Guide to the John Nicholas Brown family photographs
1860-1980 (bulk 1920-1979)

John Hay Library
University Archives and Manuscripts
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Collection overview

Title: John Nicholas Brown family photographs
Date range: 1860-1980, (bulk 1920-1979)
Creator: Brown family
Extent: 36 linear feet (estimated)
Abstract: The collection contains photographs and other memorabilia from the life of John Nicholas Brown II and his family. Materials date from John's childhood to the last years of his life, and chronicle aspects of the lives of his children and grandchildren. Also included are photographs of John's wife, Anne Kinsolving, and her family. Film, sound recordings, postcards, newspaper clippings, portraits, photograph prints and slides comprise the bulk of the collection.

Language of materials: English
Repository: John Hay Library University Archives and Manuscripts
Collection number: Ms.2010.049

Scope & content

The collection contains family photographs, film, sound recordings, postcards and newspaper clippings from the life of John Nicholas Brown II. The bulk of the collection ranges from 1920-1980 and features events such as the marriage of John and Anne, the birth and childhood and adulthood of their three children, and the family's extensive traveling. Travel sites included Europe, the Middle East, Asia (most notably Japan) and the United States. The Browns also took several cruises on board one of their many yachts. Featured most prominently in this collection is Bolero, which John launched in 1949 and raced with success for six seasons. The extensive family photos chronicle events such as family birthday parties, holidays, anniversaries and vacations. The homes that the Browns owned in Newport (Harbour Court) and on Fishers Island in New York appear in many of the photographs. Other properties and projects includes are Emmanuel Church, Rex Ranch, Beaulieu house and Nightingale-Brown house.
Many of John Nicholas Brown's public service projects are honored in photographs and newspaper clippings. His service as Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air is most prominent, and his and Anne's commitment to the Red Cross during World War II is also presented. There are some artifacts from John's childhood, such as photos and projects he may have done in Sunday school. Pictures of his father and uncles are also present. Milestones in John Brown's life are documented, such as his 70th birthday and anniversaries with his wife. Images of the Kinsolvings, Dressers, maternal and paternal relatives are also included. Film in various forms includes family footage, interviews with John Nicholas Brown, FOX News, and aquarium footage. There are also sound recordings of organ and choir recitals. Several postcard albums are present, some dating back to 1900. Miscellaneous items include a painting of a Victorian child, and unidentified people and places in photos and negatives.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in the following twelve series:

- Series 1. John Nicholas Brown II childhood
- Series 2. John Nicholas Brown II adulthood
- Series 3. Family
- Series 4. Travel
- Series 5. Yachts
- Series 6. Properties
- Series 7. Architecture
- Series 8. Film
- Series 9. Sound recording
- Series 10. Books
- Series 11. Clippings
- Series 12. Miscellaneous

Biographical

John Nicholas Brown II was born on February 21, 1900 in New York City to John Nicholas Brown I (1861-1900) and Natalie Bayard Dresser Brown (1869-1950). He was nephew to Harold Brown (1863-1900) and Sophia Brown Sherman, and grandson to Sophia Augusta Brown (1825-1909). His aunts also included Edith Dresser Vanderbilt Gerry. In 1900, John Nicholas Brown I and Harold Brown both died unexpectedly, leaving 3-month old
John Nicholas Brown II sole heir to the vast family fortune. The baby gained instant public notoriety, and Natalie Bayard Brown took it upon herself to protect her son and manage his inheritance. John Nicholas Brown was very devoted to his mother, and he grew up mostly in the care of women. A sense of religiosity and social responsibility was instilled in him at a young age. He attended St. George's school in Newport, but chose to attend Harvard instead of Brown University, citing his desire to become his own man. Harvard provided scholarly mentors for John, and he founded the Medieval Academy of America in 1925 along with these mentors. John graduated in 1922 with a unique concentration in History and Literature of Classical Cultures. He also developed a life-long interest in architecture, and donated a chapel to St. George's school. This experience led to an interest in historic preservation, and in later years John would contribute greatly to preservation groups such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Preservation Society of Newport County.

