Washington Irving Papers
1759–1898

Guide to the Scholarly Resources
Microfilm Edition

From the Holdings of Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, Center for the Humanities, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

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Wilmington, Delaware
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Acknowledgments

The publisher wishes to thank Mary B. Bowling, Karen Van Westering, and Lisa Browar at The New York Public Library for their ideas, help, and effort in compiling the microfilm for this collection.

ISBN 0-8420-4159-1
Manufactured in the United States of America
First Printing 1996

Distributed on microfilm by:
Scholarly Resources Inc.
104 Greenhill Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19805-1897

Distributed outside the USA

in Japan by:
Far Eastern Booksellers
P.O. Box 72
Kanda, Tokyo 101-91, JAPAN

in Taiwan by:
Transmission Books & Microfilm Company Ltd.
P.O. Box 96-337
Taipei, TAIWAN, R.O.C.

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Introduction

Washington Irving (1783–1859), writer and statesman, was the first American writer to achieve international recognition. Born and raised in New York City, he began to contribute satirical sketches and essays to the city newspapers as early as 1802; his first pieces are collected in Letters of Jonathan Old-style, Gent. From 1807 to 1808, with his brothers Peter and William, and William’s brother-in-law, James, Washington Irving wrote Salmagundi, or The Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq., and Others, a series of humorous satirical essays and poems on New York society.

Irving’s reputation as an excellent essayist was strengthened by A History of New York (1809), ostensibly written by his famous comic character, the Dutch-American scholar Diedrich Knickerbocker. An account of New York under Dutch occupation, A History is a satire and a conservative critique of Jacksonian democracy. It is generally considered to be the first important contribution to American comic literature.

In 1815, on a business trip to England, Irving became friends with Thomas Campbell, Sir Walter Scott, and Thomas Moore. Irving’s The Sketch Book (1820), written under the pen name of Geoffrey Crayon, was a collection of essays and short stories acclaimed for humor both in England and the United States. “Rip Van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” have become classics of American literature.

Irving spent several years of his life in Spain, first in Madrid and then in Granada. History of Christopher Columbus (1828) and The Alhambra are the most well-known works of this period. The Alhambra is a series of sketches based on Irving’s residence in an ancient Moorish palace at Granada. In 1842, he was appointed U.S. minister to Madrid. After seven years he returned to America in 1849 to settle in Sunnyside, his country home near Tarrytown, New York, where he remained until his death on November 28, 1859. Sunnyside is now a historic house and a museum.

Irving’s popular but elegant style, based on that of Joseph Addison and Oliver Goldsmith, and the picturesque imagination of his best work have gained him international popularity. American writers were encouraged by his example to look beyond the United States for subject matter. He also discovered
and proved, for Americans at least, the effectiveness of the short story as a form. Among his other works are Bracebridge Hall (1822), Tales of a Traveller (1824), Conquest of Granada (1829), The Crayon Miscellany (1835), Oliver Goldsmith (1849), and Life of George Washington (5 vols., 1855–1859).
Scope and Content

This microfilm collection of the *Washington Irving Papers* is an amalgamation of several previously separate collections, including the Isaac N. Seligman Collection, the George S. Hellman Collection, the Duyckinck Collection, and the Washington Irving Papers (all other materials acquired by the NYPL Manuscripts and Archives Section). The contents of these collections have been interfiled and divided into the following six series:

Series I, **Literary Manuscripts**, includes holograph drafts, manuscripts, revisions, and notes for many of Irving's literary and historical works. Series II, **Notebooks**, contains personal and literary notes made between 1807 and 1844. Many, however, are undated and are similar in character to some of the literary manuscripts.

