Shorb Family Photograph Collection: Finding Aid

Finding aid prepared by Suzanne Oatey.
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Photo Archives
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
© January 2018
The Huntington Library. All rights reserved.
Overview of the Collection
Title: Shorb Family Photograph Collection
Dates (inclusive): approximately 1860s-1966
Collection Number: photCL 284
Extent: Approximately 350 photographs and 1 photograph album in 8 boxes: albumen prints, gelatin silver prints, photographic copy prints; images chiefly 20 x 25 cm or smaller, album 27 x 34 cm.
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Photo Archives
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
Abstract: This collection of photographs centers around the family of James De Barth Shorb (1842-1896) and his "San Marino" ranch in the San Gabriel Valley, California. There are also photographs of Shorb's family home in Maryland, as well as his parents, siblings and children; photographs of female students and nuns at Ramona Convent, Alhambra, and Convent of Holy Names, Oakland, California; Shorb family at picnics and recreational events; and Shorb family friends.
Language: English.
Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.
Publication Rights
The Huntington Library does not require that researchers request permission to quote from or publish images of this material, nor does it charge fees for such activities. The responsibility for identifying the copyright holder, if there is one, and obtaining necessary permissions rests with the researcher.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Shorb Family Photograph Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Acquired from various sources including gifts of Shorb Steele, 1955, 1958; Mr. N. A. Strain, Jr., 1960; and Barbara F. Vucanovich, 2011.
Biographical Note
James De Barth Shorb (1842-1896), an attorney and civil engineer from Maryland, came to California in 1864. After his marriage to Maria de Jesus Wilson in 1867, Shorb joined his father-in-law, Benjamin Davis Wilson, in the development of their extensive land holdings in San Marino and Pasadena, and in the founding of the San Gabriel Winery. Shorb constructed and was president of the San Gabriel Valley Railroad and the Alhambra Railroad. In 1871, Shorb created the Lake Vineyard Land and Water Company, and in 1874, Shorb acquired a large tract of land consisting of parts of present-day San Marino, Pasadena, and Alhambra. He was active in many business ventures and served as Los Angeles County treasurer in 1892.
For information on the Shorb farmstead "San Marino" in Maryland, see Maryland Historical Trust Inventory No. F-6-98: https://mht.maryland.gov/secure/medusa/PDF/Frederick/F-6-98.pdf.
The Shorbs built a house in what is now San Marino, California about 1865-1870. The property was purchased by Henry E. Huntington around 1903-4 and the house demolished ca. 1906-08 to make way for the Huntington's house (now the Huntington Library Art Gallery).
Scope and Content
This collection of photographs centers around the family of James De Barth Shorb (1842-1896) and his "San Marino" ranch in the San Gabriel Valley, California. Views of Shorb's ranch include the house, grounds, reservoirs, ranch workers, horses, and nearby Mission San Gabriel. There are also photographs of Shorb's family home in Maryland, his parents, Dr. James Aloysius Shorb (1798-1867) and Margaret McMeal Shorb, siblings and other Maryland family. After moving to California, Shorb married Maria de Jesus "Sue" Wilson, the daughter of B. D. Wilson, and they had eleven children. All appear in the collection except "Benito" (1876-1877). The others are seen in photographs as children and some also as adults, with their spouses and children: Maria Ynez Shorb White Buck (1868-1933); James De Barth "Barty" Shorb Jr. (1870-1907); Margaret Nina Shorb (1871-1875); Edith Octavia Shorb Steele (1872-1954); Ramona Yorba Shorb Murtaugh (1874-1921); Joseph
Campbell Shorb (1878-1919); Ethel Rebecca Shorb (1880-1959); Donald McMeal Shorb (1883-1933); Norbert Newlands Shorb (1887-1951); and Bernardo Yorba Shorb (1888-1928). [Please note the name "McMeal" is also sometimes spelled "McNeal".]

There are also photographs of female students and nuns at Ramona Convent, Alhambra, and Convent of Holy Names, Oakland, California; Shorb family at picnics and recreational events; and Shorb family friends including Edward L. Watkins, his wife Mary Stone Watkins and children; Charles Frederick Holder; Grace Mellus; Katharine Mellus; Anne Wilson Patton; Eleanor Martin (1826-1928); and Susan Thornton Glassell Patton Smith.

Other people included in collection: James King Steele and son James Shorb Steele (husband and son of Edith Shorb); Adeline Day Shorb and children Mary Day and Yorba (wife and children of Donald McMeal Shorb); Daniel McMeal; Mary B. Shorb (wife of Norbert Shorb); Harriet Shorb (later called Sister Anne Alexis); Julia Shorb; Sophie Shorb; Dr. Ferdie Chatard and his wife, Josie and son, Robert (friends of Shorbs in Maryland), Ethelbert Dowlen (viticulturist); Ike Cooper; and Taylor Scott White.

