

## STANDARDS FOR CATALOGING OBJECTS IN THE VHS HISTORY COLLECTION

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All cataloguing will be done from the Objects Collection at the top left of the home screen.

### **Creating a New Entry**

If the object you are cataloguing does not have a PP entry already, you will need to create one by clicking the “Add” button at the top of the screen. (Short cut: “A”)

#### *From Blank Data*

To create an entry from scratch, make sure the “Create New Record with:” box on the right side of the screen has “Blank Data” selected. With this option selected, select the gift number (accession number) by clicking the file icon to the right of the “Enter Accession#” field. Accessions are listed in numerical order. To expedite searching, single click on any entry, then quickly type the first few numbers of the Accession Number. Double click an entry to select it.

This will automatically fill in the Source information and the first part of the Object ID on the left side of the screen. Create the Object ID using the standards set below in the section “Object ID.” Select the Object Name from the Lexicon following the standards set below in the section “Object Name.”

#### *From Current Data*

To create an entry that duplicates another entry, start with that entry open on your screen when you click Add. Then, select “Current Data” in the “Create New Record with:” box on the right side of the screen. This will populate every field on the left except Object ID. This is useful for splitting entries containing multiple objects, and for collections with extensive provenances, people connections, or other identical information.

Create the Object ID using the standards set below in the section “Object ID.” Select the Object Name from the Lexicon following the standards set below in the section “Object Name.” Note that if you forget to change the Object Name on this screen it will not be editable on the next. You will need to Save, then reopen Edit mode.

### **Editing Entries**

All cataloguing of objects will be done in the *History* Screen View or *Custom* Screen View. All cataloguing of fine arts (paintings, prints, photography) will be done in the *Art* Screen View or *Custom* Screen View. If a screen view (selections at the top left of the screen) or other view (selections at the bottom left of the screen) has information populated within it, it will have a green dot on the button. If any Screen View (Archaeology, Art, Geology, or Natural History) have green dots, open the view and clear out any information. [Note: “Description” auto-fills from every view and will not add a dot, so if there is information in those sections, it will be in a field that is not in the History screen view, like “Species.”]

#### *Collection*

All objects within the Museum’s care are in the “VHS History Collection.” To populate this field, right click within the field and select “VHS History Collection.” This method is preferred over manual entry to control for typos, misspellings, and other nonstandard entries.

### *Object ID*

An object’s Object ID is derived from its Accession number plus an additional suffix separating each item within the same gift. The numbers are formatted as [accession year].[gift number].[object number] . Example: 2019.5.4

If two objects are part of the same set and will be stored and exhibited together, they receive the same final number and are separated by the addition of a letter. Example: 2019.5.4a, 2019.5.4b Examples of objects that would follow this are pairs of shoes, a set of paints, a work of art and its frame. Examples of objects that would not follow are a matching set of bowls, husband-and-wife portraits, two hammers.

Despite being the same final number, the above objects should have individual entries in PastPerfect unless they are identical. For example, a pair of shoes could have one entry, but a suit set should have a separate entry for each piece, as should a cup and its saucer. The exception to this are objects that are different but exist as parts of a whole that will always be stored together, like a shaving kit.

When listing letter-separated objects together, represent a range of letters with a hyphen unless the letters are consecutive. For example: 2019.5.4ab and 2019.5.4a-f are both correct. 2019.5.4a-b and 2019.5.4a,b,c,d are not correct.

Previously, if a gift consisted of only a single object, the object was not given a third number, making the Object ID and Accession Number identical. This is no longer standard practice, and all Object IDs should contain three parts.

If changes are made to an already existing Object ID, record the old Object ID in “Old#.” If that field is already filled, use “Other#”. Changes to an existing Object ID should not be made until the same change is recorded on the object. Exceptions to this are small changes in standardizations, such as removing a hyphen between a-b. If any unrecorded labeling numbers are found on the object (i.e. from previous collector or massive renumbering campaign) record them in “Other#.”

The Fine Art collection is being incorporated into the VHS History Collection and will adopt its numbering system, so all fine art objects newly accessioned or catalogued into the collection should follow the tripart numbering system. (Currently, the numbering system for Fine Art is formatted as VHS-A-[entry number].)

### Examples of Object IDs

Correctly Formatted	Incorrectly Formatted
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2019.5.1	2019.5
2019.5.4a	2019.5.4a-b
2019.5.4ab	2019.5.a
2019.5.4a-c	2019.5.4a,5ab
	19.5.4

### *Object Name*

The Object Name is filled via a Lexicon Chart. To populate the field, select “Search Lexicon” to the right of the field. This brings up a tripart chart, starting with broad fields and narrowing to individual object names. Do not use the two subcategories “10: Unclassifiable Artifacts---Need to Classify” or “10: Unclassifiable Artifacts---Need to Pick Sub-Category.” Consult with the Collections Manager if you are unable to find an entry that matches your object.

