



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Percy B. Eckhart
film collection, 1925-1954

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Human Studies Film Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Human Studies Film Archives
Title:	Percy B. Eckhart films
Identifier:	HSFA.2017.05
Date:	1925-1954 1925-1954
Extent:	23 Film reels (14,300 feet; 16mm) 23 Film reels (14,300 feet; 16mm)
Creator:	Eckhart, Percy B. (Percy Bernard), 1877-1969
Language:	English .
Summary:	Percy B. Eckhart was a lawyer, a prolific oil painter, and a supporter of the arts. Most of the film footage in this collection is of travel, but there is also film footage of his family, and of a fiction film.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated by Wendy Williams in 2017.

Processing Information

Film arrived in small rolls and was assembled into larger film rolls between 800 feet and 1000 feet when possible. Film rolls that were in particularly poor physical condition were kept separate for handling purposes. All film footage is estimated, as the rolls could not be run through a film footage calculator due to shrinkage.

Film was assembled in original numbered order whenever possible. Numbered films proceed largely chronologically by subject. Information written on each film reel and/or can appears in bulleted lists on the following pages. Reels tended to come in their own cans, with the exception of a few larger cans that housed multiple film rolls. Square brackets indicate titles supplied by archives staff.

Most film is black-and-white. Note that one roll (2017.5.3-3 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Virginia Gardens, 1932]) is Kodachrome, a film format that contains color information in a lenticular format. This film footage appears black and white until projected through the required filters. There is also tinted film in 2017.5.7 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise, 1936], and Kodachrome in 2017.5.6 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Europe, 1949-1950].

Processed by Annie Schweikert, February 2017

Encoded by Katherine Christensen, August 2020

Preferred Citation

The Percy B. Eckhart films, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Please contact the archives for information on availability of access copies of audiovisual recordings. Original audiovisual material in the Human Studies Film Archives may not be played.

Access to the Percy B. Eckhart film collection requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact repository for terms of use.

Biographical Note

Percy Bernard Eckhart was born in 1877 in Lake Forest, Illinois. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago and his law degree from Harvard University. He taught public utility law at the University of Chicago and was a founding partner in the law firm of Eckhart, McSwain, Hassell, and Husum. He also served as legal counsel for the Art Institute of Chicago. His support of the arts included serving as a trustee of the Art Institute of Chicago, a founder of the Ravinia Festival association, and a governing member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestral association. He additionally served as director and officer of the B. A. Eckhart Milling company, a firm started by his late father; as a member of the executive committee of Montgomery Ward & Co; as a director of Chicago Title & Trust company, and the Champlain Oil & Refining company; and as president of the DeSoto Securities company, DeSoto Realty Trust, and the 208 La Salle Street corporation. In 1951, he received Northwestern University's centennial award. In his spare time, he was also a prolific oil painter (primarily of landscapes, some of which were exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago in the 1920s). Eckhart died in 1969 in Lake Placid, New York.

Sources Consulted

"Percy Eckhart Dies at Age 93; A Civic Leader." *Chicago Tribune*, July 16, 1969.

Chronology

1877	Born in Lake Forest, Illinois
1899	Graduated from the University of Chicago
1902	Received J.D. from Harvard University
1903-1915	Taught public utility law at the University of Chicago
1951	Received Northwestern University's centennial award
1969	Died in Lake Placid, New York

Scope and Contents

This collection contains the films of Percy B. Eckhart. The travel film footage includes trips to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Virginia, Florida, Scandinavia, Northern Europe, South America, Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and Western Europe. The home movie film footage was filmed in Lyme, Connecticut;

Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Charlevoix, Michigan. The miscellaneous film footage is outtakes and tests from a professional or serious amateur fiction film and Eugene Castle's "Hindenberg Explodes!" Castle's film is the only one in this collection that was published.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in 3 series: (1) Travel Footage, 1926-1936, 1949-1950; (2) Home Movies, 1925-1932, 1947; (3) Miscellaneous Film Footage, 1954

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Physical condition of the film ranges from fine to severely deteriorated; all film is acetate and vinegar syndrome has affected the reels to varying degrees.

