



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Mary Butler Papers, 1853-1946, bulk 1884-1946, in the Archives of American Art

Jean Fitzgerald

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Archives of American Art
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Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Mary Butler papers
Date:	1853-1946 (bulk 1884-1946)
Identifier:	AAA.butlmary
Creator:	Butler, Mary
Extent:	1.6 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of landscape painter Mary Butler date from 1853-1946, bulk 1884-1946, and measure 1.6 linear feet. Found within the papers are biographical material, correspondence, and records relating to Butler's long participation in the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Also found are notes and writings, a scrapbook, printed material, and photographs of Butler, her friends, her studio in Ogunquit, Maine, her landscape paintings, and exhibition installations.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The Mary Butler papers were donated in 2005 by Rachel F. Armstrong, the artist's niece.

Processing Information

The Mary Butler papers were processed in October 2007 by Jean Fitzgerald.

Preferred Citation

Mary Butler papers, 1853-1946, bulk 1884-1946. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research. Use requires an appointment.

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Biographical Note

Mary Butler was born on October 27, 1865 in Uwachlan, Pennsylvania, the daughter of James and Rachel M. (James) Butler.

Butler began her education at the Darlington Seminary. She studied painting at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women (now the Moore College of Art) under William Sartain and Robert Henri, graduating in 1894. Between 1896 and 1902, she studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts under William Merritt Chase and Celia Beaux. From 1897 to 1898, she studied at the Académie Colarossi in Paris with Gustave Courtois, René François Xavier Prinet, and Jean-Antoine Injalbert.

She attended a summer school conducted by William Merritt Chase at Shinnacock Hills, and later studied under Robert Henri and Edward W. Redfield. With Redfield, she spent a season at Centre Bridge, Pennsylvania. Butler was primarily a landscape painter and traveled widely in the United States and Europe to find unusual and inspiring views. She also spent summers in Ogunquit and on Monhegan Island, Maine.

In 1909, Butler joined the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and served as President of that organization from 1921 to 1937. During her tenure, she inaugurated traveling exhibitions, a picture purchasing fund and, in 1915, the Thouron Fund for aid of needy artists.

Throughout her career Butler exhibited extensively and promoted the arts in Philadelphia.

Mary Butler died on March 16, 1946.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of landscape painter Mary Butler date from 1853-1946, bulk 1884-1946, and measure 1.6 linear feet. Found within the papers are biographical material, correspondence, and records relating to Butler's long participation in the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Also found are notes and writings, a scrapbook, printed material, and photographs of Butler, her friends, her studio in Ogunquit, Maine, her landscape paintings, and exhibition installations.

Biographical material includes genealogical notes on Butler's early family history, biographical accounts, teaching certificates, and letters of recommendation from Butler's instructors including William Merritt Chase, Robert Henri, and William Sartain.

Found within the papers are correspondence with family members, including letters to her cousin Edgar Butler letters from her friend Mrs. Thomas Eakins; and miscellaneous scattered letters from various colleagues including George Biddle, Dorothy Grafly, Thornton Oakley, and Alice Kent Stoddard concerning various topics. Correspondence regarding exhibitions is with arts organizations and colleagues including Henry Thouron and S. Walter Norris.

There are files documenting Butler's long participation in the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, including a letter from Joseph Pennell, notes, writings, and printed material. Additional printed material includes a scrapbook of clippings, and exhibition announcements and catalogs. Photographs are of Butler, her friends, her studio in Ogunquit, Maine, views of the Maine coast and of Cathedral Crag in Washington State, Butler's landscape paintings, and miscellaneous exhibition installations.

Arrangement

The papers are arranged into seven series. Each series is arranged chronologically.

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1884-1945 (Box 1; 10 folders)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1853-1944 (Box 1; 0.5 linear feet)

- Series 3: File for the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1917-1946 (Box 1; 14 folders)
- Series 4: Notes and Writings, 1905-1938 (Box 1; 10 folders)
- Series 5: Scrapbook, 1908-1942 (Box 1; 5 folders)
- Series 6: Printed Material, 1894-1944 (Box 2; 0.4 linear feet)
- Series 7: Photographs, circa 1870-1945 (Box 3; 0.2 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Women artists
Women painters

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks
Writings

Names:

Biddle, George, 1885-1973
Chase, William Merritt, 1849-1916
Eakins, Susan Macdowell
Grafly, Dorothy, 1896-
Henri, Robert, 1865-1929
Norris, S. Walter
Oakley, Thornton, 1881-1953
Pennell, Joseph, 1857-1926
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Sartain, William, 1843-1924
Stoddard, Alice Kent Pearson, 1885-1976
Thouron, Henry

Occupations:

Landscape painters -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1884-1945

(Box 1; 10 folders)

Scope and Contents: Biographical material includes genealogical notes, biographical accounts, teaching certificates, letters of recommendation from Butler's instructors including William Merritt Chase, Robert Henri, and William Sartain, membership certificates, hand-drawn menu cards, an award plaque, a medical report concerning her right thumb, and miscellaneous receipts for art supplies, travel expenses, and for donations of artwork.

