Guide to the W. L. Armstrong Washingtoniana Glass Negative Collection

NMAH.AC.0183
NMAH Staff
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| 8" x 10" negatives, silver gelatin unless identified as collodion | 4 | 4" x 5" negatives, all silver gelatin | 6 |
Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: W. L. Armstrong Washingtoniana Glass Negative Collection
Date: 1865-1885
Identifier: NMAH.AC.0183
Creator: Minor, Frank (photographer) (Photographer)
Armstrong, W. L., Mrs.
Extent: 1 Cubic foot (2 boxes)
Language: English
Summary: Glass plate negatives of views of Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Virginia.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
Collection donated by Mrs. W. L. Armstrong, February 3, 1986.

Provenance
The donor was given the plates by Frank Minor [Miner?], the uncle of a friend, Mrs. Whitney Aitchen of Laurel, Md. Minor had obtained the plates from an unidentified friend who knew of his photographic interests; apparently they had been in his possession for some years before he gave them to Mrs. Armstrong, for she noted that he was unable to print them "by that time" due to failing eyesight.

Available Formats
Collection scanned in 2021.

Processing Information
Collection processed by NMAH Staff, undated
Collection scanned by Noah Stewart, digitization assistant, 2021.

Preferred Citation

Restrictions
Collection is open for research.
Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Photographer(s) and circumstances of creation unknown.

Scope and Contents

11 8" x 10" and 10 4" x 5" glass photonegatives, some marked "1885", one marked "1865" and "Libby Prison"), but most seem from ca. 1885; silver gelatin except two silver collodion plates, one of which bears the "1865." The large plates were stored in a nineteenth-century wooden, grooved plate box (now stored separately). Images depict buildings and sites in Washington, D.C., including: aerial or bird's-eye views possibly taken from the (unfinished?) Washington Monument; the Manassas Panorama building with the completed (capped) Monument visible in the background; Washington street scenes, especially Pennsylvania Avenue; the Smithsonian castle; the U.S. Capitol; the White House; and dredging operations to create Hains Point.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
- Architecture -- 1880-1890 -- Washington (D.C.)
- Buildings -- 1880-1890 -- Washington (D.C.)
- Capitols -- 1880-1890
- Cities and towns -- 1880-1890
- Cycloramas -- 1880-1890
- Dredging -- 1880-1890 -- Washington (D.C.)
- Libby Prison -- 1880-1890
- Paintings -- 1880-1890
- Panoramas -- 1880-1890
- Streets -- Washington (D.C.)
- United States Capitol (Washington, D.C.) -- 1880-1890
- Washington Monument (Washington, D.C.) -- 1880-1890
- Waterfronts -- Washington (D.C.)

Types of Materials:
- Aerial views -- 1880-1890 -- Washington (D.C.)
- Photographs -- Black-and-white negatives -- Glass -- Collodion -- 19th century
- Wet collodion negatives

Names:
- Smithsonian Institution -- 1880-1890
Places:

Hains Point (Washington, D.C.) -- 1880-1980
Manassas (Va.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Washington D.C. -- photographs -- 1860-1890
White House (Washington, D.C.)
8" x 10" negatives, silver gelatin unless identified as collodion

Box 1, Folder 1

Libby Prison / Richmond / 1865 (on negative), with soldiers and tents in foreground, prison building in background. Collodion, but copied from another photograph. Sky area opaqued; left edge ragged and broken. SI neg. no. 86 353.

Box 1, Folder 1

Libby Prison [glass plate negative], 1865
1 Item (Silver gelatin on glass.; 8.0" x 10.1")
Collector: Armstrong, W. L., Mrs.
Language: English.
Notes: AC0183-0000001.tif (AC Scan No.)
Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Glass plates must be handled with cotton gloves.
Confederate prison in Richmond, Virginia. Small group of men and soldiers standing amid six tents in foreground. Glass plate is slightly chipped around the edge.
Names: Libby Prison
Topic: Tents
Soldiers -- Civil War
Civil war
Prisons
Prisoners of war
Place: Virginia -- 19th century
Richmond (Va.)
Confederate States of America
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1860-1870 -- Black-and-white negatives -- Glass

Box 1, Folder 2

Smithsonian Institution "castle" building, exterior. #86 347.

Box 1, Folder 3

Manassas Panorama building with Washington Monument in background. Sign on building: "BATTLE OF MANASSAS OR SECOND BULL RUN." "1885" on plate. #86 345.

[Battle of Manassas or Second Bull Run panorama or cyclorama building with Washington Monument in the background: b & w photoprint], 1885
1 Item (7.9" x 9.9")
Image(s): W. L. Armstrong Washingtoniana Glass Negative Collection: 1865-1885
Collector: Armstrong, W. L., Mrs.
Language: English.
Notes: AC0183-0000002 (AC Scan No.)
86-345 (OPS neg. no.)
Silver gelatin on paper.
In collection control file.
Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.
Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves.
Building was located on National Mall in Washington, DC.
Scanned from copy print. Original is glass plate negative.

Topic: Manassas Panorama -- Washington (D.C.) -- 1880-1890
Cycloramas

Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1860-1870 -- Black-and-white negatives -- Glass

Place: Manassas (Va.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Box 1, Folder 4
Copy of painting of Civil War cavalry battle, probably from Panorama above. Plate broken and taped together. #86 348.

Box 1, Folder 5
Collodion copy of painting of men rowing boat with U.S. flag. #86 346.

Box 1, Folder 6
Bridge (possibly Chain Bridge?). Emulsion varnished, poor condition. #86 351.

Box 1, Folder 7
U.S. Capitol. #86 354.

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 1, Folder 9
Pennsylvania Avenue toward the Capitol, showing Fitch, Fox, & Brown and Solari's Hotel, with horse drawn trolley. Plate marked "Penn./Ave./1885." #86 349.

Box 1, Folder 10
Aerial view, showing Smithsonian Castle, Arts and Industries Building, and the Capitol. #86 344.

Box 1, Folder 11
Aerial view, including river. Negative marked 1885. #86 352.
### 4" x 5" negatives, all silver gelatin

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