In 2015, the donor sent the films to Click Scan Share in Lafayette, California, for transfer to DVDs. Copies of the DVDs are available for reference. Image is often jittery and exhibits "breathing" and some was transferred on wrong orientation (writing is projected backwards). DVD includes no titles or breaks between separate rolls, though DVD chapter breaks do correspond correctly to the order of rolls provided by the lab (these divisions can be accessed with the "skip" function).

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Architecture
- Beaches
- Harbors
- Monuments
- Recreation
- Ruins
- Seminole
- Ships
- Tourism

Cultures:

- Seminole

Geographic Names:

- Africa
- Asia
- Caribbean Area
- Europe
- Mediterranean Region
- South America
- United States

Container Listing

Series 1: Travel Footage, 1926-1936, 1949-1950

18 Film reels (11,900 feet; 16mm)

The film footage in this series spans several regions of the world and largely serves as a record of tourist attractions, particularly port cities and monumental or historical structures. Film includes some records of local people and activities; the Caribbean film footage is particularly notable for its focus on daily life and documentation of now-destroyed landmarks.

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Caribbean and Mediterranean], 1926

Film footage from a cruise of the Caribbean and Mediterranean that began in March 1926. Activities depicted include cruise ship life; landscapes and harbors; monumental buildings and ruins, including interior shots; and brief shots of local people on streets, at leisure, and at work. Much of the Mediterranean film footage is touristic: historic sites and monuments, crowded street scenes in port cities, and companions at leisure in restaurants or on the cruise ship. The Caribbean film footage is notable for its sustained interest in locals and serves as a record of daily life in rural villages and homes as well as cities. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Filming locations as listed on reels and in intertitles include: Puerto Rico, Martinique, Barbados, Trinidad, Caracas (Venezuela), the Panama Canal, Kingston (Jamaica), Malta, Cyprus, and Bethlehem and Jerusalem (Israel/Palestine).

Item 2017.5.1-1

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Caribbean and Mediterranean], 1926
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)

- 1. Ship: Puerto Rico, Martinique 1st Trip 1926
- 2. Barbados, Trinidad, Caracas

Item 2017.5.1-2

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Caribbean and Mediterranean], 1926
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 1,050 feet; 16mm)

- 3
- 4. West Indies, Columbus [ship S.S. Columbus]
- 6. Malta, Cyprus, Bethlehem
- 7. Bethlehem and Jerusalem. P.B. Eckhart

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Caribbean], 1927

Film footage of daily life and surroundings in rural areas and port cities of the Caribbean. Film is divided between scenes of daily life in rural areas (washing clothes, breaking up rocks, transportation via cart and poled boat, local homes); daily life in towns (street scenes and restaurants, as well as military exercises past a parade review stand); and film footage of monumental buildings and harbors in port cities. A significant amount of time is spent in rural villages, and attention is given to individuals rather than just large crowds. Film also includes city street scenes. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Filming locations include: Trinidad, Caracas, Curacao, Panama, Jamaica, Haiti, and Havana, Cuba. There are some intertitles identifying places and activities.

Item 2017.5.2-1

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Caribbean], 1927

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)

- V. Trinidad, Caracas, Curacao I
- VI. Curacao, Panama, Jamaica

Item 2017.5.2-2

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Caribbean], 1927
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 400 feet; 16mm)

- VII. Jamaica, Haiti, Havana, Cuba

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Virginia Gardens], 1932

Film footage of visits to historic homes, universities, churches, and gardens, including the University of Virginia, Monticello, Mt. Vernon, and Woodrow Wilson's birthplace in Staunton, Virginia. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Other filming locations include Wellington, Belmont, Chatham, Shirley, Westover, and Williamsburg.

Item 2017.5.3-1

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Virginia Gardens], 1932
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)

- I. Virginia Gardens April 1932: Wellington, Mt. Vernon, Belmont, Chatham, Shirley, Westover, Williamsburg
- II. Virginia Gardens

Item 2017.5.3-2

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Virginia Gardens], 1932
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 400 feet; 16mm)

- III. Virginia Gardens

Item 2017.5.3-3

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Virginia Gardens], 1932
1 Film reel (original color silent Kodacolor; 400 feet; 16mm)

- Virginia: Western Virginia House. Lochiel, Asheville, Cresaps. Balls in Winnetka.

