



Helen Gardner McCormack papers, ca. 1936-1974
SCHS 1069.00
Containers 11/279 – 280A

Creator: McCormack, Helen Gardner, 1903-1974.

Description: 1.25 linear ft.

Biographical/historical note: Director of the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Va. (1930-1940); archivist (1942-1944) and later curator of collections for the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, S.C.; and director of the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, S.C. (1954-1968). She was born in 1903 and died in 1974.

Scope and content: Papers consist of personal and professional correspondence, appointment books, desk diaries and calendars, notes, writings, and other items. Correspondence (1936-1974) mostly concerns professional matters but also includes correspondence with friends and letters (1930s) from McCormack to her family.

Appointment books and desk diaries and calendars (1943-1974) contain information on McCormack's daily professional activities, noting the processing of various collections, visitors, and events at the South Carolina Historical Society and the Gibbes Museum (with some entries in shorthand).

Writings include two manuscripts of articles on Alice Ravenel Huger Smith; articles on No. 313 King Street and Wentworth Street in Charleston (S.C.); and a manuscript (mostly typewritten, with additions and corrections) of a book about maps of Charleston (S.C.) and early Carolina. There are also notes for tours of historic Charleston and house tours.

Other items include papers (1972) pertaining to the Trident Arts Commission of South Carolina and the Charleston Community Arts Council consisting of by-laws, a constitution, grant information, and related correspondence; notes on archival practices and subject headings; clippings; photographs; certificates; a painting (n.d.) of two children in silhouette; and two silhouettes (n.d.) of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gray "by Master Hubard" and Mr. Seville.

Preferred citation: McCormack, Helen Gardner. Helen Gardner McCormack papers, ca. 1936-1974. (1069.00) South Carolina Historical Society.

Search terms:

Hubard, William James, 1807-1862.

McCormack, Helen Gardner, 1903-1974.

Siville, Mlle.

Smith, Alice R. Huger (Alice Ravenel Huger), 1876-
South Carolina Historical Society.
Gibbes Museum of Art (Charleston, S.C.)
Archives.
Art -- South Carolina -- Charleston -- Societies, etc.
Streets -- South Carolina -- Charleston -- King Street, 313.
Streets -- South Carolina -- Charleston -- Wentworth Street.
Charleston (S.C.) -- History.
Charleston (S.C.) -- Maps.
South Carolina -- History.
South Carolina -- Maps.
Genre Calendars.
Clippings.
Letters (correspondence)
Photographs.
Research (document genres)
Silhouettes.
Writings.
Museum directors.

Detailed container and item descriptions:

Helen McCormack Appointment Books/Daily Calendars

11/279/9

Correspondence between the Powder Magazine and Helen McCormack involving a pamphlet on the coat of arms of the Royal Governors of South Carolina. Letter of receipt of Helen McCormack's resignation as Gibbes Art Gallery Curator. Letter between McCormack and Alice R. Huger Smith. Included is an essay by Helen McCormack on William Hubbard. Also included is a published version of the William Hubbard article, "The Hubary Gallery Duplicate Book" that was published in *Antiques Magazine* in May of 1948. Various post cards and Christmas cards are also included.

11/280/1

This appointment book documents Helen McCormack's activities on a daily basis in 1943. She spent time working between the South Carolina Historical Society and the College of Charleston. Her day is divided into appointments with contractors working on the building, researchers, Charleston County Treasurer, Charleston County Auditor, Charleston County Clerk of Court, donors and working on numerous collections. She spent her time working on the Langdon Cheves legal papers and collection, Middleton Papers, Benjamin Allston papers, Allston papers, Governor Allston papers, South Carolina Power Company papers, Conner collection, Wilson-Mazyck collection, Gilman letters, Dulles-Lowell letters, Bowen-Cooke collection, John Stoney Porcher collection, Weston collection, Broughton-Sanders collection, Laurens collection and Teague Collection.

11/280/1

Appointment book from 1947 written almost entirely in shorthand.

11/280/2

Appointment book from 1948 is largely written in shorthand. It contains ideas for exhibits, changing out displays and the cleaning of displays. Documents visits to the Heyward House and. Included are Chinese symbols and their meanings from "Chinese War God". Meetings with the Junior League and work on the Sharpe Collection are documented. Faculty from Kent State University and Oberlin University visited with McCormack.

