A guide to the John W. Classen photograph collection, circa 1880-1900

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2014
A Guide to the John W. Classen photograph collection

P98-019

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, National Park Service

2014, National Park Service

Title: John W. Classen photograph collection
Date: circa 1880-1900
Identifier/Call Number: P98-019 (SAFR 23848)
Creator: Classen, John W.
Physical Description: 13 items.
Repository: San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, Historic Documents Department
Building E, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123
Abstract: The John W. Classen photograph collection, circa 1880-1900, (SAFR 23848, P98-019), is comprised mainly of photographs of feluccas, schooners, and steamships in the San Francisco Bay Area, California.
Physical Location: San Francisco Maritime NHP, Historic Documents Department
Language(s): In English.
Access
This collection is open for use unless otherwise noted.
Publication and Use Rights
Some material may be copyrighted or restricted. It is the researcher's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other case restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in the collections.
Processing Note
The photographs of Fort Point were not transferred to Golden Gate National Recreation Area due to the inclusion of additional out-of-scope photographs in the collection (Mission Dolores and the Presentation Convent).
Description Notes: Dates refer to when the original photograph was taken. Some of the photographic prints in this collection are reproductions that were made much later than when the original photograph was taken.
The descriptions in this collection guide were compiled using the best available sources of information. Such sources include the creator's annotations or descriptions, collection accession files, primary and secondary source material and subject matter experts. While every effort was made to provide accurate information, in the event that you find any errors in this guide please contact the reference staff in order for us to evaulate and make corrections to this guide.
Please cite the title and collection number in any correspondence with our staff.
Preferred Citation
[Item description], [Location within collection organization identified by Collection Number/Series Number/File Unit Number/Item Number], P98-019 (SAFR 23848), John W. Classen photograph collection, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
Acquisition Information
SAFR-01271
The collection was donated in 1998 by the grandson of John W. Classen. Mr. Classen believed his grandfather was the photographer; however, it is more likely that he collected the photographs. The style of the photographs varies greatly (e.g. different types of mounts) and some are reproductions.
Historical or Biographical Note
John William Classen (November 24, 1863- April 16, 1934) was an employee of the Tacoma Mill Company. He began his career with the company in approximately 1889 as a secretary and worked his way up to manager in the 1920s. He was born in San Francisco, California, but after the 1906 earthquake he relocated to San Mateo County where he remained until his death. He was married to Augusta Classen and they had a son, Willard John Classen.
Sources:
Collection Scope and Content
The John W. Classen photograph collection, circa 1880-1900, (SAFR 23848, P98-019), is comprised mainly of photographs of feluccas, schooners, and steamships in the San Francisco Bay Area, California.
Contains photographs of various vessels in the San Francisco Bay Area, California, circa 1880-1900. There are 13 black-and-white photographic prints. Includes photographs of AMERICA (built 1888; schooner, 2m: pilot vessel), BENDER BROTHERS (built 1889; schooner, 2m), EUREKA (steamship), MONTSERRAT (freighter), and RELIEF (built 1884; tugboat), as well as feluccas at Fisherman's Wharf. Also includes photographs of Fort Point, Mission San Francisco de Asis (Mission Dolores), and the Presentation Convent, all in San Francisco.

Collection Arrangement
No arrangement due to the small size of the collection.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Feluccas
Merchant ships
Schooners
San Francisco Bay (Calif.)
San Francisco Bay Area (Calif.)
San Francisco (Calif.)
Fisherman's Wharf (San Francisco, Calif.)
Fort Point (San Francisco, Calif.)
Albumen prints
Black-and-white prints (photographs)
Gelatin silver prints

Item No. 01. Feluccas moored at Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, California, circa 1880-1900
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 3.25 x 3.25 in., mounted on a 5 x 5 in. board. Handwritten on the verso: "Fishermans Wharf - SF" in blue ink and "JW Classen" in pencil.
Scope and Content Note
Several feluccas in view. A man is standing aboard a felucca in the foreground with his back to the camera. A sailing vessel (three-masted ship?) is moored alongside a building in the background.