Travel was an integral part of John Nicholas Brown's life, and after graduating from Harvard, he toured Europe, Japan and the Mediterranean with his mother. John also found inspiration for St. George's chapel from many of the sites he visited on this trip. In 1926, John decided to begin graduate study at Harvard in the fine arts. Two years later he graduated with a master's degree in historic architecture, Christian iconography and the history of painting. In 1930, John embarked on a new phase in his life when he met Anne Seddon Kinsolving. At the time, Anne was working as a reporter for the Baltimore News. They married in October of 1930 and honeymooned in Europe. Throughout the rest of their lives, the Browns would travel throughout Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the United States.

John and Anne established their residence at 357 Benefit St. in Providence, and John began to assert more control over the family business. John and Anne were in many ways male and female counterparts. While Anne was at first put off by the societal matrons of Providence, she made the Brown home a lively place to entertain and live. The Browns built a vacation home on Fishers Island in New York, where Anne's family had historically spent their summer. The family also had a home in Newport called Harbour Court. In 1933, John became the head of the Rhode Island division of the Public Works Administration, which was succeeded by the Rhode Island State Planning Board with John serving as Chair. During World War II, John was the Chair of the Newport Council of Defense and the War Fund Campaign for the Rhode Island Red Cross. Anne also worked for the Red Cross in Newport managing the Red Cross Canteen.

Anne and John had three children together, Nicholas in 1932, John Carter (called Carter) in 1934, and Angela Bayard in 1938. Angela would go on to assume the married name of
Fischer when she wed Dr. Edwin Garry Fischer. John and Anne had many grandchildren, including John Nicholas Brown III. John and Anne also had a passion for sailing and had several yachts, including Saraband and Bolero. In 1945, John served in Germany with the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Commission, returning art and other loot stolen by the Nazis to their rightful owners. In 1946, John was appointed by President Truman to serve as the Assistant Secretary to the Navy for Air. 1946 also witnessed the launch of Bolero, which John raced for many seasons. He also acquired other yachts on which he embarked on cruises, notably Volta and Mazurka.


In 1954, John became Chair of the Harvard University Committee for the Visual Arts, which was tasked with evaluating the role of the fine arts within the university curriculum. The final report was published in 1956, and is still regarded as an important statement about the fine arts within a university curriculum. In 1957, John served on the President's Committee for the American Armed Forces Museum. From there, John was selected to Chair the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery Commission and served on the Smithsonian's Board of Regents, two posts he would hold for the remainder of his life. After 1949, John focused his attentions on Rhode Island committees, and served on various public works and fine arts councils. The last years of John's life were plagued by chronic heart disease, though he still served on trusteeships, traveled, devoted attention to the fine arts and sailed. At Annapolis Maryland, on board his sailing yawl, John Nicholas Brown died on October 8, 1979. In 1985, Anne Kingsolving Brown died of cancer at Harbour Court in Newport.

Access & use

Access to the collection: There are no restrictions on access, except that the collection can only be seen by prior appointment. Some materials may be stored off-site and cannot be produced on the same day on which they are requested.
Use of materials: All researchers seeking to publish materials from the collections of the John Hay Library are requested to complete a Notice of Intent to Publish, prior to reproducing, quoting, or otherwise publishing any portion or extract from this collection. Although Brown University has physical ownership of the collection and the materials contained therein, it does not claim literary rights. It is up to the researcher to determine the owners of the literary rights and to obtain any necessary permissions from them.

Preferred citation: John Nicholas Brown family photographs, Ms.2010.049, John Hay Library University Archives and Manuscripts

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Administrative information

About the collection

Acquisition: Transferred from John Nicholas Brown Center to the John Hay Library during February-March 2011.

About the finding aid

Author: Finding aid prepared by Karen Hopkinson.

