



DELAWARE ART MUSEUM

Letters from John Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, undated and 1921-1947

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the
Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Acquisition Information

Gift of the Estate of Selma Dingee Shuster, 1989

Extent

.4 linear feet

Contents

Correspondence

Access Restrictions

Unrestricted

Processed

Sarena Deglin, 2004

Contact Information

Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives

Delaware Art Museum

2301 Kentmere Parkway

Wilmington, DE 19806

(302) 571-9590

hfslibrary@delart.org

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Letters from John Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, undated and 1921-1947, Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Biography of John Sloan/Will Shuster

John Sloan and Will Shuster first met in the summer of 1920. Both were boarding at a house in Santa Fe, New Mexico run by “Mom” and Jack Akers. Sloan and his wife Dolly (Anna W. Sloan) first vacationed in Santa Fe in 1919 at the prompting of their friend and fellow member of The Eight, Robert Henri. Shuster and his wife Helen first arrived in Santa Fe from Philadelphia in March 1920, with the hope of arresting the progress of his tuberculosis. Sloan and Shuster were together only four to five months out of the year, when Sloan was in Santa Fe. The rest of the year, while Shuster remained in Santa Fe and Sloan returned to his home in New York City the two corresponded through lengthy letters.

Sloan would address his letters “Dear Shus” or “Dear Shuses,” referring to both Shuster and his first wife Helen. Many of Sloan’s letters are illustrated, often depicting the New York City buildings around him or else cartoon greetings for Shuster’s son Donald. Shuster divorced his first wife in 1935. Two years later he married Selma (Sami) Schaumann. Sloan’s letters from then on are addressed to “Shus and Sami.” The letters continue through the death of Dolly in 1943 and Sloan’s marriage to Helen Farr (HFS) in 1944.

Sloan continued to visit Santa Fe each year until his frequent illnesses proved too much to endure another trip west. In the spring of 1951 Sloan and HFS traveled to Hanover, New Hampshire at the advice of Sloan’s doctors. In late August 1951 Sloan was diagnosed with cancer of the lower bowel. He was operated on immediately. Sloan died on September 7, of post-operative complications, in Hanover, New Hampshire, shortly after his 80th birthday. Shuster died on February 8, 1969, shortly after his 76th birthday.

Scope and Contents Note

The Letters consist of correspondence, primarily from John Sloan (Sloan) to Will Shuster (Shuster), spanning their 30-year friendship. Some of the correspondence is between Helen Farr Sloan (HFS) and Will Shuster, written shortly after Sloan’s death in 1951. This collection of letters was donated to the Delaware Art Museum by the Estate of Selma Dingee Shuster in 1989 in the wake of publication by the Rydel Press. Clark Kimball of Great Southwest Books served as intermediary as the letters were first microfilmed by the Archives of American Art in San Francisco and then forwarded to the Museum along with complete transcriptions.

Description of the Letters

Folder 1 - Letters from John Sloan, undated - 1

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, no date. Illustrated. 7 items

Folder 2 - Letters from John Sloan, 1921-1947 - 2

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, January 8, 1921. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, January 2, 1922 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, January 3, 1947 from New York. 1 item

Folder 3 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 – 1

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, February 16, 1922 from New York. 3 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 1, 1922 from New York, NM. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 17, 1922 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 28, 1922 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, no date from New York. 2 items

Letter from Sloan and Dolly to Will and Selma Shuster, no date from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan and Dolly to Shuster, no date from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Folder 4 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 - 2

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, 1922. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, May 7, 1922 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, May 23, 1922 from New York. 1 item

Postcard from Sloan to Shuster, October 30, 1922 from Kansas City, MO. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, December 13, 1922. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, December 14, 1922 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, no date from Raton, NM. 1 item

Folder 5 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 - 3

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, 1923 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, January 19, 1923. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, February 1, 1923. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, February 9, 1923. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, February 12, 1923 from New York. 1 item

Letter from John Sloan to Shuster, March 6, 1923 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Folder 6 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 - 4

