

A Guide to the Moses J. Ezekiel Papers, 1867-1917

Moses J. Ezekiel Papers 1867-1917
1867-1917

A Collection in Virginia Military Institute Archives mss 00010
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History

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Title Statement

A Guide to the Moses J. Ezekiel Papers, 1867-1917

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

mss 00010

Language

English

Physical Characteristics

The collection consists of approximately 110 items.

Repository

Archives, Preston Library, Virginia Military Institute

Administrative Information

Access

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Preferred Citation

Moses J. Ezekiel Papers, mss 00010, Virginia Military Institute Archives, Lexington, Virginia.

Additional Descriptive Data

Related Material

The VMI Archives also holds a collection of photographs (accession #3586) related to Ezekiel. Included are images of Ezekiel, his studio in Rome, and various examples of his sculpture.

Biographical/Historical Information

Moses Jacob Ezekiel, the noted 19th century American Jewish sculptor, was born in Richmond, Virginia on October 28, 1844. One of 14 children of Jacob Ezekiel and Catherine de Castro, he had already started a mercantile career when he decided to attend college. Ezekiel entered the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia in September 1862, and during his VMI cadetship he took part in the Battle of New Market (May 15, 1864) and served in the trenches in defense of Richmond in the Spring of 1865. He graduated from VMI in 1866 and in 1867 began seriously to pursue his interest in art. He studied anatomy at the Medical College of Virginia and traveled to Cincinnati where he studied at the Art School of J. Insko Williams and in the studio of T.D. Jones. In 1867 he sailed for Europe and entered the Royal Academy of Art in Berlin.

At the age of 29, he won the prestigious Michel-Beer Prix de Rome for with a bas relief entitled *Israel*. The prize money enabled him to travel to Rome, where he established a studio and lived for the remainder of his life. Ezekiel executed in bronze and marble nearly two hundred monuments. Among his productions were busts of *Lizst*, *Cardinal Hohenlohe*, *Eve*, *Homer*, *David*, *Judith*, *Christ in the Tomb*, a statue of Mrs. Andrew W. White for Cornell University, *Madonna* for the Church La Tivoli, *Faith* for the Cemetery of Rome, *Apollo and Mercury* in Berlin, *Robert E. Lee*, *Stonewall Jackson*, *Pan and Amor*, the *Fountain of Neptune* for the city of Nettuno, Italy, a bust of *Lord Sherbrooke* for St. Margaret, Westminster, London, and scores of other busts and reliefs. He also produced the *Jefferson Monument* for Louisville, Kentucky, the *Homer Group* for the University of Virginia, *Virginia Mourning Her Dead* for the Virginia Military Institute at Lexington, Virginia, *Napoleon* at St. Helena, a monument to Senator Daniel, Lynchburg, Virginia, and the *Confederate Soldiers' Memorial* at Arlington National Cemetery. Ezekiel died in Italy on March 27, 1917, but because of World War I, his body was not returned to the United States until 1921, at which time he was buried at the foot of the Confederate Memorial in Section 16 of Arlington National Cemetery.

Scope and Content Information

The papers consist of the miscellaneous papers of noted 19th century sculptor Moses Jacob Ezekiel. Included is correspondence to Virginia Military Institute Superintendent Edward West Nichols and others, 1867- 1917, some relating to the design of the Battle of New Market memorial sculpture *Virginia Mourning Her Dead*; pen and ink sketches by Ezekiel (ca. 67 items); a typescript version of Ezekiel's autobiography, *Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian* and miscellaneous printed material.

Contents List

Drawings

Scope and Content

Pen and ink drawings by Ezekiel

"Our Betty"

"Lizzie Cabell"

"Mrs. Collin"

"Mr. Collin"

"DeBoice, Artist Friend"

"DeBoice, Artist Friend"

"Mr. and Mrs. DeBoice"

"Mr. John H. Harjes"

"Robert Hausman, the Violincellist"

"Madam Helbig"

"B. B. Hotchkiss"

"Stonewall Jackson"

"Thomas Jefferson"

"Mammy Keziah"

"Mammy Keziah"

"Edith Lack"

"Edith Lack"

"Contessa Lara"

"Professor General Custis Lee"

"Mrs. Mary Custis Lee"

"Mrs. Mary Custis Lee"

"Fanny Lewalt"

"White Lucy"

"Mammy Mary"

"Lola Montes"

"Scott Shipp"

"Francis H. Smith"

"Stieler"

"Mary Triplett"

"Nannie Tunstall"

"Miss Waldecker"

"Anton von Werner"

"Unidentified men (2 items)"

"Unidentified women (2 items)"

"A Confederate Soldier"

"A Confederate Soldier"

"A Sailor on the Westphalia (2 items)"

"In my studio, Baths of Diocletian"

"The Entrance to my Studio"

"My first work in sculpture, Father's bust"

"Christ in the Tomb"

"Christ in the Tomb"

"Christ"

"My Bust in Clay of Cardinal Hohenlohe"

"Sketch of Bacchante"

"My model for Farragut"

"Confederate Soldiers' Monument"

"Southern (1910)"

"Israel"

"Anthony Drexel"

Sculpture, untitled

Correspondence, 1867-1917

Box 2

Scope and Content

Includes letters to General Edward West Nichols and Greenlee Letcher concerning *Virginia Mourning Her Dead* (New Market Monument) and the Stonewall Jackson statue at the Virginia Military Institute. Also includes postcards sent primarily to family members, including Henry C. Ezekiel and Rebecca Ezekiel.

Arrangement

Chronological

Memoirs, typescript

Scope and Content

"Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian"

Scrapbook, 1769-1871

Scope and Content

Ezekiel family scrapbook possibly compiled by H. C. Ezekiel containing misc. documents, most pertaining to various members of the Ezekiel family. Many date from the Civil War era, 1863-1865. In the case of some of the items, the connection to the family is not clear.

Printed material & miscellaneous

Memorial publication honoring Alfonso Sella, 1908

Scope and Content

Sent to VMI Superintendent Scott Shipp by Moses Ezekiel. Annotated by Shipp.

Invitation

Scope and Content

Ezekiel's copy of the invitation to the unveiling of *Virginia Mourning Her Dead*, June 1903.

R. E. Lee photo

Scope and Content

Photograph of Lee and of Lee's Farewell Address, given to Ezekiel by Mrs. Robert E. Lee