The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives

John Taylor Johnston Collection

Processed by Melissa Bowling, Assistant Archivist October, 2009

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives Office of the Senior Vice President, Secretary and General Counsel 1000 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10028-0198 212-650-2573 archives@metmuseum.org

Table of Contents

Collection Summary	1
Administrative Information	1
Restrictions	1
Biographical Note	2
Scope and Content	
Arrangement	
Related Materials	
Subject Headings	
Series Descriptions and Container List	

Collection Summary

Title: John Taylor Johnston Collection

Creator: Johnston, John Taylor, 1820-1893.

Dates: 1832-1981

Extent: Approximately 2.5 linear feet (2 boxes, 9 custom book boxes)

Abstract: John Taylor Johnston was a founder of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and was elected its first President in 1870. He held this position until he retired in 1889; the institution's Trustees subsequently voted him Honorary President for Life. The collection consists of travel journals, visitor books, correspondence, family histories, and other unpublished and published documents relating to the life, travels and family history of John Taylor Johnston. The bulk of this material relates to Johnston's personal affairs and is not concerned with The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Administrative Information

Provenance: Created by various sources including, but not limited to, John Taylor Johnston and other Johnston descendents. The bulk of the collection was received in 1978 and the early 1980's through gifts and bequests of Noel Johnston King, John Johnston Appleton, and William W. Appleton. Other donors include Mrs. Richard N. Pierson and various unnamed sources.

Form of citation: [Title of item], [date], Box [number], Folder/Volume [number], John Taylor Johnston Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives.

Restrictions

Access: Collection is open for research. Researchers are required to use transcripts when available for their initial access to travel journals. Requests for access to originals will be reviewed by Archives staff on a case by case basis.

Use restrictions: Material in Series I and II are in the public domain and may be freely quoted. Copyright restrictions may apply to items in Series III, IV and V; consult Archives staff regarding permission to quote or reproduce.

Biographical Note

John Taylor Johnston was a founder of The Metropolitan Museum of Art was elected its first President in 1870. He held this position until he retired in 1889; the institution's Trustees subsequently voted him Honorary President for Life.

Johnston was born April 8, 1820 in New York to John Johnston, a successful businessman and patron of the arts, and Margaret Taylor. He attended Edinburgh High School in Scotland, the University of the City of New York (known today as New York University) and Yale Law School. In 1843 he was admitted to the bar and practiced law until 1848, when he was named President of what was to become the Central Railroad of New Jersey. Johnston was married in 1851 to Frances Colles (d.1888). Their children were Mrs. Robert W. de Forest (Emily), Mrs. Henry E. Coe (Eva), Mrs. Pierre Mali (Frances) and John Herbert Johnston. Johnston kept diaries to document his travels abroad with his family as a young man, as well as his leisure and business travels later in life. An avid and notable art collector, Johnston displayed his paintings at his home on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Eight Street and eventually gave many objects to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. John Taylor Johnston died March 24, 1893.

Scope and Content

The John Taylor Johnston Collection consists of travel journals, visitor books, correspondence, family histories, and other unpublished and published documents relating to the life, travels and family history of John Taylor Johnston. Travel journals written by John Taylor Johnston between 1832 and 1869 describe his leisure and business trips. Handwritten text and faded ink make some entries difficult to read; however, some are supplemented by typed transcripts. Visitor's books record attendees of regularly hosted viewings of Johnston's collection and artist receptions held at his residence. Typed transcripts of correspondence and family records found in Series III and IV provide insight into the personal life and family history of John Taylor Johnston. Series V contains miscellaneous documentation including clippings, an auction catalog, obituary, etc.

Arrangement

The John Taylor Johnston Collection is organized in the following series:

Series I. Travel Journals I.A. Originals I.B. Transcripts Series II. Visitor Books Series III. Correspondence Series IV. J. Herbert Johnston's File Vol. I Series V. Miscellaneous

Related Materials

John Taylor Johnston files, Office of the Secretary Records, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives.

