

# Hill-Stead Museum



## **Pope-Riddle Family Photographs, 1850-1940**

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### **Hill-Stead Museum**

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### **Collection Summary**

**Repository**

Hill-Stead Museum

**Creators**

<b>Title:</b>	Pope, Ada Brooks, 1844-1920; Pope, Alfred Atmore, 1844-1913; Riddle, John Wallace, 1864-1941; Riddle, Theodate Pope, 1867-1946 Pope-Riddle family photographs, 1850-1940
<b>Dates:</b>	Circa 1850-1940
<b>Dates:</b>	Bulk 1870-1935
<b>Extent</b>	32 linear feet; 58 boxes, approximately 90 framed photographs
<b>Abstract</b>	The Pope-Riddle family photographs collection represents a variety of photographic formats. They depict Pope and Riddle family members, particularly members of Ada Brooks Pope's family, friends and business associates of Alfred Pope, local and international friends of Theodate Pope Riddle and scenes of her 1910-1915 travels to Europe and England. Images of architecture viewed during Theodate's travels as well as of Hill-Stead 1902-1930 are well-represented. A number of photographs, primarily stereographs, were taken by Theodate Pope Riddle. The collection also includes photographs by Gertrude Käsebier and Karl Klauser.
<b>Collection Number</b>	MS 2
<b>Physical Location</b>	Third-floor archives
<b>Languages Represented</b>	English

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## Biography

Alfred Atmore Pope (son of Alton Pope and Theodate Stackpole Pope; born N. Vassalboro, Maine, July 4, 1842 - died Farmington, Connecticut, August 5, 1913). Alfred Pope was one of five children, born to Quaker parents. In 1861, when Alfred Pope was 19, he and his family moved to a Quaker community in Salem, Ohio. Later, in Cleveland, he joined his father and two brothers as partners in a woolen business. Alfred married Ada Brooks in 1866, and their only child, Effie, was born one year later. (Effie later renamed herself "Theodate" after her paternal grandmother.) In 1869 Alfred borrowed \$5,000 to become a principal in the Cleveland Malleable Iron Company. He transformed the company product line from agricultural machinery to components for the booming railroad industry. In his late 40s, self-educated and wealthy, Alfred developed a great love and enthusiasm for art. He began collecting French Impressionist paintings when he took his family on a European Grand Tour in 1888-1889. Alfred's business associates, J. H. Whittemore and his son Harris, of Naugatuck, Connecticut, became steadfast friends and fellow collectors of Impressionist paintings. Alfred developed his personal aesthetic and bought only artwork he "could rise to." Hill-Stead was his retirement home, designed by his daughter and planned, in part, to showcase his collection.

Ada Brooks Pope (daughter of Joseph Judson Brooks and Judith French Twing; born Salem, Ohio, March 31, 1844 - died Pasadena, California, May 6, 1920). Ada Brooks was the third of eight children. While she was in her teens each of her parents died. As a result, she and her siblings remained very close to each other all their lives, often gathering in Vermont where their parents had been raised and where several relatives still lived. After marrying Alfred Pope, her childhood sweetheart, in 1866, directing the Pope household became her life's work. Her skill and grace were legendary. She enjoyed living in Cleveland, Ohio, where the couple eventually built a Queen Anne-style house, in 1885, on fashionable Euclid Avenue. The family kept an apartment, as well, in New York City. At first, Ada was less than enthusiastic about the move to Farmington. Yet, she adapted to country living, and much of what we know about daily life at Hill-Stead derives from her avid letter writing and fastidious keeping of accounts. Ada never fully recovered from Alfred's death in 1913. In her later years she found it difficult to spend

long winters at Hill-Stead and, annually, spent time California with some of her Brooks family.

