

W. A. Swanberg papers

Ms. Coll. 48

Finding aid prepared by Julie A. Reahard.

Last updated on June 23, 2020.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

1992

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	3
Scope and Contents.....	4
Administrative Information.....	5
Controlled Access Headings.....	5
Other Finding Aids.....	6
Collection Inventory.....	7
Correspondence.....	7
Notes.....	7
Notebooks, Notecards.....	11
Dreiser Typescripts.....	11
<i>Dreiser</i> Galleys.....	12
Clippings, Periodicals.....	13
Photographs.....	13

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Swanberg, W. A., 1907-
Title	W. A. Swanberg papers
Call number	Ms. Coll. 48
Date [inclusive]	1944-1982
Extent	15 boxes
Language	English
Abstract	Comprises correspondence, research notes, typescripts, galleys, clippings, and photographs (many of which may be viewed online) pertaining only to Swanberg's biography of Theodore Dreiser.

Cite as:

W. A. Swanberg Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts,
University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

William Andrew Swanberg, biographer and historian, was born 23 November 1907 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He received a BA from the University of Minnesota in 1930 and later completed some post-graduate work at New York University. After working as a common laborer during the Depression, Swanberg was hired as an editor for Dell Publishing Company in New York, a position that he held from 1935 to 1944. From 1944-1945 he was a field reporter for the Office of War Information in Europe. In 1945 he began his free-lance career as a writer.

Swanberg's subjects have included: Morgan Dix, Theodore Dreiser, Dorothy Elmhurst, James Fisk, William Randolph Hearst, Henry Luce, Joseph Pulitzer, Daniel E. Sickles, Willard D. Straight, Norman Thomas, Flora Payne Whitney, William C. Whitney, and the American Civil War. In 1973 Swanberg won the Pulitzer prize for biography for *Luce and His Empire*; in 1977 he received the National Book Award for biography for his *Norman Thomas: The Last Idealist*. A chronology of his works includes:

Swanberg received the Christopher award in 1959, the Frank Luther Mott Research prize in 1962, and the Van Wyck Brooks award for non-fiction in 1968. He was a Guggenheim fellow in 1960. In addition, he is a fellow of the Society of American Historians and a member of the Authors' League of America and International P.E.N.

W. A. Swanberg married Dorothy Upham Green in 1936 and is the father of two children.

Scope and Contents

In March of 1965, Robert E. Spiller of the Department of English at the University of Pennsylvania gave the university library an unedited copy of the galleys of W. A. Swanberg's most recent publication, *Dreiser* (Spiller had been asked to review the book upon publication). Later this gift would be added to Swanberg's own donation to the library in December of 1984 of his working papers for the text. Together these two gifts comprise the W. A. Swanberg papers. The papers document the research, writing, editing, and reception of W. A. Swanberg's biography of one of the pioneers in American realism and naturalism, Theodore Dreiser. Swanberg and Spiller gave these papers to the library to augment its substantial holdings in American literary manuscripts, specifically as a companion to the Dreiser papers, which were already housed at Penn. It should be noted that the manuscripts, galleys, research notes, correspondence, and clipping and photographs (many of which may be viewed online) for *Dreiser* are the only major portion of W. A. Swanberg's writings that the University of Pennsylvania holds. The bulk of his papers is housed in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, New York.

Care was taken in processing not to disrupt the order given the papers by Swanberg. Order follows a natural progression from correspondence to note taking through typescript and, finally, edited and unedited galleys. For purposes of proper storage, notecards, clippings, and photographs were moved to the end of the Papers. Swanberg had originally filed correspondence in reverse chronological order, which has been changed to a straight chronological order. The few copies of his own letters that Swanberg kept are interfiled with incoming correspondence, just as he had done. It should be noted, however, that Swanberg kept very few copies of his outgoing correspondence.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

1992

Finding aid prepared by Julie A. Reahard.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Source of Acquisition

Gift of W. A. Swanberg, 1984.

Galleys for *Dreiser*: gift of Robert E. Spiller, 1965.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Biographies
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Typescripts

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Dreiser, Theodore, 1871-1945

SUBJECT(S)

- Authors
- Authors, American--20th century
- Literature

Other Finding Aids

For a complete listing of correspondents, do the following ns2:title search in Franklin: W. A. Swanberg Papers.

