



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Harriet Blackstone Papers,
1870-1984, in the Archives of American Art

Christen Brown

Glass plate negatives in this collection were digitized in 2019
with funding provided by the Smithsonian Women's Committee.

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Archives of American Art
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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Names and Subjects	3
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1930-1973.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1883-1984.....	5
Series 3: Writings, 1861-1979.....	8
Series 4: Personal Business Records, circa 1906-late 1930s.....	10
Series 5: Printed Material, 1901-1984.....	11
Series 6: Scrapbook, circa early 1900s.....	13
Series 7: Photographs, 1870-early 1900s.....	14
Series 8: Artwork, 1870-1929.....	16
Series 9: Artifacts, circa early 1900s-1939.....	17

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Harriet Blackstone papers
Identifier:	AAA.blacharr
Date:	1870-1984
Extent:	5.4 Linear feet
Creator:	Blackstone, Harriet, 1864-1939
Language:	English
	Collection is in English.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Microfilmed material transferred in 1978 from the National Collection of Fine Arts, who had acquired it in 1967 along with Harriet Blackstone's paintings from Stell Anderson, Blackstone's friend and a collector of her work. Anderson had received the papers from Blackstone's brother, Edward, in 1939. Upon Anderson's death, additional material was turned over to her niece Pat Rauchenstein, who donated them in 1989. Prior to the donation, the papers were in possession of Esther McCullough, who annotated some items and added research material in preparation for her unpublished manuscript "Harriet Blackstone, 1864-1939."

Related Materials

Also at the Archives of American Art is the Richard Wunder research material on Harriet Blackstone.

Available Formats

Portions of this collection are available on 35 mm microfilm reels 1617, 1621-1622 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

Collection processed in 2015 by intern, Christen P. Brown.

Preferred Citation

Harriet Blackstone papers, 1870-1984. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

The Harriet Blackstone papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

Biographical / Historical

Harriet Blackstone (1864-1939) was a painter in New York, New York. Blackstone was born on November 13th, 1864 in New Hartford, New York. In 1883, she moved to Illinois where she became a high school elocution teacher. She did not start her studies to be an artist until 1903 when she enrolled at the Pratt Institute of Art in Brooklyn, New York. While there her art teacher was William Merritt Chase. Later, Blackstone went to the Academie Julian in Paris, France to gain more experience with Jean Paul Laurens as her instructor. Blackstone started to gain attention as a renowned artist in 1907 when her painting, *Soldat de Crimée*, was exhibited in The Salon, Paris. She moved back to Glencoe, Illinois and focused more on her artwork by painting commissions and joining different art organizations, such as the Chicago Society of Artists and the Arts Club. Blackstone travelled to different locations, including Taos, New Mexico and Bruges, Belgium, to help inspire her creativity. In 1920, Blackstone moved back to New York City where she would spend the remainder of her life; she never married or had children. She died on March 16, 1939 and was survived by her brother and friends. During her art career, Blackstone often painted portraits of well-known people and over time she developed her own style of work. Her artwork was displayed in several prominent cities in the United States: Washington, D.C., Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and New York City. Some of Blackstone's artwork became part of permanent collections, such as *Soldat de Crimée*, which was acquired by the National Gallery of Art in 1921, now known as the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter Harriet Blackstone date from 1870-1984 and measure 5.4 linear feet. The collection provides documentation of Harriet Blackstone's career through scattered biographical material; personal and professional correspondence, including letters from Maria Oakey Dewing, Thomas Wilmer Dewing, Alice Tisdale Hobart, Joseph Cummings Chase, Stell Anderson, Mary Landis, Esther Morgan McCullough, and Booker T. Washington; writings by Blackstone, Esther Morgan McCullough, Richard P. Wunder, and Florence Holbrook; personal business records; clippings, exhibition material, and other printed material; one scrapbook; photographs of Blackstone, family, friends, and notable artists William Merritt Chase, Jean Paul Laurens, and John Singer Sargent; artwork; and four sketchbooks. Also found are a few artifacts found on Blackstone's easel.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 9 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1930-1973 (Box 1, 6; 7 folders)

- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1883-1984 (Box 1; 0.4 Linear Feet)
- Series 3: Writings, 1861-1979 (Boxes 1-2; 1.0 Linear Feet)
- Series 4: Personal Business Records, circa 1906-late 1930s (Box 2; 0.2 Linear Feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1901-1984 (Boxes 2-3, 6; 0.8 Linear Feet)
- Series 6: Scrapbook, circa early 1900s (Boxes 3, 6; 0.2 Linear Feet)
- Series 7: Photographs, 1870-early 1900s (Boxes 3-4, 6, BV 7, 8-9; 1.7 Linear Feet)
- Series 8: Artwork, 1870-1929 (Boxes 4-5; 0.2 Linear Feet)
- Series 9: Artifacts, circa early 1900s-1939 (Box 5, Artifact; 0.4 Linear Feet)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Painters -- New York (State) -- New York
Women artists -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks
Sketchbooks

Names:

Anderson, Stell
Chase, Joseph Cummings, 1878-1965
Chase, William Merritt, 1849-1916
Dewing, M. O. (Maria Oakey), 1855-1927
Dewing, Thomas Wilmer, 1851-1938
Hobart, Alice Tisdale, 1882-1967
Holbrook, Florence
Landis, Mary
Laurens, Jean-Paul, 1838-1921
McCullough, Esther Morgan
Sargent, John Singer, 1856-1925
Washington, Booker T., 1856-1915
Wunder, Richard P.

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1930-1973

7 Folders (Box 1, 6)

Most of the documents found here include personal information on Blackstone such as biographical writings for *Who's Who* and information about Blackstone's artwork, estate documents, and her passport. Biographical notes are written by Blackstone.

Box 1, Folder 1	Bibliography, circa 1938
Box 1, Folder 2	Biographical Notes, circa 1930
Box 1, Folder 3	Biographical Summaries, circa 1937-1973
Box 1, Folder 4	Estate Document, 1939
Box 1, Folder 5	Exhibitions Harriet Blackstone was Represented, 1906-1941
Box 1, Folder 6	Passport, 1930
Box 6, Folder 1	Oversize List of Guests, circa early 1900s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1883-1984

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series contains Blackstone's personal and professional correspondence. Letters from family and friends tend to be about praising Harriet Blackstone's work, encouraging visits, or experiences of daily life. Notable correspondence is with Maria Oakey Dewing, Thomas Wilmer Dewing, Alice Tisdale Hobart, Joseph Cummings Chase, Stell Anderson, Mary Landis, Esther Morgan McCullough, Booker T. Washington, among others. Professional correspondence is primarily about her artwork: coordinating with curators and museums to buy or show her work, Blackstone receiving confirmation about her artwork in competitions, and legal information.

Folders are arranged alphabetically by surname of the correspondents. Four or more letters signed by the same correspondent are housed in their own folder; three or less letters signed by the same person are housed in the alphabetical folder according to their surname.

Box 1, Folder 7	A, circa 1920-1937
Box 1, Folder 8	Anderson, Stell, circa 1939-1984
Box 1, Folder 9	B, circa 1883-1939
Box 1, Folder 10	Blackstone, Harriet to others, circa 1930s
Box 1, Folder 11	C, circa 1902-1937
Box 1, Folder 12	Campbell, John A., circa 1930-1938
Box 1, Folder 13	Chase, Joseph Cummings, 1929-1932
Box 1, Folder 14	D, circa 1922-1939
Box 1, Folder 15	Dewing, Maria Oakey, 1921-1924
Box 1, Folder 16	Dudensing, Leroy, circa 1932-1935
Box 1, Folder 17	E, circa 1917-1938
Box 1, Folder 18	F, circa 1908-1931
Box 1, Folder 19	Furness, Clifton, circa 1928-1932
Box 1, Folder 20	G, circa 1922-1938
Box 1, Folder 21	Gay, William F., 1929

