



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Frances and Mary Virginia Greer papers relating to Grandma Moses, circa 1890-1981, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

Processing of this collection received support from
the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

2022/10/25

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3
Series 1: Papers relating to Grandma Moses, circa 1890-1981.....	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Frances and Mary Virginia Greer papers relating to Grandma Moses
Date:	circa 1890-1981
Identifier:	AAA.greefran
Creator:	Greer, Frances, d. 1978 Greer, Mary Virginia, b. 1889
Extent:	0.2 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The scattered papers of Frances and Mary Greer relating to folk artist Grandma Moses (Anna Mary Robertson Moses) measure 0.2 linear feet and date from circa 1890 to 1981. Found are letters from Grandma Moses and members of the Moses family, including daughters-in-law Dorothy and Molly, to Frances and Mary Greer, and scattered notes, photographs of the Moses family and others, and printed material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 1988 by Miss Frances G. Brown, the niece of the Greers.

Available Formats

The collection is available on 35mm microfilm reel 4131 at Archives of American Art offices. 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 papers received a preliminary level of arrangement upon receipt and was microfilmed on reel 4131. The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2022 with support from the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

Preferred Citation

Frances and Mary Virginia Greer papers relating to Grandma Moses, circa 1890-1981. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

Conditions Governing Use

The Archives of American Art makes its archival collections available for non-commercial, educational and personal use unless restricted by copyright and/or donor restrictions, including but not limited to access and publication restrictions. AAA makes no representations concerning

such rights and restrictions and it is the user's responsibility to determine whether rights or restrictions exist and to obtain any necessary permission to access, use, reproduce and publish the collections. Please refer to the Smithsonian's Terms of Use for additional information.

Biographical / Historical

Frances Greer (1895-1975) and Mary Greer (1889-1993) were sisters who lived near Staunton, Virginia. They were acquainted with the Moses family when Anna Mary Robertson Moses (1860-1961) and her family settled in Staunton in 1887. When the Moses family moved back to New York in 1905, Grandma Moses and daughters-in-law Mary and Dorothy corresponded with the Greers.

Grandma Moses was a self-taught, "modern primitive" painter, who did not start painting until she was seventy-seven years old when arthritis forced her to give up yarn needlework. She initially sold her work at county fairs but became known across the country when Hallmark purchased the rights to reproduce her paintings on greeting cards. At the time of her death at 101, she had painted more than fifteen hundred images.

Scope and Contents

The scattered papers of Frances and Mary Greer relating to folk artist Grandma Moses (Anna Mary Robertson Moses) measure 0.2 linear feet and date from circa 1890 to 1981. Found are letters from Grandma Moses and members of the Moses family, including daughters-in-law Dorothy and Molly, to Frances and Mary Greer, and scattered notes, photographs of the Moses family and others, and printed material.

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Folk artists
- Self-taught artists
- Women artists
- Women painters

Names:

- Moses, Dorothy
- Moses, Grandma, 1860-1961
- Moses, Molly, d. ca. 1976

Container Listing

Series 1: Papers relating to Grandma Moses, circa 1890-1981

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Letters are from Grandma Moses and her daughters-in-law Mary (Molly) and Dorothy Moses to Frances and Mary Greer. Also found is correspondence between the Greers and writer Allen H. Eaton. Letters and cards found here were primarily sent to the Greers during the Christmas holidays and recount Moses family news. Some letters mention Grandma Moses's growing reputation as an artist and books written about her after death. Other family members mentioned include Hugh Harrington, Alice Moses, Dorothy Moses, Forrest K. Moses, Hugh Moses, LLOYD Moses, and Mary (Molly) Moses.

Photographs depict Mt. Nebo, the Moses house in Eagle Bridge, New York, Grandma Moses, and other members of the Moses family. Some photos are unidentified. Clippings concern Grandma Moses and her artwork and the Moses family. Notes mention the sale of an artwork.

Box 1, Folder 1 Correspondence, 1939-1981

Box 1, Folder 2 Notes, circa 1960

Box 1, Folder 3 Photographs, circa 1890-1953

Box 1, Folder 4 Printed Material, 1948-1980

[Return to Table of Contents](#)