

R. P. Gossop, commercial artist and agent: papers, 1890 - 1992

Introduction and summary description

Creator: R. P. Gossop
Reference: AAD/1998/15
Extent: 74 files

Context

Robert Percy Gossop (1876 - 1951) was apprenticed in 1892 as a wallpaper and fabric designer in London. Whilst undertaking his apprenticeship he attended art classes at colleges including Birkbeck College and Hammersmith School of Art. From 1896 to 1902 he worked as a designer and freelance illustrator. In 1902 he married Jessie Dora Meech, with whom he had a daughter, Sylvia Mary Bronson (later Bronson Sherwood) in 1907. From 1902 until 1904 he worked as studio manager for the printers Eyre and Spottiswood and from 1904 in the same capacity for W. H. Smith. At W. H. Smith he worked with a number of significant artists, including Henry Ospovat, and designed Smith's famous lozenge shaped logo. In 1913, following a visit to America, Gossop became the first art editor for *British Vogue*. In 1914 he became art adviser to Dobson Molle and Co., an Edinburgh firm of printers. From 1916 until the end of the First World War he worked at the Ministry of Information, helping with the distribution of propaganda. At the end of the war he became joint manager at Carlton Studio.

In 1923, partly to help his friend Edmund J. Sullivan, Gossop set up his own firm of artists' agents, R.P. Gossop Ltd. His clients included Hanslip Fletcher and Eric Fraser. At the same time he continued to work as a freelance designer and illustrator, with commissions including designs for the Empire Marketing Board, Heal & Son Ltd and London Transport. In 1926 he co-founded the Society of Industrial Artists with Milner Gray. He also served on the Council of the Design and Industries Association. In 1937 he delivered the Dent Memorial Lecture, on book illustration, and from 1938 worked as a lecturer at the City of London College. His daughter joined him as office manager for R.P. Gossop Ltd in 1925 and after his death in 1951 she continued to run the business.

Scope and content

Album of press cuttings (1890 - 1951); drawings (1892 - 1944); sketchbooks (1895 - 1930); albums of greeting cards by R.P. Gossop, his clients and his associates (1895 - 1952); albums of proofs for Geo. Newnes (1896 - 1902); medals (1897 - ca. 1937); wallpaper designs (ca. 1898); portfolio including articles, correspondence, graphic designs, illustrations and lecture papers (1898 - 1950); papers relating to Jessie Gossop (ca. 1899 - ca. 1912); commercial drawings, illustrations, photographs, press cuttings and publications containing work by clients and associates including Hanslip Fletcher, Ambrose Heal, Henry Ospovat and E. J. Sullivan (ca. 1899 - 1940); cards designed by R.P. Gossop, his clients and his associates (1899 - 1992);

correspondence with R.P. Gossop and Bronson Sherwood (1905 - 1990); diary (ca. 1907 - 1945); press cuttings (1910 - 1992); photographs (ca. 1911 - ca. 1945); publications including R.P. Gossop illustrations (1912 - 1949); photograph albums (1914 - 1929); posters including commissions for Heal & Son Ltd and London Transport (ca. 1923 - 1937); cashbook (1923 - 1936); bookplate designs (undated).

Arrangement

These archives have been organized into the following sub-fonds: R. P. Gossop personal papers; R. P. Gossop commercial papers; R. P. Gossop research papers; Bronson Sherwood's R. P. Gossop papers; R. P. Gossop's associates' papers; Jessie Gossop's papers.

Provenance

Bequest of Bronson Sherwood, 1998.

Access

This archive is available for consultation in the V&A Archive and Library Study Room, which is located at Blythe House, 23 Blythe Road, Olympia, London, W14 0QX. The Study Room is open Tuesday to Friday between 10.00 am and 4.30 pm, by appointment only. To request an appointment please email archive@vam.ac.uk or telephone 020 7603 7493. Access to some files may be restricted; these are identified individually with the catalogue.