Box 1, Folder 22	H, circa 1919-1938
Box 1, Folder 23	Heyman, Katherine Ruth, circa 1930s
Box 1, Folder 24	Humiston, Grace, circa 1934-1937
Box 1, Folder 25	J, 1935
Box 1, Folder 26	Jones, C. Lansing, circa 1904-1906
Box 1, Folder 27	Jules-Bois, H.A., circa 1938-1939
Box 1, Folder 28	K, 1929
Box 1, Folder 29	L, circa 1929-1938
Box 1, Folder 30	Landis, Mary, circa 1930s
Box 1, Folder 31	M, circa 1930-1937
Box 1, Folder 32	McCullough, Esther Morgan, circa 1940-1943
Box 1, Folder 33	Mechlin, Leila, 1919-1920
Box 1, Folder 34	N, 1937-1943
Box 1, Folder 35	O, circa 1933-1935
Box 1, Folder 36	P, circa 1930s
Box 1, Folder 37	Partridge, Charlotte Russell, 1930-1931
Box 1, Folder 38	R, circa 1906-1936
Box 1, Folder 39	S, circa 1909-1936
Box 1, Folder 40	T, circa 1917-1930
Box 1, Folder 41	Thorne, Louie, circa early 1930s
Box 1, Folder 42	U, circa 1911
Box 1, Folder 43	V, 1922-1924

Box 1, Folder 44	Vayana, Nunzio, circa 1935-1938
Box 1, Folder 45	W, circa 1931-1984
Box 1, Folder 46	Washington, Booker T., 1915
Box 1, Folder 47	Y, 1937-1983
Box 1, Folder 48	Zetterberg, A.P., 1938-1939
Box 1, Folder 49	Unidentified Correspondents, circa 1905-1940

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Writings, 1861-1979

1 Linear foot (Boxes 1-2)

Writings include Harriet Blackstone's personal notes, hand written and typed, and two lectures on "Modern Art through the Ages" and "Modern Spanish Painters." This series also contains writings about Blackstone written by other authors. Esther Morgan McCullough wrote a biography about Blackstone and the first four drafts and complete typescript are included. McCullough's biography notes and chronology notes concerning Blackstone are also available in this series. A few years after Blackstone's death, Richard P. Wunder created a detailed catalog of Blackstone's work, a draft of which is also found here. Additionally, there are handwritten publicity extracts and "The Painter's Bruges" by traveling companion, Florence Holbrook, which describes a class taught by William Merrit Chase in Bruges, Belgium in 1912. The memoir is illustrated with photographs taken by Blackstone of Chase, John Singer Sargent, and others.

Folders are arranged to represent the personal writings of Harriet Blackstone first and then writings about her. Unless otherwise noted, the writings are written by Harriet Blackstone.

Box 1, Folder 50-55	Notes, circa 1910-1930s
Box 1, Folder 56	"Modern Spanish Painters" lecture and notes, 1913
Box 1, Folder 57	"Modern Art through the Ages" lecture and notes, 1936
Box 1, Folder 58-59	Writings about Harriet Blackstone, 1909-1942
Box 1, Folder 60	"Harriet Blackstone: American Artist" by Esther Morgan McCullough Typescript, circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 61-63	"Harriet Blackstone: American Artist" by Esther Morgan McCullough Draft 1, circa 1941
Box 2, Folder 1-3	"Harriet Blackstone: American Artist" by Esther Morgan McCullough Draft 2, 1977-1979
Box 2, Folder 4-6	"Harriet Blackstone: American Artist" by Esther Morgan McCullough Draft 3, 1977-1979
Box 2, Folder 7	"Harriet Blackstone: American Artist" by Esther Morgan McCullough Draft 4, 1977-1979
Box 2, Folder 8	Biography Notes by Esther Morgan McCullough, circa late 1930s
Box 2, Folder 9	Harriet Blackstone's Chronology by Esther Morgan McCullough, circa late 1930s
Box 2, Folder 10-12	"Catalogue of Works by Harriet Blackstone" by Richard P. Wunder, circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 13	"The Painter's Bruges" by Florence Holbrook, 1912

[Image\(s\)](#)

Box 2, Folder 14	Publicity Extracts, circa 1922
Box 2, Folder 15	Publicity Extracts, circa 1919-1936
Box 2, Folder 16	Publicity Extracts, circa 1935-1937

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Personal Business Records, circa 1906-late 1930s

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Personal business records include financial information about Harriet Blackstone's artwork and professional activities. Also included are European copyright documents, gallery invitations, lists of Blackstone's paintings in permanent collections, and Blackstone's own inventory of her artwork.

