Guide to the Allan Seager papers, 1906-1968

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Note
Arts and Humanities --Literature --American Literature
History --Military History
Guide to the Allan Seager Papers, 1906-1968

Collection number: BANC MSS 70/176 z

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Collection Summary
Collection Title: Allan Seager papers,
Date (inclusive): 1906-1968
Collection Number: BANC MSS 70/176 z
Creator: Seager, Allan, 1906-1968
Extent: Number of containers: 5 boxes, 6 cartons, and 5 volumes
Repository: The Bancroft Library
Berkeley, California 94720-6000
Physical Location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.
Abstract: Correspondence; typescripts of his short stories and novels; research materials and manuscripts of his biography of Theodore Roethke, The Glass House; diaries, 1924-1931, and diary notes, 1931-1960. Correspondence; typescripts of his short stories and novels; research materials and manuscript of his biography of Theodore Roethke, The Glass House; diaries, 1924-1931, and diary notes, 1931-1960. With these: a few papers of Seager's grandfather, John Brathwaite Allan, including 3 v. of Civil War diaries, 1861-1864.
Languages Represented: English
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Allan Seager papers, BANC MSS 70/176 z, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

The Bancroft Library also holds papers of Jane Sherman, containing Allan Seager correspondence

Identifier/Call Number: (BANC MSS 85/177 z)

Photographs of Seager have been transferred to the Pictorial Collections of The Bancroft Library.

Biography
Born in Adrian, Michigan on February 5, 1906, Allan Seager, author and biographer of the poet Theodore Roethke, moved with his family at the age of eleven to Memphis, Tennessee where he lived until his college days. He was graduated from the University of Michigan in 1930, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He then won a Rhodes Scholarship and went to Oriel College, Oxford in the fall of 1930. While at Oxford he contracted tuberculosis and subsequently returned to America for treatment. He later resumed his studies in England, after which he became editor of the magazine Vanity Fair until it ceased publication. He then commenced his teaching career in English Department at the University of Michigan, a post he retained until he died of cancer on May 10, 1968, with the exception of the academic year 1944-1945 when he was a visiting professor at Bennington.

Seager was the author of numerous short stories published in Esquire, Colliers. Saturday Evening Post, Good Housekeeping and other magazines. Some of these stories were collected into two books - The Old Man of the Mountain and A Frieze of Girls. His novels, among them Equinox (1943), The Inheritance (1948), Amos Berry (1953) and Death of Anger (1960), received mixed critical acclaim.

In 1965 Theodore Roethke's widow, Beatrice, commissioned Seager to write a biography of her husband. Seager's friendship with Roethke had been of long duration, and with the financial assistance of a Guggenheim Fellowship, he interviewed acquaintances of the poet from various periods of his life, his travels taking him as far as Dublin. The biography, The Glass House went through many revisions and was considerably altered before its publication in October 1968 after Seager's death.

Scope and Content
The collection, purchased from Mrs. Allan Seager, in May 1970, contains correspondence, much of it relating to Theodore Roethke, and to his own writing; publisher's copies, galleys and printed versions of many of his short stories; manuscripts of his novels Equinox, Amos Berry, Death of Anger and The Inheritance; working materials (interviews, photocopy of original Roethke material, chronological notes, etc.), manuscripts, printer's copy and galleys of The Glass House. Also included are diaries for the years 1924-1928, 1930-1931 as well as diary notes of ideas or events, some of which were used at later periods in his writings. There are also a few family papers, among them civil war diaries and a few letters of his grandfather, John Braithwaite Allan.

Boxes 1-4: Correspondence
Scope and Content Note
Box I contains Seager's outgoing letters, 1930-1968?, many of them from his days at Oxford (I folder). Incoming letters have been arranged alphabetically by author. with single letters in miscellanies. A partial list of correspondents may be consulted at the end of the report.

