

# Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown or Other Photographers, circa 1915-1955

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Gifford family.
<b>Title</b>	Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown or Other Photographers
<b>Dates</b>	circa 1915-1955 (inclusive) 1915 1955 1935-1950 (bulk) 1935 1950
<b>Quantity</b>	0.5 cubic feet, including 273 photographs, (6 boxes, including 2 oversize boxes.)
<b>Collection Number</b>	P 218-SG 6
<b>Summary</b>	The Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown or Other Photographers consists of images created and assembled by the Gifford Family. Many of the photographs may have been taken by Ralph I. Gifford, his wife Wanda, or his son Ben L. in the course of their photographic work. The photographs include portrait photographs; scenic views of Oregon landmarks; and images of agriculture, primarily in the Willamette Valley, and public buildings and businesses in Salem, Oregon.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">Oregon State University Libraries, Special Collections and Archives Research Center</a> Special Collections and Archives Research Center 121 The Valley Library Oregon State University Corvallis OR 97331-4501 Telephone: 541-737-2075 Fax: 541-737-8674 <a href="mailto:scarc@oregonstate.edu">scarc@oregonstate.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Collection is open for research.
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Sponsor</b>	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## Biographical Note

The Gifford Family is considered Oregon's first family of photography. Beginning in 1888, when Benjamin A. Gifford emigrated to Portland from Kansas, they began a photographic tradition that lasted into the 1950s and spanned three generations. Benjamin A. Gifford worked as photographer in Portland and The Dalles, Oregon, from the late 1880s until about 1920, when his son Ralph took over his studio in Portland. In 1936, Ralph became the first photographer of the newly established Travel and Information Department of the Oregon State Highway Department, a position he held until his death in 1947. After her husband's death, Wanda Muir Gifford took over the family's photography business and

continued to take and sell photographs through the mid-1950s. Ben L. Gifford, the son of Ralph I. and Wanda Gifford, joined his mother in the family's business in early 1950s and also worked for a Salem photography studio from 1951 until 1955. Three generations of Gifford photography began to come to a close when Ben took an engineering job with the State Highway Commission in 1955.

## Content Description

The Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown or Other Photographers consists of images created and assembled by the Gifford Family. They include images for whom the photographer is not identified as well as a few images that were taken by other (non-Gifford family) photographers. Many of the photographs described as "unknown photographer" may have been taken by Ralph I. Gifford, his wife Wanda, or his son Ben L. in the course of their photographic work, but their is not enough information provided with the images to specifically and confidently determine the photographer. The images include portrait photographs; scenic views of Oregon landmarks; and photographs of agriculture, primarily in the Willamette Valley, and public buildings and businesses in Salem, Oregon. Of special note are a set of photographs of Berg's Supermarket in Salem, Oregon, and images of canning and food processing operations for green beans, mushrooms, and strawberries.

Images by other photographers primarily depict Oregon scenes such as the Columbia River Gorge and Highway, the Hood River Valley, and the Fossil Beds. Photographers include the Photo-Art Commercial Studios and the Angelus Commercial Studio in Portland.

Most of the images in this collection (about two-thirds) are prints without accompanying camera negatives; the remainder of the collection is camera negatives. These include 4x5, 5x7, and 120 film negatives and several nitrate negatives. Only a few items have both a camera negative and print of the same image.

## Use of the Collection

### Preferred Citation

Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown and Other Photographers (P 218-SG 6), Oregon State University Archives, Corvallis, Oregon.

## Administrative Information

### Arrangement

The Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown and Other Photographers are arranged in two series: I. Unknown Photographers, circa 1915-1955 and II. Other Photographers, circa 1930-1955.

### Custodial History

The photographs were donated to the Oregon State University Horner Museum in 1986 by Ben L. and Beth Gifford.

### Acquisition Information

The photographs were transferred from the Oregon State University Horner Museum to the University Archives in July 1996.

## Related Materials

This is one component of the Gifford Photographic Collection (P 218) held by the OSU Archives. Other components are: [Benjamin A. Gifford Photographs \(P 218-SG 1\)](#); [Ralph I. Gifford Photographs \(P 218-SG 2\)](#); [Ralph I. Gifford Motion Pictures \(P 218-SG 3\)](#); [Wanda Gifford Photographs \(P 218-SG 4\)](#); [Ben L. Gifford Photographs \(P 218-SG 5\)](#); and Gifford Collection Documentary Materials (P 218-SG 7).

