

THE EPHEMERA JOURNAL

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Personal Visual Albums

BY DAVID FREUND

Personal visual albums should be considered folk art. Imagine every home in America: in Brooklyn, in North Dakota, in Louisiana, in Seattle, in Iowa, and on. Now imagine them in the 1880s. The space between them increases. In almost all of these homes people made visual albums, alone or together, probably on their biggest table. From across this vast geography millions of albums emerged that shared only rudimentary history or theory, just the impulse for their creation, but somehow a common visual language is evident in them. These creators have long since died and, for most, the memory of their affect upon the planet has evaporated. We would wish they knew that one fragment of their life remains which embodies their talent, their voice, sustains their presence. Things of their experience - plants, hair, fabric, but mostly printed images and ephemera- all were funneled through their eyes and minds, then sifted, sorted, and re-imagined according to their view, emerging in one or more albums of their creation.

The term scrapbook comes up short as a descriptor of the varied range of subjects and materials found in what I have called personal visual albums. For these I propose an expanded nomenclature, which begins with five broad headings: accumulation, artwork, collection, collage, and narrative. These often overlap: for example, an accumulation may also be a collage and a narrative, as will be seen below in the album of



Figure 1



Figure 2

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Dear Members and Friends:

We are close to our annual convention at Greenwich, CT, March 16-18. Great kudos are due to Barb Loe who has arranged a wonderful panel this year, centered on the topic of American Social History as seen through Ephemera. Our keynote speaker is Coline Jenkins, great-great granddaughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who will speak on Women's Suffrage.

Please pay careful attention to the schedule as we are changing the format. All the talks will be given on Friday while the Collectors Forums will be presented on Sunday morning after the Annual Meeting. A full schedule is on the Society's web site.

The Brunos, once again, have brought together the best ephemera dealers in the country, all laden with items to add to your collections.

In the past, we have had a variety of unrelated exhibits on display during our annual conference and show. I thought that, this year, we might try something new. In keeping with our theme of how ephemera reflects American social history, I am calling for single-frame exhibits (either 16 standard pages or panels measuring 33x44) on various topics whereby ephemera informs a social value. It might be a personal value, like honesty or romantic love, or a family value, like thrift, health, kinship or memory, or a societal value, like patriotism, unity, justice or peace. Reserve a frame from me: artgroten@optonline.net

Our Board welcomes a new director, David Lilburne: past-president of the ABAA, long-time Ephemera Society member, well-known dealer in Hudson River and Antipodean ephemera. The full list of Board members is on this page - feel free to contact any one of them if you have any questions.

I hope you have all been following the Society's postings on our Facebook and Twitter pages and will add comments about what is happening in your area. This provides an instant way to disseminate local events. Of course, our monthly eNews, edited by Diane DeBlois, continues to give greater detail and reviews of exhibits, books and events. This, again, is a wonderful way to get the word out on upcoming or on-going events. So please send her your reportage.

I am pleased to announce that E. Richard McKinstry, Library Director and Andrew W. Mellon Senior Librarian at Winterthur Museum, has been selected to be the 2012 recipient of the Maurice Rickards Award that will be presented during the banquet on Saturday March 17 at Ephemera 32. Please join us in honoring this past-president of our Society, founder of our archives, and promoter of serious ephemera research and exhibition in the museum world.

I extend, somewhat belatedly, my warmest personal regards for this new year of 2012.

All best wishes,



Arthur H. Groten M.D.



E. Richard McKinstry

Remembering Esther

IRA BAUMGARTEN

When Ira Baumgarten first looked into his mother's desk drawer, he laughed out loud. The array of flotsam was so typically Esther.

At the time, he thought he just needed to organize her affairs so he could handle them while she recovered from a stroke. But, in a few days, Esther died – at the age of 92 – and Ira was contemplating a eulogy as part of a memorial tribute that otherwise would be full of song, images and reminiscences. He decided to describe the ephemera of her desk drawer – and honor the quintessentially concrete and tactile Esther.

First there were the gas coupons, several of them in ten-dollar denominations in the drawer. When Esther turned 85 she stopped driving except strictly

within the village of Cold Spring. That meant she could still see the doctor, go to the library and the bank, buy food and gas. But for longer trips – to hospital, the airport, etc. – she depended on the generosity of neighbors. And she always gave them gas coupons for the local service station. (Ira gave her car to one of these Good Samaritan drivers and enclosed a last gas coupon in the envelope with the deed transfer; the recipient ordered a vanity license plate: “Essecar” in her honor.)

Then there were the ‘Esther medals’ that, for a decade or so, she had given out to anyone who had done a good deed for her, or who had otherwise pleased her. In the drawer there was a stash of Kennedy half-dollars, a few silver

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Memory & Mourning

The fall of 2011 was an anniversary of public grieving. Both a museum professional, Debbie Smith, and a collector, Michael Ragsdale, invested much of themselves in the study of mourning. In this issue, they report on what Patti Smith described, in her exhibit “Camera Solo” at the Wadsworth Atheneum, as a process of diminishing the painful indulgence of grief by focusing on remembrance.

Several collectors and museum curator, Candace Kanen, offer images of Victorian mourning ephemera. Collector/professor of photography, David Freund, and museum professional turned artist, Kathryn Kosto, take the concept of memorializing beyond mourning into artistic expressions of past lives. All that we examine today as ‘ephemera’ is, in that sense, an unplanned memorial.

Sometimes I have described what ephemera can do in terms of how the life of a person could be reconstructed from the scraps of everyday paper saved in a top drawer. A friend took this idea literally.

—Diane DeBlois, editor





Figure 3

Preston Waugh. Under these five large headings I identify a list of subheadings, some emphasizing content, and some, concept. The list is now at forty and growing, and includes Paper Doll House (figure 1) Herbarium, (figure 2) Cinema, Rebus, and Roller Skate. For an album to merit a subheading I must have seen enough examples to infer that many albums of its type were made.

The precedents of visual albums have a long history. Three early events, however, seem

to me central to the development of the personal visual album. In the mid-16th century Giorgio Vasari advocated filling blank album pages with reproductions of art. Here individual agency was at play in the selection and ordering of imagery to create, in effect, personal museums expressive of their maker's requirements and predilections. The growing availability at the time of high quality prints enabled people of reasonable means to acquire engravings of

art, popular vistas, noteworthy people and natural history. These, housed in beautifully bound albums, demonstrated, or at least implied, the learning and refined taste of their makers, bestowing on them the status through association enjoyed by Renaissance creators of cabinets of curiosities. Next, the habit of selecting and pasting material from varied sources into albums was further reinforced by the development around this time of the commonplace book, a repository for collections of useful and



Figure 4



Figure 5

admirable texts, usually brief. Finally, in England in 1769, the Reverend William Granger added illustrative engravings to a printed book on the history of England, hatching the term Grangerized, which broadly refers to the addition of visual material between or onto the pages of a book. This imaginative stroke, this intervention by an individual into a printed book, brought into play visual material from a variety of sources whose purpose was to enliven or illustrate the book's text according to the reader's wishes. These three events instituted the habits and identified kinds of materials that would later support the development of the varieties of personal visual albums.

The 19th century saw an exponential growth in the production of printed illustrations, in black and white or,

of chromolithography, in color. Such pictures, found in popular periodicals, commercial point of purchase trade cards, illustrated books, product packaging, and catalogs, for the first time in history were cheap and plentiful. Blank books were sold or made at home of fabric or available paper, allowing anyone, rich or poor, to make visual books of their own. Additionally, in response to the popularity of scrapbooks, an industry emerged to provide for them a great variety of embossed pictorial scraps, glanzbilder, shiny pictures. These were printed mostly in Germany by printers such as Albrecht and Meister, in England by Raphael Tuck, and in America by Louis Prang. Glanzbilder were abundant, exemplary of the printer's craft, sold in sheets illustrating just about any subject one could think of, but often sentimental in tone, advancing widely-shared taste in a great many scrapbooks of the period. Glanzbilder filled the pages of many albums, appreciated by their creators and now by collectors. The current resurgent appetite for making scrapbooks has a conceptual equivalent but inferior product in a wide range of adhesive stickers.

However, by the last quarter of the 19th century, often seen as the heyday of the scrapbook, other commercially printed materials served to substantially and qualitatively enlarge the thematic scope of visual albums. These images touched upon culture, politics, war, and domestic, racial, and gender themes as well as other tinderbox topics. Through their use in scrapbooks one could observe an ongoing diminution of the moral uplift and self-help tone dominant both in scrapbooks and in contemporary expressions of earlier commonplace books. Now there was more ammunition of a



Figure 6

continued on page 6



Figure 7

visual nature to help the maker illuminate her, or less often his, personal concerns and attitudes. Explosively expanding variety in available imagery carried into and through the twentieth century, although in the years after the Second World War, one sees a decline in album creation. Or so it seems. For albums to leave their home and enter collections, their makers usually must pass away. Check with me in twenty or thirty years. Or sixty, as the results of the current avalanche of scrapbook-making pass from the hands of their creators.

Allen Ruppersberg, in his *Fifty Helpful Hints on Art of the Everyday*, urges us to look for narrative of any kind: “anti-narrative, non-narrative, para-

narrative, semi-narrative, quasi-narrative, post-narrative and bad narrative.” In albums within the narrative category, narrative is a hydra-headed proposition, emerging variously. On one level, an album page may serve very well to provide an agreeable flash of nostalgic reverie, and it may sometimes appear to be composed of unconsidered elements valued solely for the minor virtue of prettiness. Still, the small risk we run in taking the chance to wring meaning from these wordless puzzles is that we may credit their absent makers for more wit and intention than we might first have assumed.

If one tries to enter the mind and the process of the album maker, other modalities of narrative may emerge, even from pages that may at first appear opaque to meaning. But consider- why would anyone take the trouble to organize materials upon a white page without some intent to evoke recollection or comment on present concerns? Narrative here may be broadly understood to include both the shared cultural story seen in carefully organized illustrations of good taste, (figure 3) and more particularly, in the graphic requirements of an overtly thematic development. (figure 4)

Like a photographer walking down a street and choosing from available possibilities, a particular album maker will, in effect, surf printed visual materials through their particular lens, selecting and cutting out only those that advance to his or her attention, initiating a form of self-expression, of creation, through the process of

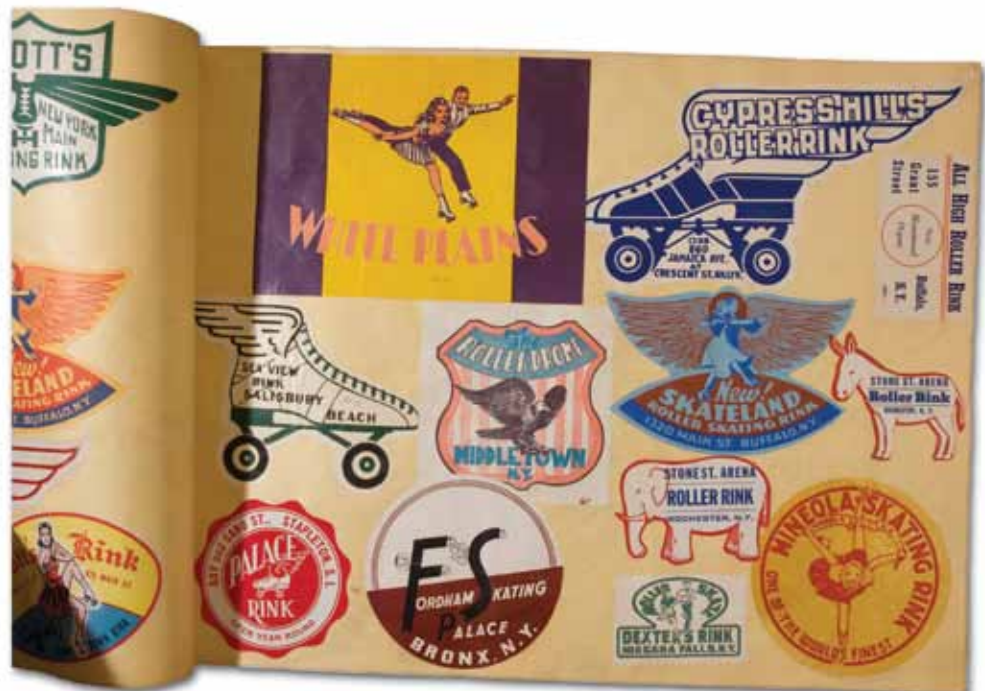


Figure 8

selection and later reassembling. Different from a digital cut and paste operation, such cutting is often very precise and time-consuming, a further commitment to and evidence of intent.