Encoding: This finding aid was produced using the Archivists’ Toolkit 2014-02-07

Descriptive rules: Finding aid based on Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)
Search terms

Names:        Brown, Anne S. Kinsolving
              Brown, Harold, 1863-1900
              Brown, John Nicholas, 1861-1900
              Brown, John Nicholas, 1900-1979
              Brown, Natalie Bayard Dresser, 1869-1950

Subjects:    Americans--Travel--Foreign countries
              Architecture
              Europe--Description and travel
              Italy--Description and travel
              Middle East--Description and travel
              Rhode Island/Local Interest
              Voyages and travels
              Yachting

Types of materials: Motion pictures (visual work)
                    Photographs
Inventory

Series 1, John Nicholas Brown Childhood, 1880-1920
Scope and Contents note

Individual and group portraits of John Nicholas Brown during his childhood, including photographs of his father, John Nicholas Brown I and uncle, Harold Brown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 81,</td>
<td>Framed photographs- JNB II and Harold Brown</td>
<td>circa 1880, circa 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 79,</td>
<td>Individual and group portraits</td>
<td>1917-1918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scope and Contents note

St. George's School

Box 78, Individual portraits 1901-1915

Scope and Contents note

With Cornelia Vanderbilt, 1906-1907

Box 80, Individual and group photos 1900-1920

Box 55, Lantern slides-Bible scenes Undated

Series 2, John Nicholas Brown Adulthood, 1900-1979
Scope and Contents note

Images of John Brown's life as an adult, including his wedding to Anne Kinsolving and his time as Assistant Secretary to the Navy for Air.

Life and travel, 1930-1979
Assistant Secretary to the Navy for Air, 1946-1949
Scope and Contents note

Photographs from John Brown's service as the Assistant Secretary to the Navy for Air.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 63,</td>
<td>1930 Wedding to Anne Kinsolving</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 65,</td>
<td>JNB and ASKB in Tuscon, 1921 South Main St. staff</td>
<td>1921, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 69,</td>
<td>Individual and group portraits</td>
<td>1921-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 68,</td>
<td>Portraits</td>
<td>1920-1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 61,</td>
<td>JNB II and ASKB 35th anniversary, JNB II children</td>
<td>1936-1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 60,</td>
<td>JNB II 70th birthday party, JNB II children</td>
<td>1930-1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 66,</td>
<td>Portraits</td>
<td>1944-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 67,</td>
<td>Formal portraits</td>
<td>circa 1930, 1936, 1965, 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 64,</td>
<td>Miscellaneous photographs</td>
<td>1902-1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 70,</td>
<td>Portraits</td>
<td>1941-1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 71,</td>
<td>Harry Truman and Military generals photos, visit to Brown</td>
<td>circa 1945, 1975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series 3, Family, 1823-1985

Scope and Contents note

Family includes John Brown's children, grandchildren, maternal and paternal relatives, and extended family and friends. Also included are the Kinsolving family, John Nicholas Brown I, Harold Brown and Natalie Bayard Brown.

John Nicholas Brown II children, 1905-1959
John Nicholas Brown II grandchildren, 1964-1972
Anne Seddon Kinsolving Brown, 1906-1985
Nicholas Brown, 1932-1981
John Carter Brown, 1934-1979
Angela Brown, 1963-1979
Family Photos, 1879-1984
Natalie Bayard Brown, 1836-1940
John Nicholas Brown I, 1861-1900
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 27,</td>
<td>Group photographs</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Scope and Contents note</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nicholas Brown, J. Carter Brown, Angela B. Brown (Fischer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 28,</td>
<td>Formal portrait of children, Yachts, Windshield glass plate, JNB II and Smithsonian Regents</td>
<td>1905-1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 41,</td>
<td>Family photos, JNB III christening</td>
<td>1964, 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Scope and Contents note</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birthday party at Harbour Ct, Aug 1972</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 53,</td>
<td>Brown and Fischer grandchildren</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 14,</td>
<td>Personal photos</td>
<td>1906-1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 14,</td>
<td>Portraits, Tuscon</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 17,</td>
<td>Portraits</td>
<td>1922-1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 16,</td>
<td>Individual and group portraits</td>
<td>1923-1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 18,</td>
<td>Individual and group portraits</td>
<td>1906-1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 15,</td>
<td>ASKB Portraits, Kinsolvings, JNB II portraits</td>
<td>circa 1943-1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 24,</td>
<td>Photographs and formal portraits</td>
<td>1932-circa 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 24,</td>
<td>Childhood photo</td>
<td>1935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 25, Nicholas, Diane Verne (wife) and children: Sylvia, James and JNB III 1956-1981

