



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Ross and Dorothy
Lake Gregory Moffett Papers, circa
1870-1992, in the Archives of American Art

Jill Lundin

1994

Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Ross and Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett papers
Identifier:	AAA.moffross
Date:	circa 1870-1992
Extent:	7.7 Linear feet
Creator:	Moffett, Ross
Language:	English
Summary:	This collection measures 7.7 linear feet, dates from circa 1870 to 1992, and documents the life and career of painter Ross Moffett and, to a lesser extent, the life and career of his wife, painter, lithographer, etcher, and illustrator, Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett. The collection includes correspondence, photographs, artwork including sketchbooks, and printed material including published writings, newspaper clippings, press releases, and exhibition catalogs.

Administrative Information

Provenance

Ross Moffett initially lent the Archives of American Art material for microfilming in 1962. The remainder of the collection was donated in 1974 by his widow, Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett (died 1975), via Ross Moffett's biographer, Josephine Del Deo, who turned the papers over in installments. Archaeological material and artifacts received with the papers were donated to the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts.

Separated Material

The Archives of American Art also holds material lent for microfilming (reel D80) including 150 letters relating to art organizations, museums, and government art projects, news clippings, records of the Provincetown Art Association, and the Emergency Committee for the Protection of Province Lands, and miscellaneous publications. Lent materials were returned to Ross Moffett and are now housed at Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York. This material is not described in the collection container inventory.

Related Material

Related resources in the Archives of American Art include a sound recording of a transcribed interview with Ross Moffett by Dorothy Seckler, August 27, 1962; and a sound recording of an untranscribed interview with Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett by Robert F. Brown, September 22, 1972.

Alternative Forms Available

Portions of the collection and material lent for microfilming are available on 35 mm microfilm reels D80, 4924-4929, and 5044 at the 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 by Jill Lundin in 1994 and J. Tallone in 1996. Funding for the processing and microfilming of material on reels 4924-4929 was provided by a grant from the Ellis L. Phillips Foundation, Boston, Massachusetts.

Preferred Citation

Ross and Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett papers, circa 1870-1992. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research. Patrons must use microfilm copy.

Ownership and Literary Rights

A portion of the Ross and Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

Biographical Note

Ross Moffett (1888-1971) was an important figure in the development of modernism in American Art after World War I. His paintings primarily depict the life and landscapes of the Provincetown, Massachusetts area. Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett is perhaps best known as a printmaker and illustrator of children's books and magazines.

Born in Iowa in 1888, Moffett trained at the Art Institute in Chicago and studied with Charles Hawthorne during the summer of 1913, in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Moffett then studied at the Art Students League and returned to Provincetown in 1915, to establish himself as an artist. He was one of the founders of the Provincetown Art Association and a leading figure in the art colony for many years. In 1920, Moffett married artist Dorothy Lake Gregory in Brooklyn, New York. Dorothy studied at the Pratt Institute and with Robert Henri and George Bellows in New York, and then went to Provincetown to study with Hawthorne as well.

During the 1920's and 1930's, Ross Moffett's success increased steadily and he had his first one-man show at the Frank Rehn Gallery in New York and also at The Art Institute of Chicago in 1928. He served on several exhibition juries around the country during this time. Between 1936 and 1938, Moffett painted four murals in two Massachusetts post offices for the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA). Moffett received full membership to the National Academy of Design in 1942.

While Moffett's painting slowed somewhat during World War II he continued his involvement in the arts by maintaining the Provincetown Art Association. He taught briefly at the University of Miami in Ohio from 1932 to 1933, and returned to Provincetown to pursue painting full-time. In the 1950's, Moffett became

interested in archaeology and even delivered a few lectures on the subject. During this time he continued to paint and his art reflected his preoccupation with the science of archaeology. In 1954, Moffett was one of two artists selected by the National Academy of Design to paint murals depicting President Dwight D. Eisenhower's life for the Eisenhower Memorial Museum in Abilene, Kansas. Moffett was chosen to portray Eisenhower's civilian life.

