

Guide to

MS 4

**Thomas Whittemore Papers,
1882-1966
(Bulk 1893-1917)**

36 linear inches

Processed by

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Citation: Thomas Whittemore Papers, 1882-1966, MS 4, Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives,
Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Trustees for Harvard University.

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Thomas Whittemore, 1871-1950, archaeologist, leader in Russian relief, and specialist in Byzantine art, was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts January 2, 1871. He was the only child of Joseph Whittemore, a real estate and insurance dealer, and Elizabeth (St. Clair) Whittemore, and grandson of the Reverend Thomas Whittemore, a prominent Universalist minister in Cambridge. Thomas attended local schools and Tufts College, and after receiving the B.A. degree in 1894, stayed on at Tufts as instructor in English, rising to professor in 1904. During this period he did some graduate work at Harvard (1895-1898) and reportedly also at Oxford. Whittemore's interests turned increasingly toward the history of art, which he began to teach at Tufts in 1906. In January 1911 he left Tufts to join a British archaeological expedition in Egypt under the auspices of the Egypt Exploration Society. There he continued to excavate, at Abydos and Balabish, until the winter of 1915.

After service (1914-1915) with the French Red Cross, Whittemore found himself in the Balkans when the German advance of 1915 into Russia was creating thousands of homeless refugees. Whittemore hastened to Russia and embarked on a relief program. He returned to Boston in 1916 and organized a fund-raising committee, "Refugees in Russia," chaired by Elizabeth Carrington Read Cram, the wife of architect Ralph Adams Cram. Whittemore directed the committee's operations in Russia from 1916 to 1918. Continuing his work in Russia after the Bolshevik revolution, he shifted, in 1919, to refugee camps outside the Russian borders. The committee's subsequent increased emphasis on education was reflected in its being renamed Committee for the Education of Russian Youth in Exile; the project continued until 1931. Whittemore also helped promising anti-Bolshevik youths reach the West, often by a clandestine route, through Sofia or Constantinople. A man of independent means, he paid his own expenses throughout his years of relief work, in which he was exclusively engaged until about 1927. In that year he began teaching art history at New York University, where he remained until 1930.

Whittemore's most important venture was the Byzantine Institute of America, which he organized in 1930. His message was that Christian art in the Near East, especially in Istanbul, was unknown, equal or superior to Western medieval art, and ought to be revealed and understood. From 1930 to 1932 he worked on and copied Coptic frescoes near the Red Sea. His principal objective, however, was to uncover the grand mosaics of the former church of the Hagia Sophia at Istanbul, built by the emperor Justinian. The mosaics had long been covered by plaster and paint. In 1931 Whittemore obtained the permission of President Kemal Atatürk of Turkey to work in the building, a mosque held in the greatest veneration; three years later it was declared a museum. There, and in other Byzantine churches in Istanbul, Whittemore worked for the rest of his life, spending half of each year raising money, publicizing his work, and building up the institute's Library of Byzantine Studies in Paris.

Whittemore never married. At the age of seventy-nine, Whittemore died of a heart attack June 8, 1950 while on a visit to the State Department in Washington, D.C. He was buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

Excerpted from the *Dictionary of American Biography*

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Thomas Whittemore Papers contain correspondence, notebooks, photographs, and other ephemera, showcasing his early personal life and teaching career, primarily before he founded the Byzantine Institute of America. The Papers are divided into four series: *Biographical*, *Correspondence*, *Reading Materials*, and *Writings*.

From photographs, to his will and obituary, *Biographical* materials reveals hints of Thomas Whittemore's personal life and early career. His teaching years are glimpsed through exam papers and programs from lectures and readings. There are also several annotated scripts of plays he produced as a school sponsor, as well as photographs from some of those plays. Receipts and check book stubs are primarily from his time in London and Russia. Photographs and a letter written to the Russian Emperor from the Council of the Empire further reflect upon his time in Russia.

