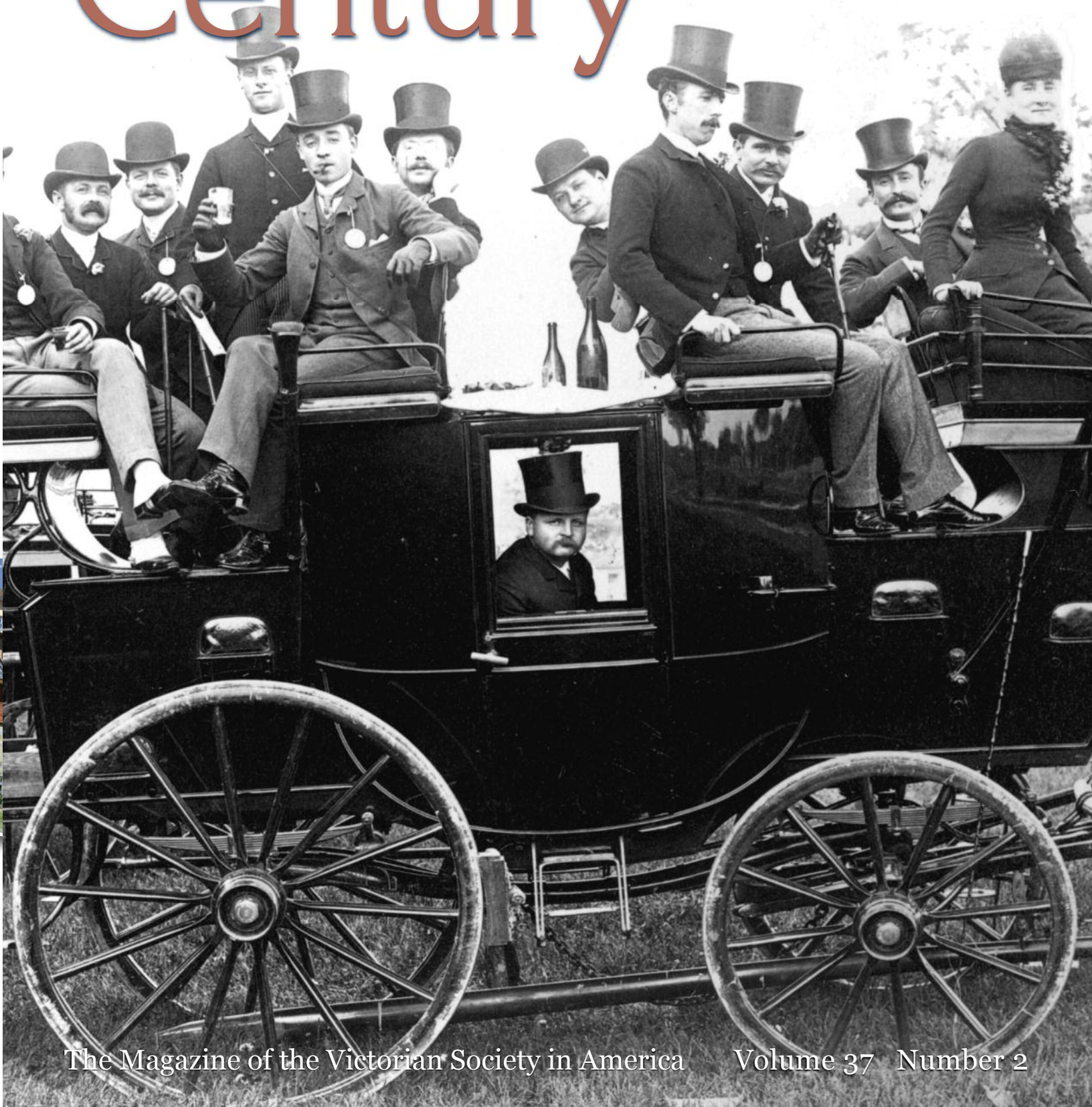


Nineteenth Century



Nineteenth Century

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA

VOLUME 37 • NUMBER 2
FALL 2017

Editor

Warren Ashworth

Consulting Editor

William Ayres

Book Review Editor

Karen Zukowski

Managing Editor / Graphic Designer

Wendy Midgett

Printed by Official Offset Corp.
Amityville, New York

Committee on Publications

Chair

Warren Ashworth

William Ayres
Anne-Taylor Cahill
Christopher Forbes
Sally Buchanan Kinsey
Michael J. Lewis
Barbara J. Mitnick
Jaclyn Spainhour
Karen Zukowski

For information on *The Victorian
Society in America*, contact the
national office:

1636 Sansom Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 636-9872
Fax (215) 636-9873
info@victoriansociety.org
www.victoriansociety.org



Cover: Society on a Park Drag, as seen in
the photograph album of August Belmont
II. Private collection.



Contents

At a Crossroads

ARCHITECT CHARLES RUTAN AND HIS PHOTO ALBUM

2

Maureen Meister

The Marquand Music Room

RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

8

Alexis Goodin and Kathleen M. Morris

A Musicale for the Maestro

ANTONÍN DVORAK, JEANNETTE THURBER

AND THE NATIONAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC OF AMERICA

18

Majda Kallab Whitaker

Coaching Through the Gilded Age

30

Merri Ferrell

Departments

40 Preservation Diary

THE CAPITOL DOME RESTORATION

Ralph Muldrow

42 The Bibliophile

Roberta A. Mayer

Jaclyn Spainhour

Karen Zukowski

46 Editorial

47 Milestones

TO PAINT A QUEEN

Anne-Taylor Cahill

49 Contributors



Drafting room, office of Henry Hobson Richardson, Brookline, Massachusetts, c.1880. Courtesy Public Library of Brookline, Massachusetts.

At a Crossroads

ARCHITECT CHARLES RUTAN AND HIS PHOTO ALBUM

Maureen Meister

The photographs are what people prize. When the time comes for the family of an architect to confront the records of a career, the members typically discard most of the papers, but the photographs give pause. “Let’s keep those.” That’s what happened after the death of Charles Hercules Rutan, a devoted employee of the country’s most prominent late nineteenth-century architect, Henry Hobson Richardson. Rutan’s photograph album was set aside, passed down to his grandson, and eventually landed in the public library in Brookline, Massachusetts. At some point, the pages were pulled apart. After they reached the library, they were never cataloged, and the donor’s name was not recorded. The loose sheets were safely preserved, however, housed in a gray acid-free box labeled “H. H. Richardson Photographs.” They were seen by a few eyes, including my own, and I filed away photocopies of a couple of the images. I was both fascinated and mystified by them. To whom did they originally belong? Several years later, no one could find the pages. On a whim this past winter, I contacted the library staff, wondering whether the photographs had turned up. They had not. But a few days later, a librarian got in touch with me to report that she had located the box and its contents.¹

Now I was excited and began to investigate who created the album. My research led me to libraries and archives as well as sources online, and eventually I realized that the album was assembled by Rutan. Arriving at this conclusion was gratifying, but it also raised new questions. I wondered how the set of photos was like other collections of the period. I also wondered what the album pages might reveal about Rutan’s life and career. To be sure, any set of nineteenth-century photographs owned by a noted architect is compelling, but this group struck me as especially interesting. Not a study collection of great monuments and not a collection of photographs intended to document an architect’s buildings, this set of pictures was personal in nature. Shot, printed, and glued into the album during the mid-1880s, the photographs, I learned, were preserved during a period when Rutan faced a crossroads in his career. Would he stay with Richardson? Would he sign on with New York architect Charles McKim? Would he be happy in a partnership with Boston architects George Shepley and Charles Coolidge?

Searching for Clues

When I encountered the newly located photographs, I found that a close examination of the pages and images was informative. My understanding of what I saw benefited from my familiarity with the Richardson literature, his staff, and the town of Brookline. Seventeen pages from the album survive, measuring 9 by 10½ inches, with a single print mounted on each sheet of paper. The photos can be grouped by subject and size. Four were taken at the Converse Memorial Library in Malden, Massachusetts, designed by Richardson and dating from 1883-1885. These prints are all the same dimensions, 6 by 8½ inches, and each image includes one or more men—staff and perhaps

others who had been involved with the building. Two more photos are the same size as the Malden library photos. One captures a scene in the drafting room that was attached to Richardson’s Brookline home, while another shows the architect’s famous study. One more print, just a little less wide, presents a still life of artifacts from the office: balusters, ironwork, a vase, and a candelabrum. Four photographs of Richardson’s study belong to a different group. Measuring 7½ by 9½ inches, they include a print of an image published in 1888 in Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer’s *Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works*.² The album’s remaining photographs are scenes from Brookline, three measuring 6 by 8 inches and three others measuring 6 by 8½ inches, suggesting that they were printed after two separate outings with the camera. Except for the four images of Richardson’s study, staged and professionally taken, the pictures are informal. They include friends and favorite places, which led me to believe that the person who assembled the photos also was the photographer.

Hand-written labels appear on eight of the album pages, obviously attributable to two different people. Notes in blue ink were made first, in a shaky penmanship indicating that the writer was probably elderly. On one of the Malden library photos, the subject is identified as “Bob Andrews.” Another is “Billy Kent.” The writer, I deduced, was once on intimate terms with these young men, Robert Day Andrews and William Winthrop Kent, both of whom trained with Richardson.³ Based on the content of the photos and the nicknames penned in blue ink, I suspected that the album originally belonged to a young architect who worked for Richardson. Captions in pencil were written later. The hand is firm and confident, but the author was uncertain about the material, as indicated by “Malden Library?” in one example. This writer clearly was far removed from the album’s creator.

A review of the major publications on Richardson proved to be fruitful. Most important was James F. O’Gorman’s 1974 book *H. H. Richardson and His Office: A Centennial of His Move to Boston*. Paging through it, I was drawn to an illustration of the Richardson office drafting room—an image that’s identical to a photograph in the set from the album. Furthermore, the source for the illustration was someone named Charles Rutan Strickland.⁴ I soon learned that Strickland was Charles Rutan’s grandson, and he appreciated the growing scholarly and popular interest in Richardson and his former employees. It seems likely that after O’Gorman’s book was issued, Strickland or an individual close to him donated the album pages to the Brookline library.

My research next focused on Rutan. Hunting online, I found information and images relating to several houses that he designed. One of the houses was a duplex in Brookline that’s the subject of one of the album photos.⁵ Here was an instance where the architect was documenting his work. With these discoveries, it became clear to me that the mysterious pages preserved by the

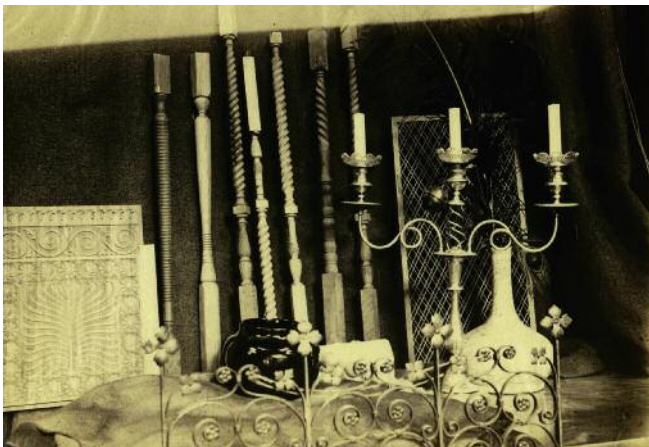
Brookline library came from an album that first belonged to Rutan.

As for dating the pictures, I was able to do that fairly readily. In the photos taken at the Malden library, the staff appears to have gathered there shortly before or after the building was dedicated. Festivities marking the opening took place on October 1, 1885. The photograph of the duplex that Rutan designed probably also dates from this period. A drawing of the house was published in the *American Architect and Building News* on May 2, 1885. The photos that document Richardson's study, taken for the Van Rensselaer book, were made after Richardson died in 1886.⁶ It should be noted that because the album pages have been pulled apart, the sequence of the images can't be determined. When seen together, however, the set reflects a narrow and important period in Rutan's life—the mid-1880s.

Charles Hercules Rutan, architect

Charles Hercules Rutan was born on March 28, 1851, in Newark, New Jersey, where he was educated in the public schools.⁷ At the age of sixteen, he entered the New York City office of Gambrill and Richardson, "starting at the very bottom of the ladder."⁸ Charles D. Gambrill and Richardson had begun their association in October of 1867, and they must have soon decided that they needed an office boy.⁹ Rutan has been identified as Richardson's "first assistant," and he stayed with Richardson longer than any other employee, remaining until the master's untimely death at age 47.¹⁰ Richardson met with increasing success, and he expanded his staff accordingly. One early hire was T. M. Clark. Another was Paris-trained Charles F. McKim, who entered the office in May 1870 as a designer. Stanford White, untrained but a brilliant draftsman, was brought on board that summer.¹¹

As is well known, in the spring of 1874 Richardson and his family left New York for Boston, making their home in suburban Brookline.¹² The office continued to be based in New York, however, and Rutan stayed put until Gambrill and Richardson parted ways in 1878. Rutan and his family then moved to Brookline, where Rutan joined Richardson in the office that the senior architect established at his house.¹³ On April 27, 1886, Richardson wrote a deathbed statement in which he expressed his wish to see the work of the office continued by "Messrs. Shepley, Coolidge and Rutan, in all of whom I have full confidence."¹⁴ By early May, Rutan, George F. Shepley, and Charles A. Coolidge agreed to form a partnership that would be called Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge.¹⁵



Still life of art objects and architectural components from the Richardson office, c. 1880. Courtesy Public Library of Brookline, MA.

The firm's first challenge was to finish the projects that were under way when Richardson died. Among these were the Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail, 1883-1888, in Pittsburgh and the Marshall Field Wholesale Store, 1885-1887, in Chicago.¹⁶ Both Shepley and Coolidge brought in clients and both were designers, whereas Rutan handled the engineering and construction.¹⁷ The firm would design the original campus buildings for Stanford University in Palo Alto, begun in 1888, and a new campus for the Harvard Medical School, Boston, 1906. They designed buildings for the Chicago Public Library (now the Chicago Cultural Center), 1892, and the Art Institute of Chicago, 1893, as well as the west porch for Trinity Church, Boston, 1894-1897.¹⁸ Rutan must have found Brookline agreeable, for he spent the rest of his life there.¹⁹ He died on December 17, 1914.

Revealed in the Rutan Papers

Rutan's widow, the former Sarah Ellen Brower, lived many more years, until her death in 1933. Rutan also was survived by two daughters, Eleanor and Elsie. Elsie married an architect, Sidney T. Strickland, and they settled in Brookline where they raised their children.²⁰ One of them was Charles Rutan Strickland, who grew up to become an architect as well. At his death in 1991, he was recognized for designing Plimoth Plantation, a re-creation of the historic seventeenth-century settlement in Plymouth, Massachusetts.²¹ Over the course of his career, Strickland directed many preservation projects, including work at Boston's Paul Revere House, Marblehead's Old Town Hall, and the Senate chamber of the Massachusetts State House. Preserving the family papers logically fell to him. In 1973, probably inspired by O'Gorman's preparation of the 1974 book on Richardson's office and the exhibition that coincided with it, Strickland donated a selection of his grandfather's papers to the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C.²² Through Strickland's efforts, other papers from his grandfather, mainly relating to family history, went to a relative who transferred the records to the Genealogical Society of New Jersey.²³

Among the Rutan papers at the Archives of American Art are twenty-four letters, four written by Richardson to his assistant. Richardson's messages are personal, not professional. In 1874 Richardson wrote to say that he had been looking forward to attending Rutan's wedding, but he was going to have to miss it due to a committee meeting. Richardson added, "I hope you will accept the accompanying book from my library as a slight token of my high esteem & sincere regards." In November of 1875, Richardson wrote to Rutan congratulating him and Mrs. Rutan upon the birth of a baby boy. In May of the following year, Richardson wrote a letter of sympathy after the baby died. The survival of these letters shows how Rutan and his family valued them as records of the relationship with Richardson.

Two of the letters to Rutan were written by the architect William R. Mead, who had entered into partnership with McKim and White in 1879. Mead wrote on March 17, 1883:

We have your letter of the 13th. Your proposition is such a surprise that we must consider it. We should like to have you in the office—and should make you work hard if you come. You are a pretty expensive man for us.

The firm, located in New York City, was in competition for a bank project, and Mead explained that the outcome could influence their decision. He ended by asking Rutan when he could come. Why did Rutan make this overture to McKim, Mead and White? Perhaps he and his wife simply hoped to return to

New York. But they appear to have been extremely happy in Brookline. Moreover, as the letter indicates, Rutan was paid well and wasn't job-hunting for the money. Rather Rutan seems to have been thinking that his future as an architect working for Richardson was going to be limited. Rutan may have been concerned about his employer's health, which was failing seriously by this time. Richardson had been diagnosed with a chronic disorder known as Bright's Disease and also was dangerously overweight. Yet Richardson did not put a succession plan in place until the very end of his life.²⁴ What happened next is unknown, but Rutan may have presented his case to Richardson and received a meaningful response.

In 1886, shortly after Richardson's death, Mead wrote to Rutan again: "We have lately lost one or two good men—and are on the lookout for somebody with brains to fill their places." Mead was fishing to see whether Rutan might bite. Mead added, "I am glad to see that Mr. Richardson has shown you some recognition for your long and faithful services," alluding to Richardson's deathbed directive, assigning the work of the office to Shepley, Coolidge, and Rutan. Reading between the lines, one may interpret Mead's words as suggesting that he and his partners valued Rutan's talents more than Shepley and Coolidge. At the same time, Mead conveyed his understanding that Rutan had demonstrated great patience waiting for Richardson to acknowledge his senior assistant's contribution to the firm's success.

Two letters from McKim to Rutan also survive. The first is marked "strictly confidential to yourself" and is dated December 26. Someone, probably Strickland, added, "1886?" but a date of 1885 is more likely.²⁵ McKim was thinking of relocating to Boston to open an office of the New York firm or to start a new practice. "In either event, I should wish to associate with me a practical man whose abilities would be of a business kind, and whose experience and training might resemble your own," he told Rutan. In June of 1885, McKim had married Julia Appleton of Boston, a motivation for his seeking to move. On January 3, 1887, Julia died in childbirth.²⁶ Six days later, McKim wrote to Rutan,

Since my wife's death I do not feel that I could under any circumstances remain in New York. Except to Mr. Phillips Brooks I have not revealed to anyone but yourself my purpose to remove to Boston on or about May 1st—& make it my home.

McKim was ready to establish the office, and he needed "an experienced man to take charge—one upon whom I can rely in all things."

By this time, the firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge had formed and had acclimated to the death of the master. The partners were completing some of his greatest projects while demonstrating to themselves their ability to carry on and succeed. Still, Rutan may have wondered whether he could be happy in a partnership with Shepley and Coolidge, both of whom were more outgoing than he was. Also Rutan was almost seven years older than Coolidge and almost nine years older than Shepley.²⁷ When Rutan saved McKim's letters, he may have been thinking that if the new partnership proved untenable, he might explore working with McKim. At a significant crossroads in his career, Rutan saw that McKim offered an alternative path. And then, as time passed and Rutan became more satisfied with his

partnership, he surely treasured the letters from Mead and McKim as testimonies of their enormous esteem for their "practical" colleague in Boston.

Revealed in the Rutan Album

To better understand the distinctive nature of the photos that Rutan collected, I decided to compare them with a sampling of photos assembled by other men who had worked for Richardson. That several examples survive is telling in itself, revealing how the images were prized by the men and those who came after them. Photograph albums assembled by Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Jr., are a case in point. In 1933 Longfellow donated a large number of photographs, mostly mounted on pages separated from albums, to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England) in Boston.²⁸ After Longfellow died in 1934, other photographs from his estate were bought for the Society by its founder, William Sumner Appleton. A second example is an oversized album, measuring 24 by 19 inches, which was preserved for nearly a century by the Shepley firm and then donated to Harvard's Houghton Library.²⁹ It contains Coolidge's bookplate, but the album must have been assembled by or for Richardson, given

the early date of certain projects that it documents. More photographs at Harvard, some affixed to boards, appear to have been collected by the succeeding partners. Yet another collection of photographs, all mounted on boards, was created by Frank Irving Cooper, who worked for Richardson and Shepley, Rutan

and Coolidge.³⁰ That collection is held by the Boston Athenaeum.

What then can be learned by this comparison? To begin with, I realized that some of the young architects were photographers, including Rutan and Cooper, while others such as Longfellow never seem to have taken their own pictures. I also realized that when a professional photographer was hired to document Richardson's study after the architect's death, prints must have been offered to the assistants. Copies are to be found in every collection, including Rutan's, but each includes a different selection. Something else I observed is that the men who were photographers shared prints of their images. For example, two prints of the photos that Rutan took at the Malden library found their way into Longfellow's album, intermingled with prints from other sources. The image of "Billy Kent" in Rutan's album was printed at least a second time and mounted on board, where it ended up in the collection of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, now at Harvard. Yet even with this sharing of prints, the other sets of photos illustrate mostly buildings and interiors on which the architects worked whereas Rutan's photos are more personal, showing people and scenes from Brookline.

Another way to look at Rutan's album is through the filter of the letters to him that were written during the mid-1880s. Upon considering them, I could see how the album illuminates a pivotal chapter in its owner's life. Rutan felt a deep attachment to Richardson, the staff, and the office itself. At the Malden library, he focused on his colleagues, not the building, resulting in images that convey the camaraderie among the men. When Rutan acquired prints of the Richardson study and pasted them into his album, he sought to remember the magic of a setting that was beloved for its beauty and stimulating contents. The photo of the drafting room also represents his affection for his workplace.

Rutan felt a deep attachment to Richardson, the staff, and the office itself. At the Malden library, he focused on his colleagues, not the building, resulting in images that convey the camaraderie among the men.

Rutan's images reflect his deepening connection to Brookline and foreshadow his decision to stay there. He photographed the Julia Goddard house, built in the early 1730s for Nehemiah Davis, located on Warren Street near the Richardson home and office. Rutan photographed the Peter Aspinwall house, dating from 1660, which would be demolished in 1891. An interest in colonial houses was widespread by this time; however, the photos can also be interpreted in terms of Rutan's own life. Rutan would have shared this interest with McKim, who was an early champion of colonial architecture.³¹ In another photo, Rutan captured a leafy street scene—devoid of buildings or people. Finally, two photos show modern, shingled houses. The duplex which he published in the *American Architect and Building News* speaks of his desire for recognition as a designer. A second photo shows an even larger residence. The location, the owner, and the architect are all unknown. But Rutan may have been involved with its design, too. In 1889 he would design and build his family home in Brookline.³²

A Talent for Engineering

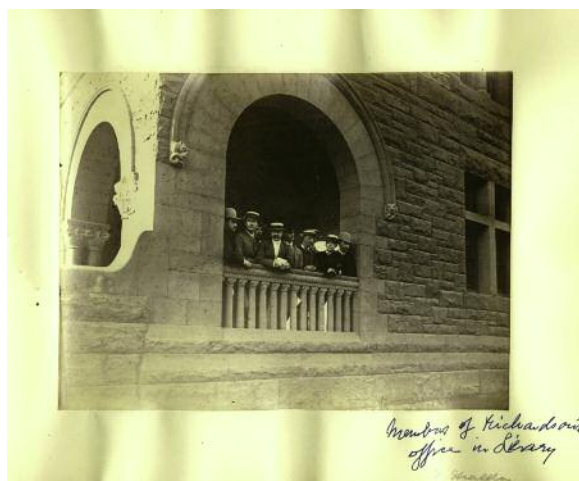
Richardson relied upon Rutan for the skill he developed as an engineer, and Rutan continued to serve in this capacity as Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge flourished. Rutan addressed an array of challenges, devising a sophisticated ventilation system for the Allegheny County Courthouse and bringing together a complex system of tracks at Boston's South Station, the largest railroad station ever built when it opened in 1898. With his son-in-law Sidney Strickland, Rutan published "Practical Problems in Construction" in 1908.³³ Rutan took pride in his achievements in engineering. After a major earthquake in 1906 destroyed several structures at the Stanford campus, Rutan observed in correspondence that the original Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge buildings came through intact.³⁴

Near the end of his life, probably at the request of a colleague or family member, Rutan compiled a list of buildings on which he worked.³⁵ The first of the three typed pages begins, "While with Mr. Richardson, made all the calculations, drawings and specifications for:" and continues with a list of the projects in Pittsburgh, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Albany. Further on, Rutan writes, "Since Mr. Richardson's death, have done the following public and semi-public buildings:" followed by sixty-five projects, some of which involved several buildings.

Always an Architect

Capable as he was at engineering and construction, Rutan was always an architect. In 1889 he was admitted as a Fellow to the American Institute of Architects, a distinction bestowed that same year to Shepley and Coolidge. Nevertheless, through the 1890s, Shepley and Coolidge were the firm's lead designers, and Rutan appears to have found satisfaction in collaborating with them to address the construction challenges presented by their visions. In his later years, Rutan was recognized as an architect in his own right. Perhaps Shepley's death in 1903 gave Rutan a chance to step forward. During the years that followed, he took the lead in campus planning in Nebraska and Turkey. In 1909 the *Western Architect* announced that Rutan had been retained to plan a campus expansion at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln.³⁶ Long in the shadow of his partners, Rutan was described as "one of the most capable architects in the United States." The following year, Rutan traveled to see the site where the American College for Girls at Constantinople would be built to his scheme.³⁷

When writing about architectural partnerships, journalists and historians focus on the designers. Flamboyant personalities invite even more attention. Within a firm, however, different values matter. When Rutan died in 1914, one tribute stated: "He worked with no blare of trumpets, but those most closely associated with him long since learned to know his worth."³⁸ Richardson, McKim, Shepley, and Coolidge all appreciated Rutan's abilities, sizing him up as the practical man, the man who supported them and enabled their visions to be built. Yet during the middle of the 1880s, a period documented by photos and letters, Rutan was struggling with this role. He was trying to sort out whether he could happily play the supporting actor if he signed on with McKim, Mead and White. He was a man with a creative drive, an architect first and foremost. The album pages are the key to our understanding his decision. They reflect Rutan's affection for Richardson and his employees, and they speak of Rutan's attachment to Brookline, factors that must have swayed him. By the end of the 1880s, Rutan embraced the opportunity to run a firm with Shepley and Coolidge. The partnership would endure and prosper as commissions came in from clients around the country.