Related Material

Archive and manuscript sources

See also at the AAD: Heal and Son Holdings plc, bedding and furniture manufacturer and retailer, posters (AAD/1986/1). R.P. Gossop undertook commissions for Heal & Son Ltd.

Selected publications

Gossop., R.P. *Advertisement design*. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd, 1937. xxxiii, 253 p. ill.

Gossop, R.P. *Book illustration: a review of the art as it is today - the 7th Dent Memorial Lecture delivered at the London School of Printing on 1st October 1937*. London: J.M. Dent, 1937. 45 p.

Detailed catalogue

R. P. Gossop personal papers, 1890-1944

Reference: Gossop-1

See also Bronson Sherwood's R. P. Gossop papers

R. P. Gossop diary, ca. 1907 - 1945

Reference: Gossop-1-1

Extent: 1 file

Diary of events of R. P. Gossop's life, 1876-1945, partially retrospective.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/1	'Pattern' - the Tale of a Maker, Buyer and Seller of Drawings 1 volume	ca. 1907 - 1945

Photograph albums, 1914-1929

Reference: Gossop-1-2

Extent: 2 files

Albums of personal photographs compiled by R. P. Gossop.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/2	Cranford, Letchworth 1914 1 volume (with 4 inserts) Album of photographs of and from 'Cranford', R. P. Gossop's home in Letchworth. Including photographs annotated by Bronson Sherwood. Includes photograph of R. P. Gossop as the 'Spirit of the Place', in a 1910 play, Letchworth.	ca. 1910 - 1914
AAD/1998/15/3	Cornwall 1929 1 volume Album of photographs from Cornwall, including Onslow [Whiting].	Pre 5 Dec 1929

Portraits, 1900-1917

Reference: Gossop-1-3

Extent: 2 files

Portraits of R. P. Gossop.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/4	R. P. Gossop 1900 by Ben Clemens Single drawing. Red chalk portrait, profile.	1900
AAD/1998/15/5	R. P. Gossop on the roof of Wellington House, Ministry of Information Mounted photograph.	1917

Press cuttings, 1890-1951

Reference: Gossop-1-4

Extent: 1 file

Album of press cuttings compiled by R. P. Gossop, with the addition of his own obituary. Includes later inserts of loose photographs, reprints, photocopies and greetings card. The file relates to R. P. Gossop's own work, that of his clients, and areas of personal interest.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/6	Press cuttings 1 volume (with 16 inserts)	1890-1951

Hampstead Garden Suburb publication, 1937

Reference: Gossop-1-5

Extent: 1 file

Publication by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Ltd. (with which R. P. Gossop was involved).

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/7	The Hampstead Garden Suburb - its achievements and significance 1 volume	1937

Medal, 1897

Reference: Gossop-1-6

Extent: 1 file

Bronze medal awarded to R. P. Gossop by the Science and Art Department for 'national success in art'.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/8	Science and Art medal Bronze medal in case.	1897

Original drawings, 1892-1944

Reference: Gossop-1-7

Extent: 3 files

Original drawings and watercolours by R. P. Gossop.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/9	Pencil sketches 1 folder (5 items) Loose pencil landscapes.	1941-1944
AAD/1998/15/10	6 South Kensington drawings and other flower studies 1 folder (21 items) Flower studies in pencil and tint.	1892-1904
AAD/1998/15/11	R. P. Gossop drawings 1 folder (18 items) Pencil sketches, paintings, and mockups for cards and bookplates.	ca. 1895 - ca. 1912

Original bookplate design, Undated

Reference: Gossop-1-8

Extent: 1 file

Original drawing for R. P. Gossop's bookplate, by Garth Jones.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/47	Original bookplate design 1 drawing	Undated

R. P. Gossop commercial papers, 1895-1949

Reference: Gossop-2

Extent: 35 files

See also Bronson Sherwood's R. P. Gossop papers

Sketch books, 1895-1930

Reference: Gossop-2-1

Extent: 6 files

Sketch books of R. P. Gossop containing pencil studies, including some preliminary to commercial work.

