

*The Filson
Historical Society*

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The Filson

A Publication of The Filson Historical Society, Kentucky's Oldest and Largest Independent Historical Society



u. Br. #162 Tom Fields. Pusher. A.B.C. Sept. 18 1929



u. Br. 163 Jackson River Boss. A.B.C. Sept. 18 1929

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

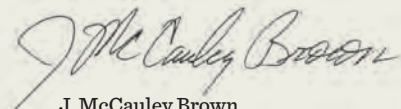
Society today is torn in many directions over a multitude of topics and struggles to determine the proper path for the future. Whether it is healthcare, equality, gun control, how to manage the economy, or other issues, we as a society struggle to determine the best way forward. An understanding of today's concerns, in the context of our values and culture through critical thinking, better allows us to face these constant challenges. Critical thinking is the best way to solve problems since it requires looking at an issue from several standpoints before reaching a final decision. But how pervasive is critical thinking throughout society, and are we teaching this skill to our youth? The study of history and organizations like The Filson Historical Society offer a solution that enables individuals to build these skills.

When students engage their minds on historical evidence, they practice inquiry, evaluation, problem solving, judgment, and synthesis. The true study of historical events enables us to understand people and society, and allows us to comprehend change and how the society we live in came to be. From understanding past experience, we understand the context of today's situations in order to better consider tomorrow's solutions.

Making history personal by helping the student relate to the time and situation through primary source material is a sure way of making history come alive.

Since 1884, The Filson Historical Society has built its collection of primary source material covering many different aspects of society. Through the portraits, artifacts, 1.8 million manuscript items and over fifty thousand volumes currently held in the library, The Filson offers Kentucky and the Ohio Valley Region a tremendous amount of material that brings history to life.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board and the staff for the tremendous work they are doing in creating increased opportunities for membership engagement. Further, I want to thank all our members for their continuing support which allows The Filson to fulfill its mission.



J. McCauley Brown
President

FROM THE DIRECTOR


Next year you will begin to see our headquarters in the Old Louisville neighborhood change as we reach the two top goals in our strategic plan: building our financial strength through our Cornerstone Campaign and creating an embracing campus, which includes our exciting new building and the renovation of the Ferguson Mansion and carriage house.

Reaching these goals will help us realize our vision of creating a premier institution that is the region's and nation's essential resource for the history and culture of Kentucky and the Ohio Valley. As you have read in past issues of *The Filson*, the Cornerstone Campaign will help us expand programming capacity across the board, including a 260 seat multipurpose lecture hall, vastly increased archival storage space, an excellent reading room for researchers, and more gallery space than we have had in our history.

The Cornerstone Campaign and the campus expansion will not only transform The Filson, but will serve as a catalyst for improving the Old Louisville neighborhood. The Filson's campus expansion is the largest civic capital improvement project in Old Louisville in over a generation. Moreover, it is a private investment in our neighborhood and our city's built environment and is one of the most exciting projects along the Fourth Street Corridor.

Our project not only reflects many of the values that The Filson holds dear, but shares these values with Metro Louisville and our neighborhood. These values include devotion to lifelong learning, creativity, authenticity, accessibility, and transparency, among others. Our open pedestrian mall will reach from Third to Fourth Streets, creating a welcoming and connected public green space within a residential neighborhood that values cultural heritage.

As we look toward the coming year, we will be updating you on this historic turning point in The Filson's history with articles such as the one in this issue. If you have any questions, please give me a call.



Mark V. Wetherington, Ph.D.
Director

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Phone: 502-635-5083
Fax: 502-635-5086
www.filsonhistorical.org
filson@filsonhistorical.org

OUR MISSION:

To collect, preserve, and
tell the significant stories
of Kentucky and Ohio
Valley history and culture.

