

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT: 27th Annual Ephemera Society Fair and Conferences March 9 - 11, 2007

by John G. Sayers

For the collector or designer addicted to dramatic, high-quality material, this year's edition of the Ephemera Society of America's annual International Fair and Conferences ("Ephemera 27") was a massive 'fix.'

The 120 dealers overflowing the Ballroom and the Pavilion Room at the Marriott Hotel offered a wide range of choice paper and similar transitory objects, in a variety of price ranges, and we've tried to capture the essence of this range in our coverage. [All prices are in U.S. dollars.]

Jason Karp ("The Earl of Clarendon") offered a compelling display of Maxfield Parrish artwork on calendars. Given that Maxfield Parrish originals go into seven figures, the prices for these calendars, (starting at \$525, up to \$2,300 plus), represent the only practical entry point into this artist's dramatic work for most collectors or designers.

We asked proprietor Jason Karp how he found so many of these stunners. He



Maxfield Parrish calendars (l to r: \$650, \$650, \$2,300, \$525, \$900).

confided that they came from the archives of The Thomas D. Murphy Company of Red Oak, Iowa, which described itself as "The Birthplace of Art Calendars." The company kept a sample of each of the 30,000 calendars that it produced during its corporate life. This archive surfaced recently to the delight of dealers and collectors everywhere, and Jason was able to acquire a selection for his clients.

Bracketed between two horizontal vintage yardsticks was a striking take on the usual recruiting poster offered by Paul Brzozowski [www.civilwarphoto.com]. In both Britain and the U.S., First World War recruiting posters featured what one could best describe as an accusative approach; that is to shame men into volunteering for military service. This poster takes the same approach, but don't walk past it too quickly, because its focus is instead on a forthcoming war savings drive, to raise funds to pay for the military effort. Priced

at \$400, this poster was a real attention-getter.

Lest readers should think that this was a poster fair, a cardboard model Food Fair supermarket should undecieve. Offered at \$350 by George Krzyminski of Certain Books of Westhampton, N.Y., the store was complete with cardboard racks, cardboard foodstuffs, and even play money to make purchases. This might have originally been created as a child's playtoy, but given its age, charm and scarcity, it has now moved into the realm of being a conversation piece.



Uncle Sam fundraising poster.



Food Fair cardboard model.

We met a number of Canadians, but saw no Canadian flags. However, there was a U.S. flag headscarf offered by Peter Luke of New Baltimore, N.Y. for \$385. Surrounded by other nations' flags, the U.S. flag sports 39 stars. American historians could readily ascertain when the U.S. had only 39 states in order to approximate the date of the piece, but as this author's History major wasn't in American History, I can't help.

Patricia Reilly Ephemera of Brooklyn, N.Y. had a small gem tucked away in her booth of wonderful paper. The gem that flashed so radiantly was a beautiful Tuck advertising novelty priced at \$165.



Raphael Tuck & Sons advertisement.

Raphael Tuck & Sons produced artistic postcards, greeting cards, and other publications and was at the crest of the postcard tsunami that swept the world 100 years ago. Unfortunately, their London, England headquarters was wiped off the map during the bombings of the Second World War, and much of their production and other history was lost. Any serious Tuck collector shouldn't hesitate to quarry this sparkler to highlight their displays.

There were many small offerings that just didn't photograph well because of their size – trade cards, postcards, poster stamps, books, travel booklets, cartes de visite – but they were there. For example, Gwen Goldman of Adamstown, PA, had an enormous amount of trade card and similar material that we can't show individually. You get the picture – there is good reason that this show spans two days, because you could

easily spend an hour at this booth alone, and there were 119 others.

We couldn't resist the large photograph at the display of Howard S. Mott Inc. Rare Books of Sheffield MA. Priced at \$500, it was as dominant in its own way as the decades-earlier First World War poster. This is a departure from the general Mott material, but we can understand why it's there. The exhibitor agreed it needs only one powerful image in any home, because it takes only one such image to make a very strong statement.

A broadsheet advertising the Fifth Annual Agricultural and Industrial Fair in Charlestown, New Hampshire offered by John Waite Rare Books of Ascutney, VT was priced at \$1,250. The event promised to be a festive occasion, in contrast to the more frequently encountered notices of farm auctions and foreclosures, and we sense that this would impart a much warmer tone to any room in which it was displayed.

Your writer succumbed to the siren call of an Allan Line Passenger List for a transatlantic voyage in 1896. The graphics on the cover were delightful, and it's always nice to find Canadian shipping company ephemera when trolling in U.S. waters. Particularly ironic was that it was in the stock of Oakland, California dealer Bruce Shyer. (If I told you the price, you'd think that I was deranged!)

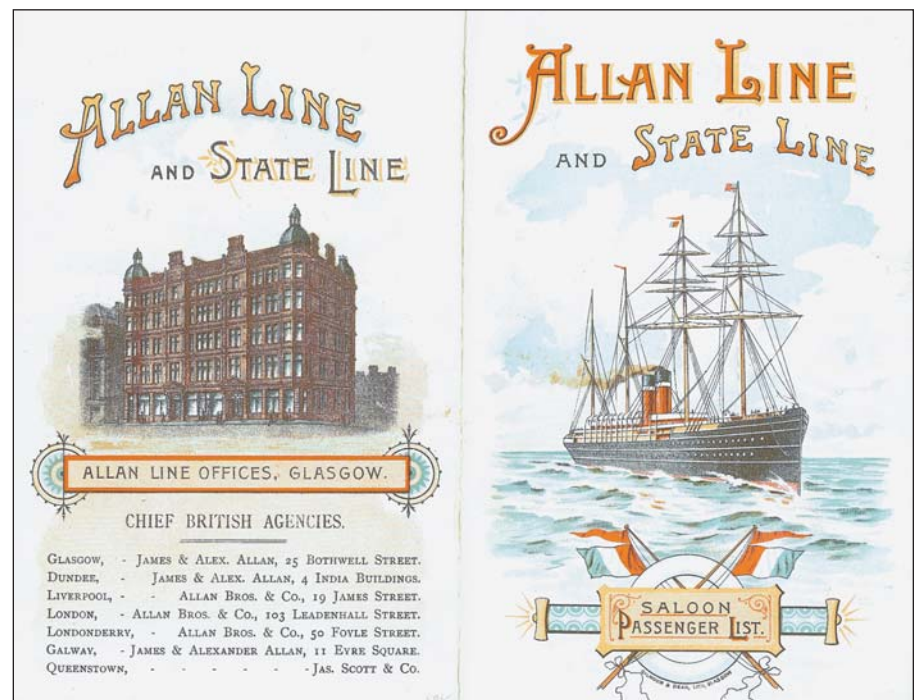


Agricultural Fair broadside.

Next year's event is already planned, for March 7, 8, and 9, 2008, at the Marriott Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut, and promises to offer more of the same. Hope to see you in the aisles. 🍁

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Allan Line 1896 Passenger List.