



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Albums

NMAH.AC.1015

NMAH Staff

Archives Center, National Museum of American History  
P.O. Box 37012  
Suite 1100, MRC 601  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012  
archivescenter@si.edu  
<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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## Collection Overview

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Repository:</b>      | Archives Center, National Museum of American History  |
| <b>Title:</b>           | A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Albums  |
| <b>Date:</b>            | 1900-1956.  |
| <b>Identifier:</b>      | NMAH.AC.1015  |
| <b>Source:</b>          | National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Work and Industry<br>National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Engineering and Industry |
| <b>Creator:</b>         | Van Tassell, A.R.<br>Jackson, Paul  |
| <b>Extent:</b>          | 0.3 Cubic feet (1 box)  |
| <b>Language:</b>        | English .   |
| <b>Summary:</b>         | 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.               |
| <b>Digital Content:</b> | <a href="#">Image(s): A.R. Van Tassell Photograph Albums</a>  |

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## 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 and access on site by appointment. Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

## Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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.

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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.

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## 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.

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## Arrangement

This collection is arranged in one series.

Series 1, Photograph Albums, 1900-1956

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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:

- 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)

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

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|-------------|--|
|             | A photograph and tickets, 1903.                            |
| Topic:      | Bullfighting -- Mexico -- 1900-1920.<br>Railroad terminals |
| Genre/Form: | Photographs -- 1890-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints    |
| Place:      | Mexico -- 1900-1910  |

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