

Melbert B. Cary Jr. Graphic Arts Collection
Rochester Institute of Technology Libraries

CSC 065

EARL H. EMMONS COLLECTION

1920-1945

XX linear feet, XXX boxes

- Series I. Writings, 1937-1945
- Series II. Maverick Press Publications, 1935-1941
- Series III. Photographs and Negatives, 1920-1936

2013

Descriptive Summary**Repository**

Melbert B. Cary Jr. Graphic Arts Collection
Rochester Institute of Technology Libraries
90 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, New York 14623

Call Number

CSC 065

Title

Earl H. Emmons Collection

Inclusive Dates

1920-1945

Quantity

5.13 linear feet (13 boxes)

Language of Materials

Materials are in English.

Abstract**Administrative Information****Restrictions to Access**

The collection is open to researchers.

Acquisition Information

The material comprising the Earl H. Emmons Collection was removed from the Cogheshall–Goudy Memorial Workshop Collection in 2013.

Ownership and Copyright

The Earl H. Emmons Collection is the physical property of the Melbert B. Cary Jr. Graphic Arts Collection, Rochester Institute of Technology Libraries. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns.

Processing Information

The collection was processed by Sandra Markham.

Preferred Citation

This collection should be cited as: [indicate specific item or series here], Earl H. Emmons Collection (CSC 065), Melbert B. Cary Jr. Graphic Arts Collection, Rochester Institute of Technology Libraries.

Online Catalog Headings**Subject Names****Subject Topics****Subject Places**

Document Types

Biographical/Historical Notes

Earl Harrison Emmons was born in Adair County, Iowa, on December 23, 1888, the son of George Wesley Emmons and Mary Miller Emmons. He began his career at age 13 working as a printer's devil at a Greenfield, Iowa, newspaper, later moving up to linotype operator at papers in Iowa City and Des Moines; in his spare time, he wrote for trade publications. In 1914 he undertook his first editing job, at *Printing Trade News* in New York, and afterward at *American Printer and Lithographer*. Emmons enlisted in the United States Army reserves during World War I, and in 1920 accepted a one-year position staffing a fire tower in the Black Hills of South Dakota. In 1921 he returned to New York and was hired to take charge of *The Composing Room* for the Monotype Group; the publication soon became noted for his clever type and ornament compositions, as well as his humorous poems, news, and feature pieces. In 1935 Goudy gave Emmons an 8 x 12 Golding clamshell press, and the Maverick Press was founded. From his studio apartment Emmons turned out broadsides, small books, and ephemera as well as some more ambitious and limited-edition projects such as *The Book of Ruth*. In 1940 Emmons quit New York to return to Iowa, where he set up his Maverick Press in West Liberty.

Earl Emmons was married three times, in 1911 in Iowa to Alta Victoria Barnes; in 1925 in Washington, D.C., to Ruth E. Ordway (1898-1980); and by 1942 to his third wife Florence. He died of tuberculosis at the Oakdale Sanitarium, near Iowa City, on February 20, 1949, after having been a patient there for three years.

Collection Overview

The Earl H. Emmons Collection spans the period from 1920 through 1945 and contains his writings and more than 280 glass plate negatives, both of which document his interest in and devotion to the American type designer Frederic W. Goudy. The collection is divided into three series: Writings, Maverick Press Publications, and Photographs and Negatives.

Box Folder

SERIES I. WRITINGS			1937-1945
1	1	Goudy biography, first draft; autograph manuscript and typescript, corrected	1937
1	2	"Goudy and Me"; autograph manuscript	1945
1	3	"Goudy Passes a Milestone"; autograph manuscript and typescript, corrected	undated
1	4	Notes on Goudy; autograph manuscript	undated
1	5	Notes on life and career of Sol Hess; autograph manuscript	undated
1	6	Notes on the Golding press received from Goudy; autograph manuscript	undated
1	7	Ampersand dinner place card	1937

