and 1844; family papers include letters and documents written or received by members of the Irving family (except Washington Irving); related letters and documents are items that were not generated or received by Irving or his family but which relate to Irving or his associates; and pictorial materials contain original drawings, oil portrait of Irving, etchings, lithographs, photographs, and many engravings. Also, rare editions of Irving's writings and translations and works about him (many are extra-illustrated).

Arrangement: Nine series: I. Correspondence; II. Literary Manuscripts; III. Journals; IV. Notebooks; V. Published Works by Irving; VI. Irving Family Papers; VII. Related Letters & Documents; VIII. Published Works Not By Irving; IX. Pictorial Materials

Key Terms

Subjects

American literature -- 19th century
Diplomatic and consular service, American -- Great Britain
Diplomatic and consular service, American -- Spain
Libraries -- New York (State) -- New York

Occupations

Authors
Diplomats

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Diaries
Drawings (visual works)
Engravings
Etchings
Lithographs
Oil paintings
Photographic prints

Geographic Names

Europe -- Description and travel
United States -- Description and travel

Names

Irving, Washington, 1783-1859
Aspinwall, Thomas, 1786-1876
Brevoort, Henry
Cogswell, Joseph Green, 1786-1871
Everett, Alexander Hill, 1790-1847
Everett, Edward, 1794-1865
Irving, Peter, 1970-
Irving, Pierre Munroe, 1803-1876
Irving, William, 1766-1821
Kemble, Gouverneur, 1786-1875
Leslie, Charles Robert, 1794-1859
Mills, Francis
Newton, Gilbert Stuart
Prescott, William Hickling, 1796-1859
Verplanck, Gulian C. (Gulian Crommelin), 1786-1870
Irwin family
Astor Library