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Guide to the Louis Choris Paintings and Sketches

WA MSS S-260



Beinecke Staff

October 2023

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-260

CREATOR: Choris, Louis, 1795-1828

TITLE: Louis Choris Paintings and Sketches

DATES: 1815-1818

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 44 Items (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: Manuscript captions in French.

SUMMARY: Watercolor paintings and sketches by Louis Choris of the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, the Bering Sea and the Alaskan Natives living on those lands, as well as other Arctic peoples including Chukchi and Itelmens in Russia. Made on the Kotzebue Expedition, 1815-1818.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.lchoris>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.lchoris>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of William Robertson Coe.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Louis Choris Paintings and Sketches is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Louis Choris Paintings and Sketches. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

Finding aid created from previously unpublished list housed with the collection. Titles in French have been translated into English. Supplied titles are in brackets.

Existence and Location of Copies

The entire collection is available in digital form.

Biographical / Historical

Louis Choris (1795-1828) was a German-Russian painter and explorer.

In 1816, he visited the Pacific and the west coast of North America on board the Russian expeditionary ship *Rurik*, serving as an artist with the Romanzoff expedition under the command of Lieutenant Otto von Kotzebue (1787-1846), which was tasked with exploring a northwest passage.

Scope and Contents

Watercolor paintings and sketches by Louis Choris of the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, the Bering Sea and the Alaskan Natives living on those lands, as well as other Arctic peoples including Chukchi and Itelmens in Russia. Made on the Kotzebue Expedition, 1815-1818.

Collection Contents

b. 4	(Baydare) Bateau des habitans des îles Aléoutiennes / Boat of the inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands
b. 1	Établis pour sécher les bateaus [sic] et les filets dans le Détroit de Behring / Established for drying boats and nets in the Behring Strait
b. 1	[Portrait of a man wearing two medallions]
b. 3	Habitans des îles Aléoutiennes / Inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands
b. 1	Aléoutes / Aleuts
b. 1	[Portrait of a woman]
b. 1	L'intérieur d'une hutte d'été sur l'île de St. Laurent près du détroit de Behring / The interior of a summer hut on the Island of St. Lawrence near the Behring Strait
b. 1	Kamtchadales / Kamchadals (Itelmens)
b. 1	[Portrait of a man]
b. 1	Femme de la Terre de Tchouktchis. Enfant du même pays / Woman from the Land of Chukchi. Child from the same country
b. 1	Bateaus [sic] à rames de l'île St. Laurent / Rowing boats of St. Lawrence Island
b. 1	Habitans de l'île de St. Laurent / Inhabitants of the Island of St. Laurent
b. 1	Kamtchadale / Kamchadal (Itelmen)
b. 1	Habitans de l'île de St. Laurent / Inhabitants of the island of St. Laurent
b. 1	Ustensiles des habitans du détroit de Behring sur la Côte de L'Amérique / Implements of the inhabitants of the Behring Strait on the coast of America
b. 1	[Portrait of a man]
b. 1	Femme de la terre des Tchouktchis / Woman from the land of the Chukchi
b. 1	Habitans de l'île de St. Laurent, près du [...] / Inhabitants of the Island of St. Laurent, near the [...]
b. 1	Détroit de Behring / Behring Strait
b. 3	Un Village des Tchouktchis. Traineaus [sic] et habitations des mêmes peuples / A Chukchi Village. Sleds and dwellings of the same people
b. 3	[Portrait of a young woman]
b. 2	Homme et cabane idem / Man and cabin
b. 3	Jeunes lions marins mène par les enfants aléoute / Young sea lions led by Aleut children
b. 3	Ours de Mer idem idem / Sea bear
b. 3	Ours de Mer de L'île St. Georges / St. George Island sea bear
b. 3	Lions marins de l'île St. Georges / Sea lions of St. George Island

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|------|--|
| b. 3 | Costume d'un jeune garçon et la carcasse d'une hutte dans le golfe de Kotzebuë / Costume of a young boy and the structure of a hut in the Gulf of Kotzebuë |
| b. 2 | Hommes du Golfe de Kotzebuë / Men of the Gulf of Kotzebuë |
| b. 2 | Hommes du golfe de Kotzebue et leur rames / Men of the Gulf of Kotzebue and their oars |
| b. 3 | [Portraits of two young men] |
| b. 2 | Costumes de femme et têtes de femmes du Golfe de Kotzebue / Women's costumes and heads of women from the Gulf of Kotzebue |
| b. 2 | Femmes des Tchouktchis / Chukchi women |
| b. 2 | Têtes du golfe de Tchischmareff / Heads of the Gulf of Shishmaref |
| b. 3 | Hommes de la terre de Tchouktchis / Men of the land of Chukchi |
| b. 1 | Costumes de l'Île St. Laurent à l'entrée du détroit de Behring / Costumes of St. Lawrence Island at the entrance to Behring Strait |
| b. 2 | (Tchouktchis) une tent en cuire idem / (Tchoukchis) a tent made of same leather |
| b. 2 | Hommes du Cap Oriental / Eastern Cape men |
| b. 3 | St. Laurents Haafen |
| b. 4 | Habitans de la Terre des Tchouktchis / Inhabitants of the Land of the Chukchi |
| b. 4 | L'Île St. Laurent dans le détroit de Behring / St. Lawrence Island in Behring Strait |
| b. 4 | Glacier dans le Golfe de Kotzebue au delà du détroit de Behring / Glacier in the Gulf of Kotzebue beyond the Behring Strait |
| b. 4 | Bay d'Avatcha (Kamtchatka) / Avacha Bay (Kamchatka) |
| b. 4 | Interieur d'une habitation de Tchouktchis / Interior of a Chukchi dwelling |
| b. 4 | Bay de St. Pierre et Paul au Kamtchatka / Bay of St. Peter and Paul in Kamchatka |

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Genres / Formats

Drawings (visual works)
Paintings (visual works)
Watercolors (paintings)

Occupations

Artists -- Russia -- 19th century
Explorers -- Russia -- 19th century

Subjects

Alaska Natives -- Pictorial works
Alaska Natives -- Portraits
Aleuts -- Pictorial works
Aleuts -- Portraits
Arctic peoples
Artists -- Russia
Chukchi -- Pictorial works
Chukchi -- Portraits
Eskimos -- Alaska -- Pictorial works
Eskimos -- Alaska -- Portraits
Explorers -- Russia
Itelmens -- Pictorial works
Itelmens -- Portraits

Geographic Names

Alaska -- Pictorial works
Aleutian Islands (Alaska)
Bering Sea -- Pictorial works
Kamchatka Peninsula (Russia)
Kotzebue Sound (Alaska)
Saint Lawrence Island (Alaska)

Corporate Bodies

Kotzebue Expedition, 1815-1818
Ri`u`rik (Brig)