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Sarah Wyman Whitman *Rediscovered Prang Calendar Designs*

BY ROBERT C. MAINFORT JR., MARY L. KWAS, AND STUART WALKER

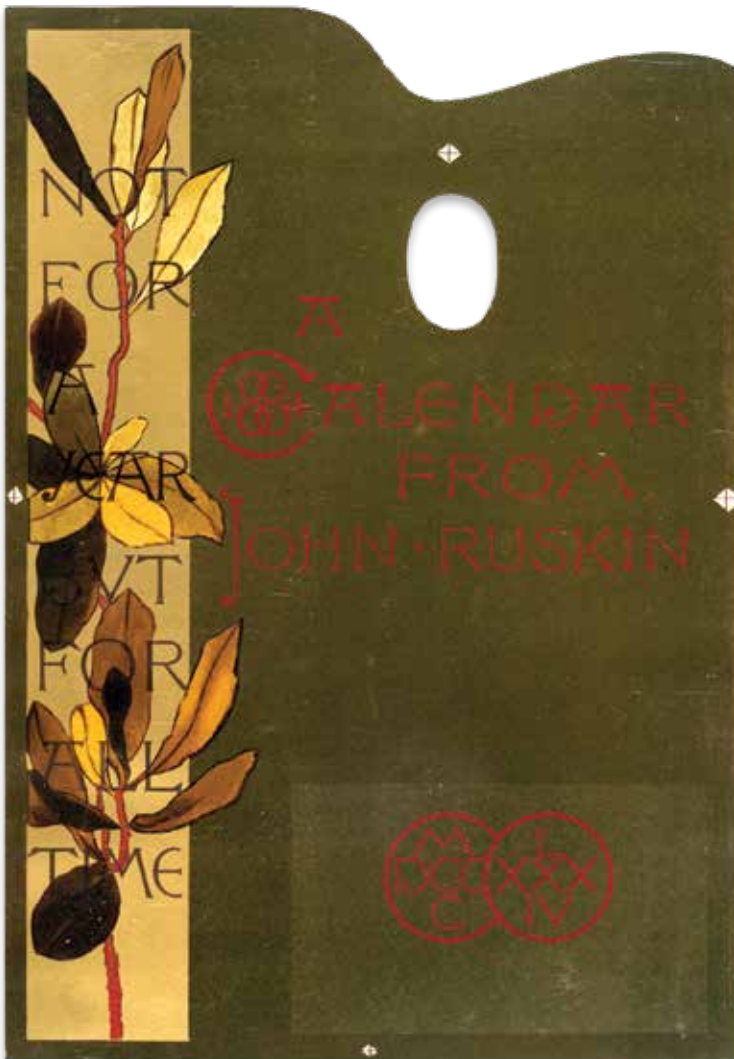


Figure 1. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library. "A Calendar from John Ruskin : not for a year but for all time." New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed March 9, 2019. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47db-bdc0-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

The artist Sarah Wyman Whitman (1842-1904) is best-known today among collectors for the book covers she designed in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Whitman holds a unique place in 1880s book publishing as the "sole example of a professional artist regularly engaged in the design of book covers."¹ Her designs were so dramatically different from what came before that they pioneered a new vision for book covers and inspired the generation of book artists that followed in the 1890s.

Whitman's design work shows the economy and restrained elegance advocated by the British Arts & Crafts movement, as inspired by the writings of John Ruskin and William Morris. And Whitman's design philosophy embraced two fundamental ideals of the movement: that objects of beauty add joy to life and that these objects should be available to all. What better place to apply this artistic philosophy than on the covers of publishers' trade bindings intended not for elite private libraries but for the general public.

The research focus on her book covers, however, has overlooked other kinds of ephemera to which Whitman applied her talents. The authors only recently discovered that she did some early design work for L. Prang & Co.

Sarah Wyman Whitman

Sarah Wyman was born in Baltimore in 1842² and moved to Lowell, Massachusetts as a child. In 1866 she married Henry Whitman, a successful Boston wool merchant. Two years later the couple moved from Lowell to Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood. The marriage was childless and distant, but Henry did encourage his wife to pursue her artistic talents, and she began taking classes in 1868.

Whitman studied painting under William Morris Hunt and later took a drawing class with William Rimmer.

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"Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go." —Anon

By the time you hold this issue Fall will be upon us, but I write during a perfect Summer day in Vermont. Sunshine and warmth seem to have eased me into some thoughts more philosophical than usual.

Yes, in life it is critical to "let things go," to move on when it is time to move on. In today's American cultural life there seems to be so much that we must move past, move through, move along. Still, history teaches us that many lessons need repeated learning. We ephemerists often choose to immerse ourselves in the cultures past that preceded our cultures present.

In these hazy lazy days of summer, it occurs to me that when we unearth printed primary source bits and bobs from the past, yes, we uncover facts new to us, but perhaps more importantly we learn that vintage ephemera can reveal past *perspectives*. Our glimpses of "street level" information found on the breadcrumbs of vernacular life which we so doggedly pursue offer *perspectives* on American culture perhaps unavailable anywhere else. The past comes to life in our collections. I like the phrase "the enduring ephemeral," coined by Canadian media scholar Wendy Hui Kyong Chun.

If I may be permitted one more idle musing, I have also been thinking about the fact that, for most of us, the pursuit of ephemera is primarily a solitary occupation. A paper show is a room full of individuals with heads down thumbing through boxes and bins, who wait impatiently for someone else to move on from the box they wish to look through next. We stop to chat only with reluctance...so much paper, so little time. We squirrel away our finds, take them back to home or archive, pore over them, perhaps do some research, store them away in another set of boxes and bins. We hunt-and-gather alone on eBay, and through auctions catalogs.

And yet, there can be equal or greater satisfaction in "doing ephemera" connected to others. Post-event "show-and-tell" sessions—while perhaps not without some competitive pride—are opportunities to share new discoveries, to mutually appreciate. Publishing an article—like the ones in this *Journal*—is an outreach to others, a sharing. Writing a blog piece for your ESA website is a welcomed generosity. Mounting an exhibit lets others understand some of what you understand. Delivering a talk is a gift to others, a spreading of the historical wealth. Your Ephemera Society warmly invites you to participate, to expand yourself, in whatever fashion appeals to you.

With crisp Fall air comes a sharpening of focus, a getting down to business. We have a full and exciting mid-year gathering planned for the weekend of October 17-20 in and around Ann Arbor, Michigan. Any and all ESA members are invited to join in. Planned are visits to the fabled collections of John Kemler (and his brother), the Clements library history collections, the Special Collections at the Hatcher Graduate Library, and a visit to the rare books and ephemera of member Garrett Scott. On the Sunday, a trek is planned—for those interested—to the Michigan Antiquarian Book and Paper Show in Lansing. For more info and to register, contact Board member Barbara Fahs Charles at: (bcharles@staplesandcharles.com).

ESA's 40th conference and fair (March 27-29, 2020) will be about "Women Challenging Expectations." Many women around the world and over the centuries have challenged social expectations to accomplish great things. Ephemera 40 will focus on the achievements of such women, many of whose contributions to society have too often gone unappreciated. Our presenters will speak on a range of of topics, using visual ephemera to tell their stories. Friday's talks will be followed by a jam-packed weekend—a banquet, two auctions (silent and live), exhibits, our annual all-members meeting, and, of course, America's premier ephemera fair! Full details and reservation information will be made available soon...hold those dates!

Your ESA invites applications for the Philip Jones Fellowship for the Study of Ephemera, a competition with a \$2,000 stipend open to any individual or organization to study any aspect of ephemera. Full information is available in the September issue of the eNews.

Richard Sheaff, President

THE STUFF OF LIFE: San Francisco Trade Catalogs at San Francisco Public Library

By TOM CAREY

The Exhibition

The California gold rush of the early 1850s and the Nevada silver boom that followed propelled San Francisco into its position as pre-eminent manufacturer and importer on the West Coast. An exhibition at the San Francisco Public Library presents a selection of the catalogs that marketed these products. Whether supplying stamp mills to mining operations, or toys to youngsters, trade catalogs helped bring material goods from the factory and warehouse to your door. Before there was Amazon and the Web, there was the literature of merchandising.

This exhibition of material from the San Francisco Public Library's San Francisco History Center features trade catalogs published by both local manufacturers and by other firms with distributors in San Francisco. The earliest item dates from 1870 and the most recent dates from 1976. San Francisco History Center holds hundreds of these catalogs. Many of these catalogs are have records in our online catalog, but an even larger number are stored in folders, filed by the name of the business in our San Francisco Ephemera Collection. The term 'trade catalog' is used here to include manufacturer's catalogs, wholesale catalogs, retail catalogs, mail order catalogs, price lists, auction catalogs and other publications advertising specific goods for purchase. The Center holds a much larger collection of business ephemera, including handbills, receipts, trade cards, business cards, blotters, posters and calendars.

Trade catalogs have been under-utilized by historians, but as documentation of material culture, they are the best representation of the products available to past generations, with then-current purchase prices. Used by architectural and fashion historians, they also illustrate technological processes of former days, and reflect the graphic design, typographic and printing styles of their eras.

Not surprisingly, catalogs reflect the artistic tastes, styles



Figure 1.

In this Issue...

In This Issue we consider the interface of art and ephemera.

September 11 marks another anniversary of the 2001 terrorist attacks. **Natasha Holmes's** piece explores how the event might have played against the art work that was on exhibit or that was scheduled to open soon after. Some images on the invitation ephemera are forever changed.

Robert Mainfort, Mary Kwas, and **Stuart Walker** followed a clue that Sarah Wyman Whitman, one of the best-known artists of turn-of-the-century book covers, designed ephemera for Prang.

In researching magazine advertising ephemera, **John Okolowicz** discovered John Wallace Pondelicek, an photographer who sold soft focus artistic poses to manufacturers of pianos and radios.

Responding to our invitation to submit stories of ephemera sleuthing into family history, **Bill Stone** shows some of the large collection of games he was inspired to form once he discovered that Edgar Olcott Clark was an ancestor. Clark and Sowdon, who began as stationers, maintained an advantage in the boxed game market by focusing on the artistic quality of labels.

San Francisco librarian **Tom Carey** shows how artistic trends can be followed in the impressive trade catalog exhibition that ends this month.

The three books reviewed emphasize the potential role of ephemera in artistic design and commercial application.

—Diane DeBlois, editor

Continued on Page 22



Figure 2. Photograph of Sarah Wyman Whitman in the pose that Helen Bigelow Merriman would paint after Whitman's death. Courtesy Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University

Armed with a letter of introduction from Hunt, she traveled to Europe in 1875 and 1877, where she studied under Hunt's teacher, Thomas Couture.³ At first Whitman was known for her landscapes in oil and her pastel portraits, done in a French style. She began to exhibit her paintings in the 1870s and was elected a member of both the National Academy of Design (1877) and the Society of American Artists in New York (1880). In 1881 she was one of only three women artists mentioned in a *Scribner's Monthly* article on young painters in America.⁴ Whitman held her first solo exhibition in 1882, and by the early 1880s she was an established painter in Boston. A \$150,000 inheritance from an uncle in 1884,⁵ an amount worth over \$3 million today, freed her to pursue her artistic and philanthropic interests.

In the early 1880s Whitman began to turn her artistic talents toward book cover design. At this time, books were becoming much more publicly accessible, both in terms of sheer numbers and low cost. Whitman viewed her book cover designs as "aesthetic tracts," i.e., aesthetic declarations that could be brought to mass-produced objects.

In the mid-1880s, while continuing her book cover work, Whitman, inspired by the artist John LaFarge, began working in stained glass. She designed stained-glass windows and interior decorations for a number of

churches and colleges in Massachusetts, New York, and Maine. She also established the Lily Glass Works.⁶

Whitman was considered one of the great society hostesses of Boston, at the very heart of the city's literary, artistic, and intellectual world. (Figure 2) Around her grew a sort of salon that included many of the region's brightest minds, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William James, Sarah Orne Jewett, Annie Fields, and Charles Eliot Norton among them.⁷ It was for the books of her many literary friends that Whitman produced her first designs. She is now best known for her Houghton Mifflin book covers.

