

# Bela Lyon Pratt Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the  
Library of Congress

Prepared by Kathleen O'Neill



Manuscript Division, Library of  
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2009

Contact information: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html>

Finding aid encoded by Library of  
Congress Manuscript Division, 2009

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms009342>

## Collection Summary

Title: Bela Lyons Pratt Papers

Span Dates: 1884-1918

ID No.: MSS85130

Creator: Pratt, Bela Lyon, 1867-1917

Extent: 1,050 items; 3 containers; 1.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Sculptor. Chiefly correspondence from Bela Lyon Pratt, to his mother, Sarah Whittlesey Pratt, relating to his work and family life.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### People

Pratt, Bela Lyon, 1867-1917.

Pratt, Sarah Whittlesey--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Boston Public Library.

Library of Congress.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts (France)

### Subjects

Art museums--Massachusetts--Boston.

Art schools--France--Paris.

Coins, American.

Half eagle (Coin)

Libraries--Massachusetts--Boston.

Libraries--Washington (D.C.)

Quarter eagle (Coin)

Sculpture--Massachusetts--Boston.

Sculpture--Washington (D.C.)

### Occupations

Sculptors.

## Administrative Information

### Provenance:

The papers of Bela Lyon Pratt, sculptor, were given to the Library of Congress by Jennifer E. Sims in 2004.

### Copyright Status:

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Bela Lyon Pratt in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

### Access and Restrictions:

The papers of Bela Lyon Pratt Papers are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

### Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Bela Lyon Pratt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1867, Dec. 11	Born, Norwich, Conn.
1873	Attended Yale University, School of Fine Arts, New Haven, Conn., where he studied with John Henry Niemeyer and John Ferguson Weir
1887	Attended Art Students League, New York, N.Y., where he studied with William Merritt Chase, Kenyon Cox, Francis Edwin Elwell, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens
1890-1892	Attended École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts (France), where he studied with Jean-Alexandre-Joseph Falguière and Henri Chapu
1892	Received commission from World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Ill., for the sculpture group <i>The Genius of Navigation</i>
1893-1917	Instructor in modeling, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass.
1897	Married Helen Pray
1895-1896	Awarded commissions to create multiple works for the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., including the spandrels entitled <i>Science, Literature, and Arts</i> ; the figure, <i>Philosophy</i> ; and the medallions, <i>Winter, Autumn, Summer, and Spring</i>
1901	Received silver medal, Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y.
1906	<i>Young Soldier</i> sculpture, Saint Paul's School, Concord, N.H.
1910	<i>Art and Science</i> sculptures, Boston Public Library, Boston, Mass.
1914	<i>Nathan Hale</i> sculpture, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
1915	Received gold medal, Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, Calif.
1917, May 18	Died, Boston, Mass.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Bela Lyon Pratt (1867-1917) span the years 1884-1918 and include correspondence, clippings, and a photograph. The bulk of the collection consists of correspondence from Pratt to his mother, Sarah Whittlesey Pratt. The correspondence addresses family and business concerns, including his years at the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts in Paris and his work as an instructor for the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. The correspondence covers specific artworks, including the spandrels *Science*, *Literature*, *Arts*, and *Philosophy* for the Library of Congress, the Indian Head quarter eagle and half eagle coins, and the sculptures *Art* and *Science* for the Boston Public Library. The collection also contains small sketches of works in progress and a photograph of the granite spandrel *Science* for the entrance of the Library of Congress.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material and thereunder chronologically.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Correspondence
BOX 1	Originals
BOX 1	1884-1894 (9 folders)
BOX 2	1895-1902 (10 folders)
BOX 3	1903-1908, 1913-1918, undated (7 folders)
BOX 3	Photocopies, incomplete, 1891-1893 (3 folders)
BOX 3	Unidentified envelopes, 1892-1918
BOX 3	Miscellany, 1918, undated
BOX 3	Photograph, undated