

Collection #
P 0525

**FREDERICK POLLEY COLLECTION
CA. 1927–1953, N.D.**

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Processed by

Barbara Quigley
11 October 2013

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
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Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 OVC Graphics Box

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1927–1953, n.d.

PROVENANCE: Multiple

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 0000.0493, 1955.0023, 1955.0219, 1967.0000.005, 1971.0008, 1977.0616, 1979.0321, 2004.0397, 2006.0366v0001

NOTES: See also: Indiana Artists' Club collection (M 0330); *Campus Sketches: Arsenal Technical Schools, Indianapolis* (Pamphlet: [LD7501.I4649 P6 1934](#)); *Literary Indiana* (Pamphlet: [PS283.I6 B4 1925](#))

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Frederick Wiley Polley was born 15 August 1875 to Nancy M. Wiley and Jacob E. Polley, in Union City, Randolph County, Indiana. He was a painter, etcher, printmaker, writer, and teacher. A graduate of Indiana University, Polley also studied under William Forsyth at the John Herron Art Institute (now known as the Herron School of Art) in Indianapolis; under James R. Hopkins in Provincetown, Massachusetts; and at the Corcoran Art School in Washington, D.C.

Polley was working as a telegraph operator in Union City when he married Cora May Mansfield on 6 August 1898. They moved to Ford County, Illinois, where Polley was still working as a telegraph operator when he became seriously interested in sketching. His drawings of area landmarks were featured in the local newspaper. He and Cora had two daughters born in Illinois: Pearl (born May 1899) and Amber (born ca. 1900).

Indianapolis city directories list Polley's occupation as telegraph operator through 1905. He is first mentioned as an artist in the 1906 directory, and is listed as being employed as such by the Indiana Electrotpe Company in the 1910 and 1911 directories.

Polley began his career as an art teacher at the Herron School of Art in Indianapolis where he taught for one term. He also taught extension classes in design at Indiana University. He taught at Arsenal Technical High School in Indianapolis beginning around 1919 for more than twenty years and served as the head of its graphic arts department.

Polley also worked as a government mapmaker in Washington, D.C., when he studied etching at the Corcoran Art School. A New York publisher noticed his work and he began to do illustrations for magazines. He illustrated the American city series in *Scribner's Magazine* from 1920 to 1924. He contributed full-page features in the *Woman's Home Companion*, *Arts and Decoration*, and other New York magazines and book publications. He contributed special features to the Sunday edition of the *Indianapolis Star* in the 1920s–40s, as well as the New Castle *Courier-Times* in the early 1950s. These features were sometimes included in national magazines such as *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Esquire*. He also authored two books, *Our America* and *Historic Churches in America*, both of which included his illustrations.

The Polleys lived at 371 South Emerson Avenue in Indianapolis from approximately 1914 to 1936. He became the city's only professional etcher. He made several trips to the Peaceful Valley in Brown County, Indiana, which provided numerous subjects for sketches and stories for his Sunday feature in the *Star*. In June 1927 he accepted a leave of absence from his school duties for the purpose of painting and etching around the country and abroad.

Polley's paintings and lithographs were exhibited by the Hoosier Salon, the Indiana State Fair, the Indiana Artists Club, the John Herron Art Institute, the Chicago Society of Etchers, the Society of Etchers in Brooklyn and Philadelphia, the Carnegie Institute,

National Arts Club in New York, and the Library of Congress. His entries won numerous awards including prizes at the Hoosier Salon in 1942 and 1943, the Indiana Artists Club in 1939, 1943, and 1945, the Herron Art Institute in 1934, and the New Orleans Art League in 1943. In 1923 Polley was commissioned by the state of Pennsylvania to etch the buildings of old Germantown.

His work is in the permanent collections of the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the National Museum in Washington, D.C., the Irvington Historical Society in Indianapolis, and the Indianapolis Public Schools.

He was a charter member of the Indiana Artists Club and served a term as vice president and three terms as president. He was an artist member of the Salmagundi Club of New York City, the Chicago Galleries Association, the Chicago Society of Etchers, and the Brown County Art Gallery Association.