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Unknown Photographers, circa 1915-1955

176 prints and 86 negatives

Series I consists of photographs that were assembled by the Gifford Family, for which the photographer is not specifically identified and is therefore considered unknown. Many of these images may have been taken by Ralph, Wanda, or Ben L. Gifford, but there is not enough information to confidently determine the photographer. However, similar images of some subjects depicted in these series are part of other components of the Gifford Photographic Collection, which may be helpful in identifying the photographer. The images include portrait photographs; scenic views of Oregon landmarks, such as the Oregon coast and the Cascades; and images of agriculture in the Willamette Valley and public buildings and businesses in Salem, Oregon. Only a few of the images in this series are available as both a camera negative and print.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>Box</b>		
12	Electric generating station at night 3 4x5 negatives	
12	Profile of a man sitting and drinking 2 4x5 negatives	
12	Long shot of a farm 2 4x5 negatives	
12	A soldier and his family 5 4x5 negatives	
12	Mural in the state capitol 4x5 negative	
<b>Portraits of people</b>		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box		
62	Tilda and cat 5x7 negative	
62	Tilda alone 5x7 negative	
62	Pinkey 5x7 negative	
62	Baby Hagedon 5x7 negative	
62	Colgan boys 4 5x7 negatives	
62	Harlan's mother and father 2 5x7 negatives	
62	Dalby copy negatives of old photos 2 5x7 negatives	
Box		
7	Portrait of a young girl 4 prints	
7	Portraits of a young woman 3 prints Two shoulder portraits and one view in swimsuit.	
7	Portrait of young woman with lace scarf on dress	
7	Portrait of a young woman in a swimsuit	
7	Portraits of U.S. Navy officers 4 prints	
7	Man standing in front of a wall Snapshot print.	
7	Wedding photo -- Helen Mulkey	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	Snapshot print.	
12	Portrait of an older man 4x5 negative	
12	Woman sitting at picnic table built into rock hillside 4x5 negative	
12	Woman walking with a child; Mt. Hood in background 5 4x5 negatives	
7, 12	Painting of a U.S. Army officer print and 4x5 copy negative	
12	Man standing in front of trees 4x5 copy negative	
7	Portrait of an older man	
7	Dinner at Silver Falls Lodge	1947
7	Military officers standing next to Japanese Zero airplane 2 prints	
7	Jeeps with rocket launchers in action, World War II? 2 prints	
<b>Two men and a woman</b>		
<b>Box</b>		
7	Eating dinner	
7	Holding fish Perhaps paying for a lost wager.	
<b>Box</b>		
7	Group sitting in a yard eating watermelon Photograph taken at night.	
7	Young woman with a flower hat sitting in an orchard under a tree in bloom	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
7	Copy photo of a family group	circa 1900
7	Coos Head Lighthouse at Cape Arago, Charleston, Oregon	
7	North Head Lighthouse at Ilwaco, Washington?	
7	Man viewing haystack rocks from cliff	
7	Skiers at Mt. Hood 2 prints	
7	Two women with waterfall in background	
7	Hot springs near near Lakeview, Oregon	
12	Two girls standing near edge of cliff, Oregon Coast 2 4x5 negatives	
12	Man and woman watching waves break, Oregon Coast 4x5 negative	
12	Two men fishing in a river 2 4x5 negatives	
7	Three people on a dock with their fishing catch	
7	Pack horses and riders in a meadow; mountain in background	
7	Man and a woman on horseback with dog running in front of them; Mt. Hood? in background	
12	Military officers: eating, at logging site, at desks 11 4x5 negatives	
12	Man releasing fish at fish hatchery 4x5 negative	
12	Painting of a man with a horse and cart 4x5 copy negative	
12	Central Oregon river? Three Sisters in the background? 2 4x5 negatives	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
7	Flag on back of boat on the Columbia River?	
7	Trucks on a highway, Willamette Valley, Oregon?	
7	Highway embankment near underpass covered with grass and flowers	
7	Highway through an unidentified town	
7	Applying asphalt on a road? Close-up view.	
7	Laying gravel on a road bed	circa 1921
7	State Capitol	
12	State Library Building 4x5 negative	
7	Branch of cherry blossoms	
7	A young prune orchard on the Red Hills of Marion County Copy print of published photograph and caption.	
12	Old farmhouse 3 4x5 negatives	
12	House on a hillside in the woods 2 4x5 negatives	
7	Front yard of a house	
7	School or state office building	
7	Stucco apartment complex	
7	Men working a sheep herd, Central Oregon?	
7	Hen and chicks	
7	Copy print of four cattle photographs	
7	Two calves grazing on a field	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
7	Sunsets 3 prints	
7	Onion field	
7	Man shocking grain	
7	Panoramic view of a farm	
7	Boy hoeing a garden	
7	Tomato packing operation	
7	Blackberry patch at dusk	
7	Flower garden 2 prints	
7	Scotty tractor with plow attachment	
7	Woman driving front end loader loaded with gravel	
12	View of creek and mountains 3 4x5 negatives	
12	View of trees and mountain 4x5 negative	
12	Rock slide or blasting? 4x5 negative	
12	Aerial view of forested mountains 4x5 copy negative	
7, 12	Basalt formation next to highway print & 2 4x5 negatives	
7	View of lake or reservoir; Mt. Hood? in background	
7	Road next to mountain stream; Mt. Hood? in background	
7	View of arid lands from mountain 2 prints	