Box 1, Folder 1	Genealogical Notes, 1894-1934, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Biographical Accounts for Mary Butler, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Teaching Certificates, 1884-1886
Box 1, Folder 4-6	Letters of Recommendation, 1884-1906 (3 folders)
Box 1, Folder 7	Membership Certificates, 1897, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Hand-Drawn Menu Cards, 1911
Box 1, Folder 9	Award Plaque; Medical Report, 1914-1923
Box 1, Folder 10	Miscellaneous Receipts, 1892-1945

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1853-1944

(Box 1; 0.5 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Family correspondence is between Butler and family members including her cousin, Edgar Butler. There are letters from her friend Mrs. Thomas Eakins, and scattered miscellaneous letters from various colleagues including George Biddle, Dorothy Grafly, Thornton Oakley, and Alice Kent Stoddard. Correspondence concerning exhibitions is with arts organizations and colleagues including Henry Thouron and S. Walter Norris, and includes prospectuses, lists of artwork, and a few price lists.

Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence with Family Members, undated
Box 1, Folder 12	Correspondence with Family Members, 1853-1881
Box 1, Folder 13	Correspondence with Family Members, 1882-1884
Box 1, Folder 14-15	Correspondence with Family Members, 1897 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 16-17	Correspondence with Family Members, 1898 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence with Family Members, 1899-1903
Box 1, Folder 19	Correspondence with Family Members, 1912-1915
Box 1, Folder 20	Correspondence with Family Members, 1923-1929
Box 1, Folder 21	Correspondence with Family Members, 1930-1943
Box 1, Folder 22	Letters to Edgar Butler, 1898-1899
Box 1, Folder 23	Letters from Mrs. Thomas Eakins, 1936-1937, undated
Box 1, Folder 24	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, undated
Box 1, Folder 25	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1907-1910
Box 1, Folder 26	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1911-1912
Box 1, Folder 27	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1913-1914
Box 1, Folder 28	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1915
Box 1, Folder 29	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1916-1918
Box 1, Folder 30	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1919
Box 1, Folder 31	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1920

Box 1, Folder 32	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1921
Box 1, Folder 33	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1922
Box 1, Folder 34	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1923
Box 1, Folder 35	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1924
Box 1, Folder 36-37	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1925 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 38-39	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1926 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 40	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1927
Box 1, Folder 41	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1928-1929
Box 1, Folder 42	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1930
Box 1, Folder 43	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1931
Box 1, Folder 44	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1932-1933
Box 1, Folder 45	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1934
Box 1, Folder 46-47	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1935 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 48	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1936
Box 1, Folder 49-50	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1937 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 51-52	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1938 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 53	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1940
Box 1, Folder 54-55	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1942 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 56	Correspondence Concerning Exhibitions, 1944
Box 1, Folder 57	Miscellaneous Correspondence, undated
Box 1, Folder 58	Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1896-1909
Box 1, Folder 59	Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1911

Box 1, Folder 60 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1912-1922

Box 1, Folder 61 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1923-1924

Box 1, Folder 62 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1925

Box 1, Folder 63 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1934

Box 1, Folder 64 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1935-1942

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Series 3: Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Files, 1917-1946

(Box 1; 14 folders)

Scope and Contents: These files include letters including one from Joseph Pennell, notes and writings, and miscellaneous printed material pertaining to Butler's long participation in the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Also included is material concerning a Fellowship banquet honoring Butler and a membership purchase of Butler's painting in conjunction with an exhibition at McClees Galleries.

