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Guide to the George Cruikshank Collection circa 1840-1850



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.CRUIKSHANKG
Title	Cruikshank, George. Collection
Date	circa 1840-1850
Size	0.25 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract	George Cruikshank (1792–1878) British cartoonist and illustrator. The collection includes sketches by Cruikshank, drafts of letters, publications, and prints.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Cruikshank, George. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note

George Cruikshank was born on September 27, 1792, in London. His father, Isaac Cruikshank, was a leading caricaturist and a strong influence on his son's early career. Though his early work was in caricature, Cruikshank turned to book illustration at the age of 31. His first illustrations were for the 1823 English translation of Grimm's Fairy Tales.

Cruikshank quickly built a reputation for himself as a social satirist of English life, and was sometimes called a "modern Hogarth." In particular, his caricatures of the British royal family and prominent politicians were notorious. He also criticized enemies of Britain and exhibited racist attitudes, often against the people with whom his home country was currently engaged in war.

Cruikshank illustrated a number of works for his friend, Charles Dickens, including Sketches by Boz (1836), The Mudfrog Papers (1837-38), and Oliver Twist (1838). His relationship with

Dickens soured when the artist attempted to claim credit for the plot of *Oliver Twist*. It was further diminished by Cruikshank's extensive involvement in the temperance movement.

On October 16, 1827, Cruikshank married Mary Ann Walker. They remained together until her death in 1849. Two year later, Cruikshank married Eliza Widdison. After his death, it was discovered that Cruikshank had father eleven illegitimate children with his mistress, Adelaide Attree. Cruikshank suffered palsy later in life, which negatively affected his health and ability to work. He died on February 1, 1878. Though initially buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, he was exhumed later that year and reburied in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Scope Note

The George Cruikshank Collection contains artwork, correspondence, and publications relating to the artist. The dates available on the items in this collection place it between 1840 and 1851, though it is not unlikely that some items originate from periods outside of those years.

The collection contains three pencil drawings by Cruikshank, including sketches of a man in restraints, a man drinking from a glass, and a city street. All are signed by Cruikshank, and it appears that the leaf containing the city street sketch also contains the beginning of a letter. Also included are two printed examples of Cruikshank's work; the 1924 engraving "Napoleon's Bivouac on the Night Preceding the Memorable Battle of Austerlitz," and a Saint Valentine's Day card.

Also included are handwritten notes for the illustration of a book, *The Fine Young English Gentleman*. This item features a list of thirteen scenes that Cruikshank was either requested to illustrate or which he had devised himself.

Following are two pieces of correspondence. First is a fragment of a draft of a letter. The recipient is unknown, but in the letter, Cruikshank criticizes the idea of the "Fall of Man," as it implies that the "all wise creator had made a mistake." The second is a letter handwritten, autographed letter, written on February 28, 1851, to George Thornbury.

The collection concludes with two biographical items. A portrait of Cruikshank, published in Grant's *London Journal* is briefly annotated and drawn on by Cruikshank, an engraving of Cruikshank is signed by F.W. Pailthorpe.

The collection was previously part of the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/topics.php>

Subject Headings

- Cruikshank, George, 1792-1878
- Thornbury, Walter, 1828-1876
- Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, 1769-1821
-
- Artists
- Valentines
- Engravings
- Pencil drawing
- Drawing
- Sketches
-

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Sketches, undated

- Original sketches, Man in Restraints, undated
- Original sketches, Man Drinking from Glass, undated
- Original sketches, City Street, undated

Box 1

Folder 2

Artwork, 1824, undated

- Engraving: "Napoleon's Bivouac on the Night Preceding the Memorable Battle of Austerlitz" by George Cruikshank, originally published May 1, 1824
- Engraving: Valentine's Card by George Cruikshank, undated

Box 1

Folder 3

Notes: for the illustration of The Fine Young English Gentleman: manuscript, undated

Box 1

Folder 4

Correspondence, 1851, undated

- Letter: draft fragment, unknown recipient, undated
- Letter: George Cruikshank to George Thornbury, February 28, 1851

Box 1

Folder 5

Biographical, 1840, undated

- Publication, Grant's London Journal, Annotations and Illustrations by Cruikshank, 1840
- Engraving, George Cruikshank by F.W. Pailthorpe, undated