



Winterthur/University of Delaware  
Program in Art Conservation  
Conservation Report



**Accession #:** 2001.0017.0025

**Object:** [Ten-month-old portrait of Gladis May Kell(e?)y]

**Object Date:** 1920-1922

**Artist/Author:** Unknown

**Materials:** Silver gelatin developing-out print (DOP)

**Owner:** University of Delaware Museums: "The Baltimore Collection"

**Permanent Location:** UD Museums Collections

**Reason for Treatment or Examination:** Examined as part of the photograph conservation block documentation project and aimed to add to the curatorial and conservation body of knowledge

**Examined by:** Karissa Muratore, WUDPAC 2020

**Report Date:** January 13, 2018

## DESCRIPTION

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This filamentary silver image depicts a 10-month-old black baby in a white dress and bonnet, sitting on a wooden chair and facing forward. She seems supported by the arm of an adult seen entering the photograph from the proper left side. The photograph is adhered at a slight angle on a mount with two doors/flaps that close and overlap to cover the image. The image is also framed by a front mat that bears the inscription "Gladis May Kell(e?)y/ Born Jan. 7th 192(2?)/ aged ten months/ when picture taken."

## CONDITION

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The photograph images measures 10.3 cm (wide) x 13.9 cm (long) [4.06 x 5.47 inches], and the mount, when closed, is 11.6 cm (wide) by 23.5 cm (long) [4.57 x 9.25 inches] and when open is 25.4 cm (wide) x 23.5 centimeters (long) [10.0 x 9.25 inches]. These measurements vary from those on Artstor.

Overall the photograph is in fair, but unstable condition. The imagery is visible, but seems faded, perhaps due to natural aging, contact with acidic materials, or bad processing. There is surface dirt on a majority of the photograph, with the most significant amount of accumulation found near the edges of the photograph and the face of the figure. There is also some abrasion and loss of the binder layer along all four edges of the photograph and in small areas near the top proper left corner, and bottom proper right corner of the photograph.

The mount is in overall fair and unstable condition. The black color is a dark grey, but may have faded from black over time. In addition, it is covered in surface dirt, and small areas of localized fading are found throughout. The paper board has become fragile/friable, actively delaminating, especially at the corners. As a result, small losses and creasing of varying degrees have already occurred. In addition, there are vertical creases the stretch the length of the mount on each of the door/flaps, near where it hinges to the body of the mount. The more severe damages to the mount are: a crunched area measuring about 6.0 cm on the proper left edge of the proper left door/flap; the complete separation of the top/image mat from the image and backing board; the complete separation of the proper left door/flap from the body of the mount; and the near separation of the proper of the right door/flap from the body of the mount.

## **TREATMENT**

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Dry cleaning, with a soft bristled brush and cosmetic sponge, was used to remove dirt and grime from both the image and its mount. Wet cleaning, with 1:1 ethanol and DI water, was gently used to remove most of the stubborn dirt after consolidating friable areas of the photograph's gelatin with 1% methyl cellulose in DI water. Small areas of loss in the gelatin were then inpainted using Senneliier watercolors after a barrier layer of 1% methyl cellulose was applied. The most severe folds and disrupted fibers of the mount were humidified and flattened. Finally, the tears in the hinge of the (left) mount door/flap and the completely separated (right) mount door flap were consolidated and reattached to the mount with toned Japanese paper and 1% methyl cellulose.