In 1960, Moffett became active in the movement to establish the 1400 acres known as the Province Lands as part of the Cape Cod National Seashore Park. After the park was established Moffett wrote and published a history of the first thirty-three years of the Provincetown Art Association in a book titled *Art in Narrow Streets*, 1964. He continued to serve as a juror for the Provincetown Art Association and was artist-in-residence for the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center in 1970.

Dorothy Moffett also pursued a successful career in art, and publishers such as Rand McNally used her illustrations for youth magazines and childrens books, such as the classic *Green Fairy Book*. Her work was exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum, the National Academy, and the Brooklyn Museum, and her *Alice in Wonderland* series of lithographs was purchased for the permanent collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Though best known as a printmaker, Moffett also worked in oil.

Ross Moffett died of cancer on March 13, 1971.

Scope and Content Note

The Ross and Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett papers measure 7.7 linear feet and date from circa 1870 to 1992. Because Dorothy Moffett's papers were received separately they are filed together in Series 13. Series 1-12 deal primarily with the life and career of Ross Moffett. The collection documents Ross Moffett's participation in the Provincetown community as an artist and resident through correspondence, photographs, sketchbooks and printed material, including published writings, news clippings, press releases, and exhibition catalogs. The papers of Dorothy Moffett include family letters, photographs, a journal and original artwork providing scattered documentation of her life and career as an a printmaker and illustrator.

General correspondence primarily focuses on news and financial affairs of the Moffett family farm in Iowa. Also included are letters from Provincetown artist, Edwin Dickinson, and a small amount of correspondence with other artists, collectors and dealers.

Files documenting specific projects that Ross Moffett was involved with are arranged separately and include correspondence, printed material and photographs. Project files have been established for the following projects: the publication of *Art in Narrow Streets*, the Eisenhower mural, the Cape Cod National Seashore Park and the renovation of the Center Methodist Church.

The series of printed material, 1918-1992, relates to Ross Moffett's career as an artist and his general interest in art. Photographs primarily focus on scenes of Provincetown and include photographs of works of art by Provincetown artists. Also included are photographs of artwork by Moffett arranged chronologically, Moffett's studio in Provincetown, and installations at the Provincetown Art Association Galleries.

Artwork found in Series 10 and 11 includes drawings by Ross Moffett and 85 annotated sketchbooks, including four by Dorothy Moffett.

The collection also houses research notes and files written by Josephine Couch Del Deo in preparation of a biography of Ross Moffett. These annotations provide useful additional information about Moffett's life.

Papers of Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett include Gregory family letters, Dorothy's correspondence with her father, and letters from other family and friends. Also found are drawings, lithographs and etchings by Dorothy and photographs of her family and friends.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into thirteen series:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1888-1965 (box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1915-1972 (box 1; 0.6 linear ft)
- Series 3: Financial Material, 1933-1971 (box 1; 2 folders)
- Series 4: Notebook/Notes, undated (box 1; 2 folders)
- Series 5: Projects, 1880-1969, undated (boxes 1-2; 1.2 linear ft.)
- Series 6: Subject File, 1960-1968 (box 2; 1 folder)
- Series 7: Printed Material, 1916-1992, undated (boxes 2-4, 7; 1.5 linear ft.)
- Series 8: Photographs, circa 1900-1975, undated (box 4; 15 folders)
- Series 9: Slides of Art Association, Iowa Farmland and the Chrysler Museum, circa 1960, undated (box 4; 1 folder)
- Series 10: Drawings, circa 1929-1934 (box 5; 1 folder)
- Series 11: Sketchbooks, 1913-1969 (boxes 5-8; 2.5 linear ft.)
- Series 12: Annotations/Item Descriptions by Josephine Couch Del Deo, undated (box 6; 2 folders)
- Series 13: Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett Papers, circa 1870-1975 (boxes 9-11; 0.7 linear ft.)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art students -- New York N.Y. -- Photographs
Art, American
Art, Modern -- 20th century -- Massachusetts -- Provincetown
Federal aid to the arts
Illustrators
Landscape painters -- Massachusetts -- Provincetown
Muralists -- Massachusetts -- Provincetown
Painters -- Massachusetts -- Provincetown
Women artists -- Massachusetts -- Provincetown
Works of art

