



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Hermann Dudley Murphy Papers, circa 1878-1982, in the Archives of American Art

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

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Hermann Dudley Murphy papers
Date:	circa 1878-1982
Identifier:	AAA.murpher
Creator:	Murphy, Hermann Dudley, 1867-1945
Extent:	2.8 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English
Summary:	The papers of painter and frame maker Hermann Dudley Murphy measure 2.8 linear feet and date from circa 1878-1982. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, writings, personal business records, printed materials, a scrapbook, photographs, and original artworks, including sketchbooks.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 1985 by Alexander B. and Dudley D. B. Samoiloff, grandsons of Hermann Dudley Murphy.

Location of Originals

Several letters from Caroline Bowles Murphy to Hermann Dudley Murphy are photocopies. The original materials stayed with the donor, Alexander Samoiloff.

Available Formats

The collection is available on 35 mm microfilm reels 4038-4039 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 Hermann Dudley Murphy papers were arranged upon receipt and microfilmed onto reels 4038-4039. In 2013, the papers were minimally processed and described by Jayna Josefson with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Preferred Citation

Hermann Dudley Murphy papers, circa 1878-1982. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical / Historical

Hermann Dudley Murphy (1867-1945) was a painter and frame maker active in Boston, Massachusetts.

Hermann Dudley Murphy was born in Massachusetts in 1867. He studied art under Edmund Tarbell at the Boston Museum School and later in Paris at the Académie Julian. His early career focused on portraiture and landscape painting. While in Paris, Murphy learned to make frames for artworks. After exhibiting at the 1913 Armory Show, Murphy rejected Modernism and painted still-life. He was known for his Tonalist style and his floral still-life paintings which included objects d'art such as Chinese ceramics, bronze statues, and textiles. Additionally, Murphy taught art classes at the Harvard School of Architecture and the Worcester Art Museum School.

Murphy married Caroline Bowles Murphy with whom he had two children, Carlene and Dudley Murphy. After Caroline died, he married artist Nellie Littlehale. With Nellie, he shared an interest in deck-seat canoeing. Murphy died in 1945.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter and frame maker Hermann Dudley Murphy measure 2.8 linear feet and date from circa 1878-1982. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, writings, personal business records, printed materials, a scrapbook, photographs, and original artworks, including sketchbooks.

The bulk of the papers focus on the later part of Herman Dudley Murphy's career. Specifically, correspondence focuses on the sale of still-life paintings and sketches and sketchbooks are mostly from Murphy's travels through Europe and Mexico from the 1920s to the 1930s. Correspondents include Mary Ogden Abbott, Edwin S. Barrie, Maurice Prendergast, Chauncey Ryder, Theodore Sizer, Edmund Tarbell, Alexander Trowbridge, and Vose Gallery among others. Personal business records comment on the sale of works of art from 1897 until 1944. Printed materials include clippings and exhibition catalogs spanning Murphy's career. One scrapbook contains photos and printed materials. Photographs and snapshots are of Hermann Dudley Murphey and family, family travels, and works of art and frames. Artwork consists of loose sketches, prints, and sketchbooks.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged as 8 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1887-circa 1940 (Box 1; 7 folders)
- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1890-1962 (Box 1; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, circa 1900-1942 (Box 1; 7 folders)
- Series 4: Personal Business and Financial Records, 1897-1944 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1889-1982 (Box 1-2; 0.9 linear feet)
- Series 6: Scrapbook, circa 1910 (Box 2; 1 folder)
- Series 7: Photographs, circa 1878-circa 1950 (Box 2; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 8: Artwork, 1892-circa 1940 (Box 2-4; 0.8 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Picture frames and framing -- Massachusetts

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Prints
Scrapbooks
Sketchbooks
Sketches

Names:

Abbott, Mary Ogden, 1894-1981
Barrie, Erwin S., 1886-1983
Prendergast, Maurice Brazil, 1858-1924
Ryder, Chauncey F., 1868-1949
Sizer, Theodore, 1892-1967
Tarbell, Edmund Charles, 1862-1938
Trowbridge, Alexander Buell, 1868-1950
Vose Galleries of Boston

Occupations:

Painters

Places:

Mexico -- description and travel

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1887-circa 1940

7 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Found are scattered biographical materials including an address book; appointment and discharge letters for the building of a canal in Nicaragua; meeting minutes for the art commission of Massachusetts; and a *Who's Who* questionnaire. Also found are materials relating to others including funeral memorial designs by Hermann Dudley Murphy for family; Nellie Murphy's passport application; and certificates and a medal for Ettore Caser.

Box 1, Folder 1	Address Book, circa 1930
Box 1, Folder 2	Nicaragua Canal Construction Material, 1887-1888
Box 1, Folder 3	Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Art Commission Material, 1941
Box 1, Folder 4	Who's Who Questionnaire, circa 1940
Box 1, Folder 5	Funeral and Memorial Material for Others, circa 1923-1943
Box 1, Folder 6	Nellie Murphy Material, 1936
Box 1, Folder 7	Ettore Caser Material, 1916-1918

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Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1890-1962

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Found is personal and professional correspondence. Early correspondence is scattered and includes letters to and from Hermann Dudley Murphy's family. Mostly, correspondence from the 1930s and 1940s is professional in nature and discusses Murphy's consignments and sales. Correspondents include: Mary Ogden Abbott, Art Institute of Chicago, Edwin S. Barrie, Ettore Caser, Cleveland Museum of Art, Gennaro Favai, Findlay Galleries, Richmond Fletcher, Grand Central Galleries, James Newman, Maurice Prendergast, Chauncey Ryder, Theodore Sizer, Edmund Tarbell, Alexander Trowbridge, and Vose Gallery.

