



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Thomas Benedict Clarke Scrapbooks, 1880-1936, bulk 1883-1920, in the Archives of American Art

Judy Ng

Funding for the processing of this collection was
provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art

April 06, 2011

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Thomas Benedict Clarke scrapbooks
Date:	1880-1936 (bulk 1883-1920)
Identifier:	AAA.clarthom
Creator:	Clarke, Thomas B. (Thomas Benedict), 1848-1931
Extent:	3.6 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The scrapbooks of Thomas Benedict Clarke measure 3.6 linear feet and date from 1879-1930. Twelve scrapbooks contain mostly newspaper clippings, but also include correspondence, invitations, exhibition catalogs, programs, magazine articles, art auction catalogs, and other material relating to Clarke's personal art collection and general art patronage. The scrapbooks also include clippings and miscellany relating to the Clarke family and influential society clubs, such as the Union League, Lambs, and New York Athletic clubs.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The scrapbooks of Thomas Benedict Clarke were donated by the Whitney Museum of Art director, Lloyd Goodrich, in 1978.

Related Material

The Archives also has the Thomas B. Clarke letters from or about Homer Dodge Martin, 1893-1897, which have been digitized and are available online via the Archives of American Art's website.

Also found in the Archives are Letters to Thomas B. Clarke from artists, 1883-1918 and the handwritten catalog *Private art collection of Thomas B. Clarke, 1872-1879*, both of which have been microfilmed and are available on reels D5 and 2802.

Alternative Forms Available

The collection is available on 35 mm microfilm reels N597-N599 and 1358 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

The scrapbooks were microfilmed shortly after receipt on reels N597-N599 and 1358. The collection was additionally processed and preserved, and described in this finding aid by Judy Ng in April 2011 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Preferred Citation

Thomas Benedict Clarke scrapbooks, 1880-1936, bulk 1883-1920. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

Use of originals requires an appointment. Patrons must use microfilm copy due to fragility of the original scrapbooks.

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Biographical Note

Thomas Benedict Clarke (1848-1931) was a prominent New York businessman and one of the first major collectors of contemporary American paintings in the 1870s-1880s. He purchased his first painting in 1872 and eventually amassed one of the largest private collections of American art at the turn of the century.

After retiring from the business world, Clarke served as President of the New York School of Applied Design for Women, Treasurer of the National Society of Arts, and Chairman of the House Committee of the Union League Club. He was a founding member of the National Sculpture Society and National Arts Club, and founded the Clarke Prize of the National Academy of Design in 1883. He was also a member of several New York gentlemen's clubs, including the Century, Lotos, Lamb, and Manhattan Clubs.

In 1890, Clarke announced he would no longer officially acquire or deal in works of art, except as an agent for his friend, George Inness. Concentrating his attentions on a new venture, in 1891, he opened "Art House" off of Fifth Avenue in New York City, a showcase for English furniture, Oriental porcelains, and Continental antiquities. In 1899, he announced he would be putting his collection of 375 American paintings up for sale during a landmark, week-long auction at the American Art Association. Included in the sale were 32 works by George Inness and 30 works by Winslow Homer.

In 1912, Clarke returned to active art collecting, this time focusing his energies on building a collection of Colonial American art.

Scope and Content Note

The scrapbooks of Thomas Benedict Clarke measure 3.6 linear feet and date from 1879-1930. Twelve scrapbooks contain mostly newspaper clippings, but also include correspondence, invitations, exhibition catalogs, programs, magazine articles, art auction catalogs, and other material relating to Clarke's personal art collection and general art patronage. The scrapbooks also include clippings and miscellany relating to the Clarke family and influential society clubs, such as the Union League, Lambs, and New York Athletic clubs.

