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Walter B. Woodbury Photograph Collection

Digital

1865-1866

2 boxes (1.5 linear ft.)

Call no.: PH 3



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In the late 1850s and early 1860s, the pioneering British photographer Walter Woodbury captured images of Java, and especially its capital city Batavia (modern day Jakarta). Working in partnership with James Page, the two established a photographic firm that continued to produce and sell images long after Woodbury's return to England in 1863.

Consisting of 42 albumen prints, the Woodbury Collection includes numerous images of the landscape and colonial buildings in Batavia, Buitenzorg (Bogor), and Surabaya. A few photographs capture images of the European community in Java, and local

Javanese residents.

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Background on Walter B. (Walter Bentley) Woodbury

Walter Bentley Woodbury was born in Manchester, England, in 1834 and was raised by his maternal grandfather. In 1857, still in his early twenties, Woodbury traveled to Java where he founded a busy photographic firm with James Page, and between them, they took the majority of the known photographs of Batavia (present day Jakarta) from the latter part of the 19th century. The two men, accompanied by Walter's brother, Henry James Woodbury, traveled extensively through Central and Eastern Java in 1860, relatively soon after which the photographers went their separate ways. Woodbury remained in Batavia.

In 1863, Woodbury and Page offered a list of sixteen topographical photographs of the city for sale in albumen format. These images are considered the first of their sort from Batavia, which was originally established in 1619 as a colonial supply station for the VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie), or the Dutch East Indies Trading Company. Prospering during the 17th and 18th centuries as part of the spice trade, Batavia was a regional center for commerce and colonial administration, but particularly after a wall was erected around the city for security, it gained a reputation as "the Graveyard of Europeans," due to the poor sanitation and the stagnation of the canal system.

Although Woodbury worked initially with the wet-plate collodion negatives and albumen positive prints, he was an avid experimenter in photography, trying his hand at photoceramics, stereoscopic photography, stereoscopic projection, balloon photography, and electromagnetic shutters. He is perhaps most widely known for the photomechanical process he developed in 1866, the Woodburytype. Woodbury died in England in 1885.

Scope of collection

The Woodbury Collection consists of 42 medium-format albumen topographical photographs of Java produced by the firm of Woodbury and Page during the 1860s. The majority of photographs were taken in Batavia (modern day Jakarta), with a few from Surabaya and Buitenzorg (modern day Bogor). While Woodbury focused primarily on landscape, several photographs -- particularly those from Batavia -- depict members of the European community, their homes, clubs, and meeting places. Among the sites represented in the collection are the Harmonie Club House, Monlenvliet canal, Michiels Monument, Welsevreden Palace, Willems Church, the residence of Martinus Petrus Pels, and the Governor's palace at Buitzenborg. Photographs of the Tanah Abang house are annotated as "our" house by a person with the initials S.H.W., and who also locates the house in relation to other landmarks and homes in the area.

The photographs are arranged in alphabetical order by title, as supplied by S.H.W. or (perhaps) the photographer.

Inventory



Tanah Abang House, 1866



Back View of Gov. Genl's. Palace at Buitenzorg, Java

ca.1865

21 x 27.5 cm.

Box 1: 1



Batavia Cemetery, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 1

View of European cemetery located in Tanah Abang from inside cemetery fence. Fresh graves in fore. The cemetery was established in 1795 to provide a burial ground for Christians.



Catholic School, Singapore

ca.1865

31 x 36 cm.

Box 2: 4



Chinaman's House at Batavia, Java [on Molenvliet]

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 2: 5

Tile roof house with adornment along roof peaks. Exterior of front porch adorned with hanging prints, statues, and sculptural elements. Four people sitting on porch. Believed to have belonged to the Khouw family who were local Chinese landowners. Possibly home of Khouw Kim An chairman of Batavian Chinese Council.



Entrance to town of Batavia

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 3

View of arched gate down road lined with trees. Structure originally marked the south entrance to Batavia's old castle built in the 17th century.



Front View of House at Tanah Abang. Breakfast Table of the Period!

1866

31 x 41 cm.

Box 1: 3



Garden Scene at Kedring Badak

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 4



Hamlet's Ghost, Sourabaya [Surabaya], Java [Boat with Passengers and Crew]

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 4



Harmonie Club House, Batavia

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 5

View of corner of clubhouse. Social club for European community. This structure was built in 1815.



Horse R.R. Station, Batavia, Java

ca.1865

32 x 40 cm.

Box 1: 5



Hotel Sumatra

ca.1865

24 x 32 cm.

Box 1: 6

Annotation on image: "Hotel 'Sumatra' at Padang. I lived in the front room at right of picture about 1 year."



House of a Batavia Merchant

ca.1865

32 x 41.5 cm.

Box 1: 6



House of Batavia Merchant
ca.1865
32 x 41.5 cm.
Box 1: 7



House of M. P. Pels, Esq., Kings Plain, Batavia, 1866
1866
35 x 40.5 cm.
Box 1: 7

This image is believed to have been commissioned by Mr. Pels. It appears in a Woodbury & Page album along with nine other photographs but is not recorded as an available print for sale in the Woodbury & Page inventory.



