



THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH CENTER-KANSAS CITY

K0523

William Rensing (1906-1984) Papers

1945-1986

.5 cubic feet

Photographs, newspaper articles concerning the works of the German-born, Kansas City area sculptor.

BIOGRAPHY:

Wilhelm Rensing, born in Germany, April 4, 1906, emigrated with his family from near Cologne in 1919. They lived in Brazil, came to the United States in 1923 and lived New York, Mankato, Minnesota, before they moved to Kansas City in 1928. Rensing met and in Kansas City married his wife, the former Franziska (Frances) Luger, born September 5, 1907 in Georg, Germany.

The work of William Rensing, a third generation woodcarver, is in many local Kansas City area churches and residences, most notably a wood portrayal of Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper" which is installed at Grace and Holy Trinity cathedral. He carved the county and state seals on some of the judicial benches in the Jackson County courthouse, fourteen figures in the Way of the Cross at St. Agnes church, as well as work in Country Club Christian Church. Rensing's work was commissioned by oil company executives as well as President of Mexico, Louis Echevaria.

At the age of 69, Rensing began working on a life-size sculpture rendition of "The Last Supper". It was begun in 1975, while the Rensings were living in Guaymas, Mexico. The work continued in Hollister, Missouri. When finished, the sculpture measured 67 feet wide.

William Rensing died July 1984. His wife Frances died January 31, 2007.

PROVENANCE:

This gift was received from Frances Rensing, through her nephew John Weber, as accession KA1289 on May 3, 2004.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPERS:

This collection consists of photographs, newspaper clippings and a scrapbook of William Rensing's work.

INVENTORY:

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| Folder 1. | Clippings |
| Folder 2. | Photographs- People, Homes, Personal |
| Folder 3. | Photographs- Sculpture |
| Folder 4. | Scrapbook |