INDIANA CABINET CARD COLLECTION
CA. 1870S–CA. 1905

Collection Information

Historical Sketch

Scope and Content Note

Series Contents

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 9 boxes

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1870s–Ca. 1905

PROVENANCE: Multiple

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

A cabinet card is a late nineteenth-century photographic format that consists of a print approximately 5 ½ x 4 inches mounted on stiff cardboard that measures 6 ½ x 4 ½ inches. It was first introduced in England in 1866, and soon replaced the smaller cartes-de-visite in popularity. In the beginning the photograph was usually an albumen print, but later gelatin silver or carbon prints, as well as photomechanical prints, appeared on cabinet cards. On most cards the photographer’s name or insignia can be found either printed or embossed on the card below the photograph and/or on the back of the card.

Most cabinet cards featured portraits, but the format was used for other subjects also. Studio portraits often made use of elaborate decorative settings, such as painted backgrounds, draperies, columns, balustrades, and furniture props for the sitter. Sometimes studios used settings to mimic the outdoors. Non-studio portraits were usually taken at the subject’s home or place of business. People usually wore their finest clothing for their portraits, but there are also portraits that show people in the clothing of their trade (apron, nurse uniform, police uniform, etc.). Portraits that reveal a person’s occupation often include the tools of their work as well (camera, telegraph, musical instrument, etc.).

The earliest cabinet card mounts were light in color. After 1880, various colors were used, such as maroon, dark green, or black. Cards with gold beveled edges date from around 1885 to 1892. Cards with scalloped or notched edges, and those with elaborate patterns printed on back, appeared in the 1890s.

Large studio portraits and scenic postcards became popular in the 1890s, gradually replacing the use of cabinet cards. The majority of cabinet cards were produced between 1880 and 1906.

Sources:

Items in the collection.


SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of cabinet cards dating from ca. 1870s to ca. 1905. The great majority are portraits, either of individuals or groups. These include babies, children, and adults. Almost half of the individual portraits are identified. Most of the portraits were taken in a studio setting, but some were taken outdoors, usually at residences or places of business. In addition to portraits of ordinary citizens, there are also some of well-known authors and politicians. Non-portrait subjects include buildings, monuments, oil and gas wells, and street scenes.

Series 1, Identified Portraits: This series includes mostly individual portraits, with a few of couples and families. They are arranged alphabetically by last name of the subject. In the series contents below, the town of the photographer’s studio is listed in parentheses, as is the date, if known, after the subject’s name. Slightly oversized cards are in a separate box.

Series 2, Unidentified Portraits: This series also consists of portraits of individuals or small family groups. The arrangement is alphabetical by name of the city or town of the photographer or studio. Slightly oversized cards are in a separate box.

Series 3, Portraits of Groups: This series is comprised of photos of school groups, social organizations, business associates, pall bearers, a reading group, some crowd scenes, and other groupings of unknown affiliation. Some individuals are identified. These are listed in the series contents alphabetically by name of the city or town of the photographer.

Series 4, Portraits Depicting Occupations: This series consists of portraits depicting the following categories of occupations: apron-wearing (e.g., nurse, bakers); authors; baseball players; businessmen and merchants; entertainers, performers, and lecturers; inventor; laborers; photographers and painters; physicians and pharmacists; police; politicians; and telegraph operator. Some individuals are identified. In the series contents below, the town of the photographer’s studio is listed in parentheses, as is the date, if known, after the description of the photo. Slightly oversized cards are in a separate box.

Series 5, Non-portraits: This series consists of photos of buildings, a casket with flowers, a union membership certificate, oil and gas wells, parks and monuments, street scenes, a historic tree, a wooden baby stroller, and some multi-view cards. In the series contents below, the town of the photographer’s studio is listed in parentheses, as is the date, if known, after the description of the photo.
SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Identified Portraits

CONTENTS

CONTAINER

A:  Ella Axtell (Washington, 1887). Box 1


C:  Annie Eliza Creswell (Logansport, n.d.). Box 1

D:  Eleanor C. Davis (New Albany, 1881). Box 1

E:  W.O. Eskew(?) (Indianapolis, n.d.). Box 1

F:  May Faust (Crawfordsville, n.d.; photographer’s sample card). Box 1

G:  George Gastil(?) (Plymouth, n.d.). John George Giezendanner in Knights of Pythias regalia (Indianapolis, n.d.) [see also photo of Giezendanner building in box 8]. Zelie Constance Simon Grisard (Vevay, n.d.). Mr. Joseph Grunwald, about 25 years old (Indianapolis, ca. 1890) [see also photo of Grunwald standing with others in front of his liquor store, in box 8]. Casimir Gunther (Indianapolis, n.d.). Box 1

H:  Roy (or Ray?) Harlan or Harlon (Terre Haute, n.d.). (Charlie Hauck(?)) (Evansville, n.d.). Box 1


K:  Frank Kizer in fraternal lodge uniform (Winchester, n.d.). Box 1
L: Max Leckner, piano teacher (Indianapolis, n.d.). Eli J. Long (Indianapolis, n.d.) [see also carte-de-visite in P 0415].