Staff from Richardson's office at the Converse Memorial Library, c. 1885. Duplex designed by Charles H. Rutan, Brookline, MA, c.1885. Courtesy Public Library of Brookline, MA.

Notes

1. Between 2000 and 2010, I was shown a few of the album pages by Roger G. Reed when he was working for the Brookline Preservation Commission, Brookline, MA. At that time, he made photocopies for me, and I noted that they were the property of the Public Library of Brookline. Later attempts to locate the pictures were unsuccessful. In 2017, I contacted the library again, and Krista Barresi, Local Historian, found the pages in the box labeled "H. H. Richardson Photographs." I would like to thank both Mr. Reed and Ms. Barresi for their assistance in this project. I also thank Tonya Loveday of the Brookline Preservation Commission.
2. Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer, *Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works*, New York: Dover, 1969 (orig. pub. 1888), p. 123.
3. James F. O'Gorman mentions these staff members along with many others in *H. H. Richardson and His Office: A Centennial of His Move to Boston, 1874*, Cambridge, MA, and Boston: Department of Printing and Graphic Arts, Harvard College Library and David R. Godine, 1974, p. 10 and pp. 32-33 n. 25.
4. O'Gorman, *H. H. Richardson and His Office*, p. 11. In an e-mail to the author, O'Gorman recalled interacting with Strickland but did not remember anything specific about this photograph or the rest of the album—certainly understandable after the passage of more than forty years.
5. See Form B for 35 and 37 Elm St., Brookline, MA, prepared Fall 1975, filed at the Brookline Preservation Commission.
6. Carla Yanni, "The Richardson Memorial: Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer's Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. 27 (Fall 2007), pp. 26-36.
7. Obituaries for Rutan appeared in the *Boston Herald*, Dec. 18, 1914, p. 13; *Boston Journal*, Dec. 18, 1914, p. 5; *American Architect*, Jan. 6, 1915, p. 13; *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, vol. 3, no. 2 (Feb. 1915), p. 88; and *Western Architect*, vol. 21, no. 3 (March 1915), p. 20.
8. All obituaries cited here state that Rutan began working for Gambrell and Richardson in 1870, a date that has been picked up by later writers. In an 1893 profile about himself, however, Rutan reports that he began working for Richardson in 1867, continuing "for nineteen years," until Richardson's death. See "Charles H. Rutan," *Columbian Exposition Dedication Ceremonies Memorial*, Chicago: 1893, p. 558. For the quote, see *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* obituary.
9. Van Rensselaer, p. 19. See also James F. O'Gorman, *Living Architecture: A Biography of H. H. Richardson*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997, pp. 82-83.
10. Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, rev. ed., 1966, p. 96. See also the unsigned typescript, "H. H. Richardson's Men," MS Typ 1097 (53), Houghton Library of the Harvard College Library, Cambridge, MA, which states that Rutan "was connected with Mr. Richardson longer than any other of his men."
11. O'Gorman, *Living Architecture*, p. 92. See also Mosette Broderick, *Triumvirate: McKim, Mead & White*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010, pp. 24-25, 67-68.
12. Noted first by Van Rensselaer, p. 21, and by later biographers.
13. Rutan's move to Brookline in 1878 is dated in *Columbian Exposition Dedication Ceremonies Memorial* and in obituaries.
14. Quoted in Hitchcock, p. 330.
15. Julia Heskell, *Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott: Past to Present*, Boston: Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott Inc., 1999, p. 21. Heskell quotes a May 3, 1886, letter from Coolidge to Shepley.
16. Jeffrey Karl Ochsner provides detailed information about the projects that came to Richardson prior to his death and considers the extent to which design ideas for the buildings were his. See *H. H. Richardson: Complete Architectural Works*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982.
17. These roles are described by Hitchcock, O'Gorman, and Heskell, among others.
18. For more on the early years of the firm, see Heskell; J. D. Forbes, "Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott: An Introduction," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 17 (fall 1958), pp. 19-31; and Russell Sturgis, "Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge," *Architectural Record*, vol. 6 (July 1896), *Great American Architects Series*, no. 3, pp. 1-52.
19. Rutan had a younger brother, Frank E. Rutan, who trained with Richardson in Brookline and went to Pittsburgh to work on the Allegheny Courthouse and Jail. He stayed in Pittsburgh and established the partnership of Rutan and Russell.
20. The survivors are named in the *Boston Herald* obituary, among others. The Stricklands lived in the same general area as the house where Richardson had established his office and where another generation of architects settled. See Keith N. Morgan, Elizabeth Hope Cushing, and Roger G. Reed in *Community by Design: The Olmsted Firm and the Development of Brookline, Massachusetts*, Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013, pp. 66 and 69.
21. "Charles Rutan Strickland, 83; designed Plimoth Plantation," *Boston Globe*, June 2, 1991.
22. The Charles H. Rutan Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., also on microfilm, Roll 1260.
23. The Rutan Collection, Genealogical Society of New Jersey, is housed in Special Collections and University Archives, Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. Strickland gave the papers to another Rutan descendant around 1970, and that individual donated them later to the Genealogical Society. Janet T. Riemer, a volunteer, and Tara Maharjan, archivist, generously assisted me. Strickland's nephew, Christopher Hussey of Brookline, also responded to my queries. A few of Rutan's personal effects, including a photograph and a walking stick, have been passed down to him.
24. James F. O'Gorman, *H. H. Richardson: Architectural Forms for an American Society*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987, pp. 24-25.
25. The 1885 date is given by Broderick, p. 220.
26. Ibid.
27. Coolidge was born on Nov. 30, 1858; Shepley was born on Nov. 7, 1860. See also Heskell, p. 21.
28. Examples of photographs originally in albums owned by Longfellow, now in the Library and Archives at Historic New England, Boston, are in folders labeled "Malden, MA. Public Library" and "Personal File. H. H. Richardson. Mounted." See also Album 97, an intact album assembled by Longfellow, at the Library and Archives.
29. "Henry Hobson Richardson additional drawings and papers," MS Typ 1097 (51), Houghton Library of the Harvard College Library, Cambridge, MA.
30. "Photographs from the Studios of H. H. Richardson and Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge," gift of Harrison Schock, 1959 and 1963, Boston Athenaeum.
31. Broderick, pp. 38-39.
32. The house is located at 109-111 Davis Ave. See also Morgan et al., pp. 73-74.
33. Sidney T. Strickland and Charles H. Rutan, "Practical Problems in Construction," in *Cyclopedia of Architecture, Carpentry and Building*, Chicago: American Technical Society, 1908, pp. 367-395.
34. Letter from Rutan to John K. Banner, June 3, 1910, Shepley Bulfinch archives, Boston, quoted in Heskell, p. 25.
35. Rutan Papers, Archives of American Art.
36. "Enlarged Campus Plan for University of Nebraska," *Western Architect*, vol. 4, no. 9 (Dec. 1909), p. 49.
37. Today Robert College. On Rutan's role, see the tribute written by the trustees of the American College for Girls at Constantinople in the Rutan Collection, Charles H. Rutan Papers, box 1, folder 5, Genealogical Society of New Jersey.
38. Tribute written by the Congregational Church Union of Boston and Vicinity, Rutan Collection, Charles H. Rutan Papers, box 1, folder 5, Genealogical Society of New Jersey.



The completed music room in the home of Henry G. Marquand, New York City, c. 1888. Visible are the Model D piano, piano stools, music cabinet, portieres, and Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema's painting *A Reading from Homer*. Courtesy Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation and Museums, Photo Archives Center.

The Marquand Music Room

RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

Alexis Goodin and Kathleen M. Morris

In 1884, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (British, 1836-1912) designed a Greco-Pompeian music room for the Madison Avenue mansion of the American businessman, collector, and philanthropist Henry Gurdon Marquand (1819-1902). The circumstances and results of this commission were the subject of an exhibition, *Orchestrating Elegance: Alma-Tadema and Design*, on view at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts in summer 2017. An accompanying catalogue, *Orchestrating Elegance: Alma-Tadema and the Marquand Music Room*, delves deeply into many of the questions the music room poses: Why did Marquand, as he built and decorated his elaborate mansion in New York, commission the noted British painter Alma-Tadema to design the interior of a room rather than turning to a local firm specializing in interior decoration? What made Alma-Tadema uniquely qualified to undertake this project? What was the result, the reception, and the aftermath of this unusual commission?

When he turned to Alma-Tadema for this project, Marquand was reaching out to one of the most celebrated painters of the late nineteenth century, famous for his depictions of everyday scenes set in classical antiquity. These paintings often showed women and men clad in flowing classical robes within luxurious spaces, engaged in light-hearted pursuits. Born in the Netherlands, Alma-Tadema trained as a painter in Belgium and moved to London in 1870 where his skilled images of reimagined life in classical antiquity met with great success. His ability to mimic the materials and objects of ancient Greece and Rome—and in particular his ability to paint marble—was key to his success. His paintings look effortless, but underlying the seeming ease of his achievement lay a lifetime of devoted study of the material remains of classical antiquity.

Like many people in Europe of the time, he was fascinated by the archaeological discoveries made at Pompeii, an ancient city famously buried by a volcanic explosion in the year 79 A.D., which subsequently laid hidden beneath a meters-thick layer of ash for centuries. He first visited the Pompeian excavations in 1863, where he took notes, measurements, and drawings of what he saw; and he soon started what would become a very large collection of photographs and drawings of ancient objects from Pompeii and elsewhere. This collection, an extensive personal library of books that documented ancient design, and his incessant study of

every scrap of ancient art he could find, meant that Alma-Tadema had at his finger-tips, as well as in his mind's eye, a vast array of ancient design sources he could use to invent a modern suite of furniture in a Greco-Pompeian style.

As Marquand planned the elaborate interiors of his mansion, which was designed and built by Richard Morris Hunt, he engaged a number of different artists, designers, and firms specializing in interiors to create rooms in different cultural or historic styles. He could have turned to a local firm for the music room, but perhaps due to the combination of Alma-Tadema's skill in reimagining ancient interiors and his fame in decorating the interiors of his own London homes, Marquand asked the London-based painter to undertake this commission. He traveled to London in 1884 to meet with the artist and the principals of the furniture firm Alma-Tadema had lined up to fabricate the large furniture suite he had designed.

The room was completed in 1887 to great acclaim. The finished interior represents a collaboration between Marquand, his architect Richard Morris Hunt, and Alma-Tadema, who engaged the London furniture firm Johnstone, Norman and Company on Marquand's behalf, and who involved his artist friends Frederic Leighton and Edward Poynter in the project. He would also add the sculptor Edward Onslow Ford to the mix, by having him execute a custom-designed fireplace fender and andirons in classicizing style for



The home of Henry G. Marquand, New York City, c. 1900. Richard Morris Hunt, architect. The house was located at 600 Madison Avenue, corner of East 68th Street, and was known as the Petite Chateau. Office of Metropolitan History

the room in 1889. Marquand filled the room with his collection of ancient Greek, Roman, and Etruscan ceramics, classical-style sculptures of both ancient and modern vintage, and some of his distinguished collection of European paintings, a few classicizing in nature and most of a more general, Arcadian landscape tradition.

As curator of decorative arts at the Clark, Kathleen Morris proposed the concept of the exhibition to the Clark's director in 2007. Working closely with Curatorial Research Associate Alexis Goodin, together we have spent years researching every aspect of this fascinating room. While the Clark's exhibition and catalogue deal with the entire music room project and its aftermath, this article concentrates on several aspects of the project related to the original textiles in the room and the two piano stools from the suite, which have been in the Clark's collection (along with the grand piano) since 1997.

During the course of the project, we had the opportunity to undertake an extensive investigation of the textiles that were an essential part of the room. These included the upholstery of all the seating furniture, short curtains that originally hung within the recesses of the music cabinet, and door and window curtains that graced the room, all produced according to the designs of Alma-Tadema and created as part of the entire furniture suite under the auspices of Johnstone, Norman and Company of 67 New Bond Street, London.

Johnstone, Norman and Company had been in business under various firm names since the early years of the nineteenth century. While the firm's records do not appear to have survived, a detailed history of the firm has been pieced together through research in archives and period publications, and appears in the exhibition catalogue. The music room commission was one of the most important and acclaimed projects of the firm's long history. For Marquand they created an elaborately veneered, inlaid, carved, and upholstered furniture suite consisting of a grand piano and two stools; a large music cabinet; two barrel-armchairs; two onyx-top tables; five settees of various sizes and shape; four side or occasional chairs; two footstools; and door and window curtains.



Model D pianoforte and stools designed by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema. Steinway & Sons, New York; Johnstone, Norman & Co., London, manufacturers. Clark Art Institute.

With the exception of the piano and its accompanying stools, the furniture and textiles were finished by mid-1885 and put on view in the London showrooms of Johnstone, Norman and Company prior to being shipped to New York. An article in the July 23, 1885 edition of the periodical *Truth* describes the furniture and textiles in detail, including this description of the upholstery of the suite:

The couches, chairs, and stools are upholstered in silk of a beautiful shade of pure grey, traversed by bands of exquisite embroidery in colours which are rich, but carefully subdued, as one sees them in Mr. Tadema's pictures. The ground of this embroidery is also silk, the colour being precisely that of the bloom of a ripe plum. Upon this, the tints of gold and orange, blue, red, and brown, with slender curved lines of pure white giving a peculiar delicacy to the whole, form a beautiful scroll-pattern. A rich trellis fringe of mingled grey and gold runs along the edges of the couches, and beneath it is a deep silk fringe of the plum-bloom colour, which does not show, except in the effect of depth and richness it imparts to the upper fringe.¹

The same article describes the curtains that hung before the recesses of the music cabinet as "of grey silk embroidered in soft, rich colours, a lyre occupying the centre."² One of the curtains for the room is also described:

A large curtain is also of grey silk, with a curious embroidered dado, the ground of which is plum-bloom silk with a quaint design in sections, in each of which is a straight piece (that reminded me of old studies in conic sections) in blue and red.³

In another article, we learn that Alma-Tadema's designs for the embroideries were, like the inlay of the furniture itself, drawn up for production by William Christmas Codman⁴ (1839-1921), who had been working as artistic designer for Johnstone, Norman and Company for a number of years.⁵ The firm's work as upholsterers, decorators, and cabinet makers frequently included upholstered furniture along with other textiles, including curtains.⁶

The original upholstery of the piano stools differed from the designs of the other seating furniture and curtains, as will be discussed in detail. The piano stools and their cushions are not described in any of the period writings on the furniture and the room, and they do not seem to have been shown with the piano when it was displayed in Johnstone, Norman and Company's showroom in May 1887. Evidence suggests that these stools were among the last items to be completed; pencil notations on the inner frame of the stools include signatures of two workers, one of them identified as "W. H. Ember, Upholsterer," and dated "July 1887." Soon the piano and its stools joined the balance of the suite in New York, where the finished room drew admiring attention in the press.

Following Marquand's death in 1902, the family sold the contents of the room as part of an eleven-day public sale of Marquand's property, and over the intervening years, the Alma-Tadema suite has been widely

scattered. Unsurprisingly, none of the original upholstery survives, but some of the door and window curtains do. In addition to these surviving textiles, critical information about the original components and appearance of the fabrics exist in a series of high-quality images taken of the room in the late 1880s and now preserved at the Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Museums's Photo Archives Center.⁷

Today, four textile panels and two fabric fragments are known from the suite: two window curtains (one in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum and one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), a pair of door curtains, also known as portieres (now in the collection of the Clark Art Institute), and two fabric fragments found during examination and reupholstery of the barrel armchairs in 1980 (one fragment is in the curatorial file for the Victoria and Albert Museum's armchair, and the other has been on loan to the Clark from H. Blairman & Sons, Ltd., London, removed from the other armchair prior to its sale to the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne).

Through examination of each of these surviving textiles, we have determined that the portieres, curtains, and furniture upholstery all shared the same basic fabrics, an olive-green silk rep⁸ (often described in period publications as "grey" or "silvery grey" but in reality of a decidedly green hue) and a silk satin of a rich charcoal/plum color. On the seating furniture, bands of floral embroidery decorated solid panels of the charcoal satin fabric that were trimmed and applied on top of the green silk rep. On the curtains, the charcoal satin fabric forms the background of the lower dado, embroidered in gold, red, and blue to create a fish-scale pattern, along with a narrow horizontal band near the top of each curtain, decorated with embroidered rosettes. Vertical lengths of floral embroidery on the portieres and curtains match the designs of the embroidery on the seating furniture, but are stitched directly onto the green silk rep.

The Portieres and Curtains

The original door and window curtains from the room are itemized (somewhat confusingly) in the 1903 American Art Association sale catalogue of Marquand's estate sale. By comparing this itemized list to the historic images and floor plans of the room, we can determine the number and type of original panels. There were two tall windows in the room, facing 68th Street, which were hung with curtains (two per window) and lace liners. One wide and one narrow doorway led from the mansion's entrance hall to the music room, and two narrow doorways within the room opened on to a small smoking room and a conservatory. Based on the textiles listed in the 1903 sale, three of these doors were fitted with portieres. One window hung with two curtains is clearly visible in several of the historic photos, as is the wide doorway hung with two portieres.

Lot 1372 in *Catalogue of the Art and Literary Property Collected by the Late Henry G. Marquand* specifies "Window Curtains for Two Windows," each strip 9 feet 6 inches by 3 feet

6 inches. Three lots are identified as door curtains (1369, 1370, and 1371). Lot 1369 is listed as 7 feet 7 inches by 3 feet 11 inches. Lot 1370, which has no recorded dimensions, must have featured the wider curtains that hung in the main doorway (each approximately 4 feet 5 inches wide, as evidenced in a 1927 description). The "Door Curtains" in lot 1371 are given dimensions matching those of the window curtains, which was presumably a mistake (they are listed as 9 feet 6 inches high, which is about two feet too long for any of the doorways, as they were all the same height). Lot 1373



Pair of portieres, c. 1885, before restoration. Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, designer. Clark Art Institute.

specifies lace curtains for two windows, "designed by Sir Alma-Tadema. Masks and palmettes and other classic patterns in applique and openwork." Most likely of a delicate nature unlikely to survive continued use, no notice of these lace panels appears after the 1903 sale.

A Hungarian immigrant named Rudolph M. Haan (1856-1932) acquired all of the door and window hangings at the 1903 estate sale, with the possible exception of the lace liners, according to a report in the *New York Sun*.⁹ Haan, who had worked in the wine import and restaurant business in New York, is said to have approached John Jacob Astor (1864-1912) with the idea of creating a hotel where "people of wealth could feel at home."¹⁰ Whether or not prompted in reality by a suggestion from Haan, Astor did build the deluxe St. Regis hotel, which opened in September 1904 with Haan as proprietor and manager. Haan spent several years in advance of the opening buying antiques and other luxurious appointments to create distinctive room interiors, including purchasing a number of objects at the 1903 Marquand sale.¹¹

Haan used at least some of the portieres and curtains within the interior of the St. Regis, according to Moffett's 1905 article,¹² and possibly the furniture as well.

Following Haan's retirement from the St. Regis (and as he was returning to Hungary), the furniture and textiles from the Marquand music room reappeared at auction.¹³ This 1927 sale featured one wide door curtain (7 feet 6 inches by 4 feet 5 inches), one pair of narrower portieres (7 feet 6 inches by 3 feet 10 inches), and two pairs of window curtains (9 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 6 inches) with accompanying lambrequins (each 3 feet long; no width is given but presumably there were two wide or four narrow panels, to coordinate with the four window curtains). Missing from the original textiles are one wide portiere and one set of narrower portieres. The original textile suite did not include lambrequins, suggesting that the missing narrow portieres had been used to create these shorter hangings, and possibly the missing wide one as well.¹⁴

The subsequent whereabouts of the textiles were unknown until 1996, when four of the panels reappeared on the market, all brought to the Brooklyn Museum for examination and review by then-New York-based dealer Simonette Harkim. An examination record kept in the Brooklyn Museum's conservation files indicate that one panel was in good condition, one fair, and two poor; and that "3 of the panels are still gathered into pleats with curtain hooks attached at top edge."¹⁵ Each panel measured approximately 8 feet, 9 inches long. The panel in "good" condition was acquired by the

Brooklyn Museum; the panel in "fair" condition by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the pair in "poor" condition were acquired by the Seattle collector Dr. Brian Coleman. Subsequent examination of these textiles proves that the Brooklyn Museum panel was originally a window curtain, slightly shortened and narrowed at top by the addition of pinch pleats which are still in place; the Metropolitan Museum of Art's panel was likewise an original curtain, altered in the same way, and the two Coleman panels were originally portieres that had been extended in length to match the others and narrowed at top with pinch pleats. Dr. Coleman had his two panels reshaped into door curtains and installed in his house in Seattle.

In 2008, we learned of the whereabouts of the Coleman portieres and visited the owner in Seattle, photographing and measuring the portieres as important early research on the textiles. Around the same time, we visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art to examine their curtain, which had been conserved and stored within a pressure-mounted acrylic box. The Brooklyn Museum's curtain was, at that time, inaccessible for study.

As we began to consider a project to recreate the original upholstery of the piano stools, having access to original materials was critical. We reviewed the object file for the Victoria and Albert Museum's armchair, which included a detailed report of the materials and construction of the upholstery as it existed upon acquisition of the chair in 1980,



L to R: Mimi Benzell and Robert Weed with the Alma-Tadema piano in the Martin Beck Theatre, 1961. Detail of lyre set into end of piano case. Detail of the piano stool cushions' embroidery, c. 1888. Clark Art Institute.



along with a fragment of original green silk rep material removed from the chair at that time. An identical fragment, both representing original scraps that had never been removed during prior reupholstering campaigns, was found on the second armchair and retained on file by H. Blairman & Sons Ltd., one of the dealers involved in the purchase of the two chairs at a 1980 Sotheby Parke Bernet sale.¹⁶ Martin Levy of Blairman loaned this fragment to the Clark, which like the fragment in the Victoria and Albert Museum's file also includes a small fragment of attached silk satin. The Blairman remnant has enabled comparisons between the original silk rep and satin used for the seating furniture with the curtains and portieres, proving that the weave, fabric weight, and colors of the silk rep and satin fabrics of all of the textiles were identical.

In 2012, Dr. Coleman lent the portieres to the Clark for research purposes, which was particularly helpful as they allowed close examination of materials, construction techniques, and embroidery colors and stitches. He then donated them to the Clark, and we began a conservation project to remove the curtain hooks and modern lining, examine the reverse of the textiles, and stabilize them for display in *Orchestrating Elegance*. In 2017, we had the exciting opportunity to examine the Brooklyn Museum curtain in storage, gaining additional critical information that helps piece together the history of these textiles.

Examination of these textiles has yielded a wealth of information concerning their fabrication materials and techniques, along with the alterations they have undergone since their original manufacture. It appears that all four of the existing panels were altered at some point after the 1927 sale to create a unified suite of window curtains. The Coleman/Clark portieres were extended by the addition of a narrowed section from a wider door panel,¹⁷ and their tops were gathered into pinch pleats. The addition of some 19 inches in length meant that the satin decorative band that was originally situated near the top of the portiere was now nearly two feet down from the top. The Brooklyn Museum and Metropolitan Museum of Art curtains were also gathered in pinch pleats, and both had their decorative satin bands moved down nearly two feet, no doubt to bring all four altered panels into visual conformity. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's curtain has been conserved, including moving the decorative satin band back to the top of the curtain, but the Brooklyn Museum's curtain retains the pinch pleats along with the relocated satin band.

The Coleman/Clark portieres, now missing the original top border of plain silk rep that extended above the satin decorative band by several inches (clearly removed at the time of the post 1927 extension), were documented and stabilized

for display by Gretchen Guidess and Annika Amundson of the Williamstown Art Conservation Center.

Reupholstery of the piano stools

The piano stool cushions were designed to look like ancient cushions resting atop intricately inlaid bases. Historical photographs reveal that each cushion was wrapped or upholstered with one material, then topped with a plush coverlet which featured embroidery, intended to complement the embroidered panels of flowers and scrolls upholstered to the seating furniture designed by Alma-Tadema for the room.¹⁸ The coverlets were trimmed with a border of decorative tape. A similarly bordered coverlet was placed underneath each cushion, visible above furniture base of the stool. These top and bottom components were linked together with cording that zig-zagged through evenly spaced openings in their tape borders.

While undoubtedly well-constructed and made of the finest materials, the upholstery was subject to much wear when the piano stools were sat upon by players of the instrument. The original upholstery was replaced early in the twentieth century. The stools were wrapped with a succession of fabrics over subsequent decades, fabrics that may have been fashionable at the time, but very far from the intended aesthetic of the cushions. For example, when the cushions were the property of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Beck, and placed on view in their eponymous theatre, they enjoyed several treatments, including

a burgundy brocade, seen in a press photo of Mimi Benzell and Robert Weede, stars of the musical *Milk and Honey*, which opened in October 1961.