Box 5: Diaries and diary notes
Scope and Content Note
Diary for Oxford year, 1930-1931.
See also separate volumes 1-4.

volume v. l: Diary, 1924-June 1925.
Scope and Content Note
Contains accounts for October 1925
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v. 2</td>
<td>Diary, June 1925-Mar. 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 3</td>
<td>Diary, Mar. 1926-Aug. 1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 4</td>
<td>Diary, Aug. 1927-1928. See also later diaries in Box 5. Diary notes, 1931-196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Box 5:**
- Diary notes, 1931-196

**Ctn. 1:**
- *Equinox:*
  - Printer's copy
  - Screen treatment
  - Review of French edition
- *Amos Berry:*
  - Notes
  - Printer's copy
- *Death of Anger:*
  - Notes
  - Revised typescript and variants (incomplete)
  - Typescript (2 copies, one of them incomplete)
- *The Inheritance:*
  - Notes
  - Simon & Schuster's reader's comments
  - Printer's copy

**Ctn. 2:**
- *A Frieze of Girls:*
  - Collection of short stories, autobiographical in nature, including
    - "Under the Big Magnolia Tree"
    - Powder River in the Old Days
    - "Dear Old Shrine, One Hearrs Round Thee Twine"
    - The Nicest Girl in Cook County
    - Actress with Red Garters
    - Miss Anglin's Bad Martini
    - The Old Man, a Nineteenth-Century Steel Engraving
    - The Drinking Contest
    - Joys of Sport at Oxford
    - The Cure
    - The Last Return
  - Manuscripts, printed versions, printer's copy, galleys, plate proofs
- *Old Man of the Mountain:*
  - Collection of short stories, including
    - The Street
    - This Town & Salamanca
    - Pommery 1921
    - Sacrament
    - Kobold
    - Pro Arte
    - Berkshire Comedy
    - Fugue for Harmonicas
    - Quitandhina
    - The Conqueror
    - Game Chickens
    - No Son, No Gun, No Street-car
  - Manuscripts, printed versions, printer's copy.

**Ctn. 3:**
- *Stendhal's Mémoires d'un touriste:*
  - Scope and Content Note
  - Printed copy. 3 v., and Seager's incomplete holograph translation and a typescript.

**Ctn. 4:**
- Short stories, arranged alphabetically by title. Manuscript and/or printed copy.
  - Untitled stories
  - Fragments
  - Notes for stories
Articles
Scope and Content Note
Including article on Arthur Miller; radio script for portion of the Scattergood Baines radioscript

Book reviews by Seager
The Glass House
Letters of Theodore Roethke from various sources, 1931-1960. Photocopies. 4 folders
Letters to or about Roethke, 1930-1959
Scope and Content Note

Ctn. 4:
Roethke's notebooks, Xerox copies. 2 folders
Roethke's poems; miscellaneous writings; miscellaneous records, 1923-1926; list of books belonging to Roethke; clippings and reviews concerning Roethke.
Notes on Roethke - bibliography, reviews, chronology, interviews, letters, notebooks, etc.
Comments by Beatrice Roethke on The Glass House
Malkoff, Karl: The Poetry of Theodore Roethke: A Critical Study
Unrevised draft of The Glass House (Xerox copy)

Ctn. 5
Manuscripts
Scope and Content Note
Including revised Xerox copy; printer's copy; galleys; and corrected galleys

Ctn. 6:
Reviews of The Glass House
Miscellaneous papers
Papers of John Braithwaite Allan, Seager's grandfather, including
Scope and Content Note
3 v. of Civil War diaries, 1861-1864; miscellaneous letters and papers, 1852-1920, and 2 v. of Alexander Fletcher's Scripture History which had belongs to Mr. Allan.

Miscellaneous correspondence, 1917-1942, and papers, 1901-1923, of Arch and Emma Seager, parents of Allan Seager, including partial autobiography of Arch Seager.
Allan Seager's school papers while at the University of Michigan and at Oxford.
Publisher's agreements, 1940-1965
Biographical information and publicity
Account books:
  v. 1: Swimming lessons
  v. 2: Farm accounts, 1938-1940
Accounts for fellowships, 1965-1966; applications for fellowships
Address books, 2 v.
Notes for proposed courses on the novel
Miscellaneous personalia, 1917-1967
Poems [some by Seager?]
Miscellaneous photographs.
Additional Note
Several photographs of Seager have been cataloged separately in the Portrait Collection