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Sketchbooks
Sketches
Slides (photographs)

Names:

Art Students League (New York, N.Y.)
Burchfield, Charles Ephraim, 1893-1967

Del Deo, Josephine Couch
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969 -- Portraits
Federal Art Project (U.S.)
Moffett, Dorothy Lake Gregory, 1893-1975
Moffett, Ross (Art in narrow streets)
Provincetown Art Association
Rehn, Frank Knox Morton, 1848-1914

Geographic Names:

Cape Cod National Seashore (Mass.)
Florida -- Pictorial works
Provincetown (Mass.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1888-1965

(box 1; 1 folder)

Biographical materials are on reel 4924.

Box 1, Folder 1 Biographical Material, circa 1888-1965

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1915-1972

(box 1; 0.6 linear ft.)

General correspondence primarily focuses on news and financial affairs of the family farm in Iowa. Letters are from Moffett's sister, Faye; Clarence Davis, his first cousin and Undersecretary of State in the Eisenhower administration; and his aunt, Fannie Gelvin. Also included are letters and postcards received from Edwin Dickinson, another Provincetown artist and a life-long friend of Moffett's, regarding daily life and Dickinson's travels through Greece. There is a small amount of correspondence with other artists, collectors and dealers, including Charles Burchfield, and Frank Rehn, as well as letters concerning the WPA.

Correspondence is on reel 4924.

Box 1, Folder 2-18 Correspondence, 1915-1972

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Series 3: Financial Material, 1933-1971

(box 1; 2 folders)

Financial materials are on reel 4925.

Box 1, Folder 19 Account Book, 1953-1971

Box 1, Folder 20 Financial Material, 1933-1969

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Series 4: Notebook/Notes, undated

(box 1; 2 folders)

Notebooks/notes are on reel 4925.

Box 1, Folder 21 Notebook, undated

Box 1, Folder 22 Notes, undated

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Series 5: Projects, 1880-1969, undated

(boxes 1-2; 1.2 linear ft.)

This series contains records of several projects on which Ross Moffett worked. Files for *Art in Narrow Streets* include typescripts, printed material, and photographs. Much of the material is general in nature and does not include information about the conception of the book, but focuses more on publishing and promotion.

The project file regarding the Eisenhower mural completed by Moffett in 1956, includes correspondence and photographs used for research about Eisenhower. Also included are five notebooks with notes, expenses, and measurements for the murals by Moffett. Printed material, photographs and slides document the completion of the mural.

Information relating to the Cape Cod National Seashore includes correspondence, published editorials by Moffett and other local residents, petitions, printed material and legal material used by Moffett and others in his effort to establish the park. The material documents Moffett's commitment and love for the Provincetown area and his involvement in a community where he was greatly respected.

One file documents the building of the Chrysler Museum at the site of the Provincetown Center Methodist Church. Moffett and other Provincetown residents fought to have the Chrysler Museum relocated.

Projects are on reels 4925-4926.

Box 1, Folder 23	<i>Art in Narrow Streets</i> , Material, 1964-1965, undated
Box 1, Folder 24-25	<i>Art in Narrow Streets</i> , Typescripts, circa 1964
Box 1, Folder 26	<i>Art in Narrow Streets</i> , Printed Material, 1964
Box 1, Folder 27-28	<i>Art in Narrow Streets</i> , Photographs, circa 1880-1920
Box 2, Folder 1	Eisehower Mural, Correspondence, 1954-1957
Box 2, Folder 2	Eisehower Mural, Notebooks, undated
Box 2, Folder 3-4	Eisehower Mural, Printed Material, 1956-1969, undated
Box 2, Folder 5	Eisehower Mural, Miscellany, 1936, 1956, undated
Box 2, Folder 6-7	Eisehower Mural, Photographs, undated
Box 2, Folder 8-13	Eisehower Mural, Slides, undated
Box 2, Folder 14-18	Cape Cod National Seashore, Correspondence, 1959-1969
Box 2, Folder 19	Cape Cod National Seashore, Miscellany, 1959-1962, undated

