

## Return of the Mayo Brothers' Portrait to Galter Library

This article was featured in [Library Notes #56](#) (September 2009).

By: Ron Sims, Special Collections Librarian

The portrait of William James Mayo (ScD 1929) and Charles Horace Mayo (MD 1888, MA 1904, LLD 1921) has been returned from the restoration and conservation studio, [Parma Conservation](#). Located on the near South Side of Chicago, Parma specializes in oversized art works, such as murals and frescoes. The Mayo Brothers' portrait is 86" x 70" and certainly qualifies as oversized.



The conservation process included cleaning, patching and in-painting, flattening the canvas, re-backing and mounting a new, reinforced stretcher.

The artist, Gerald Cassidy, was born in Covington, Kentucky in 1879, and grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. He studied at the Mechanic Institute in Cincinnati and with Frank Duveneck at the Cincinnati Art Academy and in New York at the National Academy of Design and Art Students League. He was also employed as an art director for a

lithography firm while in New York City.

At age 20 he was diagnosed with tuberculosis and traveled to a sanitarium in New Mexico. This move introduced him to life in the American Southwest. He earned his living by painting portraits of Native Americans and scenes of the Southwest that were intended to be reproduced on postcards. He moved to Denver when his health improved, establishing his reputation as a lithographer for magazine illustrations, murals, and advertisements.

He married the sculptor and writer Ina Sizer Davis in 1912. Settling in Santa Fe, Cassidy began a commission from the School of American Archaeology to document the culture of Pueblo Native Americans. Ina and Gerald are recognized as "founders" of the Santa Fe Art Colony. At this time, he changed his signature from Gerald Ira Diamond Cassidy to Gerald Cassidy, placing the Tewa Indian sun symbol (symbol of circle with four lines) between his first and last name.

He also painted many landscapes and large historic murals for commercial buildings. At the Panama-California International Exposition, San Diego, California in 1915, he was awarded the Grand Prize and Gold Medal for his murals in the Indian Arts Building. In the January 21-28, 1928 issue of the Colony's publication, *El Palacio*, the editor notes that "[h]is excellence as a portrait painter brought him many commissions ... his portrait of the Mayo brothers of Rochester, Minn., has been widely exhibited, reproduced and praised."

In 1934, Cassidy's untimely death from lead poisoning while working on a mural for the Federal Building in Santa Fe ended his promising career. His work is represented in national and international museums including the Freer Collection,

Washington, D.C., Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, N.M., San Diego Museum, San Diego, Calif., City Art Museum, Berlin, Germany, and Luxembourg Palace and the Louvre, Paris.

Cassidy was contacted by the Mayo Brothers in 1923 as they were collecting American art for display in their clinic. As a result of their meeting, a portrait was commissioned by 1925. The photographic files at the Mayo Clinic show evidence of the brothers photographed in various poses. The portrait was presented to Northwestern University in 1929, partially in gratitude for an honorary degree of Doctor of Science bestowed to Dr. William Mayo in 1929\* and in honor of Dr. Charlie Mayo's Alma Mater (Northwestern University), MD Class of 1888 and MA 1904. Dr. Charlie was awarded an honorary LLD in 1921. For many years there was an annual lectureship in surgery in his name at the medical school. He was recipient of the Alumni Merit Award in 1934 and was a trustee of the University.

The portrait was formally dedicated in 1930 and was displayed in the Archibald Church Library at Northwestern University Medical School. The restored portrait can be seen in the Library Atrium outside the entrance to the Learning Resources Center on Level 1 of the library. (\*\*) The restoration is just one of the Library's contributions to the events for the medical school's sesquicentennial celebration.

*\*Special thanks are extended to the American College of Surgeons Archives for the image of Drs. William Mayo, Franklin Martin (MD, 1880, Founder of the American College of Surgeons) and Dean Irving Cutter (1929).*

\*\* 2016 note: This portrait is no longer located in the Galter Health Sciences Library & now hangs in the Feinberg School of Medicine's Baldwin Auditorium.



**Dr. Will Mayo with his new doctoral degree,  
Dr. Franklin Martin and Dr. Irving Cutter.  
1929 University Commencement  
American College of Surgeons**

---

Printed: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:50 AM

Source: <https://galter.northwestern.edu/news/return-of-the-mayo-brothers-portrait-to-galter.pdf>