Scope and Contents note

Nicholas Brown military portraits, Nick and Diane’s wedding, photos of children

Box 29, JCB wedding-1971 1971-1974

Box 23, Candids and Portraits of Carter and family 1934-1979

Box 19, Angela's engagement and wedding 1963

Box 50, Angela's wedding 1963

Box 20, Angela Fischer, Edwin Garvin Fischer (husband) children: Olivia L. Z. Fischer, E.G. Fischer Jr., Chad Fischer circa 1963-1979

Box 105, Angela Fischer arranged to have a historic farmhouse in danger of demolition moved from Chalkstone Ave to Benefit St. Family photos 1981

Box 32, List of family photo albums undated

Scope and Contents note

List created by the family of all their photo albums including family events and travel.

Box 32, JNB I, JNB II 1921-30, NBB, Harold Brown, Sophia Brown 1879, 1900, 1921-1930

Scope and Contents note

Kinsolving-Brown wedding, JNB I, Harold and Sophia in Paris, 1879
Box 31,  On boat, framed portraits, Scandinavia, NBB  1892-1900

Box 33,  Photos of Cornelia Vanderbilt with the Browns, Europe, Harbour Court and Newport  1900-1925, 1964

Box 34,  Assorted family photos  1930-1961

Scope and Contents note

1962 Blizzard, children & grandchildren, Volta, Bolero, JNB 50th birthday

Box 19,  1938-circa 1963


Box 41,  Christmas '82 and '84  1982 December, 1984 December

Box 12,  NBB and extended family  1836-1921

Scope and Contents note

LeRoy, Dresser, D'Osmoy, Vanderbilt, NBB wedding

Box 13,  Dressers photo album  c. 1870-c. 1920

Box 9,  Mediterranean Cruise, Iolanda  1929

Box 10,  Dresser-Brown photo album  c. 1870-c. 1930
Box 11, Formal portraits and group photos 1884 Jul, 1895-1940

Box 26, JNB I portraits 1861-1900

Scope and Contents note
With Harold Brown at Niagara Falls, 1877

Box 5, Harold Brown portrait Undated

Box 5, Harold Brown and JNB I c. 1876 and c. 1870

Box 21, Multiple generations of Kinsolving family 1896-1965

Box 21, Rev. Arthur B. Kinsolving 1936, 1941 Portrait, Maryland Churchman Bulletin
Scope and Contents note
Bulletin: 1936 and 1941

Box 21, Kinsolving family 1896-1912

Box 22, Edith Vanderbilt at Biltmore Station Undated

Box 1, Framed images- JNB II, ancestors Undated

Box 2, Framed paintings-Dressers and Browns Undated

Scope and Contents note
Major George Dresser, Elizabeth Stuyvesant LeRoy Dresser, Sophia Augusta Brown, JNB II, Nicholas Brown (1792-1859)

Box 84, John Carter Brown (1797-1874) travel diaries 1823-1824
Box 104, Biltmore-Asheville, NC; Newport-LeRoy Cottage (1880s) c. 1880

Box 7, JNB I, Moses Brown, Sophia Augusta Brown, Chad Fischer, John Carter Brown I, JNB I and Pres. Faunce, 1905 1905

Box 8, JNB II and ASKB family and friends 1928

Scope and Contents note

General Convention in Washington, DC 1928

Box 6, Natalie Bayard Merrill Portrait, 1925. Nicholas Brown II Portrait and Letter, 1892 1892, 1925

Box 22, Vanderbilt 1894-1930

Box 3, Snapshots and portraits of friends and family 1884, 1888, 1922-1962

Scope and Contents note

Ralph Adams Cram, Kittredge family, Celebrity portraits, Sea Cloud cruise

Box 4, JNB II Maternal relatives 1874-1963

Scope and Contents note

Fish, LeRoy, Dresser, Merrill, D'Osmoy, Vanderbilt, McCagg

Box 5, JNB II Paternal relatives 1867-1900, 1920-1965

Scope and Contents note

Brown, Sherman, Wetmore, Fitzgerald, Stonor, Carmays, Drexel, Safe, Herbert, Binnay
Series 4, Travel, 1911-1979

Scope and Contents note

The Brown family traveled extensively to locations such as Europe, the USA, Asia, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Africa. Various cruises included stops in India and the Mediterranean. The family's vacation homes at Harbour Court in Newport and Fishers Island are also pictured.

