Nineteenth Century

THE MAGAZINE OF THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA VOLUME 44 NUMBER 2

MEMORANDUM

Warren Ashworth, editor

We were nearing the end of a house tour, and I was anxious to leave when my wife called me back into the last bedroom. I had skipped it because I have limited patience for guided house tours and was looking for an opportunity to nick out early. Pulling my sleeve she said, “You have to see this painting!”

The house is called Wilderstein. It is perched above the Hudson River in Rhinebeck, New York. Its spectacular sprawling porch features a superb view south along the river. The last and most distinguished resident of Wilderstein was Margaret Lynch Suckley, known as Daisy to her friends. She died there at age ninety-nine in 1991 having lived there all her life. Eleven years prior she had established a trust to preserve and restore the house after her death. Thanks to the well-organized and well-endowed initiative, the gracious and eclectic Queen Anne style house opened to the public in 1992.

I was glad to have backtracked to that room. The painting was a portrait. The face in the hand-decorated wood frame was entrancing. So much so that it took me some time to notice the scrawl in the upper left corner. Red letters over the luminous gold background read “The Blizzard. 1888.” The beguiling subject’s face is indeed partially veiled by a sweep of snowflakes. Who was this windswept siren? And why was she associated with the biggest and most notorious blizzard of the last two hundred years?

A few days later, I put these questions to Wilderstein’s curator, Linda Watson. Her answer was that this pastel and watercolor on gilt paper was created by Frederick Stuart Church (1842-1924, no relation to Frederic Edwin Church), a gifted illustrator, and was purchased by Daisy’s mother from a gallery in New York in 1889 for $17.00. She noted that the genesis of the work is not known. A random work of art on a somewhat random wall.

Frederick Stuart Church (1842-1924), *The Blizzard*, 1888.
Courtesy Wilderstein Historic Site, Rhinebeck, New York.

I went to Wilderstein knowing nothing about the house or its occupants. I learned that it stands just nine miles upriver from the house of Daisy’s closest and most intimate friend, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In fact, until 1963, Daisy was the chief archivist at the nearby Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park. After her death archivists found a large trunk full of their letters to each other along with Daisy’s diaries detailing her life at the nexus of power during Roosevelt’s four terms as president. Various details and speculations about their relationship may be found in articles, books, plays, and most recently, the excellent movie *Hyde Park on the Hudson* with Bill Murray as FDR and Laura Linney as Daisy.

I took this photograph before we left the house. Looking at it now I find I am delighted by its mystery. It is not necessary to have a curator’s card to enjoy a work of art and it is always very nice to be smitten on first sight before you have even been introduced.

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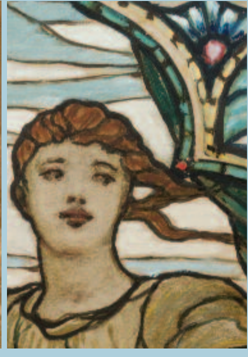
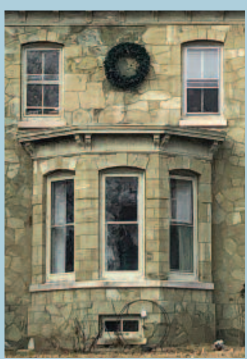
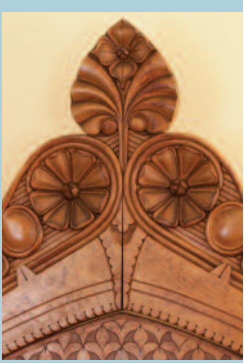

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THANK YOU TO OUR PEER REVIEWERS

Nineteenth Century would like to acknowledge our peer reviewers. We at the editorial board are, as always, deeply grateful to this group of anonymous scholars who review all our author submissions for accuracy of content and application of up-to-date methods of research and scholarship.

Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), *Moorish Interior (Study of Albert Goupil's Oriental Atelier, Paris)*, 1874. Gouache and pencil on brown paper, 20 x 13 1/2. Courtesy of Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn Harbor, New York.

Louis Comfort Tiffany's *Moorish Interior*:

A BRUSH WITH THE ORIENTAL ATELIER OF ALBERT GOUPIL

Roberta A. Mayer

Moorish Interior is a large unfinished, undated watercolor drawing on brown paper by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848–1933). Its current title suggests a room that might be found in southern Spain or the Maghreb or a commissioned design for one of Tiffany's Gilded Age patrons. But these speculations are no longer needed. Based on a serendipitous discovery, it can now be identified as a study of a highly unique and fascinating place—the famous Oriental atelier/studio of Albert Goupil (1840–1884) in Paris. In this painting, Tiffany drew attention to a large panel of geometric interlace and a surround of bright turquoise tiles. Above this installation is what appears to be a maroon textile or carpet, rectangular in shape, positioned vertically, with two prominent circles in the design. These decorative elements form a central motif that is flanked by two displays of long-handled whisks and exotic helmets set against a reflective greenish-yellow panel. Suspended from the ceiling, Tiffany depicted two shriveled black heads on a shiny silver mesh, a gruesome detail that provided the key to identifying this exotic interior. Moreover, his careful depiction of what are now known to be accurate colors indicates that he spent time in this low-lit, richly appointed room painting from observation.[1]

Curiously, there are no specific mentions of Albert Goupil in Tiffany's extant exhibition records or reviews. In 1916, however, for his major retrospective exhibition, Tiffany included *Study of Jules Goupil Studio (Paris)* (Painted in 1874) and *Jules Goupil Studio (Paris)* (Painted in 1895).[2] Then, in 1922, Tiffany exhibited Studio of Jules Goupil in a watercolor exhibition.[3] Given these records and the fact that Tiffany's watercolor clearly depicts the Oriental atelier, it appears that Tiffany misremembered Albert as Jules.[4]

Taken together, the evidence shows that Tiffany visited Albert Goupil's Oriental atelier in 1874 during his fourth trip to Paris. As we shall see, Albert had a second studio dedicated to the Renaissance. His reputation was that of an enthusiastic collector whose good fortune led to the possession of several important pieces. His two private studios at the Hôtel Goupil need to be appreciated as previously unrecognized influences on Tiffany as he began to explore artistic decorating.

The 1874 Tour of Paris

Tiffany, whose household language was French, was an early Francophile. He was only twenty-six when he made his fourth trip to Paris in 1874. At this time, he was fully committed to a professional career as an easel painter, regularly exhibiting at the National Academy of Design, the Century Association, the Brooklyn Art Association, and with the American Society of Painters in Water Colors. His studio was at the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) building on 23rd Street in New York City.[5] With the help of his father, Charles Lewis Tiffany (1812–1902), owner of the jewelry and silver enterprise, Tiffany & Company, the young Tiffany had experienced a traditional Grand Tour, completed private art lessons in Paris, and adventured through Europe, Morocco, and Egypt to build his portfolio of watercolors and oil paintings. He had also married Mary Woodbridge Goddard (1846–1884) and had his first daughter, nicknamed May-May.

On April 15, 1874, Louis, Mary, now early in her second pregnancy, and their young daughter boarded the *Abyssinia*, a Cunard express steamer to Liverpool.[6] Upon arrival in Paris, they joined American artist Samuel Colman, Jr. (1832–1920) and his wife Anne. Samuel Colman was one of Tiffany's most influential teachers, an enduring friend with familial ties, and an early participant in Tiffany's early decorating ventures. The two families took individual suites with a shared parlor in the Hotel de France et Bath at 239 rue St. Honoré, advertised as "an excellent, first-class, family hotel," that was "patronized by the first families of Europe."[7]

This was Mary's first trip to Europe, and the Parisian itinerary most likely included the cathedral of Notre Dame, the Arc de Triumphe, and Montmartre. The Haussmann renovation of Paris was obvious in the wide boulevards lined with new, uniform buildings. Bridges over the Seine, and public gardens offered opportunities for leisurely strolling. The Palais Garnier, as the new Paris Opera would come to be known, was almost completed, but there were also markets and cafés, museums and palaces, as well as the theatre. There was, however, no Eiffel Tower; that would not be built until 1889.

Tiffany's prior stay in Paris was in August 1870, at the end of Napoleon III's Second Empire. During that trip, he and his traveling companion, the artist Robert Swain Gifford (1840–1905), had spent only one anxious night there because of the political tension. Although Tiffany left well before the siege of Paris and the rise of the revolutionary and socialist Commune that ruled the city from March 18 to May 28, 1871, he was aware of the turmoil that had occurred. The Franco-Prussian War and the subsequent civil unrest in Paris resulted in the burning of the Tuileries palace, the Hôtel de Ville, and the Palais de Justice.

By 1874, tourists had begun to return to Paris, but, as Mary mentioned in one of her letters, the partial destruction of the Vendôme column was still evident.[8] The damage to this monument had been instigated by the artist, socialist, and political provocateur Gustave Courbet (1819–1877). The column was a memorial to the military victories of Napoleon I, but Courbet asserted that it did not belong on rue de la Paix, a street dedicated to peace. He said that it should be relocated near the Invalides, the site of Napoleon's tomb. Instead, it was partially destroyed during the Commune. After the Commune fell, Courbet was deemed responsible for the damage, and in 1873 he was held accountable

Attributed to Edmond Bénard (1838-1907), *Albert Goupil in his Oriental Atelier at the Hôtel Goupil, Paris*. Albumen print, c. 1870 (2015-001:053). Courtesy of The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art. Winter Park, Florida. © The Charles Hosmer Morse Foundation, Inc.

for the full reconstruction of the monument. At that point, Courbet left France for Switzerland, where he died in 1877. When the Tiffanys saw the vandalized Vendôme column, this history was fresh, and Courbet's fate was still playing out.

In addition to general sightseeing, there were several destinations that attracted Tiffany and Colman. Specifically, the first exhibition of the Anonymous Society of Painters, Sculptors, Printmakers, etc., was on view from April 15 to May 15 in the former studio of the famed photographer Nadar on the prominent Boulevard des Capucines. Both American artists almost certainly witnessed the first wave of French Impressionism. Although their assessment is unknown, Tiffany and Colman were interested in contemporary realism, a trend that had been unleashed by Courbet through his 1855 Pavillon of Realism and then embraced more broadly by an array of artists at the 1863 Salon des Refusés.

The annual Salon at the Palais des Champs-Élysées, which had suffered in recent years, was also open during their stay. Tiffany had exhibited there in 1868 with a piece titled nature morte, and so he was quite familiar with the venue.[9] The Salon had been cancelled in 1871 and then had poor participation over the next two years.[10] In 1874, a new Minister of Fine Arts, the Marquis de Chevennières, had managed to increase the number of juried entries, but Colman judged the exhibition to be "remarkably poor."[11]

The Louvre Museum was another essential stop. While there, Tiffany made at least two careful studies of *The Alhambra, Granada: Entrance to the Hall of the Sisters*, a luminous watercolor by the late Henri Regnault (1843–1871) that had been acquired by the museum in 1872.[12]

Regnault, only five years older than Tiffany, had been a rising academic painter who was awarded the prestigious Prix de Rome in 1866. Yet Regnault rejected the opportunity to study Greco-Roman antiquity and instead sought to experience the Moorish monuments of Spain and Morocco. In 1869 and 1870, he made several superb watercolor studies of the Alhambra, including the one that Tiffany had copied at the Louvre.[13]

Tiffany had not yet been to Granada when he discovered Regnault's watercolor of the Alhambra, but he and Regnault both knew Morocco. During the winter of 1869–1870, Regnault, with fellow painter Georges Clairin (1843–1919), leased a Moorish house in Tangier and decorated the courtyard in the spirit of the Alhambra.[14] By early June 1870, Regnault had purchased land in Tangier.[15] He wrote to his father of plans to build a new studio on the route to Fez near the large Moorish market, a location with a

superb view of the casbah or fortress.[16] Regnault apparently was still in Tangier on September 5, when he learned that Emperor Napoleon III had been captured during the Battle of Sedan.[17]

Coincidentally, Tiffany arrived in Tangier on September 3, when Regnault was still in residence, and their time in the city overlapped by at least two days. Proof of any encounter may remain elusive, but there is a slim chance that the two artists, who were both obviously outsiders in North Africa, crossed paths. Interestingly, Regnault's new studio seems to have been close to the site of one of Tiffany's major paintings *Market Day Outside the Walls of Tangiers, Morocco* (1873).[18]

On September 10, 1870, Regnault finally returned to Paris.[19] Obsessed with the ongoing conflict, he became more and more despondent. His friends tried to cheer him up by encouraging him to paint in Albert Goupil's Oriental atelier, an environment that likely evoked the feeling of the Tangier studio.[20] Regnault was persuaded by their efforts, and he completed his last three watercolors in the Oriental atelier.[21] Ultimately, he decided to fight in the Franco-Prussian War and died in January 1871 at age twenty-seven at the second battle of Buzenval.[22] Thereafter, as Tiffany discovered, Regnault was revered in France as a national hero and as an artist whose potential was never fully realized.

In addition to his time in the Louvre, Tiffany probably also saw Regnault's shocking and bloody masterpiece, *A Summary Execution under the Moorish Kings of Granada* (1870), which was then on view at the Musée du Luxembourg.[23] As an aside, this was painted in the new studio that Regnault had built in Tangier near the large Moorish market. If Tiffany did not encounter Regnault in Morocco, he certainly learned about him in Paris at the Louvre, the Musée du Luxembourg, and the Oriental atelier.

The Hôtel Goupil and the Ateliers of Albert Goupil

The firm of Goupil & Cie had been founded in the early-nineteenth century in Paris by Jean-Baptiste Adolphe Goupil (1806–1893) to sell engravings of paintings, as well as original art prints.[24] By 1860, the business, now international in scope, had its headquarters at the Hôtel Goupil at 9 Rue Chaptal, a four-story neoclassical building with showrooms for original paintings and printed reproductions, along with print workshops that served as production centers. There were apartments within the building that were rented to artists who worked exclusively for the firm. In addition, members of the Goupil family had their living quarters there.

The Goupil patriarch, familiarly known as Adolphe, had five children; Albert was his middle child and youngest son. Though active in the family business, Albert is better remembered today as a photographer, enthusiastic traveler, and passionate collector. In 1858, he made his first tour of Italy in the company of academic painter Charles François Jalabert (1819–1901), and that sparked his interest in collecting Renaissance artworks.[25] In 1868, Albert traveled for five months with his brother-in-law Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904) and six other painters through Egypt and the Middle East.[26] He photographed the trip and came home with a new enthusiasm for the exotic art and architecture he had encountered.[27] As an aside, during the time that Gérôme was traveling with Goupil, Tiffany was in Paris studying art under the tutelage of Léon Charles Adrien Bailly (1826–1871), a practicing, independent genre painter. Given his interest in Orientalism, Tiffany may have considered working with Gérôme at the École des Beaux-Arts, especially since Thomas Eakins (1844–1916) and Frederick Arthur Bridgman (1847–1928) had helped open the doors to American students.[28] With Gérôme being away, however, this option was unavailable.

Albert organized his collections into two studios or ateliers within the Hôtel Goupil—one dedicated to the Renaissance and the other to the "Orient." These were published by the *Gazette de Beaux-Arts* in 1885 following Albert's premature death at age forty-four.[29] Emile Molinier described the Renaissance atelier, and Henri Lavoix wrote about the Oriental atelier. Molinier presented Albert as an amateur with a sizable budget whose eclectic taste was driven by his personal sense of beauty, mingled with curiosity and admiration for the objects he selected. His ateliers were not meant to be educational museums, but rather theatrical spaces that fueled the imagination.

The Renaissance atelier was a large square room with glazing on one side, and it was filled with furniture, paintings, and tapestries. The space was dominated by a monumental French fifteenth-century fireplace which, according to Molinier, was not great art, but it was worthy because of its pure lines and just proportions. Across the room from the fireplace was a balcony for musicians. A large iron lantern in the style Louis XIV hung in the center of the room, and it was used to display small items, while another showcase contained models dressed in historical costumes. In the mix were some modern paintings and drawings, many by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867), and a bust of Jean-Léon Gérôme by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827–1875), a sculptor and painter of the French Second Empire. The most important object, one which dominated Molinier's attention, was a bust of Saint John the Baptiste that was then ascribed to Donatello and which is now in the Louvre.[30]

The Oriental atelier, also set in a large room, displayed an aesthetic appreciation for Islamic decorative arts that had been rare in France. As Henri Lavoix noted, prior to the Paris Universal Exhibitions of 1867 and 1878, several French scholars had expressed interest in these objects, but there were few serious French collectors. In England, on the other hand, Islamic decorative arts had a much wider audience and were represented in the British Museum, South Kensington Museum, and the Burlington Fine Arts Club. Lavoix neglected to mention that Frederic Leighton (1830–1896) had begun to create his Arab Hall in Holland Park, London, in 1877, a notable example of the taste for Islamic décor in England that is now preserved as a museum. The oversight may have been because Lavoix was intent on teasing out the history of some noteworthy objects and less interested in the decorative ambience.

In 1888, Albert's interiors were dissembled, and his collections were sold at auction.[31] Incidentally, Edward C. Moore (1827–1891), head silversmith and designer for Tiffany & Company, was one of the successful bidders.[32]

The catalogue added significantly to the descriptive essays of Molinier and Lavoix. In particular, the "Oriental Art" consisted of nearly three-hundred objects categorized primarily by their materials: carpets and fabrics, glass, ceramics, brass works, weapons, ironwork, ivory boxes, miscellaneous objects, marble, woodwork and furniture. Among the items listed were Persian rugs, Arabic pendant lamps, Hispano-Moresque ceramics, Mongolian helmets, a Turkish rampart rifle, Indian daggers, Chinese torches, and Japanese rondache or shields. At the center of the room was a large Moorish-style carved white marble fountain with four lion-claw feet; it stood within a twelve-sided

L to r: *Collection Albert Goupil*, as published in the auction catalogue *Catalogue des Objets d'Art de l'Orient et de l'Occident Tableaux Dessins: Composant la collection de feu M. Albert Goupil, Paris*, p. 49. April 23-27, 1888. © BnF, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY. Panel from the Oriental Atelier of Albert Goupil. Egypt, c. 1400-1600. Wood and bone. 172 x 67 x 4.5 cm, AD4419a. Department of Islamic Arts, Louvre Museum, Paris. © RMN-Grand Palais. /Art Resource, NY.

earthenware basin that was decorated with inlaid colored glass paste. One side of the room featured the façade of an Arab house with a balcony; the architecture included mashrabyia panels constructed from small wooden disks and pegs. Two stone columns at the entrance stood on pillars embellished with glass mosaic. A large niche supported by Moorish columns with spiral flutes was in an adjacent corner, and it incorporated wood and bone mosaic panels. Carpets were placed on the floors and meticulously hung on the walls between panels of wood featuring various geometric interlace designs. Fabric-draped shelves were used for the display of vessels. Weapons were mounted on the wall, and lanterns were suspended from the ceiling.

There were also photographs of the Oriental atelier in circulation, and it is now apparent that Tiffany owned one; it was an undated and unlabeled low-contrast, black and white albumen print, now attributed to Edmond Bénard (1838–1907), which focused attention on the large fountain at the center of the room and portrayed Albert Goupil posing languorously on a divan in his exotic enclave. The 1888 auction catalogue was also illustrated with photographs, including two views of the Oriental atelier, and one of these showed the corner that Tiffany had painted. The auction catalogue provides further detail on the ornamental wood panels (some now at the Louvre) as well as a small silk velvet carpet, primarily red and blue, decorated with two rosettes. There were wooden pilasters with different decorative treatments—some covered with blue Persian tiles or stretched with green velvet decorated with flowers or stretched with Chinese fabric or surfaced with enameled champlevé on copper. Most of the helmets were described as Mongolian. The unfinished portion at the bottom of Tiffany's watercolor was probably meant to include two ceramic pedestals in the form of elephants.

Albert's most bizarre possession was the shiny object with two

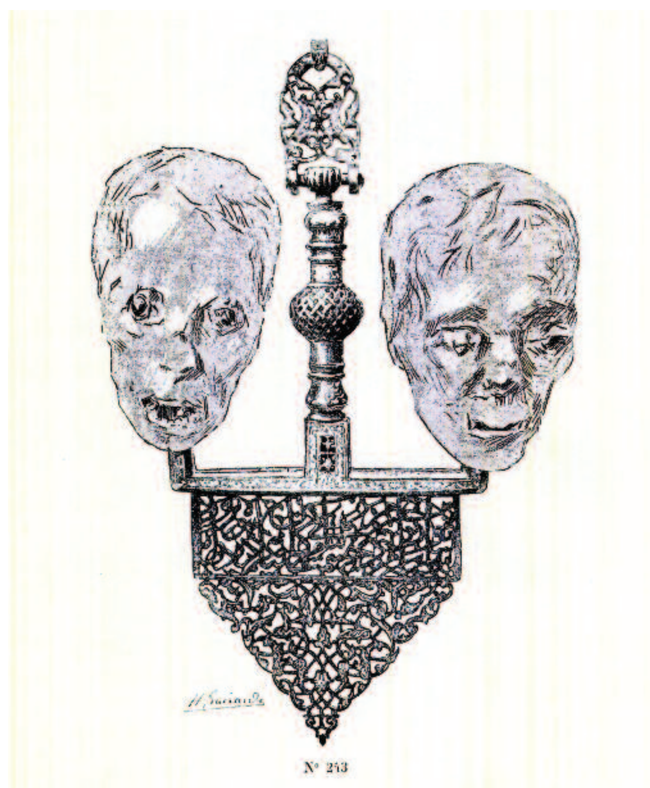
black human heads that, as noted earlier, appears suspended from the ceiling in Tiffany's *Moorish Interior*. When Lavoix discussed the Oriental atelier in 1885, he included an illustration of this item and suggested that the heads were masks, and its display was fanciful. When the object was auctioned in 1888, it was again illustrated and described as a curious piece of fourteenth-century Damascene iron work.[33] It is currently on loan to the Louvre and interpreted as an early sixteenth-century Iranian ceremonial piece with a poetic Persian inscription. Loosely translated to English, the poem reads: "The pupil of your eyes delicately in the manner of a butcher made your eyelashes a hook and pricked on him the hearts."[34] The words seem to be directed to a woman whose beauty had the power to attract and open the heart, though the use of the word "butcher" implies that there is danger in approaching such temptation. One wonders if this frightful thing might have been displayed at the entrance of a harem. Perhaps Albert's idea that it was a display for severed heads was not so fanciful!

