

Guide to the Alfred A. Hart Photo Project Collection SC1111

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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: Department of Special Collections and University Archives

Title: The Alfred A. Hart Photo Project collection

creator: White, Jesse.

creator: Stanford University. The Spatial History Project

Identifier/Call Number: SC1111

Physical Description: 5713.9 megabyte(s)253 files in 16 directories

Date (inclusive): 2008-2017

Preferred Citation

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Access to Collection

The materials are open for research use.

Scope and Contents

From 1864 to 1869, Alfred A. Hart took 364 pictures along the line of the Central Pacific Railroad in order to help solicit investment in the railroad. Between 2008-2011, Jesse White repeated Hart's journey taking photographs from exactly (or approximately) the same sites.

The materials consist of digital images and the project web site.

Biographical / Historical

Jesse White is a professional photographer working out of Sacramento and Los Angeles Ca. He is a graduate of Lewis and Clark College, and has spent the last fifteen years working both as an IASTE member in the film industry as well as a private photographer. He is using a digital 35mm camera with lenses of equivalent focal length to that which Hart used. Complete modern replication of the Hart collection is anticipated in the spring of 2010.

Biographical / Historical

Alfred Hart was born in Norwich, Connecticut in 1816. Hart initially worked as a portrait painter before he moved to California in 1863 to work as a photographer. By 1864, he was the official photographer for the Central Pacific Railroad. As the railroad's photographer, Hart could pause railroad construction to pose the railroad workers or even stop trains at photo opportunities. He published 364 images as the Central Pacific Railroad photographer between 1864 and 1869. Eventually, Charles E. Leonard of the publishing company Horton & Leonard published a book of Hart's Central Pacific photos in 1870, titled "The Traveler's Own Book." In spite of Hart's publishing success, Central Pacific director Collis Huntington hired a new railroad photographer in 1870 and Hart traveled east to offer his services as a photographer for both the Nevada and Utah Railroad and the Pullman Company. Hart did not publish a photo after he left the Central Pacific Railroad. Throughout the 1870s, Hart traveled the country before settling in New York in 1881. While he filed multiple patents for new photographic devices, Hart's inventions never made him much money. He lived in relative poverty in New York City before he returned to California in 1906. He died on March 5, 1908 in Alameda County Infirmary. While Hart is primarily remembered for his brief period as a railroad photographer, he always considered himself an artist.

Hart used a Steno wet-plate camera, an American-made camera that was commonly used in the 1860s. Wet plate cameras required mixing collodion, a thick liquid made of dissolved nitrated cotton in alcohol, with light-sensitive salts on a pane of glass. Once the alcohol in the collodion evaporated, one placed the glass in silver nitrate to form a light sensitive compound silver iodide on the glass surface, but the pane of glass had to be exposed in the camera before the collodion dried. This process meant Hart had to act quickly, especially as he frequently took several shots of the same place within minutes of each other. His photo pack likely weighed about eighteen pounds, with his tripod making up much of that weight. His cumbersome tripod did not allow the camera to tip or turn, and it could not be adjusted much for height. Hart often chose dangerous spots to take his photos, from precarious cliffs to the top of railroad cars.

[Information gathered from Mead Kibbey's excellent book, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist*]

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Photography -- History.

Photographers -- California.

Railroads -- History -- Photographs

Photoprints.

California -- Pictorial views

Documentary photography

Hart, Alfred A., 1816-1908

White, Jesse.

Stanford University. The Spatial History Project

Digital Images

Physical Description: 116 computer file(s)

005 View in Dutch Ravine Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

007 Embankment in Dutch Ravine above Newcastle 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

008 Approaching Bloomer Cut from the West 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

012 Bloomer Cut 63 feet high looking West 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

014 Bloomer Cut Eastern portion 34 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

017 Rock Ravine near Auburn 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

018 High Embankment near Auburn 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

020 Cut near Auburn Station Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

021 Auburn Depot altitude 1385 feet 36 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

022 Road East of Station at Auburn 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

025 High Embankment Auburn Ravine 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

026 Auburn Ravine Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

027 Trestle near Lovell's Ranch 40 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

028 Road and Trestle near Lovell's Ranch 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

029 Trestle in Clipper Ravine near Clipper Gap 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

030 Trestle Bridge 120 feet high 600 feet long Clipper Ravine 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

030 Trestle Bridge 120 feet high 600 feet long Clipper Ravine 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

030 Trestle Bridge 120 feet high 600 feet long Clipper Ravine 3 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

035 Depot at Colfax 500 feet long 55 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

036 Colfax from the South Altitude 2448 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

037 Teamsters Camp at Colfax Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

039 Long Ravine Bridge from the top of Cape Horn 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

040 Long Ravine Bridge from the West 56 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

041 Long Ravine Bridge near Colfax length 1050 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

044 Am River and Canyon from Cape Horn River below Railroad 1400 feet 57 miles from Sac 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

045 Sawmill and Cut East of Cape Horn 59 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

046 Deep Cut at Trail Ridge Length 1000 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

047 Secrettown 62 miles from Sacramento Altitude 3000 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

048 Secrettown Trestle from the West Length 1100 feet (actually east) 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