From hundreds, maybe thousands of chosen cutouts, large and small, spread out to ponder, one, then another is pasted on the blank page. This one, not that one, goes here, not somewhere else. Album making is fun, but judicious fun. The demands are both formal and narrative. Whether or not these terms are in the mind of the maker, it is what happens. How much it happens is a question. From an artist or an author we expect unity and sustained development of idea and/or narrative. Clearly, such

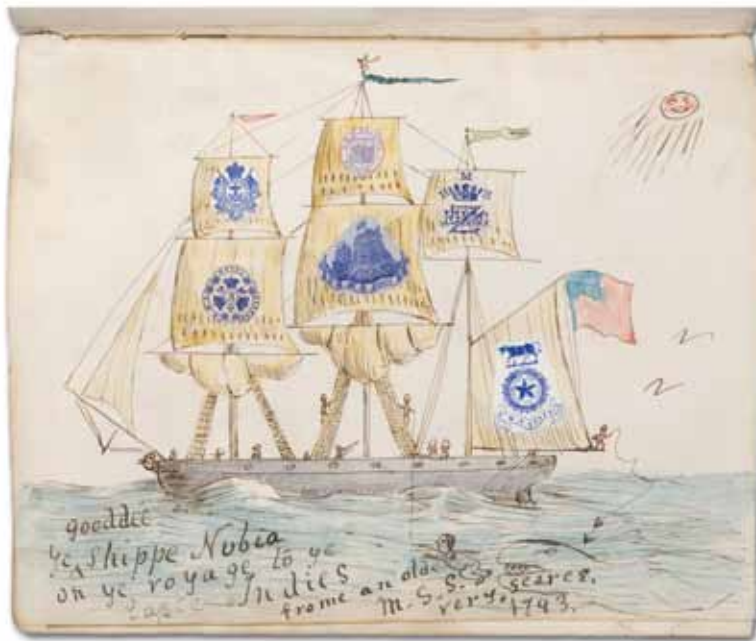


Figure 9

a professional is the exception as author of personal albums. In these, narrative is more likely to be found in smaller doses, by the page or two or even a portion of a page. However, a broad thematic impulse, such as war or romance, may fill an album. On the album's blank pages it is likely that the first images pasted down propel the idea. The album convention of a

large central image embellished by a cartouche of smaller ones is a simple, frequent outcome of that process. But the varied subject and scale of the cutouts may necessitate other visual strategies. As a more complicated page progresses, the "good stuff" may peter out and "filler" material may be employed, perhaps confusing (or in ways

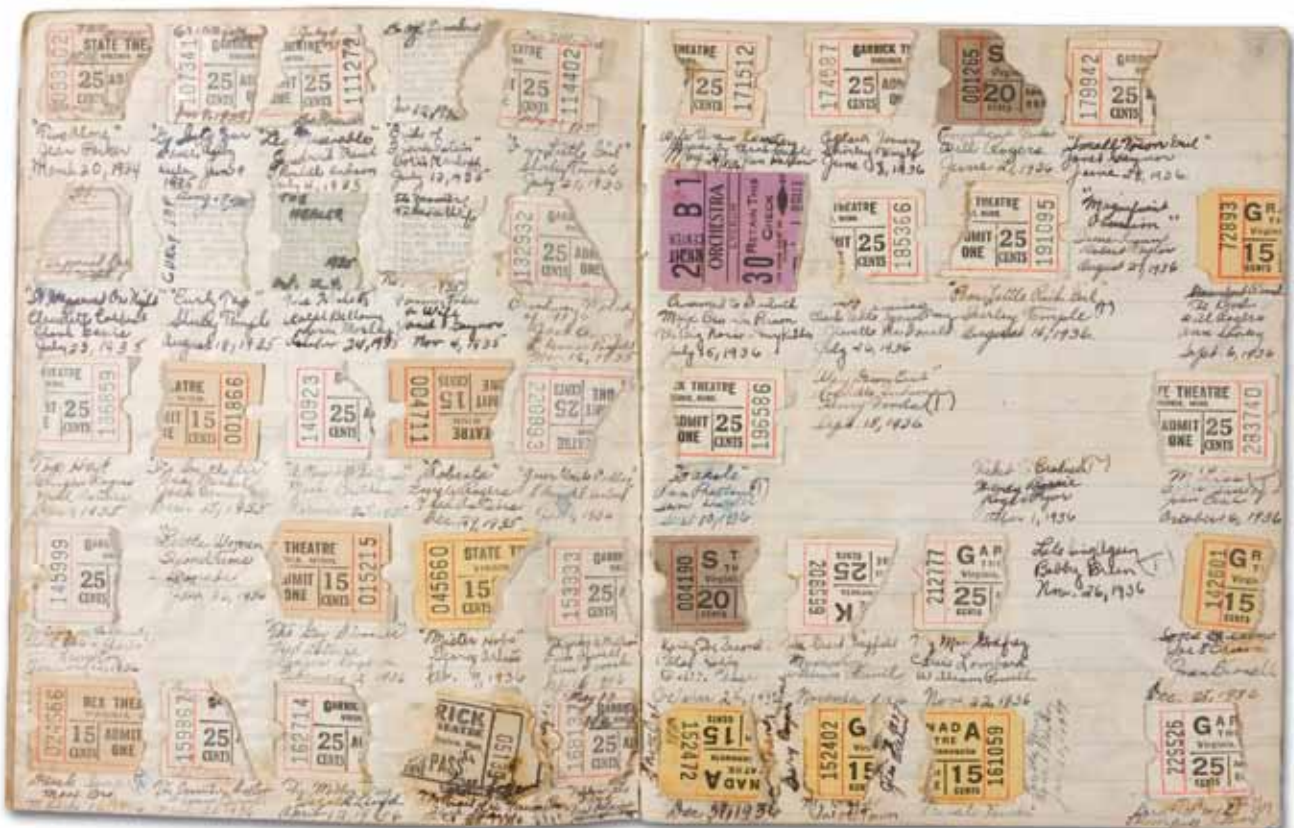


Figure 10



Figure 11

unforeseen, expanding) the narrative, but serving the design.

Sometimes the narratives seem compelling, sometimes a stretch, but the work invested in the making of albums suggests that close inspection of the available visual clues will be rewarding, and make for a more satisfying encounter with these constructed mysteries which have no one left to explain them. Compare Robert Frank's well-known photograph of a tuba player, his face hidden by his instrument, from which blooms an American flag, an image commonly viewed as an ironic commentary on patriotism, with this composition: (fig 5) might not the anonymous album maker who collaged a gramophone spouting a flag to an appreciative group of cutout cartoon characters have tried for a related idea? And what might the hippopotamus character below the gramophone have signified to the album maker with her "Officer, I demand protection!"?

It may also be that the meaning of images charged with their moment or with personal resonance are lost to time. Albums, after all, would likely have had an audience, if any, of just family and friends, insiders who got the joke, the point, in ways today's viewer's may scratch their heads over. (figure 6) The fun for canny and/or historically-

informed eyes is to visually pick the lock. It helps to know pretty much everything. For example, one might not know from looking at them that many wonderful British albums (and albums were an art in which the Brits excelled) would have had not one but many creators, since albums within upper classes were often passed among those invited to add a page. Who was invited and who responded became markers of the social ambition of the album's originator; and the contributor was under some pressure to create beautifully- or to pay a professional to do the work, as was perhaps the case in this very polished rebus. (figure 7)

Seemingly mute beyond their evident category, the potency of collection albums is easy to miss. Recall that in the time period under discussion, most album makers would have lived in towns and villages, with travel and cultural experience circumscribed. As the ability to acquire a Renaissance collection of curiosities signified expanded geographical reach and power, and occasioned praise for its owner, so the ambition of the shortwave radio enthusiast collecting acknowledging postcards sent from the reaches of his broadcasts would result in more modest but similar rewards. Same for the young person in Altoona who wrote letters to obtain through

request, trade or purchase roller skate rink decals from all the states. And if laid out with a little finesse they look great. (figure 8) Appreciation of totalizing collections based upon a goal of “all the...” can lead to musing about the means employed by a collector to gather all the postmarks in a given state, or about the number of its towns now disappeared. Collections of British crests and monograms have served as springboards to thematic embellishment, as from a ship in His Majesty’s navy. (figure 9)

Other collections, large and small, may be understood as tokens of experience that give shape to our lives. Take an album of ticket stubs from the town of Virginia, Minnesota, with date and movie title handwritten below each one. We learn from these that in the mid-1930s, Virginia was large enough to have two movie theaters, the Garrick and the State. Only one purple ticket, though, is not torn from a standard roll, but is a reserved orchestra seat in a more grand theater— a



Figure 12



Figure 13

birthday in Minneapolis? Maybe, but surely a special July 15. (figure 10) Also pasted in the album is a newspaper clipping: *Albina Fortune of Virginia, Minn, enters our contest to find out some use for those theater ticket stubs that clutter up everyone’s pockets, by pointing out that for four years she has saved each stub she got, and pasted ‘em in a book along with the title, leading characters of the pictures, and the dates she saw ‘em... which I guess could be called turning the stubs into a diary...* For Albina, indeed, each torn stub might, like a diary, evoke a night, a person, a milkshake. The contemporary viewer will read movie titles like *Duck Soup*, *A Star is Born*, and *Shall We Dance* with a view different from Albina’s, but with an appreciation for her appetites and diligence. How does it look? Orderly, the torn edge varied, comments in decent, tiny penmanship, some differently colored inks from pens with wide and fine nibs, twenty-five stubs to the page, but impossible to see without incorporating the narrative information above and its affect.