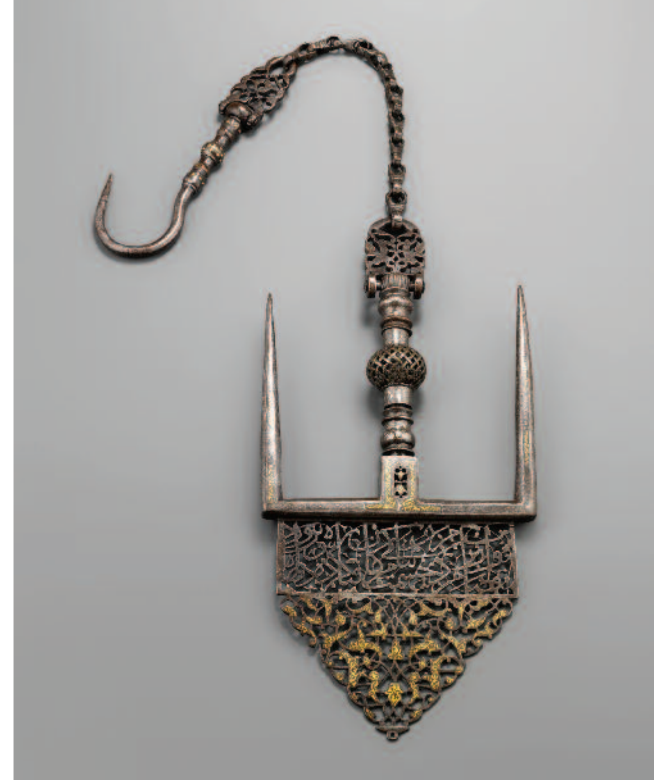
When Tiffany was in Morocco and Egypt in 1870, his primary interest was in creating marketable exhibition paintings that would further his reputation. Tiffany's time in Paris in 1874, however, seems to have been an important milestone in expanding his interests to include Islamic design and decorative arts. As he sketched in Albert Goupil's Oriental atelier and mused over Regnault's watercolor of the Alhambra, Tiffany took it all in and made his next series of travel plans. By the early part of 1876, he toured Algeria, as well as Granada and Seville in Spain. Over the next four years, he would establish business partnerships with Candace Wheeler (1827–1923) for handcrafted embroideries and with Lockwood de Forest (1850–1932) for imported goods from Egypt and India.

Early Artistic Decorating

Tiffany maintained his YMCA painting studio from 1869 to 1878. Like many other artists, he acquired and displayed trophies from his various adventures which served as emblems of sophistication and taste and could be used as props. In an undated newspaper clipping in one of Tiffany's scrapbooks, the YMCA studio was highlighted:

> Louis Tiffany's studio is a repository of strange and curious things he has picked up in his travels. To render the room in keeping with its contents he has built a wide-mouthed, hospitable fireplace, ... Around the fireplace is a great, high mantel, with its carvings and tiles. The wall above is covered in imitation of embossed leather. Here is a rack for books, a safe after the antique, with great steel clasps, and a Louis bronze clock. The windows are draped with heavy damask, resembling tapestry, hung by wooden rings on wooden bars. On the floor are Indian rugs and a tiger skin. The chairs are antique; a toilet-stand is a mass of carving; a cabinet of dark rich oak, covered with quaint designs, hints at secret drawers and long-imprisoned secrets. In one corner is a collection of Eastern costumes, gay yellows and reds, making a carnival of color, in fabrics so delicate they might be drawn through a lady's ring. There are bows and arrows, shields and helmets, bronzes and busts, Venetian glass,





L to r: *Piéce de suspension en fer ouvragé and damasquiné*, as published in the auction catalogue *Catalogue des Objets d'Art de l'Orient et de l'Occident Tableaux Dessins: Composant la collection de feu M. Albert Goupil,* Paris, lot 243, April 23-27, 1888. Ceremonial object from the Oriental Atelier of Albert Goupil. Iron, engraved decoration, gold and silver inlay. Iran, c. 1500. AD4416. Department of Islamic Arts, Louvre Museum, Paris. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.

L to r: Veteran's Room of the Seventh Regiment Armory, 1881. Park Avenue at 67th Street, New York. Photo by James Ewing / JBSA. Window in the Library of the Veteran's Room. Photo by author.

> and homely sturdy stone tankards, with several specimens of old Florentine wood carving, showing the ravage of time, but still revealing the hand of the artist.[35]

At this time, Tiffany was emulating the style of a Parisian painting studio.[36] Some of his décor was apparently fashioned from modern materials that were used to create an antiquarian atmosphere, not unlike a theatrical stage set. There seems to have been an assortment of mostly European objects. His interest in North Africa at this time appears to have been signaled only by textiles and carpets, some of which may have come via Egypt through Lockwood de Forest.

When Tiffany moved to the Bella Apartments in 1878, he set up his new painting studio and used several of his living spaces as showrooms for his new artistic decorating businesses. Although his furnishings remained eclectic, his fascination with Islamic design began to emerge.

In 1879, for example, Tiffany designed a "moresque" salon for George Kemp, a New York pharmaceutical millionaire and member of the Seventh-Regiment Armory.[37] The interior was later published in *Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States* (1883–84). The ornamental patterns used for the walls, ceiling, and leaded glass windows were based on Islamic patterns, and mosque lanterns were hung from the ceiling. Tiffany also experimented with cast plaster arabesques, a technique that was used extensively at the Alhambra, and these panels were painted, gilded, and inlaid with glass.

While the Kemp salon showed Tiffany's fascination with the Alhambra, the Veteran's Room of the Armory on Park Avenue at 67th Street, which has recently been restored, displayed lessons learned from Albert Goupil's Oriental atelier. For this decorating project of 1880–1881, inspired by the theme of military triumph, the firm of Tiffany and Wheeler held the primary contract. Tiffany also worked with consulting architect Stanford White (1853–1906), while Colman gave advice on ornamentation and color, Wheeler designed draperies, and the painters Frank D. Millet (1848–1912) and George H. Yewell (1830–1923) executed the decorative frieze. The ornament included Celtic interlaced motifs, Gothic style wrought-iron metalwork, and, of course, the display of armor. But there are several aspects of this commission that suggest the influence of the Oriental atelier, including a balcony designed with custom-made mashrabyia panels. Albert Goupil had salvaged the façade of an Arab house for his balcony, but Tiffany apparently had the Islamic design elements reproduced. For the fireplace surround, Tiffany used his own patented pressed-glass tiles that produced a brilliant turquoise color, not unlike the Persian tiles that Tiffany had studied in the Oriental atelier. Tiffany designed five leaded-glass windows for the Veteran's Room with geometric designs in green, amber, and pearly white opalescence, colors that also appear in his rendering of the pilasters in the Oriental atelier. Finally, for the library adjacent to the main room, Tiffany created a pair of leaded-glass windows, each with two prominent pieces of bullseye glass. These patterns seem to have melded the geometric interlace wooden panels in the Oriental atelier with the small vertical carpet that Tiffany recorded in his watercolor.

As Tiffany further embarked into the professional realm of artistic decorating, he absorbed and reimagined lessons from many different sources, but it now appears that Tiffany's time in Albert Goupil's Oriental atelier was an important influence that has not been previously known. Tiffany's *Moorish Interior* has proved to be a revelation.

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Notes

1. See Lynne Thornton, *The Orientalists Painter-Travellers* (Paris: ACR ed., 1994), 11. A.E. Duranton's painting of Albert Goupil's Oriental Atelier in Paris was completed before the 1888 auction and captures the original colors.
2. T*he Art Work of Louis C. Tiffany: Retrospective Exhibition* (New York: Tiffany Studios, [February 1916]), nos. 134, 47. I suspect that the 1895 date may be a typographical error of 1875.
3. *Exhibition of Water Colors by Louis C. Tiffany at the Louis C. Tiffany Foundation Gallery, 65 East 56th Street, New York City*, February 4–25, 1922, no. 67.
4. N.B.: Jules-Adolphe Goupil (1839–1883) was an academic painter known for his portraits and genre scenes, but there is presently no evidence that Tiffany painted in his studio.
5. In December 1869, at age twenty-one, Tiffany took studio #28. "Louis Comfort Tiffany Chronology," Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art, Winter Park, Florida. August 9, 2024, https://morsemuseum.org/chronology
6. James David Smillie Diary, April 14, 1874, James D. Smillie and Smillie family papers, Archives of American Art, Washington, DC; Annie Olivia (Tiffany) Mitchell, Memoranda book, 1874. Mitchell-Tiffany Papers (MS 701) Series III, box 16, folder 11, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
7. Michael John Burlingham, *The Last Tiffany: A Biography of Dorothy Tiffany Burlingham* (New York: Atheneum, 1989), 51; A. and W. Galignani and Co., *Galignani's New Paris Guide, for 1874* (Paris: The Galignani library, 1874), np, 440.
8. Letter from Mary Goddard Tiffany to Annie Tiffany Mitchell, May 12, 1874. Mitchell-Tiffany Family Papers (MS 701), cited in Burlingham, 52.
9. *Explication des Ouvrages de Peinture, Sculpture, Architecture, Gravure et Lithographie* (1868), 165, no. 1326 Nature morte. Listed as "Jiffany [sic] (Louis)." July 9, 2024, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/osu.32435022689558
10. In 1870, just prior to the Franco-Prussian War, there were 5,434 works on view. The annual Salon was canceled in 1871 and then reestablished the following year with only 2,067 accepted entries. In 1873, the conservative judges selected only 2,142 works. See *Paris Salon de 1870* (New York: Garland, 1977). July 25, 2024, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015017519987; *Paris Salon de 1872* (New York: Garland, 1977). July 25, 2024, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015017519995; *Paris Salon de 1873* (New York: Garland, 1977). July 25, 2024, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015017519847.
11. *Paris Salon de 1874* (New York: Garland, 1977). July 25, 2024, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015017519854; There were 3,657 accepted entries; Letter from Mary Goddard Tiffany to Annie Tiffany Mitchell, May 12, 1874, cited in Burlingham, 51.
12. [Roberta A. Mayer], catalogue note for Louis Comfort Tiffany, *The Alhambra, Granada* (after Henri Regnault), Sotheby's, March 3, 2021, lot 23. July 9, 2024. https://www.sothebys.com/en/buy/auction/2021/two-centuries-american-art/the-alhambra-granada-after-henri-regnault
13. *Henri Regnault* (1843–1871), October 16, 1991–January 5, 1992 (Saint-Cloud: Musée Municipal de Saint-Cloud, 1991), 60; Arthur Duparc, ed., *Correspondance de Henri Regnault* (Paris: Charpentier, 1872), 349–56, 368–73. July 25, 2024, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6481614s
14. Duparc, 335; for additional description of the studio, see Lizzie W. Champney, "In the Footsteps of Fortuny and Regnault," *Century Magazine* 23 (November 1881): 21. This rented studio is where Regnault painted *Salomé*, 1870, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 16.95. See also Henri Regault, *Patio in Tangier—The Inner Courtyard of the Painter's House*, 1869, oil on canvas, Cairo, Gezirea Museum, Inv. 393, illustrated in Nathalie Bondil, ed., *Benjamin- Constant: Marvels and Mirages of Orientalism* ([Montreal]: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; Paris: Hazan, 2014), no. 182.
15. Duparc, 373.
16. Duparc, 375; Philip Gilbert Hamerton, *Modern Frenchmen* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1878), 389–90.
17. Duparc, 384; Henri Bailliére, *Henri Regnault* (Paris: Didier et Cie, 1872), 80–81.
18. Maria Naylor, ed., *The National Academy of Design Exhibition Records, 1861–1900*, Vol. 2. (Arizona, Tombstone: Tombstone Epitaph for Kennedy Galleries, 1973), 937; Cara Seitchek, "Market Day Outside the Walls of Tangiers, Morocco," *American Art* 14, no. 2 (Summer, 2000): 90–95.
19. Duparc, 384; André Beaunier, *Les Souvenirs d'un Peintre* (Paris: Charpentier, 1906), 140.
20. Duparc, 403; Roger Benjamin, ed., *Orientalism, Delacroix to Klee* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1997), 120–21.
21. Benjamin, 120–21.
22. See Marc Gotlieb, *The Deaths of Henri Regnault* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).
23. Henri Regnault, *Exécution sans jugement sous les rois maures de Grenade*, Musée d'Orsay RF 22. July 9, 2024, https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/artworks/execution-sans-jugement-sous-les-rois-maures-de-grenade-1077; Thornton, 152.
24. *Gérôme and Goupil: Art and Enterprise* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2000), 13–14.
25. Sylvie Aubenas, "Albert Goupil (1840–1884)," Shared Heritage: Bibliothèques d'Orient, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. July 1, 2024, https://heritage.bnf.fr/bibliothequesorient/en/albert-goupil-art-en
26. Hélène Lafont-Couturier, "Mr. Gérôme works for Goupil," in *Gérôme and Goupil*, 16. The other travelers were Léon Bonnat, Ernest Journault, Willem de Famars Testas, and two students, Paul-Marie Lenoir and Jean-Richard Goubie.
27. Albert Goupil, [Voyage en Ėgypte, au Sinaï, en Jordanie et en Palestine,] [1868]. July 2, 2024, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b7200489h
28. See H. Barbara Weinberg, *The American Pupils of Jean-Léon Gérôme* (Fort Worth, Texas: Amon Carter Museum, 1984); Ilene Susan Fort, "Frederick Arthur Bridgman and the American fascination with the exotic Near East" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1990), 25, 28. Bridgman was accepted into Gérôme's atelier 1866, but did not begin his studies until February 1867.
29. *La Collection Albert Goupil: I. L'Art Occidental par Emile Molinier, II. L'Art Oriental par Henri Lavoix* (Paris: Gazette de Beaux-Arts, 1885).
30. See Desiderio da Settignano, *Saint Jean Baptiste*, c. 1455, Département des Sculptures du Moyen Age, de la Renaissance et des temps modernes, Louvre Museum, RF 679. July 10, 2024, https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010093173
31. *Catalogue des Objets d'Art de l'Orient et de l'Occident Tableaux Dessins: Composant la collection de feu M. Albert Goupil* (Paris, Hotel Drouot, April 23–27, 1888).
32. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, *Raqqa Revisited: Ceramics of Ayyubid Syria* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006), 12, 116; See also Medill Harvey, ed., *Collecting Inspiration: Edward C. Moore at Tiffany & Co.* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2021).

33 *La Collection Albert Goupil: I., 33; Catalogue des Objets d'Art de l'Orient et de l'Occident Tableaux Dessins*, lot 243.

34. "Croc de cérémonie," Department of Islamic Arts, Louvre Museum, Paris, AD 4416. July 2, 2024, https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010332490
35. Louis C. Tiffany Scrapbook, Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art, Winter Park, Florida.
36. See e.g. Frank W. Stokes, "Photographs of Artists in Their Studios," The Frick Collection/Frick Art Reference Library Archives.
37. Roberta A. Mayer, "Louis Comfort Tiffany and Joaquîn Sorolla y Bastida: Kindred Spirits" in José Luis Colomer, Blanca Pons-Sorolla, and Mark Roglán, eds. *Sorolla in America: Friends and Patrons* (Madrid: Center for Spain in America in collaboration with the Meadows Museum, 2015), 309–12.

Elihu Vedder (1836-1923), *The Mermaid Window*, 1882. Vedder created this design for a stained glass window for the home of Ashbel Holmes Barney, at 101-103 East 38th Street, New York. Courtesy of the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, New York.

Elihu Vedder's Rings:

A FLIRT WITH STAINED GLASS

Julie L. Sloan

The American Symbolist painter Elihu Vedder (1836-1923) is perhaps best known for his murals in the Library of Congress (1896) and his illustrations for Edward Fitzgerald's *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1884). Less well known are his half-dozen stained-glass windows, made by Tiffany Studios between 1881 and 1889, and his glass invention, Vedder's Rings.[1] Vedder himself talked very little about his interest in glass except in his private correspondence. He referred to it as "fad," writing,

> I had a very serious flirt with stained glass, involving the getting out of patents, and no end of time wasted, resulting in one very beautiful but very small specimen, which I call Aladdin's Window; but not having Aladdin's lamp to rub, I was reduced financially to the condition of the Sultan, his father-in-law. I believe a rotary engine might have completed my ruin had not my patent-lawyers, while admitting that I seemed to have a good thing, dissuaded me from pressing the button. However, it served to let off a great deal of inventive steam.[2]

Despite his claim that only one window was made, he listed two additional windows in the appendix of his book.[3] An additional four are known and there may have been others.

A New Yorker by birth, Vedder spent most of his adult life in Rome, Italy. Vedder returned to New York from his home in Rome in late 1881 in an effort to sell his work. In the 1870s, he had met and became close friends with D. Maitland Armstrong, then consul to the Papal States and amateur artist, and Frederic Crowninshield, painter. Both became involved with stained glass in the early 1880s, which may have piqued Vedder's interest in the medium. Within a month of his return to New York, he was in touch with Armstrong, who by then was working full time for Louis Comfort Tiffany. Armstrong became the liaison between the two men and an important supporter of Vedder's glass art. Through Armstrong, Vedder developed a working as well as a social relationship with Louis Comfort Tiffany, although he rarely dealt with Tiffany on business matters, dealing with business partners instead. In June 1881, Tiffany established Louis C. Tiffany and Company, Associated Artists with Candace Wheeler and William Pringle Mitchell; the firm lasted until 1883.[4] Mitchell and Armstrong (who was not an officer of the company) dealt with Vedder, as revealed in Vedder's correspondence, now in the Archives of American Art.

Vedder's Rings

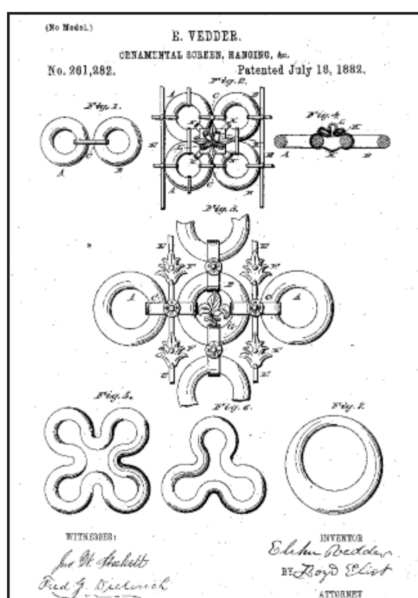
Before ever thinking about stained-glass windows, Vedder had gotten an idea to create moveable curtains or screens made of glass rings held together with metal fittings. He thought, apparently, that he could make money with it. It is not known what sparked the idea, but it came to him prior to arriving in New York in October 1881. He mentioned to his father that he had some "business ideas" to investigate, which may have included how to get the screens made and sold.[5]

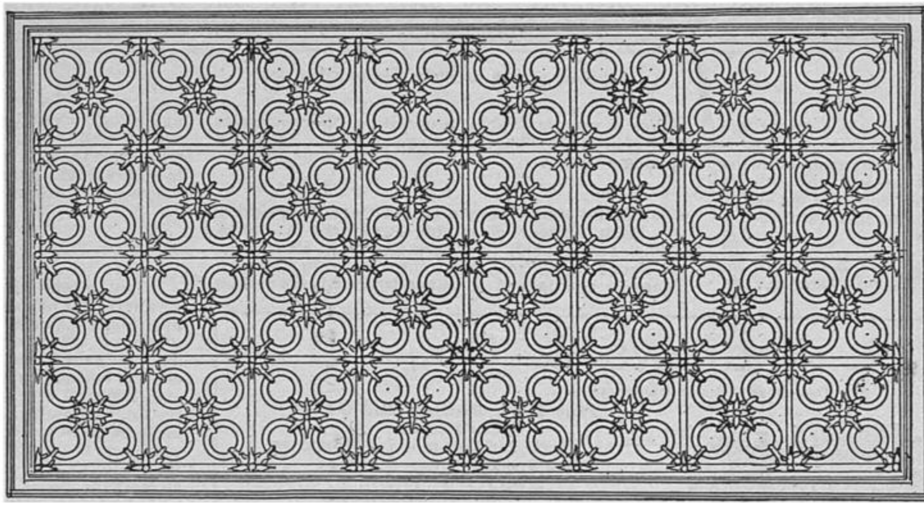
Possible examples of Vedder's rings, although these lack the flange around the perimeter. Author's collection.

He was keen to patent the product. As early as October 24, he had contacted a patent lawyer and was at work on an application.[6] In November he began to talk to Armstrong about it, trying not to give away the whole idea. He was concerned that using opalescent glass in the rings might infringe on John La Farge's patent for using opalescent glass in windows, which La Farge was battling with Tiffany about. La Farge's patent was for making windows, not for the creation of opalescent glass.[7] Vedder was also contemplating making the rings of glass, which would be pressed in a mold, with a flange around the perimeter on which the metal fittings could be clamped. Armstrong confirmed that this was a "new and valuable" idea, and so did Vedder's patent attorney.[8]

In mid-December, Vedder filed two patent applications for his glass screens, one for the flanged rings, titled "Ornament of Glass for Windows, Screens, &c.;" the other, "Ornamental Screen, Hanging, &c." for the use of such glass rings in screens with wire and metal fittings. The patents were granted in May and July 1882.[9]

While Vedder waited for the patents to be granted, Louis Tiffany got wind of his plans and began to complain that Vedder was stealing his ideas. By May 1, 1882, Tiffany had sent Vedder's patent lawyer a schedule of Tiffany's work on a similar idea: he had described them in the spring of 1880, made sketches between October 1880 and January 1881, and worked on models in October and November 1881, just when Vedder was preparing his patent texts.[10] Tiffany had not yet patented his screen idea, but nevertheless tried to bully Vedder into believing that he had intended to. Later in the month, Vedder and Tiffany had a "grand





L: Patent for Ornamental Screen, No. 261,282. Awarded to Elihu Vedder July 18, 1882. Courtesy U.S. Patent Office. Above: Illustration of a screen made of Vedder's glass rings by the Belcher Mosaic Glass Company. As published in *Decorator and Furnisher*, March 1888.

conference" with their respective lawyers to hammer out an agreement. Wrote Vedder to his wife,

> T. [Tiffany] was very pleasant and willing to do any thing [sic] so long as he could use his curtain and I[,] with my better curtain in view[,] was willing enough to let him have all that. But I will get the rings to do what I want with them [,] allowing T. to use them for commissions for [?] places and in combination with his things but not to be put on the market as a manufacture to be sold about – by others.[11]

Vedder described how Tiffany and "his man of business" (undoubtedly Pringle Mitchell) had "smiled" several times at Vedder's ideas until they learned that the patent had actually been granted on May 2, when "they subsided considerably."

