



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Winslow Homer letters to M. Knoedler and Company, 1900-1904, in the Archives of American Art

Judy Ng

Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection
was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Winslow Homer letters to M. Knoedler and Company
Date:	1900-1904
Identifier:	AAA.mknoeco
Creator:	Homer, Winslow, 1836-1910
Extent:	0.2 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English.
Summary:	This small collection of twenty-two letters written by painter and illustrator Winslow Homer to his art dealer, M. Knoedler and Company, date from 1900 to 1904. These letters to the New York gallerist concern the logistics of selling his paintings and also reference agents, collectors, and art institutions where his work was being exhibited.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Winslow Homer letters to M. Knoedler and Company were purchased at auction and donated by Martha J. Fleischman in memory of her father, Lawrence A. Fleischman, in 2010.

Related Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds the Winslow Homer collection; a microfilm copy on reels 2932-2933 of the Winslow Homer and Homer family papers from the Bowdoin College; and a video recording, *Winslow Homer in Maine*.

Available Formats

This collection was digitized in its entirety in 2014 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Processing Information

Biographical information in this finding aid was written by Erin Kinhart; all materials were processed and otherwise described by Judy Ng in 2014 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Preferred Citation

Winslow Homer letters to M. Knoedler and Company, 1900-1904. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical / Historical

Winslow Homer was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1836. He was raised in Cambridge, where he developed a love of art and the outdoors. At the age of 19 he began his career as an illustrator, apprenticing at the J.H. Bufford lithographic firm in Boston. He then decided to become a freelance illustrator. In 1859 Homer moved to New York to work for *Harper's Weekly*, serving as artist-correspondent for the magazine during the Civil War. After taking some art classes at the National Academy of Design, he decided to focus on oil painting. He quickly gained international recognition as a painter, and in 1866 made his first trip to Europe. In 1873 he decided to work in watercolor and found great success in his experimentation with light and color in this medium. In the mid-1880s Homer moved permanently to Prout's Neck, Maine, an isolated area where he built a studio and focused his paintings on man's struggle with nature. Also during the 1880s he worked on a series of etchings based on his paintings. Homer continued to paint for the next twenty years, vacationing summers in places such as the Adirondacks and the Bahamas to capture varied landscapes, until his death in 1910.

M. Knoedler and Co. was a New York art dealership and gallery that managed the sales and logistics involved in shipping or lending artworks to various collectors, museums, organizations, and institutions.

Scope and Contents

This small collection of twenty-two letters written by painter and illustrator Winslow Homer to his art dealer, M. Knoedler and Company, date from 1900 to 1904. These letters to the New York gallerist concern the logistics of selling his paintings and also reference agents, collectors, and art institutions where his work was being exhibited.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 1 series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1900-1904 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
-

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Economic aspects

Names:

M. Knoedler & Co.

Occupations:

Art dealers -- Illinois -- Chicago
Illustrators -- Maine
Painters -- Maine -- Prout's Neck

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1900-1904

9 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: These letters by Winslow Homer concern the construction of frames, pricing of artworks, potential sales, and shipping and receipt of his paintings. They also refer to Homer's Chicago agent, private collectors, and several institutions where his work was being exhibited, including the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, and the Union League Club and the Century Association in New York. There is a telegram from M. O'Brien and Son, Chicago, Ill. to Homer regarding a lost sale and 3 letters that include a sketch illustration of the painting Homer references within the letter.

Arrangement: Correspondence is arranged in chronological order.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 1 [Letter to M. Knoedler, 1900 March](#)
Notes: Regarding the pricing and and shipping of two watercolors, "Boat Landing, Bermuda" and "North Road, Bermuda."

Box 1, Folder 2 [Letter to M. Knoedler, 1900 May](#)
Notes: Clarification of J.A. Spoor as the purchaser of "Lost on the Grand Banks."

Box 1, Folder 3 [Letter to M. Knoedler, 1900 June](#)
Notes: Returning a letter to M. Knoedler and Company.

Box 1, Folder 4 [Letter to M. Knoedler, 1900 July](#)
Notes: Constructing a frame in the same style as the one for "Hound and Hunter."

Box 1, Folder 5 [Letters to M. Knoedler, 1900 September](#)
Notes:

- Following up on a frame order.
- Shipping two works to the Carnegie Institute for an exhibition.
- Sending new work to M. Knoedler for framing.
- Offering to display "Gulf Stream" at M. Knoedler's after the Carnegie exhibition.

Box 1, Folder 6 [Letters to M. Knoedler, 1900 October](#)
Notes:

- Regarding delivery of two watercolors to the Century Association for their monthly meeting.
- Pricing "Gulf Stream."
- Commissioning two frames for new works.

Box 1, Folder 7 [Telegram from M. O'Brien and Son and letters to M. Knoedler, 1900 November](#)
Notes:

- Telegram from M. O'Brien and Son on the falling through of a sale.

- Regarding shipping a new canvas and checking another canvas for damages.
- Following up on a painting sale, frame orders, and the completion of two new "wonderful paintings."

Box 1, Folder 8

[Letters to M. Knoedler, 1900 December](#)

Notes:

- Regarding shipping "Fog" with a pricing rationale.
- Sending new paintings to be framed (including "Breaking the Bar, Cannon Rock"), checking on Century Association watercolors, and an update on new works.
- Final pricing for "Fog" and "Breaking the Bar," finding the market value of his works, and offering M. Knoedler publication rights to "Fog."
- Acknowledgement and decline of offer to ship work to France.
- Sending work to the Union League, update on works and "Gulf Stream."
- Framing and shipping instructions for work sent to the Union League.

Box 1, Folder 9

[Letter to M. Knoedler, 1904 August](#)

Notes:

Regarding a circular on "Early Morning."

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