

Submitting New Records to the *Daguerreotypes at Harvard Virtual Collection*

The *Daguerreotypes at Harvard Virtual Collection* includes over 3,300 daguerreotypes housed in 15 repositories at the University. In order to keep the Virtual Collection as up to date as possible, we encourage you to add records for any newly discovered or acquired daguerreotypes you may have in your repository.

Records in the Virtual Collection are harvested from VIA (Visual Information Access). An online union catalog, VIA includes descriptive records and images of the University's visual materials. [Participating repositories](#) include archives, museums, libraries, and other collections throughout Harvard University. Repositories that have added daguerreotype records to VIA should provide Melissa Banta (melissa_banta@harvard.edu), curator of the *Daguerreotypes at Harvard Virtual Collection*, with the record number(s) for the work(s) so they can be included in the Virtual Collection.

Repositories interested in contributing to VIA should consult [How to Participate](#) for instructions. Records in VIA are uploaded to the system from [OLIVIA](#) (a centrally supported cataloging system for visual materials), and from local cataloging systems at the Peabody Museum and Harvard Art Museum. See the [OLIVIA Cataloging System](#) section for more information about OLIVIA.

Recommended Guidelines for Cataloging Daguerreotypes in OLIVIA

Repositories at Harvard use various standards and methods for describing and cataloging historical photographs and other visual materials. OLIVIA was designed to accommodate these different approaches. With this in mind, it should be understood that these guidelines supplement existing OLIVIA documentation. They are highly recommended but not required for cataloging daguerreotypes in OLIVIA. The intent in offering these guidelines is: (1) to ensure all records for daguerreotypes created in OLIVIA and added to VIA will be harvested into the *Daguerreotypes at Harvard Virtual Collection*; (2) to improve accessibility to Harvard's daguerreotypes by providing a means of achieving some consistency in the way catalogers describe these materials and create records for them in OLIVIA; (3) to achieve a uniform look to the collection indexes and records in the *Daguerreotypes at Harvard Virtual Collection*; and (4) to offer some help to OLIVIA users who may have little or no experience cataloging daguerreotypes.

The guidelines are presented in the order that the data entry screens appear in the OLIVIA Work record, and nonessential data elements are not covered. Guidelines for

creating Name and Site authority records apply to daguerreotypes, and guidelines for creating Surrogate records are not offered in this document.

In addition to the OLIVIA documentation available on the Harvard University Library Office of Information Systems website, the following tools were used as references in the development of this document and are highly recommended for use in cataloging historical photographs daguerreotypes:

Graphic Materials: Rules for Describing Original Items and Historical Collections
compiled by Elisabeth W. Betz
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/gm/graphmat.html>

(Note: The Second Edition of *Graphic Materials: Rules for Describing Original Items and Historical Collections*, compiled by Elisabeth W. Betz (Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 1982), is currently being developed by the ACRL/RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee as part of the Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials set.)

Thesaurus for Graphic Materials (TGM)
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pp/tgmhtml/tgmabt.html>

Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)
http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/

"Description and Cataloging" by Helena Zinkham in *Photographs: Archival Care and Management* by Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler & Diane Vogt-O'Connor (Society of American Archivists, 2006).

1 – Basic Info Tab

Work Type

1.1 – Daguerreotypes should be classified as both "photographs" and "daguerreotypes" in the Work Type field. *This will ensure the record is harvested from VIA into the Daguerreotypes at Harvard Virtual Collection.*

Work Title and Alternate Title

1.2 – Transcribe the title proper from the chief source of information, usually some part of the case or brass mat, a caption label (caption labels are often discovered when the daguerreotype image package is removed from its case for conservation treatment), or some other accompanying documentation. If the title proper is not accurate or sufficiently descriptive – i.e., more cryptic than useful – provide additional information in the Description field. Or alternatively, devise a title and quote the original information in a General note.

Example:

Devised title: Harriet, Ellen, and Elizabeth Ward
 General note: Misidentified, from left to right, as "Ellen, Elizabeth, and Harriett Ward" in accompanying documentation.

