

MSS. Collection #183

Charles A. Farrell Family Papers, 1916-1978 [bulk 1940-1970]. 2½ boxes (50 folders), ca. 773 items.

NOTE: The numbers cited in parentheses, e.g. I 1:5, refer the researcher to the Group# Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

INTRODUCTION

The Charles A. Farrell Family Papers consist of business records, financial and legal documents, printed material, manuscripts, correspondence and photographs relating to the personal lives, ancestry and creative activities of Anne and Charles Farrell, as well as their sons Charles Burton, Peter and Roger Farrell. The collection also documents the Farrells' ownership and operation of the Art Shop and the Book Shop in Greensboro during the early to mid-20th century.

Charles and Anne Farrell were both talented photographers who captured many images of people and places in Greensboro and throughout North Carolina between the mid-1920s and mid-1940s. The Archives also owns an Art Shop Photograph Collection containing several thousand images produced by the Farrells, and additional collections of their images are at the North Carolina State Archives and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged into three groups by contextual origin and within each group by subject or format. The three groups are: **Business Operations**, 1940-1960 [bulk 1942-1955]; **Family**, 1916-1978; and **Photographs**, 1920s-1968.

Provenance: This collection was donated by Roger H. Farrell in December 2006 and assigned the accession number 2006.40.1.

Processing: This collection was organized by volunteer Alice Bailey, and the finding aid was completed in January 2014. In June 2018, the biographical note was updated by Archivist Elise Allison with information from the obituaries of Peter and Roger Farrell.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Charles Anderson Farrell (1893-1977) was born in Yadkin County, North Carolina, and grew up in Winston-Salem, where his father, photographer Andrew Jackson Farrell (1860-1924), operated studios from around 1897 into the 1920s. Charles attended Wake Forest College from 1910 to 1913, and then worked at his father's studio before being hired by Eastman-Kodak as a sales and technical representative in Rochester, New York, and Mexico City. He enlisted in World War I and was assigned to Fort Sill but never saw action. In 1921, he married Anne McKaughan (1895-1977), whom he had met while teaching English at State College eight years earlier. The couple moved to Greensboro in 1923 and established the Art Shop, a photographic

studio, camera store, and art supply house. Charles simultaneously worked as a freelance photographer for the *Greensboro Daily News* and contributed photographs for books, including *Tobe* by Stella Gentry Sharpe (UNC Press, 1939).

Charles and Anne traveled throughout North Carolina during the 1930s taking photographs and kodachrome videos. Charles captured some of the first aerial photographs in the state and also took pictures at the first performance of *The Lost Colony* in Manteo. During the late thirties, he took many photographs of workers in the fishing industry along the North Carolina coast; a book was planned but never finished due to illness. He was a close friend of W.B. Keziah, a deaf newspaper editor in Southport, North Carolina, and learned sign language to communicate with Keziah, to whom some items in the collection pertain. During World War II, Charles spent most of his photographic supply rations on paper to make prints for soldiers stationed in Greensboro. In 1948, he was hospitalized and ultimately received surgery. Afterwards, his photography career over, he was considered an invalid by the state and required care from a private nurse, but he remained socially active and mobile.

Anne Farrell was born in Enfield, North Carolina, in 1895. Her father was a Baptist minister, and she attended Meredith College from 1910 to 1914. In 1915 she was awarded a fellowship to Radcliffe, but a family illness forced her to discontinue a year later. After her marriage to Charles Farrell in 1921, she gave birth to Charles Burton ("Charles B." or "Lito") in Rochester, New York, followed by Peter and Roger, both in Greensboro. She began working at the Art Shop in 1935, and was particularly talented at photofinishing and helping customers select frames. During the early 1940s, she wrote and took photographs for two articles in *American Girl* and edited photographs for several books. In 1942 she opened the Book Shop, which was plagued by financial difficulties and sold in 1947. After her husband's hospitalization, she assumed his duties at the Art Shop, which lost most of its capital when he withdrew a large sum of money during the onset of his illness. In 1960 the Art Shop was declared bankrupt and sold to Charles' sister, Mary Farrell Hedrick. At this point Anne ceased to be professionally active as a photographer, but she remained interested in the subject. Both Anne and Charles died in 1977.

Charles B. Farrell (1922-2002) attended Curry Demonstration School, as did both his brothers. He was interested in music from a young age and collected classical music records during adolescence. He graduated with honors from Guilford College and worked as a librarian in the Music Library at UNC for a short time, but was dismissed from both the university and library. He was drafted in 1943 and served as company clerk and leader of a mortar crew. After the war he received a Bronze Star. Charles B. lived in New York City for most of his life; he worked primarily in graphic design, book design, and publishing. After his parents died, he purchased the family home at 308 Woodlawn Avenue with the intention of retiring to Greensboro, but never did.