The largest body of material in this series are the photographs, which include portraits of Whittemore and prints of the portrait of him sketched by Henri Matisse, portraits of family and acquaintances, pictures of Whittemore in the field in Bulgaria, Russia, Egypt, Kariye Camii, Hagia Sophia and at the Byzantine Institute Library in Paris, as well as a small variety of photographs of Byzantine architecture and mosaics.

Correspondence is predominately made up of letters to Whittemore from family, friends, collegiate acquaintances (particularly those in the Theta Delta Chi fraternity) and early work associates. Subjects of the letters include his early teaching career, the British archaeological expedition in Egypt under the Egypt Exploration Society, his relief efforts in Russia, as well as his early fund-raising efforts. There are a few letters from Whittemore to others, and several letters written between correspondents other than Whittemore. The principal letter writers are author Anna Fuller and translator Ellen Frothingham (some of these letters appear to be penned by Anna Fuller for Miss Frothingham), poet Louise Imogen Guiney, Cornell professor Duncan Campbell Lee, Tufts College alumni and poet Clara Ransom, Dean of the General Theological Seminary (NY) Reverend Wilford Lash Robbins, American military historian and lawyer John Codman Ropes and Tufts alumni, fraternal brother and U.S. Representative (NY) Rollin Brewster Sanford.

The small series *Reading Materials* contains books and pamphlets of seeming personal interest to Whittemore, while the *Writings* series is comprised of notebooks dated between 1901 and 1910. The notebooks contain poetry written by Whittemore, notes relating to the fine arts, listings of book titles, and miscellaneous notations about various topics.

PROVENANCE

This collection was transferred to the Byzantine Photograph and Fieldwork Archives in 1993 from the Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Library. Some portions of research materials were received on May 25, 1999, from the House Collection Archives.

PERMISSION TO PUBLISH

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NOTES TO RESEARCHERS

Additional references to Thomas Whittemore may be found in the Byzantine Institute of America Records, also in the Dumbarton Oaks Image Collections & Fieldwork Archives. These records and photographs document the professional activities of Thomas Whittemore through the Byzantine Institute of America which he founded.

There are mentions of Thomas Whittemore in the Robert Bliss Papers, Harvard University Archive (Pusey Library). Columbia University owns the Bakchmetiev Archive: *Crane, Charles* (4 microfilms), *Ermolov, Boris* (4 boxes and 1 microfilm), and *Committee for the Russian Relief in Exile*. Further information about Whittemore and the Byzantine Institute of American can be found in Paris at the Bibliothèque Byzantine, Institute National des langues et civilisation orientales (fonds *Thomas Whittemore – Institute Byzantine*).

		Biographical
1	1	Addresses by College Professors, 1901
	2	Annotated Maps, n.d.
	3	Calling Cards, n.d.
	4	Check book stubs, 1908–1916
	5	Clothing Catalogue, London, n.d.
		Legal
	6	Will, October 1949
	7	Power of Attorney—House Correspondence, 1914
	8	Estate Correspondence, 1957 and 1958
	9	Mortgage contract between Benjamin Lawrence and Charlotte Newton, April, 1895
		Photographs
	10	Portraits of Whittemore, n.d.
	11	Portraits of Whittemore—Fine Art: I. Barry (1945–1947) and Matisse (1937)
	12	The Whittemore Family, n.d.
	13	Portraits of Others (Unidentified Persons), 1886–1926
	14	Russian Youths, n.d.
	15	Whittemore in Russia, n.d.
	16	Snapshots from Whittemore's Trip to Egypt, n.d.
	17	Whittemore in the Field: Kariye Camii (by Dimitri Kessel), n.d.
	18	Whittemore in the Field: Hagia Sophia (by Dimitri Kessel), and Unknown, n.d.
	19	Whittemore at the Byzantine Institute Library, Paris, 1945
	20	Byzantine Institute Library, Paris, June 1952
	21	Snapshots of Bulgarian Countryside, n.d.
	22	Byzantine Architecture, n.d.
	23	Byzantine Mosaics, 1920 (?)
	24	Photographs of Journals and Letters, n.d.
		Plays Whittemore Produced
	25	"Comus," by Milton, performed at Tufts College, June 4–5, 1901
2	1	Pictures of Whittemore Produced Plays, n.d.
	2	"Hippolytus"
	3	"The Pleasant Comedy of Old Fortunatas"
	4	Program: Boston Symphony Orchestra, April 20, 1906 and April 27, 1906
	5	"Open Letter to the Orthodox Clergy From a Priest," by Vladimir Wostokoff, March, 1917
	6	Receipts, 1901–1917
	7	Russian Revolution: To Russian Emperor from the Council of the Empire, n.d.
		Speaking Engagements
	8	Columbia University, 1908
	9	Whittemore Reading, "Poems of Rudyard Kipling," December 10, 1904
	10	Travel Documents: Bulgarian Train Ticket, 1915
	11	Tufts College, 1906 and 1908
	12	Unsent Postcards, n.d.
		Death
	13	Notice of Whittemore's Death, U.S. State Department, June 8, 1950
	14	Obituaries, 1950
	15	Funeral Arrangements, 1950
	16	Manuscript/Drafts, "Thomas Whittemore and His Work," pamphlet, n.d.
		Correspondence
		<i>Letters Incoming</i>
	17	From Arthur M. Aston, April 1897–Feb 1900
	18	With J.M. Atwood, May 16–19, 1893