1.3 – If it is necessary to devise a title and the Work record will have a corresponding digital image, it is generally unnecessary to include the pictorial type or vantage point in the title. Doing this avoids creating a collection catalog where all of the titles in the title browse index begin with "Portrait of ... " or "Group portrait of ... " and so forth. The vantage point or pictorial type can be indicated in the Index Terms field. It also avoids stating the obvious.

Examples:

Preferred title: Cynthia Bennett
Not: Portrait of Cynthia Bennett

Preferred title: Unidentified man
 Or alternatively: Young man sitting
Not: Portrait of unidentified man

Preferred title: Exhibition gallery at the Crystal Palace, London
Not: Stereoscopic view of exhibition gallery at the Crystal Palace, London

If the cataloger would rather indicate the pictorial type or vantage point in the title and not the Index Terms field, then it should be after the subject of the image with the use of a qualifier.

Example:

Title: Andrew Burns, head-and-shoulders portrait

1.4 – Although it is a matter of style, to better reflect how an image captures a moment in progress, the progressive verb tense – or -ing verb form – without an auxiliary verb is preferred when devising a title.

Examples:

Preferred title: Boy posing with dog
Not: Boy posed with dog

Preferred title: Older woman sitting at table
Not: Older woman seated at table

1.5 – Do not enclose devised titles in brackets. This affects sorting by title and the browse function in VIA. Instead, provide a source of title note in the General notes field when the title is *not* devised.

Examples:

General note: Title from case.

General note: Title from accompanying documentation.

1.6 – Do not use quotation marks around the title or the first word of the title. This also will affect sorting and the browse function in VIA.

1.7 – Initial articles (a, an, the) are not recommended, as they, too, will affect sorting by title.

1.8 – Sentence-style capitalization is recommended. In general, capitalize the first word of a title and all proper names. Also, for consistency, do not include a period at the end of the last word or sentence in a title (a title may consist of only a word or two, an incomplete or complete sentence, or even two or more sentences).

1.9 – For recommended guidelines on inaccuracies, abbreviations and initials, interpolations, and other title information see "General Rules" and "Title and Statement of Responsibility Area" in *Graphic Materials*.

Start Year, End Year, and Date Description

1.10 – When no date of execution can be found for a daguerreotype, give a probable date or a date span. Do not use "n.d." (no date). Because daguerreotypes were only in general use for a period of about 20 years, from around 1840 to 1860, the cataloger can at least conjecture an acceptable date span of "between 1840 and 1860".

1.11 – See "Appendix A" of *Graphic Materials* for recommended guidelines on recording probable or uncertain dates of execution in the Date Description field. The following date ranges are recommended for the Start Year and End Year when estimating dates:

Examples:

Use a two year date range for one year or the other:

Start Year: 1851

End Year: 1852

Date Description: 1851 or 1852

Use a three year date range for a probable date:

Start Year: 1851

End Year: 1853

Date Description: 1852?

Use a five year date range for an approximate, or circa, date:

Start Year: 1850

End Year: 1854

Date Description: ca. 1852

Use a ten year range for a probable decade (or when the decade is certain):

Start Year: 1850

End Year: 1859

Date Description: 185-? (or 185-)

Do not exceed a span of more than 20 years when giving a probable date range:

Start Year: 1840

End Year: 1860

Date Description: between 1840 and 1860

Dimensions

1.12 – Always indicate the plate size of the daguerreotype in the Dimensions field. Optionally, add the dimensions of the case (height x width, determined by how the image is viewed), or the visible image and the case, after the plate size. Give the height x width in centimeters, abbreviated "cm." Either round up to the next whole centimeter or give the dimensions to the nearest millimeter.

Examples:

- quarter plate
- sixth plate; 9 x 7 cm.
- half plate; 11.4 x 8.3 cm.
- quarter plate; visible oval image 7 x 6 cm., in case 11 x 9 cm.

Description

1.13 – Use this field to further clarify the subject of an image and to provide contextual or artifactual information.

Examples:

Title: Elizabeth Denny Ward

Description: Wife of Thomas Walter Ward.

Title: Harvard College Class of 1818 in 1852

Description: One of the earliest photographic class portraits.

