



**AMERICAN
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Archives and Special Collections Department,
American University of Beirut
Beirut, Lebanon
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Jan Just Witkam Postcard Collection, 1925-1927

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the University Archives, AUB
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Descriptive Summary

Call No.: Pc:JW:1925-1927

Library catalog ID: [b26472892](#)

Record Creator: Jan Just Witkam

Collection Title: Jan Just Witkam Postcard Collection, 1925-1927

Collection Dates: 1925-1927

Physical Description: 27 digital postcards

Language : French

Administrative Information

Source: Digital copies were donated to the Archives and Special Collections by Jan Just Witkam (emeritus-professor of Codicology and Paleography of the Islamic World, in the University of Leiden, Leiden, The Netherlands) in 2016.

Access restrictions: The collection can be used within the premises of the Archives and Special Collections Department, Jafet Memorial Library, American University of Beirut.

Reproduction restriction: No reproduction restriction.

Preferred citation: Jan Just Witkam Postcard Collection, 1925-1927, Pc:JW:1925-1927, Series No., File No., American University of Beirut/Library Archives.

Scope and Content

The small collection consists of 27 photomechanical postcards in digital format. The postcards range in date from 1925 to 1927 and were mailed by Yves Savidan, French soldier, stationed in Rayak, Lebanon in the 1920s, to his family. The postcards depict locations in Lebanon. They feature photos of locals, religious, touristic, and archeological sites in Beirut, Aintoura, Araya, Brummana, Baalbek, and Zahlé. Publishers included Sarrafian Bros. (17), André Terzis & Fils, Beyrouth-Jerusalem (4), Librairie Stamboul L. Férid (3) and unidentified publisher (3). The collection is arranged by location, title, then publisher and have Witkam number.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in four series:

Series I: Lebanon (general)

Series II: Beirut

Series III: Mount Lebanon

Series IV: Biqa'

Biographical Information

Yves Savidan, a young artillery man in the French expeditionary force that occupied Syria and Lebanon during the Protectorate after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire sent these postcards to his parents, his sisters Fernande and Jeanne, his brother Marcel, and his grandmother. They mostly treat family matters and carry no addresses but are crammed with text.

The extensive and varied military protection that Yves Savidan enjoyed in Rayak was impressive, but the enemy came from an unexpected angle. French military records revealed that Yves died on August 24, 1927, in Damascus of a disease contracted during his service, therefore he was not entitled to the epithet *mort pour la France*. His name figures on a French memorial monument, the one on Place de l'Eglise in Beaubec-la-Rosière in Upper-Normandy.¹

Subject Headings

Lebanon -- Pictorial Works.

Lebanon -- Description and Travel.

Soldiers -- Middle East -- History -- 20th century.

Soldiers -- France -- Correspondence.

Lebanon -- History -- French occupation, 1918-1946 -- Sources.

Genre/Form

Postcards -- 1925-1927.

Photomechanical postcard -- 1925-1927.

Panoramic postcards -- 1925-1927.

Container List

Series I. Liban, 2 postcards

- 451. Liban - La Vie Libanaise. Rayak- Liban- Décembre, [undated], Witkam-PC-2016-004-015-016-Vie-libanaise
- Liban – Fleuve du Chien – La Vallée. Rayak, Liban, le 4 Juillet, 1926. No. 25. Addressed to Marcel, Andre Terzis et Fils, Beyrouth – Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-081-082-Fleuve-du-Chien

Series II. Beirut, 9 postcards

- 11. Beyrouth - Panorama et Grand Sérail. Rayak, Liban, le 22 Novembre [...]. Addressed to father, mother, and sisters Fernande and Jeanne, Librairie Stamboul, L. Ferid; Witkam-PC-2016-004-019-020-Beyrouth.
- 421. Beyrouth - Moyen principal de se atelier en Syrie. Homs-Liban. 7 Janvier, 1926. Addressed to Fernande and Jeanne, Librairie Stamboul, L. Ferid; Witkam-PC-2016-004-021-022-Beyrouth.
- Beyrouth-Vue prise d'Université Americane. Rayak, Liban, le 18 Mai, 1925, No. 17. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria); ²Witkam-PC--2016-004-055-056-Beyrouth.