As a matter of record, Tiffany filed suit against Vedder a week later, which Vedder had expected, but as a result of this conference, an agreement was written up and signed the same day, with which Vedder was pleased. "The great case of Tiffany vs Vedder," he wrote his wife, "has been brought and was closed after the papers are signed."[12]

Interestingly, in December 1882, Tiffany contributed a number of objects to the Pedestal Loan Fund, an endeavor to raise money to build a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty. One of the objects listed in the catalog was a "screen of opal rings." Vedder's name was not included, and the screen was not illustrated so it is not known whether these were Vedder's rings or something different, but it illustrates that Vedder's concerns about Tiffany stealing the idea were not unfounded.[13] Glass rings without flanges survive today in various private collections anecdotally said to be from Tiffany Studios, but no screens made with them have been discovered.[14] Beginning in the 1890s, the Tiffany company began making screens more often, such as for the Henry O. Havemeyer house in New York, decorated in 1891-1892. Using pressed glass in the shape of paisleys or commas held with wire arabesques, Tiffany Studios fashioned the railing of the flying staircase, which "tinkled from the slight motion when the staircase was used."[15] Simpler screens made of square pieces of glass held together with metal clamps, more similar to Vedder's patent, appeared after 1900, in a catalog and made for architect Claude F. Bragdon, among other examples.[16]

Despite having the rights to make the glass rings, Vedder had a hard time finding anyone to produce them. He spent some time in the autumn of 1882 working with Louis Heidt, the glass man with whom Tiffany had had an exclusive agreement in 1881 to buy all his opalescent glass.[17] But Heidt needed to get molds made and this took time, not to mention money, of which Vedder had little.[18] When the molds were finally ready, Heidt's furnaces needed to be replaced, which took another week.[19] By early November, Heidt had made only dark-colored rings when his furnaces burned out again.[20] By this time, Vedder was in financial trouble with the idea. Writing to his father, he admitted that he had spent a great deal of money trying unsuccessfully to get specimens made.[21] Once that was done, if it ever was, he would then need to find someone to take on their production and distribution. He still adamantly did not want Tiffany to do this, even though Tiffany would probably have succeeded at it. He was willing to lose everything to keep Tiffany from having them.

In November 1882, Vedder drew up a small stained-glass panel made of rings and commissioned Tiffany to make it; this is probably the one he called *Aladdin's Window*, now known only through a sketch.[22] Because the rings were open in the center, he referred to it as an "openwork" window and a ventilator. He took it to Tiffany for fabrication and Pringle Mitchell told Vedder they would have it done in a week and not charge him much for it.[23] At the end of the month, Tiffany's was still working on it. Vedder thought it "will be lovely."[24] It was completed the following month and Mitchell, who was conniving to use Vedder's rings without having to pay him a royalty, liked it.[25] Vedder was so pleased with it that he decided to keep it for himself.[26]

Vedder then started to seek out other stained-glass studios who would work the rings into windows. He met one of the Lamb brothers, either Charles Rollinson or Frederick Stymetz, who visited Vedder's studio and looked at the rings, but declined to become involved because the work was so different from what they did and they were very busy.[27] At the end of the month, a Mr.

and Mrs. Brower from Utica, NY, visited him and recommended the Boston studio, Cook, Redding & Co.[28] Brower contacted them, but John Baird, head of the company, declined, saying they did not make glass. He recommended the New England Glass Company, one of the premier glass factories in the country.[29] With Vedder's agreement, Brower contacted them, but it is not known what their reaction was.[30] Vedder groused that Baird had misunderstood the request – he was looking for someone to make windows with the rings, not to make the rings themselves, but Brower may have been the one to misunderstand.[31]

The Tiffany company still badgered Vedder, trying to get him to let them produce the rings. In late November 1882, Pringle Mitchell brought clients to see Vedder who wanted "novelty in glass" and were smitten with Vedder's rings. Mitchell tried to get Vedder to let Tiffany's make the rings, but Vedder refused, saying that he would charge them $300 for a design and a share of Tiffany's asking price.[32] There was no further mention of the project.

Things came to something of a climax in early 1883, when Vedder decided to return to Rome, which he did in April. He began to search in earnest for someone to take over his rings. He entertained offers from several wildly inappropriate people. In January, he tried to get a "Mr. Robinson" interested because "he is tremendous driver."[33] This was probably Frank T. Robinson, an art critic who was in the process of writing an article on American stained glass for a Boston newspaper.[34] He also tried to loop in Francis Hopkinton Smith, a painter and author.[35] In February, Samuel P. Groocock, purveyor of parquet floors who was working with Tiffany on the decoration of the dining room at Kingscote in Newport, RI, showed an interest, as did Arthur Turnure, publisher of the *Art Interchange*.[36]

The same month, Maitland Armstrong brought Tiffany's latest offer: they would take care of all the mechanicals (molds, casting the glass, making the framework), provide Vedder with a room to work in, and give him ten percent on all sales to start with. Vedder was very tempted, a sign of his frustration, perhaps because Armstrong assured him that he (Armstrong) would make sure Vedder was not cheated.[37] Vedder finally capitulated. On February 15, he told his wife he had sent all his glass rings to Tiffany's.[38] The transfer of business took some time, however. Between September 1883 and December 1884, Vedder's rings were available from Caryl Coleman & Co.[39] Caryl (1847-1930) was the brother of Charles Caryl Coleman (1840-1928) (with whom he is often confused), a painter who lived in Italy and was a good friend of the Vedders. Caryl Coleman worked with or for Tiffany around this time while also engaging in his own business schemes. When Vedder left for Italy, Coleman published a notice that he represented Vedder's art in the U.S.[40] Finally, in November 1885, Tiffany took over the rings, paying Vedder a royalty of about $120.[41] The same month, the *Art Interchange* published a notice that "Louis C. Tiffany & Co. have the Vedder rings in stock."[42]

It was not long before Vedder was unhappy with Tiffany, however. He accused them of owing him money and threatened to sue them.[43] Tiffany had turned over the ring business to F. Roy Jackson, who was involved with making bronze firebacks designed by Vedder (also represented by Coleman). In April 1887, when Vedder was back in New York, he visited Jackson's shop:

> Now I am slowly getting my dander up about the Tiffany people. In at Jackson's I found a bit of the ring work made by the Jacksons of rings supplied them by the Tiffanys. That is T [Tiffany] sold them the simple rings for them to make up–to make an infringement in fact. Also Armstrong confides to me that it is their regular practice to tell people that the rings are too expensive and then they shove off something of their own on them. A. [Armstrong] says that on the contrary that they are very cheap. They should pay me up or I will take it away from them. In fact [if] they do pay me I will take it away in any case.[44]

Although it took another month or so to get satisfaction from Tiffany's in this matter, Vedder did in fact withdraw the agreement. By December 1887, he had turned over the ring project to the Belcher Mosaic Glass Company. Caryl Coleman was probably the catalyst for this connection, since he had written the introduction to the Belcher Company's catalog in September 1886 and published a glowing review of their work the following month.[45] Henry F. Belcher, who came from a stained-glass-making family, had founded his company in 1884 to manufacture windows made in his patented technique in which he poured a metal alloy around pieces of glass instead of using lead came to hold them together. Their initial dealings have not been located.

Vedder's lawyer drew up a contract between them in October 1887.[46] On December 11, Felix Gottschalk of the Belcher company wrote to Vedder in Rome to tell him about their progress. Louis Heidt was again making the rings. They had produced a circular and sold about a dozen screens, mostly to decorators as samples. Gottschalk was enthusiastic:

> I can see my way clear to a nice trade and mutually profitable [sic]. You know I am not given to bragging! But in 1888 I shall astonish you.

Four days later, the third annual exhibition of the Architectural League of New York opened with a printed catalogue in which Belcher had taken out an advertisement for "The Elihu Vedder Glass Ring Structures":

> Having, by agreement with Mr. Elihu Vedder, of Rome, Italy, the exclusive right of manufacturing his glass ring structures, we are prepared to furnish these structures in any size and quantity. Mr. Vedder's patents cover the sole right to manufacture "Illuminated decorative colored glass rings, hinged together in the form of a flexible stained glass window or screen." WE WARN all parties against purchasing the above from any other firm or manufacturer, as by law both buyers and sellers are liable as infringers.

Vedder had obviously relayed his troubles with Tiffany, and Belcher had paid attention. Vedder received another letter from Gottschalk in February 1883 in response to his own letter (which does not survive). Gottschalk wrote that they were sending 5,000 circulars "to every architect, builder and decorator throughout the U.S." on hand-colored, hand-made paper. The Belcher company had issued their own catalog the same way. They were producing the rings in pink, blue, amber, and a milky clear opal. They had invested $2,500 to promote the product. They were still enthusiastic, and it certainly seemed that if anyone was going to make this product work commercially, it would be Belcher.

In March, the *Decorator and Furnisher* noticed Vedder's

screens, probably due to a press release sent by Belcher. This apprised readers that the rings were available in "amber, straw, opal, blue-green, and in clear glass, the sizes ranging from one to three inches in diameter." Two screens were illustrated.[47] But on March 5, Vedder's attorney noted that no royalties or licensing fees had yet been received from Belcher.[48] Again in January 1889, the attorney noted that no statement had been received, although whether this was left from the previous March is unknown.

The Belcher company failed in 1891. The following year, the New Jersey Lamp and Bronze Works of New Brunswick advertised that it had obtained the rights to produce Belcher Mosaic Glass. With this, apparently, came Vedder and his rings. The company announced that Vedder had been "especially engaged" to create designs that the company would submit "for several residences of millionaires which are being built in New York and vicinity.[49] This relationship was advertised by the company through the end of January 1893.[50]

In 1899, the screens were mentioned as part of typical interior design of the late 1880s in a paragraph immediately following a description of Belcher's windows: "The arch between two parlors was filled in with a hanging screen of Vedder's wings [sic] in ruby, green or blue glass."[51] None of Vedder's screens are known to survive.

Windows

While the rings debate, which was never antagonistic, was ongoing, Tiffany was courting Vedder to become part of his company, Louis C. Tiffany, Associated Artists.[52] While Vedder had no intention of doing so, he was flattered. Tiffany did not let Vedder's reticence keep him from using Vedder's talents:

L to r: Elihu Vedder (1836-1923), *Faith (Wise Maiden)*, *Three Angels*, *Knight*, 1883. Christ Church, Pomfret, Connecticut. Photos by author.

sometime in the fall of 1881, shortly after Vedder's arrival in New York, Tiffany asked Vedder to design a window for the vestibule in the mansion of Wells Fargo president, Ashbel Holmes Barney (1816-1886). Barney had bought a house on the corner of Park Avenue and 38th Street in New York in 1873 and remodeled it in 1881.[53] By November 1881 Vedder was working on the cartoon at Tiffany's studio.[54] The Barney window, which no longer exists, was very ambitious, if its sketch is any indication. Drawn in vibrant crayon accented with gold paint, it suggests that Vedder intended real abalone and other shells to be used. The figure of the mermaid was typical of Vedder's sinuous women, and the drawing of seaweed and corals lends a sense of underwater movement. In January, Tiffany urged Vedder to hurry up, and Vedder finished it in February. [55] Vedder, constantly under financial stress, wrote to Barney on March 7 asking to be paid. Anxiously he delivered the letter in person, but he apparently did not see Barney.[56] On March 11, Vedder complained to his wife that he had not yet heard from the millionaire. He blustered that he would "tell Barney that I wasn't a plumber and that I would keep the design for myself."[57] Barney paid him $300 for the design two days later.[58] Six months later, Vedder visited Tiffany's to see the window in progress.[59] Finished in January 1883, Vedder wrote it was "now definitely off my hands."[60] Tiffany later exhibited the drawing at the International Art Exhibition in Munich in May.[61]

While the Barney design was on Vedder's drawing board in November 1881, Vedder was creating a drawing called *Aladdin's Lamp* for *Century Magazine*. Tiffany offered $200 for Vedder to turn it into a stained-glass design.[62] It is not known what the design was; no such window has been located. Louis Prang (1824-1909), a publisher of lithographs, made a Christmas card of a Vedder design of the same name in 1883, with a poem printed on satin and a leatherette envelope.[63] One article described it as,

> ... a beautiful piece of work. ... Aladdin with a lamp above his head is descending a pair of stone steps in a cave. His garments, expression and the bright reflection of his lamp are all true and clearly convey the intelligence of that great romance.[64]

Although the card is charming, there is no indication that it was the same design purchased by Tiffany.

In January 1882, when Tiffany was urging Vedder to move ahead with the Barney *Mermaid*, he was also waiting for a "design for the church window" from Vedder.[65] The identity of this project is not known.

In January 1883, Tiffany was tapped to provide six windows for Christ Episcopal Church in Pomfret, CT, and turned to Vedder for three of them. This is the largest assemblage of Vedder's windows in one place. The tiny church was dedicated to Rev. Alexander Hamilton Vinton (1807-1881) by his daughters. Vinton was an influential minister, perhaps best known as mentors to Rev. Phillips Brooks, bishop of Massachusetts, 1891-1893. Most of the windows are dedicated to Vinton family members. Frederic Crowninshield, a close friend of Vedder's, provided the five chancel windows in memory of the minister.[66] Two others were made by William J. McPherson of Boston and Heaton, Butler & Bayne of London; all but the English window were in place for the church's consecration in May 1883.[67]

One of Vedder's was to be "one single figure (something appropriate to a grandmother)....I can easily make a draped figure with a lamp burning."[68] This was the window dedicated to Mary Atwell Vinton (1773-1854), Rev. Vinton's wife, and given by her children and grandchildren. Vedder referred to the window as *Faith*, although the church now calls it the *Wise Maiden*.[69] The now-lost sketch has been published as *Aladdin's Lamp*, relating it to the earlier Aladdin images, but this makes no sense for a church window dedicated to a woman.[70] Vedder also designed a window he called *Three Angels*, given in memory of Randolph Marshal Clark (1833-1873), husband of one of the Vinton daughters.[71] This is similar to one of his Christmas cards for Prang, *Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Man*. The figures hold the same positions and poses but are pushed together in a narrower space and instead of the Christmas greeting, their banderole contains the legend, "Well Done Thou Good and Faithful Servant." The third window depicts a long-haired man in medieval armor with a winding road behind him. It is dedicated to the artist and soldier, Major John Rogers Vinton, the minister's son. Vedder's wife recorded a payment of $400 for cartoons in February 1883, which must have been for these windows.[72]

The Pomfret windows are some of the most fascinating of Tiffany's work in terms of construction.

> The peculiar beauty of these windows is enhanced by the fact of their novel construction, never before attempted in this kind of stained glass work. The figures and every other part are executed wholly in glass and lead, without the aid of paint or any other touching up. The lines are all done with fine leading...[73]

While claims like this were made of many Tiffany windows that were in fact painted, it is accurate here. Inscriptions were leaded or acid etched. Some details of the faces, hands, and feet were created using wires instead of painting them. Others were formed with overlays of lead came, adhered to the surface of the glass with adhesive. The eyes of the figures were holes cut into the faces and filled with white and blue glass to create corneas and irises. The effect is not entirely successful artistically; the faces are awkward, and the eyes in particular are unsettling. The article was incorrect in its statement that this was the first time Tiffany had used this form of construction. Wires and lead overlays had been used in 1881 for the transept windows, the *Annunciation* and the *Ascension*, designed for Tiffany by Augustus Saint-Gaudens in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Lynn, Massachusetts. The studio used them again in 1882 for the Allen Memorial window in the First Congregational Church in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, completed a month after the Pomfret windows.[74]

Shortly after Pomfret was completed, in November 1882, Vedder drew "a beautiful design of a seated figure with ornamental background for stained glass which I will sell to Tiffany if they want it."[75] This was *Morning*, eventually made in 1888 for the Tarrytown, New York, mansion of Timothy Eastman (1821-1893), called Croydon.[76] It showed a seated woman holding back a curtain, showing the pink and turquoise tints of a morning sky. The border is composed of shapes that look like fish tails and fins, leading one author to call the woman a mermaid despite the fact that she has feet.[77] Vedder was very pleased with this border: "It is really striking and I have out-done myself in the ornamental border. I didn't think I could invent so good a one." He wanted to sell the drawing to *Harper's Weekly* but allowed that if they did not want it, he could either sell it to Tiffany or take a share from the sales price that Tiffany could get for it.[78] *Harper's* "fiddle-faddled" about it so he took it to Tiffany's. Initially they offered

Elihu Vedder (1836-1923), *Morning*, 1888. Photo by Doris Cultraro.

only $150, but a week later they gave him $200 for it.[79]

Several designs mentioned in Vedder's correspondence and elsewhere have not been identified. In 1889, Tiffany and Vedder displayed two drawings of a memorial window (or perhaps two memorial windows) at the annual Architectural League exhibition.[80] Neither was illustrated in the catalogue. The review of the show in the *Chicago Tribune* lauded the designs as "impressive and beautiful," but not describe them further.[81] In 1897, Tiffany Studios had an open house and displayed some of Vedder's cartoons, but again, it is not known which ones.[82]

In 1889, Vedder designed a window called *Until Day Breaks and the Shadows Flee Away*. The three-lancet window was created by Tiffany Studios for St. John's Episcopal Church in Bangor, Maine, in memory of Frederick Francis French and his wife.[83] Tiffany provided three other windows at the same time, but these were not designed by Vedder. Unfortunately, it was destroyed by a city-wide fire in 1911 and no image of it has been found.[84]

Perhaps the last window created by Vedder was for the house of Charles F. Brush (1849-1929) in Cleveland, Ohio. Brush made a fortune through his invention of the arc lamp and built a mansion between 1880 and 1885 near Euclid Avenue. Depicting *Fortune*, "the peculiarities of Mr. Vedder's colors have been most happily copied in the glass, with the added charm of that softness and translucence of the medium which is impossible in paint."[85] Vedder's sketch survives, but the window was apparently lost when the house was demolished in 1929.

In spite of his relative obscurity as a stained-glass designer today, Vedder was recognized as early as February 1883, when the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* mentioned him in the company of John La Farge, Louis Comfort Tiffany, and Frederic Crowninshield as breaking new ground in stained-glass design.[86] The author was Frank T. Robinson, a friend of Vedder's, which may explain the inclusion, since none of Vedder's windows had yet been reviewed. The notice about the Pomfret windows in May 1883 was the first mention of Vedder as a glass designer.[87] Charles De Kay mentioned him with Frank Millet and Will H. Low as designers in 1889.[88] The same year, the *Philadelphia Times* lamented his absence from Potteries Exhibition where stained glass had "the most striking and interesting exhibit." Today his contributions are practically unknown.

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Notes

1. For Vedder's biography, see Reginia Soria, *Elihu Vedder: American Visionary Artist in Rome* (1836-1923) (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970).
2. Elihu Vedder, *Digressions of V* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1910), 316.
3. Ibid., 482, 483.
4. Roberta Mayer and Carolyn K. Lane, "Disassociating the 'Associated Artists': The Early Business Ventures of Louis C. Tiffany, Candace T. Wheeler, and Lockwood De Forest," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 8 (Spring-Summer 2001), 3-4, 21, 29. Mitchell (1858-1900) was related to Tiffany by marriage.
5. Elihu Vedder to his father, October 14, 1881,
6. Vedder to his wife, October 24, 1881, AAA.
7. John La Farge, "Colored-Glass Window," U.S. Patent No. 224,831, February 24, 1880; Julie L. Sloan and James L. Yarnall, "John La Farge's patent for the American opalescent window," *Journal of Stained Glass* 28 (2004), 31-45.
8. Julie L. Sloan, "The Rivalry Between Louis Comfort Tiffany and John La Farge," *Nineteenth Century* 17 (Fall 1997), 27-29.
9. Elihu Vedder, "Ornamental Screen, Hanging, &c.," patent No. 261,282, filed December 17, 1881, granted July 18, 1882, U.S. Patent Office; Elihu Vedder, "Ornament of Glass for Windows, Screens, &c.," patent no. 257,417, filed December 19, 1881, granted May 2, 1882, U.S. Patent Office.
10. Vedder to his wife, May 1, 1882, AAA.
11. Vedder to his wife, May 23, 1882, AAA.
12. Vedder to his wife, May 28, 1882, AAA.
13. *Catalogue of the Pedestal Fund Art Loan Exhibition* (New York: December 1883), np [8].
14. The author owns several of these, given to her by stained-glass craftspeople who said they bought them from Tiffany Studios; there is no way to verify this.

