

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - George du Maurier fonds (RBSC- ARC-1832)

Generated by Access to Memory (AtoM) 2.6.4 Printed: September 08, 2022

Language of description: English

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Irving K. Barber Learning Centre
1961 East Mall
Vancouver
British Columbia
V6T 1Z1
Telephone: 604-822-2521
Fax: 604-822-9587
[Email: rare.books@ubc.ca](mailto:rare.books@ubc.ca)
<http://rbsc.library.ubc.ca/>
<https://rbscarchives.library.ubc.ca/george-du-maurier-fonds>

George du Maurier fonds

Table of contents

Summary information	3
Administrative history / Biographical sketch	3
Scope and content	4
Notes	4
Access points	5
Series descriptions	5
, Graphic Works, 1856-1897	5
, Writings, 1860-1898	8

Summary information

Repository:	University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Title:	George du Maurier fonds
Reference code:	RBSC-ARC-1832
Date:	1834-1898 (date of creation)
Physical description:	16.5 cm of graphic materials and textual records.
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Dates of creation, revision and deletion: Fonds arranged and described by Allison Gale in December 2021-February 2022. Items indexed by Catherine Hall in January 2022.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

George du Maurier (full name George Louis Palmella Busson du Maurier) born March 6, 1834 was a French-English illustrator and novelist. He was born in Paris to Louis-Mathurin Busson du Maurier and Ellen Clarke; he grew up believing his grandfather, Robert-Mathurin Busson, fled France during the Revolution, but in reality he fled due to fraud charges. His grandfather, arriving in England, changed the family name to du Maurier to sound more sophisticated. He met his wife, Emma Wightwick in 1853 and married her ten years later, on January 3, 1863 in an Anglican London church. He and Emma would have five children together, Beatrix (known as Trixy), Guy, Sylvia, Marie Louise (known as May) and Gerald; their children would become actors, army officers, playwrights, and authors as well. His daughter, Sylvia Llewelyn Davies, is the mother of the five boys who inspired the writing of Peter Pan. His granddaughter, Daphne du Maurier, is also a very successful novelist and playwright.

Du Maurier originally studied chemistry, like his father, and in 1851 he studied and worked at Berbeck Chemical Laboratory, University College, London. Chemistry was a short-lived aspiration, as was opera singing, inspired by his father, which would also prove temporary as he did not have the vocal range. Depressed and unsure what to do with his life, he moved to Paris in 1856, shortly after his father's death, to attend the workshop of the painter Charles Gleyre. He would continue his artistic studies in Antwerp, Malines, and Düsseldorf. During this time, he unexpectedly lost vision in his left eye due to a detached retina. In 1860, he returned to London to work as a magazine illustrator for *Once A Week* and his first cartoon for *Punch* was published. This would begin his long and prosperous career as a cartoonist and illustrator. He received constant commissions from *Once A Week* and by 1865 he joined the permanent staff at *Punch*, and remained a cartoonist and illustrator there until his death. Common themes in his cartoons included: Victorian society, fashion, and etiquette; social commentary on Britain's middle class and high society; the bourgeoisie; and the tensions of "Beautymania" and the "New Woman" in the 19th century.

Due to his deteriorating eyesight in his right eye in 1891, he was unable to continue producing cartoons and illustrations at *Punch* of the quality and quantity he usually drew. Instead, he wrote three novels and

made his own accompanying illustrations for those books. The novels are: *Peter Ibbetson* Volumes I and II (1891), *Trilby* (1894), and *The Martian* (1897). His novels have gone on to be adapted into operas, silent and "talkie" films, TV shows, music, and spin-offs. Out of these novels, *Trilby* received the most widespread commercial success and fan following. The fonds received copies of these books along with two novels not written by du Maurier: *Pictures of Life & Character, From the Collection of Mr. Punch* by John Leech and *Americans* by Charles Dana Gibson. These books were catalogued and available separately by the UBC library.