Theodate Pope Riddle (born Salem, Ohio, February 2, 1867 - died Farmington, Connecticut, August 30, 1946). Effie Brooks Pope, an only child, grew up in Salem, Ohio, and later Cleveland. At the age of 19, she changed her name to "Theodate" after her paternal grandmother, and thereafter was known by the name that means "gift of God." She attended Miss Mittleberger's School, a private girls' school in Cleveland. Among her classmates were the daughters of Presidents Garfield and Hayes. In 1886, she went east to continue her education at Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut. There, amid the historic structures along Farmington's Main Street, she fell in love with a romanticized version of life in Colonial times. While accompanying her parents on a European Grand Tour, 1888-1889, she began to articulate her ambition of becoming an architect. Upon the family's return, Theodate received permission to live on her own in the rural Connecticut village she had grown to love. She purchased and restored an eighteenth-century farmhouse—her introduction to house design and construction. During this time she became further enamored of the Colonial Revival movement that had swept the nation. After living on her own for nearly ten years, Theodate persuaded her parents to buy hilltop property and retire in Farmington. She designed and built Hill-Stead, her first architectural project, assisted by the noted firm of McKim, Mead & White, who completed construction drawings. Spacious, yet comfortable, the house also provided a showcase for her father's magnificent art collection. The landmark project was completed in 1901. Later architectural accomplishments included designing several private homes and schools, including Westover School in Middlebury, Connecticut, and Avon Old Farms School, in Avon, Connecticut. As a single woman Theodate took in a toddler to raise as her child. At the age of 49, following her remarkable survival of the sinking of the RMS Lusitania, Theodate surprised family and friends by marrying diplomat John Wallace Riddle, whom she had known for nearly a decade. The couple had no children of their own, but, following the death of her first ward, from polio, two more foster sons were added to the household. In addition to her architectural practice, Theodate oversaw management of Hill-Stead's extensive, and progressive-minded, farm operations. Theodate wanted Hill-Stead to remain intact for the benefit of future generations. To that end, her Will specified that the house she had designed, with all its contents, become a museum for the education and enjoyment of all.

John Wallace Riddle (born Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 12, 1864 - died Farmington, Connecticut, December 8, 1941). John Wallace Riddle never knew his father, who had died before his son's birth. When he was seven his mother married Judge Charles Flandrau of St. Paul, Minnesota, a widower with two daughters, and John was raised there in a blended family. The couple eventually had two sons together. Although John funded his own education from a small inheritance, his stepfather's important political connections helped advance his diplomatic career. After graduating from Harvard in 1886, John attended Columbia Law School and then the École des Sciences et Politiques in Paris. He became a skilled linguist proficient in several languages. His early diplomatic posts included Turkey, Egypt, Romania, and Russia while it was under Tsarist rule. During World War I, he worked for the Army War College, in Washington, D.C. before embarking on his final diplomatic posting to Argentina in 1922. John met Theodate in 1905 through their mutual friend and Farmington resident Anna Roosevelt Cowles, Theodore Roosevelt's sister. The couple married in 1916. If John and Theodate's marriage was a relationship based partly on mutual convenience, it also was affectionate. She called him "Totem" because of his height, and he called her "Dearest of Geniuses."

Gertrude Käsebier (1852-1934) - was an artist and a professional photographer. In the 1890's, while being formally trained in art at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute, she became interested in the "new" medium of photography. During study abroad in France, she

began to pursue photography in earnest as the field was deemed acceptable for women. Unimpeded by her marriage and her three children, Käsebier was determined to become a professional photographer. Throughout her career she maintained a thriving portrait business in New York City, while exhibiting her more artistic, pictorial photography and winning numerous awards. She was a colleague and friend to photographers Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Steichen and, like them, believed photography was the equal of other art forms. She was also a member of Stieglitz's Photo-Secession group formed in 1902 and dedicated herself to the promotion of photography as a fine art. Her work was often included in Stieglitz's Photo-Secession galleries at 291 Fifth Avenue and in his independent Camera Work magazine. From her studio on New York City's Fifth Avenue, she photographed such renowned figures as writers Mark Twain and Booker T. Washington, architect Stanford White and photographers Jacob Riis and Alfred Stieglitz. Her studio portraits of Mr. Pope capture both his discerning manner and his charm, while Theodate is portrayed at Hill-Stead as a sensitive yet confident intellectual.