Reference	Description	Dates

AAD/1998/15/12	Sketchbook no. 1 1 volume Including a few notes.	1896-1897
AAD/1998/15/13	Sketchbook no.2 1 volume Pencil flower studies.	2 Sept 1895 - 1896
AAD/1998/15/14	Sketchbook no.3 1 volume Pencil studies, mostly flowers.	1896-1897
AAD/1998/15/15	Sketchbook 1 volume	ca. 1902 - ca. 1904
AAD/1998/15/16	Sketchbook no.5 1 volume (with 9 inserts) Contains sketches for The Cock, The Mouse and the Little Red Hen; see AAD/1998/15/74.	ca. 1900 - ca. 1905
AAD/1998/15/17	Sketchbook 1 volume	1925-1930

Pattern designs, ca. 1898

Reference: Gossop-2-2

Extent: 1 file

Painted designs by R. P. Gossop, for wallpaper, and one griffin design.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/18	Pattern designs 1 roll (14 items)	ca. 1898

Albums of proofs of work done for Geo. Newnes, 1896-1902

Reference: Gossop-2-3

Extent: 2 files

Including illustrations and decorations for the *Sunday Strand* magazine.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/19	First album of proofs for Geo. Newnes 1 volume	1896-1902
AAD/1998/15/20	Album 2 of proofs for Geo. Newnes 1 volume Contains some work other than that done for George Newnes.	1899-1902

Posters by R. P. Gossop, 1923-1937

Reference: Gossop-2-4

Extent: 19 files

Advertisement posters.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/21	Tod the Tailor 1 poster Advertising a play in Hampstead Garden Suburb.	1937
AAD/1998/15/22	Stone of Destiny 1 poster Advertising a play in Hampstead Garden Suburb.	1937
AAD/1998/15/23	The Garden City Pantomime 1 poster Advertising a play [in Letchworth?].	Undated
AAD/1998/15/24	The Garden City Pantomime 1 poster Advertising a play in Letchworth.	Undated
AAD/1998/15/25	The Red Beetle 1 poster Anti-Communist propaganda.	1926
AAD/1998/15/26	Welwyn Gardener 1 poster Advertising Welwyn Garden City.	Undated
AAD/1998/15/27	Welwyn Garden City 1 poster Advertising Welwyn Garden City.	1926
AAD/1998/15/28	Cricket 1 poster Advertising cricket matches at Lord's and The Oval, for London Underground.	1926
AAD/1998/15/29	Football - How to Get There 1 poster With blank spaces for details of football matches, for London Underground.	1926
AAD/1998/15/30	Guide to London 1 poster Advertising London Town and Country guidebook.	1929
AAD/1998/15/31	Your Guide to Winter Shopping 1 poster Winter shopping map, for London Underground.	1928
AAD/1998/15/32	Winter Sales - Where to Shop 1 poster For London Underground.	1926
AAD/1998/15/33	KLG plugs 1 poster Advertising KLG sparking plugs.	1924

AAD/1998/15/34	Theatreland 1 poster Guide to Theatreland by Underground.	1928
AAD/1998/15/35	Theatreland 1 poster The Way to Theatreland by [Underground] - part missing.	1927
AAD/1998/15/36	Theatreland 1 poster 'Your Guide to Theatreland, travel Underground'.	1926
AAD/1998/15/37	Heal's furniture 1 poster Advertising Heal and Sons Ltd.	1927
AAD/1998/15/38	At the Sign of the Four Poster 1 poster Advertising Heal and Sons Ltd.	1928
AAD/1998/15/39	Lee on the Solent 1 poster Advertising Lee on the Solent.	1923

