
Vanessa Catanzaro and Erin Corley

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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Olin Levi Warner papers
Identifier: AAA.warnolin
Date: 1857-1962
(bulk 1857-1899)
Extent: 1.9 Linear feet
Language: English.
Summary: The papers of sculptor Olin Levi Warner measure 1.9 linear feet and date from 1857 to 1962 with the bulk of the materials dating from 1857 to 1899. The collection documents Warner's art student days in Paris and his career as a sculptor, primarily in New York City. Found are scattered biographical materials and writings, including a speech by Warner about the Paris Commune of 1871; personal and professional correspondence; clippings, catalogs, and other printed material; sculpture project files; and photographs of Warner, his studio, his family, and notable figures who sat for him, including artist J. Alden Weir, and his artwork.

Administrative Information

Provenance

A portion of the Olin Levi Warner papers were originally loaned to the Archives of American Art for microfilming in 1972 by Rosalie Warner Jones, Warner's daughter. Rosalie Warner Jones and her sister, Frances O. Warner, and Rosalie's daughter Frances Follin Jones, donated the collection in several accretions between 1972 and 1977. This gift included the majority of the loaned materials, excluding one sketchbook. Additional materials were transferred to the Archives in 2005 from the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Separated Material

The Archives of American Art also holds material lent for microfilming on reel 270. All of the material was later donated, except for one sketchbook which was returned to the lender, and is not described in the collection container inventory.

Alternative Forms Available

The bulk of this collection was digitized in 2013 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website. Materials which have not been scanned include photographs of artwork, duplicates, blank pages in bound volumes, and blank versos of photographs. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned.
Material lent for microfilming is available on 35mm microfilm reel 270 at the Archives of American Art reading room and through interlibrary loan.

Processing Information
The bulk of the collection was microfilmed as separate accretions and loans on reels 270, 414, and 3746-3747, except for the materials transferred from the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2005. All earlier accessions were merged and re-processed by Vanessa Catanzaro, Joan Lord, and Erin Corley in 2004 and 2005, and a finding aid prepared as part of the Terra Foundation for American Art Digitization Project. The collection was scanned in 2013 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Preferred Citation

Restrictions on Access
Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical Note
Olin Levi Warner was born in 1844 in Suffield, Connecticut and worked as an artisan and a telegraph operator before pursuing his art education and career. In 1869, Warner traveled to Paris to study under Francois Jouffroy at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. He was in Paris when the Republic was declared and served in the French Foreign Legion for a short while before resuming his studies. In 1872 he returned to the United States and set up a studio in New York.

An early proponent of the French Beaux-Arts style, Warner was a founding member of the Society of American Artists in 1877 and joined the National Academy of Design in 1888. By the end of Warner's lifetime, he had become a well-known sculptor, helping to popularize bas-relief in the United States. A few of Warner's notable works include a series of medallions depicting Native American Indian Chiefs, an 1876 bust of President Rutherford B. Hayes, the 1883 nude Diana, a statue of judge and former U.S. Attorney General Charles Devens in Boston, and the design of the bronze doors of the Library of Congress. This last project was uncompleted at the time of Warner’s death on August 14, 1896, as the result of a bicycle injury in Central Park.
Scope and Content Note

The papers of sculptor Olin Levi Warner measure 1.9 linear feet and date from 1857 to 1962 with the bulk of the materials dating from 1857 to 1899. The collection documents Warner's art student days in Paris and his career as a sculptor, primarily in New York City. Found are scattered biographical materials and writings, including a speech by Warner about the Paris Commune of 1871; personal and professional correspondence; clippings, catalogs, and other printed material; sculpture project files; and photographs of Warner, his studio, his family, and notable figures who sat for him, including artist J. Alden Weir, and his artwork.

Found are biographical materials, including a speech written by Warner about the Paris Commune of 1871, awards, and membership records for several art organizations, including the Fine Arts Federation of New York.

Personal and business correspondence written by Warner, his wife, and his daughter is with family and friends. Warner's correspondents include artists Albert Pinkham Ryder, Clarence Cook, and Wyatt Eaton, among others. Of note are letters written from Warner to his family during the time he spent in Paris from 1869 to 1872 studying art and serving in the Foreign Legion.

Also found are scattered project files for a few of his notable sculptural projects, including his statue of Massachusetts governor Charles Devens, the Hodgkins Medal designed as the Smithsonian Institution's seal, work for the Chicago World's Fair, and bronze work produced by the Jno. Williams Foundry.

Printed materials include clippings and exhibition catalogs for the Society of American Artists, the National Sculpture Society, and the World's Columbian Exposition.

Photographs in the papers are of Warner, his family, home, and studio, works of art, and a few notable sitters, including the artist J. Alden Weir.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into five series.