11/280/2

Appointment book from 1951 includes the day to day activities of Helen McCormack. Activities are comprised of cataloging collections, accessioning and appraising items, labeling documents, cleaning exhibits, penning correspondence, public relations tasks and basic office routine. Invitations to an exhibit at Dayton Art Institute called "The Arts of Old Persia" and an exhibit called "Paintings and Drawings by Fritz Janschka" at the American Art Gallery in NYC are in the appointment book. Her appointments for the Junior League are included as well as her visits to the Manigault House and a meeting with Emily Ravenel. Research on the wills of C. Prioleau Ravenel, Harold Ravenel, Arthur Ravenel, and Rosa Ravenel are in the back of this appointment book.

11/280/3

Appointment book from 1952. McCormack met with staff from the University of California and from Kansas University. She met with or was doing research on Ben Heyward, Louise Porcher and Mrs. Manigault Jenkins. She also spoke with Dr. Dietrich von Bothmer who was Curator of Greek and Roman Art from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her days were filled with office tasks that included cataloging, labeling, and appraising records. She also came in to appraise any damage before and after a big storm. Meetings with pest control companies for the eradication or investigation of silver fish and termites are included. During her office time she was doing research for trade directories. She frequented the Manigault House and the Avery school. Work with Audubon Quadrupeds is also noted.

11/280/3

Appointment book from 1954. McCormack spent her time between the Charleston Museum and the South Carolina Historical Society. McCormack denotes communication with the Guggenheim on the conditions of a painting, and meetings with the Committee of Medical Students' Wives, Guild of South Carolina Artists, Air Force Wives Club, Junior Gallery Committee, and the Southern Regional Council. Also contains records of Junior League obligations. Met with Professor James O. Stakeley from Clemson University. Appointments with Lucas Simons, Mrs. W. B. Gadsdon, and Elise Pinckney. Denotes research on the estate of Eva G. Dumming McCartney. Also research on a portrait of Mrs. Louder by Gilbert Stuart and notes on a Miss Eunice Chambers about Frances Marion painting. Also included are the names and addresses of boys who broke on of McCormack's windows.

11/280/4

Appointment book from 1955. Sent prints to La Scala, Milan for *Porgy and Bess* opening. Thomas Montague Beggs with the National Collection of Fine Arts. Sheet with biographical data/resume on Dr. Werner F. Bornheim, Curator of Museums for the State of Rheinland – Pfalz Germany. Notations on “Drayton Hall” print and “Feast of Herod” print. Picture of M. E. Dulles for University of South Carolina. Speaking engagement for Beta Sigma Phi. Pictures to State College in Orangeburg. Painted photo of Dr. G. E. Manigault. Met with A.A.U.W. about art project. Newspaper article dated November 18, 1955 that was titled, “Finnish Educator Confused by Southerners’ Silence on Segregation Issue.” She has also included his business card and a notation that she invited heads of several cultural organizations to meet with Reino O. H. Oittinen, the educator. Invitees included Mr. and Mrs. Charles Paul of D.S.T, Mr. and Mrs. W. Humphreys of Charleston Mission, Mrs. Dodds from M.A.C, Mr Wiffred Patterson of C.C.A, Miss E. Sanders of C.F.L. and Miss Va Rugheimer of C.L.S. Appointment with American Heritage about the Battle of Cowpens. Business card of Yvon Bizardel, Director of Fine Arts – de la Ville de Paris. Letter of thanks from Marian McMillan. Business card of Reverend Paul B. Freeland of Presbyterian Church, U. S. Board of World Missions.

11/280/4

Appointment book from January – April of 1955. Notation about the Brooklyn Museum and the Guggenheim. Denotes that the Armed Forces Artists were at the Gallery. Went to the opening of the Charleston Artists’ Guild Gallery in the Exchange Building. Met with Exhibition Committee and the Medical Students’ Wives Auxillary. Lectured at Princeton Club.

