



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Mary Chase Stratton papers,  
circa 1846-1959, in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

2022/05/03

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	
Administrative Information .....	1
Biographical / Historical .....	2
Scope and Contents .....	2
Arrangement .....	2
Names and Subjects .....	
Container Listing .....	
Series 1: Mary Chase Stratton Papers, circa 1846-1959 .....	4

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Mary Chase Stratton papers
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1846-1959
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.stramary
<b>Creator:</b>	Stratton, Mary Chase Perry, 1867-1961
<b>Extent:</b>	0.5 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of ceramicist and educator Mary Chase Stratton measure 0.5 linear feet and date from circa 1846 to 1959. The collection provides scattered documentation of Stratton's career through artwork including a lithograph signed by Gwen Lux; an award to William Stratton and an honorary degree to Stratton; correspondence from Stratton's father and a few others; personal photographs of Stratton, family members, and photographs of works of art; and a photograph of Charles Lang Freer by Edward Steichen. Also found are printed materials including a brochure for Pewabic Pottery, and several writings.

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Mary Chase Stratton in 1961. Some material was lent for microfilming in 1973 by Mrs. Ella Peters, secretary to Stratton.

### Separated Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds microfilm of material lent by Mrs. Ella Peters, secretary to Stratton, for microfilming on reel 593 including a 144-page unpublished autobiography of Mary Chase Stratton. Loaned materials were returned to the donor and are not described in the collection container inventory.

### Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art are the Pewabic Pottery records, 1891-1973.

### Available Formats

The collection is available on 35mm microfilm reels 1010 and 1021, and material lent for microfilming is on 35mm microfilm reel 593. Microfilm reels are available for use at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of 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 Sarah Mundy in 2022.

## Preferred Citation

Mary Chase Stratton papers, circa 1846-1959. 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.

## 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

Mary Chase Stratton (1867-1961) was a ceramicist and educator, and a founder of Pewabic Pottery in Detroit, Michigan.

Stratton was born in Hancock, Michigan, to Dr. William Walbridge Perry and Sophia Barrett Perry. Stratton and her mother moved to Ann Arbor after the murder of Dr. Perry in 1877. Stratton's artistic interests were encouraged by her mother who hired art teacher Lily Chase to instruct her. The family later moved to Detroit where Stratton became a prominent figure in the art world. She co-founded Pewabic Pottery with Horace J. Caulkins around 1903 and after a few years in business they found a permanent home for the pottery studio in a Detroit building designed by William Stratton, who would become Stratton's husband in 1918.

The studio, now a National Historic Landmark, created architectural tiles found at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Kingswood School for Girls in Cranbrook, the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Detroit, and numerous other public buildings. Stratton taught at Wayne State University and the University of Michigan where she established the ceramics department.

Stratton died in 1961.

---

## Scope and Contents

The papers of ceramicist and educator Mary Chase Stratton measure 0.5 linear feet and date from circa 1846 to 1959. The collection provides scattered documentation of Stratton's career through artwork including a lithograph signed by Gwen Lux; an award to William Stratton and an honorary degree to Stratton; correspondence from Stratton's father and a few others; a partial license to dig for gold in the Colony of Victoria; personal photographs of Stratton, family members, and photographs of works of art; and a photograph of Charles Lang Freer by Edward Steichen. Also found are printed materials including a brochure for Pewabic Pottery, and several writings.

---

## Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

- American studio craft movement
- Women artists
- Women ceramicists

### Types of Materials:

- Drawings

### Names:

- Freer, Charles Lang, 1856-1919
- Lux, Gwen
- Perry, William Walbridge, Dr.
- Pewabic Pottery (Firm)
- Steichen, Edward, 1879-1973

### Occupations:

- Ceramicists -- Michigan -- Detroit
- Educators -- Michigan -- Detroit

## Container Listing

### Series 1: Mary Chase Stratton Papers, circa 1846-1959

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1, OVs 2-4)

**Scope and Contents:** The series comprises artwork including a signed lithograph by Gwen Lux; an award to William Stratton from the Cornell Club of Michigan; correspondence from Stratton's father, Dr. William Walbridge Perry, and a few others; a partial license to dig for gold in the Colony of Victoria; Stratton's Doctor of Science honorary degree from the Colleges of the City of Detroit; personal photographs of Stratton, family members, her home, and city locations; photographs of works of art; a photograph of Charles Lang Freer by Edward Steichen; printed materials including a map of the U.S. from 1864 and a brochure for Pewabic Pottery, a ceramics studio founded by Stratton; and several writings.

Oversize 4	Artwork, circa 1940s
Oversize 2, Folder 1	Award to William Stratton, 1936
Box 1, Folder 1	<a href="#">Correspondence, 1846-1924</a>
Box 1, Folder 2	<a href="#">Gold License for Colony of Victoria, 1953</a>
Box 1, Folder 3	<a href="#">Degrees and Commencement Program, 1933</a>
Box 1, Folder 4	<a href="#">Photographs, Personal, circa 1860-circa 1945</a>
Oversize 2, Folder 2	Photographs, Personal, circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 5	<a href="#">Photograph of Charles Lang Freer by Edward Steichen, circa 1916</a>
Box 1, Folder 6	<a href="#">Photographs of Works of Art, circa 1940s-1950</a>
Box 1, Folder 7	<a href="#">Photographs of Works of Art, circa 1940s-1950</a>
Oversize 2, Folder 3	Photographs of Works of Art, circa 1940s-1950s
Box 1, Folder 8	<a href="#">Printed Materials, circa 1875-circa 1950</a>
Oversize 3	Printed Materials, Map of U.S., 1864
Box 1, Folder 9	<a href="#">Writings, circa 1846</a> Notes: Manuscripts include, "The Age of Freedom," "Imagination," "Moral Science," and a couple of untitled writings.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