Box	Folder	Title of Folder
2	19	From Helen C. Bell, January 12, 1899
	20	From R.M. Benson, January 1896– April 1900
	21	From Elizabeth Powell Bond, April 15, 1907
	22	From Ethel Isador Brown, December 18, 1897
	23	From Marie N. Buchanan, Egypt Exploration Fund, February 2, 1916
	24	From Mary L. Capen, June 14, 1893
	25	From J.E. Chandler, July 11, 1(?)
	26	From Elizabeth Cram, July 22, 1917
	27	From Cram & Ferguson, Architects, July 10, 1917
	28	W.S. Cram/Aunt Lottie, 1890 & 1895
	29	From Winchester Donald, April 10, 1894
	30	From F.H. Evans, April– July 1900
	31	From Charles E. Fay, August 20, 1893
	32	From Annie Fields, March 1899– July 1900
	33	From Fred (last name unknown), July 13, 1882– April 13, 1883
	34	From Ellen Frothingham (translator) & Anna Fuller (writer) 1895-1900
3	1	From Billy ODX [William Henry Goodrich], June 30, 1891–March 1, 1894
	2	From John H. Gourlie, October 8, 1886
	3	From E. Gurney Groffman, May– June 1917
		From Louise Imogen Guiney
	4	April 17, 1896– December 25, 1899
	5	January 8, 1900– 1915
	6	From W.C.H., February 27, 1897–August 10, 1897
	7	From William Harwood (Brother William/Bill), September 28, 1916
	8	From Ida A. Higginton (?), August 13, 1917
	9	From Alice Forbes Paskins Hoopes (?), January, 1915
	10	From Arthur G. Horn, January 1899– February 1900
	11	From James O.J. Huntington, St. Gabriel's School, January 5, 1893
	12	From Agnes Irwin, February 3, 1899
	13	From Isabelle [Stewart Gardner], July 24, 19??
	14	From Joseph L.J. Kislin (?), 1899
	15	From Duncan Campbell Lee, December 21, 1894– March 3, 1899
	16	From W.H. Longridge, December 28, 1896–November 12, 1899
	17	From Mac (last name unknown), July 24, 1917
	18	To John from Mary, December 3, 1915
	19	From Michel (last name unknown), October 5, 1914
	20	From Felix Moscheles, November 5, 1897–November 2, 1899
	21	From Walter J. Nunn, February, 1897
	22	From Harry Ofhin Jr (?), n.d.
	23	From Viera Ourbusolef (?), December–January, 1917
	24	From A. Poavell (?), June 27, year unknown
	25	From B.B. Pruddah, January 5, 1898
	26	From Clara Ransom (poet, Tufts alumni), August 1897– 1914 (?)
4	1	From Reg (last name unknown), n.d.
	2	From George Riddle, May 25, 1893–1894
		From Reverend Wilford Lash Robbins (Dean of General Theological Seminary, NY)
	3	November 8, 1887– April 17, 1889
	4	June 1, 1889–September 30, 1893
	5	October 1893–1900
	6	From John Codman Ropes (US military historian & lawyer)
		September 5, 1894–May 23, 1895
	7	June 3, 1895–September 18, 1896
5	1	January 1, 1897–September 2, 1899
	2	From Mrs. Elizabeth H. Russell, July 10, 1917