Collection Inventory

I. CORRESPONDENCE. 3 BOXES.

Series Description

Correspondence to and in a few cases from W. A. Swanberg with those whom he contacted about the life of Theodore Dreiser. In addition, there is correspondence from Swanberg's own publishers, agents, and fans about his book, *Dreiser*. The correspondence is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. The container list provides only a brief description of box contents for the first correspondence series, because individual cataloging records for the files of principal correspondents were entered into the AMC file of the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN). An alphabetical index of these correspondents was subsequently generated and is available to researchers in the reading room of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library. The index provides correspondent's names; extreme years of their letters; number of letters and leaves within the file; and the folder numbers for their correspondence. In addition, cross references were created for files of organizations to reflect the names of individuals writing letters within that company or group. The index of principal correspondents for letters written to and from W. A. Swanberg includes 136 file names.

	Box	Folder
Adriance, George - Gleeson, Edgar.	1	1-66
Goodman, Lillian - Sinclair, Upton.	2	67-136
Smith, Lorna D. - Yale Univ. Library.	3	137-172

II. NOTES. 3 BOXES.

Series Description

Notes mainly on Dreiser correspondence at the University of Pennsylvania, Indiana University, Huntington Library, and The New York Public Library. This series also contains Swanberg's interview notes; notes on books written by Theodore Dreiser; notes on books written about Theodore Dreiser; copies of articles by and about Dreiser; a work plan for Swanberg's book; and memorabilia.

	Box	Folder
Theodore and Helen Dreiser's outgoing correspondence copied out by Swanberg, 1901-1948, undated.	4	173-176
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to Cahan (Jewish Daily Forward) copied out by Swanberg, 1918-1926.	4	177
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to Thelma Cudlipp copied out by Swanberg, 1910-1944.	4	178
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to Sally Kusell copied out by Swanberg, 1923-1930.	4	179
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to William Lengel copied out by Swanberg, 1910-1941, undated.	4	180
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to Helen Richardson copied out by Swanberg, 1923-1927.	4	181
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to Sara Osborne White copied out by Swanberg, 1896-1898.	4	182
Dreiser's outgoing correspondence to Huan Wilson copied out by Swanberg, 1932-1934.	4	183
Notes on Dreiser's incoming correspondence copied out by Swanberg: A - Y.	4	184-195
Miscellaneous notes on various correspondence files copied out by Swanberg.	5	196
Chronological list of letters, mostly to Dreiser.	5	197

Notes taken at the Emeline Fairbanks Memorial Library, Terre Haute, Indiana.	5	198
Research material on Terre Haute, Indiana.	5	199
Notes on <i>The "Genius"</i> lawsuit.	5	200
<i>San Francisco Examiner</i> notes: Mooney trial articles; George Sterling.	5	201
Addresses for T.D. taken from correspondence, 1898-1904.	5	202
T.D. Income Tax Records copied out by Swanberg, 1919-1946.	5	203
Sales figures on T.D.'s books copied out by Swanberg, 1898-1933.	5	204
Dreiser's philosophy—notes copied out by Swanberg; Theodore Dreiser's <i>Notes on Life</i> —pamphlet by Neda M. Westlake.	5	205
T.D. biographical information copied out by Swanberg.	5	206
Excerpts from letters of relatives to Dreiser copied out by Swanberg.	5	207
Helen Dreiser's will copied out by Swanberg.	5	208
Samples of the types of letters written to Dreiser copied out by Swanberg.	5	209
T.D. radio interviews copied out by Swanberg, 1940-1941.	5	210
Clipping files: information copied out by Swanberg.	5	211
T.D.'s memorial services: information copied out by Swanberg.	5	212
Interviews with Robert Elias; notes on <i>Theodore Dreiser: Apostle of Nature</i> ; notes on Elias material at Cornell.	6	213-218
Notes from interviews with Louise Campbell, 1962.	6	219

