

**Helen Winkelmes  
to  
Samuel R. Owens  
October 23, 1945**

**Hunter Library MS 16.05-1-08-005**

**Transcribed by Randi Adams  
For ENGL 618: Research Methods in English  
Instructor and General Editor: Dr. Brian Gastle  
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## Introduction to the Series

This transcription and its attendant annotations, explanatory material, and bibliography were prepared by students in ENGL 618: Research Methods in English, the required gateway class for the MA in English at Western Carolina University. The learning outcomes for this class include the following:

1. Conduct appropriate, effective, and ethical scholarship
  - a. Effectively find and use advanced research tools (handbooks, databases, guides, bibliographies, etc.) appropriate to a subject.
    - Students will be able to use a wide variety of such tools and evaluate those tools.
  - b. Find appropriate advanced research (print and electronic scholarship) and apply that research to specific disciplinary questions or issues.
    - Students will be able to find a variety of scholarship, evaluate both the appropriateness and rigor of that scholarship, and incorporate that scholarship correctly and effectively.
  - c. Develop accurate bibliographies and reference citations.
    - Students will be able to annotate, abstract, and cite materials following standard MLA format.
2. Understand the process by which the texts we use are made available.
  - Students will be able to conduct basic editorial work and evaluate the editorial work of others.

All work is presented as submitted by the students. While these students take great care with their transcriptions and annotations, errors are always possible. As these students learn throughout this class, good scholarship requires checking of sources and corroboration by authoritative sources.

It is hoped that the transcription and annotation of WCU Special Collections materials will be useful to the institution, students, scholars, and other patrons and users of WCU's Special Collections materials.

## **Introduction**

When Samuel Robert Rickman Owens was born on April 10, 1918, he was the ninth of the eleven children of Steven John Owens and Frances Elvira Alexander Owens. His sister, Flora Helen Owens Winkelmes, was the Owens' second child—born April 28, 1906. Helen's letter to her brother, "Sammy," was written on October 23, 1945. It is clear from the context of the letter that this was fairly soon after Samuel Owens' return to the United States after being held as a prisoner of war at Fukouaka—a Japanese prisoner camp. With Owens having been a P.O.W. since 1942, the sentiment expressed in Helen's letter reflects that of a family member that has been waiting years for their soldier to return safely to American soil. Helen's letter to her brother was originally addressed in black ink to the Oakland Navy Hospital in San Francisco, California. This is crossed out with blue ink, and redirected to Parris Island, South Carolina. From the handwriting, it is unclear whether Helen made this change herself. The envelope is postmarked in Savannah, Georgia, where Helen lived, on October 23, 1945 and was postmarked by the U.S. Navy on November 3, 1945.

## **Editorial Statement**

This transcription is a diplomatic edition. The base text is replicated as accurately as possible and as close to the original text as is feasible, meaning spelling and grammatical errors have not been fixed in the transcription. Annotations have been made as needed.

307 Abercorn St.  
Savannah, GA.  
Oct. 23 - 1945

Dear Sammy—

A letter from Mama<sup>1</sup> today tells us you are back home again<sup>2</sup>—and we are about the happiest folks you will ever want to know—we have waited so long for that good news, just daring to hope, as we know you were too, but we are so Thankful that at last we will have you safe among us noisy Owenses again.

We are all planning to visit you when you get to Mama's. The new in-laws—children and all. if we can get there—so till then Be good and be careful and do hurry home—we love you so much—Sis Helen

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<sup>1</sup> Frances Elvira Alexander Owens was the mother of Helen Owens Winkelmes and Samuel Robert Owens (“Owens Collection Overview”).

<sup>2</sup> Owens was a prisoner of war at a Japanese camp, Fukouaka, until the end of World War II (The National Archives).

## Works Cited

“Owens Collection Overview.” 17 November 2016. MSS 16-05. Hunter Library, Western

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The National Archives. “Owens, Samuel Robert.” *Records of World War II Prisoners of War*,

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