Recent Acquisitions



Acquisitions continue at a brisk clip at The Filson. Numerous acquisitions could be highlighted, but one that many readers will find particularly interesting is a group of papers and photographs from the Henry Whitestone family. Revered for his architectural style and abilities, Whitestone's surviving buildings in Louisville are all greatly appreciated for their simple elegance. Many of his works, unfortunately, have not survived the wrecking ball. Pictured here, along with Henry Whitestone himself, are two of his Louisville houses that no longer survive, including his own. The Filson thanks Douglas Morton Semple for donation of this material.

1. St. Xavier - Newcomb House, 118 West Broadway.
2. Whitestone House, 116 Jacob Street.
3. Architect Henry Whitestone



Adding a New Downtown Bridge (c.1928)

Two albums document construction of the George Rogers Clark Memorial Bridge

BY AARON ROSENBLUM | ASSISTANT CURATOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Recently, the Special Collections Department processed two very different photographic albums documenting the construction of the Louisville Municipal Bridge, now officially named the George Rogers Clark Memorial Bridge, but mostly known to residents on the southern sides of the river as the Second Street Bridge.

The albums, catalogued as the Louisville Municipal Bridge Construction albums, contain landscape images of the bridge under construction as well as intimate images of construction workers and their work sites. Taken together, the albums offer a unique perspective on the past and a peek into the future as we enter the active bridge construction phase of the Ohio River Bridges Project (ORBP). Included here are selected images from the albums, and a little background on the construction of the bridge.

The need for an automobile crossing

Before 1929, the Kentucky & Indiana Terminal (“K&I”) Bridge, connecting New Albany and Louisville, offered the only automobile roadway over the Ohio at Louisville (the K&I carried automobiles until 1979). The idea of a purpose-built automobile bridge was first notably proposed by Robert Worth Bingham in 1919. The new bridge was eventually designed by Medjeski & Masters with additional architectural designs by Paul Philippe Cret, but, just as with the ORBP, questions of funding, location, and tolls arose years before construction of the 5,746 foot span began in June, 1928. The photo albums document the process almost from this point, showing preparation of river-bound materials, construction of the approaches, a diver in full diving suit and helmet preparing to inspect underwater elements, and later the completion of the superstructure and roadway.

Just as with the ORBP, many questions arose between the planning and implementation phases, regarding funding, implementation of tolls, toll rates, etc. In the early planning stages, it was expected that the span would be open for use free of charge. In the February 8, 1922 issue of the *Courier-Journal*, New Albany banker Henry B. Jewett is quoted as saying, “we feel sure there is not a doubt about our getting a free bridge. It will help New Albany and it will help Louisville.” He goes on to say:

Now, persons who would like to live [in Indiana] cannot do so on account of the high toll rates for automobiles. It costs me twenty-five cents one way alone, and five cents for each passenger [to cross the K&I bridge]. Working people coming back and forth daily cannot afford such a tax.







However, a public bond issue to fund the bridge construction failed, and the bridge was funded with private capital, at which point tolls began to be discussed. To the presumed dismay of Mr. Jewett and many would-be daily commuters, the Louisville Municipal Bridge did open with a toll, which lasted until the bonds taken out to pay for construction were repaid, in 1946.

The albums

The first of the two recently processed albums is professional and industrial in nature. The images show landmarks in the construction process and are often aesthetically pleasing, though the bridge itself is the sole subject. The few people present are often a blur of movement against a background of the immobile bridge. The second album also features architectural shots and images of the various bridge components, though of a slightly less professional quality than those in the first album. The most striking images in the album, however, show the faces and stories of the men who spent long shifts clearing the river bed, or riveting and paving the road deck.

These images put the bridge in human perspective, much as the opening of the Big Four Bridge as a pedestrian and bike path has allowed an up-close consideration of the physical details that make up one of our largest architectural landmarks. The images in the second album do not contradict the sweeping vision of the bridge

seen in the first. Rather, they add detail and a depth of understanding that is hard to gain from seeing something so great from afar, or through the window of an automobile (even one struck in traffic).