### *Other Name*

Regardless of what name is selected for the Object Name field, put the common name of the object within the Other Name field. In this case, the common name is the name that is most likely to be used to search for the object by a member of the public. So for example, if the lexicon selection is “Table, Dining” the Other Name would be Dining Table. If the Lexicon selection is “Screwdriver,” the Other Name would also be “Screwdriver.”

The Other Name should still be the most basic name for the object rather than a description. For example, if the object is an oil portrait of a young girl, the Other Name should be Painting, not Portrait Painting, Painting of Child, or the title.

Capitalize Other Name as if it were a title.

### *Other#*

If the object is marked with a number other than one applied by the Museum (i.e. if it was transferred from another collection), record that number in this field as it appears on the object.

### *Old#*

If the object was originally numbered following an outdated standard and its Object ID has been updated, record the old number here.

### *Accession#*

This field is automatically populated by linking to the accession record. If this field is blank or nonstandard, consult the Collections Manager.

### *Home Location*

This field is automatically populated by linking to the information entered into the Location view.

### *Date*

This is the date or approximate date of the object's creation, in years. If the date is known, enter the year into this field. If the date of the object can be narrowed down to a range of years, format it as [beginning year]-[ending year]. So, for example, if an object dates to the 1920s, put "1920-1929" rather than "1920s," or "c. 1920."

This rule is excepted when the range is a century or a long span of time with not concrete beginning and end. In the case of a century, enter "[x]th century" rather than "1700-1800" or "1900s." In the case of a long, uncertain span, enter "mid-19<sup>th</sup> century" or "second quarter 19<sup>th</sup> century" rather than c. 1850 or guessing at beginning and ending years.

#### *Year Range*

If the year of creation is known, enter the same year for both dates. Otherwise, enter the earliest possible date and the latest possible dates. For long ranges with uncertain beginning and end dates, get as close as possible. For example, "mid-19<sup>th</sup> century" would be "1840-1860" and "last quarter 20<sup>th</sup> century" would be "1975-2000."

#### *Catalog Date*

If you make significant changes to the catalog, i.e. changing description, hit F5 to insert the current date.

#### *Cataloged by*

If you make significant changes to the catalog, i.e. changing description, right click within the field and select your name from the Authority File.

#### *Status Date, Status by, and Status*

Use these field only if you evaluate the object for deaccession or determine it is missing, stolen or lost. For an object to be deemed Evaluated, the entry must contain all information we have on the object, including what is in all worksheets and accession documents, the accession documents must have been transferred to the worksheet file, all fields must be standardized, and all reasonable provenance research must be done and entered. If you are uncertain if the object qualifies, consult the Collections Manager.

### **History Screen View**

#### *Description*

This is a physical description of the object. The first sentence should be a standalone overall description of the object, with the following sentences giving more detail. Interpretation and dimensions are not entered into this field.

#### *Collector*

If the object was obtained by a collector prior to donation, enter the person's name here formatted [first name] [middle name(s)] [last name] ([life dates in years]). For example, 1976.33.1-41 were collected by J. Lee Murray to be a collection rather than for use. Dealers not acting as a proxy are also counted as collectors.

### *Site/Site#*

This field is only for archaeological artifacts from known digs.

### *Pl of Origin*

This field is where the object was made (if known). Format the location as you would a letter. For example: Barre, VT. This field should only detail down to the town name. If the specific address is known, record it in the Notes field.

### *Event*

Use this field if the object is tied to a specific historical event. The field is populated through an Authority Field. To access it, right click within the field, then double your selection from the list. If the event is not within the Authority Field, consult the Collections Manager.

### *Material*

This field is populated by an Authority Field. Do not manually enter the materials. To access the Authority Field, right click within the field, and then double click your selections from the list. Materials do not have to be more specific than “wood” or “metal” if the type is not known. Note that not all the materials listed within the Authority File are appropriate for this field as not all of them are materials. For example, “satin” is a weave structure, not a material. If you are uncertain whether something is a material or not, consult the Collections Manager.

### *Found*

If the object was discovered somewhere without prior provenance, enter the location, down to the street address if known, here. For example, if someone found an object in the attic of a house they purchased.

### *Made*

If the maker of an object is known, enter their name here formatted [first name][middle name(s)][last name] ([life dates]). If the maker of an object is a company, enter it as it appears in their trademark, followed by their active dates (if known).

