

WORCESTER HISTORICAL
MUSEUM

30 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts

ARCHIVES

Esty, Martha Cushing
Papers

1999.07

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Collection Information

Abstract: The Martha Cushing Esty Papers illustrate primarily through letters the life of a girl born into a socially prominent Worcester family during the 1920s and into the World War II years. Diaries and other records book illustrate her life from the 1950s until her death in 1998.

Finding Aids: Finding aid in print form available in the Worcester Historical Museum Library. Folder-level control (letters) and item-level control.

Preferred Citation: Worcester Historical Museum Archives, 30 Elm Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance: Donated 1999

Access: The collection is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings (LCSH, AAT, TGM, GMGPC, etc.):

- Esty, Martha Cushing, 1921-1998.
- Esty, Martha Cushing, 1921-1998 – Letters.
- Esty, Martha Cushing, 1921-1998 – Diaries.
- Michie, Martha Esty, 1921-1998.
- Michie, Forbes, 1916-1998.
- Esty, Edward T. – Letters.
- Worcester (Mass.) – Social life and customs – 20th century.

- Diaries.
- Record-keeping works.
- Letters.

See also: Clippings files, Worcester Historical Museum Library, Esty and Michie folders.

Biographical Information

Martha Cushing Esty was born in Worcester March 1, 1921, daughter of Grace Heward Esty and Edward T. Esty. She was educated at Milton Academy, Milton, Mass. and received her B.A. degree from Vassar College in 1943. In 1948 she received a Masters degree from the French School of Middlebury College. Following her graduation from Vassar, she taught French for three years at Mary Wheeler School, Providence, R. I. In 1948 she married Forbes Michie in Worcester, and remained a resident of the city for the remainder of her life. She was mother of two sons, and prominent in Worcester social life. She died in December, 1998, less than two weeks after the death of her husband of fifty years.

Scope and Content

The Martha Cushing Esty Papers, Record Group 1999.07, illustrate through letters and other writings the life and activities of Martha Cushing Esty, particularly during the 1930s and 1940s while she was away at boarding school and later at college. The collection also provides insight into the social life of Martha Esty and her peers, and illustrates the life styles of Worcester society during the decades preceding World War II.

The bulk of the collection consists of letters written to Martha Esty by her father, E.T. Esty, prominent Worcester attorney and sometime District Attorney and Judge. Three or four letters per week were sent to Martha Esty during her absences from home – summer vacations, boarding school, Vassar College. Additional letters in the collection include those sent to Martha Esty from her mother, from other relatives, and from friends. Also included are numerous postal cards written by Martha Esty to her parents during her attendance at Vassar College. A small part of the collection includes letters written by Martha's father to her mother during summer vacations of 1936 and 1938.

The collection also includes diaries and engagement calendars (many with personal notes as well as appointments) written by Martha Esty between 1951 and her death in 1998. Diaries of both her parents, as well as a few miscellaneous diaries are also present in the collection.

The collection also includes photographs of Martha Esty, family, and friends, including a scrapbook of photographs of Martha Esty from her infancy to about age 10. Also included are two ink cartoon drawings of E.T. Esty (Martha's father) for publication in the Worcester newspapers by artist Phifer.

Miscellaneous items in the collection include invitations, marriage announcements, the Episcopal Church service of matrimony, Martha Esty's diploma from Vassar College, and a few other items.

The collection has been arranged into four series by format. Description of letters is by folder-level, remainder of collection is item-level description.

Series Description

Series 1: Letters. The series includes some 500 letters, cards, and telegrams written between the 1920s and 1970, the bulk written to Martha Esty during her absences from home. The series is divided into four subseries by writer/recipient as follows:

Subseries 1: Letters to Martha Esty. The bulk of these were written by her father during her attendance at boarding school and later at Vassar College. 1930s-1940s. (373 items)

Subseries 2: Letters from Martha Esty. The bulk of these were written to her parents from Vassar College. 1940s. (102 items)

Subseries 3: Letters to Mrs. E.T. Esty (mother) at Seal Harbor, Maine, from E.T. Esty (father) 1930s-1940s. (14 items)

