

Archives Center
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Washington, D.C.

Scurlock Studio Records, ca. 1905-1994: A Preliminary Finding Aid

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Summary: The Scurlock photographic studio was a fixture in the Shaw area of Washington, D.C., from 1911 to 1994. Two generations of Scurlocks – Addison N. and his sons George H. and Robert S. – created an extraordinary documentary record of the African American community in the nation’s capital. This collection consists largely of photographic prints and negatives of studio portraits, weddings, graduations, community events, and business activities. The bulk of the photographs were created after 1930.

Extent: The Scurlock Studio Records occupy approximately 258 cubic feet and include an estimated 57,000 prints and 160,000-200,000 negatives. These materials are stored in the Museum and in an off-site location.

Processing note: This finding aid is a work-in-progress. It will be revised periodically as the collection is further arranged, described, and preserved.

Access to the collection: Substantial portions of the Scurlock collection are available for research at the Museum. This finding aid will assist in using the collection. Some 2,000 Scurlock images have been digitized and may be searched and viewed in the on-line catalog: <http://sirismm.si.edu/siris/acahtop.htm>

“Portraits of a City: The Scurlock Photographic Studio’s Legacy to Washington, D.C.,” presents these images in an interpretive framework drawing on the on-line catalog.

Support for the preservation of the Scurlock photographs has been received from Save America’s Treasures and private donors.

Collection number: AC NMAH 618

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Draft, partial container list available in Archives Center reference room

SCURLOCK STUDIO RECORDS, ca. 1905-1994

History

The Scurlock photographic studio was a fixture in the Shaw area of Washington, D.C. from 1911 to 1994, and encompassed two generations of photographers, Addison N. Scurlock (1883-1964) and his sons George (1920- 2005) and Robert S. (1916-1994).

The turn of the twentieth century saw a mass exodus of African Americans from the South to northern cities in search of better employment opportunities and fairer racial treatment. Although many considered Washington to be the northernmost southern city, it still offered opportunities for African Americans leaving seasonal agricultural work and racial oppression in the South. In Washington, African Americans found stable employment with the U.S. government. In addition, Howard University offered African Americans teaching opportunities, college education, and professional training as doctors, dentists, nurses, lawyers, and ministers.

By 1900 a substantial African American middle class existed in Washington. Despite the fact that Washington was historically and legally a segregated city (and would remain so into the 1960s), this middle class population continued to grow and prosper. Constance McLaughlin Green, a leading historian of Washington, D.C., described African American Washington as a "Secret City," a separate world with institutions of its own that remained largely unknown to the white majority. Addison Scurlock and his sons documented that world on film in the course of running their business and perfecting their art.

After graduation from high school, Addison Scurlock moved from Fayetteville, North Carolina, to Washington, D.C., with his family in 1900. With a keen interest in photography, he sought out an apprenticeship at the white-owned Moses Rice Studio on Pennsylvania Avenue. The Rice brothers (Amos and Moses) had been in Washington working as photographers since the 1860s and had one of the more prominent and better studios in the city. There Addison learned portrait and general photography. In 1904, he left Rice and began his photographic career at his parents' home. By 1911, when he opened the Scurlock Studio, he had already captured the likeness of Booker T. Washington, probably his best known portrait. Scurlock quickly identified his market: a self-sufficient African American community which included students, graduates, and educators affiliated with Howard University; poets; writers; intellectuals; musicians and entertainers; politicians; socialites; fraternal and religious organizations and their leaders. The Scurlock Studio, located at 900 U Street, N.W., became a fixture in the midst of the thriving African-American business community. As with his white counterparts on Pennsylvania Avenue and F Street, N.W., Addison Scurlock inspired passers-by with window displays of his photographs of national leaders and local personalities.

During the 1930s, Addison Scurlock's two sons apprenticed in the studio. In addition to

portrait and general photography, they learned the techniques of retouching negatives and photographic prints, hand-coloring, hand-tinting, and mat decoration. George concentrated on the commercial side of the business while Robert concentrated on the portrait side. During World War II, Robert served in the Army Air Force in Italy as a "Tuskegee Airman."

