

2495 REDDING ROAD
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06430

May 5, 1980

Dear Fred Chappell: At my 75th
birthday party (given by an old friend
in Iuseon) your poem - read
aloud with others by an elderly
man of dignity - skill - struck
me with surprise & delight. Delight,
let me say first, that you would
contribute to such a collection.
And next, delight in the poem.
It's the hardest kind of poem
in the world to write (too hard
for me, anyway) - the little
prose-fragment so truly, &
significantly. I saw Allen
so little in the late years, I felt
that you were giving me a glimpse
of some reality that letters
could never capture. (And letter-writing

became such a problem for him in
later years - I don't mean toward the
end - just the problem of perfecting
himself in a personal way beyond
a topic, usually too demanding to
explore)

Anyway, "Afternoons" stands
me in a triple way: that you
would read it to me, that you
could give such a memorable
& right portrait, & that the
poem is such a poem - one
of the most difficult of poems
to do & keep under the control
of poetry - real poetry.

I want to thank you - very
much. And I want to say how
much I wish our paths crossed.

All good wishes to you & part -
- Ted Womer