Cruises, 1929-1973

Scope and Contents note

The Brown family embarked on numerous cruises to locations such as the Mediterranean and India.

Europe, 1911-1973

Scope and Contents note

The Browns traveled to many European countries including France, Spain, Italy, England, Switzerland and Portugal.

Family Travel, 1926-1979

Scope and Contents note

Photos and slides of the Browns during their travels throughout Europe and the USA.

Middle East and Asia, 1922-1960

Scope and Contents note

Travels in Asia and the Middle East including Egypt, Japan, Taiwan, Jordan, Istanbul and Sinai.

South America,
USA, 1951-1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 46,</td>
<td>S. Y. Iolanda Cruise, Mediterranean</td>
<td>1929 Apr-May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 45, Iolanda Cruise 1929 May-Jul
Box 44, Slides-1957 Coronia Cruise 1957
Box 47, RMS Caronia, India 1957
Box 50, Volta cruise 1964
Box 53, Cruises on Trelawney, Gitana IV and Mazurka 1972-1973
Box 107, Folder 1-2 Cruise in Greece on the Kormoran 1968 Apr
Box 107, Folder 27-28 Caribbean Cruise on Ketch Ring Andersen - Album 106 1970 Mar-Apr
Box 47, Gitana IV, Renaissance Cruise 1973 Feb, 1975 Mar
Box 38, 1911
Box 39, France, Spain, Italy, England, Sicily 1922-1923
Box 101, Autochromes and negatives, flipbooks, lantern slides-NBB 1924?
Scope and Contents note
Piazza Navona
Box 37, Slides-Italy, Switzerland, France, Portugal, England, Spain 1925, 1955
Box 36, Picture slides-England, France, Houston, Caribbean, Bolero 1951
### Scope and Contents note

England slides contain pictures of Stonor children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 107, Folder 5</th>
<th>Greece and Istanbul - Album 50</th>
<th>1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 6</td>
<td>Rome (1958, 1960); The Cosma Family (1962); Switzerland (1962); Venice (1962); Florence (1963) - Album 51</td>
<td>1958-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 7-8</td>
<td>Sicily - Album 67</td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 12</td>
<td>Sicily, Naples, Benevento, Herculaneum, Pompeii, Ischia - Album 68</td>
<td>1961-1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 9-10</td>
<td>Mouton (1963, 1970); Bordeaux (1963); Italy (1970) - Album 67</td>
<td>1963-1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 13</td>
<td>Portugal - Album 75</td>
<td>1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 14</td>
<td>Ireland - Album 80</td>
<td>1964 Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 15-16</td>
<td>Russia - Album 81-82</td>
<td>1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 17-19</td>
<td>Mexico - Album 86-87</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 20-21</td>
<td>England, Iron Curtain, Alsace - Album 90</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 107, Folder 3-4</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1969 May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 107, Folder 26  Yugoslavia, Rome  1969 May

Box 107, Folder 29-30  Save Venice - Album 109  1971 May

Box 32,  Photographic Log  circa 1926

**Scope and Contents note**

Photographic log kept by John Nicholas Brown in which he recorded the subject, exposure time, F-stop, lens, plate and filter that he used to take the photograph. Most of the photos logged in this volume are for travel in Havana and Europe but it includes notes for photos taken of the Biltmore mansion in North Carolina.

