



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Olive Leavister 19th Century Handmade Valentine Collection

NMAH.AC.0376

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives Center, National Museum of American History |
| Title: | Olive Leavister 19th Century Handmade Valentine Collection |
| Identifier: | NMAH.AC.0376 |
| Date: | 1830-1880 |
| Creator: | Lazerowitz, Seymour (dealer) Leavister, Olive Mae, 1913-1990 |
| Extent: | 0.33 Cubic feet (1 box) |
| Language: | English . |
| Digital Content: | Image(s): Olive Leavister 19th Century Handmade Valentine Collection: 1830-1880. |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated to the Archives Center, National Museum of American History, on July 11, 1990, by Seymour Lazerowitz. Mr. Lazerowitz purchased the cards from Olive Leavister prior to her death.

Provenance

Mr. Seymour A. Lazerowitz, a dealer, purchased the collection from Mrs. Leavister. He retained approximately fifteen items and donated the remainder to the Museum in Mrs. Leavister's memory.

Processing Information

Processed by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist, 1991.

Preferred Citation

Olive Leavister 19th Century Handmade Valentine Collection, 1830s-1880s, Archives Center, National Museum of American History. Gift of Seymour A. Lazerowitz in honor of Olive Leavister.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Olive Mae Leavister was born on December 16, 1913 in Kansas City, Missouri. She moved to the Washington, DC metropolitan area sometime in the 1930s where she met her husband Charles D. Leavister. She was a charter member of the Maryland Doll Club and frequently gave lectures at doll and antique meetings. In addition, Mrs. Leavister also collected toys, children's books, holiday postcards, sewing objects, candy containers, Christmas ornaments and valentines. Olive Mae Leavister died on June 20, 1990.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of one hundred and fifteen handmade valentine cards. It contains examples of American, English and German cards dating from the 1830s through the 1880s. The cards are in excellent condition with many of them containing poems written on the inside and signed by the sender. In addition, there are a few envelopes found among these materials.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Children
- Holidays -- 1830-1880
- Saint Valentine's Day -- 1830-1880

Types of Materials:

- Greeting cards -- 1830-1880
- Valentines -- 1830-1880 -- England
- Valentines -- 1830-1880 -- Germany
- Valentines -- 1830-1880 -- U.S.

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1-9

Valentines , 1830 - 1880

[\[Cherubs with heart : Valentine card\], \[ca. 1830-1880.\]](#)

1 Item (Ink and gold leaf on paper, 7 x 4-5/8" (17.78 x 11.75 cm.))

Language: English.

Notes: AC0376-0000001.tif (AC Scan No.)

Handmade card. Maker unidentified.

Reproduced in "Treasures from the Smithsonian Institution 2006," New York: Universe Publishing, 2005, opposite Feb. 13-19.

Topic: Angels

Putti

Genre/Form: Valentines

Greeting cards -- 1830-1880