The Clark had long desired to return the cushions to the aesthetic look intended by Alma-Tadema, and the exhibition *Orchestrating Elegance* was an ideal opportunity to engage craftspeople in recreating the distinctive cushions.

Based on the color scheme of the door and window curtains the underlying material was likely an olive-green silk rep fabric, while the coverlet was a dark gray with purple tone, similar in hue to the satin found on the lower register of the curtains. Historical photographs suggest there was a plushness to this top cover, that it was not satin but a velvet with a low pile. Each cover was embroidered with an object surrounded by a wreath, the wreath similar to those found inlaid on the lid of the piano. An oblique view of the piano stools in the completed music room suggests the object within each floral wreath was a lyre, appropriate to a music room designed in the Greco-Pompeian taste. The piano cushion lyres would have corresponded to a lyre embroidered on the central curtain of the music cabinet and the silvered brass low-relief lyre set into the end of the grand piano.



Designed by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, this armchair was part of the suite of furniture made by Johnstone, Norman and Company, London, for the music room in the home of Henry G. Marquand. Victoria and Albert Museum.



L to R: Elizabeth Creeden, *Design for Alma-Tadema Piano Stool Embroidery*, 2016. Piano cushion mid-treatment. Photo by Elizabeth Lahikainen.

Finding appropriate fabrics for this upholstery project proved challenging. Curators worked to find a green silk fabric that approximated the original weave structure and matched the color of the original. A 100% silk taffeta with a small rib structure was selected from a sample card from Swiss producer Weisbrod, now produced by the firm Minnotex. The green color was slightly too bright upon receipt of the fabric, so curators worked with a professional dyeing company in New York to darken the color, matching it to the color of the long-concealed portion of a portiere discovered in 2016.

Velvet fabric swatches were ordered from several high-end upholstery fabric suppliers, but the chosen material was found during a visit to Robert Allen in New York. A 100% linen velvet with low pile in a dark gray color was an ideal choice: it contained a hint of purple and was a close match to the piece of plum/gray fabric found on the armchair remnant, taken along with curators while searching for the appropriate fabric.

A sample of the Robert Allen velvet was sent to embroiderer Elizabeth Creeden of Wellingsly Studio of Plymouth, Massachusetts, to test before the full yardage was ordered. She discovered the material would allow her to stitch accurately if each embroidery passage were padded beforehand with wool felt.¹⁹

Recreating the design of the coverlet embroidery, Creeden studied digitized historical photographs of the stools supplied to her by curators, and looked to the piano lid inlay and the plaque on the end of the piano for inspiration. She chose a wreath of oak leaves from the lid that borders the name of the muse Terpsichore, the muse of chorus and dance (Terpsichore or, in Greek characters, Τερψιχόρη, is the bottom right wreath visible on the lid). Although a wreath of daisies was contemplated, creating the smaller and more numerous petals would be extremely labor-intensive, as cut-to-shape padding was needed underneath all passages of embroidery both to make sure the embroidery wouldn't sink into the pile, and because the pile would actually throw off the needle by as much as an eighth of an inch.

Creeden used the silvered brass lyre set into the end of the piano as the basis for the lyres she embroidered.²⁰ This lyre, the maker of which has not been confirmed, features the ancient instrument with seven strings.²¹ A decorative

horizontal strap appears over the lower right side of the instrument. The Greek letters ΚΑΛΛΟΣ were included around the sides and top of the medallion. "Kallos" translates to "harmonious beauty." Alma-Tadema no doubt asked the sculptor to include this expression as he hoped the piano, the suite of furniture, and door and window curtains that he designed for the music room would prove harmonious with Marquand's collection of paintings, Greek and Etruscan terracottas, reproduction sculptures after ancient bronzes, and other elements found in the room, such as the Leighton ceiling paintings of muses, the marble dado found around the walls of the room, and the stenciled silk walls above the dado, the production of which Alma-Tadema probably also coordinated.

Creeden sketched her design on paper, which was placed atop the stools to test that the size was appropriate. After confirmation that the size was correct (again using historical photographs as evidence), Creeden crafted a watercolor of the design, replete with selected color palette. These decisions followed the careful selection of embroidery threads after consulting the Clark's portieres from the music room.

Elizabeth Creeden and her friend and fellow embroiderer, Janice Card, made a visit to the Clark in November 2016 to view the portieres from the music room. They studied the palette of embroidery thread and the stitching techniques, paying special attention the portion of the portiere that had been added to the original curtain to extend its length, and then later folded behind the curtain, an act that preserved the freshness of the thread colors. Using an embroidery floss palette, Creeden matched the silks of the nineteenth century with contemporary threads, noting whether one was exactly right, or slightly too yellow, and the like. She then ordered similarly colored silk threads from the manufacturers Soie d'Alger, Soie Perlee, Trebizond and Gütermann. While the palette she selected matched the colors in the portieres, she chose specific hues to resonate with elements in the piano, to tie the embroidery into the ensemble and enhance the connection between this newly crafted component and the 130-year-old opulently decorated instrument. Creeden wrote that "The blues reflect the [Poynter] painting and gold emphasizes the music stand" while the brown oak leaves were

stitched with the intention that they match inlaid woods of the piano.²²

A period review of the furniture suite noted that the couches for the room “were finished off with a trellis fringe of grey and gold.”²³ Gold was therefore a good candidate for the trim and cording used in the piano stool cushions, so it was decided to pursue this color tape and cording for the finishing touches on the piano stool cushions. While stock samples from various upholstery firms were reviewed, ultimately, curators engaged Belfry Historic Consultants, Inc. in Beacon, New York, to procure custom dyed and woven trims. The gold chosen was intended to match the gold threads used in the embroidery of the recreated lyres.

To arrive at the desired pattern, scale, and color of the trims, Belfry Historic’s Catherine Buscemi sent the Clark curators samples of trims and tassels. The gold was selected from one tape that combined the desired rich gold with a lighter yellow silk. The tape design was selected from a woven sample in another color, and cording was also selected from a two-color twisted example. The diameter of the cording sample was 5 millimeters, but curators thought it was slightly too wide for the project: the zig-zag cording needed to appear light and delicate while securely bringing the top and bottom coverlets together. We asked that the weavers make the twisted cord in the gold silk that would match the tape, but with a diameter of 4 millimeters, a twenty-percent reduction in the width of this cording. This desired width was arrived at by studying historical photographs and measuring known components within the piano stools in order to make the best estimate of what diameter of cording was required. The weavers employed by Belfry Historic successfully executed tape and cording.

The Clark contracted Elizabeth Lahikainen and Associates of Salem, Massachusetts, a firm that specializes in historical furniture upholstery, to recreate the cushions from the materials assembled by Clark curators. Like Elizabeth Creeden, Elizabeth Lahikainen relied on digital images of historical photographs of the stools to determine how to place

and sew the various parts together. Conversations with curators also helped clarify how to present the materials.

Two upholstery covers—an olive green ribbed polyester material close in color to the original silk rep and purchased by the Clark in 2014, and a ribbed taupe material that covered the cushions prior to the sale of the piano and stools at Christie’s, London, in 1997—were removed from the stools.²⁴ Modern cotton and polyester batting found below these fabric layers were also removed, as was an acidic jute undercover, not original to the cushions. The jute was replaced with lightweight linen on both cushions, protecting original materials below. New conservation-quality fibers were then added to each cushion create a low profile, similar to that viewed in the historical photographs. The custom-dyed green silk taffeta was upholstered to the reshaped cushions, this fabric secured to the cushion’s wood frame base with stainless steel staples. The dark linen velvet was then cut and applied to the undersides of each cushion. The embroidered coverlets executed on the same material were placed on top, centered, and sewn in place. The tape trim was applied to the edges of the upper and lower coverlets subsequently, with spaces reserved for the zig-zag threading of the cording. This cording was pinned in place. Once all decorative elements were properly arranged—a time consuming process—they were sewn into place with thin, delicate needles.

Recreation of the piano stool monograms

Another alteration the piano stools experienced, probably soon after they were sold at Marquand’s 1903 estate sale, was the removal of his monogram along each of the four longer side of the piano stools. The letters “HMG,” for Henry Gurdon Marquand, were inlaid with mother of pearl, ebony and boxwood, surrounded by a boxwood ring of astragal profile. It was likely Colonel William Warren Barbour (1858-1917), who purchased the instrument and matching stools for the low sum of \$9,050 in 1903 (the instrument reportedly had cost Marquand some \$50,000 in 1887), that had these removed as the initials did not relate to him or his family.



L to R: Detail of defaced monogram on piano stool. Clark Art Institute. Furniture conservator Hugh Glover assembles the components for the Marquand monograms. Photo by Tucker Bair.

Because the inlay was set into the precisely channeled cedar veneer of the bench, removing the letters left incised traces of the letters and ring. The spaces were sloppily filled in with sawdust and glue, and the marred area concealed with a square of veneer, stained to match the cedar of the stool.

The Marquand monograms were recreated and returned to the stools for the opening of *Orchestrating Elegance*. Hugh Glover of the Williamstown Art Conservation Center studied the scars of the original monograms, historical photographs of the stools as they originally looked, and surviving monograms on other pieces of furniture from the suite (the armchairs, occasional chairs, and music cabinet all have monograms; each is slightly different in size and decorative detail, with the piano stool monograms having the smallest diameter). The intricately overlapping letters of the monograms were originally outlined in ebony and inlaid with tiny pieces of boxwood and mother-of-pearl, further detailed by grooves carved down the center of each letter form. Modern technologies assisted in achieving the minute scale of some of the inlaid materials. Pear-wood (later stained to resemble ebony) and boxwood elements were laser-cut by FreeFall Laser of North Adams, Massachusetts, as were the voids in the cypress wood substrate. The astragal ring was turned in boxwood by Blueberry Woodworks of Plainfield, Massachusetts, and the mother-of-pearl, too fragile to withstand the force of the laser, was cut by router at Pearl Works in Charlotte Hall, Maryland. Stained, assembled, hand-grooved, and mounted to the small squares of cypress also stained to match the cedar rail of the piano stools, Glover's new monograms, along with the recreated cushions, return the piano stools to a close approximation of their original look.

At the conclusion of the music room commission, when Marquand, in New York, was enjoying the fruits of Alma-Tadema's designs and Johnstone, Norman and Company's industry, Alma-Tadema wrote to Marquand:

You call it [the commission] a labour of love. Of course so it was in one sense[,] because I loved doing it for you & because although I had never done such a thing before I wished to design for you the best I could produce..."²⁵

For the authors of this paper, recreating the Marquand music room for the exhibition *Orchestrating Elegance: Alma-Tadema and Design* was also a "labor of love," a rewarding endeavor encompassing years of fascinating research that not only culminated in the reunion of furniture, paintings, and Greek terracottas from the music room, but also in the conservation of the objects described above.²⁶ Coordinating the treatment of the portieres and replacement of the piano stool cushions and monograms gave us unique insight into Alma-Tadema's carefully researched, yet inventive, designs. Observing these conservation projects in process exponentially increased our admiration for the highly skilled craftsmanship of the Victorian embroiderers, furniture makers and upholsterers. Indeed, in



Piano stool designed by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, after restoration. Above the keyboard is Edward Poynters' painting *The Wandering Minstrels*. Clark Art Institute

partnering with conservators, an embroiderer, and a historical furniture upholsterer, among other specialists, to repair or recreate these works as designed, we were heartened to see that fine craftsmanship, aided by new materials and technologies, thrives today. We feel these carefully considered and executed treatments do justice to Alma-Tadema and the employees of Johnstone, Norman and Company who first displayed the products of their labor in London one hundred and thirty years ago, and to Marquand and his family who surely treasured them in their Gilded Age New York music room. It has been our pleasure to share the achievements of Victorian and contemporary craftspeople with the readers of this journal as evidenced in this remarkable furniture suite.



Notes

1. "Girls Gossip," *Truth*, July 23, 1885, 147.
2. "Girls Gossip," *Truth*, July 23, 1885, 148.
3. Ibid.
4. Reported in "The Chronicle of Art," *The Magazine of Art*, 8 (August 1885): xliii.
5. Codman was providing design services to the firm since at least 1881, when he was awarded a certificate for the design of paneling produced by Johnstone, Jeane & Co., displayed at the Royal Albert Hall, "The Awards for the Furniture Exhibited at the Albert Hall," *Cabinet Maker and Art Furnisher* (November 1, 1881): 84. Codman worked for other firms while in England before being recruited as chief designer of the Providence, Rhode Island-based Gorham Manufacturing Company in 1891. For more on Codman, see Kristin Heron, "William Christmas Codman," *American National Biography* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 5:130.
6. For example, invoices that document work for Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle (located in the Lord Chamberlain's bill books held at the National Archives, Kew) indicate provision of curtains and other decorative fabrics. A March 1890 bill for work done at Buckingham Palace includes a list of silk fabrics and trims, including "56 yards 8 inches rich amber silk, heavy fringe to pattern" and "6 rich amber silk curtain embraces with double tassels to pattern," LC11/287, NA, Kew.
7. The photographs were formerly housed at Cedarmere, the Roslyn Harbor, Long Island home of William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878). Bryant's grandson purchased the house in 1891: Harold Godwin (1858-1931) was married to Marquand's daughter Elizabeth Love (1862-1951), who brought the music room photographs and other ephemera from the Marquand mansion into the Cedarmere collections.
8. Silk rep is characterized by closely spaced, horizontal ribs. Rep was used for window curtains in the mid-nineteenth century, a material "superior to what had been used before," including damask, according to Charles Locke Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and Other Details*, 4th ed. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1878), 99.
9. *Sun* (New York), February 1, 1903, 12.
10. This assertion is made in Samuel Moffett, "The Modern Comforts of Home Measured by the St. Regis, New York's Newest and Most Luxurious Hotel," *Everybody's Magazine*, 12 (1905): n.p.
11. Haan was reported to have spent some \$1,500,000 on interior furnishings in "The St. Regis Opens To-Day," *Sun* (New York), September 4, 1904, 3. His many purchases at the Marquand sale, including most of the music room furniture and textiles, are itemized in reports such as in the *Sun* (New York), February 1, 1903, 12. It is unclear how these decorations were financed, but at least some of them belonged to Haan personally, as a sale of his property was advertised by the New York auction house Silos following his retirement in 1926 including "furniture from the Henry G. Marquand and other famous collections." This sale was advertised in the *New York Times*, October 31, 1927, E7, as taking place November 8-13, 1926, and a catalogue was offered for purchase. No record of either a sale catalogue or any sales results has been located.
12. Moffett, "The Modern Comforts of Home Measured by the St. Regis," n.p.
13. *English, French, Italian, and Spanish Furniture, Velvet and Brocade Hangings, Vestments, Cushions, Covers, Oriental Rugs, Porcelain and Glass, Tableware, and Silver Objects of Art* (New York: American Art Association, October 13-15, 1927). The furniture and textiles from the Marquand music room suite were sold in the third session, October 15, lots 742 A-H.
14. Since each lambrequin measured 3 feet long, four lambrequins would have required in excess of twelve feet of fabric. These presumably were made by culling fabric from the missing pair of narrow door curtains, each of which measured roughly 7 feet 6 inches long. It is possible that the missing wider curtain was used in this alteration process as well, particularly if the lambrequins used only the embroidered silk rep portion of the design, rather than the lower dado of embroidered silk satin. The specific design of the lambrequins is not described in the catalogue entry.
15. Memorandum dated August 15, 1996, Brooklyn Museum conservation file for 1996.124.
16. *Victorian International VIII: Good 19th and 20th Century Porcelain, Silver, Decorations, Works of Art, Furniture, and Rugs* (New York: Sotheby's Parke Bernet, March 26, 1980), lot 536, purchased by Haslam & Whiteway Ltd. in collaboration with H. Blairman & Sons Ltd. and the Fine Art Society. This chair was subsequently sold to the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.
17. These additions measure approximately 19 inches high by approximately 4 feet 3 inches wide. The portieres are approximately 3 feet 10 inches wide, and the added material was reduced in width by means of one fold to correspond. These former extensions, now removed from the conserved Coleman/Clark portieres, has been protected from light and dirt for several decades and therefore, along with the pristine Brooklyn Museum curtain, provide the best evidence we have of the original colors of the silk rep and the embroidery floss originally used to make the textiles for the room.
18. Period reviews of the furniture suite note the richness of the embroidered decoration on the couches: "The upholstering of the seats is in silvery-grey silk, which is traversed by bands of exquisite embroidery of special design in a variety of rich and effective colors," "Classic Furniture for an American Mansion," *The Furniture Gazette* (August 1, 1885): 355.
19. Another gray velvet sample from a British manufacturer had been sent to her previously. This 100% cotton fabric was sized on the reverse, however, and this stiffness made embroidery much more difficult—it significantly threw off her needle—and therefore this fabric was not an option.
20. The lyre and the metals found in the piano's candle stands and music stand were analyzed by the Williamstown Art Conservation Center's Christine Puza, Associate Conservator of Furniture and Wooden Objects, in September 2016. Puza used a Niton XL3t XRF analyzer to determine the metals and alloys present.
21. Alma-Tadema's own famous grand piano, decorated in the Byzantine style and designed by George E. Fox, included an inset plaque at the end of the piano, added after the piano was largely completed in 1878. The subject was *Orpheus on the Waves*, and this low-relief sculpture was made by Giovanni Battista Amendola (Italian, 1848-87). It is quite possible Amendola was asked to make the silvered lyre for the Marquand piano. In addition to the Orpheus, he had sculpted busts of Alma-Tadema and his second wife, Laura, in terracotta and bronze, so was familiar with the artist/designer's requirements. Amendola's death in Naples in late December 1887 would not preclude him from having cast the lyre for the Marquand piano, as the instrument was completed and on display in London in July of that year, newspapers noticing the lyre in their accounts of the instrument.
22. Letter from Elizabeth Creeden to Alexis Goodin, May 2, 2017, Clark Art Institute curatorial files.
23. "Classic Furniture for an American Mansion," 355.
24. A shiny pale green satin was upholstered to each piano stool cushion before their sale at Christie's, London, in 1997, and remained on the piano stools until 2014.
25. Alma-Tadema to Henry Gurdon Marquand, January 16, 1888, Marquand Papers, Princeton University, box 48, folder 3.
26. These conservation projects were made possible by generous funding provided by Sylvia and Leonard Marx, The Coby Foundation. Ltd., and Robert D. Kraus.



Jeannette M. Thurber, president of the National Conservatory of Music of America, in her office, likely at the original location of 128 East 17th Street, New York. Byron Company, 1905. Museum of the City of New York.

A Musicale for the Maestro

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK, JEANNETTE THURBER,
AND THE NATIONAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC OF AMERICA

Majda Kallab Whitaker

Tracing an Episode in New York Musical History

Czech composer Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) captured American newspaper headlines and widespread public attention during his eventful New York residency from 1892 to 1895. The celebrated composer was, however, publicity shy and avoided private social occasions, preferring to be at home with family, at work on his musical compositions, or visiting a Broadway café with colleagues, according to those who were close to him.¹ One notable exception appears to have been a special musicale and reception held in his honor at the residence of Jeannette Meyer Thurber (1850-1946), his American patron and the founder and president of the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York. The event, which took place on the afternoon of Thursday, January 10, 1895, received coverage in the society pages of the *New York Herald* the next day.² Dvořák immediately clipped the article and forwarded it by steamship to his children at home in Bohemia, with a letter expressing his delight at being invited to the Thurber residence and circulating among the distinguished guests.³ To appreciate the rarity of this occasion and the uncharacteristic response of “Dr. Dvořák,” as Thurber addressed him, it is useful to examine the events leading up to the occasion, and to explore the relationship that the Bohemian composer enjoyed with the visionary woman responsible for bringing him to America.

The musicale was a personal and professional honor for Dvořák but also held significance in the ongoing publicity campaigns of Thurber, who gained prominence as an innovative and energetic music impresario in Gilded Age New York. Born in New York City, musically educated in Paris, and married to a millionaire wholesale foods merchant, Thurber made her mark in the music and opera world through a series of increasingly bold philanthropic projects culminating in the National Conservatory of Music of America.⁴ Established by New York State charter in 1885 and active for over thirty years, the Conservatory was a leading and highly influential public institution for music study in the United States in the late nineteenth century.⁵ It was also one of the most progressive educational institutions of its day, offering full scholarships to students who demonstrated talent, regardless of race, creed,

gender, or physical disability, and providing unprecedented opportunities for many African Americans and women, among others. Supported principally by Thurber’s wealth, the institution was modeled after the Paris Conservatoire, and aimed to “place the best obtainable musical education within the reach of all.”⁶ American musical independence was Thurber’s long-term goal, eliminating the need for American

students to study abroad and fostering a national school of composition. With Dvořák, who was seen as an exemplar of nationalism in music, Thurber was able to develop her ambitious idea for training young American composers, and the years of Dvořák’s residency marked the high point of the Conservatory’s history.

By the time of the musicale in January 1895, Antonín Dvořák had completed two and a half years as musical director and professor of composition and instrumentation at the Conservatory, and created almost all of his great works from the American period.⁷ The “New World” Symphony had premiered with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall on December 16, 1893, and was met with instant acclaim, not withstanding the transatlantic debate over its inclusion of African American and Native American musical themes, a highly controversial idea at the time.⁸ During his summer sojourn of 1893 in Spillville, Iowa, the hometown of his faithful assistant Josef Kovařík, he had written the “American” Quartet and “American” Quintet in a flurry of composing activity, inspired by the bucolic surroundings of that small Czech community in America’s Midwest.



Announcement of the premiere of the Symphony
“From the New World,” December 16, 1893.
Carnegie Hall Archives.

He had completed the Sonatina for Violin and Piano, opus 100, touchingly dedicated to his children; the *Biblical Songs*; the *Humoresques*; and, in January 1895, was working on another great masterpiece, the Cello Concerto. Despite his preference for an insular life, Dvořák was open to the sights and sounds of New York, viewing with excitement the October 1892 celebrations marking the 400th anniversary of Columbus’s arrival in America, which coincided with his arrival, and going on frequent forays to see the trains, ships, and Central Park attractions which so fascinated him. All of which seems to have enhanced his ability to compose music that reflected the “American” ambience.



National Conservatory of Music of America, (center and right) 126-128 East 17th Street, New York City. Byron Company, 1905. Museum of the City of New York.

Jeannette Thurber “always aimed at big game,” as music critic Henry C. Finck once observed.⁹ Dvořák had been catapulted to fame by his *Slavonic Dances* in the late 1870s and championed by no less than Brahms. He was recognized as one of the greatest living composers, acclaimed in Europe and England, but in the United States he became a truly international celebrity owing to the coverage surrounding his every activity and utterance. Much of that was attributable to Thurber’s publicity acumen and energy: what was good for the composer was good for the Conservatory. Thurber unabashedly promoted Dvořák to an America that was captivated with his musical genius and rags-to-riches story. Henry Krehbiel, dean of American music critics, wrote: “The Fate which gave the world a composer of music robbed Bohemia of a butcher.”¹⁰ Dvořák’s son Otakar, in his memoir *Antonín Dvořák, My Father*, reported that after the triumphal premiere of the “New World” Symphony, requests came from merchants anxious to use his father’s name on products, and it was not unusual to see ties, shirts, walking sticks, and many other products imprinted with “Antonín Dvořák” in shop windows of the biggest stores.¹¹ Celebrity branding, it appears, was already in fashion. This was the golden age of music in New York, with large concert-and-opera-going audiences, and Dvořák’s presence offered visible proof that New York was a musical capital as well as the world’s greatest industrial and financial center.

Thurber was the visionary who negotiated the contract that brought Dvořák to America in September 1892. The position of Conservatory director had been open for several years, and it was Thurber’s desire to fill the post with a composer of



Dvořák’s Certificate of Honorary Membership in the New York Philharmonic (The Philharmonic Society of New York), April 18, 1894. Courtesy Antonín Dvořák III.

international stature. The school was renowned for its faculty, many of them European-trained, recruited by Thurber at home and abroad. Thurber had gained long-sought Congressional recognition for the National Conservatory in 1891, which empowered the school to award doctoral and honorary degrees, an important milestone for the six-year old institution. The highlight of Thurber’s publicity campaign in Washington, D.C. was the performance of an all-American music program with the Conservatory orchestra, followed by a reception for dignitaries at which she made an attention-getting appearance in “a gown of black velvet with a front of point lace from the time of Henri I.”¹² A photograph records Thurber in the attire she wore, giving a sense of her ego, beauty, and ambition.