volume v. 5:
Scrapbook of clippings relating to swimming meets, in many of which Seager participated.
A Miscellany
Adams, Franklin Pierce, 1881-
Allen, sir Carleton Kemp, 1887-
Letter, May 26, 1963
Appleman, Philip, 1926-
Letter, July 19, 1966
Atlantic Monthly
Letter, Dec. 29, 1965, by Peter Davison concerning the Roethke biography and
containing copy of an article by Davison on Roethke.
Ader, Richard M.
3 letters, 1967. Xerox copies of letters to McGraw-Hill. Ader represented Beatrice
Roethke in the matter of Seager's biography of her husband.
Anderson, Sherwood, 1876-
4 letters, 1940
Auden, Wystan Hugh, 1907-
2 letters, n. d. and 1965?
B Miscellany
Blunden, Edmund Charles, 1896-
Letter, Feb. 3, 1944
Burger, Knox
Letter, n. d.
Burnett, Whit, 1899-
Letter, June 4, 1937
Bagster - Collins, Mary (Kunkel) (Mrs. Jeremy Felix Bagster-Collins)
3 letters, 1967 and n. d. Re Theodore Roethke
Bennington College
see Jones, Lewis Webster
Bloom, Robert, 1930-
3 letters, 1964-1966
Bogan, Louise, 1897-
Booher, Edward E.
see McGraw-Hill Book Co.
Bredvold, Louis Ignatius, 1888-
2 letters, 1945, written while chairman, English Dept., University of Michigan.
Brockway, Wallace, 1905-
see Simon and Schuster
Burke, Kenneth Duva, 1897-
Burlingame, William Roger, 1889-
5 letters, 1950-1966. Include his memo on Seager's Lightening Before Dark, and the
first chapter of his own book on Franklin.
C Miscellany
Caldwell, Erskine, 1903-
Letter, June 5, 1952
Char, René, 1907-
Cousins, Margaret, 1905-
Letter, May 23, 1950, written while editor, Good Housekeeping, re Seager's "The
Lion on the Bicycle".
Crowninshield, Frank, 1872-1947
Inscribed photograph, Sept. 1935.
Collier's
Coombs, Patricia
Letter, n. d., in ctn. 4
Cowley, Malcolm, 1898-
9 letters, 1957-1964

D Miscellany
De Vries, Catherine (Mrs. Peter H. De Vries)
Davenport, John, d. 1966
8 letters, 1939-1965, commenting on Roethke and on Seager's biography of Roethke.
Davison, Peter Hubert, 1928-
see Atlantic Monthly
De Vries, Peter Hugh
Dickey, James, 1923-
Doubleday & Company, Inc.
Eliot, Thomas Stearns, 1888-1965
Letter, Aug. 5, 1953, in ctn. 4.
Emmon, Lloyd C.
Letter, Apr. 14, 1936, in ctn. 4
Engle, Paul Hamilton, 1908-
Esquire
See also Gingrich, Arnold, Hills, L. Rust, and Solomon, David.
Fair, James R.
5 letters, 1939-1947
Farrar, John Chipman, 1896-
see P.E.N.
First Person
G Miscellany
Graves, Harold F.
Letter, June 1, 1965, re Theodore Roethke.
Gehman, Richard
2 letters, 1964-1967
Gingrich, Arnold, 1903-
Gosling, Veronica
Goodman, Jack A.
see Simon and Schuster
H Miscellany
Haber, William, 1899-
Hall, Donald, 1928-
Letter, Dec. 13, 1963
Hamburg, Sam
Hanna, Allan
Letter, Mar. 11, 1961, enclosing copy of letter from Warner G. Rice. copy of an article by Hanna on Seager, and a poem, entitled "The Emperor's Secretary to the Field".
Hellman, Lillian, 1907-
Hoffer, William
Hoffman, Daniel
Letter, Sept. 28, 1965, re Theodore Roethke. See also ctn. 4.
Hoffman, Lyne Starling Sullivant
Letter, June 9, 1965
Houghton Mifflin Company
Letter, Sept. 11, 1945, re reprinting of "This Town and Salamanca"
Hovde, Frederick Lawson, 1908-
Letter, Dec. 10, 1946
Hatfield, Walter Wilbur, 1882-
Hileman, Robert Becktold, 1906-
3 letters, 1959, in ctn. 4.
Hendrick, Leo
Hills, L. Rust
4 letters, 1959-1964, written for Esquire and Saturday Evening Post.
Holiday
2 letters, 1964, re article on swimming by Seager.
J Miscellany
Jackson, Blyden, 1910-
Letter, Apr. 10, 1953, re reviewing Seager's Amos Berry for the Nashville Tennessean.
Jackson, Joseph Henry, 1894-1955
Jones, Barbara (Slatter) (Mrs. Lewis Webster Jones)
Jackson, James Turner
Javet, Pierre
Jerome, Judson
Letter, June 3, 1957, in ctn. 4
John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
Johnston, William W.
10 letters, 1935-1938, in ctn. 4
Jones, Lewis Webster, 1899-
2 letters, 1944-1945, written while president, Bennington College.
See also ctn. 4.
K Miscellany
Kees, Welden, 1914-1955?
Letter, Aug. 21, 1943
Kunitz, Stanley Jasspon, 1905-
Postcard, Oct 25, 1965
Kaufman, Schima
2 letters, 1943-1956
Kenner, Hugh, 1923-
14 letters, 1962-1966
Kinsella, Thomas, 1928-
Klingman, Theophil
Letter, Jan. 17, 1936, in ctn. 4
**Kuhn, Edward**

