



Guide to the William Frederick Paskell Journal, 1883-1885

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

William Frederick Paskell Journal, 1883-1885

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-228-6688
nhhistory.org

Collection Number:

2023.089

Author of Finding Aid:

Sandra L. Wheeler

Creator:

Paskell, William Frederick, 1866-1951

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

1 volume ; 9" x 7.5"

Abstract:

Boston landscape artist William Frederick Paskell (1866-1951) kept this journal between December 1883 and October 1885. He recorded what he painted (he often worked outdoors and was specific about which view or subject he was capturing), whether in oil, watercolor or a pencil sketch, and if he was out with an artist friend, who that was. There are also extended entries about what he saw at Boston art exhibitions, what the local critics thought of his work, to whom he sold work, what they paid and his problems finding purchasers willing to pay more than small amounts. He recorded two summer painting trips in detail – one to the White Mountains near Conway, NH, with a stop at Long Island in Lake Winnepesaukee, NH, and another to Lake Baboosic in Amherst, NH. At the end of the volume are several loose lists: "Water Color Drawings & Sketches;" "Oil Paintings and Sketches;" "Pencil Drawings & Black and White." These indicate titles, sizes, and whether or not they sold.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The William Frederick Paskell Journal was the gift of Sheila W. and Samuel M. Robbins on December 28, 2023.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Korrena Cowing in June 2024. The finding aid was written by Sandra L. Wheeler in February 2025. This finding aid follows the standards set forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

This volume is paper based and requires a book cradle for use.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, William Frederick Paskell Journal, 2023.089. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

William Frederick Paskell (1866-1951) was born in London, England, on October 5, 1866, to William Edward Paskell (1840-1900) and Mary (Jupp) Paskell (1841-1888), who emigrated to Boston around 1873 with William and two younger boys (Albert and Ernest). Two more children (Laura and Florence) were born in the United States. In England, William Edward had followed his father Samuel into the picture frame business (Samuel was listed as a “picture framer and restorer” in the 1851 London census); before leaving London, he was a “carver and gilder.” The 1880 Boston census listed him as a “gilder,” and his son William Frederick referred in the journal to working for his father “in the city” occasionally, though the Boston City Directory does not list a business under his name.

William Frederick Paskell became a U.S. Citizen in either 1887 or 1894 (records vary). He lived with his parents in Jamaica Plain during the years of the journal, but found his own lodgings in Boston shortly thereafter. Through the succeeding years he listed himself in the City Directory variously as a ‘landscape painter,’ ‘artist,’ and ‘proprietor of a painting studio.’

In 1901 he married Mary Morgan (1870-). They had at least five children: William Albert (1901-1968), Ruth (1903-), Arthur (1905-1907), Dorothy (1908-), and Alfred (1910-). Dorothy married John Leahy in 1930. William Frederick Paskell died in Boston in 1951.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

William Frederick Paskell (1866-1951), a young landscape painter, made almost daily entries between December 1883 and October 1885 in which he recorded what he painted (size, medium, subject). He noted details about the landscape: weather, time of day, what species of trees or plants, and names of features such as mountains and streams. Although most of the entries were written at home in the Roxbury-Jamaica Plain area west of Boston, he went on two painting trips to New Hampshire. In August of 1884 he spent several weeks in the White Mountains near Conway, where he climbed and painted Mount Chocorua, noted the damage left behind by the hurricane of 1882 in Passaconaway, fished for trout, navigated a log boom floating down a river, and spent time at a ‘camp’ on Long Island in Lake Winnepesaukee. A year later, he went to Baboosic Lake in Amherst, NH. Although he was with others on both trips, the diaries contain little information about them other than that those at Baboosic Lake taught him to play poker.

He noted what he saw at art exhibitions in Boston, including those of the Boston Art Club and the 1884 Mechanics Fair in Boston. Occasionally local critics wrote about his work, and he quoted from their reviews. Throughout the journal, Paskell discussed his interactions with local artists, some his contemporaries and others older. One of these, Ida Bothe, was something of a mentor. He had strong opinions about the purpose of landscape painting: it should elicit a reverence for and awe of nature and God, its creator. He disparaged artists who in his opinion pandered to popular taste and lamented the lack of discerning buyers to purchase his work. At age 20, he rented a room and mounted his own (unsuccessful) one-man show; towards the end of the journal, he looked for a “room” for a studio, for he had begun to teach and wanted space for that as well as to work on and show his artwork.

At the end of the journal are loose pages with dated lists of his work in watercolor, oils, and pencil with titles, measurements, and notations indicating those that had sold.