Item 2017.5.4

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Florida], 1933
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 400 feet; 16mm)

Film footage of a variety of shots of daily life in Florida. Of note is the brief film footage of Seminole Indians performing daily tasks (sewing, scraping bark off log). Also depicted are public buildings including a racetrack and mansion, as well as women and families at the beach.

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: North Cape Cruise], 1933

Film footage of a cruise visiting Scandinavia and Northern Europe. Activities depicted include cruise ship life; landscapes and harbors; monumental buildings and ruins, including interior shots; and folk reenactments, dances, and traditional dress. Street scenes provide glimpses of local people's daily activities not performed for tourists, including harvesting fish and farmers' markets. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Filming locations include: Iceland; Norway (Romsdalshorn, Lynsuset, Lapps, Trondheim, Åndalsnes, Merok, Stolkjarres, Svartisen, Oye, Stalheim, Bergen, Oslo, Visby); Finland (Helsingfors/Helsinki); Russia (Leningrad); Sweden (Stockholm); Denmark

(Copenhagen); Germany (Berlin); Czech Republic (Prague, Frenstadt); and Austria (Salzburg).

- Item 2017.5.5-1 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: North Cape Cruise], 1933
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)
- #1. Iceland, Norway. #1. North Cape 1933.
 - #2. Norway: Romsdalshorn, Lynsenset, Lapps, Trondheim, Aadelnaes [Åndalsnes?], Merok, Stolkjarres, Svartisen. #2. North Cape Cruise 1933.
- Item 2017.5.5-2 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: North Cape Cruise], 1933
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)
- #3. Merok to Oye, Stalheim to Bergen, King Haalsonn Haakinson (1263), Hanseatic City at Fauloft Church Stav (13th century)
 - #4. Eckhart. Oslo - Visby - Finland - Russia. Helsingfors, Leningrad.
- Item 2017.5.5-3 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: North Cape Cruise], 1933
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)
- #5. Stockholm
 - #6. Copenhagen, Berlin, Prague, Frenstadt, Salzburg.
- Item 2017.5.5-4 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: North Cape Cruise], 1933
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 650 feet; 16mm)
- Berlin #SS Bremen
 - (9?) Norway: Dance, reindeer, etc.

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise], 1936

Film footage is from a cruise to the Caribbean, South America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific from January 9 to May 9, 1936. Activities depicted include cruise ship life and beaches; landscapes and harbors; monumental buildings and ruins, including interior shots; and brief shots of local people on streets, at leisure, and at work. Film footage is largely touristic: historic sites and monuments, crowded street scenes in port cities, and companions at leisure in restaurants or on the cruise ship. Shots of locals tend to be either in city crowds or in performances, usually dances or concerts in traditional dress. Camera is curious about locals but rarely records more than brief, unstaged moments. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Filming locations as listed on film reels and in intertitles include: Trinidad (Port of Spain); Brazil (Bahia, Rio de Janeiro); St. Helena; South Africa (Cape Town, Kimberly, Pretoria, Durban); India (Bombay, Udaipur, Amber, Jaipur, Delhi, Agra and Taj Mahal); Indochina/Cambodia (Angkor); Ceylon/Sri Lanka (Kandy); Indonesia (Bali, Java); Philippines (Manila); Hong Kong; China (Beijing, Shanghai); Hawaii (Honolulu).

- Item 2017.5.7-1 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise], 1936
1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 400 feet; 16mm)
- World Cruise 1936 #1 Start: Trinidad, crossing equator, Kenilworth train, unedited
- Item 2017.5.7-2 [Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise], 1936

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 490 feet; 16mm)

- World Cruise January 1936 #2: Brazil: Bahia, Rio, St. Helena, Cape Town [South Africa] [sections of red tinted film]
- World Cruise 1936 #3: India. I Bombay, Udaipur; 4,5, Ceylon, Kandy, 190'. [sections of red tinted film]

Item 2017.5.7-3

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise], 1936

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 800 feet; 16mm)

- World Cruise 1936 #4: India II. Bombay, Udaipur (cont'd), Amber, Jaipur. [sections of red tinted film]
- World Cruise 1936 #5: India III: Delhi, Agra, Taj Mahal

Item 2017.5.7-4

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise], 1936

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 1,005 feet; 16mm)

- Cruise 1936 #7: Ceylon, Kandy, Devil Dancers, Elephants, Monkeys.
- #10: Java II Bali 1936; #9: Java II Bali.
- World Cruise 1936 #14: South Africa, Manila, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Honolulu. Kimberly, Pretoria, Durban.