The Scurlocks' work changed with the times. From the early 1900s until Addison's death in 1964, the Scurlock Studio was the official photographer of Howard University. In the 1930s the studio began a press service and prepared newsreels on African American current events for the Lichtman Theater chain, which offered some of the few non-segregated venues in the city. Their press service supplied the African American press with newsworthy photographs of current events, personalities, and social, political, and religious life. Clients included the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, *Amsterdam News*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Cleveland Call and Post* and the *Washington Tribune* and *Afro-American*. George and Robert ran the Capitol School of Photography from 1948 to 1952. Among their students were African American veterans under the G.I. Bill, Ellsworth Davis, who later worked as a *Washington Post* photographer, and Bernie Boston of the *Los Angeles Times*. Perhaps their best-known student was the young Jacqueline Bouvier.

In 1952 Robert opened Washington's first custom color lab. Capitalizing on his knowledge of color processing, Robert was asked to take color portraits of both noted and ordinary individuals. In addition, the studio offered color views of important Washington landmarks and monuments. By the 1960s, Robert added magazine photography to his list of talents, publishing images in *Life*, *Look*, and *Ebony*. Robert continued photographing Washingtonians at his studio until his death in 1994.

According to George Scurlock, the Scurlock studio never had substantial competition in the African American community.¹ Some Washington residents remember it differently, however. Dr. Theodore Hudson, a retired Howard University professor, recalled two other black photographers, Sam Courtney and a man named Sorrell, who photographed events in the African American community.²

The Scurlock collection represents the most comprehensive record of any long-lived -- let alone African-American -- photography studio in a public institution. Other twentieth century studio collections exist, for example, the Robinson Studio, Grand Rapids and the Hughes Company, Baltimore. Among African American studio collections in public institutions are James Van Der Zee (New York City, 1912-80s), Teeny Harris (Pittsburgh), P.H. Polk (Tuskegee), and the Hooks Brothers (Memphis, 1910-1975). The Scurlock Collection covers a longer time period and provides greater depth of coverage of African-American events and

¹George Scurlock. Interview conducted by David Haberstich and intern Lora Koehler at Mr. Scurlock's apartment, Aug. 2003.

²Theodore Hudson, conversation with David Haberstich in the Archives Center, 2 February 2004.

people.

Several commentators have assessed the Scurlock legacy. Jane Freundel Levey, editor of *Washington History* magazine, believes that the family went beyond the artful use of light, shadow, and composition. She wrote, "Perhaps the most distinctive hallmark of the Scurlock photograph is the dignity, the uplifting quality of the demeanor of every person captured by photographs who clearly saw each subject as above the ordinary."³ Steven C. Newsome, formerly director of the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture and now director of the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum, stated that the Scurlocks' photographs "gave us connections. They tell stories. They let us remember."

³Jane Freundel Levey, "The Scurlock Studio," *Washington History*, 1989, p. 44.

Exhibitions

- n.d. 70th Annual Exposition of Professional Photography and 9th National Industrial Photographic Conference, New York City
- 1976 "21 Photographers," Intuitiveye Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1976 "The Historical Photographs of Addison N. Scurlock," The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
- 1983 "A Century of Black Photographers," Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, R.I. (traveling exhibition)
- 1985 "The Black Photographer: An American Experience," Chicago Public Library Cultural Center, Chicago, Ill.
- 1986 "The Historical Photographs of Addison N. Scurlock," The Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, D.C. (substantially the same as the Corcoran exhibition)
- 1990 "A Focus on Dignity—The Photographs of the Scurlock Family," Banneker-Douglass Museum, Annapolis, Md.

Awards and Honors

- 1907 Gold Medal for Excellence in Photography, Jamestown Exposition (Addison Scurlock)
- 1920 Photographs selected by Carter G. Woodson of the Association for The Study of Negro History for use in public schools (Addison Scurlock)
- N.D. Robert Scurlock elected (?) to the George Eastman House Associates, Rochester, N.Y., for contributions to the field of color photography

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[Insert Pugh, Karen]

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Scope and Content Note

The collection includes all forms of photographs produced by the studio: prints in black-and-white and color, black-and-white and color negatives, color transparencies, black-and-white dye-transfer matrices, and slides. It also includes business documents, studio session ledgers, appointment books, business and personal correspondence, tax documents, and books, catalogs, and other publications. This material documents the photographic output of the business, both commercial and artistic, as well as the personal and business side of the enterprise.

