



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Edward Harvey Davis
photograph collection, 1903-1939

2011

National Museum of the American Indian
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Edward Harvey Davis photograph collection
Date:	1903-1939
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.001.031
Creator:	Davis, Edward H., b. 1862
Extent:	770 Photographic prints (approximate number; black & white) 2000 Negatives (photographic) (approximate number)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Davis visited the Diegueno and Luiseno in southern California; the Pii-pi (Pais), Kil-e-wah (Cahuilla), and Waicuri of Lower California, Mexico; the Yuma, Cocopah, Pima, Papago, Maricopa, Mojave, Hualapai (Walapai), Yaqui, and White Mountain Apache in Arizona; the Cora, Huichol, Opata, Mayo, and Yaqui of Mexico; the Seri of Tiburon Island; the Chemehuevi of Nevada and California; the Modoc and Klamath Lake Indians in Oregon; and the Paiute in Nevada. His collection contains photographs of Apache, Cahuilla, Chemehuevi, Cochimi, Cochiti Pueblo, Cocopa, Cora, Guaicuruj, Huichol, Kawia, Kiliwa, Kumeyaay (Diegueno), Luiseno, Maricopa, Mayo, Mission, Mohave, Opata, Paipai, Papago (Tohono O'odham), Pima (Akimel O'odham), San Carlos Pueblo, San Manuel, Seri, Ute, Walapai (Hualapai), Yaqui, and Yuma.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Purchased;, Edward H. Davis;, 1917 and 1948.

Available Formats

1965 negatives and 759 prints have been digitized as of July 30, 2009.

Processing Information

Biographical notes updated by Mimi Games, July 30, 2009

Restrictions

Access restricted. Researchers should contact the staff of the NMAI Archives for an appointment to access the collection.

Biographical Note

Artist, photographer, and artefact collector, Edward Harvey Davis was born on June 18, 1862 in New York. He traveled to California in 1884 for health reasons (Bright's disease i.e. actue of chronic nephritis (a kidney

disorder)), arriving in 1885, and settled on 320 acres in an area called Mesa Grande, east of San Diego. Later that year he returned to New York to marry, bringing his new bride, Anna May Wells back to California with him. They would eventually have four children. Shortly after settling in California, Davis became interested in the the Kumeyaay (Northern Diguenos), the Mesa Grande Indians indigenous to that area, and spent the remainder of his life collecting artifacts, studying and photographing them. He collected so many items that his ranch house ran out of room for them, necessitating the building of another structure (adobe) to house them. As a result of this interest and care of the Mesa Grande Indians in San Diego County, in 1907, Davis was named a ceremonial chief by the Indians themselves. Originally trained as an artist, Davis first worked as a drafter and architect. Upon his arrival in San Diego in 1885, he fortuitously invested in and profited from the booming real estate industry of the time. Davis became known to George Gustav Heye when Heye initially purchased a collection of Indian artifacts from him for the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation in 1915. With the money from the sale of his collection, Davis was able to open a resort lodge called the Powam that same year. His real estate investments and his lodge enabled Davis to finance his fieldwork, most of which he did on his own. In 1916 however, Davis also became an official field collector for the Museum of the American Indian in New York. Sporadically, from 1917 to 1930, Heye contracted Davis to conduct field trips to California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Mexico, and Tiburon Island, visiting over two dozen different Indian peoples in the course of his travels. Wherever he went, Davis continued to photograph the Native peoples, but did not consider these photographs to be part of his contract with Heye. Heye later purchased the bulk of Davis's photograph collection. Davis also had sketched objects and landscapes during his travels as a method of preserving what he saw. Davis died in San Bernardino on February 22, 1951. In addition to his photographs, Davis authored several scholarly articles.

Arrangement

Collection arranged by item number.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Akimel O'odham (Pima)
- Cahuilla
- Cahuilla [Morongo Band of Mission Indians]
- Campo Band of Kumeyaay
- Chemehuevi
- Cochimi
- Cochiti Pueblo
- Cocopa
- Cora
- Cora
- Desert Cahuilla [Torres-Martinez Reservation/Torres-Martinez Band]
- Guaycura (Waicuri)
- Hualapai (Walapai)
- Indians of Mexico -- Photographs
- Indians of North America -- Arizona -- Photographs
- Indians of North America -- Basin -- Photographs
- Indians of North America -- California
- Indians of North America -- California -- Photographs
- Indians of North America -- Southwest -- Photographs
- Kamia (Desert Kumeyaay)

Kiliwa
Kumeyaay (Diegueño)
Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay
Mojave (Mohave)
Nevome (Pima Bajo)
Opata
Paipai (Pi-Pi/Pais)
Payómkawichum (Luiseño)
Pechanga Band Luiseño
Piipaash (Maricopa)
Quechan (Yuma/Cuchan)
San Carlos Apache
Seri
Soboba Luiseño
Tohono O'odham (Papago)
White Mountain Apache
Wixarika (Huichol)
Yavapai
Yavapai [Fort McDowell]
Yoeme (Yaqui)
Yoeme (Yaqui) [Pascua Yaqui]
Yoreme (Mayo)

Cultures:

Akimel O'odham (Pima)
Cahuilla
Cahuilla [Morongo Band of Mission Indians]
Campo Band of Kumeyaay
Chemehuevi
Cochimi
Cochiti Pueblo
Cocopa
Cora
Cora
Desert Cahuilla [Torres-Martinez Reservation/Torres-Martinez Band]
Guaycura (Waicuri)
Hualapai (Walapai)
Indians of North America -- California
Kamia (Desert Kumeyaay)
Kiliwa
Kumeyaay (Diegueño)
Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay
Mojave (Mohave)
Nevome (Pima Bajo)
Opata
Paipai (Pi-Pi/Pais)
Payómkawichum (Luiseño)
Pechanga Band Luiseño
Piipaash (Maricopa)
Quechan (Yuma/Cuchan)
San Carlos Apache
Seri
Soboba Luiseño

Tohono O'odham (Papago)
White Mountain Apache
Wixarika (Huichol)
Yavapai
Yavapai [Fort McDowell]
Yoeme (Yaqui)
Yoeme (Yaqui) [Pascua Yaqui]
Yoreme (Mayo)

Types of Materials:

Negatives
Photographic prints

Places:

Arizona
California
Mexico