A disbound photograph album of 38 pages contains snapshots dating from 1895-1896 of Shorb ranch, family members, Lake Vineyard, Catalina Island, camping and hunting, picnics and Shorb family friends including the Rice family, Richard I. Howitt, J. H. Gilmour, E.M. Tiernan and members of the Patton family. There are also some views of Chinese peddlers, Chinese workers and African American children at Shorb Ranch. Other items of note: Photograph of an African American man standing by horse and carriage at Shorb home in Maryland (item 41); a studio portrait of a Chinese man named Liu Tian written in Chinese (known as "Hen" by the Shorbs) by Fong Get Photo Studio, San Francisco (item 85); and a Chinese man, possibly an employee, known as "Sing" (item 86), who also appears in the photograph album (Box 8).

Some of the loose photographs are copy prints from negatives in other Huntington collections including the Patton and Holladay collections.

- James De Barth Shorb papers  (Call number: mssShorb papers)
- James De Barth Shorb papers addenda  (Call number: mssShorb addenda)
- Shorb family deeds and photographs  (Call number: mssHM 80516-80520)
- Patton Family collection of negatives and photographs  (Call number: photCL 282). Contains photographs of the Shorb family
- 11 cased daguerreotypes or ambrotypes, 1850s-1880s, of Shorb family or friends: photDAG 49 (Maria de Jesus Wilson Shorb as a young girl); photDAG 89 (Margaret McMeal Shorb); photDAG 98 (Donald McMeal Shorb); photDAG 100 (Ethel Shorb); unidentified people in photDAG 97, 99, 102, 103, 104; and two painted miniatures of male Shorb ancestors, photDAG 105 and 109
- oversize photographs of Shorb family and homes: photOV 10450-10459; photOV 10660-10676; photOV 11267

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Subjects

- Holder, Charles Frederick, 1851-1915 -- Photographs.
- Patton, Anne Wilson -- Photographs.
- Shorb, J. Campbell -- Photographs.
- Shorb, James De Barth -- Photographs.
- Shorb, James De Barth -- Homes and haunts -- Photographs.
- Patton family -- Photographs.
- Shorb family -- Photographs.
- Mission San Gabriel Arcangel (San Gabriel, Calif.) -- Photographs.
- Ramona Convent of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (Alhambra, Calif.) -- Photographs.
- Chinese -- California -- Photographs.
- Ranches -- California --San Marino -- Photographs.
- San Marino (Calif.) --History.

Forms/Genres

Photographs.
Photograph albums.

Contributors

Strain, Numa Alonzo, donor.
Shorb Family Photograph
Collection: Finding Aid

Container List

Box 1

Shorb family and ancestral homes in Maryland (Items 1-47)
Includes "Clairvaux," the ancestral home of James De Barth Shorb in Emmitsburg, Maryland; "Republic of San Marino" coat of arms; copies of engravings of ancestors Johan Shorb and John Shorb; James A. Shorb (father of J.D.B. Shorb) and a copy of his memorial service program, 1867; Margaret McMeal Shorb; Daniel McMeal; Joseph Campbell Shorb and a copy of his memorial service program, 1889; Donald Shorb; street scenes of Emmitsburg, Maryland; Harriet Shorb (also known as Soeur Anne Alexis) in nun’s habit; Addie Shorb; Sophie Shorb; and Shorb friend Dr. Ferdie Chatard with his wife and son.

Box 2

Shorb Ranch, California ("San Marino"); James De Barth Shorb portraits (Items 48-105)
- Shorb Ranch: Includes interior and exterior views of the residence, grounds and reservoirs in what is now San Marino, California, as well as a 1966 news clipping. Includes a cabinet card view by photographer E. A. Bonine (item 49.1) and a view of an adobe ranch house of ranch superintendent Numa A. Strain, ca. 1895, by photographer C. C. Warner of Alhambra. Other photographs include Shorb family members on the property; views of Mission San Gabriel, approximately 1890s (Items 90-96), including a card photograph of the decorated altar of one of its chapels. There are also studio portraits of Ethelbert Dowlen, the Shorb Ranch viticulturist, 1890s; Chinese employees (including Liu Tian, item 85); Taylor Scott White, ranch superintendent, (item 87); and Ike Cooper (Items 88-89). See also Box 8 for interior view of Reception Room, San Marino.
- James De Barth Shorb: Several portraits, ca. 1870-1890, in young and old age (Items 98-105). Two portraits are by photographer Valentin Wolfenstein, Los Angeles. Some biographical material accompanies the photographs.