Throughout the journal, he referred to people only by surname, making it difficult to firmly identify local friends and colleagues. There is no mention of family members or family activities, or of how or from whom he learned to paint. Although he was clearly familiar with artists of international and historical fame (Turner, Michelangelo) as well as painting genres (such as the Barbizon school), there is no indication of how or where he saw reproductions of their work.

Arrangement:

This is a single bound volume with loose pages at the end.

Contents List

Volume 1 William Frederick Paskell Journal, 1883-1885
[200 bound pages, 9 loose pages]

Subject Terms

People:

Boggs, Frank Myers, 1855-1926
Bothe, Ida
Brewer, Gardner, Mrs., -1888
Chase, J. Eastman, 1840-1923
Cropsey, Jasper Francis, 1823-1900
Cole, Joseph Foxcroft, 1837-1892
De Blois, Francois B., 1829-1913
Dupré, Jules, 1811-1899
Enneking, John Joseph, 1841-1916
Gaugengigl, I. M. (Ignaz Marcel), 1855-1932
Gendrot, Felix Albert, 1866-1955
Gibson, W. Hamilton (William Hamilton), 1850-1896
Jenks, Phoebe A. Pickering Hoyt, 1847-1907
Juglaris, Tommaso, 1844-1925
Murphy, John Francis, 1853-1921
Paskell, William Frederick, 1866-1951
Smith, Francis Hopkinson, 1838-1915
Smillie, George Henry, 1840-1921
Turner, Ross, 1847-1915
Vonnoh, Robert, 1858-1933
Walker, Henry Oliver, 1843-1929
Waugh, Frederick Judd, 1861-1940
Weir, Julian Alden, 1852-1919
Woodbury, Charles H. (Charles Herbert), 1864-1940

Organizations:

Boston Art Club
Doll & Richards (Gallery)
Henry W. Patterson & Co.
Williams & Everett

Subjects:

Art
Diaries
Exhibitions
Fairs
Fishing
Hiking
Hurricanes
Landscape painting
Logging
Mountains
Painting
Societies and clubs
Travel

Locations:

Albany, NH
Amherst, NH
Baboosic Lake, NH
Bear Mountain, NH
Boston, MA
Conway, NH
Dorchester, MA
Jamaica Plain, MA
Lake Winnepesaukee, NH
Mount Carrigain, NH
Mount Chocorua, NH
Mount Passaconaway, NH
Mount Potash, NH
Mount Whiteface, NH
Oliverian Brook, NH
Owl's Head Mountain, NH
Roxbury, MA
Swift River, NH
White Mountains, NH

Occupations:

Art dealers
Artists
Painters

Related Materials**Museum**

The museum has seven drawings and two sketchbooks by William Frederick Paskell. See museum accession 2023.040.

Library

Kristiansen, Rolf H. and John J. Leahy. *Rediscovering some New England artists, 1875-1900: biographies and memorabilia of some little known and forgotten master New England painters*. Dedham, MA.: Gardner-O'Brien Associates, c. 1987. Call number: 759.14 K92r

Leahy, John J., Jr. *Sketch books of William Frederick Paskell compiled by John J. Leahy Jr.* 1984. Call number: 759.13.P282

Index of People, tentative

These people were mentioned in the journal by surname only. Possible identities and their occupations are below as listed in Boston City Directories for 1884 and 1885:

Brewer, Sarah
Crowninshield, Frederick, artist
Dickinson, Sidney, assistant editor, Boston Journal
Dickinson, George H., assistant editor, Boston Globe
Downes, William H., art critic, Daily Advertiser
Eaton, John S., painter
Eaton, William E., painter
Engles, Hugo F., artist
Flohr, Emil, artist
Fuller, Alonzo, portrait painter
Graves, Abbott F., artist
Green, Albert H., painter
Green, Charles E.L., artist
Hatfield, James, painter
Heath, Mrs. Abbie K.M., teacher of water color painting
Jones, Alister S., artist
Jones, Daniel, painter
Jones, Henry, artist
Jones, Joseph L., artist
Jones, Robert, painter
Kimball, I. Burt, art critic
King, Frank K., painter
King, George, painter
Knox, Edward, artist
Knox, John, painter
Little, Phillip, artist
Martin, Mrs. L.E., artist
McLean, Charles H., painter
McLean, N. Wallace, landscape painter
Pierce, Charles F., artist
Sanderson, Charles W., artist
Stewart, Phillip, artist
Tompkins, Joseph E., painter
Turner, Charles H., artist
Turner, Wilbur, artist
Wagner, Edward, artist
Weinz, William F., artist