While she rarely produced pictorial covers, Whitman believed that the design should reflect the tone of the book. She worked in the style of art nouveau, employing sinuous linework and plant forms combined with the influence of Japanese art. In a speech before the Boston Arts Students' Association, Whitman stressed the importance of good lettering and the need to bring the "touch of art" to books that would be sold cheaply.⁸

Whitman was the first cover designer to invent her own alphabet, a distinctive rustic sans serif that she used on most of her covers. Whitman often employs a rounded E, resembling a shallow Greek epsilon. Her A, like Albrecht Dürer's, has a crossbar top. Her C is often tall and shallow, cupping the next letter. Whitman's D, widely imitated by other designers, curls in at the bottom, often stopping just short of the vertical stroke. These and other letter forms fall clearly within the Arts and Crafts

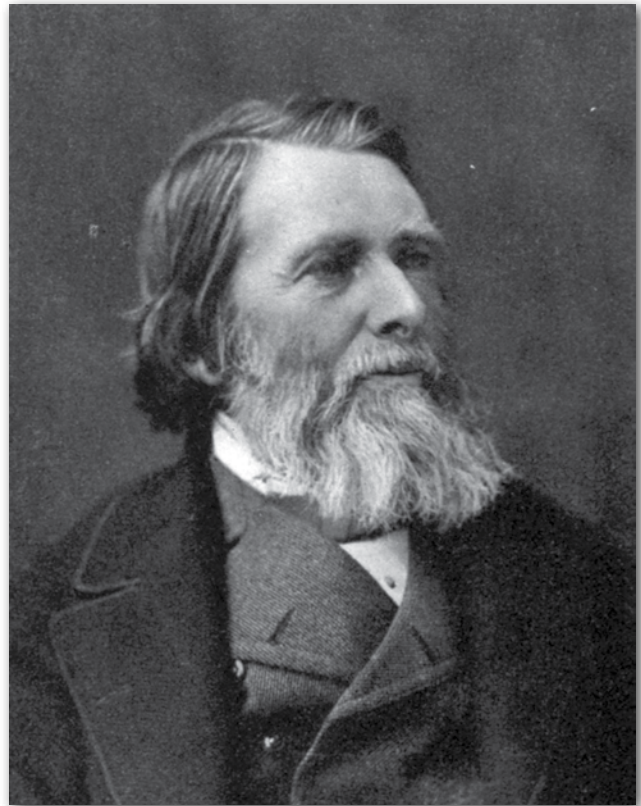


Figure 3. John Ruskin. From John Ruskin, *His Home and Haunts*, by James David Symon. New York, Dodge Publishing, 1911, *Frontispiece*.

tradition, but Whitman refined these letters and made them her own. Whitman consistently arranged the book's title and the author's name as essential components of her design, her distinctive alphabet harmonizing with the restrained graphic elements.⁹

French master Thomas Couture declared that "letters were the most beautiful embroidery in the world because it was an embroidery that spoke," to which Whitman added "To any one who learns to love it, it is the enduring pleasure to decorate by letters."¹⁰

Living in Boston, Whitman was in the perfect place at the perfect time. With the founding of the Society of Arts and Crafts and a host of craftsmanship exhibitions, Boston became a center of the Arts & Crafts movement in America.¹¹ Boston was also a center for printing and publishing, competing directly with New York City. Among its publishing houses were Houghton Mifflin, Little, Brown and Co., and smaller publishers such as Copeland & Day, along with associated industries like printers and binders.¹² Boston was also the home of L. Prang & Co.

L. Prang & Co.

In the production and marketing of printed works of art, Prang was the premier American firm during the last half of the nineteenth century. Louis Prang, a German immigrant, arrived in America around 1850 and worked for engraver Frank Leslie before forming a lithographic printing company with Julius Mayer in 1856. Four years later, Prang was sole owner.

At first the company printed business cards, album cards and other ephemera, and was particularly noted for its Civil War maps. In 1864 Prang went to Europe to study the techniques of the German color lithographers. When he returned to America, he developed the process that he called "chromolithography." Using high-quality paper and as many as 30 colors, Prang produced beautiful images of major works of art originally painted in oils.

In the spirit of the Arts & Crafts movement, Prang desired to bring the beauty of fine art into the homes of common people and received considerable support for his efforts from Harriet Beecher Stowe.¹³

In 1867 he began to publish a catalog of prints, and orders poured in from around the world. In 1874 Prang produced a line of Christmas cards, which he sent to England. The cards were such a success that the following year he introduced them in America, becoming the "father" of the American Christmas card. By 1881 he was printing five million Christmas cards a year.

In addition to artistic prints and Christmas cards, Prang produced a large line of other ephemera, including holiday cards, trade cards, menus, birth announcements and marriage certificates, advertisements, and calendars. In an effort to promote fine art, Prang produced textbooks, drawing books and art supplies, introducing art education to American public schools.

Prang strongly promoted the work of women. By 1881 over 100 women worked for Prang as artists, designers,

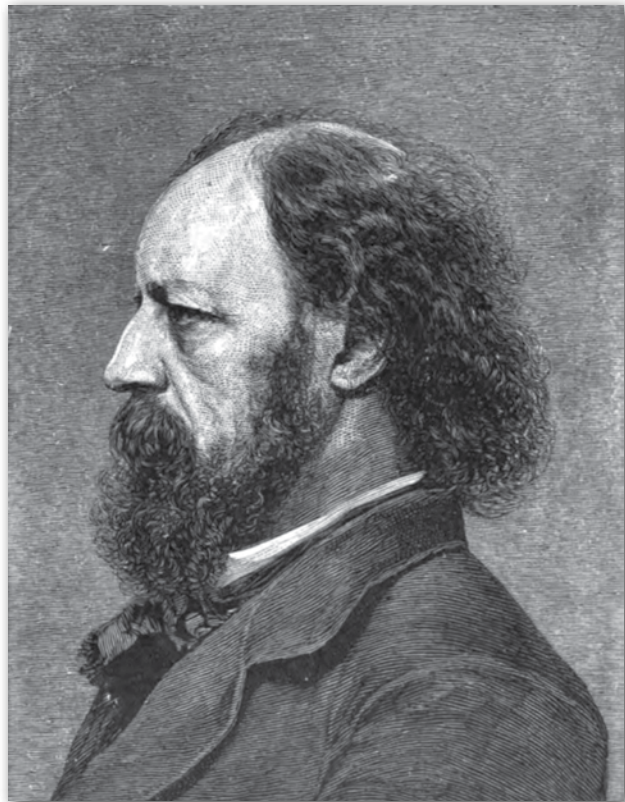


Figure 4. Alfred, Lord Tennyson. From *A Catalogue of Books Published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, Riverside Press, 1887, 70.*

writers, and craftswomen. Dora Wheeler, Olive E. Whitney, Rosina Emmett, and Rose M. Sprague were among the artists, while poet Celia Thaxter wrote many of the verses that adorned the cards.¹⁴ In addition to the lesser-known artists he employed, Prang also sought the work of established artists, such as Elihu Vedder and Sarah Whitman. Whitman may well have been drawn to designing calendars for Prang because the work fit well with her philosophy of art for the people.

To our knowledge, no examples of the actual calendars survive, unless they are in private collections. What we present here are the publisher's proofs for the calendar mounts. These are in the remarkable collection of Louis Prang material curated by the New York Public Library.

The two proofs, a Ruskin calendar for 1884 and a Tennyson calendar for 1885, are excellent early examples of Whitman's lettering style and its integration into the overall design, in a manner similar to her innovative book covers.

The Ruskin Calendar

John Ruskin (1819-1900) is not a household name today, but the English art critic and theorist defined the art and culture of his century. (Figure 3) Leo Tolstoy, Gandhi, and George Bernard Shaw considered Ruskin one of the greatest social reformers of his time. A leading figure in the Arts and Crafts movement, Ruskin advocated a sustainable relationship between people, craft, and nature that is as pertinent today as it was

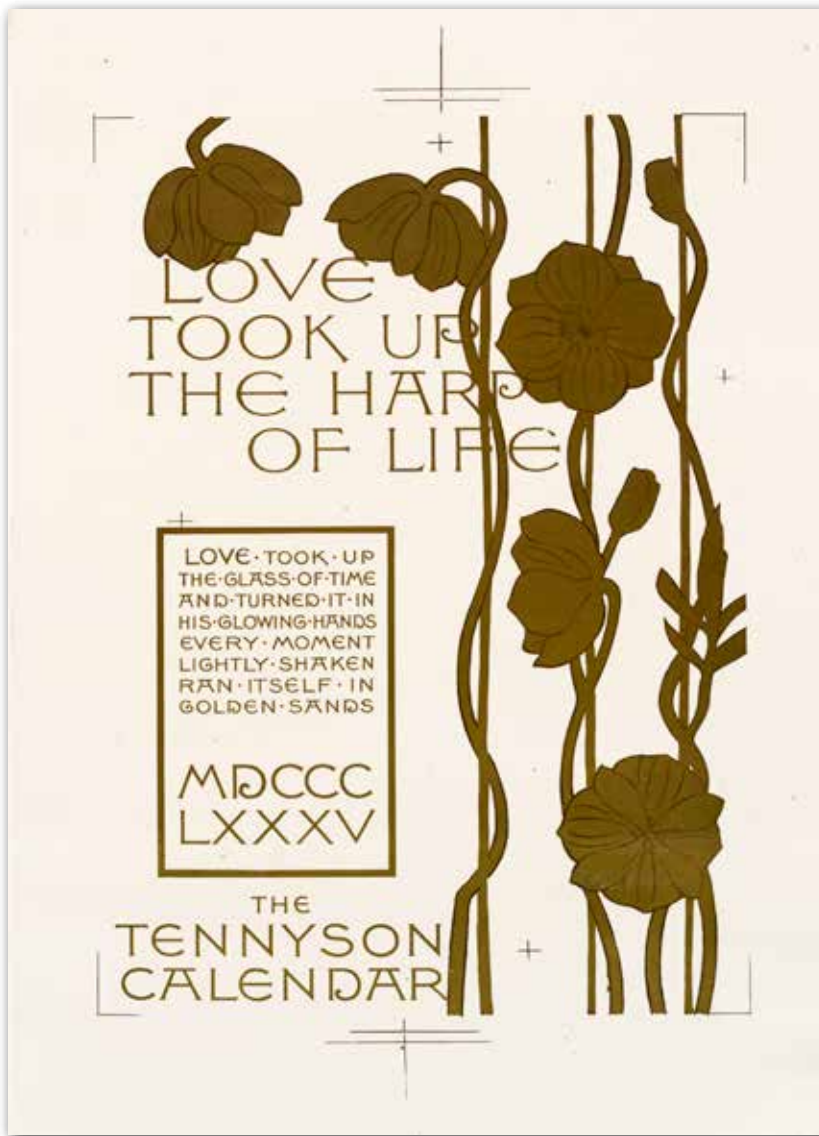


Figure 5. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library. "A Tennyson Calendar, Christmas and New Year cards depicting girls, friendship, winter, flowers and decorative design." New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed March 9, 2019. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47db-be09-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

in his lifetime. British art historian Kenneth Clark observed that, "For almost 50 years, to read Ruskin was accepted as proof of the possession of a soul."¹⁵

Ruskin's influence was strongly felt in America, partly due to his long friendship with Charles Eliot Norton, Professor of Art at Harvard, who was the founding president of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston. Norton, who served as the founding second vice president of the Society, was also a "mentor and benefactor" to Whitman.¹⁶ The writings of Ruskin, as well as those of his kindred spirit, William Morris, were very popular in the United States, and reading groups met regularly to discuss their work. The moral aesthetics of Ruskin resonated with Whitman, in her commitment to bringing art into the lives of working people, and in the various social causes she

championed. A calendar designed in the Arts and Crafts tradition with Ruskin's inspirational words was a perfect opportunity to spread the movement's ideals via the new reality of mass production.

The American Stationer described the Ruskin calendar as follows: (Figure 1)

"It represents a palate of dark color, with artistic ornamental border in gold and conventional flowers on the left side. In the right lower corner is the pad containing the calendar, each leaf of which quotes suitable selections from John Ruskin's works for each day of the year, which have been made by a lady well known for her cultivated taste and judgment. The mount has been designed by a well-known Boston artist and, coming from her thought and tasteful skill, the form and decoration will be a fitting accompaniment to the words within. This calendar will be a source of pleasure to all who love and appreciate Ruskin, that they may have every morning a jewel from the treasure of his noble and earnest thought."¹⁷

This description is not quite accurate. The botanical element on the left side clearly does not depict "conventional flowers" but rather, portrays a small branch with pointed, narrowly-oval leaves that resemble those of Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*). The calendar mount is also shaped as an artist's palette.

The calendar's sidebar, which reads "Not for a year but for all time," is taken from a line in Ben Jonson's effusive eulogy to William Shakespeare, published in the preface to *The First Folio* (1623), but here Jonson's "an age" is replaced by "a year." The phrase may well reflect Whitman's admiration for Ruskin, but this may also be a bit of wordplay; it appears that the calendar pad, which was affixed to the mount near the lower right corner, could be replaced at the start of a new year.

Whitman was not initially identified as the designer of the Ruskin calendar, but after the calendar proved popular, Prang acknowledged her by name the following spring in announcing that the same "gifted artist" had been secured to design a Tennyson calendar for 1885.¹⁸

The Tennyson Calendar

Sarah Wyman Whitman loved the poetry of Tennyson and mentions the great poet several times in her letters. (Figure 4) Whitman and a number of her Boston friends, including Henry O. Houghton, George Mifflin, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, raised money “for the erection of a lofty granite monolith in the form of an Iona cross to the memory of Alfred Tennyson...on the highest point of the famous down which overlooks the western end of the Isle of Wight.”¹⁹ The monument was raised in 1897 and is today a prominent landmark.