Box 57,  George VI Coronation  1926-1937

**Scope and Contents note**

George VI Coronation, 1937

Box 49,  Assorted Slides and prints  1942-44, 1948-49

**Scope and Contents note**

Iowa, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Havana, Bermuda, Passport photos, children, Saraband, Yawgoo camp, Red Cross, Baden Baden

Box 82,  Slides: Bolero, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Harbour Court, Newport, Fishers Island, Morocco, France, Gibraltar, N.Y.  1952, 1953, 1955 Feb-Mar
Scope and Contents note

Bolero coronation 1953, Christmas 1952

Box 56, Greece, Japan, Puerto Rico, Iowa, Rex Ranch, Volta, Harbour Ct 1957-1959

Scope and Contents note

357 Benefit St., St. George’s Chapel

Box 54, Slides and negatives, South Africa, Harbour Court and Windshield 1954-1959

Box 55, Slides- Travel, Yucatan 1955-1958, 1960 Oct

Scope and Contents note


Box 58, Nassau, Minnesota, Rex Ranch, Germany, Misc. photos and negatives 1940-1960


Box 51, Fischers, Walkers, JNB III, Europe and USA 1967-1971

Scope and Contents note

Carribean, Jamaica, and Barbados, Venice. Italy, England, Providence,
Newport, Hawaii, Nebraska, Iowa, Maine, California

Box 59, Newport, Rome, England, Canada, France, Spain, Germany, AZ, NY, NJ, 1906-c. 1970
Newport

Scope and Contents note
1960s-1970s-friends, family, travels

Box 52, Slides, travel photos 1924, 1960, 1974-1979

Scope and Contents note
Mt. Sinai 3/1960, France, Spain, Tintern, Biltmore-1924. Travel photos- 1974-1979

Box 43, Egypt (Jan-Mar 1923), Italy (Mar-Apr 1923), Palestine (Mar 1923) 1922-1923

Box 42, Egypt 1923

Box 40, Japan, Taiwan, Jordan, Egypt and Istanbul 1955, 1959, 1960

Box 41, Japan, Taiwan and Sinai 1959, 1960

Box 107, Folder 22-23 Iran - Album 93 1967

Box 107, Folder 24-25 Jamaica, Venezuela, Cartagena - Album 94 1967

Box 36, Slides 1951

Scope and Contents note
MN, NY and Windshield
Series 5, Yachts, 1929-1972

Scope and Contents note

John Brown possessed a passion for boats and yachting, and his yachts Bolero, Annapolis and Sea Cloud were used for racing and for cruises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 85,</td>
<td>Annapolis</td>
<td>1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 87,</td>
<td>Sea Cloud</td>
<td>1948-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 85,</td>
<td>Bolero - Negatives and Prints</td>
<td>1949-1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 86,</td>
<td>Boats, Yachts and crews</td>
<td>1929-1972</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Series 6, Properties, 1900-1949

Scope and Contents note

The Brown family owned several residences included in this collection: 357 Benefit St. and 50 South Main St. in Providence, Rex Ranch in Iowa, Harbort Court in Newport, Nightingale-Brown House and Fishers Island.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 94,</td>
<td>Providence - 357 Benefit St and 50 S. Main St</td>
<td>c. 1900, 1903, c. 1940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Scope and Contents note

Interiors and Exteriors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 95,</td>
<td>Rex Ranch</td>
<td>1900-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 104,</td>
<td>Providence, Fishers Island</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 93,</td>
<td>Harbour Court, Nightingale-Brown house, 357 Benefit St.</td>
<td>c. 1890, 1906-1959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scope and Contents note

Interiors, Exteriors and Gardens

### Series 7, Architecture, 1900-1949

Scope and Contents note

John and Anne Brown were involved in numerous architectural projects. These include Emmanuel Church, St. George's Chapel, Beaulieu House and the Providence Public Library.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 96,</td>
<td>Beaulieu House photos</td>
<td>c. 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 98,</td>
<td>St. George's Chapel</td>
<td>1924-1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 97,</td>
<td>Emmanuel Church</td>
<td>1903-1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 97,</td>
<td>Properties scrapbook</td>
<td>1900-1946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scope and Contents note