Notes from interview with Lester Cohen, 1962.	6	220
Notes from interview with Thelma Cudlipp, 1962.	6	221
Notes from interviews with Vera Dreiser, 1964.	6	222
Notes from interview with Wharton Esherick, 1962.	6	223
Notes from interview with Lillian Rosedale Goodman, 1963.	6	224
Notes from interviews with Marguerite Tjader Harris, 1962.	6	225
Notes from interview with William C. Lengel, 1962.	6	226
Notes from interview with Ann Watkins, 1962.	6	227
Notes on Dreiser's early newspaper stories.	6	228
Notes on Dreiser's novels.	6	229-233
Notes on Dreiser's diaries; notes on Helen Dreiser's private diaries.	6	234-238
Notes on Dorothy Dudley's <i>Forgotten Frontiers</i> .	6	239
Notes on Daniel Aaron's <i>Writers on the Left</i> .	6	240
Articles written by Dreiser.	6	241
Description		
Reprints; photocopies		
Photocopies of articles about Dreiser and his works.	6	242
Lists of articles by Dreiser in <i>Esquire</i> and in L.A. Public Library.	6	243
Work plan; addresses of interviewees and correspondents; chronology of Dreiser's works.	6	244

Memorabilia.

6

245

Contents

- * Original of a Dreiser invitation
 - * Christmas card with Dreiser's grave
 - * Floor plan of Kings Road house
 - * "The Why and How of Meditation" by Allan Hunter (pamphlet)
 - * Guides to Forest Lawn cemetery
 - * Sheet music, "Cherie, I Love You" by Lillian Rosedale Goodman, autographed to Swanberg
 - * 45 rpm record, "Our Prayer" by Lillian Rosedale Goodman and Mark Goodman, autographed to Swanberg
-

III. NOTEBOOKS, NOTECARDS. 2 BOXES.**Series Description**

Spiral bound notebooks in the hand of Swanberg; notecards arranged either chronologically or in series by Swanberg.

	Box	Folder
Notebooks; bibliographic cards; notecards.	7	246
Notecards (cont.).	8	247

IV. DREISER TYPESCRIPTS. 2 BOXES.**Series Description**

Early, incomplete typescript with revisions by Swanberg; final typescript with revisions by Swanberg.

	Box	Folder
<i>Dreiser</i> typescript (incomplete).	9	248
Description		
Swanberg's notes indicate "revision begun June 14, 1963"		
<i>Dreiser</i> typescript, final draft.	10	249
Description		
Swanberg's notes indicate "completed ms. from which final copy was typed"		

V. DREISER GALLEYS. 2 BOXES.

Series Description

Unbound galleys include first author's proof with corrections; front matter and back matter, uncorrected; and xeroxes of photo paste-up. Bound galleys include one corrected and one uncorrected copy.

	Box	Folder
<i>Dreiser</i> unbound galleys with corrections; front and back matter, uncorrected (author's first proof).	11	250
Photocopies of photograph paste-up for <i>Dreiser</i> .	11	251
Bound galleys, one corrected, one uncorrected.	12	252
Description		
Uncorrected copy is Robert E. Spiller gift		

VI. CLIPPINGS, PERIODICALS. 1 BOX.**Series Description**

Mainly clippings of reviews of Swanberg's *Dreiser*. Some clippings of reviews of Robert Elias's work *Theodore Dreiser: Apostle of Nature*; reviews of other works about Dreiser. A few clippings about Dreiser himself. Periodicals include copies of articles written by Swanberg about Theodore Dreiser.

	Box	Folder
Reviews of Swanberg's <i>Dreiser</i> , January 1965-1967, undated.	13	253-257
Clipping concerning Dreiser from the <i>Philadelphia Record</i> , May 22, 1944.	13	258
Reviews of Elias's <i>Theodore Dreiser: Apostle of Nature</i> , 1949.	13	259
Miscellaneous articles concerning Dreiser and works about Dreiser, 1949-1982.	13	260
Journals with articles written by Swanberg about Theodore Dreiser, 1963-1970.	13	261
Contents		
* <i>College English</i> , December 1963		
* <i>Critic</i> , November/December 1970		

VII. PHOTOGRAPHS. 2 BOXES.

	Box	Folder
	14	262

Series Description

Photographs used or considered for use in *Dreiser*. Many of these photographs may be viewed online.

Series include: (1) Early T.D., Family, Jug; (2) Trip to Soviet Union; (3) Later T.D.; (4) Iroki; (5) T.D.'s death; (6) T.D.'s female friends; (7) T.D.'s male friends.

	Box	Folder
Oversize: fit into the series (2) Trip to Soviet Union; (3) Later T.D.; (5) T.D.'s death; (6) T.D.'s female friends (Thelma Cudlipp).	15	263-265
