

AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART ARCHIVES COLLECTION GUIDE

Collection Summary

Title:	Helen Post Papers
Date:	1938–1975, bulk 1940s
Creator(s):	Post, Helen (1907–1978)
Extent:	2.8 linear feet
Code:	HPP
Repository:	Amon Carter Museum of American Art Archives
Abstract:	The Helen Post Papers contains correspondence, typescripts, research notes and materials, newspaper articles, and photographs documenting her work with Native American groups and commercial assignments.

Information for Researchers

Access Restrictions

The collection is open to qualified researchers. A small portion of the papers are open to qualified researchers by special request only.

Use Restrictions

The Helen Post Papers are the physical property of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art. The Amon Carter Museum of American Art assumes no responsibility for infringement of literary property rights or copyrights or for liability to any person for defamation or invasion of privacy.

Preferred Citation

Helen Post Papers, [item identification], Amon Carter Museum of American Art Archives.

Related Collections in the Amon Carter Museum of American Art Archives

Helen Post Modley Documentary Photographs

Related Collections in the Amon Carter Museum of American Art

Approximately 3000 prints and negatives by Post are in the Photography Collection.

Contact the museum archivist at archivist@cartermuseum.org or 817.989.5077 for additional information.

Administrative Information

Acquisition and Custody Information

Gift of Peter Modley in 1985 and 2006

Processed By

Georgia A. Carey

Biographical Note

Helen Margaret Post (1907-1978), older sister of photographer Marion Post Wolcott, was born in Bloomfield, New Jersey. After graduating in 1932 from Alfred University, in upstate New York, with a degree in applied arts, Post taught school for a short while. By 1933 she went to Europe to study photography and apprenticed with noted Viennese photographer Trude Fleischmann, who taught Post composition and darkroom techniques.

Post returned to the United States and started a career as a freelance photographer. Her specialization was documenting educational institutions, but she also accepted other assignments. In 1937 Post married Rudolf Modley, an economist and management consultant. As a result of her desire to travel with Modley while he researched erosion and conservation techniques in the West, Post began photographing American Indians. From 1936 to 1941, she traveled throughout the West and Southwest documenting Sioux, Navajo, Apache, Hopi, and Pueblo Indians. Like her older contemporary Laura Gilpin, Post gained the trust and friendship of the Indians and thereby gained access to traditionally closed societies. The resulting images, mostly made with a 70 mm Roliflex, offer a realistic view of the Indians' daily activities. Post sold some of her photographs to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to use in various publications. Her images also were used as illustrations in *As Long as the Grass Shall Grow* by Oliver La Farge, *Brave-Against-the-Enemy* by Ann Clarke, and numerous magazine articles, and occasionally, were exhibited between 1940 and 1978. However, most of her collection of over 5,000 images of American Indians was never published or exhibited.

Post abandoned her photographic career to work assisting refugees fleeing Europe during World War II and later to raise her two children and to manage a country property. In the 1970s, she attempted to resume her career; she planned to visit the Indians she had photographed in the late 1930s and photograph them or their descendants, but she never followed through with the project.

Scope and Content Note

The Helen Post Papers (1938-1975) contains correspondence, newspaper articles, research notes written to identify people and places in her photographs, and material that Post collected on various

aspects of Native American life. The materials in the collection are arranged by subject. The correspondence is arranged in alphabetical order by the author's surname, then chronologically.

Among the highlights are the handwritten notes that Post made to identify the subjects of her photographs. Some descriptions include numbers for negatives, which are in the Amon Carter Museum of American Art photography collection.

Inventory

Series I. Native American Materials

Scope and Content Note: Post collected information regarding Native Americans. These materials document customs and rituals, the sizes and locations of reservations, and the health conditions of people living on the reservations. Typed manuscripts for *Brave-Against-the-Enemy* and for short stories by Eugene Wounded Horse are also included, as well as handwritten notes on individuals and tribes, newsletters, and newspaper clippings.

Subseries I. Handwritten Notes

Box 1, Folder 1: Notes — Cooperative Land Use

Box 1, Folder 2: Notes — Projects, Caption Material, Radio Transcript, Letters of Introduction, and Autobiographical Notes

Box 1, Folder 3: Notes — Various Subjects

Subseries II. Correspondence

Box 1, Folder 4: Correspondence, 1939–1979, n.d.

Subseries III. Descriptions for Photographic Materials

Box 1, Folder 5: Descriptive Materials for Photographs and Negatives [1]

Box 1, Folder 6: Descriptive Materials for Photographs and Negatives [2]

Box 1, Folder 7: Photographic Date Books

Subseries IV. Research Materials

Box 1, Folder 8: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Indian Handcrafts Book

Box 1, Folder 9: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Manuscript, *Brave-Against-the-Enemy* by Ann Clark [1]

Box 1, Folder 10: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Manuscript, *Brave-Against-the-Enemy* by Ann Clark [2]

Box 1, Folder 11: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Manuscripts, Eugene Wounded Horse

Box 1, Folder 12: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Map, Reservations, 1939

Box 1, Folder 13: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Newsletters, "Navajo People," study prints

Box 1, Folder 14: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Newsletters, "Arts and Crafts," study prints

Box 1, Folder 15: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Newspaper Clippings

Box 2, Folder 1: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — "New York Indians"

Box 2, Folder 2: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Notes from "Aschi, Nav" study prints

Box 2, Folder 3: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Notes, Chief Sitting Bull

Box 2, Folder 4: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Notes from Phoenix, Arizona, study prints

Box 2, Folder 5: Native Americans: Collection of Materials — Resume for Te Ata

Subseries V. Address Book

Box 2, Folder 6: Address Notebook

Subseries VI. Ephemera

Box 2, Folder 7: Ephemera

Series II. Professional Assignments

Scope and Content Note: Post's photographic work encompassed commercial commissions for portraiture and advertising in addition to her Indian subjects. These commissions are documented through negatives and prints.