Other accumulations of ephemera may also reveal diaristic information unintended by the album maker but decipherable to an attentive viewer. In a monument to obsessive saving, in the 1930s Mr. Preston Waugh compiled albums of product labels and other domestic paper, neatly and densely covering the pages of more than twenty, lined school notebooks edge to edge. His motive to create his albums will remain a mystery, but browsing through them we discover that he is an independent farmer who buys flour in 24 1/2 pound sacks, and plants his vegetable garden with cabbages and radishes. His wife subscribes to *The Farmer's Wife* and, judging from a rubber canning jar ring label, puts up food for the winter. Still, they also have a well-developed appetite for such store-bought foods as canned corn and sockeye salmon. Smith Brothers cough drops and Pepto-Bismol labels indicate intermittent colds and other ailments. A page of distant postal cancellations and subscription labels from *The Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's* suggest a lively intercourse with the wider world. One postmark, from Little America, Antarctica and a number of labels from radio batteries provide further clues to what his and his wife's possibly unwired life in the small town of Levant in central Maine might have been like. (figure 11)

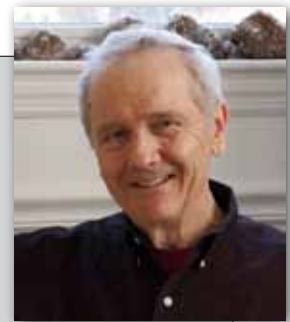
Other, more expressly autobiographical albums also tellingly evoke the absent maker. Though many are rote in structure and content, travel albums made by attentive tourists may give subjective accounts of personal travel not found in literature on the subject. In an earlier example, in 1895, at age 16, Avis Morison writes, "Fearing that no one will take sufficient interest in me to give an account of my life to the public, I will try to do so myself." What now indeed account for her life are several elaborate albums in her subsequent travels in many countries of the Far East with her wealthy aunt Hannah Adams. These are full of narrative, well-seen photographs and many pages of travel ephemera, some as collaged cutouts. (figure 12)

I know of no contemporary equivalent to the tender memorial albums made when contact with loved ones, either face to face or through correspondence, was often less frequent or more difficult than today. Especially touching are albums enclosing locks of hair, embellished, as if on the head, with ribbon. These were simple locks or sometimes wreaths woven by skilled family members, or at some expense by professionals in a thriving hair products industry. These have special potency for contemporary eyes, since such tokens

have long gone out of fashion, and their delicate intimacy fascinates. (figure 13)

Like pieces of a loved one's dress sewn into a quilt, some albums housed small scraps of clothing, annotated with the occasion on which it was worn. Not simply a memento like a thimble or a tumbler once used by the now ghost, the association of the scrap with the body of the wearer serves as a more vivid prompt to recall. Women of the 19th and early 20th centuries would have had a lifelong intimacy with fabric, lace and sewing, and familiarity with preserving valued examples of them in albums. (See Fanny Longfellow's textile diaries, page 21) Like excellent handwriting, needle skills were a marker of domestic and social accomplishment, and surviving school sewing projects, whether practical or imaginative, always beckon close examination.

Much valuable study has been given the materials found in albums by members of the Ephemera Society and others. Trade cards, cigar box labels, rewards of merit and valentines come to mind as topics given special, expert attention. My advocacy here is for the communicative potential and formal imagination revealed in personal visual albums. They are indeed bound vitrines of ephemeral artifacts preserved against the odds, to be curated and studied. But they are also the surviving expression of their makers, some simple, direct, and some with greater potential for deciphering. Some are what I call "forehead-slappers," some, not so much, but all are loveable for their qualities.



David Freund, is a Professor Emeritus of Photography at Ramapo College of New Jersey, where he chaired the Visual Arts program for fifteen years. For a National Endowment for the Arts grant, Freund photographed in and around gas stations in 47 states. Widely exhibited, Freund's work has been shown at Light Gallery, New York, and the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House. His work is in several collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

Memory and Mourning: The Long View of an Ephemeral Moment

BY DEBORAH A. SMITH

September 11, 2001 was a beautiful fall day in Brunswick, Maine. At my small historical society, we were preparing for another day of visitors to our two house museums. The phone call alerting me to the astounding news of planes crashing into towers came from a site manager at the property up the street from the house where the rest of the staff had offices. "Well, they've finally done it," he said. "You'd better turn on the news." I had no clue who or what "they" or "it" could be, and an announcement that sounded overly dramatic irritated me, especially coming from a person whom we all knew enjoyed being a prophet of doom. Still, his pessimistic predictions did not usually call for a supporting role by the media, and we turned on the radio.

Thirty years earlier on September 11, 1971, I was a few weeks past my 17th birthday and preparing for the milestone of my first driver's license. My father was my primary driving instructor and our favorite place to practice was Mt. Hope Cemetery in Rochester, New York. This 300-acre, park-like cemetery, laid out in 1838, was close enough to our house to see from the attic windows. Throughout my childhood, when driving home from any family outing that went past the cemetery gates, my father would turn in. It was hardly a short cut but always a treat. We would enjoy the history (Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony are two of the more famous denizens); the wildlife (abundant birds, squirrels and chipmunks but even the occasional deer and, one wondrous time, a fox); the unique topography (carved by retreating glaciers at the end of the last Ice Age); but most of all the abiding sense of serenity. Long before I was old enough to think about driving, I loved to ride my bicycle through Mt. Hope. By 1971, I had explored every section and avenue, especially the older, unpaved roads suited for a horse-drawn hearse but too narrow for a modern car.

As the executive director of the historical society, my concern as events unfolded was: do we stay open or do we close? The thought of a terrorist attack of such magnitude on U.S. soil was frightening and sickening; sending everyone home surely would have been capitulating to the attempt to wreak fear and havoc

The image below and the ones that follow on pages 13-14 are examples of the Etiquette of Victorian Mourning



A weeping willow and an urn were the most popular images of mourning. (Dick Sheaff collection)

across the land. Yet the many unknowns left me feeling very unsure: was business as usual really the right thing to do? At the end of the day, I knew in my heart that having kept the doors open was more a case of acquiescing to uncertainty and inertia than of making a principled choice.

On September 11, 1981, I was just beginning a second year at my first museum job in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and anticipating the appearance

continued on page 12

of my first modest publication, a review of a book about the history of Forest Lawn Cemetery in Los Angeles. For my senior college project in American Studies I had researched the history of Mt. Hope and illustrated the written paper with a photographic essay. I had chosen cemeteries again for my Master's thesis in American material culture and decorative arts. Looking at children's gravestones from 1840 to 1899, I was interested to know what the inscriptions and iconography could tell us about Victorian attitudes toward childhood and mortality. I added two other sources of evidence to compare and contrast with the cemeteries: a genre of popular writing at that time known as consolation literature; and posthumous photographs, not a new form of portraiture but one made much more affordable and accessible by new technology in the 19th century. [See article by Candace Kanés, page 19]

I found that all three sources reinforced each other. Overwhelmingly, the focus of these Victorian mourning media was to comfort the survivors. The *memento mori* admonitions so typical of the 17th and 18th centuries ("Remember me as you pass by/As you are now so once was I/As I am now so you shall be/Prepare for death and follow me") were nearly gone. Not even one percent of all the inscriptions in a sample of more than 900 stones in northern Delaware cemeteries could be categorized as an attempt to warn passers-by of impending judgment. Rather, the epitaphs and the emblems shared the same comforting themes as the consolation literature: my son has gone to a better place, my daughter is not dead but sleeps, we can hope to meet them again.

As for the photographic evidence, images of dead bodies are distinctly disquieting to most viewers today but we no longer live in a time when the causes of disease are unfathomable, or when 162 infants out of every 1,000 births will die, "snatched from earth to bloom in heaven." Family members today less often tend the dying at home, and the appearance of a corpse is not a subject for matter-of-fact discussion in letters and diaries. In the first half century of photography, the consoling message conveyed by the final (sometimes the only and cherished) picture of the deceased was, "The casket is still beautiful, though the gem has been stolen away." It is probably for this reason that of the hundreds of post-mortem photographs I examined, images of the deceased alone were much more common than ensemble portraits where the living posed with the dead. I surmised that the comfort for the survivors lay in the absence of their own suffering faces.

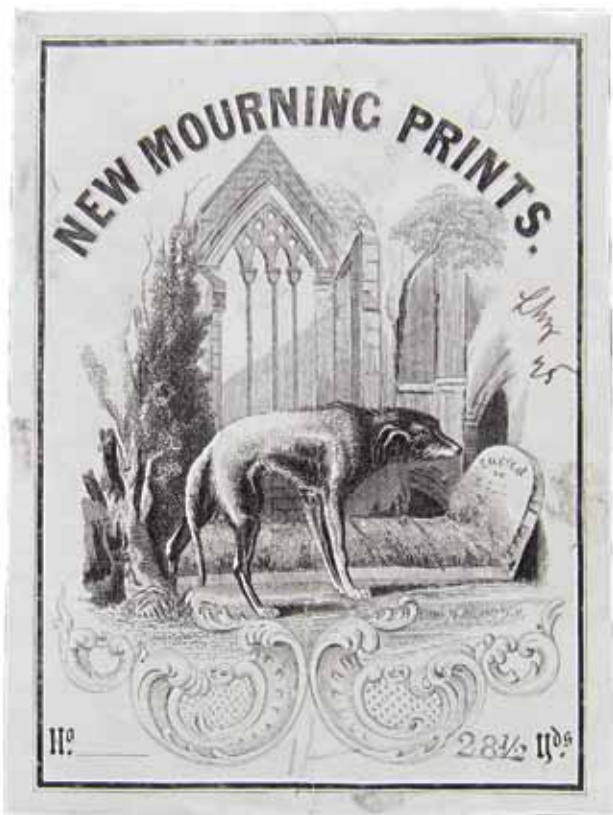
One week following the long day that came to be abbreviated simply as "9/11," I traveled by train from

Maine to Pennsylvania to speak at the Chester County Historical Society on Victorian mourning. Although I had been giving similar talks for twenty years, I was unsure how to ease into the topic this time. I had learned it was usually a good idea to acknowledge in my opening remarks that someone in the audience might be in mourning and the rest of us might not know; we no longer expect widows to dress in black or friends of the deceased to wear crepe armbands. My point was to let any reticent mourners understand: I don't pretend to be an expert about your personal grief. We are here instead to explore the ways that people coped with death in another time and place, one that might seem like a foreign country even though we'll be talking about the United States, and even if your own ancestors might have identified with the white, Protestant, middleclass, highly didactic culture we now call the American Victorian era.

Only one other time had I come across anything remotely similar, that is, an audience for whom the loss of a loved one was quite likely more immediately real than something that had happened in the past or was still in the future. On that occasion I was speaking in San Francisco. Looking out at the members of the Decorative Arts Society, I observed something I had not seen before: people reacting with visible grief as I talked about the projected images of hair jewelry, needlework, paintings, prints, and framed coffin plates. Then it dawned on me that companions of the same gender were comforting those who seemed most upset. Mementoes from a century or more ago were evoking emotional responses from the same wells of pain and love that inspired the creation of thousands of panels of the national AIDS quilt.

But I was unable to think of an adequate response if someone in the audience in Chester County—not far distant from either Shanksville or Manhattan—should reveal that they had a loved one who had died on one of the planes, in the towers, or as a first responder at Ground Zero. Even though I knew it was futile, I still searched from the train windows to see the impossible – the void of the twin towers.

