

Transportation Photograph Scrapbook

The collection includes images taken in the 1910's focusing on railroads, other forms of transportation as well as rural and urban life.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Unknown

Title: Photograph scrapbook collection #4

Dates: 1910-1917 (bulk 1915)

Size: 5 boxes, 24 folders, 318 photographs, 549 negatives

Location: P26

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: Unrestricted access.

Additional physical form available: Scrapbooks have been photocopied and photographs have been digitized.

Acquisition information: Unknown.

Citation note: Photograph scrapbook collection #4, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Collection Description

Biographical/Historical note

This collection was processed during May and June 1997 so it could be included in the photograph scanning project occurring at that time. The collection's provenance was not determined at the time of processing. In addition, it was impossible to determine the owner/photographer for the collection. Because of the number of railroad related images, it is possible a railroad employee, perhaps a surveyor or engineer, was responsible. The name "W. W. Baird" (Photo #50, Scrapbook #1) appeared on one photo associated with the term "myself" but this is not felt to be conclusive evidence. A person named Anna is also attributed as the photographer for some scenes. All have the appearance of an amateur photographer.

Scope and content note

The unprocessed collection was contained in one cardboard box and included 2 medium sized scrapbooks with 318 snapshot type photographs of varying sizes pasted on black pages and 6 small negative holding booklets with a handwritten description for each of 549 negatives. This negative index gives a good identification for the photographs. Most, but not all, of the photographs had corresponding negatives, and 258 negatives had no corresponding prints.

The collection was processed to retain as much as possible the original arrangement. Photocopies were made of the original scrapbooks before they were dismantled. The original photographs were numbered in order and placed in acid free folders. The handwritten negative lists were also photocopied and one of the original negative booklets was retained. Enlarged prints were made of those images of greatest local interest (27, 5" x 7" prints from negatives and 21, 5" x 7" prints and 5, 8" x 10" prints and negatives). Inventories were prepared for these new prints and negatives; each scrapbook; and the negative booklets. The collection is stored in 5 boxes: photographs in one letter size Hollinger box with 24 folders, negatives arranged in number order in 4 small boxes.

The collection includes images taken in the 1910's focusing on railroads and transportation and rural and urban life. The collection's geographic scope is the Midwest, stretching from Memphis, Tennessee to Colorado and from Arkansas and Oklahoma to Chicago, Illinois. The majority of the photographs were taken in Missouri and Kansas. Those views of other areas may have been captured at vacation times.

The railroad related photographs pertain to the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad line and show scenes along its route in Missouri and Kansas. Missouri towns pictured include LaPlata, Marceline, Ethel, Carrollton, Keytesville, etc. Kansas towns pictured include Atchison, Bonner Springs, Berryton, Winfield, Emporia, Newton, etc. Very few photos of rolling stock and engines appear, but views of railroad track and bridges are numerous as well as some railroad employees such as cooks and depot workers.

Scenes of both eastern Jackson County and Kansas City are scattered throughout the collection. Those of eastern Jackson County show roads, bridges, and county surveyors. Kansas City scenes include the then newly constructed Union Station and nearby Grand Avenue Depot, the West Bluffs including the 8th Street Tunnel, Swope Park, Elm Ridge Race Track, The Grove wading park and swimming area, a Sells Floto Circus parade on its downtown route, downtown streets, river scenes, the Fire Department responding to a call, drugstore interiors and exteriors, and others. There are a number of images of individuals and groups of people.

These photographs capture both the rural scene of the time as well as the urban. The dress and style and mood of the time are portrayed. The most striking features caught are the modes of transportation used at the time: the railroads, the newly evolving automobile, the street car, the interurban to Excelsior Springs, river boats, and an early airplane seen taking off in Overland Park.

Collection Inventory

Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Inventory photograph list of Scrapbook #1 and #2

Folder 2: Photocopies of Scrapbook #1

Folders 3-11: Photographs from Scrapbook #1

Folder 12: Photocopies of Scrapbook #2

Folder 13-20: Photographs from Scrapbook #2

Folder 21: Photocopies of Negative Index lists, 6 books

Folder 22: Negatives only inventory list, from all neg. books

Folders 23-24: New negatives and prints from "Negative only" list

Process by Special Collections Librarian Sara Nyman, June, 1997. Digitized images loaded and described by volunteer Rebecca Power, Winter, 2005.