15. Aline B. Saarinen, *The Proud Possessors* (1958), quoted in Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993), 190-191; a fire screen from the house was similarly constructed, 179.
16. Marilyn A. Johnson, *Louis Comfort Tiffany: Artist for the Ages* (London: Scala Publishers Ltd., 2005), 169; similar screen in David A. Hanks, *Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2013), 134-135. An unidentified catalog image is in Alastair Duncan, *Tiffany Lamps and Metalware* (London: Antique Collectors Club, 2007), 458.
17. Jean-Francois Luneau, “Un document inédit sur les début du verre opalescent ; L’accord entre Louis C. Tiffany et Louis Heidt,” *Journal of Glass Studies* 50 (2008), 197-216.
18. Vedder to his wife, September 27, 1882, AAA.
19. Vedder to his wife, October 3, 1882, AAA.
20. Vedder to his wife, November 2, 1882, AAA.
21. Vedder to his father, October 16, 1882, AAA; illustrated in Richard Murray, “The Art of Decoration,” in Regina Soria, *Perceptions and Evocations: The Art of Elihu Vedder* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1979), 179.
22. Illustrated in Murray, “The Art of Decoration,” 179. Vedder to his wife, November 12, 1882; December 7, 1882, AAA.
23. Vedder to his wife, November 12, 1882, AAA.
24. Vedder to his wife, November 29, 1882, AAA.
25. Vedder to his wife, December 19, 1882.
26. Vedder to his wife, November 29, 1882, AAA.
27. Vedder to his wife, November 12, 1882, AAA.
28. Vedder to his wife, November 25, 1882, AAA. There was a Dr. Abram G. Brower living in Utica at this time, but Vedder did not refer to him ever as “Dr.”
29. John Baird, Cook, Redding & Co., to A. G. Brower, December 2, 1882, AAA.

30 A. G. Brower, Utica, to Elihu Vedder, December 4, 1882, AAA.

31. Vedder to his wife, December 6, 1882, AAA.
32. Vedder to his wife, November 29, 1882, AAA.
33. Vedder to his wife, January 4, 1883; January 7, 1883, AAA.
34. The article was Frank T. Robinson, “Artistic Glass-Making,” *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* (February 13, 1883), 6.
35. Vedder to his wife, December 9, 1882; January 19, 1883, AAA.
36. Vedder to his wife, February 16, 1883, AAA; Vedder to his wife, February 14, 1883, AAA.
37. Vedder to his wife, February 9, 1883, AAA.
38. Vedder to his wife, February 15, 1883, AAA.
39. “Notes and Queries,” *Art Interchange* (November 19, 1885), 141-142; see also “Decorative Novelties,”*Art Interchange* (September 27, 1883), 84; “Notes and Queries,” *Art Interchange* (October 25, 1883), 105; “Queries and Answers,” *Art Interchange* (October 25, 1883), 107; “Queries and Answers,” *Art Interchange* (February 14, 1884), 48; “Notes and Queries,” *Art Interchange* (September 25, 1884), 82; “Queries and Answers,” *Art Interchange* (December 18, 1884), 152; “Queries and Answers,” *Art Interchange* (February 12, 1885), 45.
40. “Art and Artists,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (April 12, 1883), 3.
41. Statement of Account of Mrs. Caroline R. Vedder with Joseph Gutman, Jr. [atty] for 1884, AAA; and November 1885, Financial Papers, Caroline R. Vedder’s Notebook of Sales, AAA. These two documents appear to refer to the same payment, but the first records the amount as $118 and the second, $123.
42. “Notes and Queries,” *Art Interchange* (November 19, 1885), 141-142.
43. Vedder to his wife, March 2, 1887, AAA.
44. Vedder to his wife, April 26, 1887, AAA.
45. Belcher Mosaic Glass Co. (New York, 1886), np; Caryl Coleman, “Mosaic Glass,” *American Art Illustrated* 1 (October 1886), 13-14.
46. Joseph Gutman, atty, to Carrie Vedder, March 5, 1888, AAA.
47. “Among the Trades,” *Decorator and Furnisher Supplement* 11 (March 1888), 227-228.
48. Joseph Gutman, atty to Carrie Vedder, March 5, 1888, AAA.
49. “An Eminent Artist,” *Daily Times* (New Brunswick, NY) (October 25, 1892), 1.
50. “New Jersey Lamp and Bronze Works,” *Daily Times* (New Brunswick, NY) (January 28, 1893), 3. The company was “known throughout the entire country”; *The City of New Brunswick, New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: *The Daily Times*, 1908), 128.
51. *History of Architecture and the Building Trades*, vol. II (New York: Union History Company, 1899), 100.
52. Vedder to his wife, November 1, 1881, AAA; Vedder to his wife, November 5, 1881, AAA.
53. https://daytoninmanhattan.blogspot.com/2023/11/the-lost-charles-t-barney-mansion-101.html, accessed June 4, 2024. The house was demolished in 1922.
54. Vedder to his wife, November 3, 1881, AAA.
55. Vedder to his wife, January 21, 1882, AAA; Vedder to his wife, February 2, 1882, AAA.
56. Vedder to his wife, March 9, 1882, AAA.
57. Vedder to his wife, March 11, 1882, AAA.
58. Financial Papers, Caroline R. Vedder’s Notebook of Sales, AAA.
59. Vedder to his wife, November 14, 1882, AAA.
60. Vedder to his wife, January 3, 1883, AAA.
61. “Fine Arts,” *New York Herald* (May 5, 1883), 10.
62. Vedder to his wife, November 5, 1881, AAA.
63. “L. Prang & Co. [advertisement],” *American Stationer* 14 (July 5, 1883), 4.
64. In 1881, Vedder had won first prize in a Prang Christmas card competition; “Christmas Cards,” *Times Leader* (Wilkes Barre, PA) (November 22, 1883), 4, quoting a local stationer.
65. Vedder to his wife, January 21, 1882, AAA.
66. Gertrude de G. Wilmers and Julie L. Sloan, F*rederic Crowninshield: A Renaissance Man in the Gilded Age* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), 113-115. Vinton had presided at the second marriage of Crowninshield’s mother in 1869.
67. “Connecticut,” *The Churchman* 47 (May 5, 1883), 484-485.
68. Vedder to his wife, January 3, 1883, AAA.
69. Vedder to his wife, January 30, 1883, AAA; Christ Church Pomfret website, https://www.christchurchpomfret.org/tiffany--others.html, accessed June 10, 2024.
70. Murray, “The Art of Decoration,” 179.
71. Vedder to his wife, January 30, 1883, AAA.
72. Financial Papers, Caroline R. Vedder’s Notebook of Sales, AAA. Three other ornamental Tiffany windows were installed at the same time, but they were not designed by Vedder.
73. “Connecticut,” 484-485.
74. “Artistic Glass Work,” *Berkshire County* (MA) *Eagle* (June 29, 1882), 2.
75. Vedder to his wife, November 21, 1882, AAA.
76. “A New Field for Artists: Picture Making in Stained Glass for House Use,” *New York Times* (April 5, 1891), 17; Paul M. Barrett, “’Morning’ Shines Again: A Lost Westchester Treasure is Found,” *Westchester Historian* 90 (Winter 2014), 5-11.
77. Murray, “The Art of Decoration,” 180.
78. Vedder to his wife, November 25, 1882, AAA.
79. Vedder to his wife, December 1, 1882, AAA; Vedder to his wife, December 7, 1882, AAA.
80. Architectural League of New York, *Catalogue of the Fourth Annual Exhibition* (New York: 1889), 48.
81. “American Architecture,” *Chicago Tribune* (January 12, 1889), 12.
82. “Art Notes,” *The Critic* 27 (March 6, 1897), 165.
83. “Local Matters: Beautiful Memorial Window,” *Bangor* (ME) *Whig* (October 28, 1889), np; “Diocesan News: Maine,” *The Churchman* 61 (June 28, 1890), 863; Tiffany Census, Item 19.3.1.2, https://www.cambridge2000.com/tiffany/html/site/19.3.1.html#19.3.1.2, accessed August 13, 2024.
84. “Already Planning to Rebuild Bangor,” *New York Times* (May 2, 1911), 2.
85. “Decorative Notes,” *Decorator and Furnisher* 25 (December 1894), 94.
86. Frank T. Robinson, “Artistic Glass-Making,” *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* (February 13, 1883), 6.
87. “Connecticut,” *The Churchman* 47 (May 5, 1883), 484-485.
88. Charles De Kay, “Renaissance of Stained Glass: An American Triumph,” *Harper’s Weekly* (July 13, 1889), 565.
89. “Native Stained Glass,” *Philadelphia Times* (November 3, 1889), 13.

One of the Virginia Avenue “Sisters,” c. 1872. West Chester, Pennsylvania. Addison Hutton (1834-1916), architect. Photo by author.

Joseph Brinton's "Celebrated" Stone:

HOW GREEN STONE BUILDINGS BECAME A GILDED AGE CRAZE

Anne Krulikowski

Joseph Hill Brinton (1834-1931) chose a propitious moment to become sole proprietor of a serpentine stone quarry located in Chester County, Pennsylvania, about twenty miles west of Philadelphia, in 1869. The expanding national rail network was beginning to provide architects with access to a greater array of building stones as the new taste for polychromy became "almost a general obsession."[1] This new aesthetic taste combined with Brinton's dogged determination to create a successful business resulted in a Gilded Age fad for buildings faced with green stone. As the fashion caught on, geologists began questioning the suitability of serpentine as a building stone but were little heeded. Many hundreds of buildings in seventeen states and Washington, D.C., completely faced, partly faced or trimmed with Chester County green stone, made Joseph Brinton's the most "celebrated" and longest operating serpentine stone quarry of the age.[2]

Brinton conceived the idea of operating the local quarry in 1856, the year he graduated from Yale's Sheffield School after studying geology.[3] Born in a green serpentine stone farmhouse in the countryside just south of West Chester, Brinton was familiar with the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century green stone dwellings, barns, and outbuildings dotting the rural landscape. Early farmers worked the soft stone using just handsaws.[4] Lacking both capital and decision, Brinton spent the thirteen years after graduation farming and tinkering with agricultural machinery, winning several patents.

A year or so before Brinton committed himself to the quarry business, he anxiously observed as two other parties each began to commercially work one of two local serpentine outcroppings after obtaining leases from the farmer landowners. In early 1868, workers laid the cornerstone for the new Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in West Chester. Pastor John Bolton (1818-1898), a trained artist who might have practiced as an architect for a brief time, faced the Gothic church with serpentine and contrasting brick trim. Perhaps his experience working with brother William Jay Bolton (1816-1884), a noted stained-glass artist, attracted Pastor Bolton to the colorful stone.[5]

The same year construction began on Holy Trinity, Brinton's chance meeting with Baltimore architect Thomas Dixon (1819-1886) was the first of two final prods he needed. Dixon had won an early solo commission to design Grace United Methodist Church (1871) in Wilmington, Delaware, his hometown. As Brinton recorded, Dixon was immediately taken with the stone when he first saw the serpentine farm buildings in the countryside, but church building committee members unanimously rejected it.[6] The unfamiliar green stone was probably too radical a departure for these socially prominent men, who planned to erect a magnificent church during a period of intense architectural competition between denominations.[7]

The young architect, though, *was* eager for something new to establish his career, so he informed the committee he was willing to gamble his professional reputation on this unfamiliar stone.[8] Dixon used the serpentine as the principal facing material for the Gothic church, accentuating its windows, doors, and edges with Connecticut brownstone and Nova Scotia "drab stone." The serpentine was generally considered "a beautiful material for the purpose of building; and in this instance the result is very pleasing to the eye."[9] Serpentine proved attractive to architects ready to embrace Gothic and other historical styles they showcased with polychromatic designs.

Dixon's bold action impressed Brinton. Soon after meeting Dixon, Brinton learned that an architect was planning to face a church on Philadelphia's prominent Broad Street with the green stone. The architect was Edward Tuckerman Potter (1831-1904), a New Yorker who maintained a Philadelphia office for a few years in the 1860s; the church was the West Spruce Street Baptist Church (1869), soon named Beth Eden.[10]

According to *Sloan's Architectural Review*, Potter described Beth Eden as being "in the spirit of early Gothic," with a "tendency" towards the Venetian, an effect the architect believed was achieved mainly through the textures and colors of the stone: Chester County serpentine facing combined with Ohio sandstone trim and details.[11] One twentieth-century observer noted that the popularity of the Venetian Gothic championed by John Ruskin "synchronized" with the discovery of serpentine.[12]

The same issue also included a brief article on the Chester County serpentine. The author, John C. Savery, was a successful Philadelphia builder who in September 1867 acquired a five-year lease on the largest of the two outcroppings south of West Chester to provide the stone for Beth Eden (and the Wilmington Church). Without mentioning this, the builder stated that architects were just then introducing the green stone to Philadelphia for "choice edifices."[13] Savery claimed the Chester County serpentine was classed among the marbles, like verde antique. This was a reference to the much harder, dark green serpentine quarried in Tuscany. Connemara, Ireland, and Cornwall, England, also produced a hard variety of serpentine often marketed as "marble." The editor provided a note to clarify that true marbles contain carbonate of lime as their chief constituent, while samples of American serpentine averaged about 80% silica and magnesia. Though many people referred to Brinton's serpentine as "marble," experts considered its softer texture more like sandstone.[14] Chester County serpentine is a medium-to-light green that Brinton described as "emerald." He always corrected correspondents who referred to the color as "pea green."

Brinton was finally convinced that architects and the public beyond his local town appreciated the stone. In January 1869, Brinton secured a twenty-five-year lease on the same property as Savery, giving him the right to quarry when Savery's lease expired.

Brinton then negotiated a partnership with Savery, bringing in his brother as a silent partner to help with financing. The relationship with Savery quickly soured, so a few months later Brinton borrowed money to buy out the Philadelphia builder. The following year, after receiving a contract for a large public building, Brinton plunged further into debt when he acquired a mortgage to purchase the entire 44-acre farm property. His relatives thought he had "lost [his] mind." Conscious that he had a family to support, the risk stiffened Brinton's determination to build "a first-class business."[15]

For the first five years, quarry workers struggled to fill orders. Even skilled stone masons and quarry workers were unfamiliar with serpentine and required almost six months to locate an additional commercially workable vein below the granite. They often broke the larger chunks excavated from the earth into portions too small to be cut to the dimension size required by architects' specifications. Rocks were hauled by wagon to railroad depots, shipped by rail, and then again hauled by wagon to construction sites, increasing breakage. At the building site, stone masons cut the stone to required dimension size and dressed the stone for the degree of smoothness required. Brinton, expected by architects and builders to replace unusable stone, complained that building site workers, equally unfamiliar with the stone, wasted even more.[16]

Brinton's interest in quarrying seems to have developed more from his love of machines than his study of geology: he had always envisioned working the serpentine with "perfect machinery." Handwork was slow. Mechanizing work sped up production but incorporating more machinery into the quarry presented challenges Brinton never overcame. Crowding relatively small serpentine quarry holes with saws, drills, boilers, and other large machines endangered workers. Trade journals noted that quarry accidents annually accounted for an almost equal number of deaths and instances of dismemberment and other injuries as occurred in mines. The quarry soon became famous for its "many curious and original mechanical devices." Brinton himself found that most of his mechanical experiments were failures. Serpentine was simply too soft to be worked even with the modified versions of heavy-duty saws he adapted from granite quarries.[17]

In the mid-1870s, Brinton removed several larger saws after conceiving a new strategy. He demanded that architects send him their specifications so that the work of cutting and dressing the stone could be done at the quarry. Most architects and builders did not think this would work, but Brinton was adamant. Quoins and small decorative elements often didn't fit into place when they reached the building site, so they sometimes had to be re-cut or re-shaped there. Even so, Brinton found that shipping cut stone significantly reduced the cost of waste.[18]

Local boosters depicted the Brinton quarry as a symbol of the industrial age but quarrying and construction still depended on the good old-fashioned horse. Horses mainly but sometimes mules and even oxen hauled heavy stone to and from railroad stations and through city streets to building sites. Stabling, feeding, and the health of his horses constantly preoccupied Brinton. Even horse thieves were an occasional problem. Brinton once offered a reward for a stolen mare, Maisie, and by way of identification noted that "her disposition is very crabbed."[19]

Other challenges were more easily met. To offset the disadvantages of the seasonal industry and retain laborers who gained experience with the soft stone, Brinton built a lumber mill. The mill provided winter employment for the most experienced stone cutters and workers. Between the lumber mill and increasing stone orders, Brinton cleared all his debt by the mid-1870s, despite the Panic of 1873 that drove the adjacent smaller quarry to close.

The First Major Contracts

Early in 1870, the contract for the new state normal school (1871) to be built in West Chester signaled to Brinton that the stone would be more than a quickly passing fad. Building committee members investigated several stones before instructing Addison Hutton, Philadelphia's "Quaker architect," to use Brinton's serpentine. Trustees liked the new and local stone for their new endeavor.[20] The green stone and Hutton's Second Empire design became West Chester trendsetters. Several professional men commissioned Hutton to design large family residences: the "Four Sisters" (1872-74) on Virginia Avenue were faced with almost completely unrelieved serpentine stone, two in the same Second Empire style as the normal school.

Normal school trustees required all their architects to work with Brinton's serpentine for the six additional buildings constructed before World War I. Styles ranged from Second Empire to Queen Anne and then returned to the classical at the end of the century, a Victorian hodgepodge unified by the green stone.[21] Students were proud of their unusual campus and named the school yearbook *The Serpentine*.

The University of Pennsylvania's new West Philadelphia campus and the developing up-scale neighborhood nearby provided a more prominent showcase for Brinton's stone than rural West Chester. Thomas Webb Richards (1836-1911), first head of the School of Architecture, faced College Hall (1872) with the green stone, creating visual interest with courses of brownstone and arches and cornices of Ohio sandstone; the base is a gray stone from Trenton.[22] Richards had already used Brinton's serpentine in West Philadelphia for the new Church Home for Children (1872), begun the year before College Hall. A contemporary illustration shows the orphanage capped with the same Mansard roof Richards employed on the Penn campus.[23]

College Hall, though substantial in size, was not a profitable contract for the quarry. Eager to advertise the stone to Philadelphia architects, Brinton took what he considered the low price of 18 cents per cubic foot rough cut.[24] The sacrifice proved worthwhile when the building garnered positive publicity. Even as the cornerstone was laid in June 1871, a New York publication noted that the green stone the architect planned to use was "becoming such a favorite in the Quaker city."[25] Richards continued with the serpentine and brownstone trim for the next three buildings erected by 1878. Even black and white images of these four immense buildings suggest Penn's exuberant Gilded Age campus.[26]

Brinton wrote that keeping up with the large Penn contracts while taking on others was a "Herculean task." With the skyrocketing demand for the green stone, three other serpentine quarries opened, one just half the distance to Philadelphia as West Chester—described by Brinton as "the biggest danger" to his own prospects—and two in Chester County straddling the Pennsylvania-Maryland border. Despite inexperience, some failed mechanical experiments, and a sudden physical collapse brought on by four years of stress and overwork, Brinton outlasted his competitors. All three ceased operations after just a few years, while Brinton's stonecutters and quarry workers carried on during his convalescence.[27]

The prestigious West Philadelphia suburb near the Penn campus featured several substantial dwellings and churches faced with the green stone. Another Richards project, the Gothic Northminster Presbyterian Church (1875), was clad in rusticated serpentine and

The Normal School Building, c. 1871. West Chester, Pennsylvania. Addison Hutton (1834-1916), architect. This building was the first of seven constructed with serpentine stone on the school's campus. Author's collection.

flaunted a four-story tower that became a prominent landmark.[28] Richards became a spokesman for Brinton's quarry. Eight years after designing College Hall, Richards confirmed that he was still satisfied with the choice of serpentine:
"The stone is harder now than when first built in the wall, and improved in color. The stone, I believe, is frost and fire-proof, and has shown no indications of crumbling."[29]

Despite this endorsement, the College Hall towers suffered the same deterioration as most serpentine towers and cupolas; around World War I, these became the first serpentine towers removed from their building.[30]

The new stone quickly traveled across the Delaware River to Camden. Philadelphia architect Stephen Decatur Button (1813-1897) was then resident in Camden, where one of his projects was the First Presbyterian Church (1871). Button faced the Gothic structure with three stones: "Connecticut brownstone, West Chester greenstone, and Ohio bluestone."[31] That same year, a Camden real estate broker developed the 400 block of Linden Street with serpentine-faced rowhouses lining both sides. Here, the street was widened to accommodate three oval green spaces with fountains, features that differentiated this middle-class enclave known as Linden Terrace from the rest of Linden Street.[32]

In these early years, Brinton's orders came almost exclusively from within the broad Philadelphia region, with one exception. Edward Tuckerman Potter, architect of Beth Eden church, returned to the green stone to trim the Harvard Church (1871-73) in Brookline, Massachusetts.[33] Almost a century later, Henry Russell Hitchcock noted "how effectively such American materials as the popular brownstone from Portland, Conn., and the light-coloured Berea sandstone from Ohio, enlivened by accents of livid green serpentine from Pennsylvania" could achieve a richer polychromy than brick.[34] The same year the church was completed, a Chester County newspaper reported shipments of stone to Boston for several buildings "in what is known as the burned district," left by the devastating fire in November 1872.[35] Possibly Tuckerman's church caught the attention of that city's architects, as several used the stone.

