

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

WESTERN ARCHIVES



THE HELEN WOOLSON FONDS

AFC 44

Inventory prepared by Bev Brereton, January, 2009

WESTERN ARCHIVES
THE HELEN WOOLSON FONDS
AFC 44

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FONDS DESCRIPTION	4
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and ITEM LISTS	
Series 1 Photographs	6
Series 2 Personal Papers	10

THE HELEN WOOLSON FONDS
AFC 44
FONDS DESCRIPTION

Dates

1916 - 1973, predominant 1916 - 1919

Extent and Material

4 cm of textual records
105 photographs
1 postcard

Biographical Sketch

One of six children of William A. Woolson and Janet (Jessie) Murdoch Woolson, Helen Woolson was born in Ingersoll, Ontario on March 2, 1888. She graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in 1908. Woolson enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in May of 1916, and was initially assigned to the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital, the hospital unit established by Western University and commanded by Dr. Edwin Seaborn. Upon mobilization of the unit, Woolson travelled to England with other nursing sisters in June of 1916, but was reassigned in July to the No. 1 Canadian General Hospital. Despite requests from Seaborn to restore the original members of the No. 10 staff, Woolson remained with the No. 1 General for the duration of the war and was awarded the Royal Red Cross, 2nd class, in June, 1919.

Following the war, Woolson nursed at Byron Sanatorium and at Speedwell Hospital in Guelph; served as an investigator with the Canadian Pension Commission for Military District No. 1, London; and was night supervisor at St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing from the 1940s until 1957.

Called "Aunt Hylo" by family members, Helen Woolson lived for most of her life in London, Ontario. She died in that city on January 10, 1973.

Scope and Content

The fonds consists of materials related to Helen Woolson's career as a nursing sister in World War I and her personal life.

Arrangement

The fonds has been arranged into the following series:

Series 1 Photographs
Series 2 Personal Papers

Finding Aids

Item lists available.

Related Material

1. Woolson's Officers' Declaration Paper and the war diaries of the No. 1 Canadian General Hospital and the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital are available online at Library and Archives Canada.
2. Additional information relating to the nursing sisters of the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital can be found in the No. 10 Canadian Stationary fonds and in the Edwin Seaborn fonds.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Donated by Cherie Fry, niece of Helen Woolson, in 2005.

Notes

1. The No. 1 Canadian General Hospital was established at Etaples, France in 1916. Following bombing raids on May 31 and June 1, 1918, the hospital was relocated to Trouville.
2. Instituted by Queen Victoria in 1883, the Royal Red Cross is an honorary award conferred by the monarch upon a fully trained nurse who has demonstrated special devotion or competency while engaging in nursing or hospital duties with the military forces. Recipients of the award are designated "Members" and can use the letters "RRC" after their names. The Royal Red Cross, 2nd class was instituted during World War I. Recipients are designated "Associates" and can use the letters "ARRC" after their names. Holders of the 2nd class award are promoted to the 1st class upon a second award.
3. Biographical information has been provided by Cherie Fry and obtained from *The London Free Press* and the *Ingersoll Tribune*.

THE HELEN WOOLSON FONDS
AFC 44
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and ITEM LISTS

Series 1 Photographs

Dates of Creation

1916 - 1939, predominant 1916 - 1919

Extent and Material

105 photographs - b&w print
1 postcard - col

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographs taken and collected by Helen Woolson. Included are photographs of nursing sisters and soldiers, the No. 1 Canadian General Hospital, military actions, family members, and buildings.

Notes

1. Pages with attached photographs have been removed from a photograph album.
2. Most notations on the reverse of the photographs were added by Helen Woolson or members of the Woolson family.
3. The notation made by a Woolson family member on the reverse of photograph #46 indicates that Helen Woolson received the Royal Red Cross circa September, 1922. The award, however, was presented in October of 1919 in London, Ontario, by Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII), during his tour of Canada that year. On the reverse of the original photo, which remains with the Woolson family, Helen wrote "Your Aunt - with arm in a sling, from an accident when on duty in operating room at Speedwell Hospital Guelph Ontario which is now 'Ontario Reformatory.' I got out before it became the latter. / Prince Edward - pinning on my Army Royal Red Cross Medal at Wolsley [Wolseley] Barracks. 1919" An account of the ceremony is available in the October 23, 1919 edition of *The London Free Press*.
4. Photograph #1 is part of a 1916 series of photographs taken of the personnel of the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital. Other photographs in this series can be found in the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital fonds.
5. Photographs #47 through #70 appear to be stock photographs.
6. Several of the photographs of the No. 1 Canadian General Hospital were published in Kenneth Cameron's *History of the No. 1 General Hospital*, available in the D. B. Weldon Library. Supplied titles and dates for those photographs are based on information provided in Cameron's book.

