Warren C. Dickerson (1853-1936) Collection, circa 1890-1920

Finding aid created by Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County staff using RecordEXPRESS

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2015
Descriptive Summary

Title: Warren C. Dickerson (1853-1936) Collection, circa 1890-1920

Dates: circa 1890-1920

Collection Number: P-005

Creator/Collector: Dickerson, Warren C.

Extent: 55.2 linear feet (Boxes: letter, 5x7, 3 ov)

Online items available http://collections.nhm.org/seaver-center/

Repository: Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Los Angeles, California 90007-4057

Abstract: Warren C. Dickerson was a commercial postcard photographer whose work covers the late nineteenth century through about 1920. While Dickerson’s work as a whole is inclusive of photographs from throughout the United States, about one-third of the photographs are of California, which make up this collection. The photographs feature diverse subjects such as architecturally unique southern California residences, amusement parks, cityscapes and mountain scenes located throughout the counties and cities of the state.

Language of Material: English

Access

Research is by appointment only.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Warren C. Dickerson (1853-1936) Collection, circa 1890-1920. Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Acquisition Information

The Warren C. Dickerson Collection was transferred to the museum in 1934 directly from the photographer. Cataloging was completed in 1945 when the collection was integrated into the museum’s negative collection.

Biography/Administrative History

Very little is known about Warren C. Dickerson, who donated his collection of work to the museum in 1934, two years before his death. He traveled throughout the United States ranging from New York and Maine to Southern California, selling photographs to commercial postcard companies. A majority of the Dickerson Collection is contained within the bulk years of 1890-1920, with work that is illustrative of diverse aspects of the United States during the early twentieth century. During the winter of 1991, an edition of Terra, produced by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, featured Dickerson’s work. In a segment titled “Focus on the West”, an image of a new federal building construction site, featuring horse-drawn wagons in front of a city street background, was taken during late 1906 or early 1907.

Scope and Content of Collection

While Dickerson photographed throughout the United States extensively, about one-third of the donated work is made up of images from throughout California. The Seaver Center houses Dickerson’s work in its entirety as it was donated. However, the scope of the Warren C. Dickerson Collection specified within this finding aid includes only work from California in order to fit with the mission and scope of the repository. Photographs depict significant landmarks, buildings, or events from eighteen California counties. Dickerson’s dry plate glass negatives contain a diverse array of locations and subjects, ranging from Yosemite landscapes to Los Angeles seaside amusement park scenes. The series have been arranged according to county, and further subdivided into subseries by city or locale. For certain counties, an additional subseries is included to hold photographs that cannot be identified on the city of locale level.

Indexing Terms

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Mission San Gabriel Arcangel (San Gabriel, Calif.)
Berkeley (Calif.)
Oakland (Calif.)
Eureka (Calif.)
Provo (Utah)
Inyo County (Calif.)
Skidoo (Calif.)
Bakersfield (Calif.)
San Gabriel Mountains (Calif.)
San Gabriel Valley (Calif.)
Alhambra (Calif.)
Bunker Hill (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Domínguez Hills (Calif.)
Garvanza (Calif.)
Hollywood (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Los Angeles (Calif.)
Los Angeles River (Calif.)
Long Beach (Calif.)
Port of Long Beach
Wilshire Boulevard (Los Angeles, Calif.)
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Pasadena (Calif.)
Pomona (Calif.)
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San Gabriel (Calif.)
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Yosemite National Park (Calif.)
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Tulare (Calif.)
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Astronomical observatories – California
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Battleships -- United States
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Carnegie libraries
Missions--California
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P-005 Series