Peter Farrell (1924-2018) was interested in music from a young age and showed proficiency with many instruments, favoring the violin. After an arm fracture at age 13, he was unable to continue violin and reluctantly learned to play the cello. During his adolescence, he was often away from home attending music camps and performing in youth symphonies. In 1943 he was drafted and served in the USO, and in 1946 he married Miriam "Mimi" Mellott, whom he had met at a music camp in Michigan. Peter and Mimi both attended Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and Mimi was awarded a Bachelor of Music with distinction in 1946. Peter graduated with distinction in 1948 with a Performer's Certificate and Bachelor of Music, and then received a master's in music theory in 1953. Afterwards, he played cello professionally

and taught at the University of Illinois before joining the faculty of the University of California San Diego in 1972. After his retirement in 1991, he played cello in the La Jolla Symphony.

Roger H. Farrell (1929-2017) was born in Greensboro and at age 14 entered the University of Chicago, from which he earned a PhB (the equivalent of a bachelor's in liberal arts) in 1947 and a master's degree in mathematics in 1951. During the Korean War, he served as an analyst who evaluated where incoming personnel would be best suited to serve. He received his PhD from the University of Illinois in 1959 and taught in the Mathematics Department at Cornell University until retiring in 1999. Most of his research focused on mathematical statistics and measure theory, and he produced 34 research papers and two textbooks, *Techniques of Multivariate Calculation* (1976) and *Multivariate Calculation: Use of the Continuous Groups* (1985).

Biographical Sources: This biographical note was compiled from materials composed by Roger Farrell in 1977 and 2005 regarding members of the Farrell family and both the Art Shop and Book Shop. Other sources include items within the collection, correspondence from Roger Farrell to former Archivist Stephen Catlett, the finding aid for the [Charles A. Farrell Photograph Collection](#) at the North Carolina State Archives, and the campus obituaries of Peter and Roger Farrell (see the first folder in the collection for hard copies).

SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains items pertaining to the personal lives, creative endeavors and business activities of Anne and Charles Farrell and their son Roger Farrell. Its greatest strength is the photographs, most of which show areas in Greensboro and the Piedmont between the 1930s and 1960s; especially notable are images of Greensboro's downtown area that record commercial development over a long period of time. Items in the Photography group reflect technical and stylistic changes in photography between the 1930s and 1950s, but the historical value of some is diminished by the absence of information about the creator, location and date. In some cases, the context of items is provided in emails from Roger Farrell to Stephen Catlett.

The primary source documents found in the Family group are also noteworthy. Charles' reminiscences of his childhood and adolescence, dictated to Anne, narrate his experiences in detail. The correspondence of Anne, Charles and Roger constructs a portrait of the events and relationships that influenced their lives, and contains valuable insights into the mid-20th century American middle-class family. Researchers studying how families responded to prolonged mental illness during the mid-20th century will find this series interesting.

The records from the Art Shop and Book Shop in the Business Operations group provide insight into the supply and demand for photography supplies, framing services and printed materials in Greensboro during the early to mid-20th century. Some Business Operations material and correspondence from Anne will be valuable to researchers studying women entrepreneurs during the mid-20th century.

Weaknesses of the collection include a scarcity of information about Peter and Charles Burton Farrell, and a lack of biographical source material about Anne before her marriage. Also lacking is background information about Reverend George E.C. Knapp of England, with whom Anne corresponded for several years in the 1960s.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

I. Business Operations

1. The Art Shop. 4 folders (ca. 20 items). 1940-1960.

This series consists primarily of financial documents such as annual reports, receipts, inventories and tabulations of payments due from customers. Also found are official documents from the Photographer's Board of Examiners and correspondence relating to the sale of the Art Shop. Group II contains further correspondence from Anne Farrell to her son Roger, including letters regarding the sale of the Art Shop.

2. The Book Shop. 5 folders (ca. 120 items). 1943-1948.

This series includes correspondence relating to orders and outstanding balances, offers from solicitors, and Bennett Mitchell's sale of the Book Shop to Anne. Correspondence and legal documents regarding reparations for orders damaged in transit to the Book Shop are found under legal disputes. Various business documents record accounts and inventories for both the Book Shop and Art Shop.

II. Family

1. Farrell, Anne. 8 folders (ca. 110 items). 1920s-1960s.

Documents in this series relate to the professional activities and personal relationships of Anne Farrell. Materials pertaining to two articles Anne wrote for *American Girl* include correspondence, manuscripts and magazines. A collection of Christmas cards made by Anne between the 1920s and 1940s are of potential interest for their artistry and representation of the Farrell family at different periods. Individual income tax returns span from 1935 to 1955. Also included is a collection of correspondence from Reverend George E.C. Knapp, whose exact relationship with Anne is not known.

2. Farrell, Charles. 9 folders (ca. 175 items). 1936-1978 [bulk 1940s, 1960s].

This series contains newspaper clippings covering a wide range of subjects, including the fishing industry on the North Carolina coast and W.B. Keziah, a deaf newspaperman with whom Charles was friends. Of greatest interest are Charles's reminiscences, which are detailed accounts of his personal experiences between the late 1890s and 1920, with some coverage after 1920. Subjects include Charles' family, Wake Forest, World War I, Eastman Kodak, the stock market crash, and many locations in and around Greensboro. There are sparse notes on the chronology of events and an index of questionable accuracy, however these documents are possibly the most historically valuable items in the collection. Legal documents relating to Charles's death and Roger Farrell's management of his estate are also found in this series.