Negotiating the Contract That Brought Dvořák to America

What may have ultimately spurred Thurber’s invitation to Dvořák was the opening of Carnegie Hall in May 1891 and Tchaikovsky’s heralded visit to New York to conduct at the opening concerts, which generated the kind of press and public excitement that Thurber desired.¹³ The negotiations with Dvořák began just one month later, shortly before the composer received an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University in England.¹⁴ Thurber sent the initial 20-word telegram from Paris, where she was based, to Prague: “would you accept position director national conservatory of music New York October 1892 also lead six concerts of your works.”¹⁵ She audaciously offered the enticement of an unheard of salary of \$15,000 per academic year for two years, and after

seven months of negotiations with a somewhat reluctant Dvořák, sealed the deal in early 1892. The only known original copy of the unusually long, six-page hand-written contract, signed “Antonín Dvořák Prague, 1892,” was found among the papers of a Thurber descendant, where it had been safeguarded as a “trophy,” and has been acquired by the Dvořák American Heritage Association in New York City.¹⁶

Even before receiving the signed contract, Thurber began publicizing Dvořák’s as-yet-unconfirmed arrival. She announced a juried competition for the best American compositions, “emphasizing the engagement of Dr. Dvořák as director” at the Conservatory.¹⁷ Behind the scenes, Thurber impatiently negotiated: Dvořák wished to teach only the most talented students, to have a precise payment schedule, and to have his responsibilities fully detailed, so as to leave time for his composing and to have the summer free of obligations.¹⁸ She acquiesced to almost all his demands, and he finally sent a tentative letter of acceptance in mid-December 1891—“Mrs. Dvořák and my eldest daughter, Otilie, are very anxious to see Amerika but I am a little afraid that I shall not be able to please you in everything in my new position.”¹⁹ The contract was signed only after Dvořák submitted the decision to a family vote, including his wife and six children.²⁰

Eager to mount a full publicity campaign, Thurber immediately requested assorted materials for publication, while offering reassuring words: “Do not worry. We Americans will be very considerate.”²¹ She floated the idea that Dvořák compose a cantata to be performed at his first concert. The work was to be based on a lengthy patriotic poem, *The American Flag*, but it could not be completed in time; instead Dvořák composed his “Columbian” *Te Deum*, which he premiered at Carnegie Hall in October 1892.²² Thurber would leave no stone unturned in devising press angles for the many newspapers and periodicals covering musical developments in that period.

Controversy and Triumph: The “New World” Symphony

Soon after coming to America—accompanied by his wife Anna, two oldest children, and personal secretary Josef Kovařík—the composer confided to his Czech friend and patron Josef Hlávka:

The Americans expect great things of me and the main thing is, so they say, to show them to the promised land and kingdom of a new and independent art, in short, to create a national music...Forgive me for lacking a little in modesty, but I am only telling you what the American papers are constantly writing.²³

Dvořák also described his work at the Conservatory:

As regards my own work, this is my programme: On Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 9-11, I have composition; twice a week orchestra practice from 4-6 and the rest of my time is my own. You see that it is not a great deal and Mrs. Thurber is very ‘considerate’ as she wrote to me in Europe that she would be.²⁴

Lastly, he touched on his domestic affairs:

We live in 17th street East, 327 (only 4 mins. from the school) and are very satisfied with the flat. Mr. Steinway sent me a piano immediately—a lovely one and, of course, free of charge, so that we have one nice piece of furniture in our sitting-room.²⁵

Within the year, Dvořák’s strength and resolve would be tested in a period of intense publicity activity, likely fostered by Thurber and her newspaper contacts, according to Dvořák scholar Michael Beckerman.²⁶ As Dvořák finished composing his masterwork, the *Symphony No. 9* in E minor, in late May 1892, he released his now famous statement to a *New York Herald* reporter thought to be James Creelman, who specialized in high profile “scoops” and was possibly under retainer from Thurber.²⁷ Published under the headline “The Real Value of Negro Melodies: Dr. Dvořák Finds Them The Basis For An American School of Music,” Dvořák’s declaration sent shockwaves across the Atlantic:

In the Negro melodies of America I find all that is necessary for a great and noble school of music. They are pathetic, tender, passionate, melancholy, solemn, religious, bold, merry, gay or what you will. It is music that suits itself to any mood or any purpose. There is nothing in the whole range of composition that cannot be supplied with themes from this source. The American musician understands these tunes, and they move sentiment in him. They appeal to his imagination because of their association.²⁸

Dvořák further asserted: “These are the folk songs of America and your composers must turn to them.”²⁹ Embedded in the article was a similarly controversial press release from Thurber, announcing that the Conservatory would establish free “Classes for Colored Pupils” for the training of professional music teachers, an indication of her strong commitment to offering music education to all with talent, though unfortunately still along segregated lines.³⁰ Thurber’s release mentioned that the initiative had the support of Dvořák, as the conservatory director, as well as of trustee Mrs. Collis P. Huntington, an unusual but fitting ally at this critical juncture. One of the richest women in America, Arabella Huntington and her railroad baron husband were not socially accepted in New York’s rarified circles, but were known as long-time supporters of African American educational institutions in the South, where Huntington had railroad interests.³¹ Here as in other cases, Thurber’s contacts and alliances showed remarkable openness and flexibility, which were closely tied to her vision of the Conservatory as a site of equal educational opportunity.

When Dvořák found his “radical” ideas challenged from many sides, he wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Herald* confirming his beliefs and praising the work of Jeannette Thurber and the Conservatory.³² “It is my firm opinion that I find a sure foundation in the Negro melodies for a new national school of music,” he stated. Dvořák had a good working knowledge of the English language, but must have received assistance from Thurber or one of her associates in drafting the important letter, which echoed her own ideas. On a personal note, Dvořák stated that he was convinced that America’s composers of the future would come from among the poor, as he himself had done; among his coterie of talented students were those who would fulfill that prediction.³³ Kovařík, who witnessed Thurber’s publicity maneuvers in this period, commented about her possible role in the controversy: “Simply, as a practical lady, she bided her time, for she was strongly convinced that her institution would benefit from extraordinary publicity from the whole matter, without much effort or expense.”³⁴ It would seem that Thurber welcomed almost all publicity, so long as for the cause of American

music, and was willing to take risks for the benefit her institution.

One of the sources of Dvořák's knowledge of African American music was Harry T. Burleigh, a black student at the Conservatory who assisted him in various capacities, and who Dvořák invited to his home on numerous occasions to sing spirituals.³⁵ Burleigh would enjoy a long career as a baritone chorister, soloist, composer, and arranger of art songs and spirituals. Another source was music critic and Conservatory faculty member James Gibbons Huneker, who brought Dvořák an article of interest titled "Negro Music" from a contemporary publication, as Beckerman has established.³⁶ The melodic and rhythmic aspects of African American and Native American musical sources were new and fascinating to Dvořák, though he drew parallels with European-derived folk music.³⁷ Dvořák also found inspiration in Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*, and sketched ideas for an opera he hoped to compose.³⁸ With characteristic genius, he transformed these various elements into an original composition bearing his own distinctive imprint, at the same time reflecting all that was new to him in "American" energy, style, and variety.³⁹

When sending his new symphony to the New York Philharmonic conductor Anton Seidl in preparation for the premiere, Dvořák signed and titled the score "Z nového světa" in Czech, and "From the New World" in English.⁴⁰ The composer was aware that the ambiguity of his words could lead to further speculation about their meaning among the waiting reporters, but seemed to enjoy the confusion it might cause. Kovařík called it the "Master's innocent prank," insisting that the title meant nothing more than 'Impressions and Greetings from the New World,' as he (Dvořák) himself had stated on more than one occasion.⁴¹ Others would read more into it, leading to headlines such as "First American Symphony" and "First American Composer, A Bohemian," which Kovařík and Dvořák did not appreciate.⁴²

At the official premiere with the New York Philharmonic, on December 16, 1893, most of the reviewers wrote favorably about the symphony's musical attributes and its warm reception by the public. Henry Krehbiel, the distinguished critic at the *New-York Tribune*, gained the privilege of interviewing Dvořák and publishing a preview of the symphony a day in advance of the premiere.⁴³ He commented: "...in the new work Dr. Dvořák has exemplified his theories touching the possibility of founding a National school of composition on the folk-song of America."⁴⁴ The extensive *New York Times* coverage by veteran critic William J. Henderson offered a close analysis of the musical sources and concluded that Dvořák had succeeded in composing an American work.⁴⁵ Alone as a naysayer, disgruntled James Huneker, who did not get the exclusive story that he desired, contended falsely that the symphony had been composed in Bohemia and had no American character whatsoever.⁴⁶ He continued to have great praise for Thurber, however, and her work at the Conservatory (where he was employed on the faculty). The issue would continue to be debated, but Dvořák asserted that nothing he wrote would have been the same had he not been in America.⁴⁷

The *New York Herald* described the triumphal scene at the premiere as follows:

The famous Czech composer would certainly not be easily satisfied if he were not extremely satisfied with the enthusiasm which his new symphony evoked in a very

large audience. After the second movement, he was given an enthusiastic ovation. Storms of applause resounded from all sides. Everyone present turned to look in the direction in which the conductor Anton Seidl was looking. It was clear wither their gaze was directed. At last a sturdily built man of medium height, straight as a fir-tree from the forest, whose music he so splendidly interprets, was discovered by the audience. From all over the hall there are cries of 'Dvorak! Dvorak!' And while the composer is bowing we have the opportunity to observe this poet of tone who is able to move the heart of so great an audience...Dr. Dvorak, hands trembling with emotion, indicates his thanks to Mr. Seidl, the orchestra, and the audience, whereupon he disappears into the background while the symphony continues. After the conclusion of the work he is called for with stormy insistence. He bows again and again and ever new storms of applause break out...⁴⁸

Dvořák described the same scene from his point of view, when writing his publisher Simrock in Berlin about the success—Simrock would publish the work in 1894:

...The success of the symphony was tremendous; the papers write that no composer has ever had such success. I was in a box; the hall was filled with the best New York audience, the people clapped so much that I had to thank them from the box like a king!...You know how glad I am if I can avoid such ovations, but there was no getting out of it, and I had to show myself will-nilly. Seidl said he would wire you about the success.⁴⁹

Thurber later recalled the historic moment of the premiere in an article titled "Dvořák as I Knew Him," published in *The Etude* magazine in November 1919:

In looking back over my thirty-five years of activity as President of the National Conservatory of Music of America there is nothing I am so proud of as having been able to bring Dr. Dvořák to America, thus being privileged to open the way for one of the world's symphonic masterpieces...A gala day in New York's concert life was the first performance of the New World Symphony by the Philharmonic Orchestra, under Anton Seidl. It was the most important event in the long history of the Philharmonic.⁵⁰

And without question it was a personal triumph for a visionary New Yorker, using her wealth, power, and superb publicity skills to snare this "big game" for her pioneering institution.⁵¹ The appreciative New York Philharmonic, founded in 1842 and coming into its prime under the direction of Anton Seidl, voted Dvořák an honorary member in April 1894.⁵² To this day, the "New World" Symphony is their signature piece, and one of the most frequently played works in the Western cannon of classical music.

Financial Difficulties and an Honorary Musicale

One year later, however, Thurber was having difficulty keeping up with her financial obligations, and was seriously in arrears in her payment to Dvořák. Her husband, Francis B. Thurber (1842-1907), a wealthy wholesale merchant and leading importer of coffee, tea, and other fancy foodstuffs, had experienced financial reversals in the Panic of 1893 and his firm had gone into receivership in November 1893, just before the triumphal premiere of the "New World" Symphony.⁵³ A progressive thinker and anti-monopolist, well known for

taking part in public debates, Francis Thurber fully supported his wife's philanthropic ventures until his business began to fail.⁵⁴ While it is generally known that Dvořák was offered a fortune—the equivalent of nearly \$400,000 in today's terms each year for the initial two-year term of his contract—it is not widely known that the payments of his salary were already in arrears by January 1893, four months after his arrival.⁵⁵

This vexing payment problem has been analyzed closely in articles by Dvořák scholars, who described the anxiety that this must have caused the composer, with a cloud hanging over his head during much of his American stay.⁵⁶ His respect for Mrs. Thurber does not seem to have diminished, but with his wife Anna's encouragement, he sent letters demanding payment and even threatened to reveal the problems to the press, which would have been a devastating blow for Thurber.⁵⁷ He did not share his troubles in his correspondence with friends or associates during his residency, and it is a testament to Dvořák's patience that he maintained a good working relationship with Thurber, and appears never to have ceased admiring her diligence and hard work on behalf of the Conservatory.⁵⁸ Dvořák likely realized that it was better to keep quiet about uncomfortable matters, and leave those at home with the impression that he was still receiving the highest salary ever paid to a composer.

It was against the background of these financial straits that the afternoon musicale of January 10, 1895 was presented by "Mrs. F. M. Thurber (sic) and the Misses Thurber in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Antonin Dvorak at their residence, No. 49 West Twenty-fifth street."⁵⁹ According to the *New York Herald*, it was the first of three musicales to be given by Mrs. Thurber during the winter, and featured

an attractive musical programme...consisting of Handel's 'Largo' by the National Conservatory Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Dvorak; Gounod's ariette 'Romeo et Juliette,' sung by Mme. Lillian Blauvelt, and the Hungarian Fantasia by Liszt, which was given on the piano by Miss Bertha Vlsanska.⁶⁰

Ms. Blauvelt was a star student at the Conservatory who became a successful opera singer and Miss Vlsanska, of Czech origin, was a child prodigy who had appeared in an earlier concert organized by Thurber to benefit the *New York Herald* Clothing Drive.⁶¹

Thurber's guests at the private musicale were from the upper echelons of New York society. It was a coup for her to be able to feature her normally reticent celebrity musical director as guest conductor. Any misgivings about Thurber's erratic payments were put aside by Dvořák as he participated in the event and enthusiastically wrote to his five absent children about his delight at being introduced to millionaires in the Thurber home. He reported with pleasure that no one else from the Conservatory had been invited.⁶² He urged his eldest daughter Otilie to look over the published guest list, and suggested that she might recognize the names of the rich and famous, no translation necessary here: "Peabody—millionár! Douglas—millionár! dr. Parkhurst atd" (*a tak dal* meaning "and so forth").⁶³ Meeting a millionaire was probably the secret wish of every Bohemian in America, something to talk about back home, and, for all his celebrity, Dvořák was no different in this desire. Reverend Dr. Charles Henry Parkhurst was a newsmaker in his own right, the well-known minister of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church and a Tammany Hall reformer close to the progressive-minded Thurburs.⁶⁴ Dvořák

was obviously flattered to be in this company, overcoming his usual feelings of social awkwardness. The event celebrated Dvořák's accomplishments as director of the Conservatory, but also played to his need for personal attention as Thurber sought assurances that he would continue to honor his contract, even while she was alarmingly behind in payments.

For Thurber, the musicale and the "flattery offensive" were an apparent success, and Dvořák eventually gave her a verbal promise that he would return. But once in Bohemia that summer, he reversed his decision, citing family reasons, and informed her with deep regret he would not be able to continue as director of the Conservatory. After listing his reasons, he concluded the letter:

Mrs. Thurber, you know well, how much I value your friendship, how much I admire your love for music, for its development you have done so much and therefore I may hope that you will agree with me...⁶⁵

His respect was evident, for he and Thurber had gained much from their mutually beneficial American years together. Despite the payment difficulties, he returned to Bohemia enriched by his American experience, with musical masterpieces and a financially improved situation enabling him to better negotiate with his publisher, and perhaps most important, he moved on to new musical frontiers in the realm of tone poems and opera, the seeds of which were suggested in the "New World" Symphony itself. Thurber, meanwhile, enjoyed the reflected glory and glamour of Dvořák's residency and the reputation of having negotiated the deal that brought Dvořák to America and gave birth to a masterwork in the world musical repertory.

Thurber attempted to convince Dvořák to return, and when he did not, to save face, she offered the press explanations about Dvořák's homesickness and his work on a new composition, according to Kovařík, who claimed the stories about Dvořák's homesickness were greatly exaggerated and a cover-up for the underlying reason he did not return, which was Thurber's unpaid debts.⁶⁶ The Conservatory continued to operate at different locations into the late 1920s and existed on paper at least until 1946, the year that Thurber died at nearly the age of 96.⁶⁷ But the Conservatory would never again achieve what it had been in the Dvořák years, "a gathering place for the most promising young American composers" and their celebrated teacher, and an institution that brought critical attention and recognition to the importance of non-European musical sources in American music.⁶⁸

Visualizing Jeannette Thurber at Home and at Work

Thanks to Thurber's promotional skills and foresight in commissioning photography from the noted turn-of-the-century photographer Joseph Byron, we are able to visualize the Conservatory where, in its heyday, Dvořák served as director and fostered an American school of composition.⁶⁹ The photographs include the only existing image of the Conservatory's original site at 126-128 East 17th Street, and the administrative office from which Conservatory president Thurber launched her various projects and publicity campaigns. We are also able to look inside Thurber's impressive private residence at 49 West 25th Street, the scene of the musicale that Dvořák so enjoyed.⁷⁰ Thurber commissioned the photographs in 1905, when she was in the process of moving the Conservatory to a new location, retrospectively documenting her contributions to the New

York musical world in the period of Antonín Dvořák's residency.

The photographic views of Thurber's residential interiors reveal her cultivated taste and lifestyle preferences as an important musical philanthropist. They also raise the interesting possibility that her sister-in-law, Candace Thurber Wheeler (1827-1923), the interior design pioneer and associate of Louis Comfort Tiffany before establishing her own enterprise, may have left her imprint on its decoration.⁷¹ The Wheelers had owned the house previously and sold it to Francis (Frank) Thurber—Wheeler's favorite younger brother—when they ran into financial problems in 1877.⁷² Jeannette Thurber and Candace Wheeler, though 22 years apart in age, shared similar ideals in their philanthropic endeavors, offering vital support to women and disadvantaged groups with their post-Civil War educational projects. With Francis Thurber as the financial backer, the three like-minded individuals joined together in 1883 to found Onteora, the Catskill mountain summer colony for artists and writers.⁷³

Thurber's "artistic" drawing room and library would have been designed initially in the late 1870s or the early 1880s. She

would have needed a fashionable residence to help define her public image as a patron of music, deploying all the resources at hand, including an inviting at-home salon with a concert grand piano. The eclectic furnishings mixed cultures and styles, incorporating a particularly wide range of chair types from antique to "modern," including an exotic carved Indian lounge chair.⁷⁴ While it was considered artistic to have assorted unmatched chairs in a room, these likely represented a layering of acquisitions made by Thurber over a 25-year span to provide seating for her intimate concerts. Decorative features such as the animal skin floor covering, the patterned textiles, curtains, and wallcovering, and the Japoneseque-style shelving over the mantel, displaying choice ceramics, exemplified the Aesthetic Movement vocabulary that was then in vogue.

Commanding pride of place in the drawing room was a dramatic, full-length portrait of a woman—most certainly the attractive, dark-eyed Jeannette Thurber in a dark gown with white ruffles that set off her features. Ostrich-feather fan in hand, Thurber posed seated sideways and exposed a dainty shoe from under her long gown's train. The artist's signature,



Top, L to R: Views of the Drawing Room of Jeannette M. Thurber's residence, with portrait of Thurber by Georges Jules Victor Clairin visible, 49 West 25th Street, New York City. Bottom, L to R: Views of the Library of Jeannette M. Thurber's residence, with Aesthetic Movement fireplace and cabinet visible. Byron Company, 1905. Museum of the City of New York.

visible in the remarkably detailed Byron photograph, reveals it was painted in 1879 by the Beaux-Arts-trained French artist Georges Jules Victor Clairin (1843-1919), who depicted actress Sarah Bernhardt in a comparable, though far more suggestive pose three years earlier.⁷⁵ Portraits by French artists were de rigueur among the leading New York society ladies of the day, and this one, with its seductive appeal, was a standout. Thurber is known to have circulated in French musical and theatrical circles on her frequent trips abroad, meeting with such well-known celebrities as Bernhardt, as the striking portrait and choice of fashionable artist help corroborate.⁷⁶

Thurber was by all accounts a beautiful, petite woman with a vivacious, sparkling manner. Born in New York City in 1850, she was from a socially prominent family, apparently of independent means: her father, Henry Meyer (1809-1894), was a Danish immigrant and amateur musician, and her mother, Anne Maria Coffin Price (1816-1895), was descended from old New England, Long Island, and New Jersey stock.⁷⁷ Thurber was guarded about family details, but in the few personal notes that she recorded, mentioned that her father was a “cultured man” with a “fine library,” and played for several years in an amateur string quartet founded by Richard Grant White, an eminent critic and father of architect Stanford White.⁷⁸ Joseph W. Drexel, the banker, collector of musical instruments, and Metropolitan Museum trustee, was another quartet member.⁷⁹ Thurber had life membership in several American genealogical societies, and some of her nationalistic spirit may be traced to her distinguished heritage.

Sent to France to study music as a young woman, before her marriage in 1869 at age 19, Thurber acquired the social skills that would be an asset in New York, where everything French was prized among the upper class. It was in France, seeing the advantages of government support of music study, that she apparently resolved to create an American institution along the lines of the French Conservatoire.⁸⁰ She shared an interest in France with one of her American admirers, James Gibbons Huneker, the music critic, pianist, and faculty member at the Conservatory, who described her in his 1920 memoir *Steeplejack*:

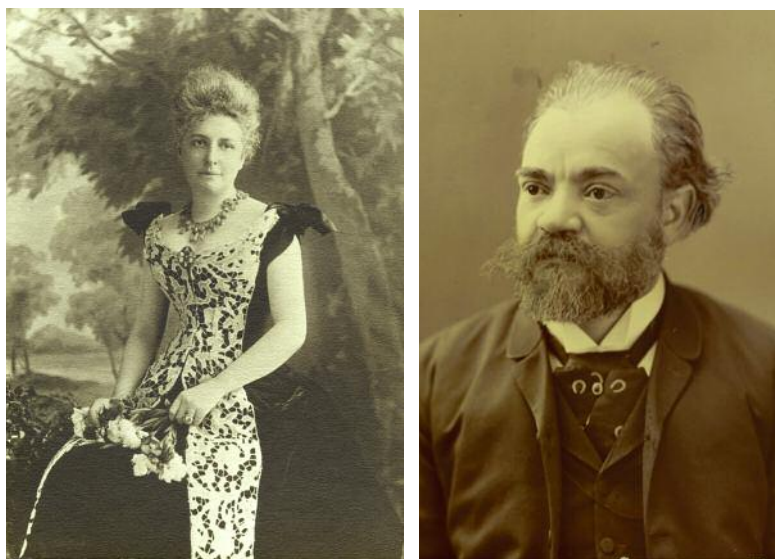
She was a picturesque woman, Gallic in her ‘allures,’ but more Spanish than French in features. She spoke French like a Parisian, and after 30 years, I confess that her fine, dark eloquent eyes troubled my peace more than once. But I only took it out in staring.⁸¹

It was Huneker’s “chief duty,” as press representative and secretary to Thurber, “to pay a daily visit to her residence,” where he “sat for an hour and admired her good looks.”⁸² He found she had changed little over the years, “with only a grey lock or two, which only makes her more picturesque than ever.”⁸³

Thurber’s own substantial library, adjoining the drawing room, was custom-fitted with bookcase cabinets and shelving in the Aesthetic style. The monumental wall system and tiled fireplace surround made a striking statement, filled with Chinese and Japanese porcelain. Outsized music and art volumes were casually placed on side tables and cabinet surfaces. While living abroad clearly influenced Thurber’s

taste, the rooms did not mimic European models. Rather, they projected an informal style, one described as “American self-expression” in Candace Wheeler’s *Principles of Home Decoration* of 1903, philosophically in keeping with Thurber’s own ideas about the need for developing an American style of musical expression free from European imitation and domination.⁸⁴

These were spaces created around the idea of music, entertainment, and intellectual discussion, literally a stage for Thurber as a modern woman engaged in philanthropic ventures. It was here that Thurber was interviewed for the *New-York Tribune* article that introduced her to the public in



L to R: Jeannette M. Thurber, dressed in the gown worn at the American music concert, March 26, 1890 in Washington, D.C., c. 1890. Courtesy The Lilly Library, Indiana University. Antonín Dvořák, c. 1893. Courtesy Dvořák American Heritage Association, New York.

1885, as she simultaneously launched her ambitious American School of Opera, American Opera Company, and the affiliated National Conservatory of Music of America.⁸⁵ “A High Priestess of Opera,” read the headline: “Mrs. F. B. Thurber’s Enthusiasm. A Chat With Her About Opera Sung by Americans.”⁸⁶ The reporter described meeting with Thurber in her home:

Sitting in one of her parlors the other day, surrounded by all the artistic belongings that modern parlors are so often filled with, she chatted over the prospects of the school for opera.⁸⁷

This was the inner sanctum where Thurber met daily with her press secretary, James Huneker, to plot publicity strategies, and it was also where Thurber honored Dr. and Mrs. Dvořák at the afternoon musicale of January 1895, with wealthy guests jockeying for position to see the celebrated maestro conduct the student orchestra and hear the talented soloists in a short program of virtuoso pieces.

The photograph of the National Conservatory, occupying identical Italianate row houses at 126-128 East 17th Street, solves a mystery that long troubled Dvořák scholars, who could not find a single trace of the Conservatory building where Dvořák served as director.⁸⁸ Both buildings were

demolished to make way for Washington Irving High School built at that location in 1911, leaving the 1905 Byron image as the only surviving record. The Byron photographs also documented the new Conservatory location—incorporating Thurber’s own residence—with the name “National Conservatory of Music of America” emblazoned across the facades of two adjoining buildings at 47–49 West 25th Street. The consolidation move was likely necessitated by continued financial setbacks.⁸⁹ Together with several views of rehearsal and study rooms, the photographic series offers a snapshot of turn-of-the-century musical facilities at a foremost music institution in America.⁹⁰

The Byron portrait of Thurber in her Conservatory office shows her seated at a cluttered desk in a confined workspace, under a photographic portrait of her husband.⁹¹ As founder, president, and chief spokesperson for the National Conservatory of Music of America, Thurber cultivated the image of a business executive. She was a diligent administrator, a workaholic, ever present in the music world, “hounding” potential donors, as William Steinway once complained, and drafting her own correspondence with international celebrities.⁹² An 1887 article in the *New-York Tribune* declared:

Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber has business enough upon her hands to keep several women, to say nothing of men, occupied from morning till night. Yet she manages to dispatch it all in a business-like way.⁹³

As a role model for working women, her preferences in business attire were mentioned in a *Washington Post* article published in 1890, which labeled her “a devotee of the tweed cutaway coat jauntily buttoned over a waistcoat and soft-linen shirt.”⁹⁴ It was not unusual for her to be mentioned in national columns as a style-setter, as she became a household name.