Box 2, Folder 20-24 Cape Cod National Seashore, Newspaper Clippings, 1959-1966

Box 2, Folder 25 Center Methodist Church/Chrysler Museum, 1958

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Series 6: Subject File, 1960-1968

(box 2; 1 folder)

This subject file contains documentation relating to the Universalist Church and contains general material, including miscellaneous correspondence and receipts that Moffett collected during his years as a member and as treasurer.

The subject file is on reel 4926.

Box 2, Folder 26

Universalist Church, 1960-1968

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Series 7: Printed Material, 1916-1992, undated

(boxes 2-4, 7; 1.5 linear ft.)

Included in this series are announcements for competitions, newsletters from the various art organizations to which Moffett belonged, press releases, news clippings regarding Moffett's works of art, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and magazines with references to Moffett.

Printed materials are on reel 4926.

Box 2, Folder 27	Announcements for Societies and Competitions, 1935-1963
Box 2, Folder 28	Press Releases, 1956, 1976-1977, undated
Box 2, Folder 29-31	News Clippings, 1916-1975, undated
Box 2, Folder 32	Exhibition Announcements, 1969-1992, undated
Box 2, Folder 33	Exhibition Catalogs, 1916-1917, undated
Box 3, Folder 1-14	Exhibition Catalogs, 1918-1965
Box 4, Folder 1-2	Exhibition Catalogs, 1968-1987
Box 4, Folder 3-5	<i>The Arts</i> , 1926-1930
Box 4, Folder 6	<i>Art Digest</i> , 1930, 1933
Box 4, Folder 7-9	Magazine Clippings, 1918-1975, undated
Box 4, Folder 10	Miscellaneous, 1930, 1934, 1956, 1964, 1986, undated
Box 7, Folder 1	Calendar with Print of Moffett Painting for January, 1943

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Series 8: Photographs, circa 1900-1975, undated

(box 4; 15 folders)

Photographs primarily focus on scenes of Provincetown and include photographs of artwork by Provincetown artists. Also included are photographs of artwork by Moffett arranged chronologically, Moffett's studio in Provincetown, and installations at the Provincetown Art Association Galleries.

Photographs are on reel 4926.

Box 4, Folder 11	Photograph Album of Provincetown, circa 1913-1930
Box 4, Folder 12	Ross Moffett, Family and Friends, 1908-1967, undated
Box 4, Folder 13-14	Provincetown, 1958, undated
Box 4, Folder 15	Old Provincetown, circa 1900
Box 4, Folder 16-18	Artwork by Moffett, 1916-1968
Box 4, Folder 19	Art by Provincetown Artists, circa 1940
Box 4, Folder 20	Boats and the Waterfront, circa 1958, undated
Box 4, Folder 21	Moffett's Studio, 1956, 1964, undated
Box 4, Folder 22-23	Installations, circa 1917, 1925, 1960, 1975
Box 4, Folder 24	Iowa Farmland near Clearfield, IA, 1954-1956
Box 4, Folder 25	Miscellaneous, circa 1950, 1964

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Series 9: Slides of Art Association, Iowa Farmland and the Chrysler Museum,
circa 1960, undated

(box 4; 1 folder)

Box 4, Folder 26

Slides, circa 1960, undated

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Series 10: Drawings, circa 1929-1934

(box 5; 1 folder)

Drawings consist of thirty-two loose pencil-on-paper sketches.

Drawings are on reel 4927.

Box 5, Folder 1

Drawings, circa 1929-1934

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Series 11: Sketchbooks, 1913-1969

(boxes 5-8; 2.5 linear ft.)

