

Finding Aid to the Donald and Irene Fraser Photograph Collection

Fraser, Donald C., 1913-1973

Donald and Irene Fraser Photograph Collection, 1920s-1987

7 photographic prints

Collection number: Photo 486

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Links: Finding Aid to the [Donald C. Fraser Papers](#)
View images in [Digital Horizons](#).

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

Provenance: Donated by Palmer Forness, 2004 (Acc. 2720).

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

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

BIOGRAPHY

Donald C. Fraser was born on May 2, 1913, the son of G. Angus and Dorothy Beatrice (Waldron) Fraser of Fargo, North Dakota. Donald had two siblings; an older brother, Simon W. Fraser, and younger sister, Mildred (Mrs. Mathew Tindall). His father served in the U.S. Army during the Spanish American War (1897-1899) in the Philippines, and in the National Guard from 1891 to 1932. G. Angus Fraser established Cass County Abstract Company in 1910.

Donald enlisted as a private in the National Guard in 1929 at the age of 17. He attended North Dakota Agricultural College, graduating in 1935 with a BS in education. He married Irene Graber, in 1938. Donald worked as a sales manager at the Ford Tractor Company in Fargo from 1940 to 1941 when his National Guard unit was activated. Donald served in World War II, rising from second lieutenant to major in the 188th Field Artillery Battalion. During his service, Donald wrote his wife faithfully. Some of these letters appeared as articles in the *Fargo Forum*, and often his wife or father would read his letters at

service and auxiliary group meetings. When Donald's National Guard unit was activated in 1941, Irene became a "camp follower," as many of the early letters reveal. Once Donald left for England in December 1943, Irene returned to Fargo and worked for her father-in-law at Cass County Abstract Company. The 188th Field Artillery Battalion landed in Normandy on D-Day plus 6 and fought their way through France, Belgium, and Germany. Major Fraser returned from Europe in October of 1945.

In 1950, Donald was elected to a four year term as Fargo City Commissioner, but only served for two years. He resigned after his National Guard unit was activated to serve in Korea from January 1951 to October 1952. After serving as a commissioned officer in World War II and the Korean War, Lieutenant Colonel Fraser was nominated as Fargo Postmaster by President Harry S. Truman. He held this position until 1971, when he was appointed U.S. Postal Service Field Manager covering North Dakota and portions of Minnesota.

Irene (Graber) Fraser was born July 12, 1910 in Indiana. She held several different jobs prior to marriage; at one time she worked as a switchboard operator, a general office clerk, and became head of the direct shipping department, working full time from 1925 to 1938, and part time from 1938 to 1941. When her husband's National Guard Unit was activated, Irene moved to be near him. She worked at the Main Post Exchange in Fort Lewis, Washington from 1941 through 1943. Once he was deployed to England in 1943, Irene moved back to Fargo and worked at Cass County Abstract Company from 1956 to 1978, eventually becoming President of the company. Irene and Donald had no children. Donald C. Fraser died on October 5, 1973, and Irene Graber Fraser died June 4, 2001.

SCOPE AND CONENT

These seven images, originally in frames, came as part of the accession of Donald Fraser's correspondence while in World War II. Five of the prints are portraits of Donald and Irene from circa 1930, late 1930s and the 1950s. In addition there is a print of Irene Fraser dancing with Lawrence Welk, and a color print of Irene's brothers and sisters, the Graber family. They were the children of John and Delilah Graber.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
.1	Donald Fraser portrait, hand colored, ca.1931
.2	Irene Graber portrait, hand colored, ca. 1928
.3	Donald Fraser in U.S. Army uniform, 1930s
.4	Irene Fraser dancing with Lawrence Welk, 1970s
.5	Graber siblings, 1987
.6	Donald Fraser in U.S. Army uniform, hand colored, 1950s
.7	Irene Fraser portrait, hand colored, 1950s