

J.J. Lankes Papers, 1907-1988 (bulk 1922-1934, 1942)

Administration Information

Creator

J.J. Lankes

RBR Illus. L2 1907

Extent

2 letter-size document cases, 1 legal-size document case. 1.5 linear feet.

Abstract

A collection consisting primarily of letters sent to J.J. Lankes, renowned woodcut artist. The letters detail business and personal events, and correspondents include Charles Burchfield, Helen Keller, William J. Schwanekamp, and Robert Frost.

Terms of Use

The J.J. Lankes Papers is open for research.

Reproduction of Materials

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Acquisition

The J.J. Lankes Papers were bequeathed to the Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library through the will of Julius Bartlett Lankes (J.B. Lankes), son of J.J. Lankes, in 2010.

Biographical Note

Julius John Lankes, known as J.J. Lankes (1884–1960), was an American woodcut artist and illustrator. The majority of his work features nature scenes of the eastern United States. As an artist, he was friends with a number of poets and writers who commissioned work for publications, including Robert Frost, Beatrix Potter and Sherwood Anderson.

Lankes was born in Buffalo and graduated from the Buffalo Commercial and Electro-Mechanical Institute in 1902. It was only after attending the Art Students League of Buffalo and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts that he created his first woodcut. In 1910 Lankes formed the Saturday

Sketch Club with other students from the Albright Art Academy, including lifelong friend William Schwanekamp. The group met in an East Aurora cabin to develop their artistic skills. In 1914 Lankes married Edee Maria Bartlett, and his first child Julius Bartlett was born in 1915. Lankes lived in Gardenville, NY and Hilton Village, VA. Throughout his career, Lankes produced about 1,300 woodcuts, many of which were published in magazines and books. Before WWII, Lankes was an art professor at Wells College. During WWII, Lankes served as head of technical illustrating in the reproduction section of Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory.

Throughout his life, Lankes' work was often seen on exhibition in places as far away as Auckland, New Zealand. His publications include Virginia Woodcuts (1930) and A Woodcut Manual (1932). He was a member of a number of professional organizations, including the Society of American Graphic Arts and American Artists Professional League. Today his work can still be found in galleries across the country.

Lankes died in 1960, after suffering a stroke in 1959. He is buried in Acacia Park Cemetery in North Tonawanda.

William Schwanekamp (1893-1970) was another prominent Buffalo artist, who worked in the printmaking, etching and painting mediums. He participated in several arts societies, including the Buffalo Society of Artists (President from 1939-41), the Artists Guild of Buffalo, and the Arts Club of Buffalo (Secretary in 1916). From 1919-1958 he was employed in a local advertising agency, Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn.

Charles Harris Whitaker (1872–1938) was an architect born in Rhode Island. He was close friends with Lankes, and wrote a book on his work in 1924 titled The Work of J.J. Lankes. Whitaker frequently traveled and studied art abroad.

Clare Boothe Luce, born Ann Clare Boothe (1903–1987) was a playwright, journalist and US Ambassador. She wrote for *Life* magazine as a war journalist until 1942, when she began her political career in the House of Representatives. Later she served as Ambassador to Italy. In 1983, she became the first female to be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Scope and Content

The J.J. Lankes Papers Collection is organized in four series: General Correspondence, William Schwanekamp Correspondence Charles Whitaker Correspondence and Clare Luce Correspondence.

General Correspondence (1907-1988, n.d.; bulk 1921-1934) is organized alphabetically by sender's last name, then chronologically. The letters contained here were primarily sent to Lankes by colleagues, publishers and friends. The letters discuss business such as exhibitions and

publishing, and personal life including traveling. The Miscellaneous folder contains form letters such as invitations and letters from senders whose name could not be deciphered. The Lankes Papers folder contains drafts and notes written by Lankes, as well as a comic newsletter written by several friends.

William Schwanekamp Correspondence (1912-1938, n.d.) contains letters sent by Schwanekamp to Lankes. The letters are in individual folders arranged by date. Some letters are quite lengthy and illustrate the depth of friendship between Schwanekamp and Lankes, as well as Schwanekamp's sense of humor. Some examples depict social and political life of the time, as seen in the flyers and articles on measures taken to reduce unemployment in Boston (Feb. 1914). There are also pictures of Schwanekamp and his children (Jan. 7, 1919).