Publishers Weekly described Whitman’s Tennyson calendar mount as “an exquisitely delicate design in white and gold, in which allusion is made to one of the most popular songs of the poet on the golden strings of a harp entwined by the blossoms of the anemone or windflower.”²⁰ (Figure 5) The plant is likely *Anemone hupehensis*, var. *japonica*, a fall-blooming perennial native to China, but long cultivated in Japan. The flowers are well above the foliage on taller branching stems that wave in the breeze. Some nice stands of anemone may be seen today in Mount Auburn Cemetery, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and examples probably grew there in Whitman’s time. The featured line, “Love Took Up the Harp of Life,” and the smaller text within the rectangular box below it, are taken from Tennyson’s “Locksley Hall,” first published in his 1842 collection of *Poems*. In context, the two couplets read:

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn’d
it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in
golden sand.
Love took up the harp of life, and smote
on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,
pass’d in music out of sight.

Several of Whitman’s most successful book cover designs have strong vertical motifs consisting of anemones woven around one or more vertical lines. The similarity in design of the Tennyson calendar and her cover for Kate Douglas Wiggins’ *Nine Love Songs and a Carol* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1896) is striking. (Figure 6)

As on the Ruskin calendar, Whitman’s lettering is essential to the overall design, and the size of each textual element is carefully balanced according to its position. Notice the guide marks that were added for printing.

Whitman’s work for Prang extended beyond the two calendars. She also produced designs for Prang’s 1884-85 line of Christmas and New Year cards, but we

During our on-going research on the book cover designs of Sarah Wyman Whitman, we have come across some other of her design projects, including these Prang calendars. First brought to our attention by book historian Sue Allen, we located the calendars in a Prang scrapbook held by the New York Public Library. The scrapbook contains over 1800 pages of cards and other ephemera and can be viewed on-line from this link: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/publishers-proofs-of-the-publications-of-l-prang-co-and-scrapbooks-of-colored#/>.

We also located three letters written by Whitman to Prang, which are in the Louis Prang Collection of the Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards Inc., Kansas City, Mo., thanks to an article on this collection that appeared in Volume 1 of *The Ephemera Journal*.

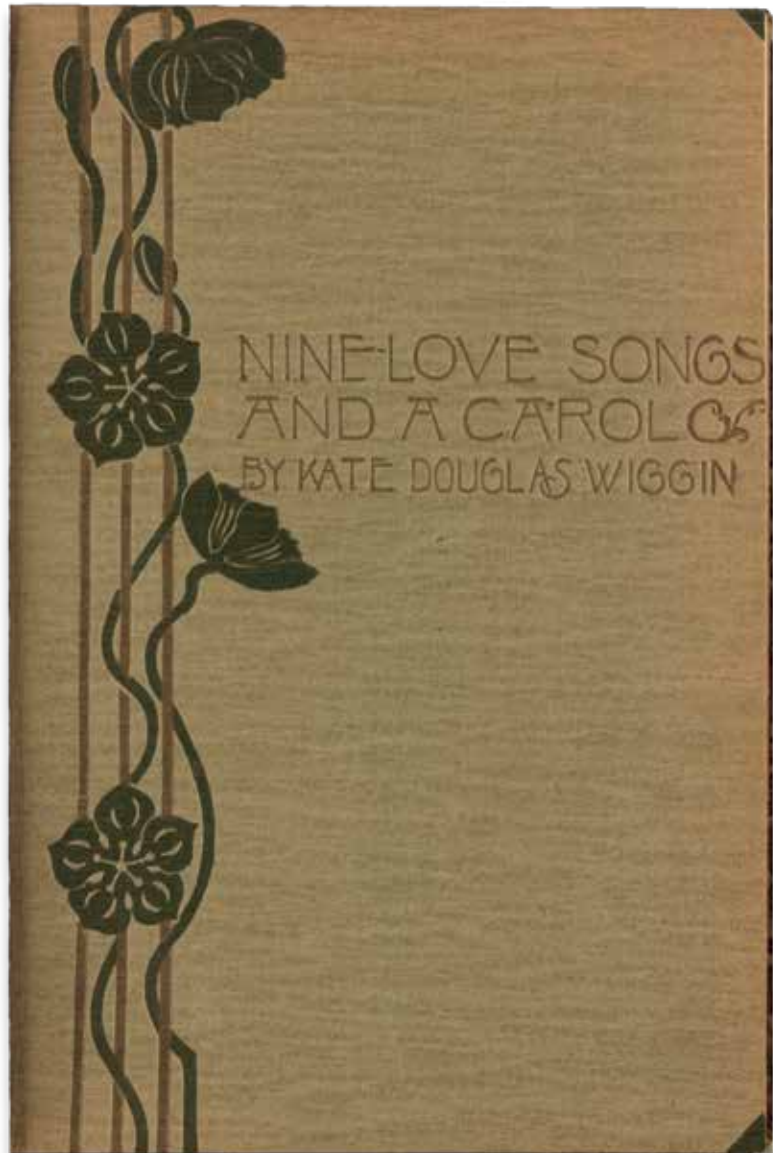


Figure 6. Kate Douglas Wiggin, *Nine Love Songs and A Carol*, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1896. Image courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library.

have not yet identified any examples.²¹ These cards and the calendars appear to represent the extent of her work for Louis Prang. Whitman produced at least one more calendar, entitled *A Calendar of Brave Deeds*, offered by the Boston firm D. Lothrop & Co. for 1887. Designed in “red and bronze,” *The Boston Globe* described it as “One of the most unique and attractive calendars of the year.”²²

Prang’s Ruskin and Tennyson calendars provide important examples of Whitman’s style at the beginning of her work in applied art. Even at this early time, her designs are remarkably mature and would not appear out of place on a book cover of the 1890s.

Endnotes

¹ Sue Allen and Charles Gullans, *Decorated Cloth in America, 1840-1910*, Los Angeles, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1994, 59.

² In three articles (two of which we cite below), Betty S. Smith erroneously gives Lowell, Massachusetts, as Whitman’s birthplace, but the following sources all show that she was born in Baltimore, Maryland: John Henry Treat, *The Treat Family*, Salem (MA), Salem Press & Publishing & Printing Co., 1893; *Baltimore Sun*, 25 April 1842, 2; and these documents available at *Ancestry.com* (U. S. Censuses for 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900; Massachusetts State Census 1865; Maryland Births and Christenings Index, 1662-1911; Massachusetts Marriage Records, 1840-1915; U. S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925).

³ *The Sun* [New York], 21 January 1875, 2; *Boston Post*, 22 January 1875, 4; *The Boston Globe*, 28 May 1877, 8; Martha J. Coppin, “Women Artists in Boston, 1870-1900: The Pupils of William Morris Hunt,” *The American Art Journal* 13/1 (Winter 1981), 28-29; Sue Allen, *The Book Cover Art of Sarah Wyman Whitman*, Boston, Society of Printers, 2012, 3; Paula Blanchard, *Sarah Orne Jewett: Her World and Her Work*, Boston, Perseus, 1994, 218-219; Erica E. Hirshler, Janet L. Comey, and Ellen E. Roberts, *A Studio of Her Own: Women Artists in Boston, 1870-1940*, Boston, MFA Publications, 2001, 36.

⁴ *Scribner’s Monthly*, 22/3 (July 1881), 321-334.

⁵ *The Baltimore Sun*, 14 April 1884, 4.

⁶ Charles Gullans and John Espy, “American Trade Bindings and Their Designers: 1880-1915,” Jean Peters, editor, *Collectible Books: Some New Paths*, New York, R. R. Bowker, 1979, 37; Hirshler *et al.*, 36-37, 39; Betty S. Smith, “Sarah de St. Prix Wyman Whitman,” *Old-Time New England* 77 (Spring/Summer 1999), 46-64.

⁷ Stuart Walker, “A Quiet Revolution,” *Fine Books and Collections* 9/1 (Winter 2011), 36-40; Allen, *Whitman*, 4; Hirshler *et al.*, 39; Gullans and Espy, “Trade Bindings,” 37; Smith, “Whitman,” 50; Nancy Finlay, *Artists of the Book in Boston, 1890-1910*, Cambridge, The Houghton Library, 1985, 106-107.

⁸ Sarah W. Whitman, “Notes of an Informal Talk on Book Illustrations, Inside and Out,” given before the Boston Art Students’ Association, Feb. 14, 1894, Boston, By the Association, 1894, 5-6, 9; Gullans and Allen, *Decorated Cloth*, 63; Ellen Mazur Thomson, *Aesthetic Tracts*, New Castle, Oak Knoll, 2015, 33-50.

⁹ Allen, *Whitman*, 15.

¹⁰ Whitman, “Notes,” 10.

¹¹ Gerald W. R. Ward, editor, *Inspiring Reform: Boston’s Arts and Crafts Movement*, Wellesley, Davis Museum and Cultural Center, 1997, 15.

¹² Finlay, *Artists*, 117.

¹³ *Prang’s Chromo* 1/4 (Christmas 1868), 5; Harriet Beecher Stowe, “What Pictures Shall I Hang on My Wall?,” *The Atlantic [monthly] Almanac*, 1869, 41-44.

¹⁴ Lorna Condon, “Louis Prang, Printer and Democrat,” *Historic New England* 14/2 (Fall 2013), 30-33; Sharron Uhler, “My Dear Mr. Prang,” *The Ephemera Journal* 1 (1987), 28-32; Amelia Peck and Carol Irish, *Candace Wheeler: The Art and Enterprise of American Design, 1875-1900*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001, pp. 164-169; Ernest Dudley Chase, *The Romance of Greeting Cards*, London, University Press of Cambridge, 1956, pp. 26-32.

¹⁵ John Ruskin and Kenneth Clark, *Ruskin Today: Chosen and Annotated by Kenneth Clark*, London, J. Murray, 1964, xi.

¹⁶ Betty S. Smith, “Sarah Wyman Whitman, Brief Life of a Determined Artist: 1842-1904,” *Harvard Magazine* 110/3 (January-February 2008), 32-33.

¹⁷ *The American Stationer*, June 21, 1883, 879.

¹⁸ *The American Stationer*, May 1, 1884, 581. This is also confirmed in a letter Whitman wrote to Prang, now in the Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, MO, USA..

¹⁹ *The New York Times*, July 8, 1894, 4.

²⁰ *Publishers Weekly*, Christmas Number, 1884, 92.

²¹ *Journal of Education*, December 13, 1883, 896.

²² *The Boston Globe*, December 5, 1886, 13.

Spouses **Robert Mainfort**
(Ph.D., Michigan State University)
and **Mary Kwas** (M.S.,

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)
are retired archaeologists whose careers took them to Mississippi, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Upon retirement they returned to their native habitat in the Great Lakes, where they now pursue diverse interests, such as decorated book bindings and various ephemera, waterfall hikes, history research, and growing and photographing daylilies.

Stuart Walker was chief book conservator of the Boston Public Library, where he curated an exhibit of the book covers and stained glass of Sarah Wyman Whitman to mark the centenary of her death in 2004. In retirement he continues his research into Whitman, when he is not out birding.



Edgar Olcott Clark, Game Publisher

BY WILLIAM STONE

Edgar Olcott Clark was my great-grandfather, about whom I knew nothing until I inherited my father's library in 2003 and noticed Clark's name inscribed in many of the books. My curiosity led me on a fascinating and rewarding journey of discovery.

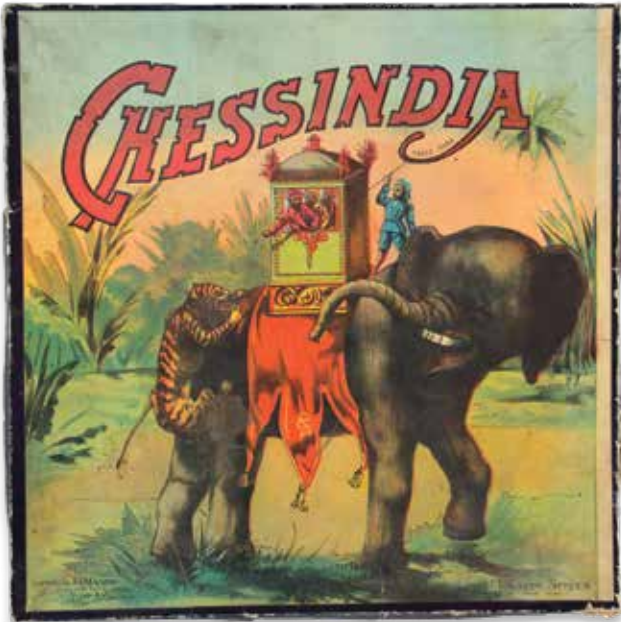


Figure 1. The box lid for the game Chessindia, "published by E.O. Clark successor to Clark & Sowdon New York." A game in their Tokalon Series. [Unless otherwise identified all items are in the author's collection.]

Edgar O. Clark was born in 1847 in New Rochelle, New York, and married Georgia Edwina Sowden in 1873. The 1880 census records Edgar's occupation as a dry goods merchant. In our family archives is an advertisement for Cooley Corsets hand stamped, "Compliments of E.O. Clark, New Rochelle, N.Y."

The 1890 census shows the Clarks settled in New York City. Edgar went into business with Georgia's uncle William at 7 Dutch Street under the trade name, Clark & Sowdon. According to city directories, the company moved to 342 West 14th Street sometime between 1892 and 1893 and were listed as purveyors of boxes and games.