Box 1, Folder 65	Letters, 1919-1946, undated
Box 1, Folder 66	Notes and Writings, 1935-1937, undated
Box 1, Folder 67	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1924-1942, undated
Box 1, Folder 68	Clippings, 1917-1926
Box 1, Folder 69	Miscellaneous Printed Material, 1926-1937
Box 1, Folder 70-72	File Concerning Banquet for Mary Butler, 1936 (3 folders)
Box 1, Folder 73-78	File Concerning McClees Galleries Exhibition and Purchase of Painting by Mary Butler, 1944 (6 folders)

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Series 4: Notes and Writings, 1905-1938

(Box 1; 10 folders)

Scope and Contents: This series includes address lists, lists of artwork, lists of exhibitions, notes on travel to Ireland, and miscellaneous notes and writings.

Box 1, Folder 79	Address List, undated
Box 1, Folder 80	Address Book, 1908-1925
Box 1, Folder 81-82	Lists of Artwork, 1905-1938, undated (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 83	Lists of Exhibitions, 1924-1933
Box 1, Folder 84-85	Notes on Travel to Ireland, 1912 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 86	Miscellaneous Notes, 1919-1930, undated
Box 1, Folder 87	Writings by Others, undated
Box 1, Folder 88	Miscellaneous Writings, 1937, undated

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Series 5: Scrapbook, 1908-1942

(Box 1; 5 folders)

Scope and Contents: One scrapbook contains clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and a list of artwork.

Box 1, Folder 89-93	Dismantled Scrapbook, 1908-1942 (5 folders)
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Series 6: Printed Material, 1894-1944

(Box 2; 0.4 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Printed material includes clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and tickets and passes for exhibitions, the Touring-Club de France, and for entrance into public parks. Also found are programs, brochures, and miscellaneous printed material.

Box 2, Folder 1	Clippings, undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Clippings, 1908-1911
Box 2, Folder 3	Clippings, 1912-1913
Box 2, Folder 4	Clippings, 1914-1924
Box 2, Folder 5	Clippings, 1925
Box 2, Folder 6	Clippings, 1926-1929
Box 2, Folder 7	Clippings, 1930-1932
Box 2, Folder 8	Clippings, 1933-1938
Box 2, Folder 9	Clippings, 1941-1942
Box 2, Folder 10	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, undated
Box 2, Folder 11	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1894-1913
Box 2, Folder 12	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1914-1915
Box 2, Folder 13	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1921-1922
Box 2, Folder 14	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1923-1925
Box 2, Folder 15	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1926-1928
Box 2, Folder 16	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1930
Box 2, Folder 17	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1931
Box 2, Folder 18	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1932-1934
Box 2, Folder 19	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1935-1938
Box 2, Folder 20	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1940-1944
Box 2, Folder 21	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs for Others, 1918-1936

Box 2, Folder 22 Miscellaneous Tickets and Passes, 1897-1916, undated

Box 2, Folder 23 Programs, 1897-1916

Box 2, Folder 24 Brochures, 1897-1935

Box 2, Folder 25 Miscellaneous Printed Material, 1896-1935, undated

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Series 7: Photographs, circa 1870-1945

(Box 3; 0.2 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Photographs are of Mary Butler, her friends, her studio in Ogunquit, Maine, and views of the Maine coast and of Cathedral Crag in Washington State. There is one folder of photographs of Butler's exhibition installations. Most of the photographs are of her landscape paintings of scenes in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Norway.

Box 3, Folder 1-2	Photographs of Mary Butler, circa 1890-1945 (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 3	Photographs of Mary Butler in her Ogunquit Studio, circa 1900
Box 3, Folder 4	Photographs of Interior of Ogunquit Studio, circa 1900
Box 3, Folder 5	Photographs of Friends, circa 1870-1900
Box 3, Folder 6-7	Photographs of the Maine Coast and of Cathedral Crag, 1936, undated (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 8	Photographs of Paintings of Cornwall, undated
Box 3, Folder 9	Photographs of Paintings of Scotland, undated
Box 3, Folder 10	Photographs of Paintings of Ireland, undated
Box 3, Folder 11	Photographs of Paintings of the Pyrenees, undated
Box 3, Folder 12	Photographs of Paintings of Norway, undated
Box 3, Folder 13	Photographs of Paintings of the Canadian Rockies, undated
Box 3, Folder 14	Photographs of Paintings of Nova Scotia, undated
Box 3, Folder 15	Photographs of Paintings of Maine, undated
Box 3, Folder 16	Photographs of Paintings of New Hampshire, undated
Box 3, Folder 17	Photographs of Paintings of the Catskills, undated
Box 3, Folder 18-19	Photographs of Miscellaneous Landscape Paintings, undated (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 20	Photographs of Exhibition Installations, undated

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