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William S. Sawyer exhibition : a thesis project : a curated exhibition of William S. Sawyer's collection and the preservation recommendations for its storage

Elisabeth Teresa Jessica Caron
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WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION

By

Elisabeth Teresa Jessica Caron
BA Honors Fine Arts, Bishops University Lennoxville,
Quebec, Canada, June 2003

A Thesis Project

A Curated Exhibition of William S. Sawyer's Collection,
and the Preservation Recommendations for its Storage

Presented to Ryerson University, and
George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film

In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts

In the program of
Photographic Preservation and Collections Management

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2006

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Elisabeth Caron

Abstract

William S. Sawyer Exhibition

Masters of Arts, 2006

Elisabeth Teresa Jessica Caron

Photographic Preservation and Collections Management

Ryerson University

This practical thesis project examines the planning process of a specific exhibition using the photographic collection of a Canadian photographer/ portrait painter William S. Sawyer. The exhibition is drawn from the many artifacts, including photographic prints, family albums, newspaper clippings, and speeches on photography from William S. Sawyer's personal collection that were donated to the Archives Department at Queens University. Following several discussions with the head archivist at Queens University, Mr. Paul Banfield, I have created an exhibition for future display at Queen's University archives. The exhibition contains a selection of 48 prints and related artifacts. This paper examines the procedures and decision-making process used while planning this exhibition. The appendix includes the traditional byproducts of an exhibition including checklists, wall text, gallery layout and preservation and conservation recommendations for the objects included in the exhibition.

Acknowledgements

I would like to personally thank all of the individuals who have contributed their time, knowledge and valuable information in order for this thesis to be completed. A thank you goes out to the staff and members of Queens University Archives for allowing me to complete my thesis at Queen's University Archives and providing me access to the William Sawyer Collection. I would like to individually thank from Queens University Archives, Mr. Paul Banfield, Ms Heather Home, Ms Margaret Bignell and Heather Wolsey. I would also like to thank my thesis advisor Mr. Sean Corcoran from George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film for his support.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my thesis to my parents George and Dina Caron and to my fiancé Michael Valente for their ongoing support and encouragement throughout the past two years upon the completion of my Masters of Arts Degree in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management at Ryerson University and George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film. Thank you.

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Planning an exhibition is often a long and arduous process requiring careful consideration of ideas and available objects. This process is necessary if visitors are to enjoy a positive and educational experience from the show. The importance of a carefully considered decision making process and its impact on the success of an exhibition convinced me to focus on this topic as a thesis project. Specifically, I have chosen as my thesis project, the creation of a photographic exhibition using a personal photographic collection of the Canadian photographer/ portrait painter William S. Sawyer.

Sawyer was a founding member of the Society of Canadian Artists which led him to pursue the careers of many of the other artists and to include their work in his personal collection. His resulting collection of personal photographs and artifacts including family albums, newspaper clippings, speeches on photography, and photographic prints have been donated to the Archives at Queen's University. Following several discussions with Mr. Paul Banfield the head archivist at Queen's University Archives, and at his request, I have created an exhibition using the William S. Sawyer collection for future use at Queen's University Archives. This paper will explain who William S. Sawyer was, why he is important to Canada, and especially to Kingston, Ontario and Queen's University. I will discuss the process of creating the William S. Sawyer exhibition.

William S. Sawyer was born in Montréal, Quebec November 9th 1820, and died December 10th 1889, in Kingston Ontario. He was a photographer and portrait painter and is one of Kingston's best-kept secrets. He first thought of studying law but changed because of his love for the arts. His artistic career began in his hometown of Montréal where even as an unschooled artist his raw talent was soon evident in his career. "Sawyer seemed to have learned his art by copying the masters from engravings, drawing casts, and perhaps some drawing from life".¹ Years later traveling to find work, he met with many different persons from Montréal to Toronto. Sawyer would stay in communities until he felt that there was no more opportunity to make money, then he moved on to the next possible prospective town.

¹ Bell, Michael. *William S. Sawyer: Portrait Painter (Kingston, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1978)*, 8

Kingston, Ontario would become Sawyer's longest stop along the way and the place where "he met his wife Eliza Jane Baxter whom he then married on 18 November, 1851. With this new responsibility Sawyer set out to improve his capacity to earn a living by visiting New York in the spring of 1852 where he tried to absorb everything he saw and profit from the excellent portraits which were the best he had ever seen."² Sawyer then moved back to Montréal where business thrived. He and his wife called Montréal home until 1855, when they returned to Kingston. "From 1856, using Kingston as a centre of operations, Sawyer plied the trade of the itinerant portrait painter along the north shore of Lake Ontario, traveling back and forth from Port Hope, Cobourg, Belleville, Toronto, and Brockville, striking north to Peterborough and Ottawa in search of business and returning to Montreal for extended periods."³ In Kingston, Sawyer found many individuals within the legal and business community to sit for portraits. "Sawyer diligently sought out commissions from the government of Canada, from the city of Kingston and from individuals who had established themselves as leaders in their communities"⁴

Sawyer's distinctive approach of using photography as an aid to help him when painting portraits was clearly evident in Michael Bell's exhibition catalogue on William S. Sawyer. He writes "Sawyer's working knowledge of photography was useful to his career as an artist. He could, for instance, shorten the traditional lengthy sitting for an oil portrait by doing studies with the camera. The resulting print could be controlled, by him, for composition, size and could even be printed faintly on the paper or canvas for over-painting in water colors or oils, according to the client's wishes."⁵

Sawyer was supported by commissioned works. "The Corporation of the City of Kingston acquired a large number of portraits of their former mayors."⁶ One of the best known full length portraits created by Sawyer was of Sir John A. MacDonald, first Prime

² Bell, Michael. *William S. Sawyer: Portrait Painter*. (Kingston, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1978), 13.

³ Ibid, 13.

⁴ Ibid, 13.

⁵ McKendry, Jennifer. *Early Photography in Kingston* (Kingston, Ontario, 1998), 49.

⁶ Bell, Michael. *William S. Sawyer: Portrait Painter* (Kingston, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1978), 17.

Minister of Canada, now displayed at Kingston City Hall. The MacDonald commission was largely influential in bringing further commissions. "In 1859 he cooperated with photographer Henry Sheldon in sending colored photographs and portraits in oil to the Provincial Exhibition. Sheldon produced a carte de visite of Sawyer holding a palette board in front of an easel. A handsome Sheldon view of the Kingston City Hall is pasted into Sawyer's album which also contains views Sawyer shot on his tour of Bowmanville, Barriefield, Kingston, Watertown, in the late 1850's."⁷ This particular album contains many other works by Sawyer from his travels along the north shore of Lake Ontario.

Sawyer's long life and remarkable talent enabled him to have a lengthy career creating portraits using photographs as aids. As noted above in the quotation #5 his use of photographs enabled him to create accurate portraits with less time for sittings. Sawyer worked with many photographic processes, including calotypes and ambrotypes. They illustrate how Sawyer's working knowledge of photography was a major contributor to his successful art career: he was on the cutting edge of his art form by creating many photographs to develop an accurate portrait and or painting. Many of these photographic studies survive today and are held at Queen's University Archives.

This photographic collection is an important part of Canadian history; there is no doubt that Sawyer was a talented photographer whose artwork was both original and unique. Being an energetic and visionary artist and businessman, he became an influential photographer and painter in and around Kingston where he was successful in expanding his business. It was at this time that he created the portraits of important people that we now examine. These remarkable portraits are part of Kingston and Canadian history and they also reveal the face of nineteenth-century North America. William S. Sawyer brings all the elements of painting and photography to a higher level providing a comprehensive view that can be seen by many Canadians for years to come. He is rightfully recognized for his skill in portraiture and photography.

⁷ McKendry, Jennifer. *Early Photography in Kingston* (Kingston, Ontario, 1998), 48.

William S. Sawyer's photographic collection came to Queen's University Archives as a private donation from a distant relative of Sawyer. As noted above the collection is a mixture of personal family photographs ranging from a cased ambrotype to a carte de visite with some professional works. The collection is very important to Queens University Archives because of the unique mixture of materials. It is a rare collection providing a glimpse into the life of an important Canadian photographer/portrait painter and visionary. His collection is also important to Kingston's heritage because it includes many influential and famous individuals from Kingston, such as Sir John A. Macdonald, Kingston Mayors, and eminent individuals in the church and at Queen's University.

I decided to use the Sawyer collection as the focus of my project because it is in urgent need of preservation and care. It is rare and unique to Kingston and I believe that history should be made available to whoever would like to view it. This collection is so important to Kingston and Canadian history that I hope to make people aware of it and encourage them to use it. But as I said, the collection is in need of special care. By creating this exhibition I aim to ensure that specific care is given to every piece of art that is in need of preservation, and to introduce Kingston's heritage to new viewers to give them an opportunity to appreciate their heritage.

For the Sawyer exhibition, I have chosen 48 photographic objects from the donated Sawyer collection and related ephemera to be the main objects used in the exhibition. When deciding on what will be the main focus of the Sawyer exhibition I decided to follow traditional procedures when planning the exhibition including checklists, wall labels, wall text, lighting, and layout. Because the legacy of the Sawyer collection is important to Canadian history and yet it is in moderate to poor condition, I decided to emphasize the preservation recommendations for the photographic objects in the collection. I included proper housing for the cased objects, and storage for before and after the exhibition to the Queen's University Archives. After extensive research of the Sawyer collection I also decided to recommend any conservation for objects when needed.