N: Ben, Jude(?), Ida, and Orville Nibarger (Anderson, n.d.).
Note: the identification of this family has been refuted by a Nibarger descendant (12 April 2011).


P: Charles Powner (unknown photographer, n.d.) [see also carte-de-visite in P 0415].


U: C.L. Urmston or Urniston (?) (Greencastle, n.d.).


Oversized: Civil War veteran James K. Collins and wife, Sarah (Hastings, signed 2 November 1902). Tom and Ivy Coy (Goshen, n.d.).

Series 2: Unidentified Portraits

CONTENTS

Cities and Towns A: Albion—child’s memorial flowers with image of child superimposed. Anderson—seated woman reading newspaper, on back is written “Merry Christmas” and is signed by Emily in 1888. Auburn—woman with bow at neck. Aurora—two young girls; older woman.
Cities and Towns B: Bloomington—old man, two women, and little girl standing by gate. Bluffton—older couple.


Cities and Towns D: Deming—young man in suit and bowtie.

Cities and Towns E: Elwood—baby lying in fancy buggy. Evansville—woman in hat and gloves.

Cities and Towns H: Hobart—young woman standing. Hudson—two women; two young children and a baby.

Cities and Towns I: Indianapolis—woman standing with fan, 2 June 1880; profile of woman facing right; man looking toward left; woman looking toward left; woman in lacy dress; man with handlebar mustache; older woman; a boy leaning on a gate, identified as “Arthur” on the back.

Cities and Towns L: Lafayette—woman with bow on left shoulder; man facing left.

Cities and Towns M: Michigan City—young woman (“Aunt Gustie” is written on front); woman and man; duplicate photos of baby, woman, and man. Milford—woman wearing a brooch with small chain attached.

Cities and Towns N: New Castle—older man with beard; same portrait with memorial flowers. Noblesville—boy with cow.

Cities and Towns R: Roanoke—young woman wearing earrings, message written by her on back. Rushville—five portraits of men; five portraits of women; one portrait of a man and woman. Russiaville—woman standing, wearing a sash.

Cities and Towns S: Shelbyville—young man facing toward right; baby seated on fur. South Bend—woman in dark dress with puffed sleeves. South Whitley—young woman seated with book; young couple; young man with printed tie; young man with drooping eyes; young man with mustache; young child; young woman with dark hair. Spencer—woman standing, wearing a hat with feathers.

Cities and Towns V: Valparaiso—woman in light frilly dress; baby in long (christening?) gown. Veedersburg—little girl by man in wheelchair.

Cities and Towns W: Warsaw—Indiana soldier (illegible writing on back) [see also tintype of same soldier in P 0416]. Winchester—seated man reading newspaper.


Series 3: Portraits of Groups

CONTENTS


Cities and Towns E: Evansville—one man and eight women in an Evansville cemetery on Memorial Day; seven boys with stringed musical instruments and teacher.

Cities and Towns F: Fairmount—schoolchildren with teacher, class no. 9, Friends’ S.S., 27 June 1891. Fort Wayne—fiftieth anniversary montage of Concordia (Lutheran) College in Fort Wayne, showing some buildings and faculty, 1889.

Cities and Towns L: La Porte—group of nine men and women, some dressed in stripes, one holding a tennis racquet, another holding an umbrella; last names identified on back: Day, Wile, Boyd, Hurd, Boyd, How, Butterworth, Doughty, Kramer, 1888.


Cities and Towns N: New Albany—twenty-one people by a gazebo with a sign that says “Proserpine.”

Cities and Towns S: South Whitley—six female pallbearers wearing sashes and hats.

Cities and Towns T: Terre Haute—six women reading.