¹ www.islamicmanuscripts.info/files/Tadhkara-135.pdf. Last accessed December 2022

² All the Sarrafian postcards have the following note on verso “ Complete set of 60 postcards comprising Business Life and costumes of Syria and Palestine 8 -, post free. Oriental views and Types comprising over 1500 varieties, at 1 d each, post free. Catalogue 2 d. Post free. Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria).”

- Beyrouth (Liban), Asfourieh, Vue générale. Rayak, Liban, le 7 Juin, 1926, No. 20. Addressed to Marcel. Printed on verso: Andre Terzis et Fils – Beyrouth – Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-061-062- Asfourieh.
- Beyrouth -La Grande Mosquée, Le jour du Baraïmi. Rayak, Liban, le 7 Juin 1926. Addressed to Fermande, Unknown publisher; Witkam-PC-2016-004-063-064-Beyrouth.
- Beyrouth -Rustum Pasha. Rayak, Liban, le 13 Juin, 1926, No. 21, Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria); Witkam-PC-2016-004-065-066-Beyrouth
- 38. Beyrouth - Le Parc D’Automobiles à Raz-Beyrouth. Rayak, Liban, le 18 Juin, [...]. No. 22. Addressed to Marcel, Libraries Stamboul L. Ferid; Witkam-PC-2016-004-069-070-Beyrouth.
- Beyrouth - Cathédrale St-Georges - Église des Maronites. Liban, undated, Unknown publisher; Witkam-PC-2016-004-123-124.
- Beyrouth - Quartier Minet-El-Hosn, undated, Unknown publisher; Witkam-PC-2016-004-125-126-Beyrouth.

Series III. Mount Liban, 3 postcards

Aintoora

- Mt. Liban – Aintoora. Rayak, Liban, le 29 Mai, 1926. No. 19. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria). No. 19; Witkam-PC-2016-004-059-060-Aintoora.

Araya

- Liban - Araya - Vue générale. Rayak - Liban. Le 23 Juin, 1926. No. 24. Addressed to Marcel, Andre Terzis et Fils – Beyrouth – Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-075-076-Araya.

Brummana

- Mt. Liban – Brummana. Rayak-Liban, le 24 Mai, 1926. No.18. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-057-058-Brummana.

Series IV. Biqa,’ 13 postcards

Baalbek, 3 postcards

- Baalbek - Intérieur du Temple de Bacchus. Homs, le 29 Décembre, 1925, Addressed to Parrain et Mauriane, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria); Witkam-PC-2016-004-001-002-Baalbek.
- Baalbeck – Piscin. Damas, le 21 Juillet, 1926. No. 80. Addressed to Marcel, Andre Terzis et Fils – Beyrouth - Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-087-088-Baalbeck.
- Baalbek - Vue générale de l’Acropole, undated. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria); Witkam-PC-2016-004-107-108-Baalbek.

Zahlé, 10 postcards

- Mt. Liban – Zahlé - Vue générale. Rayak, Liban, le 13 Avril, [...], No. 12. Addressed to brother Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-037-038-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban - Zahlé El Wadi. Rayak-Liban - le 19 Avril, [...], No. 13. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-039-040-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban – Zahlé - Hotel Santé. Rayak, Liban, le 25 Avril, [...] - No. 13. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC- 2016-004-041-042-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban- Zahlé - Rue Muntazah. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC- 2016-004-043-044-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban – Zahlé. Rayak, Liban, le 2 Mai, 1926. No. 14. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-047-048-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban – Zahlé - Muntazah Wadi. Liban, Mai 2, [...] No. 14. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-049-050-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban – Zahlé. Rayak, Liban, le 9 Mai, 1926. N. 15. Addressed to Marcel. Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC- 2016-004-051-052-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban - Zahlé et Muallaka. Undated. No. 15. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-053-054-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban - Zahlé Vue Générale. Rayak, Liban, le 10 Avril [...]. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-109-110-Zahlé.
- Mt. Liban - Zahlé Vue Générale. Beaubec, le 22 Mai, 1927. Addressed to Marcel, Sarrafian Bros., Beirut (Syria) and Jerusalem; Witkam-PC-2016-004-129-130-Zahlé.

