



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Henry Hudson and Theo  
Alice Ruggles Kitson papers

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/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Henry Hudson and Theo Alice Ruggles Kitson papers
<b>Date:</b>	[187-]-1979
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.kitshenr
<b>Creator:</b>	Kitson, Henry Hudson, 1863?-1947 Kitson, Theo Alice Ruggles, 1876-1932
<b>Extent:</b>	5.7 Linear feet ((partially microfilmed on 3 reels))
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The donor, Dorothy P. Cavanagh, was the sister of the Kitsons' daughter-in-law Helen (wife of John), and was writing a biography on the Kitsons up until her death in 1986. The microfilmed material was originally loaned by Cavanagh June 28, 1982 and September 12, 1986, and then donated upon her death by her nephew and executor, Paul Bennet. The unmicrofilmed material was donated by Cavanagh in 1973 and 1976.

### Related Materials

Additional Kitson letters also located at: New York Historical Society.

### Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 3929-3931 available at Archives of American Art office 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.

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## Biographical / Historical

Sculptors; Boston, Mass. Henry Hudson Kitson's actual name was Harry Kitson. Theo(dora) Alice Ruggles became his student in 1886 at the age of 15; in 1893 they were married and were notable monumental and portrait sculptors by the turn of the century. They had three children: Theo (also known as Babsy or Babbins), Dorothy and John. Three years after Theo's death, in 1935, Henry married Marie Hobron.

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## Scope and Contents

Biographical material, correspondence, writings, art works, legal and financial records, scrapbook, photographic and printing material, and printed matter.

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## Scope and Contents

Biographical materials include a copy of Henry Hudson Kitson's birth certificate; his confirmation certificate; a copy of the death certificate of his father, John Kitson; a photograph of the honorable mention certificate received by Theo Ruggles (Kitson) for "Young Orpheus" from the Societe des Artistes Francais, 1890; a letter of reference for her from sculptor George F. Bissell, 1901; her will; calling cards from those who attended her funeral, 1932; biographical data on Henry Kitson; genealogical data on the Kitson family; an incomplete list of works by the Kitsons compiled by Dorothy Patricia Cavanagh; and a diary by Henry Kitson, 1902-1904, containing brief entries pertaining to his daily life and work.

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## Scope and Contents

Personal and professional correspondence includes letters from Theo to Henry from Paris, 1890, including an illustrated letter to "my own darling child" (? Henry Kitson) describing her award ceremonies at the Salon, an illustrated letter to her father, written from Rome, describing the city, a letter from Henry Kitson to Miss Tower, ca. 1899, about putting the Minutemen Memorial in Tower Park, Lexington, Mass., letters from him to his wife, 1903, and to "Babsy" (his daughter, Theo), undated, with sketches for constructing a fence and a stone wall, a letter from Alexander J. Schottes, 1905?, containing descriptions and sketches of the studios of Daniel Chester French, Charles Grafly, Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Louis Saint-Gaudens, copies of letters from Kitson to the secretary of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland requesting photos preparatory to making a bust of the Queen, letters from the War Dept. to the Kitsons about their work at Vicksburg, Miss., and letters to Theo from the Gorham Manufacturing Company. Posthumous correspondence includes letters to the Kitsons' son John, his wife Helen, and her sister, Dorothy P. Cavanagh, from sculptor Lee Lawrie, sculptor Milton Horn and his wife, Estelle.

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## Scope and Contents

Writings include a poem by Henry Kitson; a description of a "Visit to a Bronze Foundry" (Gruet, Fils, Paris), author unknown, undated; reminiscences by sculptor Lee Lawrie; and a remembrance of Lawrie by Dorothy P. Cavanagh, 1963.

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## Scope and Contents

Art works include a childhood sketch by Theo Kitson of her home in Brookline, Massachusetts; sketches of animals; several sketches by her, possibly for monuments; unidentified sketches, chiefly of possible monument designs, probably by one of the Kitsons; a rendering by an architectural firm of a bas-relief designed by Henry Kitson, 1935; 2 caricatures of Kitson by Hiram Jay; an etching by Robert Kitson, 1891; various sketches of Japanese figures and costumes by Hiroshi Yoshida, 1910; and 2 pastels by T. (?) Walser of "Stonegate" (?), home of the Kitsons in Framingham Centre, Mass. Also included are 4 steel dies for bas-reliefs.

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## Scope and Contents

Legal records 1895-1940, include specifications for the Soldiers' Memorial, Vicksburg, Miss., numerous contracts for works by the Kitsons, copyright receipts and certificates, and deeds for sale of real estate. Financial records, 1882-1946, include invoices for casting for Henry Kitson, his bank statements, 1931-32, and his promissory notes.

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## Scope and Contents

A large scrapbook, 1888-1954, annotated by Dorothy P. Cavanagh, contains clippings, genealogical information on the Kitson family, photos of works by the Kitsons, personal photographs, correspondence, including letters from Henry Kitson to his future wife, 1892, and postcards to her and their children, a humorous resolution about the "Regiment of Macaroonies," written by Henry Kitson's friends in Paris, 1888, invitations, agreements for sculpture, copies of speeches given at the University of Minnesota for the Student Soldier Memorial Monument dedication.

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## Scope and Contents

Photographs are of the Kitsons, their family, homes, studios, Paris, ca. 1900, and their work, including photos of oxen hauling the granite boulder for the base of the "Volunteer" by Theo Kitson from Quincy, Mass. to Vicksburg, Miss., 1904, and scenes of the dedication of the monument. In addition, there are 7 photos of "Work in Progress" by Ellin and Kitson and Company for the Equitable Building, New York, 1887, a photo of the Astor Memorial, Trinity Church, New York, which the firm also worked on, and 6 undated photographs of works by Samuel Kitson. Also included are glass negatives of the Kitson's work.

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## Scope and Contents

Printed materials date from 1884-1979.

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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:

- Bronze founding
- Bronze sculpture, American
- Sculpture, American
- Sculpture, Modern -- 19th century -- United States
- Sculpture, Modern -- 20th century -- United States

Types of Materials:

- Scrapbooks

Names:

- Cavanagh, Dorothy, 1907-1986
- Kitson, Samuel James, 1848-1906

Occupations:

Sculptors -- Massachusetts

Functions:

Memorials