• Series 1: Biographical Material, 1863-1896 (Box 1, OV 4; 5 folders)
• Series 2: Correspondence, 1857-1962 (Box 1; 0.7 linear feet)
• Series 3: Project Files, 1871-1936 (Box 1, OV 4; 6 folders)
• Series 4: Printed Material, 1862-1950 (Boxes 1-2, OV 4; 6 folders)
• Series 5: Photographs, 1870s-1890s (Box 2-3, OV 4; 0.7 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
Art -- Study and teaching -- France -- Paris
Artists' studios -- Photographs
Sculptors -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews
Sculpture, American
Types of Materials:
Photographs

Names:
Cook, Clarence, 1828-1900
Devens, Charles, 1820-1891
Eaton, Wyatt, 1849-1896
Fine Arts Federation of New York
France. Armée. Légion étrangère
Jno. Williams, Inc.
Ryder, Albert Pinkham, 1847-1917
Smithsonian Institution
Warner, Sylvia Martinache
Weir, Julian Alden, 1852-1919
World's Columbian Exposition (1893 : Chicago, Ill.)

Geographic Names:
Paris (France) -- History -- Commune, 1871
Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1863-1896

5 Folders (Box 1, OV 4)

This series contains official documents for Warner's membership in several art organizations, including the Fine Arts Federation of New York and the Society of American Artists, and from Warner's time in France, including his admission form to the French Foreign Legion. Also found are death announcements and other memorial material, including a memorial paper read before the National Sculpture Society by W. C. Brownell. Additional items of note are drafts of a speech written by Warner about the Paris Commune of 1871. Oversized materials include Warner's Mason membership certificate and documentation from a U.S. diplomatic office in France, and two awards received for his artwork.

Materials are arranged by document type.

This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 1  
Awards, 1863, 1895  
Image(s)  
Oversized material housed in OV 4.

Box 1, Folder 2  
Membership Documents, 1868, 1870  
Image(s)  
Oversized material housed in OV 4.

Box 1, Folder 3  
Memorial Materials, 1896  
Image(s)  
Oversized material housed in OV 4.

Box 1, Folder 4  
Speech Drafts, circa 1871  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 5  
Speech Drafts, circa 1871  
Image(s)

Box OV 4  
Oversized Awards, 1863, 1895  
Oversized material scanned with Box 1, Folder 1.

Box OV 4  
Oversized Membership Documents, 1868-1870  
Oversized material scanned with Box 1, Folder 2.

Box OV 4  
Oversized Memorial Material, 1896  
Oversized material scanned with Box 1, Folder 3.
Series 2: Correspondence, 1857-1962

0.7 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series contains family and personal correspondence. Family correspondence is found for Olin Levi Warner, his wife Sylvia Martinache Warner, and their daughters Rosalie Warner Jones and Frances O. Warner.

Warner's family correspondence is primarily with his parents, his wife Sylvia, and his extended family. Warner's personal correspondence is with friends, including Charles Erskine Scott Wood, Albert Pinkham Ryder, W. C. Brownell, Clarence Cook, Wyatt Eaton, and his business correspondence is primarily with people interested in commissioning sculptures. Topics covered in this series include Olin Warner's studies; his life in Paris from 1869 to 1872, including the establishment of the French Third Republic; and the artist's work up to the time of his death.

Sylvia Martinache Warner's correspondence consists of sympathy notes following her husband's death; various personal matters; and the management of the artist's work by Mrs. Warner and her daughters.

Materials are arranged alphabetically by correspondent name.

This series has been scanned in its entirety.


Box 1, Folder 6    A-O Miscellaneous, 1857-1895
     Image(s)
     Includes letters from Wyatt Eaton and Albert Pinkham Ryder

Box 1, Folder 7    Oliver, Michael, 1893
     Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 8    P-W, Miscellaneous, 1857-1895
     Image(s)
     Includes letters from John Quincy Adams Ward

Box 1, Folder 9    Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1857-1860
     Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 10   Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1861
     Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 11   Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1862-1863
     Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 12   Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1864
     Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 13   Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1865
Box 1, Folder 14  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1866
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 15  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1867-1868
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 16  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1869
Image(s)
Includes typescript transcriptions of letters.

Box 1, Folder 17  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1870-1871
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 18  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1872
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 19  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1873-1875
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 20  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1876-1879
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 21  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1880-1883
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 22  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1884-1885
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 23  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1886
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 24  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1887-1890
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 25  Warner, Olin Levi and Family, 1891-1895
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 26  Wood, C.E.S., 1883-1896
Image(s)

2.2: Sylvia Martinache Warner, 1883-1962

Box 1, Folder 27  Concern for Olin Levi Warner, 1896
Box 1, Folder 28  Condolences for Olin Levi Warner, 1896

Box 1, Folder 29  A-B, Miscellaneous, 1896-1917

Box 1, Folder 30  Brownell, W.C. and Gertrude, 1903-1935

Box 1, Folder 31  C-N, Miscellaneous, 1896-1930

Box 1, Folder 32  National Sculpture Society, 1896-1898

Box 1, Folder 33  Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 1897-1899