On September 11, 1991, I was packing suitcases to live in Northern Ireland on a six-month sabbatical fellowship funded by the British Council. My purpose was to continue preparations for an exhibit back in my hometown at The Strong Museum, "Memory and Mourning: American Expressions of Grief," a project that had been in the making for several years. The title explicitly referred to ideas I had read in the writings of cultural anthropologists and historians, and struck me as profoundly important to understand different reactions to death. Grief may be a universally experienced emotion across time and place, but



Fabric label c.1870 (compliments of Margolis & Moss)

From Collier's 1882 Cyclopedia of Social and Commercial Information, a list of the black garments "ample for a widow's outfit" (compliments of Dick Sheaff):

- One best dress of Paramatta covered entirely with crape.
- One costume of Cyprus crape or an old black dress covered with rainproof crape.
- One Paramatta mantle lined with silk and deeply trimmed with crape.
- One warmer jacket of cloth lined, trimmed with crape.
- One bonnet of best silk crape, with long veil.
- One bonnet of rainproof crape, with crape veil.
- Twelve collars and cuffs of muslin or lawn, with deep hems.
- One black stuff petticoat.
- Four pairs of black hose
- Twelve cambric handkerchiefs with black borders



Folding trade card 1895. Priestley's Black Goods are "dyed in two standard shades of black – jet black for mourning, which exactly matches the Courtauld crapes in shade, and a blue black for general wear." (compliments of Margolis & Moss)



A Birmingham printer marks the 1840 death of the Prince Consort with a memorial card (Barbara Rusch collection)



Mourning card to be distributed at funerals, 1880s (Barbara Rusch collection)



The death of Queen Victoria, who had been in mourning for her Prince over 6 decades, inspired memorial souvenirs (Barbara Rusch collection)

Price List of Mourning Papers
BOORDERED ON FOUR SIDES
 Prices include envelopes to match. Please note reduction of cost for quantity of 5 quires.

QUALITY	SIZE	WIDTH OF BORDERS													
		0		1		2		3		4		5		6	
		One Qrs.	Five Qrs.	One Qrs.	Five Qrs.	One Qrs.	Five Qrs.	One Qrs.	Five Qrs.	One Qrs.	Five Qrs.	One Qrs.	Five Qrs.	One Qrs.	Five Qrs.
London	Billet	\$0.70	\$2.80	\$0.70	\$2.80	\$0.70	\$2.80	\$0.70	\$2.80	\$0.70	\$2.80	\$0.70	\$2.80	\$0.70	\$2.80
White	Octavo	.70	2.80	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
Angora	Commercial	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
	Lakewood	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
White	Billet	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80
Antique	Octavo	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
Base	Commercial	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
Cross	Billet	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80
Lines	Octavo	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80
	Commercial	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
	Lakewood	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
White	Billet	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80
Wove	Octavo	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80
	Commercial	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
London	Reception	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80	.70	2.80
White	Lorne	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00	.75	3.00
French															
Ogondia															

We carry the above papers and borders in stock; other papers and special sizes bordered to order.

No. 0

No. 1

No. 2

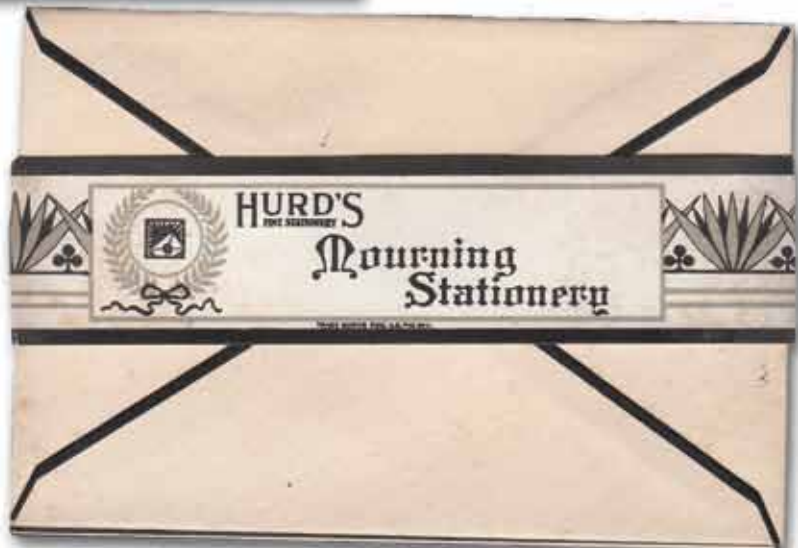
No. 3

No. 4

No. 5

No. 6

All correspondence was black-bordered, the width corresponding to the period of mourning or relationship to the deceased (Dick Sheaff collection)



mourning—our outward customs and behaviors—is tempered by our expectations about death and experiences with it. Mourning is our link with the dead. When the dead have no place in our lives, we have a very different view of life itself. Memory itself becomes a form of mourning.

In my application to the British Council, I had proposed that research in Northern Ireland, where “The Troubles” had made death a frequent occurrence, would allow me to explore two cultural mourning traditions side by side. What I had not thought much about before spending time in Northern Ireland was the nature of violent death. Protestant and Catholic funeral rites were certainly different but while grieving families on both sides found comfort in their religious beliefs, their mourning shared an undercurrent that seemed to have less to do with consolation than confrontation. Violent death was not something I had ever been forced to live with on a daily basis. After only a few weeks I could begin to understand on a visceral level what that meant, but I also recognized that I was still only an observer and ill-equipped to process the experience. In my interviews with Catholics and Protestants about death and dying, I never felt able to broach the topic of how memory becomes politicized, even though it was clear that historical memories on both sides going back three centuries were as selective as they were long. I retreated to my favorite comfort zone and spent much of the fellowship exploring the churchyards of County Down.

I discovered a stonemason who signed enough of his work that I could research his life and write an article, so the time was both personally and professionally rewarding. “Memory and Mourning” opened a year after I returned. It won an Honorable Mention in the annual exhibit competition sponsored by the American Association of Museums and went on to travel nationally for three years. However, none of my still nebulous thoughts about the role of memory and contemporary mourning in Northern Ireland ended up in the exhibit.

In late October 2001, when the tourism season had ended and it was time to close our summer camp in Washington County, Maine, my husband and I made the four-hour drive Downeast. By then the President had made his speech to a nervous nation, squarely identifying our enemies and declaring a state of war of a new kind. On that trip I had never before seen so many flags and “God Bless America” signs on homes and businesses. It was inconceivable that more than a handful of people in rural Maine, if that many, might have known one of the victims personally. But it was easy to recognize the message everywhere on display

as a statement of solidarity, and to feel it myself. Terrorism is effective precisely because it attacks the innocent. I, too, wanted to show my sympathy and support in a public fashion for those bereft, and that included all of us who had lost the illusion that “it can’t happen here.” The sight of so many flags on that drive made me want to cry and I could not say why, except I somehow I knew it was something more than sorrow for the mindless violence, pity for the families in mourning, and fear of the unknown.

The last time I had felt tearful in the same way was years before in County Down watching the Easter Monday parade. On that occasion the parade was officially sanctioned and well attended, held on the main thoroughfare of Bangor, a heavily Protestant town. Before the fellowship my knowledge of the conflict in Northern Ireland had been limited to coverage about the more spectacular (i.e. deadly) instances of terrorism. I had never heard about the pro-Unionist counterparts to the outlawed Irish Republican Army, who seemed to be singled out in the U.S. media as the chief violators of the peace. In the parade I saw grim-faced marchers wearing sashes in the colors of the Union Jack and displaying banners with the bloody Red Hand of Ulster, heard the ominous beating of the great Lambeg drums, and felt their heavy reverberations that made my whole body tremble. I was only a visiting foreigner but I felt intimidated, the effect intended during “Marching Season” when unauthorized, smaller bands hold processions through largely Catholic neighborhoods. It took several years of reflection before I associated a characteristic of these two events with my wish to weep: public statements that commemorated loss but failed to comfort me.

On September 11, 2011, my 91-year-old mother had died six weeks earlier, following several years of an increasingly wretched decline from Parkinson’s Disease and dementia. My father had died in 1994, of sudden and completely unexpected heart failure at the relatively young “old age” of 75. As I listened to a week of special reporting on the radio to mark the anniversary, I had personal memories to reflect on as well as the events of ten years ago. Two things struck me most in the commentary and coverage: first, that a sense of entitlement had taken root among the survivors and second, that the role of survivor had grown far beyond those who were related to the dead. What seemed new to me is the idea that death creates a debt owed to those who may not have known the deceased at all. An example I found especially disturbing was a local commemoration of 9/11 not far from where I live now in Georgia. The town had placed thousands of small American flags, one for

each person who died, in the playing field of a park. Many people found it an affecting and meaningful tribute. Unfortunately, a town official had ordered all of the flags removed a day too soon before a final ceremony to “retire” the flags. They ended up piled in a heap in a back corridor of town hall. From the outraged reaction, what appeared to be an honest failure of communication was being treated as an act of treason. The flags had acquired the same sacred status as the dead and the person who made the mistake risked losing his job.

The tragedy of the 9/11 is not unique in producing what I call entitlement. Before 2001, it was already clear that past events alone do not shape the conduct of present life; just as important is the way we remember them. The acts of terrorism that shot down a plane over Lockerbie, Scotland and blew up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City similarly created a group of victims much more numerous than the family members. When it comes to public deaths that do indeed have large public significance and consequences, no one is reticent about death any more, or willing to be invisible. On the one hand, a change in attitudes about mourning that encourages greater visibility is not to be dismissed or deplored. In some ways the change takes us back to an earlier time. The purpose of Victorian mourning was not to hide the bereaved from our sight but the opposite: to call attention to a person in need of a little extra sensitivity. In an era of growing incivility, surely courtesy and respect are desirable and commendable. On the other hand, when we focus on the deaths of the heroes, we are in danger of abandoning—sending into invisibility—the far greater number of everyday mourners whose loved ones, no less special and no less treasured, die in “ordinary” circumstances.

In 1901, it would have been atypical to reach adulthood without knowing first-hand the death of a child, sibling, parent, or friend. The generation born since 1960 is the first in human history to grow up without the devastating, life-changing loss of someone personally close to them. “Gen X” is also said to value the opinion and authority of the group more than the individual, to be highly attuned to relationships but not exclusively to those of family, and to use their own subjective experience to validate what is real. If one’s experience with death is largely vicarious, what impact does the mass murder of more than 3,000 people in a single day have on mourning behavior? I remain (still thankfully) untouched by the loss of someone I knew and loved personally to violence, so I am still not in a position to say what might console the survivor of such a death. I respect the heroism of the first responders, gratefully acknowledge their role in keeping me safe, and empathize with the

families of those who died on September 11, 2001—or any other day in history. I know full well how grief can envelope the mourner in deep waves of anguish. If we are lucky it subsides with time into less wrenching pangs, less often. Demonstrations of mass memorialization seem of limited help to me in this process. I find myself instead remembering Alexander Pope: “*You purchase pain with all that joy can give, And die of nothing but a rage to live.*”

After a lifetime of study and reflection, my conclusion is much less profound than Pope’s poetry: the memory of mourning is paradoxical. The absence caused by death is permanent and for some people the ache is also. Yet the way we respond to loss is ever changing. Considering that death has been and ever shall be with us, when measured over the span of decades mourning could even be called ephemeral. The *memento mori* attitude toward death gave way to a Victorian era that came to be thought of us as morbid, and was in turn rendered invisible by a long period in the 20th century when the primal response to death was denial. We appear to be in the midst of a behavioral transition again, and it will surely take the rest of my allotted time on earth to see where mourning evolves next. In my view, there is no right way, wrong way or best way to mourn, so long as it brings comfort to the bereaved. Somehow, the public memory of tragic deaths has supplanted the personal. The confusion wrought by the initial shock a decade ago has far from dissipated, and consolation seems to have faded away.