The American Stationery of November 8, 1894 (Volume 36 page 850) announced:

"The American Whist Pack Company, Rochester, NY has appointed Clark & Sowdon 342 West Fourteenth Street, New York, general agents for the sale of its goods to jobbers and dealers not reached direct from the home office. Clark & Sowdon are well known to the stationery trade and their travelers cover the field from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Mr. Clark, who is an enthusiastic whist player, was at once impressed with the merits of the whist packs and will push them."

One of the suppliers for Clark & Sowdon was Merrill, Springer & Co. of Dixfield, Maine. According to the *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Industrial and Labor Statistics for the State of Maine*, 1897:

"Merrill, Springer & Co. of Dixfield, carry on an extensive business in wood novelties. ... We watched the operation of making checkers for a few minutes, and saw them fall from a Springer lathe at the rate of about two in a second. These checkers were sent the Clark & Sowdon of New York, the great dealers in all sorts of games."

William Sowdon died in 1900 and Edgar continued the business under the name "Edgar O. Clark, Successor to Clark & Sowdon." (Figures 1 and 2)

With all this as background, I began my ephemera research into what my ancestor actually did. My first clue was a reference to a board game published by his company. Thanks to a long-lapsed membership in the Association of Game & Puzzle Collectors, I had some reference

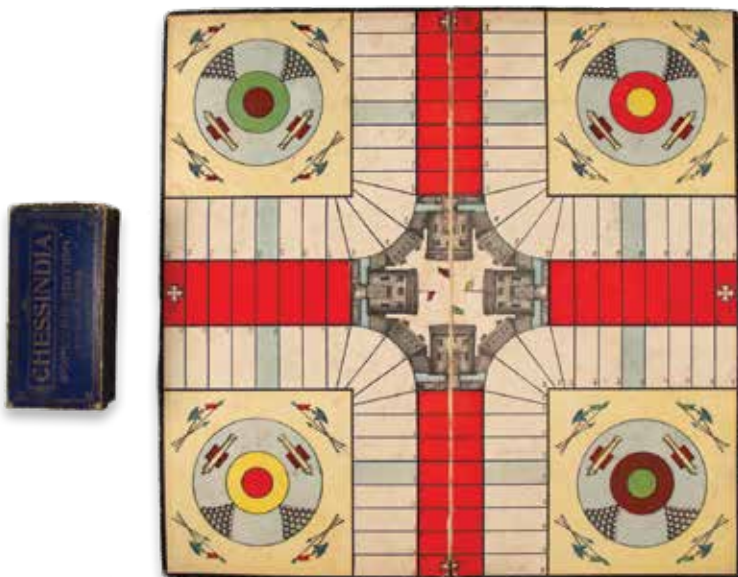


Figure 2. The game board and box of game pieces for Clark & Sowdon's Chessindia.

continued on page 10



Figure 3. Clark & Sowdon salesman's catalog with samples of board game box illustrations and game cards - most in the Tokalon Series. The Chessindia box lid label and game board (upper left) are earlier printings of the game in figures 1 and 2 - dating this catalog prior to 1900. [Courtesy of the Strong Museum of Play, Rochester, New York.]

books on board games. *Warman's Antique American Games 1840-1940* (1986) listed a number of games published by Clark & Sowdon, including the following: Authors Illustrated, The Game of Golf, The Game of Rough Riders, The Game of Wang, Hunting the Rabbit, Tete-a-Tet, Lucko, and Yacht Race. Under E. O. Clark were listed: The Charge, Hippodrome, and the Owl and the Pussy Cat.

I set out to buy as many of these games as I could find through eBay and the *American Games and Puzzle Collectors Quarterly*. I was also introduced to Nic Ricketts at the Strong Museum of Play in Rochester who helped me acquire photographs of all the Clark & Sowdon games in their collection. Nic told me of the only known copy of a Clark & Sowdon salesman sample catalog, with game box labels illustrating their offerings. (Figure 3)

I began to develop a list of confirmed Clark & Sowdon games, starting with ones I either owned or of which I had images. Added to this was a list of games I had seen a reference to, with no image. I then reached out to other collectors to try and move as many games into the "confirmed" list as possible. During this process I was amazed by an email with attachment of a game mentioned nowhere else: Elephant Dance. As of an article I wrote for the Winter 2013 *AGPC Quarterly*, I had confirmed 54 Clark &

Sowdon board games, with 27 titles for which I was still searching.

During my search I discovered an interesting aspect to the story. The Colgate Company was located at 6 Dutch Street, next door to Clark & Sowdon. Perhaps it was this proximity that inspired Colgate to promote their Bee Soap with games as premiums. (See figure 5b.) The soap packaging featured a large black bee that could be cut out, collected, and redeemed for items in the Bee Soap Premium Catalog. (Figure 6) Beginning in 1896, the games of Clark & Sowdon (along with those of J. H. Singer) were prominently displayed as premiums available when you redeemed a certain number of Black Bees. These games were included in the annual catalog through 1902. In 1896, the games were Snap, Little Miss Muffit,



Figure 4. ca1895 chromolithographed trade card for Chessindia.



Figure 5a & b. A later, perhaps 1900, chromolithographed trade card with a family parlor scene similar to that in figure 4. Chessindia has been renamed Parcheesi, "The Royal Game of India," and the game board no longer has castles as the central motif. Advertising copy on the card back describes saving 200 "Black Bees" from soap wrappers to receive the game in the mail. Selchow & Righter registered the name

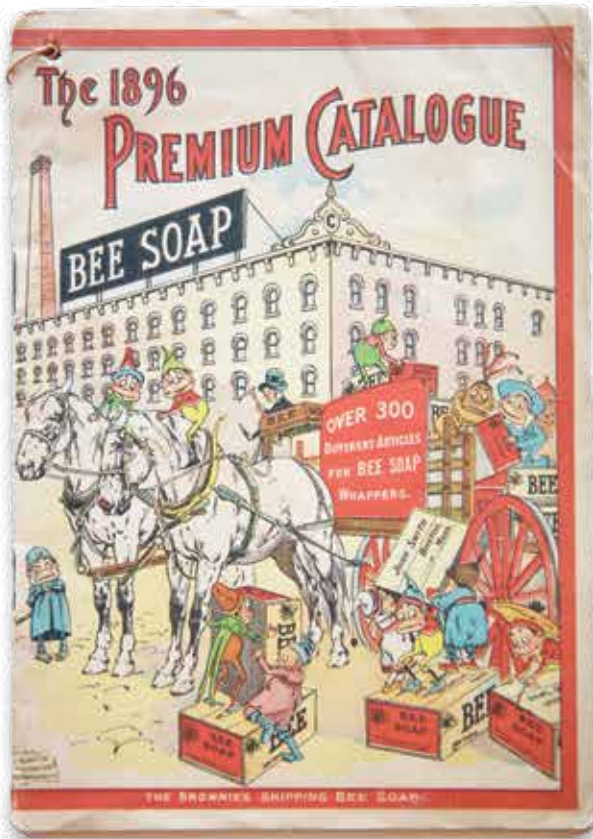


Figure 6. The 1896 premium catalog for Colgate's Black Bee soap.



Figure 7. The box lid for the game Paws & Claws, represented in the Clark & Sowdon catalog of figure 3, and one of the premiums offered by Colgate in 1896, figure 6.



Figure 8 a & b. The box illustration for *Objects in Slices*, another game in the Tokalon Series. The slices are illustrated with modern marvels: an electric automobile, a lighter-than-air airship.



Left: Figure 9. A book in the *Children's Happy Hour Series*, published by the Edgar O. Clark Company. The cover illustration is a reversed image from one of the sliced objects in figure 8.

Right: Figure 10. A game card from Clark & Sowdon - *New York urchins gaze hopefully at the Clark & Sowdon Tokalon Series book*. Perhaps it is Clark himself hidden from view, ready to release another game.



4 Famous Funny Fellows, Paws and Claws (figure 7), Butterfly Stop, and Three Little Kittens.

In my research I also discovered two puzzles produced by Clark & Sowdon: *Objects in Slices*, consisting of eight different pictures including an Ocean Liner, Fire Engine, Racing Sloop, Automobile, and Air Ship (figures 8a and b); and a similar puzzle featuring animals boarding Noah's Ark.

My final discovery was that Clark and Sowdon published a series of beautiful children's books. The *Children's Happy Hour Series* included "Frank's Trip to New York" (figure 9), "Animal Story Book," "Birds of America," "The Nursery Rhyme Book," "The Night Before Christmas," "Around the World," "Santa Claus Book," and "Old Mother Hubbard." The Fairy Tale

Series included "Country Friends," and "Jack and the Beanstalk."

As a final note, I found my game-playing and game-making great-grandfather at rest with Georgia, his wife in a beautiful plot at Beechwoods Cemetery in New Rochelle, New York.

William Cameron Stone

is a retired attorney and a long time member of The Ephemera Society of America and the Association for Games and Puzzles International. Photography of the author's collection by Shani Christine Schliefer



Pondelicek: Artistic Photography in Advertising

BY JOHN OKOLOWICZ

James Wallace Pondelicek (Figure 1) enjoyed a decade of national notice as a pictorialist figure photographer showing nymphs cavorting nude on Lake Michigan's dunes. He could perform as much aesthetic magic with his soft focus lens as an illustrator could with his brush and canvas.¹

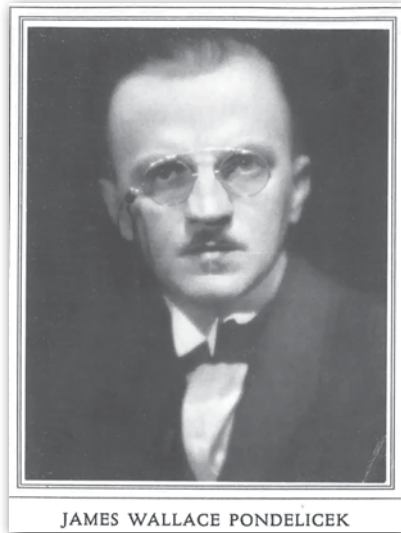


Figure 1. James Wallace Pondelicek portrait from his advertising flyer Photography for the Illustration of Advertising from the University of Chicago.

Born in 1891 in Chicago, James was the son of immigrants who came to this country from Bohemia, a region within Czechoslovakia. As a teenager he worked in a neighborhood tailor shop on the west side of Chicago. Also working there was Bozena Krejci, a young girl a few years older than he, who had immigrated from Bohemia in 1895. Their common ethnic background and strong desire to do something better than the menial work of the tailor shop created a mutual bond. It also helped that James was attracted to Bozena, and that she shared James's interest in dancing and the arts. Over time Bozena, who he affectionately called "Bessie," became his model, muse, confidant and adviser.

James's interest in photography led them to spend many of their free weekends on the shores of Lake Michigan. There he snapped pictures of Bessie, all the while trying to improve upon his composition and lighting techniques in an effort to emulate the effects achieved by artistic painters.

In February 1914, they were married and six years after that, Bessie gave birth to their daughter, Vivian Claire, in December.²

By the mid 1910s James was entering his pictures in photo contests where they began to garner awards. In 1917 he won first prize in *Photo-Era's* Spirit of Summer contest with his picture, "Spirit of the Dunes" (Figure 2) featuring Bessie as a woodsy elf playing the lute.³ Many other prizes followed, and James became well-known in Chicago's art circles.

James surprised many when he decided to make "Spirit of the Dunes" into a self-promotional tool by offering it for just the cost of postage to any *Photo-Era* reader who requested one.⁴ He also began to submit more pictures for publication in mainstream magazines such as *Theatre* and *American Photography*.

His success with photography grew to the point where he

was able to leave the tailor shop in April 1919 and work full time as a commercial photographer for Charles Daniel Frey's advertising firm.⁵ In October 1921 he formed the partnership of Pondelicek and Conklin with Robert H. Conklin. A little over a year later, he established his own firm, Pondelicek and Associates.⁶ An advertising brochure for his firm lists over 100 clients, many with familiar names that are still around today such as Goodyear Tire, Quaker Oats, and Carnation Milk.

During his early years in the advertising business James wrote a few instructive magazine articles that also subtly promoted his photographic skills. "Character Lighting and Proper Development" explained the photographic lighting techniques used in obtaining his dramatic portraits.⁷ "Photographic Advertising Illustrations" highlighted his advertising work with clients such as Hoover vacuums, Goodyear Tires, LaFayette motor cars, Carnation milk, and Gennett Records.⁸ And "Figure Photography" featured some of his nude figure studies made on Lake Michigan's dunes along with pointers on how to achieve the most natural poses.⁹

Quite a few of James' best figure studies were published in obscure, avant garde art magazines such as *Camera Art*,



Figure 2. *Spirit of the Dunes*, Talking Machine World, February 15, 1925.

continued on page 14

APRIL 15, 1925 THE TALKING MACHINE WORLD 87



The Starr Piano Company

STARR PIANOS for over half a century have represented highest ideals of craftsmanship. Each Starr Mole Grand, Pipecase and Upright represents a value known the world over.

STARR PHONOGRAPHS from the smallest table style to the elaborate console model present musical worth which is the result of a careful coordination of each part into a perfect symmetry.

GEMNETT RECORDS represent the highest attainment in the art of sound recording. Their variety, perfect reproduction and real music-making of the artists have made them musical gems of rarest choice. Released every week.

