



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi papers

1871

MssCol 223

Processed by Melanie Yolles.

Summary

Creator: Bartholdi, Fre_de_ric Auguste, 1834-1904

Title: Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi papers

Date: 1871

Source: Received from Chemical Bank, 1984.

Abstract: Collection consists of a journal of Bartholdi's trip to the U.S. in 1871 and twenty letters written to his mother during the journey.

Alternative Form Available: Journal available on microfilm; New York Public Library; *ZL-331

Preferred citation: Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi Papers. Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

Language of the Material: Journal and letters are in French

Processing note: Processed by Melanie Yolles; machine-readable finding aid created by Catherine Lakenwood.

Creator History

Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi (1834-1904) was an Alsatian sculptor known for his monumental works on patriotic and republican themes. His most famous creation is, "Liberty Enlightening the World," more commonly known as The Statue of Liberty. The creation of a monument commemorating French-American friendship, focusing on the idea of liberty was first suggested to Bartholdi by his friend the French statesman, Edouard de Laboulaye in 1865. In 1871 Bartholdi made his first trip to the United States to find an appropriate site for the proposed work and to try to interest prominent Americans in the project. In 1876 a subscription campaign was begun in France to pay for the statue which was to be given to the U.S. as a gift from the French people. Bartholdi returned to the U.S. in 1876 to help set up an American committee to raise funds for the statue's pedestal. The completed work was presented to the U.S. in 1885 and dedicated in New York Harbor on October 28, 1886.

Scope and Content Note

The Bartholdi Papers consist of a journal (1871 May 27 - Oct. 24) of his visit to the United States and twenty letters written to his mother (1871 Jun. 17 - Oct. 3) during the trip. Bartholdi came to the U.S. to generate support for a proposed monument to commemorate the centennial of American independence. This would eventually become the Statue of Liberty. He travelled throughout the country, making stops in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Niagara Falls, Chicago, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, and other locations. In the letters and diary he remarks on the many prominent persons he met, including Charles Sumner, Ulysses S. Grant, Carl Schurz, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Brigham Young, and Frederick Law Olmsted. In addition to noting the daily successes and setbacks of his mission, Bartholdi comments on American architecture, food, hotels, train travel, Negro churches, and the American character in general.

The letters and journal are accompanied by a typescript annotated English translation by Rodman Gilder.

Key Terms

Occupations

Sculptors

Subjects

Statue of Liberty (New York, N.Y.)

Visitors, Foreign -- United States

Geographic Names

United States -- Description and travel

United States -- Social life and customs -- 1865-1918

Names

Bartholdi, Fre_de_ric Auguste, 1834-1904

Gilder, Rodman, 1877-

Container List

- Volume 1 Journal 1871 May 27 - Oct. 24
 - f. 1 Photographs of illustrations from his letters and diary
 - f. 2 Transcripts of Bartholdi's diary 1871
 - f. 3 Transcripts of letters to his mother 1871
 - f. 4 Original letters to his mother (missing part or whole of 3 letters)