Deborah Smith,

received the Maurice Rickards Medal in 1991 for her work in building and exhibiting the ephemera collection at the Strong Museum. After 20 years working as a museum registrar, curator, grantwriter, and director, she returned to academia to work on a Ph.D. in Public Policy at the University of Southern Maine. Her dissertation research built on a two-year gubernatorial appointment in 2004-2006 as chair of the Maine Cultural Affairs Council, a consortium of the leading state agencies and nonprofit organizations coordinating cultural policy for archives, art, historic preservation, libraries and museums in Maine. Dr. Smith is now on the faculty of the Department of Political Science and International Affairs at Kennesaw State University.



The Memory of 9/11 in New York City

By MICHAEL RAGSDALE

New Yorker Michael Ragsdale has a unique relationship with 9/11 aftermath remembrance. Over a hundred pieces from the collection he started on the day itself were on exhibit in 2004 at *Ephemera 24*. Past President Richard McKinstry's article telling the story of the collection's growth and a 36-image exhibit *9/11 Healing* are both on the Ephemera Society web site.

The leadership of the future 9/11 Museum found out about the Ragsdale collection in 2006, invited Michael to present some of it at their headquarters near Ground Zero, sent representatives to look it over again in 2009 and, finally, acquired the collection in 2010.

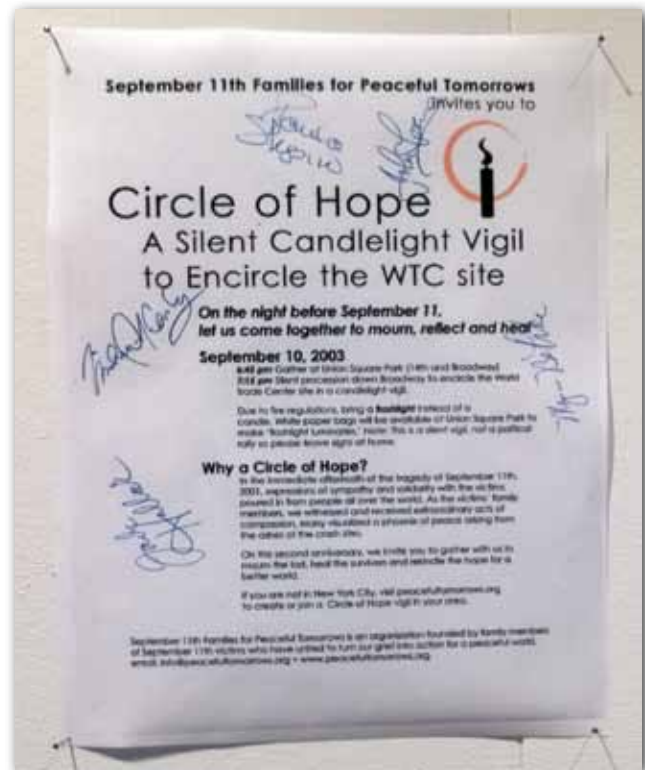
For the tenth anniversary of 9/11, Michael's entire aftermath collection — 3,000 pieces — was exhibited at the Art Center of the Rosenthal Library at Queens College in Flushing.

Michael Ragsdale's exhibit statement

Even before the attacks on September 11, 2001 I was a collector of New York City area event-specific paper ephemera and autographs — gathering fliers, cards, programs and so on at public and private events I both videotaped and went to on my own, and capturing on a few hundred of those materials the signatures of as many of the participants as I could. My collecting effort became a personal documentary history of sorts of everyone I worked with since 1997.

On 9/11, realizing that I was in a position to do some noteworthy collecting, I immediately decided to start a separate 9/11-related collection. Some of my first video assignments placed me at a college classroom discussion of the Taliban; a speech by former Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill at the *National Foreign Trade Council's 2001 World Trade Dinner*; former Vice President Dick Cheney's first public appearance after the attacks at *The Fifty Sixth Annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner*; and at the United Nations covering world leaders and dignitaries during the World Assembly meeting addressing international terrorism. On my own I attended the first post-9/11 public town hall meeting at the Great Hall at Cooper Union, and an interfaith prayer vigil and peaceful march to Times Square on the day the U.S. invaded Afghanistan. Later I covered two appearances by President George W. Bush (one at West Point, the other in Manhattan); a book talk by John Miller, the last American journalist to interview Osama bin Laden; appearances by the New York Times' Judith Miller; and many others.

Initially, I thought I might only do my 9/11-related paper history for a year or two. But because the proceedings and individuals I was repeatedly exposed

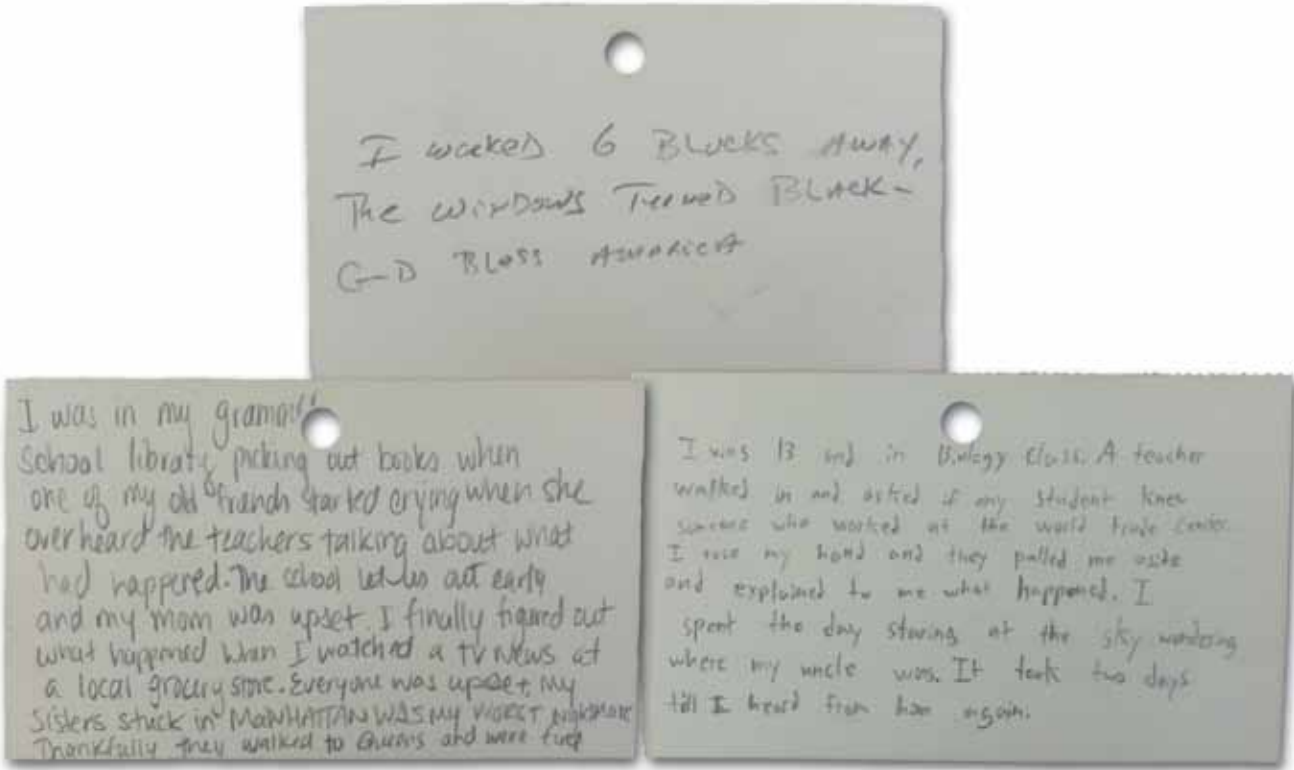


On September 10, 2003, at Union Square Park, I collected a few fliers at a gathering titled, Circle of Hope. This was a Peaceful Tomorrows-sponsored event calling for people from all over the New York City area to mourn, reflect and heal by walking together in silence and remembrance from Union Square Park down Broadway to the World Trade Center... with the intentions of encircling it for a candlelight vigil. To also mark this moving memorial occasion I asked five members of Peaceful Tomorrows to autograph one of the fliers as they gathered at Union Square.

to remained interesting and important and President Bush entered the U.S. into a war unrelated to 9/11 — to which the anti-war community loudly reacted — I persisted. I concluded my collecting effort on September 12, 2008 at a 9/11 Truthers/We Are Change-sponsored fundraiser for ill Ground Zero workers and WTC family members where I was able to exhibit several binders of paper materials from a separate 14 -month collection that is now in the possession of the National September 11 Museum.

How did I do overall? At over 200 events which addressed a myriad of aftermath issues (recovery, security, war, Ground Zero worker health, remembrance, civil liberties, Abu Ghraib, rebuilding, and more), I obtained over 3,000 pieces of event-

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I particularly enjoyed talking with the college students who visited, who were 8 to 13 years old when the attacks took place. Guessing that these young people knew very little of what took place in NYC in the aftermath — except for the massive clean-up, burying and remembrance of the dead, monetary compensation to families (to avoid lawsuits against the U.S. government and airlines), and implementation of higher security measures — I made it a point to talk with them. Visitors were invited to write down and then post on the wall their recollections of 9/11.

related materials (programs, press releases, copies of speeches and more) and secured 500 participant and in-the-audience autographs. I am excited to share with

you this paper documentary of my aftermath journey — something I was able to focus on instead of the violence, death and destruction of that “day that forever changed the world” — culminating in an archive of New York City area 9/11 aftermath-related paper ephemera and autograph collection unlike any in the U.S., and which I hope will someday end up at a museum, college or other institution, preserved and used to educate others in ways I alone cannot.

This documentary captures what went on and who got involved during one of the most important periods of time in the history of New York City — the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. It is also my 9/11-related story — how I personally experienced the aftermath of 9/11 in my hometown of New York City.

In 2002 Joseph Durickas produced a lovely, palm-sized, memorial project in an edition limited to 750: Forty Photographs of logos and signs that had incorporated the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Taken on New York City streets in the year after 9/11, the images show “what happens when an icon dies: memorials are discovered as having already been in place.” Proceeds from sale of the book benefited Peace Brigades International, a human rights organization, and *DoubleTake* magazine, a documentary studies quarterly (which folded in 2005).