Colles Family Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. Catalog record and finding aid link: <u>http://catnyp.nypl.org/record=b9045369</u>

Subject Headings

The John Taylor Johnston Collection has been indexed in the Thomas J. Watson Library online catalog using the following subject headings. Those seeking related materials should search under these terms.

Johnston, John Taylor, 1820-1893 Johnston, John Taylor, 1820-1893 – Art collections Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.) Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.). Johnston collection. Central Railroad of New Jersey Colles family Johnston, John, 1781-1851

Series Descriptions and Container List

Series I. Travel Journals

Subseries I.A. Originals

9 custom book boxes (16 volumes), 1 folder.

The original travel journals of John Taylor Johnston consist of 16 volumes written between 1832 and 1869, with a gap between 1850 and 1858. The journals document the leisure and business travels of John Taylor Johnston beginning at age 12 and continuing through adulthood to age 49. Some journals contain multiple accounts, spanning many years; they are listed below in the order in which they appear. The journals offer details of his travels through Europe and the United States and relate significant personal and world events such as his wedding excursion, trips with his family, a visit to Richmond, VA in 1865 after the surrender of the Confederate Army, and a trip West on the newly-built Union Pacific Railroad. When available, the location of the transcript has been noted in parentheses.

Box <u>Volume</u> <u>Title</u>

1	1	Trip to Europe: May 10, 1832-Mar. 12, 1833. (Box 10, f. 3)
1	2	Trip to Europe (cont'd): Mar. 13, 1833-June 15, 1833. (Box 10, f. 3)
	3	Trip to Europe (cont'd): June 16, 1833-Oct. 22, 1833. (Box 10, f. 3)
	5	Trip to Virginia Springs: June 18, 1835-Aug. 21, 1835.
2	4	John T. Johnston's Travels in 1832 and 1833 in various parts of Europe:
2	4	May 10, 1832-Dec. 31, 1833.
	5	John T. Johnston's Journal. 1836: Sept. 8, 1836-Dec. 31, 1836. (Box 10, f.
	5	4)
		Journal for 1837: Jan. 1, 1837-Dec. 25, 1837.
		Memoranda. 1838: Jan. 1, 1838-Apr. 25, 1838.
3	6	Virginia Springs: June 22, 1836-Sept. 1, 1836.
		Virginia Springs: July 21, 1837-Sept. 14, 1837. (Box 10, f. 2)
		Saratoga: June 11, 1838-June 20, 1838.
		Ballston Spa: July 20, 1838-Aug. 31, 1838.
		Ballston Spa: July 24, 1839-Aug. 30, 1839.
	7	White Sulfur and Hot Springs: July 14, 1840-Aug. 28, 1840.
		Lebanon Springs: July 14, 1841-Aug. 27, 1841.
		White Mountains: July 14, 1842-Aug. 30, 1842.
		Schooley's Mountain: July 25, 1843-Sept. 24, 1843.
		Schooley's Mountain: July 8, 1846-Aug. 28, 1846.
		Sharon Springs: July 9, 1847-Aug. 26, 1847.
		Sharon Springs: July 7, 1848-Aug. 30, 1848.
		Sharon Springs. July 10, 1849-Aug. 29, 1849.
		Sharon Springs. July 9, 1850-Aug. 30, 1850.
4	8	Journal of a Tour to the West in the Spring of 1842: May 13, 1842-July 1,
		1842. (Box 10, f. 2)
5	9	Trip to Europe: Sept. 25, 1843-July 12, 1844.
	10	Trip to Europe, cont'd: July 13, 1844-July 21, 1845.
6	11	Journal of a Visit to Europe in the Fall of 1843: Sept. 25, 1843-July 5, 1844.
		(Box 10, f. 5)
		Note: Map has been pulled from volume and placed in Box 1, Folder 1.
	12	Journal in Europe. Vol. 2.: July 6, 1844-July 21, 1845.