I chose the photographic prints and related ephemera for the exhibition, an impressive group of images and objects, which capture Canadian history in one simple exhibition. The talent of Sawyer, and the many photographers represented in his personal collection, overcame the rigidities of the photographic technology of their day to reveal their life and their times. Sawyer's collection is as innovative and fascinating now as when it was taken because it vividly conveys a sense of ongoing and instinctive reality, unique to him.

When I decided to create the William S. Sawyer exhibition, I wanted to follow the traditional procedures of a gallery or museum. Many decisions have to be made before the choice to involve a gallery or museum with an exhibition is agreed upon. For example, I had to decide if the Sawyer exhibition should be educational or created solely for entertainment or should it be both. When I decided to create it as an educational exhibition, I chose to have it promote and represent the treasures of Queen's University Archives as represented by painter/ photographer William S. Sawyer. I wanted to enhance the knowledge base of Canadians unfamiliar with nineteenth century photography. I thought the exhibition would introduce new viewers to Kingston's heritage through photographic visions of one important Kingston family as shown by photographers of the nineteenth century. That is precisely why I chose many of Sawyer's family photographs which include most of his children. They represent the cultural significance of how photography influenced and recorded a family's importance in society. This exhibition will explore how photography can provoke a direct experience when viewing photographs from Canada's heritage. I thought it would be an opportune time for visitors to be given the chance to appreciate one of Kingston's first photographers/ painters and to enrich their lives with a piece of Kingston's history. I wanted the exhibition also to give the viewer an endearing glimpse into the family life of one of the most influential local photographers/painters of this period while giving insight into nineteenth century photography.

I discovered that my decision to create an exhibition using the Sawyer collection became an overwhelming task. The collection was donated February 2006, and has never

been placed on display in a public exhibition. I had to start creating the exhibition without a structure. It began with the lengthy process of writing a proposal that would be included in the exhibition package. The proposal (letter to Dorothy Farr) was written to provide information to the gallery or museum that would be interested in showcasing the Sawyer exhibition. The Sawyer exhibition proposal included information such as what the Sawyer collection is all about, what photography or objects are included in the Sawyer collection will be used in the exhibition, what the goal of the Sawyer exhibition was to be, what type of objects will be included in the exhibition, and who will be in charge of the exhibition. The proposal will be the main informational source that the featuring gallery or museum will use if they decide that they would like to showcase the Sawyer exhibition.

After writing the proposal, I then created a checklist that would provide visual information of the art and text of the objects to be included in the exhibition. The name of the artist, the year created, the photographic process, the subject of the photograph, the size of the photograph, and if it is a cased photograph, or a mounted photograph; all of the above components were essential when creating the William S. Sawyer checklist. I chose to create the checklist because it provides actual small photographs that are placed into a list that provides information that is used when organizing and creating an exhibition.

Another traditional procedure that will be included in the preparation of the Sawyer exhibition is the generation of wall labels. These are small information sources that will be placed beside each image or object in the Sawyer exhibition. They provide information such as artist, size, and title which will be shown in the Sawyer exhibition. My wall text will provide the viewer with a brief description of what the exhibition is about, why the Sawyer collection was chosen for display, why its contents are important to Kingston, and to Canadian history, and why it was donated to the Queen's University Archives and by whom. I have also selected a layout design for the objects to be displayed. I decided to hang the mounted photograph prints on the wall; the cased photographs and the other objects like the family albums and Sawyer's day journals

would be placed in a vitrine in the center of the exhibition space to provide protection from unauthorized handling. I have also completed recommendations for the proper type of lighting and the amount to be used when displaying the exhibition.

Above all, I spent much time going through the collection to decide what should be included in the exhibition. I chose most of the cased photographs from the overall collection, because these are very rare objects and are a different type of photograph that many people may not even know exists. I thought most viewers would be unfamiliar with nineteenth century photographs and cased photographs. I have also chosen to include a selection of mounted photographs of Sawyer's children and family. These photographs will provide the viewers with a personal look at Sawyer's life and family and show how unique and diverse they are for their time; they offer a quirky glimpse of family life in that era. I believe that it is important to connect ourselves to Canadian history, especially to Kingston's history, so I have also selected many personal objects such as day books, sketch books and speeches and nineteenth century photographic recipes. The selection process was hard, but interesting and I feel that the Sawyer exhibition will be memorable and exciting. However more research needs to be done on the existing Sawyer collection to determine which photographs relate to the painted portraits belonging to the Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen's University. This would definitely lead to an exciting and interesting future exhibition.

I considered carefully the best layout and design for the Sawyer exhibition. I want to create an exhibition that is viewer friendly with visually pleasing components, and a sense of entertainment. Entertainment, pleasure and understanding are all factors that need to be included to make the Sawyer exhibition attractive to all ages and walks of life. Most visitors to any exhibition grasp what the intention behind the exhibition is and at least somewhat understand what the curator is trying to accomplish. Above all I hope to make the Sawyer exhibition an experience that is educational, and artistic, that is easily understood and enjoyed by every viewer.

As noted earlier when the William S. Sawyer collection was donated to Queen's University by a private family donor, it was immediately clear that it needed prompt conservation and preservation. My thoughts were geared towards preservation because of the generally poor condition. For example, some hinges on various cased photographs were in need of repair and some photographic prints were cracking or were torn due to old age and improper storage. I recommended proper housing and proper storage for each of the photographic objects that are included in the Sawyer exhibition. Preservation for photographs is still a very new process that is not usually done properly and sometimes not done at all which may become problematic for the future condition of the photographs. I recommended conservation for the photographic objects in the exhibition that clearly need some proper care and cleaning. I made these recommendations to raise awareness of how to properly house and store nineteenth century photography and objects. In my recommendations I have included why I thought each photographic object needed such attention. The conservation and preservation and collection management recommendations for the Sawyer photographic collection are in the appendix and are written out in chronological checklist order from the checklist created for the exhibition. I have included the checklist numbers, the description of the objects along with who the photograph is of. I then provided conservation recommendation and why I have recommended conservation. I have also recommended preservation and collection management in terms of what type of housing is best for each object in the Sawyer exhibition.

When creating an exhibition from the past for viewers today, entertainment, pleasure and understanding must be included. This is essential to make the exhibition accessible to all ages or walks of life. Exhibitions should leave the visitor with an emotional response if they are to have an everlasting impact. Visual stimulation as well as intellectual stimulation must be combined in order to have a successful exhibition. When creating the William S. Sawyer exhibition I realized that accessibility is vital. Families make up a significant percentage of visitors to art exhibitions. Displays should be designed to be seen for both an adult and child's heights; displays and labels should be comprehensible for both children and adults; and exhibits intended for family groups

should promote group participation. Exhibitions should encourage all types of individuals to take part, and welcome viewers as well as embrace them.

In conclusion, I suggest that the William S. Sawyer collection is not just a photographic collection but a unique and diverse exhibition showcasing some of Canada's most interesting nineteenth century photography. When I planned the Sawyer exhibition I decided to promote the photographic objects in the exhibition, yet keep in mind the need to attract and interest the viewer. My initial focus and goal was to promote and represent the unique treasures in the Queen's University Archives of painter/photographer William S. Sawyer. I wanted an exhibition that is viewer friendly with a sense of enjoyment. Entertainment, pleasure and understanding are all factors to be taken into consideration when choosing the objects for the exhibition. I wanted visitors to grasp the focus and intentions behind the exhibition and catch a glimpse of Sawyer as a person by introducing them to the power and beauty of his photography. Furthermore, the exhibition provides visual proof of how beautiful nineteenth century photography was and how it was used. If the conservation, preservation and collection management recommendations are implemented, the collection will last many more years for research, teaching storage, exhibitions and personal use. The Sawyer collection is a wonderful resource that provides the opportunity for researchers to have an endearing glimpse into the family life of one of the most influential Kingston photographers/painters of the nineteenth century period while giving insight into photography of that time.

I have enjoyed using all my talents to create the William S. Sawyer exhibition and hope my enjoyment will be communicated to the viewers so that they may share my pleasure of exploring the beauty of nineteenth century Canadian photography. Also I hope the exhibition will be an important source of information that provides Canadians with the opportunity to appreciate Sawyer's contributions to Canadian history, through the many photographic studies he and other photographers created which are now located in his personal collection held at Queen's University Archives. As I have worked on this project I have become very aware of how vital it is for a community to feel connected to its past, and to be sensitive to the importance of our legacy to the present and future. It is

therefore very important that we take care to preserve our legacy when it is in the shape of photographs, painting, papers and other fragile objects. A major collection like that of William S. Sawyer deserves the kind of conservation and preservation I have outlined. I have found great pleasure in this work and I hope we can ensure the safe keeping of the collection so that many others present and future can share that pleasure.

Proposal: Letter to Dorothy Farr

Dorothy Farr
Associate Director and curator
Anges Etherington Art Centre
Queens University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
K7L 3N6

July 28, 2006

Dear Ms. Farr,

William S. Sawyer's collection of photographs and artifacts including family albums, newspaper clippings, speeches on photography, and photographic prints was recently donated to the Queens University Archives. This collection, created by a variety of artists, had been accumulated by the important Canadian photographer/portrait painter, who was born in Montréal November 9th 1820 and died December 10th 1889 in Kingston Ontario.

