

THE ARTCARE[™] ADVANTAGE: PROFILES IN CONSERVATION



THE CLIENT PROFILE

Located in the heart of the Midwest, the Nebraska State Historical Society is the keeper of hundreds of collections that chronicle the westward expansion of the United States. One of the largest and most important of these is the Eli S. Ricker Collection - a compendium of hundreds of interviews and photographs documenting the conflicts that culminated in the Battle of Wounded Knee. Donated to the Historical Society in 1926, the Collection includes 260 period photographs that are among the Society's most requested for research and reproduction. Also included in the Collection are 200 tablets containing interviews with soldiers, cowboys, trappers, scouts and Native Americans, as well as letters, official reports and records of Ricker's 21 years of research. As an invaluable documentation of the infamous conflict between Native Americans and white settlers, the Eli Ricker Collection required the highest level of conservation protection available.

THE CONSERVATION CHALLENGE

The 260 photographs of the Collection are frequently requested for reprint and reproduction and thus required housings that were both protective and accessible. In addition, the photos feature a variety of

Nebraska State Historical Society *Selects Alphasag[®] Artcare[™] to protect* Battle of Wounded Knee Collection

finishing emulsions. To accommodate any alkaline-sensitive finishes, an unbuffered storage product was indicated. The 200 tablets of written documentation are made of groundwood paper, and thus are inherently prone to degradation - indicating the need for preventive protection against self-destruction.

THE PROCESS AND SOLUTION

To properly address the two different media of the Collection - photographic images and hand-written documents - conservators at the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center chose a two-pronged approach to conservation treatment.

- Alphasag Artcare Natural White 4 ply board, which is produced with unbuffered outer layers and Artcare technology in the middle layers, was selected to create storage file dividers for the 260 photographs. The unbuffered outer sides of the board pose no threat to alkaline-sensitive photographic emulsions, while the embedded Artcare technology will adsorb atmospheric and micro-environmental pollutants that could damage the photographs. Photographs now rest upright, flat and separated between two Artcare archival boards.
- Each of the 200 tablets was placed in an individual folder constructed of 4 ply Alphasag Artcare that will provide adequate physical support for these fragile pieces, as well as active mitigation of the self-destructive tendencies of the groundwood paper itself.

The portrait of Red Cloud and his wife are among the 260 original photographs that have been preserved with Alphasag Artcare. Photograph: Nebraska State Historical Society



THE SUCCESS OF ARTCARE[™]

The priceless Eli Ricker Collection is now fully protected with housings that provide the desired accessibility for researchers, scholars and the American public, and the much-needed preventive conservation protection of Artcare, to ensure that the Collection survives well into the new millennium.



Portrait of Eli S. Ricker, courtesy of the Nebraska State Historical Society

The Artcare[™] Archival System

The art of protecting your art.

1-800-9ARTCARE
www.artcare.com

MATERIALS USED

Alphasag[®] Artcare[™] 4 ply White
100% cotton rag board to make housing folders for 200 groundwood tablets.

Alphasag[®] Artcare[™] 4 ply Natural White
100% cotton rag board with unbuffered outer layers and zeolite-bearing inner layers to make dividers for photographs of varied emulsion finishes.