3. Farrell, Roger. 4 folders (105 items). 1932-1960s [bulk 1960s].

In addition to telegrams, performance programs and report cards from Roger's attendance at Curry Demonstration School, this series contains correspondence from Anne, Charles, Charles Burton and Peter Farrell, as well as a selection of Charles' reminiscences about events in Roger's life.

4. Miscellaneous. 7 folders (55 items). 1916-1960s [bulk 1960s].

The highlights of this series are black and white photographic reproductions of art related to Historic New Garden. Also included are genealogical documents of the Farrell, McKaughan, Coe and Snow families, an issue of *New York American*, and newspaper clippings on a variety of subjects, including the Catholic and Episcopal churches.

III. Photographs**1. Greensboro. 8 folders (80 items). 1920s-1967.**

Of particular importance in this series are photographs of downtown Greensboro, focusing on the intersection of West Market Street and Elm Street. These include a series of this area after a heavy snowfall. Other items include photographs and negatives of Hamilton Lakes and the Katydidd estate. In 1:4 are Anne's notes for an artist's conception of the Dolley Madison House at New Garden, accompanied by negatives of comparable structures, and the smokehouse constructed with logs from the original cabin. Several images of items from Dolley Madison's wardrobe on display at the Greensboro Historical Museum are also of interest.

2. Miscellaneous. 3 folders (75 items). 1920s-1968.

Miscellaneous photographs and negatives include images of Montpelier, Monticello, and Oak Ridge; most of these images were likely taken by Anne Farrell.

3. Portraits. 2 folders (33 items). 1920s-1967.

This series contains photographs mainly of Anne and Charles Farrell, the latter represented in both formal studio portraits and candid poses beside an airplane shortly after he took the first aerial photographs of Greensboro. Photographs of various unidentified subjects are also included.

FOLDER LISTING

<u>I. Business Operations</u>			
<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	1	Art Shop	-- Annual Reports (1949, 1952)
	2	"	-- Photographer's Board of Examiners certificate (1940-1942)
	3	"	-- Financial (1940s)
	4	"	-- Sale of Art Shop (1960)
2	1	Book Shop	-- Correspondence from sale of Book Shop (1948)
	2	"	-- Financial (1943-1948)
	3	"	-- Legal disputes (1946)
	4	"	-- Miscellaneous (1943-1948)
	5	"	-- Records from sale of Book Shop (1948)
<u>II. Family</u>			
<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	1	Farrell, Anne	-- <i>American Girl</i> , "Brookgreen Gardens..." (1940)
	2	"	-- <i>American Girl</i> , "A Day in..." (1942)
	3	"	-- Christmas cards (outgoing, 1920s-1940s)
	4	"	-- Clapp, Millie (1965)
	5	"	-- Correspondence (1943-1968)
	6	"	-- Income tax (1939-1955)
	7	"	-- Knapp, Reverend George E.C. (1936-1969, bulk 1960s)
	8	"	-- Personal (1944, 1955)
2	1	Farrell, Charles	-- Correspondence (1946-1955, bulk 1946-1947)
	2	"	-- Invitations (1940s-1970)
	3	"	-- Keziah, W.B. (1938-1954)
	4	"	-- Legal & financial (1971-1978)
	5	"	-- Personal (1936-1971, bulk 1940s)
	6	"	-- "Reminiscences," index & chronology (1960-1961)
	7	"	-- "Reminiscences," transcript (1960-1961)
	8	"	-- "Reminiscences," transcript (1960-1961)
	9		-- "Reminiscences," transcript & chronology (1960-1961)
3	1	Farrell, Roger A.	-- Correspondence (from Anne Farrell, 1959-1967)
	2	"	-- Correspondence (1947-1964)
	3	"	-- Personal (1932-1960s)
	4	"	-- Report cards (1940-1947)
4	1	Miscellaneous	-- Catholic and Episcopal Churches
	2	"	-- Ephemera (1969)
	3	"	-- Genealogy (1960s)
	4	"	-- Historic New Garden
	5	"	-- Newspaper, <i>New York American</i> (1916)
	6	"	-- Newspaper clippings (1950s-1960s)
	7	"	-- Operations report (1945)

III. Photographs			
Series	Folder	Contents	
1	1	Greensboro	-- 304 Woodlawn Avenue
	2	"	-- The Art Shop (1920s-1960)
	3	"	-- Dolley Madison exhibit (Greensboro Historical Museum)
	4	"	-- Dolley Madison House & Ballinger Smokehouse (1966-1967)
	5	"	-- Downtown street scenes (ca. 1925-1960)
	6	"	-- Hamilton Lakes
	7	"	-- Katydid estate (McConnell Road, 1939)
	8	"	-- Sesquicentennial parade (1958)
2	1	Miscellaneous	-- Montpelier & Monticello (1968)
	2	"	-- Oak Ridge (1938)
	3	"	-- "Passing of the..." James Whitcomb Riley
3	1	Portraits	-- Farrell, Charles & Anne (1935-1967)
	2	"	-- Miscellaneous