Medals, ca. 1937

Reference: Gossop-2-5

Extent: 2 files

Designs (presumably by R. P. Gossop) for award medals.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/40	Sunday Times Literary Gold Medal 1 blank of medal, in case	1937
AAD/1998/15/41	National Art Collections Award stamp 1 cast of medal/stamp Unknown provenance.	Undated

Original drawings for reproductions, 1897-1946

Reference: Gossop-2-6

Extent: 2 files

Originals by R. P. Gossop for reprinting

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/42	The Conduit, Sherborne 1 drawing Reproduced in AAD/1998/15/19 (as a proof).	1897
AAD/1998/15/43	Bronson Sherwood bookplate 1 drawing Original design for private reproduction.	1946

Published work by R. P. Gossop, 1912-1949

Reference: Gossop-2-7

Extent: 3 files

Publications incorporating work by R. P. Gossop.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/44	Proof 1 volume Proof magazine no. 4, front cover designed by R. P. Gossop.	Feb 1916
AAD/1998/15/45	In the Press and Out Again 1 volume A souvenir of the Children's Welfare Exhibition, 1912-1913 (The St Catherine Press, London). Text by R. P. Gossop, illustrations by Charles Pears.	1912
AAD/1998/15/46	Boys and Girls Come Out to Draw! 1 volume Ernest Benn Ltd, London. Written and illustrated by R. P. Gossop. See AAD/1998/15/65 for manuscript draft.	1949

R. P. Gossop research papers, 1895-1952

Reference: Gossop-3

Extent: 2 files

Albums of artists' personal greetings cards, 1895-1952

Reference: Gossop-3-1

Extent: 2 files

Greetings cards, also invitations, programmes, and advertisements, sent to and from R. P. Gossop, designed by R. P. Gossop, his friends and his clients.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/48	Vol. 1 of greetings cards 1 volume (with 1 insert) Insert is offprint from The Penrose Annual, Vol. XL (1938): 'With Every Good Wish - a review of artists' personal greetings cards', by R. P. Gossop.	1895-1938
AAD/1998/15/49	Vol. 2 of greetings cards 1 volume (with 52 inserts) Inserts are further greetings cards including some added by Bronson Sherwood.	ca. 1923 - 1952

R. P. Gossop's associates' papers ca. 1899 - 1940,

Reference: Gossop-4

Extent: 14 files

R. P. Gossop Ltd papers, 1923-1937

Reference: Gossop-4-1

Extent: 2 files

Composite series.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/50	Cashbook 'Account No II' 1 volume Sales and commission details for R. P. Gossop's clients.	1923-1936
AAD/1998/15/51	List of Artists, R. P. Gossop Ltd 1 folder Published list of artists who were clients of R. P. Gossop Ltd.	1937

Ambrose Heal papers, ca. 1913 - ca. 1914

Reference: Gossop-4-2

Extent: 1 file

Silhouette print by K. W. Diefenbach: 'only survivor of a frieze of these decorating bedroom designed and furnished by Ambrose Heal at 8 Melina Place, St John's Wood. 1913/14' (Bronson Sherwood's label).

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/52	Silhouette 1 print	ca. 1913 - 1914

E. J. Sullivan papers, ca. 1899 - ca. 1930

Reference: Gossop-4-3

Extent: 2 files

Original and printed works by E. J. Sullivan; R. P. Gossop was his agent from 1923.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/53	E. J. Sullivan works 1 folder (42 items)	ca. 1899 - ca. 1930
	'Reproductions of the works of EDMUND J. SULLIVAN RWS ARE. Note: The series of press advertisements for DEWARS was the first commission that R. P. Gossop received as an Agent when he had taken rooms in No. 2 Henrietta St WC2 in 1923 as a freelance artist. This led to other commissions for others of his artist friends' (Bronson Sherwood's label, initialled SMBG).	
AAD/1998/15/72	The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde/Prince Otto 1 volume By Robert Louis Stevenson with illustrations by E. J. Sullivan (MacMillan and Co. Ltd, London).	1928