The men who built the bridge

Also contained in the second album is a clipping from the August 29, 1928 *Louisville Times* in which construction worker T. B. “Red” Braswell shares his observations on shoveling mud forty feet below the surface of the river – work carried out in an artificially lit and pressurized steel box measuring 30 by 80 by 6.5 feet. Braswell had this to say about the work:

There’s absolutely no kick in it. You see you get down there and when you first get on the bottom, you feel kind of funny and the air pressure sings in your ears. But after a while you get used to that and you’re with the rest of the “hogs.” That’s what they call us fellers, “sand hogs,” and the first thing you know it is all the same as being out.

When you come out? Say, when you come out there’s the hot coffee and the shower bath over on the boat and then it’s “hot dog” to town.

The showers are necessary, as evidenced by the photos, and as the article reports, “so covered with mud are the men when they



Louv. Br. #61 Pier 1 Diver 10-18-28

come out it is hard to tell what parts of their bodies are covered with clothing and where the mud line ends.”

After highlighting the construction of the road deck, the second album ends with a serene and quiet image of the first snow on the bridge, on November 22nd, 1929, nearly a month after the bridge was dedicated by President Hoover.

The need for (another) automobile crossing (and another, and another)

By the early 1950s, the traffic on the bridge was near capacity, and the topic of new bridges was on the mind of civic and governmental leaders once again, restarting the whole process of investigation, investment, discussion, and decision. The result in that case was the construction of the Sherman Minton and John F. Kennedy Memorial bridges. As these bridges have come closer to their capacities or have developed the need for renovation, the process has begun again with the ORBP.

Though completion of the new downtown I-65 and East End bridges is years away, we can look to these images to see that the concerns of our day have been faced before, and to find a more human perspective from which to view our largest civic endeavors.



p.2

Construction worker on the deck of the Louisville Municipal Bridge, 1929.

p.3

Beginning the superstructure, seen from Indiana.
Progress on the superstructure, seen from Indiana.

p.4

“Sandhogs” clearing the riverbed.

p.5

A diver prepares to inspect the pier footings.
Bridge piers, seen from Kentucky.

THE KEMPS' "MAGIC" LANTERN SLIDES

BY MARK V. WETHERINGTON,
DIRECTOR

The images on the following page are part of a larger collection of lantern slides acquired by The Filson in 2013. They were created in 1916 by the commercial photographers, Edward H. Kemp (1868-1940) and his wife Josephine Sparrow Kemp (1868-1941), on a trip through the Kentucky Bluegrass.

The Kemps were best known for their photograph and motion picture travelogues. Josephine Kemp described in *Camera Craft* magazine a trip made by the couple to Arizona in 1905 to document a Native American snake dance. The following year was an eventful one for the Kemps. The June issue of *Camera Craft* carried an advertisement for the Kemps' lantern slides under the banner "Burnt Out." Their business was destroyed by the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire the previous month and a temporary office was set up in Sausalito. However, Edward Kemp advised *Camera Craft* readers: "Lantern Slides of the San Francisco Disaster Now Ready." Other topics included the construction of the Panama Canal and the Grand Canyon.

The Kemps carried on a tradition of projecting images from glass that dated back centuries. Early versions used images painted on glass for the entertainment of children and in religious services. The modern lantern slide process used by the Kemps

was introduced in 1849, when daguerreotypes were opaque and unsuitable for slide projections.

However, during the 1840s William and Frederick Langenheim developed a process, employing both their discoveries and those of others, that allowed the creation of glass negatives using solutions sensitive to light. These negatives were in turn transferred onto another piece of glass, creating a transparent positive image. Patented in 1850, the brothers' invention received a medal at London's Crystal Palace Exposition the following year.

Originally conceived as entertaining "picture shows," the lantern slides were adapted to several formats. By 1911 Kemp lantern slides were being used by Edward S. Curtis, an ethnologist and photographer whose collection resides in the Library of Congress. In his North American Indian "Musical" Productions, Curtis combined Kemp images with music and his, Curtis's, voice.