THE STARR PIANO COMPANY
Established 1872
Factory: Richmond, Indiana

NEW YORK, CHICAGO, LOS ANGELES, SAN FRANCISCO, PHOENIX, BOSTON, CINCINNATI, CLEVELAND, DETROIT, PITTSBURGH, RICHMOND, INDIANA, ST. LOUIS, ST. PAUL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Figure 3. Starr Piano ad from Talking Machine World, April 15, 1925, p 97.

JULY 15, 1924 THE TALKING MACHINE WORLD 75



The Starr Piano Company

STARR PIANOS for over half a century have represented highest ideals of craftsmanship. Each Starr Mole Grand, Pipecase and Upright represents a value known the world over.

STARR PHONOGRAPHS from the smallest table style to the elaborate console model present musical worth which is the result of a careful coordination of each part into a perfect symmetry.

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Figure 4. Starr Piano ad from Talking Machine World, July 15, 1924, p 75.

NOVEMBER 15, 1924 THE TALKING MACHINE WORLD 175



The Starr Piano Company

STARR PIANOS for over half a century have represented highest ideals of craftsmanship. Each Starr Mole Grand, Pipecase and Upright represents a value known the world over.

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Figure 5. Starr Piano ad from Talking Machine World, November 15, 1924, p 175.

MARCH, 1925 THE LADIES HOME JOURNAL 79



For those rosy cheeks, try hot breakfasts

QUICK QUAKER—luscious and strength building—cooks in 1 or 2 minutes

FOR sparkling crested hot drinks—"the new one"—Ask your grocer for Quick Quaker. You can add "any substance or cold drink" will be delighted with it.

Because of limited cooking time, many women get their Quick Quaker before breakfast, or, at least, before heating and adding very little. They think "sure, it's hot and delicious, it's cooked and ready in two or three minutes." But they wonder then how, quick-heat coffee? Why not have richer, more satisfying breakfast?

Quick Quaker

QUAKER OATS

These grocers have two kinds of Quaker Oats—the kind you have always known and Quaker Oats.

Standard 4 1/2 oz. soft-rolled package. Makes 1 quart of porridge. Keeps 3 months.

Figure 6. Quaker Oats ad, Ladies Home Journal, March 1925, p 79.



Figure 7. Starr Piano ad from Talking Machine World, December 15, 1924, p 131.

Arts Fads Modes, and Arts and Vanities. Due to the “R-rated” content, their sales were restricted and today, they can rarely be found in library collections.

Richmond, Indiana’s Starr Piano Company manufactured pianos and phonographs, and one of its divisions, Gennett Records, pressed records. They appear to have been one of James’s earliest advertising clients. Starr Piano used many of the signed and dated photos James took in his early days. His 1917 prize-winner, “Spirit of the Dunes,” which he had been giving away for free, was re-purposed for a Starr ad as were some of his other works. (Figures 3 and 4)

James used nature-themed photographs in some of his Starr ads, and one from 1924 is quite unusual. It shows a slightly out-of-focus female nude peeking from a grove of trees in a very dreamy, Maxfield Parrish-style composition (Figure 5). Had this ad been published in the family-oriented *Saturday Evening Post*, it would have caused a scandal!

According to Tom Reichert, author of *The Erotic History of Advertising*, “Woodbury’s facial soap was one of the first advertisers to feature nude female images in mainstream publications. The brand broke the nudity boundary in 1936 with what were considered tasteful nude images shot by highly respected artistic photographers such as Edward Steichen.” James Pondelicek’s Starr Piano ad broke the “nudity boundary” ten years prior to Woodbury, although, it must be

said, *Talking Machine World* was not as widely distributed as *Ladies Home Journal*, where Woodbury’s ads appeared.

As his client list expanded, Pondelicek started using his young daughter, Vivian, as a child model. She appeared in ads for Carnation milk and Quaker Oats (Figure 6) among others.

The Utah Radio Products Company chose some of James’s figure studies for their 1928-29 advertisements for radio speakers. Some of these ads are similar to the earlier Starr Piano ads (Figures 7 and 8). However, Pondelicek became more daring further into the ad campaign when his risqué nudes became the dominant feature (Figures 9 and 10).

While by 1923 James’ career appeared to be heading toward even greater success, difficulties at home were taking a toll. Bessie had been James’s primary model but, with the birth of Vivian, homemaking duties took precedence over modeling. After establishing Pondelicek and Associates, James had hired Esther Radell to be his secretary and office assistant and as Bessie spent more time at home, Esther became one of his models. James was now spending much more time “at the office” and one night, a suspicious Bessie secretly followed the two of them to Esther’s apartment. The next evening she called the police and had them both arrested for disorderly conduct. There followed a sensational suit and counter-suit that eventually lead to reconciliation for the Pondeliceks, and the termination of Radell.

Pondelicek hired Mabel Ellis Davey to be his secretary and model and a suspicious Bessie again caught her philandering



Figure 8. Utah Radio Products ad, Radio Retailing, February 1928, p 3.



Figure 9. Utah Radio Products ad, Radio Retailing, April 1928, p 3.



Figure 10. Utah Radio Products ad, Radio Retailing, January 1929, p 3.

husband. This time they divorced and James married Mabel the day after the decree.

Four short years later, in May 1929, Mabel filed for her own divorce from James, who again inspired splashy headlines. “Smash-up of the Temperamental Artist’s ‘Lily Girl’ Romance” occupied a full page in the *Detroit Free Press* with photos galore. (Figure 11) The “Lily Girl” moniker referred to James’ most famous photo at the time: a semi-nude Mabel holding a bouquet of lilies, discretely positioned.

“In ‘Marital Hell’ He Kills Himself,” was the *Joplin Globe’s* headline on July 28, 1929. “In his studio on South Michigan Boulevard today James Wallace Pondelicek, internationally known art-photographer of society folk and stage celebrities, sat down and wrote a seven page history of



Figure 11. Detroit Free Press, May 19, 1929, p 6.

his troubles.” Bessie claimed the suicide note was written by someone else and insisted on a police investigation. At age 38, James was near penniless and there was no money in his estate to pay for the funeral. Bessie said she would cover the funeral expenses under the condition that Mabel did not attend. The two women continued to fight in the press, each declaring that Pondelicek had found life with the other unbearable.

Unbeknownst to Bessie at the time, the American economy was going to change dramatically after Pondelicek died. She would go on to raise Vivian alone with no economic safety net to help. Bessie never remarried and died in 1964 at age 76.

In 1935 Dever Timmons, a local Ohio photographer and collector of Pondelicek’s work, put on a display at his local museum. Fourteen photos from his collection of eighty-four prints were included. According to Timmons, “the plates (i.e

negatives) were destroyed by the family, so this is probably the only complete collection in existence.” Reviews of the exhibit were very positive: “From the standpoint of beauty in design, selection of subject, and delicate control of shading, the Pondelicek prints are unquestionably the best of those now on display.”

James’s early photos were sold individually or as collections through advertisements that he placed in *Shadowland* and other publications. One such collection was called “Outdoor Illusions of the Dance” (Figure 12) and another, “Camera Paintings of the Semi-Nude Figure” (Figure 13). Some of those photos occasionally appear in on-line auctions.

There is no known repository of Pondelicek’s work, but some of his photos have been collated for viewing on the website, Historical Ziegfeld Group.¹⁰

The work of James Pondelicek may not have achieved the fame of such contemporaries as Edward Steichen, Charles Sheeler, or Edward Weston, but at age 30 he was just beginning his career - a career that would be cut tragically short only eight years later.

Endnotes

- David S. Shields, from Facebook website Cult of Aphrodite Vintage, <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.871311196231583.1073742662.223418931020816&type=1>.
- F. A. Behymer, “Artists’ Wife Wins Fame and Fortune. . .,” *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 30, 1925.
- “Awards, Spirit of Summer,” *Photo-Era*, October 1917.
- “A Pictorialists’ Genorosity,” *Photo-Era*, January 1918, p 50.
- “Briefs,” Editor and Publisher, April 17, 1919 (joins C. D. Frey).
- “J. W. Pondelicek, Professional Illustrator,” *Photo-Era*, November, 1921, p 268.
- “Character Lighting and Proper development,” *Photo-Era*, July 1918.
- “Photographic Advertising,” *American Photography*, June 1921.
- “Figure Photography,” *American Photography*, June 1922.
- Historical Ziegfeld Group, <https://historicalzg.piwigo.com>

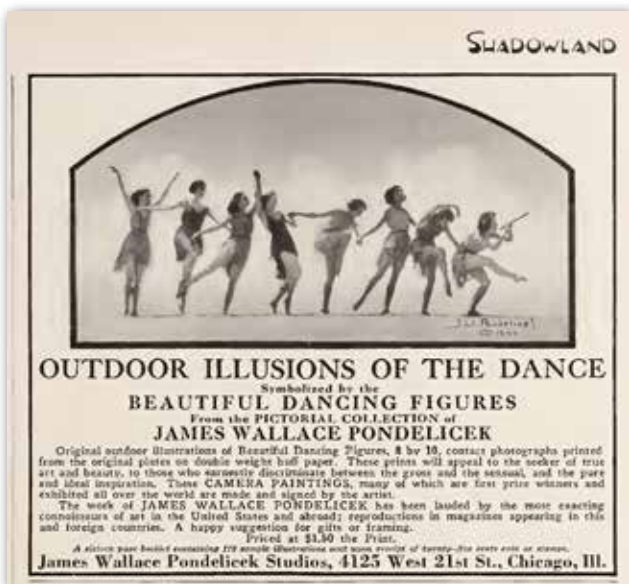


Figure 12. Pondelicek ad, *Shadowland*, June 1923.

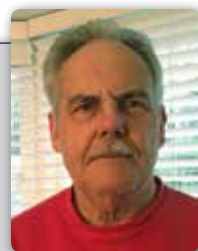


Figure 13. Pondelicek ad, *Art Lovers*, December 1925.

Other Newspaper References used

- “Kisses That Don’t Thrill Lead to Triangle,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 8, 1923.
- “Baby Love Unites Artist and Wife,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 29, 1923.
- “Artist Row Leads to Raid, Other Woman Again Blamed,” *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), July 3, 1923.
- “Has Suing Husband Arrested,” *Buffalo Enquirer*, July 3, 1923.
- “Judge Smiles at 1:45AM Art Photo Taking,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 19, 1925.
- “Artists Wife Wins Fame and Fortune for Husband but Wrecks Her Own Happiness by F. A. Behymer,” *St. Louis Dispatch*, August 30, 1925.
- “Smash-up of the Temperamental Artist’s ‘Lily Girl’ Romance,” *Detroit Free Press*, May 19, “Art Photographer Commits Suicide,” *Morning Call* (Allentown, PA), July 28, 1929.
- “In ‘Marital Hell’ He Kills Himself,” *Joplin Globe*, July 28, 1929.
- “First Wife Thinks Pondelicek Was Not Victim of Own Hand,” *Oshgosh Northwestern*, July 30, 1929.
- “Second Wife Tells of Pondelicek’s Tragic Romance,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 31, 1929.
- “Too Many Lovely Models---So He Didn’t Want to Live,” *Miami News*, September 1, 1929.
- “Pondelicek’s Photographic Work Outstanding in Museum Display,” *The Tribune* (Coshocton, OH), June 26, 1935.

John Okolowicz has been dabbling with radios since the `960s and is currently fascinated by the artistry of old magazine ads as they relate to consumer technology. He is a retired Honeywell engineer after working there 29 years. His articles have appeared in *Radio Age* (newsletter of the Mid-Atlantic Radio Club), *Antique Radio Classified*, the *AWA Journal* (newsletter of the Antique Wireless Association), and *Deco Echoes*.



Context is, and Changes, Everything

BY NATASHA HOLMES

Art exhibitions are ‘sitting ducks’ for circumstance. The terrorist attacks of September 11 in New York City and Washington DC intersected the world as displayed on gallery walls, changing the palette of readings. Perspective seeps into the imagery. Whether personal or collective, art can highlight a distinct moment. Or it can be looked at through hindsight, or with new filters of time and context that will alter our understanding, interpretation, or regard.

The ten images of this piece were part of a slide presentation given at Sage College in Albany NY in the spring of 2019. All the images shown then were from a collection of the promotional mail sent to the National Gallery of Art in 2001.

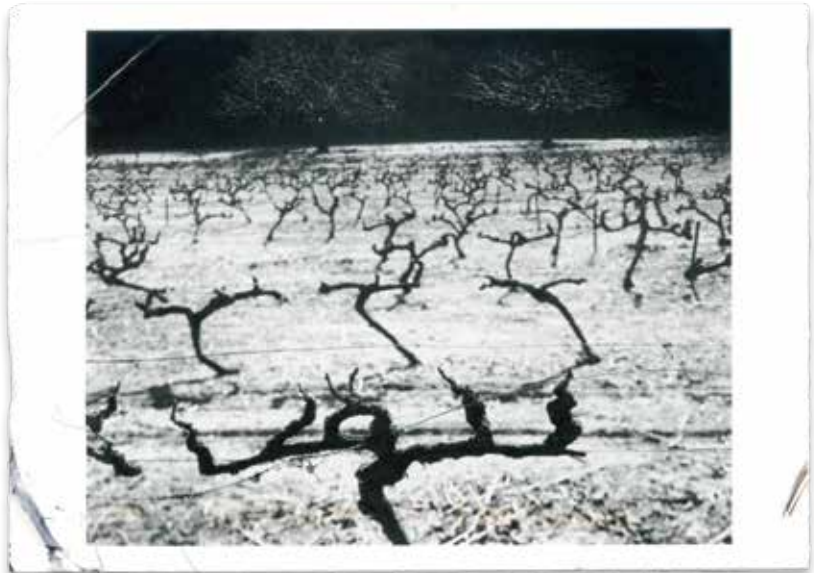


Figure 1

Figure 1: “*Vignes*, Bonnieux, France 2000,” a photograph by Matthew Pillsbury was on view on West 3rd Street, New York, both before and after 9/11. The twisted shapes of pruned grapevines might have suggested something more sinister after September 11th.