Subseries 4: Miscellaneous letters (undated, fragments, etc.) (11 items)

Series 2: Diaries, engagement calendars, etc. The series includes diaries kept by E.T. Esty, Mrs. E.T. (Grace) Esty, diaries and engagement calendars kept by Martha Esty, and other diaries. The series is divided into four subseries by author as follows:

Subseries 1: Engagement calendars kept by Martha Esty Michie, 1950s-1990s, diaries of 1930s, and memoranda books about Martha Esty during her infancy and childhood written by her mother. (50 items)

Subseries 2: Diaries kept by Grace (Mrs. E.T.) Esty, 1940s-1950s. (7 items)

Subseries 3: Diaries (Line-a-day books) kept by E.T. Esty, 1900s-1940s. (10 items)

Subseries 4: Diaries, various other authors. (4 items)

Series 3: Photographs. The series includes photographs of Martha Esty and other family members, group and individual photographs of family and others, and prints.

Series 4: Miscellaneous. Includes assorted items such as diplomas, invitations, calling cards, etc. relating to Martha Esty and/or her family.

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
 1999.07
 Series 1, Letters
 Subseries 1, Letters to Martha Esty

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	1999.07.1.1.1	Letters to Martha Esty at Seal Harbor, Maine, August-September, 1931, from E.T. Esty (father)
1	2	1999.07.1.1.2	Letters to Martha Esty at Seal Harbor, Maine, August-September, 1932, from E.T. Esty (father) 31 items (1931-1932)
1	3	1999.07.1.1.3	Letters to Martha Esty at Seal Harbor, Maine, August 1933 and August 1936, from E.T. Esty (father) 10 items
1	4	1999.07.1.1.4	Letters to Martha Esty at Goodwin House, Milton, Mass., September-December, 1936, from E.T. Esty (father) 15 items
1	5	1999.07.1.1.5	Letters to Martha Esty at Goodwin House, Milton, Mass., and Seal Harbor, Maine, 1937, from E.T. Esty (father) (42 items)
1	6	1999.07.1.1.6	Letters (some with clippings, cards, etc. inserted) to Martha Esty at Goodwin House, Milton, Mass., Breadloaf, Vt., and Seal Harbor, Maine, 1938, from E.T. Esty (father) (32 items)
1	7	1999.07.1.1.7	Letters (with inserted items) to Martha Esty at Goodwin House, Milton, Mass. (January-June); at Vassar College (September-December); and various summer locations, 1939; from E.T. Esty (father) (39 items)
1	8	1999.07.1.1.8	Letters to Martha Esty from E.T. Esty (father) at Vassar College, 1940. (45 items)
2	9	1999.07.1.1.9	Letters to Martha Esty from E.T. Esty (father) at Vassar College, 1941. (46 items)

Series 1
Subseries 1, continued

2	10	1999.07.1.1.10	Letters to Martha Esty from E.T. Esty (father) at Seal harbor, Maine, and in western United States, 1941. (9 items)
2	11	1999.07.1.1.11	Letters to Martha Esty at Vassar College from E.T. Esty (father), 1942. (17 items)
2	12	1999.07.1.1.12	Letters to Martha Esty at Mary C. Wheeler School, Providence, R.I., from Mrs. E.T. Esty (mother), September-November 1945. (15 items)
2	13	1999.07.1.1.13	Letters to Martha Esty at Mary C. Wheeler School and at Quebec, Canada, from Mrs. E.T. Esty (mother), 1946. (5 items)
2	14	1999.07.1.1.14	Letters to Martha Esty in Buffalo, N.Y., and in western United States, from Mrs. E.T. Esty (mother), 1947. (15 items)
2	15	1999.07.1.1.15	Letters to Martha Esty from friends and relatives, 1936-1943. (14 items)
2	16	1999.07.1.1.16	Letters to Martha Esty from friends and relatives, 1944. (13 items)
2	17	1999.07.1.1.17	Letters to Martha Esty from friends and relatives, 1945. (9 items)
2	18	1999.07.1.1.18	Letters to Martha Esty from friends and relatives, 1946-1947. (7 items)
2	19	1999.07.1.1.19	Letters to Mrs. Forbes S. Michie (nee Martha Esty) from friends and relatives, 1948-1974. (13 items)

