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EMMA FORDYCE MACRAE COLLECTION

Creator:	Emma Fordyce MacRae; various
Dates:	1850-2008 (bulk 1915-1957)
Quantity:	6 document boxes
Acquisition:	Accession #: 2018.023 ; Donated by: Jennifer Kissel
Identification:	A91 ; Archive Collection #91
Citation:	[Document Title]. The Emma Fordyce MacRae Collection, [Box #, Folder #, Item #], Cape Ann Museum Library & Archives, Gloucester, MA.
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Language:	English
Finding Aid:	Processed 2018 by Amber Wingerson, Curatorial Assistant. Updated by Karla Kaneb, June 2020.

Biographical Note

Emma Fordyce MacRae was born Emma Dean Fordyce on April 27, 1887, in Vienna, Austria to American parents, Dr. John Addison Fordyce and Alice Dean (Smith) Fordyce. Raised in New York City, MacRae's father was a professor of dermatology at New York University and later Columbia University, while her mother came from inherited wealth. MacRae was exposed to the arts through yearly visits to Europe and her primary education at Miss Chapin's School and the Brearley School, both all-girls schools in Manhattan. She later pursued her artistic training at the New York School of Art under Kenneth Hayes Miller and at the Art Students League under Luis Mora and E.F. Blumenschein. Additionally, MacRae continued her studies under John

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Sloan and George Bridgeman before opening studios in New York and in Gloucester. Her first exhibited work was “Italian Fishing Boats,” shown at the Pennsylvania Academy in 1918.

Starting early and persisting throughout her career, MacRae’s paintings fell into three main categories: floral still-life, figural studies (mostly of women), and landscapes. She worked in a flat, linear, primarily two-dimensional style with references to Old Masters and Japanese prints. MacRae was known for her unique painting style where she used paint sparingly and often scrapped away sections of paint to reveal a textured, chalky canvas. These techniques gave her paintings an antiqued look, while also feeling modern.

Throughout her long and illustrious career, MacRae’s paintings were exhibited at several prestigious museums and galleries throughout the country. These included: The National Academy of Design, Pennsylvania Academy, Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, Chicago Art Institute, John Herron Art Institute of Indianapolis (now the Herron School of Art and Design), the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington D.C., Currier Museum of Art, and Boston Art Club. Emma also exhibited paintings between 1937 and 1945 as part of The Philadelphia Ten Painters. The Philadelphia Ten, also known as The Ten, was a group of female artists from the United States who exhibited together from 1917 to 1945.

In addition to the Philadelphia Ten Painters, MacRae was a part of several artists groups and organizations, including the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, Allied Artists of America, North Shore Art Association, National Association of Mural Painters, Boston Art Club, The Philadelphia Ten Painters, and New York Society of Painters. She received full membership in the National Academy of Design in 1951.

MacRae also received several awards for her paintings, including: Academy of Design awards for “Cosmos” and “EasterLilies,” the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors for “Neda Gray”, the Kingdon Gould Prize of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors for “Stelka” (1928), The Edith Penman Memorial Prize of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors for “Stelka” (1934), and the National Arts Club Medal for “Cosmos” (1930).

Emma Fordyce MacRae was married twice. The first in 1910 to Thomas MacRae, which was dissolved in 1920, although the couple lived together for less than a year. The second to Dr. Homer Swift in 1922. She had one child, Alice MacRae, from her first marriage. MacRae retained her first married name throughout her professional painting career. Personally, she went by Swift upon her second marriage.

Acquisition Note

Gift of Jennifer Kissel, ex-wife of Stephen Kissel (grandson of Emma Fordyce MacRae).

Scope and Content of the Collection

This is a personal manuscript collection of Emma Fordyce MacRae regarding her private life, domestic life, career, and extensive information about her family. It includes paper, photographs, diaries, address books, books, and objects, including embroidery, wood, and a weapon. The paper contents range from correspondence to legal documents to handwritten notes. The collection ranges from 1850 to 2008, while the bulk of the materials date from 1915 to 1957.

The largest series, Series 1: Correspondence, is broken down into three sub-series: family correspondence, friends and acquaintances to Emma Fordyce MacRae, and professional correspondence to Emma Fordyce MacRae. A large section of the first subseries, family correspondence, is not addressed to Emma, but rather other family members, including a large section of letters addressed to her parents. The exception to this is the correspondence from Stephen Kissel to his grandmother, Emma, which begins with his first childhood letters and continues throughout the rest of her life. The second subseries contain letters addressed to Emma from several friends and acquaintances with many references to Emma's paintings and exhibitions. This sub-series of correspondence also includes letters from romantic interests of Emma. The third sub-series of professional correspondence is from galleries and museums, requesting paintings or updating Emma about her current and past exhibitions.