Container(s)	Description	Dates
7	Pasture, fence and mountains (Steens Mountain area?)	
7	Man looking at rock formation, John Day fossil beds?	
7	Crater Lake and Wizard Island in winter	
7	Boat dock on lake	
12	Boat at dock on lake 4x5 negative	
12	Deer walking through snow in a forest 2 4x5 negatives	
7	Courtroom in a courthouse Possibly in new Marion County Courthouse.	
7	Aerial view of Salem bridges over the Willamette River	circa 1952
7	Aerial view of Willamette River and Salem downtown area	circa 1952
7	Aerial view of south Salem	circa 1940
	<b>Capitol and early state buildings, Salem</b>	<b>circa 1915</b>
<b>Box</b>		
60	Capitol 2 nitrate negatives	
60	Marion County Courthouse 2 nitrate negatives	
60	Pioneer monument nitrate negative	
60	Unidentified building nitrate negative	
<b>Box</b>		
7	Road under construction?	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
7	High dam on river in arid area Snake River?	
7	Lake or reservoir in arid area	
12	Dog lying on the ground 4x5 negative	
7	Three men playing cribbage 2 prints	
7	Women diving into a pool 2 prints	
7	Young boy in car merry-go-round	
7	Group gathered in a living room	
7	Man sitting at a desk 2 prints	
12	Man sitting in basement or utility room 4x5 negative	
7	Woman looking at map of Salem	
7, 12	Children and older man in a swimming pool or water tank next to a greenhouse 5 prints and 2 120 negatives	
7, 76	Gnarled tree next to beachhouse door 3 prints	
7	Family group? at beach, Oregon Coast 5 prints	
12	View of coast 2 4x5 negatives	
12	Land survey map 4x5 copy negative	
12	Large stack of logs 4x5 copy negative	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	#2504?	
12	Sheep grazing 4x5 copy negative	
7	Snow covered cabin	
7	Snow covered garden and lawn?	
7	Snow covered mountain, Eastern Oregon?	
7	River and snow covered bluff	
7	Deer hunters 2 prints	
7, 76	Barn, corral and men on horseback 3 prints	
7	Camp at base of mountain	
7	Young boy holding fly rod and caught fish	
7	Fishing boats in a river	
7	Man holding catch of fish	
	Berg's Supermarket, Salem 35 prints Includes views of store interior with and without shoppers including produce, meat, and shelves with canned foods and an aerial view of the store and parking lot. Some of the photos to taken (or printed) by McEwan's Photo Shops in Salem.	
<b>Canning and processing operations</b>		
<b>Box</b>		
7	Green beans, Santiam Cannery, Stayton 8 prints	
7	Mushroom growing and canning 7 prints	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
7	Strawberry processing 2 prints	
7	Loading railroad cars with frozen food cases 2 prints	
7	Crop dryer 2 prints	
7	Cannery building	
7	Man in office	December 1946
<b>Box</b>		
7	Silage?	
7	Boys in a pole bean field 2 prints	
76	Welder	
76	Southern Pacific steam locomotive going through downtown Salem, Oregon	
76	Gnarled trunk of a grapevine?	
76	Heceta Head lighthouse, framed by two trees	
76	<i>Gem of the Sea</i> , ship in drydock	
76	Marina views, Los Angeles? 3 prints	

## Series II: Other Photographers, circa 1930-1955

11 prints

Series II consists of photographs assembled by the Gifford Family that were taken by other photographers. These include images of Oregon scenes such as the Columbia River Gorge and Highway, the Hood River Valley, and the Fossil Beds.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box		
7, 77	<i>The Columbia Gateway: Bonneville Dam and Mt. Hood</i> postcard print and hand colored mounted print Copyright 1938 by Samuel Lancaster.	
7	Man and woman viewing Columbia Gorge Photo-Art Commercial Studios, Portland	
7	Mitchell Point tunnel, Columbia River Highway Angelus Commercial Studio, Portland, #59380	
7	Apple orchards of the Hood River Valley nestling under the slopes of the eternally snow-clad Mt. Hood Angelus Commercial Studio, Portland; courtesy Oregon State Highway Dept.	
7	Fossil beds, home of the pre-historic three toed horse, John Day Highway, Oregon Sawyers Scenic Photos #C 12560	
7	Bull M M Prince Royal 17 Photograph by Edward J. Saxton, Helena, Montana.	
7	Pharmacy? with Ralph Gifford's photomurals Photo-Art Commercial Studios, Portland	
7	Woman harvesting commercially grown mushrooms Photograph by Joseph Tompkins, Salem.	
77	Still life of fruit and flowers By Charles Conkling.	
77	<i>Winter Shadows</i> Photograph by Ray Atkeson; art print engraving by Hicks-Chatten Engraving Co.	

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Agriculture--Oregon.

Fruit processing plants--Oregon.

Landscape photography--Oregon.

Portrait photography--Oregon.

Gifford Collection Photographs by Unknown or Other Photographers, circa 1915-1955  
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv29895>

Vegetable processing plants--Oregon.

**Geographical Names :**

Cascade Range.

Pacific Coast (Or.)

Salem (Or.)

**Form or Genre Terms :**

Film negatives.

Nitrate negatives.

Photographic prints.

**Other Creators :**

**Personal Names :**

Gifford, Ben L.

(creator)

Gifford, Ralph I.

(creator)

Gifford, Wanda.

(creator)

Finding aid prepared by Lawrence A. Landis; updated by Elizabeth Nielsen  
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