Finding Aid for the Carey McWilliams collection of material about Ambrose Bierce, 1909-1935

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Finding Aid for the Carey McWilliams collection of material about Ambrose Bierce, 1909-1935

Collection number: 277

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UCLA Library Special Collections staff

Los Angeles, CA

Contact Information

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UCLA Library Special Collections staff, 1977
Encoded by:
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Online finding aid edited by:
Josh Fiala, May 2002

Descriptive Summary

Title: Carey McWilliams collection of material about Ambrose Bierce,
Date (inclusive): 1909-1935
Collection number: 277
Creator: Bierce, Ambrose, 1842-1914?
Extent: 1 box (0.5 linear ft.)
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575

Abstract: Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?) was born in Ohio. He was a journalist, satirist and author of sardonic short stories based on themes of death and horror. The collection consists of correspondence, typescript copies of letters, photographs, clippings, manuscript notes, and ephemera by and about Ambrose Bierce gathered and used by Carey McWilliams for his biography about Bierce.

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Language: English.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction

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Restrictions on Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Zeitlin and VerBrugge Booksellers, purchase, 1950.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Carey McWilliams collection of material about Ambrose Bierce (Collection 277). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

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Biography
Ambrose Bierce was born June 24, 1842 in Ohio; journalist, satirist, and author of sardonic short stories based on themes of death and horror; principal works include Tales of Soldiers and Civilians (1891), later reissued as In the Midst of Life (1892), Black Beetles in Amber (1892), Can Such Things Be? (1893), and The Cynic's Word Book (1906); The Cynic's Word Book was later retitled The Devil's Dictionary (1911); his death in Mexico, in 1914, remains an unsolved mystery.

Carey McWilliams was born December 13, 1905 in Steamboat Springs, Colorado; J.D., University of Southern California; attorney, Black, Hammack & McWilliams, Los Angeles, 1927-38; contributing editor, associate editor, and editorial director, The Nation, 1945-55; editor, The Nation, 1955-75; some of his books include: Ambrose Bierce, a Biography (1929), Factories in the Field: the Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California (1939), Ill Fares the Land: Migrants and Migratory Labor in the United States (1942), Brothers Under The Skin (1943), California Country: An Island on the Land (1946), A Mask for Privilege: Anti-Semitism in America (1948), and The Education of Carey McWilliams (1979); died of cancer, June 27, 1980 in New York, New York.

Scope and Content
Collection consists of correspondence, typescript copies of letters, photographs, clippings, manuscript notes, and ephemera by and about Ambrose Bierce. Materials were gathered and used by Carey McWilliams for his biography about Bierce. Includes of 100 carbon typescript copies from Bierce to Carroll Carrington and Eleanor Vore Sickler, 200 letters to McWilliams about Bierce (37 letters from H.L. Mencken), and a photo of Bierce at the desk of his mountain retreat at Angwins.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects
Bierce, Ambrose, 1842-1914--Archives.
McWilliams, Carey, 1905- --Ambrose Bierce, a biography.
Mencken, H.L. (Henry Louis), 1880-1956--Correspondence.
Authors, American--Archival resources.

Other Index Terms Related to this Collection
McWilliams, Carey, 1905-

1. Ambrose Bierce Correspondence.
   Physical Description: ---- 8 Typescript letters (copies).

2. Correspondence--Bierce, George Sterling, Mencken and others by various writers, including James Wheaton James.
   Physical Description: ---- 7 letters.

   Physical Description: ---- over 100 carbon typescript copies.

4. Photographs of and concerning Bierce.
   Physical Description: ---- 21 items, (including, in many cases, negatives).
   Abstract:
   ---- Includes the very rare photograph (with negative) of Bierce at the desk of his mountain retreat at Angwin's near Calistoga, California.
5. McWilliams Correspondence.
   Physical Description: More than 200 letters (Autographed letters signed and
typewritten letters signed) from over 115 correspondents to McWilliams and in most cases
with carbon copies of McWilliams letters.
   Scope and Content Note
   Including:
   A.W. Bender
   Benjamin De Casseres
   Adolphe de Castro Danziger
   C. Hartley Grattan
   Jerome A. Hart
   Walter Jerrold
   David Starr Jordan
   Robert Morss Lovett
   H.L. Mencken
   37 letters from H.L. Mencken to McWilliams, 1925-1935.
   Frank Monaghan
   Walter Heale
   Fremont Older
   Ethen Talbot Scheffauer
   Eleanor Vore Sicker
   Vincent Starrett
   A.J.A. Symonds, etc.

6. Miscellaneous.
   Scope and Content Note
   1. Photostat copy of Bierce's will dated January 5, 1909.
   3. Pencil drawing of Bierce.

7. Notes from magazine and books and other sources regarding Bierce and his family.
   Physical Description: 117 leaves, typed.

   17, 1910.
   Physical Description: With envelope. 4 pp. (also typescript).

    Physical Description: 2pp. Holograph.
    Scope and Content Note
    Accompanying this is an envelope addressed to Mrs. Cowden by Bierce, but dated
    November 22, 1911.
    Note
    Gift of Mrs. Bradforth A. Booth, December 1968.