Providence Public library, Sophia Augusta Brown obituary, Emmanuel Church

Box 85, Greece-lantern slides, Italian architecture 1949

Series 8, Film, 1982-1999
Scope and Contents note

The Browns acquired film of family footage, news clips, interviews with John Brown and Anne Kinsolving testifying at the trial of Claus von Bulow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reel 1,</td>
<td>F.W.M., Cambridge, Olympic, Foch Funeral</td>
<td>c. 1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 2,</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>c. 1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 3,</td>
<td>St Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Mis French, Nice, Iolanda, Segesta</td>
<td>1930 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 4,</td>
<td>Gulf of Patras, Canal, Athens</td>
<td>c. 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 5,</td>
<td>Nauplia, Epidaurus, Mycenae, Bassae</td>
<td>c. 1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 6,</td>
<td>Monemvasia, Mount Taygetos, Mistro, Mega Spelion, Delphi, Sunium</td>
<td>c. 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 7,</td>
<td>Sunium, Groups, Delos, Santorin, Knossos</td>
<td>c. 1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 8,</td>
<td>Phaistos, Lindos, Rhodes, Cyprus</td>
<td>c. 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 9,</td>
<td>Symi, Patmos, Pest Samos, Lesbos, Fishing Dardanelles</td>
<td>c. 1928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reel 10, Troy, Istanbul, Constantinople, Iolem c. 1936
Reel 11, Crew Groups, Mount Athos, Arta c. 1936
Reel 12, Cortu, Cattaro, Boat file drill c. 1936
Reel 13, Venice, Rimini, Marseilles, Minorca, Southampton c. 1936
Reel 14, Plessis, Clurry, Stonor, Colebrook or Coldbrook c. 1928
Reel 15, Akropolis, Lido, Venice c. 1936
Box 88, VHS tapes, 3/4 inch 1982

**Scope and Contents note**

Assorted news coverage, AKB testimony at Von Bulow trial, USA Today spot on aquariums.

Box 89, Film rolls, Interviews with JNB II, FOX News, family footage-3/4 inch 1999

Box 90, Family footage Undated

**Scope and Contents note**

Film: Betacam SP and VHS

Film rolls: Harbour Ct and Newport. This box of films was originally Box 91. All the films were rehoused into vented archival film cans and numbered Reels 1-15.

Film rolls. This box of films was originally Box 92. All the films were rehoused into vented archival film cans and numbered Reels 1-15.
Box 108, Disk 1  DVD patron access copy of Reels 1-4  undated  
Box 108, Disk 2  DVD patron access copy of Reels 5-8  undated  
Box 108, Disk 3  DVD patron access copy of Reels 9-12  undated  
Box 108, Disk 4  DVD patron access copy of Reels 13-15  undated  
Box 108,  
videotape 1-4  Beta SP video cassette masters of  
Reels 1-15  undated  

Series 9, Sound Recording, 1968-1971  
Scope and Contents note  
Sound recordings of organ and choir recitals and the St. Dunstan's College Conference on Sacred Music.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 99,</td>
<td>Organ and choir recitals</td>
<td>1968, 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 99,</td>
<td>St. Dunstan's College Conference on Sacred Music</td>
<td>1968, 1970, 1971</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Series 10, Books, 1833-1918  
Scope and Contents note  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 100,</td>
<td>Autograph book, Decoy book with safe codes, Drawings of French location, Obituaries: Williams Goddard and Elizabeth Marris, Fountainbleu drawings</td>
<td>1833-1850, 1899-1907, 1918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series 11, Clippings, 1900-1963

Scope and Contents note

The Browns collected postcards from traveling and documented events such as World War I and John Brown public service ventures in newspaper clippings.

Postcards, 1895-1926

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 84,</td>
<td>Postcard booklets, Italy</td>
<td>c. 1900,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Scope and Contents note</strong></td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postcards-St. Mary of the Angels church, Italy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 73,</td>
<td>Assorted newspaper clippings- WWI, USS Newport</td>
<td>1912, 1914,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1943-1944,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1956-1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 83,</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings</td>
<td>1934-1938,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Scope and Contents note</strong></td>
<td>1944-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Cross, State planning board, Newport Civilian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Defense Photos and Log, Committee on Visual Arts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>at Harvard, Harvard Arcade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Series 12, Miscellaneous, 1915-1967

Scope and Contents note

Unidentified places, people and items and a Victorian painting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 102,</td>
<td>Ivory painting of Victorian child in leather case</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 103</th>
<th>Unidentified people, places and items.</th>
<th>1915-1923, 1940, 1949, c. 1950, 1967</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>