

Home Page

Smithsonian Institution Archives

Search Site & Collections **SEARCH**

COLLECTIONS ▾ SERVICES ▾ SMITHSONIAN HISTORY ▾

about education blog press donate

SERVICES

- Reference ▾
 - Reference Inquiries
 - Collections Access Policies
 - How to Search
 - Frequently Used Collections ▾
 - Office of the Secretary
 - Records of the Assistant Secretary
 - Other Frequently Used Records
 - Frequently Used Special Collections
 - Photograph and Image Collections**
 - Biographical Information
 - Smithsonian Publications
 - Photo Research
 - Reference FAQ
 - Rights and Reproduction
 - Records Management ▾
 - Collections Care ▾

Photograph and Image Collections

Photographs and other images at the Smithsonian Institution Archives are not in a central file, but are dispersed throughout its collections. However, there are a few collections which are mostly devoted to photographs.

Many digitized images from these and other collections can be found Archives' Collection Search. Most online images can be downloaded in low resolution versions (300 dpi or less). We encourage the use of Archives images without charge or the need for permissions for educational and personal use. Reproduction fees for higher resolution images and additional commercial fees may apply.

- **Record Unit 95, Photograph Collection, 1850s.** This collection consists of ten series of photographs of people, places, things, and events related to the Smithsonian Institution and United States history. The majority dates from the mid- to late-19th century. Many of digitized images from this collection can be found Archives' Collection Search. Series include:
 1. **Portraits** (persons important in Smithsonian or United States history)
 2. **Group Portraits** (prominent scientific groups, political groups, and Smithsonian staff)
 3. **Buildings and Facilities** (documenting the planning, construction, architecture, and use of Smithsonian Institution buildings, grounds, and facilities)
 4. **Exhibits** (permanent and special exhibits of the Smithsonian and its museums)
 5. **Specimens, Artifacts, Equipment** (specimens in the Smithsonian collections and of equipment used in research and other activities of the Institution, as well as some photographs of artifacts)
 6. **Events** (a chronological file of photographs documenting events in the Smithsonian's history)

Logo**URL**

<https://siarchives.si.edu/services/photograph-and-image-collections>

Subjects

Smithsonian Institution Archives - Photograph Collections
Smithsonian Institution Archives - Images

Accessibility

Free

Language

English

Publisher

Smithsonian Institution

Brief History

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum and research complex, with nineteen museums with over 137 million objects, and nine research centers across the globe. Explore resources on the history of the Institution, beginning with James Smithson's 1829 request to the people of the United States.

Scope and Coverage

The Smithsonian Institution Archives is the custodian of over three million images spanning the history of the Institution, its diverse collections, and its involvement in science and cultural heritage since the middle of the 19th century.

Kind of Information

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Many digitized images from these and other collections can be found Archives' Collection Search. Most online images can be downloaded in low resolution versions (300 dpi or less). They encourage the use of Archives images without charge or the need for permissions for educational and personal use.

A small portion of individual collection items, such as photographs and documents, have been cataloged, digitized, and are available online through the Archives' Collection Search. However, note that while the Archives are constantly adding more collections online, the majority of the Archives' photographs have not been digitized.

In recent years, the Archives acquired several remarkable photograph collections, most notably the historic Smithsonian Photographic Services **photo morgue** (<https://siarchives.si.edu/blog/cabinet-curiosities>), which includes images taken by Smithsonian staff photographers documenting the history of the Institution, its activities, and its diverse collections. As the collection documents the Smithsonian and its multiple divisions, the rights and restrictions for Photographic Services "morgue" images may involve more than one Smithsonian unit.

Researchers, publishers, or others who want to use some of the images that the Archives holds in its custody for other Smithsonian curatorial units must receive permission for that use from the curatorial unit that holds copyright.

Special Features

- ❖ Users can refine their search by selecting these options.



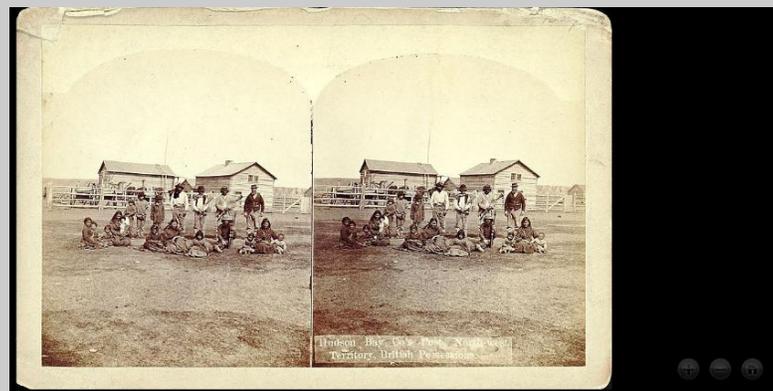
- ❖ Users can download and print images direct from this site.
- ❖ Full bibliographic descriptions with every image are also given.

- ❖ Every page is shareable through social networking sites.



- ❖ There is a facility to zoom in and zoom out with every image.

As for example,



Arrangement Pattern

Images are arranged topic wise, category wise and chronologically also. To see these collections users can use this URL, <https://siarchives.si.edu/blog/cabinet-curiosities>.

As for example,

<p>Topics/Tags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Here (812) American History (767) Science (750) Archive (589) Cities/Places (390) Web/Tech (378) Link Love (343) Exhibitions (312) Sneak Peek (289) Photo History (233) 	<p>Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collections in Focus (1600) What Gets Saved (553) Smithsonian History (407) Behind the Scenes (314) 	<p>Yearly Archive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2017 (84) 2016 (313) 2015 (311) 2014 (313) 2013 (308) 2012 (331) 2011 (432) 2010 (490) 2009 (171)
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Remarks

The Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA) is the archives of the Smithsonian Institution. SIA maintains the archives related to the history of the 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, 9 research facilities, and the people of the Smithsonian.

Researchers may also be interested in the several million photographs held in other collections across the Smithsonian's many museums, art galleries, research centers, libraries, and archives. A good starting point for these is the Smithsonian Collections Search Center, where it is possible to search across several Smithsonian unit collections simultaneously.

Comparable Tools

- Archives Photograph Collection of Indiana University, Bloomington
(<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/archivesphotos/>)

Date of Access

April 10, 2017