The collection numbers several hundred thousand photographic negatives, prints, and transparencies made by the Scurlocks and other staff photographers of the studio in its three Washington locations. The negatives are estimated at approximately 160,000-200,000 in

number, and the prints of all sizes and types at nearly 57,000. The vast majority of the photographs are portraits of individuals, family groups, and organizations, as the primary business of the studio was portrait photography. They date primarily from the 1940s to 1990s. There also are images made for commercial clients of building interiors and exteriors and consumer products. Some photojournalistic documentation exists, documenting architectural and industrial scenes and general views in and around Washington, including children and street laborers, political events, social events, President Kennedy's funeral (1963), and civil disturbances (1968). There are also more personal artistic images, including still lifes with plants and flowers and a few nudes. Robert's wartime service is documented in his photographs of European landscapes and his fellow Airmen.

In addition to images taken by the Scurlock Studio photographers, there are some prints of images by other photographers. Some black-and-white and color prints seem to be the work of students in the Capitol School of Photography. Custom Craft, the Scurlock's professional color processing service made prints for other photographers. Samples for printing reference and studio décor are found in the collection. Custom Craft worked for diverse photographers such as artist and Corcoran School of Art teacher Robert Epstein and well-known Washington photojournalist Fred Maroon. A print of a Maroon photograph was on display in the reception room when the studio closed.

A large group of manuscript items, business documents, ephemera, and office and studio supplies constitutes separate series from the photographs. A set of ledgers, recording and identifying portrait sittings, highlights this group.

Nearly all of the photographs and documents stored in the studio and auxiliary storage locations were acquired by the Archives Center in order to form a complete history of this family business over the better part of a century. A selection of photographic apparatus and studio equipment was acquired by the Museum's Photographic History Collection; these items are inventoried and catalogued separately.

Studio Portraits

The majority of the surviving photographic negatives and proof prints were made in connection with the studio's portrait work for a wide variety of clients. These portraits include images of famous people, such as political figures, entertainers, and noteworthy persons in a variety of fields, including scientists, writers, intellectuals, and academics. The majority of the figures depicted among both the famous and the not-so-famous are African American. The bulk of the studio portraits, most of which are identified and dated, depict a general clientele who visited the studio for portrait sittings. Although the individual images in this vast quantity have limited research value in the usual sense, the aggregate represents a chronology spanning almost ninety years, which may be useful for demographic and genealogical information and as visual evidence of changing styles in clothing, hair, and accessories. It constitutes a panorama of a significant percentage of Washingtonians of the period, especially the black community.

The collection includes photographs of nationally famous people, including Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, George Washington Carver, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Mary McLeod Bethune, Mary Church Terrell, and Marian Anderson; locally and regionally important individuals such as P.B.S. Pinchback, Judge Mifflin Gibbs, Col. Jim Lewis, Ernest Just, Anna J. Cooper; and actors, artists, vaudevillians, and musicians such as Fredi Washington, Madame Lilian Evanti, Oakley & Oakley, and Duke Ellington.

More recent portraits of famous people include: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sammy Davis, Jr., Sugar Ray Leonard, Muhammad Ali, Mayors Walter Washington and Marion Barry, D.C. Council members, Ralph Bunche, and Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton. Of particular interest is a signed group portrait of the U.S. Supreme Court with Chief Justice Berger presiding. There also are large-format portraits of Justice Thurgood Marshall and J. Edgar Hoover.

Group portraits include both formal sittings and the informal documentation of banquets, convocations, and similar events. This material includes groups at Howard University; Dunbar High School; the Post Office Clerks' Banquet; the Bishops' Meeting of the A.M.E. Church; a Y.M.C.A. camp, ca. 1947-1949; and the 23rd annual conference of the N.A.A.C.P., 1932.

Howard University

Thousands of black-and-white negatives and prints, 1930s-1960s, depict the people, facilities, and events of Howard University, with which the Scurlocks had a long business relationship. Photographs include Howard University Medical and Law school faculty, class portraits, and images of President Herbert Hoover, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, and other prominent University guests.

Wedding Photography

Wedding photography is an important aspect of most portrait studio output. Bridal portraits, group pictures of wedding parties, and the complete documentation of weddings, in both black-and-white and color, constitute a significant part of this collection. African American weddings predominate and provide important insights into this aspect of society.

Exhibitions

The Studio's work was shown in special public exhibitions over the years, and several of these are included *in toto*. The most important was an extensive retrospective display of 121 prints of Addison's work, both vintage and posthumous, prepared by Robert for the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1976. Others include: (1) a set of thirty-two black-and-white images made by Robert at the Ramitelli Air Base, Italy, while he was a major in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II; (2) a group of portraits from a Black History Month exhibit at Woodward and Lothrop; and (3) a set of sixteen vintage and modern prints which Robert displayed in an interview on the "Today" television show in the 1980s.

