



DELAWARE ART MUSEUM

Bertha Corson Day Bates Papers

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

Acquisition Information

Gift of Mrs. J. Marshall Cole (Bertha Bates Cole), April 1983

Extent

10 linear feet

Abstract

The collection includes correspondence, notebooks, books, photographs, photocopy of journal, catalogs, cards, programs, etc.

Access Restrictions

Unrestricted

Contact Information

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Preferred Citation

Bertha Corson Day Bates Papers, Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Related Materials

Students of Howard Pyle Files

Biography of Bertha Corson Day Bates

American painter and illustrator, 1875-1968

Bertha Corson Day was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Germantown. Her cousin was married to the popular artist Thomas Hovenden, and Day posed for his painting *Bringing Home the Bride*. She enrolled in the Drexel Institute art department in 1892; her teachers included sculptor Charles Grafly and watercolorist Lydia Austin. She became a friend of Lydia Austin and her husband Maxfield Parrish.

Day studied in Howard Pyle's illustration class that began at Drexel in the fall of 1894. After completing the four-year course at Drexel in 1896, she decided to continue as an advanced student in Pyle's illustration class from 1897 through 1899. Having made plans to go to Europe for the summer of 1898, she was unable to attend Pyle's first summer school at Chadds Ford. However, she did attend the next year along with her friends Anna Whelan Betts, Ellen Bernard Thompson, and seven other Drexel students.

Three of her decorative designs were published in the *Chap-Book* in 1896 and 1897, and her poster design advertising Cashmere Bouquet products won second prize in a contest sponsored by Colgate and Company in 1897. In 1899 she was commissioned to design a billboard announcing the National Export Exposition in Philadelphia. Her historical illustrations appeared in several novels, including Bulwer Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii* in 1898 and Paul Leicester Ford's *Janice Meredith* in 1899. Her most important work was a series of twenty-two illustrations for the book *Where the Wind Blows*, a collection of fairy tales from different countries, written by Howard Pyle's younger sister, Katharine, and published in 1902.

After her marriage in 1902 to Daniel Moore Bates of the Bancroft textile firm, she did very little commercial illustration. When they moved to Wilmington, she turned instead to designing bookplates and program covers for the Greenroom Club, a local theatrical group.

In 1912 the Bates family moved to Lewiston, Maine, and maintained a summer home on MacMahon Island. From 1920 to 1929 they lived in the Philadelphia area. During those years Bertha Day Bates occasionally painted landscapes, but most of her time was devoted to raising her three children. In 1919, when they moved back to Wilmington, she became active in social and cultural activities and was a member of many organizations, including the Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts (now called the Delaware Art Museum), the Historical Society of Delaware, the Women's Committee of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Cosmopolitan Club in Philadelphia. She died at her home "Selborne" in 1968 at the age of ninety-three.

Source: Elzea, Rowland and Elizabeth H. Hawkes, eds. *A Small School of Art: The Students of Howard Pyle*. Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 1980.

Organization of the Collection

Series I: Personal and Biographical

- Subseries A: Miscellaneous Biographical Material
- Subseries B: Journals and Notebooks
- Subseries C: Calendars

Series II: Correspondence

- Subseries A: Personal
- Subseries B: Business

Series III: Artwork

- Subseries A: Materials Designed by Bertha Corson Day Bates
- Subseries B: Illustrations and Tear Sheets

Series IV: Printed Matter

- Subseries A: Exhibition Catalogs
- Subseries B: Miscellaneous
- Subseries C: Books and Periodicals

Series V: Photographs

Note on abbreviations used in the finding aid:

- BCD refers to Bertha Corson Day prior to marriage in 1902
- BCDB refers to Bertha Corson Day Bates after marriage
- DMB refers to Daniel Moore Bates
- BBC refers to Bertha Bates Cole (Mrs. J. Marshall Cole, daughter of BCDB)

Description of the Collection

Series I: Personal and Biographical

Subseries A: Miscellaneous Biographical Material

Box 1

Folder

- 1 Record of work and biographical notes
- 2 Clippings
- 3 Lists of books read and plays attended, 1891-1906
- 4 Penmanship exercise book
- 5 Clippings and medal re. National Export Exposition, 1899

Box 2

Item

- 1 Hat inscribed by Howard Pyle and summer school students
- 2 Diploma from Drexel

