



# Overbeck Sisters

*Cambridge City, Wayne County*

The Overbeck Sisters were four women potters who worked in Cambridge City, Indiana, from 1911 until 1955. They were Margaret (July 3, 1863 – August 13, 1911), Hannah Borger (March 14, 1870 – August 28, 1931), Elizabeth Gray (October 21, 1875 – December 1, 1936), and Mary Frances (January 28, 1878 – March 20, 1955). Their sisters, Ida and Harriet, and brother, Charles, did not follow their sisters' artistic pursuits.

They were hardworking, sophisticated artists who worked as an ensemble to create some of the finest studio pottery to come out of Indiana. All but Elizabeth worked in other media, producing oil paintings, watercolors, pastels, and black-and-white drawings.

The oldest daughter, Margaret, studied at the Cincinnati Art Academy in 1892-93. After teaching in several locations, she proposed that the sisters establish a pottery studio in their home. In 1911, the year the studio was launched, she died. However, her sisters carried on the dream. They each took on specialties in their collaborative endeavor. Hannah and Mary Francis designed most of the pots. Elizabeth was the foremost potter, and experimented with glazes and clays.

Overbeck pottery is widely collected and can be found in several Museums around the country. The Indianapolis Museum of Art held an exhibition of Overbeck work in 2007. Significant collections of their work are found at the Richmond Art Museum and in the Cambridge City Public Library. The Midwest Museum of Art in Elkhart, Indiana, has a room devoted to Overbeck pottery. In addition, pieces can be found in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and other museums as well as in private collections.

For information about the Overbeck Sisters, go to:

<http://www.waynet.org/ency/artist/bio/overbeck-sisters.htm>.

For information about *Writing Her Story*, go to: <http://www.in.gov/icw/2440.htm>.

Photo: Go Wayne County (15 June 2011). *Cambridge City Prepares for Festivities Needs Reenactors*. Retrieved from: <http://www.gowaynecounty.com/blog/tag/overbeck-sisters/>.

  
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