

Mary Moulton Cheney Collection

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Summary Information

Repository	James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library
Creator	Cheney, Mary Moulton, 1871-1957
Title	Mary Moulton Cheney Collection
Date	1897-1951
Extent	1.0 Linear feet
Language	English

Biography

Mary Moulton Cheney was a prolific and influential Minneapolis artist and educator in the early part of the 20th century. She was born in 1871, daughter of Isaac Cheney, head millwright for the Washburn, Crosby Milling Company in Minneapolis. She graduated from the College of Science, Literature, and Arts at the University of Minnesota and the design department at the Boston Museum School of Art. She also studied painting under George Elmer Browne in Provincetown, Massachusetts and took a special course in design under Dr. Denman Ross. Thus Cheney's design work was well-rounded. She was thoroughly experienced in leather work and acquired skills in metal work, producing jewelry in copper and silver. She was most well-known for her printing skills.

Cheney educated many others on art in turn, organizing the first class in design at the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts in 1897, eventually becoming the principal of the design department, then Dean of Women, and finally Director of the school from 1917 to 1925. This school would become the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD). She also taught at Camp Danworthy during the summer, leading the Mary Moulton Cheney Art Colony for young women.

Cheney was also involved in community organizations including The Woman's Club and the Minneapolis Business Women's Club, serving as president for the later in from 1922 to 1924.

Cheney also taught Design Arts at the Vocational High School in Minneapolis from 1928 to 1942. After retiring, she moved to Bend, OR and devoted herself to painting in oil. She died in 1957 at the age of 86.

This collection reflects primarily Cheney's own work as an artist and entrepreneur, specifically in printmaking. Cheney owned and operated a printmaking shop, The Artcraft Shop: Sign of the Bay Tree, from 1897 to 1917. With the help of Mary Marsh Smith, who did the bookkeeping for the shop, she produced richly detailed and delicately colored hand-bound books, book plates, greeting cards, calendars, and other printed material. She and Smith also published fine press books in the same shop as the Chemith Press, beginning in 1902.

Description of Collection

8 boxes, primarily of Cheney's artwork, including book plates, insignia designs for local groups and printers, loose prints from the Artcraft Shop, jewelry designs, insignias designed for local printers, a fine press printing of Chapter 13 of 1st Corinthians designed by Cheney, two sample books of work done by Cheney and available for sale in her store, and pencil sketches. Also includes information sheet and clippings files on Mary Moulton Cheney, pieces written by Cheney on the subject of art study including the pamphlet "Shall I Study Art?" and a pamphlet on the Camp Danworthy Art Colony, a guest book from a Minneapolis School of Art Alumni Exhibition signed by Cheney, and photographs of Cheney.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

Subject(s)

- Arts and Crafts Movement -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis
- Prints -- Minnesota.
- Women Artists -- Minnesota.

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Biography, focused on work with School of Fine Arts 1951	1	1
Newspaper clippings file, focused on work with School of Fine Arts 1917-1926	1	2
Artwork - bookplate samples	1	3
Artwork - Woman's Club monogram drafts	1	4
Artwork - "Shall I Study Art" pamphlet, Camp Danworthy pamphlet, photograph of Cheney, advertisement for Artcraft shop, sample card, and placecard made for Theodore Roosevelt Banquet 1901-1930	1	5
Artwork - final copies and drafts of religious and Christmas prints, pencil sketch	1	6
Artwork - miniature monogram samples for Pioneer Press and Hahn and Harmon Printers 1920	1	7
		Box
Illuminated guestbook signed by Cheney March 15, 1918		2

Scope and Contents note

This guest book was presented at the Alumni Exhibition of the Minneapolis School of Art on Friday, March 15, 1918. The guest book was signed by visitors at the event and was

to be used thereafter for visitors to the school to inscribe their names. During the event, Mrs. Robert (Marie) Koehler was asked to sign first, followed by Lucy Gilbert, curator of the Walker Art gallery in the Public Library, in honor of their long association with the art colony in Minneapolis. Mary Moulton Cheney was fourth to sign. The last signature in the book dates from July 3, 1922. For more information on the alumni exhibition, see the Minneapolis Tribune article from March 17, 1918.

The Guest book was designed by Robert W. Hyde with verses by Arthur Guiterman and published by Paul Elder & Company (San Francisco, CA).

Artwork - Chapter 13 of 1st Corinthians, printed by Hahn and Harmon, bound by A.J. Dahl, designed by Cheney

3

Artwork - Artcraft shop No. 2 Samplebook, with order form for prints for Christmas, birthdays, and other occasions

4

Artwork - Artcraft Shop No. 4 Samplebook, with order form, primarily for Christmas prints

5

Artwork - oversize pieces including Northwestern National Bank announcement layout, 3 pencil sketches of Minneapolis, and photograph of a Cheney design modeled in clay 1900-1930

6

Artwork - Scrapbook of original jewelry designs 1908-1912

8

Book: Last Leaf, by James K. Hosmer 1912 Contains dedication to Cheney by Hosmer, and one by Cheney to the Minneapolis Public Library, donating the book to the library.

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