Thurber made her presence known in the newspapers through interviews and public statements, and was not averse to boasting. This was particularly true in the period of her opera ventures, which opened her up to criticism on more than a few occasions, and had uncomfortable repercussions for her as the defendant in multiple lawsuits. The *New-York Tribune* article, titled “Every Hour Full of Work: What Mrs. Thurber Does for American Opera,” offers a small taste of the hyperbole.⁹⁵ It bolstered her image as a busy executive to be envied by Wall Street types, drawing analogies between her work—she had just travelled to Chicago to settle outstanding opera bills—and that of a newly appointed trustee, the well-known financier Washington E. Conner, with whom she served on the Conservatory executive committee, as the article took care to mention. Never mind that Conner was the former broker and partner of vilified “robber baron” Jay Gould; it suited Thurber’s purposes to be aligned with an important backer from the financial world who she recruited to shore up the finances of her foundering opera company.⁹⁶

Thurber’s typical workday, as reported in the *New-York Tribune* article, consisted of responding to an “appalling amount of correspondence” with the help of a stenographer and other assistants.⁹⁷ The article listed her responsibilities as:

watching the finances and consulting over the plans of the company, laying out details, instructing lawyers—for they have to bend to her will—listening to singers, looking out for promising material, watching over her pet Conservatory of Music and talking to the board to straighten out matters occasionally.⁹⁸

She also found time to “write educational articles and to show a lively interest in kindred subjects.”⁹⁹ Friends worried that she was “working herself to death,” yet the newspaper reported “her vitality is remarkable.”¹⁰⁰ Articles like this gave Thurber important public exposure and served to popularize her projects, which would ultimately benefit the Conservatory by attracting new students and contributions.¹⁰¹

The scope of Thurber’s Conservatory activities and responsibilities was extremely broad, and her ideas far reaching. As one should emphasize here, Thurber is credited with being among the first to provide comprehensive musical training with “a broad-based academic program emphasizing the technical aspects of music as well as music history.”¹⁰² The Conservatory’s faculty, hand-picked by Thurber, was considered equal to that of any foreign conservatory.¹⁰³ The founding trustees, a “who’s who” assembled by Thurber utilizing her many contacts and remarkable persuasive powers, included some of America’s wealthiest industrialists, financiers, and philanthropists, among them Andrew Carnegie, Henry G. Marquand, William K. Vanderbilt, and Joseph W. Drexel.¹⁰⁴ Thurber’s network of “friends” was indeed large and influential, but as she was to discover, the presence of a distinguished group of trustees did not necessarily guarantee the desired capitalization, leaving the task principally to Thurber and her husband, a task that became increasingly difficult.

The tireless Thurber proved herself to be a “friend of music;” in the words of an editorial appreciation published in *The New York Times* a few days after her death, in January 1946.¹⁰⁵ She represented a class of philanthropic entrepreneurs that contributed to the cultural advancement of the United States in the late nineteenth century, when the country was searching for its own identity and desired to be on equal footing with Europe. She ensured that music would have a firm place on the list of American achievements, along with literature, architecture, and the fine arts. While the Conservatory did not survive long into the 20th century, she established important precedents in music education, opened up a serious debate about the meaning of indigenous traditions in musical composition, and found a special place in history as the American patron of Antonín Dvořák.



The author gratefully acknowledges the support of the Dvořák American Heritage Association and esteemed colleagues on the Board of Directors.

Notes

1. Kateřiná Nová and Veronika Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro: An American remembers Antonín Dvořák*, trans. Adam Prentis (Prague: Národní Muzeum (National Museum), 2017), 37, 77. This volume contains the reminiscences of Josef Jan Kovařík (1870-1951) about Antonín Dvořák. Kovařík, as a young graduate of the Prague Conservatory, served as Dvořák's personal secretary during his American sojourn. Kovařík recalled: "The maestro was not active socially: if it happened that he was invited somewhere, he would usually excuse himself somehow." One of Dvořák's favorite cafés was Fleishman's on the corner of Broadway and 10th Street, where he often met with New York Philharmonic conductor Anton Seidl.
2. "Musical for Dr. and Mrs. Dvorak," *New York Herald*, Friday, January 11, 1895. Online source: www.oldfulton.com.
3. Letter from Antonín Dvořák in New York to Otilie, Anna, Magdalena, Antonín, and Aloisie Dvořák (Dvořák children) and Klotilda Čermáková (their Grandmother) in Prague, January 11, 1895, in *Antonín Dvořák: Korespondence a dokumenty* (Correspondence and documents), ed. Milan Kuna et al. (Prague: Editio Supraphon/Editio Barenreiter Praha, 1987-2004) V. 3: 356-57.
4. Several secondary sources mistakenly identify Thurber's birthplace as Delhi, New York. The New York State notarized passport application of Jeannette Meyer Thurber dated April 22, 1876 states the birthplace as the City of New York, New York. Online source: Ancestry.com. *U. S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925*. Thurber's philanthropy projects ranged from student scholarships to underwriting of music festivals to the establishment of the American School of Opera (as the first department of the Conservatory), and a related, but short-lived, American Opera Company for operas sung in English by Americans.
5. *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Current Volume D* (New York: James T. White & Co., 1934), 216.
6. *The National Conservatory of Music of America*, undated brochure, c. 1893. The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.
7. In Dvořák's contract of 1892-1894, the titles of Musical Director and Director are used interchangeably. See also endnote 16.
8. At the time of Dvořák's New York residency, Carnegie Hall was known simply as Music Hall, and the New York Philharmonic was known as The Philharmonic Society of New York.
9. Henry T. Finck, *My Adventures in The Golden Age of Music* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1926), 276. Finck was also a Conservatory faculty member.
10. Henry Krehbiel, "Antonin Dvorak," *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 44 (September 1892): 657.
11. Otakar Dvořák, *Antonín Dvořák, My Father*, ed. Paul J. Polansky, trans. Miroslav Nemec (Spillville, IA: Czech Historical Research Center, 1993), 32.
12. "The Music of America. Success of the First Concert of the Series begun by Mrs. Thurber," the *New York Times*, March 27, 1890. The fashionable lace panel was most likely from the sixteenth century period of Henry II.
13. "Live Musical Topics," the *New York Times*, May 3, 1891. According to Gino Francesconi, Director, Carnegie Hall Archives & Museum, Tchaikovsky's fee was \$2,500 for the Carnegie Hall engagement of approximately 20 days. Multiplied by eight (the number of months Dvořák's salary covered), the figure would have been \$20,000, which is, coincidentally, the figure Dvořák requested in response to Thurber's \$15,000 offer.
14. In her reminiscences, Thurber mentioned she met Dvořák in London, though the meeting is not discussed elsewhere. Jeannette M. Thurber, "Dvořák as I Knew Him," *The Etude* 37 (November 1919): 693-694.
15. Telegram from Jeannette Thurber to Antonín Dvořák, June 5, 1891. Archives of the Czech National Museum, Antonín Dvořák Museum, Prague.
16. One of four original copies of the contract covering the period of 1892-1894—two in English and two in German—Jeannette Thurber's English-language copy is the only one known to survive. "The Agreement between The National Conservatory of Music of America and Anton Dvořák of Prague, Bohemia Musical Composer," signed "Antonín Dvořák Prague 1892." Archives of the Dvořák American Heritage Association. See also Michael Cooper, "The Deal That Brought Dvorak to New York," the *New York Times*, August 23, 2013, covering the inaugural exhibition of the document, curated by the author, in the Dvořák Room at the Bohemian National Hall in New York City.
17. "Music and Patriotism. Plan of the National Conservatory to Encourage Native Composers. Plucky Mrs. Thurber's Scheme," the *Washington Post*, November 22, 1891. The author thanks Gabryel Smith, Assistant Archivist at the New York Philharmonic Archives, for tracing several early articles announcing Dvořák's appointment.
18. Dvořák had asked for a higher salary of \$20,000 dollars, but this was rejected early on by Thurber, who acceded to almost all his other demands. Copy of letter from Antonín Dvořák to Alfred Littleton, July 6, 1891. The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.
19. Letter from Antonín Dvořák in Prague to Jeannette Thurber in New York, December 7, 1891. Archives of the Czech National Museum, Antonín Dvořák Museum, Prague.
20. Otakar Dvořák, 13-14. The vote was affirmative, and Anna Dvořák immediately posted the signed document to Thurber so that Dvořák could not change his mind.
21. Thurber desired a recent photographic portrait in two different poses and two manuscripts of about a page each, all autographed and signed "To the National Conservatory of Music of America," to be mailed before February 15, 1892. Letter from Jeannette M. Thurber to Antonín Dvořák, December 29, 1891. The Morgan Library & Museum, New York. Dvořák dutifully responded by the deadline, as evidenced by a signed musical quotation from his Symphony No. 7 in D minor dated January 30, 1892, which was later used as the frontispiece of a Conservatory publication. Henry T. Finck, *Thirty Years of the National Conservatory of Music of America, 1885-1915* (New York: 126-128 West 79th Street, 1916), Frontispiece.
22. Draft of letter from Jeannette Thurber, Paris, to Alfred Littleton, Novello, Ewer & Co, London, September 17, 1891, and copy (typewritten) of letter from B. Bachen, National Conservatory of Music of America, addressed to Alfred H. Littleton, Esq., Novello, Ewer & Co., New York, June 10, 1892. The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Illinois.
23. Letter from Antonín Dvořák to Mr. and Mrs. Josef Hlávka in Prague, November 27, 1892, in *Antonín Dvořák: Letters and Reminiscences*, ed. Otakar Šourek, trans. Roberta Finlayson Samsour (Prague: Artia, 1956), 152.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. See Michael Beckerman, "The Real Value of Yellow Journalism," in *New Worlds of Dvořák: Searching in America for the Composer's Inner Life* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003), 99-110.
27. Ibid.
28. "The Real Value of Negro Melodies. Dr. Dvořák Finds In Them the Basis for an American School of Music. Rich In Undeveloped Themes. American Composers Urged to Study Plantation Songs and Build Upon Them. Uses of Negro Minstrelsy. Colored Students To Be Admitted to the National Conservatory—Prizes to

- Encourage Americans," *New York Herald*, May 21, 1893. Online source: www.oldfulton.com.
29. Ibid.
 30. Ibid.
 31. Shelley M. Bennett, *The Art of Wealth: The Huntingtons in the Gilded Age* (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 2013), 32, 122-123. Collis P. Huntington was an "ardent supporter" of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia from 1874 to his death in 1900. In the 1890s he and his wife also gave to Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. Arabella Worsham was the second wife of Huntington, who he married in 1884; her boudoir, financed with the support of her paramour and future husband Collis, is installed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's American Wing.
 32. "Letter to the Editor," *New York Herald*, May 28, 1893, as reprinted in *Dvořák in America, 1892-95*, ed. John C. Tibbetts (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993), 359-361.
 33. Ibid.
 34. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 140.
 35. Jean E. Snyder, "Introducing Antonín Dvořák to African American Music," in *Harry T. Burleigh: From the Spiritual to the Harlem Renaissance* (Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 80.
 36. "Two Who Made the 'New World,'" in Beckerman, 79-98.
 37. "Dvořák on his New Work," *New York Herald*, December 15, 1893 as reprinted in Tibbetts, *Dvořák in America*, 362. In interview, Dvořák noted "a remarkable similarity to the music of Scotland," referring to the use of the "peculiar" (pentatonic) scale.
 38. Ibid., 363-64.
 39. "Dvořák, Krehbiel, and the 'New World,'" in Beckerman, 115.
 40. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 80.
 41. Ibid.
 42. Ibid., 103.
 43. "Dvořák On His New Work," in Tibbetts, 362-364.
 44. *New-York Tribune*, December 15, 1893, 115.
 45. "Dr. Dvořák's Latest Work," the *New York Times*, December 17, 1893.
 46. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 144-147.
 47. Ibid., 80. See Footnote 194 in this volume, quoting letter of June 12, 1894 from Dvořák to composer Francesco Berger; "I think that the influence of this country (it means the folk songs as are Negro, Indian, Irish, etc.) is to be seen, and that this and all other works (written in America) differ very much from my other works as well as in couleur as in character..."
 48. "Dvorak's Symphony a Historic Event," *New York Herald*, December 17, 1893, as reprinted in Šourek, 173.
 49. Šourek, 174.
 50. Jeannette M. Thurber, "Dvořák as I Knew Him," 693-694.
 51. Finck, *My Adventures*, 276.
 52. Original document is located in Dvořák's summer home at Vysoká, Czech Republic.
 53. "In the Hands of Receivers—The Thurber-Whyland Company in Difficulties," the *New York Times*, November 18, 1893.
 54. Francis Thurber's obituary headline read: "Well Known as a Lawyer, Writer, Politician, and Wholesale Merchant"; elsewhere he is referred to as a publicist, or what might be known today as a lobbyist active in public debates. "F. B. Thurber Dead," the *New York Times*, July 5, 1907.
 55. "Dvořák's Ordeal during the American Depression," *The Musical Times*, Vol. 130, No. 1761 (November 1989), 670-675. For currency conversion, see www.in2013dollars.com.
 56. John Clapham, "Dvořák's Musical Directorship in New York," in *Music & Letters*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (January 1967); 40-51, and Clapham, "Dvořák's Ordeal," 671. A check for \$7,500 in payment of overdue salary issued December 16, 1893, the same day as the premiere of the "New World" Symphony, failed to clear the bank, which must have been a shock to Dvořák.
 57. Copy of Letter from Antonín Dvořák to Jeannette Thurber, April 5, 1894. (Copy typed by John Clapham). The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Illinois.
 58. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 115. In this connection, Kovařík, who lived with the Dvořák family and knew the Maestro intimately, mentioned that a repeated mantra of Dvořák was: "what would they say back home."
 59. "Musical for Dr. and Mrs. Dvořák," *New York Herald*, January 11, 1895.
 60. Ibid.
 61. "Dvořák Leads for the Fund," *New York Herald*, January 24, 1894. The concert took place at Madison Square Garden, and featured the Conservatory orchestra under Dvořák's direction with an all-black, 130-voice choir and soloists, the one exception being young Miss Vlsanska, who played with "unusual maturity" the same piece as at the musicale.
 62. Letter from Antonín Dvořák dated January 11, 1895. Not even Adele Margulies, a piano professor and Mrs. Thurber's closest confidante at the school, was invited. In an earlier letter, Dvořák mentioned that the conductor Anton Seidl was also invited, but does not refer to him as having attended on January 11. Letter from Antonín Dvořák in New York to Otilie, Anna, Magdalena, Antonín and Aloisie Dvořák in Prague, January 8, 1895, in *Antonín Dvořák: Korespondence a dokumenty* (Correspondence and documents), ed. Milan Kuna et al., V. 3: 354-55.
 63. Ibid., 357. See also "Musical for Dr. and Mrs. Dvorak." The names of Mrs. Rutherford Peabody, Miss Peabody, and Mrs. James A. Douglass appear in the article's published list of guests.
 64. Reverend Parkhurst performed the marriage ceremony of Thurber's daughter Marianne to Francis L. Pruyn in 1896 at the Thurber home, 49 West 25th Street. "A Day's Weddings," the *New York Times*, April 30, 1896.
 65. Letter from Antonín Dvořák to Jeannette Thurber, August 17, 1895, in Clapham, "Dvořák's Musical Directorship," 51.
 66. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 116-117.
 67. "Jeannette Meyers Thurber," *Notable Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 458. Note: Thurber's maiden name is sometimes listed as Meyers.
 68. Finck, *My Adventures*, 277-278. Thurber spoke of Dvořák's students in her article: "Many of our most gifted young men eagerly seized the opportunity of studying with him," among them "Harvey Worthington Loomis, Rubin Goldmark, Harry Rowe Shelley, William Arms Fisher, Harry T. Burleigh, and Will Marion Cook, who now rank with our best composers." Thurber, "Dvořák As I Knew Him," 693.
 69. Museum of the City of New York, Byron Company Collection.
 70. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 101. Kovařík informed Dvořák's biographer Otakar Šourek in 1929 that it was impossible to obtain a photograph of the National Conservatory, as "the house was demolished years ago." See also Tibbetts, 58. This publication likewise indicates there was no trace of the Conservatory in 1993, and offers a photograph of Washington Irving High School instead, which coincidentally shows 130 East 17th Street, a row house identical to the demolished Conservatory, and still extant.
 71. Working collaboratively, Thurber engaged Wheeler's Associated Artists for "oversight" of the "mis-en-scène" of opera productions of her ambitious American Opera Company in 1885. *The Century Illustrated Magazine* 31 (January 1886): 477.
 72. Amelia Peck and Carol Irish, Candace Wheeler, *The Art and Enterprise of American Design, 1875-1900* (New York and New

- Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2001), 20. Referring to the residence at 49 West 25th Street, Wheeler expressed mixed feelings about “seeing other people’s lives in it.”
73. Ibid.
 74. The carved Indian chair may have been acquired by Francis Thurber in his business travels to India and the Far East in 1876, a voyage recounted in Francis B. Thurber, *Coffee: From Plantation to Cup* (New York: American Grocer Publishing Association, 1884). The chair was also a popular import item displayed in the Indian Pavilion at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia. The author thanks Decorative Arts Curator Ulysses Grant Dietz of the Newark Museum for his interpretive insights into the furnishings of the Thurber residence.
 75. The signature reads G. Clairin, 1879; the artist was a life-long friend of Sarah Bernhardt. The Bernhardt portrait of 1876 depicts the actress dressed in white, in a semi-reclining position, very much the “femme fatale” in her Orientalist studio setting. Though the Thurber portrait is relatively demure, Clairin painted both women with similar dark features, holding the popular ostrich feather fans of the period, in variations of his signature serpentine pose, seductively exposing a foot from under their long gowns with trains.
 76. Based on information provided to the author by a Thurber descendant in 2012.
 77. Jeannette M. Thurber, “A Few Personal Notes.” Undated typed manuscript with a few details about her father and her mother’s genealogy. Copy obtained by the author from a Thurber descendant in 2012.
 78. Ibid.
 79. Ibid. Joseph W. Drexel was a founding trustee of the National Conservatory of Music of America.
 80. “Something About The National Conservatory Of Music Of America,” Conservatory brochure of 1894-95: 12. The Lilly Library, University of Indiana, Bloomington, Indiana. The publication favorably compares the organization of the National Conservatory with the Paris Conservatoire.
 81. James Gibbons Huneker, *Steeplejack* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1920), Vol. 2, 66.
 82. Ibid.
 83. Ibid.
 84. Candace Wheeler, *Principles of Home Decoration* (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Press, N.D. First published by Doubleday, Page & Co., 1903), 8.
 85. The opera project, fostering both a school and touring company for the production of operas sung in English by Americans, was an artistic success, but ended in bankruptcy after just two seasons. See Emanuel Rubin, “American Opera in the Gilded Age: America’s First Professional Touring Opera Company,” in *Opera and the Golden West: The Past, Present, and Future of Opera in the U.S.A.*, John Louis Di Gaetani and Josef P. Sinefman, eds. (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994), 78-95.
 86. “A High Priestess of Opera. Mrs. F. B. Thurber’s Enthusiasm. A Chat With Her About Opera Sung By Americans,” *New-York Tribune*, November 1, 1885.
 87. Ibid.
 88. It appears that the Conservatory occupied only 128 East 17th Street at the time of the Byron photograph, in 1905, though both 126 and 128 are visible in the image. The author discovered the photograph in the Museum of the City of New York Byron Company Collection in 2007, when planning a walking tour of Dvořák’s neighborhood on East 17th Street for the Dvořák American Heritage Association.
 89. Following his firm’s bankruptcy, Francis Thurber embarked on a new career in law (earning the distinction of being the oldest ever law student in the state when admitted to the New York State Bar Association in 1899), but surely the Thurburs’ means were greatly reduced.
 90. It is not certain if the rehearsal and study rooms were located in the old or new Conservatory buildings; space limitations do not permit further discussion here.
 91. Thurber’s office has the appearance of age and accumulation, which suggests that it was photographed in the old Conservatory building at 128 East 17th Street.
 92. “William Steinway Diary, 1861-1896,” American History Museum, Smithsonian Institution, March 23, December 10, December 12, 1887. Online source: www.americanhistory.si.edu/steinwaydiary.
 93. “Every Hour Full of Work: What Mrs. Thurber Does for American Opera,” *New-York Tribune*, January 9, 1887.
 94. “The Feminine Shirt: Society Regards It as a Fashionable and Valuable Garment.” the *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., June 29, 1890.
 95. “Every Hour Full of Work.”
 96. In an unforeseen turn of events, Conner, as a widower, married Thurber’s eldest daughter in 1913; also named Jeannette Meyer Thurber, she was some 18 years his junior, an item that the papers noted with evident interest. “W. E. Conner To Wed Jay Gould’s Former Partner, at 64, Engaged to Miss Jeannette Thurber,” the *New York Times*, April 24, 1913. The Connors established a summer residence at Onteora, joining Francis and Jeannette Thurber and Candace Thurber Wheeler. See Peck, *Candace Wheeler*, 58-59, 248-249.
 97. See Šourek, 153. At the time of Dvořák’s residency, Thurber was assisted by Edmund Stanton, her Secretary and the former General Manager of the Metropolitan Opera, and Frances McDowell, the second Secretary in charge of correspondence, who was a friend of Thurber and mother of American composer Edward MacDowell. Critic and Conservatory piano teacher James Huneker was press representative and later replaced Stanton as Secretary to Thurber.
 98. “Every Hour Full of Work.”
 99. Ibid.
 100. Ibid.
 101. In Dvořák’s first year, enrollment doubled to 800 students, according to Kovařík. Nová and Vejvodová, *Three Years with the Maestro*, 30.
 102. Emanuel Rubin, “Jeannette Meyer Thurber (1850-1946): Music for a Democracy,” in *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists Since 1820*, eds. Ralph P. Locke and Cyrilla Barr (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press). Rubin provides a thorough description of the Conservatory’s history and accomplishments in this article.
 103. *New York Evening Post*, October 8, 1893, as reprinted in Finck, *Thirty Years*, 12.
 104. At the first organizational meeting, held at Delmonico’s restaurant on Fifth Avenue in October 1885, the impressive roster of supporters included Andrew Carnegie, Henry G. Marquand, W. K. Vanderbilt, Joseph W. Drexel, Jesse Seligman, retired Judge William G. Choate, New York Mayor W. R. Grace, and Francis B. Thurber. Parke Godwin was elected President; August Belmont, Vice-President; and Richard. C. Irvin, Jr., Treasurer. Prominent women included: Mrs. August Belmont (daughter of Commodore Matthew C. Perry), Mrs. William T. Blodgett, Mrs. Richard Irvin Jr., and Mrs. Thomas W. Ward. “The National Conservatory of Music of America, Certificate of Incorporation. Minutes of the first meeting of the Trustees of The National Conservatory of Music of America of October 27, 1885.” The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.
 105. “A Friend of Music,” the *New York Times*, January 12, 1946. Unsigned editorial attributed to music critic Olin Downes.



Thure de Thulstrup, *The Charge of the Four Hundred*, 1896. Chromolithograph, published by the Truth Company, Ontario, Canada. Author's collection. Image courtesy of The Old Print Shop.

Coaching Through the Gilded Age

Merri McIntyre Ferrell

“No more exhilarating recreation than coaching is awarded patronage in the United States and it is a matter of special pride to New Yorkers...”

FREDERICK R. TOOMBS, *TOWN AND COUNTRY*, APRIL 4, 1903

Coaching was a sport based on the Royal English Mail Coach system that gained its reputation on the punctuality and skill of professional drivers. It was introduced in 1784 by John Palmer, a theater owner from Bath. Before Palmer, existing mail routes between London and Bristol took up to thirty-eight hours. Palmer felt he could improve that time based on his experience transporting actors and materials between theaters. His first journey took only sixteen hours.¹

When mail coaches were replaced by railroads in 1830s England, nostalgia for the “romance of the road” ensued. Inspired by their admiration for the skilled professional coachmen of former days, young aristocrats and other gentlemen in England revived coaching and transformed it into a sport for wealthy amateur sportsmen. Driving four horses was, and remains, a difficult skill to master, requiring dexterity, coordination, patience and a fundamental understanding of the mind and physical ability of a horse. Ernest K. Fownes described it as “an art.”² The sport required mastering the difficult feat of holding the “lines” (reins) controlling four horses in one hand, hence the term “four-in-hand.” Unlike the sport of racing, keeping to a predetermined route and schedule were all-important; so guards’ watches and toe-board clocks were requisite appointments.

Americans Col. Delancey Astor Kane and Col. William Jay formed the New York Coaching Club in 1875. Both men had been attracted to coaching on their trips to England. In particular, Jay was inspired by his frequent visits with the Duke of Beaufort, an amateur coaching enthusiast. It is said that Jay and Kane were walking down Fourth Avenue in New York and saw an old coach displayed outside a carriage maker’s establishment and immediately purchased it. They put together a team comprised of a thoroughbred supplied from Kane’s stud, a carriage horse from Jay’s mother, a third horse from Thomas Newbold and finally a cab horse to make up the remainder of the four.

