

# Guide to the Wallace Stevens Collection

YCAL MSS 545



by Beinecke staff

13 December 2011

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 545

**CREATOR:** Stevens, Wallace, 1879-1955

**TITLE:** Wallace Stevens collection

**DATES:** 1921-1966

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2.71 linear feet (7 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The Wallace Stevens collection contains material donated to the library by Wallace Stevens, his daughter Holly Stevens, the Rev. John Curry Gay, and others. The Wallace Stevens gifts include one typed letter signed from Stevens, one manuscript by Stevens, "A Collect of Philosophy," and a bound copy of a score presented to Stevens by Jan Wisse. The Holly Stevens gift consists of a setting draft and galley and page proofs for the Letters of Wallace Stevens (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966). The Rev. John Curry Gay gift contains writings, letters, and other material, including discarded drafts to poems, most of which appeared in Harmonium (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923). Materials from other sources include one letter, two drafts, and a publicity photograph.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.stevensw>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.stevensw>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gifts of Wallace Stevens, 1950-1954; Holly Stevens, 1967; Rev. John Curry Gay, 1974; and others.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The Wallace Stevens Collection is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

Wallace Stevens Collection. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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### Processing Information

Collection materials received preliminary processing around the time of acquisition. During reprocessing of the collection in 2011, series were established with respect for provenance.

Formerly classed as Za Stevens.

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## Wallace Stevens (1978-1955)

Wallace Stevens was an American Modernist poet. He was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, educated at Harvard and then New York Law School, and spent most of his life working as a lawyer for the Hartford insurance company in Connecticut.

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## Scope and Contents

The Wallace Stevens collection contains material donated to the library by Wallace Stevens, his daughter Holly Stevens, the Rev. John Curry Gay, and others. The Wallace Stevens gifts include one typed letter signed from Stevens, one manuscript by Stevens, "A Collect of Philosophy," and a bound copy of a score presented to Stevens by Jan Wisse. The Holly Stevens gift consists of a setting draft and galley and page proofs for the *Letters of Wallace Stevens* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966). The Rev. John Curry Gay gift contains writings, letters, and other material, including discarded drafts of poems, most of which appeared in *Harmonium* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923). Materials from other sources include one letter, two drafts, and a publicity photograph.

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## Arrangement

Organized into four series: I. Wallace Stevens Gifts, 1950-1952. II. Holly Stevens Gift, 1966. III. Rev. John Curry Gay Gift, 1921-1926. IV. Material From Other Sources, 1949-1955.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Wallace Stevens Gifts, 1950-1952

0.21 linear feet (1 box)

Series I. Wallace Stevens Gifts consists of three separate small gifts from Stevens, including one typed letter signed from Stevens to Yale University librarian James T. Babb, one manuscript by Stevens, "A Collect of Philosophy," and a bound copy of a score presented to Stevens by Jan Wisse.

Gifts of Wallace Stevens, 1950-1954.

b. 1	Letter to James T. Babb	1950 March 31
b. 1	"A Collect of Philosophy," drafts, holograph and typescript 2 Folders	undated
b. 1	"Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," score, with text by Stevens With letter from J. Wisse to Stevens, dated 1951	1951-1952

**Series II: Holly Stevens Gift, 1966***2.09 linear feet (5 boxes)*

Series II. Holly Stevens Gift consists of a setting draft and proofs for the *Letters of Wallace Stevens* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), selected and edited by his daughter Holly Stevens.

Gift of Holly Stevens, 1967.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 2	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , setting typescript, corrected, with proofreaders' marks 5 Folders	1966
b. 3	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , setting typescript, corrected, with proofreaders' marks 6 Folders	1966
b. 4	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , galley proofs, corrected, with printer's annotations 2 Folders	1966
b. 5	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , page proofs, corrected 2 Folders	1966
b. 6	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , illustrations	1966
b. 6	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , miscellaneous pages	1966
b. 6	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , revised page proofs, corrected 4 Folders	1966
b. 7	<i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i> , revised page proofs, corrected 3 Folders	1966

**Series III: Rev. John Curry Gay Gift, 1921-1926***15 Folders*

Series III. Rev. John Curry Gay Gift contains writings, letters, and other material. The series features numerous drafts, holograph and typescript, to poems discarded by Stevens while renting an apartment from David Tait Gay and Teresa Curry Gay on 735 Farmington Avenue in West Hartford. Most of the poems found here were published in *Harmonium* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923).

Gift of Rev. John Curry Gay, 1974.

Organized into three subdivisions for Writings, Correspondence, and Other Material.

Writings		
b. 7	"Anecdote of the Prince of Peacocks"	undated
b. 7	"From the Journal of Crispin"	[1921 December]
b. 7	"A High-Toned Old Christian Woman"	undated
b. 7	"The Jack-Rabbit"	undated
b. 7	"Sonatina To Hans Christian"	undated
b. 7	"Sunday Morning"	undated
b. 7	"Three Travelers Watch a Sunrise"	undated
b. 7	"To the One of Fictive Music"	undated
b. 7	"Two Figures in Dense Violet Night"	undated
b. 7	"The Virgin Carrying a Lantern"	undated
b. 7	"The Worms at Heaven's Gate"	undated
Correspondence		
b. 7	Autograph letter signed from Stevens to Mrs. Gay	1926 December 30
b. 7	Typed letter signed from <i>The Dial</i> editor Gilbert Seldes to Stevens	1922 April 26
Other Material		
b. 7	Leather billfold	undated
b. 7	Photograph of Holly Stevens	undated

**Series IV: Material From Other Sources, 1949-1955**

*5 Folders*

Series IV. contains material relating to Stevens from other sources. Materials include one letter, two drafts, and a publicity photograph.

Acquired from various sources, 1950-1975.

Arranged alphabetically by material type and title.

b. 7	Letter signed to I. L. Salomon	1952 April 10
b. 7	[National Book Award address]	1955 January
b. 7	"An Ordinary Evening in New Haven"	1949, undated
b. 7	Photograph of Wallace Stevens	undated



## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

American literature -- 20th Century  
Poets, American -- 20th Century -- Archives

### **Genres / Formats**

Photographic prints

### **Occupations**

Authors

### **Names**

Gay, John Curry  
Stevens, Holly  
Stevens, Wallace, 1879-1955  
Wisse, Jan, 1921-2008