Michael Ragsdale,
at the Rosenthal
Library exhibit

Post-Mortem Photographs: **To Preserve Memory**

BY CANDACE KANES

John W. Crockett, born in February or March 1850 to Enos and Mary J. Crockett of Rockland, Maine, entered a family of two brothers, ages six and five; and a sister, age three. Johnnie was still an infant when he died, probably later that year. Young Jonnie Crockett's father had worked as a daguerreotypist and would do so again, although he is listed in the 1850 census as a laborer. Crockett took a photograph of his deceased son, who appears as if he could be sleeping and who has no symbols of death surrounding him. The image served as a memorial for the family.

In later years, someone affixed white adhesive tape to the back of the daguerreotype case and wrote, "dead baby / Johnnie Crockett / son of Enos."

In 1850, about one quarter of babies born in the United States could be expected to die before they reached their first birthdays. Parents compensated by having large numbers of children, but they did not forget the lost babies. Often, subsequent children received the same name as the child who had died. The advent of photography offered further opportunities for memories of deceased children to live on.

Postmortem photography, which began to wane in popularity about 1880, gave those who did not have the means to have portraits painted, and who lost children or adults before having photographs taken, a tangible means of remembering the deceased. Some postmortem photos, like that of Johnnie Crockett, show the subject in a natural pose, as though they are asleep. Others go further, with the deceased person sitting – or occasionally standing – as a further suggestion that the person lives on. Yet others are more clearly photos of the deceased, taken in a coffin or laid out in a pose that clearly suggests death, like the c.1843 image of Mrs. William H. Herbert, about whom little is known other than that her father, George Barker, was a ship captain in Bangor, Maine. The close-up of Herbert, with her eyes closed and the white pillow and sheet drawn up to her chin, suggest the image was taken when she was laid out following death, probably in the family's drawing room.

Memorializing the dead was nothing new. Elaborate Egyptian tombs are one example, but more contemporary to the post-mortem photographs are memorial embroidery made by schoolgirls and women, and jewelry or other mementos made from the hair of the deceased. Eliza Wadsworth of Portland, Maine, was about 20 years old when George Washington died in 1799. She begged her father, a Revolutionary War associate of Washington, to secure hair from the deceased first president. He did so. When Eliza died in 1802, she left

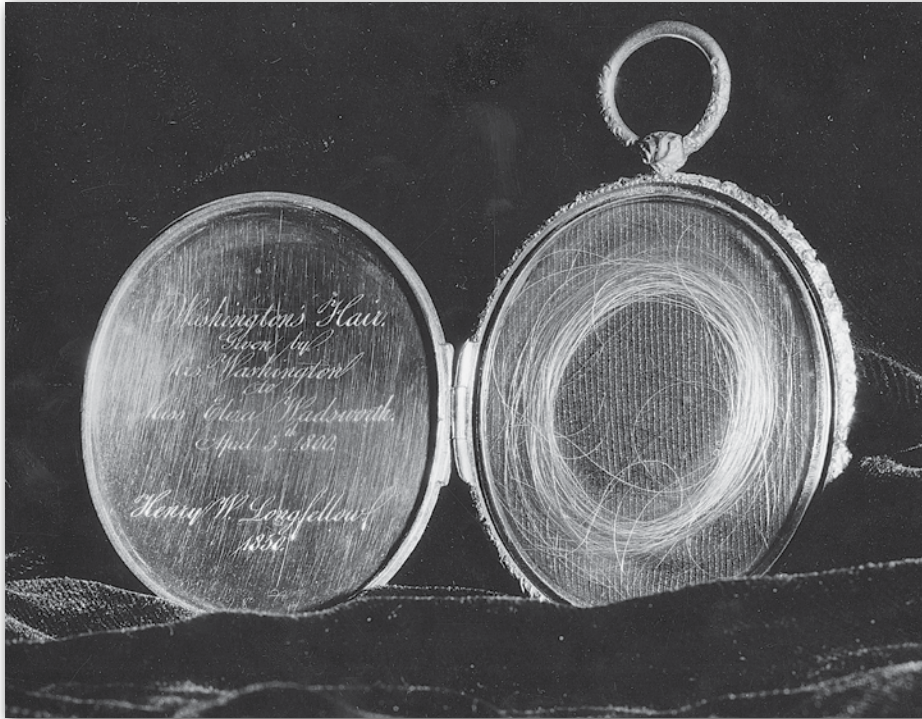


Johnnie Crockett post-mortem photograph c.1850. Courtesy the Maine Historical Society



Mrs. William H. Herbert post-mortem photograph c.1843. Courtesy the Maine Historical Society

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Lock of George Washington's hair, given to Eliza Wadsworth April 5, 1800, encased in gold locket by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Courtesy the Maine Historical Society

the hair to her sister Zilpah, the mother of poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Longfellow, who later inherited the relic, had it encased in a gold locket in 1850.

Photography did not end other forms of memorializing the dead, but added a different dimension. Wealthy persons might have portraits painted, but those of more modest means were often unable to secure any visual representation of loved ones until the advent of the photograph. Daguerreotypes were introduced in 1839, followed by the even more economical ambrotype in the early 1850s and, finally, in about 1860, carte de visite photographs printed on paper and mounted on cardboard stock so they could easily be carried. Photographs served a clear purpose in helping family and friends remember the dead. Some photos were of the post-mortem variety; others were taken while someone was still alive – especially if they might not be expected to live long.

Evidence of this is the habit of Civil War soldiers to have pictures taken, send them home, and trade them with fellow soldiers. The Civil War began in 1861, just as the carte de visite – or calling card photography – gained popularity. Many letters between soldiers and their families mention photographs and while they do not refer to them as related to the potential death of the soldier in the war, there often is an urgency to the discussion that makes that concern implicit.

William B. Adams wrote to his sister on Dec. 6, 1861, “I got T. J. Skillin’s miniature did you see it if not I will send it to you. You have said So much about my sending mine that I got out to day and had mine

taken twice once to send Down East and one for you.” Adams, a musician in Co. K of the 5th Maine Infantry, survived the war.

Pvt. Benjamin Mower of the 7th Maine Regiment apparently died of disease in 1863, shortly after the Battle of Gettysburg. His wife, Louisa S. Jenkins Mower, not knowing he had died, wrote to the Maine Soldier’s Relief Agency in Washington, D.C., in October 1863 seeking information about him. She described him in part by writing, “A small miniature of myself with our boy then a babe of 3 months he used to carry in his shirt pocket...”

Another soldier, John P. Sheahan of Dennysville, Maine, wrote to his mother shortly after enlisting in the 1st Maine Infantry Regiment in August 1862, “When I left you at the door your last

words were, ‘send me your picture.’ When I came through Bangor I thought of what you said and got it taken I think it is a good one keep it to remember me by ...” Sheahan survived the war, but his older brother was killed at Rappahannock Station in 1863. No letters suggest whether he had followed their mother’s advice about a picture.

Candace Kanés, is employed by the Maine Historical Society as the curator/historian for Maine Memory Network, a museum and archive of historical items and online exhibits from around

the state of Maine. A former newspaper reporter and editor in Ohio and Maine, she earned a master’s degree in Women’s/American Studies from the State University of New York at Buffalo and a doctorate in modern American History from the University of New Hampshire. She has taught history and women’s studies at Bates College and the Maine College of Art.



Capturing Time:

The “Textile Diaries” of Frances Appleton Longfellow

BY KATHRYN CLIPPINGER KOSTO

Ephemera is, simply put, ephemeral. Yet as historians and collectors, we are aware that material objects serve as continuing witness of past cultures, no matter how transient the original purpose of the historical artifact. Unlike the majority of transitory paper items, certain ephemeral materials have been taken out of ordinary usage, and altered or re-fashioned to serve as memory guideposts. In this category are the “textile diaries” of Frances Appleton Longfellow (1817-1861). These paper-and-textile artifacts serve as a reminder that people, particularly women, have linked the transitory to the eternal by using ephemera in an attempt to capture that most fleeting of experiences: time itself.

As artifacts which reveal a unique connection between textile manufacture, advertising, domestic management, and family memories, Frances Appleton Longfellow’s “textile diaries” are part of the extensive collection of textile fragments of the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which was the home of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow from 1837 until his death in 1882. The historic site contains much of her

accumulation of material culture, particularly textiles, which provide a window into her thoughts regarding things that her natural reticence and cultural upbringing advised should lay silent. The house had an already storied history, having been originally built in 1759 by the wealthy merchant and Loyalist John Vassall, Jr., and later serving as George Washington’s headquarters from 1775-1776.

As a young professor at Harvard, Longfellow wooed and married Frances, the intelligent and expressive daughter of Maria Gold and Nathan Appleton. Frances (“Fanny”) Appleton was born into an affluent household; the bulk of the family’s wealth originated from her father’s investments in the Lowell Textile mills. The Appletons were constantly on the move, traveling between Boston, the Gold home in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and New York City. To relieve the summer doldrums of one hot and dusty Boston summer, the family spent the summer in Lowell. She recounted, “When we were there we went into the factory and we saw the great wheel...we saw them print and dye calicoes. The second day we were there we dined with Mrs. Boot [*sic*] and we took a ride with her about Lowell and we thought it a beautiful place.” Fanny’s enjoyment of the city, her interest in its machinery, and her father’s pleasure in showing the calico-printing machine, typified New Englanders’ pride in their expanding industrialization. Though the textile mills were the basis of the family’s fortune, by the time she was fourteen, Fanny had lost her sense of awe in the complexities of textile manufacture. Like many young women, she assiduously pursued writing, sketching, and other accomplishments, and focused her interests on what was deemed more conventionally artistic in her travels. Her diary of 1832 notes a trip to Lowell, but focuses her interests on a visit to see Audubon’s original drawings, “most magnificent!” and critiques of portraiture; the mills are entirely left unmentioned.

Like many women of her social strata, Fanny was an avid collector from an early age, and accumulated materials on her family trips. She developed a particularly close knowledge of textiles: she carried a small work-bag with her at all times, and had regular dressmaker’s visits, which could take up to an entire week at a time. She also joined the fashionable “Sewing Circle” when she was fifteen, along with daughters from the wealthy Bowditch, White, Warren, Whitney, and Amory families. For her, sewing was not a necessity, but a pastime that was considered becoming to a young woman of refinement; sewing also provided an opportunity for friends to meet, and perform fashionable charitable works, such as making clothes for



Figure 1. Daguerreotype c.1849 of the Longfellow family: Henry and Fanny with sons Charles and Ernest. All images courtesy of National Park Service, Longfellow House-Washington’s Headquarters.

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Figure 2: Adult textile diary

the “benefit of poor Irish or any children.” Her sewing group circulated a poem, asking for donations of fabric so they could create children’s clothing for the poor, or as they wrote, to “make little beggar girls look so bewitching!” While Fanny had assured her father that she was engaged in charitable work, privately, she confided to her journal the Sewing Circle was actually “not very brilliant – no sewing done.” Sewing, and the creation of garments for children was specifically associated with women, and such charitable work was a sanctioned means for women to participate in international political causes. On Christmas Eve, she went to an “Anti-Slavery fair....Lord Marpeth philanthropically bestowing buttons on Miss Chapman for sale. Much child’s gear sent from England for the occasion.” At the end of the day she “[r]ead thro Prof. L[ongfellow]’s fresh prose.”

