

Antioch Excavation Director's Reports MS.11

Finding aid prepared by Anna J. Clarkson

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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10 Art Museum Drive

Baltimore, MD, 21032

(443) 573-1778

BMALibrary@artbma.org

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Summary Information

Repository	Archives and Manuscripts Collections
Creator	Committee for the Excavation of Antioch and its Vicinity.
Creator - Contributor	Garrett, Robert, b. 1875
Title	Antioch Excavation Field Reports
Date [inclusive]	1932-1935
Extent	2.5 Linear feet (4 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The collection contains field reports and ephemera related to the archaeological excavations at Antioch on the Orontes, Syria (modern day Turkey) and the landmark discovery of over 300 ancient mosaics. The excavation was lead by Princeton University and Musées Nationaux de France in conjunction with The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Worcester Art Museum, and later the Fogg Museum of Art at Harvard & Dumbarton Oaks. The collection contains mixed materials including two sets of field reports with text and images for the years 1932, 1933, 1934, and 1935 with related ephemera by year including correspondence, essays and photographs.</p>

Preferred Citation

Antioch Excavation Field Reports, Archives and Manuscripts Collections, The Baltimore Museum of Art.

Biographical Information

The excavation of Antioch On the Orontes, Syria (present day Turkey) from 1932-1939 led to the landmark discovery of over three hundred mosaics dating from the first decades of the second century until the earthquake of 526 CE.

The origins of the discovery lies in two previous expeditions to Syria. The first, occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century by Count Charles Jean Melchior de Vogue (1829-1916) who documented his discoveries of Central Syrian archaeological sites and published a corpus of works from 1865-1877 entitled "La Syrie Centrale". The second expedition led by Dr. Howard Crosby Butler (1875-1958), scholar of ancient architecture at Princeton, built upon Melchior's previous work. In 1899 Butler, Enno Littman (1875-1958), William Kelly Prentice (1871-1964) and Robert Garrett (1875-1961) embarked on Princeton's two year Abyssinian Expedition to Syria (see *Robert Garrett Diaries and a Calling Card Collection*, The Baltimore Museum of Art). During that time, Butler and his team traversed three main districts of Syria. The expedition covered ruins previously mentioned by de Vogue and provided further site-documentation including photographing and measuring every monument with attention paid to the large amount of preserved domestic architecture. Several publications resulted from this campaign.

A keen interest in ancient architectural monuments was awakened through these publications as well as Butler's teaching and an application was made to the Syrian Government in 1930 for concession of the site of Antioch. Permission was granted in 1931 to excavate for a period of six years. The expedition was headed by Princeton University and the Musées Nationaux de France. Through the cooperation of Princeton alumnus, Robert Garrett, a trustee at The Baltimore Museum of Art and Francis Henry Taylor, Director of the Worcester Art Museum, securing the involvement of their museums in the excavation.

In 1935-1936 the project was given support by the Penrose Fund of the American Philosophical Society and in 1936, the excavation committee was enlarged to include the Fogg Museum of Art at Harvard, affiliated with Dumbarton Oaks. A further concession of six years was granted by the Syrian government but work was discontinued in 1939 due to the depression back home and the growing threat of war in Europe and the Middle East.

Over three hundred examples of mosaic pavements were excavated for dissemination to the participating museums of The Louvre, The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Worcester Art Museum, and the Museum of Historic Art at Princeton. In addition, work was also installed in the Museum of Antioch (presently, Hatay Archaeological Museum in Antakya, Turkey) where the mosaics are revered for their grand scale, naturalistic effects and decorative brilliance.

Directors of the excavations included Dr. Clarence Stanley Fisher (1876-1941), George W. Elderkin; and W.A. Campbell. Numerous publications on the excavations were published including: *Antioch-on-the-Orontes I*, *Antioch-on-the-Orontes II*, issued by Princeton University press in 1938.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains field reports and ephemera related to the archaeological excavations at Antioch on the Orontes, Syria (modern day Turkey) and the landmark discovery of over 300 ancient mosaics. The excavation was led by Princeton University and Musées Nationaux de France in conjunction with The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Worcester Art Museum, and later the Fogg Museum of Art at Harvard & Dumbarton Oaks. The collection contains mixed materials including two sets of field reports with text and images for the years 1932, 1933, 1934, and 1935 with related ephemera by year including correspondence, essays and photographs.

The Baltimore Museum of Art held multiple editions of excavation field reports for the years 1932-1935, many of which were incomplete and missing small amounts of information. As material in the field reports was created in editions and not unique, sets were combined to represent two complete copies (Copy A and Copy B). All field books were preserved in their original order aside from a replaced image or page. Further documentation on the subject can be found in the collection processing notes.

In addition to the field reports, loose materials were found inserted under the covers of the original three-ring binders that the reports were housed in. The loose material was gathered from all sets of field reports and placed in a folder titled "Ephemera" and filed under the corresponding year where the material was located.

