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Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Creator: Willard, Nancy

Title: Nancy Willard Papers

Dates: 1989-2010

Quantity: 2.2 cubic feet (2 boxes, 1 oversize folder)

Abstract: This collection consists of drafts and unpublished material pertaining to poet, author, and teacher Nancy Willard's children's book *A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*, as well as collections of student writings and artwork from a number of Willard's Vassar College courses.

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Biographical Note

Nancy Willard was a writer in several genres, best known for her poetry and children's books. Born in 1936 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Willard completed undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Michigan and Stanford University. In 1965, she took a position at Vassar College, where she taught courses in creative writing, folklore, and the art and history of tapestry. She retired from teaching in 2013. Over the course of her career, she published 70 books of poetry and fiction for adults and children, including *A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers* (1982), which was the first book to win both a Newbery Medal and Caldecott Honor. Nancy Willard died in 2017 in Poughkeepsie, New York.

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Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of drafts of poems and unpublished material pertaining to Nancy Willard's children's book *A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*, including an original watercolor and ink illustration by illustrators Alice and Martin Provensen. Also included are bound collections of student writings and artwork compiled by Willard for a number of her courses, including "Woven Stories: Medieval Tapestries and Texts," a course she co-taught with Tina Kane on the art and history of tapestry. These volumes contain work by the students in the courses, photographs taken by Willard during the class meetings, and unique covers designed by Willard.

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Access and Use

Access

The materials in this collection pertaining to *A Visit to William Blake's Inn* are open for research according to the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

Portions of the student work in Box 1 may be restricted; please contact Special Collections staff for details.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

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Subject Headings

Names:

- Blake, William, 1757-1827--Juvenile poetry
- Kane, Tina
- Provensen, Alice
- Provensen, Martin

Organizations:

- Vassar College--Faculty

Subjects:

- Children's poetry, American
- Women teachers

Document Types:

- Drafts (documents)
- Photographs
- Poetry
- Short stories
- Watercolors (paintings)

VCL Categories:

- Children and Children's Literature
- Literature and Writing
- Vassar College

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Encoding Information

Encoded by Mark Seidl, May 2020. Updated by Emma Gronbeck, June 2025.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Nancy Willard Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Processed by Emma Gronbeck, June 2025.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Nancy Willard, 2016. (M2016-006, M2016-007)

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Series List

[Series I.](#) *A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*, 1989, undated

Arranged alphabetically by title.

[Series II.](#) Vassar College, 2001-2009

Arranged alphabetically by title.

Container List

Series I. *A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Box 2 | <i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers</i> , annotated drafts and unpublished poems, undated |
| Box 2 | Photographic print, "The King of Cats Sends a Postcard to his Wife" by Alice and Martin Provensen for <i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers</i> , undated |
| Map Case -
Drawer 29 | Poster, <i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers</i> , undated |
| Box 2 | Watercolor, "The King of Cats Sends a Postcard to his Wife" by Alice and Martin Provensen for <i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers</i> , 1989 Sep [Framed] |

Series II. Vassar College

Box 1	Class Book - EDU 262b: The Fairy Tale, 2002 Apr [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - EDU 262a: The Fairy Tale, 2003 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - EDU 262a: The Fairy Tale, 2005 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Photographs and negatives - EDU 262a: The Fairy Tale, 2005 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - EDU 262a: The Fairy Tale, 2009 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - EDU 271: From Print to Film: The Reading, Writing and Seeing of Children's Books, 2001 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - ENG 205, 2010 Fall [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - MED 220a: Woven Stories: Medieval Tapestries and Texts, 2002 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - MED 220a: Woven Stories: Medieval Tapestries and Texts, 2006 [2 folders; RESTRICTED]
Box 1	Class Book - MED 220a: Woven Stories: Medieval Tapestries and Texts, 2008 [RESTRICTED]
Box 1	ENG 305/306(?) Senior Composition - Gannon, Megan, "Lessons in Moving," 1997-1998 [RESTRICTED]

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