



DELAWARE ART MUSEUM

Katharine Pyle Manuscript Collection

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the
Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Acquisition Information

The Katharine Pyle Papers were purchased from Oak Knoll Books, 1996; the Katharine Pyle Letters were a gift of Howard Pyle Brokaw, March 1984; the Katharine Pyle Files include materials collected by Museum staff and gifts of Phyllis Aerenson, 2006, Diane K. Wilson, 2015, and well as various other donors

Extent

4 linear feet

Contents

Correspondence, handwritten manuscripts, photographs, illustrations, tear sheets, original drawings

Access Restrictions

Unrestricted

Processed

Harriet Memeger, 1996; Sarena Deglin, 2002; Rachael DiEleuterio, 2014

Contact Information

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Preferred Citation

Katharine Pyle Manuscript Collection, Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Biography of Katharine Pyle

Born in Wilmington, the youngest child of the Pyle family, Katharine Pyle was encouraged by her brother, Howard, to pursue a career in writing and illustration. While still a child, her poem "The Piping Shepherd" was published in *Atlantic Monthly*. Howard Pyle asked her to contribute drawings and verses to his book *The Wonder Clock*, published in 1888.

Katharine Pyle studied art at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women and in her brother's illustration class at Drexel Institute. Two of her drawings were exhibited in the first exhibition of Pyle's School of Illustration at Drexel in 1897. While living in New York for four years, she wrote a play published by *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1896 and the book *The Counterpane Fairy*, published in 1898. During her career she wrote and illustrated about thirty books and illustrated a number of books by other authors, including Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty* in 1923. In 1924 her serialized article "The Story of Delaware" appeared in the Wilmington newspaper, the *Sunday Morning Star*.

Many of her stories were drawn from fairy tales, ancient myths, nursery rhymes, and stories about animals. In 1900 a series of poems about young children by Katharine Pyle, illustrated by Sarah S. Stilwell, appeared in *Harper's Bazaar*. In 1902 she and Bertha Corson Day, a friend at Drexel, collaborated on a book of fairy tales, *Where the Wind Blows*; Katharine Pyle provided the text and Bertha Day the pictures.

In 1923 the editor of *Child Life* magazine expressed concern about two fairy tales that Katharine had submitted for publication. The editorial policy was to keep out "the horror element and the adult experience from *Child Life* stories as much as possible." Katharine argued that in traditional fairy tales evil always defeated itself and that in the end good always triumphed. However, the *Child Life* editor argued that "lurid picturization of the hideousness of evil is usually more impressed upon the child than is the great truth that good finally triumphs." However, she continued to re-tell and illustrate fairy tales and stories from Greek and Norse mythologies throughout her career.

Katharine Pyle was an intense, public-spirited person who pressed for change in the field of social reforms. Her deep concern for troubled young people led to her involvement in the Juvenile Court of Wilmington. As a champion of the underdog, she was responsive to anyone in need, often at her own expense. Her niece Ellen Pyle Lawrence has described her as "a brilliant and vital individual and a woman well ahead of her time." Though raised in a Quaker faith, she, like her brother, became an active member of the Swedenborgian Church.

Pyle relatives fondly recall her curious distinction of having one blue and one brown eye.

By Elizabeth H. Hawkes

Source: Elzea, Rowland and Elizabeth H. Hawkes, eds. *A Small School of Art: The Students of Howard Pyle*. Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 1980.

Organization of the Collection

- Series I. Katharine Pyle Papers
- Series II. Katharine Pyle Letters
- Series III. Katharine Pyle Files
- Series IV. Oversize Materials

Series I. Katharine Pyle Papers

Purchased from Oak Knoll Books, 1996

Scope and Contents Note

This collection contains 20 books, 28 original manuscripts (mostly handwritten with a couple of typescripts), 4 photographs (3 portraits, one work of art), 8 pieces of correspondence addressed to Pyle, and 4 pieces of original artwork.

A large and unique collection including a large number of Katharine Pyle's handwritten stories. Many of the manuscripts relate to her book *Tales from Norse Mythology* (Lippincott, 1930) and are annotated and bear revisions. The photographs include two large attributed portraits, one photograph of a work of art, and one image of Pyle in her studio. The original works of art include a hand drawn illustration for *Black Beauty* (Dodd, Mead, 1923, plate facing p. 238), and three other similarly drawn illustrations for other unidentified books. One of these depicting mice is damaged. In all this is a large and interesting collection. Also included are twenty books either written or illustrated (sometimes both) by Katharine Pyle over the period 1898 to 1932. Two of the books are signed by the author.

