ARRAGON PAPERS
REGINALD FRANCIS ARRAGON PAPERS

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Date: July 28, 2005 and August, 2011

Biography

Reginald Francis (‘Rex’) Arragon was born on July 30, 1891, in Chicago Illinois. His parents, Mary Kendall Simons and Alexander Lloyd Arragon, were second-generation Americans—his mother’s father was English and his father’s father was Scottish. The family was raised in the Methodist church.

R.F. Arragon graduated with a B.A. from Northwestern University in 1913 and received an M.A. from the same institution in 1914. He went on to get his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1923. Awarded an honorary LL.D. by Reed College in 1962, he received an L.H.D. from St. Mary’s College of Maryland in 1976.

Rex Arragon married Gertrude Tower Nichols on June 19, 1919. They had two daughters: Margaret Arragon Labadie (Reed ’43) and Mary Arragon Spaeth (Reed ’53).

Arragon was an instructor and tutor in history at Harvard University from 1920-23; The Richard Scholz Professor of History at Reed College from 1923-62; then an Emeritus professor at Reed until his death. During his long tenure at Reed, he inspired and motivated many generations of students, and became friends with a good number, including students Mary Barnard and Dorothy Johansen. Credited with the development of the Humanities program at Reed, he became an expert in curriculum-building and a consultant to many other programs around the country. Arragon was a visiting professor at Haverford, 1952-53, a Fulbright lecturer, American Studies, Universities of Lille and Rennes (France), 1957-58, a National Representative, Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Foundation, 1962-1965; Field Staff, Rockefeller Foundation, and visiting professor of humanities, University of the Philippines, 1965-67.
Arragon belonged to various civic and cultural organizations including the Social Science Research Council (1953-57), the American Council of Learned Societies, (1962-64), Trustee & Chairman of the Portland Art Association (1942-49; 1950-56), Founder and Chairman of the Portland Friends of Chamber Music (1938-62), Board Member, Portland Junior Symphony, (1951-57, 1959-62).

He was a member: Phi Beta Kappa, American Historical Association; and the American Association of University Professors.

Rex Arragon died on November 7, 1986

Scope and Content

The Arragon papers contain his research, both notes, reports, and ephemeral publications, dealing with curricular development in American universities across the country collected during his research travels. Also included is his correspondence, his work on various external committees and at conferences, and his Reed papers including notes, some lectures, syllabi, reports, minutes, and ephemera.

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