

Collection #
M 1116

PHYLLIS WHEATLEY WATERS
COLLECTION ADDITION, CA. 1908–1954

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Processed by

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July 2014

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 half size manuscript box, 1 photograph box, 1 upright graphics folder, 1 4 x 5 negative box, 1 5 x 7 negative box

COLLECTION DATES: ca. 1908–54

PROVENANCE: Marilyn Crain, Indianapolis

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Phyllis Wheatley Waters Papers. Manuscript Collection: M 0589; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Lambda Omega Chapter Minute Book. Manuscript Collection, BV 3561

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2002.0685

NOTES: This is an addition to the Phyllis Wheatley Waters Papers, M 0589.

Negatives in the collection are nitrate (cold storage).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Phyllis Wheatley Waters (ca. 1898–30 December 1973), born in West Virginia, lived most of her life in Indianapolis. In 1913 she graduated from Ann Arbor (Michigan) High School. Four years later, in 1917, she received a B.A. in French from the University of Michigan, where she played on the women's basketball team. Following graduation from Michigan, she headed up the Language Department at West Virginia Collegiate Institute, now West Virginia State University.

One year later Waters relocated to Indianapolis, where she began employment with Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), teaching first at Crispus Attucks High School and later School #17. In Indianapolis she also earned a Master's degree from Butler University. During her last three years with IPS, she served as a psychological consultant to fifteen grade schools. After working 48 years in the school district, she retired in 1968.

Waters was active in local politics, acting as a precinct committee member and ward chairman. She ran unsuccessfully for the state legislature in 1960 as a Republican, and served out an unexpired term on the Indianapolis City Council in 1967.

Waters was a member and leader of numerous organizations, most notably the Indiana State Teachers' Association, of which she served as vice president. Her leadership also extended to the executive boards of the Indianapolis Education Association, the Indianapolis Grade School Teachers' Association, the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, the Marion County Cancer Society, and the Indianapolis Children's Museum. She was a charter member of the Indianapolis Zoological Society and the Fall Creek Parkway YMCA, as well as an active member of Citizens Forum Inc., Senate Avenue YMCA, and the Business and Professional Women's Club.

Her list of community service awards includes honors from Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, the United Negro College Fund, the Indiana State Teachers Association, the Indianapolis Urban League, and the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce. The month before her death, she received the University of Michigan Outstanding Achievement Award.

Waters donated her body to the Indiana University Medical Center, and is buried in the Anatomical Section (Section 41A) of Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Sources:

Collection Guide. Phyllis Wheatley Waters Papers. Manuscript Collection: M 0589

Collection Materials.

Obituary. *Indianapolis Recorder* 5 January 1971, pp. 1 and 5.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection addition comprises written, printed, and photographic materials, mostly from Phyllis Waters' early life. The emphasis on photographs differentiates it from the Phyllis Wheatley Waters Papers, which focuses on manuscript materials and covers a greater span of time.

The first series includes correspondence, receipts, and a variety of other papers. There are two 1922 letters from C. Doyle King, who that year served as executive secretary of the New York City Boys' Welfare Association in addition to heading up his own real estate and investment firm, C.D. King Co. The first letter despairs that she will ever write him back and is signed "With love, love, love." The second refers to a recent visit from her. Waters' other prominent correspondent is Master Sergeant C.O. Cromer, who wrote to her between 1942 and 1945 and signs his letters "Pete." The first of his five letters mentions that "the Army finally got me," about which he is dispirited. Cromer, stationed in Italy and France, is never very pleased to be in the Army, and frequently expresses his displeasure at the tough work schedule and distance from his loved ones. He often tells Waters, with whom he is clearly in a romantic relationship, to relax and not work so hard. In one letter he also mentions her complaints about the Individual Income Tax Act of 1944, which broadened the tax base and likely required Waters to pay taxes when she previously had not.

Series two is the most extensive, containing approximately 450 photographs and two postcards. The photographs, taken in the first few decades of the twentieth century, are nearly all snapshots of Waters, her friends, and her family. Very few are labeled with dates or names. The images present Waters as a confident young woman who was affectionate with those around her. A number of the photographs depict men in casual settings wearing what are clearly U.S. military uniforms. Others images show young men wearing what could be either enlisted men's clothing or Boy Scout uniforms (the two were nearly identical in the 1910s). Both are possible, as black boys and men were active in both the First World War and the early Boy Scouts of America. There are also four snapshots featuring women in military hats or jackets. The women are probably not formally affiliated with the military, however, as the jackets appear to be from men's uniforms.

The third and final series consists of approximately 85 irregularly sized, single frame nitrate negatives, the great majority of which correspond to printed snapshots in the collection.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Papers

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|--|------------------|
| Jesus Leaflet, not dated | Box 1, Folder 1 |
| Miscellaneous Business Cards, not dated | Box 1, Folder 2 |
| Postcard Correspondence, 1909–42 | Box 1, Folder 3 |
| French Practice Letter, 1912 | Box 1, Folder 4 |
| Checks and Receipts, 1915–21 | Box 1, Folder 5 |
| West Virginia Collegiate Institute Musical Program, 1919 | Box 1, Folder 6 |
| Cards and Invitations, 1919–35 and not dated | Box 1, Folder 7 |
| Correspondence from C. Doyle King 1922 | Box 1, Folder 8 |
| Legal Notice to Theodore Cable, 1923 | Box 1, Folder 9 |
| Correspondence from Master Sergeant C.O. Cromer, 1942–45 | Box 1, Folder 10 |

Series 2: Printed Photographic Materials

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Landscape Photographs, not dated | Photographs Box 1, Folder 1 |
| Postcards of Homes, not dated | Graphics Folder 1 of 1 |
| Dated Snapshots, 1908–22 | Photographs Box 1, Folder 2 |
| Boy Scout or Military-Related Snapshots, ca. 1910s | Photographs Box 1, Folder 3 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s (1 of 5) | Photographs Box 1, Folder 4 |

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|---|---------------------------------|
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s (2 of 5) | Photographs Box 1, Folder 5 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s (3 of 5) | Photographs Box 1, Folder 6 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s (4 of 5) | Photographs Box 1, Folder 7 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s (5 of 5) | Photographs Box 1, Folder 8 |
| Formal Portraits, ca. 1910–54 | Photographs Box 1, Folder 9 |
| Phyllis Waters in Her Room, 1914 | Photographs Box 1, Folder 10 |
| Military-Related Snapshots, ca. 1917–18 | Photographs Box 1, Folder 11 |
| Women in Military Clothing, ca. 1917–18 | Photographs Box 1, Folder 12 |
| West Virginia Collegiate Institute Scenic Photographs, 1918–19 and not dated | Photographs Box 1, Folder 13 |

Series 3: Negatives

CONTENTS

Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s

Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s

Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s

Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s

Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s

CONTAINER

5 x 7 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 1

5 x 7 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 2

5 x 7 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 3

5 x 7 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 4

5 x 7 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 5

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 5 x 7 Negatives Box 1, Folder 6 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 5 x 7 Negatives Box 1, Folder 7 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 5 x 7 Negatives Box 1, Folder 8 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 1 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 2 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 3 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 4 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 5 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 6 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 7 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 8 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 9 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 10 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 11 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 12 |
| Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s | 4 x 5 Negatives Box 1, Folder 13 |

Snapshots, ca. 1910–30s

4 x 5 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 14

Military-Related Snapshots, ca. 1917–18

5 x 7 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 9

Military-Related Snapshots, ca. 1917–18

4 x 5 Negatives
Box 1, Folder 15

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 1116).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.