On their 1916 Kentucky trip, the Kemps visited Lexington, Paris, and other Bluegrass towns. They took images of hemp farms, African American laborers, court house squares, street scenes, bridges, and scenic Kentucky rivers. They also made glass plate copies of a few antebellum photographs of people and places made available to them on their trip.



Left Column:

Breaking hemp.

Farm Workers in an agricultural community.

Steamboat changing course.

Right Column:

Basket maker's wagon.

Kemps' copy of an antebellum photograph.

**ON THEIR 1916
KENTUCKY TRIP
THE KEMPS VISITED
LEXINGTON,
PARIS, AND
OTHER BLUEGRASS
TOWNS.**

FILSON INTERNS

Gain Experience and Help Fulfill Our Mission

*Danielle DiGiacomo (left)
Alex Covington (right)*



The Filson has been fortunate to have three interns in recent months, helping us to process collections.

BY JAMES J. HOLMBERG | CURATOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Wade “Trey” Richardson, working on his master’s degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Kentucky, spent two months in the Special Collections Department this summer as the first of two H. F. Boehl Interns. Trey’s background in history assisted him as he focused on cataloging manuscripts and scrapbooks.

Our second Boehl Intern, Danielle DiGiacomo, came to us from the Historical Administration MA program at Eastern Illinois University. Danielle spent two months in Special Collections from late summer to early fall, focusing on our museum collections. She worked on a variety of projects, including preprocessing incoming collections of museum items and photographs, preparing the next batch of Filson items to be included on the Kentucky Online Arts Resource website, and assisting researchers working with our textile collection. Danielle also updated and

added information on various museum items (especially portraits) in our Past Perfect Museum Software database and prepared several exhibit cases for The Filson’s “Beards, Bouffants, and Bourbon” event held November 7.

Alex Covington, a graduate student in the University of Louisville’s history program, is The Filson Intern for Fall 2013 and Spring 2014. Alex has primarily worked with the photograph collection; her largest project to date involved the Louis Cohen Collection, which primarily is composed of the work of nineteenth century Louisville photographers. Alex also cataloged two albums of Louisville Municipal Bridge construction images (featured in the “Browsing” piece of this issue of *The Filson*). Alex is currently cataloging scrapbooks, and will begin a focus on manuscript cataloging in the Spring 2014 semester.



OUR MISSION

To collect, preserve, and tell the significant stories of Kentucky and Ohio Valley history and culture.

*Help us support this mission
with a gift to the Annual Fund.*

*Help us collect unique materials, preserve our national
and regional history, and tell the stories of our past to
researchers and history lovers everywhere.*

Thank you for your past support of The Filson Historical Society. The Filson has become a renowned professional historical society and a public center for lifelong learning, forging an irreplaceable link to the past that provides a sense of place, community, and identity. With your help, The Filson will continue to give our community the resources to understand today and imagine tomorrow. Gifts to the Annual Fund are completely tax-deductible and must be received by December 31st to count toward the 2013 tax year. Please call Sarah Strapp at 502.634.7108 with any questions or if you need a new copy of your gift acknowledgement letter with your tax-deductibility information.

**A Filson membership is a great gift
for the people who have everything.
Give a gift that will last year round!**

**Members of The Filson will receive
10% off a gift membership at the
level of their choice.**



CAMPUS EXPANSION

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR OUR REGION'S STORIED PAST: THE FILSON'S CAMPUS EXPANSION PROJECT

BY RICK ANDERSON, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT,
THE FILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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In order to better serve our current constituents and many more in the future, The Filson embarked on an exciting Campus Expansion Project toward the end of 2010. With our 100 annual programs, ever-expanding collections, and increasing public and scholarly visits, we have simply run out of space in which to perform our unique mission – collecting, preserving, and sharing the significant stories of Kentucky and Ohio Valley history and culture. The Expansion will give us the space required to perform our mission for future generations with the excellence the community has come to expect. The Expansion and its transparent, open, welcoming design are tangible expressions of our dedication to performing that mission for all who live, work, or visit here.