The 1870s saw the most concentrated use of serpentine in Philadelphia. Many blocks of rowhouses were fronted with the stone. In her travel book, *A Half Year in the New World*, the Finnish author and social activist Alexandra Gripenberg recounted visiting a "wealthy Mrs. J." on Diamond Street in north Philadelphia, possibly the 2100 block (1875), where one side of the block was lined mainly by Second Empire rowhouses fronted with serpentine. Gripenberg describes the residence as

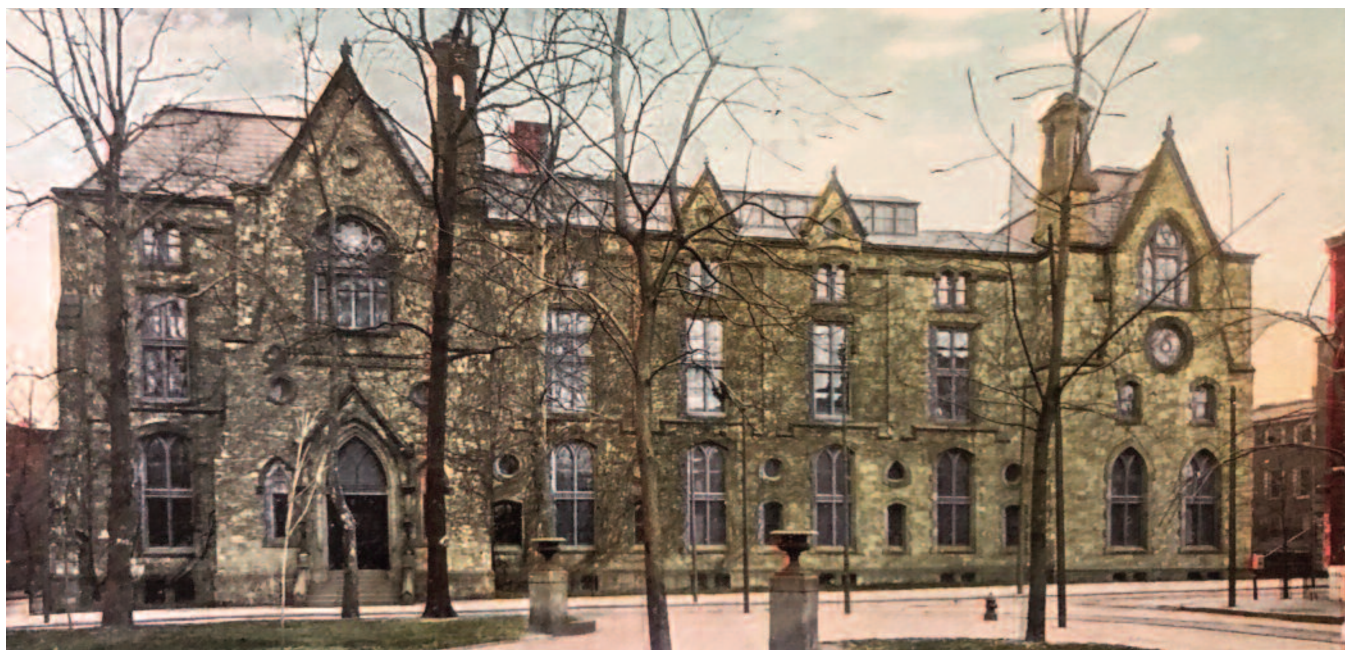
> a new light-green stone house in a charming spot. Within, luxurious splendor prevailed: art treasures, expensive Chinese and Japanese china and also furniture, every piece of which was in itself a work of art.

The old world visitor commented that this "expensive and elegant" house earned little attention from native-born Philadelphians because Diamond Street was not home to the city's bluebloods. This was a neighborhood developed for the professional and business classes.[36]

Along with churches, mansions, and rowhouse fronts, school buildings always constituted one of the main uses of serpentine. The new Girls Normal School (1876), completely faced with serpentine, was one of Philadelphia's largest educational buildings.[37] Prominent civic and cultural institutions were also clad with the green stone. Sources describe Theophilus P. Chander's New Castle County Courthouse (1879) in nearby Wilmington, Delaware, as completely clad in serpentine with the usual Ohio sandstone trim and set on a granite base.[38] Architect James Windrim faced the Academy of Natural Sciences (1875) with "rich green serpentine stone," while doors and windows were trimmed with Ohio sandstone. As soon as the building was ready for occupancy in fall 1875, staff members hurried to prepare the museum for the public grand opening on May 1, 1876, just in time for Centennial visitors.[39]

The Centennial: Brinton's Great Marketing Opportunity

The Centennial introduced the green stone to a broader audience. Brinton won awards for his serpentine samples, which judges considered the most noteworthy among serpentine specimens they ranked as having "considerable merit." The others were employed



The Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, c. 1875. James Windrim (1840-1919), architect. Author's collection.

strictly for interior decoration, so the judges emphasized that the "coarse, green serpentine of Chester County, Pennsylvania," was a well-known building stone, "quite largely used in Philadelphia and elsewhere."[40] The Centennial's Philadelphia location itself provided an effective advertisement for the quarry, as it drew architects from many regions of the country to West Philadelphia. The Tenth Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects, held in the city during the final month of the fair, enhanced the likelihood that architects from around the country would visit the city.

Architects and builders often depended on brief descriptions of stones in advertisements and correspondence; architects also examined small rock samples they requested from quarries. Stone merchants operating in larger cities also stocked and provided samples, along with scientific information as well as lists of buildings for which stones had been used and their architects. Chicago architect John Root alluded to these promoters when he wrote in one article that

> Not a day passes in the office of any architect of active practice but specimens are brought in of new granite quarried in Wisconsin, new sandstones from Michigan, ricolites from Mexico, verd-antique jaspers and rich marbles from Colorado to California.[410]

Viewing completed buildings was more informative. John Root's brother recalled that the architect even took notes as they walked around Philadelphia together.[42] In the article noted above, Root focused solely on the color effect of specific stones he mentioned. When he explored the meaning of color in an 1883 four-part series in *The Inland Architect and Builder*, Burnham and Root had already chosen Brinton's green stone for at least five residences.[43]

Broad Street, Philadelphia's most prominent thoroughfare and the location of many showy new residences and churches—several faced with serpentine—would have been of irresistible interest to a visiting architect. One speaker during the AIA Convention singled out the new German Gothic Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion (1875), designed by Fraser, Furness, and Hewitt.[44] The Philadelphia Inquirer described the church at Broad and Arch Streets as having an "exterior [of] green serpentine marble, with dressings, arches, and string courses of light-colored Ohio stone, and coping of brown stone."[45] Furness & Hewitt had employed serpentine for a church completed one year earlier, the Memorial Church of the Holy Comforter, at 19th and Titan Streets. Furness historian Michael Lewis believes that the use of serpentine makes this church "the most colorful building ever designed by Furness & Hewitt."[46]

The Centennial helped Brinton transform the quarry into a multi-regional business. The period from 1880 until 1895 was the most active in the quarry's history. After the fair, inquiries and orders came from a wider geographic area. As serpentine buildings appeared in more towns and cities, geologists raised questions about the green stone's durability.[47] Even so, booming demand pushed the quarry to its limits. By 1895, Brinton had shipped his stone to seventeen states and the national capitol.

A Multi-Regional Business

Baltimore was the first important city outside southeastern Pennsylvania to feature several significant buildings faced entirely or in part with Brinton's serpentine. After completing Wilmington's Grace Methodist Church, Thomas Dixon and his partner, Charles L. Carson (1847-1891) quickly introduced the stone to Baltimore with the Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Church (1872). They employed the same green and brown scheme of the Wilmington church on a larger and more costly scale. One of the briefly operated serpentine quarries straddling the Maryland-Pennsylvania border and closer to Baltimore obtained the primary contract. When that quarry was unable to keep to schedule, the quarry owner sub-contracted Brinton to provide a significant portion of the stone. Dixon & Carson dealt with Brinton alone for their next two Baltimore churches—the Lafayette Square Presbyterian Church (1878) and the Central Presbyterian Church on Eutaw Place (1879). Both Gothic churches were faced with serpentine and trimmed with brownstone and Ohio sandstone.[48] Even a rejected design for the Lafayette

Square church submitted by Edmund George Lind, architect of the Peabody Institute (1875), shows green serpentine walls combined with the usual Ohio "drab" (light yellowish Berea sandstone) trim and details.[49] Dixon & Carson also ordered the stone for several groups of rowhouse fronts, most in the same neighborhoods as the churches and facing green squares.

Wealthy and very successful men commissioned prominently located attached houses and detached residences. In Washington, architect Henry R. Searle (1836-1882) designed a five-story Richardsonian quarry-faced serpentine front for Commodore Allen V. Reed (1878) at 6 Logan Circle.[50] Serpentine row house fronts and houses with serpentine trim appeared in several neighborhoods in the capital. In the late 1880s, Thomas Franklin Schneider (1859-1938), known for his landmark Cairo Apartment Building (1894), developed the 1700 block of Q Street and faced several dwellings with roughly dressed Brinton serpentine.[51]

In the same year the Reed house was built, Charles Rowland Peaslee, owner of a Louisville paint and glass company, hired architect Charles J. Clarke (1836-1908) to design a more impressive front for his Third Street dwelling. Clarke faced the street façade of the three-story Queen Anne house with green serpentine (1878). According to contemporary accounts, the side and rear brick walls were painted green to match, undoubtedly with Peaslee's own paint. Nineteenth-century photographs show smaller serpentine rocks only partly dressed, so this dwelling also had a Richardsonian appearance like the Reed and later Schneider dwellings.[52]

Chicago: Brinton's Emerald City

Chicago was the largest single market for Brinton's serpentine stone outside the broad Philadelphia region, providing steady orders from the late 1870s through the early 1890s. More Chicago architects worked with the stone than perhaps even in Philadelphia. The green faced buildings, associated with success and fortune, made their appearance in contemporary fiction and travel accounts as markers of prosperous and even opulent neighborhoods.[53] The first order Brinton received from that city, however, was not for serpentine. During his quarrying career, Brinton also sold a gray granite and in the 1890s he marketed both red and a very popular pink sandstone, which he advertised as the only pink sandstone in the United States.[54] In 1878, Burnham and Root ordered Brinton's granite for the George Hankins House on Michigan Avenue. A few years later the Tribune described it as "a house made of glittering mica gray stone."[55] Two years later, the architects placed their first order for serpentine to face a trio of dwellings (1881) facing the main entrance to Lincoln Park. The green stone was combined with red terracotta panels and "some timber work."[56] In 1892, one of these houses, still owned by the successful distiller for whom it had been built, sold for $75,000.[57]

Burnham and Root used the stone for at least five more dwellings. For two identical houses (1883) built for brothers on Washington Boulevard near Garfield Park, rough serpentine was used for the basement and first story, brick and timber for the second and third stories, topped with stained shingles and a tile roof.[58] The William R. Linn house (1885) on Michigan Avenue, was described as "Old Dutch in feeling," and built of rough serpentine throughout, again decorated with red terra-cotta with a dark-red tile roof. A serpentine-fronted barn was also added to the property.[59]

Burnham and Root seem to have lost interest in the stone as more Chicago architects began placing orders. Most were for residences or fronts on Michigan Avenue, facing a park, or located in Chicago's Gold Coast. Author Clarkson Crane included a Gold Coast trio of three fronts on Goethe Street (1882) in his 1921 short story "A Morning Walk," depicting the middle house at 11 E. Goethe Street as the childhood home of the narrator.[60]

Chicago architects also employed Brinton's serpentine for several apartment and office buildings. In 1882, architect Lawrence Hallberg ordered stone for a 6-story apartment building, the Mentone Flats, at 650 N. Dearborn (1882). After an attic fire in 1889, Hallberg ordered stone for two additional floors.[61] The Mentone was the first of three apartment buildings with serpentine fronts. The Western Publishing Company building (1882) on Dearborn was completely clad in serpentine. A Fifth Avenue office building (1886), designed by O.J. Pierce, included serpentine decorative elements to enhance its Moorish design.[62] The owner of this extravagant "Indian" building pioneered shaky financing for skyscrapers before his spectacular bankruptcy.[63] Providing stone for the highly ambitious was risky. When bankruptcies (or indictments) of clients occurred mid-construction, the quarry sustained significant financial losses, embroiling Brinton in numerous lawsuits.

The Green Stone Church (1882) in Pullman is undoubtedly the most famous building faced with Brinton's serpentine. Solon Spencer Beman (1853-1914) employed serpentine only for the much-photographed two street elevations, while the other two walls reveal the brick construction. Mrs. Duane Doty, author of an early history, considered the Green Stone Church to be the finest building in the new town, finding that the small church had the style and presence of a much larger edifice. Doty separated aesthetics from function, though, and excoriated the use of serpentine. As the wife of a noted civil engineer whose materials she seems to have carefully consulted, Doty provided a detailed description of Chester County serpentine to explain that Chicago's sulphureous atmosphere would likely destroy the building in short order.[64]

Cutting, dressing, and shipping stone for the Pullman church while supplying stone for multiple projects in that city and other locations east of the Mississippi stretched the quarry to the limit. In early spring of 1881, Brinton had a larger workforce than ever before (including 15 stonecutters) and opened two more quarry holes. Master stonecutter David McMaster traveled with a crew to Chicago where they worked on the Burnham and Root dwellings near Lincoln Park and then the two on Washington Boulevard before moving on to a project in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Brinton himself made several trips to meet with architects and builders and to observe progress on the Pullman church.

The Final Years

The quarry remained active into the late 1890s despite the economic depression that began in 1893. Orders for schools, residences, railroad stations, a few firehouses, and other types of buildings, including the Putnam Organ factory (1894) in Staunton, Virginia, were steady. After the Chicago apartment buildings were completed in the early 1890s, churches provided the largest contracts in the quarry's final years. Church work became increasingly dominant in the mid- to late-1880s. One of several serpentine churches built in Ohio was Joseph Warren Yost's (1847-1923) High Victorian Gothic Broad Street United Methodist Church (1884) in Columbus. Yost clad all four walls, except a portion of the rear wall, in serpentine combined with Berea sandstone, which was used for the five lower courses of the walls and as window and door trim. William and Ida McKinley attended church here while he was governor.[65]

Church work led to Brinton's most significant collaboration with an architect, that with George Kramer (1847-1938). Kramer was

said to have designed more than 2,000 buildings, including 500 churches, in most states in the country.[66] In the mid-1890s, Kramer even began legal and financial arrangements to become a partner in the quarry, though this did not ultimately transpire. In his book, *The What, How, and Why of Church Building*, Kramer featured photographs of five churches he had already designed with Brinton's serpentine. By 1906, Kramer faced at least three more with the green stone. Most of the eight churches were in New York, a few in New Jersey and Ohio. All were in a Romanesque style with rubble or roughly dressed stone.[67]

Surviving order and account books for the quarry end ca. 1910. Around 1900, demand rapidly decreased, though large churches provided important projects for a few years. At the time of Brinton's death in 1931, quarrying still occurred, though builders made individual arrangements with Brinton and did their own quarrying.[68]

By the World War I era, crumbling towers and cupolas were becoming evident. The 1880 census, the first to include a survey of quarries and building stones, initiated greater dissemination of data. Geologist George Merrill (1854-1929), a pioneer investigator of building stones who worked on that census, featured the Brinton quarry in his 1897 book, *Stones for Building and Decoration*. Though Merrill noted that the Brinton serpentine quarry was the most successful in the country, he provided an illustration to point out that the rock was almost always badly jointed (i.e., fractured), which could lead to later weakness and breakage after it had been inserted into the wall of a building.[69] The ubiquitous brownstone of the era, which after Berea sandstone was most frequently combined with serpentine, was similarly believed to be durable, though this sandstone also weathered and showed environmental effects more quickly than other building stones.[70] In the 1930s geologist Ralph Stone observed that Chester County serpentine put into a building as rubble or rough quarry-faced rocks held up fairly well while rocks worked more heavily with tools and machinery "go to pieces first." Earlier southern Chester County farm buildings worked only with handsaws have weathered the best.[71]

By 1900, Americans encountered serpentine that in many cases had been exposed for decades. Alexandra Gripenberg visiting Philadelphia's Diamond Street noted the light green color of stone on a house built only about twelve years earlier. Exposure considerably lightened the green color and greatly diminished the contrast between the green serpentine and the yellowish sandstone with which it was almost always paired, resulting in a drab appearance. Even geologists jabbed at the taste of nineteenth-century architects for this combination, though a new generation of architects was even more brutal.[72]

The social context for many serpentine buildings had altered as well. As the narrator of Clarkson Crane's 1921 story finds upon returning to Chicago after a twenty-year absence, the original owners of elegant serpentine residences and the congregations who built the lavish green stone churches had moved on to newer neighborhoods. Green stone buildings came to be associated with the down-at-heel: boarding houses, poverty, immigrants, and racial minorities. But decades earlier, young Thomas Dixon staked his architectural career on a chance to design with the new and unusual green stone. For more than a generation, Brinton's green serpentine stone added color to the urban landscape.

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67. Brinton Correspondence; Kramer, *The What, How, and Why of Church Building*, Frontispieces 1 and 3, xii, xiii, xiv.
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69. Waldemar Lindgren, "Biographical Memoir of George Perkins Merrill, 1854-1929," *National Academy of Science of the United States of America Biographical Memoirs*, Vol. XVII, 2nd Memoir, 1935, 36-38; George P. Merrill, *Stones for Building and Decoration* (New York: John Wiley & Sones, 1891), 68-70.
70. Infinity Design Solutions, "Brownstone's Susceptibility to Accelerated Deterioration and Restoration," https://www.ids-dmv.com/masonry/brownstones-susceptibility-to-accelerated-deterioration-and-restoration/. A detailed study by Ben F. Olena on Hummelstown (PA) brownstone can be found at http://www.quarriesandbeyond.org, an extensive compilation of materials on quarrying history
71. Ralph W. Stone, *Building Stones of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1932), 107.
72. Merrill, *Stones for Building and Decoration*, 69; Parsons, *Report on the Advisability of Increasing the Output*, 23-24. One Philadelphia architect consulted by Parsons used the word "atrocities"; all were critical.

Above: Dining room, house of Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., 6 West 57th Street, New York, 1872-1875, (TRC-PH-4 560.11-019). Courtesy of Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Cover: Albert Levy (1847-1907), *Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., Residence*. 6 West 57th Street, New York, c. 1883. Russell Sturgis (1836-1909), architect. Courtesy Ryerson and Burnham Architecture Archive, Art Institute of Chicago.

Of Roosevelt, Furness and Frogs:

A CASE STUDY IN HIGH VICTORIAN DESIGN

Michael J. Lewis

DEDICATED TO AARON WUNSCH
(1970-2024)

Who as professor of historic preservation at the University of Pennsylvania labored with dedication and unstoppable enthusiasm for the preservation of our cultural heritage.

Who reveled more joyously in "the strenuous life" than President Theodore Roosevelt, who gave that title to an 1899 speech? Whether cattle ranching in North Dakota, big game hunting in Africa, or charging up San Juan Hill in the Spanish-American War – overcoming by sheer force of will his sickly childhood – he more than lived up to the phrase. And so it is gratifying to learn that the man who designed the Roosevelt family home lived just as strenuously. Frank Furness was a Civil War cavalry hero, Medal of Honor winner, and lifelong outdoorsman. But while many of his buildings display a startling, swaggering bravado, none could match the Roosevelt dining room at 6 West 57th Street, New York, which lifts the strenuous to the realm of the bloodthirsty.

The room is a chamber of restless, pulsating activity. Nowhere is there a plain surface on which the eye can rest. The walls are an agitated lattice of notched and beveled beams, while the shelves flaunting the display china are carried on slender wooden colonettes that seem to rest on coiled springs which look as if they might release at any moment, carrying the whole structure up through the ceiling. While the surrounding panels depict the treasures of the feast – fish, lobsters, duck –a grimmer drama unfolds at your feet. For the table at which you dine is carried on sturdy legs with carved representations of fierce storks, each with a frog clasped firmly in its beak. You are reminded that dining is not merely a pleasurable pursuit but something much deeper, nothing less than the immutable law of nature herself. It is the lesson known by every serious hunter, which Furness already was and which young Roosevelt soon would be.

Frank Furness (1839-1912) was in his youthful glory in 1872 when the Roosevelt commission came his way. He was thirty-two and his newly formed partnership of Furness & Hewitt had just won the commission for the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Their office was bursting with commissions for every sort of building: houses, churches, banks, hotels, hospitals, and even a house of correction. Virtually all of his work was in and around Philadelphia, as it would be throughout his career. He had a remarkably stable clientele, drawn from fellow veterans of the Sixth Pennsylvania Cavalry, his elite volunteer regiment, or from members of the First Unitarian Church, where his father was a popular minister. That he should be hired by a New Yorker was unusual, but Roosevelt's father was an unusual man.

Theodore Roosevelt Sr. (1831-1878) was a businessman and philanthropist who was deeply involved in the cultural and civic life of New York. He was a founder of both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History, and was on cordial terms with Calvert Vaux, the architect of both buildings. But he spread his largesse around, and when it came time to move his family to a fashionable address uptown, he chose Russell Sturgis, who was then building a tasteful row of four-story houses on West 57th Street. He bought one and his brother bought one next door.

At some point in the spring of 1872, while the houses were under construction, Roosevelt came to Philadelphia. He inspected the house of Fairman Rogers, then undergoing extensive remodeling by Furness, and was impressed.[1] He wrote Furness & Hewitt on June 1 and again on June 12, 1872, informing them "I have decided to give you charge of my Library," which was to be "similar" to Rogers' library.[2] Rogers' house is long gone and we have no photograph, but we do have one of the library Furness had just designed for Horace Howard Furness, his brother. Horace was married to Rogers' sister, and he and Rogers were the closest of friends; on matters artistic and architectural they were of one mind. Rogers' library would have been in the same Modern Gothic spirit as Horace's, showing the same exaggerated expression of its wooden structure.

Furness's reply does not survive but it was obviously favorable. Before the month was out Roosevelt invited him to New York so they could have "an opportunity to exchange views."[3] Whatever Furness said or showed at this meeting – and we have no direct evidence – it impressed Roosevelt mightily. By the time he returned to Philadelphia, Furness had expanded his commission to include the dining room, its furniture and furnishings, and much of the rest of the interior. He had to move fast. Roosevelt and his family planned to leave for an extended trip to Europe that October and during their absence Furness was to design, build and install the interiors of the new house.

During the summer of 1872, Furness made his preliminary sketches. It was a time of furious activity in the office but he would have spent at least part of the summer at Cape May, New Jersey, where he owned a cottage. Fishing and hunting were his principal diversions, and it is likely that he made his studies for the dining room panels there. They are delightfully fanciful: ducks waddle above open-mouthed fish, framed in neat compartments divided horizontally by the water line and vertically by common marsh reeds. But Furness was also making designs for the furniture; the sketchbook includes studies for the dining room

Library, house of Theodore Roosevelt Sr., 6 West 57th Street, New York, (TRC 560.11-018). Courtesy of Houghton Library, Harvard University.

chairs as well as the fierce storks of the dinner table, along with the comic caricatures with which he constantly teased friends and family members.