Organization of the Papers

Subseries I. Correspondence

Subseries II. Illustration

Subseries III. Manuscripts, Books, *Tales from Norse Mythology*

Subseries IV. Manuscripts, Poetry

Subseries V. Manuscripts, Stories

Subseries VI. Photographs

Subseries VII. Miscellaneous

Description of the Papers

Box 1

Subseries I. Correspondence

Folder

1 Miscellaneous

2 Miscellaneous

3 Miscellaneous, 11 items

Subseries II. Illustration

Folder

- 4 Magazine illustrations
St. Nicholas, 1902, p. 880
St. Nicholas, 1905, January pp. 238-9
- 5 *Tales from Norse Mythology*
"The Giant Ymir is Cast Into Ginnungagap"
"Loki clips away Sif's golden hair"
"Frey Mounts the Height of Hlidskialf"

Subseries III. Manuscripts, Books, *Tales from Norse Mythology*

Folder

- 6 Index & "Thor the Thunderer", 3 items
- 7 Chapter 1 "In the Beginning", 3 items
- 8 Chapter 2 "How the World Was Made", 5 items
- 9 Chapter 3 "Sun, Moon Stars and Day and Night", 7 items
- 10 Chapter 4 "Sif's Golden Hair", 16 items
- 11 Chapter 5 "How a Wall Was Built Around Asgard", 10 items
- 12 Chapter 6 "How the Gods Made War and Peace With One Another", 6 items
- 13 Chapter 7 "Frey Wins a Hide and Loses a Sword", 14 items
- 14 Chapter 8 "Skadi Chooses a Husband for Herself", 8 items
- 15 Chapter 11 "The Story of Brisingamen" (How Freya Won a Necklace for Herself), 9 items
- 16 Chapter 12 "Loki Tries to Steal a Necklace", 5 items
- 17 Chapter 13 "The Binding of the Fenris-Wolf" (How the Fenris Wolf Was Bound), 8 items
- 18 Chapter 14 "Freya's Gift", 6 items

- 19 Chapter 17 "Thor Brings a Kettle from Jotunheim", 11 items
- 20 Chapter 18 "How Odin Brought the Magic Mead to Asgard" (How the Magic Mead Was Brought to Asgard), 15 items
- 21 Chapter 19 "Thor Loses and Finds His Hammer", 11 items
- 22 Chapter 20 "Thor Visits Jotunheim" (How Thor Visited Jotunheim), 36 items
- 23 Chapter 21 "The Battles with Hrungrir", 14 items
- 24 Chapter 23 "The One Who Would Not Weep" (One There was Who Did Not Weep for Balder), 8 items
- 25 Chapter 24 "The Punishment of Loki", 7 items

Subseries IV. Manuscripts, Poetry

Folder

- 26 "Virgin's Cradle Song" (4 leaves)
- 27 Miscellaneous
 - "Bringing in the Christmas Tree"
 - "In the Train"
 - "Winter Mornings"
 - "The Snow Storm"
 - "In the School-Room"
 - "Evening Play"
 - "By the Stream"
 - "The Summer Sky"
 - "On the Stairs"
 - "Recess-Time"
 - "Cloud Shadows"
 - "A Day in Spring"
 - "Afternoon"
 - "Summer Rain"
 - "In the Garden" (2 leaves)

“In the Hay-Mow”

“Three Little Mice”

“Dicky was so excited that he fell down the back stairs.” (story on 3 leaves; on verso of leaves 1 and 2 are other manuscripts of “The Snow Storm”)

Subseries V. Manuscripts, Stories

Folder

- 28 “The Bees’ Wedding” (15 leaves)
- 29 “Curious Losts & Founds” (12 leaves)
- 30 “Johnny & Janey” (11 leaves)
- 31 “The Story of Heracles” (23 leaves)
- 32 “Uncle Pie’s Hair” (10 leaves)
- 33 “Well Known Superstitions” (8 leaves)

Subseries VI. Photographs

Folder

- 34 Photographs (5 items)
 - Photograph of Katharine Pyle in Howard Pyle’s studio, inscription: “I am Your Valentine”
 - Cyanotype of woman wearing witch hat and cape, possibly a model
 - Photograph of a fire screen
 - Photograph of Katharine Pyle (with glasses)
 - Photograph of Katharine Pyle (glasses removed)

Subseries VII. Miscellaneous

Folder

- 35 Clippings, exhibition brochure
- 36 Watteau Dairymaids: A Pastoral Interlude by Katharine West (33 leaves)