Scrapbook 1 dates from 1880-1884 and includes information about the Lincoln Club, the Century Association, Motto Club, Rembrandt Club, Merchants Club, Art Club, and Union League Club. Scrapbook 2 dates from 1883-1884 and includes an index of artists in the Clarke art collection, as well as information about the artists. Scrapbook 3 dates from 1887-1889 and includes information about artists Vasily Vereshchagin and Antoine Louis-Barye. Scrapbook 5 dates from 1891-1894 and contains clippings about the Clarke Prize, the opening of Clarke's "Art House" in

Manhattan, New York, the 1891 Clarke exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the 1892 Columbian Loan Exhibition, and the 1893 Worlds' Columbian Exhibition. Scrapbook 6 dates from 1891-1902 and includes clippings regarding the art and auction sales of Greek, Continental, Persian, and Oriental antiquities, rugs, and porcelains. Scrapbook 7 dates from 1894-1898 and covers Clarke's support of Justice Frederick Smyth, his parents' 50th anniversary celebration, his daughter's society introduction reception, and events at the Lambs and Union League Clubs. Scrapbook 8 dates from 1894-1920 and houses announcements of the George Inness memorial exhibition, coverage of the Inness 1895 estate auction sale, copies of correspondence between Inness and Clarke, and two original photographs of Inness' studio. Scrapbook 9 is dated 1899-1900 and includes coverage of events at clubs, particularly the Lambs and Union League clubs, the Clarke Prize, Paris Exposition, Dewey Arch, and the private art collection of William T. Evans. Scrapbook 10 dates from 1899-1936 and consists primarily of coverage of the 1899 Clarke art auction to fund the National Academy of Design's Clarke prize. Scrapbook 11 dates from 1900-1902 and covers Clarke's Hampton cottage, his daughter's marriage and divorce suit, the New York School of Design for Women, and the Academy of Design annual exhibition. Scrapbook 12 is dated from 1899-1918 contains clippings regarding William Tilden Evans, a contemporary art collector and friend of Clarke's.

A 670 page annotated index of Books 1-6 and Books 10-12 is available on microfilm reels N598-N599.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 1 series:

- Series 1: Scrapbooks, 1880-1936 (Boxes 1-2, 4 BVs; 2.6 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Collectors and collecting -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks

Names:

Barye, Antoine-Louis, 1796-1875
Century Association (New York, N.Y.)
Exposition universelle internationale de 1900 (Paris, France)
Inness, George, 1825-1894
Lambs (New York, N.Y.)
Lincoln Club (New York, N.Y.)
Merchants Club (New York, N.Y.)
National Academy of Design (U.S.)
Smyth, Frederick, 1832-1900
Union League Club (New York, N.Y.)
Vereshchagin, Vasili Vasilevich, 1842-1904
World's Columbian Exposition (1893 : Chicago, Ill.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Scrapbooks, 1880-1936

- Scope and Contents: Book 1 (1880-1884, 73 pages) consists of clippings regarding art news and events, the National Academy of Design's Clarke award, coverage of private art collections and auctions, exhibition openings, artists, art related charity events, and art museums and societies. There is one booklet of the Lincoln Club's charter and by-laws, and additional miscellaneous printed material related to the Century Association, Motto Club, Rembrandt Club, Merchants Club, Art Club, and Union League Club.
- Book 2 (1883-1884, 241 pages) contains an index of artists in the Clarke art collection. It lists the titles of works owned and includes artists' biographical information and clippings regarding specific works of art. Coverage related to the National Academy of Design's Clarke prize, including the 1883 fundraising exhibition of the Clarke collection, is also included.
- Book 3 (1887-1889, 27 pages) consists of clippings regarding art news and events, exhibition openings, and artists, including Vasily Vereshchagin and Antoine Louis-Barye. There is also news coverage of the New York Athletic Club.
- Book 4 (1889-1891, 70 pages) consists of clippings regarding the art related and general activities of the Union League and New York Athletic clubs. There is also news coverage of Clarke's art collection.
- Book 5 (1891-1894, 242 pages) includes clippings regarding Clarke's art collection and the Clarke Prize, the opening of Clarke's "Art House" in Manhattan, New York, the 1891 Clarke exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the 1892 Columbian Loan Exhibition, and the 1893 Worlds' Columbian Exhibition. There is one annotated catalog of the 1894 A.H. Wyant Collection at the 5th Avenue Art Galleries, and news coverage of art auctions, exhibition openings, and events at the Union League, New York Athletic, Metropolitan, and Lambs clubs.
- Book 6 (1891-1902, 234 pages) consists of clippings regarding the art and auction sales of Greek, Continental, Persian, and Oriental antiquities, rugs, and porcelains. There is also coverage of the Clarke collection and exhibition openings.
- Book 7 (1894-1898, 337 pages) includes coverage of Clarke's support of Justice Frederick Smyth, his parents' 50th anniversary celebration, his daughter's society introduction reception, the theft of silverware from his residence, and events at the Rembrandt, Lotos, Colonial, Manhattan, New York Athletic, Heights, and Century clubs. Extensive coverage is given to the Lambs and Union League Clubs, including several art exhibition catalogs. Clippings covering art related events and news are also included.
- Book 8 (1894-1920, 198 pages) consists of clippings related to George Inness, including obituaries and remembrances, announcements of the Inness memorial exhibition, and coverage of the Inness 1895 estate auction sale. A catalog of the 1895 auction sale, copies of correspondence between Inness and Clarke, two original photographs of Inness' studio, and additional auction sales lists from 1904 and 1911 are also included.
- Book 9 (1899-1900, 175 pages) includes coverage of events at the Brooklyn, Clover, Democratic, Lincoln, and Manhattan clubs, with extensive coverage given to the Lambs and Union League clubs. Clippings covering the Clarke Prize, Paris Exposition, Dewey Arch, the private art collection of William T. Evans, and the non-segregation policies of the New York School of Applied Design for Women are also included.