While sewing clothing for children was a means to express political activity for young women in the public sphere, the transition to taking on household management continued to be a demarcation of maturity for young women in the 19th century. In 1832 when her mother’s health declined, Fanny and her sister took on household responsibilities, such as ordering home furnishings and supplies. When Nathan Appleton’s seat in Congress pulled him away from home yet again, Fanny pensively noted, “Father’s left for Washington leaving Mary housekeeper. We are lonely but get along very well.” Her mother died the next February, and Nathan arrived the day after her death. Ten days later, he left his orphaned daughters for Washington, “whither his duty called him.” Often

hastened by the untimely death of a parent, taking on the full management of the household was a sign that a young woman had achieved adult responsibilities. Fanny saved delicately hand-sewn indoor bonnets worn by her mother; each is marked with her mother’s name and a number. Poignant reminders of a painful loss, the bonnets were a way to connect spiritual pain to a tangible object.

Marrying Henry Longfellow on July 13, 1843, Fanny brought the union considerable wealth in stocks and investments in textiles mills. She held investments in Boott Mills, the Lawrence Machine Shop, and her father’s firm, the Merrimack Manufacturing Company, and she monitored their activity throughout her life. She continued the charitable assistance of her youth, making garments for a family who had lost their cottage to fire: “Hemmed zealously til dark in an atmosphere of Inferno & then returned home.” Fanny, however, found that “domestic details curiously unfolded in her household,” and she did not enjoy household management; perhaps memories of the domestic responsibilities she had to shoulder when her mother died lingered with her. She employed a Miss Dana whom she referred to as a “clothes-mender” to help with household duties. Nevertheless, as recommended by household guides, Fanny kept an inventory of her household textiles from 1843-1857, listing each with a date, number, and notes on their quality; her husband likewise maintained an inventory of the paintings in the house. Fanny made few, if any, of the textiles used, and likely commissioned the making of household linens from seamstresses or purchased them in shops.

Yet, for Fanny, textiles were more than simply indicators of an efficient household; clothing itself was imbued with special meaning, and was linked to particular memories. Pregnant with her first child, Fanny delicately alluded to it in her diary through a reflection on her clothing: “I have out-grown my wedding-dress & it will no longer cover one beating heart only.” While she wrote of politics in her letters, her written diary reflects little of the outside world, politics, or the economy, and due to substantial household help, her diary also does not mention domestic chores. A “Lovely breezy day” in June was remembered simply as “Chicks frolicking on piazza with hoops & harrow....Baby looks droll in a sack.”

Sometime after 1843, Fanny began creating a unique form of documentation of her family’s life by pasting small scraps of clothing onto two cardboard sample-boards from the Merrimack Mills, which were originally created to display a small samples of printed cotton; an unaltered version is in the collections of the Museum of American Textile History in Lowell. Why she chose this particular method is unknown; however, these “textile diaries” show a confluence of the world of her paternal mercantile heritage with the more traditional womanly sphere of diary keeping. Likewise, her creation was probably influenced by the practice of keeping record-books of household textiles, and the growing popularity of scrapbooks among upper-class women. The earlier of the two “textile diaries” (figure 2) is made up of twenty-two pieces of dress fabric, dated

and arranged chronologically, on a sample-board from the Merrimack Mills, which featured an engraving of a tidy and industrious Lowell. Fanny glued the small fabric scraps in place, beginning with a blue and white gingham from 1843 and running until 1851, with a flannel tartan. The majority of the pieces were of silk, most in complex weaves or prints, in soft dress fabrics. Next in frequency were printed cottons, fine gauze-like in weight, with multiple layers of printing and intricate patterns. Judging from the profusion of clothing she and Henry owned (likewise evidenced in her diary), the “textile diary” appears to contain scraps from Fanny and Henry’s wardrobes. For example, one textile scrap dated 1844 attests to how often a single cut of fabric could be re-used or altered. An imported red, blue and purple woven paisley silk appears in two other places in the Longfellow House today: on a worn and faded settee in the family’s guestroom, and stashed in the attic, in a carefully picked-apart remnants from a dressing gown, probably worn by Henry Longfellow.

The second “textile diary” (figure 3) largely consists of children’s clothing, pasted and annotated in the same manner, with a total of thirty six samples of fabric from 1845 to 1852. The majority of the textiles are of cotton, with four of silk, two of wool, and one of linen; the colors and textiles shifted over time from lightweight woven cottons, in simple prints (likely of Lowell origin) to deeper shades of rich blues and browns, in predominantly tartan patterns, reflecting the changing attire of her two sons as they grew older. Providing insight into concepts of gender roles, both the boys and her daughter, “little Fanny,” shared the same clothing in their early years. For example, “Little Erny” seems to have glowed in pink, having three sets of clothing in a rosy pink shade. The “textile diary” indicates that even in an affluent household such as the Longfellows’, children’s clothing was re-used.

One piece of the children’s wardrobe from the “textile diaries” survives intact. A green spotted cotton gown can be dated due to annotation: “1847 Erny’s gown worn by F.,” referring to her oldest daughter, “Little Fanny,” who was born in 1847. Likewise, there is a shift in clothing choices for Charlie and Erny. As they grew older, sharing clothing between the boys and girls ended, and the boys were clothed in woolen tartans. This was typical fashion of the period, as suggested in *Godey’s* advice for mothers in 1850: “Dresses and small sacque[s] of woolen plaids, dark green or blue, are most suitable for street dress of the little fellows.” While sharing clothing was undoubtedly thrifty, for a thoughtful, even sentimental, mother such as Fanny, the sharing of clothes was also a way to connect one child to another.

Her daughter Fanny died in September 1848. While it is probable that the “textile diaries” were started before her daughter’s death, it is likely that this event spurred Fanny to elaborate her textile memorial. She could (and did) save drawings created by her older children as mementoes, but her infant daughter had left behind little but some clothing. Fanny was aware that her daughter’s memory was larger than these small tangible reminders; a few weeks after her



Figure 3: Children’s textile diary

daughter’s death, Fanny wrote “[e]very room, every object recalls her; & the house is desolation.” Fanny collected up the few physical reminders left from her daughter’s brief life, and saved her shoes, scraps of her clothing, and a lock of her hair, which survive in the Longfellow House’s collections today. She attempted to capture the experience of raising her children in an even more tangible form, for she had learned through sorrow that these years were all too fleeting. The experience of clothing was a particularly intimate one: as Fanny dressed her son Ernest in a “plaid blouse” her daughter Fanny had worn, she asked him, “Do you remember darling baby wore this last winter?” She recorded that after seeing Erny dressed in Fanny’s clothes, she broke down in tears, seeing in her young son an image of her recently lost daughter. She then wrote that she felt the toddler understood her grief and comforted her. Fanny wrote in her diary that she thought of her daughter constantly, “fantasizing my Darling here, & the dresses she would be wearing.” Two years later, when her daughter Alice was baptized, she wore baby Fanny’s christening gown; Fanny recorded that the sight caused her daughter Alice to be “baptized in her mother’s tears.” Thus, the worn, stained “textile diaries” which survive today in the Longfellow House’s collections represent a woman’s attempt to collect, catalog, and eventually memorialize the experience of raising her family.

In 1861, Fanny tragically died from injuries sustained in a household fire, leaving a family of five children, aged six to seventeen to be raised by their father and governess, Hannah Davies. Greatly saddened and depressed for years over Fanny’s death, Henry Longfellow nonetheless tried to

AUCTION PREVIEW & REVIEW

Our coverage of Part I of the Swann auction of “The Eric C. Caren Collection: How History Unfolds on Paper” inadvertently gave the impression that Eric (a former Director of The Ephemera Society) was giving up collecting. Nothing could be further than the truth! The following profile is based on an October 24th telephone interview with the fifty-one year old owner of “The Caren Archive.”

Eric began collecting in the 1960s with “kids’ stuff” – stamps, baseball cards – and at age eleven he was intrigued by a 1913 newspaper found in a creepy old house. He started to collect comics and participated in his first paper show, in New York City, at age fifteen. That’s Eric on the left, with arms crossed, in the process of realizing his first profit as a paper dealer - \$100.

Eric formed, and sold, his first major collection – of comic images – to Steve Geppi, owner of the *Overstreet*

Guide to Comic Books. Eric had been attracted to the 16th to 18th century comics (the earliest in the collection was 1570, then it jumped to Benjamin Franklin’s “join or die” snake of 1754) and Geppi gave Eric’s name of “The Pioneer Age” to these early examples.

In 1981, Eric, who had just graduated from college, met Cal Otto in London where Eric was managing a Covent Garden gallery. That was his introduction to The Ephemera Society; and Hall Cohen’s 1972 *Guide to Paper Americana* was his introduction to dealing in ephemera.

In 1983, Eric began a full-time career as an independent dealer. Alton Ketchum, the advertising executive and author of the 1959 *Uncle Sam: The Man and the Legend*, suggested the name: “The Caren Archive” for Eric’s business – a title he feels he hardly deserved at the time, but has grown into. He generated his own start-up funds, but is very grateful for an early loan from a fellow newspaper collector of modest means – and it has been his pleasure to generously repay in kind and with friendship.

He set himself the task of acquiring at least one document to cover each major event or figure in American history – restricted to the English language, and with an emphasis on the pictorial. What he now designates, unofficially, as Collection Number One,



Eric Caren in his younger days.

he sold to the Newseum – an interactive museum of news and journalism that opened in temporary quarters in 1997 and is now on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC.

Since the museum wanted just newspapers and magazines that documented American history, key items remained to form the nucleus of Collection Number Two. And, Eric started a shadow Collection Number Three – which remains his personal trove. Though there always remains the possibility of finding other “niche” items that comment on American history, Eric feels that this Collection Three represents all the significant events, except for the 1704 Deerfield massacre.

It is Collection Two that was consigned to Swann Galleries, who decided to split the auction in three parts. Eric has nothing but praise for the way Swann has handled the first sale. Rick Stattler, who wrote the descriptions, allowed Eric to edit and otherwise make suggestions to produce a catalog that is an excellent reference.

In deciding what item belonged to which Collection, Eric did not always keep the more valuable for himself. For instance, the item with the highest realization of September



Public mourning for George Washington generated a wide range of ephemera, both commercial (as with the 1801 stipple engraving by Thomas Clarke of Boston, lot 338 (left image) in the Caren sale) and personal (as with the folk art memorial, lot 339 (right image) “An appealingly naïve listing of the major events in Washington’s life, surrounded by a watercolor funerary monument and bearing the title Washington is Dead. Although four of the seven listed events have errors, the patriotic sentiment was 100% genuine.”) Courtesy Swann Auction Galleries.

25, 2011 (\$120,000), was “The Birth Certificate of New York” – a 1674 royal authorization for Edmund Andros to take possession of New York from the Dutch. But he kept a 1626 periodical with the first printed news of the Dutch settling Manhattan as well as a 1668 document signed by Richard Nicholls, the first English Colonial Governor of New York. Sold was a letter from Ed Scheiffen, the founder of Tombstone AZ; Eric kept a Scheiffen letter explaining the name. Sold was a letter about the Custer expedition; he kept one from the same officer writing from “The Little Big Horn” that Custer’s body had been found “naked but not mutilated.”