049 Secrettown from the East hight 90 feet (actually west) 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

057 Excursion Train at Cape Horn 3 miles above Colfax 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

059 Hornet Hill Cut West of Gold Run 50 feet deep 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

059 Hornet Hill Cut West of Gold Run 50 feet deep 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

062 Embankment below Dutch Flat Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

063 Dutch Flat Placer County 67 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

064 Dutch Flat Station 47 miles from Sacramento Altitude 3416 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

067 Alta from the South Altitude 3635 feet 69 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

068 Alta from the North Altitude 3635 feet 69 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

070 Blasting at Chalk Bluffs above Alta Cut 60 feet deep 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

074 Secrettown Bridge 1100 feet long 62 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

104 Yuba River above Cisco Placer County 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

104 Yuba River above Cisco Placer County 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

105 New Hampshire Rocks on Yuba River Summer View 96 miles from Sacramento 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

105 New Hampshire Rocks on Yuba River Summer View 96 miles from Sacramento 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

105 New Hampshire Rocks on Yuba River Summer View 96 miles from Sacramento 3 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

106 New Hampshire Falls on Yuba River Summer view 96 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

108 Scene on Yuba River above Cisco 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

113 Castle Peak and Grants Butte Western Summit 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

114 Scene at Lake Angela Altitude 7300 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

116 Camp new Summit Tunnel Mount King in the distance 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

117 Bluffs in Donner Pass Western Summit 500 feet high Altitude of Pass 7000 feet 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

118 Summit Tunnel Eastern Portal Length 1660 feet on the Western Summit 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

120 Scene near Summit Tunnel Eastern slope of Western Summit 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

134 Dry Creek Bridge 17 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

137 Bound for the Mountains 12 mile Tangent 4 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

147 Train at Griffiths Station Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

149 Colfax looking West Illinoistown in distance 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

150 Colfax looking East Cape Horn 4 miles and Giants Gap 20 miles distant 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

152 Cape Horn from American River Railroad 1400 feet above 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

152 Cape Horn from American River Railroad 1400 feet above 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

152 Cape Horn from American River Railroad 1400 feet above 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

153 Hogs Back Cut 60 feet deep 2 miles above Alta 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

153 Hogs Back Cut 60 feet deep 2 miles above Alta 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

154 American River from Green Bluffs 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

170 Cement Ridge Old Man Mountain in distance 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

170 Cement Ridge Old Man Mountain in distance 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

171 Millers Bluffs near Crystal Lake Old Man Mountain in distance 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

173 Echo Point and Rattlesnake Mountain near Crystal Lake 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

186 View of the South Yuba below Cisco 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

186 View of the South Yuba below Cisco 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

197 Summit Tunnel before completion Western Summit Altitude 7042 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

202 East Portals of Tunnels No 6 and 7 from Tunnel No 8 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

217 All Aboard for Virginia City Wells Fargo and Cos Express 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

218 Tunnel No 3 above Cisco 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

229 American River Bridge Railroad around Cape Horn 1400 feet above 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

230 View on American River below Cape Horn 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

230 View on American River below Cape Horn 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

230 View on American River below Cape Horn 3 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

232 Capitol Granite Quarry at Rocklin 22 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

234 Railroad Wharves at Sacramento City 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

237 Crested Peak from Grants Butte 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

241 Engine House and Turntable Rocklin 22 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

242 West of Clipper Gap Placer County 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

242 West of Clipper Gap Placer County 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

242 West of Clipper Gap Placer County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

244 Cut near New England Mills 49 miles from Sacramento 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

244 Cut near New England Mills 49 miles from Sacramento 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

245 Railroad around Cape Horn from the Canyon 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

248 Lower Cascade near Long Side Track 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

249 Lower Cascade Bridge above Cisco 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

250 Upper Cascade 98 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

251 Upper Cascade Bridge above Cisco 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

254 Inside View of Snow Gallery at Summit Bolting the Frame to the Rocks 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

256 Crested Peak and Tunnel No 10 Eastern Slope of Western Summit 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

256 Crested Peak and Tunnel No 10 Eastern Slope of Western Summit 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

258 Castle Peak from Railroad above Donner Lake 1 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

258 Castle Peak from Railroad above Donner Lake 2 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

262 Depot at Truckee 119 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

263 Scene at Truckee Nevada County 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

274 Bridge over Truckee River Eagle Gap 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

276 View near Verdi Truckee River 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

277 Looking toward Verdi Truckee River 140 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

278 Bridge below Verdi Truckee River 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

286 Virginia Street from the Bridge Reno 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

287 Entering Lower Canyon of Truckee River 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

288 Looking across Truckee Meadows toward Sierra Nevada Mountains near Camp 37 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

289 Truckee Meadows Sierra Nevada Mountains 20 miles distant 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

290 Truckee Meadows from Camp 37 162 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

291 Scene near Camp 37 Lower Canyon of Truckee 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

293 Crossing of Wagon Road Lower Canyon of Truckee 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

294 Cottonwood Valley Lower Canyon of Truckee 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

295 Scene on Bank of Truckee River Lower Canyon of Truckee 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

338 First Construction Train passing the Palisades Ten Mile Canyon 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

339 Alcove in Palisades Ten Mile Canyon 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

340 Indian viewing R R from top of Palisades 435 miles from Sacramento 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

832 Levee at Sacramento looking north from Steamer 2008-2011

Physical Description: 1 computer file(s)

Web site 2016-2017 