### *Used*

If the place of use of an object is known, enter here formatted as you would a letter. For example: Barre, VT. This field should only detail down to the town name. If the specific address is known, record it in the Notes field. An example of this would be a wedding dress worn in Barre, VT.

### *Owned*

If the original owner/user/wearer is known, enter their name here formatted [first name][middle name(s)][last name] ([life dates]).

### *Title*

Use this field only if the object has been given a title by the maker/artist.

*Creator*

Do not use this field.

*Role*

Do not use this field.

*Provenance*

The provenance field is used to record the entire history of ownership of an object in chronological order. Each transfer of ownership begins on a new line, separated by a semicolon. If there is a gap in our knowledge of ownership, end the line with a period.

Indicate the means of transfer as follows:

Made by...	Indicates the object was produced by the person or entity
By sale to...	Indicates that the previous owner sold it to the following owner
By gift to...	Indicates that the previous owner gave it to the following owner
By descent to...	Indicates that it descended through the family from the previous owner to the following owner without formal designation within a will
By bequest to...	Indicates that it was formally given from the previous only to the following owner through a formal will
By consignment to...	Indicates that the previous owner consigned it to the care of a secondary owner for the purposes for further sale
By auction to...	Indicates that the previous owner sold it to the following owner during public auction
Owned by...	The object was owned and originally used by this owner, but how they obtained it is unknown
Obtained by...	The object was not originally owned or use by this owner, but how they obtained it is unknown
By theft to...	The object passed from the previous owner to the following owner by theft
By seizure to...	The object passed from the previous owner to the following owner by order of seizure or confiscation

If the previous owner and following owner knew each other, their relationship should be noted, i.e. By descent to her daughter, [name].



All names within the provenance should be formatted [first name][last name] ([life dates]). If the date of transfer is known, it should be included at the end of the line.

Examples of correctly formatted Provenances

<p>A hammer was made by Wm. Booth of Rochester, NY (stamped), and used by Orla Brown of Bakersfield, VT. The donors are descendants.</p>	<p>Made by Wm. Booth, Rochester, NY, c.1858;          By sale to Orla Brown (1820-1863), Bakersfield, VT, c. 1858;          By descent to his daughter, Elizabeth Brown Cooper (1846-1890);          By descent to her son, John Cooper (1870-1953);          By gift to VHS, 1948.</p>
<p>A pair of shoes was purchased by a collector at auction, and the auction house has no record of the previous owners.</p>	<p>By consignment to Skinner, Inc., 1975;          By auction to Frank Shumacher, New York, NY, 1975;          By gift to VHS, 1978.</p>
<p>A lock of Coolidge’s hair was donated by someone who claims it descended within their family, but the genealogy cannot completely link the two.</p>	<p>Owned by Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933);          By gift to Joseph McFarland.          By descent to Sarah Conner (b. 1965);          By gift to VHS, 2005.</p>

**Appraisal View**

Do not input into this view.

**Condition**

If inputting the general condition of the object, enter it into the main screen. If entering a full condition report of the object, enter a detailed condition report by clicking the plus-sign icon on the right of the screen. (You must be out of Edit Mode to add a detailed condition report.)

*Definition of Condition Terms*

**Excellent:** The object is in perfect, like-new condition. There are no noticeable flaws.

**Good:** The object has very minor flaws that do not affect the stability or significantly impact the object’s appearance. It can withstand being handled, stored, transported, and mounted for exhibition in any reasonable manner. Flaws indicative of the object’s original use are not considered detrimental to the object’s appearance.

**Fair:** The object has several flaws that are not indicative of the original use and that do not affect the object’s stability. The object’s appearance is noticeably affected by the flaws. It can withstand being handled, stored, transported, and mounted for exhibition in most ways.

**Poor:** The object has several flaws that impact its stability. It cannot easily withstand handling or transportation, and cannot be mounted for exhibition in most ways.

**Dire:** The object is unstable to the point that it cannot withstand handling, transportation, or exhibition. Without conservation, the object will continue to deteriorate beyond repair.

*General Condition Notes*

Record an overview of the object's condition here, noting any issues that may affect stability or exhibitability.

### *Detailed Condition Report*

Make a detailed condition report if the object has been examined closely. Detailed condition reports are necessary for all objects going on exhibition or outgoing loans. In Description of Condition, note every flaw present on the object, and photograph each. Only input into Damage Information if we know how the damage happened (i.e. it was dropped). Upload all images to the Image of Condition widget.

### **Dimensions**

Record the overall dimensions (in inches) of the object at its widest points within the input fields. If the object has other dimensions that are important for mounting or interpretation, record them in Dimension Details. This includes modern shoe size, body measurements of clothing (for mannequin builds), bit size of bolts if the object needs to be assembled, and important dimensions of any components.