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, 1923. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, 1923 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 20, 1923. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, May 7, 1923 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 19, 1924 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, November 13, 1924 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, November 23, 1924 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Folder 7 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 - 5

Letter from Sloan and Dolly to Will, Helen and Don Shuster, 1925. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 4, 1925 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will, Helen and Don Shuster, April 29, 1925 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, May 24, 1925. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, January 8, 1926 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, February 25, 1926 from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, April 18, 1926 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, October 19, 1926 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, October 27, 1926. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, December 7, 1926 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Folder 8 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 - 6

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, December 25, 1926. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, January 18, 1927 from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, February 1927. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 2, 1927 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 28, 1927 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, May 24, 1927 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, October 30, 1927 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, January 13, 1928 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, April 30, 1928 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, December 12, 1928 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Folder 9 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 – 7

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, February 22, 1930 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, April 7, 1930 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, November 16, 1930 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, March 20, 1931 from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, October 1931 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Folder 10 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 – 8

Letter from Sloan and Dolly to Will and Helen Shuster, 1931. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, December 25, 1932 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, August 31, 1933 from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan and Dolly to Will and Selma Shuster, January 19, 1940 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, March 20, 1940 from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, April 8, 1940 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan and Dolly to Will and Selma Shuster, April 5, 1941 from New York. 1 item

Folder 11 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 – 9

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, January 14, 1942 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, April 4, 1942 from New York. Illustrated. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, April 29, 1942 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, April 13, 1944 from New York. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, June 4, 1944 from New York. 1 item

Folder 12 - John Sloan material previously filmed found on AAAMF 277 from file #1 - 10

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, January 7, 1940 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, March 1, 1945 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, December 1, 1945 from New York. 2 items

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, December 28, 1945 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, March 19, 1947 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, undated (1951). Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, August 5, 1951 from Hanover, NH. Illustrated. 1 item

Folder 13 - Sloan material previously filed on Roll 277 from file #2

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, February 27, no year. 34 items

Folder 14 - Items from file #3 previously filmed on AAAMF 277 - 1

Letter from HFS to Shuster, September 22 1951 from New York. 2 items

Letter from HFS to Shuster, March 6, 1952 from New York. 1 item

Letter from Churchill P. Lathrop of Carpenter Art Galleries, Dartmouth to Will Shuster, April 14, 1955 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Letter from HFS to Will and Selma Shuster, January 2, 1964. 1 item

Letter from Will Shuster, August 8, 1964. 1 item

Draft letter from Mrs. Sylvia Loomis of Archives of American Art to Mrs. Winfield T. Scott, February 16, 1971 from Santa Fe, NM. 1 item

Postcard from Ellie Scott to Mrs. Sylvia Loomis, February 22, 1971. 1 item

Folder 15 - Items from file #3 previously filmed on AAAMF 277 - 2

Letter from John Sloan to the Editor Santa Fe New Mexican, October 7, 1950 from Santa Fe, NM. 1 item

Letter, 1951 - "Farewell dear John"

Letter from HFS to Will and Selma Shuster, August 21, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Letter from HFS to Will and Selma Shuster, August 23, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Postcard from HFS to Will and Selma Shuster, August 29, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Postcard from HFS to Will and Selma Shuster, September 1, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Telegram from HFS to Shuster, September 8, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Eulogy for Sloan by Oliver La Farge, 1951. 2 items

Letter from Dolly Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, February 19, no year. 2 items

Letter from Dolly Sloan to Will and Helen Shuster, no date. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, no date. 1 item

Folder 16 – Items from file #3 previously filmed on AAAMF 277 – 3

Envelope from Sloan to Shuster, March 6, 1921 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Will and Selma Shuster, November 3, 1921. Illustrated. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, November 5, 1921 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Postcard from Sloan to Shuster, February 8, 1940 from New York. Illustrated. 1 item

Postcard from Sloan to Shuster, August 27, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Envelope from Sloan to Shuster, August 28, 1951 from Hanover, NH. 1 item

Letter from Sloan to Shuster, no date from New York. 1 item

Folders 17-18 – Transcripts

Folder 19 – Administrative materials