**L Miscellany**
- Lewis, Clive Staples, 1898-1963
  - Letter, July 2, 1943
- London Mercury
  - Letter, Nov. 9, 1933
- Luckey, Robert
- Lid, Richard Wald, 1928-
- Lindley, Denver, 1904-
  - see Collier's
- Lundberg, George
  - Letter, Aug. 21, 1947, in ctn. 4

**M Miscellany**
- Marquand, John Phillips, 1893-
- Matthiessen, Francis Otto, 1902-1950
  - Letter, Jan. 11, 1950
- Meisel, James Hans, 1900-
  - Letter, June 22, 1953
- Michener, Earl Cory, 1876-
  - Letter, June 21, 1940, re his position on American involvement in World War II.
- Mortensen, Violeta (Roethke)
- Munch, Dora
  - Letter, May 18, 1937, re translation of Seager's "Fugue for Harmonica" into German.

**McGraw-Hill Book Company**
  - See also Kuhn, Edward.

**McGregor, Donald, 1908-**
- 28 letters, 1939-1952

**Macmillan Company**
- 2 letters, 1945-1953, re Seager's *They Worked for a Better World*.

**McWilliams, Carey, 1905-**

**Michigan. University**

**Milburn, George, 1906-1966**
- 17 letters, 1939-1953

**Milburn, Mary M. (Sullivan) (Mrs. George Milburn)**
- 3 letters, 1966

**Miller, Arthur, 1915-**

**Mills, Ralph J.**
- 3 letters, 1966, re work on Theodore Roethke letters.

**Moore, Marianne, 1887-**
- Letter, July 21, 1958, in ctn. 4

**Myrer, Anton**
- 3 letters, 1953-1962

**N Miscellany**
- Nipson, Herbert, 1916-
Partial List of Correspondents

Nation
  see McWilliams, Carey
New Yorker
  3 letters, 1954-1963, by Robert Henderson
New American Library
  see Kuhn, Edward
Nichols, Edward
Northwestern University Press
  3 letters, 1962, by Robert Erwin. Copies of letters to Morton D. Elevitch, editor of
  First Person re copyright for Seager's translation of Stendhal's Memoires of a
  Tourist.
Noyes, Robert Gale, 1898-
  Letter, Nov. 21, 1935, in ctn. 4.
Odegaard, Charles Edwin, 1911-
  see Washington University.
Orrmont, Arthur
  6 letters, 1943-1960
P Miscellany
  P. E. N.
    Letter, May 16, 1964, by John Farrar
Pasinetti, Pier Maria
  5 letters, 1944-1952
Pickerell, Albert G.
  2 letters, 1940-1945. 1940 letter re George Milburn.
R Miscellany
  Rauh, Joseph L., 1911-
  Reinhard, John Revell
    Letter, Aug. 30, 1964
  Renz, Janet (Mrs. Arnold H. Renz)
  Rice, Elmer, 1892-
    Letter, Apr. 4, 1955
  Ridings, Eugene Ware, 1899-
    Letter, July 23, 1948
  Rosenfeld, Eva M.
Randlett, Mary
Ray, Gordon Norton, 1915-
  see John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
Rice, Warner G., 1899-
  see Hanna, Allan
Rockefeller Foundation
  2 letters, 1965, by Gerald Freund
Roethke, Beatrice Heath (O'Connell) (Mrs. Theodore Roethke)
    See also ctn. 4.
Roethke, Harriet (Mrs. William A. C. Roethke)
  2 letters, 1965. Roethke's sister-in-law
Roethke, June
    See also ctn. 4.
Roethke, Theodore, 1908-1963