This series contains eighty-five annotated sketchbooks (43 x 35.1 cm. or smaller), including four by Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett. The sketchbooks primarily contain pencil-on-paper sketches of nautical scenes and landscapes of Provincetown and Florida, figure studies, and studies for paintings and murals.

Sketchbooks are on reels 4927-4929.

Box 5, Folder 2-35	Sketchbooks 1-44, 1913-1942
Box 6, Folder 1-26	Sketchbooks, 45-54, 56-58, 63-64, 66-67, 69-70, 74-75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84-85, 1940-1969
Box 7, Folder 2	Sketchbooks, 55, 59-62, 1946-1953
Box 8, Folder 1	Sketchbooks, 65, 68, 71-73, 76, 78, 83, 1954-1969

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Series 12: Annotations/Item Descriptions by Josephine Couch Del Deo, undated

(box 6; 2 folders)

Material found here includes a type-written description of many of the documents within the collection and copies of documents from Del Deo's research in other papers and repositories. The files are useful in providing additional information about Moffett's life. Researchers should note that many of the pencil annotations within the collection, such as those found on envelopes, should be attributed to Del Deo.

Annotations/item descriptions by Josephine Couch Del Deo are on reel 4929.

Box 6, Folder 27-28 Annotations/Item Descriptions by Josephine Couch Del Deo, undated

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Series 13: Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett Papers, circa 1870-1975, undated

(boxes 9-11; 0.7 linear ft.)

This series contains family letters and Dorothy Moffett's correspondence including letters written by her grandfather, John Milton Gregory (first president of the University of Illinois) to her father, Grant Gregory. There is correspondence with her father which was written from Woodstock, New York (where Dorothy was studying art), New Hope, Pennsylvania, and Provincetown, Massachusetts. The letters discuss her finances, classes, instructors, fellow students, materials, and critiques. Also found are miscellaneous letters from fellow students, letters relating to business affairs, and letters of condolence prior to and upon the death of Ross Moffett.

Also found is original artwork including pencil drawings, lithographs, and etchings, as well as photographs of Dorothy and her family and friends, including one of Robert Henri's Art Students League Class for 1914-1915.

The series contains a file on Moffett's aunt, Julia Gregory, containing correspondence and a will; an illustrated journal on a European trip; material relating to Moffett family history, and information regarding sales and other financial records from 1945-1954.

The Dorothy Lake Gregory Moffett papers are on reel 5044.

Box 9, Folder 1	Josephine Couch Del Deo Typed Notes, undated
Box 9, Folder 2	Gregory Family Letters, circa 1870-1917, 1957
Box 9, Folder 3-8	Letters to Father, Grant Gregory, 1912-1914, 1921-1929
Box 9, Folder 9-17	Correspondence, 1915-1919, 1925, 1930-1939
Box 10, Folder 1	Family and Business Correspondence, circa 1943-1968
Box 10, Folder 2	Letters of Condolence, circa 1970-1971
Box 10, Folder 3	Incoming Letters, circa 1972-1974
Box 10, Folder 4	Julie Gregory (aunt) Material, 1939, circa 1946-1947, circa 1962-1964
Box 10, Folder 5	Journal, "My European Trip," 1910
Box 10, Folder 6	Family History/Genealogy, undated
Box 10, Folder 7	Account Book, Gregory Building, Inc., circa 1945-1954
Box 10, Folder 8	Miscellaneous Items, 1941, 1953, 1969
Box 10, Folder 9	News Clippings, 1975

Box 10, Folder 10	Photographs, circa 1913-1930, 1950
Box 10, Folder 11	Artwork, Pencil Drawings, circa 1926-1930
Box 10, Folder 12	Artwork, Etchings, circa 1926-1934
Box 10, Folder 13	Artwork, Printed Material, 1907-1908, undated
Box 10, Folder 14	Artwork, Photographs of, undated
Box 10, Folder 15	Artwork, Early 8 x 10 Oil Study, undated
Box 11, Folder 1	Artwork, Lithographs, circa 1925-1935
Box 11, Folder 2	Photograph of Robert Henri's Class, Art Student's League, 1914-1915

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