11/280/5

Appointment book from 1956 includes scraps of paper with names of preservation vendors. An article titled, “Walpole Group Tours Garden,” about the Walpole Society is affixed to one of the pages. Appointment with John Rutledge about painting and John Trumbull for Girl Scouts. Notation about picture of Beethoven by I. Balestieri. Mention of a break in at Junior Gallery and safe. Notation of talking with someone from Carnegie Institute and with Professor Irving H. Cowdrey of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Some correspondence between McCormack and the Gibbs Art Museum.

11/280/5

Appointment book from 1957. Mentions conversation with William Pierson of the Carnegie Study in the Art of the United States and Oliver Jansen from American Heritage. Included notations on a photo of A. Burr by W. Alston. Corresponded with John Ervin Director of University Press of the University of Minnesota. Also corresponded with the Museum of Denver. Met with the Summerville Art Guild.

11/280/6

Appointment book from 1958. University of Georgia art slide project. Day to day activities of McCormack. Notations largely consist of identifying paintings and research requests for patrons. Robert Pinckney. Louis Y. Dawson. Portrait of Andrew Pickens. Instructed Boy Scouts on reproduction for scout badge. R.H. Hanna. Paper clippings with a tiny biography of Edme Jean Pigal.

11/280/6

Appointment book from 1959. Entries were mainly regarding paintings and various meetings with patrons. Names mentioned in appointment book are: Philip Boileau, John Philip Cappello, Mrs Erban Kennedy of Kingstree library. She has scrap paper with a listing of portraits of George W. Cross, John Caldwell, William Aiken, Elias Horry-Frost, Tristan Tupper, Alexander Black, Ezra Miller, Timothy Ford, J.L. Petigru, Alfred Huger, George Gibbon, and John Hume. Names also in appointment book: John Izard Middleton, the Hudson River School, Barclay Jones from University of California-Berkley, Cedric Dover, John Drayton. T.M. Karlowicz from the University of Minnesota, Dr. JC Andrews from Chatham College in Pittsburg and a portrait of Mrs. Algernon Wilson. McCormack kept appointments with the National Park Service, Greenville Art Museum, Tucson Fine Arts Association and the Circular Congregational church regarding restoration problems.

11/280/7

Appointment book from 1960. Southern art for Corcoran catalogue and "Artists of the South" exhibition. Harnett Kane (photos). Appointments regarding portraits of Henry Laurens, Rembrandt and Pierce Butler. She spoke and/or corresponded with Turpin Bannister from University of Florida about Gabriel Bernard and Colonel Schutz, Captain Hillard from Citadel and Colonel Wiles of Citadel about photos or Captain John Whilden and W.S. Simkins, Dr Louis Walton Siple, Director of the American Museum of Photography, Bruce Kordebein of Row, Peterson and Co about using Fraser pictures in and American History textbook and Waggie Smith about South Kent School from South Kent, Connecticut.. Also noted are paintings of Harry Roseland, Thomas Sidney Cooper. Elise Pinckney, Christopher Gadsden and mention of Jean Houdon, sculptor.

11/280/7

Appointment book from 1961. Names mentioned in this appointment book includes: Robert Gibbes, William Gibbes Langdon Cheves, Chalmers Davidson, James Adger, James Gadsden, Christopher Gadsden, Riley Napier, Frances Porcher, and Isaac Motte. Calls on the painting "Miss Pearce". A researcher calling about "Passing Show" by A. Wenzell. Patrons doing research on Rose O'Neill. The National League of Post Masters and the National Trust and research questions and/or appointments. Inquiries on Mills Manor, Hibernian Hall, and Meminger House photos. Barkley Jones from Cornell University. .

11/280A/1

The appointment book of Helen McCormack from 1962 contains various itineraries and meetings. Most appointments deal with the examination of paintings and portraits. She viewed various paintings that includes Pierrri Manigault, Pinckney portraits, Cupid and Psyche, Calhoun portraits, James Hamilton, Earle Biogo, Van Schouick. Appointments include interview with Time Life, meetings with the Junior League dealing with the formation of a Junior League Guidebook, the Hibernian Society, Yeamons Hall, Milwaukee Art Center, Garden Club, and the Citadel. She kept appointments with faculty of various colleges such as Georgia Institute of Technology, Citadel, Penn State, University of Nebraska, Louisiana State University, University of South Carolina, University of North Carolina, University of Melbourne (Australia). Also included is an article from April 1, 1962 from the Evening Post titled, "Westward Move of Culture Studied by Anthropologist."

