

William Wetmore Story Papers

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1846-1894



WILLIAM
& MARY

CHARTERED 1693

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Descriptive Summary

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SC 01076

Unit ID

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Unit Date

1846-1894

Language

English

Creator

Story, William Wetmore (1819-1895)

Extent

0.1 Linear Feet

Repository

Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

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Biographical / Historical

William Wetmore Story (February 12, 1819 - October 7, 1895) was an American sculptor, art critic, poet and editor. He was the son of jurist Joseph Story and Sarah Waldo (Wetmore) Story, and graduated from Harvard College in 1838 at the age of nineteen. He moved to Italy in 1856 after receiving a commission for completing a bust of his late father, which resides in the Memorial Hall/Lowell Hall. Story's home, in the Palazzo Barberini, became a central location for Americans in Rome. His most famous work, Cleopatra,(1858) was described and admired in Nathaniel Hawthorne's romance *The Marble Faun*, and is on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Another work, the Angel of Grief, has been replicated near the Stanford Mausoleum at Stanford University. Story submitted a design for the Washington Monument, then under construction. Although the Washington National Monument Society concluded that his design seemed "vastly superior in artistic taste and beauty" to the obelisk already under construction, the obelisk continued to be built, and is what we see today as the monument. In addition, Story sculpted a bronze statue of Joseph Henry on the Mall in Washington, D.C., the scientist who served as the Smithsonian Institution's first Secretary. His "Libyan Sibyl" is on display at the Smithsonian Museum of American Art. Story is buried with his wife, Emelyn Story, in the Protestant Cemetery, Rome, under a statue of his own design (Angel of Grief). His children also pursued artistic careers: Thomas Waldo Story (1855-1915) became a sculptor, Julian Russell Story (1857-1919) was a successful portrait painter, and Edith Marion (1844-1907), the Marchesa Peruzzi de' Medici, became a writer.

Scope and Contents

Letters and poetry of the American sculptor, essayist, and poet, William Wetmore Story. Includes an 1846 poem entitled, "Plea for Peace, "; an 1851 reply to a request for an autograph of his father, Justice Joseph Story (1779-1845); and an 1894 letter giving his opinion on a book and enclosing the clipping of his poem,

"In the Rain."

Keywords

Poetry, Modern--19th century

Poets, American--19th century

Sculptors, American--19th century

Custodial History

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Description of Subordinate Components

Papers

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Container 1 (folder)

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