Finding Aid to the John Buckland Wright Collection of Letters to Christopher Sandford MS.1960.028

Finding aid by Joyce Wang, 2017
William Andrews Clark Memorial Library
2520 Cimarron Street
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URL: http://www.clarklibrary.ucla.edu/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library
Title: John Buckland Wright Letters to Christopher Sandford
creator: Buckland Wright, John, 1897-1954
Identifier/Call Number: MS.1960.028
Physical Description: 1 box
Date (inclusive): 1937-1955
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.42 linear ft, 1 box
Abstract: This collection is comprised of hand written and typed letters, postcards, and a few pieces of inserted works/proofs sent from the engraver John Buckland Wright to Christopher Sanford, the owner of the Golden Cockerel Press.

Acquisition Information
Purchased from Bertram Rota Booksellers, 1960.

Processing Information
Items were originally part of the William Andrew Clark Library's Misc MSS collection and were recataloged and described in 2017 by Joyce Wang.

Preferred Citation

Biographical Note
John Buckland Wright (1897-1954) was an eminent 20th century book illustrator, printmaker and engraver known for producing engraved works for numerous private presses. Born in New Zealand where he spent most of his childhood, he and his mother later moved to England in 1908. Though he briefly studied history in college and considered becoming an architect, he ultimately became a self-taught wood engraver. In the mid-1920s, John Buckland Wright moved to Brussels to experience its vibrant artist community, joining groups such as the Gravure Originale Belge and the Xylographes Belges. While at Brussels, he met the Scottish-Canadian musician Mary Bell Anderson whom he later married. After 1929, he went to Paris and spent the next decade working at the avant-garde printmaking shop Atelier 17 with its founder Stanley William Hayter, becoming its director in 1936. During this time, he collaborated with a number of illustrious artists including Matisse, Chagall, Picasso, Miró, and Dali. Returning to London in 1939 with the outbreak of WWII, he continued to be active in the printmaking and engraving scene during the war. In his later years, he started to teach printmaking at the Camberwell School of Art and the Slade School of art up until his unexpected death in 1954.

He illustrated 16 books for the Golden Cockerel Press and became close friends with its then owner Christopher Sandford. The most notable of his works from this period included illustrations for Pervigilium Veneris (1939), The Vigil of Venus (1939), and John Keats' poem Endymion (1947). Most of his engravings dealt with themes of environmental beauty and the sensuality of the nude female body, particularly as epitomized in Greek mythos. His preoccupation with producing works of grace and tranquility was arguably a cathartic one that can be traced to his experiences in the Scottish Ambulance Service where he witnessed scenes of devastation while stationed at Verdun during WWI. In 1953, Buckland Wright published Etching and Engraving: Techniques and the Modern Trend which remains a seminal work in the field. Holdings of his engravings can be found in the British Museum, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Tate Gallery.

Scope and Contents
A collection of letters sent by John Buckland Wright, mostly to Christopher Sandford, during their many years producing books together at the Golden Cockerel Press. The letters primarily deal with work-related issues such as layout and the production of engravings, although more casual, family-related letters become increasingly frequent towards the later years.

One folder in the collection contains letters sent by Buckland Wright's wife Mary Bell Anderson to Christopher Sanford.

Arrangement
Materials arranged in the collection by recipient and then chronologically.

Related Materials
Other collections related to the Golden Cockerel Press at the Clark Library include:
Finding Aid to the John Buckland Wright Collection of Letters to Christopher Sandford MS.1...

Press coll. Golden Cockerel
Eric Gill Artwork Collection: MS Gill
A number of letters addressed to Christopher Sandford can also be found in the Misc. Mss Collection

Conditions Governing Access
This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Letters--England--20th century
Small presses -- England -- 20th century
Sandford, Christopher
Golden Cockerel Press

Box 1, folder 1 Letter to Anthony Sandford 1937-07-27
Scope and Contents
Letter sent from Paris by Buckland to Anthony Sandford (Christopher Sandford's brother) regarding the delivery of plates to the latter.

