



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Benjamin F. Curtis papers

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
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:	Benjamin F. Curtis papers
Date:	1910-1925
Identifier:	AAA.curtbenj
Creator:	Curtis, Benjamin F.
Extent:	16 Items ((partially filmed on 1 microfilm reel))
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 1995 by John A. Parker, Benjamin F. Curtis' son-in-law.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reel 5050, frames 932-962 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Microfilmed materials must be consulted on microfilm. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Curtis was a fine arts photographer; Boston, Mass. with the firm of Curtis & Cameron, Inc.

Scope and Contents

Miscellaneous letters and photographs from the files of art photographer Benjamin F. Curtis of the firm of Curtis & Cameron, Inc. The items mainly relate to portrait painter John Singer Sargent.

Scope and Contents

Included are two letters to Curtis from Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard University, February 26 and March 2, 1925, regarding portraits of him by painters John Singer Sargent and Louis Potter, and a photo of each portrait, 1910 and undated, (one taken by Curtis & Cameron, Inc.). Eliot requests that Curtis' print of Sargent's portrait of him not be used in publication as it "looks to me like a picture of a complacent fop seven feet tall" and that he prefers Charles Hopkinson's portrait instead. Of the Louis Potter bust, he writes "my family say unanimously that it is a good looking man but that it is not I."

Scope and Contents

Also included are two letters, undated, from Isabella Stewart Gardner (another of Sargent's sitters) to "Dear Sir" and "Dear Mr. Sears"; an undated letter (plus typescript) to Mr. [Otto] Fleischner, Assistant Librarian of the Boston Public Library, from Sargent regarding a complaint about his murals in the library, writing that he does not want to get into an argument with a woman who considers his murals "a bewildering, crowded, rotten world of dogmas, distress and medievalism"; four photographs of Sargent, including a portrait of him at age eight, Sargent receiving an honorary doctorate at Harvard University in 1916, and one dated 1925, Montreal; a photo by Keystone View Co. of Sargent's painting "Artist Sketching," and two of portraits of Sargent by Raymond M. Crosby and an unidentified artist.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Names:

Curtis & Cameron, Inc
Eliot, Charles William, 1834-1926
Fleischner, Otto, d. 1939
Gardner, Isabella Stewart, 1840-1924
Parker, John A. (John Albert)
Potter, Louis McClellan, 1873-1912
Sargent, John Singer, 1856-1925
United States. National Park Service

Occupations:

Photographers -- Massachusetts -- Boston