Box 2, Folder 17	Alphabetical List of Portraits by Harriet Blackstone, circa late 1930s
Box 2, Folder 18	Consignment Receipts, circa late 1930s
Box 2, Folder 19	Gallery Invitations and Memberships, 1907-1911
Box 2, Folder 20	Harriet Blackstone's Inventory, circa early 1900s
Box 2, Folder 21	Harriet Blackstone's Painting's Alphabetically Indexed, circa 1930s
Box 2, Folder 22	Harriet Blackstone's Personal Record of Paintings, 1906-1921
Box 2, Folder 23	Insurance Documents, 1929-1940
Box 2, Folder 24	List of Harriet Blackstone Paintings, circa 1930s
Box 2, Folder 25	List of Paintings and Price Lists, 1936-1937
Box 2, Folder 26	List of Paintings with Notes by Harriet Blackstone, 1930
Box 2, Folder 27	Lists of Paintings in Permanent Collections, circa late 1930s
Box 2, Folder 28	Permission to Copy in European Galleries, 1906-1912
Box 2, Folder 29	Stock Documents, 1925-1947

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Printed Material, 1901-1984

0.8 Linear feet (Boxes 2-3, 6)

Found here are various publication documenting Blackstone's career including exhibition announcements, catalogs, and visiting cards as well as two published books Blackstone compiled. Additionally there are journals, magazines, newspaper clippings, and a museum catalog (most are written in English and a couple in French) that depict the artwork of Blackstone.

Box 2, Folder 30	Exhibition Announcements, 1919-1984
Box 2, Folder 31-32	Exhibition Catalogs, 1910-1941
Box 2, Folder 33	Visiting Cards, 1909-1934
Box 2, Folder 34	Book, <i>New Pieces that Will Take Prizes in Speaking Contests</i> compiled by Harriet Blackstone, 1901
Box 3, Folder 1	Book, <i>The Best American Orations of Today</i> compiled by Harriet Blackstone, 1903
Box 3, Folder 2	<i>The International Studio</i> , 1916
Box 3, Folder 3	<i>The Artists Guild</i> , 1917
Box 3, Folder 4	<i>Fine Arts Journal</i> , 1917
Box 3, Folder 5	<i>The American Magazine of Art</i> , 1918-1922
Box 3, Folder 6	<i>The National Arts Club</i> , 1933-1939
Box 3, Folder 7	<i>Le Nouvelle Revue</i> , 1937
Box 3, Folder 8	<i>Le Messager de New York Revue Franco: Americaine</i> , 1937
Box 3, Folder 9	<i>The Columns</i> , 1938
Box 3, Folder 10	<i>The Weekly Magazine of New York Life</i> , 1941
Box 3, Folder 11	<i>The Art Digest</i> , 1942
Box 3, Folder 12	<i>The Art News</i> , 1934-1941 Oversized items housed in Box 6, Folder 2
Box 3, Folder 13	Reproduction of Harriet Blackstone's Work, circa early 1900s

Box 3, Folder 14	Bennington Museum Catalogue, 1984
Box 3, Folder 15-20	Clippings, 1908-1984
Box 3, Folder 21-22	Miscellaneous, 1922-circa 1930s Oversized items housed in Box 6, Folder 3
Box 6, Folder 2	Oversized <i>The Art News</i> from Box 3, Folder 12, 1934-1941
Box 6, Folder 3	Oversize Miscellaneous from Box 3, Folders 21-22, 1938

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Scrapbook, circa early 1900s

0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 3, 6)

Found here is a large scrapbook that contains clippings, cards, announcements, notes, and photos of Harriet Blackstone. One folder contains a page of the scrapbook that was separated from the main document.