Commercial Work

This category includes architectural and industrial photography for commercial clients and food and still life photographs. Much of this material is comparatively recent and was made in large-format color, and includes transparencies and enlargements. It is possible that some of the prints represent Custom Craft work for other photographers rather than the camera work of Robert and George Scurlock. Thus far, prints by artist Robert Epstein have been identified as extra prints of his work from orders which he placed with the firm. At least one image by Fred Maroon has been identified.

A group of color prints constitutes copies of artworks, primarily on behalf of the National Portrait Gallery. Prints in 8" x 10," 11" x 14," 16" x 20," and 20" x 24" sizes are included, and undoubtedly negatives and transparencies corresponding to these subjects will be found.

Photojournalism

In addition to the formal studio portraits and pictures documenting formal events, the Scurlocks took candid photographs of the everyday life of their city, as well as extraordinary events of local and national significance, ranging from occasions such as John F. Kennedy's funeral and the 1968 riots to political rallies and demonstrations.

Capitol School of Photography

The collection includes a variety of materials, such as books and ephemera, which document the activities of the Capitol School of Photography, a sideline of the Scurlock business. Some of the photographs apparently represent student work. The most famous student of the school was Jacqueline Bouvier (later Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis), although no documentation of her association with the school has been located. There are forty-five photographs, ca. 1950, showing the photography lab, men retouching prints, students with cameras, and other school scenes.

Personal Photographs

A few photographs of the Scurlock family are included in the collection in various forms and formats, including enlarged portraits of Addison and Robert. A self-portrait of

Addison and Mamie Scurlock is included in the Corcoran Gallery of Art exhibition series. Other photographs which represent personal artistic expression, such as a few nude studies and floral and plant still lifes, are included.

Business Records and Ephemera

Many of the Scurlock Studio business records were retained. These include invoices, accounting books, and correspondence. Two daybooks and about ten portrait ledgers record sittings from 1922 to 1965: these include negative numbers, sitters' names and addresses, date of sitting and order, compiled alphabetically for each year. The ledgers represent a valuable chronological record of the studio's business and can be used to locate individual negatives and for cross-checking negatives and jobs. There are also several printed inventories of historic negatives in the collection. The business documents also include tax records for the studio.

Ephemera, including receipts, labels, envelopes, stationery, advertisements, and studio and office supplies, document studio routine. Books, magazines, eight high school yearbooks (presumably containing Scurlock work), and other publications either reproduce Scurlock photographs or represent office reference material. Exhibition catalogues, magazines with articles about the Scurlocks, brochures, and calendars illustrated with Scurlock photographs also document the popularity and professional acceptance of the Studio's work. Forty frames of display size and thirteen additional metal and wooden photographic frames, 11" x 14" and smaller, probably served as studio samples. Kodak and Ansco display items, brochures for photographic equipment and papers, photographic pamphlets, and promotional items also are typical studio accessories and supplies of their periods.

Photographic Apparatus and Cameras

A selection of apparatus from the studio is inventoried separately and located in the Museum's photographic history collection. Included in the "apparatus" collection are several bulky studio signs which have documentary value to the collection.

Physical Description, Including Photographic Forms and Formats

Prints

The prints vary in size from 3" x 5" and smaller contact proofs to large 30" x 40" prints and a few even larger images. The majority of fine prints are 8" x 10" to 16" x 20," although some are quite large. Panoramas are up to 10" x 20".

Most of the earliest images are silver gelatin black and white, while later images were made by a variety of color processes, including Ektacolor or Type C and Dye Transfer. The portrait work is typical of a high-quality commercial portrait studio, employing a variety of technical skills which are evident in the prints. Some

black-and-white prints, especially early work, are delicately hand-colored. As Robert Scurlock wrote about some of his father's work:

"The print quality of the vintage prints...is further enhanced by the use of special formats, oblongs, ovals and circles, some with discreet embossing and photographically produced tinted borders, single and multiple. The tinted border is a lost art, completely unknown in contemporary work."⁴

Some prints, mainly the later color works, are signed or bear mechanical facsimile signatures in white or gold ink on the recto of the prints. Some of the earlier prints are signed on their overmats. Many images are signed in the negatives, so that the signature appears white on the lower right corner of the print. The panoramas are signed, titled, and dated in the negatives. Some of the original boards for the class photographs are in the collection. These have a small photograph of each student, individually mounted, with names written below the image in ink and the graduating class noted. Many of the later color portraits are housed in a variety of presentation mats bearing Scurlock's credit embossed on the mat.