Furness had to work briskly because the designs needed to be approved before Roosevelt departed in October. This required a lengthy meeting, and Furness was summoned to New York to spend the night, giving Roosevelt ample time to review Furness's drawings and contracts.[4] Among them were sketches for the furniture, which would be executed by Daniel Pabst, the German-born cabinetmaker on whom Furness relied for his most exacting furniture.[5] Details were still being settled up to the eve of Roosevelt's departure. On October 9 he wrote a hasty note to Furness to confirm his order for twelve dining room chairs and another six for the library.[6]

And off he went.

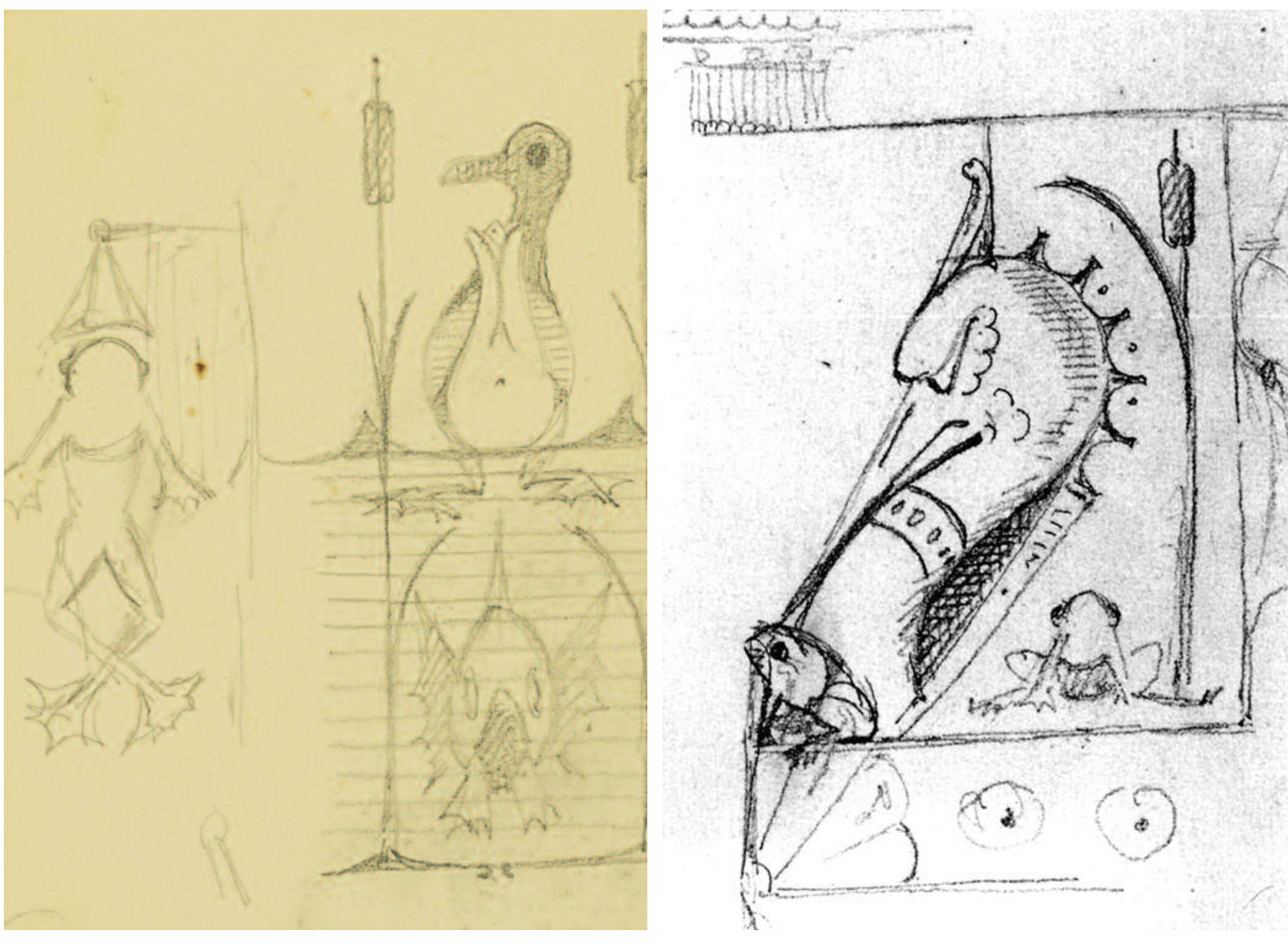
The Roosevelts spent a lively year in Europe, mostly in Germany, where young Theodore threw himself into learning the language. There was a moment of drama in April 1873. The official United States commissioners to the Vienna Exhibition were accused of financial irregularities and summarily dismissed. A new commission was speedily thrown together and, taking advantage of Roosevelt's presence on the Continent, he was made a commissioner.[7] All the while he assumed that work was progressing steadily on his house, into which he planned to move on October 1.

Roosevelt returned alone in mid-June, leaving his family in Europe, and immediately wrote Furness & Hewitt to ask what had been done in his absence:

> Gent[lemen]. I have returned from Europe and would inquire what has been done with regard to my work. How far it is advanced, and when it will *certainly* be completed. Have you kept yourself informed with regard to the condition of the rooms, position of gas &c.?
> Yours truly, Theodore Roosevelt.[8]

To his dismay, very little had been done. Roosevelt telegraphed Furness to come to New York immediately, which was not possible, and followed this up with a curt summons to come on July 29 "and meet me at 94 Maiden Lane immediately on arrival." His letter told Furness that he was in for a drubbing. How was it, Roosevelt demanded, that his brother's woodwork was already in place next door while his own languished, although the order was placed months earlier. "This seems hard," he sighed.[9]

The pace of work now accelerated, dramatically, as Roosevelt sent Furness a steady cascade of letters, sometimes daily, urging speed and demanding to know when things would be ready. (He



Frank Furness (1839-1912), sketches for the interior of the Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. house. Private collection.

would not be the first person to act as if his architect had no other clients). The problem was that Furness had to coordinate a great many operations – woodwork, painting, carpets, gas fixtures, furniture, etc. – which had to occur in sequence. Complicating matters was that Russell Sturgis, the architect of the row of houses, was still involved; he designed the entry hall and staircase. Fortunately, Furness and Sturgis were old friends who knew how to divide their duties cordially, but it must have rankled with Furness not to have charge of the whole project.

By default, Roosevelt became the superintendent of the project, who had to ride herd over his subcontractors. He was what our age would call a micromanager, and he was personally involved in the most minute of decisions. These ranged from technical issues (a request to "telegraph width of back of grates second and third floor") to minute aesthetic issues (make sure the library furniture was "not tufted.").[10] But this attention to detail is just what one would expect from a man whose family business was in the manufacturing of plate glass.

And Roosevelt was preeminently a businessman who was well aware how much his house was costing him. His gas fixtures alone cost him $4550.04, and he was keen to recoup at least some of that. Although they were manufactured by the Philadelphia firm of Baker & Arnold, they were designed by Furness at Roosevelt's behest. If the firm manufactured any more of them, Roosevelt demanded a share of the profit. When he sent them his check, he reminded them that

> I note your agreement to give me a royalty of $60.00 on each chandelier and $30.00 on each bracket you may make from my pattern.[11]

(This may have been the moment when Furness realized that he might earn a profit from the mass-production of his designs, something he pursued with varying success in years to come.)

Furness came nowhere near meeting his October 1 deadline. Roosevelt returned from a two-week business trip in mid-September and was appalled to find the house an empty shell:

> I am much disappointed to find nothing done except the oak floors laid at your request...while nothing [else] has been accomplished. Please send at once woodwork, marble grates, everything. It will be now almost impossible to have it all set by Oct. 1st when I go into the house finished or unfinished. Write me at once stating when it will be here.[12]

The problem was Pabst, who was not only responsible for the furniture but the richly detailed woodwork of the library and

Frank Furness (1839-1912), and Daniel Pabst (1826-1910), dining room table, house of Theodore Roosevelt Sr. Courtesy of the Virginia Carroll Crawford Collection, High Museum of Art, 1983.198.

dining room. There was only one card Roosevelt could play. He wrote a check for $3000 to Pabst and sent it to Furness; "Do not give it to him yet," Roosevelt wrote, "if there is going to be any further delay with the work."[13]

This was on September 18, the day that Jay Cooke's banking house failed, launching the Panic of 1873. The bank could be seen from Furness's office at the corner of Third and Chestnut streets, where Louis Sullivan, his precocious teenage draftsmen, heard the shouting from the street. He dashed to the window to see "a solid black mass of frantic men, crowded, jammed from wall to wall."[14] The aftershocks of that failure would reverberate throughout the American economy in the days ahead, and while it did not ruin Roosevelt, it certainly made him irritable. The tone of his letters over the next few weeks grew decidedly testier. To no avail. Pabst was a perfectionist, and an overworked one at that, and he would not be rushed.

The house was still unfinished when Roosevelt moved during the first week of October, as he told Furness in a pointed letter. The first installment of woodwork had finally arrived, along with one of Pabst's assistants to supervise their installation, but this was only a fraction of what was needed:

> Please ask Mr. Pabst to instruct his man who is here to remain until all wood work is up in Library, and tell him that as I have moved into my house and am very uncomfortable. I wish him to put men on to woodwork for Dining Room at night to complete it at once. Can you now tell me when it and the upstairs mantles will be shipped? When will Mr. Furness be here himself? Of what are the three mantles upstairs being made?
>
> Yours truly, Theodore Roosevelt.[15]

But by now the paneling, fireplace mantels and furniture was trickling in – although not in time for Mrs. Roosevelt, who returned from Europe in early November. Despite her stay at the spa in Karlsbad, Germany, she had not recovered her health. "Mrs. Roosevelt has returned an invalid," Roosevelt peevishly wrote Pabst, "to a house which is only unfinished because of delay in your work."[16]

Even while abroad, Mrs. Roosevelt had been involving herself in the furnishing of the house, surely to the dismay of her husband – and his architect. "Mrs. Roosevelt writes she has ordered gas fixture from Paris," Roosevelt once had to tell Furness, "so cancel order for all except Library and Dining Room."[17] Now that she was back in the country, she intervened more decidedly. On November 17, Roosevelt begged Furness to "send no more of Mrs Roosevelt's bedroom furniture"; a week later he wrote asking that if Pabst would "take back Mrs.

Frank Furness (1839-1912) and Daniel Pabst (1829-1910), furniture for Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., as relocated to Sagamore Hill, the home of President Theodore Roosevelt, Oyster Bay, Long Island. Courtesy of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site | National Park Service.

Roosevelt's bed room furniture in the spring?"[18] He had already paid for the furniture but evidently hoped that Pabst could resell some of it, because he asked Furness to ensure "that my loss will not be too heavy."[19]

What were Mrs. Roosevelt's objections to the Furness-Pabst bedroom furniture? We can only speculate. But she was not the only strong-willed woman to return from Europe in 1873 to discover that Furness had filled her house with eccentric "decorations made *à fantaisie*" and objects "better suited for an English baronial hall!"[20] In each instance, the wife of the client evidently regarded as vulgar décor that her husband found manly.

Mrs. Roosevelt's replacement bed, which survives at the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, would be classified as a specimen of High Victorian exuberance had another architect designed it. But given what Furness was capable of at this period, and what he had done in the rest of the house, it suggests he was reining himself in.

By December 1, Roosevelt's tone abruptly brightened. The painters had finished, "unexpectedly," the scaffolding was coming down in the dining room, and the gas fixtures were arriving the next day. Furness himself was to arrive for his final inspection tour on the 4th, by which time "all Pabst work" was to have been shipped. The furniture maker was now back in good graces with Roosevelt, who was once again sending him his checks directly.[21]

By December 18, when Roosevelt sent Furness the final installment of his $2058.00 fee, all was forgiven. With the check came a cheery note, telling Furness how much pleasure his designs had given Roosevelt and his friends. It closed on the most gracious of notes:

> Hoping that our friendly relations will not cease with our business ones,
>
> I remain yours truly, Theodore Roosevelt.

Of Roosevelt's some four dozen letters to Furness, not a word is said about the character and meaning of his work. They are straightforward business letters from a straightforward businessman. That Furness's designs were witty or playful or wildly imaginative goes unmentioned. Any such comments belong to their private conservation, about which we know absolutely nothing. Certainly they talked about Furness's sketches, and even chuckled over them, for example, the dining room table that is now in the collection of the High Museum in Atlanta. How could Roosevelt have looked at the carved storks of the table legs – their menacing beaks firmly clasping helpless frogs that straddle them like miniature jockeys on race horses – and not laughed?

Of all the items Furness created for Roosevelt, none seems so

Frank Furness (1839-1912) and Daniel Pabst (1829-1910), furniture for Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., as relocated to Sagamore Hill, the home of President Theodore Roosevelt, Oyster Bay, Long Island. Courtesy of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site | National Park Service.

charged with personal meaning. He had served during the Civil War in Rush's Lancers, the elite cavalry regiment that rode into battle with actual lances. They were formidable weapons – nine feet long and made of Norwegian fir, terminating in a three-edged blade – and the idea of riding at a gallop towards an enemy and plunging the lance into his body exercised a grim fascination for Furness. So we learn from an anecdote published in his regimental history. The lances, it reads,

> were a trifle awkward to handle at first, perhaps, and we used to wonder how St. George managed to kill the Dragon, but we made no doubt that in time we should be able to ride a tourney with great success. Lieutenant Furness made a picture to illustrate the superiority of the lance to the sabre. A cavalryman with a sabre rode into a charge and pierced one foe and carried him off in triumph on his sword, but a lancer rode in by his side, and transfixed half a dozen foes, and bore them all off on his lance gayly. That would have settled the question, perhaps, if any grave doubts had surrounded it.[22]

Here was a prophecy of Roosevelt table, Furness's feeling for the drama of great weight or force coming to bear at a single point, and with comic bloody-mindedness.

It would be too much to say that Furness's spirited interiors, bristling with vital images of the animal and plant kingdom, helped set Theodore Roosevelt Jr. on his path of the strenuous life. He had already been dabbling in natural history and taxidermy since he was nine, and he was already fifteen when he returned from Germany in 1873 to move into the finished house. But he clearly appreciated Furness's work, for when he built Sagamore Hill, his Long Island house, in 1885, he outfitted it with furniture from the West 57th Street house.

Once young Roosevelt discovered the joys of hunting and ranching in Dakota, it was inevitable that he come into personal contact with Furness, who regularly spent his summers hunting in the Rockies. In 1888, Roosevelt founded the elite Boone and Crockett Club, dedicated to wildlife conservation and ethical hunting; by 1893 Furness was a member.[23] But about their personal relationship, we know virtually nothing. There is one tantalizing scrap. In the collection of the Furness family is a short letter of recommendation from President Roosevelt to William Howard Taft, then Secretary of War. Although undated, the letter must be from 1906 or 1907, at which time the federal government had decided to erect a memorial at Gettysburg to the "Regulars," that is, the regular United States army as opposed to the various volunteer regiments that had privately erected their own monuments across the battlefield. Roosevelt urged Taft to hear the views of Furness, who was "an old friend of mine" and "a good fellow." The design for the 85-foot granite shaft on Cemetery Ridge was selected by Taft in consultation with Furness; it was dedicated in May 1909. Other than this curious coda at the end of Furness's career, it is the only bit of patronage that Roosevelt sent his way.

It is hard to know what to make of the last anecdote concerning Furness and President Roosevelt. According to

George Wood Furness (1899-1974), who would have been seven at the time, he once visited his grandparents and brought with him that toy sensation of 1907, a Teddy Bear. When Furness saw it – so the grandson recalled – he growled that "there'll be no Teddies in this house," and promptly dropkicked the poor stuffed animal through the front door. According to family tradition, Furness was outraged that President Roosevelt had called for a graduated income tax during his State of the Union address.

Whether or not that is true, it should be, for it gives a poetic symmetry to the architect's long and eventful relationship with the Roosevelt family, which begins and ends with a hapless animal – frog or bear – as the brunt of Furness's charmingly ungovernable will.

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Frank Furness (1839-1912) and Daniel Pabst (1829-1910), furniture for Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., as relocated to Sagamore Hill, the home of President Theodore Roosevelt, Oyster Bay, Long Island. Courtesy of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site | National Park Service.

Notes

1. A Furness sketchbook in the possession of a family descendent, recording projects from 1871/1872, shows a plan of the Rogers house along with notations for payments of $500 and $1000. Also see George F. Thomas, et al, *Frank Furness: Complete Works* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), p. 171, pp. 282-283.
2. Letter, Theodore Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, June 12, 1872. This letter and subsequent ones quotes are from Theodore Roosevelt Senior letterpress copybooks, MS Am 3067, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
3. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, June 25, 1872.
4. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Frank Furness, September 30, 1872. Furness was to arrive October 1 on the 5:00 p.m. train.
5. David Hanks, "Daniel Pabst," *Nineteenth Century Furniture: Innovation, Revival, and Reform* (New York, N.Y.: Art & Antiques, 1982), pp. 36-43.
6. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, October 9, 1872.
7. "Vienna Frauds, The American Commissioners Suspended," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (April 25, 1873), p. 4.
8. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, June 19, 1873.
9. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Frank Furness, July 25, 1873.
10. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Frank Furness, August 14, 1873; Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, October 9, 1873.
11. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Baker & Arnold, January 2, 1874.
12. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, September 17, 1873.
13. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, September 18, 1873.
14. Louis H. Sullivan, *The Autobiography of an Idea* (New York: American Institute of Architects, 1924), p.196.
15. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, October 5 or 6, 1873.
16. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Daniel Pabst, November 10, 1873.
17. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Furness & Hewitt, August 4, 1873.
18. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Frank Furness, Nov. 17, 1873, Nov. 24, 1873
19. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Frank Furness, November 25, 1873
20. Michael J. Lewis, "Frank Furness, Perpetual Motion, and 'the Captain's Trousers'," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. 37, no. 1 (Spring 2017), pp. 10-15.
21. Letter, Roosevelt Sr. to Frank Furness, Dec. 1, 1873, Dec. 2, 1873.
22. S.L. Gracey, *Annals of the Sixth Pennsylvania Cavalry* (Philadelphia: E.H. Butler, 1868), pp. 360-361.
23. "Lovers of Big Game," *Sunday Inter-Ocean* (May 7, 1893), p. 1.

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A Victorian Legacy on the Delaware

John N. Whitenight

]The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum, front view. Courtesy of The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

The time is January 1863. The nation is in turmoil as the Civil War rages. On January the 13th Joseph Ridgway Grundy was born to William Hulme Grundy (1836-1893) and Mary Lamb Ridgway Grundy (1838-1926). Mary was born to a family of wealthy New Jersey landholders of unique lineage from three signers of the Magna Carta in 1215. Joseph was the namesake of his uncle Union Army Captain Joseph Ridgway who, at age 22, was killed in the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862. "Joe" Grundy entered a family of manufacturers who created woolen mills that had their beginnings in 18th century England. "Golden Dennis" Grundy (1736-1820) lived in Lancashire and was the progenitor of this industrialist family and grandfather of Edmund Grundy (1799-1878). "Golden Dennis" was a great example of the prospering English nonconformist families of the period such as the Manders, the

The stair hall, in the English Arts and Crafts style with inglenook visible. Courtesy of The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

Rathbones, and the Wilburforces. The term nonconformist refers to anyone not a member of the Anglican faith. Edmund emigrated to America to begin an import business where he married Rebecca Hulme (1804-1895), the daughter of wealthy Quakers. The beforementioned William, was their son who, with his brother, Edmund and a partner Richard Campion, who in 1876, moved the mill 25 miles upriver from Philadelphia to Bristol, in Bucks County. Bristol was considered an ideal location as a market town and shipping port on the Delaware River.

Although William's parents owned a very substantial residence and farm, known as Walnut Grove, located only six miles from Bristol, William and Mary decided to establish an in-town home for themselves, Joe and their daughter Margaret known as "Meta." In 1884 they purchased a large lot and old house on Radcliffe Street on the Delaware River. The mill was increasingly prosperous affording them the means to greatly enhance the house. From the then current architectural styles, in a nod to their English heritage, William and Mary engaged an architect to create a substantial and formal English Arts and Crafts-style residence which would predominantly encase the bones of two previous houses allowing some of the original structure exposed on the rear of the home.

The resulting house with its dark brick exterior, highly pitched gables with wooden shake shingles and tall decorative chimneys exemplifies the essence of the American Arts and Crafts Movement inspired by the British design reform masters William Morris (1834-1896) and Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) and their American counterpart, Bernard Maybeck (1862-1957). The house on Radcliffe Street reflects a broad range of other architectural styles including Federal, Italianate, Second Empire, Tudor, and Queen Anne.

On October 31, 1893 William Grundy, at age 56, suddenly died in his home, thereby leaving his son Joe, at age 30, to assume all responsibilities of the business, the financial affairs of the family, as well as the role of guardian of his mother and sister. Between the untimely death of his father and World War I, Joe exponentially increased the size of the mill and its production. He also became a powerful politician with a focus on legislation pertaining to manufacturing, tariffs, and labor. He was a revered member of the 5 o'clock Club at the bastion of Republicanism, The Union League in Philadelphia. His political ambitions culminated in his serving as a short-term United States senator for one year from 1929-1930.

One of the laudable qualities that sets Joe Grundy apart from many Victorian industrialists was his civic-minded local philanthropy. "If a man does not take pride in his own town," Grundy said, "he isn't likely to give a rap about his country." He lived by those words and donated land and funds to the town of Bristol in order to create a municipal building, public parks, and a sewer system. Joe also helped his beloved town financially more than once during the Great Depression.