Box Folder

SERIES II. MAVERICK PRESS PUBLICATIONS			1935-1941
1	8	Maverick Press bibliography and catalog	undated
1	9	Broadside	1935 Dec 5
1	9	No. 12. Victoria	1938
1	9	No. 13. Reward of Virtue	1938
1	9	No. 20. A Rhymed Review of the Body Beautiful	1936
1	9	No. 21. Frederic W. Goudy's Latin motto	undated
1	9	No. 22. Little Orphan Ampersand	1936
1	9	No. 23. The Oath of Ruth	undated
1	9	No. 24. Happy Birthday to You	1937
1	9	No. 26. Trademark for the Typophiles	1937
1	9	No. 27. Uncle Mose and His Balky Mule	1937
1	9	No. 28. Ballad of the Twin Buttes	1937
1	10	No. 31. Le Chapeau Immortel	1937
1	10	No. 32. The Praise & Characteristics of a Good Wife	1937
1	10	No. 34. From Camelot to Bertham	1938
1	10	No. 35. Of Ellen Glasgow	1938
1	10	No. 39. Peace on Earth	1938
1	10	Son of a Goudy	1938
1	11	Maverick Press bottle labels (12 designs)	undated
1	12	Maverick Press ephemera	1935-1941
2	13	Proof prints from Maverick publications	undated

Box Folder

SERIES III. PHOTOGRAPHS

1920-1936

Arranged in two subseries: Photographs, and Glass-plate negatives.

Series III contains nearly three hundred glass plate negatives that Earl Emmons made during his lifetime and are arranged in two groups reflecting the distinctly different subjects covered. The first is a group of images taken at Deepdene, Frederic and Bertha Goudy's home and workshop in Marlborough-on-Hudson, New York. Emmons documented Goudy at work designing a typeface, illustrating every step in the creative process; the two collaborated on the content and were intending to publish a comprehensive pictorial history of Goudy's work. A selection of images was published in the June 1934 issue of the journal *Printing*, and when Goudy's workshop was destroyed by fire in January 1939, Emmons's photographs grew in importance.

The second subseries has negatives working for the United States Forest Service in the Black Hills National Forest in southwestern South Dakota in 1920 and 1921. Images include pack horses climbing up a mountain, four views of the second Harney Peak lookout tower where Emmons was stationed, and an image of Emmons inside the tower using an Osborne Fire Finder, or alidade, to look for smoke. The lookout tower was at 7,200 feet and had views to four states. Also present are more general images of Black Hills landscapes including, views of a Sylvan Lake, Friendship Tower on Mount Roosevelt, Devils Tower, and the Needles, as well the Horace Ross monument in Custer City. Emmons copied a number of historic images such as portraits of Jack Crawford, Wild Bill Hickok, Seth Bullock, Calamity Jane, and their graves and memorials. Several of the South Dakota history negatives were titled within the image in ink by Emmons, who included his distinctive monogram of an H with elongated serifs and crossbar, suggesting that he might have intended to market them.

Photographs

1	14	Goudy bas-relief photograph and proof print	1935
1	15	Emmons printing <i>Unholy BRible Story</i> scroll	1936
1	16	Index cards for Deepdene images with exposure notes	circa 1932

Glass-plate negatives

New York, Marlborough-on-Hudson

3	Goudy numbers 1-28
4	Goudy numbers 29-57
5	Goudy numbers 58-86
6	Goudy numbers 87-115
7	Goudy numbers 116-145
8	Goudy numbers 146-173

Box Folder

South Dakota

Black Hills National Forest

- 9 Harney Peak, lookout tower, views from below, 4 images
- Harney Peak, Emmons inside tower with alidade, 2 images
- Raising curtain/drape with pulleys, 2 images
- Pack horses carrying lumber and supplies uphill, 2 images
- Emmons posing as cowboy
- Unidentified men, 2 images
- "Black Hills Mountain pack rat"
- Explosion/fire (?) in distance, 3 images
- Mount Roosevelt, Friendship Tower
- Devil's Tower
- Sylvan Lake, 5 scenes
- The Needles, 4 images
- General view in the park
- 10 General views in the park, 10 images

Custer City

- Views from distance, 2 images
- Horace Ross monument

Local history, 16 images

 Includes copy photographs of Jack Crawford, Sitting Bull,
 W. S. Harney, Calamity Jane, Seth Bullock, Wild Bill Hickok,
 and Comanche (horse)

- 11 Local history, 8 images

Box Folder

Other Images

Cactus plants, 17 images

Ceramic stage coaches (models/toys), 3 images

12 Ceramic stage coaches (models/toys), 5 images

Dog (photographs of Emmons's dog), 14 images

Scotties (dog figurines and graphics), 9 images

13 Film boxes