Item No. 02. Three men mending nets at Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, California, circa 1880-1900
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 3.75 x 4.75 in., mounted on a 6.25 x 7.5 in. board. "Fisherman's Wharf" is handwritten on the verso in blue ink.
Scope and Content Note
The men are seated on the wharf.
Item No. 03.  **Felucca underway on San Francisco Bay, California, circa 1880-1900**

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7 x 9 in. “SF Bay” is handwritten on the verso in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
One man is on board. Starboard, slightly quarter, view.

Item No. 04.  **Relief (built 1884; tugboat) underway on San Francisco Bay, California, port broadside view, 1889**

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 3.875 x 5 in. Handwritten on the verso: “J.D. Spreckels Tug Boat Relief in 1889” in one handwriting and “J D Spreckels tug boat "Relief"” in another.

Item No. 05.  **Passenger steamer underway on San Francisco Bay, California, starboard broadside view, circa 1880-1900**

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7.5 x 9.75 in. Small tear near center of right edge. Handwritten on the verso: “SF Bay” in blue ink and “S F Bay, in 1800's?” in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
Small steamer, possibly a ferry, with one stack. A three-masted schooner with a deckload of lumber and a four-masted bark are anchored in the middle distance. Alcatraz Island is in the far distance.

Item No. 06.  **Eureka (steamship) underway on San Francisco Bay, California, starboard broadside view, circa 1885**

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7.5 x 9.75 in. “San Francisco Bay” is handwritten on the verso in pencil.

Item No. 07.  **Montserrat (freighter) underway on San Francisco Bay, California, starboard broadside view, 1889 November 10**

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white albumen photographic print, 8 x 10 in. There is a green stain above the forward section of the steamship. Handwritten on the verso: “Stmr. 'Montserrat'. Nov. 10/89” in black ink; “Steamer” and “Smaller boat has load of wood” in blue ink; “1889” in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
A scow schooner with a deckload of wood is anchored on the right. A pair of pants is hanging from the mainmast boom and a tender is tied off the stern.

Item No. 08.  **Bender Brothers (built 1889; schooner, 2m) underway on San Francisco Bay, California, starboard bow view, 1890**

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7.5 x 9.75 in. Handwritten on the verso: "SF Bay" in blue ink and "San Francisco Bay 1890" in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
Several people are aft on board. The vessel is towing a tender.
Item No. 09. America (built 1888; schooner, 2m: pilot vessel) in San Francisco Bay, California, port quarter view, 1893

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7.5 x 9.75 in. “S F Bay 1893” is handwritten on the verso in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
The anchor appears to be lowered. The sails are unfurled. A large "0" is visible on the main sail. A tender is tied off the stern. Other sailing vessels are moored with sails furled in the background, including two two-masted schooners and two three-masted ships.

Item No. 10. Mission San Francisco de Asis (Mission Dolores), San Francisco, California, circa 1880-1900

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7.5 x 9.75 in. Handwritten in pencil on the verso: "Mission Dolores San Francisco" and "For Mr. Classen."

Scope and Content Note
Eight boys are standing outside the entrance.

Item No. 11. Presentation Convent, San Francisco, California, circa 1880-1900

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 7.5 x 9.75 in. "Presentation Convent, Powell St. SF" is handwritten on the verso in blue ink.

Scope and Content Note
Located on Powell Street between Greenwich and Lombard Streets. A horse-drawn cart with two men aboard is on the left, traveling away from the camera.

Item No. 12. Lighthouse and canons on the barbette of Fort Point, San Francisco, California, as seen from inside the fort, circa 1880-1900

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white albumen photographic print, 5.25 x 8.5 in. "Fort Point SF" is handwritten on the verso in blue ink.

Scope and Content Note
Two women are in view at the railing of the barbette.

Item No. 13. Fort Point interior, San Francisco, California, circa 1880-1900

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 black-and-white photographic print, 4.5 x 7.5 in. The upper right corner is torn. Handwritten on the verso: "Fort Point SF" in blue ink and "San Francisco Presidio area" in pencil.

Scope and Content Note
The lighthouse is visible in the upper left corner.