Series 2 contains personal items and writings of Emma's, including a diary, travel logs, a scrapbook, address books, and a local cookbook from a Rockport church.

Series 3 comprises of family history information about Emma, her parents, and each of her parents' ancestors. This includes family trees, hand-written questionnaires filled out by Emma, and newspaper announcements of family marriages and deaths. Additionally, there is information about the Kissel family car business, which is the family Emma's daughter Alice married into.

Series 4 is a wealth of legal information, including several family members' wills, power of attorney, land grants, and Emma's divorce from her first husband. Many of the legal documents include correspondence about the legal process of different wills and cases, which I have included in this series. The correspondence included provides the reader with the legal correspondence associated with each case, the steps that were taken during the legal process, and, in some cases, the personal thought process behind them.

Series 5 has some slightly disjointed financial information, such as a few checks and a warranty, in addition to some family investment information.

The photographs of Series 7 range from Emma as a young girl to photographs of her grandson, Stephen Kissel. This includes two photo albums, several photographs, and photocopies of photographs. Few are dated or labeled, but the viewer can discern some information about those pictured, such as a family picture of Emma, her daughter, and her parents circa 1916. Series 8 contains books that belonged to earlier generations of Emma's family. Series 9 contains several objects, including pieces of embroidery given to Emma and her brother, Addison, from both grandmothers as well as objects with an earlier family history.

Series Description

- I. Correspondence (1857-1976)
 - I. Family Correspondence, 1857-1976
 - II. Friends and Acquaintances to Emma Fordyce MacRae Correspondence, 1920-1973
 - III. Professional Correspondence to Emma Fordyce MacRae, 1917-1969
 - II. Personal (1900-1927, undated)
 - III. Biographical and Family History (1874-1969, undated)
 - IV. Legal (1850-1974, undated)
 - V. Financial (1898-1939)
 - VI. Professional Ephemera (1926-2008)
 - VII. Photographs, undated
 - VIII. Books, undated
 - IX. Objects, undated
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Container List

Box 1

- I. Series I: Correspondence
 - I. Family Correspondence, 1857
 - II. Family Correspondence, 1900-1922
 - III. Family Correspondence, 1922-1933, undated
 - IV. Copies of family correspondence, 1915-1922
 - V. Correspondence, to Mrs. J.A. (Alice Dean) Fordyce, 1876-1926
 - VI. Correspondence, to John A. Fordyce, 1903, 1915
 - VII. Correspondence, to Dr. J.A. Fordyce, 1915-1925
 - VIII. Correspondence, to Dr. J.A. Fordyce, regarding career, 1912-1914
 - IX. Correspondence, to Addison Fordyce, 1915
 - X. Correspondence, regarding Addison Fordyce, 1915
 - XI. Correspondence, regarding Addison Fordyce, 1918 and undated
 - XII. Correspondence, from Stephen Kissel, 1943-1957
 - XIII. Correspondence, from Stephen Kissel, 1960-1971, undated
 - XIV. Kissel Family Correspondence, 1971-1976, undated
 - XV. Correspondence, to Emma F. MacRae, 1930-1939
 - XVI. Correspondence, to Emma F. MacRae, 1947-1973, undated
 - XVII. Correspondence, from Benjamin Earl Appleton, 1920-1921

XVIII. Correspondence, from A.W. Burnett, 1920

Box 2

- I. Series I: Correspondence
 - I. Correspondence, from A.W. Burnett, 1920
 - II. Correspondence, from A.W. Burnett, 1921
 - III. Correspondence, from A.W. Burnett, 1921, undated
 - IV. Professional Correspondence, to Emma F. MacRae, 1917-1928
 - V. Professional Correspondence, to Emma F. MacRae, 1928-1969, undated

- II. Series II: Personal
 - I. Diary, Emma Dean Fordyce, 1900
 - II. Diary, travel log, Emma Dean Fordyce, 1905
 - III. Travel logs, 1911, 1921, 1914, 1926, undated
 - IV. Scrapbook, Emma F. MacRae, undated
 - V. Address books, undated

Box 3

- I. Series II: Personal
 - I. Copy of Address book, undated
 - II. Name cards and invitations, Emma F. MacRae, 1927, undated
 - III. Rockport Cookbook, St. Mary's Episcopal Church