Subseries B: Journals and Notebooks

Box 3

Folder

- 1 Journal, February 1893 to June 1896
- 2 Photocopy of 1893-96 journal
- 3 Notebook containing notes from Howard Pyle's illustrations class at Drexel, fall 1894 and notes from James Wood's anatomy class
- 4 Notebook of commissions and payments, 1896-1902
- 5 Journal, October 1896 to September 1898 (includes Day's trip to Europe from June to September 1898); small notebook (contains handwritten copy of notes from journal re. trip to Europe)
- 6 Journal, August 1899 to March 1900 (trip to Valley Forge with Mr. Pyle; Chadd's Ford summer school); name tag or place card for "Miss Day" (made by Pyle for Valley Forge picnic?; tipped into journal at page 3)

Subseries C: Calendars, originals (Münchener Kalender)

Box 4

Folder

- 1 1886
- 2 1899 (BCD notes)
- 3 1900 (BCD notes)
- 4 1901 (BCD notes)
- 5 1902 (BCD notes)
- 6 1903
- 7 1905 (BCDB & DMB notes)
- 8 1906 (BCDB & DMB notes)
- 9 1907 (BCDB & DMB notes)
- 10 1908
- 11 1909 (DMB notes)
- 12 1910
- 13 1911 (DMB notes)
- 14 1912 (BCDB notes)
- 15 1913 (DMB notes)
- 16 1914
- 17 1915
- 18 1916
- 19 1923

Series II: Correspondence

Subseries A: Correspondence, General

Box 5

Folder

- 1 Brincklé, Gertrude
April 1, 1963, postcard to BCDB
December 18, 1968 to Bertha Bates Cole (Mrs. J. Marshall Cole, daughter of BCDB),
regarding death of BCDB

- 2 Day, Bertha Corson to/from cousins
February 9, 1898 Bertha to cousins Annie and Agnes (photocopy)
December 23, unknown year from "Cousin Fanny" to Bertha (photocopy)

- 3 Day, Mrs. Richard H. (Bertha's mother) from BCDB
July 12, 1899, regarding Chadds Ford summer school

- 4 Gibson, Charles Dana to BCDB
undated

- 5 Gordon, Jessie and family, 1938-1943
Jessie Gordon to BCDB (Gordon was Drexel classmate)
December 15, 1938
November 6, 1941
Margaret Gordon (sister of Jessie) to BCDB
March 3, 1943, regarding death of Jessie
March 29, 1943
June 8, 1943
Sara Caldwell (friend of Jessie) to BCDB
March 16, 1943
May 25, 1943
June 5, 1943

- 6 Green, Elizabeth Shippen to BCDB
March 6, unknown year

- 7 Hovenden, Thomas to BCDB (photocopies)
November 17, 1892
undated
clippings referring to Thomas Hovenden

- 8 Keller, Caroline Gussman (Drexel classmate) and family, 1897-1957
 Caroline Gussman Keller to BCDB
 August 10, 1896 (photocopy)
 August 30, 1897, regarding Drexel
 September 3, 1897
 June 17, 1898
 July 10, 1898
 July 22, 1898
 August 15, 1898
 May 3, 1942, regarding Deane Keller's talk about Pyle in Wilmington; mentions Frances Day in India broadcasting over radio
 January 29, 1943 regarding the death of Jessie Gordon, Drexel classmate
 Deane Keller (Caroline's son) to Mr. and Mrs. Bates
 April 22, 1942, regarding his visit to Wilmington
 December 28, 1957 regarding his father's death; mentions D.K.'s his two murals at Johns Hopkins University
 A.G. Keller to BCDB
 September 20, 1953
 November 5, 1953
 February 9, 1953
 January 21, 1955
 September 4, 1955
 September 22, 1955
 November 12, 1955
 March 5, 1956 (postcard)
 March 10, 1956
 July 29, 1956 (includes pages written August 20 and 23, 1956)
 BCDB to A.G. Keller (copy of letter), [1953], mentions her daughter Frances Bates (wife of Peter Muir) died August 31, 1931
- 9 Marceau, Mrs. Henry from BCDB
 April 2, 1934
 undated
- 10 Oakley, Thornton
 November 26, 1922 to Daniel Bates
 May 8, 1944 to BCDB
- 11 "P." (Maxfield Parrish?) to BCDB
 November 9, 1925, regarding Howard Pyle's copy of A Cyclopaedia of Costume or Dictionary of Dress by J.R. Planché (given to DAM by Mrs. John P. Spielman, Jr., in 1973; PYLE Z997 .P9 PI)
 Photocopy of letter from Bertha Bates Cole to "Betsy" (Elizabeth Hawkes?) at DAM regarding book, February 2, unknown year

