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LUMIÈRES

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections

Technology Preserves History

What do a daguerreotype of Mrs. Jefferson Davis, a computer tape from the office of Senator Russell B. Long, and reel-to-reel audio tape interviews done by Professor T. Harry Williams have in common? They are among the non-print materials collected by the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, Special Collections, Louisiana State University Libraries. These non-print materials reflect the history and culture of the region as well as technological changes in society.

Until the 1839 invention of photography, the only ways to convey human thought were by voice or print. Louis Daguerre's perfection of the photographic process added a new dimension to human expression. For the first time, images of people, places, and things could be frozen in time and made available to the entire world. No longer did people need to travel to Washington, D.C. to see the United States Capitol building, they could see it in a photograph at home.

The history of photography is, in itself, a "fantastic journey" from the daguerreotype to instant Polaroid snapshots. This history can be seen in the photographs housed in the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections. Over 80,000 photographic images present a visual record of the Louisiana and lower Mississippi valley region from the mid-19th century through today.

Almost all photographic processes are represented by these images: daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tin-types, cartes-de-visite, cabinet cards, stereographs, glass plate negatives, lantern slides, nitrate and acetate negatives, black and white prints, color prints, and instant Polaroid prints. Subjects shown in these photographs vary as widely as the photograph types. The earliest images from the 1840s are stiff and formal

portrait-like images of Louisiana planters and their families. Civil War photographs of army encampments, soldiers, street scenes, and Confederate officers are found individually among family letters and papers and in distinct collections such as the Andrew Lytle Photograph Collection. Steamboats, Mississippi River floods, railroads, lumbering, businesses, parades, politicians, and school children are the subjects of many photographs as well.

During the 1920s, radio, another method of transmitting human thought, was developed. Radio, even more than photographs, brought the world into people's homes. The Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections also acquire materials which document history by sound. The sounds of radio, preserved on 16-inch discs of heavy plastic, were recorded (cut) in the radio station as the sound was being broadcast live. Famous speeches such as Huey Long's 1935 "Share the Wealth" speech were recorded in this manner. Today, re-recordings of this speech by Huey Long are available in the LLMVC. Whether through 78 rpm phonograph records or cassette tapes, it is possible for researchers to hear the voice of Huey Long. Radio broadcasts of Russell Long from the 1950s and 1960s are another example of radio history.

The phonograph record also became popular in the 1920s and popular music was made available cheaply and quickly to the public. Folk music could be heard on phonograph records for sale to the public, and folklorists collected such items. Lauren Post, author of *Cajun Sketches* and *Louisiana As It Is*, collected numerous phonographs containing "cajun music." These can be found in the Lauren Post Papers in LLMVC.

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Another medium for recording sound, developed in the early 1930s, was the wire recorder, the precursor of the tape recorder. Early wire recorders were vastly different from the small portable cassette recorders of today. Large stationary machines literally recorded voices on small reels of wire. While we have no examples in the LLMVC of early wire recordings, we have thousands of feet of recorded sound on tape. Most early tape recordings were done on reel-to-reel tapes, such as those used by T. Harry Williams when he interviewed various people for his biography of Huey P. Long.

Tape recordings are also used for recording folk music. Excellent examples of these folk music recordings can be found in the Lauren Post Papers, which include a recording of the June 1963 Scott, Louisiana Fais-do-do, and in the Walter Joseph Coquille Papers. Tape recordings are also used in the process known as oral history, wherein an interviewer discusses with a person aspects of their lives. In 1979, LSU Professor David Culbert interviewed German filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl about her career, and an oral history interview with James Brown and Richard Lewis examines the production of educational films for the Navy in World War II.

With the advance of technology, sound and visual images were combined into film. In the 1930s, technicolor was added to film, and in the 1950s, home movie cameras were first developed. By 1960, television began to use video tape in place of film for cheaper and quicker image transmission. Throughout the collections of the LLMVC are numerous examples of film. In the Earl K. Long Papers are a silent color film of his May 15, 1956 inauguration, and a film titled *Louisiana, the First Chapter*, narrated by John Carroll, c. 1950. Films of the LSU band performing during football games are available in the LSU Band Records. By 1970, Senator Russell Long had replaced his radio programs with television programs, and in his papers are videotapes of the senator speaking to the people of Louisiana from the recording studio of the United States Senate.

Computers represent the latest technology for transmitting human thought. Computer tapes are one of the most unusual of the non-print categories of materials collected by the LLMVC. United States senators and representatives use computers extensively in their offices to answer constituent correspondence. In order to preserve the full history of Congressional work, we have accepted such computer tapes along with the papers of Senator Russell Long, Representatives Henson Moore, Gillis Long, and Cathy Long. These tapes will serve as excellent resources for researchers through the LSU computer system.