File and Item List

1. Nursing Sisters of the Western University #10 Stationary Hospital 1916 AFC 44 - 1 / 1

London Ont. June 1916 [Marked #964]

Top / N/Sr. McRoberts, Collyer, H. Woolson, M. Hodge, Wilson, Ismay, Sanderson, Simpson

[Nursing Sister Mabel MacRobert, Frances Collyer, Helen Woolson, Mary Hodge, Bertha Wilson, Olive Ismay, Mary Sanderson, Annie Simpson]

2nd Row / N. Foreman, King, McCallum, A. Turner, K. Durkin, V. Keene, Whiteley, Taggie, McDougall, M. Douglas

[Mary Foreman, Charlotte King, Jean Macallum, Alice Turner, Kathleen Durkin, Vera Keene, Anna Whitely, Ethel Taggie, Flora McDougall, Marguerite Douglas]

3rd Row / Anderson, Orme, Hicks, B. Richards, Maton Dulmage, B. Popham, E. Davies, A. McPhee, G. McQue

[Florence Anderson, Elizabeth Orme, Anne Hicks, Beatrice Richards, Matron Helen Dulmage, Susan Bissette Popham, Ethel Davies, Amy McPhee, Gertrude McCue]

- | | | | |
|----|--|---------|----------------|
| 2. | [Nursing Sisters' Quarters, Trouville, France] | [1918] | AFC 44 – 1 / 2 |
| | [Dining Hall, Trouville?] [See also #18] | [1918] | |
| | [Nursing Sisters, No. 1 General Hospital] | [1918] | |
| | [Nursing Sisters, No. 1 General Hospital, Trouville] | [1918] | |
| 3. | [Ottawa Valley Red Cross Hut, Ward E, Etaples, France] | [1917] | AFC 44 – 1 / 3 |
| | [Ottawa Valley Red Cross Hut, Ward E, Etaples, with fracture beds] | [1917] | |
| 4. | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples, after air raid of May 31- June 1] | 1918 | AFC 44 – 1 / 4 |
| | [Funeral for air raid casualties, Etaples] | 1918 | |
| | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples showing damage after air raid] | 1918 | |
| | [Funerals for air raid casualties, Etaples] | 1918 | |
| 5. | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples showing damage after air raid – 8 photos] | 1918 | AFC 44 – 1 / 5 |
| | [Memorial Service, July 1] - 4 photos | 1916 | |
| 6. | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples showing damage after air raid – 8 photos] | 1918 | AFC 44 – 1 / 6 |
| 7. | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples showing damage after air raid] | 1918 | AFC 44 – 1 / 7 |
| | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples] | 1916 | |
| | [Nursing Sisters, No. 1 General Hospital] | [1918?] | |
| | [No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples] | [1918?] | |
| | [Procession to funeral of Nursing Sister Wake?] | [1918?] | |
| 8. | [Nursing Sisters, No. 1 General Hospital] | [1918?] | AFC 44 – 1 / 8 |
| | [Nursing Sisters, No. 1 General Hospital] | [1918?] | |
| | [Unidentified scene] | [1918?] | |
| | [Funeral of Nursing Sister Lowe] [See also #13] | 1918 | |
| | [On deck of the R.M.S. P. [Royal Mail Steam Packet] Essequibo] | 1919 | |
| | [On deck of the Essequibo] | 1919 | |
| | [R.M.S.P. Essequibo] [Postcard] | [191-?] | |
| 9. | [Helen Woolson] | [1916?] | AFC 44 - 1 / 9 |

