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Woods Family
Collection, 1885-1973 Year-Year

Collection 153

Champaign County Historical Archives

Compiled by: Maggie Weimer, July 2023

Creator/Corporate Name: Woods Family

Inclusive Dates: 1885-1943

Physical Description: 2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Provenance: The Woods Family collection was donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Access: These records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

Biographical Note:

William Franklin Woods Sr. was born on July 16, 1876 in Farmer City, IL to Thomas and Catherine (Kirk) Woods. A man of academia, he earned a degree from Rice Collegiate Institute in Paxton IL. in 1895, a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois in 1900, and a law degree from the University of Illinois in 1902. He went on to practice law at his own firm in Champaign, IL for 40 years. He married Mary Margaret Casserly in Champaign, IL on June 21, 1910 and together they had three sons and one daughter: William Franklin Jr., Paul Joseph, John T., and Margaret Mary. Mary also attended the University of Illinois and was associated with the C.A. Kilar Furniture Store for many years.

As a practicing lawyer, William F. Woods Sr. also served as a member, vice president, and president of the Champaign County Bar Association. In addition to his long and successful career in law, he served on the Champaign Library board for 27 years, residing as president of the board from 1934 to his death in 1942. His obituary praised him as an outstanding community member and detailed how his "entire career had been closely linked to the growth of Champaign-Urbana."

An all-around scholarly family, William F. and Mary Woods' children also went on to do great things. William F. Woods Jr. (1912-1961) followed his father's footsteps by becoming a lawyer and practicing in his father's firm. After his father's death and returning from serving in World War II, he married Elizabeth Cox Henderson, moved back to Champaign, and continued practicing law in the community. Dr. Paul J. Woods (1916-1984) was a fellow academic, as he earned his Ph.D. in Philosophy in History from the University of Illinois before serving in World War II. He married Ruth Hackleman in 1942 and became a popular history professor at both Texas A&M and Texas Tech University. John T. Woods worked in the office of the collector of internal revenue in Springfield, IL before serving in World War II. With General Patton's forces, John T. died while serving in France on November 8, 1944. The youngest and only daughter, Mary Woods (1921-1989) attended and worked at the University of Illinois.

Scope and Content Note:

The collection contains legal documents pertaining to the law office of William F. Woods, newspaper clippings, a Ph.D. thesis by Paul J. Woods, photographs, and ephemera relating to the Knights of



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Columbus. It also contains more personal items such as school work, academic notes, exercise books, correspondence, and other ephemera of related family members.

Arrangement:

This collection is organized into two series: William F. Woods and Children, 1895-1943 and Photographs, undated. Each series is then arranged alphabetically by folder.

Separated Materials:

Diploma awarded to William F. Woods from Rice Collegiate Institute, 1895 is located in Map Case 2, drawer 3. Labeled 13-061.

Subject Terms:

Academic writing – Political aspects
Alleys
Clark St. (Champaign)
Knights of Columbus
Photographs
Woods family

Name Terms:

Woods, John T.
Woods, Margaret M.
Woods, Mary (Casserly)
Woods, Paul J.
Woods, William F. Sr.
Woods, William F. Jr.

Container List:

Box 1

Series 1: William F. Woods & Children, 1895-1943

Folder 1: Knights of Columbus certificates, programs, and ephemera, 1904-1942

Folder 2: Legal documents and newspaper clippings pertaining to the Alley Local Improvement Number 3, 1925-1926

Folder 3: Letterhead and envelopes of the Law Office of William F. Woods and legal documents pertaining to the Local Improvement of West Part of Clark Street, 1922

Folder 4: Newspaper clippings and correspondence, 1895-1898 and undated

Folder 5: Schoolwork and handwritten academic notes and ephemera, 1898-1943

Folder 6: Trip to Europe ephemera, 1910

Folder 7: Typing tests and academic booklets and essays, 1901-1934

Folder 8: Uncategorized family ephemera, undated

Folder 9: University of Illinois Ph.D. thesis of Paul Joseph Woods titled, "The G.A.R. and Civil Service", 1941



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Box 2

Series 2: Photographs, undated

Folder 1: Champaign Senior High School, undated

Folder 2: Unidentified children, undated

Folder 3: Unidentified portraits, undated

Folder 4: Weber Studio portraits identified by first name, A-K, undated

Folder 5: Weber Studio portraits identified by first name, L-Z, undated

Folder 6: Weber Studio unidentified portraits, undated

Folder 7: William F. Woods Sr., undated