



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Katherine Prince Collection
Relating to James McNeill Whistler, circa 1834-
circa 1892, 1980, in the Archives of American Art

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical	2
Scope and Contents	2
Arrangement	2
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	
Series 1: Katherine Prince Collection Relating to James McNeill Whistler, circa 1834-circa 1892, 1980	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Katherine Prince collection relating to James McNeill Whistler
Date:	circa 1834-circa 1892 1980
Identifier:	AAA.prinkath
Creator:	Prince, Katherine, 1819-1906
Extent:	0.2 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Katherine Prince collection relating to James McNeill Whistler, dates from circa 1834-circa 1892, and 1980, and measures 0.2 linear feet. This small collection of letters, two diaries, mementos, and family history notes, provides scattered documentation of the long friendship between Katherine Prince, her sister Leslie, and Katherine's daughter, Susie Livermore Sutton, with their Lowell, Massachusetts neighbor, James McNeill Whistler.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2002 by Mary Ellen Prince Doolan, great-great granddaughter of Katherine Prince.

Related Materials

The Archives of American art also holds the James McNeill Whistler collection, 1863-1906, circa 1940.

Processing Information

The collection was processed by Stephanie Ashley in January 2020.

Preferred Citation

Katherine Prince collection relating to James McNeill Whistler, circa 1834-circa 1892, 1980. 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.

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Biographical / Historical

Katherine Prince, her sister Leslie, and her daughter Susie Livermore Sutton (1855-1938) were friends and neighbors to James McNeill Whistler in Lowell, Massachusetts, where Whistler was born in 1834. Whistler and his family moved to Connecticut in 1837, but during their time in Lowell, the Whistlers had become close friends of the Prince family and remained friends with the daughters of the Prince family over many decades. Frequent trips to England and periods of residency in London kept Katherine Prince in close touch with Deborah Whistler and her brother James. Susie Livermore Sutton was a lifelong associate of Whistler. These mementos of an extended family friendship show a familial side of Whistler, who enjoyed the company of his sister Deborah, and their friends in the Prince family.

Scope and Contents

The Katherine Prince collection relating to James McNeill Whistler, dates from circa 1834-circa 1892, and 1980, and measures 0.2 linear feet. This small collection of letters, two diaries, mementos, and family history notes, provides scattered documentation of the long friendship between Katherine Prince, her sister Leslie, and Katherine's daughter, Susie Livermore Sutton, with their Lowell, Massachusetts neighbor, James McNeill Whistler.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Diaries

Names:

Prince, Leslie
Sutton, Susie Livermore, 1855-1938
Whistler, James McNeill, 1834-1903

Occupations:

Expatriate painters -- United States
Painters -- Massachusetts

Container Listing

Series 1: Katherine Prince Collection Relating to James McNeill Whistler, circa 1834-circa 1892, 1980

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: The series includes a typescript of notes written by Robert Cypian Houpe on the Livermore family history, including an account of an occasion on which Houpe's grandmother, Susie Livermore Sutton, daughter of Katherine Prince, visited Whistler to dine with him even as bailiffs have attached Whistler's property.

Prince family letters include seven letters from Leslie Prince to her sister Katherine (Kate), two of which were co-written by their brother Frederick, pertaining to life in Lowell, Massachusetts in the 1830s; one letter to Robert Prince from Elihu Beck; one letter to Robert Prince from Elinor J. Beck; a letter written probably to one of the Prince sisters from an unidentified person; and a photocopy of a page from an unidentified letter.

Two handwritten diaries of Katherine Prince were written in England and Europe in 1845 and 1846. The diaries frequently mention and describe visits with Whistler's sister, Deborah Whistler, and their travels and activities together.

Four items from Whistler include an 1878 telegraph to the Livermore family; a letter from Whistler to Susie Sutton, with Whistler's butterfly signature, inviting her to call on him in his studio; an invitation to Whistler's "10 O'Clock" lecture at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly; and an 1892 catalog, "Nocturnes, Marines and Chevalet Pieces" Goupil/6th Edition, inscribed to Sutton by Whistler.

Box 1, Folder 1 Houpe's "Brief Notes on the Livermores of Holderness and Some Others", 1980

Box 1, Folder 2 Prince Family Letters, circa 1834-circa 1836

Box 1, Folder 3 [Prince, Katherine, Diaries, 1845-1846](#)

Box 1, Folder 4 Whistler Card, Catalog, Letter, and Telegram, circa 1878-circa 1892

[Return to Table of Contents](#)