

Sometimes an imprint on the back identifies the photographer and location. (Caution: Printed cards could be purchased in bulk lot, and a photographer might use up leftover card stock after moving to a new town or sell leftover card stock to another photographer.) Celebrities' cartes de visite were mass produced and used much as today's fan mail photographs. Family albums, with slotted pages, might contain celebrity images (such as Jenny Lind, U.S. Grant, Tom Thumb) that came with the album or were purchased separately. Cartes de visite with a federal tax stamp on the back were produced between

September 1, 1864 and August 1, 1866, when the government was raising revenue to pay for the Civil War.

Cabinet Card (1866-1890s)

Also albumen prints, they supplanted the carte-de-visite in popularity. Literally millions were produced. Typical size is 3¾" × 5½", mounted on 4¼" × 6½" cards. Many advertise a photographer on the bottom and back (but the same cautions about leftover card stock hold true). Slotted albums were also available, and during the transition some albums were made with slots for both sizes.

For more information, consult these sources

Bloomington's Illustrated 1886 Catalog (Mineola, New York: Reprinted by Dover Publications, 1988).

Jane A. Farrell, "Clothing for Adults in Iowa, 1850-1899," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd ser.) 46:2 (Fall 1981), 100-20. (Photographs, drawings, and text provide specific information about styles, ornamentation, and colors of clothing worn by Iowa men and women.)

Alison Gernsheim, *Victorian and Edwardian Fashion: A Photographic Survey* (New York: Dover, 1963, 1981). Family photographs can be compared to more than 235 photographs dated from 1845 to 1914.)

Patricia E. Horridge, Diane E. Smathers, and Diane L.

Vachon, *Dating Costumes: A Check List Method* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1977), Technical Leaflet No. 102.

Note: Information about men's clothing is sparse in all of these references. Only the Gernsheim book is much help, and the men shown in identified photographs are mostly upper-class individuals dressed in high style. This does not necessarily help us identify men's clothing in the Midwest, although it may help.

Additional sources useful for interpreting and caring for historical photographs are listed in the Spring 1990 Palimpsest, part 1 of this series.

Tips on Storing Historical Photographs

by Mary Bennett

1. To prolong the life of your photographs, maintain constant temperature and humidity in a clean storage area year round. Don't store photos in basements or attics. Aim for a cool, dry, and consistent environment.
2. Separate prints from each other by placing them in acid-free paper envelopes or triacetate sleeves, with print surface away from gummed seams.
3. Do not use brown kraft envelopes, glassine sleeves, colored paper (because of the dyes), or vinyl or plastic-based materials that contain polyvinyl chloride. Acidic paper will become brittle with age and speed the deterioration of images. Cheaper plastics will often cause fading and sticking.
4. Interleaf albums or large groups of photos with 100 percent rag paper. Wrap oversized photos in archival paper and store them flat in acid-free boxes. Support torn or fragile

photos with acid-free matte board. Make copy negatives of any damaged photos.

5. Store prints vertically in acid-free storage boxes or metal cabinets with baked-on enamel finishes. Wood boxes or cabinets (even if painted) and cardboard release fumes that will accelerate the aging process.
6. Don't use rubber bands, paper clips, adhesive tape, or pens. They damage prints.
7. Always wash your hands or wear white cotton gloves when working with photographs. Never touch the print or negative surface because skin oils and chemicals (such as sulphur) will cause permanent damage.

Sources for archival materials: *Light Impressions* (439 Monroe Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607) and *Hollinger Corporation* (PO Box 6185, Arlington, VA 22206).

The next two issues will offer tips on storing negatives and displaying photos in albums or frames.