The 1932 field report is entitled *First General Report on the Excavations at Antioch on the Orontes*. It numbers 47 pages of text and contains many mounted black and white photographs depicting maps, places, artifacts and various stages of excavation. In addition, the report contains a written narrative by G.W. Elderskin covering the period of time of March - June 1932. Ephemera from 1932 includes a transcription of cable sent from Professor Charles R. Morey to M. Seyrig, General Director of Antiquities for the Commissariat of Syria detailing discovery of an important Megalopsychia mosaic at Ain-Jamoos near Daphne; 17 additional photographs of the dig from Robert Garrett to The Baltimore Museum of Art; four photographs of Antioch mosaics; and a scholar's rendering of a large mosaic scene.

The 1933 field report is entitled *General Report on the Excavations at Antioch on the Orontes for the Season of 1934*. It numbers 30 pages of text and contains many black and white mounted photographs depicting the staff, maps, places, artifacts and various stages of excavation. In addition, the report contains written narratives by William A. Campbell and Jean Lassus. Ephemera from 1933 includes four sets of photographs of mosaics featured in the report and two copies of a cable from Charles R. Morey to Robert Garrett detailing mosaics and the favorable prospects of the site.

The 1934 field report is entitled *General Report on the Excavations at Antioch on the Orontes for the season of 1934* numbers 41 pages of text and contains 200 images including maps, artifacts, and site photography. The report was authored by William A. Campbell, F.O. Waage, Donald N. Wilber, and Jean Lassus. It should be noted that both 1934 field reports contain photocopies of images rather than photographic prints as found in the other three years. Ephemera from 1932 includes several one page letters from Professor Charles R. Morey detailing the export of the mosaics; an undated, anonymous essay

entitled "The Mosaic of Antioch"; and two black and white photographs of mosaics mounted on card stock.

The 1935 field report is entitled *Director's Report on the Excavations at Antioch-on-the-Orontes for the Season of 1935* by William A. Campbell and narrative by Donald N. Wilber entitled *A Roman Theater*. It numbers 41 pages and contains mounted black and white photographs of staff, maps, artifacts and the excavation site.

The collection is missing reports for the years 1936, 1937, 1938, and 1939 which do exist at another institution who participated in the project. For preservation purposes the original three-ring binders that contained the field reports have been housed in a separate box at the end of the collection.

Arrangement note

Arranged in one series: Antioch Excavation Field Reports.

The field books are arranged by year (1932, 1933, 1934, and 1935). There are two copies of each year's field (Copy A and Copy B). In addition, there is one Ephemera folder for each year.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Archives and Manuscripts Collections June 21, 2012

Restrictions on Use

The Antioch Excavations Field Reports are the physical property of the Manuscripts Collections, Baltimore Museum of Art. Copyright, except in cases where material has passed into the public domain, belongs to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult a Library staff member.

Provenance

The collection was received from the Registration Department of The Baltimore Museum of Art. Date unknown.

Processing Information

This collection was partially processed by Linda Tompkins-Baldwin and Emily Rafferty in 2002. The collection was completely processed by Anna Clarkson in 2012.

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Antioch (Turkey)--Antiquities, Roman
 - Excavations (Archaeology)--Turkey
 - Mosaics, Ancient--Turkey
 - Pavements, Mosaic--Turkey--Antioch
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Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

The overall condition of the collection is fair. Field Report Pages are brittle in some instances. In addition, photographic mounts have deteriorated and many photographs have loosened and/are loose. Pages must be handled with care. Staining on many pages due to acidic nature of glue used in the historic photographic mounts. In addition, Field Report Binders show signs of deterioration and have been segregated in a separate box.

Bibliography

Morey, Charles R. *The Excavation of Antioch-on-the-Orontes*. Baltimore: The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1937.

Collection Inventory

Elderkin, G. W., (George Wicker), 1879-1965 1932 First General Report on the Excavations at Antioch on the Orontes. 1932 5.0 folders

Box **Folder**

Copy A 1932

1 1-2

Copy B 1932

1 3-4

Ephemera 1932

1 5

General Report on the Excavations at Antioch on the Orontes for the Season of 1933. 1933 5.0 folders

Box **Folder**

Copy A 1933

1 6-7

Copy B 1933

2 1-2

Ephemera 1933

2 3

General Report on the Excavations at Antioch on the Orontes for the Season of 1934. 1934 5.0 folders

Box **Folder**

Copy A 1934

2 4-6

Copy B 1934	2	7-8
Ephemera 1932-1934	1	9
Director's Report on the Excavations at Antioch-on-the-Orontes for the Season of 1935. 1935 5.0 folders		
	Box	Folder
Copy A 1935	3	1-2
Copy B 1935	3	3-4
Ephemera 1936	3	5
Field Report Binders 1932-1935 1.0 box		
	Box	Item
1932 Binder 1932	4	1
1932 Binder 1932	4	2
1933 Binder	4	3
1933 Binder 1933	4	4
1934 Binder 1934	4	5
1934 Binder 1934	4	6

1935 Binder 1935	4	7
1935 Binder 1935	4	8