Box 3, Folder 23 Scrapbook Pages, Undated

Box 6, Folder 4 Oversize Scrapbook, circa early 1900s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 7: Photographs, 1870-early 1900s

1.7 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4, 6, BV 7, 8-9)

Photographs of Blackstone, her family, and friends can be found here as well as photos of other artists whom had an influence on her including William Merritt Chase, Jean Paul Laurens, and John Singer Sargent. There are travel photos of Blackstone's experiences in Belgium, New Mexico, New York, and Illinois as well as photos of the studios Blackstone worked in, a subject she worked with, and photos and negatives of her own artwork: paintings, sketches, and drawings. A photo album with separate descriptions can be found here.

Glass plate negatives are housed in separate containers and are closed to researchers.

Glass plate negatives have been digitized.

Box 3, Folder 24-25	Harriet Blackstone, 1877-circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 26	Family, 1870-1883
Box 3, Folder 27-28	Others, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 29	William Merritt Chase, 1910
Box 3, Folder 30	John Singer Sargent, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 31-32	Places, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 33	New Hartford, New York, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 34	Taos, New Mexico, 1918
Box 3, Folder 35	Bruges, Belgium, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 36	Studio in Glencoe, Illinois, 1908-1920
Box 3, Folder 37	Studio on 15 West 67th Street, New York City, circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 38	Brooklyn Museum Exhibit, 1929
Box 3, Folder 39	National Arts Club Studio, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 40	Studio in Hotel Chelsea, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 41	Subject: A Soldier of the Crimea, circa early 1900s
Box 3, Folder 42	Sketches of G.K. Chesterton, circa early 1900s

Box 3, Folder 43	Self-Portraits, Drawings, and Sketches, circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 44-47	Artwork, circa early 1900s
Box 4, Folder 1-3	Artwork, circa early 1900s Oversized items housed in Box 6, Folder 5
Box 4, Folder 4	Artwork, Mounted on Glass, 1881
Box 4, Folder 5	Artwork, Mounted on Wood, circa early 1900s
Box 4, Folder 6-9	Negatives, circa early 1900s
Box 4, Folder 10	Harriet Blackstone's Photo Album Descriptions, circa early 1900s Oversized items housed in Box 6, Folder 6
Box 6, Folder 5	Oversize Artwork, circa early 1900s
Box 6, Folder 6	Oversize Harriet Blackstone's Photo Album Descriptions from Box 4, Folder 10, circa early 1900s
Volume 9	Oversize Photograph Album, circa early 1900s
Box 7	Glass Plate Negatives of Artwork, circa early 1900s Image(s)
Box 8	Glass Plate Negatives of Artwork, circa early 1900s Image(s)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 8: Artwork, 1870-1929

0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 4-5)

This series contains original artwork by Harriet Blackstone including framed paper dolls she made when she was five years old, loose sketches, and four of her own sketchbooks that contain pencil sketches of people. There is also a silhouette of Blackstone created by another artist and a framed pastel self-portrait.

Box 4, Folder 11	Paper Dolls, circa 1870
Box 4, Folder 12	Sketchbook, 1907
Box 4, Folder 13	Sketchbook, circa 1909
Box 4, Folder 14	Sketchbook, circa early 1900s
Box 4, Folder 15	Sketchbook, 1912
Box 4, Folder 16	Sketches, 1929
Box 4, Folder 17	Silhouette of Harriet Blackstone by Webster, 1917
Box 5, Folder 4	Pastel Self-Portrait of Harriet Blackstone, circa early 1900s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 9: Artifacts, circa early 1900s-1939

0.4 Linear feet (Box 5, Artifact)

Found here are objects Harriet Blackstone used in her studio to create her artwork. Included are two palettes, a brush with fine hair, glasses, a calligraphy ink holding case, and various small art tools. Each item is placed in an envelope and foldered with similar objects. The original envelopes that contained the objects are included and remain close to the artifacts they originally held.

Box 5, Folder 1-3 Artifacts found on Easel, 1939

Box 10 Palettes, circa early 1900s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)