Guide to the Roland Eberhart Collection 1979.2557

Finding aid prepared by History San Jose
History San Jose Research Library
1650 Senter Road
San Jose, CA, 95110
(408) 287-2290
research@historysanjose.org
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Note
This finding aid was created using Archivists Toolkit, based on an existing guide created in 2001.
Title: Roland Eberhart Collection
Identifier/Call Number: 1979.2557
Contributing Institution: History San Jose Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.4 Linear feet (1 box)
Date (inclusive): 1909-1967
Language of Materials note: The materials are all in English.
Abstract: The collection comprises the personal papers of Roland Eberhart from 1909 to 1967. A substantial portion is Eberhart's correspondence with the many friends, acquaintances and professional contacts he made through his poetry, his years at Stanford, his teaching career and his philanthropic work. Also included are autographed photos and photocopies of several well- and lesser-known figures. Eberhart collected a substantial number of handwritten and published poetry of local poets, including Hamlin Garland and Henry Meade Bland. The remainder of the collection is magazines and pamphlets, Eberhart's personal records, including his Freemason certificates, programs for a number of local Freemason, Church and other social events, and Christmas cards and postcards dating from 1937 to 1955.
creator: Eberhart, Roland, 1889-1974
Immediate Source of Acquisition note
The Roland Eberhart Collection became a part of the History San José archives in 1979. For donor and accession information, contact History San Jose Research Library.
Conditions Governing Access note
The collection is open for research to the public by appointment.
Processing Information note
The collection was processed by volunteers and staff in December 2001.
Biographical/Historical note
Roland F. Eberhart was a San Jose teacher, Freemason and poet. He was born in Illinois in 1889 but grew up in San Jose. He graduated from San Jose High School in 1909 and went on to pursue his lifelong interest in English and Education as a student at Stanford University, under the tutelage of, amongst others, Ellwood Cubberley. After his graduation from Stanford in 1917, he spent a year teaching English and Typewriting at the Chinese Government Middle School in Tientsin. Then, with the exception of a short stint teaching Commercial Subjects at a public school in Flagstaff, Arizona, in 1921, he spent the rest of his career in San Jose. He taught English at the San Jose Normal School, later known as the San José State Teachers College, and San Jose High School and, with his wife Winnie, settled into a home on South Sixth Street. Eberhart enjoyed poetry and became an active member of the Edwin Markham Poetry Society and a friend of many local poets, including Henry Meade Bland, the English professor named “The Laurel Crowned Poet of California” in 1929. Eberhart was the editor of the Santa Clara County Teachers’ Association’s Bulletin, El Padre, and served for a time as President of the Association. Researching the details of word division and syllabication practiced by printers and publishers became one of his favorite pastimes.
Much of Eberhart’s life was devoted to community service and Freemasonry. In recognition of his work with the Freemason’s Howard Chapter No. 14 and the Fraternity Lodge No. 399, he received the Freemasons’ highly esteemed thirty-third degree. He also belonged to the Centella Methodist Episcopal Church in San Jose and taught Sunday school classes there. After the Second World War, in which his son, Frederick, was killed, Eberhart seems to have dedicated himself all the more to his charitable work. He sent gifts of vegetable seeds to Japan, through the well-known missionary and founder of the Anti-War League, Toyohiko Kagawa. In making small donations of money and books to numerous other organizations across the U.S., China, Japan and Mexico, he corresponded with a number of other well-known public figures and founders of charitable organizations. These included Herbert Hoover, the founder of Stanford’s Institution on War, Helen Keller of the National Federation for the Blind, and Pearl S. Buck, the author and founder of the East and West Association.
Eberhart continued to make San Jose the home base for his active community life until his death in 1974.
Scope and Contents note
The Roland Eberhart Collection contains the personal papers of Roland Eberhart from 1909 to 1967. Just one box holds all the papers.
The Correspondence subseries contains Eberhart’s correspondence with the many friends, acquaintances and professional contacts he made through his poetry, his years at Stanford, his teaching career and his philanthropic work. These subseries are arranged alphabetically according to the letter-writers’ last names. They include letters signed by such famous names...
as Herbert Hoover, Helen Keller, Pearl S. Buck, the actress Olivia De Haviland, John S. Gregg, the developer of the Gregg shorthand system, John Hersey, the journalist, Hamlin Garland, the writer and philanthropist, Henry Emerson Fosdick, the Protestant religious leader, and Wendell Wilkie, the businessman and Presidential candidate. Also included in this correspondence is a letter written in 1934 by William McKendree, a former confederate soldier and veteran of the Battle of Gettysburg. In his letter to Eberhart, McKendree describes his own personal impressions of Robert E. Lee and other generals. Eberhart may have used this information as background for the poem he wrote on Lee for the Richmond Times Dispatch in 1935.

The Autographs subseries, contains photos and photocopies of several well- and lesser-known figures.

The three Poetry subseries contain a substantial collection of the handwritten and published poetry of local poets, including Hamlin Garland and Henry Meade Bland.

The Publications subseries contains a number of magazines and pamphlets. It includes a copy of El Padre, the magazine Eberhart edited for many years, and a copy of a Stanford University Library publication in which Eberhart is listed as a donor.

The Certificates, Receipts and Drawings subseries contains many of Eberhart’s personal records, including his Freemason certificates and receipts for his charitable donations, for example.

The Programs subseries contains the programs for a number of local Freemason, Church and other social events Eberhart and his family attended.

The final subseries contains Christmas cards and postcards dating from 1937 to 1955, including several photo postcards of places Eberhart visited, such as the Luther Burbank garden.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Bland, Henry Meade, 1863-1931
Keller, Helen, 1880-1968
Markham, Edwin, 1852-1940
correspondence
Freemasons--California
photographs
Poets, American--20th century--Archives
Stanford University