

Gertrude Bass Warner lantern slides, 1904-1930

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Warner, Gertrude Bass, 1863-1951
Title	Gertrude Bass Warner lantern slides
Dates	1904-1930 (inclusive) 1904 1930
Quantity	43.5 linear feet, (102 containers)
Collection Number	PH014
Summary	Gertrude Bass Warner (1863–1951) was an Asian art enthusiast, internationalist, and traveler. The collection consists of lantern slides documenting Asian art, culture, religion and architecture before World War II, in China, Japan, Korea and Cambodia. Images of the Warner art objects are also included. Inventory is incomplete.
Repository	University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives. UO Libraries--SPC, 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 Fax: 541-346-3485 spcarref@uoregon.edu
Access Restrictions	Collection is open to the public. Collection must be used in Special Collections and University Archives Reading Room. Glass plate negatives and lantern slides are restricted due to the fragility of the format. All decisions regarding use will be at the discretion of the curator for visual materials.

Languages English

Historical Note

Gertrude Bass Warner was born May 14, 1863 in Chicago, to Clara Foster and Perkins Bass. The Foster family prospered from early investment in Chicago real estate and also maintained an estate in Peterborough, NH. Clara's mother, Nancy Smith Foster, supported the higher education of women and used her substantial wealth to build a women's dormitory at the fledgling University of Chicago. Clara served on the board of the Art Institute of Chicago, helped establish the historical society in Peterborough, and commissioned its building to house Colonial art and a library. One of Gertrude's brothers, Robert Perkins Bass, served as governor of New Hampshire in 1911-13. Another, John Foster Bass, was a noted journalist and war correspondent.

Warner was educated at fashionable schools in Philadelphia and in Paris, where the family maintained an apartment. During Gertrude's teenage years, the house in Peterborough was equipped with a darkroom to support her interest in photography. She attended Vassar, and studied art in Europe. In 1888 she married Dr. George F. Fiske of Chicago and bore three children: Samuel Bass Fiske, George Foster Fiske, and Clara, who died as an infant in 1893. The couple divorced, George staying with his father while Gertrude raised Sam.

Gertrude and Murray Warner boating in AsiaAt the turn of the century, Asia experienced much political and military turmoil, and was forcibly influenced by European cultures. In 1904 Gertrude accompanied her journalist brother, John, to Japan during the Russo-Japanese war. The following year John sent her for safety to Shanghai, recommending an acquaintance with his friend Maj. Murray Warner (1869-1920). Murray Warner, a graduate of Exeter Academy, held a degree from MIT and went to China to establish the engineering department of the American Trading Company. Warner was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Shanghai Volunteers, protecting American citizens during the Boxer Rebellion, a Chinese uprising against foreign imperialism in 1899-1900. Gertrude and Murray were married on Oct. 1, 1905 and took up residence in Shanghai.

Gertrude Bass Warner continued her travels, exploring China, Japan, Korea, and Cambodia from Shanghai. She was an appreciative witness to many religious and cultural traditions that were destroyed in later wars. She experienced political unrest and military conflicts that complicated her travels: in 1924 she was besieged in Beijing and was evacuated on an International Train that came under repeated fire on its journey. [See "Our escape from Peking".] She photographed as she traveled, and also purchased images. Her interest in art expanded to Asia and to Russian icons, and she acquired a reference library to expand her knowledge.

The Warners returned to the United States in December 1909, residing in San Francisco. Murray Warner served as consulting engineer and quartermaster at Camp Dix during World War I. In 1920, he suffered a fatal stroke. Gertrude moved to Eugene to live near her son, a professor of law at the University of Oregon. For the next thirty-one years, Gertrude Bass Warner worked to build and manage a museum to house the collections, and to establish one of the first Asian studies departments, at the University of Oregon. Assisted by Maude Kerns and Mabel Klockars Garner, Warner continued her collecting trips and kept the museum going through the Depression and through political battles on campus.

Sam Bass Warner left the University of Oregon for a term at Syracuse, and then joined the law faculty at Harvard. His brother, George Fiske Jr., became a doctor in Southern California. Gertrude bought property next to Sam's in Belmont, Massachusetts, but continued to travel to visit with family and to work on the museum. Much of her correspondence is on letterhead from hotels and steamships.