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 1, Letters
Subseries 2, Letters from Martha Esty

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	20	1999.07.1.2.1	Postal cards to Mr. and Mrs. E.T. Esty from Martha Esty at Vassar College, January-April 1941. (34 items)
3	21	1999.07.1.2.2	Postal cards to Mr. and Mrs. E.T. Esty from Martha Esty at Vassar College, May-December 1941. (46 items)
3	22	1999.07.1.2.3	Postal cards to Mr. and Mrs. E.T. Esty from Martha Esty at Vassar College, 1942. (16 items)
3	23	1999.07.1.2.4	Letters, postcards, telegrams, etc., from Martha Esty to family and friends, 1930-1940. (4 items)

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 1, Letters
Subseries 3, Letters to Mrs. E.T. Esty

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	Accession #	Description
3	24	1999.07.1.3.1	Letters to Mrs. E.T. Esty at Seal Harbor, Maine, from E.T. Esty, summer 1936 and summer 1938. (14 items)

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 1, Letters
Subseries 4, Miscellaneous

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	25	1999.07.1.4.1	Letters, postcards, telegrams, undated, fragments, unidentified, etc. (11 items)

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
 1999.07
 Series 2, Diaries, etc.
 Subseries 1, Martha Esty Michie

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4		1999.07.2.1.1	Diary. "Memoranda relating to Martha Cushing Esty, December 1922-January 1928"
4		1999.07.2.1.2	Diary. "Memoranda relating to Martha Cushing Esty", 1928-March 1931.
4		1999.07.2.1.3	Diary. Martha Esty, 1936-1938. 14 cm.
4		1999.07.2.1.4-.21	Engagement calendars. Martha Michie, 1951-1968; many with clippings, notes, cards inserted. 21 cm. (18 items)
5		1999.07.2.1.22-.41	Engagement calendars. Martha Michie, 1969-1987; many with clippings, notes, cards inserted. 21-24 cm. (20 items)
6		1999.07.2.1.42-.51	Engagement calendars. Martha Michie, 1988-1998, ending at her death December 19, 1998 (10 days after the death of her husband), many with notes, clippings, cards inserted. 21-24 cm. 1990 missing. (10 items)

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 2, Diaries, etc.
Subseries 2, Grace Esty (Mrs. E.T.)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
6		1999.07.2.2.1-.7	Diaries. Grace Esty (Mrs. E.T. Esty), 1943/1944 to 1957/1958, except 1947/1948. Two years per volume. (7 items)
		.1	1943/1944
		.2	1945/1946
		.3	1949/1950
		.4	1951/1952
		.5	1953/1954
		.6	1955/1956
		.7	1957/1958 to her death October 15.

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 2, Diaries, etc.
Subseries 3, Edward T. Esty

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7		1999.07.2.3.1-.10	Diaries. Edward T. Esty, 1901-1942. Most multi-year "line-a-day" style. 20 cm. (10 items)
		.1	1901/1902
		.2	1903
		.3	1904-1908
		.4	1910/1911
		.5	1912-1916
		.6	1917-1922
		.7	1923-1927
		.8	1928-1932
		.9	1933-1937
		.10	1938-1942

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 2, Diaries, etc.
Subseries 4, Miscellaneous

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7		1999.07.2.4.1	Diary, Ethel A. Hatch. 1923-1927. 15 cm.
7		1999.07.2.4.2	Record book "My trip abroad", Jeanne H. McClure, July-December 1937. 16 cm.
7		1999.07.2.4.3	Record book "My trip abroad", Grace Howard (Mrs. E.T. Esty), June-September 1903, with later diary entries December 1903-December 1917. 15 cm.
7		1999.07.2.4.4	Diary, 1890. Unidentified. 16 cm.