The two enthusiasts decided to form a club that represented their interests and soon the New York Coaching Club had its first meeting at the Knickerbocker Club on Fifth Avenue and 28th Street. Among the first members were founders Delancey Kane, William Jay, and Leonard Jerome, Thomas Newbold, William Douglas, Frederick Bronson, James Gordon Bennett, A. Thorndike Rice and S. Nicholson



Col. Delancey Astor Kane and coaching party with the *Tally-Ho*, 1885. *Scrapbook of the Tally-Ho*, Gerstenberg Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History and Carriages.

Kane. August Belmont and his sons August II and Perry became members of the club in 1876. Their goal was “to encourage four-in-hand driving in America,” organized on the principle of “harmony of tastes and mutual interests.”³

The first recorded sporting coach in America was built by May & Jacobs of Guilford, England, and sent to T. Bigelow Lawrence of Boston. The *Dorking*, a true road coach made by Stephen Gower of Stratford, England, around 1860 was imported by William Jay who converted it into a drag and renamed it *Olden Times*.⁴ The second coach, the *Tally-Ho*, was made by Holland and Holland of London for Delancey Kane. Kane ran the *Tally-Ho* on a regular route from New York to Ardsley and seats were sold by subscription.⁵

Seventeen coaches were listed in the trade journal, *The Hub*, in 1877.⁶ They were all handsomely painted. Jay’s the *Olden Times* was “canary and red.” William P. Douglas’ “blue and canary” coach, made by the French firm Million Guiet et Cie., had been imported by James Gordon Bennett and later sold to Douglas when Bennett went to Europe. Col. Delancey

Kane's the *Tally-Ho* was painted "primrose," a pale yellow. Frederick Neilson's bottle green and vermilion coach was made by Brewster & Company based on design #3328 of 1876 that became a template for numerous coaches made through the early twentieth century.⁷ A vivid picture of the coaches, teams and occupants was written in the *New York Times* in 1877:

Colonel William Jay, the president of the club, was at the head of the procession. The Col was driving his drag, yellow body and red undercarriage built by Gower of London. He handled the ribbons over four chestnuts which would be hard to beat for fashion. The harness was brass mounted and the floral rosettes decorating the heads were snowballs. Mr. August Belmont came next. He was driving a drag, stylish and comfortable, maroon body and undercarriage, striped with red, built by Brewster & Co. of Broome St. Four superb bays, all symmetry and quality, did their duty, the team eliciting much admiration. Harness silver mounted. Rosettes of red roses were at the horses' heads. Mr. Pierre Lorillard followed sixth. His drag, green body, yellow under-carriage striped with green, looked finely. His team was made up of bays and browns—a substantial lot, capital steppers and gentlemanly-looking animals withal. The harness was mounted in brass and handsome bouquets of pansies were at the heads of the horses. Mr. Fairman Rogers appeared on a drag built by Barker & Co. of London and drove a team of bays standing about 16 hands, in silver-mounted harness. The body of the carriage was dark brown and green, the undercarriage red. In Mr. Rogers' coach, besides the driver, were Mrs. Rogers, Mr. Ward McAllister, Mrs. Ward McAllister and Miss French. The toilets of the ladies were very elegant. Mr. Frederick Bronson, who is one of the oldest members of the club, and who is acknowledged to be a graceful and skillful driver, drove a mixed team of three bays and a chestnut, in brass-mounted harness, before a drag with a blue body and red undercarriage. The coach was built by Peters of London. Last but by no means least in the estimation of the club and the spectators who greeted his familiar face along the line, came Col. Delancey Kane with his familiar primrose drag, the *Tally Ho*. He drove a mixed team of grays and bays. The drivers all appeared in the uniform of the club—bottle green coats with brass buttons, silk hats, and huge peonies at their lapels. The guards were not in uniform, but all wore liveries and appeared in top boots and wore immense clusters of violets in their buttonholes.⁸



L to R: Harris C. Fahnestock and members of the coaching club, c. 1890. Henry E. Coe with his daughters and guests, c. 1890. Library of Congress.

Over the following decades, club members added many coaches to their throng, among them the *Tantivy*, *Red Jacket*, *Greyhound*, *Republic*, *Herald*, *Liberty*, *Lightning*, *Vivid*, *Venture*, *Enterprise*, *Good Times* and *Pioneer*. There were several coaches named *Old Times* or *Olden Times*.⁹

New York, known for commerce as well as fashion, became a center for carriage manufacturing, owing much to the growing wealth of the city as well as the many venues in the metropolitan area for pleasure driving. Society was ascending from two sources, from old families such as the Schermerhorns, Rhinelanders and Astors, as well as from the newer captains of commerce like Cornelius Vanderbilt.¹⁰ During this age of "conspicuous consumption," to be seen and obey the strict guidelines for correctness were cultural objectives. These imperatives had an impact on the ownership and use of horse-drawn vehicles since carriages were emblems of taste and position as much as they were useful conveyances.

An 1853 advertisement announced:

No city in the Union can present a more handsome array of public and private equipages than New York; a circumstance which, while it has attracted the marked attention of travelers among us, fully indicates the wealth, taste, and social position of a large proportion of its residents.¹¹

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the rise of industries such as railroads, shipping, steel, banking and a general boom in building in the New York metropolitan area created great fortunes. The region's wealth gave carriage makers an eager and able clientele. Because New York attracted manufacturing establishments of all kinds, not only were some of the nation's preeminent carriage makers located in the city, but also a host of related businesses.¹² The combination of infrastructure—especially transportation—that

facilitated the movement of goods, the influx of skilled craftsmen, and availability of capital contributed to the carriage trade. Special destinations such as Madison Square Garden, Central Park and scenic thoroughfares such as Riverside Drive offered locations well-suited for carriage driving. Proximity to scenic areas made for the construction of more, larger, and more elaborate country estates that supported a variety of equestrian activities including coaching.

By 1859, there were over forty carriage makers in the city, selling an average of five thousand vehicles a year. The number of carriage-making firms nationally was 7,288, according to the 1860 Census of Manufactures. By 1900, there were nearly 60,000 carriage-making firms nationwide and as many establishments devoted to related enterprises. The 1899 *American Carriage Directory* lists 3,909 carriage makers in New York, as well as 1,660 dealers and 951 sleigh manufacturers and dealers.¹³

Of all the carriage-making establishments, none could equal Brewster & Company. Its reputation for quality vehicles, elegant design and superior finish was unsurpassed. James Brewster founded the firm in 1810 in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1856, his youngest son Henry joined partners John R. Lawrence and John Britton to form "Brewster of Broome Street" with a repository (display showrooms) on Broadway. In 1860, the repository moved to the corner of 14th Street and Fifth Avenue where members of New York society attended the spring openings to view

William Rockefeller, Henry Clay Frick, Pierre Lorillard and other members of Gilded Age society.

The principals of Brewster & Company had a close relationship with members of the New York Coaching Club. They promoted English driving master Burton Mansfield, who gave lessons in coaching to prospective clients from an office attached to their firm. The company was the primary source for vehicles of all types owned and used by New York society.

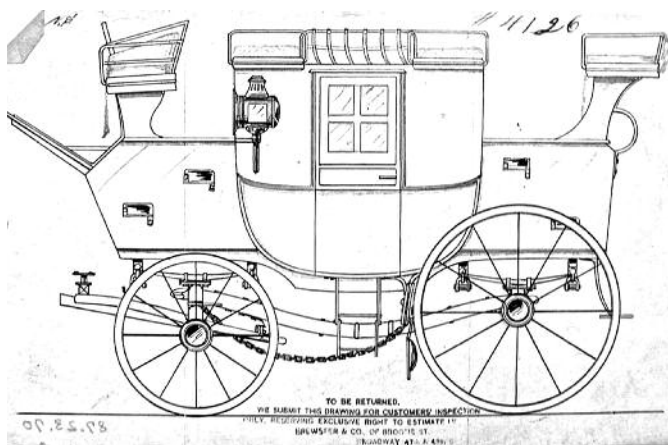
The firm stayed apprised of domestic as well as international styles, and was the first American carriage manufacturer to make coaches specifically for the sport of driving.¹⁴ The May & Jacobs coach that had been ordered by T. Bigelow Lawrence of Boston and subsequently sent to New York may have been the model for the first of its type to appear in Brewster's 1850-1874 draft book with the notation "made in England." (There are records, although very scant, that Brewster & Company purchased and displayed an English coach in their showrooms on 14th Street.) They built the first "Regulation Coach" for the sport in 1878, based on Kane's *Tally-Ho*.

Brewster built three road coaches for the New York Coaching Club. The first was based on its Draft #3328 from 1876 and built in 1880. The

club's second coach may have been made for an individual and was eventually traded in. The third and last coach used by the club was the *Pioneer*, listed in Specification Record #20690 as the second *Pioneer*, made specifically for the club and the seventy-ninth sporting coach made by the firm (the number



Detail of the *Pioneer* Coaching Club insignia.



L to R: Herman Stahmer, road coach design #4126, Brewster & Company, Gerstenberg Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages. Road coach *Pioneer*, Brewster & Company. New-York Historical Society.

fashionable vehicles of the season. In 1874, Brewster & Company combined warehouse and factory facilities on 47th & 48th Streets and Broadway for a state-of-the art complex designed by Edward A. Sargent that had a block frontage of two hundred feet. Over four hundred men were employed when their new facility opened. Their clientele included Alfred G. Vanderbilt, August Belmont, J. P. Morgan, Jay Gould,

"79" was painted on the axle). It was ordered on February 15, 1895, and based on Design #4126a that was entered into Brewster's draft book in 1890. The vehicle was completed on April 9, 1898, at the cost of \$2,400. It weighed 2,673 pounds, relatively light for a vehicle of this type.

The *Pioneer* was painted "Mansfield style" (named after professional coachman Burton Mansfield) with black upper



Col. William Jay and members of the New York Coaching Club on the road coach *Pioneer*, departing from the Hotel Brunswick in New York for "Idlehour," Oakdale, Long Island, on May 12, 1883. August Belmont II photograph album. Author's collection.

quarter panels, white body and boot panels, vermilion toe board and undercarriage, and black striping. The name *Pioneer* and the club's insignia of interlocking double "C's" over lead bars were painted on the crest panel and the seal of the state of New York was painted on the door panels. The stable shutters were divided into panels and painted vermilion and black. The seats were trimmed in a fabric of black, yellow, off-white and beige uncut loop fabric called "tapestry." The subscription numbers of enameled vermilion on round leather bosses were sewn onto the fronts of the seat cushions.

As with the *Tally-Ho*, subscriptions were sold for seats on the *Pioneer*. Single fare was \$3.00; round trip was \$5.00. The whole coach could be reserved for \$60.00. It was \$1.00 extra to sit on the box seat. An engraved brass timetable attached to the toe board recorded its route from New York City through towns in Westchester. The interior was finished in varnished oak with pigskin door pockets and woven raffia seats. The coaching club insignia was repeated through the accessories such as lap aprons and quarter blankets as well as on the brass harness hardware. The equipage included a cockhorse harness and leather-covered chain that connected the harness to the pole head (a cockhorse was a fifth horse added for steep inclines and was ridden independently of the four horses that were driven). The brow bands of checked vermilion and white enameled leather reiterated the color scheme of the coach.

The *Pioneer* maintained a regular scheduled run of fifty-five miles from the Holland House in New York City to the Ardsley Club in Tarrytown from 1898 to 1906, when it was retired from service as a public coach. In his inscription to William Brewster of his book *The Coaching Club*; Reginald Rives described it as the "most perfect road coach ever built. It embodies the highest class of work attained by their [Brewster

& Company's] mechanics. Eventually this vehicle will be placed in a museum as a specimen of the perfection to which the coach builders' art had developed."¹⁵

New York's proximity to attractive destinations in the countryside was another factor influencing the popularity of coaching in the city during the Gilded Age. North of



Coaching on parade: Riverside Drive, New York City, May 7, 1910. August Belmont II photograph album. Author's collection.

Manhattan, Westchester County provided rolling countryside along the Hudson River for grand estates. Long Island's North Shore "Gold Coast" also offered wealthy city dwellers a picturesque landscape and views of Long Island Sound.¹⁶

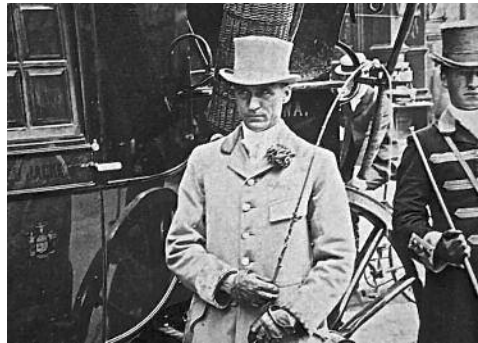
From the years roughly between 1870 and 1900, families with familiar names such as Vanderbilt, Frick, Astor and Rockefeller accumulated spectacular fortunes. The wealth of industry, railroads, real estate, banking and other enterprises that flourished in metropolitan New York created a new American gentry. With a seemingly endless amount of expendable income, before income tax dented personal wealth, members of this echelon of society built immense houses in Manhattan and even larger estates in nearby scenic areas that were quickly deemed "fashionable," including "cottages" in Newport and "camps" in the Adirondacks. These may have been largely imitations of English models, but American country estates were noteworthy for a love of novelty and even greater passion for sports, combining American daring with English gentility. Thoroughbred racing, fox hunting, polo and coaching were popular sports on these estates and surrounding countryside. Moreover, coaches served as mobile grandstands for diverse equestrian sports held at popular locations such as Jerome Park.

The New York Coaching Club excursions were launched in the city at locations such as the Hotel Brunswick or Madison Square Park. The routes went through Central Park, up Fifth Avenue or north on Riverside Drive, to destinations in Westchester such as the Ardsley Club and Pelham, or else east

to Long Island. One of the Long Island destinations was August Belmont's farm near Babylon on the South Shore. The club set out from the Hotel Brunswick at 9:30 a.m. on the *Pioneer* with three bays and one gray horse. Belmont was on the box seat and accompanied by George Fearing, J. V. Parker, Col. Jay, Leonard Jerome, Theodore Havemeyer, J. R. Roosevelt and Col. Kane. They traveled down Fifth Avenue, through Central Park to Astoria and Flushing (Queens) and to Lakeville and Garden City to the Sportsmen's Hotel in Amityville. They had lunch at the Garden City Hotel, taking turns on the box seat at each destination. Belmont took over after a change of horses and they continued on to Babylon, arriving at 6:00 p.m. The trip covered forty-three miles.¹⁷

Other excursions included visits to J. Seward Webb's splendid estate in Shelburne, Vermont, with its magnificent views of Lake Champlain and the Adirondack Mountains. Seward Cary maintained a route between Buffalo and Niagara with his Brewster & Company coach the *Red Jacket*.

One of the most ambitious trips took place on October 9, 1901, between New York and Philadelphia, when Alfred G. Vanderbilt and fellow coaching enthusiast James Hazen Hyde embarked on one of the most famous coaching events on record. The trip was 224 miles long, the average speed twelve miles per hour. It was completed in nineteen hours and thirty-five minutes and used seventy-two horses, many of them previously unbroken to the coach. Assisted by professional coachman Morris Howlett, the trip began at 5:55 a.m. at Holland House on Fifth Avenue at



Seward Cary with his Brewster & Company Road Coach, *Red Jacket*. August Belmont II photograph album. Author's collection.



L to R: Alfred G. Vanderbilt in New York with his "Vanderbilt Grays." Courtesy Eden Lahr. Vanderbilt's horses off-loading from his private steamship on their way to Olympia. Photograph album of Alfred G. Vanderbilt, Gerstenberg Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages.

30th Street. Horses, whips, grooms and guests went to Jersey City by ferry then continued their journey by coach to Elizabeth, New Jersey, then on to Rahway, Metuchen, New Brunswick, Franklin Park, and Ten Mile Run to Lotz Farm, before continuing on to Princeton and the Princeton Inn, then Trenton. Crossing the Delaware River, next was Bristol, Pennsylvania, and the Black Horse, then to Cornwells and the Delaware House, then to Collegeville and the Vandergrift Hotel before reaching the final destination of Philadelphia and the Bellevue Hotel. Upon arrival in Philadelphia, the crowd cheered. Only six minutes elapsed before the intrepid team returned to New York arriving at 1:36 a.m. The entire trip was completed in nineteen hours and thirty-five minutes.

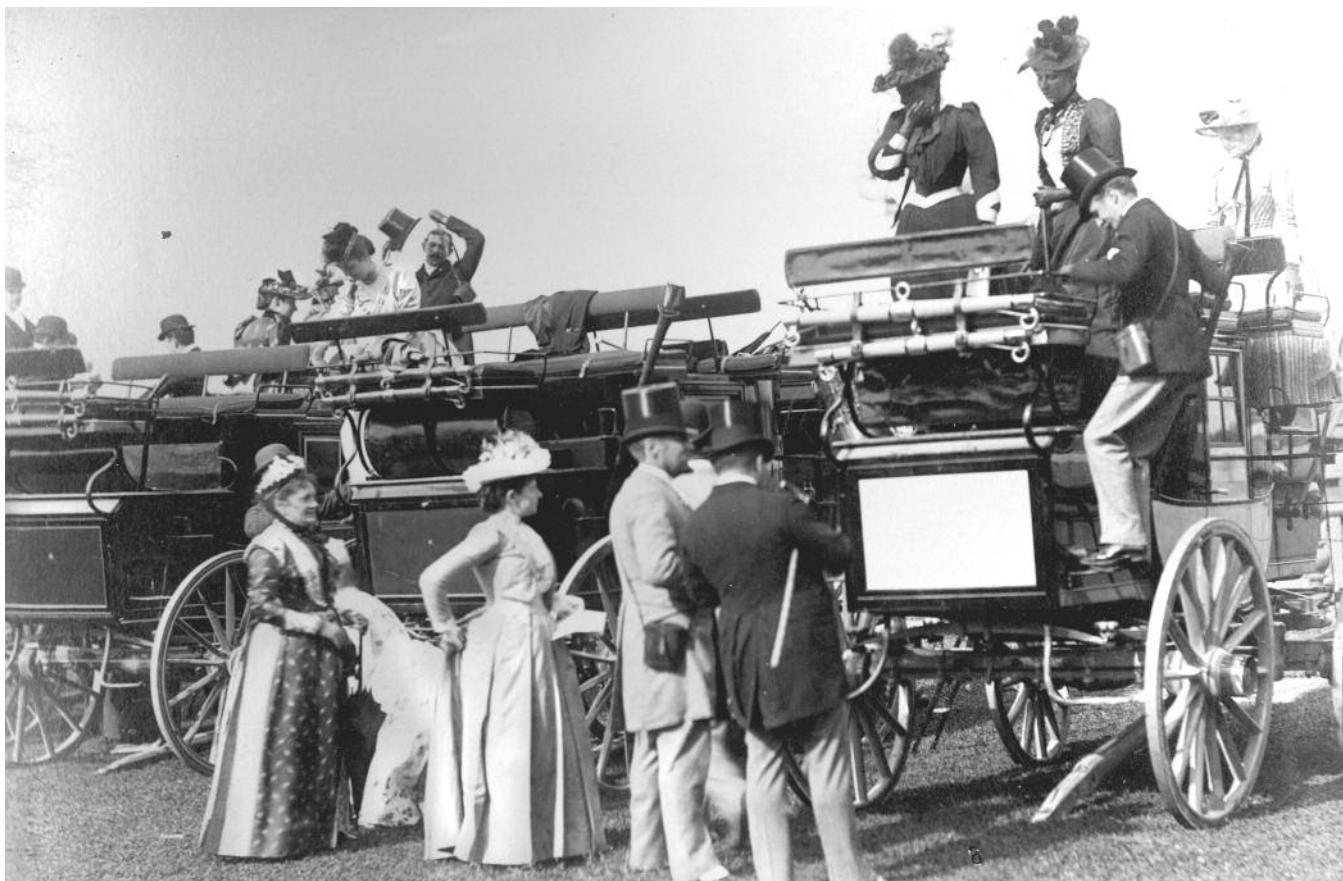
Even more adventurous members sent horses to Europe. James Gordon Bennett and William Tiffany took their Million Guiet coach the *Comet* to France for the run between Paris and Trouville. Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt regularly took his private steamship with his horses, coaches, grooms and appointments to England to drive his Brewster & Company coach the *Venture* between London and Brighton and to compete in the coaching classes at the Olympia Horse Show.

Coaching was a spectator sport, an opportunity to show off one's turn-out (complete equipage) as well as one's skills as a whip (driver). Well-dressed passengers lent considerable appeal to the overall display. Moreover, the visibility of the passengers made it a perfect vehicle to show off finery and fashion. The spectacle of coaches and fashion inspired the title "Gowns Like Coach Colors," and dresses were described in great detail."¹⁸

Not only did the Coaching Club make a beautiful moving picture for admiring spectators, it also brought immense pleasure to the active participants. Destinations took members of the club and their guests (or subscribers) to some of the most magnificent residences and hotels, through gorgeous countryside as well as to sporting events where their coaches were transformed to mobile grandstands. Many trips concluded with a grand banquet at Delmonico's or the Hotel Brunswick on Fifth Avenue and 26th Street.

The growing passion for horses in New York led to the formation of the National Horse Show Association of America in 1883. Like Central Park, the horse show provided an arena for equestrian sports as well as for spectators, and was regarded as "the opening gun for the social season in New York." The first exhibitions were held in Madison Square Garden at Madison Avenue and 27th Street. Classes included showing breeds in hand, driving competitions and fire companies demonstrating "quick hitching" to heavy firefighting steam pumpers. From 1883 the National Horse Show had 5,625 exhibitors and 26,488 entries. In 1884, the *New York Times* reported:

The attendance of the horse-show yesterday was very large. The feature was the parade of four-in-hand coaches. The drags were very stylish and the coach horses were a proud and prancing lot. All of them were well driven but Mr. E. D. Morgan's coachman handled the ribbons with such consummate skill and wheeled his drag about so gracefully that a continuous ripple of applause followed him around the ring.¹⁹



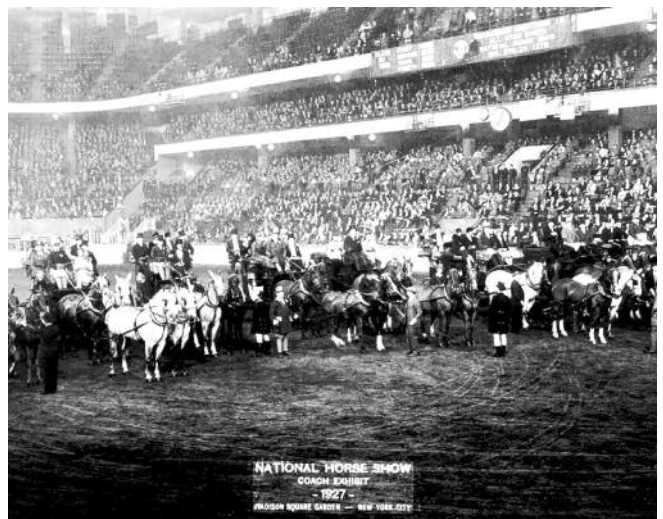
Coaches were mobile grandstands that transported passengers to sporting destinations such as Sheephead Bay and Jerome Park. Author's collection.

One of the classes required the four-in-hands to drive to the Garden from the upper part of Manhattan. There was also a class called the Arrow Inn Challenge Cup for road teams to drive to a coach carrying no less than seven people. These coaches were to leave the Arrow Head Inn on 117th Street and arrive at the Garden in one hour.

The National was the first great indoor horse show and quickly became a gathering for horse aficionados, high society, celebrities and curious spectators, who were as interested in the crowd as in the events. One young exhibitor was seven-year-old Alfred G. Vanderbilt, who showed his Shetland pony.

From a social standpoint the exhibition promises to equal if not eclipse all previous shows. The event offers the first chance of the season for the display of the latest creations in hats and dresses from Paris firms. The area boxes will present an interesting appearance and includes among the holders: Mrs. Charles Proctor, William Moore, Alfred Vanderbilt, Delancey Kane, W. K. Vanderbilt, Paul Sorg and Thomas Hitchcock.²⁰

In 1890, the National Horse Show became elevated to one of the most popular events of the year, owing to the magnificent new Madison Square Garden designed by renowned architect Stanford White. The new design included boxes and a grand promenade and was richly colored. The 1894 exhibition included nearly eight hundred horses. Its status as an arena for fine horses as well as fashion continued. In 1900, the *New York Times* stated that “the horse show promises to be a show for gowns, furs, and jewels and a school of instruction for milliners and dressmakers for the large cities



National Horse Show, 1927. Madison Square Garden, New York City.

outside of New York.”²¹ It was “an annual dress frolic,” where people “saved their money for weeks to go and see society and its good clothes.” With an obsession for seemingly endless descriptions of dresses and hats, the press recorded every detail of what the fashionable women wore at the horse show. It was especially suited to this because unlike the opera or the theater, it ran for weeks and fashionable ladies could be seen in their changing splendor throughout the day and night as well as over the week’s duration of the show.



Member of The Ladies’ Four-in-Hand Coaching Club, departing the Colony Club on Park Avenue, New York City c. 1911. Library of Congress.