Title: Adrien Henri Laurent de Jussieu

Description: One of two daguerreotype portraits in a single case.

1.14 – If there is no corresponding digital image, use this field to fully describe the image subject(s).

2 -- Name, Site, & Groups Tab

Names (Relationship, Role, and Attribution)

2.1 – If the daguerreian photographer is known, select "creator" for the Relationship and "photographer" for the Relationship Role. If the photographer is in doubt and you are making an attribution, enter "Attributed to" in the Attribution field as well. You can also include a General note describing the basis of your attribution if desirable.

2.2 – When linking a Name Authority for a person pictured in a daguerreotype, select "associated name" for the Relationship and either "subject" or "sitter" for the Relationship Role. "Subject" is preferable because daguerreotypes tend to be part of historical photograph collections rather than art collections, and because the term "sitter" is associated more with sitting for an artist or sculptor.

2.3 – In situations where the creator of a daguerreotype is unknown, do not use "Anonymous" for the creator, unless "Anonymous" is on the chief source of information. Because the photographer, or creator, of a daguerreotype is often not clearly identified, the use of "Anonymous" for the creator, in effect, creates a collection catalog where most of the records will fall under this heading in the Name/Creator index and can even suggest to the uninformed student or researcher that all of the daguerreotypes with "Anonymous" were taken by the same person who made a conscious choice to remain anonymous. Unknown creators are better handled with a General note simply stating: "Photographer unidentified."

2.4 – When creating a Name Authority record, the following authority files are recommended:

Library of Congress Authorities

<http://authorities.loc.gov/>

Getty Union List of Artist Names (ULAN)

http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/ulan/

Craig's Daguerreian Registry

<http://www.daguerreotype.com/>

George Eastman House Database

<http://www.geh.org/gehdata.html>

Also, the following print resource may be helpful:

A Directory of Massachusetts Photographers, 1839-1900 edited by Ronal Polito (Picton Press, c1993). HOLLIS Catalog number: 004122824.

Sites (Relationship and Type)

2.5 – Most daguerreotypes are studio portraits. If the location of the studio is known, select "production" for the Relationship and "place of production" for the Relationship Type to the linked Site record.

2.6 – If the daguerreotype shows a landscape, cityscape, or other view, and the location is known, then select "associated site" for the Relationship and "subject" for the Relationship Type to the linked Site record.

2.7 – When creating a Site authority record, the following authority files are recommended:

Library of Congress Authorities
<http://authorities.loc.gov/>

Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names
http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/tgn/

U.S. Board of Geographic Names
<http://geonames.usgs.gov/>

3 -- Notes & Numbers Tab

3.1 – Use correct punctuation, including closing punctuation, and capitalization for all notes. Also, do not separate more than one note in any Note Type with a line space. The space will not display in VIA.

Historical

3.2 – Use this field to record biographical information about the photographer if desirable, especially if they are notable. If an Historical note is included, it is recommended you copy the note to the Biography/History field in the Name Authority record. This will be helpful to other catalogers.

Subject

3.3 – Use this field to record biographical information about the subject or sitter pictured in the daguerreotype if desirable. If a Subject note is included, it is recommended you copy the note to the Biography/History field in the Name Authority record. This will be helpful to other catalogers.

Materials and Techniques

3.4 – Use this note field to indicate if the daguerreotype is hand colored or to record information about the case if desirable.

Examples:

Hand colored.

Case: brown leather with embossed torch and arrows in floral wreath.

Case: back only, brown leather with embossed floral motif.

4 -- Access Terms Tab

Materials and Techniques

4.1 – Always select "daguerreotype" from the controlled vocabulary list.

Index Terms

4.2 – Indicate the pictorial type or vantage point in this field, along with any topical subjects.

Examples of pictorial types:

portrait photographs

group portraits

landscape photographs

5 -- Local & Related Info Tab

5.1 – Follow the "Local & Related Info" section in *Works: General Guidelines for Cataloging into OLIVIA* at:

http://hul.harvard.edu/ois/systems/olivia/works_cataloging_guidelines.pdf

Additional copies of this Guideline are available at

<http://preserve.harvard.edu/guidelines/DHVC.pdf>.

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