

Inventory to the Stereograph Card Collection (1895-1905)

Finding aid created by Stephanie Crawford, April 2020

Descriptive Summary

Title: Stereograph Card Collection

Dates: 1895-1905

Collection Number: M-59

Quantity: 1 linear foot

Abstract: The collection contains 103 stereograph cards spanning 1895 through 1905. Subjects include: Americana, documentary scenes, monuments, a presidential inauguration, scenes involving African Americans, places, animals, and jobs.

Language: English, French and German.

Repository: The Max R. Taurig Library and Archive, the Mattatuck Museum. Advance notice required.

History:

Stereograph cards were produced by using a camera with a double lens. The twin- although slightly different- images, when viewed through a stereoscope viewer, produced a 3D image. The 3D image was meant to reproduce ocular vision. The initial process was originally developed by Sir Charles Wheatstone in a study he published in 1838. Wheatstone originally intended for drawings to be viewed in this fashion, but the process was applied later to photography.

Stereoscopy gained popularity after a simpler version of a stereoscope reader was invented by Sir

David Brewster in 1849. Photography companies began to mass produce cards. Stereograph cards allowed viewers to see places far away from their homes, to see people from different places, and to view entertainment scenes.

Sources consulted: Beaumont Newhall. *The History of Photography*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2005. 110-117.

Scope and Content Note:

The collection contains 103 stereograph cards spanning 1895 through 1905. The majority of the cards are from the Keystone View Company. Subjects include: Americana, documentary scenes, monuments, a presidential inauguration, scenes involving African Americans, places, animals, and jobs. Almost all of the cards are albumen prints. One of the cards has captions in English, French, and German.

References and Related Collections:

The Mattatuck has a stereoscope viewer in its collection for viewing. The Max R. Traurig Library and Archive, the Mattatuck Museum.

Administrative History:

Preferred Citation: Stereograph Card Collection. M59.

Container List: This section provides descriptions of the materials found within each series. Each series description is followed by a container list, which gives the titles of the folders and their locations in the numbered boxes that comprise this collection.

Note: The cards are listed below are described as: Publisher, publisher location, date. Type of print. Card number, title. Information on reverse.

Box Item

- 1 1-2 Alfred S. Campbell, Elizabeth NJ, copyrighted 1896 [albumen print?]
- 603 “The Lively Pickaninnies”. The reverse has an ad for Honest, long cut tobacco. Image depicts 8 African American children, outside
 - 616 “The Interrupted Game”. The reverse has an ad for Honest, long cut tobacco. Image depicts 8 African American children, outside, and 1 slightly older female child.
- 3 Strohmeyer & Wyman Publishers, New York, NY, copyrighted 1895. [albumen print?] Sold only by Underwood and Underwood. “Cotton is King, Plantation Scene, Georgia, U.S.A.” Reverse has title, and variations in other languages like French and German.
- 4 New York Stereoscopic Company, undated. On Reverse: “Illustrations of Negro Life. Delineated by Wood’s Minstrels. ‘Sittin on a Rail’ – Mr. C.H. Fox.” [seems like a drawing]
- 5-6 On Reverse: Characteristic Southern Scenes. Photographed by A.J. Palmer, Aiken, S.C. A large stock of Views of Negro Groups, Cabins, teams, Cotton Fields and Plants, etc., kept constantly on hand. Also Florida, Georgia and South Carolina Views. Albumen print, undated.
- 150 “Flip Flap Militia”. Group of 13 African American boys, in a semi-circle. Some are holding guns.
 -

Box Item

- 175 “Cotton Field.” Expansive shot of a cotton field. In midground, there is a group of African American women and small children picking cotton. 2 women hold baskets on their heads, 2 women are stooped over. Slavery? Share Cropping?

- 1 7 Geo Barker, Photographer. Niagra Falls, NY, copyright 1890. Albumen print. “Niagara – Dixon crossing the Niagara on a 7-8 inch wire.” Reverse is blank. Image is of a man on the wire, holding a very long pole for balance. There is also a ring around his ankles.
- 8 Underwood and Underwood Publishers, albumen print. circa 1897. S 309. “6227 – Modern American harvesting in the great western wheat fields – Walla Walla Washington. Reverse has a long explanation.
- 9-103 Keystone View Company, albumen prints. Circa 1895-1905. 1-300, not complete. Contains scenes of cities, coal mining, DC monuments, inaugurations, scenes of people, jobs, and animals.