Eric decided to not set many reserves for the sale – and to not ‘buy back’ any items with a disappointing hammer price. The one piece he now thinks he might have bought back was the 1789 broadside “Remarks on the Slave Trade” illustrated with a plan of a slave ship’s lower deck – even though Collection Three has a similarly illustrated pamphlet. The item he was most tickled with was the country’s first baseball scorecard of 1866 that he had bought from the late Peter Howard of Serendipity Books – and which realized \$35,000.

In addition to being a collector and a dealer, Eric wears a third hat – of publisher. His Retrographics Publishing Company has produced over a hundred titles with material from Eric’s collection and from the *New York Times* archives. With the Smithsonian, he created a newspaper history of the Civil War; with Castle Books he produced other titles such as *Baseball Extra* and *Titanic Extra*; with images from his collection he created gift products for museum shops.

As a dealer, Eric participates in our Society’s annual show, but in few others. Wherever he has exhibited, he has made a point of giving an interesting item to any young collector who stops at the booth. The seeds of a passionate collector were sown early for Eric, and he continues to reap the rewards even as he sows more seeds ... on the search for those quirky items that give delight.

New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined the Society since publication of our Fall issue.

Paul Ament-Gjenvick

The Gjenvick-Gjenvik Archives
528 Drifton Quay
Woodstock, GA 30188-3623

Donna Barbee

1106 2nd Street, PO Box 632
Encinitas, CA 92024

Brenda W. Barksdale

1623 Wilbur Road, SW
Roanoke, VA 24015

Peter F. Blackman

White Fox Rare Books and Antiques
974 Cemetery Road
West Windsor, VT 05089

Thomas J. Brennan

T. Brennan Bookseller, LLC
431 Langley Oaks Drive, SE
Marietta, GA 30067-4977

Frank Brinkerhoff

404 Greenbriar
Salem, IL 62881

Richard Candee

6 Scituate Road
York, ME 03909

Richard T. Claus

Post Office Box 716
Gwynedd Valley, PA 19437-0716

Kristen Doyle Highland

New York University
19 University Place
New York, NY 10003

Scott Maloch & Terry Echeverria

Milltown Collectibles
Post Office Box 485
Landis, NC 28088

Carole Hoffman

115 South Quincy Avenue
Margate City, NJ 08402

Vickie LoPiccolo Jennett &

Patrick Jennett
Needle Work Press
23819 S. 150 Street
Chandler, AZ 85249

Seth Kaller

Seth Kaller, Inc.
235 Main Street, Suite 510
White Plains, NY 10601

Richard J. Kaufman

4200 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Suite 106-292
Washington, DC 20016

Chris Kuppig

Dover Publications
31 East 2nd Street
Mineola, NY 11501

Virginia Mahoney

4905 Cumberland Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Mike McMahon

117 Pinewood Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Elvin Montgomery, Jr.

Professional Resource LLC
519 W. 121st Street, #3B
New York, NY 10027

Kenny Parolini

Poor Man’s Books
509 North East Avenue
Vineland, NJ 08360

Chuck Rabinovitz

Cinderella Co.
Post Office Box 265
Sykesville, MD 21784

Andrew V. Rapoza

28240 Nancy Lane
Conroe, TX 77385-9040

Dennis Ray

Harropian Books
752A Lewis Road
Nelson, British Columbia,
Canada V1L 6P7

Robert Richshafer

7878 E. Gainey Ranch Road #55
Scottsdale, AZ 85258

Mitchell Rosin

BeDeers, LLC
270132 LaSalle Road
West Hartford, CT 06127

San Francisco Public Library

Periodicals Proc. Department
95 Washburn Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

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Terry Smythe

55 Rowand Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba,
Canada R3J2N6

Gary and Peggy Spengler

Calico Duet Antiques
23 Sandra Court
Frederic, DE 19946

Thomas C. Swett

Post Office Box 838
Unionville, PA 19375

Tom Topol

Gubelstr. 13
Rüti, ZH
Switzerland 8630

Change of Address:

Addresses for these members have
changed since publication of the Fall
Issue.

Gloria Burleson

2621 Caddo Court
Frisco, TX 75033-7336

Nancy S. Collins

Collins, LLC
941 Toulouse Street
New Orleans, LA 70112

M.S. McCorison

70 Briarwood Circle, Apt. 114
Worcester, MA 01606

Interesting Books

David M. Beach, with the help of his late friend Wayne S. Baxley, published a collectors' guide: *Antique Cigar Label Art: Original 100+ Year Old Lithographs, Collecting for Beauty, History and Profit* (Marceline MO 2009 ISBN 978-0-615-33-36-5; for Ephemera Society members, \$19.95 plus \$5 shipping, dbeach7@cfl.rr.com) to promote the acceptance of chromolithographed labels as works of art that share all the excitement of world-class posters — just not their size. Wayne perfected a process of photo mechanical imaging with digital manipulation and hand retouching that he called “metagraphy” provided the illustrations for the book that can also be ordered reproduced on fabric

or paper by. David is a consummate enthusiast (the text bristles with exclamation marks) and he wanted to showcase the artistry of a select 1500 labels. The images were generated at high resolution, and he invites the reader to examine them with a magnifying glass to appreciate the detail. Toward that end and to emphasize the stipple work, he also includes enlarged details. In recent conversation, David admits that the prices quoted were at the giddy height of cigar label sales and are no longer current. But the rarity scale applied to all examples is still valid. Though the book (arranged thematically but without table of contents or index) is attractive, it is a good example of how digital publishing of reference works can provide more than print versions. David's web site at www.cigarboxlabels.com offers thousands of images searchable by title and topic. Illustrated is a Hep-

penheimer & Maurer label of “Little Big Horn” which, on line, David reveals is the only one he has seen — except for an almost perfect example he now has that is still glued to its box.



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*See advertisement in this issue

Remembering Esther (continued)

dollars (and even an envelope of two-dollar bills that were the predecessors of the ‘medals’). Ira treasures one that he received in the mail a couple of years ago. And, for Esther’s 90th birthday party, he passed out half dollars in small envelopes to spread the word.

A worn Italian leather case with two much-used decks of cards told of Esther’s days as a substitute in the local bridge club, and her prowess at Rummy. Several brand new decks were secreted elsewhere – for special occasions only.

A year-old letter from the Village of Cold Spring (“Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the condition of the sidewalk ...”) was testament to Esther’s relentless seizing on details that needed attending to – personal or civic. She loved her community, one that she and her husband Phil chose in retirement and became passionately involved with.

She was especially proud of her library card and her Club Card at the village market. These were the lodestones of her daily life. She was a great reader (though she rarely liked the choice of the local book club and enjoyed telling them so) and she couldn’t get over that the Foodtown deli manager would slice the corned beef she cooked at home.

An index card recorded the birthdays of her loved ones – she always sent cards. And, under the blotter on her desk was the last valentine that Phil gave her in 2003. He had been very ill for almost a year, apologized for being cranky, and asked her if she wanted to try for twelve more months. He died a month later (recorded on the back of her index card, along with the death of her twin sister.)

Phil’s set of keys was also in the drawer and on the key ring was a ‘blessing of the fleet’ medal in Hebrew and English to bless “your going out and your coming in.”

Capturing Time (continued)

provide his children with the guidance they needed to reach adulthood. While Henry Longfellow’s private writings and journals reveal a man depressed over his wife’s untimely death, his daughter’s sketchbooks and letters reveal children who enjoyed their childhood, and were encouraged to be creative. As the Longfellow children grew up, despite memories of their mother becoming more distant, her memorial of their time together served as a reminder to them of one woman’s creative efforts to preserve and transmit these fleeting, intimate memories of their family. Their mother’s efforts to capture time survive to this day.



Kathryn Clippinger Kosto is an artist, living in an 18th-century farmhouse in upstate New York. She is the former curator of Longfellow National Historic Site. Further information about her work is at: www.poetryCollage.com

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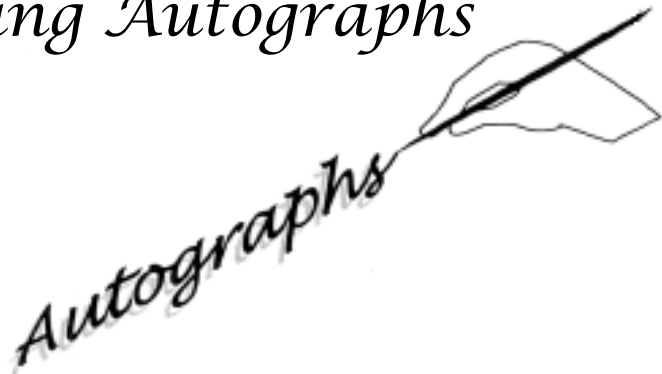
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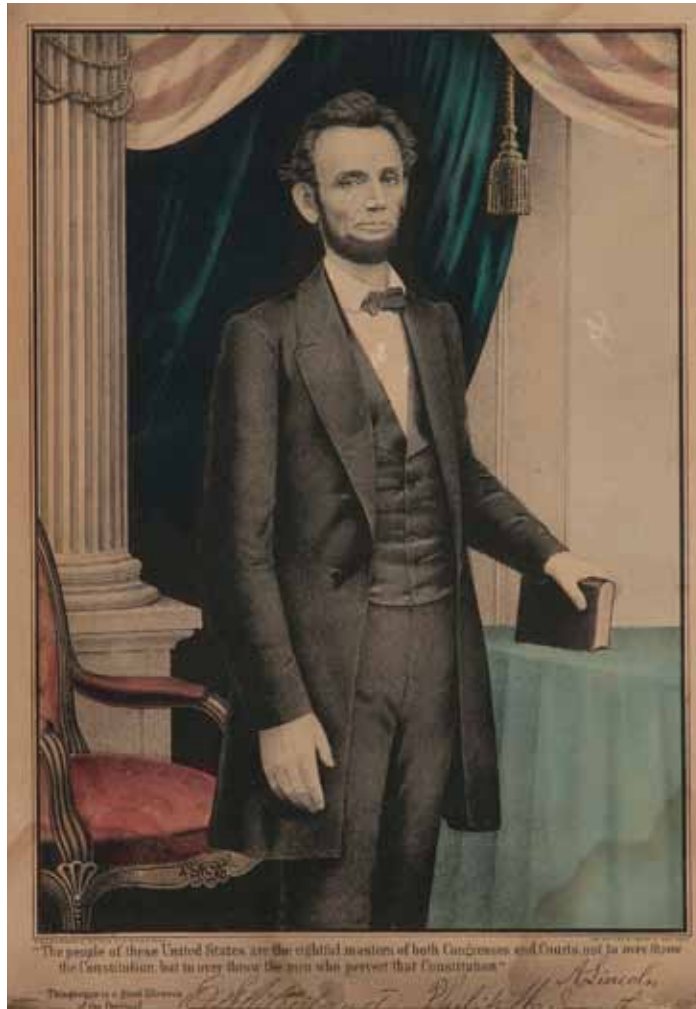
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