The National Horse Show established rules for all of its classes and set the standard for turnout for horse-drawn vehicles. There was some controversy over the mania for English styles and breeds, especially in the judges' preference for English hackneys over American trotters. However, the event set the fashion and soon hackneys were imported to America. As reported in the *New York Times*, "Society's horse is the modern Hackney."²²

The New York Coaching Club inspired the formation of similar organizations. In 1890, The Philadelphia Four in Hand Club was founded with distinguished members of Philadelphia society such as Alexander Johnston Cassatt of the Pennsylvania Railroad and brother of American artist, Mary Cassatt, Barclay Warburton and Fairman Rogers. The Ladies' Four-in-Hand Club was formed in 1901. Brewster & Company made their coach, the *Arrow*, and their meets began at the Colony Club on Park Avenue.²³ Members included Mrs. Thomas Hastings, Marion Hollins, Belle Beach, Harriet Alexander and Mrs. Arthur Iselin. All of the members of the club were accomplished horsewomen who demonstrated their coaching skills on regular trips to Bronx Park and Greenwich, Connecticut. Morris Howlett assisted as their professional coachman.

By the turn of the century, the novelty of the automobile began to compete for the attention of the wealthy members of society. Soon it would replace the carriage as a primary mode of transportation. The expansion of suburban communities, loss of country, and general cultural shifts led to the inevitable diminishment of coaching in the twentieth century except for a few enthusiasts such as Ambrose Clark, Harris Fahnestock, Viola Winmill and Chauncey Stillman.

In 1915, Morris Howlett remarked in the *Official Blue Book* of the National Horse Show,

The spirit of the horse is dead in and around New York, the erstwhile horsemen have, some of them, become speed maniacs and the only thing that satisfies their want is the motorcar.²⁴

Reginald Rives echoed Howlett's sentiments in his 1935 record of the club:

It was, of course, with deep regret that this great sport had to be abandoned when it was, but the rapid



The end of an era: William H. Moore's road coach *Rockmarge*, followed by an automobile. Gerstenberg Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages.

introduction of the automobile, both for pleasure and commercial purposes, forced the issue, it being evident that there was not room for both on the road, and the excessive speed of the automobile far outdid the coach and four.²⁵

However, belying this death knell, Oliver H. P. Belmont declared, "No sport which requires the perfection of skill and dash and the exercise of nerve will ever be abandoned by Americans."²⁶

Many of the coaches used by the original members of the New York Coaching Club have changed ownerships and paint schemes over the years. Notable examples are preserved in museum collections or are put to use by the considerable number of individuals who continue the sport of coaching today.



Notes

1. For more information on John Palmer, see John Ford in the *Carriage Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 5, October 2010.
2. "National Horse Show Awakens Memories," *New York Herald Tribune*, November 12, 1933.
3. There are many descriptions of the activities of the New York Coaching Club, especially in newspapers contemporary with its most active years in New York. The most comprehensive history was privately published by Coaching Club president Reginald Rives in 1935.
4. A comprehensive history of Jay's coach *The Dorking/The Olden Times*

is in an unpublished appraisal prepared by Thomas W. Geyer, June 16, 2008. I am indebted to Geyer for his summary of the coach's history. This coach is now in the possession of the Islin family.

5. The *Tally-Ho* is in the carriage collection of the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages. Gift of Mrs. Delancey A. Kane, through the Museum of the City of New York.
6. *The Hub*, Vol. 19, No. 4, July 1, 1877, p. 168. The article notes that Brewster & Company was building three "regulation" coaches, two for prominent New York gentlemen and one for San Francisco.
7. Coaches follow a traditional form with little variation. There were distinctions between a drag and a road coach, but it was not uncommon to find combinations of those features or conversions

- from one to the other on specific vehicles. Likewise, colors varied and were governed by prevailing tastes as well as what was considered “harmonious” in terms of color combinations. Color harmony was not arbitrary, but was calculated accorded to scientific color wheels. Colors of vehicles also conformed to the “stable colors” of the owner, and were followed *en suite* throughout the turnout. Color directives found in various records for Brewster & Company may say “paint his claret,” indicating a special color of the client. Color combinations ranged from green and vermillion, to pale blue and black, to primrose (yellow) and rifle green to brown, black and vermillion. Striping directives ranged from fine lines, “New Drag Style,” or “Mansfield Style.” Examples preserved in original condition assist in understanding these specifications.
8. *New York Herald*, May 29, 1881, from the *Scrap Book of the Tally-Ho*, Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages, Stony Brook, New York.
 9. The carriage collection at the Long Island Museum has a coach named *The Vivid* which was made in England by either Holland & Holland or another maker, but which bears the name “Mills” on its hubs. It was used by Harry T. Peters, a Standard Oil executive who was also the author of a book on Currier & Ives. *The Olden Times*, also in the collection, is a hybrid type combining elements of a road coach and drag, called a private road coach. It was made by Peters and Sons of London and previously owned by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wilshire of Greenwich, Connecticut. Morris Howlett was their coachman.
 10. One of the personalities who set the pace for the New York Social scene was Ward McAllister. He was from a prominent family from Savannah and practiced law in California during the Gold Rush. He moved to New York after a brief trip to Europe (where he polished his manners even further) and he married Sarah Taintor Gibbons, a wealthy New Yorker. McAllister divided New York’s wealthy class into two sets: old moneyed “nobs” and new money “swells.” He was responsible for the formation of the “Four Hundred” his term for the number of people in New York he deemed worthy based on their social ease in a ballroom. The leader of the Four Hundred was Caroline Schermerhorn Astor “the Mrs. Astor” who was the leader of endless social events that defined society during the period. McAllister was a frequent guest on the coaches of the New York Coaching Club
 11. *Metropolitan Warehouse*, 1853, archival fragment, Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island of American Art, History & Carriages.
 12. The trade publications *The New York Coach-Maker’s Magazine* and its successor, *The Hub* were located on Chambers Street. Valentine’s Varnish, a supplier to Brewster & Company and other carriage firms, had a factory in Long Island City and offices in Manhattan. Moseman’s horse goods occupied a five story building on Chambers Street. Palm & Fetchler, makers of decals for vehicles, also had offices on Chambers Street; Kauffman’s Saddlery was located on Canal Street, then 24th Street. Rogers Peet & Company as well as Brooks Brothers, both located in New York, made livery and hunt clothing. J. L. Mott and J. W. Fiske had foundries for stable fixtures in New York. New York City had carriage factories as well as dealers, representing companies Brewster & Company, J. B. Brewster, Abbott Downing, A. T. Demarest, Healy & Company, Flandrau & Company, Wood Brothers and R. M. Stivers. New York was also the first location for the Technical School for Carriage Drafting and Design, first located at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
 13. *The American Carriage Directory*, New Haven: Price & Lee, 1899, p.2.
 14. *Draft Book of Carriage Designs 1850-1874*, shows a drawing of a coach with a notation “made in England.” This may have been the vehicle purchased by the company that served as a model for their own coaches. Brewster designed several types of coaches, and built multiple vehicles from single designs. It was therefore possible for a coach to be made in 1901 that was based in an 1876 design. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William Brewster, 1923.
 15. *The Remount*, March-April, 1930, archival fragment found in object files, Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages. The coach was stored in a warehouse belonging to the Rolls Royce Company in Long Island City (former factory of Brewster & Company which made bodies for Rolls Royce). Eventually it was “placed in a museum,” donated to the New York Historical Society in 1938 where it was exhibited until 1994, when it was transferred to the Long Island Museum and exhibited in the Pleasure Driving gallery with its accessories until 2004. It was transferred to the Newport Preservation Society’s The Breakers stables and carriage house in February 2017. I am indebted to Mike Zaetta for sharing his Reginald Rives-inscribed copy of *The Coaching Club*.
 16. The North Shore of Long Island and Queens possessed the richest soil in the United States. Until 1870, most of the residents were farmers (especially Quaker farmers in Queens County) but they were soon to be replaced by the palatial residences that represented the beginnings of the Country Life movement of the Gilded Age.
 17. Reginald Rives, *The Coaching Club*, New York: privately printed, 193, p. 56-57.
 18. “On Mr. Fred Bronson’s coach, Mrs. W. W. Astor wore a brocaded green silk costume with a mass of Spanish lace trimming. Mrs. A. Hunnewell wore a coaching costume of white satin and Spanish lace. Mrs. Fred Bronson wore black silk with silk trimmings the color of a Marechal Niel rose, and all wore hats to match the costumes. The ladies on the coaches, in their bright colored dresses, lent considerable animation to the scene, and some very handsome toilets were displayed. The hats were chiefly of the Gainsborough and Danichell style, with artificial flowers. One lady wore a very attractive looking costume of moss green tinted silk, cut in Breton style, with trimming of intermixed fringe and India bands. A cashmere fisha of damasse goods, profusely embellished with lace, completed this artistic toilet. A hat of canary colored silk and a blue cloth mantle set off with gray ostrich tips and amber dotted galloon bands completed the costume.” “The Coaching Parade: The Most Brilliant Display Ever Seen in New York,” the *New York Herald*, May 27, 1877. Scrapbook of the *Tally-Ho*, Carriage Reference Library, the Long Island Museum of American Art, History & Carriages. The article reports that fifty-thousand people gathered to watch the coaches on Fifth Avenue and Central Park. *The Coaching Club*, written by Reginald Rives in 1935 as the official record of the club, is replete with descriptions of fashion and names renowned designers such as Mainbocher and Worth in detailed descriptions of passengers’ ensembles.
 19. “Parade of Coaches,” the *New York Times*, May 30, 1884.
 20. The *New York Times*, November 8, 1908.
 21. The *New York Times*, November 20, 1900. The effusive descriptions of ladies’ garments indicate the relationship between coaching and the display of fashion.
 22. The *New York Times*, November 8, 1896. For a comprehensive history of the National Horse Show, see Kurth Sprague *The National Horse Show: A Centennial History 1883-1983* (The National Horse Show Foundation, New York), 1985.
 23. *The Arrow* is in the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. John E. Day of Monkton, Maryland.
 24. Morris Howlett, “Alfred Vanderbilt: In Memoriam,” *The Official Blue Book, Vanderbilt Memorial and Coaching Number* (New York: J. W. Wary Publishers, 1915), p.42. I am indebted to Barry Dickinson for giving me this important book.
 25. Reginald Rives, *The Coaching Club*, p. 280
 26. “Coaching,” Oliver P. Belmont, *The Book of Sport*, William Patten, editor. New York: J. F. Taylor & Company, 1901, p. 219

Preservation Diary

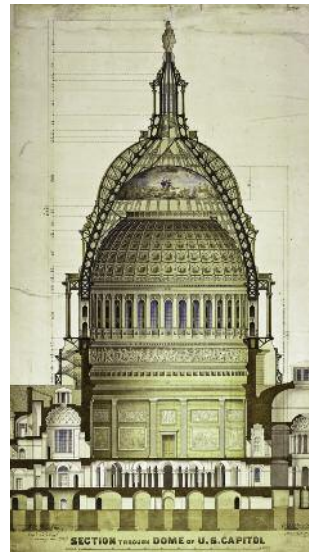
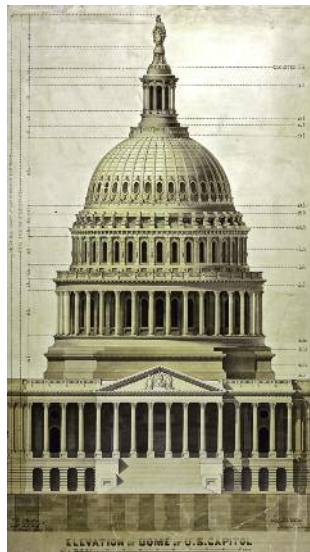
The Restoration of the Capitol Dome

Ralph Muldrow

Under the auspices of the Architect of the Capitol, Stephen Ayers, FAIA, the three-year restoration of the Capitol Dome of the United States Capitol has just been completed in 2016. I was fortunate to be able to interview Mr. Stephen Ayers and the Project Manager for the restoration, Mr. Joe Abriatus, about the intricacies of the project. Entering Ayers' office, I immediately noticed oil portrait paintings of past Architects of the Capitol including B. Henry Latrobe and Thomas Ustick Walter. While Latrobe had worked on earlier restorations and additions to the building it was Walter that did the predominant components—the two current congressional wings and the great dome that is three times the height of the earlier dome that was made of wood with a copper roof. The work on the design of the dome commenced in 1855 and continued even during the Civil War to its completion in 1866.

Ayers noted that the last major overhaul of the Capitol Dome was from 1959 to 1960. Since then the dome had deteriorated as over 1,000 cracks were found mostly in the upper reaches of the cast iron cladding. The cast iron cladding varies in thickness by area between 3/8" and 3/4" at the top dome. As the sun moves across the sky it heats the iron envelope in differing angles throughout the year, making for expansion and contraction of the metal that is a major cause for the cracking. Other forces of nature to be mitigated by the restoration are those of rain, snow and sleet. As water ingress happens it penetrates the structure, eventually causing rust to occur. Rust has a strong expansion effect that literally cracks open portions of the dome, especially at the seams. Thus a cycle of deterioration continues to the detriment of the dome as the widened cracks let in more water which, depending on the season, can cause freeze/thaw jacking and further water ingress.

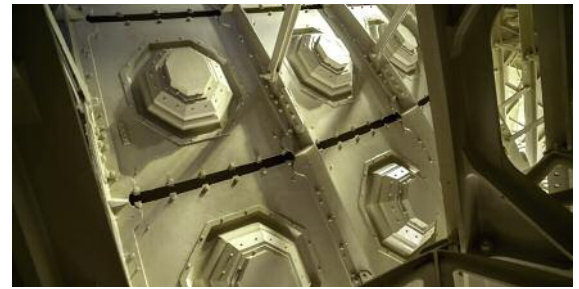
The partial solution to this problem is a system that emulates crack repair methods in the hulls of large cast iron



L to R: Thomas U. Walter, *Present Elevation and Section Through of Dome of U.S. Capitol*; *Tholus of U.S. Capitol*, 1859. Courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol.

ships. Stainless steel screws with semi-circular cut outs are applied one-by-one. The cut out in the head of the screw allows them to nest in a row thus accruing the strength of a solid steel plate. After that they install perpendicular elements much like sutures in closing a medical gash. This application was required on approximately 8,000 inches of cracks.

In addition to the use of cast iron, wrought iron was used in all areas that would potentially be in tension. The wrought iron is usually in the form of a square profile rod. This use of wrought iron in construction was an established and useful element since the eighteenth century; the use of pre-made cast iron components was a fairly new technology developed mainly in the mid-nineteenth century. The first inventor to patent the use of his cast iron designs was James Bogardus of New York City. He received approval of his patent in 1850. However, other competitors in the architectural cast iron business were soon came along. Thomas U. Walter chose the firm of Kirkbride and Fowler. Walter had previously interviewed 8 cast iron firms for a short lived cast iron addition of a Library of Congress attached to the Capitol. He was therefore knowledgeable and conversant in the field of cast iron construction. It was going to be much lighter than



L to R: Removal of paint inside the dome, c. 1960. Interstitial space of the dome after painting and final cleaning, 2016. Cleaned section of the external coffered dome, 2016. Photos by Chuck Badal. Courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol.

stone and yet with paint it could resemble stone. And unlike wrought iron, it could be cast in almost any shape using sand molds.

The weight of the cast iron dome was approximately 8,900,000 pounds. It would rest on the same foundations as the previous shallow dome made of wood and copper. That foundation was fortunately over-sized, including masonry rubble and stone that matched that of the adjacent portions of the original capitol. The stone used was aquia stone from a quarry near the District of Columbia. That stone looked good to most people involved with the building of the capitol as it was a pleasant light tan color with rust-colored veining; however, it was sandstone and therefore problematic in terms of weathering. Luckily, the foundations were very thick and have not settled, as one might fear.

All of the parts of the dome were cast in New York and were then brought to Washington, D.C. on trains, themselves a recent technological advance in transportation. Walter had studied the great domes of Europe including St. Paul's Cathedral in London, St. Peter's in Rome, the Pantheon in Paris and the dome of the Duomo in Florence, Italy. He was then able to usher in the cutting-edge technology in a form that exemplifies the beauty of those precedents. The parts are all assembled with bolts and nuts.

As with the other great domes, downspouts were brought inside of the dome from the cupola level down. They make their way through the 36 columns at the peristyle level. But the varying temperatures inside the dome caused condensation and over the years rust settled to the bottom of the downspouts blocking the drainage from the cast iron pipes. The restoration replaced many of the iron pipes with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) conduits. In addition, unseen systems were replaced including the HVAC electrical systems.

Walter's collaborator, and sometime competitor, in the highly politicized capitol projects was Montgomery Meigs, later

a General in the Civil War. A West Point graduate, he brought engineering skills that remain the main contributions he made to the building of the dome. For instance, he had the workers set a tall ship's mast in the center of what would become the dome. The lower portion of the dome would have 36 Corinthian columns in the peristyle. Meigs had them crank the mast around to build each successive section as the 36 bays ran all the way up and down. Helping to hold it all together is a heavy metal compression ring at the cupola level.

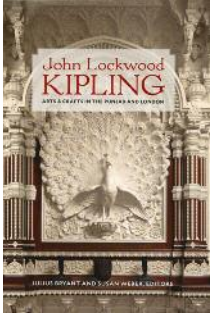
While the 1959-1960 renovation did remove some paint and coated the dome with a red rust inhibitor before application of the top coat of white lead-based paint. The current restoration reflected the awareness of the poisonous nature of lead paints, so the entire dome was stripped of its old paint. Stubborn areas during the stripping of the lead paint were gently blasted with garnet dust and copper slag. 1,200 gallons of paint were applied in three coats: an epoxy primer followed by two coats of a fluoro-polymer, for long term protection.

Missing elements, mostly decorative, were re-secured when possible. Missing pieces were specially recast. Missing acanthus leaves on the Corinthian column capitals, for instance, were replaced with newly formed cast metal leaves as necessary. Similar care was taken in replacing cracked glass in the upper story windows. The glass was specially made to include the wavy surfaces of the existing windows.

As I took leave of the meeting with Mr. Ayers I asked him how long it might be before another major restoration. He said that they now have a full time expert spending time each day to monitor the health of the exterior using bosun chairs like the ones that window washers use. He says he hopes that with our more advanced approach and additional monitoring it might be 75 years in the future before the next major restoration.



The Bibliophilist



John Lockwood Kipling: Arts & Crafts in the Punjab and London

Julius Bryant and Susan Weber, editors.

New York, New Haven and London: Bard Graduate Center Gallery and Yale University Press, 2017.

John Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911) was an English artist, architectural sculptor, designer, teacher, museum curator, preservationist, manager of international exhibitions, and writer who made his reputation in India during the era of the Raj. Now, for the first time, these many facets of his career are brought together and explored in depth in a new book, *John Lockwood Kipling: Arts & Crafts in the Punjab and London*. The publication of this book coincides with an exhibition that originated at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and will be shown at the Bard Graduate Center in New York City from September 15, 2017, to January 7, 2018. I had the privilege of being a peer reviewer for two chapters and have been thoroughly engrossed with this ambitious, interesting, and richly illustrated publication.

Kipling is a fascinating and complex figure—a ceramic modeler and designer of lower-middle class origins whose marriage to Alice Macdonald in 1865 placed him at the epicenter of the British Arts and Crafts movement; his new brothers-in-law included Edward Burne-Jones and Edward Poynter. The Kiplings then moved to India where their son, the famous author, Rudyard Kipling, was born. There, John Lockwood Kipling spent more than two decades working tirelessly at government art schools, first at the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy School of Art and Industry in Bombay (Mumbai) and then at the Mayo School of Art in Lahore.

Scholarly writing on Kipling appeared in the late 1970s and 1980s with important works by Partha Mitter, Mahrukh Tarapor, and Mildred Archer. Kipling's biography by Arthur Ankers was published in 1988. In the 2000s, Kipling appeared in postcolonial scholarship, notably in publications by Peter H. Hoffenberg, Tim Barringer, and Arindam Dutta. In my own work of that decade, I placed Kipling in the context of his friendship with Lockwood de Forest, the American business partner of Louis Comfort Tiffany who revived Indian woodcarving traditions for Gilded Age patrons. Against this backdrop of growing interest, it became clear that a new assessment of Kipling's legacy was overdue.

Although Rudyard Kipling destroyed most of his father's private papers shortly after his death, the amount of material that has survived is striking. This new book is certain to be the definitive source of information on Kipling, detailing a wealth of new research. It also gives a personal and ground-level view of the complex intersection of the British Arts and Crafts movement and art production in Victorian-era India. In her preface, Deborah Swallow introduces

Kipling as a thought-provoking case study because he illuminates the idealism of the Arts and Crafts era and its paradoxes, especially in India. Kipling was thoroughly impressed by the beauty of India's arts, and his encouragement of India's artists was no doubt sincere. At the same time, his efforts were part of a larger project of British colonialism in India, with its pressures and constraints. It is also clear that Kipling's personal experiences were not easy—his low social status amongst the British in India, the loss of children, illness, and the constant need to supplement the family income are made evident. Likewise, his sometimes-contradictory attitudes toward life in India are expressed in his dry wit.

The book is organized in a loosely chronological fashion with most chapters focused on a specific aspect of Kipling's life and art. This thematic approach results in repeating timelines, but establishes each of Kipling's many specific areas of accomplishment in England and India. The book begins with a succinct history of the South Kensington Museum and its relationship to Indian art. Attention then turns to Kipling's biography, followed by detailed chapters on his many pursuits. This segues to a chapter on Alice Kipling, followed by discussions on Kipling's post-India projects, and the book concludes with an assessment of Kipling's influence.

Julius Bryant writes the introduction, highlighting key characters beside Kipling that influenced the larger history of the Arts and Crafts movement as it played out in India, notably John Ruskin, George Birdwood, William Morris, Owen Jones, and later E.B. Havell. Bryant discusses the positive reception of Indian art at the Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations in 1851 and the founding of the South Kensington Museum, along with a parallel school of industrial arts. This phase of British enthusiasm for Indian design was short-lived. After the Sepoy Revolt of 1857-58, which resulted in the establishment of the British Raj, Ruskin shifted from being an early admirer of Indian arts to being a vocal detractor. Still, with Kipling's involvement, British India continued to be represented at international exhibitions, and the South Kensington Museum evolved into the Victoria and Albert Museum, which still maintains collections of historical and traditional Indian arts. Bryant's next chapter examines Kipling's personality, along with his career versatility as he moved from London to Bombay as an agent of the British Indian empire, a decision seemingly guided by the opportunity for upward mobility rather than the desire to render public service.

Christopher Marsden provides background on Kipling's early training in ceramic sculpture in Staffordshire and London. In the next three chapters, Bryant discusses Kipling's architectural sculpture, his contributions to architectural projects, and his designs for decorative arts and dresses, highlighting work done in India and England. He also includes Kipling's relationship with Lockwood de Forest. Catherine Arburthnott focuses on Kipling's designs for the 1877 Imperial Assemblage in Delhi, a celebration of Queen Victoria's new role as Empress of India.

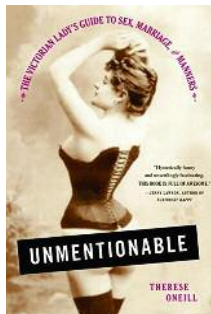
Sandra Kemp illuminates Kipling's achievements as curator and collector at the Lahore Museum, as well as his published journalism, and Susan Weber addresses Kipling's involvement with the international exhibitions movement. Peter Hoffenberg then examines Kipling's participation in *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, which began its run in 1884 in London as a vehicle for promoting the preservation of Indian arts and crafts.

Barbara Bryant argues the importance of Alice Kipling and her family ties to the English Pre-Raphaelites as key factor in

shaping Kipling's ambitions and the decision to go to India. As the focus shifts to Kipling's life after India, Elizabeth James draws attention to Kipling's book illustrations, Sandra Kemp writes on his relationship with Rudyard, and Julius Bryant examines Kipling's royal commissions for design at Bagshot Park and the Durbar Hall at Osborne House in collaboration with Bhai Ram Singh. Finally, Nadhra Shahbaz Khan covers the impact of industrial art education in the Punjab, and Abigail McGowan concludes by showing how some of the ideas of Kipling's era have continued to resonate across time.

This book provides a comprehensive overview of Kipling's cross-cultural world and a plethora of new research. At 600 pages, 700 color illustrations, 37 black and white illustrations, and a full apparatus of footnotes, bibliography, and index, it is a hefty tome that can be enjoyed by the casual reader, and will be treasured by scholars and specialists.

Reviewed by Roberta A. Mayer



Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners

Therese Oneill. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2016.

As an author who proudly stakes a claim to lurid historical detail, Therese Oneill lives up to her own hype with her new book *Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners*. Oneill wants the reader to see beyond the flowing dresses and polite manners of literature and delve into the grosser practices of Victorian ladies in Britain and America. It is hard not to be entertained by her witticisms, quick quips, and sarcasm as she explores the daily life of wealthy females during the nineteenth century. Mind you, this work is not for the faint of heart. But many readers will find this book both educational and entertaining, and will likely view their Victorian heroines very differently after they finish the book. I know I did.

At the start, Oneill offers her primary motive for writing this book: to dispel the myths perpetuated by novels and popular culture and to reveal the realities of life as a Victorian lady, especially in matters having to do with sex and bodily functions. She delves deeply into topics that are still controversial today, including everything from birth control and pregnancy to masturbation and rape. In between these overtly shocking topics, she raises more acceptable subjects for polite conversation. Her detailed explanation of what to do and what not to do when walking the streets is quite instructive, as she explains how to avoid being mistaken for a prostitute. Her subsequent discussion on marriage, running a household, dinner table manners, and dressing for one's station are particularly well-researched and enlightening. Oneill makes such topics (among the few she discusses which might be considered drab and boring) accessible to all by inserting her own sense of humor and author's

voice throughout the work.

