

# Angelus Studio photographs, circa 1880s-1940s

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Angelus Studio (Portland, Or.)
<b>Title</b>	<a href="#">Angelus Studio photographs</a>
<b>Dates</b>	circa 1880s-1940s (inclusive) 1880 1949
<b>Quantity</b>	87 linear feet
<b>Collection Number</b>	PH 037
<b>Summary</b>	The Angelus Studio was a professional photographic company located in Portland, Oregon. The collection includes works by George M. Weister (1862-1922) and Arthur M. Prentiss (circa 1865-1940) among the studio photographers; owner Fred Clark also acquired images by previous local photographers. The Angelus Studio collection provides extraordinary documentation of the city of Portland, the Lewis & Clark Exposition of 1905, Oregon landmarks, and commercial operations including logging and fish packing.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives.</a> UO Libraries--SCUA 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 <a href="mailto:spcarref@uoregon.edu">spcarref@uoregon.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Collection is open to the public.  Collection must be used in Special Collections & University Archives Reading Room.  Collection includes nitrate photographs to which access is restricted.
<b>Additional Reference Guides</b>	<a href="#">See the Current Collection Guide for detailed description and requesting options.</a>
<b>Languages</b>	English

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## Historical Note

The collection comprises: glass plate, nitrate, and safety negatives; original and reprinted photographs, and logbooks from the photographic studios of George M. Weister (1862-1922), Arthur M. Prentiss (dates undetermined) and the Angelus Commercial Photo Company of Portland, Oregon. The history of the company, and the relationships between the photographers represented, is complex and not yet fully understood.

George M. Weister began his photographic career in 1888 with the Partridge Photo Company of Portland, Oregon. Following the untimely death of E. J. Partridge in 1891, Weister managed the company until 1893, when he established the Weister-Meek Company. In 1895 Weister established the Weister Company, selling photographic supplies, lantern slides and cameras along with Weister's photographic services. His collection of negatives reportedly dated to 1872.

Arthur M. Prentiss joined the Weister Company in 1913 as a photographer and secretary-treasurer. In 1917 Prentiss established Gifford and Prentiss, Inc. with noted Oregon photographer Benjamin A. Gifford (1859-1936). Following Weister's death in 1922 Prentiss acquired Weister's studio and collection of negatives.

Robinson lists the following employees for Weister and Prentiss: Adams, John Foster, photographer and printer, 1914-1929; Aldrich, Frank C., photographer and printer, 1911-1923; Brown, H. C. Gensler, Jacob, vice president 1912, manager 1913, photographer 1914; Hasenmayer, Max, manager 1916; Hasenmayer, Oscar, manager 1917.

In 1932 Fred N. Clark, owner of the Angelus Studio, purchased Prentiss' studio from the ailing photographer. The Angelus Commercial Photo Company had been established in Portland, Oregon around 1911, and specialized in commercial subjects. "We photograph Construction Work, Interiors and Exteriors of Buildings, Real Estate Views, Machinery, Furniture, Automobiles, Catalog Work, etc." After acquiring the Weister and Prentiss negatives, which were numbered as taken and recorded in logbooks, it appears that they were filed by subject and renumbered by the Angelus Studio.

## Content Description

Photographic negatives and images within this collection are currently housed using three separate numbering systems: the University of Oregon Special Collections numbering (Boxes 1-185), the Angelus Studio category abbreviation and negative numbering (Boxes 186-211) and negatives grouped by the photographer's original numbering (Boxes 212-232). Since Special Collections was unable to reprocess the entire collection into a unified numbering and indexing system, current efforts have focused on rehousing negatives in appropriate storage boxes, identifying damaged or missing negatives from those numbered using the University of Oregon Special Collections system (Boxes 1-185) and developing a shelf list of the entire collection. Existing finding aids for the collection include a computer inventory and index for images P1-P4500, and a guide to a collection of 598 images selected from the Angelus Studio negatives by Works Progress Administration workers in 1940. Due to the subsequent renumbering and rearrangement of the collection the W.P.A guide needs to be cross-referenced with the University of Oregon numbering system.

The classifications used by the Angelus Studio and the number of negatives in each classification are as follows: Agriculture 510; Alaska 20; Amusements 200; Art Slides 500; Bathing 60; Bridges 160; Buildings 1625; Cemeteries 705; Cities 150; Fish 100; Flowers 160; Historic 570; Horses 30; Indians 130; Larry 100; Liberty 45; Livestock 260; Mallory 100; Manufacturing 925; Mining 25; Miscellaneous 260; Multnomah Hotel 75; Old Portland 125; Oregon State College 1; Purcell 900; Railroads 100; Scenic 1400; Ships and Harbors 700; Timber 400; Transportation 60; University of Oregon 20; Wildlife 50.

In 1940 Zed N. Clark assisted members of the Oregon Historical Record Survey in selecting 598 images of "permanent historical value." These images were reclassified by subject and consecutively numbered for the Guide to the Angelus Studio Collection of Historic Photographs. The Angelus Studio also provided photographic services for other W.P.A. survey projects. Further research is necessary to determine the relationship between the Angelus Studio and other W.P.A. survey projects in Oregon.

In the mid-1940s the 598 images selected by the Oregon Historical Records Survey were transferred to the University of Oregon, which had sponsored the development of the Angelus Studio guide. Sometime in the late 1940s or 1950s the University acquired the remaining negatives by Weister, Prentiss, and the Angelus Commercial Photo Company from the Angelus Studio. It is not currently known whether this transfer coincided with the closing of the Angelus Studio or the death of Zed N. Clark.

In the mid-1970s the entire collection was rehoused in acid-free envelopes and stored upright in clamshell boxes. The Special Collections staff began renumbering the entire collection and created a computerized index with catalog cards for each image. During this project negatives were numbered consecutively without regard to prior numbering sequences or arrangement. When original photographer's numbers or Angelus Studio numbers were available they were listed on the negative envelopes and computer cards. Unfortunately the project was never completed and rapid changes in computer technology have rendered computer tapes from the project inaccessible. A bound printout of the 1970s database, by subject, is available in the Reading Room. A modern database is being compiled and is available for staff searching.

In preparation for the 1993 renovation of Knight Library, the Angelus Studio photographs were rehoused in negative storage boxes designed specifically for glass plate and safety negatives. During this process damaged negatives were individually wrapped and relocated at the end of the collection for subsequent conservation. The negatives are arranged in the following order until funding is available for a comprehensive cataloging effort.

## Administrative Information

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Description

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[Guide to the Angelus Studio photographs](#)

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## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Buildings--Oregon--Portland--Photographs  
Cemeteries--Oregon--Portland--Photographs  
Fish canneries--Oregon--Photographs  
Logging--Oregon--Photographs  
Manufacturing industries--Oregon--Photographs

### Personal Names :

Gifford, Benjamin A. (1859-1936)  
Prentiss, A. M. (Arthur M.)  
Purcell, William Gray, 1880-1965  
Weister, George M., 1862-1922

### Corporate Names :

Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition (1905 : Portland, Or.)

Pendleton Round-Up

**Geographical Names :**

Portland (Or.)--Photographs

**Form or Genre Terms :**

Glass negatives--Oregon--1880-1949

Nitrate negatives--Oregon--1880-1949

Photographic prints--Oregon--1880-1949

Safety film negatives--Oregon--1880-1949

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