Series II. Katharine Pyle Letters

Gift of Howard Pyle Brokaw, March 1984

Description of the Letters

Box 2

Folder

- 1 Correspondence, August 1, 1927-December 29, 1928
 - Katharine Pyle to Mr. [Grant] Code, August 1, 1927 – from 2317 West 17th Street, Wilmington (1 leaf)
 - Katharine Pyle to Mr. [Grant] Code, August 28, 1927 – Owings Mills, Maryland (1 leaf)
 - Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], [Summer 1928] (transcript: 1 leaf; original: 1 leaf)
 - Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], [December 13, 1928] (3 leaves)
 - Katharine Pyle to Marion and Grant [Hyde Code], [December 29, 1928] – 1616 Rodney Street, Wilmington (transcript: 3 leaves; original: 2 leaves)

- 2 Correspondence, January 12-August 7, 1929
 - Katharine Pyle to Marion and Grant [Hyde Code], January 12, 1929 (2 leaves)
 - Katharine Pyle to Marion [Code], February 17, 1929 – from 1616 Rodney Street, Wilmington (transcript: 4 leaves; original: 3 leaves)
 - Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], July 24, 1929 – 1616 Rodney Street, Wilmington (2 leaves)
 - [Grant?] to Katharine Pyle, August 2, 1929 (typescript) (2 leaves)
 - Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], August 7, 1929 – Owings Mills, Maryland (2 leaves)

- 3 Correspondence, January 23-December 3, 1930
 - Katharine Pyle to Marion and Grant [Hyde Code], January 23, 1930 – 1616 Rodney Street, Wilmington (4 leaves)
 - Katharine Pyle to Marion [Code], June 1930– 1616 Rodney Street, Wilmington (studio 1) (2 leaves)
 - Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], June 11, 1930 – 1616 Rodney Street, Wilmington (transcript: 3 leaves; original: 2 leaves)

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], November 28, 1930 – Owings Mills, Maryland (3 leaves)

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], December 3, 1930 – Owings Mills, Maryland (typescript: 1 leaf; original: 1leaf)

4 Correspondence, January 19, 1931-June 1936

Katharine Pyle to Marion [Code], January 19, [1931] – 917 Gilpin Avenue, Wilmington (transcript 3 leaves; original 3 leaves)

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], May 20, 1931 – 917 Gilpin Avenue, Wilmington (transcript 2 leaves; original 2 leaves)

Katharine Pyle to Marion [Code], January 5, 1932 – 917 Gilpin Avenue, Wilmington – (1 leaf)

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], August 4, 1935 – illustrated – Arden, Delaware (1 leaf)

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code], August 16, 1935 – Arden, Delaware (1 leaf)
Eva to Marion, [June 1936] (transcript) (1 leaf)

5 Correspondence, no date

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code] (1 leaf)

Katharine Pyle to [Mrs.] Eva [Robin] (1 leaf)

Katharine Pyle to Grant [Hyde Code] – from Rehoboth Beach, Delaware (1 leaf and envelope)

Ellen B.T. Pyle to Mrs. [Eva] Robin – from Greenville, Delaware (1 leaf)

Ellen B.T. Pyle to Mrs. [Eva] Robin (1 leaf)

6 Miscellaneous

Notes regarding gift

Persons mentioned in correspondence

Series III. Katharine Pyle Files

Material collected internally by Delaware Art Museum staff and gifts of Phyllis Aerenson in 2006, Diane K. Wilson in 2015, and various other donors

Organization of the Files

Subseries I. Biographical
Subseries II. Correspondence
Subseries III. Illustrations, Books
Subseries IV. Illustrations, Magazines
Subseries V. Manuscripts and Writing
Subseries VI. Miscellaneous
Subseries VII. Photographs
Subseries VIII. Wilson Research Materials

Description of the Files

Box 3

Subseries I. Biographical

Folder

- 1 Biographical material
- 2 Autobiography: "When I Remember" by Katharine Pyle
- 3 Research material compiled by Phyllis Aerenson

Subseries II. Correspondence

Folder

- 4 Correspondence (photocopies): 21 letters by Katharine Pyle; 4 letters about Katharine Pyle, received from Howard P. Brokaw, March 22, 1984 (originals in Katharine Pyle Letters)
- 5 Correspondence (photocopies): Archives of American Art, microfilm roll #0710, 477-488, Pierpont Morgan Library, Harper Collection
- 6 Transcript of correspondence between Pyle and Mr. Dutton regarding *The Counterpane Fairy*, July 1897 – April 1929. From E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc. Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library

- 7 Correspondence (photocopies): from University of Delaware Library Special Collections and Delaware Art Museum Katharine Pyle Letters (compiled by Phyllis Aerenson)

