

Archives & Manuscript Collections
National Sporting Library
Middleburg, VA

Wesley Dennis Scrapbooks

Name: **John Wesley Dennis** **MC0059**

Materials: Scrapbooks, photo albums

Dates: 1948-1966

Volume: 2 cubic feet

Donation: Sue Dennis, 2005

Usage: Unless otherwise stated by NSL staff, these records are open for research without restrictions.

Biographical Note

Wesley Dennis (1903-1966) was born in Falmouth, Massachusetts and grew up on a farm on Cape Cod. He and his older brother Morgan both learned to draw specializing in farm animals, with Wesley finding a preference for depicting horses.

Dennis dropped out of school at age 17 and worked for a time for a newspaper in Boston. He found work as an illustrator and began drawing sketches of racehorses in the hopes of finding commission work. He traveled to France to study with artist Lowes Dalbiac Luard, an expert on horse anatomy.

In 1941, Dennis published his first book, "Flip," a story about a pony's desire to jump the brook. That year he and his wife, Dorothy, moved to Warrenton, Virginia.

Dennis' brilliance lay in his ability to accurately capture horses, dogs and people in moments of expression and motion. It was the quality of his work in "Flip" that caught the eye of author Marguerite Henry when she was searching for the right illustrator for her first book, "Justin Morgan Had a Horse." The collaboration of Henry and Dennis on "Misty of Chincoteague" (1947) was so successful that it was named to the New York Times list of the Top 100 Children's Classics of the 20th Century. Dennis and Henry would go on to collaborate on fifteen books over twenty years.

Dennis died in 1966 at his summer residence in Falmouth.

Collection Description

The Wesley Dennis Scrapbooks collection is comprised of five scrapbooks and a photograph album belonging to Dennis.

Series and Subseries

- I. Scrapbooks** **5 scrapbooks, 1 album**
 Scrapbooks and photographs belonging to Dennis. Materials include printed samples of Dennis' paintings and illustrations, and clippings of articles about Dennis. Also included is an undated photo album of Dennis and family.

Container List MC0059

I. Scrapbooks

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
L76	--	Scrapbook: Cards 1	undated
L76	--	Scrapbook: Cards 2	undated
L76	--	Scrapbook: Clippings of Illustrations	undated
L76	--	Scrapbook: Clippings of Articles	undated
L77	--	Folio Scrapbook: Illustrations	undated
L77	--	Photograph Album	undated
J56	20	Dennis Obituary	1966
J56	21	Book Reviews	1948-1965
J56	22	Loose Scrapbook Pages	undated

This collection was processed by John Connolly, October 2016.