Charles Whitaker Correspondence (1922-1940, n.d.; bulk 1922-1931) contains letters sent by Whitaker to Lankes. The letters are in individual folders arranged by date. Whitaker was the editor of *The Journal of The American Institute of Architects*, and many letters pertain to the business of Whitaker using Lankes' woodcuts in publications. Based on the letters, Whitaker appears to have worked hard to promote Lankes' work professionally by requesting specific pieces for the journal or suggesting venues for exhibition. The later letters include more personal items, such as tales of Whitaker's many travels. There is one folder of letters sent by Gene Whitaker requesting the return of property after Charles died.

Clare Luce Correspondence (1941-1942, n.d.; bulk 1942) concerns a project, and thus includes letters from multiple parties connected to Clare Luce. Letters here are from Luce, Isabel Hill (secretary to Luce), Emily Connor (of Marchbanks Press) and Edmund Thompson (of Hawthorn House printer). Although there are some letters by Lankes, the letters were primarily sent to Lankes. The letters are arranged chronologically.

Arrangement

J.J. Lankes Papers

- General Correspondence
- William Schwanekamp Correspondence
- Charles Whitaker Correspondence
- Clare Luce Correspondence

Container List

Box 1

- General Correspondence, 1907-1988, n.d. (bulk 1921-1934)
 - A-C, 1907-1935, n.d. (bulk 1921-1931)
 - D-G, 1920-1947, n.d. (bulk 1929-1934)

H-I, 1919-1933, n.d. (bulk 1919, 1922-1925)
J-L, 1911-1932, n.d. (bulk 1921-1932)
M-Q, 1918-1941, n.d. (bulk 1926-1934)
R-V, 1913-1978, n.d. (bulk 1927-1934)
W-Z, 1919-1937, n.d. (bulk 1930-1932)
Misc., 1919-1988, n.d.

Box 2

A-C Oversize 1919, 1932
J-L Oversize 1923, 1931, n.d.
Lankes Papers 1913-1988, n.d.

William Schwanekamp Correspondence (1912-1938, n.d.)

undated
Nov. 9, 1912
Nov. 16, 1912
Nov. 30, 1912
Oct. 28, 1913
Nov. 10, 1913
Jan. 7, 1914
Jan. 12, 1914
Jan. 22, 1914
Feb. 1914
Feb. 2, 1914
March 1, 1914
July 31, 1918
Sept. 3, 1918
Jan. 7, 1919
May 29, 1919
Sept. 30 1919
Jan. 2, 1920
Jan. 6, 1920
Jan. 20, 1920
March 31, 1920
Nov. 22, 1920
July 22, 1922
Sept. 13, 1922
Oct. 15, 1922
Jan. 11, 1923
Feb. 14, 1923
March 14, 1923

April 2, 1923
April 16, 1923
June 10, 1923
July 9, 1923
July 25, 1923
Aug. 3, 1923
Aug. 7, 1923
Oct. 4, 1923
Oct. 31, 1923
Dec. 27, 1923
Jan. 9, 1924
Jan 17, 1924
Feb. 1924
Feb. 6, 1924
Feb. 9, 1924
March 11, 1924
April 1, 1924
July 15, 1924
Dec. 15, 1924
March 20, 1925
April 16, 1925
May 18, 1925
Dec. 14, 1925
Dec. 26, 1925
March 15, 1926
March 24, 1926
May 22, 1926
April 6, 1927
July 6, 1927
Oct. 20, 1927
Jan. 10, 1928
Feb. 23, 1928
March 23, 1928
April 3, 1928
April 27, 1928
Feb. 4, 1929
July 8, 1929
July 31, 1929
Sept. 27, 1929
Oct. 22, 1929

May 2, 1930
March 24, 1931
Sept. 18, 1931
Feb. 2, 1932
March 22, 1932
May 26, 1932
Feb. 16, 1933
Feb. 23, 1933
May 11, 1933
June 14, 1933
April 16, 1934
May 21, 1934
June 27, 1934
Aug. 31, 1934
Oct. 5, 1934
Feb. 6, 1935
April 17, 1935
Oct. 15, 1935
Jan. 7, 1936
Nov. 7, 1936
May 5, 1937
Jan. 31, 1938
May 12, 1938

