Double Take Webinar Series

“White House or Not?”

Welcome! We’ll get started at 4PM ET.
Welcome! We’re glad you’re here! Use the chat box to introduce yourselves. Let us know:

- Your first name
- Where you’re joining us from
Double Take: White House or Not?

Kristi Finefield, Reference Specialist
Prints & Photographs Division
Library of Congress
Look Closely

• Look closely, front and back.
• Zoom in on details, if digital.
  • Describe what you see.
  • Take note of unusual features.
• Take note of what's present and what's missing.
What do you see in this photo?
Title – names of people

Fancy/formal clothes, furs

Horse & carriage

White House

outdoors

unsmiling

medals

married couple

hats

Arriving or departing from a place

Fancy/formal clothes, furs

foreign?

date

http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.13137
Seek and explore context

Read accompanying information:
• on the object,
• in the catalog description, and
• about the collection, if known.

Consider the sources of information that came with the photograph. Are they reliable?
Bibliographic Record in the Prints & Photographs Online Catalog

Mirza Ali Kuli Khan & wife

About This Item

- Title: Mirza Ali Kuli Khan & wife
- Creator(s): Bain News Service, publisher
- Date Created/Published: 1913 May 28 (date created or published later by Bain)
- Medium: 1 negative : glass ; 5 x 7 in. or smaller.

Reproduction Number: LC-DIG-ggbain-13137 (digital file from original negative)

Rights Advisory: No known restrictions on publication. For more information, see George Grantham Bain Collection - Rights and Restrictions Information https://www.loc.gov/rr/print/res/274_bain.html

Call Number: LC-B2-2708-2 [P&P]


Notes:

- Title and date from data provided by the Bain News Service on the negative.
- Forms part of: George Grantham Bain Collection (Library of Congress).
- General information about the George Grantham Bain Collection is available at http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.ggbain
George Grantham Bain Collection

Bain Collection

Print Subscribe Share/Save

President William H. Taft, ca. 1910.

Search All Search This Collection

All images are digitized | All jpegs/tiffs display outside Library of Congress | View All

About the George Grantham Bain Collection

The George Grantham Bain Collection represents the photographic files of one of America’s earliest news picture agencies. The collection richly documents sports events, theater, celebrities, crime, strikes, disasters, political activities including the woman suffrage campaign, conventions and public celebrations. The photographs Bain produced and gathered for distribution through his news service were worldwide in their coverage, but there was a special emphasis on life in New York City. The bulk of the collection dates from the 1900s to the mid-1920s, but scattered images can be found as early as the 1860s and as late as the 1930s.
Is this the White House or not?

None of the current info we have answers this question.

What would you do next?
Seek and explore context

• Seek out related photographs – by subject matter, time period, collection. Use these photos to question assumptions made at first glance.

• Search for textual info in newspapers, periodicals, etc.
Find related photographs

Easter Egg Rolling, White House. Photo by Harris & Ewing, 1914.
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hec.03961
Find related photographs

Look closely
Is this the same building?
Conclusion:
This is not the White House.

How could we determine what building it actually is?
Review what I know:

- The man in the photo is involved in political affairs which would bring him to Washington, D.C.
- The building is consistent with D.C. architecture
- Possibly a government or institutional building
- And the real challenge:

  I know nothing that lends itself to keyword searches
Getting over brick walls during research requires persistence, and help!

- **Ask for help!** Consult experts like librarians, archivists & historians
- **Be willing to browse and be patient**

Hare. Photo by Bain News Service, betw 1915 and 1920.  
[http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.31029](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.31029)
Souvenir Viewbooks

They picture street scenes, new and notable buildings, and majestic views. The book featured below takes us on a tour of *General Government and State Capitol Buildings of the United States*. Every state in the union is covered in the Souvenir Viewbooks Collection, though some were yet to be states at the time of publication. Sadly, Delaware and Nevada are underrepresented with only one viewbook each.


Eureka!
To the online catalog!

Bonus round!

Do you think the couple is visiting Memorial Continental Hall? Why or why not?
Look closely

http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.13137
Look closely

More Bonus round!

How can we figure out where the couple is standing?
Find related photographs

MEMORIAL CONTINENTAL HALL, NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OF D.A.R. FROM STEPS OF PAN AMERICAN UNION. Photo by Harris & Ewing, 1917.
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hec.08697
….and look closely

Note position relative to building.

http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.13137
Seek out broader context

WASHINGTON MONUMENT. VIEW OF PAN AMERICAN UNION AND N.W. FROM MONUMENT.
Photo by Harris & Ewing, betw. 1913 and 1918.
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hec.10496
...and look closely

Detail of WASHINGTON MONUMENT. VIEW OF PAN AMERICAN UNION AND N.W. FROM MONUMENT. Photo by Harris & Ewing, betw. 1913 and 1918. 
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hec.10496
Thank you!

Questions?

Kristi Finefield, Reference Specialist
Prints & Photographs Division
Library of Congress
Learn More:

Ask a Prints & Photographs Librarian: https://ask.loc.gov/prints-photographs/

Prints & Photographs Online Catalog: https://loc.gov/pictures/

Researcher’s Toolbox: https://www.loc.gov/rr/print/resource/researchertool.html