

Edwin C. Sinks

Written by Sue Cummings

Leland Sinks, Edwin's great-nephew, and Bura Elizabeth Sinks Whitt, Edwin's niece, were both descended from Edwin's brother, Walter Herr Sinks. These two individuals shared the personal collections that contain original family photos, family correspondence, and genealogy records.

The information below came from letters and papers that were generously shared with the Historical Society.

Edwin's job as music instructor at the High School (1914-1916) did not pay much. It may have been part-time since several letters mention a winter contract. His job entailed travel throughout the township schools. He put on cantatas, and other musical programs. He himself played the piano and slide trombone and was especially excited when he obtained his own piano. He took some summer courses at Northwestern University in Chicago in 1915 and 1916.

Edwin's photography career was more far-reaching than at first, we supposed. Mention is made of his traveling to Springfield and New Lebanon, Ohio to take different family reunion photos. He also wrote to Walter telling him that he signed up again (first time in 1911) to be the photographer at Chautauqua (1914). He said he had rented a tent that worked out very well as his developing studio.

Note: the Society has copies of several of the photo postcards he took of local residents attending Chautauqua, including the Razor girls and Berry boys. He also took photos of unidentified young men playing tennis at the camp and overall views of the tests along the river. He said he did very well selling his photos, but that it was hard work. Edwin also took photo postcards of a large Brethren in Christ revival meeting held near Englewood.

Edwin was caught in Dayton during the 1913 Flood. He told Walter about Jacob Hoover's and Jesse West's attempt to rescue residents of Little York, Ohio after the flood. Our collection of nine flood postcards, showing the devastation at Little York, Ohio, is almost certainly the work of Sinks.

In one letter from 1916, Walter asks Edwin how the two Razor sisters are, and says, he understands, that Edwin has a certain Razor on his mind! This confirms our suspicions that Edwin was smitten with one of the two unmarried Razor girls, probably either Anna or Lily.

Edwin endured poor health all his adult life, and by September 1916, was taking serum treatments for his lung problems. In the months before his death in November 1917 at age forty, Edwin was an invalid. Walter and Elizabeth were on their way back to Ohio from China when Edwin died.