

Collection #  
P 0280

**JOHN CHISLETT  
PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHS, CA. 1900–CA. 1920**

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## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 OVB Photographs box

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1900–ca. 1920

PROVENANCE: Swann Galleries, New York; Christie's, New York, Stephen T. Rose, Indianapolis

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 1991.0152, 1991.0186, 1991.0401, 1992.0746, 1992.0498, 1992.0745, 1992.0945, 1992.0946, 1992.0947, 1993.0043, 1993.0193, 1994.0020, 1995.0433

NOTES: This is an artificial collection.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The photographer, John Chislett was born 6 February 1856 in Dubuque, Iowa. His father, Frederick W. Chislett was born in England (1827–99) and came to America as a child with his family. Frederick spent his formative years in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where he met and married Margaret Dwight Edwards. In 1853 they moved to Dubuque, Iowa where he operated a hardware business.

Frederick's father, also named John Chislett was a noted architect and landscape designer in Pittsburgh. The elder John Chislett was hired by a group of prominent Indianapolis citizens to plan a new cemetery for the growing community. He selected Strawberry Hill, now known as Crown Hill, as the ideal site. He also recommended that his son Frederick be appointed Crown Hill's first superintendent. Frederick and the family left Dubuque and arrived in Indianapolis on 31 December 1863.

The younger John Chislett began working at Crown Hill Cemetery in 1876 and eventually became the assistant superintendent. When his father died in 1899 he was appointed superintendent. His mother died in 1910 and he left Indianapolis sometime after her death and moved to Pittsburgh. Later in 1931 he moved to La Jolla, California where he died in 1938 at the age of 82. Chislett never married and is buried at Crown Hill with other members of his family.

Recognized as a noted pictorialist photographer, John Chislett was active in Indianapolis from the 1890s to 1918. His name is listed as an exhibitor in the Photographic Club exhibit catalogs for the Art Association of Indianapolis beginning in 1903. His name also appears in other exhibit catalogs, among them the Salon Club of America, an organization devoted to promoting regional pictorialist photography clubs. The latest exhibit catalog found where his name appears is the 1918 Fifth Annual Pittsburgh Salon of Photography. His photographs won numerous awards and were reproduced in photographic journals of the time. Today his photographs are in collections at the National Museum of American Art, the Addison Gallery of American Art, and the Hallmark Collection at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Missouri.

Sources:

Foresta, Merry A. *American Photographs: The First Century*. Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American Art with the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996.

George Eastman House database: <http://www.geh.org/>

Nicholas, Anna. *The Story of Crown Hill*. Indianapolis: Crown Hill Association, 1928.  
General Collection: F534.I55 N5 1928.

Smithsonian American Art Museum: <http://americanart.si.edu>

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The collection is comprised of 22 pictorial photographs taken by Indiana photographer John Chislett. They were purchased by the Indiana Historical Society between 1991 and 1995.

Made during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the photographs are in the impressionistic and soft focus pictorialist style popular among photographers of that time. Most of the photographs appear to be Indiana landscapes. One seascape photograph is identified on the verso as being taken in Maine in 1903. It is assumed the other seascapes are in the same vicinity.

The photographs are arranged in three series according to subject matter:

Series 1: Landscapes

Series 2: Seascapes

Series 3: Landscapes with People

Each photograph is listed in the Contents section of the collection guide with the title, process, size, and some dates as supplied by the dealers at the time of purchase. Information in square brackets [ ] was supplied by the processor.

## SERIES CONTENTS

### Series 1: Landscapes

#### CONTENTS

**Title:** *House and Shadows*

**Process:** Platinum Print

**Size:** 9 ½ x 7 ½ in.

**Title:** *Country House in Autumn*

**Process:** Cyanotype,

**Size:** 7 x 9 ½ in.

**Title:** *Covered Bridge*

**Process:** Platinum Print

**Size:** Size: 7 ¼ x 9 ¼ in.

**Title:** *The Pond*

**Process:** Platinum Print

**Size:** 7 x 9 ½ in.

**Title:** *Sunlight Through Trees*

**Process:** Platinum print, penciled notations on verso

**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 ½ in.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Title:** *Tree Study*

**Process:** Platinum Print

**Size:** 9 ½ x 7 ½ in.

**Date:** 1910

**Title:** *Trees and Reflections*

**Process:** Platinum Print

**Size:** 9 x 7 1/8 in.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Title:** *Woods in Winter*

**Process:** Platinum Print

**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 ½ in.

#### CONTAINER

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 1

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 2

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 3

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 4

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 5

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 6

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 7

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 8

**Title:** *Snowy Scene* [view of canal]  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 ½ in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 9

**Title:** *Winter Trees*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 9 ½ x 7 ½ in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 10

**Title:** *Winter Tree*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 9 ½ x 7 ¼ in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 11

**Title:** *Frozen Pond*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 9 ½ x 7 in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 12

**Title:** *Cloud Study at Dusk*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 5 x 9 ½ in.  
**Date:** ca. 1900

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 13

## **Series 2: Seascapes**

### CONTENTS

**Title:** *Gott Island, Mt. Desert 1903* [on verso]  
[Scene in Maine, tide is out with stranded boats]  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 ½ in.  
**Date:** 1903

### CONTAINER

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 14

**Title:** *Rowboats on Beach*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 15

**Title:** *Harbor Scene*  
**Process:** Platinum Print,  
**Size:** 9 ½ x 7 ½ in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 16

**Title:** *Seascape*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 ½ in.  
**Date:** ca. 1905

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 17

**Title:** *Sea Grasses*  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 ½ in.

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 18

### **Series 3: Landscapes with People**

#### CONTENTS

**Title:** *Apple Blossoms* [woman and tree]  
**Process:** Platinum Print  
**Size:** 7 ¼ x 9 in.

**Title:** *Young Man With a Hay Rake*  
**Process:** [Platinum Print]  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 in.  
[Initials J.R.C. on verso]

**Title:** *The Reaper*  
**Process:** [Platinum Print]  
**Size:** 7 ½ x 9 1/2 in.

**Title:** *Woman Sweeping*  
**Process:** Platinum Print,  
**Size:** 7 ¼ x 9 in.  
**Date:** ca. 1902

#### CONTAINER

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 19

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 20

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 21

OVB Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 22

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P 0280).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.