

THE CARD COLLECTOR'S BULLETIN

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THE METROPOLITAN COLLECTION

Sooner or later every card collector is asked "What are you going to do with them?" or "What will become of them?". It is natural to evade an honest answer to such questions; but Time has an inexorable way of marching on, whereas we, sometimes more abruptly than expected, come to an end. These questions merit serious thought, and all collectors, regardless of age, should have a ready answer for them.

Some few collectors will have heirs to carry on; but all too often in the past, collectors have passed away leaving properties for which their relatives have neither interest nor knowledge of the best methods of disposition. While most collectors wish to keep their possessions as long as they live, it is becoming increasingly common for them to arrange for the final placing while they are yet alive and able to care for the multitude of attendant details.

In my own case the matter has been somewhat automatically decided by my uncertain physical condition and the fact that there will be no immediate survivors qualified to carry out my wishes. While the years may produce other larger and better collections than my own, I have long felt that at least one large general collection such as mine should be preserved intact and in such a way that it will be available indefinitely to all for reference and study. I believe time will show that such a disposition will give future collectors the greatest possible benefit from these cards, that it will be helpful to the hobby in general, and also be an aid to writers and others who may find in the collection the information or illustrations they seek.

Obviously, the place for such a collection is in some institution which is built and equipped for such purposes. During the past few years I have considered several such places and my only regret is that it has been necessary to select one place only, as all the others are worthy and honorable in every way. In choosing THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART in New York city I was influenced somewhat by the location which undoubtedly will enable more people to inspect the collection than would any other place. More important, however, is the person of Mr. A. Hyatt Mayor, Curator of Prints, in whose department the collection will be housed. I feel sure that in Mr. Mayor the collection will find sympathetic treatment and will be preserved and handled in the finest possible manner. He is a man in whom one can have full confidence.

I cannot at this time give any details about the collection itself but future BULLETINS will have notes covering everything. Placing my collection in this way will have no immediate effect on the BULLETIN or on my collecting activities in general. I plan to continue collecting as long as possible and hope to fill in many of the items missing in the various sets. No collection of this kind will be entirely complete and I am almost constantly adding to every section. Should anyone desire to participate in helping make this Metropolitan Collection as complete as possible I will be glad to hear from them. Every effort will be made to give adequate recognition and recompense for all help.

While a small portion of the collection will be transferred to the Museum late this year, the entire operation will probably require three or four years, depending on how rapidly I can get the material ready and how rapidly the Museum staff can handle it. As those who have visited me will testify, there are many thousands of items involved and

considerable still to be sorted and arranged. In my limited spare time, it will require many months. J.R.B.

Mr. Mayor writes the following note for Bulletin readers:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 28, N.Y.

Department of Prints

Oct. 29, 1947

Mr. Burdick's generosity in deciding to give his collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art will fill a want that has been long felt by the public of the Print Room. A complex center like New York makes endlessly unpredictable demands on its art museum. To meet these demands the Museum needs nothing less than the record of civilized man as shown by the things that he had made. This includes not only the untypical creations of genius but also the typical things that show how men lived, how they made whatever they needed, how they thought, built, dressed, drew, wrote, acted and looked at the world. Such past examples can help any of us to do the same things under new conditions.

Trade cards, bill heads and commercial catalogues make a record of the past more vivid and intimate than almost any other. For a number of years a considerable public, that includes designers and historians, have made increasing use of the rich collection of European commercial printing given to the Metropolitan Museum by Mrs. Bella C. Landauer. Mr. Burdick's remarkable gift will round out this treasure of design with the fascinating and varied American contribution. The Museum is proud to have earned Mr. Burdick's confidence in making this irreplaceable gift. To the Museum's public it opens a whole new possibility for research and inspiration. A. Hyatt Mayor, Curator.

GREETINGS. At this time we pass on our usual wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy 1948 to all card collectors. Also as usual, this note has to suffice for the personal greeting which we wish we could make to each and every reader of the Bulletin.

OLD TIMES. Col. Sturtevant writes further on the Marquis of Lorne insert mentioned in the Oct. Bulletin: "The use of this insert adds strength to the possibility of use of the #347 Hall's Pres. & Vice Pres. Candidates as early as 1880. I have a reasonably good file of the old New York Clipper from 1858 to 1916. This was the Sporting and Theatrical Journal, although there were the Mercury and others. From the time of the Civil War, 1860 on to around 1886, there appeared small ads offering single photos or groups of photos, as I mentioned, of actresses, actors, prizefighters, barmen, and celebrities such as presidents, sovereigns, etc. The continuance of these ads indicated a demand from an age lacking many good pictures. Those appearing in magazines were miserable coarse woodcuts, and the public liked these photos as well as the nice colored lithos like Currier & Ives. Why did these ads cease? Simply because the use here and there of inserts caught on in the late seventies and early eighties and soon the public got a nice lot of these photos and lithos free, and ergo, by 1886 there was no demand for these sale items. Currier & Ives, Sarony, and other framing prints fell off as more modern methods made them available either cheaper or better as supplements of London and New York magazines. I believe other data will substantiate this theory."

MILITARY. Mr. Bray is toying with the idea of plating the banner of the Kinney Military Series. The complete banner is yet to be found but about 125 cutouts are known, including some in multiple pieces. If anyone has any of these things they should communicate with Mr. Bray. It is not too promising a job, but something of interest may be done.

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