

**NOTRE DAME DE PARIS PHOTOGRAPH  
ALBUM, ca. 1908**

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**SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE**

The Notre Dame de Paris Photograph Album dates ca. 1908 and contains over 200 images of the medieval church as well as supplementary autograph manuscript notes in the hand of a Frenchman only identified as "M. Cottin." In addition to this annotated photograph album, a companion notebook exists (also in the hand of M. Cottin) as well as loose photographs, photostats, and miscellaneous documents that relate to the study of Notre Dame. The photograph album and all related materials measure less than 1 linear foot and are housed in 3 oversize boxes.

The album is the most significant record in this collection and primarily contains large-scale photographs measuring approximately 11"x 14." These images document the major exterior and interior views of the cathedral. Other supporting groups of photographs focus on various architectural components of the church, including details of interior columns, capitals, and statuary as well as the exterior chimeres galleries, flying buttresses, spires, roofing, and windows. The album also contains smaller photostatic reproductions of diagrams showing masonry work and the architectural components of the interior vaulting systems.

Another significant component of the album is the text hand-copied by M. Cottin from a 19<sup>th</sup> century edition of Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc's Dictionnaire raisonne de l'architecture francaise du XIe au XVIe siecle. It appears that the album was created as an early attempt to illustrate Viollet-le-Duc's text on Notre Dame with photographs. This album is now an important visual record of Notre Dame for several reasons. A number of the photographs bear the stamp of French photographers Seraphin Mederic Mieusement and his son-in-law, Paul Robert, as well as the stamp of the *Commission des Monuments Historiques*. Mieusement and Robert photographed many examples of medieval architecture throughout France for the *Monuments Historiques*. This organization was founded to protect, preserve and restore France's architectural heritage, and, as part of that mission, undertook a large-scale project to document the great medieval churches throughout the country. The Notre Dame photographs in this album also serve as a record of the changes made to the church during the Viollet-le-Duc restoration, show details of the upper portions of the exterior church, now difficult to see from the street level, and document losses in exterior stonework due to acid rain, erosion, and World War II damage.

The companion notebook to the photograph album is bound and entitled "Notre-Dame de Paris, Notes, 1895-1898." It also contains excerpts from Viollet-le-Duc's Dictionnaire raisonne de l'architecture..., copied in M. Cottin's hand, and reproduces many of the same passages, lists of architectural terms, and notes which accompany the photographs of the album. In addition to this companion notebook, the collection also includes individual black and white photographs and photostats of Notre Dame de Paris, the

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church of Saint Merry, various supporting documents, and a group of related material from the college's exhibition on Notre Dame de Paris.

**PROVENANCE NOTE**

This collection, including the annotated photograph album, companion notebook, and supporting documents, was acquired in 1996 from Fernand Laget, a Parisian rare book dealer. Attribution of "M. Cottin" as the creator of the album and companion notebook comes from a document in Box 2, Folder 5 dated January 5, 1908. On this document, item number 3 under "Ordre du jour" states (in French) that M. Cottin will present his album of photographs on Notre Dame de Paris.

**INVENTORY**

**Box 1**

Notre Dame de Paris Photograph Album, ca. 1908

**Box 2**

Companion notebook, "Notre-Dame de Paris, Notes, 1895-1898"

Folder 1: Photographs of Notre Dame (16)

Folder 2: Photostats of Notre Dame (6)

Folder 3: Photographs of Saint Merry (10)

Folder 4: Autograph manuscript notes by M. Cottin relating to:

a) Marcel Aubert's La Cathedrale Notre-Dame de Paris

b) Viollet-le-Duc's Dictionnaire de l'Architecture....

Folder 5: Miscellaneous supporting documents

**Box 3**

Folder 1: Exhibition materials – Negatives (17)

Folder 2: Exhibition materials – Poster and label text

Folder 3: Exhibition materials – Photographs (7)

Folder 4: Exhibition materials – Photographs (7)