Box 1, Folder 8	Hermann Dudley Murphy to His Children, circa 1920
Box 1, Folder 9	Caroline Murphy to Hermann Dudley Murphy (photocopies), circa 1900
Box 1, Folder 10	1890s, 1892-1899
Box 1, Folder 11	1900s, 1904-1909
Box 1, Folder 12	1910s, 1912-1919
Box 1, Folder 13-14	1920s, 1920-1929
Box 1, Folder 15-19	1930s, 1930-1939
Box 1, Folder 20-24	1940s, 1940-1945
Box 1, Folder 25	circa 1890-circa 1945, 1890s-1940s
Box 1, Folder 26	Carlene Samoiloff, 1945-1962

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Series 3: Writings and Notes, circa 1900-1942

7 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Found are writings by Hermann Dudley Murphy including a poem and lists, and writings by others.

Box 1, Folder 27	Poem for Caroline Bowles Murphy, by Herman Dudley Murphy, circa 1900
Box 1, Folder 28	Lists of Works of Art, 1942
Box 1, Folder 29	Lists, 1930-circa 1940
Box 1, Folder 30	"The Rabit [sic]," by Carlene Bowles Murphy Samoiloff, circa 1910
Box 1, Folder 31	"The Loss of Style," by Ettore Caser, circa 1910
Box 1, Folder 32-33	Unknown Writings, by Others, circa 1900-circa 1930

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Series 4: Personal Business and Financial Records, 1897-1944

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Found are consignment, loan, and sales records from Grand Central Galleries; acknowledgements of gifts from Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Harvard University; three sales ledgers, one of which includes annotated exhibition catalogs; and a file entitled "Bat File" which includes correspondence, and unsigned sketches of plans, possibly for an unidentified commission.

Box 1, Folder 34 Consignment, Loan, and Sales Receipts, 1939-1944

Box 1, Folder 35 Gift Acknowledgements, 1942

Box 1, Folder 36-38 Sales Ledgers, 1897-1943

Box 1, Folder 39 "Bat File", 1906
Notes: Includes unsigned plans, sketches, and correspondence.

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Series 5: Printed Material, 1889-1982

0.9 Linear feet (Box 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Found are clippings relating to Hermann Dudley Murphy's career as a frame maker and painter; exhibition catalogs for solo and group shows featuring Hermann Dudley Murphy; published works by Mrs. Schuyler van Rensselaer, Denman W. Ross, and Otto H. Kahn; various art publications; and exhibition catalogs, announcements, and reproductions of works of art for Gennaro Favai.

Box 1, Folder 40-48	Clippings, 1898-1982
Box 1, Folder 49-53	Exhibition Catalogs, 1906-1913
Box 2, Folder 1-9	Exhibition Catalogs, 1914-1982
Box 2, Folder 10-11	Published Books by Others, 1893-1916
Box 2, Folder 12	Various Art Publications, 1889-1936
Box 2, Folder 13	Gennaro Favai Material, circa 1920

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Series 6: Scrapbook, circa 1910

1 Folder (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Found is one scrapbook consisting of: photographs of Hermann Dudley Murphy and household pets; clippings; sketches; and reproductions of works of art.

Box 2, Folder 14 Scrapbook, circa 1910

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Series 7: Photographs, circa 1878-circa 1950

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Found are portraits and snapshots of Hermann Dudley Murphy, Caroline Bowles Murphy, Nellie Littlehale Murphy, Carlene and Dudley Murphy, friends, and colleagues; and snapshots from canoeing trips taken by the Murphy family. Also found are photos of works of art and frames by Hermann Dudley Murphy.

Box 2, Folder 15	Portraits of Hermann Dudley Murphy and Family, circa 1878-circa 1940 Notes: Includes photos of Caroline Bowles Murphy, Carlene Murphy, and Dudley Murphy.
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Box 2, Folder 16	Portraits of Friends and Colleagues, 1895-circa 1920 Notes: Includes photos of Ettore Caser, Robert Coit, Fred Holland Day, John Enister, and Charles Hopkins.
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Box 2, Folder 17	Canoe Trip Snapshots, circa 1891-1927
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Box 2, Folder 18-25	Works of Art, circa 1890-circa 1950
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Box 2, Folder 26	Frames, circa 1915
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Box 2, Folder 27	Negatives, circa 1940
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Series 8: Artwork, 1892-circa 1940

0.8 Linear feet (Box 2-4)

Scope and Contents: Found are loose pen and ink, pencil, and watercolor sketches; and sixteen sketchbooks including those from Murphy's travels through Europe and Mexico. One of the sketchbooks is annotated and describes steps to making frames.

Box 2, Folder 28-30	Loose Sketches and Prints, circa 1900-circa 1940
Box 3, Folder 1-9	Sketchbooks, 1892-circa 1940
Box 4, Folder 1-5	Sketchbooks, 1892-circa 1940

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