



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Albums

NMAH.AC.1015

NMAH Staff

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Albums
Date:	1900-1956.
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1015
Source:	National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Work and Industry National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Engineering and Industry
Creator:	Van Tassell, A.R. Jackson, Paul
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Photograph album documenting the work and life of A.R. Van Tassell, an engineer who worked on structures in Hawaii as well as the Panama Canal.
Digital Content:	Image(s): A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Albums

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was donated to the National Museum of American History's Division of Engineering and Industry by Paul Jackson, 1987.

Ownership and Custodial History

Transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Engineering and Industry in 2007.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

W. P. Stine Panama Canal Papers (NMAH.AC.1039)

John Frances Little Panama Canal Scrapbook Photograph Albums (NMAH.AC.0708)

Katherine Kingsford Panama Canal Photograph Album (NMAH.AC.1040)

Processing Information

Collection processed by Kiley Orchard (intern); supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons (archivist), 2008.

Preferred Citation

A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Album, 1900-1956, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270.

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Biographical Note

In 1900, A.R. Van Tassell took his first engineering job in Honolulu, Hawaii at the age of seventeen. In 1902, he went to Mexico City to help build the Central Post Office. He also worked on the Panama Canal and was employed as an engineer during the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. He was married at least twice and had one daughter, Janet.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of two photograph albums documenting A.R. Van Tassell's engineering career and family life. The first album includes photographs that begin in 1900 and include images of buildings, structures, ships, harbors, a sugar factory, the Kilauea Volcano, mills, and the "Rainbow Bridge" near Hilo, which Van Tassell was involved in building. Other images feature Van Tassell's friends and family, as well as his wedding trip to Laredo, Texas. The album also contains photographs from Mexico City, Havana, and various travels in the United States. Van Tassell has included tickets from bull fights and musical programs in Mexico City. The photographs are captioned and dated. Three loose postcards found in this album have been placed in a folder. The second, smaller album consists of photographs taken of the Panama Canal.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in one series.

Series 1, Photograph Albums, 1900-1956

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Bridges -- Hawaii
- Bullfights -- Mexico
- Canals -- Panama
- Castles -- Cuba
- Engineers
- Harbors -- Cuba
- Harbors -- Hawaii
- Hawaii -- Hawaii -- Hilo
- Pyramids -- Mexico

Sugar -- Cuba
Sugar -- Hawaii

Types of Materials:

Photograph albums -- 20th century
Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin -- 20th century

Names:

National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Engineering and Industry
National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Work and Industry

Places:

Cuba
Cuba -- Havana
Havana (Cuba)
Hawaii
Hawaii -- Oahu -- Honolulu
Hilo (Hawaii)
Honolulu (Hawaii)
Kilauea Volcano (Hawaii.)
Mexico
Panama
Panama Canal (Panama)

Container Listing

Series 1: Photograph Albums, 1900-1956

Box 1, Folder 1	Postcards, 1954, 1956, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Panama Canal, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Panama Canal, 1900-circa 1954
Box 1	<p>Post Office Job -- Mexico City 1902 [5 black-and-white photoprints on album page], 1902 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 10" x 13".) Collector: Van Tassell, A.R. Language: English. Notes: AC1015-0000001.tif (AC Scan No.) Unrestricted research access on site by appointment. Gloves required with unprotected photographs. The photographs depict construction of a post office.</p> <p>Topic: Building Post office buildings Place: Mexico City (Mexico) Mexico -- 1900-1910 Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1890-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints</p>
Box 1	<p>Bull Fight Scenes Mexico City -- 1903 [hand-written title on page]. [Black-and-white photoprints on album page], 1903 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 10" x 13".) Collector: Van Tassell, A.R. Language: English. Notes: AC1015-0000002.tif (AC Scan No.) Unrestricted research access on site by appointment. Gloves required with unprotected photographs. Six prints mounted on page.</p> <p>Topic: Bullfighting -- Mexico -- 1900-1920. Place: Mexico City (Mexico) Mexico -- 1900-1910 Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1890-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints</p>
Box 1	<p>[National Railroad Station, Bull Fighting ticket, etc.], 1903. [black-and-white photoprint and color print] 1 Item (Silver gelatin and ink on paper.; 10" x 13".) Collector: Van Tassell, A.R. Language: English. Notes: AC1015-0000003.tif (AC Scan No.)</p>

Unrestricted research access on site by appointment. Gloves required with unprotected photographs.

A photograph and tickets, 1903.

Topic: Bullfighting -- Mexico -- 1900-1920.
Railroad terminals

Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1890-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints

Place: Mexico -- 1900-1910

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