Karl Klauser (1823-1905) was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, to Swiss parents. He studied music in Leipzig and Hamburg before emigrating to the United States in 1850 and learning the craft of photography from his brother William, who had arrived in America two years earlier. In 1855, Klauser was recommended to Sarah Porter as a potential music director for her school, and moved to Farmington where he served as a music teacher at Miss Porter's School for 28 years. Klauser continued to photograph in and around the village of Farmington, and, upon retiring from teaching, he developed his skills into a new profession, selling his work to Miss Porter's students, alumnae and visitors to the town. Klauser's subjects ranged from Miss Porter's School class portraits to Farmington landscapes and building interiors.

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## **Scope and Content of Collection**

The collection consists of approximately 2,200 original photographs (several having multiple copies in various formats). The collection comprises tintypes, daguerreotypes, cabinet cards, cartes de visite, lantern slides, autochromes, stereographs, cased photographs, passe-partouts and small and large format prints. Subjects include members of the Pope-Riddle family, local scenes, Hill-Stead and places to which Theodate Pope Riddle traveled in England, Europe and Mexico, primarily in the 1910-1915 time period. Particularly well-represented are members of Ada Brooks Pope's family, friends and business associates of Alfred Pope, and family friends from both the Farmington Valley and international locales. Of note are photographs by Gertrude Käsebier and Karl Klauser. These include examples of Käsebier's art photography and photographs she took of the Pope-Riddle family, and local Farmington scenes by Klauser. A number of photographs were taken by Theodate Pope Riddle. Subjects include prominent individuals whom the family knew personally such as Henry James and Mary Cassatt, as well as stereographic depictions of family and friends and places to which she traveled, such as the Cotswolds region of England. Architecture is featured in many of her photographs. A few photographs document John Riddle's diplomatic career. The collection also includes copies of photographs from other repositories that pertain to the Farmington area, Miss Porter's School and Theodate's architectural projects.

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## **Arrangement**

The collection is cataloged at the item level with a distinct numbering schema and management system that includes a card file and register. Unframed and

small format photographs are boxed and arranged by format, and then by catalog number.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Restrictions**

Collection open for research by appointment only.

### **Publication Rights**

For copyright status, please contact the Hill-Stead Museum.

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## **Related Material**

Pope-Riddle family papers

Harris Whittemore Trust papers

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## **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Agriculture  
Architecture  
Art  
Authors  
Autochromes (photographs)  
Avon Old Farms School  
Bachrach Studios  
Brooks family  
Cabinet photographs  
California  
Cartes-de-visite  
Cassatt, Mary, 1844-1926  
China  
Cleveland Malleable Iron Company  
Connecticut  
Cotswold Hills (England)  
Cowles, Anna Roosevelt, 1855-1931  
Daguerreotypes (photographs)  
DeLamater, Richard S.  
Diplomatic and consular service  
Diplomats  
Egypt

Europe  
Farmington (Conn.)  
Flandrau, Grace, 1889-1971  
Hillard, Mary Robbins  
James, Henry, 1843-1916  
James, William, 1842-1910  
Käsebier, Gertrude, 1852-1934  
Klauser, Karl, 1823-1905  
Lantern slides  
Massachusetts  
Mexico  
Middlebury (Conn.)  
Miss Porter's School (Farmington, Conn.)  
National Malleable and Steel Castings Co.  
Passe-partouts (borders)  
Photographic prints  
Pope family  
Pope, Alfred Atmore, 1844-1913  
Riddle, John Wallace, 1864-1941  
Riddle, Theodate Pope, 1867-1946  
Stereographs  
Tintypes (prints)  
Travel  
Vermont  
Westover School  
Whittemore, Harris, 1864-1927  
Whittemore, John Howard, 1837-1910

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

Pope-Riddle Family Photographs, Archives, Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, CT

### **Acquisition Information**

Bequest of Theodate Pope Riddle, 1946.

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