House of Prince Radheu Saleh, Batavia
ca.1865
24 x 32 cm.
Box 1: 8

View of residence from front. House is heavily adorned with statues, urns, and stained glass windows. Manicured lawn and developing gardens visible in foreground. This structure was originally built in 1852.



House of the Pels Family Next to Ours at Tanahabay
ca.1865
32 x 41 cm.

Box 1: 8

View of house from across the road. Four figures stand looking at camera in front of gate. Martinus Petrus Pels served as the honorary vice-counsel for the United States in Batavia. He likely made his living working for a trading firm and in 1866 served as a member of the Batavian Chamber of Commerce.



Kedirie [Kediri] River, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 9

Michiels Monument, Waterloo Plain, Erected in Memory of Genl. Michiels & the Troops Killed During the Three Expeditions to



Bali in 1848

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 9

View of Monument with Roman Catholic Church in right of image. Monument was erected to honor the memory of Major General Andreas Michiel.



Mr. and Mrs. Volz, Kings Plain, Batavia

ca.1865

24 x 32 cm.

Box 1: 9



Natives Making Sarongs and Saraps

ca.1865

24 x 32 cm.

Box 1: 10



Padang [Port from water]

ca.1865

22 x 28 cm.

Box 1: 10



Palace at Buitenzorg, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 11



Palace at Weltevreden, Batavia, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 1: 11



Pasangrahan Resting Place for Travelers at Nnangteng, Java
ca.1865
30 x 39 cm.
Box 2: 1



Private House at Sourabaya [Surabaya], Java
ca.1865
30 x 39 cm.
Box 2: 1



River at Tanah Abang from Bridge in Front of Our House
ca.1865
22 x 28 cm.
Box 2: 2



River scene at Buitenzorg, Java
ca.1865
30 x 39 cm.
Box 2: 2



River Scene in Sourabaya [Surabaya], Java
ca.1865
23.5 x 31 cm.
Box 2: 3



Road to Town, Batavia (Jangkeh)
ca.1865
30 x 39 cm.
Box 2: 3



Ryswyk Portion Harmonie, Batavia, Java
ca.1865
30 x 39 cm.
Box 2: 4
View from Rijswijk side.



Salak Mountain River, Buitenzorg, Java
ca.1865
32 x 41.5 cm.
Box 2: 4



Stadhuis [Town Hall] Batavia, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 2: 5



Stream with Bamboo Banks at Sourabaya [Surabaya], Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 2: 5



Tanabang Road, Batavia

ca.1865

32 x 37 cm.

Box 2: 6



Temple of Tego Wangie at Kediri [Kediri]

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 2: 6



Turn Vereen, Batavia

ca.1865

35 x 41 cm.

Box 2: 7



View at Buitenzorg, near Batavia

ca.1865

32 x 41.5 cm.

Box 2: 7



View at Tanah Abang, Batavia

ca.1865

32.5 x 41.5 cm.

Box 2: 8

Annotation on image: "The two white pillars at the left represent entrance to house where Mr. Fay [Jay] lived in Batavia, S.H.W."
on verso "View at Tanah Abang, Batavia N.B. Our House is just at the right after bridge in the background."



View at Tanah Abang, Batavia, Looking Down the River

1866

31 x 41 cm.

Box 2: 8



View from Front Veranda, House at Tanah Abang

ca.1865

31 x 41 cm.

Box 2: 9



Waterloo Plain -- Sunrise, Batavia, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 2: 9

View of the military square at sunrise. The Waterloo monument is visible in front of Daendel's palace. The monument was originally erected in 1828 to commemorate the defeat of Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo.



Willems Church (Dutch Reformed), Batavia, Java

ca.1865

30 x 39 cm.

Box 2: 10

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

The Du Bois Library holds a copy of John Thomson's *The Straits of Malacca, Indo-China, and China* (Call no. DS507 .T49 1875a) inscribed to a Frank L. Wilson "with love from S.H.C." The handwriting in this volume seems to match that on the images, although the initials change to S.H.W., perhaps as the result of a marriage.

This collection was originally housed with the John Thomson Photograph Collection (PH 2) and the Felice Beato Photograph Collection (PH 4), which may indicate that the prints were all acquired together by S.H.W. and family while living in Indonesia.

Processing Information

Collection was processed by Meghan Fahey, May 2007.

Related Material

John Thomson Photograph Collection (PH 2)

Felice Beato Photograph Collection (PH 4)

Digitized content

Digitized versions of the images in this collection have been added to SCUA's online repository, Credo.

Language:

English

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Subjects

Bogor (Indonesia)--Photographs.

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Jakarta (Indonesia)--Photographs.

Java (Indonesia)--Photographs.

Surabaya (Indonesia)--Photographs.

Contributors

Woodbury, Walter B. (Walter Bentley), 1834-1885 [main entry]

Woodbury and Page.

Genres and formats

Albumen prints.

Photographs.

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