
Guide to the Gibson Family Papers

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Guide to the Gibson Family Papers

Collection number: MS 6

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Gibson Family papers

Dates: 1887-1980

Collection number: MS 6

Collection Size: 1 linear foot(2 boxes)

Repository: African American Museum and Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)
Oakland, CA 94612

Abstract: The Gibson Family Papers encompass materials relating to six family members: Audrey Gibson Robinson; Charles Nelson Gibson; Lucinda Ray Gibson; Lois Gibson; Maude E. Gibson; and Frederick D. Robinson. Papers consist of clippings, biographical information, a scrapbook, photographs and assorted items such as postcards and poems collected by members of the Gibson family. Arranged by name of family member and thereafter by format and date.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

No access restrictions. Collection is open to the public.

Access Restrictions

Materials are for use in-library only, non-circulating.

Publication Rights

Permission to publish from the Gibson Family Papers must be obtained from the African American Museum & Library at Oakland.

Preferred Citation

Gibson Family papers, MS 6, African American Museum & Library at Oakland, Oakland Public Library. Oakland, California.

Biography / Administrative History

The Gibson family can trace its roots back to the pioneering days of California. Charles Nelson Gibson was born in Sacramento in 1879. His parents, William Henry Gibson and Lucinda Ray Gibson, became part of the African American community of West Oakland in the late nineteenth century. William Gibson obtained a position as a dining and club car waiter on the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1898 and worked for the railroad for thirty years. Lucinda Ray was a descendent of Nelson Ray, a slave who obtained his freedom in 1864 and came out to California to mine for gold. Through his profits, Ray acquired enough money to pay for his wife and childrens freedom and settled in Placerville, where he worked as a carpenter and blacksmith. The Ray family moved to Sacramento sometime prior to 1877.

Charles Nelson Gibson followed in his father's footsteps and worked for Southern Pacific Railroad for forty-one years, from 1913-1954. He was often called upon to work in private railway cars of Southern Pacific officials. In 1901, he married his wife, Maude, and they had three daughters, Thelma, Lois, and Audrey. Gibson's civic activities included membership at the First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Oakland, the Retired Railroad Men's Club, and several masonic lodges. His daughter Thelma Gibson Radden became a director for the Detroit American Red Cross District, while his daughter Lois received medical training and worked in Oakland as a surgical chiropodist. Audrey Gibson Robinson also worked in Oakland as kindergarten teacher at Thornhill School. She married Frederick D. Robinson, a police officer from Washington D.C., in

1941 shortly before he would leave to fight in World War II. Frederick D. Robinson died in combat in Italy in 1944. Audrey became very active at the Oakland Museum, serving as Docent Chairman for the History Department and as Vice President of Administration for the Cameron-Stanford House Preservation Association.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Gibson Family Papers encompass materials relating to six family members: Audrey Gibson Robinson; Charles Nelson Gibson; Lucinda Ray Gibson; Lois Gibson; Maude E. Gibson; and Frederick D. Robinson. The papers include Charles Gibson's notes on family history, as well as biographical clippings and photos. Lois Gibson's involvement in the Xi Alpha chapter of Zeta Phi Beta sorority is documented in a scrapbook she compiled of clippings noting chapter events and national news. This scrapbook also contains a few photos of Lois and her friends. Materials on other family members are present in the form of clippings, photographs, biographical sketches, and postcards. The collection also contains an eight page journal maintained by Lucinda Ray Gibson during a cross-country trip by rail in 1924, Frederick D. Robinson's war letters to Audrey Gibson Robinson shortly before his death in Italy in 1944, and 335 photographs and negatives of the Gibson family.

Arrangement

Series I. Audrey Gibson Robinson Series II. Maude Gibson Series III. Charles Nelson Gibson Series IV. Lucinda Ray Gibson Series V. Frederick D. Gibson Series VI. Lois Gibson Series VII. Photographs

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Railroad travel--United States.

World War, 1939-1945--African Americans.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority.

African Americans--California--East Bay--History.

Other Finding Aids

Black Women Stirring the Waters Collection, African American Museum & Library at Oakland

Audrey Gibson Robinson

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes biographical sketch, correspondence, financial and legal documents, YMCA programs, and artifacts.

Arrangement

Arranged by format and date thereafter.

Box 1:1	Biographical sketch 1965 and undated
Box 1:2	General correspondence 1961-1965
Box 1:3	Pension correspondence 1943-1970
Box 1:4	Financial documents 1967-1980
Box 1:5	Legal documents 1915-1980
Box 1:6	Y.M.C.A. programs 1931-1932
Box 1:7	Necklace and ring undated

Maude Gibson

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes poems written by Maude Gibson, will, and postcard.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

Box 1:8	Will of Maude Gibson circa 1960s
Box 1:9	Poems 1930-1936
Box 1:10	Postcard 1914

Charles Nelson Gibson

Series Scope and Content Summary

Newspaper clippings and funeral arrangements related to Charles Nelson Gibson.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

Box 1:11

Newspaper clippings 1947-1972

Box 1:12

Funeral arrangements 1964-1967

Lucinda Ray Gibson

Series Scope and Content Summary

Consists of journal maintained by Lucinda Ray Gibson during a cross-country trip by rail in 1924.