- 12 Pyle, Ellen B. T. to Daniel Bates
March 27, unknown year, regarding portrait commission of BCDB (BBC note indicates that portrait was painted by Lydia Field Emmett in 1930)
- 13 Pyle, Howard to BCDB
June 1, 1896
June 23, 1896
September 17, 1896
January 7, 1897
February 11, 1897, Edward Penfield to Howard Pyle regarding a sketch by BCD (copy forwarded from Pyle to BCDB)
August 21, 1897
April 26, 1898
April 5, 1899
April 25, 1899
October 25, 1899 (with enclosure from August F. Jaccaci, October 13, 1899)
- 14 Pyle, Katharine to BCDB
November 13, 1904
- 15 Pyle, Sophie (Mrs. Walter Pyle) to BBC
undated
- 16 Smith, Jessie Willcox to BCDB
December 26, 1898
January 14, 1923
- 17 Regarding 1903 calendar

Subseries B: Correspondence, Business

- 18 A-D
Beck Engraving Company
Butterick Publishing Company
The Chap-Book, H. S. Stone & Company
Clark, Helen
Colgate & Company
Drexel Institute
- 19 H-L
Harper & Brothers
William H. Horstmann Company
Houghton, Mifflin and Company
Howson & Howson

Kalamazoo Corset Company
Ketterlinus Lithographic Manufacturing Company
The Ladies' Home Journal
J. B. Lippincott Company

- 20 M-P
S. S. McClure Company
McCormick Harvesting Machine Company
Millville Manufacturing Company
National Export Exposition (photocopy; see curatorial files)
A. Edward Newtown & Company
Philadelphia Exposition of 1899 (photocopy)
The Plastic Club
Printwell Printing Company
- 21 S-W
School of Industrial Art of the Pennsylvania Museum
The Union Selling Company
Water Fowl Club of America
John Wanamaker
- 22 E.P. Dutton & Company
- 23 Little, Brown & Company (includes letter from Howard R. Garis regarding Day's illustrations for his book, *The White Crystals*, 1904)
- 24 Regarding bookplate designs
- 25 Regarding exhibition of BCDB's work, 1902, 1904
- 26 Correspondence, clippings, and contract regarding *Where the Wind Blows*

Series III: Artwork

Subseries A: Materials designed by Bertha Corson Day Bates

Box 6

Folder

- 1 Christmas cards, dated
- 2 Christmas cards, undated
- 3 Programs for The Greenroom Club designed by BCDB
 - The Private Secretary*, December 1907
 - The Importance of Being Earnest* (April 1908)
 - Woodbarrow Farm*, December 1908
 - Rosemary*, May 1909
 - Raffles* (May 1910) (2 copies)
 - Prince Karl*, February 1911 (program and original sketch)
 - Miss Hobbs* (May 1911) (2 copies)
 - Arms and the Man* (December 1911) (2 copies)
 - The New Lady Bantock* (April 1912) (2 copies)
- 4 Catalogs for The Plastic Club 1898, 1899
- 5 Bookplates and dinner cards
- 6 Calendar, 1903
- 7 Designs for Day Brothers Smith Shop Machines

Subseries B: Illustrations and Tear Sheets

- 8 Book illustrations
 - Last Days of Pompeii* by Edward Bulwer Lytton, 1897
 - The Boys of Marmiton Prairie* by Gertrude Smith, 1899
 - Dorothy Fox* by Louisa Parr, 1901
 - Where the Wind Blows* by Katharine Pyle, 1902
- 9 Periodical illustrations – *Chap-Book*
 - June 15, 1896 – interior illustration
 - August 1, 1896 – interior illustration
 - January 1, 1897 – cover illustration
- 10 Periodical illustrations – *The Interior*, August 4, 1904

- 11 Periodical illustrations – miscellaneous tear sheets
Collier's Weekly
Harper's Bazar
Harper's New Monthly Magazine
The Ladies' Home Journal
McClure's Magazine
- 12 Miscellaneous
Photograph of study for "The Fairy Godmother"
Photocopies from sketch book

Series IV: Printed Matter

Subseries A: Exhibition Catalogs

Box 7

Folder

- 1 *A Catalogue of Drawings Illustrating the Life of Gen. Washington, and of Colonial Life. Together with a few other Examples of work done for the Public Prints, by Howard Pyle.* Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry, Philadelphia, February 6, 1897.