Book 10 (1899-1936, 326 pages) consists primarily of coverage of the 1899 Clarke art auction to fund the National Academy of Design's Clarke prize. Articles describe highlights in the 375 piece collection and provide coverage and analysis of the sales at the American Art Association galleries. Printed announcements of the auction and a copy of the auction catalog are included. From 1910-1930, there are clippings regarding the art of Winslow Homer, Albert Ryder, and George Stuart. From 1912-1936, there are articles on George Stuart's paintings of Washington, clippings regarding the exhibition of Clarke's collection of American portraits from the 17th-19th century, and the 1936 purchase of this collection by Knoedler and Company.

Book 11 (1900-1902, 173 pages) consists of coverage of Clarke's Hampton cottage, his daughter's marriage and divorce suit, and events at the Manhattan, Lambs, and Union League clubs. Clippings related to the playwright Charles Hoyt, the New York School of Design for Women, the Academy of Design annual exhibition, and various charity benefits and art auctions are also included.

Book 12 (1899-1918, 98 pages) is a book of clippings regarding William Tilden Evans, a contemporary art collector and friend of Clarke's. It includes coverage and analysis of Evans' 1900 art collection auction, prices paid, and printed materials related to the auction sale. Later material includes a catalog of Evans' exhibition at the Union League Club in 1903, clippings regarding Evans' suit against the art dealer William Clausen from 1908-1910, a second art auction in 1913, Evans' creditor's suit against artists in 1917, and obituaries and remembrances of Evans in 1918.

Available
Formats:

Books 1-6 and 10-12 are on reels N597-N599. Books 7-9 are on reel 1358.

Arrangement: The original chronological arrangement has been retained, which does not match the order of filming.

Box 1, Folder 1	Book 1, 1880-1884 (Book 1 housed in BV 3)
Box 1, Folder 2	Book 2, 1883-1884 (Book 2 housed in BV 4)
Box 1, Folder 3	Book 3, 1887-1889
Box 1, Folder 4	Book 4, 1889-1891
Box 1, Folder 5	Book 5, 1891-1894
Box 1, Folder 6	Book 6, 1891-1902 (Book 6 housed in BV 5)
Box 1, Folder 7	Book 7, 1894-1898
Box 2, Folder 1	Book 8, 1894-1920
Box 2, Folder 2	Book 9, 1899-1900
Box 2, Folder 3	Book 10, 1899-1936 (Book 10 housed in BV 6)
Box 2, Folder 4	Book 11, 1900-1902

Box 2, Folder 5	Book 12, 1899-1918
Box BV 3	Oversized Book 1 from Box 1, Folder 1, 1880-1884
Box BV 4	Oversized Book 2 from Box 1, Folder 2, 1883-1884
Box BV 5	Oversized Book 6 from Box 1, Folder 6, 1891-1902
Box BV 6	Oversized Book 10 from Box 2, Folder 3, 1899-1936

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