Sawyer's photographic collection is an important element of Kingston's history because of its focus on many influential individuals from Kingston including Sir John A. Macdonald, Mayors, and notables of religious institutions and Queen's University. Many of the photographs are currently held in the Queen's University Archives and many paintings are in the Agnes Etherington Art Centre and Kingston City Hall. The photographs included in my proposed exhibition are a small selection of the collection now in the Archives at Queens University. They were chosen because they show Sawyer's children and close relatives.

As a graduate student working with the donated Sawyer collection at Queens University Archives over the past several months, I have selected 48 objects that comprise a proposed exhibition. The images are diverse in subject and format but united in their common spirit. They are present a personal look at Sawyer's children, family and the Kingston community from our culturally enriched past. The photographs of Sawyers

family are unique and diverse for their time, representing family and a slice of life of the time.

I propose that The Agnes Etherington Art Centre assemble an exhibition of 48 works of William S. Sawyer's collection from Queen's University Archive. (For installation in the Historical Feature Gallery or the Elliott Gallery)

The goal of the exhibition is to promote and represent the unique treasures of the Queen's University Archive and the Agnes Etherington Art Centre of painter/photographer William S. Sawyer. The Sawyer exhibition will introduce new audiences to the power and beauty of nineteenth century photography. This is a unique opportunity for audiences to be given an opportunity to appreciate one of Kingston's first photographers/painters and enrich their lives with a piece of Kingston's history. This exhibition will also give viewers an endearing glimpse into the family life of one of the most influential local photographers/painters of this period and also show them a variety of nineteenth century photographic processes.

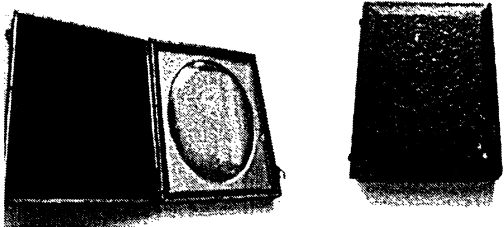
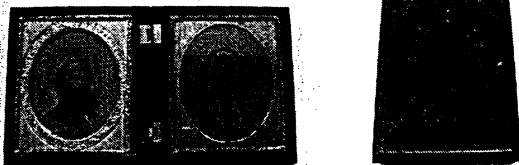
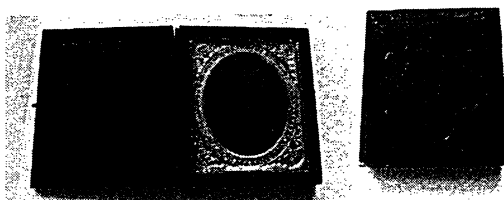
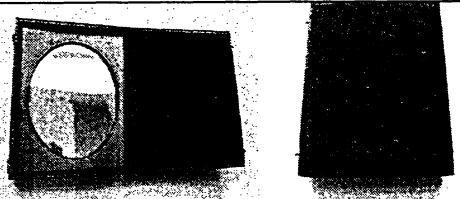
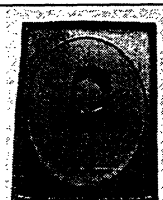
I am currently organizing this exhibition as part of my graduate thesis work on the William S. Sawyer collection. I have been working closely with Queen's University Archives staff in the preparation of the images for the exhibition to create appropriate wall labels and wall text for each image/object in the exhibition. A gallery layout design for organization for the objects and prints in the exhibition will also be provided.

I thank you for your consideration of this project. I anticipate this exhibition will be an exhibition that many from the Kingston area would enjoy. I hope that we can work together to create a successful exhibition for the benefit of our community in the near future.

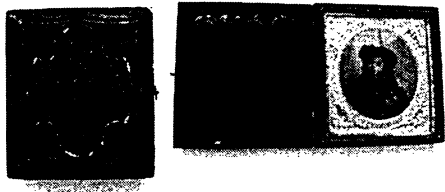
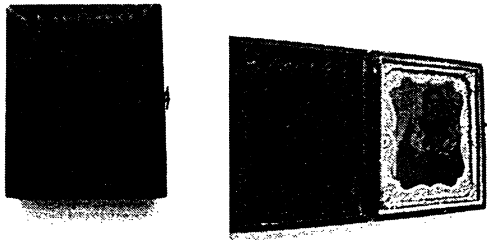
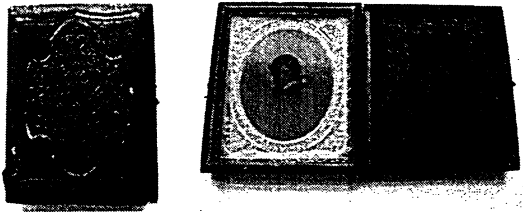
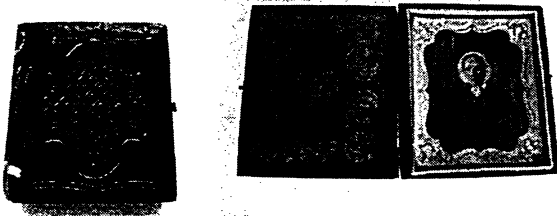
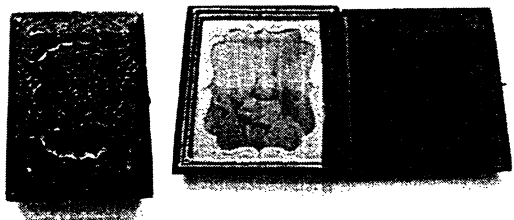
Sincerely,

Elisabeth Caron


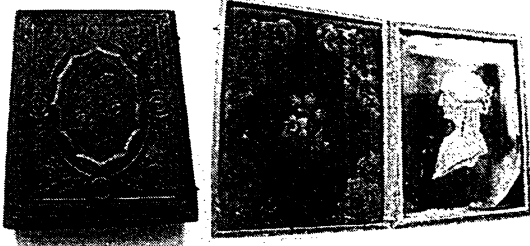
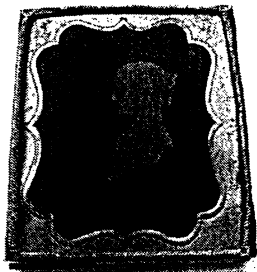
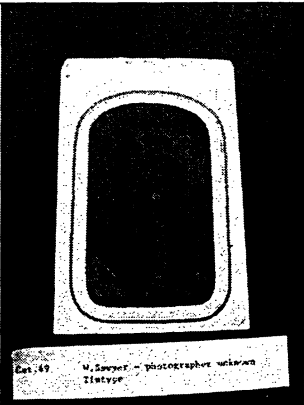
WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>1. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1850 Daguerreotype Photo of: William S. Sawyer 8.3 x 7.0 Mounted in hinged case</p>
	<p>2. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1850 Daguerreotype Photo of :William S. Sawyer and older women 8.0 x 7</p>
	<p>3. Unidentified Photographer ca.1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Anne Sutherland 7 x8 and 8.2 x0.5 Hinged case</p>
	<p>4. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1850 Daguerreotype Photo of: Eliza Jane Sawyer and daughter Mary 8.0 x 7 Hinged case</p>
	<p>5. Unidentified Photographer ca.1860 Hand tinted photograph Photo of : Agnes Sawyer 10.8 x 8.3 Half of hinged case</p>





WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>6. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of :Unknown Sawyer child 8.3 x 9.2 Hinged case</p>
	<p>7. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype (hand tinted) Photo of : Unknown Sawyer child 5.6 x 7.3 Hinged case</p>
	<p>8. Unidentified Photographer ca.1860 Ambrotype Photo of :Unknown Sawyer child 8.3 x 9.2 Hinged case</p>
	<p>9. Unidentified Photographer ca.1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Unknown women 8.3 x 9.2 Hinged case</p>
	<p>10. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Unknown Sawyer child 8.3 x 9.2 Hinged case</p>





WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>11. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Unidentified man 5 x 6.2 Half of hinged case</p>
	<p>12. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Profile head of a lady 9.2 x 11.8 Hanged case</p>
	<p>13. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Profile head of a lady 7 x 8.3 Half of hinged case</p>
	<p>14. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1865 Tintype Photo of : William S. Sawyer 6.2 x 9.6</p>



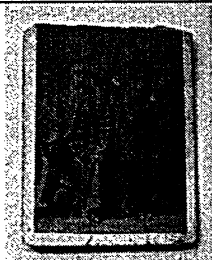


WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>15. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1870 Albumen print Photo of : William S. Sawyer 9.7 x 14 Un-mounted</p>
 <div data-bbox="338 935 747 1016" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p>Cat. 53 E.R.Turner? W.Sawyer Carte de visite Albumen print. NATIONAL GALLERY CANADA</p> </div>	<p>16. E. R. Turner ca. 1870 Albumen print Photo of : William S. Sawyer Mount: 6.4 x10 Un-mount: 5.6 x 8.9 In National Gallery Canada</p>
	<p>17. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1850 Salted paper print Photo of : Eliza Jane Sawyer 12.2 x 9.2 Un-mounted</p>
	<p>18. Unidentified Photographer ca.1870 Albumen (postcard) Photo of: Sawyer Family Residence on Brock St. 8.4 x 13.8</p>