Box 3

Children of James De Barth Shorb and Maria Jesus Wilson Shorb (Items 108-135)
Chiefly studio portraits taken at various ages of the children of J.D.B. Shorb and their related family members.
- Ynez Maria Shorb (1869-1933), her husband Stephen S. White, and their daughter, Ruth White; Major T. F. Farrell (husband of Zita White); Carroll DeForest Buck (Ynez Maria Shorb White's second husband). Includes photographs of the wedding of Ynez Maria Shorb to Stephen S. White, 1894.
- James De Barth Shorb Jr. ("Barty") (1870-1907)
- Margaret Nina Shorb (1871-1875)
- Edith Shorb (1872-1954), her husband, James King Steele, and their son James Shorb Steele (also known as Shorb Steele).

Box 4

Children of James De Barth Shorb and Maria Jesus Wilson Shorb, continued (Items 136-152)
- Ramona Maria Shorb (1874-1921)
- Joseph Campbell Shorb (1878-1919)
- Ethel Rebecca Shorb (1880-1959). Also includes snapshots from Ethel Shorb's trips, primarily to Europe, approximately 1908-1910.
- Donald McMeal Shorb (1882-1933), his wife, Adeline Day Shorb, and their children Mary Day and Yorba.
Box 5

**Children of James De Barth Shorb and Maria Jesus Wilson Shorb, continued; Shorb family members and friends (Items 153-196)**

- Norbert Newlands Shorb (1887-1951), his wife, Mary Burke Shorb, and three children.
- Bernardo Yorba Shorb (1888-1928)
- Family friends in California: Charles Frederick Holder, Grace Mellus, Katharine Mellus, Mrs. Hugh Smith (formerly Mrs. George S. Patton), Anne (Nita) Patton, Eleanor Martin, Edward L. Watkins and his wife, Mary (Stone) Watkins, and their children; Friedrich-Ferdinand von Levetzow (including an identification badge with small framed portrait of Levetzow from the "Deutscher Offizier Verein Zu Berlin"; Jay Naylord Church; and miscellaneous cartes-de-visite and studio portraits.
- Group portrait of students from the Convent of Holy Names, Oakland, Ca., that includes Edith Shorb and Elizabeth Workman, ca. 1880s.
- Group portrait of students and nuns at Ramona Convent in Alhambra, Ca., that includes Ethel Shorb, ca. 1890s.
- Shorb family members posed with tennis rackets, ca. 1880s, and group portrait of the Valley Tennis Club at Purcell Ranch and at other outings, ca. 1880s; views of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses parade, 1896 and 1901.

Box 6

**Shorb family friends; other miscellaneous (Items 197-244)**

- Miscellaneous buildings including La Casa Figueroa adobe; Mark Hopkins residence in San Francisco, 1912; Banning home on Catalina Island, 1895; Customs House, Monterey; Mission San Francisco de Solano.
- United States military men in uniform, 1900-1918 (mostly unidentified)
- Rear Admiral Uriel Sebree, 1908.
- Studio portraits of mostly unidentified men and women, late 1800s-early 1900s. Also many unidentified cartes-de-visite portraits by San Francisco and East Coast photographers.

Box 7

**Shorb family friends; Shorb children; duplicate album photographs; other miscellaneous (Items 245-253)**

- Studio portraits and some snapshots of mostly unidentified men, women and children, late 1800s-early 1900s.
- Various snapshots and portraits of Shorb family children including J.D.B. Shorb's grandchildren Shorb Steele, Yorba Shorb, Mary Day Shorb and others, including some at the San Francisco fairgrounds, 1915, and on a Mendocino ranch. Many unidentified.
- Snapshots of unidentified ranch scenes, people on horses, early 1900s.
- A few duplicate photographs from the Shorb family photograph album (Box 8).

Box 8

**Shorb family photograph album (1895-1896)**

A disbound photograph album (27 x 34 cm) with leather covers and 38 pages of photographs dating from 1895-1896 of the Shorb ranch, family members, Lake Vineyard, Catalina Island, camping and hunting, horses, picnics and Shorb family friends including the Rice family, Richard I. Howitt, J. H. Gilmour, E.M. Tiernan, Ike Cooper, Victor Ward, Ida Banning, and members of the Patton family. There are also some views of agricultural workers, Chinese peddlers, and Chinese workers and African American workers and children at Shorb Ranch. The images have handwritten captions.

Also in box is a large, mounted photograph of interior, Reception Room, San Marino Ranch (Item 254).