Guide to the Allan Seager papers,
1906-1968
14 letters, 1941-1963. See also letters and other material relating to Roethke in ctn.
4. Letter of Nov. 28, 1946 is incomplete copy. Letter Feb. 4, 1954, written for him by
his secretary.
S Miscellany
San Francisco Review
Sandburg, Carl, 1878-
Letter, [Mar. 29, 1944], an appraisal of Equinox.
Saturday Evening Post
Letter, Nov. 16, 1964, by David McDowell. See also Hills, L. Rust.
Scannell, Maidie Alexander (Mrs. Austin J. Scannell)
Letter, Nov. 11, 1965, re her mother, Louise Bogan.
Sewell, Herbert Mathieu, 1902-
Simpson, Percy, 1865-
Letter, Mar. 7, 1932
Sparks, Dorothy Elizabeth
Letter, May 11, 1944
Spender, Stephen, 1909-
Letter, [Sept. 1933]
Stevens, Roger L., 1910-
Letter, Oct. 11, 1966
Sweeney, John L.
Letter, Nov. 16, 1965
Swinton, Stanley Mitchell, 1919-
Sylvestor, Harry, 1908-
Letter, Sept. 23, 1948
Salinger, Herman, 1905-
2 letters, 1953
Schorer, Mark, 1908-
see Lid, Richard Wald
Segal, David I., 1928-1970
20, 1964, includes copy of letter from Jessamyn West.
Shaw, Harry Lee, 1905-
2 letters, 1947
Shelley, Philip Allison, 1907-
Simon, Richard Leo, 1899-
see Simon and Schuster
Simon and Schuster, Inc.
23 letters, 1943-1958, by Wallace Brockway, James Holshaert, Richard Leo Simon and
Jack Goodman.
Solomon, David
Stevens, Christine (Gesell) (Mrs. Roger L. Stevens)
3 letters, n. d. and 1943
Stokes, Katharine Martin, 1906-
Strauss, Louis A.
Letter, Feb. 25, 1936, in ctn. 4
Swados, Harvey, 1920-
10 letters, 1943-1946. Poem, "America Carcinoma" and article, "Why Resign from the
Human Race?" at end of folder.
Tupper, James Wadell, 1870-
2 letters, 1935, in ctn. 4.
V-W Miscellany
Vivian, Weston Edward, 1924-
   Telegram, Nov. 18, 1966, announcing grant for study on Roethke.
Vonnegut, Kurt
   Letter, n. d.
Warre, Michael
   Letter, Oct. 4, 1965
Warriner, John E.
Weybright, Victor, 1903-
White, Eric Walter, 1905-
Wurzburg, Francis Lewis
   Letter, Aug. 2, 1943
Wagner, Robert Wilhelm, 1905-
   3 letters, 1940-1964
Walsh, Chad, 1914-
   2 letters, 1965. April letter is a copy of a letter to Mrs. Roethke re a proposed critical
   study of Roethke's poetry.
Warren, Robert Penn, 1905-
   4 letters, 1944-1966
Washington. University, Seattle
Watkins, Ann, d. 1967
   11 letters, 1936-1959. Seager's literary agent. See also Watkins, Armitage, and
   Watkins (A) Inc.
Watkins, Armitage
   32 letters, 1959-1967, written while Seager's literary agent. Many re negotiations for
   the Roethke biography.
Watkins (A) Inc.
   22 letters, 1944-1967, re contracts, royalties, etc.
Webster, Harvey Curtis, 1906-
   2 letters, 1957-1963
West, Jessamyn, 1907-
   see Segal, David I.
Wilkinson, Maxwell P.
   6 letters, 1936-1967
Woodburne, Lloyd Stuart, 1906-
   Letter, Apr. 6, 1959, in ctn. 4.