Item 2017.5.7-5

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: World Cruise], 1936

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 355 feet; 16mm)

- World Cruise 1936 #8: Indo-China, Angkor, Temples, Palaces; #6 Angkor II.

Item 2017.5.6

[Percy B. Eckhart Travel Footage: Europe], 1949-1950

1 Film reel (original silent Kodachrome; 750 feet; 16mm)

Film footage of a cruise to Western Europe. Mostly touristic film footage of cruise ship life, landscapes and harbors, and monumental buildings and ruins. Sequences of interest include speeches and protests in London and film footage of the 1950 Tour de France in Paris. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Filming locations include: United Kingdom (London), the Netherlands, Switzerland (Alps), Italy (including Venice), and France (Paris and the South of France, including Cannes).

- Europe, Summer 1949 (Kodachrome)
- (Unidentified)

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Series 2: Home Movies, 1925-1932, 1947

3 Film reels (1,850 feet; 16mm)

The film footage in this series includes home movies shot in Lyme, Connecticut; Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Charlevoix, Michigan. The film footage includes shots of people engaging in various recreational pursuits.

[Percy B. Eckhart Home Movies], 1925-1932

Film footage is home movies of an affluent family. Film footage is largely of two young brothers, shot mostly at generic suburban and country homes. Film footage of older members of family is brief but includes a man painting en plein air in the woods. Bulleted information is transcribed from film reels and/or cans. Filming locations include: Lyme, Connecticut, and Cambridge, Massachusetts. Film footage includes potentially recognizable shots of city skyscrapers from a ship and a rocky New England coastline and harbor.

Item 2017.5.8-1

[Percy B. Eckhart Home Movies], 1925-1929

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 1,000 feet; 16mm)

- Dec 25, 1925 / Aug 1926 Don, Jr., Christening at 206; 1926 Don Jr. at home in Cambridge, MA
- Don, Jr., Kenilworth - Sept 1927, Cambridge, MA - Feb 1928
- 1928 Don Jr., Kenilworth w/ his grandparents & mother
- September 23-28, 1929 - Lyme, Connecticut - Irvines

Item 2017.5.8-2

[Percy B. Eckhart Home Movies], 1931-1932

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 550 feet; 16mm)

- Don Jr and Charles at [Ymouth?], November 1, 1931
- Cambridge, Mass. Don and Chas Nov. 1, 1931, also April 10, 1932

Item 2017.5.9

[Percy B. Eckhart Home Movies], 1947

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 300 feet; 16mm)

Film footage is home movies filmed in Charlevoix, Michigan. Vacation by a lake and in woods: people lunching, chatting, strolling outdoors, bathing cabins, and golf.

- Charlevoix 1947

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Series 3: Miscellaneous Film Footage, 1937, 1954

2 Film reels (750 feet; 16mm)

The film footage in this series includes outtakes and tests from a fiction film and Eugene Castle's short subject film, "Hindenberg Explodes!"

Item 2017.5.10

[Percy B. Eckhart Miscellaneous Film Footage], 1954

1 Film reel (original black-and-white silent reversal; 550 feet; 16mm)

Film footage is outtakes and tests from a fiction film; clapper indicates a professional film, or at least a serious amateur undertaking. Two main subjects are a bearded man reading a book by a fire with a group of solemn men, and a young man smiling at and walking up to the camera. Some shots of Los Angeles streets.

- Barry & Bradley 327
- (Unidentified)

Item 2017.5.11

Hindenburg Explodes!, 1937

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent print; 200 feet; 16mm)

Head title reads: "HINDENBURG EXPLODES!" "A Pathegrams Release edited by Eugene W. Castle," copyright 1937. Content is famous newsreel footage of the German zeppelin that exploded on landing at Lakehurst, New Jersey. Film is silent with intertitles.

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