Polley died on 9 September 1957 in Brown County, Indiana, and is buried in Memorial Park Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Sources:

"Frederick Polley." Find a Grave (<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=POL&GSpartial=1&GSbyrel=all&GSst=17&GSctry=4&GSsr=2121&GRid=96234439&>). Accessed 11 October 2013.

"Frederick Polley." Fine Estate Art (http://fineestateart.com/artists/frederick_polley). Accessed 11 October 2013.

"Frederick Polley Drawings Collection." Biographical note from the Indiana State Library (<http://www.in.gov/library/4384.htm>). Accessed 11 October 2013.

Items in the collection.

Owings, Jr., Frank N. "Polley, Frederick." In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by Bodenhamer, David J. and Robert G. Barrows. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994: 1128. General Collection: F534 .I55 E4 1994

"U.S. City Directories, 1821–1989." Ancestry.com (ancestrylibrary.com). Accessed 11 October 2013.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of illustrations and writings by artist Frederick Polley. It includes original drawings, prints, photocopies of newspaper articles written and illustrated by Polley, and a resume of his artistic experience. The subjects of his illustrations are primarily churches but also include a mill, covered bridge, courthouse, Union Station, school for the blind, homes, and a bank building. The illustrations depict various locations in Indiana; some of the newspaper articles illustrate churches in other parts of the United States. The newspaper articles are features written and illustrated by Polley, pertaining to specific structures. They appeared in two Indiana newspapers: the *Indianapolis Star* and the New Castle *Courier-Times*.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Original Drawings

CONTENTS

Christ Church, Indianapolis, n.d.

The First Union Station, Indianapolis (drawn from an old print), n.d.

Old School for the Blind, Indianapolis, n.d.

Covered bridge east of Rushville, Ind., near East Hill Cemetery, (1932 or 1937).

House in Vincennes, Ind., n.d.

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Series 2: Prints

CONTENTS

Beck's Mill, [Salem, Washington County, Ind.], n.d.

"Old School for the Blind, Now Replaced" --
"Christmas Greetings 1943 / The Frederick Polley's /
Route 13, Box 22 / Indianapolis, Indiana." Black-and-
white print with green tint.

"Christ Church on the Circle," Indianapolis, print
©1934.

First Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, n.d.

Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Indianapolis, n.d.

"Greetings from Santa Claus, Indiana. Christmas,
1935." "Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Polley / 371 So.
Emerson Avenue, Indianapolis." Printed in blue.

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Series 3: Photocopies of Clippings from the *Indianapolis Star*, 1930–1946

CONTENTS

"The Passing of an Old Friend" -- the old school for the blind on North Street, Indianapolis -- 19 October 1930.

"Pioneer Church of Methodism" -- Roberts Park Methodist Episcopal Church, Indianapolis -- 26 January 1936.

"Our Changing Architecture" -- Madison County Courthouse in Anderson, Ind. -- 6 June 1937.

"Carried Down by Floodwaters" -- Pipe Creek Falls, Cass County, Ind. -- 24 October 1937.

"The Oldest House in Corydon" -- Corydon, Ind. -- 8 May 1938.

"Pioneer Log Church of Indiana" -- Goshen Baptist Church, Harrison County -- 26 June 1938.

"Largest Log House in Indiana" -- Locust Hill home in Brown County -- 24 October 1943.

"The Lanier Memorial at Madison" -- the James F. D. Lanier mansion in Madison, Ind. -- 28 November 1943.

"Passing of Little Cedar Grove Church" -- Little Cedar Grove Baptist Church in Franklin County, Ind. -- 8 April 1945.

"First Presbyterian Church in Franklin" -- Johnson County, Ind. -- 27 January 1946.

"Pioneer State Bank in Terre Haute" -- former State Bank of Terre Haute, at the time of this article known as Memorial Hall or the G.A.R. Building -- 10 February 1946.

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Series 4: Photocopies of Clippings from the New Castle *Courier-Times*, 1952–1953, n.d.