- II. Series III: Biographical and Family History
 - I. Family Tree, undated
 - II. Biographical and family records, 1898-1899, undated
 - III. Biographical information, Smith family, undated
 - IV. Biographical information, Thompson Dean, 1891
 - V. Biographical information, Fordyce family, 1969
 - VI. Biographical, Dr. J.A. Fordyce, published 1925
 - VII. Emma Fordyce MacRae, biographical, 1927-1941, undated
 - VIII. Newspaper, marriage and death announcements, 1874-1925, undated
 - IX. Marriage announcement, Alice Dean and J.A. Fordyce, 1886
 - X. Marriage announcement and certificate, Emma Fordyce MacRae, 1910
 - XI. Marriage service and materials, Emma Fordyce MacRae and Dr. Homer Swift, 1922
 - XII. Dr. J. A. Fordyce, death certificate, 1925
 - XIII. Marriage certificate, Alice MacRae and Lester Kissel, 1934
 - XIV. Newspaper articles, Dr. Homer Swift, 1953, undated
 - XV. Letterhead, Fordyce crest, undated
 - XVI. Cemetery map, 1914
 - XVII. Kissel car materials, 1917-1961

- III. Series IV: Legal
 - I. Will, James Smith, undated
 - II. Federal land grant, 1850
 - III. Robert Burlan, Certificate of the Register of the Land, 1858
 - IV. Land purchase, 1873
 - V. Legation papers, 1887
 - VI. Larchmont manor, Company deed, 1887
 - VII. Thompson Dean, will and estate papers, 1894-1903
 - VIII. Alice Dean Fordyce, Dean family estate papers and correspondence, 1890-1904
 - IX. Inventory of Larchmonth residence, 1905
 - X. Legal correspondence about MacRae divorce, 1917-1921
 - XI. Court papers, MacRae divorce, 1920
 - XII. Wills, 1925, 1926
 - XIII. Legal documents concerning the wills, 1927-1928
 - XIV. Power of Attorney, 1928
 - XV. Alice Dean Fordyce, instrument of trust, July 18, 1934
 - XVI. Emma Fordyce MacRae, legal correspondence, 1953, 1968
 - XVII. Legal documents, settling will of Emma F. Swift, 1974

Box 4

- I. Series V: Financial
 - I. Investment information, 1898-1927, undated
 - II. Financial, receipts, checks, etc., 1907-1941
 - III. Estate finances, unknown family member, 1911-1915
 - IV. Warranty information, 1922
 - V. Emma Fordyce MacRae, tracking painting sales, 1922-1939
 - VI. Cash book, 1926-1929
- II. Series VI: Professional Ephemera
 - I. Membership, society papers, 1926-1939, undated
 - II. Emma Fordyce MacRae, publication features, 1929
 - III. Certificates, 1963, undated
 - IV. Exhibition materials, Emma Fordyce MacRae, undated
 - V. Posthumous Exhibitions, 1983-2008
 - VI. Exhibition catalogs and materials, 1920-1939
 - VII. Exhibition catalogs and materials, 1939-1977
- III. Series VII: Photographs
 - I. Photographs, family, undated
 - II. Photocopies, family photographs, undated
 - III. Photo album, undated
 - IV. Photographs, Cook family land, labeled, undated
 - V. Photographs, travel, undated

- VI. Photographs, family homes and interiors, undated

- IV. Series VIII: Books
 - I. Note found with the books, undated

Box 5

- I. Oversized
 - I. Objects have been pulled from their series in the regular sized boxes and replaced with “Document Removed” documentation that will guide researchers to the Oversized Box, including:
 - I. Family Tree
 - II. Greenwood Cemetery map
 - III. 1873 Land purchase
 - IV. 1850 Land grant
 - V. 1887 Legation papers
 - VI. 1858 Land certification
 - VII. Larchmont Co. deed
 - VIII. Photography
 - IX. April 15, 1929, Town & Country (MacRae painting featured on the cover)

Box 6

- I. Series IX: Objects—to be moved to Main Complex, Lower Level, Storage Room 2
 - I. Embroidery from grandmothers on both sides of her family made for her and her brother
 - II. Knife and cover
 - III. Wood from a hammer from MacRae’s mother’s side (great, great, great grandfather), labeled
 - IV. Small metal frame with a picture of MacRae’s brother, Addison Fordyce, in his WWI uniform
 - V. WWI field service medal