



120 Academy Street, Trenton, N.J. 08608
609-392-7188 * www.trentonlib.org

Collection 357
Photographers of Trenton Collection

By Laura M. Poll
January 2021
Updated January 2023

History

The photographic process began in France in early 1839 by Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre, a painter. One of his pupils, M. Francois Gouraud, brought the process to the United States later that year, although it had been introduced here before him and spread to larger eastern cities like New York, Philadelphia and Boston. The first person to introduce photography to Trenton was J. Vandeusen who had set up a stand in a rented room in a building on the northeast corner of Warren and State Streets in early 1841. He advertised “Daguerreotype Miniatures.”

In May 1842, daguerreotypists Livermore and Stinson set up a stand in a room of the Rising Sun Tavern on Warren Street (on the 1939 site of the American House). Collins and Brother was the next photographers to come to the city about 1845 and rented a room in the old City Hall on the corner of Broad and State streets.

Morris Moses, James H. Wilson, and L.E. Girard opened businesses in the 1840s. Moses was in business for many years and his studio, Moses’ Daguerreotype Salon was also located in the old City Hall building.

By the 1850s, some of those with studios included Edward H. Stokes, Jonathan F. Cheeseman, A.H. Armour, J.W. Hale, M.P. Simons and Good & Eliot. Those in the 1860s included John Bainbridge, A.S. Atchley, Charles H. Brown, L.R. Cheesman, William B. Gaston, H.C. Lovejoy, and A.W. Packer.

Scope and Content Notes

This collection consists of mostly photograph covers and envelopes that contain the imprint of the studio. These items were found in a box marked “photographers” and in random order. There were also a few pieces of ephemera in the box, all bearing the studios’ names. It is assumed that the photographs that had been in these folders and envelopes were removed and integrated into the general photograph collection sometime prior to 2015.

Items of note include a coupon for a dozen cabinet cards (Excelsior, 1890); 3 folders containing medium format negatives (Moyers, 1945); a cut-out advert card “Get a Life-Like Statuette of Your Boy” (Photo Art Co., c.1942); and an envelope advertising Ferrotypes (Walker, c.1880).

While the connection between the persons in the photographs and the studio where the portraits were taken or the film developed has now been lost, this collection documents a portion of the Trenton studios in business over the decades and where they were located. It also documents the various levels of photography being performed in the city, from professional portraiture to general public snapshots, and how they were presented.

The collection is arranged in folders by individual studio. There are a few non-Trenton studios represented in this collection since they most probably conducted business in the city or may have had a pop-up second studio here.

Container List

Folder	Studio
1	Alexander
2	Capital Photo Service
3	Collins
4	Excelsior Photo Co. [formerly Applegate Artistic Photographers]
5	Jerome H. Fritz
6	Maurice Gars Studio
7	Howard Studio
8	Kidd Studio
9	Leader Photo
10	Leons Art Studio
11	Miller
12	Moyers Photo Shop
13	Moyers Photo Shop / Moyer & Podmore – Negatives
14	Jack Nalbone Photography [Lawrenceville]
15	Nardis Art Studio
16	Photo Art Studio
17	Pro-Photo

18	Ran[i]
19	William Carlton Roof
20	Orren Jack Turner [Hopewell]
21	Varga
22	Walker
23	A.G. Westlake [Canada]
24	Sol Young [New York but had studio on N. Broad]
25	Misc. found separate and included here [includes Leigh]

Bibliography

Podmore, Harry J. "Early Days of Photography in Trenton." *Trenton*, April 1939.