Box 3

Charles Whitaker Correspondence (1922-1940, n.d.; bulk 1922-1931)

undated
Feb. 7, 1922
Feb. 14, 1922
March 18, 1922
March 30, 1922
Sept. 26, 1922
Oct. 2, 1922
Dec. 1, 1922
Dec. 29, 1922
1923 (month unknown)
Jan. 26, 1923
Feb. 2, 1923
Feb. 16, 1923
April 6, 1923

May 2, 1923
May 29, 1923
June 24, 1923
July 12, 1923
Aug. 5, 1923
Sept. 10, 1923
Nov. 8, 1923
Nov. 14, 1923
Nov. 23, 1923
Dec. 10, 1923
Dec. 15, 1923
Jan. 26, 1924
March 5, 1924
June 15, 1925
June 23, 1927
July 17, 1927
Aug. 13, 1927
Aug. 25, 1927
Oct. 27, 1927
March 15, 1928
April 7, 1928
April 28, 1928
Aug. 25, 1928
Oct. 3, 1928
Oct. 25, 1928
Nov. 22, 1928
Feb. 17, 1929
May 25, 1929
Dec. 10, 1929
Dec. 17, 1929
Dec. 26, 1929
Jan. 5, 1930
Jan. 20, 1930
Jan. 22, 1930
April 6, 1930
June 1, 1930
July 5, 1930
July 5, 1930 and July 10, 1930
July 10, 1930
Aug. 9, 1930

Sept. 22, 1930
Nov. 1, 1930
Dec. 22, 1930
Jan. 6, 1931
Jan. 8, 1931
March 1, 1931
March 17, 1931
Nov. 30 1933
May 30, 1934
Jan. 3, 1935
Jan. 10, 1935
Dec. 7, 1935
July 24, 1936
Nov, 20, 1936
Oct. 5, 1937
Spring 1938
Gene Whitaker 1939-1940
Clare Luce Correspondence (1941-1942, n.d.; bulk 1942)
undated
Nov. 13, 1941
Nov. 19, 1941
Nov. 28, 1941
Dec. 12, 1941
Dec. 20, 1941
Jan. 27, 1942
Jan. 29, 1942
Feb. 6, 1942
Feb. 12, 1942
Feb. 21, 1942
March 3, 1942
March 4, 1942
March 17, 1942
March 23, 1942
March 26, 1942
April 1, 1942
April 15, 1942
April 27, 1942
May 7, 1942
May 14, 1942
May 29, 1942

June 2, 1942
 June 5, 1942
 June 10, 1942
 June 11, 1942
 June 13, 1942

Related Materials

The woodcut art of J.J. Lankes - Taylor, Welford Dunaway. NE1112.L37 T38 1999 – CENTRAL

A descriptive checklist of the woodcut bookplates of J. J. Lankes : Foreword by Charles Harris Whitaker - Osburn, Burl N. (Burl Neff), 1896-1962. RBR ILLUS. L2 1937 – CENTRAL

Lankes, his woodcut bookplates - Stone, Wilbur Macey RBR ILLUS. L2 1922 – CENTRAL

J.J. Lankes: painter-graver on wood - Brown, Bolton, 1864-1936. NE1215.L3 B7 – CENTRAL

Twelve book-plates designed by J.J. Lankes - Lankes, Julius J., 1884-1960. RBR ILLUS. L2 1920 – CENTRAL

J. J. Lankes collection, 1905-1962 - Lankes, Julius J., 1884-1960. RBR ILLUS. L2 1905 – CENTRAL

A collection of letters, woodcuts and prints exists at the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library of the University of Virginia, accession number 10164-n.

A collection of letters and woodcuts exists at the Rauner Special Collections Library at Dartmouth College, call number General MS-1115.

Search Terms

Lankes, Julius J., 1884-1960

Wood-engraving, American 20th century.

Art archives--New York (State)--Buffalo.

Art--New York (State)--Buffalo--History--Sources.