

**The New York Public Library  
Stephen A. Schwarzman Building  
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Guide to the  
**Charles Matlack Price letters**  
1917-1947 (bulk 1918-1923)  
MssCol 18567

Compiled by Kit Messick, January 2013

## **Summary**

**Creator:** Price, Charles Matlack

**Title:** Charles Matlack Price letters, 1917-1947 (bulk 1918-1923)

**Size:** .63 linear foot (2 boxes)

**Source:** Purchased from Swann Galleries, 2011.

**Abstract:** The Charles Matlack Price letters are comprised of letters written by Price to his fiancée (later wife), Marguerite Meade Wurzburg between 1918 and 1923, and correspondence between Price and others (1917-1947). Topics discussed include daily life in New York, Price's financial constraints, his military service, and his work.

**Access:** Advance notice required. Apply at <http://www.nypl.org/mssref>.

**Preferred citation:** Charles Matlack Price letters, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

## **Creator history**

Charles Matlack Price was born on March 31, 1887, in Chester County, Pennsylvania. After graduating from Harvard in 1909, Price moved to New York City and found employment in several publishing houses and advertising agencies. He soon established himself as an authority on American visual design, particularly the art of the poster, which was the subject of his first book in 1911. He would go on to publish a number of books on commercial art and editorial layout. His career trajectory was briefly interrupted by his military service at Camp Meade Cantonment and Field Signal School, Maryland. After his discharge in 1919, he married Marguerite Meade Wurzburg (1891-ca. 1936). Price later taught at both the American School of Design and the Rhode Island School of Design. He died in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1962.

## **Scope and content note**

The Charles Matlack Price letters are comprised of letters written by Price to his fiancée (later wife), Marguerite Meade Wurzburg between 1918 and 1923, and correspondence between Price and others (1917-1947).

Letters written while Price was living and working in New York City (1918-1919) were sent to Marguerite at her family home in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Many contain discussions of his loneliness and affection

for Marguerite, job prospects, and potential employers, including magazine publisher Condé Nast. "I am living on minimum right now," he wrote on May 2, 1918, "but there are several things that will take a little money. Notably a new suit...if I were to work with someone like Nast where clothes are imperative." He wrote frequently about daily life in New York, his financial constraints, visits to friends, and his work. Some letters are illustrated with small sketches.

Price also wrote to Marguerite while serving at Camp Meade, Maryland, in 1919. These letters contain frequent mention of his dissatisfaction with army life and military bureaucracy, and his eagerness to be discharged. Letters resume between 1922 and 1923, after their marriage, when Price returned to New York for work while Marguerite remained in Michigan.

Additionally, there is one folder of correspondence dating 1917 to 1947 between Price and other friends and family members.

## **Arrangement**

Material is arranged chronologically and by correspondent.

## **Key terms**

### **Subjects**

World War, 1914-1918 -- Personal narratives,  
American

### **Names**

Price, Charles Matlack  
United States -- Army -- Military life

### **Special formats**

Love letters  
Sketches

### **Occupations**

Art critics  
Art historians

### **Places**

New York (N.Y.) -- Description and travel -- 20th  
century  
New York (N.Y.) -- Social life and customs -- 20th  
century

## **Container list**

### Correspondence with Marguerite Meade Wurzburg

- b.1 f.1-5 1918-1920
- b.1 f.6-7 1922
- b.2 f.1 1923
- b.2 f.2 Undated
- b.2 f.3 Correspondence with Others, 1917-1947