

Louis B. Puffer (1886-1951)
Photograph Collection, 1910-1951
FB-81

Introduction

This collection contains black and white photographs and color slides taken by Louis Blackmer Puffer (1886-1951) of Burlington, Vermont. The collection was purchased in two separate groups (photo albums and slides) by the Vermont Historical Society in 2002 (ms. acc. no. 2002.20). It is housed in three archival boxes and consumes 1.75 linear feet of shelf space.

Biography

Louis Blackmer Puffer was born on July 24, 1886, the son of Norman Martin Puffer, a Civil War veteran, and Olive F. Blackmer Puffer of Bennington, Vermont. He graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, with a degree in Civil Engineering, in 1909. He joined the faculty of the University of Vermont in September 1921; in 1937 he became a full professor there and was made head of the Department of Civil Engineering.

Louis Puffer was an enthusiastic outdoorsman and amateur photographer. He was a active member of the Green Mountain Club. He served as president of the Burlington Section and of the main club and was a trustee of the main club for many terms. He was editor of the club's two major publications, *The Long Trail News* and *The Guide Book*. He was the 50th person to become an Adirondack 46er, having climbed all 46 four-thousand foot peaks in the Adirondacks, 21 of which are trail less.

Louis Puffer married Ruth Bascom Resseguie in Bennington on December 6, 1912. They had three children: Olive Louise Puffer (Mrs. A. Wendall Folkins), Helen Blackmer Puffer (d. 1989), and Norman Mearns Puffer (d. 2005). Professor Puffer died on October 11, 1951. Additional biographical information is contained in Folder 0 of the collection.

Scope & Content

This collection documents Louis B. Puffer's interests in hiking and nature; his profession of engineering; and portions of his personal life in Bennington, Vt.; Troy, New York; and Burlington, Vt.

The black and white photographs, mounted on pages in 17 separate albums, most with identifying captions, were taken between 1910 and 1945. The strength of the collection is the large number of photographs that document the activities of the Green Mountain Club and the appearance of natural environment in the first half of the twentieth century. Professor Puffer was an accomplished amateur photographer and the albums contain some high quality photographs of mountains, rivers, and winter activities

in the outdoors. Early GMC leader Roy O. Buchanan and named Long Trail lodges appear in many of the photographs. Some photographs were taken by others, including M. L. Joslin. The albums include a few photographs of Bennington and more of Troy, New York, and Burlington, Vermont. Of note are two photographs of Amelia Earhart Putnam at the Burlington, Vermont, airport. There are also photographs of field camps Puffer set up with his engineering students; most of the students in these photographs are identified.

Volunteers at the Vermont Historical Society have created an inventory of the major groups of photographs within the albums. The inventory include fields for year, state, and subject in addition to caption and book and page number. The inventory and copies of the inventory sorted by state and category are contained in Folder 0.

The color slides, all identified and numbered, were taken during the period 1941 to 1951. The VHS collection does not include the complete numbered sequence; there are some numbered slides that were not part of the collection when we purchased it. The slide collection is particularly strong in Vermont mountain scenery. An inventory is included in Folder 0.

Related Collections

The Vermont Historical Society library contains the records of the Green Mountain Club (Doc 182) and several of its early leaders including Eugene L. Bamforth (Doc 227), Theron S. Dean (MSA 55 & 56), Will S. Monroe (Doc 86), and James P. Taylor (Doc T 1–13).. The Society also maintains its own file of GMC photographs (F-PO-Green Mountain Club) and of hiking in general (F-SP-Hiking and camping).

Several collections of Professor Puffer's photographs were sold at the same time that the Vermont Historical Society purchased their two lots. These other collections are now in private hands or at other repositories.

Inventory (see more detailed inventories in collection)

I. Photo Albums

FB-81.1:01	1909-1910
02	1910
03	1912 ?
04	1911
05	1913-1914
06	1910
07	1923
08	1923
09	1924-1925
10	1929-1930
11	1918, 1926-1928
12	1929-1931

13	1926, 1929-1933
14	1931-1934
15	1934-1936
15A	Loose photographs removed from albums, no dates
FB-81.2:16	1935-1937
17	1937-1940
18	no dates
19	no dates

II. Slides

FB-81.3	1941-1951
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