Figure 2: Kojo Griffin’s mixed media collages blend images of endearing anthropomorphized animal figures with real menace (this piece, “Untitled,” features a dynamite bomb strapped to a character’s chest) Her work was showing in New York at the Mitchell-Innes & Nash gallery on Madison Avenue from September 6.

Figure 3: “*Sanctuary* 2001” by Josephine Haden was one of her new paintings shown beginning September 7 at Gallery K in Washington DC. Four days into the show, any image of a jet plane overhead would have implied menace not safety. Fleeing the stricken cities caused an exodus of people seeking sanctuary elsewhere, preferably in the country.

Figure 4: John Pilson’s videos from which this is a still (*A la Claire Fontaine* 2001) were showing at Nicole Klagsbrun’s gallery on West 26th Street on September 11. The raised hand and suggestion of smoke at an open high-rise window would now evoke the claustrophobia of being trapped. “Our sudden, shocked comprehension of the vulnerability of capitalism’s architectural icons resonates with Pillion’s depiction of just how people who live and work in them undermine their coolly rationalized



Figure 2.

environments.” (from *Art Forum*. <https://www.artforum.com/picks/john-pilson-1688>, accessed April 2019.)

Figure 5: “*Bombardment* 2001” a photograph in the series “*Apartments*” by Nancy Davenport was also on the walls of Nicole Klagsbrun’s gallery. Before 9/11 the artistic commentary on urban violence might have felt comfortably removed in time and space (perhaps this is Beirut) - but the smoke and horror would have been palpable at the gallery on 9/11.



Figure 4.

Figure 3.



Figure 5.



Flower, 2001, oil on Baltic birch plywood, 71 x 72 (x 2) in.

His art cordially invited
to the opening of the exhibition
of recent work by
JACK YOUNGERMAN
and to meet the artist on
Thursday, September 11
from 6:00 to 8:00

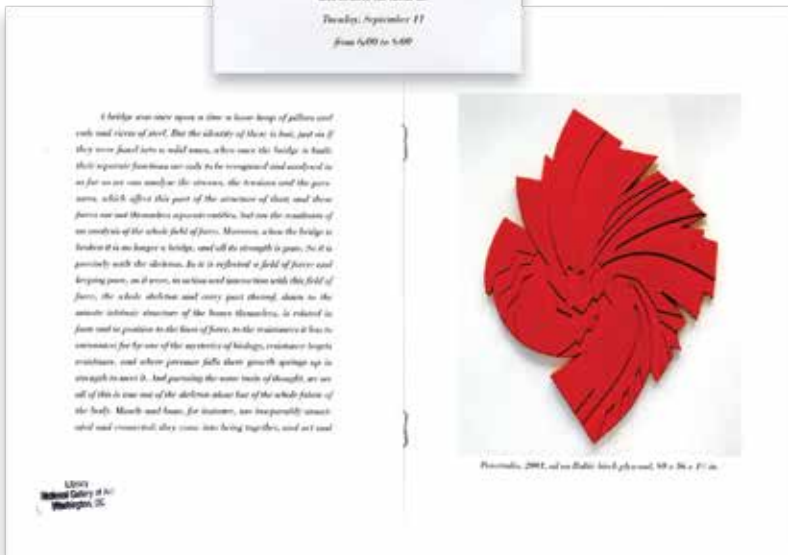
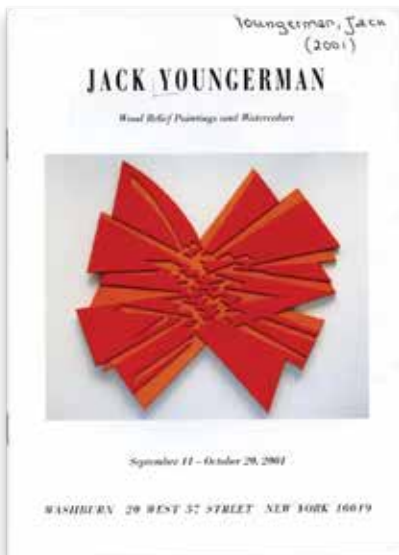


Figure 6.



Figure 7.

Figure 6: An exhibition of Jack Youngerman’s layered compositions of Baltic birch plywood was to have its gallery opening at the Washburn on West 57th Street in New York on September 11th itself. By the time the pieces were shown, the red, white, and blue patriotic reference, and the collapsing of layers would have reminded viewers of a twisting explosion - the searing images of the World Trade Towers’ architectural geometric beams forced to be organic via pressure and heat. The titles of the works, too, resonate: Penetralia - the innermost parts of a building, a secret or hidden place; Confluence - an act of merging or collapsing.

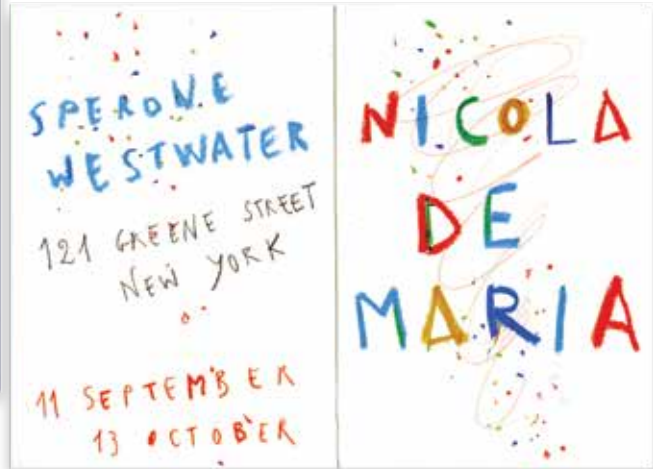


Figure 7: Also opening on September 11, at Sperone Westwater gallery on Greene Street in New York, was Nicola de Maria’s multi-color abstracts which, suddenly, would not seem so playful — the blobs disintegrating into dust.

Figure 8: The September 14th opening of Theresa Chong’s very detailed paintings at Danese on East 57th Street in New York was first announced with this image (Figure 8b). The event was then postponed until later in the month “Due to this week’s tragic events” — accompanied by a more sombre painting (Figure 8a). By that time, the tension in Chong’s work, between black matrix and repetitive connected dots, would have acquired another layer of meaning.

Figure 9: Three of Bruce McCall’s “Fantasies, Visions, and the Last Dream-O-Rama” that appeared at the James Goodman Gallery in Manhattan beginning September 20 no longer seem so humorous. The intersection of birds of prey and aircraft with iconic New York buildings would have darker suggestion — and the scene at JFK “Rocketport” would recall the chaotic disruption of

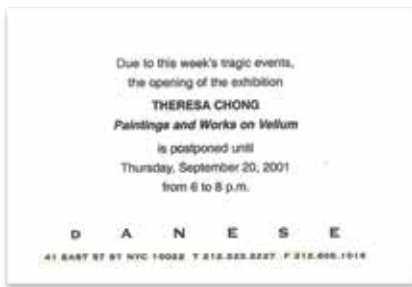


Figure 8a.

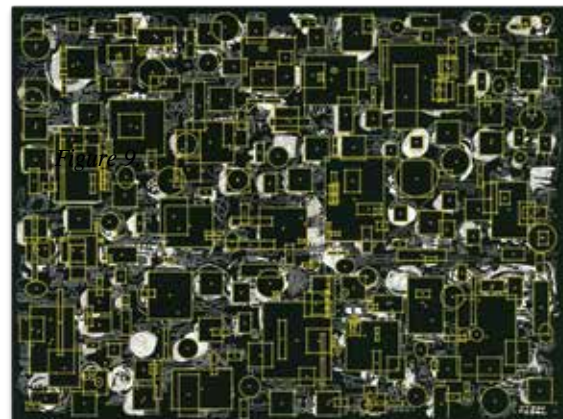


Figure 8b.



Figure 9.

the nation's air traffic.

Figure 10: Front cover for the catalogue of continuing education programs, Fall of 2001, at the New York Academy of Art, a pencil sketch by Stephen Assael of a fireman with a stoic face and fallen helmet. Chosen before September, this image seems like foreshadowing.

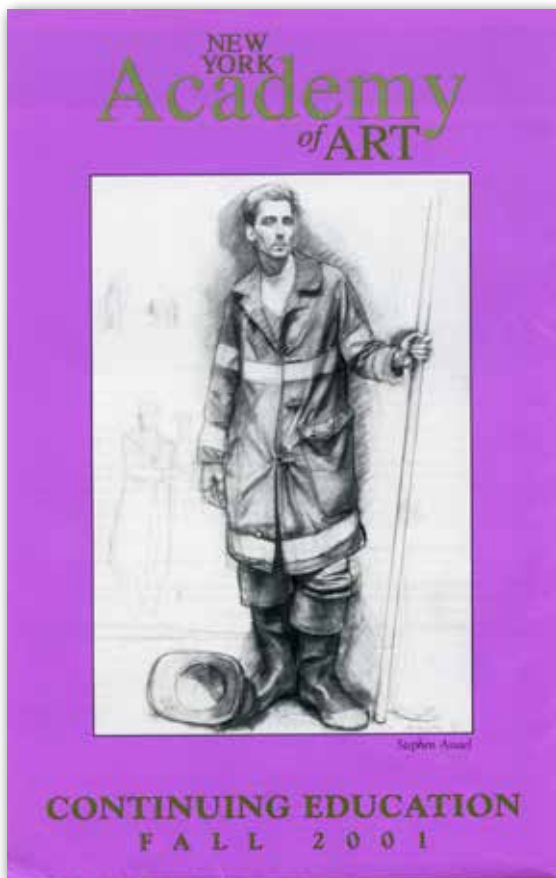
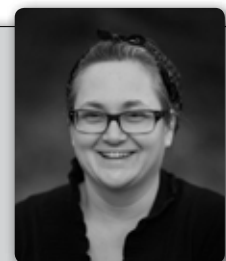


Figure 10.



Natasha Holmes, a native of California, received an MFA in Photography from Indiana University. She has taught ceramics, drawing, and photography in this country and has shown work abroad in Kyoto and Venice. She was on the faculty at Sage College in Albany NY, and now is teaching dark-room photography and digital art at SUNY Albany. In her photography she blends ephemera with queries of consumption and mass production, calling attention to the ubiquity of plastics and the re-sulting temporary nature of items and the disposability of our era. [Photograph courtesy of R. J. Kern]



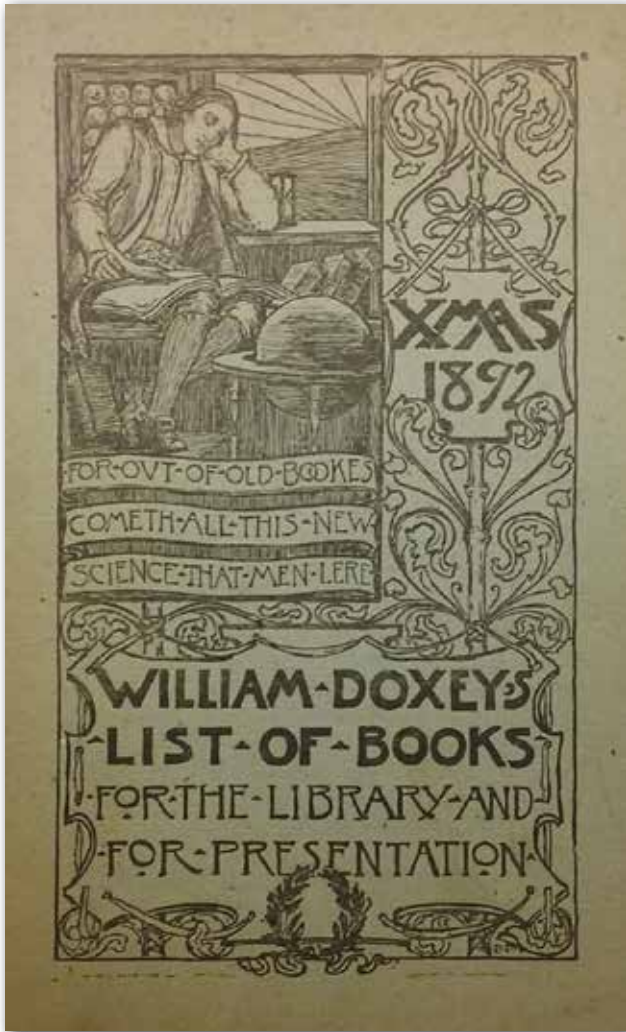


Figure 2.

and movements of the periods in which they were published. Goldberg & Bowen's Excelsior Coffee advertisement (figure 1) reminds us of Aubrey Beardsley's work of the same period. William Doxey's Holiday Catalog (figure 2) features a cover by the multi-talented Bruce Porter, reminiscent of Edward Burne Jones's work. In 1895, with Gelett Burgess, Doxey would publish the little magazine *The Lark*, and his San Francisco shop became a gathering place for artists, writers and bohemians of all stripes. Coming forward 75 years, the Roos-Atkins cover (figure 3) is a bow to the collage art explosion of the mid-1960s.