Hanslip Fletcher, cuttings from Sunday Times, 1923-1940

Reference: Gossop-4-4

Extent: 1 file

Drawings, mostly architectural, by Hanslip Fletcher for the Sunday Times: cuttings of newspaper prints. Fletcher may have been a client of R. P. Gossop Ltd. Most are of London; Paris, Norfolk, Battle Abbey, Oxford, Cambridge, Portsmouth, Hampton Court, Surrey, Edinburgh, Lincoln, Sherborne, Windsor and Brighton are also pictured.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/54	Hanslip Fletcher cuttings from Sunday Times 1 folder (135 items)	1923-1940

The Four Seasons, Undated

Reference: Gossop-4-5

Extent: 1 file

Coloured prints of the four seasons as women, by an unknown artist, perhaps a client of R. P. Gossop Ltd.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/55	The Four Seasons 1 folder	Undated

Henry Ospovat papers, ca. 1902 - 1911

Reference: Gossop-4-6

Extent: 5 files

Work by Henry Ospovat, 1877-1909, colleague of R. P. Gossop at W H Smith. 'Original drawings, etchings, reproductions and photographic slides of the work of HENRY OSPOVAT 1877-1909. Designer for printing and illustrator - friend and colleague of R. P. Gossop at W H Smith's studio from 1905 until his death in 1909 at the age of 31' (Bronson Sherwood's label).

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/56	Henry Ospovat work 1 folder (9 items) Reproductions of Ospovat's work.	ca. 1902 - ca. 1909
AAD/1998/15/75	Henry Ospovat work 1 folder (8 items) Ospovat originals.	ca. 1902 - 1909
AAD/1998/15/76	Henry Ospovat work 1 folder (38 items) Originals, reproductions, slides of Ospovat's work, and the catalogue of a retrospective exhibition.	ca. 1902 - 1911
AAD/1998/15/57	Ospovat slides 1 box (22 items) Glass slides of Ospovat's work (numbered by R. P. Gossop).	ca. 1900 - ca. 1909
AAD/1998/15/73	Men and Women 1 volume By Robert Browning with illustrations by R. P. Gossop's associate Henry Ospovat (Miranda's Library series, J. M. Dent and Co., London).	1903

Goudy papers, 1920

Reference: Gossop-4-7

Extent: 1 file

Frederic and Bertha Goudy were associates of R. P. Gossop. Two trial pages of Lord Berner's translation of Froissart, with William Morris decoration, were printed in 1897; facsimile copies were printed for the Goudys.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/63	Facsimile trial pages of Lord Berner's Froissart 2 pages folded together	1920

Tony Sarg: The Cock, The Mouse and the Little Red Hen, 1907

Reference: Gossop-4-8

Extent: 1 file

Book written by Felicite Lefevre and illustrated by Tony Sarg using originals by R. P. Gossop (E. Grant Richards, London). Inserts of R. P. Gossop's original paintings. See AAD/1998/15/16.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/74	The Cock, The Mouse and The Little Red Hen 1 volume (with 4 inserts)	1907

Jessie Gossop's (nee Meech) papers, 1899-1982

Reference: Gossop-5

Extent: 5 files

Jessie Meech original works, ca. 1899 - ca. 1903

Reference: Gossop-5-1

Extent: 2 files

Original sketches, designs, embroidery.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/58	Jessie Meech works 1 folder (10 items)	ca. 1899 - ca. 1903
	Designs for book covers, design sketches, reference material.	
AAD/1998/15/59	Jessie Meech embroidery 1 mounted item Embroidered design.	Undated

Jessie Gossop envelopes, 1901-1982

Reference: Gossop-5-2

Extent: 1 file

Painted envelopes addressed to May Venables, with covering letter from Vyvien Newton to Bronson Sherwood. Envelopes postmarked 1901-1903. Letter dated 1982.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/60	Jessie Gossop envelopes 1 folder (5 items)	1901-1982

