

**THE TRUSTEES OF RESERVATIONS  
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**Guide to**

**Holly McLennan Ketron Albums  
Regarding Ashintully, 1904-1948**

**AT.PH.Coll.1**

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Extent: 2 oversize boxes  
Other storage formats: none  
Linear feet: 2.75

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

### **PROVENANCE**

Gift of Holly McLennan Ketron, 2013.

### **OWNERSHIP & LITERARY RIGHTS**

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### **CITE AS**

Holly McLennan Ketron Albums Regarding Ashintully. The Trustees of Reservations, Archives & Research Center.

### **RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS**

This collection is open for research.

### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Grace Seeley Henop was born on September 9, 1875 in Ossining, NY to Louis Philip Henop (1833-1918) and Alice Seeley Henop. She and her sister, Sydney Stuart Henop (who married Sir Talbot Ewart), were educated in New York and traveled extensively abroad with the family.

On May 19, 1903, Grace married Robb de Peyster Tytus (1876-1913) in Grace Church, New York, in a ceremony performed by Rev. William R. Huntington. Tytus, who was born on February 2, 1876 in Asheville, NC to businessman Edward Jefferson Tytus (1845-1881) and Charlotte Mathilde Davies Tytus (1850-1936), had graduated from Yale College in 1897 and had received a master's degree from Yale in 1903. Tytus had conducted excavations with Howard Carter and Percy Newberry on the tomb of King Amenhotep III in Thebes, Egypt and had published *A Preliminary Report on the Re-Excavation of the Palace of Amenhetep III* in 1903. Later, he published various poems, stories, articles, and drawings, some in collaboration with Grace. He was also elected twice to the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

On their honeymoon, Robb and Grace visited the Berkshires and decided to buy property there. Over time, they assembled several farms to create Ashintully, an estate in Tyringham, Massachusetts. The name Ashintully derives from Gaelic and means “on the brow of the hill.”

The Tytuses traveled at length after their wedding, and their first daughter, Mildred Mordaunt Tytus (1904-1933) was born in Cairo, Egypt on April 7, 1904. They returned with Mildred to Ashintully on July 26, 1904 to live in Garfield Homestead, and their second daughter, Victoria Stuart Tytus, was born there five years later on October 23, 1909. The Tytuses spent much of their time at Ashintully, aside from a few winters in Boston, a trip to Europe, and Robb’s time convalescing from tuberculosis. In 1912, the Tytuses completed a Georgian-style mansion at Ashintully, which became known as the “Marble Palace.”

Robb’s health deteriorated, and he died of tuberculosis on August 13, 1913 in Saranac Lake, NY. As a memorial to Tytus, his mother donated money to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to fund the publication of a series of five volumes, the Robb de Peyster Memorial Series, regarding excavation work in Thebes.

On January 7, 1915, Grace Tytus married Canadian industrialist, newspaper owner, and politician John Stewart McLennan (1853-1939) in the Grace Church Chantry in New York. Their son, John Stewart McLennan, Jr. (1915-1996) was born on November 26, 1915 at Ashintully. They divided their time between Sydney (Nova Scotia) and Ashintully, and they also spent time in Washington, DC through McLennan’s position as Canadian senator, as well as continuing to travel abroad.

The McLennans separated in 1921, and Grace filed for divorce in 1926; the divorce was finalized in 1927. Grace continued traveling, entertaining international and prominent guests at Ashintully, and giving talks and writing about world politics.

On October 14, 1928, Grace slipped and fell while playing tennis at Ashintully. She was hospitalized in Pittsfield with a broken hip and returned to Ashintully to recuperate, but she died on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

Grace’s daughters from her first marriage, Mildred and Victoria, inherited Ashintully. Mildred died in a car accident in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1933, and Victoria, who had married Lawrence Coolidge and had a family of her own, decided to sell Ashintully. John Stewart McLennan, Jr., who had become a composer (he won the American Academy of Arts and Letters music award in 1985), purchased the property in 1937.