7	13	Journal of my Wedding Excursion in the Spring of 1850: May 15, 1850-July 7, 1850. (Box 10, f. 2)
		Excursion in the White Mountains, by the Valley of the Connecticut, returning by Lake Winnipisseogee. Summer 1858: Aug. 23, 1858-Sept. 7, 1858.
		Excursion to Niagara Falls, Trenton Falls and Montreal, 1860: Sept. 12, 1860-Sept. 22, 1860.
		Journal of a trip to Richmond, VA after the Surrender, 1865: May 15, 1865- May 26, 1865. (Box 10, f. 2)
		Journal of a trip with my wife to Chicago, St. Louis and Cincinnati, 1867: Apr. 29, 1867-May 13, 1867.
		A Trip to the West over the Union Pacific Railroad (as far as completed) in the Summer of 1868: July 17, 1868-July 30, 1868. (Box 10, f. 2 and f. 6)
	14	Journal of an Excursion to Great Britain with my family in the Summer of 1859: May 11, 1859-Oct. 26, 1859.
8	15	Journal of a Trip to Europe with my Family in the Fall of 1868: Sept. 19, 1868-Feb. 9, 1869. (Box 10, f. 7)
9	16	Trip to Europe: Sept. 19, 1868-Aug. 31, 1869. (Box 10, f. 8)
10	1	Map from "Journal of a Visit to Europe in the Fall of 1843" (Box 6, Vol. 11).

Subseries I.B. Transcripts

7 folders

This subseries consists of undated transcripts of various parts of Johnston's travel journals. The transcripts titled "Journals of John Taylor Johnston 1829-1842" in Folder 2 appear to be excerpts from the journals, most likely edited by Emily J. de Forest, at times only containing a sentence or two from the original journal entry. Transcripts titled "John Johnston's Journal of a trip to England, Scotland, and Europe: May 10, 1832-Oct. 22, 1833" are edited and abridged by Johnston's great-granddaughter, Noel Johnston King. Location of original journals is not known for all transcripts. When available, the location of the original travel journal has been noted in parentheses.

Box Folder <u>Title</u>

10	2	Journals of John Taylor Johnston 1829-1842.
		Note: transcripts are provided for the following:
		1829, Saratoga Springs
		1830, Saratoga Springs
		1831
		1834
		1836
		1837, Hot Springs, Virginia (Box 3, Vol. 6)
		1838
		1840-1841, Walking Trip
		1842, Tour in the West (Box 4, Vol. 8)
		1850, Wedding Excursion (Box 7, Vol. 13)
		1865, Trip to Richmond after its Surrender (Box 7, Vol. 13)
		1868, Trip over the Union pacific Railroad (Box 7, Vol. 13)
	3	John Johnston's Journal of a trip to England, Scotland, and Europe: May 10,
		1832-Oct. 22, 1833. (Box 1, Vol. 1, 2, and 3)

- 4 John T. Johnston's Journal 1836: Sept. 8, 1836-Dec. 31, 1836 (Box 2, Vol. 5, pg. 1-14)
- 5 Journal of a Visit to Europe in the Fall of 1843: Sept. 25, 1843-May 7, 1844. *Note: Gaps between Mar. 4-19, 1844 and Apr. 9-27, 1844.* (Box 6, Vol. 11)
- 6 A Trip to the West over the Union Pacific Railroad (as far as completed) in the Summer of 1868: July 17, 1868-July 30, 1868. (Box 7, Vol. 13)
- 7 Journal of a Trip to Europe with my Family in the Fall of 1868: Oct. 4, 1868-Feb. 9, 1869 (Box 8, Vol. 15, pg. 15-160)
- 8 Penciled Journal for 1869: Feb. 9, 1869-July 15, 1869. (Box 9, Vol. 16)

Series II. Visitor Books

2 folders

The galleries at Johnston's No. 8 5th Avenue residence held his admirable collection of art. These visitor books are from Johnston's regularly hosted viewings and artist receptions and are signed by notables such as Theodore Roosevelt (Box 10, f. 9, Apr. 8, 1881).