THE PROJECT

The Filson plans to transform its Old Louisville Campus, our home since 1986, through construction of a new building, renovation of existing facilities, and creation of a public, park-like green space. The Project, designed by Louisville's award-winning De Leon & Primmer Architecture Workshop, includes:

- Construction of a 20,000 square foot building featuring new collection storage facilities, a modern digitization and preservation technology center, museum-quality exhibition space, and a multiple-use education and event venue.
- Renovation of the Ferguson Mansion and Carriage House, adding museum-quality exhibition galleries and an advanced research facility affording improved user accessibility.
- Creation of an architecturally landscaped, public, park-like Campus.

THE PROJECT'S IMPACT

The Expansion will:

- Increase our collection storage capacity by 140% or 8,000 square feet, providing modern storage to protect our unique and expanding collections.
- Enhance the quality and reach of our acclaimed programming by providing modern multi-use event facilities, with audience capacity far greater than our current space and equipped with modern audio-visual capabilities, suitable for recording and televising events.
- Make our collections far more accessible to users through expanded and technologically-advanced research facilities, including a new digitization and conservation lab.
- Expand the quality and scope of our exhibits in new and renovated museum-quality gallery spaces.
- Demonstrate The Filson's commitment to our historic Old Louisville urban neighborhood, serving as a symbol of, and catalyst for, its continued revitalization.
- Create another important cultural and event destination for our city and region.

PROGRESS OF THE CORNERSTONE CAMPAIGN FOR THE PROJECT

Pledges are now over \$9 million, against our \$11.7 million goal. We are a year ahead of schedule due to strong support by individuals, businesses, and foundations from across the region and nation. We thank all of our Campaign pledgors for their community leadership, support, and generosity.

The Project's design and its \$11.7 million budget were finalized in late summer. In early fall, we engaged the Project general contractor/construction manager. Groundbreaking is planned for spring 2014, with completion in 2015. We have work left to do, but our progress and momentum bring The Filson's exciting new home ever closer to reality.

If you have questions about the Project, or would like to make a Campaign pledge, please telephone 502-634-7109 or e-mail pra@filsonhistorical.org. More information about the Expansion is available at filsonhistorical.org. Please watch for a Campaign progress report in each *Filson Magazine*.

STREET VIEW



A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

Greeting Cards in The Filson's Library Collection

BY JANA MEYER



Christmas two hundred years ago was a much more subdued affair. Many businesses did not even consider it a holiday. However, by the end of the 1800s, Christmas had become the celebration we recognize today—the foremost holiday of the year.

Traditions introduced during the Victorian era transformed how Christmas was celebrated in Britain and, later, in America as well. Britain's Queen Victoria and Prince Albert loved the Christmas season and were responsible for the popularity of many holiday customs. Prince Albert, a native of Germany, introduced many German Christmas traditions to the country. In 1848, the *Illustrated London News* printed an image of the royal family gathered around a Christmas tree. Soon, every British household also celebrated Christmas with a tree; families in the United States were not far behind, adopting this custom by the 1870s. Charles Dickens' publication of *A Christmas Carol* in 1843 also helped promote many Christmas traditions of the period.

Christmas cards were also introduced to Britain during this time period. In 1843, Sir Henry Cole commissioned artist John Callcott Horsley to design a card for Christmas that





Animals such as this kitten were popular card illustrations during the Victorian era.



Christmas cards have contained a message of seasonal cheer since their introduction in Britain in 1843.

he could send to his numerous friends and acquaintances. Horsley's card contained a Christmas message and an illustration of a group of people gathered around a Christmas dinner table. Initially, Christmas cards were too expensive for most people; however, the tradition of exchanging cards at Christmas caught on, with many people crafting their own hand-drawn cards. Not long after, advances in printing technologies caused the price of cards to drop, and the British began purchasing and mailing their Christmas cards to one another.