Mary Grundy's bedroom, decorated in the Anglo-Japanese style. Courtesy of The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

"Uncle Joe", as he was affectionately called, died on March 3, 1961 at age 98, but his legacy continues today through the Grundy Foundation that was created through his testamentary arrangements. A major part of that legacy is the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum dedicated to his much-loved sister who died in 1952. In his will Joe directed that his family home is to be preserved as a museum free to the public and reflect the life style of the family during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The burgeoning of interest in all things Victorian was in its infancy during the 1960's. Prior to that, during the first half of the twentieth century the era was viewed as being old-fashioned, cluttered, and dated and was looked upon disdainfully and with disinterest. After the death of the matriarch, Mary Grundy, the interiors of the house grew tired with benign neglect but remained intact. The aging Joe focused on the family's substantial investments, his large farm and his public activities while Margaret spent much of her time on her extensive gardens at Walnut Grove and the free library she helped to found and operate.

For the immediate years following Joe's death, in accordance with his will, the trustees almost exclusive focus was the design and building of the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library which today is considered one of the finest libraries in Bucks County. Incidentally, the design of the library building has received accolades for its design. Five years ago, the changing board of trustees directed its focus to a substantial preservation, renovation, and restoration of the museum mansion and grounds.

This initiative began with the eleven rooms that encompass the first and second floors. At the outset, the electrical, climate control, and fire and safety systems were addressed as well as a study of all of the paint colors, carpets, wallpapers, and wood finishes. Finally, upholstery and metalwork were addressed.

The double front doors welcome the visitor as they enter the grand oak staircase room which is a tour de force of the Arts and Crafts style. One feature commonly found in the style of this interior is the inglenook, a name derived from the Scottish "ingle" or domestic fire. It evokes a feeling of warmth and coziness. A pair of Italian Savanarola chairs tempts one to warm oneself and perhaps have a chat by a roaring fire. Upon close examination, with the amount of wear present, it suggests this was the most used of the fireplaces in the house. William Grundy spared no expense, and the museum is very proud of, the original brasses, tools, and fire backs in all its seven fireplaces. Fine woods such as cherry, chestnut, maple and oak were chosen for each of the carved mantlepieces.

Callers on Mrs. Grundy would be directed to the elegant reception room which is an unbridled reflection of the Gilded Age. On her European tours Mary acquired giltwood Florentine armchairs, a French curio cabinet, and a gilt demi-lune console all resting on an original Aubusson carpet. Here, Mary would serve tea from the

The drawing room, decorated in the Aesthetic Movement style. Courtesy of The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

family's extensive collection of silver and china. Illuminating the room is a duel function chandelier providing gas and electric light.
Adjoining the reception room is the drawing room and beyond that the dining room that presents a beautiful view of the river and Burlington Island. The drawing room is decorated in the Aesthetic Movement-style with motifs of sunflowers, Chinese designs, and ebonized furniture from makers such as Kimble and Cabus, A. & H. LeJambre of Philadelphia, Pottier and Stymus and an upright piano by Steinway. The focal point in the room is the elegant and colorful stained-glass window centered within the chimneypiece. The radiant red, golds, and blues are reflected in the gem-like colors of the upholstery, wallpaper, and carpeting.

Passing through the pair of double-sided portieres one enters the oak paneled dining room with a very large corner fireplace decorated with a tall low relief foliate panel supported by etagere shelving. The other features of note include a custom fifteen-sided Axminister carpet, and a floor to ceiling Jefferson window which retracts into the ceiling wall creating a door that opens onto an elaborate veranda. On the dining table sit a pair of silver candelabra fitted with very unusual kerosene candles with pierced filigree silver shades. Adjacent to the dining room is the restored pantry with its chestnut wood cabinetry that houses the china by makers such as Coalport and Limoges and fine glassware. A recreated dumbwaiter has been installed where the original was removed during the 1960's.

The eyes from a dozen large Grundy gilt framed family portraits follow the visitor as one ascends the grand staircase past the eighteenth-century tall case clock circa 1795 to the second floor or private family space of the house that includes four bedrooms, and a bathroom, with one of the bedrooms now serving as exhibition space. As was the then custom among wealthy couples, the two largest bedrooms are defined as his and hers. William's bedroom, with its dark and imposing walnut Renaissance Revival bedroom set along with the wallpaper colors of maroon and deep green, leaves no question that this, by Victorian standards, is a masculine space. In contrast, Mary's bedroom, which receives its light from a large bay window facing east, evokes a feeling of femininity presented in the Anglo-Japanese style so popular in the 1880's. The cherry blossom papered walls create a stage for the faux bamboo furniture and luxuriously tufted chaise lounge nestled in a smaller prow style window hung with exotic pheasant and peony embroidered linen drapes. Of particular note in Margaret's bedroom next door are the carved oak Modern Gothic mantlepiece and custom ceiling height closets with a deeply coved storage space above.

Continuing up the stairs to the third floor one would have found a large bedroom, a billiard room, a bath, a maid's room and two large storage rooms. From the rear rooms there is an expansive view of the lawns and the river and from the bedroom facing south, there is a broad view of the two hundred and fifty-year-old sycamore trees, a

The Margaret R. Grundy Museum, rear view. Courtesy of The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

four-tiered Gertrude Jekyll-inspired terraced garden leading up to the south lawn at street level, and to the carriage-style house constructed in 2021 to 2022 which conforms to the architecture of the mansion and contains bathroom facilities for guests, a small catering kitchen, and more storage. The carriage house and south lawn are accented by ten award winning Victorian-style gas lamps. The carriage house reflects the architectural style, the materials, and details of the museum. The four-inch thick oak double doors and their hand wrought iron hardware and strap hinges were made by a local craftsman. The zinc roof is crowned by a cupola, a weather vane, and period-style ruby glass lightning rods.

What sets this house museum apart from many other Victorian house museums is not only its architectural style along with its beautiful setting on the river and its comprehensive collections of family ephemera, accessories and garments of the period. In concluding any description of the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum, one must revisit the foresighted and careful legacy of Joseph R. Grundy. Except for his love and concern for his family home and surrounding properties, all may well have disappeared by now rather than standing proud and tall in the heart of the town he loved.

The carriage house and south lawn, with Victorian-style gas lamps. Courtesy of The Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

John Whitenight has been a member of the Victorian Society in America for over 40 years and an avid collector of all things Victorian for 50 years. He is an artist, educator and the author of *Under Glass: a Victorian Obsession* as well as serving on the American Art Committee at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. He is the curator of the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Museum.

Early Gothic Revival Churches in Western New England: Biography of An Idiom

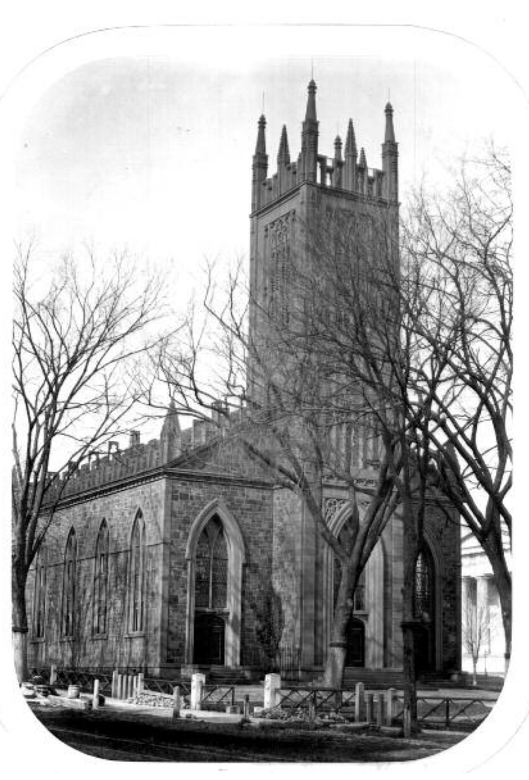
David Hosford

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Troy, New York. Published in Arthur James Weise's *History of the city of Troy: from the Expulsion of the Mohegan Indians to the Present Centennial Year of Independence of the United States of America*, 1876.

Trinity Church (1814-15) on the New Haven Green is often cited as the earliest example of a Gothic revival ecclesiastical structure in this country. An almost contemporary testimonial provided by the vestry and wardens for its architect Ithiel Town (1784-1844) enthused that he had "erected a New Episcopal Church in this place of which the workmanship and style of architecture are surpassed by but few if any buildings of that kind in the United States." But the early history of the gothic revival style on this side of the Atlantic is rather more complex. Town's design was actually patterned after St. John's Church in Providence, Rhode Island (1810), the work of John Holden Greene which, in turn, was likely influenced by Charles Bulfinch's Federal Street Church (1809) in Boston, a city where both Greene and Town at different times had trained as apprentices. Then there was Benjamin Latrobe's alternate design (unused) in Gothic revival style for the Catholic cathedral in Baltimore (1805), as well as Joseph Mangin's plan for old St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York (1809), and perhaps others, too. What makes Trinity Church particularly interesting, however, is the unique string of early gothic ecclesiastical buildings shaped by its design and scattered from New Haven, through Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and then well into Vermont. They all were built during the quarter century or so following Trinity's consecration. Together these structures represent the largest cluster of early gothic revival churches to be found in America before 1840.

Now Connecticut at the time was the unusual tale of a state with two alternating capital cities—New Haven and Hartford (1701-1878), so perhaps it is not surprising to find the growing congregation at Christ Church Hartford deciding to adopt the Trinity Church model when contemplating their own need for a larger building in the early 1820's. In any event, a site was acquired by mid-decade, Ithiel Town hired as architect in 1827, and construction completed two years later under the supervision of James Chamberlain, a local builder and parish member. Christ Church, incidentally, originally had a wooden top to its tower which was not replaced by masonry until 1939 while the change to stone at Trinity Church dates back to 1871. For purists, the exterior of St. Paul's in Troy, New York (1827-28)—the third of Ithiel Town's early gothic churches built to essentially to the same plan—is likely closest in current appearance to the architect's original scheme. Over time, however, the interiors of all three have had such significant alterations that making useful comparisons becomes difficult given installation of pipe organs, addition of side chapels and chancels, and new arrangements of pews and other changes influenced by shifts in fashion and modifications of liturgy.

While the transmission of ideas is frequently difficult to trace, it seems the nod is still owed Trinity Church as inspiration for the adoption of gothic revival design in several new or rebuilt parish churches in rural western Connecticut. Not until 1818 had the state finally disestablished the Congregational Church which facilitated the emergence of a wide variety of religious groups that had been largely operating sub-rosa. It also marked the early years of the second 'great awakening' in America, a ground swell of religious enthusiasm that generated a need to accommodate larger congregations and touching even the formalistic and hierarchically organized Episcopalians. Three good examples of the phenomenon are St. Andrew's in Marbledale (1822), St. Andrew's, Kent (1826), and Union Episcopal in Riverton (1830). Both the Marbledale and Kent churches were reputedly designed by their rector, George B. Andrews, whose wealthy wife financed the costs of construction. Marbledale church was the simpler of the two, built with local red brick, large gothic style windows framed in white wood, and a one-stage belfry with spire atop its plain brick tower projecting outward from the front wall and housing a single central entrance door with an arched window over- head and two others framing each side of the tower at ground floor level. The Kent building, however, is a small but effective echo in miniature of Trinity, with fieldstone walls, arched windows and front entrance trimmed in brick, and a masonry tower pierced by one slender window and a quatrefoil just under the wooden belfry, the crenelated top of which was replaced by a spire added in the 1870's. But perhaps the most interesting of the lot is Union Episcopal in the village of Riverton (1830). Clearly a transitional building, the words of the National Register text of 1985 describe it as "a small granite structure with wooden steeple, of Greek Revival proportions but with Gothic stylistic features." Uniquely, it served multiple denominations at first, perhaps an economical response to the rapid growth of Riverton just after the opening and early success of the original Hitchcock chair factory. In the 1880's it reverted to exclusive use by the Episcopal Church of St. Paul's before closing a century later.



Trinity Church, New Haven, Connecticut 1865. Ithiel Town (1784-1844), architect. Buildings, Grounds and Landmarks in New Haven Photographs (RU 685). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Between the Connecticut border with Massachusetts and Vermont there was a second group of early gothic revival churches along what is now Route 7. Near the southern border is St. James in Great Barrington which dates after the mid-century mark and basically beyond the chronological limits of this essay. It is, however, a sizeable bluestone structure with a tall masonry tower in a design which roughly falls within the early gothic tradition of Trinity New Haven. But St. Stephen's Pittsfield (1832) was apparently a much closer copy although subsequently torn down and replaced by a much larger late Victorian structure of same name. But the prize of the lot is St. Paul's Lanesborough, a beautiful example of the genre that is both on the National Register and in process of being carefully restored by private owners. Neither architect nor source of the plans used during its construction have been identified, but an "Old Home Days" history of Lanesborough provides a fascinating insight into the erection of a building, a virtual twin by all accounts of its long-gone Pittsfield counterpart.

> In 1836, five years after [the rector] Mr. Shaw's arrival, a building committee consisting of Almon Curtiss, Jason Newton, Stoddard Hubbell, Sherman Curtiss, and Titus Wood contracted with William Babbit and Hiram Crandall to erect a church 60 by 44 feet, walls 26 feet high, to be finished in a good a style as the church in Pittsfield, for $2,250 and the material of the old church. They also contracted with Solomon Stoddard to prepare the walls, lath, plaster with three coats of hard finish, and put up the chimneys, raise tower the same as the Pittsfield church for $750. On Easter,1836, the old church was opened for the last time; on the day next it was taken down; by June the walls were raised; by July the tower was raised; in September it was lathed, plastered and painted; on Christmas day it was opened for the first time. $45 was paid to Jason Newton for plank, John Farnum for lime $48, Benjamin Pratt for stone, oil & paint $127, Leonard Scott & Almon Curtiss for work, $55; parties in Pittsfield for supplies and work, $200 making the total cost $3694.67. On the Monday preceding the opening of the church the pews were sold for $3,200.

Auctioning pews to cover construction costs was, incidentally, a very common practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries among most denominations. There was, however, provision for free seating for the elderly and the poor and a subscription then taken up then to balance the books.

Over the border in Vermont, an Englishman, William Passman of Yorkshire, can be identified as builder of St. James Episcopal at Arlington. He had come from Troy and may have worked on St. Paul's–the near replica of Trinity New Haven. Interestingly, Passman negotiated a final payment for his efforts to cover passage back to England and thereafter disappears from the scene. However, John Cain—another builder from Troy—then masterminds what seems to be yet another iteration of the same plan for Trinity Episcopal Church in Rutland. Consecrated in 1833, it was later replaced by a second generation gothic building erected just after the Civil War years on a different site, but an early print provides a glimpse of the tower sufficient to identify it as likely a near clone of the churches at both Lanesborough and Arlington. Cain then moves on and eventually teams up with his brother William then employed in Pittsford—just ten miles north of Rutland—to build a bold structure for the Congregational Church (1837) well-sited atop the gentle open slope of a sizeable village green alongside Route 7. Interestingly, about a dozen miles further up the road, Brandon's Congregational Church—built five years earlier (1832)—is also usually classified as 'transitional,' but in a comparison

L to r: The bell tower during restoration on Hinterland Hall (formerly St. Lukes Church), Lanesborough, Massachusetts. Courtesy of Ben Garver, *The Berkshire Eagle*. Pittsford Congregational Church, Pittsford, Vermont. Photograph © Curtis B. Johnson.

with the Pittsford structure only the latter shows the hand of builders fully comfortable working in the new early gothic mode presumably inherited from Connecticut by way of Troy.

In her book *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture,* Professor Phoebe B. Stanton asserts that the 1840's mark a significant turning point in evolution of ecclesiastical design, a point well taken. But she is also dismissive of the earlier period here considered on the grounds that what was to come made those efforts seem "primitive and old fashioned." The early gothic revival was certainly a time of transition, as well as an opportunity to experiment with designs often more interesting than some of the stone-for-stone copies of English village churches that follow. But that is an argument based on aesthetics. The point of this essay is to follow—as best as possible—the transmission of a new idea in New England church architecture from its first clear expression in Providence; through its apogee in New Haven and Hartford; spilling out into western Connecticut rural communities at almost the same time it was picked up in Troy; branching back into western, Massachusetts; and then appearing in very southern and then mid-state Vermont. Much of the early transmission process described was facilitated by the Episcopal Church and its hierarchical organizational. Indeed, Vermont's very first bishop, John Henry Hopkins, wrote *Essay on Gothic Architecture* (1836) defining his strong support for the new Gothic revivalist tradition as well as trying his hand at actual design of several church buildings in the diocese. But fashion and style know no boundaries. The Pittsford Congregational Church is only one early and interesting example of this idiom jumping the narrow confines of denomination.

FOR FURTHER READING:

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Charles J. Palmer, *History of the Town of Lanesborough, Massachusetts, 1741-1905*, Part I, 1905.

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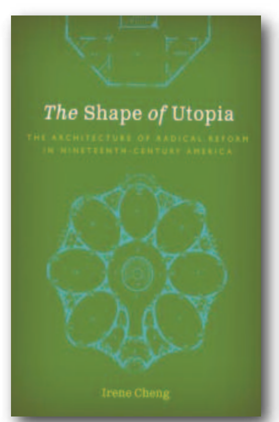
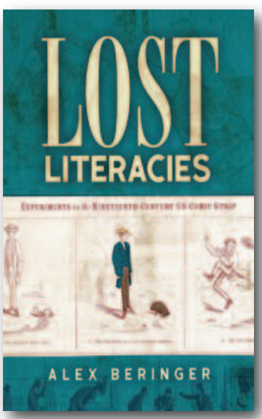
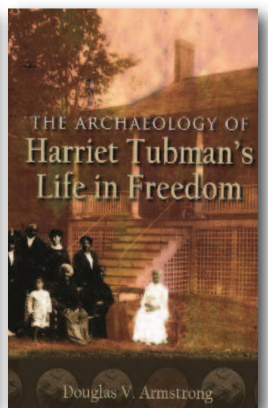
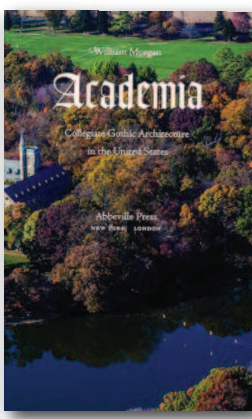
David Hosford is Professor Emeritus of History and sometime Dean of the School of the Arts and Sciences, Rutgers University-Newark. He holds a B.A. from Bates College and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Wisonsin-Madison. A specialist in seventeenth century British history by training, his pivot to interest in Victorian architecture arises from continuing efforts to preserve the Meeting House on the Green in New Marlborough MA, an early Henry Sykes building in Greek Revival Style.









The Shape of Utopia: The Architecture of Radical Reform in Nineteenth Century America

Irene Chang. University of Minnesota Press, 2023.

In *The Shape of Utopia: The Architecture of Radical Reform in Nineteenth-Century America*, Irene Cheng identifies a strain of antebellum American reform ideology which she classifies as "geometric utopianism." Promulgated largely by white, middle-class men, this cultural response to economic, religious, and technological ferment sought to improve society through the creation of new communities with streets, property boundaries, and architecture arrayed according to geometric principles. Proponents of these undertakings, influenced by the associational precepts of Charles Fourier and Robert Owen, promoted their beliefs and sought participants through the publication of texts in broadsides, newspapers, journals, and books accompanied by diagrams of gridded, octagonal, hexagonal, and circular buildings and landscapes.

In this deeply researched and intricately argued interdisciplinary study, Cheng interprets, contextualizes, and explicates a number of these schemes developed in the years between 1840 and 1873 while positioning them within the larger American settler colonial project of claiming territory from indigenous peoples. Cheng situates her work amidst, and draws upon, the fields of visual culture, intellectual history, art history, and urban planning. She argues that the printed diagrammatic images of these innovative antebellum spaces were a form of visual rhetoric intended to goad audiences into critique of the prevailing order while assisting with envisioning possible improved futures. She suggests that rather than understanding these reformist nineteenth-century published plats and printed plans as proposals for actual development, they are better treated as visual representations of sociopolitical ideas and iconographic indictments of the nation's burgeoning individualist market capitalism. Cheng utilizes a semiotic approach steeped in the literature of cultural studies, citing the work of theorists including Frederic Jameson, Charles Peirce, W. J. T. Mitchell, Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault, and E. P. Thompson.

Case studies of a gridded community published in 1845 by land-reform advocates, Orson Fowler's celebrated octagonal houses, octagonal temperance and vegetarian communities established in Kansas preceding the Civil War, an anarchist's proposal for hexagonal townscapes, and circular and ovoid architectural designs communicated by spirits to John Murray Spear and his spiritualist associates in the 1850s form the core of this study. In explicating these proposed architectural undertakings, Cheng introduces her readers to, and explains the significance of, various interrelated antebellum reform movements including (in alphabetical order) abolition, alphabet reform, free love, hydrotheraphy, magnetism, pacifism, phrenology, Shakerism, shorthand, stirpiculture, Swedenborgianism, temperance, transcendentalism, vegetarianism, and women's rights. A chapter examining Thomas Jefferson's use of grids and octagons in the early nineteenth century and one contextualizing Ebenezer Howard's promotion of English garden cities in the *fin de siècle* bracket the central inquiries and offer intellectual antecedents and legacies for the author's primary antagonists.

Cheng acknowledges that geometric utopias were largely transient failed endeavors that resulted in few built structures. Her study, thus, depends heavily upon written and published sources. Although the book's subtitle indicates that it addresses "the architecture of radical reform," this impressive text is substantially an analysis of arcane architectural ideas in antebellum print culture. As such it privileges individuals from the American northeast, like New Yorker Orson Fowler and Bostonian John Murray Spear, who had access to the publishing industry.

The book is generously illustrated with two-dimensional representations of buildings and communities in the form of wood prints, lithographs, engravings, and even a few historic photographs.

These images, however, engage the conception or rhetoric of the structures rather than articulating their physical existence, materiality, or modes of construction. In describing one of Howard's two-dimensional graphic compositions the author notes, "Unencumbered by topography or existing conditions, the perfectly geometric cities float in an imaginary idealized space." Cheng's book similarly offers an insightful semiotic analysis of her proposed utopias, but it remains somewhat removed from lived reality and the constructed American cultural landscape. The work can be reminiscent of architectural histories of an earlier generation which analyzed Victorian housing by studying and analyzing Andrew Jackson Downing's pattern books rather than by documenting homes actually erected in the era. As an intellectual history of unbuilt spaces based upon abstracted diagrammatic sources, this study is vexed by, to use Cheng's own phrase, "the distance between representation and reality."