Highbury High School Magazine, June 1899

Reference: Gossop-5-3

Extent: 1 file

Jessie Meech's old school magazine, with her cover design.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/61	Highbury High School Magazine 1 volume	June 1899

Jessie Gossop - play script, 1912

Reference: Gossop-5-4

Extent: 1 file

Mr Sampson - A Play in One Act (J. M. Dent and Sons, London), in which Jessie Gossop took part.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/62	Mr Sampson - A Play in One Act 1 volume	1912

Bronson Sherwood's R. P. Gossop papers, 1898-1992

Reference: Gossop-6

Extent: 9 files

Bronson Sherwood collection of R. P. Gossop papers, 1898 - ca. 1987

Reference: Gossop-6-1

Extent: 4 files

'Reproduced work, articles, photographic portraits of R. P. Gossop - AWG script for talk, obit. notices, Hampstead G. Suburb, first drawing in 'Captain'. (Bronson Sherwood's label) Collection of reference material, R. P. Gossop's work, photographs etc put together by Bronson Sherwood. See also commercial papers and personal papers.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/64	R. P. Gossop commercial work 1 folder (27 items)	ca. 1903 - ca. 1932
	Etching for illustration, postcard, programmes, posters (and reproductions of posters), magazine.	
AAD/1998/15/65	R. P. Gossop written work 1 folder (10 items)	1898-1950
	Ms and sketches of illustrations for book (Boys and Girls come out to draw; at this stage Dear David; see AAD/1998/15/46), printed articles and letters, text of talks.	

AAD/1998/15/66	Portraits 1 folder (11 items)	ca. 1911 - ca. 1945
	Photographic portraits of R. P. Gossop, reprint of 'futurist' portrait by W H Smith colleagues, photograph of woman (Jessie?), pictures of Onslow Whiting's bust of R. P. Gossop.	
AAD/1998/15/67	Articles on R. P. Gossop 1 folder (15 items)	1910 - ca. 1987
	Printed articles about R. P. Gossop, including obituaries.	

R. P. Gossop papers collected by Bronson Sherwood, 1905-1990

Reference: Gossop-6-2

Extent: 1 file

Correspondence (R. P. Gossop and Bronson Sherwood), photocopy portrait, R. P. Gossop's notes, biographical timeline, W H Smith exhibition booklet, card designed by R. P. Gossop.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/68	R. P. Gossop papers collected by Bronson Sherwood, 1 folder (22 items)	1909-1990

The Times special report on W H Smith, 24 Jan 1992

Reference: Gossop-6-3

Extent: 1 file

Special W H Smith bicentenary report.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/69	<i>The Times</i> special W H Smith bicentenary report 1 newspaper	24 Jan 1992

Cards collected by Bronson Sherwood, 1899-1992

Reference: Gossop-6-4

Extent: 2 files

Cards designed by R. P. Gossop, his clients and his associates.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/70	Cards designed by R. P. Gossop 1 folder (16 items) Cards, and envelope addressed to Bronson Sherwood (with her note on reverse).	1899-1936
AAD/1998/15/71	Cards designed by R. P. Gossop's and Bronson Sherwood's clients and associates 1 folder (49 items) Christmas cards by G. Byfield, C. W. Bacon, Eric Fraser, J. S. Goodall, Elizabeth Haines, C. Walter Hodges, Norman C. Jaques, Edward Ripley, Maurice Wilson. Some written to Bronson Sherwood.	1960 - 1992

Sonnet, Undated**Reference:** Gossop-6-5**Extent:** 1 file

Printed sonnet (in French) by C. Plantin, no apparent connection with R. P. Gossop, inserted into archive by Bronson Sherwood? (Possible connection in the typescript or the printing.) Stamped 'Museum Plantin Moretus'.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/1998/15/77	Sonnet 1 page	Undated
