

A Guide to the Brocks Gap Photographs, 1905 SC 0006

Brocks Gap Photographs
1905



Title Statement

A Guide to the Brocks Gap Photographs, 1905 SC 0006

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0006

Unit ID

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Unit Date

1905

Language

English

Abstract

Two photographs on mounted board, dated 1905, of road construction in Brocks Gap in northwestern Rockingham County, Virginia. Both photographs are attributed to New Market photographer, B. B. O'Roark.

Creator

O'Roark, B. B. , Jr. (Benjamin Branson)

Extent

0.06 cubic feet 1 letter folder

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open to research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

Special Collections acquired the photographs at auction on May 14, 2008.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Brocks Gap Photographs, 1905, SC 0006, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Bio/Historical Note

Brocks Gap is an area of approximately 200 square miles in northwestern Rockingham County formed by the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. Due to primitive infrastructure that required fording the North Fork three times in order to exit Brocks Gap, Elder John Kline (1797-1864), Brethren Church leader and resident of nearby Broadway, proposed making improvements to Brocks Gap. These plans included cutting down the Gap rocks, making a road in the place of the cut, and erecting a bridge across one of the three fords. By 1880, the remaining two fords were replaced with a new road and bridge.

Both photographs are attributed to B. B. O'Roark (likely Benjamin Branson O'Roark Jr.), a photographer in New Market.

Scope and Content

The Brocks Gap Photographs are comprised of two 4 1/2 x 7 1/2 inch black and white photographs on 7 x 10 inch mounted board. Each mounted board is stamped with "B. B. O'ROARK, PHOTOGRAPHER, NEW MARKET VA." The first photograph features a group of eight people, including four women and one man on a horse, standing by a piece of equipment, likely a steam tractor used for grading the roadway. The North Fork of the Shenandoah River is in the foreground. The verso of the photograph reads: "Brocks Gap Between the Two Cuts No. 2 Spring of 1905 W. J. Gochenour." The second photograph features the same group of people and the same machinery. The verso reads: "No. 3 Brocks Gap road at the last big cut in the rocks Spring of 1905 W. J. Gochenour." The top left corner of the mounted board has been broken off. It is unclear if Gochenour is one of the persons in the photographs or how he relates to the photographs. cursory searches of the internet suggest that a W. J. Gochenour lived in Penn Laird, Virginia and was a miller by trade. Additionally, there was a different W. J. Gochenour practicing drilling in the Shenandoah Valley in the early to mid-twentieth century.

Related Material

Based on the numbers assigned to each photograph ("No. 2" and "No. 3" written on the versos), there must have been a "No. 1" in the series originally. A similar photo to the two in this collection was published in Lena Albrite Turner and Pat Turner Ritchie's photographic history of the area entitled Brocks Gap. This photo, on page 14 of the monograph, also features eight people standing by the same type of machinery. Therefore, it is possible that this photo, held in a private collection, is part of the same series of B. B. O'Roark photographs of Brocks Gap.

Brocks Gap photographs, circa 1915, SC 0410, James Madison University Special Collections, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Keywords

Rural development -- Virginia -- Brocks Gap
Roads -- Virginia -- Brocks Gap -- Design and construction
Brocks Gap (Va.) -- History -- 20th century
Rockingham County (Va.) -- History -- 20th century
Black-and-white photographs

Bibliography

Turner, Lena Albrite and Pat Turner Ritchie, Brocks Gap. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.

Arrangement

One folder containing two photographs.

Description of Subordinate Components

Brocks Gap Photographs

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1874

Unit Date 1905

Mixed Materials [1000886486] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)