-Reviewed by William D. Moore

William D. Moore holds a joint appointment between the Department of History of Art & Architecture and the American & New England Studies Program at Boston University. An interdisciplinary American Studies scholar, he has specialties in material culture, the built environment, and cultural history.

Lost Literacies: Experiments in the Nineteenth-Century US Comic Strip

Alex Beriner. Ohio State University Press, 2024.

A commendable contribution to scholarship in the field, *Lost Literacies* is, with its allusions to Mark Twain, Doesticks, and Artemus Ward, an unlikely companion volume to Constance Rourke's *American Humor* (1931); and, with its passing references to Whitman, Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, and Melville, to F. O. Matthiessen's *American Renaissance* (1941). "Like the social world of Whitman's poetry," as Alex Beringer observes, "comics engaged with a large, inclusive version of American culture." The modern comic strip was made possible by technological developments in lithography, as Beringer explains: "in 1850, a printed page with illustrations cost 1/100th of what it did only a decade earlier." The two best chapters here, in my opinion, are the two most historically-grounded: chapter three on "theater comics" or the interplay between theatrical performance and printed picture comedy and chapter four on "impressions of place" or travel comics as visual travelogues. In all, the study foregrounds a number of neglected artists, including Rodolphe Töpffer, Augustus Hoppin, Frank Bellew, John McLenan, and Felix Darley; and it smartly cites David E. E. Sloane's scholarship on American humor.

Unfortunately, I believe, the book is also gravely flawed. It focuses to an extreme degree on the aesthetics of comics at the expense of their social criticism and satire. That is, Beringer seems more interested in how cartoonists manipulated time in sequential panels than on their topical commentary. He selects comics that emphasize "*stories* with distinctive characters, settings, plots, and situational humor" rather than political or editorial cartoons. For example, he reproduces Bellow's boxing strip "The Fight for the Championship" because it features a comic "tableau of the pantomime" without a drop of blood. While Beringer concedes that many of the comics of the period contain "racist caricatures of Native Americans" he inexplicably ignores Henry B. Wonham's *Playing the Races: Ethnic Caricature and American Literary Realism* (Oxford, 2004). The study needs a wider focus, such as chapters devoted to multi-frame editorial cartoons and book illustrations. While it touches on such well-known artists as Frederick Burr Opper, Thomas Nast, Joseph Keppler, and Richard F. Outcault, it mostly skips the "second wave" of US comic strips and thus overlooks late-century artists with comparable reputations such as Dan Beard, Clare Dwiggins, Edward Jump, Kate Carew, and Homer Davenport. As a result, it reads something like a history of American poetry that focuses only on sonnets. It also needs a wider canvas—literally. Though seven by ten inches rather than the normal six by nine inches, the trim size is still too small-scale to duplicate many illustrations and captions in their original proportions.

A pair of final reservations to the book: First, a minor one. Three names of authors or artists are misspelled: "Francis" Trollope, "Fredric" Church, Louisa "Mae" Alcott. Second, a factual error: Beringer indulges an idle (idol?) speculation: "there is ample reason to believe that Twain drew inspiration from Hoppin's travel comics. Many of Twain's early writings appeared in *Yankee Notions* alongside Hoppin's work while Hoppin himself was the illustrator for the first edition of *The Gilded Age*." In fact, only four of Twain's early sketches appeared in *Yankee Notions*, none of them original contributions, all copied from the Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise* or San Francisco *Golden Era*. That is, there is no evidence Twain ever saw or held a physical copy of Yankee Notions. Moreover, while Hoppin contributed a few of the 212 illustrations to the first edition of The Gilded Age, the primary illustrator was True Williams. In fact, Twain did not mention Hoppin in any of his surviving writing. That is, there is no evidence Twain was in the least familiar with Hoppin's travelogues.

-Reviewed by Gary Scharnhorst

Gary Scharnhorst (Ph.D., Purdue University) is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English at the University of New Mexico, editor of the journal *American Literary Realism*, and author or editor of over sixty scholarly books, including the three-volume *The Life of Mark Twain* (University of Missouri Press, 2018-2022) and, with Leslie Myrick, of *Cartoons and Caricatures of Mark Twain in Context: Reformer and Social Critic, 1869-1910* (University of Alabama Press, 2023).

The Archaeology of Harriet Tubman's Life in Freedom

Douglas V. Armstrong. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2022.

Author Douglas V. Armstrong gets personal in his biography of Harriet Tubman, a unique look into the heroism and activism of one of America's most celebrated Black women in history. First, he discovers that a field trip to Auburn, New York – where he takes his archaeology students from nearby Syracuse University – provided a plum site for excavation of Harriet Tubman's home and life in freedom. He also uncovers more layers to a family lore about ancestors who had participated in the raid at Harper's Ferry in West Virginia, led by anti-slavery militant John Brown. Incidentally, John Brown was a close friend and ally to Tubman, who eventually opened a John Brown Hall in the Infirmary of the Harriet Tubman Home on the property she owned. How apropos, then, that these linkages primed Armstrong to recover a treasure trove of unearthed materials and other riches that fill in the gaps of this extraordinary life.

The Archaeology of Harriet Tubman's Life in Freedom documents Armstrong's meticulous research into Tubman's life in Central New York, where she pursued a life of freedom, struggle, survival, and community in the years during and after the U.S. Civil War until her death on March 10, 1913. An exhaustive and comprehensive history, this narrative is nonetheless an easy read. Using the tools and methodology of archaeology, Armstrong paints a fascinating portrait of Tubman that few may recognize. Her legacy and popularization often freeze her in the antebellum years when she self-emancipated from slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in 1849, before returning thirteen different times to rescue her loved ones as a well-traveled conductor of the Underground Railroad. In this study, however, we encounter a different Tubman, literally coming in from the storm of chattel slavery and into the domestic sphere of family, home life, and communal refuge.

Recognizing Tubman as a "female head of household," Armstrong notes the importance of white abolitionists and sympathizers, such as local governor and Secretary of State William Seward and his wife, Frances, selecting to sell property to Tubman in the interest of promoting "an economic base for autonomy and self-determination" for African Americans eking out a living as potential free citizens. Auburn, New York, was a hub for progressive and abolitionist activity and the site for much of Tubman's rescue missions, especially once she had to move operations from free northern states to beyond the border in Canada, in the wake of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Despite these dangers, Tubman made the decision in 1859 to return to the United States, moving her parents – whom she rescued from the Eastern Shore – to a place less cold than Canada.

It is in this place where Tubman took care of her parents and other members of her extended family. She also took in boarders, one of whom was Civil War veteran Nelson Davis, whom she would later marry not long after becoming widowed. She and Davis, along with an adopted baby girl, and various orphans and elderly people who needed her care – based on her years of practice as a nurse during the Civil War – often struggled financially, and the wooden-frame house where they lived burned to the ground in 1880. The brick house they built in its place is still standing.

Tubman, with her husband Davis, ran a brick company along with a farm. And even though he was 25 years her junior, Davis died in 1888, leaving her to struggle to obtain a widow's pension from his veteran's status, much less her own veteran's pension that took decades before she finally received it for her own exemplary military work for the Union Army.

Armstrong relies on previous biographies, interviews, and other historical documents to flesh out a compelling story about her life on the property itself that offers its own fragmented narrative. There are the shards of dessert goblets that Tubman used for ice cream socials for example, or the bits of porcelain tea sets that document her social gatherings, both within her household and with outside guests. There are the different pillboxes and medication bottles that remind us of the infirmary for the elderly she successfully opened just a few years before her death.

Tubman continued her work in activism – including women's suffrage, temperance, and racial uplift. The artifacts found on her property simply document the extent to which her life was nuanced and enriching. Despite financial struggles, she, like so many of her time, still maintained an interest in living a life that approximated pleasantries and communal bonding.

With the latest books revisiting Tubman and this particular moment in American history, Armstrong's study adds much depth and complexity to her iconicity. Specifically, we are fortunate to finally receive a portrait that extends her story beyond her mobility on the Underground Railroad, where instead she has literally found a place to call home. What Armstrong emphasizes is how home, property, and land ownership, are also crucial sites of resistance, or what Katherine McKittrick recognizes as "cartographies of struggle." In these spatial politics of race, class, and gender, Tubman has reoriented the "cult of domesticity" and respectability politics of the Victorian era to refit these spaces for new definitions of family, work, love, leisure, and ethics of care.

-Reviewed by Janell Hobson

Janell Hobson is professor of women's, gender and sexuality studies at the University at Albany. She is the author of *When God Lost Her Tongue: Historical Consciousness and the Black Feminist Imagination*. She is also the editor of Tubman 200: The Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Project.

Academia: Collegiate Gothic Architecture in the United States

William Morgan. Abbeville Press, 2023.

The architectural history of American colleges and universities normally focuses on individual institutions while the larger overall treatment of the many only exists in a few books. William Morgan, a major scholar of Medievalism and of church design in the United States, has produced an important and elegant study of the impact of "Oxbridge" (Oxford-Cambridge) on the American campus. Dividing the book into nine chapters, Morgan places central focus on the period from the Civil War to 1929, and the proliferation of English-inspired buildings at well-known institutions such as Yale, Princeton, West Point, and Duke; somewhat more obscure colleges such as Agnes Scott in Atlanta and Berry in rural Georgia; and "prep schools" as with St. George's, Middletown, Rhode Island, and St. Paul's, Concord, New Hampshire. The major focus is on the Gothic in the eastern states, but a chapter is devoted to the more western appearances in Idaho and Washington, and at the University of Chicago which contains the incredible Rockefeller Chapel designed by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. Also given a chapter are the southern states where the towers, pointed arches, and quadrangles make various appearances as at the University of Richmond, Virginia, and the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, both with contributions by Ralph Adams Cram, who led American Gothicism and was a fervent Anglo-Catholic Episcopalian. Attention is paid to the Oxbridge origins of the American designs and the obvious association with the American quest for the elite. Americans, while trying to establish a national identity through architecture, still were under the cultural umbrella of England. Yes, France and the École des Beaux-Arts played a major role in American architecture in these years, and at some universities such as Columbia and others, but the elitism and romanticism of the crenelated tower, pointed arch, and ribbed arches proved to be very attractive.

Of major importance are some architects who have been largely forgotten or ignored such as Charles Donahue Maginnis, an Irish-born immigrant, who became a leader in the design of Catholic churches, campuses such as Boston College, and the University of Notre Dame's Law School. Maginnis received the American Institute of Architects' Gold Medal in 1948, at the time the highest architectural award in the United States. Catholicism was questioned by many Americans, but very important were the writings of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, an English Catholic who wrote major books on English Gothic and greatly influenced American designers.

Also brought to print are architects such as Day & Klauder from Philadelphia who designed numerous English Gothic-inspired buildings at Princeton and Allen and Collens who designed great tower buildings for Vassar College and Union Theological Seminary. Henry Vaughn, on whom William Morgan wrote an important book in 1983, makes a major appearance. Vaughn emigrated from England where he worked under George Frederick Bodley, a major English Gothicist, and in the United States he designed many churches and major buildings at Bowdoin College and at Groton and St. Paul's Schools and contributed greatly to the design of the National Cathedral in Washington, DC. These semi-ignored architects and many others brought to life the Gothic campus in America.

The last chapter is titled "Twilight of the Quads: Postmodern Collegiate Gothic" and contains "modernist" adaptations by Eero Saarinen, Louis Kahn, and others, and revivals such as R. A. M. Stern's at Yale in a Ruskinian, brightly colored Gothic. Perhaps the most compelling and very historically accurate are the Goodson Chapel and Divinity School additions, 2005, at Duke University by the Washington firm of Hartman & Cox. It could be easily mistaken for a hundred-year-old chapel, though the interior is very open and indicates the changes in religious practices occurring in recent years.

The book is beautifully illustrated with 217 color photographs that range from aerials to overall views of the buildings, magnificent interiors of the chapels, libraries, and eating halls, to details of stone murals, entrance ways, and gargoyles in the form of saints and rugby football players. The "renaissance" or recovery of stained glass played a big role in all the chapels and some other buildings such as the library and the eating hall, and Morgan very carefully documents the window makers such as Charles Connick, Clayton & Bell, William Willet, and more. (Noteworthy is the fact that Tiffany Studios does not make this volume.) Wonderful photographs bring the windows to life.

The book as said is very well done but there are a few troubling elements. One is the lack of plans and any original drawings for the buildings. The campuses created were complex with many quadrangles and spaces and plans would help in orienting the reader and understanding the hierarchy of buildings. A more minor issue is the lack of page numbers on many pages in sequence which can be confusing. These complaints aside, this is an excellent book that brings to life an arena of American architecture frequently ignored.

-Reviewed by Richard Guy Wilson

Richard Guy Wilson is Commonwealth Professor Emeritus of Architectural History at the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia. His research interests have long included the firm of McKim, Mead and White, and he has been the director of the Newport venue of the Summer Schools of the Victorian Society in America.

The Career of Cassie

Anne-Taylor Cahill

The editors wish to thank Anne-Taylor Cahill
for her many years authoring *Milestones*.
This is her farewell article.

Elizabeth Bigley (aka Cassie Chadwick) started her career early—at age 14. Born into a respectable Canadian farming family in 1857, Cassie practiced her questionable talent from Ontario to Ohio to New York City. Fleecing a boyfriend out of $50, she took his money and ran. In a nearby town, she presented herself at a local bank as an heiress. Claiming an unexpected inheritance, she presented this letter to a gullible bank manager:

> Dear Miss Bigley,
>
> We regret to inform you of the passage of your late Uncle Simon Bolivar. In his will he left you $15,000. We will be forwarding this to you shortly.
>
> Regretfully yours,
>
> Adam Smith, Lawyer

Obviously in those days of limited communication and no easy credit checks, fraud was easy. Cassie informed the manager she wished to deposit $30 of the $50. She was given a pad of checks. Carefully explaining how to use a check, the manager told her these were just like cash. Immediately Cassie went shopping for clothes and jewelry. Cassie purchased a gold bracelet, which cost more than the $30 deposited in the bank. But never mind, Cassie had checks – good as cash. After a day of extensive shopping, Cassie was caught when the shopkeepers went to the bank to cash the checks. Cassie spent the night in jail. Due to her young age she was returned to her parents the next day.

After about a year, Cassie took off again. Not only did she use the same trick but also added a calling card to her repertoire, announcing herself as “Miss Bigley – An Heiress to $15,000.” Refining her technique, Cassie would select an expensive item, write a check for more than its price and ask for the cash difference. If questioned about her ability to pay, Cassie would simply produce her calling card. It worked every time.

Next on her agenda was Cleveland, Ohio where her sister Alice lived. Newly married, Alice and her husband invited Cassie to stay while she looked for work, but looking for work was not quite what Cassie had in mind. As Alice and her husband were out all day working, Cassie was evaluating their possessions from chairs to china to use as collateral for a bank loan! Once discovered, Cassie was ejected from the house. But never mind, Cassie just relocated to another part of town.

Cassie L. Chadwick, 1905. Published in *The Great Chadwick Bubble: Life Sketch of Mrs. Cassie L. Chadwick, The Most Remarkable Woman of Modern Times*. Specialty Publishing. Toledo, Ohio, 1905.

It was here she encountered Dr. Wallace Springsteen who was enchanted by her quiet dignity. They were married in 1883. The local paper announced the marriage on the society page. Shortly thereafter, several local merchants demanded that Dr. Springsteen pay his wife’s unpaid debts, which were considerable. Concerned for his credit and reputation, Dr. Springsteen sued for divorce. The marriage had lasted only 12 days.

Moving further afield to Erie, Pennsylvania, Cassie presented herself as the niece of General William Tecumseh Sherman. Once established, she pretended to be quite ill, suffering from hemorrhages. Bedridden and pathetic, Cassie’s friends collected a large sum so that she could return to Cleveland for “treatment.” When these friends wrote to request repayment, Cassie took on the persona of a dear friend writing a sad reply that Cassie had died soon after returning to Cleveland. She even went so far as to write a

glowing tribute to herself!

Next Cassie became Madame Marie Rosa, a gifted clairvoyant. In this guise she married two of her clients. The first was one John Scott, a local prosperous farmer. She cleaned him out financially and disappeared. Her second victim was one C. J. Hoover, a successful businessman. With Hoover she had a son, Emil, who was promptly sent off to Canada to be raised by her parents. No one knows what tale she told her family about Emil. Apparently, she lived with Hoover until he died in 1888. At this time she inherited a comfortable estate of $50,000. Cassie then moved to Toledo where she became Madam Lydia DeVere. She presented herself again as a clairvoyant. Here she became involved with Mr. Joseph Lamb.

Mr. Lamb was so enraptured by Cassie's talent as a clairvoyant he gave her $10,000 to serve as his financial advisor. On a roll, Cassie created a promissory note from a prominent citizen and asked Mr. Lamb to cash it for her with his bank in Toledo. As he had an impeccable reputation in Toledo, he cashed the check easily. Cassie repeated this numerous times gaining $40,000 over time. Eventually the bank caught on. Cassie and Mr. Lamb were both arrested. He was acquitted. Cassie was sentenced to a 9-year prison term in the state penitentiary.

Never defeated, Cassie continued her clairvoyant act in jail. She told the warden he would lose $5,000 in a bad business deal, and he did. She prognosticated he would die of cancer, and he did. All the while Cassie was busy writing letters to the parole board expressing extreme remorse and promising to be a better person. After 3 years she was released in 1891.

Returning to Cleveland, she opened a brothel where she met her third husband Dr. Leroy Chadwick, a recent widower. Cassie played the sympathy card to the hilt.

Moreover, she pretended the brothel was a boarding house for "indigent and respectable widows." When Dr. Chadwick gently informed her she was living in a brothel, Cassie fainted dead away. Coming to, Cassie begged Dr. Chadwick to take her away from this den of iniquity. They were later married. Meanwhile, her son Emil was now living in the brothel under the care of one of the "ladies." How she explained Emil to Dr. Chadwick is unknown.

Cassie was in financial clover, having a grand financial time as the wife of Dr. Chadwick. Moving into the Chadwick family home on elegant Euclid Avenue, Cassie immediately set out to impress her neighbors. She went wild, spending and buying anything that caught her eye. She redecorated with no holds barred. She bought at $9,000 pipe organ and a musical chair that produced music when sat upon. Her loot included $9,000 worth of jewelry, including a $40,000 rope of pearls. The neighbors thought her a little odd but because Dr. Chadwick was her husband she was accepted.

In 1902 Cassie pulled off her biggest con: The Carnegie Caper. On a visit to New York, Cassie asked a lawyer friend of her husband, James Dillon, to escort her to the home of Andrew Carnegie. Intrigued, he complied. Cassie knocked at the front door and was admitted. She made Dillon wait in the carriage. Once inside, Cassie stayed 30 minutes and returned to the carriage with a handful of papers. Accidently dropping them on the floor of the carriage, Dillon noticed it was a promissory note for $2 million dollars signed by Andrew Carnegie. Swearing Dillon to secrecy, she told Dillon that Carnegie was her father. She further explained that as her natural father Carnegie had given her notes totaling $7 million which she had at home, locked away. She even went so far as to tell Dillon she would inherit $400 million when "Daddy passed away."

What had happened when Cassie went inside the Carnegie mansion? She asked to see the housekeeper, claiming to be seeking a reference for a new housekeeper for herself. She explained the alleged housekeeper claimed to have worked for Carnegie. Of course the Carnegie housekeeper had never heard of the woman. Cassie politely thanked the housekeeper and made a graceful exit. Despite being sworn to secrecy, Dillon spread the story of Cassie being the love child of Andrew Carnegie. Cassie now had free rein to all kinds of bank funds.

BECKWITH TALKS.

Aged Banker Confesses Regarding Bank's Transactions With Mrs. Cassie L. Chadwick.

TEARS STREAMED FROM HIS EYES.

He and Cashier Spear Endorse Notes in Addition to One Other Note For $1,000,000.

The Woman Took a Solemn Oath That the Notes Were Not To Be Used For the Purpose of Raising Money.

Headline published in *The Evening Bulletin*, Maysville, Kentucky. December 6, 1904.

After this, Cassie really outdid herself spending and extending her credit. At Christmas 1903 she bought 8 pianos and gave them as gifts. She ordered clothes and jewelry from New York with no thought of cost. Expensive furniture arrived from Europe and even sculpture from the Far East.

After the Carnegie Caper, Cassie graduated to conning prestigious financial institutions. This was her ultimate downfall. Among her victims were Ohio Citizens' Bank, Cleveland Wade Park Bank, and the New York Lincoln National Bank. She would take out a loan from one bank then use another loan to repay the first, repeating this over and over.

Eventually, one Herbert Newton of a Massachusetts bank caught on and filed suit. Naturally Cassie denied everything, including her claim to be Andrew Carnegie's daughter. In 1905 Cassie was found guilty of fraud and sentenced to 10 years in the state penitentiary. Carnegie attended the trial but did not testify. Later he pointed out the many errors in her infamous promissory notes. He further noted that he had not signed a promissory note in 30 years. Of course the trial was a media circus with daily reports in the *New York Times*. In prison Cassie was treated like a celebrity. However Cassie did not last long. Her health declined rapidly and she died in 1907 on her 50th birthday.

FOR FURTHER READING:

John S. Crosbie, *The Incredible Mrs. Chadwick*. New York McGraw-Hill, 1975.

K. Seagrave, *Women Swindlers in America 1860-1920*. New York McFarland & Co., 2007.

Ted Schwartz, *Cleveland Curiosities*. Charleston, South Carolina, Charleston History Press, 2010.

Anne-Taylor Cahill is a professor of philosophy at Old Dominion University (retired) in Norfolk, Virginia, and serves on the national board of the Victorian Society in America. She is a Docent Emeritus of Hunter House Victorian Museum and has a special interest in Victorian silver and nineteenth century landscape paintings.

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