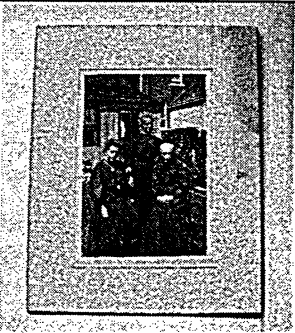
WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>19. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1853 Albumen print Photo of : John sawyer (baby) Born: Oct/4/1852 Mount: 4.8 x 7.3 Un-mount: 4.4 x 6.2</p>
	<p>20. Henderson (90 Princess St. Kingston) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : John Sawyer Mount: 10.3 x 16.1 Un-mount: 9.8 x 14.1</p>
	<p>21. Bell Brothers (Kingston) ca.1880 Albumen print Photo of : John Sawyer Mount: 13.1 x 18.6 Un-mount: 9.7 x 13.9</p>
	<p>22. Henderson (Kingston) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Mary Sawyer Mount: 10.4 x 16.3 Un-mount: 9.8 x 14.6</p>


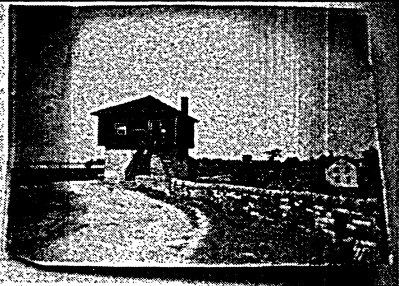
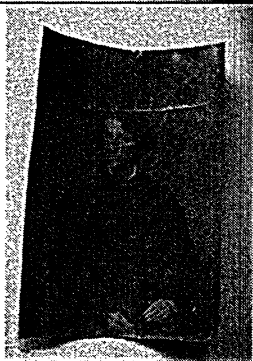


WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>23. William S. Sawyer (Montreal) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Agnes Sawyer Born (Jan/6/1858) Mount: 10.5 x 16.4 Un-mount: 9.6 x 14.4</p>
	<p>24. Sheldon & Davis (Kingston) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Agnes Sawyer Mount: 10 x 21.7 Un-mount: 9.4 18.8</p>
	<p>25. Sheldon & Davis (Kingston) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : William Alfred Sawyer Born: (March/4/1860) Mount: 6.3 x 8 Un-mount: rough 5.8 x 7</p>
	<p>26. G. C Carless (Montreal) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Albert Dingwall Sawyer Born :Oct/4.1862 Mount: 10.4 x 16.1 Un-mount: 10.1 x13.7</p>
	<p>27. Roy (Peterborough, On) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Alfred Ontario Sawyer Born: Feb/8/1865 Mount: 12.7 x 17.7 Un-mount: oval 7 x 9.7</p>


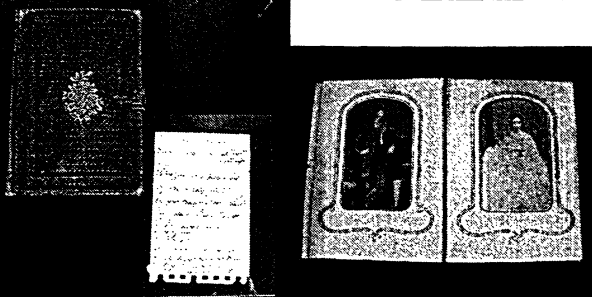
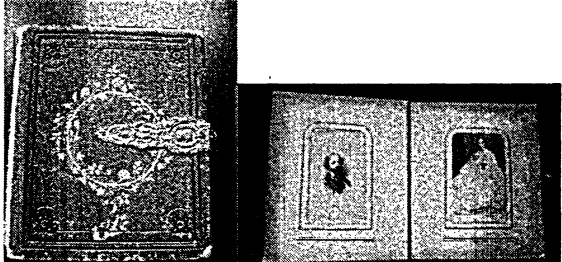
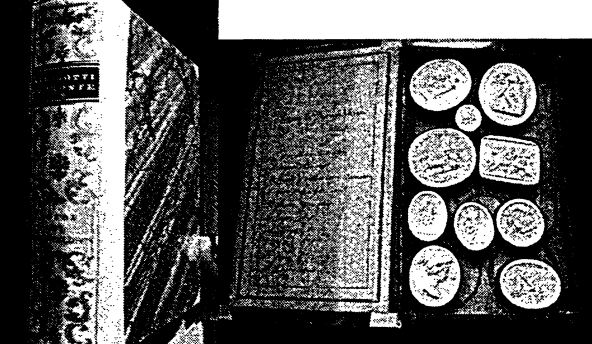

WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>28. Smith (Belleville) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Eva Sawyer Born: Sept/25/1867 Mount: 10.5 x 16.2 Un-mount: 9.8 x 13.7</p>
	<p>29. Sheldon & Davis (Kingston) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Arthur Baxter Sawyer Born: Oct/1/1870 Mount: 10.7 x 16.4 Un-mount: 9.8 x 14.2</p>
	<p>30. Sheldon & Davis (Kingston) ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Francois Sawyer Born: Apr/29/1874 Mount: 6.2 x 10.1 Un-mount: 5.7 x 8.9</p>
	<p>31. Unidentified Photographer ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Sawyer family: Eliza, Agnes, Mary Mount: 9.9 x 12.5 Un-mount: 5.2 x 7.8</p>

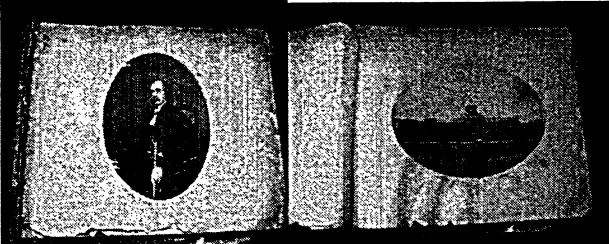
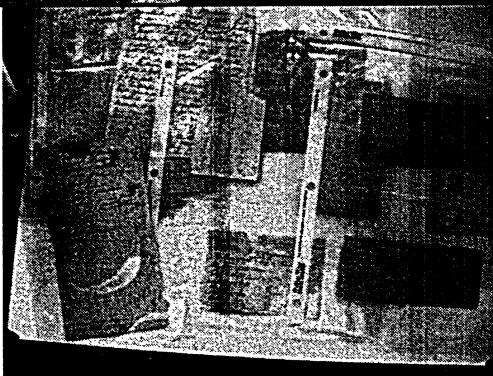
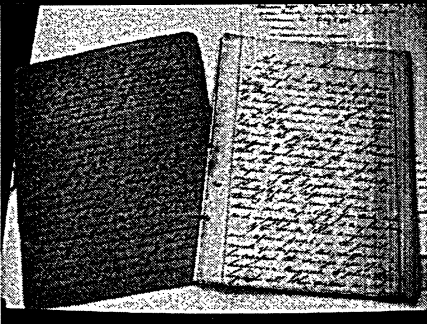
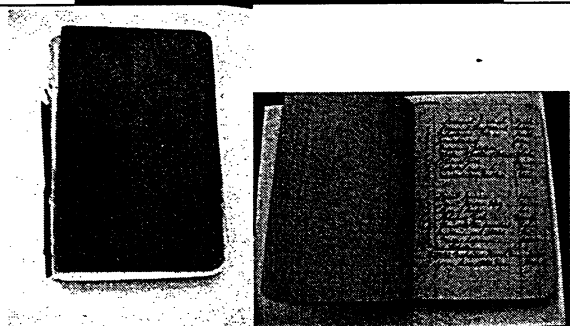
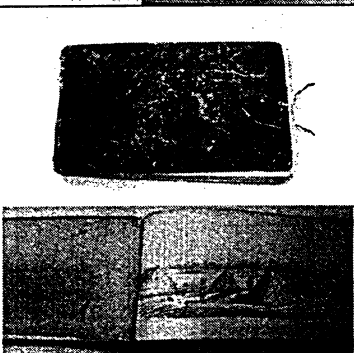
WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>32. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1850 Salted paper print Photo of : Sir John A MacDonald 16.6 x 14.6</p>
	<p>33. Unidentified Photographer ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Kingston Mills 17 x 12</p>
	<p>34. William S. Sawyer ca. 1860 Albumen print Photo of : Sir John A. MacDonald 6.4 x 8.9</p>
	<p>35. William S. Sawyer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Sir John A. MacDonald 7.8 x 10.3 Un-cased</p>
	<p>36. Unidentified Photographer ca. 1860 Ambrotype Photo of : Child in Chair 6.8 x 8.1 Un-cased</p>

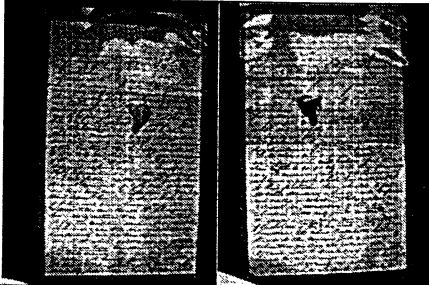

WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>37. William S. Sawyer ca.1870 Albumen print Photo of : Eliza Jane Sawyer Mount: 6.4 x 10.3 Un-mount: 5.9 x 9</p>
	<p>38. William S. Sawyer Family Album ca. 1870 10 x 14.2</p>
	<p>39. William S. Sawyer Album ca. 1861 13.5 x 16.5</p>
	<p>40. William S. Sawyer Classical Medallions ca.1872</p>
	<p>41. William S. Sawyer (Mary Sawyer Album) ca. 1884</p>

WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>42. William S. Sawyer photo album ca. 1857-1870</p>
	<p>43. William S. Sawyer Formulae (photographic recipes) (ca. 1850- 1880)</p>
	<p>44. William S. Sawyer Lectures on Art (July 1861- Feb 1865)</p>
	<p>45. William S. Sawyer Day Book ca. 1856</p>
	<p>46. William S. Sawyer Sketch Book ca. 1840</p>

WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<p>47. William S. Sawyer Essay on Colored Photographic Prints</p>
	<p>48. William S. Sawyer Business Sign ca. 1850</p>

Wall Text

WILLIAM S. SAWYER

Canadian photographer, artist, and entrepreneur, William S. Sawyer (1820-1889) is a highly influential figure in Kingston's heritage, yet is virtually unknown to the rest of the world.