11/280A/1

Appointment book from 1963. McCormack met with various patrons over numerous paintings that portrayed William Aiken, Chancellor Duvkin, Henry Bonneau Toomer, Jonathan Lucas, T Pinckney Alston, W.H. Brown, John and Mary Gibbes. Appointments were with the Junior League, and the faculty of University of North Carolina, University of Delaware and Georgia Institute of Technology.

11/280A/2

Appointment book from 1964 documents McCormack's agenda and meetings with the Preservation Society, Charleston Artist's Guild and Charleston Council of Architects. She documented various galleries, museum exhibits and research that she conducted for herself and researchers.

11/280A/3

Appointment book from 1962 contains two cards with information on paintings of Georges Bracque entitled "Still Life with Flowers" and "Pink Tablecloth". Appointments with Elise Pinckney re: Lord Anson, Colonel Francis Malbone Waring. Inquiries about Lord Proprietors. Poisonous reptiles in SC. Queen Victoria. Francis Marion for Oakland Gun Club. Newspaper article from Charleston Evening Post (Nov 10, 1964) entitled "Art Association Names Six New Benefactors." Chinese deities. Ashley Hall. William Stephen Poyntz, Sir George Hayter, Newspaper article from News and Courier (11-11-64) entitled "Gallery Honors Art Benefactors", Mrs. L Mendel Rivers, L Lucieu Faure, Thomas Sully, John Blake White, Buford Pickens of Washington University, Thomas Wightman, John and Mary Gibbes, Talked to H Peterson from University of Louisville about greek fragments, Emma Manigault.

11/280A/3 "Research and Inquiries"

Helen McCormack's appointment book from 1965 documents day to day activities that include appointments with patrons and descriptions of their research. She met with patrons and organizations such as the Florida Board of Parks and Historical Monuments and the Greenville Art Association. Book contains some correspondence, business cards and addresses of researchers.

11/280A/4

This appointment book from 1965 documents McCormack's meetings, speaking events and tours at the Society. Tour appointments were for local schools, Brownie and Girl Scout Troops. Meetings of the Historical Preservation Society were included as were her attendance at cultural events around the city that includes symphonies and ballets.

11/280A/5

Appointment book from 1966 documents various meetings and events in the day to day activities of Helen McCormack. Tours and speaking engagements are transcribed. Events such as concerts, film screenings, gallery openings and the ground breaking of the City Auditorium are included.

11/280A/6

Appointment book from 1966 documents research and inquiries on a day to day basis. Included are business cards, phone messages, and some correspondence. Inquiries included reference to

Greek mythology, mentally challenged children workers, Federal Bureau of Investigation inquiries about a killer that frequents art galleries, and patrons questions about various paintings.

11/280A/7

This folder includes two appointment books/calendars from 1967.

The first appointment book contains the months of January through March 18, 1967 and from September 3, 1967 through December 9, 1967. This calendar is the National Gallery of Canada Engagement Calendar. The appointments include meetings pertaining to a miniature of William Sabb Thomson, meetings with the Preservation Society, Junior League and Junior League docents, girl scout troops, brownie troops, a lecture by Mr. Vigtel, opening of Scholastic Art Show, meeting with Desmond Guinness at Ashley Hall, concert with Pollack and Stillwell, meeting with Donald R. Taylor, concert of Curry and Bovinger.

The second appointment book encompasses the whole year of 1967 up until December 2, 1967. This appointment book mirrors many of the appointments in the first book. It includes meeting about the William Sabb Thomson miniature, Junior League meetings, meetings and tour with NOW Wives, meetings and tours with girl scouts troops and brownie troops, met with Alicia Rhett about photography, opening of the Scholastic Art Show, meeting with Desmond Guinness at Ashley Hall, Orange Grove School, appointment with Hebrew Institution, appointment for concert of Pollack and Stilwell, Albert Simmons appointment at gallery, Unitarian church talk, Exchange club luncheon,

11/280A/8

Appointment book from 1967. First page of book has a date of death for a Dr. Edward King on June 1966. Appointment with Fanny Tabor about William Sabb Thomson photographs.