Most non-print items in the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections were acquired along with the manuscripts of individuals and families. In order to fully document the history, life, and culture of Louisiana and the lower Mississippi Valley, and to make such materials available for research, we seek to collect other manuscripts and non-print materials. Future non-print items will continue to show technological progress; whether laser discs, holograms, or videotapes produced by computers, such items will be represented in the LLMVC.

Faye Phillips
Head, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections

1987

The gathering on April 23, 1987 at the LSU Faculty Club was an occasion for applauding the many accomplishments of the Friends organization throughout the 1986/87 year. Friends president, Mrs. Mary Jane Kahao, presided at the business meeting held before the delicious Faculty Club meal was served. The president reviewed the year emphasizing major activities and thanking individuals for their contributions to the organization.

- The 1986 book bazaar, chaired by Mrs. Douglas Harrison, raised \$38,500. Although the book bazaar has been the major fund raising activity for eleven years, each year we marvel anew at the success of this endeavor which is a cooperative effort of so many dedicated workers. All of these people are collectively and heartily thanked.
- The Friends' coffers continue to show a healthy annual increase. The endowment now has over \$180,000. The officers, board, and membership are delighted that the results of hard work show so visibly in the fund balances. Over \$300,000 has been expended in purchases for the Library.
- The publication of *Nature Classics, a Catalogue of the E. A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection* is a milestone for the organization. It will bring international recognition to the McIlhenny collection, the Friends, and the University. Anna Perrault was applauded for her dedicated work in compiling, editing, and publishing this work for the Friends.



Mrs. Delroy O. Spann and Mrs. John Keenon, recipients of the Doris Dennis Smith Book Award.



Mrs. Nan Warrick, Mrs. Estelle Williams, who received an award, and Mrs. Gordon Kean, chairman of the award committee.

Annual Banquet

- The first Friends' workshop held March 25, 1987 in Hill was outstanding. It had the immediate effect of attracting new members for the Friends and more attention to the McIlhenny collection. Mrs. Elaine Ellis and her committee—Anne West, Kathy Morgan, Anna Perrault, and Bill Holtman—were thanked for planning the workshop and the reception and exhibit associated with it. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Kean were also thanked for hosting the speakers, Joe Studholme and David Lank.
- Mrs. Bill Holtman was commended for her work as publicist for the Goodrich-Taylor assistantship and the spring workshop. She was also responsible for the production of a new Friends brochure.
- The fundraising committee for the Goodrich-Taylor assistantship was congratulated on a good initial effort toward a goal of \$75,000. The committee chair is Dr. Trent James.
- The president thanked the immediate past president, Mrs. John West for her help throughout the year. The banquet committee of Virginia Noland, chair, Mrs. Paul Murrill, and Caroline Wire were also thanked.
- Three board members who have served the limit of their term, Dr. Edward Boagni, Mrs. Edith Kirkpatrick, and Miss Sallie Farrell, were lauded for their loyal service and contributions to the Friends and were presented a certificate of appreciation.

The president then called upon the chairman of the awards committee, Mrs. Gordon Kean. Two people were honored with the Doris Smith Book Award—Mrs. John Keenon and Mrs. Delroy O. Spann. Mrs. Keenon was book bazaar chairman in 1984 and has been a book barn worker from the early days. Mrs. Spann has also been a book barn worker for many years, and has served on the transportation committee. She has been vice-president of the Friends and currently serves as secretary. Mrs. Smith, in whose honor the award was established, was present at the banquet. All three ladies received a resounding ovation.

Mrs. Kean also presented an award to Mrs. Estelle Williams for the gift of the personal library of T. Harry Williams to the LSU Library. T. Harry Williams was one of the original organizers of the Friends of the LSU Library. He was president of the organization for several years. Mrs. Williams was presented with a plaque from the Friends in recognition of the donation of the library of one of LSU's most distinguished and beloved scholars.

In the next order of business, Miss Sallie Farrell, chair of the nominating committee, presented the slate of officers. The 1986/87 slate—Mary Jane Kahao, president; Dr. Neil Odenwald, vice-president; Mrs. Delroy O. Spann, secretary; and Mrs. Eugene Owen, treasurer, were all asked to serve for another year and elected by acclamation. Board members Mrs. John M. West, III and Mrs. Anna Perrault were asked to serve another three-year term.

New board members are Mrs. H. Don Ernst, General Middleton's granddaughter; Mrs. Mary Bennett of Clinton, an active supporter of local cultural organizations; and Mr. Leslie McKenzie, who has been active for many years in Baton Rouge civic organizations and a supporter of the Friends organization since its inception.