The artist/photographer William S. Sawyer had immediate success as a commercial artist and managed to become an energetic and visionary businessman. Sawyer was a very talented and innovative photographer/ portrait painter, who was heavily supported through his commissioned portraits for government officials. Throughout the years, Sawyer had commissions from many members from the Government of Canada, as well as known and influential figures of Kingston's society. One of the most influential and best known full-length portraits created by Sawyer was one of Sir John A. MacDonald, first Prime Minister of Canada now displayed at Kingston City Hall. The MacDonald commission was greatly influential in obtaining further commissions. Sawyer's work is a prominent legacy in the history of photographic and painted portraiture and his accomplishments are some of the most innovative, striking, distinctive art pieces in nineteenth century Canadian photography.

William S. Sawyer Wall Labels

1.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: William S. Sawyer

ca. 1850

Daguerreotype

2.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: William S. Sawyer and Older Women

ca. 1850

Daguerreotype

3.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Anne Sutherland

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

4.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Eliza Jane Sawyer and Daughter Mary Sawyer

ca. 1850

Daguerreotype

5.
Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Anges Sawyer

ca. 1860

Hand Tinted Photograph

6.
Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Unknown Sawyer Child

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

7.
Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Unknown Sawyer Child

ca. 1860

Ambrotype (hand tinted)

8.
Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Unknown Sawyer Child

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

9.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Unknown Women

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

10.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Unknown Sawyer Child

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

11.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Unidentified Man

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

12.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Profile Head of a Lady

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

13.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Profile Head of a Lady

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

14.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: William S. Sawyer

ca. 1865

Tintype

15.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: William S. Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

16.

E. R. Turner

Photo of: William S. Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

17.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Eliza Jane Sawyer

ca. 1850

Salted paper Print

18.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Eliza Jane Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen (Postcard)

19.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: John Sawyer (baby)

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

20.

Henderson (90 Princess St. Kingston)

Photo of: John Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

21.
Bell Brothers (Kingston)
Photo of: John Sawyer
ca. 1870
Albumen Print

22.
Henderson (Kingston)
Photo of: Mary Sawyer
ca. 1870
Albumen Print

23.
William S. Sawyer (Montréal)
Photo of: Agnes Sawyer
ca. 1870
Albumen Print

24.
Sheldon & Davis (Kingston)
Photo of: Agnes Sawyer
ca. 1870
Albumen Print

25.

Sheldon & Davis (Kingston)

Photo of: William Alfred Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

26.

G. C. Carless (Montréal)

Photo of: Albert Dingwall Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

27.

Roy (Peterborough, On)

Photo of: Alfred Ontario Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

28.

Smith (Belleville)

Photo of: Eva Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

29.

Sheldon & Davis (Kingston)

Photo of: Arthur Baxter Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

30.

Sheldon & Davis (Kingston)

Photo of: Francois Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

31.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Sawyer Family: Eliza, Agnes, Mary

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

32.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Sir John A. MacDonald

ca. 1850

Salted Paper Print

33.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Kingston Mills

ca. 1870

Albumen Print

34.

William S. Sawyer

Photo of: Sir John A. MacDonald

ca. 1860

Albumen Print

35.

William S. Sawyer

Photo of: Sir John A. MacDonald

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

36.

Unidentified Photographer

Photo of: Child in Chair

ca. 1860

Ambrotype

37.

William S. Sawyer

Photo of: Eliza Jane Sawyer

ca. 1870

Albumen print

38.

William S. Sawyer Family Album

ca. 1870

10 x 14.2

39.

William S. Sawyer Album

ca. 1861

13.5 x 16.5

40.

William S. Sawyer:

Classical Medallions

ca. 1872

41.

William S. Sawyer (Mary Sawyer Album)

ca. 1884

42.

William S. Sawyer

Photo album

ca. 1857

43.

William S. Sawyer

Formulae (Photographic Recipes)

ca. 1850

44.

William S. Sawyer

Lectures on Art

(July 1861- Feb 1865)

45.

William S. Sawyer

Day Book

ca. 1856- 1867

46.

William S. Sawyer

Sketch Book

ca. 1840

47.

William S. Sawyer

Essay on Colored

Photographic Prints

48.

William S. Sawyer

Business Sign

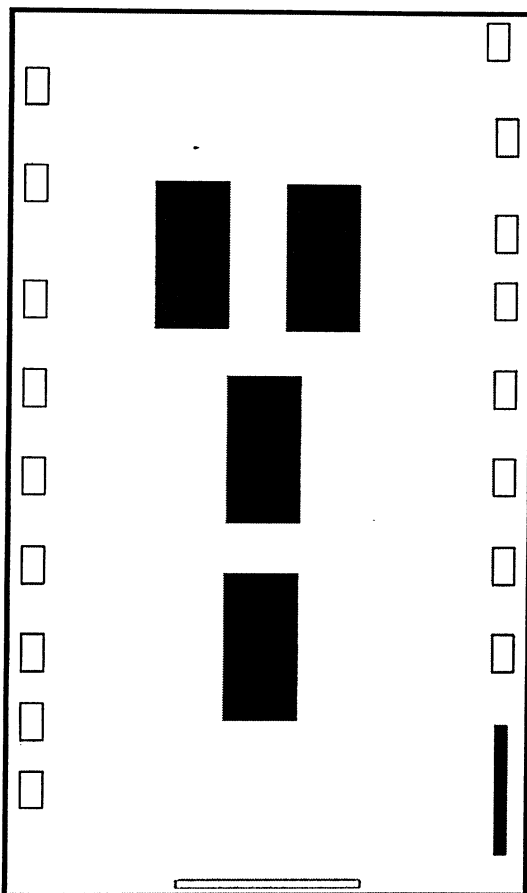
ca. 1850

WILLIAM S. SAWYER EXHIBITION
LAYOUT DESIGN
For the Agnes Etherington Art Centre

←-----21' 7 1/2"-----→

↑
46' 6 1/2"
↓

Ceiling Height 14' 8"



- 1.) Photographic prints will be matted and framed and will be hung along exterior walls.
- 2.) Cased photographic objects will be placed in side-by-side vatrines.
- 3.) Photographic albums and Sawyer Business Sign will be placed in the middle vatrine.
- 4.) Sawyer's personal objects will be placed in the vatrine near entrance.
- 5.) Wall text will be placed on right wall near entrance.
- 6.) Wall labels will be placed underneath each object.

Conservation and Preservation Recommendations

For the William S. Sawyer Exhibition Collection

Checklist #1

Daguerreotype of William S. Sawyer

*Conservation is needed on the hinge of the case to support the object when being opened and closed. The daguerreotype is in moderate to poor condition, and is of need of cleaning. The plate is starting to tarnish around the perimeter of the image near the oval matt. The daguerreotype should also be checked if there is proper seal around the outer sides of the image.

*Above all a professional cleaning of the cased object and re-hinging of the hinges is required before exhibition. Proper housing for the objects can be made out of a proper fitted box. The box can be created using an acid free matt board and foam core that is cut, and folded into the proper shape. The box then can be placed in a dropdown front archival box. The cased objects can then be laid flat within the inner box to reduce stress.

Checklist #2

Daguerreotype of William S. Sawyer and Older Women

* Conservation is needed to fix the hinges on the cased object. A professional cleaning is required for the outer sides of the cased object. The daguerreotypes are in good condition, but could use professional cleaning, especially the top glass and metal matt. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at their very best.

Checklist #3

Ambrotype of Anne Sutherland

* Conservation is needed to fix the hinges on the cased object. A professional cleaning is required for the outer sides of the cased object. The ambrotype is in good condition, but it needs some cleaning to remove dust and residue. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #4

Daguerreotype of Eliza Jane Sawyer and daughter Mary

* Conservation is needed to clean and re-matt the daguerreotype. A front glass should also be placed on the cased object. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #5

Hand tinted photograph of Agnes Sawyer

*Conservation has already been completed by a Queen's University conservation student. File # 1-06 is kept on file at Queen's University Archives conservation dept.

Checklist #6

Ambrotype of Unidentified Sawyer Child

* Conservation is needed to fix the hinges on the cased object. A professional cleaning is required for the outer sides of the cased object. The ambrotype is in good condition, but it can use some cleaning to remove dust and residue. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #7

Ambrotype of Unidentified Sawyer Child

* Conservation is needed to clean the cased object to remove dust and tarnish. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #8

Ambrotype of Unidentified Sawyer Child

* Conservation is needed to fix the hinges on the cased object. A professional cleaning is required for the outer sides of the cased object. The ambrotype is in good condition, but it can use some cleaning to remove dust and residue. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #9

Ambrotype of Unidentified Women

* Conservation is needed to fix the hinges on the cased object. A professional cleaning is required for the outer sides of the cased object. The ambrotype is in good condition, but it can use some cleaning to remove dust and residue. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #10

Ambrotype of Unidentified Sawyer Child

* Conservation is needed to fix the hinges on the cased object. A professional cleaning is required for the outer sides of the cased object. The ambrotype is in good condition, but it can use some cleaning to remove dust and residue. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #11

Ambrotype of Unidentified Man

* Conservation is needed to clean the half cased object to remove dust and tarnish. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #12

Ambrotype of Profile Head of Lady

* Conservation is needed to clean the cased object to remove dust and tarnish. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #13

Ambrotype of Profile head of lady

* Conservation is needed to clean the cased object to remove dust and tarnish. A professional cleaning will provide an opportunity for the image to be displayed at its very best.

