

George W. Norris scrapbooks and photograph albums

Ms. Coll. 1121

Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2015 August 19

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Norris, George William, 1875-1965
Title	George W. Norris scrapbooks and photograph albums
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1121
Date [inclusive]	1875-1963
Extent	0.8 linear feet (3 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	<p>George William Norris (1875-1963) was a professor of clinical medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and chief of Medical Service at the Pennsylvania Hospital. After a successful career and a period of overseas service with the Medical Corps during the first World War, Norris retired to a country house in northeast Pennsylvania. There, Norris was able to dedicate himself to his greatest interests: photography and family history. This collection contains four scrapbooks (1875-1963) compiled by Norris which feature many photographic portraits of Norris family members and landscapes of the Pennsylvania countryside. The scrapbooks also contain background information about Norris' family and one scrapbook is filled with some of George Norris' correspondence, certificates of membership to philanthropic and academic societies, and other papers. This collection also includes a short account of a 1963 Christmas trip to Guatemala.</p>

Cite as:

George W. Norris scrapbooks, 1875-1963, Ms. Coll. 1121, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

George William Norris (1875-1963) was a professor of clinical medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and chief of Medical Service at the Pennsylvania Hospital. Born in Philadelphia, Norris' mother was Viennese and his father descended from a long line of socially prominent Quakers. Norris attended George F. Martin's School before enrolling at the University of Pennsylvania, where he dedicated most of his academic efforts to the study of physics and earned his bachelor's degree. In 1899, Norris received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and began a two year residence at the Pennsylvania Hospital. Norris then served as a professor of medicine at the University until he joined the Medical Reserve Corps of the Army in 1911. During World War I, Norris served in England and France for about two years and retired as a Colonel. In 1920, Norris received a citation as Senior Medical Consultant in the Toul Sector from General Pershing for his "exceptionally meritorious and conspicuous services." After the war, Norris returned to teaching and a position at the Pennsylvania Hospital. Over the course of his career, Norris contributed dozens of articles to medical journals and published three books. Norris was also an active member of many organizations including the Association of American Physicians, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the American Philosophical Society, the Academy of Natural Sciences, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, as well as serving as a trustee of the Mutual Assurance Company. When George Norris retired in 1931, he moved to Woodbourne, his family's country estate in northeast Pennsylvania, where he had the opportunity to pursue his passion for landscape photography. In 1956, at age eighty-one, Norris married Annie Bradford Hays. Norris passed away in 1963.

Scope and Contents

George William Norris composed four scrapbooks of photographs, letters and certificates ranging in date from 1875 to 1963, and wrote a short account of a 1963 Christmas trip to Guatemala. A medical professional, Norris was also dedicated to several hobbies including photography and genealogical history.

Norris' account of his holiday in Guatemala was written in 1964, a year after the trip took place. The thirty-six typewritten pages read like a travel journal; though not formal, the narrative gives a relatively complete and detailed account of his vacation.

Norris titled two albums "Photographs," which largely feature Norris' family members and the various properties they owned in and around Philadelphia. Norris added some notes and background information to these albums, as well as snapshots of Philadelphia landmarks and a few photographs from his time as a student at the University of Pennsylvania. Photos and color postcards from Norris' travels to the Caribbean and Austrian Tirol can be found in volume two of 'Photographs.'

The volume Norris titled 'Recollections: People, Places, Events' contains a variety of documents including many letters from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania thanking Norris for donations of antique objects and documents (bulk: 1956-1963). This scrapbook also contains photographs (1894-1956, with undated materials) of Norris' family members and others, documents relating to The Green Tree Mutual Assurance Company, of which Norris was a chairman (1954-1963), a military citation granted under General Pershing for Norris' service in the first World War (1920) and various certificates of membership to philanthropic and academic societies. A limited amount of personal and professional correspondence is also included.

A final scrapbook holds more travel photographs (including images from Italy, Spain, Germany and Trinidad), family portraits taken by Norris, and interior photos of the family's estate in Susquehanna County, PA. A large portion of this album features clippings of black and white photographs taken by Norris (mostly showing the rural landscapes of Pennsylvania) which are printed on glossy magazine paper and seem to have been featured in a publication.

Administrative Information

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Source of Acquisition

Gift of George W. Norris, 1964.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
- Mutual Assurance Company for Insuring Houses from Loss by Fire.
- University of Pennsylvania. School of Medicine.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Photograph albums
- Scrapbooks

SUBJECT(S)

- Families
- Voyages and travels

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Christmas, 1964, Guatemala C.A., 1964.	1	1
Photographs, volume 1, 1875-1963.	1	2
Photographs, volume 2, 1875-1963.	1	3
Recollections: People, Places, Events, 1875-1962.	2	1
Scrapbook of photographs (original title illegible), undated.	3	1