The president next called upon the Director of the LSU Libraries, Sharon Hogan, who also observed that the 1986/87 year had been one of the major accomplishments for the Friends. Ms. Hogan talked about the process of selecting Friends' purchases. She said she is often asked the question, "How do you decide what to purchase?" Suggestions from faculty, book dealers, Friends members, and library staff are brought to meetings of the Friends purchase committee. The merits of each suggestion are discussed. These meetings can be quite lively as some of the purchases in the past have possessed unusual features.

One such purchase this year was a copy of *The Odyssey of Homer* translated by T. E. Lawrence. The volume was designed by Bruce Rogers and printed with an ink mixed from a sixteenth-century formula using balsam of copaiba. The ink has a peppery aroma which is immediately sensed when the book is opened. This particular meeting was one of "show and smell." Such delightful attributes not withstanding, the major criterion for selecting titles for purchase is their value to the research collections of the LSU Libraries.



Banquet speaker, Vance Bourjaily with Dr. and Mrs. Donald Stanford, and Mrs. Bourjaily.

At the conclusion of the evening, those present were treated to a personal account by Vance Bourjaily of the inspiration for one of his novels. Mr. Bourjaily came to LSU two years ago to be head of the new Master of Fine Arts program in creative writing. He has published eleven books, among them *The Man Who Knew Kennedy*, *Brill Among the Ruins*, his latest novel, *The Great Fake Book*, and *The Violated*. The latter novel was the subject of his talk to the Friends. It concerns a production of *Hamlet* staged in Mexico City by a group of children entirely on their own. The author did not see the production and could not find anyone who had seen it to give him any substantive information about it. Feelings were contradictory. The incident so intrigued the author that he decided to write an imaginary account of the production. Vance Bourjaily believes an author should write about something he doesn't know, something that mystifies him. The story of the inspiration for *The Violated* is his answer to the question "Where do you get your ideas?"

Collecting Natural History Art

A reception at Hill Memorial Library on Tuesday, March 24, initiated a one-day workshop—held Wednesday, March 25—on “Collecting Natural History Art.” The workshop was the first to be sponsored by the Friends of the LSU Library and was conceived as a way to celebrate yet another Friends “first”—the publication of *Nature Classics: A Catalogue of the E. A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection at Louisiana State University*.



The Hale family came from Austin, Texas, to attend the workshop and visit with John S. McIlhenny. Left to right, Chris, Mrs. Hale, Bryan, Mr. McIlhenny, and Cecil Hale.

In keeping with the natural history theme, Special Collections staff mounted a major exhibition titled “A Flow-ering of Science: Plants from Captain Cook’s First Voyage, 1768-1771,” a former Smithsonian Institution Travelling Ex-hibition which was recently given to LSU by its creators, Alecto Historical Editions and the British Museum (Natural History.) This exhibition is of particular significance to the Special Collections Library because it forms an interpretive archival supplement to the *Banks’ Florilegium*, which is being purchased, in part, by the Friends of the LSU Library.

For this special occasion, there was a smaller exhibition on the second floor of Hill Library on “*Nature Classics: The Making of a Catalogue*.” This exhibition chronicled the steps leading to the publication of the catalogue, and high-lighted a selection of titles from the McIlhenny Collection.

Honored guests at a reception were the workshop speak-ers: Mr. Joe Studholme of Alecto Historical Editions; David Lank, F.R.S.A., eminent authority on wildlife art; and Mar-garet Moreland, a respected fine arts conservator based in Baton Rouge. Also present at the reception were members of the Friends and workshop participants. Everyone en-joyed a delectable array of hors d’oeuvres and wine in the reception area of Hill, which had been transformed into a veritable garden, using plants loaned by the LSU Horti-culture Department.

On Wednesday, March 25, the workshop commenced with at-the-door registration of several additional partici-pants. Joe Studholme spoke first, giving a witty and elegant slide presentation that described the making of the *Banks’ Florilegium*, now being published by his firm, Alecto His-torical Editions, in association with the British Museum (Natural History). A luncheon at the Faculty Club provided the registrants and speakers an opportunity to talk infor-mally together.



*David Lank hands Anna Perrault a pen as John McIlhenny receives a signed copy of *Nature Classics* with Kathy Morgan looking on.*

After lunch, back at Hill, David Lank gave a fast-paced and entertaining slide show covering the history of natural history art, much like the introductory essay he wrote for *Nature Classics*. This was followed by afternoon tea. The final speaker of the day was Margaret Moreland, whose concise and informative talk illustrated by before and after slides made the audience aware of the importance of pro-tecting valuable prints from the ravages of time and the environment. Participants thought the workshop was both educational and entertaining.