Gertrude Bass Warner was an active supporter of the United Nations, a member of the Institute of Pacific Relations, the Meiji Japan Society, the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Association of Museums, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Federation of Arts. In addition to her work at the University of Oregon, she established museums at St. Mary's Hall and at the International Institute, both in Shanghai. She provided scholarship assistance, funding the first Japanese full-time woman student at the university in 1935-37; established a statewide essay contest on Asian culture; encouraged fraternities to include foreign students; funded an International Club and residence; and supported the creation of multicultural campus organizations. In 1929 the University of Oregon conferred an honorary degree of master of arts in public service, "in recognition of her scholarly contribution to a better understanding of the art and civilization of Oriental peoples through her discriminating selection and organization of material contained in the Murray Warner Collection, and

her tireless efforts in the promotion of international goodwill.\" Gertrude Bass Warner died in 1951 at the family home in Peterborough, NH.

Content Description

The collection consists of approximately 5,500 lantern slides, many hand-tinted. Most of the images are presumed to have been taken by Mrs. Warner, or her husband and son, on their travels; some were purchased from commercial sources. Many of the images feature Shinto ceremonies, the subject of an unpublished manuscript. An important series are the 38 Ainu slides of University of Chicago anthropologist Frederick Starr (1858-1933), acquired in 1937. There is also a collection of 34 World War I recruiting posters from Britain and Canada.

Additional Gertrude Bass Warner materials in Special Collections include correspondence, both personal and related to the museum; travel diaries and social calendars; financial documents related to the museum and to the Bass family trust; lecture notes and an unpublished manuscript, *When East Meets West*; personal effects of Murray Warner; and the Warner Library. Materials are currently located in multiple collections in the Manuscripts and University Archives collections, particularly the archives of the Museum of Art. The Murray Warner Art collection is housed in the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon. Other art objects collected by the Warners were donated to the Freer Gallery of the Smithsonian, and to two small museums in Shanghai.

[...] page from Gertrude's journal. Documentation of the lantern slides is very limited. There is no original inventory. The slides are mentioned occasionally in letters and notebooks, and included in list of shipped materials. The photography is primarily attributed to Gertrude Warner because her letters frequently mention taking pictures as part of her expeditions. Gertrude's original gift of collections to the University of Oregon occurred in 1922, but she made additional gifts throughout her life. Transfer of Warner materials from the museum to the library occurred twice: The Warner Library in 1968, and a steamer trunk containing travel diaries and Shinto research materials in 1971. The slides may have come to the library from the museum, or from the Art Department where Maude Kerns taught.

Many of the slides are identified on handwritten labels, presumably by Mrs. Warner. Most can be dated only from context and comparison with her letters and travel diaries. Multiple arrangement systems have been used over the years, in conjunction with Warner's lectures. The images are currently numbered sequentially by box. A database inventory that includes references to other numbering sequences is available.

Use of the Collection

Alternative Forms Available

Selected photographs in this collection are available online in the Gertrude Bass Warner Lantern Slides in Oregon Digital.

Restrictions on Use

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Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in this collection without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g. a cause of action for invasion of privacy may arise if facts concerning an individual's private life are published that would be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person) for which the University of Oregon assumes no responsibility.

If a researcher finds sensitive personal information in a collection, please bring it to the attention of the reading room staff.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Gertrude Bass Warner lantern slides, PH014_[item number], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Gertrude Bass Warner, 1922.

Processing Note

Collection processed by Normandy S. Helmer, September 2004.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

Related Materials

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The Murray Warner Art collection is housed in the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon. Other art objects collected by the Warners were donated to the Freer Gallery of the Smithsonian, and to two small museums in Shanghai.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box	Gertrude Bass Warner lantern slides, 1904-1930 http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv81365	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1-98, 100	1.: Lantern Slides	undated
99	Starr Lantern Slides	
93	Prints	
102	Lantern Slide Cases Empty oak cases previously used to house the lantern slides.	

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Ainu--Japan--Photographs
 Architecture--China--Photographs
 Architecture--Japan--Photographs
 Art, Chinese--20th century--Photographs
 Art, Japanese--20th century--Photographs
 Shinto--Rituals--Photographs
 World War, 1914-1918--Recruiting, enlistment, etc.--Photographs

Personal Names :

Starr, Frederick, 1858-1933
 Warner, Gertrude Bass, 1863-1951

Geographical Names :

Cambodia--Photographs
 China--Photographs
 Japan--Photographs
 Korea--Photographs

Form or Genre Terms :

Lantern slides--Asia--1903-1929
 Photographic prints--Asia--1903-1929

Finding aid prepared by Normandy Helmer
 c2010



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