Box 1:13

My trip east [railway travel journal, 8 pp.] 1924

Frederick Dovington Robinson

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes war correspondence to Audrey Gibson Robinson, address books, wallet, and badges.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

Box 1:14

World War II correspondence to Audrey Gibson Robinson [46 pp.] 1944

Box 1:15

Address books undated

Box 1:16

Assorted artifacts circa 1940s

Lois Gibson

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes scrapbook of newspaper clippings and photographs related to the activities of the Zeta Phi Theta sorority.

Box 1:17

Zeta Phi Theta sorority scrapbook 1939-1940

Photographs

Series Scope and Content Summary

21 photographs and 313 negatives of family and friends of the Gibson family.

Box 2:1

Reproduction from an oval portrait of a 1 year old boy wearing a small locket on a chain around his neck [001] circa 1880

Box 2:2

Thelma, Audrey, and Lois Gibson stand posed against painted brick wall [002] circa 1958

Box 2:3

Portrait of Virginia S. Gibson dressed in nurses uniform and cap [003] circa 1940

Box 2:4

Charles Nelson Gibson stands posed wearing a dark colored kilt and white collared matching dark jacket, and holds a cap in his left hand as he stands with one leg crossing another [004] 1887

Box 2:5

Thelma M. Gibson, infant, stands in wicker chair dressed in christening dress and a small ribbon in her hair [005] circa 1900

Box 2:6

Portrait of Thelma Gibson, R.N., Norfolk, Virginia [006] 1937

Box 2:7

Oval portrait of Lucinda Ray Gibson wearing high collar dress [007] circa 1890

Box 2:8

Charles Nelson Gibson standing on sidewalk near fire hydrant wearing traffic patrol cap [008] 1955

Box 2:9

Portrait of Maude Gibson wearing high collar dress and string of long beads [009] 1902

Box 2:10

Portrait of Dr. Lois E. Gibson Oubre wearing dark colored blouse and large white collar [010] 1930

Box 2:11

Oval portrait of William Henry Gibson dressed in vested suit and small bow tie [reproduction] [011] circa 1900

Box 2:12	Portrait of Mrs. George R. Cashen wearing high-collar, lacey white blouse with horseshoe pin [reproduction] [012] 1908
Box 2:13	Two separate views of ferryboats at piers; showing the passage of several years [013] undated
Box 2:14	Portrait of Audrey Gibson Robinson wearing white straw hat and light-colored plaid jacket [014] circa 1975
Box 2:15	Ferryboat sails across the bay to San Francisco, skyline in background [015] circa 1930
Box 2:16	Charles A. Gibson [?] sitting with banjo (glass plate negative) [016] undated
Box 2:17	Lois Gibson portrait (infant) [017] undated
Box 2:18	Portrait of Audrey Robinson [018] undated
Box 2:19	Thelma Gibson, 5 month old [019] 1903
Box 2:20	Grand Lodge, Portland, Oregon (11 negatives) 1954
Box 2:21	Blooming rose (1 negative) undated
Box 2:22	Home of Lois Gibson (5 negatives) undated
Box 2:23	Mitzu; Stanley and Lois; Watkins and Betty; Stanley and dog (11 negatives) 1950
Box 2:24	At the beach (12 negatives) undated
Box 2:25	Jone Francis; Backyard in San Jose; Me and Jone; George and Jone (33 negatives) 1951
Box 2:26	Unidentified portraits (3 prints/39 negatives) circa 1920s
Box 2:27	Grand Lodge, Portland, Oregon; Sacramento Grace and Dad; Delaney and Auntie Jeff; Rosa Morton (17 negatives) circa 1962
Box 2:28	Jeri and [illegible]; [illegible] and Sweeney; Jeri and I; Sacramento Convention Grand Lodge (6 negatives) 1963
Box 2:29	Running of Del.; me, hostess; Susan [illegible]; Jone Francis (8 negatives) 1961
Box 2:30	Car door (1 negative) 1964
Box 2:31	Unidentified photographs (23 negatives) undated
Box 2:32	Roses of 6148; Picture of Nell; San Jose old home (16 negatives) 1959
Box 2:33	San Jose; Jone and picnic of [illegible] (3 negatives) undated
Box 2:34	Marysville and Rose Garden; Rose Davis (10 negatives) undated
Box 2:35	Francis and her car (1 negative) 1961
Box 2:36	Honeymoon home; New York houses; flower garden; Piedmont (22 negatives) undated
Box 2:37	Bakersfield chickens; San Diego Grand Lodge (9 negatives) 1954
Box 2:38	Cousin Osborne; F.D. and Emma Robins (4 negatives) undated
Box 2:39	Backyard group (3 color negatives) 1964
Box 2:40	Neighbor's house (6 negatives) 1964
Box 2:41	Family picnic (12 negatives) 1956
Box 2:42	Aunt Katie, Audrey, June, and Caroline (5 negatives) 1963
Box 2:43	1958 reunion (10 negatives) 1958
Box 2:44	4th of July picnic (11 negatives) undated
Box 2:45	Easter (8 negatives) 1959
Box 2:46	Faucet's picnic (7 negatives) 1961
Box 2:47	Fishing; New York trip; Edwin Faucett party; Ogden (17 negatives) undated
Box 2:48	Audrey Gibson Robinson, 3 months and high school graduation 1915, 1933
Box 2:49	Frederick D. Robinson 1936