Box 1, folder 2 Letters to Christopher Sandford 1937
Scope and Contents
9 letters sent from Paris to Christopher Sandford regarding the production of plates for Mademoiselle de Maupin and the layout of Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, as well as some mention of The Vigil of Venus.

Box 1, folder 3 Letters to Christopher Sandford 1938
Scope and Contents
12 letters to Christopher Sandford sent from Paris regarding the production of Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Pervigilium Veneris, and Mademoiselle de Maupin.

Box 1, folder 4 Letters to Christopher Sandford 1939
Scope and Contents
2 postcards and 13 letters sent from Buckland Wright, with materials from the first portion of the year being sent from Paris and afterwards from England. Deals with wood block production for Pervigilium Veneris and relays the significant tension between Buckland Wright and Sanford over whether to use copper plates or wood-block engravings. One letter is sent right after Buckland Wright's evacuation from Paris into London with his wife.

Box 1, folder 5 Letters to Christopher Sandford 1943
Scope and Contents
14 letters from Buckland Wright concerning production of Omar Khayyam and Hymn to Porsepine, as well as early brainstorming for Endymion.

Box 1, folder 6 Letters to Christopher Sandford 1944
Scope and Contents
11 letters mostly regarding Buckland Wrights production of engravings for Keats' Endymion.
Box 1, folder 7  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1945**

*Scope and Contents*

2 postcards and 21 letters primarily regarding the production of illustrations for Endymion and Matthew Flinders' Narrative of his Voyage in the Schooner Francis: 1798. Mentions Buckland Wright's residential move from Bramham Gardens to Nevern Mansion, as well as other personal matters such as the selection of Sandford as godfather to John and Mary's children.

Box 1, folder 8  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1946**

*Scope and Contents*

20 letters from Buckland Wright primarily regarding engravings for Matthew Flinders' Narrative of his Voyage in the Schooner Francis: 1798, as well as work on Endymion, The Odyssey, and Laus Veneris.

Box 1, folder 9  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1947**

*Scope and Contents*

20 letters and 5 postcards sent by Buckland Wright from England mostly regarding the production of Laus Veneris, Endymion, and payments for work.

Box 1, folder 10  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1948**

*Scope and Contents*

26 letters sent by Buckland Wright regarding teaching at Camberwell, the production of Laus Veneris and Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice, Pasiphae, and Hero & Leander, payments for work, an unsuccessful application to a position as Ruskin Master of Drawing at the University of Oxford, among other matters.

Box 1, folder 11  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1949**

*Scope and Contents*

1 postcard and 33 letters sent from Buckland Wright regarding the production of Pasiphae, Hero & Leander, Cockalorum: A Bibliography of the Golden Cockerel Press, plans for Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, and miscellaneous family matters. Also includes some proofs Hero & Leander.

Box 1, folder 12  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1950**

*Scope and Contents*

27 letters sent by Buckland Wright regarding payments for work, his experiences teaching at the Slade School, family health matters, the production of blocks for Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, and the reception of Pasiphae, among other topics.

Box 1, folder 13  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1951**

*Scope and Contents*

15 letters sent by Buckland Wright from England regarding such topics as the production of plates for The Grecian Enchanted, payments, his experiences teaching, the financial situation of the Golden Cockerel Press, as well as family matters.

Box 1, folder 14  
**Letters to Christopher Sandford 1952**

*Scope and Contents*

11 letters from Buckland Wright while in England regarding holiday plans, the illustrations for The Grecian Enchanted, and the sales performance of his other Golden Cockerel Press books.
Box 1, folder 15  **Letters to Christopher Sandford 1953-1954**

Scope and Contents

7 letters sent by Buckland Wright while in England regarding matters of health, his employment at the Slade, and the publication and reception of his book *Etching and Engraving: Techniques and the Modern Trend.*

Box 1, folder 16  **Mary Buckland Wright letters to Christopher Sandford 1945-1955**

Scope and Contents

7 letters from Mary Buckland Wright