<u>Box Folder Title</u>

- 10 9 Visitor's Book: Feb. 23, 1865-Apr. 8, 1881
 - 10 Visitor's Book: ca. 1870-1875

Series III. Correspondence

1 folder

The series consists of undated transcripts of correspondence to and from John Taylor Johnston with notes made by Emily Johnston de Forest. The letters provide insight into the life and times of Johnston, including his thoughts on Harriet Beecher Stowe's seminal novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Box 11, f. 1, Dec. 13, 1852). The transcripts are chronologically indexed, noting author, recipient, geographic locale, date authored, and page number. Location of original correspondence is unknown.

<u>Box Folder Title</u>

11 1 Letters of John Taylor Johnston, Oct. 9, 1839-Sept. 7, 1873

Series IV. J. Herbert Johnston's File Vol. I

19 folders

This series consists of undated transcripts of extracts of records from family bibles, correspondence, journals, family histories and various other published and unpublished sources. The transcripts titled "Journals of John Johnston" (Box 11, f.8) contain extracts from the journals of Mr. and Mrs. John Johnston, the father and mother of John Taylor Johnston, as well as pieces of John Taylor Johnston's journals. John Johnston's earliest journal entries offer detailed descriptions of his business travels and transactions in India. Location of original sources of transcripts is unknown.

<u>Box Folder Title</u>

- 11 2 Contents
 - 3 Records from the Family Bibles of John Johnston and Samuel Johnston
 - 4 "The Old Merchants of New York City" by Walter Barrett [1863]

5	"Grandma Johnston" (Margaret Taylor Johnston) 1784-1879 by Emily J. de Forest
6	Extracts from Grandma Johnston's "Dinner Party" book [1840-1866]
7	Letters and Papers of John Johnston. Also Letters from Scotch Relatives [1804-
	1907]
8	Journals of John Johnston. [1809-1850]
	Note: transcripts are provided for the following:
	1809, First Voyage to India
	1810, Second Voyage to India
	1812, Trip to N. Ward
	1812, Second Journey to Boston
	1812, Stay at Fishkill during the War of 1812
	1813, First Voyage to Europe
	1816, Journey to the Southward
	1818, Second Voyage to Europe
	1818, Journal of Mrs. John Johnston, Europe
	1822-1825, 1829-1830, Yearly Trips
	1832, Third Voyage to Europe (Includes entries from John Taylor Johnston's
	journal, Box 1-2, Vol. 1-4)
	1835-1843, Yearly Trips
	1843, Fourth Voyage to Europe (Includes entries from John Taylor Johnston's
	journal, Box 5-6, Vol. 9-12)
	1846-1850, Yearly Trips
9	Records of the Johnston Family made by John Humphreys Johnston [1903-
	1907]
10	Alexander Johnston 1810-1845, Extracts from his Diary, Life written by Emily
	J. de Forest. [1839-1845]
11	Epitaph of "E" [1905]
12	Records from the Family Bibles of John Taylor
13	Taylor Records by Margaret Taylor Van Nest
14	Various Taylor Papers [1694-1833]
15	John Taylor, Will, September 4, 1815. Not proved. Last Will and Testament,
	February 10, 1832. Appraisal of his Effects. [1815,1832]
16	Letters about John Taylor from John Humphreys Johnstone [1913-1916]
17	Descendents of John Taylor
18	Letters and Papers from Various Members of the Family of John Taylor [1796-
	1912]
19	Life and Letters of John Burnside Taylor [1815]

20 John Taylor Sherman 1814-1844 [1829-1836]

Series V. Miscellaneous

6 folders

This series contains some previously published works relating to John Taylor Johnston including clippings and an 1876 auction catalog for the sale of objects from Johnston's collection.

Box Folder <u>Title</u>

10	11	Clippings (oversized), v.d.
11	21	Obituary Notice of John Taylor Johnston [1893]
	22	"Christmas 1979 Ancestors" by Dorothy Stewart Pierson [1979]
	23	Draft by Katharine Baetjer, Aug. 1981

- 24 Clippings, v.d.
- 25 Catalogue. The collection of paintings, drawings, and statuary, the property of John Taylor Johnston, Esq. to be sold at auction. [1876]
- 26 "Antiquities of America". Five lectures delivered in the Stuyvesant Institute by Francis L. Hawks, D.D., transcribed from some notes taken by John T. Johnston, New York., n.d.