Oneill finds unconventional ways to use conventional historical sources. She works through the male-dominated literature of the nineteenth-century surrounding women's bodies, manners, and lifestyles while attempting to bring the voice of the Victorian female to light. She relies heavily on a handful of male authors, while sprinkling in tidbits from authors such as Isabella Beeton and other well-known ladies of the day to corroborate her assertions. She has chosen numerous illustrations and captioned them with witty quotes; these are funny and informative, even if some border on the obscene. In the introduction, she offers an illustration depicting an obese woman squatting and urinating on a street corner, titled "What are you staring at?" This image is just one of many used to dispel the myth of abounding cleanliness and propriety amongst Victorian women. They add a touch of informality to her work, but in a pleasant way. She includes a rather interesting bibliography, most of which is source material that is well known to scholars of Victorian social life and manners. She is not necessarily adding any new information to the history of nineteenth century culture, yet with her gross and highly entertaining viewpoint she sheds new light.

Oneill writes with a conversational tone, indicating a familiarity one would associate with gossip between girlfriends. This may be uncomfortable or unexpected for some readers; if you are a man searching for a dry discussion of sex, marriage, and manners, you have come to the wrong place. She takes her readers by the hand and sends them on a journey through time as a nineteenth century woman, chamber pots and all. No

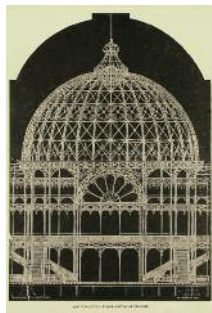
detail is too small for her to mention, and no activity is too disgusting to discuss. For example, she points out instances where routines differed between the United States and England. Most notably, in rural America the choice of bathroom wipe was corn husks; these were not available in industrial London. Such trivia might not appeal to all readers, but this sort of detail is what makes this book something to be appreciated and adds to its originality. For those willing to digest historical information delivered in Oneill's style, they will find quite a bit of well-researched minutia hidden amongst the jokes and sarcastic comments.

But don't let her tone fool you—Oneill means business. She wants to remove the veil of secrecy surrounding feminine hygiene and bedroom antics and properly educate us on the realities of Victorian life. This is an arduous task, and one that requires relying on information that is often given by nineteenth-century authors in a selective, biased, and filtered manner. Oneill should be applauded for sifting through the vague wordings and descriptions provided by the period authors. She decodes the flowery language and elusive meanings. Oneill is also quick to point out inaccuracies in the source material, such as what constituted symptoms of the now-discredited diagnosis of hysteria and which face powders

supposedly beneficial to one's health were poison-laden. She even makes the effort to remind readers that she is discussing the lifestyle of only a very small segment of the Victorian female population. As she is focused on the wealthy Victorian lady, there is no real discussion of the lowest classes or women who were not White Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Such women were not, after all, the subject of the myths she wished to dispel with her work. Most of all, Oneill should be commended for giving us a book that is an entertaining, thorough, well-researched view of the overall lifestyle of the Victorian lady, unparalleled in its discussion of material commonly considered vulgar or uncomfortable.

Readers seeking a less sensationalist approach to Victorian etiquette and manners could consult works such as Ruth Goodman's *How to be a Victorian: A Dawn-to-Dusk Guide to Victorian Life* (2014), reviewed in this journal in volume 35 #2 (Fall 2015), or the ever-reliable Judith Flanders' *The Victorian City: Everyday Life in Dickens' London* (2014). Both of these books give the reader an understanding of everyday life for Victorian ladies and their men. But, I suspect many readers will not find these books as much fun as Oneill's.

Reviewed by Jaclyn Spainhour



New York Crystal Palace 1853

David Jaffee, editor. Bard Graduate Center, 2017.

New York Crystal Palace 1853 is a born-digital exhibition catalog on a very Victorian topic—a welcome anachronism. New York's Crystal Palace, formally titled the Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations, was a vast exposition of goods held in a purpose-built innovative cast-iron and glass structure in New York City in 1853; it aimed to rival London's 1851 Crystal Palace exposition. The digital publication *New York Crystal Palace 1853* accompanies an exhibition of the same title held at the gallery of the Bard Graduate Center from March 24 to July 30, 2017. Both build upon the 2015 project *Visualizing 19th-Century New York*, an exhibition and digital publication on the myriad published images of New York City. Both were produced by Bard Graduate Center students and staff led by David Jaffee, who was until his death in January of 2017, Professor and Director of New Media Studies. Although the exhibitions have closed, the digital components of both projects are meant to endure. The purpose of the digital publication *New York Crystal Palace 1853* is to “emphasize the experience of those who entered the Crystal Palace through the objects they may have seen.” Although there are overlaps between the exhibition and the digital publication, this review will cover the latter.

The boundaries of this publication are not entirely clear. To be fair, the conventions for digital publications are not yet fixed. Should they have a title page and a table of contents? Where are the author(s) listed? Where does a digital publication begin and where does it end? (And, must a digital publication

conform to any of these conventions?) None of these issues are resolved by *New York Crystal Palace 1853*, because it performs more as an assemblage than a fully-realized publication. Much of the uncertainty stems from the interfaces for entry to the publication—there are too many of them! There are two distinct “title pages.” Through one of these pages (<http://crystalpalace.visualizingnyc.org/digital-publication/>), designed somewhat like the title page and table of contents one would find in a paper publication, the reader accesses two forwards, an introduction by Jaffee, images and brief analytic captions for 49 objects, nine academic footnoted essays, and a bibliography. Another “title page” (<http://crystalpalace.visualizingnyc.org>) looks more like the home page of a website, with type and images arranged in attractive graphic blocks. The most prominent block at the upper left corner, labeled “New York Crystal Palace 1853,” shares the page with three other blocks. One of the smaller blocks, titled “Digital Publication” leads to the first URL cited here, and thus to the content described above. The other two blocks lead to “A Stroll Through the Crystal Palace” via a period panoramic illustration that has been annotated with clickable notes; and a “Visitor's Companion”—a gateway to three more annotated clickable period illustrations, namely the Latting Observatory, an observation tower and refreshment pavilion built next to the Palace; a map of Manhattan highlighting modes of transportation and tourist sights; and a detailed view of the exterior of the Crystal Palace. And, on the Bard Graduate Center webpage for this exhibition,

there are links to two “digital publications”—one link connects to all of the above and the other, titled “New York Crystal Palace 1853 Audio Guide” brings the listener to a title page with clickable photographs of the poet Walt Whitman, along with two (presumably fictional) characters: Philip DeGrasse, an African American man; and Aunt Kitty, a stout woman in a bonnet; these three people deliver commentary on various objects, places and events associated with the fair.

Whether or not all these elements are formally a part of the digital publication, or repurposed components of the exhibition (or both) is unclear, but they certainly all shed light on the Crystal Palace exhibition of 1853. Navigating through them all, however, can lead to either confusion or serendipity, depending upon your mood. I found David Jaffee’s introductory essay almost by chance (hint: click on the word “introduction,” not the author’s name or the short paragraph of text, which you might mistake for the entire introduction).^{*} It’s not always obvious how to enter and exit components, and there are errors, such as mislabeled images and typos, as well as technical glitches. But look beyond these difficulties. For example, despite encountering a paragraph of dummy text (lorem ipsum anyone?) as the heading to the audio guide, I clicked on the face of Aunt Kitty and was rewarded by hearing her no-nonsense views on fine china, statuary and the Singer sewing machine. The audio guide, the Stroll, and the Visitor’s Companion incorporate real or imaged textual and/or visual period quotations. For example, the masthead of the Visitor’s Companion is designed to look like a mid-nineteenth century illustrated magazine, and its text reads like a mid-nineteenth century guidebook. The digital format offers nifty interconnections. A bright blue soda water bottle encircled with a relief depicting the Crystal Palace is in the catalog section, and also turns up when the reader visits the Latting Observatory Ice Cream and Refreshment Saloon. A superlative feature of this digital publication is that with a simple touch all illustrations can be enlarged. This is true not only for the 49 objects in the exhibition, but for all the illustrations in essays and the Stroll and the Visitor’s Companion. It is a delight to use the iPad’s open and close pinch gesture to enlarge and shrink the 1854 daguerreotype view of the Crystal Palace nave, zooming in and out of this rare image, seeing more with greater ease than if I could hold the actual daguerreotype in my hand. (Of course, I cannot!) But, the virtues of this publication are also its weaknesses. By clicking here and there the reader wanders, finding surprises but also forgetting the path back to the rest of the book, or finding oneself sometimes in the nineteenth century along with Aunt Kitty, and the next moment abruptly in the twenty-first century with one of the essays. Like Hansel and Gretel without their breadcrumbs, the reader can get lost in the woods.

This digital publication on the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1853 is a solid source of information on an important topic about which too little is known. The illustrations give unparalleled visual data on

objects exhibited in fair, the architecture of the Palace, and nearby touristic sights. The captions accurately identify the objects, put them in the context of the fair, and sometimes, in a larger cultural context. The nine essays, written by Bard’s MA and PhD candidates, all follow a formula, undoubtedly dictated by their professors. Each of them is approximately 1,500 words long, has 4-8 illustrations, and makes use of primary and secondary sources. They are of varying quality. I recommend Sheila Moloney on the architecture of the Crystal Palace; Lara Schilling on mass transit; Rebecca Sadtler on how New York City’s nascent police force was legitimized through its work at the Fair; Roberta Gorin, on how showing off souvenirs of the fair reiterated the act of attending the fair and reinforced the spectacle of city life; and Alexandra Beuscher on how technologies that used light (photographs and light house lanterns) epitomized the Victorian predilection to connect science, art, philosophy and theology. Through the many accounts of the fair published in newspapers and illustrated press that are quoted throughout the digital publication, we get the mainstream media’s boosterish attitude towards the enterprise.

The audio guide gives us three very different and personal viewpoints: that of Whitman, who marvels at the spectacle; and that of two imagined characters: Philip DeGrasse, who while excluded from the Crystal Palace because of his race, experiences the fair by handling goods destined for display; and the New England matron Aunt Kitty, who is nearly, but not quite, flabbergasted by the Fair. The historical fiction delivered through these audio tracks seems well-documented, but I would have liked to know more about the sources used.

The digital publication as whole reinforces several points. The Crystal Palace was an ambitious proclamation of America’s power to produce goods and consume them. The organizers of the Crystal Palace hoped to bowl visitors over with stylish furnishings and fashions and the latest technological accomplishments. More subtle cultural products were also on display, such as the social control exerted by the police within the walls of the Palace, and the leisure practices of New York’s diverse population exercised in the midway booths outside the walls. The Crystal Palace was a spectacle within the larger spectacle of New York City. All in all, through some technical wizardry in the service of scholarship, this digital publication lets us experience the Crystal Palace exhibition of 1853.

Reviewed by Karen Zukowski

^{*}During the editing process for this review, the “New York Crystal Palace 1853 Audio Guide” was changed and improved.

The audio guide can now be found on one of the two entry interfaces (<http://crystalpalace.visualizingnyc.org>), biographies are now supplied for the three commentators, citing the sources used for their words.

Refuge/Pozemků

It is good to get away from one's desk. And so it is, that around the time desks were invented, vacations were invented.

Rome was to be our destination this past summer but circumstances intervened. Nebraska turned out to be the answer to our family's need to be in the Midwest. We vacationed in that beautiful state for ten days. In Rome, one is in among the roots of Western civilization. In Nebraska, one is in a land that defies civilization. And in the case of Nebraska's 93,000 square miles of Sand Hills, a land that defies even cultivation.

For years we have wanted to visit the home town of Willa Cather, whose novels are so eloquent about the Nebraska landscape and about the earliest white settlers there. Settlers who came mostly from the desperate poverty and disease of Europe in the nineteenth century. *O Pioneers!* (1913), *The Song of the Lark* (1915), *My Ántonia* (1918), among many others, speak of the "glittering sand hills" and the radiant summer light; and they warn of the harsh, duplicitous prairie. They exalt in the sounds of meadow birds, the whisper of tall grasses, and the voices of people becoming accustomed to the English language. Her works celebrate the Czechs, the Slovenians, the Swedes, the Bohemians, the Moravians, the Norwegians, who came hoping to tame this land, a land with "its own fierce strength, its peculiar, savage kind of beauty, its uninterrupted mournfulness." None better than Cather wrote of this wave of the dispossessed, lured here by posters and advertisements depicting the Eden that awaited them.

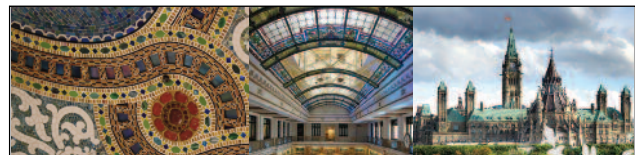
Red Cloud, Nebraska, her home, has come alive with a brand new museum about the author. The Willa Cather Foundation, based there, sponsors town tours. Among the sites one may visit are the house where the writer's girlhood friend, Annie Sadilek Pavelka, worked as a servant. Annie, the plucky daughter of Bohemian emigrants, came to be the model for the eponymous Ántonia. Red Cloud today is full of many such connections. For those familiar with Cather's books, delight in glimpsing her inspirations awaits the visitor. This bill from the B & M Railroad in Czech advertising *Nebrasce pozemku* (land) is to be found, framed, at the Red Cloud Railroad Depot. It is a wistful window onto the nineteenth century when refugees fleeing poverty and persecution, along with religious refugees, were welcomed here without extreme vetting.

Warren Ashworth



A family-operated resort since 1890, the newly expanded Port Cunningham Lodge maintains its commitment to gracious Muskoka hospitality. Six new custom cottages provide a traditional feel with modern comforts. Relaxing fun for the whole family with tennis, canoeing and swimming off the sandy beach or docks. Our dining room is fully licensed and open to the public.

R.R. 1, Dwight, Ontario P0A 1H0
Tel: (705) 635-2505 • Fax: (705) 635-1524
www.pc-lodge.com



AN INVITATION TO JOIN

THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA



Photos by James Russell

Since 1966, The Victorian Society in America has been a leader in the appreciation and preservation of this country's 19th century heritage. Founded as a companion organization to The Victorian Society in Great Britain, The Victorian Society in America brings together lovers of Victorianism—old house owners, professional historians, architects, collectors, students, museum curators, preservation organizations, college libraries, art galleries, antique shops, and restoration specialists. Interests are as varied as the era itself.



1636 Sansom Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 636-9872
victoriansociety.org



Benefits of Membership

- **Symposia and Study Weekends**
Frequently, members gather for a weekend of special study or a symposium on a selected topic such as Victorian houses, hotels and resorts, as well as collectibles.
- **Annual Meeting and Tour**
The annual meeting is held in a locale distinguished for its Victorian heritage and includes tours, receptions, and visits to private collections.
- **Summer Schools**
These schools, based in Newport, R.I., and London, England, study facets of 19th/early 20th century architecture and culture.
- **Publications**
Nineteenth Century magazine is devoted to the cultural and social history during the Victorian era. The Victorian Quarterly newsletter covers activities and news from our local chapters.
- **Preservation**
The Victorian Society engages in efforts to ensure the preservation and/or restoration of 19th century buildings throughout the U.S.
- **Chapter Affiliations**
Members enjoy an even greater variety of activities by joining both the national and a local chapter.

Milestones

To Paint a Queen

Anne-Taylor Cahill

Perhaps one of the loveliest portraits of Queen Victoria is that painted by the American portraitist Thomas Sully of Philadelphia. In true American fashion, Sully did not pose the Queen in the traditional royal portrait pose. No sitting on a throne looking serious and imperial for Sully. Rather he portrayed Victoria from the rear, a youthful monarch approaching the steps up to her throne. Victoria glances back at the viewer as if responding to a call. It was both daring and dramatic. The portrait was a takeoff on a picture of the famous British actress Fanny Kemble whom Sully has painted many times. The prototype was a picture of Fanny as Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Kemble had been a family friend of the Sully family for some time both in England and in America. She married Pierce Butler of Philadelphia and settled there, hence cementing her relationship with the Sullys. Sully equated Fanny with enchantment and loved to paint her. He described her as having a unique charm spiked with “impertinence and vivacity.”

While Fanny and Victoria’s physical appearances were quite different, their personalities were similar according to Sully. Sully’s daughter Blanche who accompanied him to London described Victoria as “good natured, fat face, ugly likeness of (Fanny) Mrs. Butler.” Sully was kinder to Victoria, describing her as “short...and plump but not fat.” In conversation with Sully, Victoria solemnly pronounced the famous actress as a bit too thin!

By showing Victoria ascending the steps to her throne rather than sitting upon it, Sully depicts the formidable future awaiting this very young monarch. It should be noted that Victoria had difficulty with steps. Sully says “It gives her pain to ascend and descend steps from something wrong in the knees, and perhaps this may take something from grace and ease in her walking.” He goes on to elaborate the assistance she needed from Baroness Lehzen just to get in and out of the portrait chair. Nevertheless, the finished portrait presents a taller, slim graceful Victoria gliding up the steps to her throne. Sully was kind to all his female subjects but was especially so to Victoria. It appears that he was always mindful that indeed Victoria was just a young eighteen-year-old. He often refers to the Queen and her ladies as typical teenage girls, laughing and chatting with little constraint. His personal diary injects a note of sadness as he declares, “long may she feel so light of heart.”



Thomas Sully (1783-1872), *Queen Victoria*, 1838.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Sully was most cognizant of young girls and their ways. His daughter Blanche had traveled to England with him and they lived in 3 rooms for nearly 10 months.

Moreover, young Blanche assisted Sully as a stand-in for Victoria during the painting process. Blanche even agreed to model the Queen’s crown for her father. However, fearful that Victoria would be offended at the sight of an American wearing

her crown, Blanche made her father promise not to let the Queen see her. But the Queen did see and she was most amused. Immediately, Blanche and Victoria bonded and proceeded to chat and laugh like old friends. Further, Victoria even allowed Blanche to don her coronation robes and pose in her stead. Sully’s journal indicates a very light and happy atmosphere pervading the palace room when painting Victoria. He really seemed to enjoy the experience.

Sully’s last encounter with the young Victoria was quite by chance. His diary notes it was a Sunday and he was going to attend services in St. James Palace Chapel. He could not get in as there was a great crowd at the door. Dispirited, he turned to take a walk in the park and he reports there was Victoria “in an open carriage on her way...she bowed as though she remembered me.” And why would not Victoria remember Sully? Maybe because prior to her coronation Victoria sat for more than 15 artists. Oftentimes she sat twice a day with 2 artists working at the same time!

Sully sums up his experience with Victoria thusly: “I should be gratified if I were able to give an idea of the sweet tone of voice and the gentle manner of Queen Victoria.” Her manner he said was “impressive of dignity and mildness. I felt quite at my ease as tho’ in company with merely a well-bred lady.”



For further reading:

Carrie B. Barratt
Queen Victoria and Thomas Sully (2016).

Carolyn Erickson, *Her Little Majesty* (1997).

The Victorian Society in America

PRESIDENT

Kevin Rose, Springfield, OH

PAST PRESIDENTS

John J. Simonelli, Paterson, NJ

Tina Strauss, Deerfield, IL

Bruce Davies, Victoria, BC

Patricia Pixley, Omaha, NE

John J. Simonelli, Paterson, NJ

Billie S. Britz (1925-2013)

Guy Lacy Schless (1929-2011)

Richard Hubbard Howland (1909-2006)

William J. Murtagh, Sarasota, FL

Henry-Russell Hitchcock (1903-1987)

J. Steward Johnson (1925-2006)

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

John J. Simonelli, Paterson, NJ

VICE-PRESIDENTS

William Ayres, New York, NY

Anne-Taylor Cahill, Norfolk, VA

Patricia Eldredge, Hudson, OH

SECRETARY

Bruce Davies, Victoria, BC

TREASURER

Robert Chapman, Montclair, NJ

SUMMER SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Richard Guy Wilson, Newport Summer School

Joanna Banham, London Summer School

Elizabeth Leckie, London Assistant Director

Tina Strauss, Chicago Summer School Co-Director

John Waters, Chicago Summer School Co-Director

DIRECTORS

Dennis Andersen, Richmond, VA

Warren Ashworth, New York, NY

Cindy Casey, San Francisco, CA

Janice Hack, Chicago, IL

Sylvia Johnson, Akron, OH

Michael Lewis, Philadelphia, PA

Barbara J. Mitnick, Philadelphia, PA

Charles J. Robertson, Washington, DC

Jaclyn Spainhour, Norfolk, VA

Frampton Tolbert, New York, NY

EMERITI

Patrice K. Beam (Director), Davenport, IA

Donald H. Bergmann (Director), St. Louis, MO

C. Dudley Brown (Director), Washington, DC

William J. Murtagh, (President), Sarasota, FL

Marilyn Tuchow (Director), Birmingham, MI

Sallie Wadsworth (Director), Brookville, IN

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Christopher Forbes, New York, NY

Sibyl M. Groff, New York, NY

Sally Buchanan Kinsey, De Witt, NY

Pauline C. Metcalf, New York, NY

Sandra Tatman, Philadelphia, PA

Richard Guy Wilson, Charlottesville, VA

NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF

Susan Verzella, Business Manager, Philadelphia, PA

Anne Mallek, Summer School Administrator,
Worcester, MA

Special Membership is also available in the Alumni Association Chapter for participants in the Society's summer schools.

The Victorian Society Chapters

Falls Church, Virginia • Greater Chicago

Hoosier (Indiana) • Michigan • New England

Northern New Jersey • New York Metropolitan

Ohio River Valley (Cincinnati Area)

Savannah, Georgia • St. Louis, Missouri

Eloise Hunter, Norfolk, Virginia • Washington, D.C.

For information on chapter membership,
write to the national office:

1636 Sansom Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

or email

info@victoriansociety.org



VICTORIAN
SOCIETY
IN AMERICA

CALL *for* PAPERS | SPECIAL ISSUE

NINETEENTH CENTURY MAGAZINE'S SPRING 2018 ISSUE
WILL FOCUS ON SCIENCE IN THE VICTORIAN ERA.

Nineteenth Century magazine is the peer-reviewed journal of The Victorian Society in America. Scholarly submissions are encouraged in the fields of cultural and social history of the United States dating from 1837 to 1917. *Nineteenth Century* publishes regular features reflecting current research on architecture, fine arts, decorative arts, interior design, landscape architecture, biography and photography.

Guidelines for Submissions

Submissions should be from 2,000 to 6,000 words in length, with illustrations and end notes as necessary. Submissions should be in a Microsoft Word document. Illustrations should be formatted as .jpg, .tiff, .eps or .pdf, 300 dpi or greater, and submitted by **January 1** for publication in the Spring issue, and **July 1** for publication in the Fall issue. Manuscripts shall conform to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. It shall be the responsibility of the author to secure the rights to publish all images. The Victorian Society in America and the editors assume no responsibility for the loss or damage of any material.

Email submissions to: Warren Ashworth, Editor
NineteenthCenturyMagazine@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTORS FALL 2017

Anne-Taylor Cahill is a professor of philosophy at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and serves on the national board of the Victorian Society in America. She is also founding member for former president of the Eloise Hunter Chapter of the VSA.

Merri Ferrell began her career at the Henry Morrison Flagler Museum and later the curator of carriages at Maymont in Richmond, Virginia and at the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook, New York. Regarded as a national expert on the subject of carriages, she has been a consultant for museums and private collections and is currently volunteering at the Metropolitan Museum of Art cataloging carriage drawings and prints.

Alexis Goodin is curatorial research associate at the Clark Art Institute, where she has co-curated exhibitions including *A Fresh and Large Assortment: American Silver from the Burrows Collection*, *Copycat: Reproducing Works of Art*, and most recently, *Orchestrating Elegance: Alma-Tadema and Design*.

Roberta A. Mayer is professor of art history at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, Pennsylvania, and a United States Professor of the Year in 2010. She is author of *Lockwood de Forest: Furnishing the Gilded Age with a Passion for India* and is currently researching Louis Comfort Tiffany's paintings.

Maureen Meister has written extensively on the architects who worked for H. H. Richardson. Among her publications are a monograph on the architect H. Langford Warren and *Arts and Crafts Architecture: History and Heritage in New England*, for which she received an award in 2016 from the New England chapter of the Victorian Society in America.

Kathleen M. Morris is Sylvia and Leonard Marx director of collections and exhibitions and curator of decorative arts at the Clark Art Institute. She oversaw reinstallation of the Clark's decorative arts collections and has co-curated several exhibitions, including *Orchestrating Elegance: Alma-Tadema and Design*.

Ralph Muldrow is the Albert Simmons professor of architecture and preservation at the College of Charleston. He was a project architect for numerous projects including the New Jersey Governor's Mansion, restoration projects at the Roebling Factories in Trenton, and restoration of the 1824 Anne Arundel County Courthouse in Annapolis, Maryland.

Jaclyn Spainhour is the director of the Hunter House Victorian Museum in Norfolk, Virginia. She is also a published local historian, the president of the Norfolk Victorian Society Chapter, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Victorian Society in America.

Majda Kallab Whitaker is an independent scholar, curator, and lecturer specializing in subjects related to late 19th and early 20th century cultural and design history. She is curatorial director of the Dvorak Room in the Bohemian National Hall, New York City, and a board member of the Dvorak American Heritage Association and Bohemian Benevolent & Literary Association.

Karen Zukowski is the book review editor for *Nineteenth Century*, and on the board of the Victorian Society in America. She is an independent writer specializing in the visual culture of the nineteenth century in America, and is at work on a monograph of Olana, the home of Hudson River School painter Frederic Edwin Church.