Appointments regarding miniatures of James and J.I. Middleton, Varner prints and etchings, picture of Brooks restaurant, Guido Reni porcelain, "Great Wave" painting, portrait of John C. Calhoun by C.W. Peale, portrait of John C. Calhoun by James Bogle. Notes in regard to Robin Bolton-Smith of the National Collection of Fine Arts with the Smithsonian Institute, Sybil Frank of the Cooperstown Graduate Program and the New York Historical Society, Mr. Hill of Berry Hill Galleries, Dorothy Debnaw of Hunley Museum, Mrs. Erskine of the California Historical Society. Business card of Blaine M. Madison, Commissioner of Correction, with the Board of Correction and Training in Raleigh, NC, business card for Leonard Lane. Notations regarding the Junior League, Exchange Club, Garden Club. A photograph (photo of a portrait of white male in early 20s-30s) from the Gibbes Art Gallery Loan Collection is included. On the back it is written Gibbes and also Mrs. R. P. Bivins (no indication of who the photograph is of is included).

11/280A/8

Ccalendar book from 1968. Calendar is the National Gallery of Canada Engagement Calendar. Starts in December of 1967 and goes through April 13, 1968. Entries for Grace Church, Lively Arts, St Michael's Church, There is also an appointment book from 1968. Appointment book is empty of notations.

11/280A/9

This folder contains two calendar books

The first calendar/appointment book mainly lists the day to day activities that were involved with Ms. McCormack's duties at the South Carolina Historical Society. Entries include activities and

preparation for the move to the South Carolina Historical Society. Numerous entires for the Gibbes Art Gallery. References to Theodosia Burr Alston, Heyward Collection, Gadsden Collection, National Portrait Gallery, Columbia Museum
Second calendar book includes the dates for January through July 5, 1969 with notations of the day to day activities at the South Carolina Historical Society. Appointment slots include trips to Charleston County Probate Court and the Register Mesne and Conveyance to look up Historical Society records. Mentions of Middleton Place, Nathaniel Russell, Theodosia Burr Alston, Significant amount of time was spent at the Gibbes Art Gallery.

11/280A/10

Appointment book for 1969 is empty of notations.

11/280A/10

Appointment book from 1970. Documents Ms. McCormack's daily activities at the South Carolina Historical Society. References to the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company, Junior League, a Peter Hill in reference to a bust of George Washington by Ceracchi, Banbridge miniature, Eleanor Ball, National Portrait Gallery, Porcher collection, Hibernian Society, Columbia Museum, State Artists List, Louis Manigault, Pinckney, Newspaper article about Bishop England senior, Alexander Ramsey and the Carolina Scholar program at the University of South Carolina. McCormack spent a significant amount of time at the Gibbes Art Gallery.

11/280A/11

Appointment book for 1971 documents the activities and tasks of Helen McCormack at the South Carolina Historical Society and the Gibbes Art Gallery. Pinckney miniatures. Mentions letters regarding Mrs. Pierre Hartel. Annotations to Lady Baltimore. This appointment book deals a lot with the Alston collection. McCormack was working on Middleton collection which included summaries and building plans. A letter for *Readers' Digest* is noted. B.F. Dunkin collection is mentioned several times.

11/280A/11

Appointments book from 1972 document McCormack's day to day activities and routine. Much of this time period was spent cleaning up the Historical Society for their move to the Fireproof building. Pictures of Judy Middleton. Prints of George Rogers and Russell Macbeth. Research on Stonewall Jackson. Documents meeting with the Bi-centennial medal committee. Meeting with the Columbia museum. Notes working on various collections such as Turner Logan and Albert Simons papers. Josiah Smith papers and Diocesan records. Noted a visit to 74 Queen Street.

11/280A/12

Appointment book from 1973. McCormack documents her day to day appointments, tasks and duties at the South Carolina Historical Society. Dr. William Pearson of Williams College. Simmons coat of arms. She mentions doing work for the Valentine Museum. The collection of Edwin DuBose Heyward is mentioned quite a few times in this appointment book as well as his works: *Brass Ankle*, *Peter Ashley*, *Star Spangled Virgin*, *Emperor Jones* and *Lost Morning*. Appointment book ends on November 9, 1973. Doctor's appointments and hospital visits are frequently mentioned.