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 3, Photographs, prints, etc.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	26	1999.07.3.1	Photographic print, Alden Trust Committee (includes E.T. Esty et al.), 1938? 8x10 in. b&w
3	26	1999.07.3.2a-c	Photographic prints, Thursday Club (includes Martha Esty), n.d. 3x5 in. color. (3 items)
3	26	1999.07.3.3a .3b	Photographic print "Charles A. Hamilton's birthday party, 1925 or 1926. 2 ½ x 3 ½ in. b&w. 5x7 in. enlargement.
3	26	1999.07.3.4	Photographic print. Martha Esty, September 1922. 3x4 in. b&w.
3	26	1999.07.3.5	Photographic print. Forbes Michie, 1917? 3x5 in., b&w.
3	26	1999.07.3.6	Albumen print. Group photographic of Irving School class, Watertown, Mass. Includes Grace Howard (Mrs. E.T. Esty et al.) n.d. 4 ½ x 7 ½ in.
3	26	1999.07.3.7	Photographic print, [Mrs. E.T. Esty?], 1943? 5x7 in. b&w.
3	26	1999.07.3.8	Photographic print. Tom, Annette, Sig Esty, 1943? 4x5 ½ in., b&w
3	26	1999.07.3.9	Photographic print. Grace Howard Esty and Edward T. Esty, 1919? 5x7 in. b&w
3	26	1999.07.3.10	Photographic print. Thomas C. Esty and Edward T. Esty, 1941. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	26	1999.07.3.11	Photographic print. Jean Michie, Forbes Michie, ca. 1920. 3x5 in., b&w.

Series 3, continued

3	26	1999.07.3.12	Photographic print. Esty family group photograph, 1919. 2 ½ x 4 in., b&w.
3	26	1999.07.3.13	Photographic print. Tom and Annette Esty, Edward and Grace Esty, Martha Esty, 1941. 2x3 in., b&w.
3	26	1999.07.3.14	Photographic print. Sig Esty, 1941. 2x3 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.15	Photographic print. Forbes and Martha Michie, ca. 1948. 2x3 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.16	Photographic print. Lovell Price Perkins, Martha Michie, Margery Williams Adams, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.17	Photographic print. Anne Michie, Martha E. Michie, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.18	Photographic print. unidentified. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.19	Photographic print. Martha E. Michie et al., ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.20	Photographic print. Martha and Forbes Michie et al., ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.21	Photographic print. Forbes Michie, William Carlton, et al., ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.22	Photographic print. Anne Michie Finkenstaedt, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.23	Photographic print. unidentified, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.24	Photographic print. John T. Finkenstaedt and dog, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.25	Photographic print. Dog, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.26	Photographic print. Dog, ca. 1948. 5x7 in., b&w.

Series 3, continued

3	27	1999.07.3.27	Photographic print. Unidentified man, n.d. 4 ½ x 4 ½ in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.28	Photographic print. Martha Esty and parents, ca. 1922. 8x10 in., b&w.
3	27	1999.07.3.29	Photographic print. Martha Esty and parents, ca. 1922. 8x10 in., b&w.
3	BV	1999.07.3.30	Scrapbook. Photographs of Martha Esty from infancy through age ca. 10. 26 cm.
OVS		1999.07.3.31	Print. Ink drawing (cartoon) of Republican Party rally principals, including E.T. Esty, n.d., by Phifer. 28x35 cm.
OVS		1999.07.3.32	Print. Ink drawing (cartoon) of District Attorney Edward T. Esty, n.d., by Phifer. 37x49 cm.

Martha Cushing Esty Papers
1999.07
Series 4, Miscellaneous.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	28	1999.07.4.1	Invitation. Bachelors' Assembly, Worcester Club, February 23, 19uu.
3	28	1999.07.4.2	Wedding announcement. Grace Howard and Edward T. Esty, March 1, 1919.
3	28	1999.07.4.3	Clipping. "Martha Esty married to F.S. Michie." n.d.
3	29	1999.07.4.4	Pamphlet. "The form of solemnization of matrimony as contained in the Book of Common Prayer." Marriage service for Grace Howard and Martha Esty, March 1, 1919.
3	30	1999.07.4.5	Diploma. Bachelor of Arts, Vassar College, 1943, given to Martha Cushing Esty. Photograph inserted in folder.
3	31	1999.07.4.6	Photograph holder, leather, initialed M.C.E.