



ArchivesSpace

Finding aid for the Quimby Family collection Collection 445

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Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections
Department

111 Library Street NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

localhis@grpl.org

URL: <http://www.grpl.org>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator:	Quimby, George Irving, Jr.
Creator:	Quimby, Thomas H.E.
Title:	Quimby Family Collection
ID:	Collection 445
Date [inclusive]:	1842 - 1987
Physical Description:	1.0 Linear feet One flat clam shell box
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	This collection contains material related to the Quimby, Lowe, and Butterworth families of Grand Rapids, Michigan. There are two scrapbooks, one of newspaper articles mostly from London papers in the mid 1800s. A second one was kept, beginning in 1906, by George Irving Quimby recording his involvement in the theater, beginning at Central High School, and his professional work in New York City and on tour with a traveling troupe through the south, including playbills, photographs of himself with his wife and friends. There is an 1842 letter from Richard Butterworth to his wife, Ann, in England, describing his farm in Grand Rapids, the Native Americans in the area, his plans for her arrival. Photographs include a picture of Richard Butterworth, Ann, and their two daughters, Ellen Lowe and Charlotte Pruesser, 1864, and photos of an old farmstead and of employees and buildings of the Butterworth and Lowe Iron works.

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Biographical/Historical note

The two donors of this collection, George Irving Quimby Jr. (May 4, 1913 – February 17, 2003) and Thomas H. E. Quimby (June 20, 1918- November 20, 1998) were sons of George Irving Quimby. At birth George Irving Quimby (1886-1950) was named Irving Leo Quimby, changing his name as an adult. He was the grandson and heir of the Ichabod Quimby lumberman family, grew up in the Ichabod Quimby family home on the north side of Grand Rapids after his father George died at a young age. He was raised by his grandmother, Emeline, and his aunt, Clara S. Morley. In high school, he was active in

the local theater and later worked professionally in New York and with a traveling troupe. He settled in Grand Rapids and, in 1911, married Ethelwyn Sweet, a daughter of Frank Sweet and Mabel Mary Lowe. He bought the Raymer's Book Store and was in that business for 25 years. He continued his interest in theater and the arts, and the Grand Rapids Herald, upon his death in 1950, claimed he was a founding member of Civic Theater.

The two donors, George Irving, Jr. and Thomas H. E., grew up in the family home at 21 Union Avenue SE (a house often referred to as the Quimby House). George, Jr. attended the University of Michigan, graduated in 1936 and became a noted anthropologist, focusing on ethnohistory. He ended his career at that University of Washington where for 15 years he served as Professor of Anthropology and Curator of Ethnology at the Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum.

Thomas H. E. attended Harvard College, graduated in 1940, married Lucy Foster Williams in 1941, and spent part of World War II serving in the Navy. He moved back to Grand Rapids in 1946, worked for Doehler Jarvis and was active in Democratic party politics. He died in Maine, in 1998.

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Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Collection 239, box 98 Scrapbook of Thomas H. E.'s political life in Grand Rapids.

Collection 304, the George Elliot Book Collection: Lulu Linear Punctated : essays in honor of George Irving Quimby, edited by Robert C. Dunnell and Donald K. Grayson, 1983; Recycling : the alternative to disposal / a case study, by Thomas H. E. Quimby, 1975

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Controlled Access Headings

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- Theater -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids -- History
- Quimby, George I.

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Richard Butterworth letter, original, October 19, 1842 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> October 19, 1842	Box 1	Folder 1
Richard Butterworth letter, transcript, October 19, 1842 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> October 19, 1842	Box 1	Folder 2
Lowe family tree, 1692 - 1959 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1692 - 1959	Box 1	Folder 3
Richard Butterworth photographs	Box 1	Folder 4
Newspaper clippings, 1880 - 1925 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1880 - 1925	Box 1	Folder 5
Thomas H. E. Quimby letter, September 9, 1987 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> September 9, 1987	Box 1	Folder 6
George Irving Quimby biography, 1986 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1986	Box 1	Folder 7
Scrapbook, newspaper clippings, 1860 - 1862 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1860 - 1862	Box 1	item X
Scrapbook, Irving L. Quimby, 1906 -1912 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1906 -1912	Box 1	item X
Scrapbook items, loose, 1906-1912 <u>Date [inclusive]:</u> 1906-1912	Box 1	Folder 8