

## Finding Aid to the Bill Rudd Photograph Collection

### Rudd, Bill, 1902-1944

Bill Rudd Photograph Collection, 1920-1950

85 photographic prints : 8 x 10 in. and smaller

1 5x7 plastic negative (Neg. 5x7P-356)

15 4x5 plastic negatives (Neg. 4x5P-436 thru 449, 450a)

15 120mm plastic negatives (Neg. 120mm-581 thru 593)

40 scans on 9 CDs

Collection number: Photo 2022

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### OVERVIEW

**Links:** View collection in [Digital Horizons](#)

**Access:** The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

**Provenance:** Donated by M. Eugene Rudd, 1980, 1982, 2004 (Acc. 2059, 2079, 2741)

**Property rights:** The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

**Copyrights:** Copyrights to images in this collection are held by the Institute.

**Citation:** Institute for Regional Studies, NDSU, Fargo (item number)

### BIOGRAPHY

Millard Eugene Rudd was born July 10, 1902 in Fargo, N.D., the son of Peter Axel and Ellen Rudd. He grew up in Fargo and graduated from Central High School in 1922. Many of his high school days were spent with his friends canoeing on the Red River. He also enjoyed photography and documented his enjoyment of the Red River and scenes around Fargo. He called his canoe the "Palace on the Waters." After high school he attended North Dakota Agricultural College in Fargo and studied architecture. He graduated in 1927. He married Stella Nelson of Fargo. She was born September 22, 1904 at Northwood, Iowa but moved at a young age to Marion, N.D. Their son M. Eugene was born in 1927.

Known as Bill Rudd, he took a job as a draftsman at Union Light Company, later owned by Northern States Power, after his graduation from NDAC, and he worked there until his death. He also had jobs at the Chamber of Commerce, was a projectionist at the State and Isis theaters, worked at the election polls, and was concessions manager at the state fair. Bill Rudd died on May 30, 1944.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Bill Rudd Photograph Collection** consists almost exclusively of eight-five photographic prints made from the original negatives taken by Bill Rudd and his son M. Eugene Rudd. The gelatin silver prints in the collection were made by M. Eugene Rudd in 1980-1982 specifically for donation to the Institute. There are a very small number of images, also donated by Mr. Rudd, that post-date the death of his father in 1944. Almost all images are dated to the exact date the image was taken.

Bill Rudd had a good “photographic eye” in documented social life and events in Fargo, N.D. in the 1920s up to his death in 1944. The collection has been arranged into two broad series: Red River at Fargo-Moorhead and Topical. The physical order actually reflects the incorporation of additional images in 1982, and thus are not in an alphabetical sequence.

The [Red River Series](#) images were taken on or near the river at Fourth Street South. Rudd and his friends had canoes they used on the river, evening having a record player and other amenities in the boats. In one image a boater is going over the dam. There is also an image of their boat house, the “Kanoo Inn.” Other images including cutting ice in the winter, the construction of the dam in 1930, the footbridge across the river and scenes of the 1943 flood.

The [Topical Series](#) is more eclectic in the images represented. The 1944 blizzard scenes are from downtown Fargo showing automobiles in large snow drifts. The YMCA images document young boys at the camp at Cormorant Lake, near Detroit Lakes, Minn. There are scenes of the boys in formation by tents, inside a bunkhouse, washing dishes, from the dock towards the camp buildings, and a “load” of boys in a truck in front the Fargo YMCA building. There are three images of the *Spirit of St. Louis* airplane when Charles Lindbergh was in Fargo on August 26, 1927. Several have crowds near it and another shows individuals looking into the cockpit.

The Downtown Fargo files are primarily Broadway street scenes and businesses, including the Fargo, Roxy and Grand theaters, Herbst Dept. Store, Royal Jewelers store window display, fire at Fargo Creamery Supply Co. and the N.S.P. steam plant. There are two views of men by an automobile that is covered with ducks they hunted. They are identified as Bill Rudd, Carl Lunde and Henny Hanson. The train wreck file has views of railroad crews lifting cars that have overturned after a tornado struck the Great Northern Railway’s Empire Builder near Sabin, Minn. on May 27, 1931. There are a number of images of students and teachers at Fargo’s Clara Barton school, the front of the school and the janitor (name not given).

The Fargo Central High School images are of the All Talent Show, student outside listening to the band and various choirs performing, and Clinton Schonberger, biology teacher. The Fargo scenes include the Island Park Swimming Pool, community Christmas Tree at night, close view of a Northern Pacific locomotive crossing Broadway, construction scaffolding, Mrs. Rudd entering flowers in a flower show, and a man on the steps of Island Park Pavillion. Mrs. Rudd (who later married C.A. Running) is in a group of women who formerly worked at Black’s Store.

There are four images of scenes on or near Broadway of snow drifts and automobiles in the drifts after a snow storm, possibly in 1946. There is a winter scene of the houses on the east side of North River Road in Fargo. All were removed for flood control after the 1997 Fargo flood. The N.S.P. file shows Mr. Rudd

at his desk, a J. A. McGuire, department head, and a view of one of the smokestacks of the downtown Fargo steam plant. The final image is of the Fargo ski jump that was located at the north end of Broadway by the Red River. It is a view of the back and side of the main jump with a much smaller one nearby.

The [Reference Prints from Scans and Negatives Series](#), includes three files of reference printouts on paper. These printouts are of scans made from photographs and negatives; some are from a photo album held in private hands and some are of negatives donated in the summer of 2004. (Negative numbers 5x7P-356, 4x5P-436 thru 449 & 450a, 120mm-581 thru 593)

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