CONTENTS

"New Departure in Church Design" -- Tabernacle Church of Christ in Columbus, Ind., 12 April 1952.

"The Oldest Church of Mormon Faith in Kirtland, O." -- Kirtland Temple in Kirtland, Ohio, 4 October 1952.

"Chapel at Notre Dame University" -- Gothic Chapel of Sacred Heart in South Bend, Ind., 11 October 1952.

"San Francisco de la Espada" -- chapel near San Antonio, Texas, 25 October 1952.

"Old Rockingham, Vermont's Oldest Church" -- Rockingham, Windham County, Vermont, 15 November 1952.

"Catholic Cathedral at Vincennes, Indiana" -- St. Francis Xavier Catholic Cathedral, 22 November 1952.

"St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bouwerie in N. Y. City" -- 6 December 1952.

"The Old Thetford Methodist Church in Vermont" -- Thetford Center, Vermont, 20 December 1952.

"Old Falls Church in Virginia" -- Episcopal Church, Falls Church, Virginia -- 3 January 1953.

"Pioneer Building Overlooks Ohio River at Hanover" -- previous home of Presbyterian Seminary, Hanover College, Hanover, Ind., 10 January 1953.

"St. Paul's Church in Richmond, VA., Antedates War" -- 17 January 1953.

"Baptismal Font in Kentucky Hills Dates Far Back" -- Bullittsburg Baptist Church, Boone County, Kentucky, 24 January 1953.

"The Old Christ Church Near Laurel, Delaware" -- 31 January 1953.

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"St. Nicholas Church Razed to Make Way for Offices" -- New York City, 7 February 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Old Bennington, Vermont, Church is Now a Museum" -- Historical Museum and Art Gallery, formerly the St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, 14 February 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Church of the Presidents..St. John's in Washington" -- St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., 21 February 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Charleston, N.H., Parish Dates Back to Year 1822" -- St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 28 February 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"New Providence Presbyterian Church, Kentucky" -- near McAfee, Kentucky, 7 March 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"St. Paul's Chapel on Broadway in New York City" -- 14 March 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Beautiful Old California Mission Dates Back to 1786" -- Mission Santa Barbara, 4 April 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Pohick Church in Virginia Designed by Washington" -- Truro Parish, Fairfax County, 11 April 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Pueblo Church is Example of Mission Architecture" - - First Presbyterian Church in Santa Fe, New Mexico, 25 April 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"San Buenaventura Mission in California" -- parish of Ventura, near Santa Barbara, 2 May 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"The Alamo, Texas' Sacred Shrine" -- San Antonio, 9 May 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"St. Vibiana Cathedral, Los Angeles, California" -- 22 May 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Church Near Bedford One of First of Sect in State" -- Leatherwood Christian Church, near Bedford, Ind., 6 June [1953].	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"St. Vincent's in Los Angeles is Architectural Gem" -- California, 13 June 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2

"St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church in New York City" -- 11 July 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Old St. Mary's' Typifies the Charm of New England" -- West Claremont, New Hampshire, 18 July 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Old Church of St. Augustine in New Mexico" -- Mission of St. Augustine, Isleta, New Mexico, 25 July 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Provincetown Church is at Pilgrim Landing Site" -- Congregational Church (a.k.a. "Pilgrim Church") in Provincetown, Massachusetts, 19 September 1953.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"The Church on the Hill, Chatham, Mass." -- Chatham Congregational Church in Chatham, Massachusetts, n.d.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Pioneer Delaware [sic] Church at Milford" -- Christ Church in Milford, Delaware, n.d.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
"Pisgah Church in Blue Grass Region 100 Years Old" -- Gothic meeting house of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, west of Lexington, Kentucky, n.d.	OVC Graphics Box 1, Folder 2

Series 5: Frederick Polley Resume

CONTENTS

One-page resume of Frederick Polley's experience as a student, teacher, illustrator, exhibitor, etc. Appears to have been composed ca. 1927, with an addendum typed at the bottom giving his date of death in 1957.

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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, P 0525).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.