Checklist #14

Tin-type of William S. Sawyer

* The object appears to be in very good condition.

Checklist #15

Albumen print of William S. Sawyer

* Conservation is needed to fix the tears and repair the folds on the object.

Checklist #16

Albumen print of William S. Sawyer

* The object appears to be in very good condition.

Checklist #17

Salted Paper Print of Eliza Jane Sawyer

*Conservation is needed to clean and repair the tears on the top of the object.

Checklist #18

Albumen Postcard of Eliza Jane Sawyer

*Conservation is needed to repair the tear on the left side of the object and remove the tape that supports the tear. A professional cleaning is required to remove dust and staining on the surface of the object.

Checklist #19

Albumen print of John Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #20

Albumen Print of John Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #21

Albumen Print of John Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #22

Albumen Print of Mary Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #23

Albumen print of Agnes Sawyer

*Conservation is needed to repair the tear on the bottom right side of the object. A professional cleaning is needed to remove the dust and staining possible caused by foxing.

Checklist #24

Albumen Print of Agnes Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #25

Albumen Print of William Alfred Sawyer

*Object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #26

Albumen Print of Albert Dingwall Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #27

Albumen Print of Alfred Ontario Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #28

Albumen Print of Eva Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #29

Albumen Print of Arthur Baxter Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #30

Albumen Print of Francois Sawyer

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #31

Gelatin Printed Out Print of Eliza, Agnes and Mary

*The object appears to be in good condition.

Checklist #32

Salted Paper Print of Sir John A. MacDonald

*The object appears to be in fair to good condition.

*** Checklist #33**

Gelatin Printing Out print of Kingston Mills Locks

*The object appears to be in fair to good condition

Checklist #34

Albumen Print of Sir John A. MacDonald

*Conservation is needed to repair the fold on object.

Checklist #35

Ambrotype of Sir John A. Macdonald

*Conservation is needed to place black backing, a front glass, a matte, and a preserver to seal the object.

Checklist #36

Ambrotype of Sawyer Child in Chair

*Conservation is needed to place a black backing, a front glass, a matte, and a preserver to seal the object.

Checklist #37

Albumen print of Eliza Jane Sawyer

*The object appears to be in fair to good condition.

Checklist #38

Sawyer Family Album ca. 1870

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #39

Sawyer Family Album ca. 1861

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #40

William S. Sawyer Classical Medallions

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #41

Sawyer Family Album (Mary) 1884

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #42

Sawyer Family Album 1857-1880

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #43

William S. Sawyer Formulae photographic recipes

*Conservation is needed to repair the tears on the cards.

Object #44

William Sawyer's Lecture on Art

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #45

William Sawyer Day book

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #46

William Sawyer Sketch Book

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Checklist #47

William Sawyer's Essays on Colored Photography

*The object appears to be in fair to good condition.

Checklist #48

William S. Sawyer Business Sign

*Conservation has already been completed by Queen's University Archives
Conservation.

Above all, proper housing for most of the objects in the exhibition is essential. I have included information for each type of photographic object in the exhibition collection. For the cased objects the proper housing can be created using an acid free matt board and foam core that is cut, and folded into the proper shape. The box then can be placed in a dropdown front archival box. The cased objects can then be laid flat within the inner box to reduce stress. The proper housing for mounted photographs can be created by cutting acid free matt board to the appropriate size. The matte board is then placed as a backboard to support the object. Mylar is then used next. The mylar can be cut and wrapped around the object and scored with a bone folder on each fold. This type of housing is created to save the object from damage, dust and improper handling. The object should be place in an acid free archival box laying flat for storage. The proper

housing for albums can be created by using an acid free matt board cut to the appropriate size to create a four flap enclosure. This is an excellent solution for albums.

All of the recommended housings for the objects in the collection are easy to create, but take time and patience to be correctly created in order to have a housing that fits the object precisely.

Lighting Recommendations For the William S. Sawyer Exhibition

Lighting within galleries and museums can play a key role in how a visitor may perceive and enjoy the displayed photographs. In order to develop a successful lighting scheme for nineteenth century photographic objects, the gallery or museum must satisfy many conflicting preservation and conservation concerns. The type of lighting that is appropriate for museums and art galleries displaying nineteenth century photographic objects is still up for debate. Inappropriate lighting causes many hazards that adversely affect the preservation of photographs. New effective lighting technologies are constantly being developed to address these concerns.

After contacting Katharine Whitman, Conservator from the 4th cycle Mellon fellow of the Advanced Residency Program in Photograph Conservation at George Eastman House International Museum of Film and Photography. I have received her recommendations for proper lighting for nineteenth century photographic objects in an exhibition surrounding. The proper lighting all depends on how much lighting is used on each display, and how long the exhibition will be on display at any given location. As stated by Katharine Whitman in an email she provided information for very sensitive to less sensitive photographic objects for an exhibition;

“VERY LIGHT SENSITIVE – meaning the total exposure/year should be less than 50,000 lux hours. That equals 3 foot candles for five months at 10 hours /day, or 5 foot candles for 3 months at 10 hours/day) the cased objects fit into this category: I would be worried about the leather and textiles fading rather than the images themselves. If there is any coloring on the prints, or tinted albumen (the paper base is tinted, it would be blue or pink usually) be very careful – they will also be very sensitive.

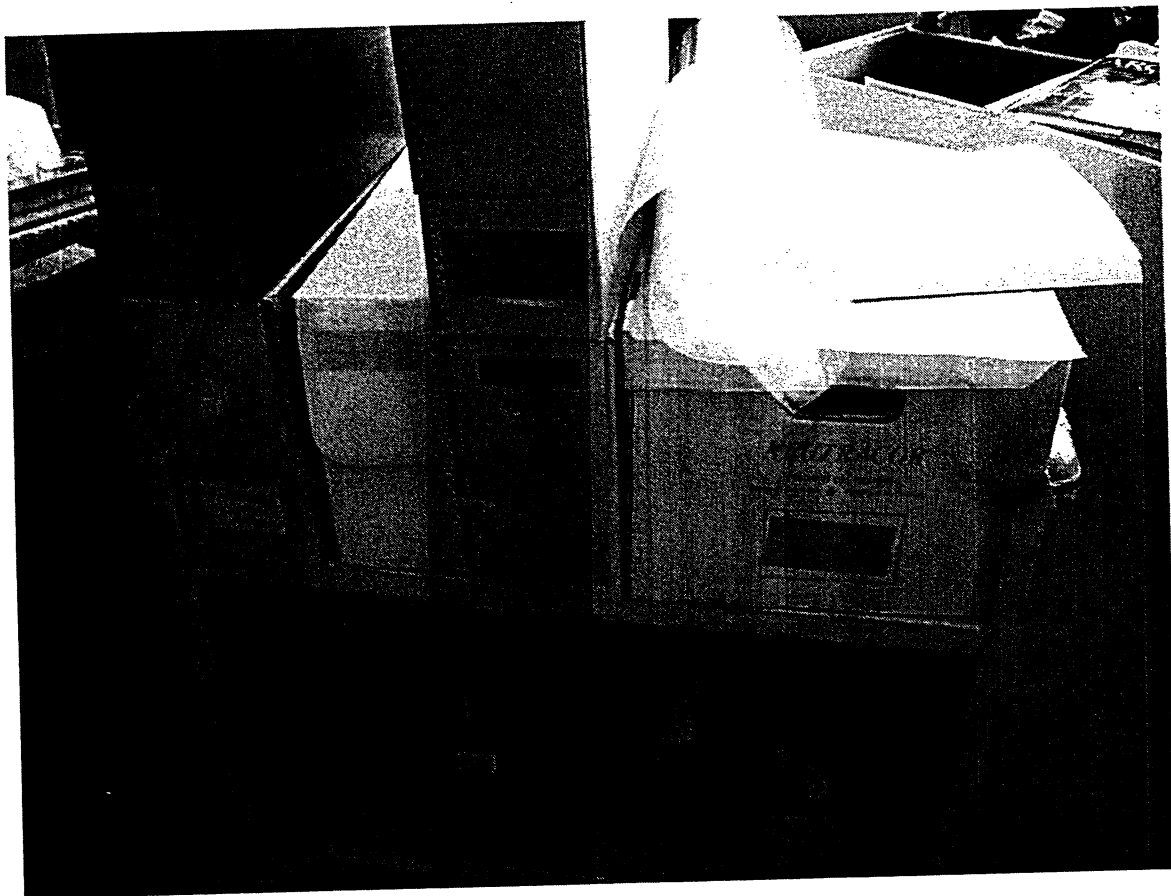
MODERATELY LIGHT SENSITIVE – meaning total exposure/year should be less than 100,000 lux hours. That equals 3 foot candles for 10 months or 5 foot candles for 6 months at 10 hours/day. The most sensitive photographic material on your list would be the salted paper prints. However, if they have an uncertain history (processing/toning/coating) move them into the very sensitive category – this is what is usually done. (Platinum prints are solidly in the moderate category.) Albumen is usually in this category as well.

