



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Alexander Robertson James papers

Archives of American Art  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Alexander Robertson James papers
<b>Date:</b>	1893-1983 (bulk 1914-1946)
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.jamealex
<b>Creator:</b>	James, Alexander, 1890-1946
<b>Extent:</b>	3.6 Linear feet ((on 7 microfilm reels))
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Donated 1986 by Michael James, the son of Alexander James, except for the bound volume on reel 3828 which was lent for microfilming.

### Location of Originals

Original letters from William James (1842-1910) to Alexander (reel 4195) retained by the donor, Michael James.

### Location of Originals

Bound volume, reel 3828: Original in the Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

### Related Materials

Also found in the Archives on microfilm only (reel 3828) is a bound volume containing 37 letters from William James to his youngest son, Alexander James, one letter from his mother, Alice Howe Gibbens James, and 11 postcards.

### Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 3828 and 4195-4201 available at all Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

### Reproduction Note

Letters from William James (1842-1910) to Alexander (reel 4195) are photocopies.

### Conditions Governing Use

Reel 3828: Authorization to publish, quote, or reproduce requires written permission from Alexander R. James, Glandore, County Cork, Ireland. Contact Reference Services for more information.

### Terms of Use

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## Biographical / Historical

Portrait painter. The younger son of psychologist William James (1842-1910), brother of painter William James (1882-1961), and nephew of novelist Henry James, Alexander James was actually christened Francis Temple Tweedy James in 1890. In 1925 he had his name officially changed to Alexander Robertson James. Later in life he dropped the Robertson and became Alexander James. He studied with Abbott Handerson Thayer and was a close friend of John Singer Sargent and Rockwell Kent.

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## Scope and Contents

Family and professional correspondence; exhibition and sales records; sketches; sketchbooks; photographs and printed materials documenting the career and activities of Alexander James.

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## Scope and Contents

A marriage certificate; a genealogy of the James family; autobiographical notes; passports for James and his wife Frederika Paine James; a diary with entries by both James (1907) and his mother (1921); loose pages from diaries kept by James and his wife (intermittent, 1917-1939). Correspondence to and from James family members, including eight letters from his father, William James; letters to and from colleagues, friends, museums, galleries, clients, and posthumous exhibition correspondence. Correspondents include Abbott Handerson Thayer, Rockwell Kent, and Eric Gugler.

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## Scope and Contents

There are also biographical notes on Abbott Handerson Thayer; a notebook containing James' description of his gesso techniques; Frederika James' notes on her husband's paintings and her account of a family trip to France; reminiscences of James by Barry Faulkner and Thornton Wilder; exhibition files containing correspondence, lists of works, address lists, guest books, clippings and catalogs (1937-1978); commission files; a card file with information on James' paintings, exhibitions and sales; sketches of landscapes and people including sketches of his father and John Singer Sargent.

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## Scope and Contents

Five sketchbooks (one too faint to film); an oil study of his father; three watercolors of Giverny, France; three pigment studies (unfilmed); 12 woodcuts by Julius J. Lankes; and a sketch of James by his brother, William James; expense journals; bank records; tax returns; insurance figures for paintings; a notebook of sales' records; price lists; invoices and receipts for materials; deeds; a will; certificates of name changes; photos of James, his studio and his work; photos and a photo album of William James and other family members; two albums of exhibition photos; photos of two sketches of James, one by John Singer Sargent, and the other by Barry Faulkner.

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## Arrangement

Reels 4195-4201: I. Biographical materials. II. Family correspondence. III. General correspondence. IV. Writings. V. Exhibition files. VI. Commission files. VII. Card file. VIII. Art works. IX. Financial materials. X. Legal materials. XI. Photographs. XII. Photograph albums. XIII. Printed materials. Chronologically arranged except for commission files which are arranged alphabetically by name of subject.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Gesso  
Sculptors -- United States -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Sketchbooks

Names:

Faulkner, Barry, 1881-1966  
Gugler, Eric, 1889-1974  
James, Frederika Paine  
James, Henry, 1843-1916  
James, William, 1842-1910  
James, William, 1882-1961  
Kent, Rockwell, 1882-1971  
Lankes, Julius J., 1884-1960  
Sargent, John Singer, 1856-1925  
Thayer, Abbott Handerson, 1849-1921  
Wilder, Thornton, 1897-1975

Occupations:

Painters -- New Hampshire  
Portrait painters