Box 2, Folder 8: 69 Bank Street, Harriet Johnson Nursery School [1]

Box 2, Folder 9: 69 Bank Street, Harriet Johnson Nursery School [2]

Box 2, Folder 10: Adams, Lucy Wilcox

Box 2, Folder 11: Belknap

Box 2, Folder 12: Binns

Box 2, Folder 13: Birds

Box 2, Folder 15: Bischoff

Box 2, Folder 16: Bishop, E. H.

Box 2, Folder 17: Black Mountain College, North Carolina [1]

Box 2, Folder 18: Black Mountain College, North Carolina [2]

Box 2, Folder 19: Black Mountain College, North Carolina [3]

Box 2, Folder 20: Border Town Hotel, Nebraska

Box 2, Folder 21: Brazil [1]

Box 2, Folder 22: Brazil [2]

Box 3, Folder 1: Canfield

Box 3, Folder 2: Capacity

Box 3, Folder 3: Casey, Jack

Box 3, Folder 4: CIAA, Lincoln School

Box 3, Folder 5: Coal Miner Families

Box 3, Folder 6: Coast Guard — Staten Island

Box 3, Folder 7: Collier [1]

Box 3, Folder 8: Collier [2]

Box 3, Folder 9: Collier [3]

Box 3, Folder 10: Collier [4]

Box 3, Folder 11: Collier [5]

Box 3, Folder 12: Collier [6]

Box 3, Folder 13: Collier [7]

Box 3, Folder 14: Collier [8]

Box 3, Folder 15: Collier [9]

Box 4, Folder 1: Contact Sheets [1]

Box 4, Folder 2: Contact Sheets [2]

Box 4, Folder 3: Co-op Nursery, Western School, Rhineland

Box 4, Folder 4: Daniel, Francis, Gravedigger, Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Fonthill Ave, Baltimore, MD

Box 4, Folder 5: Dentist, Dr. Guise, Nebraska

Box 4, Folder 6: Dogs

Box 4, Folder 7: Downing

Box 4, Folder 8: Fitelson, Alliance

Box 4, Folder 9: Foster-Stonorov [1]

Box 4, Folder 10: Foster-Stonorov [2]

Box 4, Folder 11: French

Box 4, Folder 12: Gellhorn, Ellis, Walter, and Kitty

Box 4, Folder 13: GNP — Profits [1]

Box 4, Folder 14: GNP — Profits [2]

Box 4, Folder 15: GNP — Profits [3]

Box 4, Folder 16: GNP — Profits [4]

Box 5, Folder 1: Gössenberg

Box 5, Folder 2: Gout

Box 5, Folder 3: Haas

Box 5, Folder 4: Hessian Hills School

Box 5, Folder 5: Hoffman, Tante Emma, and Family [Empty]

Box 5, Folder 6: Holdahl

Box 5, Folder 7: Janeway

Box 5, Folder 8: Kallir, Dr. Otto [Empty]

Box 5, Folder 9: Lincoln School [1]

Box 5, Folder 10: Lincoln School [2]

Box 5, Folder 11: Lincoln School [3]

Box 5, Folder 12: Lincoln School [4]

Box 5, Folder 13: Lincoln School [5]

Box 5, Folder 14: Lincoln School [6]

Box 5, Folder 15: Lincoln School [7]

Box 6, Folder 1: Locket, Clay, Children

Box 6, Folder 2: Lugano Arbor Vitae

Box 6, Folder 3: Lyman, Sam, Railroad Engineer

Box 6, Folder 4: Maine

Box 6, Folder 5: Martin, Tommie, Hartford and Weston

Box 6, Folder 6: Masaru, Katsumie, Graphic Design, Tokyo [Empty]

Box 6, Folder 7: McCarum, Carol

Box 6, Folder 8: Medical

Box 6, Folder 9: Mexican Dance Group, NYC

Box 6, Folder 10: Morse

Box 6, Folder 11: Mountz, Emily

Box 6, Folder 12: Museum of Modern Art

Box 6, Folder 13: NAV

Box 6, Folder 14: Navajo

Box 6, Folder 15: Nelson, Fosdick and Alfred

Box 6, Folder 16: Other

Box 6, Folder 17: Post, Helen, Contact Sheets

Box 6, Folder 18: Rosebud

Box 6, Folder 19: Rosemary School

Box 6, Folder 20: Rosemary School, Helen Steele

Box 6, Folder 21: Scenes [1]

Box 6, Folder 22: Scenes [2]

Box 6, Folder 23: Sierra Club

Box 6, Folder 24: Sitting Eagle, Thomas Henry

Box 6, Folder 25: Slade

Box 6, Folder 26: Studio/Gallery Photographs

Box 6, Folder 27: Tatham

Box 7, Folder 1: Toronto, Arts and Crafts

Box 7, Folder 2: Trees

Box 7, Folder 3: Two Medicine Community

Box 7, Folder 4: Unger

Box 7, Folder 5: Urmi, Tommy

Box 7, Folder 6: Wakesfield, Weston Co-op

Box 7, Folder 7: West Virginia

Box 7, Folder 8: Whittemore

Box 7, Folder 9: Wilford

Box 7, Folder 10: [Loose Images]

Box 7, Folder 11: [Loose Negatives] [1]

Box 7, Folder 12: [Loose Negatives] [2]

Box 7, Folder 13: [Loose Negatives] [3]