5	3		From Rollin Brewster Sanford (US House of Representatives, NY), June 18, 1894–1914
	4		From Henry Sanford, July-August, 1895
	5		From P.H. Savage, February 8, 1896
	6		From Cy Seligman (?), June 23, 1917
	7		From P.S. Sharp (?), May 5, 1901
	8		From W.R. Shipman, June 1894– July 1900
	9		From E.S. Smart, Sept 13, 1897
	10		From Frederick H. Swain (?), n.d.
	11		From M.E.T. June 1894– April 1899
	12		From R.T. or R. F., February 2, 1900
	13		From Caroline Thomas, December 14, 1914
	14		From W.R. Tompkins, August 9, 1886
	15		From Eda Adams Wozkan (?), August 9, 1892
	16		From Byron Yroce (?), June 13, 1893
	17		To T. Whittemore from Persons Unknown, Postcards, 1893–1899
			<i>Letters Outgoing</i>
	18		From T. Whittemore to Marion McCanna (Whittemore's Niece), Postcard, January 17, 1917
	19		From T. Whittemore to Unidentified Person, October, 1900
	20		Letter of Introduction, for T. Whittemore to Prince Koudachef— for refugee work. November 2, 1915
			<i>Miscellaneous Correspondence</i>
	21		Letters Between Persons Other Than Whittemore: Charles Gore (?) to Dr. Robbins, July 28, 1897; Winnie Papt (?) to Alice, April 6, 1916
	22		Unknown Correspondents, May 10, 1876 and n.d.
	23		Letter from Smithsonian, re: Portrait of Joseph Whittemore (T.W.'s Father), 1966
			Reading Material
			<i>Articles</i>
6	1		Essays
			<i>Literature</i>
	2		Egypt
	3		<u>Sanga</u>
			<i>Pamphlets</i>
	4		"Summary of Conditions for Admission into the Third Order Secular of St. Francis," n.d.; "L'Imitation de Jésus -Christ," by L' Abbé C. Albin de Cigala, n.d.; "Prayers: for use on active service," The Society of SS. Peter and Paul, 1915; "Parting Words: a sermon," by Edwin James Palmer, D.D., 1909; "My Faith and Hope in View of the National Mission," by George Lansbury, n.d.
	5		"The Herb O'Grace," no. I–X (January–October, 1901) and vol. I (1901)
			<i>Poetry</i>
	6		Knut Hamsun, March 22, 1916
	7		Poems by Rudyard Kipling, n.d.
	8		"Henry Birkhead and the foundation of the Oxford Chair of Poetry," by J. W. Mackail, 1908; "A Walk in Chamouni and Other Poems," by John Ruskin, n.d.; "The Abbot, A Christmas Tale of Long Ago, and Other Poems," by Leavitt Clough Sherburne, 1906; <i>L'Eco</i> , Organo del Circolo Italiano, no. XII, n.d.
6	9		3 Poetry Books
	10		<i>The North American Review</i> , November, 1903
			Writings
			Notebooks

7	1		June 1901–1904
	2		"T[homas] W[hittemore] Epoch," 1905
	3		1905
	4		c.1910
	5		"Figures," n.d.
	6		"Fine Arts I," R.B. Manbert, n.d.
	7		"Paragraphs," n.d.
	8		Listing of 246 Items, n.d.
	9		Note pages, n.d.