



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Barbara Latham Papers, circa 1900-1972, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

Processing of this collection received federal support from the Collections  
Care Initiative Fund, administered by the Smithsonian American  
Women's History Initiative and the National Collections Program

2021/05/11

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 .....	3
Container Listing .....	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1928-1970.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, 1902-1972.....	5
Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1934-1965.....	6
Series 4: Printed Material, 1925-1972.....	7
Series 5: Photographs, circa 1900-circa 1960s.....	8
Series 6: Artwork and Sketchbooks, 1907-1963.....	9

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Barbara Latham papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.lathbarb
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1900-1972
<b>Creator:</b>	Latham, Barbara, 1896-1989
<b>Extent:</b>	3.4 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of illustrator and painter Barbara Latham date from circa 1900 to 1972 and measure 3.4 linear feet. The collection documents Latham's career through biographical material, correspondence, writings and notes, printed material, photographs, and artwork. Artwork includes sketches and original Christmas cards, six sketchbooks, pencil and pen sketches, and prints. Works by others include four oil paintings by Henry Leigh-Ross and drawings by Howard Cook.

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Barbara Latham donated her papers to the Archives of American Art in 1972-1973.

### Related Materials

Barbara Latham's papers relating to her work as a children's book illustrator are located in the Kerlan Collection at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

### Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available for use on 35mm microfilm reels 2839-2841 and 3244 at 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 collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2021.

### Preferred Citation

Barbara Latham papers, circa 1900-1972. 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.

Correspondence with Harriet Latham Robinson is access restricted: written permission is required.

## 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

Barbara Latham (1896-1989) was an illustrator and painter active in Taos, New Mexico. She illustrated many children's books and designed Christmas cards from the 1920s to 1940s.

Barbara Latham was born in Walpole, Massachusetts to Allen and Caroline Walker Latham. Her parents were naturalists and she was influenced by the natural surroundings of the farmhouse in which she was raised. Latham received a scholarship to study art at eight years old at the Norwich Free Academy. She continued her education at Pratt Institute and the Art Students League during their regular and summer sessions.

Latham married fellow painter Howard Cook. They settled in Taos and Sante Fe, New Mexico. She painted the natural landscape of New Mexico and designed Christmas cards for the Norcross Company. She was well known for her work as a children's book illustrator and her paintings may be found in museums around the United States.

Barbara Latham died in Sante Fe, New Mexico in 1989.

---

## Scope and Contents

The papers of illustrator and painter Barbara Latham date from circa 1900 to 1972 and measure 3.4 linear feet. The collection documents Latham's career through biographical material, correspondence, writings and notes, printed material, photographs, and artwork. Artwork includes sketches and original Christmas cards, six sketchbooks, pencil and pen sketches, and prints. Works by others include four oil paintings by Henry Leigh-Ross and drawings by Howard Cook.

Biographical material is scattered and also includes sales records of Latham's prints. Correspondence is with family, friends, and colleagues. Correspondents include Howard Cook, Allen Latham, Amalia M. de Schulthess, and the Vancil Foster Christmas Cards company. Writings by Latham are short stories. Book files are for publications illustrated by Latham and may include drafts and proofs.

---

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 6 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1928-1970 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1902-1972 (Box 1, 5; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1934-1965 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1925-1972 (Boxes 1-2, 6; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 5: Photographs, circa 1900-circa 1960s (Box 2; 3 folders)
- Series 6: Artwork and Sketchbooks, 1907-1963 (Boxes 2-4, 6-7; 2.0 linear feet)

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Women artists  
Women painters

Types of Materials:

Sketchbooks

Names:

Cook, Howard Norton, 1901-1980  
Leith-Ross, Harry, b. 1886

Occupations:

Illustrators -- New Mexico  
Painters -- New Mexico

---

## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, 1928-1970

#### *0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)*

Scope and Contents: Series includes scattered biographical materials such as resumes, a membership card, genealogy of the Latham family, and annotated day books. Also found are sales records of prints by Barbara Latham.

Box 1, Folder 1	Awards, 1936-1966
Box 1, Folder 2	Biographical Sketches and Resumes, circa 1940s-1970
Box 1, Folder 3	Calendars and Day Books, 1942-1957
Box 1, Folder 4	Genealogy, circa 1940
Box 1, Folder 5	Exhibition and Jury Acceptance Notices, 1932-1946
Box 1, Folder 6	Membership Card, circa 1940
Box 1, Folder 7	Sales, of Prints, 1928-1956

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 2: Correspondence, 1902-1972

### 0.5 Linear feet (Box 1, 5)

**Scope and Contents:** Series includes Barbara Latham's professional correspondence relating to the exhibition of her works of art and commissions for prints and illustrations. Personal correspondence is with family and friends. Correspondents include Claude K. Anderson, Clotilde F. Crawford, Howard Cook, Frank Dobie, Allen Latham, Jean Lee Latham, Henry Leach, Harry Leith-Ross, Amalia M. De Schulthess, Mason Sutherland, Vancil Foster Christmas Cards, and the Weyhe Gallery. Early letters were written by Barbara Latham to her family as a young child, and some include illustrations and doodles. Correspondence with Harriet Latham Robinson discusses family matters.