McLennan, Jr. lived with his first wife, Honora Harwood Kammerer McLennan, and their daughters, Holly Victoria McLennan (Ketron) and Angelica McLennan (Syp), in the farmhouse at the bottom of the hill while the great house, which had been built as a summer home and was difficult to heat in winter, remained empty. McLennan eventually put the great house on the market and found a buyer, but the house burned down on April 20, 1952 before the sale was completed.

McLennan and his first wife divorced. He married Katharine White Bishop in 1966. McLennan created Ashintully Gardens on the estate, leaving the foundation, terrace, and four columns from the front of the great house as a testament to the original structure. McLennan blended natural and

created features into a beautiful garden that incorporated meadows, footpaths, statuary, and grassy terraces, among other elements.

The McLennans renovated the barn into a music studio, where John continued work on his musical compositions, which included chamber and orchestral music and pieces for piano and organ. McLennan won the American Academy of Arts and Letters music award in 1985.

From 1977 to 1991, McLennan gave The Trustees of Reservations almost 600 acres of land in Otis and Tyringham that was part of the original Ashintully estate to form a new reservation, McLennan Reservation. Then in 1996, he and Katharine gave The Trustees the more than 120 acres that comprise Ashintully Gardens.

John Stewart McLennan, Jr. died on October 10, 1996 at Ashintully.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ALBUMS**

The Holly McLennan Ketron Albums Regarding Ashintully consist of two albums.

Album 1, Tytus Family Album Regarding Ashintully, contains 471 photographs. These images date mainly between 1905 and 1912. There is one photograph outside of that range, which shows Grace Seeley Henop Tytus McLennan sitting on the steps next to the columns of the finished house at Ashintully, probably in the 19teens or 1920s. There is also an engraving labeled “Lenox in 1840.” The remaining images are undated (cataloged as [190-]), but probably date between July 26, 1904 (when the Tytus family arrived in Tyringham) and October 23, 1909, when Victoria Stuart Tytus (Coolidge) was born at Ashintully. Dates were assigned to some of the photographs based on information contained in a diary kept by Grace between 1904 and 1909; a transcript of this diary is owned by The Trustees of Reservations.

The images in Album 1 show Grace; her husband, Robb de Peyster Tytus; and their two daughters, Mildred Mordaunt Tytus and Victoria Stuart Tytus, along with family and friends who visited the Tytuses in Tyringham. Visiting family members include Robb’s mother, Charlotte Mathilde Davis Tytus, and Grace’s parents, Alice Seeley Henop and Louis Philip Henop. There are also images that show the farmhands and the girls’ nurses; interiors and exteriors of the house and farm buildings; various animals on the farm, such as dogs, cats, horses, and sheep; and the landscape of the farm. Some of the images show work on the farm, such as maple sugaring, ice cutting, and sheep shearing.

Album 2, McLennan Family Album Regarding Ashintully, contains 93 photographs. The images date mainly between 1944 and 1948. There is one photograph outside of that range, which shows Olivia Pattison Heminway Kammerer (the maternal grandmother of Holly Victoria McLennan Ketron) as a child, probably in 1906.

The majority of the photographs in Album 2 show John Stewart McLennan, Jr.; his first wife, Honora Harwood Kammerer McLennan; and their daughters, Holly Victoria McLennan (Ketron) and Angelica McLennan (Syp). There are also images of Honora’s family, including Honora’s mother, Olivia Pattison Heminway Kammerer; Honora’s father, Percy Gamble Kammerer; Honora’s stepmother,

Eliza Huger Dunkin Kammerer; Honora's sister, Eleanor Kammerer Spence; Eleanor's husband, Lewis Henry Spence; and Eleanor's son, Padraic Tuthill Spence. There are images of friends who visited the McLennans at Ashintully, including the Irish author James Reynolds, Barclay and Sarah Hudson, and Hugh Wheeler, among others. Some of the images show interiors and exteriors of the house at Ashintully, and some show the grounds. A few of the photographs are from visits that the McLennan family made to the Hamilton, MA house of John's half sister, Victoria Stuart Tytus Coolidge.