Christmas cards would soon become an American tradition as well. Louis Prang is credited with the introduction of Christmas cards to the United States. Prang emigrated from Germany to Boston, Massachusetts in 1850. After experimenting with various trades, Prang opened a small lithographic business which specialized in black-and-white prints of monuments, buildings, and towns in Massachusetts. In 1864, Prang returned to his native country for a short period to study German lithographic techniques, which were more advanced than American techniques at the time. Prang used this knowledge to become a leader in chromolithography, creating colored reproductions of artwork and marketing them to the general public. Prang initially copied the works of great artists such as Raphael, but later turned to printing popular subjects such as pets and western scenery. In 1874, Prang began selling Christmas cards in the British marketplace. He introduced the Christmas card to the United States the following year, where it has since become a seasonal tradition. Prang has been called the "Father of the American Christmas card."

The Filson Library has a collection of greeting cards, including some early Christmas cards published during the Victorian era. Kentucky women carefully collected these cards over the years and pasted them into scrapbooks; their compilations were eventually donated to The Filson. As you can see, the vibrant colors have not faded much during the ensuing years. I hope you will enjoy these artistic images from our collection during the holiday season.



SOURCES

Christmas cards featured in this article are from the scrapbook of Mrs. E.Y. Naylor, in The Filson Library greeting card collection.

Neubauer, Bethany. "Prang, Louis." American National Biography Online. Feb. 2000.

British Broadcasting Corporation. "History of Christmas." <http://www.bbc.co.uk/victorianchristmas/history.shtml>

Greeting Card Association. "The History of Greeting Cards." <http://www.greetingcard.org/AbouttheIndustry/History/tabid/72/Default.aspx>



This card includes many of the images we still associate with Christmas: snow-covered trees, gray skies, holly branches, and a cozy indoor scene with a roaring fire and stockings hanging from the mantel.



Victorian Christmas cards didn't always have the traditional winter scenery we associate with Christmas. Cards such as this one were illustrated with bright and colorful flowers.

Initially, Christmas cards were too expensive for most people; however, the tradition of exchanging cards at Christmas caught on, with many people crafting their own hand-drawn cards. Not long after, advances in printing technologies caused the price of cards to drop, and the British began purchasing and mailing their Christmas cards to one another.

Filsonian listing reflects memberships received through December 1.

The Filsonians *September - December 2013*

How can you give a gift that will provide the greatest benefit to you and The Filson Historical Society? Through Planned Giving.

By informing us of your intent to include The Filson Historical Society in your estate, you are helping to ensure The Filson's ability to meet our mission of saving and sharing the significant stories of Kentucky and Ohio Valley history and culture. Your commitment allows us to remain a strong and vital educational resource for our community both today and tomorrow.

Planned gifts create opportunities for both you and The Filson Historical Society. Choosing the right type of commitment for you and your needs is just as important as making the gift. It could be something as simple as naming The Filson as a beneficiary to a more complex trust arrangement. In addition to the tangible benefits of planned giving, you will have the joy of knowing that your commitment helps The Filson continue to be a steward of the past and ensures our future as a resource for Kentucky and the Ohio Valley. To learn more about planned giving options, please contact Rick Anderson at 502-635-5083.

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 Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Sutherland
 Mrs. Avanel C. Sutherland
 Mr. William Swinson
 Gary and Linda Tanner
 Mr. and Mrs. Carson Torpey
 Mr. and Mrs. Bert A. Trompeter
 Mrs. Elizabeth L. Turner
 Mr. Charles Ullrich
 Rick Jenkins and Virgil Vaughn
 Mr. George W. Vest
 Mr. and Mrs. John Vezeau
 Dr. Daniel Vivian
 Ms. Nancy Walker
 Mr. Hugh Walker
 Ms. Nancy R. Watkins
 Mr. Robert R. Webb Jr.
 Mr. Neil S. Weiner
 Dr. and Mrs. A. Franklin White
 Mrs. Joan T. Whittenberg
 Mrs. Mary W. Winges
 Mr. Mike Worley
 Mrs. Sharon Wright
 Carolyn Yetter