Sometimes, whether catalogs are dated or undated, images inside the catalogs can deceive: the A. Carlisle stationery catalog, published in 1921, features paper weights with a decidedly Victorian design; was the company selling very old merchandise? Typically showing contemporary tastes, these catalogs are still occasionally anachronistic.

The catalog content sometimes makes reference to current events: Pacific Embroidery's shipments may be "delayed at times, on account of the European war" raging in 1916. Uncle Sam Automobile Company used the jargon of the time (1908) to sell its wheels to the masses. Though not a true trade catalog, this brochure sold steel automobile wheels by cleverly using the political speech of the period; it extolled the Great

White Fleet, and mentions of strikes, graft and revolution are scattered throughout. Bob Mandell's Costume Shop (figure 4), with roots in San Francisco going back to 1868, sports a centerfold illustrating a range of Revolutionary War garb, just in time for our nation's Bicentennial. In a beautiful lithographic cover by H. S. Crocker & Co., an 1889 aerial view of the Fulton Iron Works (figure 5) might be of interest to historians lacking photographic source material.

Samples of wares inserted in catalogs are typically paper or fabric. A. Lietz Company, suppliers of drafting equipment, provides a set of paper samples in various colors on the front paste-down endpaper of its catalog. The most humorous item in the exhibition is the scatological Rears and Robust catalog, a spoof of the Sears, Roebuck catalog. This volume includes unprinted sheets of soft toilet paper of various colors throughout; cardboard and blotter inserts; mock journals and satirical advertisements relating to personal hygiene, alcohol, personal products: a sheet of wall paper, and a sheet of sandpaper.

Pioneer San Francisco clothier Hastings distributed fabric samples for their Caltwist topcoats in 1929. The C. C. Hastings store first opened its doors in the Lick House Block, at Montgomery and Sutter Streets, in 1854, "while the prairie schooners of the Argonauts still lumbered westward." The small brochure for topcoats includes the claim that "men who are in the habit of buying very expensive clothes frequently pick out Caltwist suits and topcoats." This may have been the case before the stock market crash of the same year.

Amidst the variety of product catalogs selling household



Figure 3.

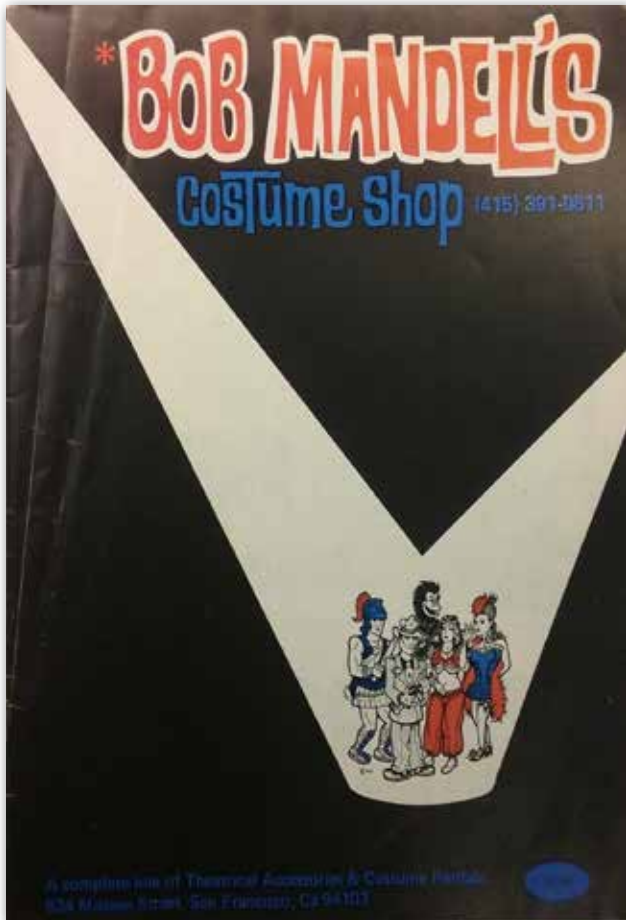


Figure 4.

goods, there is even a J. Cather Newsom catalog selling... houses (figure 6). The Newsom brothers designed the familiar Victorian Carson Mansion in Eureka, California. The catalogue cover includes a prominent advertisement for W.W. Montague & Company, whose own fireplace furnishings catalog is also featured in this exhibition.

The cable car is almost synonymous with the city of San Francisco, and it is fitting to include a catalogue for California Wire Works (figure 7). Andrew Hallidie's invention of a mechanism to pull cable cars was first used here in 1873, but the cover illustration of this catalogue reflects Hallidie's earlier work in the gold mining regions.

Killip & Company's auction catalog for trotting-bred mares is peppered with clues for historians. Eadweard Muybridge's series of stop-action photographs of the horse in motion was created at Leland Stanford's Palo Alto Stock Farm. Later, the stock farm was the property of Jared L. Rathbone, a founder of the Burlingame (California) Country Club and former consul-general to Paris under President Cleveland. This may have been Rathbone's copy, as his name is penciled on the cover. Inside the catalogue are pencil notations which probably refer to successful bidders and winning bid amounts, with the name O'Kane in several places — maybe the same O'Kane (figure 8) selling California Horse Boots?

Obviously, all of these catalogs are examples of printing history. San Francisco was once a hub for commercial printing on the West Coast. Earlier catalogs were printed

on hand presses using available type and ornaments, and the latest were produced using offset lithography. The Palmer & Rey specimen book shows a wide range of typefaces available to printers of the period; Sunset Seed presents a chromolithograph cover; and Bethlehem Pacific's products are illustrated with halftone photographs, all held together in a sturdy plastic cover and spiral binding for use in industrial environments.

Almost imperceptibly, industry has been leaving the Golden Gate. Printing companies have moved out or been replaced by modern digital technologies. Material culture remains, but access to goods — “the stuff of life” — is increasingly found online. Your local public library may still be committed to collecting history in tangible formats — explore and enjoy it!

The Collection

The Californiana collection in Special Collections at San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) was created in 1964. Ephemera was part of that early Californiana collection, and that collection continues to grow. In 2011, a consortium of historical institutions, including SFPL, launched the California Ephemera Project, through which these libraries and archives could make their ephemera collections known to the public online. A folder listing for San Francisco History Center's *San Francisco Ephemera Collection* is available through the Online Archive of California at <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt2p30342b/>

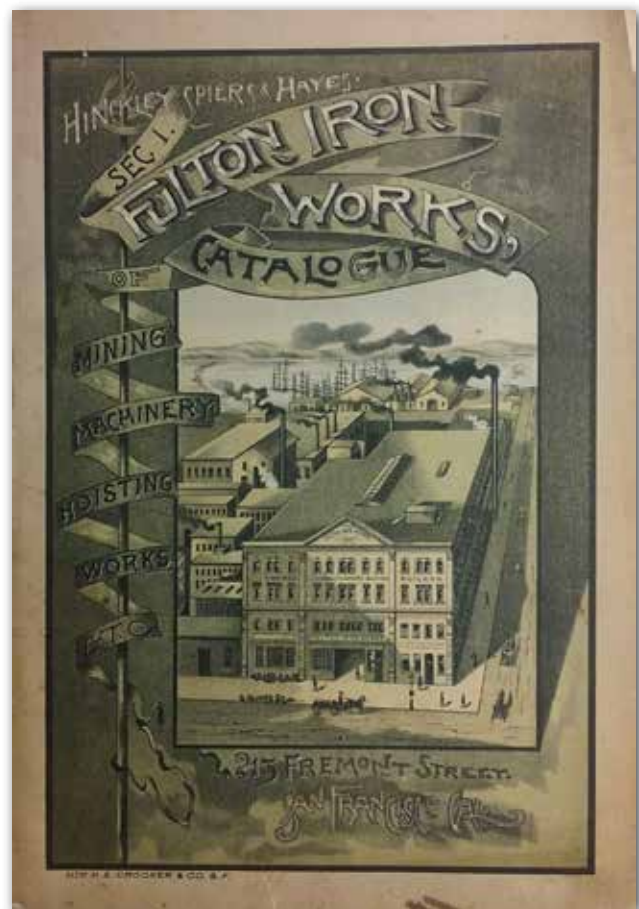


Figure 5.



Figure 6.

A folder listing for another collection, *San Francisco Biography Collection* is found at <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt2489r71w/>

The Book Arts and Special Collections Center at San Francisco Public Library maintains the *Grabhorn Letterpress Printing Ephemera Collection*, and a link to the guide for this is found at <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c87d31qs/>

The *San Francisco Ephemera Collection* consists of ephemera relating to the city of San Francisco. Materials date from the 1850s to the present, with the bulk from the 20th century. Subjects cover a wide spectrum of San Francisco history and primarily pertain to: municipal government; city planning; urban policy; environmental engineering; transportation; social history; labor history; community relations; notable events; public events, fairs and celebrations; and aspects of local popular culture. Subjects also relate to specific local entities, such as: businesses; schools, colleges and universities; political parties and associations. Specific places are also found here, including: buildings; public spaces; bodies of water; and neighborhoods or districts.

The types of ephemera include: newspaper and magazine clippings, menus, pamphlets, brochures, political mailings and advertisements, reports, maps, trade catalogs, exhibition catalogs, scrapbooks, certificates, handbills and fliers, programs, view books, comic valentines, trade

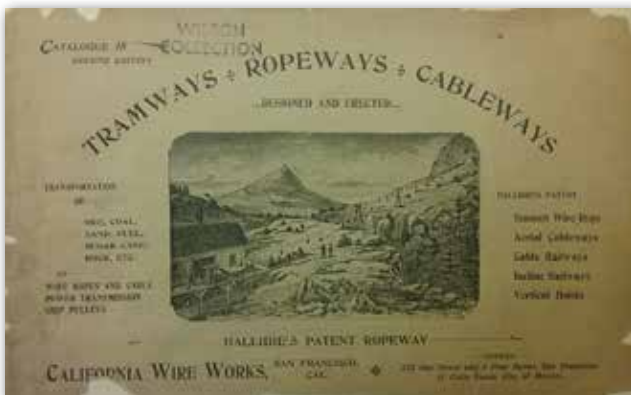


Figure 7.

cards, souvenirs and other commemorative materials. The *Collection*, housed in 153 file cabinet drawers, is arranged alphabetically by subject, and additions to the collection are ongoing. Individual ephemera files can contain a single item or extensive amounts of material.

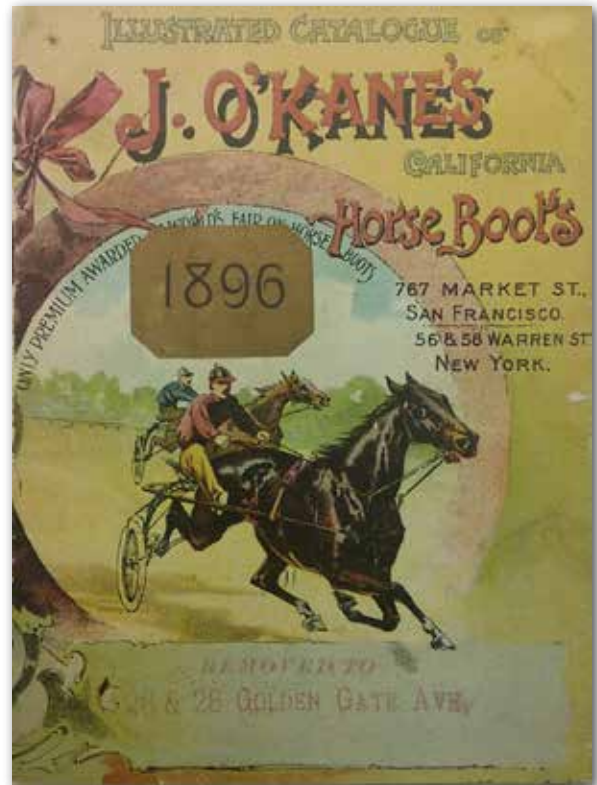


Figure 8.