Subseries III. Illustrations, Books

Folder

- 8 *The Counterpane Fairy* (new edition). New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1928, 1931, 1937. (photocopy)
- 9 *Fairy Tales from India*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1926. (dust jacket, upper cover only; photocopy of part of book)
- 10 *Granny's Wonderful Chair and Its Tales of Fairy Times* by Frances Browne. New York: E.P. Dutton & Company.
- 11 *The Katharine Pyle Book of Fairy Tales*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1925.
- 12 *Tales from Greek Mythology*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1928.
- 13 *When Molly was Six* by Eliza Orne White. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1894.
- 14 *White Aprons: A Romance of Bacon's Rebellion, Virginia 1676* by Maud Wilder Goodwin. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1897

Subseries IV. Illustrations, Magazines

Folder

- 15 *The Century Magazine*, 1897
- 16 *Circle*, 1910
- 17 *Cosmopolitan*, 1894, 1895
- 18 *Harper's Bazar*, 1883-1910

Box 4

- 19 *Harper's Young People*, 1886-1887
- 20 *Harper's Young People*, 1888-1891

- 21 *Harper's Young People*, 1892-1893
- 22 *Hercules Magazine*, 1924
- 23 *Metropolitan Magazine*, 1909
- 24 *The Saturday Evening Post*, 1903, 1904
- 25 *Shooter's Guide*, 1925
- 26 *St. Nicholas*, 1889-1894
- 27 *St. Nicholas*, 1897-1906
- 28 *Wide Awake*, 1888, 1892
- 29 *Woman's Home Companion*, 1911
- 30 *Youth's Companion*, 1912

Subseries V. Manuscripts and Writing

Folder

- 31 Manuscript: "Under the Canvas"
 Article: "Religion in Fairy Tales" (*The New Church Review*, v. 27, no. 1, January 1920)

Subseries VI. Miscellaneous Materials

Folder

- 32 List of works illustrated
- 33 Inventory from University of Delaware Special Collections
- 34 Exhibition: Twenty-Fifth Annual Delaware Show and Drawings by Katharine Pyle (The Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts, November 7 – 27, 1938)
- 35 Exhibition catalog: *Tales of Folk and Fairies: The Life and Work of Katharine Pyle* (Delaware Art Museum, February 18 – September 9, 2012)
 Article: Miner, Katherine L. and Margaretta Frederick. "Tales of Folk and Fairies" in *Illustration* (Issue 32, Summer 2012)

Subseries VII. Photographs

Folder

- 36 Charles Ryan and Alice McIntyre, models posing for Pyle's mythology book (copies—original negatives owned by Barbara Ryan)
- 37 Photographs of Pyle's works (2) (gift of Richard Layton, 2004)
- 38 Photographs of Pyle's homes and burial site (gift of Phyllis Aerenson)

Box 5

Subseries VIII. Wilson Research Materials (gift of Diane K. Wilson, 2015)

Folder

- 1 Katharine Pyle: Her Life, Her Work, Her Interests (research paper)
- 2 Miscellaneous information
- 3 Audio tape interviews with Sophie Pyle and Howard Pyle Brokaw

Two research notebooks:

Book 1: Art works, Bibliography, Biographical material, Correspondence (from Katharine, to Katharine, code letters, to Wilson), Fine arts & other information, Genealogy, History/Background, The Homoeopathic Hospital, Howard Pyle, Inventories of Katharine Pyle's works and locations

Book 2: Jingles, Katharine's mother—Margaret Churchman, Persons to contact, Photos, Plays, operettas, etc., Residences (photos, negatives, and slides), Swedenborg, Paper and presentation, Wilmington City Directory covers, Miscellaneous

Series IV. Oversize Materials

Oversize materials from the Katharine Pyle Papers and the Katharine Pyle Files

Box 6

Folder

- 1 Illustrations (from the Katharine Pyle Papers, purchased from Oak Knoll Books, 1996)
 - Two mice (ink drawing)
 - Tomahawk (ink drawing)
 - "Joe Green recognizes Black Beauty" (ink drawing)
 - Unidentified (ink drawing)
 - Horses (print)

- 2 Illustrations and Tear Sheets
 - Harper's Bazaar*, April 6, 1895
 - Ladies' Home Journal*, December 1896
 - "Post Cards for Children" (source unknown)
 - "Unexpected Guest" from *Supplement to Boston Sunday Globe*, no date

- 3 Magazine Covers
 - Woman's Home Companion*
 - April 1908, cover
 - May, cover
 - January 1910, cover
 - July 1915

- 4 "Story of Delaware," *The Delmarva Star*, 1924 (photocopy)

- 5 Hour illustrations from *Harper's Young People* (24)