A Catalogue of Drawings Illustrating the Life of Gen. Washington, and of Colonial Life. Together with a few other Examples of work done for the Public Prints, by Howard Pyle. Exhibited by the St. Botolph Club...Boston, [February 27, 1897]. Inscribed by Pyle to BCD.
- 2 *Catalogue of Paintings in Water-Color and Oil, Annual Exhibition of Art Department.* Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry, Philadelphia, 1895.

Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of the Work in Water-Color and Oil Painting. Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry Art Department, Philadelphia, 1896.

Fifty Years Since Howard Pyle: 1898-1948. Drexel Institute of Technology, Philadelphia, April 5, 1948.
- 3 *An Exhibition by the Pupils of Howard Pyle.* Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts, 1923.
- 4 *Bertha Corson Day Bates: Illustrator in the Howard Pyle Tradition.* Delaware Art Museum, September 29 – November 5, 1978.

Subseries B: Miscellaneous Printed Material

- 5 Bulletin for St. Andrews Church, Wilmington, DE, 1974 (includes information about Bates Chapel)
- 6 Theater programs for the New Century Club
- 7 Bookplate designs by Christopher L. Ward. Christopher Ward His Book (10 bookplates); C.E. & R. Ward Their Book (1 proof); C.L. Ward, Jr. His Book (1 proof)
- 8 Miscellaneous printed material – clippings and tear sheets

Subseries C: Books, Periodicals, and Catalogs

- 9 *Frank Leslie's Lady's Magazine*, November 1864 (owned by BCDB)

- 10 *The English Illustrated Magazine*, July 1885, August 1891 (owned by BCDB)
- 11 R. H. Russell publications
 - The Holiday List of R.H. Russell*, 1899
 - R. H. Russell's Publications*, 1902
 - What the Critics Say of Some of R. H. Russell's Leading Books: Comments by the Critical Press of the Country*, c. 1903
- 12 *Catalogue of Plaster Reproductions*, P. P. Caproni and Brother, 1913
- 13 Annual Report of the Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts, 1962-1963 (regarding acquisition of BDBC works)
- 14 Drawing School books (9)
- 15 Books
 - The Royalty of Friendship*, compiled by Alice L. Williams (Boston: Samuel E. Cassino, 1886)
 - Robert Browning: Old Pictures in Florence* (Florence: Giulio Giannini & Son, 1923)
 - In Memoriam: Elizabeth Lean Head, 1833-1914* (U.S.: publisher not identified, 1914)
 - Book of etchings (no title or publisher given, c. 1849)

Box 8 – OV

Artistic Japan, June 1889-May 1890

The Graphic Christmas Number, 1883, illustrated by Randolph Caldecott

Series III: Photographs

Box 9

Folder

- 1 Bertha Corson Day Bates
 - 1.1 BCD in her studio, no date
 - 1.2 BCD, c. 1892

- 2 Chadds Ford, 1899
 - 2.1 BCD and other students washing brushes (cyanotype and black and white copy)
 - 2.2 Female students in front of their dormitory, the Lafayette's Headquarters building (cyanotype and black and white copy)
 - 2.3 Howard Pyle and students at picnic table, Valley Forge, August 20, 1899 (cyanotype)
 - 2.4 Howard Pyle and students picnicking par terre at Valley Forge, August 20, 1899 (cyanotype and black and white copy)
 - 2.5 Students in costume at Chadds Ford
 - 2.6 Students at door of Chadds Ford school (negative)

- 3 Drexel, 1893-1894
 - 3.1 BCD with Caroline Gussman, Jessie Gordon, and ____ Fuller, June 2, 1893 (4 copies and glass plate negative)
 - 3.2 Female students at tea, c. 1894
 - 3.3 Female students at tea, c. 1894
 - 3.4 Gussman, Gordon, and BCD in modeling class, February 1894

- 4 Howard Pyle
 - 4.1 Howard Pyle seated with students standing behind him, c. 1903
 - 4.2 Howard Pyle at easel

- 5 Artwork