



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of Natural History*

Guide to L.H. Palmer collection of Chinese  
paintings and documents, circa 1912-1915

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Anthropological Archives
<b>Title:</b>	L.H. Palmer collection of Chinese paintings and documents
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1912-1915
<b>Identifier:</b>	NAA.MS7409
<b>Extent:</b>	7 Items
<b>Language:</b>	Chinese .

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Purchased by Cornelius Osgood from the estate of L. H. Palmer of Boston and donated to the Smithsonian on May 20, 1977. The collection was transferred from the object collections of the Department of Anthropology to the National Anthropological Archives by Chang-su Houchins in 1986.

### Related Materials

Objects and other documents collected by L.H. Palmer in China and donated to the Smithsonian by Cornelius Osgood are held by the Department of Anthropology object collections under Accession 327219.

### Processing Information

The items in this collection were originally cataloged individually by the NAA under numbers MS 7174, 7409-7411, and 7602. English translations and other data were furnished by Chang-su Houchins, Department of Anthropology; Emily Hoover, summer volunteer; and Huey-ing Jeng, museum intern from George Washington University.

In 2023, the collection was reprocessed and all items were incorporated into a single collection under MS 7409.

### Preferred Citation

MS 7409 L.H. Palmer collection of Chinese paintings and documents, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

### Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Access to the collection requires an appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of seven (7) items collected in China by L.H. Palmer from approximately 1912 to 1915. The collection includes 3 ornamental inscriptions, or figures of animals that also form Chinese characters; a painted fan design; a painting of flowers and other plants; a painting of a scene by a stream; and a passport for Mrs. L.H. Palmer.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or National Anthropological Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

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## Local Numbers

NAA MS 7409

USNM Accession 327219

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Calligraphy
- Chinese

### Cultures:

- Chinese

### Types of Materials:

- Drawings
- Works of art

### Places:

- China
- East Asia

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## Container Listing

Folder 1

[Ornamental inscription](#)

1 Paintings (visual works) (31 x 43 inches)

Notes: Two pairs of birds and one single bird with a pussy willow branch form characters that read Sung Chu Mei, meaning pine, bamboo, and flowering plum, symbols of endurance to the Chinese.

NAA INV 10000052

USNM Ethnology Catalog 418001

Folder 1

[Ornamental inscription](#)

1 Paintings (visual works) (31 x 43 inches)

Notes: NAA INV 10000053

USNM Ethnology Catalog 418002

A fish and a dragon and two birds form characters which read Yün Lung Ting, meaning cloud dragon pavillion.

Folder 1

[Ornamental inscription](#)

1 Paintings (visual works) (31 x 43 inches)

Notes: NAA INV 10000054

USNM Ethnology Catalog 418003

A fish and a dragon, a bird, and a pair of birds with a butterfly form characters which read Lung Feng Hsiang, meaning the dragon and the phoenix, symbols of prosperity and good fortune.

Folder 2

[Painted fan leaf](#)

1 Paintings (visual works) (15 x 23.5 inches)

Notes: NAA INV 10000055

The painting depicts a scene of two boats carrying people. A canopied boat carries two ladies with a blue bowl between them, their two servants, and a punter. The other boat holds four musicians, one playing a trumpet-like instrument (possibly a sona or a hai-ti-tzu), another playing a recorder-like instrument (possibly a hsiao), another playing the cymbals, or nao, and the last playing a drum on a stand (possibly a tan-p'i-ku).

Folder 2

[Painting of flowers and plants on hillside](#)

1 Paintings (visual works) (17 x 24.5 inches)

Notes: Painting of flowers and plants on hillside, in yellow, pink, and green. The flowers depicted are probably peonies, asters, and chrysanthemums. Includes a verse, signature (Shao Kai Zhu) and two stamped seals, and is dated 1915.

NAA INV 10000056

USNM Ethnology Catalog 417991

Folder 2

[Painting of a scene by a stream](#)

1 Paintings (visual works) (15 x 12.5 inches)

Notes: A stream scene with a person on a dock, a bridge and house on the far side.

Folder 2

[Passport \(hùjhào\) for Mrs. L. H. Palmer](#)

1 Document (woodblock print on mulberry paper)

Notes: According to the passport, Mrs. Palmer (Pa-Mü-Eř, on the document) was a teacher of English at the Chihli Normal College and the passport was issued for her travel to the capital cities of Henan, Xi'an, Chengdu, Wuchang, and Hankou during summer vacation in 1912. The passport bears official seals and is decorated with the wave border design in blue.