The prints are in generally good condition, despite the fact that many were stacked in the studio without much protection. Some of the early color proofs, however, are deteriorating and fading. Many prints were found in the same boxes with deteriorating negatives, and some exhibit resultant damage.

Proof prints are often filed with negatives. Unfortunately, many additional proof prints were found loose in the studio, and as they seldom bear any identification, they will be difficult to match with negatives, except visually. They will probably have to form a separate sub-series when the collection is processed. This caveat applies to many enlargements in the collection as well, although they can be more readily identified because the subjects tend to be more prominent, and will be somewhat easier to match with negatives.

The set of 121 fine prints from the Corcoran Gallery of Art retrospective exhibition of Addison's work, including both vintage prints and new prints by Robert from the original negatives, is framed and in excellent condition (although some acidic mats and mounts need to be replaced). There are also approximately fifty framed prints, apparently used in other exhibitions, plus the unframed exhibition groups from Ramitelli Air Base, and twenty-six 8" x 10" portrait prints, flush-mounted on foam board, from the Woodward and Lothrop department store show.

There are twenty-four wedding albums containing color and black-and-white enlargements, an empty wedding anniversary album, and another eleven wedding albums, each containing approximately fifty 4" x 5" color prints, ca. 1970s-1980s, plus framed and/or matted bridal portraits.

⁴Robert S. Scurlock, "An Appreciation of Addison N. Scurlock's Photographic Achievements," *The Historic Photographs of Addison N. Scurlock*. Washington, D.C.: The Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, 1986 (exhibition catalog).

More than 100 sample color and black and white photographs in metal and wood frames, ranging in sizes from 8" x 10" and smaller to 20" x 24" and larger, are included. These items were either displayed on the studio walls or were shown to clients for ordering purposes.

Also included are posters for photographic exhibitions and poster-size enlargements, including a large black-and-white portrait of Addison Scurlock.

Negatives

The silver gelatin negatives account for more than half of the bulk of the collection. They date from the beginning of Addison Scurlock's career, before he opened his first studio in 1904, to the end of the Scurlock Studio operations in 1994. Many of the negatives bear numbers, ranging from 200 to 85,021. However, negatives were found loose in the studio and are difficult to identify. Most of the Howard University negatives are unnumbered.

There are fewer than one hundred glass plates by Addison; the small number is surprising, but may be due to breakage and other losses over the years. On the other hand, the early film negatives were made by him. Important historic glass negatives include Addison's portraits of Booker T. Washington and Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, and the so-called "Formal Dance at the Whitelaw" (correctly, "The Midwinter Assembly, Baltimore," 1912).

The earliest negatives were taken by Addison, those during the middle period by all three Scurlocks, and those after Addison's death in 1964 by Robert and George and their assistants. The negatives range in size from 35mm strips to 10" x 20" panoramas. They are primarily cellulose acetate. The formats are attributable to the large variety of cameras used over the years, from 8" x 10," 5" x 7," and 4" x 5" view cameras to 2-1/4" by 2-1/4" Rolliflexes and 35mm Nikons. The 4" x 5" format predominates among the black-and-white negatives. Many color negatives are 5" x 7."

The negatives were housed in various types of containers, many in brown, later white, envelopes inscribed with varying amounts of information, including negative numbers, subjects' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, category, date of sitting, print order, and price. On some 5" x 7" negatives identifying information is written in the negative margins. Some envelopes contain more than one negative, proof prints, and contact sheets. This makes it difficult to establish an accurate count of the negatives and prints in all formats; estimates were derived by a combination of actual count, averaging, and measurement.

There are approximately 900 film panoramic negatives, 8" to 12" wide x 20" long, primarily group portraits, athletic and social events, ca. 1920s-1940s (made with a "banquet camera"), and nine glass panoramic negatives, 11" x 20".

Most of the glass plates are in good condition, and many of the film negatives are in a good state of preservation. However, approximately 40% of the acetate film negatives are badly damaged, deteriorating acetate, showing evidence of channeling and extreme dimensional distortion. They exhibit "vinegar syndrome" with a pungent acetic acid odor. Comparatively few negatives in the collection have been identified as cellulose nitrate.