LESS LIGHT SENSITIVE – meaning 300,000 lux hours/year = 10 foot candles for 9 months at 10 hours/day. The actual daguerreotypes and ambrotypes fit in here (assuming no hand-coloring) – but if they are in cases put them in the very-moderate sensitive

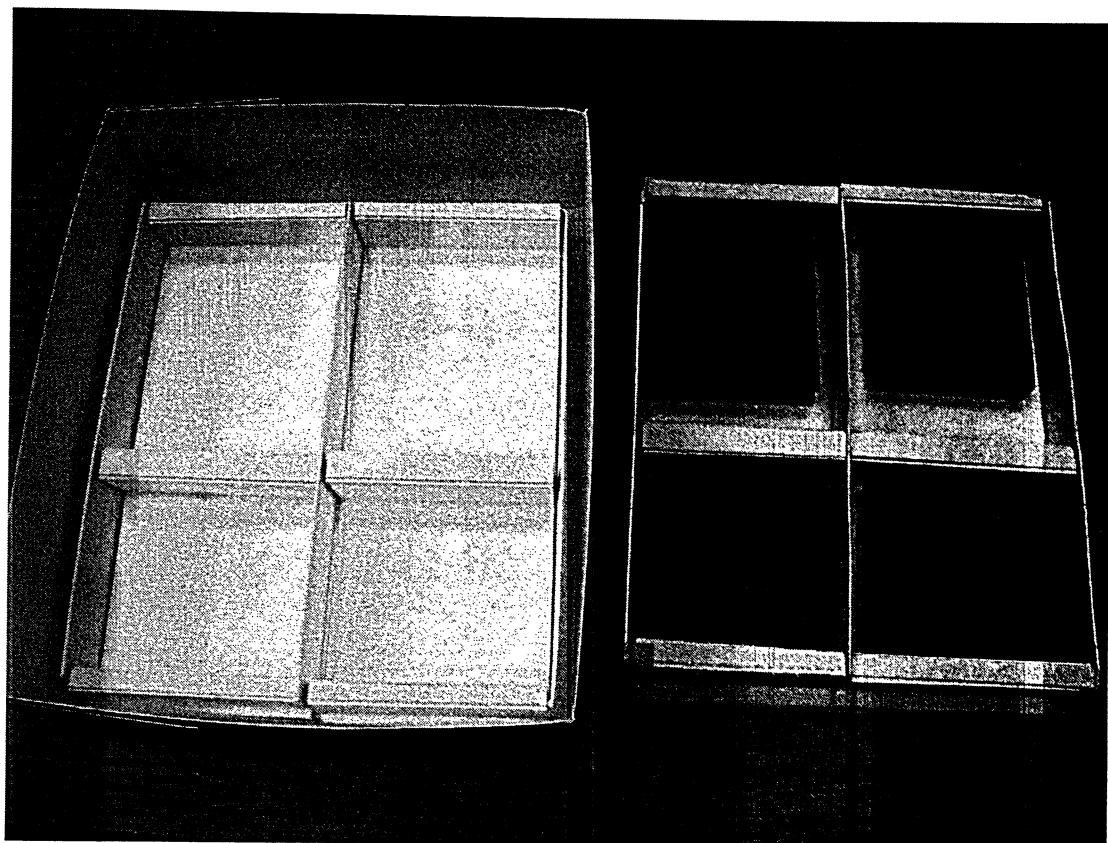
category. Photomechanical prints and gelatine silver prints tend to fit into this category as well.”¹

Ideally, all of the photographic processes should be treated as though they are very light sensitive; it is very easy for a less light sensitive photographic object to be bumped into the very light sensitive category, this was also stated by Katharine Whitman. I believe that with the proper knowledge of lighting and conservation practices put into use, the William S. Sawyer exhibition can be enjoyed for many years.

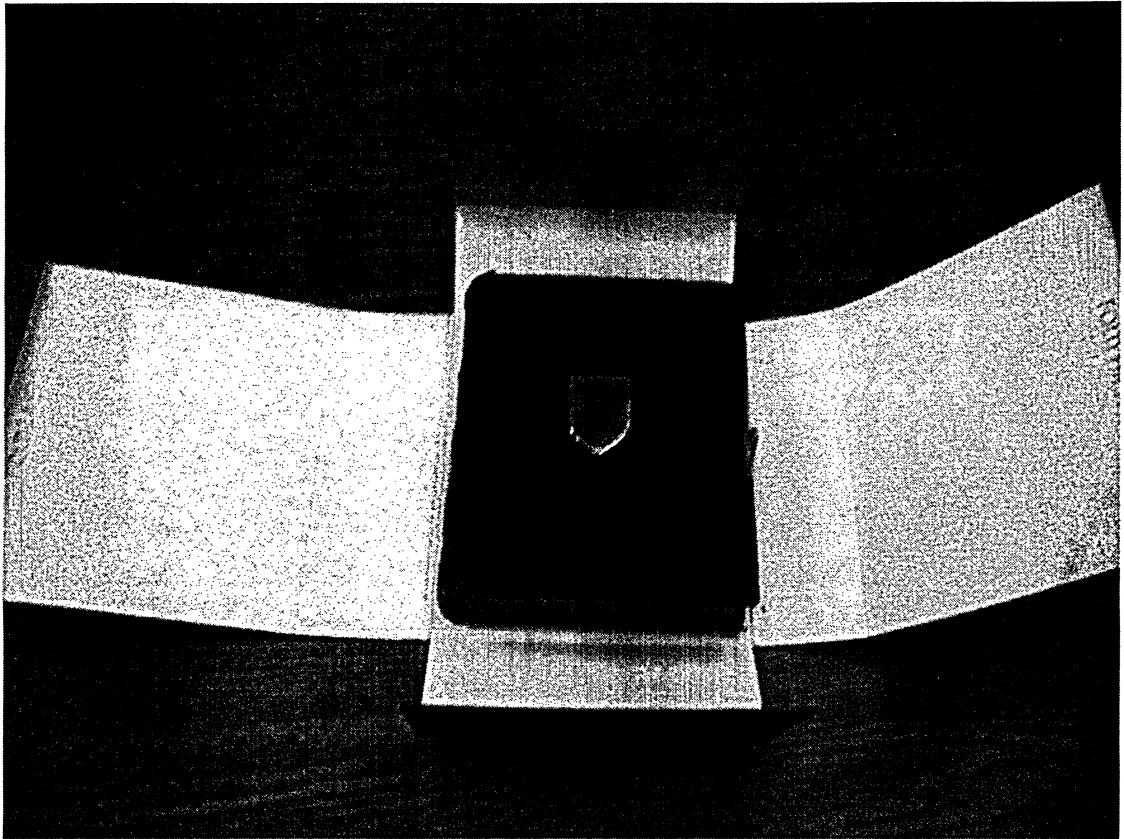
¹ Katharine Whitman, Question About Lighting from a Ryerson Student, July 24, 2006, personal email, (July 24, 2006)



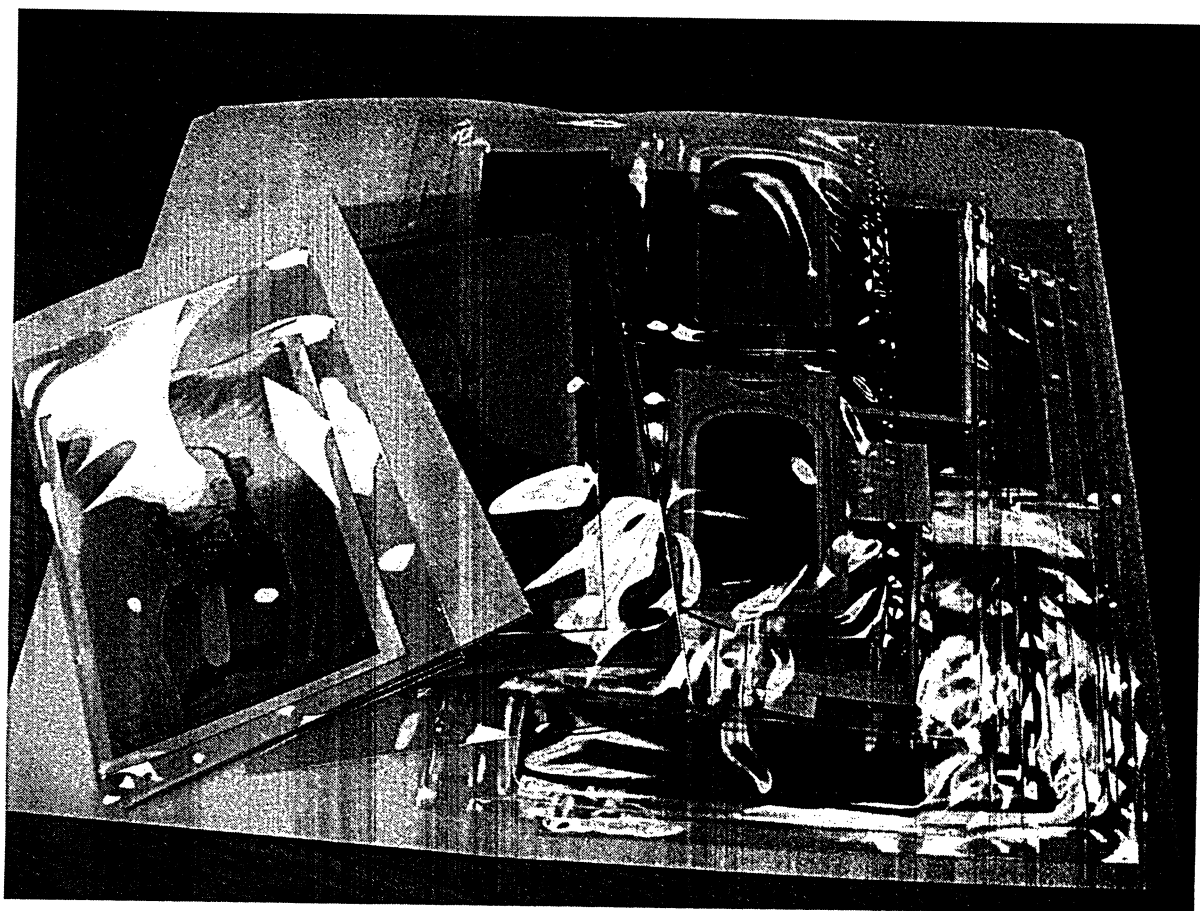
This Picture displays the William S. Sawyer collection as it looked when it was donated to Queens University Archives.