Box 1, Folder 34  P-R, Miscellaneous, 1898-1920

Box 1, Folder 35  Ryder, Albert Pinkham, 1897-1912

Box 1, Folder 36  S-W, Miscellaneous, 1898-1930

Box 1, Folder 37  Warner, Olin Levi, 1883-1894

Box 1, Folder 38  Wood, C.E.S., 1896-1921

Box 1, Folder 39  X-Z, Miscellaneous, circa 1910

Box 1, Folder 40  Letters to Rosalie Warner Jones and Frances O. Warner, 1936-1962
Series 3: Project Files, 1871-1936

6 Folders (Box 1, OV 4)

This series contains materials such as receipts, contracts, and correspondence documenting some of Warner's sculptural projects. Projects with a significant amount of material include a statue of Massachusetts governor Charles Devens; the Hodgkins Medal, designed as the Smithsonian Institution seal; sculptural work for the Chicago World's Fair; and works produced by the Jno. Williams Foundry.

Materials are arranged alphabetically by project name.

This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 42  Charles Devens Statue, 1892-1896
                   Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 43  Jno. Williams Foundry, 1904-1936
                   Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 44  Library of Congress Doors, circa 1897-1898
                   Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 45  Smithsonian Seal, 1893-1894
                   Image(s)
                   Oversized material housed in OV 4.

Box 1, Folder 46  World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago World's Fair), 1893
                   Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 47  Miscellaneous contracts and receipts, 1871-1905
                   Image(s)

Box OV 4         Oversized Smithsonian Seal Information, 1893-1894
                   Oversized material scanned with Box 1, Folder 45.

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Series 4: Printed Material, 1862-1950

6 Folders (Boxes 1-2, OV 4)

This series contains assorted printed materials including exhibition catalogs for the Society of American Artists and the National Sculpture Society; a catalog for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair; information from clubs to which Warner belonged; newspaper and magazine clippings; promotional materials and a booklet highlighting Warner's doors for the Library of Congress; and miscellaneous materials such as programs and booklets.

Materials are arranged by document type.

The bulk of this series has been scanned. Duplicates and blank pages in bound volumes have not been scanned. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned.

Box 1, Folder 48  Clippings, 1895-1950
            Image(s)
            Oversized material housed in OV 4.

Box 1, Folder 49  Club and Association Membership Listings, 1892-1896
            Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 1  Exhibition Catalogs, 1880-1883
            Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 2  Exhibition Catalogs, 1893
            Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 3  Exhibition Catalogs, 1895-1907
            Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 4  Miscellaneous, 1862-1921
            Image(s)

Box OV 4  Oversized Clippings, 1895-1950
            Oversized materials scanned with Box 1, Folder 48.

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Series 5: Photographs, 1870s-1890s

0.7 Linear feet (Boxes 2-3, OV 4)

Photographs are of Warner, his family, sitters, and artwork. Included are photographs of Warner in his New York City studio and with his wife and two daughters. Two photographs of note are of Warner standing with an unfinished Caryatid for the Skidmore Fountain project. Also found are photographs of the exterior of Warner’s New York home and studio, an unidentified exhibition, and photographs of some of the many people Warner sculpted, including the artist J. Alden Weir. Additional photographs are of Warner’s completed sculptures, medals, or other works.

Materials are arranged by photographic subject.

The bulk of this series has been scanned. Photographs of artwork, duplicates, and blank versos of photographs have not been scanned.

Box 2, Folder 5  Photographs of Artist and Family at Home and Studio, circa 1875-1895
  Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 6  Photographs of Olin Levi Warner Standing with Caryatid for Skidmore Fountain, circa 1883
  Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 7  Photographs of Exterior of Warner Home and Studio, circa 1890s
  Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 8  Photograph of Exhibition, circa late 1890s
  Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 9  Photographs of Sitters, circa 1870's-1890's
  Image(s)
  Includes photographs of J. Alden Weir, Governor Buckingham, Chief Joseph, and President Hayes.

Box 2  Photographs of Artwork

Box 2, Folder 10  W. C. Brownell, 1886
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV 4.

Box 2, Folder 11  Governor Buckingham, 1884
  Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 12  General Charles Devens, 1894
  Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 1  Dancing Nymph, 1879
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 2</th>
<th>Diana, 1883</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 3</td>
<td>Library of Congress Doors, circa 1896</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Image(s)]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversized material housed in OV 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 4</td>
<td>Native American Series, circa 1880's</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Image(s)]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 5</td>
<td>Skidmore Fountain, circa 1883</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Image(s)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 6</td>
<td>Various Sculptures, circa 1880s-1890s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Image(s)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 7</td>
<td>Various Sculptures, circa 1880s-1890s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Image(s)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 8</td>
<td>Portraits of Olin Levi Warner, 1880s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Image(s)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box OV 4</td>
<td>Oversized Photographs of Artwork, 1886-circa 1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversized material scanned with Box 2, Folder 10 and Box 3, Folder 3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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