Color Slides and Transparencies

The majority of the color transparencies are 35mm slides, some of which apparently were intended for stock use, although there are also 4" x 5" transparencies. The subjects include President Kennedy's funeral, 1968 riots, Howard University, and views of Washington monuments, federal buildings, and other scenes. These images date from the 1950s through the 1990s.

Dye Transfer Matrices

There are approximately 450 large black-and-white film images made from color negatives and transparencies to produce color prints by the Kodak Dye Transfer process, occurring in sets of three, corresponding to the three primary colors. They date from the 1950s to the 1980s. It is not known how many of these sets are complete. Although dye-transfer matrices are comparatively rare in photographic collections, the research value of this material is primarily technical, since the Dye Transfer process represented an exacting and complex procedure for producing high-quality color prints; Custom Craft excelled at this process. Undoubtedly many of these matrices were made from photographs by Custom Craft clients rather than from Scurlock photographs.

Initial Organization of the Collection

Series 1: Black-and-White Photoprints.

Sub-Series 1: Identified Black-and-White Photoprints

Corcoran framed exhibition series

Special series, including other exhibitions

High-quality "vintage" prints by Addison, all categories

Portraits--Individual

Size categories in all classes

Group Portraits

Size categories, etc.

Scurlock family and business

Howard University

Music and performance

Sports

Academic, etc.

Photojournalism

Political events

City and neighborhoods

- Weddings
- Graduations
- Commercial subjects
- World War II and Europe
 - Exhibit on 332nd Fighter Group
- Landscapes, pictorial
- Copies of paintings and art work
- Sub-Series 2: Unidentified Black-and-White Photoprints
 - Men
 - Special categories, such as politicians, clergymen, soldiers, etc.
 - General studio portraits
 - Women
 - Fashion, modeling
 - Glamour
 - Special categories (occupational, etc.)
 - General studio portraits
 - Groups
 - Special categories, e.g., organizations, special events
 - General: families, etc.
 - Weddings
 - Children and babies
 - Photojournalism
 - Political events
 - City and neighborhoods
 - Graduations
 - Commercial subjects
 - Copy prints
- Series 2. Color Prints
 - Sub-Series 1. Identified color prints
 - Sub-Series 2. Unidentified color prints
- Series 3. Other Framed Prints, including black-and-white and color
- Series 4. Black-and-White Silver Gelatin Negatives
 - Sub-Series 1. Item-level described, digitized negatives prepared for freezer storage
 - Sub-Series 2. Scurlock grouped negatives with lists
 - Sub-Series 3. Identifiable, subject grouped negatives
 - Sub-Series 4. Unidentified, ungrouped negatives
- Series 5. Color Negatives
 - Sub-Series 1. 35mm.
 - Sub-Series 2. Other formats
- Series 6. Color Transparencies
 - Sub-Series 1. 35mm.
 - Sub-Series 2. Other formats
- Series 7. Black-and-White Color Separation Negatives and Matrices
- Series 8. Business Records

- Sub-Series 1. Studio negative registers
- Sub-Series 2. Correspondence
- Sub-Series 3. Others
- Series 9. Printed Miscellany and Ephemera
- Series 10. Studio Supplies

Provenance

The Museum acquired the Scurlock Studio Records from the Estate of Robert S. Scurlock following his death in 1994. During the period of negotiation between the museum and Robert Scurlock's heirs, his widow Vivian and brother George, the collection was on loan to the Museum and was housed primarily in a closed exhibition area on the second floor. Thus the staff of the Archives Center took physical possession of the collection before the transfer to the Museum was final. The collection was acquired with assistance from the Eugene Meyer Foundation.

The Studio records and photographs were housed principally in the 18th Street facility and in two rental storage locations. The primary move of the collection to the Museum occurred in September, 1995. An additional pickup occurred in February, 1996. There was probably one additional pickup from the studio by David Haberstick and Caleb Fey on an unrecorded date.

Rights and Reproductions

The Museum purchased all rights, including copyright, to the collection from the Estate of Robert S. Scurlock. The earliest photographs in the collection are in the public domain because their term of copyright has expired. The Archives Center controls copyright and the use of the collection for reproduction purposes in accordance with its reproduction policy guidelines.