Edith Irvine: Her Life and Photography

Wilma Marie Plunkett, Brigham Young University, Provo

Abstract
In mid-1988, Brigham Young University received a high-quality collection of photographic glass plates made by Edith Irvine at the turn of the century. The plates, her camera and other photographic equipment, and miscellaneous publications were donated to BYU by her nephew, Jim Irvine.

When the plates arrived and the Archives Photolab had them proofed, we realized that not only were the San Francisco earthquake/fire and other areas of California history recorded, but we had, in fact, the work of an outstanding photographer. As we compared the proofs with the work of other photographers who handled similar subjects, we called on faculty members qualified to judge her work. All were unstinting in their praise. As our Archives Curator, Dennis Rowley, looked at them, he said, "I've never seen a set of photographs create a mood like these do."

The more I worked with them, the greater my need to do more than just process and preserve. As I discussed the collection with the faculty members, it became evident to me that I should make a change in my graduate program. I was determined to learn more about the photographer.

The collection of photographs can be viewed in the Edith Irvine Collection.

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First Advisor
Eugene England, Committee Chairman

Second Advisor
Wallace M. Barrus, Committee Member

Third Advisor
Frank W. Fox, Committee Member

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