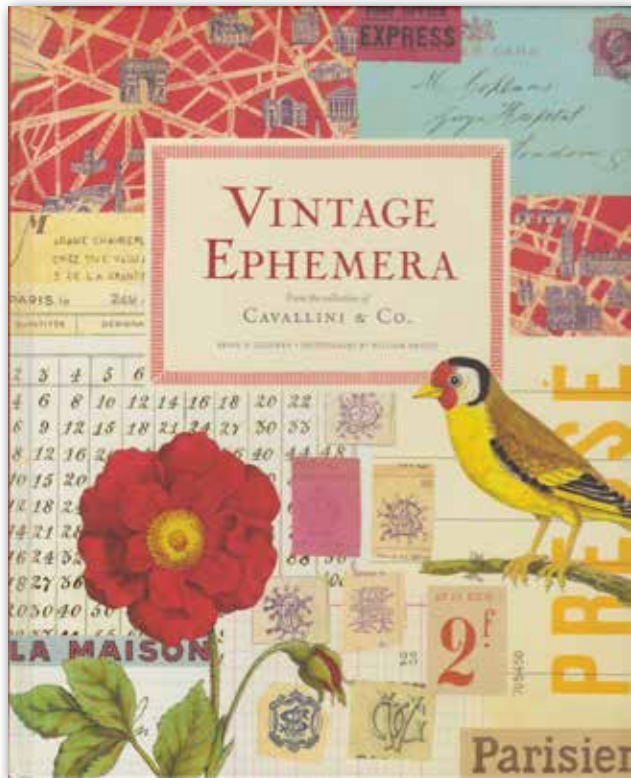
San Francisco Public Library presents an exhibition, *The Stuff of Life: San Francisco Trade Catalogs* June 8 through September 26, 2019, in the Skylight Gallery, 6th Floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco. The Library is open Mondays 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Fridays 12 noon – 6 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Sundays 12 noon – 6 p.m. URL: <http://sfpl.org/sfhistory> Contact: sfhistory@sfpl.org

Tom Carey is a Librarian and Archivist at San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library. He is unabashedly biased towards 19th century printed matter, whether it's books, maps, ephemera or photographs. Before receiving his MLIS, he earned a BFA in Illustration, and is still captivated by any and all 19th century images. After thirty years' employment at SFPL, he is confident he will still discover "new" material in the Library's collections.

Interesting Books

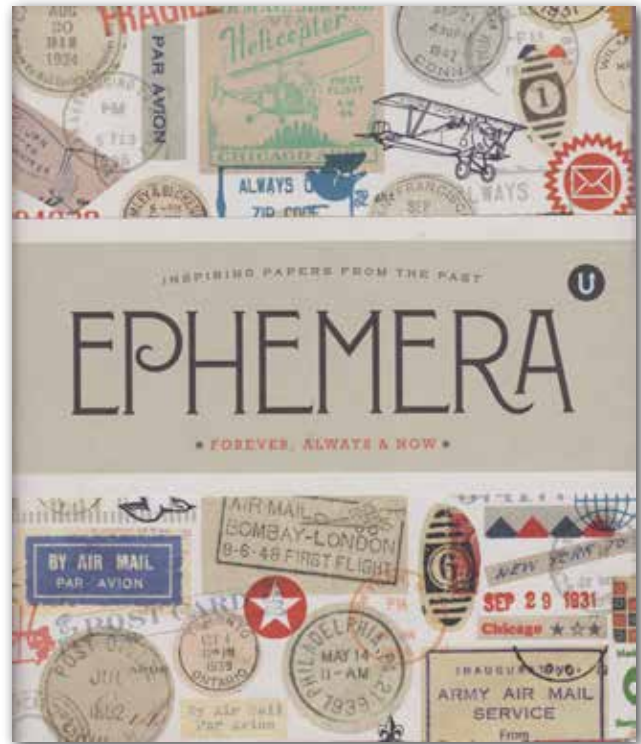
The February Society tours in San Francisco introduced two books that well document both the collections and the outreach of our hosts, Brad Parberry and Mark Sackett.

Vintage Ephemera From the Collection of Cavallini & Co., by Brian D. Coleman, published in 2014 by Gibbs Smith to honor the 25th anniversary of the company, showcases the extensive collection of ephemera collected by Brad Parberry. A foreword by Jan Greci, Reference Specialist in the Prints and Photography Division of the Library of Congress, gives a good general introduction to ephemera and the range of reasons for collecting it. Brad Parberry then tells his own story of intense collecting from the time he was nine years old. This ephemera became the foundation of the Cavallini company he formed in 1989 to produce high quality paper goods. Each design is created from images in the collection, beginning with large-format wall calendars inspired by one Brad purchased in Perugia during a year of study in Italy. The 8.5 x 11 inch, hardbound book of 178 pages is divided thematically into 12 chapters: Animals, Bon Voyage, Christmas, Curiosities, Flora and Fauna, Letters and Correspondence, Maps, Italy, London, Paris, New York, San Francisco. Many items are reproduced full size, with some surprising close-ups and mises en scènes with three-dimensional vintage objects from the Cavallini cabinets of curiosities — all identified by printer, designer and date if known. The illustrations open with the envelope and group of luggage labels addressed to Brad



in Bellingham WA in 1968 — the book, and the company it describes, reflect his early decision to keep everything, and to create uses for what is saved.

Inspiring Papers from the Past, Ephemera: Forever, Always & Now is the 2018 “E” volume in Uppercase Magazine’s Encyclopedia of Inspiration (so far other volumes are F for Feed Sacks, B for Botanica, S for Stitch-illo. Each volume “has 4 different dust jackets that you can fold to reveal your favorite



pattern. A belly band wraps around the dust jacket and brands the book as part of the Encyclopedia of Inspiration series.”) The book is a joy to hold: fat boxy shape, flexible binding, and high quality matte paper — 446 pages of ephemera presented both as collage and as individual pieces. It was designed by Janine Vangool, the founder of Uppercase Publishing in Calgary, Canada. Janine is one of the 30 contributors, describing her passion for ephemera, and how it has shaped her graphic design career. Mark Sackett is among other graphic designers represented who also have an open shop that showcases their collections. His Victorian extravaganza of a mercantile space and pressroom is well represented. Longtime member Pat Lafflin of New Haven VT (who is our Society agent) is one of the designers represented who work from home. New Society member Mandy Ross of San Francisco is one of the mail order ephemera dealers represented — she is also a college lecturer. (See her piece on researching scrapbooks, page 18, in *The Ephemera Journal* 21-3.) True to its role in an encyclopedia, the anthology covers Ephemerists in the United Kingdom, France, Australia and Canada as well as the U.S. — collage artists, multi-media artists, illustrators, sign painters, creators of products such as sewing kits and fabric and wrapping paper inspired by ephemera, and educators such as Rob Saunders who founded the Letterform Archive in San Francisco as a center for creativity. Each contributor shares

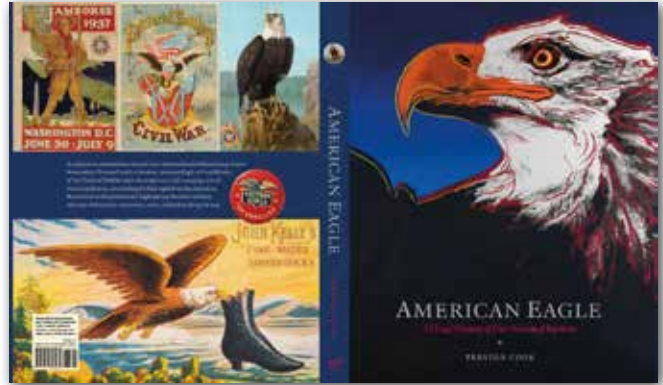
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the genesis of their choosing paper ephemera, describes their work space and gives their collecting philosophy.

The Spring 2009 issue of *Ephemera News* featured an article on the collecting of eagle ephemera by Preston Cook, who continues to proclaim: "You can't have too many eagles." His mammoth collection has grown to the point where it is now the focus of a new museum being built at The National Eagle Center in Wabasha MN (the Center's logo depicts Harriet, a bald eagle who died there in 2016). A beautifully printed, very impressive book (large enough to BE the coffee table) has just been published, proceeds to benefit the museum:

American Eagle: A Visual History of Our National Emblem, by Preston Cook, Goff Books 2019, 245 pages, hardbound, \$75, documents the national bird in all its guises. The book jacket shows just some of the media represented: modern art (Warhol), trade cards, poster (Rockwell), chromo title page, pinback button. The eight thematic chapters - The Official Page, Military & War, Politics & Protest, Culture & Entertainment, Art & Decoration, Commerce, The Natural Eagle, Travel & Transportation - all feature a plethora of eagles, though Commerce offers the most familiar to Ephemerists. The imagery based on Old Abe (the bald eagle mascot of the 8th Wisconsin) alone is intriguing. Each item is captioned with a full description including size and material and content notes (as an example: "Cutlery trade card, G.S. Harris & son, lithographers, Philadelphia, ca. 1876. 4 1/4 x 5 9/16 inches. The image comes from a sketch used as the template



for a three-dimensional sculpture created by L. Herder & son, a cutlery company, for the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial International Exhibition. The eagle was made entirely of cutlery: table knives for the wings, curved knives for the talons, and forks for the body. After the fair the sculpture was displayed in the company's Philadelphia store." The hundreds of items have been well researched - for instance, a series of caption commentaries follows the narrative trope of an eagle carrying off a child, revealing that some of the "sightings" reproduced stills from a 1939 movie. Appendices include a timeline of eagles in America; references for each chapter; notes to the chronology; acknowledgments (that include Kit Kinrichs who spoke on American flag collecting at Ephemera 36). In addition to offering many hours of pleasurable browsing, the book provides a way to chart the evolution of particular images, and arrangements of the eagle's wings, scroll, and accoutrements.

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are gray-haired, respected creatures, heavy with the experience of power in the world and with Establishment honors. Which means, of course, that they are almost always men.


But this is the year of Women's Liberation. Or at least, it's the year the press has discovered a movement that has been strong for several years now, and reported it as a small, privileged, rather lunatic event instead of the major revolution in consciousness - in everyone's consciousness, male or female - that I believe it truly is.

It may have been part of that revolution that caused the senior class to invite me here - and I am grateful. It is certainly a part of that revolution that I, a devout non-speaker, am managing to stand before you at all: I don't know whether you will be grateful or not. The important thing is that we are spending this time together, considering the larger implications of a movement that some call "feminist" but should more accurately be called humanist; a movement that is an integral part of rescuing this country from its old, expensive patterns of elitism, racism,

Early typescript of Gloria Steinem's "Living the Revolution" speech at Vassar, with related family letters and documents, 1941-77. Estimate \$5,000 to \$7,500. At auction September 26.

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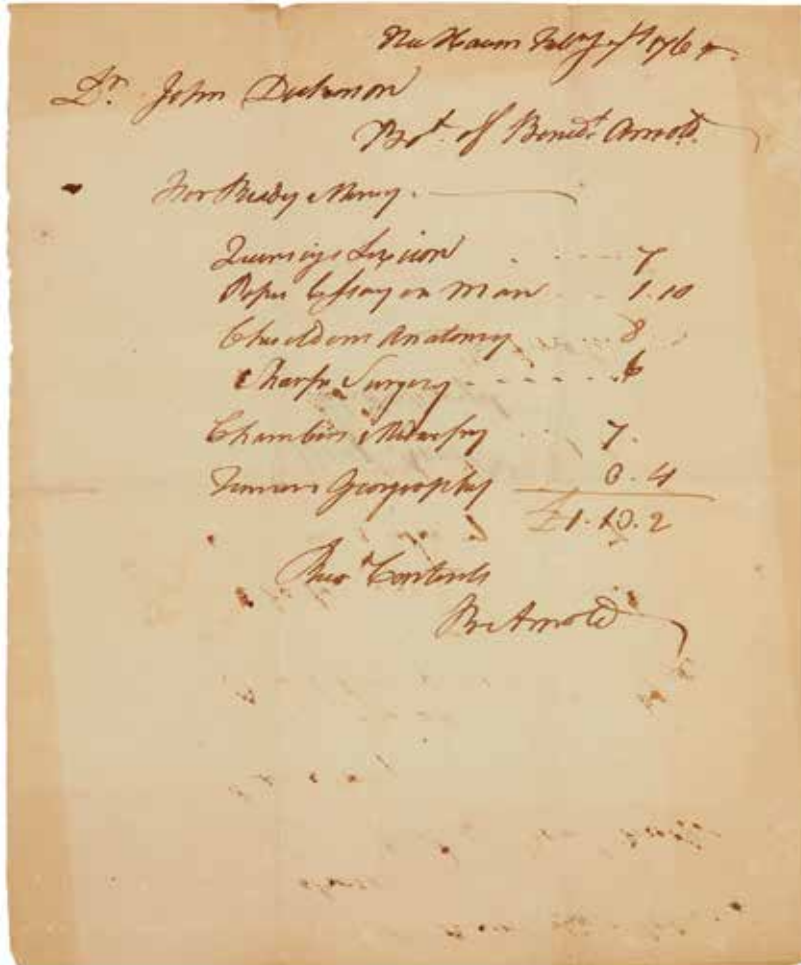
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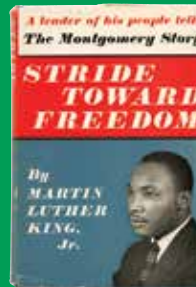
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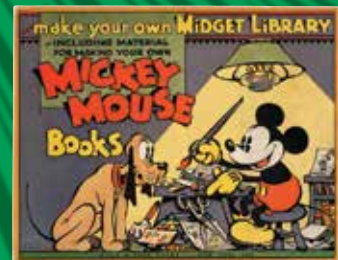
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