

Champney Papers (1866-2002) S 759.13 C453c, Manuscript



This collection represents a small portion of the work of James Wells Champney (1843-1903), a prolific and successful artist and illustrator in the last quarter of the 19th century. Following the Civil War, Champney went to Europe to continue his artistic training. After his return in 1873, he married Elizabeth Williams Champney (1850-1922), author of more than 30 novels and numerous stories printed in *Harper's*, *Lippincott's*, *Scribner's* and *The Century* magazines. The couple moved to Deerfield in 1876, taking up residence in Mrs. Champney's ancestral home, the Elijah Williams house (built on lot 15 South by Timothy Childs in c. 1730). In 1877, Champney became a professor of art at Smith College, Northampton, Mass., and began splitting his time between Deerfield and his New

York City studio. The couple continued to travel in Europe, as well. James Wells (who often signed himself "Champ") and Elizabeth Williams (who favored "Lizzie" at the beginning of her career) Champney collaborated on numerous projects, with James frequently illustrating his wife's works. Together they also produced two children: Edourd Frere Champney (b. 1874—named for Champney's mentor in Paris) and Maria Mitchell Champney (b. 1877—named for Elizabeth W. Champney's favorite professor at Vassar College).

The collection consists of James Wells Champney's sketchbooks, loose sketches, and a small number of letters. Three scrapbooks, presumably maintained by Mr. and Mrs. Champney, contain numerous photographs, newspaper clippings, printed items, and some business and personal correspondence. Elizabeth W. Champney is represented in the collection by several letters from publishers found in the scrapbooks. The remainder of the collection consists of later material, much of it research notes and correspondence done in preparation of a 1965 James Wells Champney exhibition and catalogue, done by the American Studies Group of Deerfield Academy, with the help of J. Peter Spang, curator of the Heritage Foundation.



Provenance: The scrapbooks, sketches, and sketchbooks, with the exception of one, were donated by Ms. Frances Malone of Greenfield, Mass. The other sketchbook was a gift of Henry N. Flynt in 1970. This sketchbook has a Museum accession number of 63.326. The remainder of the collection was gathered by Joseph Peter Spang III.

Box and Folder List

Box 1—Sketchbooks

9 sketchbooks, 1866-1890, featuring mostly pen and ink and pencil drawings by James Wells Champney

Colour: An elementary manual ..., owned by James Wells Champney, with a drawing on back fly-leaf



Box 2—Scrapbooks



Volume 1 (“Mark Twain’s Scrapbook”):

Mounted clippings, letters, invitations, business cards, programs, catalogues, and loose sketches

Volume 2 (flowered cover): Mounted and unmounted cyanotype photos from c. 1880s, and unmounted black and white photos

Volume 3 (“Literary Scraps”): contains letters, exhibition programs of Champney’s pastels, invoices, and clippings, some unmounted



Box 3—Champney Family

Folder 1: Pencil and pen and ink sketches by James Wells Champney

Folder 2: Two sketches and one reproduction from Forbes Library (1871, 1877, and undated)

Folder 3: Manuscript letters and notes by James Wells Champney, 1883-1899

Folder 4: “Elizabeth Williams Champney: A Biographical History, a short-title time line, and a bibliography of her works,” by Wendy Alexander

Folder 5: Miscellaneous Elizabeth Champney documents

- typescript of "The Old Soldier on the Common"
- typescript of letter to her brother Orson, 1873
- excerpt from "A Woman of the Century ..."

Folder 6: Printed materials relating to Edouard Frere Champney

Folder 7: Miscellaneous family papers

- manuscript list of names from a ledger
- unpublished letters concerning the giant Champney elm tree

--photocopy of letter describing Champney's grave

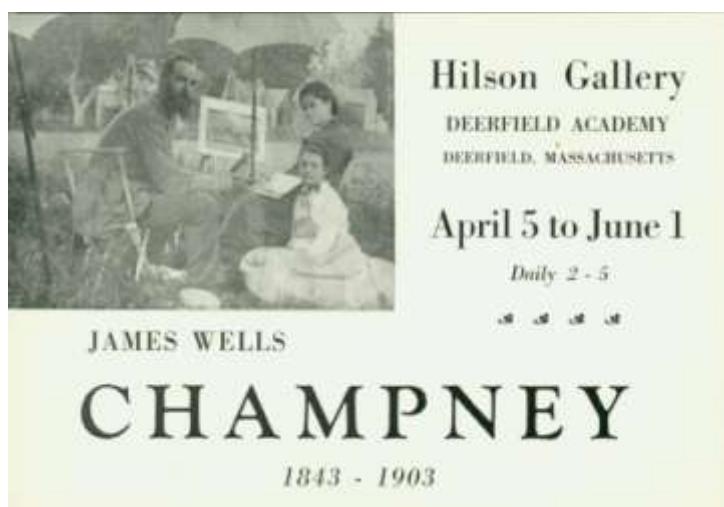
Folder 8: Miscellaneous photos, copies, art catalogues, and publications on the Champneys

Folder 9: Miscellaneous correspondence on Champney family research

Folder 10: Notes by Joseph Peter Spang III on James Wells Champney

Folder 11: Miscellaneous Champney newspaper clippings

Folder 12: Photographs of Champney, his family, studio, and paintings



Box 4—James Wells Champney Exhibit

Folder 1: Letters to Joseph Peter Spang III

Folder 2: Joseph Peter Spang III's correspondence regarding the exhibit and catalogue

Folder 3: Robert Merriam's correspondence regarding the exhibit

Folder 4: Correspondence with other institutions regarding Champney material

Folder 5: Information sheets of Deerfield Academy students who took part in the exhibit

Folder 6: Letters to Christopher Monkhouse (Deerfield Academy student, part of the American Studies Group)

Folder 7: Notes relating to Champney exhibit

Folder 8: Permission forms and acknowledgements of lenders to the exhibit

Folder 9: Press releases and notices of the exhibit and catalogue

Folder 10: Exhibition newspaper clippings



Box 5—James Wells Champney Exhibit

Folder 1: Corrected typescripts of exhibit catalogue

Folder 2: Catalogue galley

Folder 3: Photographs used in the catalogue

Folder 4: 1st and 2nd printings of the exhibit catalogue; exhibit announcement cards; *Deerfield Journal*, summer 1965; *Deerfield Scroll*, vol. 39, no. 10

Folder 5: Photographs of Champney's paintings

Folder 6: Photographs documenting the exhibit

Folder 7: Guest book for exhibit; list of individuals who received catalogues and thanks; index cards listing Champney's paintings on display; index cards with notes on James Champney