Related Material

Postcards

- Sarrafian Brothers Postcard Collection, 1900-1935. [Pc:SB:1900-1935](#)
- Fouad Khoury Postcard Collection, 1920-1980. [Pc:FK:1920-1980](#)
- Students Projects Collection, 1920s. [Ph:SP:1920s](#)
- [Issa Iskandar Ma'luf postcard collection, 1925-1940](#)

Photographs

- E. W. Blatchford Collection, 1880-1900. [Ph:EWB:1880-1900:1-801](#)
- Frances Copeland Stickles Photo Collection, 1880-1900. [Ph:FCS:1880-1900](#)
- Isa Iskandar al-Ma'luf Photograph Collection, 1890s-1950s. [Ph:IIM:1890s-1950s](#)
- Franklin Moore Photograph Collection, 1892-1902. [Ph:FTM:1892-1902:1-80](#)
- Joseph and Joyce Stein Photograph Collection, 1896-1930. [Ph:JJS:1896-1930](#)

- Nahr Ibrahim Photo Collection, [1900]. [Ph: NI: 1920s](#)
- Three American Sisters Photo Album, ca. 1900s. [Ph:ASP:1900s](#)
- Saul Rosenberg Collection, 1932-1978. [Ph: SR: 1932-1978:1512](#)
- Middle East Photo Album, 1933-1943. [Ph:MEP:1933-1943V](#)
- Robert Black photo album, 1935-1937. [Ph:AUB:1935-1937:1-289:41](#)
- Richard Sterling Finnie Photograph Collection, 1951. [Ph:RSF:1951](#)
- Kongstad and Khalaf Collection, 1950-1967. [Ph:KK:1950-1967](#)
- Lebanon Tourism Photo Collection, 1969. [Ph:LT:1969](#)

Ephemera

- [Travel and Tourism Ephemera Collection, 1942-2013](#)

Books

- Panagopoulou, H. (1997). Form versus function: lithic use-wear analysis and its applications to a class of Levantine Mousterian tools. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Information Service. [J 939.4:P187f](#)
- Haber, R. M. (2013). Adonis River: valley of the dancing shadows. Jounieh, Lebanon: Authors. [J 939.44:H114a](#)
- Harfouche, R.; Poupet, P. (2015). Du Mont Liban aux sierras d'Espagne: sols, eau et sociétés en Montagne: autour du projet Franco-Libanais CEDRE "Nahr Ibrahim". Oxford: Archaeopress Archaeology. [J 939.44:D893h](#)
- Harfouche, R. (2017). Paysages et peuplement du Mont Liban: La vallée du Nahr Ibrahim et l'hinterland de Byblos. Beyrouth: Ministère de la culture. Direction générale des antiquités. [J 939.44:B111ba:no.17](#)
- [Office national du tourisme au Liban], (1964). Liban = Lebanon = لبنان .Beyrouth: Office national du tourisme au Liban. [CA 915.692:L694L](#)
- Stafford, M. (1998). Silent stories: A photographic journey through Lebanon in the sixties. London: Saqi Books. [CA 915.692:S779s](#)
- Homsî, Raya. (2009). 23 visions: [Lebanon through the lens of its photographer's talents = 23 visions: le Liban a travers le talent de ses photographes. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. [F 779:H768t](#)
- Waterbury, John. [2011]. A Photographic remembrance of Lebanon. Beirut: Dar an-Nahar. [J 770.956:W324p](#)
- Sardouk, N., Abboud, F., Tayah, M., & Lebanon. Ministry of Tourism. (2013). Beirut in motion. Ministry of Tourism. [J 956.92:S244b:2013](#)
- دباس، فؤاد. (١٩٩٤). بيروت ذاكرتنا: جولة مصورة في المدينة القديمة. بيروت، لبنان: بيسان. [CA F 956.925:D286bA](#)

Lib Guides

- [Archives and Special Collections Subject Guide: Description and Travel](#)

Digital Collections

- [Beirut, Byblus and Mt. Lebanon: description, history, and touristic guide \(1952\)](#)
- [Travel Books](#)
- [Travelers to the Middle East: Visual Resources. Travel Guides, and Maps](#)
- [The Fouad Debbas Collection \(Sursock Museum\)](#)