

C Miller, Merritt F. (1875-1965), Collection, 1906-1927  
3921 682 photographs and 14 negatives (.4 linear feet)

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://www.mshs.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

## INTRODUCTION

Photographs, negatives, and caption notebook of a University of Missouri professor of soils, 1904-1938, and dean of the College of Agriculture, 1938-1945, depicting scenes of the Ozarks, European landmarks and agriculture, a North American tour of the International Society of Soil Science, and various Missouri, Columbia, and University of Missouri scenes.

## DONOR INFORMATION

The Merritt F. Miller Collection was donated to the University of Missouri by his daughter, Elizabeth M. Hanson, on 18 July 1990 (Accession No. 4966).

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Merritt Finley Miller was born on 7 July 1875 in Grove City, Ohio. He received a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from Ohio State University in 1900 and a Master of Agricultural Science from Cornell University in 1901. Miller spent two years studying in Germany at the University of Gottingen, 1910-1911, and at the University of Munich, 1933-1934. He received honorary doctorates from Kansas State University in 1938 and Ohio State University in 1939.

After a year as a soil surveyor with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and two years as an instructor in agronomy at Ohio State, Miller began his long career with the University of Missouri. He was professor of agronomy from 1904 to 1914, professor of soils from 1914 to 1938, and dean of the College of Agriculture and director of the Agricultural Experiment Station from 1938 to 1945, after which he spent many years as professor emeritus.

Miller was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Society of Agronomy, American Society of Soil Science, International Society of Soil Science, and many other professional and social organizations. He was the author of Soil and Its Management, published in 1924; many bulletins of the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station; and articles to several technical journals.

M.F. Miller married Flora Grace Ernst on 19 December 1914 and they had four children: Edward, Elizabeth, Robert, and Daniel. He lived in Columbia until his death in 1965.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Merritt F. Miller Collection consists of 682 photographs, fourteen negatives, and one small notebook that document several trips, both recreational and professional, of a University of Missouri professor of soils. The four photograph albums in which the snapshots were housed were photocopied and then dismantled for conservation purposes. The photos have been retained in their original order, including the written captions. The volumes have been arranged chronologically from 1906 to 1927 and the pages of each volume have been separated into several folders.

Volume one, 1906-1909, is the least organized of the four volumes. It contains 143 snapshots of several vacation trips to the Ozarks, Minnesota, and Canada, as well as photos of Columbia, the University of Missouri, and miscellaneous other items and events of interest to

Miller. Interspersed among the scenic views--primarily, but not exclusively, Ozarks landmarks--and family recreation shots are photos of fields of agricultural crops, unusual soil or rock formations, farm animals and machinery, and various agricultural experiment stations around the country. Also included in this volume are two photos of a May Day celebration on the University of Missouri Quadrangle and two group photos of the members of a faculty club at the university in the early 1900s.

Volume two consists of 356 prints and 14 additional negatives of photos that were taken by Miller during a sabbatical at the University of Gottingen, Germany, from 1910 to 1911. Although the original album included descriptions with most of the photos, Miller also kept a small notebook in which he listed captions corresponding to numbered negatives. Folder six contains the notebook and a list that correlates Miller's numbering system with the photograph numbers in the collection. The descriptions in the notebook are usually similar to those in the album, but occasionally they do add more or different information. The negatives with captions but no corresponding prints are included at the end of the volume in folder fifteen.

Although most of the photos in this volume depict German vistas, there are also a large number of French and Dutch scenes and lesser numbers of snapshots of Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, England and Scotland. This group of photos provides an excellent pictorial diary of a middle-class European tour in the early part of the 20th century. The majority of the photographs are tourist-type pictures of special landmarks, interesting or unusual places, and beautiful views, like the Eiffel Tower, the Hartz Mountains, and Dutch canals, but there are many photos of agricultural-related scenes as well. The farm scenes add another dimension to the usual tourist fare and furnish a more complete view of the countryside than would otherwise be seen.

Volume three, the smallest album, consists of 56 photos of a 1924 Miller family camping trip through the Ozarks. It depicts a typical vacation of picnics, children swimming, and scenery, including Hahatonka in Camden County, the suspension bridge over the Osage at Linn Creek, and Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Three of Miller's children are prominent in several of these photos.

The 1927 transcontinental tour of the first conference of the International Society of Soil Science is the subject of the fourth volume in the collection. It contains 127 photographs covering the tour through Maryland, Tennessee, Georgia, Kansas, Colorado, Salt Lake City (Utah), Nevada, California, Oregon, Vancouver, the Canadian Rockies, western Canadian agricultural regions, North Dakota and Minnesota. In addition to the scenic vistas--especially the mountains of Colorado and the deserts of Nevada and California--and agricultural scenes one might expect, this volume also includes several photos of the scientists actually sampling some of the soils.

## FOLDER LIST

### Volume 1 Vacations and Miscellaneous, 1906-1909

- |      |                    |   |
|------|--------------------|---|
| f. 1 | Photocopy of album |   |
| f. 2 | Photos #1-52       | Lake Erie, 1907; views of Southern Missouri; Farmers Parade, 1908   |
| f. 3 | Photos #53-84      | Minnesota vacation; Canadian agricultural views; Cornell University Experiment Station, NY; school agricultural club, Sedalia, Missouri |
| f. 4 | Photos #85-117     | Ozarks; Current River float trip/camping; May Day at University of Missouri, 1908; Southeast Missouri farms                             |
| f. 5 | Photos #118-143    | Southeast Missouri; fishing; Ozarks; loess soil in Howard County; University of Missouri faculty club                                   |

## Volume 2 European Sabbatical, 1910-1911

- f. 6 Notebook and caption list
- f. 7-8 Photocopy of album
- f. 9 Photos #144-194 Ship voyage; Gottingen, Germany, scenes; German friends; parties; ice skating, etc.
- f. 10 Photos #195-250 Germany; Hartz Mountains; German farms and farming
- f. 11 Photos #251-307 German farms and farming; Rhine River; Nurnberg; Munich; Cologne; Oberammergau
- f. 12 Photos #308-361 Switzerland; Holland (canals, farms, street scenes); Paris
- f. 13 Photos #362-422 France (Paris, Rouen, Rennes, Bordeaux, Marseilles); French farms and farming
- f. 14 Photos #423-478 Copenhagen; Sweden; England; Scotland; Agricultural experiment stations
- f. 15 Photos #479-499 Ocean voyage and unidentified; 14 negatives without prints, #500-513

## Volume 3 Ozarks Vacation, 1924

- f. 16 Photocopy of album
- f. 17-18 Photos #514-569 Miller family; camping; Ozarks scenery; Hahatonka; Osage River; Eureka Springs, Arkansas

## Volume 4 First International Society of Soil Science Congress, Transcontinental Tour, 1927

- f. 19 Photocopy of album
- f. 20 Photos #570-597 Views of soil and rock formations and agricultural scenes in Maryland, Tennessee, Georgia, Kansas, Colorado; soil scientists
- f. 21 Photos #598-629 Soils; farms; scenic views of Colorado; Salt Lake City, Utah; Nevada and California deserts
- f. 22 Photos #630-661 California; Oregon; Columbia River; Vancouver, Canada; soils; orange groves; movie lots; orchards; scientists
- f. 23 Photos #662-696 Scenic views of Canadian Rockies; Canadian agriculture; glaciers; soils; Indian children; North Dakota and Minnesota agriculture

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