Series 4: Portraits Depicting Occupations

CONTENTS

**Apron-wearing:** Nurse in apron and cap, holding a tray (Indianapolis, n.d.). Two mustachioed men in aprons over vests and bowties (Indianapolis, n.d.). Two bakers: Charlie Frump and George Rupley in aprons with pans (South Whitley, n.d.).

**Baseball players:** Team portrait with caption “Champions of Indiana” (South Bend, 1887) [The South Bend Greenstockings: Lennox, Joyce (left field), Staples (1st base), Bates (center field), Lyons, (James) Burns, Dobson (right field), J.F. Deacon (manager), Johnson, Rockstroh, Tray, Teddy (bat boy?), Hart (pitcher)]. Claypool player posing with baseball (North Manchester, n.d.). Evansville players, 1889: [Charles] Calhoun (catcher); [Paul] LaTouche (pitcher); Willie McGill (pitcher), written on back: “pitcher Evansville, Ind. and Burlington, Iowa B.B.C. Season of 1889 age 15 and 7 mo.” [William Vaness McGill, b. 10 November 1873 in Atlanta, Georgia; died 29 August 1944 in Indianapolis; buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis]. Two players: one with glove, the other holding a baseball and wearing a shirt that says “Monarch” (Wolcott, n.d.).

**Baseball players**—oversized card: First champions[Terre Haute Hottentots], I.I.I. [Illinois-Indiana-Iowa] League—Wm. F. Krieg (manager), Mordecai Brown (pitcher), Lewis Walters (second base and captain), James J. Hackett (pitcher), Bobby Carter (left field), Geo. Wilkinson (right field), Wm. H. Richardson (first base), Geo. Starnagle (catcher), A.A. Swaim (pitcher), Jim Baird (third base), Teddy McGrew (shortstop), and Geo. Brady (center field and pitcher) (Terre Haute, 1901).

**Businessmen and merchants:** Two men sitting on stoves with pots and pans in front of store (Indianapolis, ca. 1879). Three men standing in doorway of Schrader & Wilson insurance, real estate, and loan office (Fort Wayne, n.d.). Salesman sitting with samples of his wares from Hulman & Co. (Terre Haute, n.d.).

**Entertainers, performers, lecturers:** Two vaudevillians in false noses and mustaches with musical instruments (Martinsville, n.d.). Ashbury Ben, “The Original Leopard Boy” in boxer’s pose (Indianapolis, n.d.). Walter Howe Jones (DePauw music professor) at the piano (Greencastle, signed 11 February 1893). Lillie May Bentley, child lecturer (Shelbyville, n.d.).

**Inventor:** Man standing, pointing to a press with patent label dated 1890 (Hammond, ca. 1890).


Physicians and Pharmacists: Dr. Thomas B. Harvey (Medical College of Indiana professor of gynecology (Indianapolis, n.d.). Pharmacist with mortar, pestle, and beakers (Kendallville, n.d.).

Police: Police sergeant with beard (South Bend, n.d.). Policeman with numeral four on his hat (South Bend, n.d.). Full-length portrait of policeman with number 93 on his hat (Indianapolis, n.d.).


Telegraph operator: Man seated at desk with telegraph (Wanatah, n.d.).

Series 5: Non-portraits

CONTENTS

Buildings [continued]: Giezendanner Building at intersection of Vermont, Senate, and Indiana Avenue, including bakery and Lewis Meier store (top floor was Odd Fellows lodge) (Indianapolis, n.d.) [see also portrait of John George Giezendanner in box 1]. Mr. J. Grunwald standing with others in front of his liquor store (Indianapolis, ca. 1905) [see also portrait of Joseph Grunwald in box 1]. Bank of Logansport (Logansport, n.d.). Ridgeville Bank (two of the people pictured in front of it are identified as “Dad” and “Rollo”) (Ridgeville, n.d.). Church of All Saints (church in San Pierre, but photographer’s studio in Winamac, n.d.). “Y.M.C.A. and R.R. Building” (Union City, n.d.).

Casket and flowers: “Mother” written among flowers with casket (Indianapolis, n.d.).


Multi-view scenes: Synod buildings and other scenes, with German text on verso (Fort Wayne, 1896). Hanover College, river scenes, and views of Madison, advertising Spaulding’s Gallery (Madison, n.d.).

Oil and gas wells: Crowd standing by oil well (Greenfield, n.d.). Gas well with gas cloud (Marion, n.d.).


Tree: Historic tree in Corydon under which legislature held a meeting (New Albany, 1891).

Wooden baby stroller with advertisement written in pencil on verso (Fort Wayne, n.d.).