Du Maurier died on October 8, 1896 of heart failure in Oxford Square. He was buried in a Hampstead cemetery, and his memorial plaque is inscribed with the last two lines of *Trilby*, his own translation of a couplet from Léon Monté-Naken's "Peu de Chose": "A Little trust that when we die / We reap our sowing. And so — good bye!" He left a sizeable £47,555 in his will, which accounting for inflation, would have been worth around £6.5 million in 2020.

Custodial history

The donor wishes to remain anonymous. The donor's parents started collecting in the mid 1970s as they enjoyed reading the venerable "Punch" magazine, where du Maurier's cartoons often appeared. They expanded the collection over the next 10-20 years. The donor took possession when their parents moved from their house, and wanted to keep the collection intact until their mother passed away in 2020.

Scope and content

The fonds reflects George du Maurier's life and career as an illustrator and writer. Graphic materials include 66 hand drawn illustrations and cartoons for *Punch* or *Once A Week* magazines as well as for books he authored himself. These graphic works were drawn primarily with black and brown ink or with graphite from 1856 through to his death in 1896. Also included with his graphic works is a print from the 1896 edition of *Vanity Fair* magazine. Records relating to personal correspondence written by or for du Maurier are also included in the fonds. First editions of *"The Martian"*, *"Trilby"*, and *"Peter Ibbetson Volumes I and II"* by du Maurier, as well as *"Pictures of Life and Character"* by John Leech and *"Americans"* drawn by C.D. Gibson, were also donated with the fonds that are now catalogued and available in the UBC library.

Notes

Title notes

Related material

"*The Martian*", "*Trilby*", and "*Peter Ibbetson Volumes I and II*" by du Maurier, as well as "*Pictures of Life and Character*" by John Leech and "*Americans*" drawn by C.D. Gibson, were also donated and can be found within the UBC library catalogue.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published

Access points

- Graphic material (documentary form)
- Textual record (documentary form)
- Arts and culture (subject)

Series descriptions

Graphic Works

Date: 1856-1897 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists predominately of illustrations, comics, and cartoons by du Maurier from his time spent working at "Punch" and "Once a Week" magazines. Common themes included: Victorian society, fashion, and etiquette; social commentary on Britain's middle class and high society; the bourgeoisie; and the tensions of "Beautymania" and the "New Woman" in the 19th century, among others. Accompanying the illustrations are handwritten texts depicting the scene with a humorous story. The subject matters in these illustrations are commonly human still life drawn in a single pane drawn in muted ink colors like black or brown. This series also includes a watercolor portrait of du Maurier and a print from the January 23, 1896 edition of "Vanity Fair" of du Maurier himself at the drawing bench illustrating for his novel "Trilby".

Physical description: 66 drawings: ink on paper

1 painting: oil on paper

1 print: color

Access points:

- Graphic material (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-01	Item - Mrs. de Montmorency Jones Calls Upon Lady Clara Robinson - Intellectual Culture Versus Aristocratic Barbarism	20 Nov. 1886		

RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-02	Item - Father and Two Sons - Part II	1878
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-03	Item - "Svengali!...Svengali!...Svengali!..."	[1890-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-04	Item - Tact	07 March 1885
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-05	Item - The Life of the Party - Making the Best of It - 1 Sept 1888	July 1888
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-06	Item - [Drawing of man fainting at a dinner table caught by woman]	[1860-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-07	Item - [Were we wed, Clarissa	03 March 1877
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-08	Item - Study of a Female Art Student For "Trilby" "Among the Old Masters" 1894	1894
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-09	Item - "Cre' Nom de Nom	1879
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-10	Item - A Responsibility "I'm going to a fancy ball as dawn	Feb. 1888
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-11	Item - Love in Debt - Cornhill Magazine 1881/2	[1881-1882]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-12	Item - A Young Darwinian	01 May 1880
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-13	Item - Infelicitous quotations	Jan. 1891
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-14	Item - "Fothergill! Is She Much Hurt?" Percival XV p. 346 Cornhill, 1878	1878
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-15	Item - "The Last Ball of the Season at Lawntennisville-Super-Mare"	17 Oct. 1885
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-16	Item - An effect of [?], let us hope!	27 Dec. 1884
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-17	Item - "You Have Rather a Large Party This Afternoon	25 Sept. 1880
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-18	Item - A Lesson	12 Aug. 1897
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-19	Item - Snob Snubbing "And So You Find Our Suburb a Pleasant Change	19 Feb. 1887
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-20	Item - A logical inference "I wonder why he's so black	09 Feb. 1895
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-21	Item - At a Smoking Concert	29 Oct. 1881
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-22	Item - a vocation	23 Dec. 1882
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-23	Item - Things one would rather have left unsaid	17 May 1884
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-24	Item - [?] Whispers	[1860-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-25	Item - "I Say Dubois - You Know How to Lay it on Thick, Old Man!"	30 April 1892
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-26	Item - Sea Shore	[1874-1876?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-27	Item - At her old tricks again	07 Aug. 1886
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-28	Item - Knowing One's Place	29 May 1875

RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-29	Item - Feline amenities	Dec. 1888
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-30	Item - "Why, Indeed Didn't the Vicar Say the Natives of Gongalooloo Wore No Clothes?"	21 Sept. 1895
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-31	Item - I should like to know the force of the [?] - Part VII p. 151	[1875]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-32	Item - Brothers in art	12 Dec. 1874
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-33	Item - What It Will Come To	Jan. 1894
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-34	Item - Holiday Pleasures	31 Aug. 1872
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-35	Item - Uncertainties of arithmetic	April 1890
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-36	Item - A conscientious artist	27 March 1880
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-37	Item - ["Mother proposing"?]	[1860-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-38	Item - Some people get so soon familiar	03 June 1882
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-39	Item - Scene. Hotel in Cologne	06 Nov. 1880
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-40	Item - The anti-semitic Movement	29 Jan. 1881
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-41	Item - Some people have such a pleasant way of putting things	25 Aug. 1883
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-42	Item - Culinary culture	17 Feb. 1877
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-43	Item - The Danger of Dilettantism	03 May 1879
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-44	Item - What our artist has to put up with	12 May 1883
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-45	Item - The momentous question	15 Aug. 1885
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-46	Item - Have I a Rival?	10 Oct. 1874
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-47	Item - "Frou-frou."	19 June 1880
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-48	Item - What shall we do with our girls! (Their perverseness)	May 1888
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-49	Item - In good faith (Violet's reply was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Preston.)	[1860-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-50	Item - Quid Pro Quo - on the Beach (Etretat?) (p. 195, Pt II. 1889)	14 Oct. 1882
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-51	Item - Scene. Country post office.	[1881-1892?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-52	Item - Tables turned	15 Sept. 1883
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-53	Item - Lady Gatheremall at home	23 April 1881
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-54	Item - Below Stairs, Fashions For the Kitchen	17 March 1877

RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-55	Item - A Parvenu (The coming aristocracy of mind)	Jan. 1887
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-56	Item - A "oner" for our artist	15 Feb. 1879
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-57	Item - A Friend in Human Shape	04 Jan. 1879
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-58	Item - [Pooly?] Manners	18 Oct. 1873
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-59	Item - An infantile sell	03 Jan. 1880
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-60	Item - Don't let her marry him - 2.57.III	[1860-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-61	Item - After the Party	[1860-1896?]
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-62	Item - Triumphs of the Funny man	Dec. 1890
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-63	Item - Country House Pets	Aug. 1891
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-64	Item - "Trilby" [Vanity Fair]	23 Jan. 1896
RBSC-ARC-1832-GR-65	Item - Unfinished self-portrait in oils, painted in Paris	[1856-1857]

Writings

Date: 1860-1898 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of personal letters written by or for du Maurier. Handwritten letters by du Maurier also occasionally have illustrations drawn on them. Several letters also have annotations written by the previous custodian of the fonds. 45 pieces of loose correspondence were donated as well as a framed collage with eleven pieces of correspondence, and a self-portrait in oil (which can be found in the "Graphic Works" series as the framed collage was de-framed during processing). File also includes one piece of a written explanation regarding an illustration that is not present in this fonds.

Physical description: 54 letters

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1832-01-01	File - [Correspondence]	1860-1898		
RBSC-ARC-1832-01-02	File - [Lady Snobbington explanation]	1886		