10.	[Etaples Military Cemetery]	[192-?]	AFC 44 – 1 / 10
11.	[No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples]	1916	AFC 44 – 1 / 11
12.	London, Ont. / June 7 th 1939 / King and Queen [King George VI and Queen Elizabeth]	1939	AFC 44 – 1 / 12
13.	[Funeral of Nursing Sister Lowe] [See also #8]	1918	AFC 44 – 1 / 13
14.	Etaples [Matron Edith Campbell and Nursing Sisters]	[1917?]	CEN 1
15.	[Unidentified Nursing Sister, tennis courts, No. 1 General Hospital, Etaples]	[1917?]	CEN 1
16.	[Ottawa Valley Red Cross Hut, Ward E, Etaples]	[1917]	CEN 1
17.	[Canadian Red Cross Recreation Hut, Etaples]	[1917]	CEN 1
18.	[Dining Hall, No. 1 General Hospital, Trouville?] [See also #2]	[1918]	CEN 1
19.	[Nursing Sisters, No. 1 General Hospital]	[1918?]	CEN 1
20.	[No. 1 General Hospital, Trouville] [Same as #21]	[1918]	CEN 1
21.	[No. 1 General Hospital, Trouville] [Same as #20]	[1918]	CEN 1
22.	Muriel McConnell R.N. / Montreal P.Q. / Mrs.[?] J.J. Jardine	[1918?]	CEN 1
23.	Frank and Frances / a Day's outing	[1918?]	CEN 1
24.	[Unidentified Nursing Sisters]	[191-?]	CEN 1
25.	[Unidentified Nursing Sisters]	[191-?]	CEN 1
26.	M. Douglass, Aide-Curraïn [?] Mr. ? & Helen	[191-?]	CEN 1
27.	[M. Douglas and unidentified persons]	[191-?]	CEN 1
28.	[Unidentified soldier] [On reverse: "I am a little fat Helen but it won't last long"]	[191-?]	CEN 1
29.	Our Club House	[191-?]	CEN 1
30.	A view of Etretat from my room where I visited	[1918?]	CEN 1
31.	Taken in July at Etretat, at low-tide / Miss Collis of Vancouver and myself out on the rocks	[191-?]	CEN 1
32.	Bersford [?] England near Chatworth	[1919?]	CEN 1
33.	[E---?] Jardin Church – London, Eng. / April 1 st / ..19	[1919]	CEN 1
34.	"Northwood" – Buxton – Derbyshire / England Mar. 3 rd / ..19	1919	CEN 1
35.	[Unidentified cityscape]	[191-?]	CEN 1
36.	Haddon Hall / England	[191-?]	CEN 1
37.	May 13 th on mid-Atlantic / ..19 / "Essequibo"	1919	CEN 1
38.	Essequibo	1919	CEN 1
39.	Capt. & Miss Anderson on bridge of Essequibo	1919	CEN 1
40.	[Angelus Hospital]	[191-?]	CEN 1
41.	[Angelus Hospital]	[191-?]	CEN 1
42.	[King George VI and Queen Elizabeth]	1939	CEN 1
43.	[King George VI and Queen Elizabeth]	1939	CEN 1
44.	Uncle Harry / Grandma / Grandpa / Aunt Hylo	[191-?]	CEN 1
45.	Aunt Marg [Helen Woolson, left, and her sister Margaret Woolson]	[1908?]	CEN 1
46.	Aunt Hylo receiving decoration "Royal Red Cross" around Sept. 1922 [Same as # 71]	1919	CEN 1
47.	General Currie inspecting troops going into Germany / Bridge over the Rhine	[191-?]	CEN 1
48.	Mons Square, Germany / General Currie	[191-?]	CEN 1

49.	Laying of duck boards at Pasiondale [Passchendaele] / CAMC & RAMC Boys collecting [Canadian Army Medical Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps]	[191-?]	CEN 1
50.	Bombardment at Pasiondale [Passchendaele]	[191-?]	CEN 1
51.	A tank in action a Pashiondale [Passchendaele]	[191-?]	CEN 1
52.	Troops on Gullicourt[?] Road	[191-?]	CEN 1
53.	Troops on Gullicorrt[?] Road nearing Amiens	[191-?]	CEN 1
54.	Amien's [Amiens'] tank graveyard	[191-?]	CEN 1
55.	Supplies going to Ypres [Ypres]	[191-?]	CEN 1
56.	Light Railway's Engineers at Ypres	[191-?]	CEN 1
57.	Ypres Square	[191-?]	CEN 1
58.	Ypres canal	[191-?]	CEN 1
59.	Ypres cathedral after being Boomed	[191-?]	CEN 1
60.	Boomed near Ypres	[191-?]	CEN 1
61.	Hard Tack at Ypres outside dog outs	[191-?]	CEN 1
62.	Arras	[191-?]	CEN 1
63.	Cambria [Cambrai]	[191-?]	CEN 1
64.	Machine gun on Somme	[191-?]	CEN 1
65.	Returning a message to german's from one of our big guns on the Somme	[191-?]	CEN 1
66.	Imperial machine guners [gunners]	[191-?]	CEN 1
67.	French guns out of action & "Dead"	[191-?]	CEN 1
68.	Dead german & german machine gun	[191-?]	CEN 1
69.	Zero sounded / over the top	[191-?]	CEN 1
70.	Our dug-outs & men carrying in wounded german's	[191-?]	CEN 1
71.	[Helen Woolson receiving Royal Red Cross from Prince of Wales, London] [Same as # 46]	1919	CEN 1

**THE HELEN WOOLSON FONDS
AFC 44
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS**

Series 2 Personal Papers

Dates of Creation

1916 - 1973, predominant 1916

Extent and Material

1 cm textual records

Scope and Content

Series consists of records documenting Helen Woolson's military career and life. Included are materials related to nursing sisters of the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital and the No. 1 Canadian General Hospital.

Notes

1. The passenger list of the S.S. Corinthian includes the names of nursing sisters of the No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospital.
2. For preservation purposes, the original newspaper clippings have been replaced with photocopies.

Item List

Cabin Passenger List, S.S. Corinthian	1916	AFC 44 – 1 / 14
Letter from Ben Franklin, sent from the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, England	1916	AFC 44 – 1 / 15
Newspaper Clippings [Photocopies]	1916, 1918	AFC 44 – 1 / 16
Program, Annual Memorial Service, Mount Brydges	1934	AFC 44 – 1 / 17
Funeral card for Helen Woolson	1973	AFC 44 – 1 / 17