Series III, **Journals**, contains Irving's diaries kept between 1804 and 1842, which include descriptions of his travels in the United States and abroad. Among the journals are two personal account books and one account book for the American embassy in Spain (April–October 1842). Series IV, **Letters**, consists of Irving's letters to and from family, friends, and colleagues, as well as correspondence and other documents signed in his capacity as chargé d' affaires of the American legation in London and president of the Astor Library. Of particular note are the more than 125 letters exchanged between Irving and his closest friend, Henry Brevoort, Jr. Other correspondents include Thomas Aspinwall, Joseph G. Cogswell, Alexander H. Everett, Edward Everett, Gouverneur Kemble, Charles R. Leslie, Gilbert Stuart Newton, William H. Prescott, and Gulian Verplanck.

Series V, **Genealogy**, and Series VI, **Memorial** are located on the last roll of microfilm.
# Reel Contents

## Series I: Literary Manuscripts

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<td>The Alhambra (ms. notes for revised edition attached to 2 pp. of printer’s proof), 3 pp. — Hellman Collection</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Astoria (ms. of parts of Vol. I, Chaps. 6–14; 16–29) — Washington Irving Papers</td>
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<td>Bracebridge Hall (ms. of portions of 15 sections) — Seligman Collection</td>
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<td>The History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus (1 p.) — Washington Irving Papers</td>
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<td>“Communipaw” (essay, 11 pp.) — Seligman Collection</td>
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<td>“Communipaw” (final draft of first essay in Book of the Hudson), 6 pp., incomplete — Duyckinck Collection</td>
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<td>20  &quot;Notes for One of His Spanish Histories&quot; (unidentified, in pencil), 4 pp.—Hellman Collection</td>
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<td>29 “Verses on Wigs and Haircutting” (1 p.)—Hellman Collection</td>
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<td>Notebook kept while in England containing memoranda, verses, 3 drawings, etc. [1817]</td>
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<td>Notes, memoranda, thoughts, anecdotes, etc., written at London, Brighton, Rouen, and Paris in 1818 and other years</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Notebook containing excerpts, anecdotes, plots, etc.; some notes dated 1825 or later</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Notebook kept in Paris containing historical excerpts, etc., in French and English, 1824–25</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Four notebooks containing memoranda, extracts, etc. relating to Indians, animals, flora, etc. of the Western part of United States [183_?]</td>
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<td>Notebook containing queries, extracts from printed sources, etc. relating to Astoria, 1835</td>
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A.L.S., 1833 Jul. 11, Washington Irving at Tarrytown to Harrison Hall at Philadelphia. 2 pp. (copy?)

"Allston—Washington Irving Mss" (biographical sketch of Washington Allston, with three letters of Irving to Duyckinck, 1854–1855)


Emmet Collection


Hellman Collection

PRIVATE PAPERS OF WASHINGTON IＲVING (VOL. I)

WASHINGTON IRVING PAPERS, 1759–1898

Reel No. 4

Contents

New York Public Library

Reel No. 4

Contents


Irvingiana—Autograph Letters, Manuscripts, Etc.

4

A.L.S., 1815 Jul. 29, Washington Irving at Birmingham to Cadwallader D. Colden at New York. 3 pp. (fragment)


Washington Irving Papers

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A.L.S., 1808 May 9, W. I. at Skeenesborough to Henry Brevoort at Montreal. 2 pp.


D.S., 1808 Aug. 10, Irving's signature as witness to mortgage certification. 1 p.

A.L.S., 1809 May 5, W. I. at Kinderhook to Henry Brevoort, Jr., at New York. 2pp. (fragment)


WASHINGTOM IRVING PAPERS, 1759–1898

Reel No. 4

Contents

Letter, 1815 Jul. 4, W. I. at Birmingham to Mrs. Sarah Irving at New York. 4 pp. (transcript with 1857 watermark)
A.L.S., 1816 May 9, W. I. at Liverpool to Henry Brevoort, Jr., at New York. 3 pp.
A.L.S., 1818 Mar. 22, W. Irving, at Liverpool, to Henry Brevoort, Jr., at New York. 1 p. (also a 2nd copy, 2 pp., with variations in text)
A.L.S., [1829 Nov. 7], Washington Irving at London to [Thomas] Moore at ---?
WASHINGTON IRVING PAPERS, 1759–1898