### **Location**

Whereas previously, location was recorded as a string of numbers separated by slashes all within the Building field, locations are now separated out and inserted individually into separate fields using Authority Files. To insert a location, right click in the field and select the location from the list. If the location is not yet in the list, it can be added by clicking the plus-sign icon at the top right. All additions must follow the standards set below.

### *Building*

The VHS currently has two buildings in which objects are kept: The History Center in Barre, and the History Museum in Montpelier. Within the list, they are VHC Barre and VHM Montpelier.

### *Room*

The rooms are numbered following the numbering system on the building's floorplan. The numbers are also labeled on each door. Following the room number is its designation, i.e. 005 Workroom; 003 Storage.

### *Wall*

If the object is hung on or placed against a wall, select the wall from the list. The wall designations will be dependent on the room and will be labeled on the space, i.e. Back Wall, North Wall.

### *Cabinet*

Cabinets, shelving units, and rolling units all bear this designation and are recorded as "Unit [x]," "Rolling Unit [x]," "Quilt Rack [x]," etc. Work Tables are also recorded under Cabinet.

### *Shelf*

A shelf is any stationary platform within a cabinet/unit. The shelves are designated as the last number on the shelf's label. (i.e. the shelf labeled 023/12/4a is Shelf 4a) If the designation is a number followed by a letter, the two are joined without a space, and the letter is lower case. If the shelf is only a letter, the letter is capitalized. (i.e. Shelf 4a, Shelf A) The top of the Unit is designated as "Top")

#### *Drawer*

A drawer is any slidable compartment. They are formatted the same way as shelves, but with the prefix Drawer (i.e. Drawer 5a, Drawer A).

#### *Box*

If the object is within the box, this field is filled with the designation as it appears on the box (i.e. Small Linens Box).

### **Lexicon**

This view is uneditable. It shows the full Lexicon tree of the Object Name.

### **Notes & Legal**

Use the notes field to enter any information about the object that does not fit into another field, i.e. anecdotes about the object's use. Also use this field to record drastic changes to the cataloguing and why they were made. Every note should be followed by your name and the current date. The Provenance field on this screen automatically populates with the information entered into the Provenance field on the History Screen View. Do not enter anything into the Legal Status field, the Web Rights field, or the Repatriation Type field.

### **People – Subjects, Classification, Search Terms**

#### *People*

Enter any known people associated with the original production or use of the object as well as people associated with other significant periods of use. To enter a person, first check if there is already a Person entry. To do that, right click within the field to pull up the authority file. The names are sorted by surname with tabs for each letter at the top. If the name is present, double click to select it. If multiple versions of the same person are present, notify the Collections Manager.

If the name is not present, add it by clicking the Plus-Sign button at the bottom right of the screen. In the popup window, type the name formatted [surname], [first name] [middle names] ([life dates]). Once a name has been added, exit Edit Mode and click the file button at the upper right corner of the People field. Then, select the person's name from the list. This will open up the People Biographies widget. Input all known data about the person within this widget. For dates added to this section, format them in the European style: 13 Feb 1984. If genealogy is undertaken, print every page information from which information was learned and include it in the object's paper file.

### *Subjects*

To enter a subject, right click within the field and select subjects from the Authority File.

### *Classification and Search Terms*

Do not input anything into these fields.

## **Relations**

### *Related Publications*

Use this field to record the Chicago-style citation for all published works that reference the object or explain the object. Copies of the relevant portion of said work should be included within the object file.

### *Notes on Related Items*

Use this field to explain the connection between this object and the objects included in widget on the right of the screen. Also use this field to note related objects held in other collections, privately owned, or no longer extant.

### *Related Items*

Use this widget to connect objects that are related to other, but not part of the same gift. When you relate one object to another, all related objects tied to the other object automatically tie to this object, so cross relating is not advised. Use this widget for objects owned by the same person but part of separate gifts, objects that are by the same maker, objects that are significantly stylistically related, etc. If a related object already has several objects related to it that are not related to the object you're working on, note the relation in the "Notes on Related Items" rather than connecting it to all the objects.

## **Repatriation**

Do not input into this view.

## **Source**

This view will be automatically populated using the accession record.

## **Inscription Maker's Mark**

Use this view to record *all* words present anywhere on the object. Since there are no standardization of marks and inscriptions, there is no standardization in this view.

## **Custom Screen View**

Input the object's final evaluation grade into the Custom Screen View field Eval. Score. (For a breakdown of the scoring rubric, see "Evaluating the Collection for Possible Deaccession.") To enter a score, right click within the field and select the grade from the list.