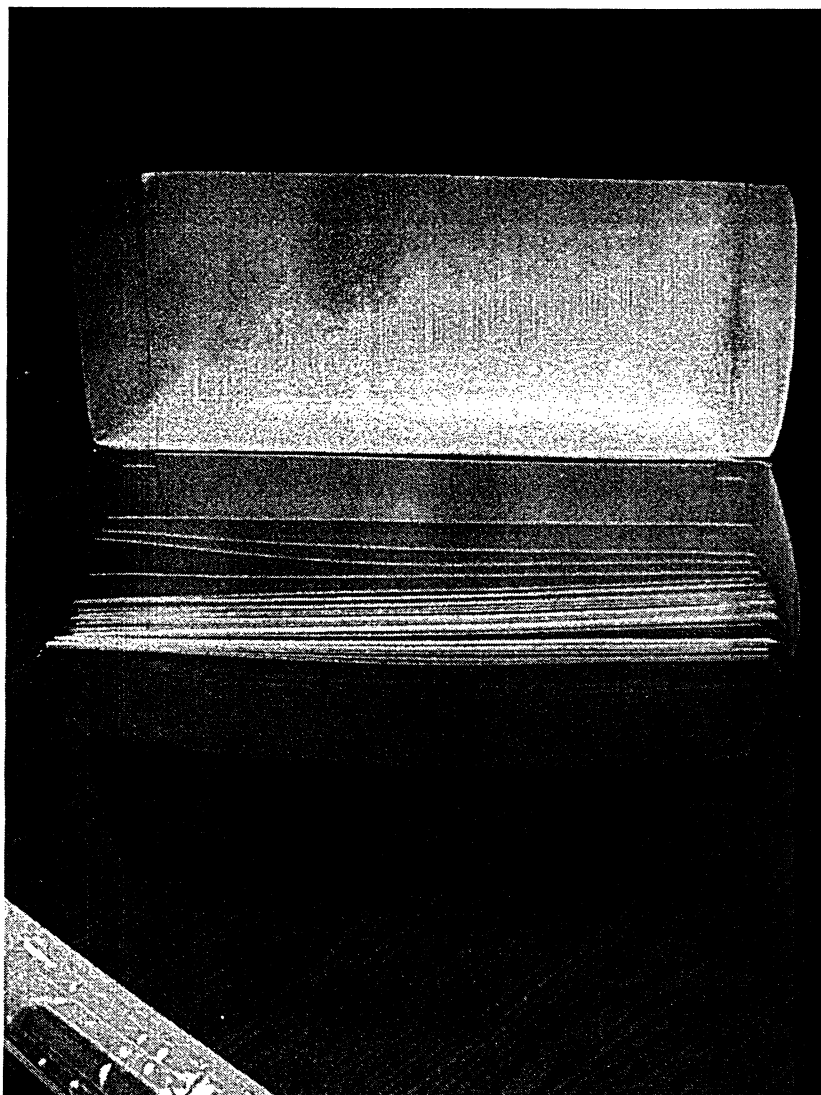
This picture displays an example of the housing for the cased objects that I created for the William S. Sawyer collection.



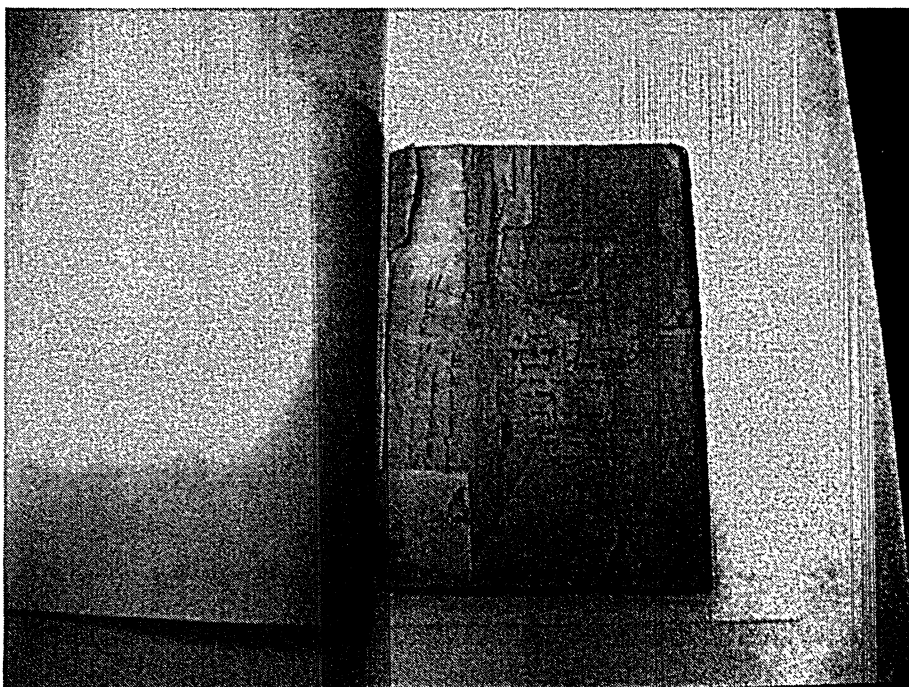
This picture displays the type of housing I recommended for the photographic albums that are part of the William S. Sawyer collection at Queen's University Archive.



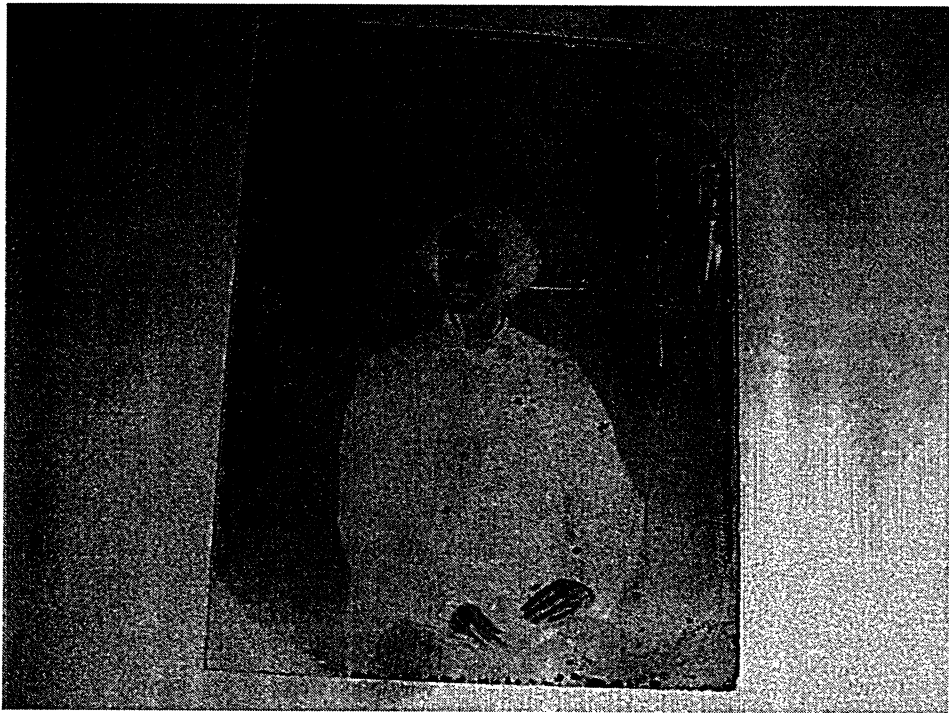
This picture displays how many of the mounted photographic prints are stored in the William S. Sawyer collection before I gave my recommendations for conservation and preservation to Queen's University Archive.



This photograph displays how the William S. Sawyer mounted photographs collection was stored at Queen's University Archive prior to my recommendations for conservation and preservation.



This photograph displays how the William S. Sawyer's Day Journal, stored at Queen's University Archive was in need of proper housing and conservation before it is put on display in William S. Sawyer's.



This photograph displays how this un-cased Ambrotype of Sir John A. MacDonald from the William S. Sawyer's photograph collection stored at Queen's University Archive in need of a new case, and conservation work before it is put on display in William S. Sawyer's exhibition.

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Email Correspondence

- Katharine Whitman, *Question About Lighting from a Ryerson Student*. Personal email, July 24, 2006.