Contents

Reel No. 4

D.S., [1854?] Jan 4, Acknowledgment of gift from John Augustine Smith to Astor Library, signed by Washington Irving. 1 p.
Contents


A.L.S., 1857 May 9, [Washington Irving] at Sunnyside to Frederick Saunders at ---? 2 pp. (signature clipped)


A.L.S., 1858 Aug. 21, Washington Irving at Sunnyside to George D. Canale at ---? 1 p.

Letter, 1859 Jan. 11, Joseph Harrison at Philadelphia to Washington Irving at Sunnyside. 2 pp. (copy)


Reel No. | Contents
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4 | **Kohms Collection**

A.N.S., 1832 Nov. 16, Washington Irving at Montgomery's Point, Arkansas River to ---? at [Memphis, Tennessee?] 1 p.
A.N.S., 1858 Apr. 8, Washington Irving at Sunnyside to George Jones at New York. 1 p.

4 | **Madigan Collection**


4 | **Montague Collection**


4 | **Seligman Collection of Irvingiana**

**WASHINGTON IRVING LETTERS TO THOMAS MOORE AND OTHER FRIENDS, 1819–1858**

New York Public Library

Reel No. Contents

A.L.S., 1858 Mar. 6, Washington Irving at Sunnyside to Miss Harriet Backus at ---? 1 p.

Autograph Letters of Washington Irving, (1805–1859)

Reel No. 4

Contents


A.L.S., [1805?], Washington Irving at ---? to [his brother] at ---? 2 pp. (fragment)


Contents


UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT TO WASHINGTON IRVING


LETTERS OF WASHINGTON IRVING TO HENRY BREVOORT, JR. (3 VOLS.)

Vol. II, 11 Jul. 1817–1 Mar. 1819 (30 items)
Vol. III, 16 Mar. 1811–25 Nov. 1843 (13 items)

Hellman Collection

LIFE AND LETTERS OF WASHINGTON IRVING (MEMORIAL EDITION) BY PIERRE M. IRVING

4  Vol. I–1
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**Contents**

**Vol. I–2**

**Vol. I–3**

**Vol. I–4**
A.L.S., 1836 Mar. 5, E. Leslie at Philadelphia to Mrs. C. Gilman at Charleston, South Carolina. 3 pp. (w/typescript)
A.L.S., 1835 Jan. 23, C. R. Leslie at London to S. F. B. Morse, president of the National Academy, at New York. 3 pp.

**Vol. II–1**
A.L.S., 1817 Sep. 3, F. Jeffry at 92 Gee St. ---? to Alexander Young at Colder (?), Scotland (?). 1 p.
L.S., 1819 July 31, Lord Palmerston at War Office to the Paymaster General. 1 p.

**Vol. II–2**
A.L.S., 1865 Nov. 8, Sarah Irving at Irvington to Miss Collins at ---? 1 p.
D.S., 1860 Jan. 31, Queen of Spain. 1 p.

**Vol. III–1**
A.L.S., 1859 Mar. 25, Washington Irving at Sunnyside to Benson J. Loring at Poughkeepsie. 2 pp. (w/envelope)
Contents


Vol. III–2


D.S., 1797 July 18, Jonathan Dayton, receipt. 1 p.


A.L.S., 1865 Mar. 8, Henrietta J. Bedford at Wilmington, Delaware, to ---? at ---? (enclosing clipped autograph of Gunning Bedford). 1 p.

Vol. III–3


A.L.S., 1898 May 12, Noah Davis at New York to Patricia Club at ---? 1 p.

Series V: Genealogy

Irving Family Genealogy by Pierre M. Irving
Series VI: Memorial

A Memorial of Washington Irving by C. B. Richardson