Box 1, Folder 8	General, circa 1920-circa 1960
Box 1, Folder 9	General, 1902-1909
Box 1, Folder 10	General, 1920-1929
Box 1, Folder 11	General, 1931-1939
Box 1, Folder 12	General, 1940-1949
Box 1, Folder 13	General, 1950-1959
Box 1, Folder 14-15	General, 1960-1969
Box 5, Folder 1	General, 1960-1969 Notes: This folder is access restricted; written permission is required. Contact Reference Services for more information.
Box 1, Folder 16	General, 1970-1972

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1934-1965

### 0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Writings by Barbara Latham include three short stories and a travel journal that was likely written by Latham in Europe. Also found are book files for publications illustrated by Latham. Files may include original drawings, proofs of drawings and text, drafts, and scattered correspondence. Titles include *I Like Caterpillars* (1952), *Maggie--A Mischievous Magpie* (1949), *Pedro, Nina, and Perrito* (1939), *The Frightened Hero* (1965), *Why the Salt is Sea* (1942), and others.

Box 1, Folder 17      Travel Journal, 1934

Box 1, Folder 18-19      "Bees and Battleships" by Barbara Latham, circa 1949

Box 1, Folder 20      "We Keep House in Mexico" by Barbara Latham, circa 1950

Box 1, Folder 21      Untitled Short Story by Barbara Latham, circa 1950

Box 1, Folder 22-26      Book Files, 1939-1965

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Series 4: Printed Material, 1925-1972

*0.5 Linear feet (Box 1-2, 6)*

Scope and Contents: Printed materials include published books featuring illustrations by Latham, clippings, and exhibition announcements and catalogs concerning Latham and the exhibition of her works and those of her friends. Also found are reproductions of her works in various book order forms, magazines, and publications.

Box 1, Folder 27	Book, Pedro, Nina, and Perrito, by Lily Duplaix, 1939
Box 1, Folder 28	Book, Hurdy-Gurdy Holiday, by Leah Gale, 1942
Box 1, Folder 29	Book, Flying Horseshoe Ranch, by Stella Sanders, 1955
Box 1, Folder 30	Book, The Frightened Hero, by Jean Lee Latham, 1965
Box 1, Folder 31-32	Clippings, 1925-1972
Box 1, Folder 33-35	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1925-1967
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1925-1967
Box 2, Folder 3-4	Reproductions of Works of Art, 1925-1960s
Box 6, Folder 1	Reproductions of Works of Art, 1925-1960s

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 5: Photographs, circa 1900-circa 1960s

### *3 Folders (Box 2)*

Scope and Contents: Portraits depict Barbara Latham as a child, an adolescent, and an adult, and include a portrait by Mildred Tolbert, circa 1960. Snapshots of Latham show her riding a horse, at school with friends, and with family throughout her life. Also found are photographs of works of art by Latham and scattered photographs of other people, many of whom are unidentified.

Box 2, Folder 5	Photos of Barbara Latham, Portraits, circa 1900-circa 1960
Box 2, Folder 6	Photos of Barbara Latham and Others, Snapshots, circa 1910-circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 7	Photos of Works of Art, 1940s-1960s

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 6: Artwork and Sketchbooks, 1907-1963

*2 Linear feet (Box 2-4, 6-7)*

Scope and Contents: Found are six sketchbooks with pencil sketches which are undated. The bulk of this series consists of original Christmas cards designed by Barbara Latham for Barlat, Norcross, and Vaneil Foster companies. Works are primarily etchings, but also include hand painted cards, original drawings, lithographs, and monoprints.

Sketches for a mural in Taos, New Mexico are in watercolor. The bulk of Latham's sketches are in pen and ink or pencil, including two self-portraits.

Also found are Christmas cards, eleven portraits of Latham by Howard Cook executed in charcoal, ink, and pencil, wood engravings and aquatints, and three self-portraits of Cook. Four small oil paintings are by Henry Leith-Ross, given to Latham as a gift.

Box 2, Folder 8-9	Sketchbooks, Likely France, circa 1920
Box 2, Folder 10	Sketchbook, Children, circa 1920
Box 2, Folder 11-12	Sketchbooks, Animals, circa 1930
Box 2, Folder 13	Sketchbook, Likely New Mexico, circa 1940
Box 2, Folder 14	Christmas Cards, Barlat Designs, 1937
Box 2, Folder 15-20	Christmas Cards, Norcross Designs, 1921-1928
Box 3, Folder 1	Christmas Cards, Vaneil Foster Designs, circa 1920s-1930s
Box 3, Folder 2-5	Christmas Cards, General, circa 1920s-1940s
Box 6, Folder 3	Christmas Cards, General, circa 1920s-1940s
Box 3, Folder 6	Christmas Cards, by Howard Cook, 1963
Box 3, Folder 7	Paper Doll Dresses, circa 1910
Box 3, Folder 8	Prints, Woodcuts, Lithographs, and Etchings, circa 1930
Box 3, Folder 9	Sketches, Childhood Drawings, 1907-1912
Box 3, Folder 10-12	Sketches, General, circa 1920-circa 1960
Box 4, Folder 1-3	Sketches, General, circa 1920-circa 1960
Oversize 7	Sketches, General, Oversized, circa 1930-circa 1960
Box 4, Folder 2	Sketches, Taos Mural, Oversized, circa 1930
Box 6, Folder 4	Sketches, by Howard Cook, Oversized, circa 1930-1960s

Box 4, Folder 4-5      Small Oil Paintings, by Henry Leigh-Ross, circa 1920

Box 6, Folder 5      Textile Prints, Oversized, circa 1930

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*