Kathryn Morgan
Head, McIlhenny and Rare Book Collections

Nature Classics published

The E. A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection is the jewel in the LSU Libraries’ crown. The Collection is well known to the Friends of the Library, who have generously supported it for many years. By making possible the pub-lication of *Nature Classics: A Catalogue of the E. A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection*, the Friends have continued this support and helped LSU to make the Collection better known to the scholars, bookmen, and librarians of the coun-try.

The catalogue had its inception as a project of the Friends, and has benefitted from their sustained interest and sup-port. It is the product of the work of a number of individuals of the staff of the LSU Libraries. First among these, of course, is Anna Perrault, who compiled and edited the work, supervised the design, and saw it through the press. Kathryn Morgan, the librarian of the McIlhenny Collection, and now the head of the Rare Book Collections of which it is a part, assisted in every phase of the project and con-tributed the interesting Preface, describing the history and development of the Collection. Not to be slighted are the efforts of Sandra McGuire, who spent many long, tedious

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Friends board member, T. O. Perry and president, Mary Jane Kahao admire *Nature Classics*.

Nature Classics From page 4

hours at the computer terminal inputting codes for the type-setting process, and the photographic work of Don Morrison, who produced all of the many fine illustrations, both color and black and white, that contribute so substantially to the work's success.

One of the most interesting and useful features of *Nature Classics* is the fine essay on the history of natural history illustration by David Lank. An internationally recognized authority on wildlife art, Lank deftly traces the evolution of the art of rendering in two dimensions on paper the images of the plants, birds, animals and fishes that form the core of the McIlhenny Collection. Occupying almost a third of the text of the book, Lank's essay is a tour de force of its genre, compressing into few words the erudition that is the result of a lifetime of study and research. His remarks go a long way to illuminate the content of the catalogue, and also provide a rationale for the existence of the collection.

The catalogue itself contains 1,388 entries, divided into general subject categories, such as Travel and Scientific Expeditions, Ornithology, Botany, and the like. In each section, works are listed alphabetically by author or title. For each work, a complete bibliographic description is provided, together with descriptive notes about the copy in the McIlhenny Collection. There is a complete index to the catalogue, but it does not cover the essay.

Nature Classics is an important contribution to the bibliographic literature of natural history. It is a major accomplishment for the editor and compiler, the contributors, the LSU Libraries, and—by no means least—the Friends of the LSU Library. All associated with it can take justifiable pride in the result. Published in an edition of only 1,000 copies, at a price of only \$39.95, it will not remain available for long. Members of the Friends should order their copy without delay.

Nature Classics is distributed by the Louisiana State University Press and is available in local bookstores.

Robert S. Martin
Assistant Director of Libraries for Special Collections

PURCHASES

Elizabeth Blackwell, *A Curious Herbal*.

London: John Norse, 1739. \$5,250.

This important botanical work containing 500 illustrations of medicinal herbs was issued in parts between 1737 and 1739. A charming story connected with the work has it that Mrs. Blackwell undertook this work to earn the funds to free her husband, Dr. Alexander Blackwell, from debtor's prison. The work was done completely by Mrs. Blackwell who selected the specimens, created the original drawings, engraved them in copper, and hand-colored them after printing. The enterprise was successful and she secured her husband's release from prison.

James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*.

London. Charles Dilly, 1791, 1st edition. \$3,750.

Samuel Johnson is the most famous of all the literary figures of the eighteenth century. His reputation rests not only on his works, *Johnson's Dictionary* notable among them, but also on Boswell's evocation of his brilliant conversation, eccentricities, opinionated outbursts, and interest in the supernatural. Boswell's account of Johnson's life as one of the most eminent literary figures of his day established biography as a literary art form.

John Cassin, *United States Exploring Expedition. Atlas Mammalogy and Ornithology*. Philadelphia: C. Sherman and Son, 1858. \$3,800.

This atlas is part of a series of books and atlases published between 1844 and 1874 documenting America's first naval exploring expedition under the command of Charles Wilkes. The expedition explored the South Pacific Islands, Australia, and New Zealand, the Hawaiian Islands, the west coast of America, and the Antarctic coast line. The atlas consists of 53 plates, 11 devoted to mammalogy and 42 to ornithology. The majority of the ornithological plates are based on drawings by Titian Peale, the eminent American naturalist who accompanied Wilkes as the artist on the expedition. The plates are lithographed in color and highlighted by hand. This volume is extremely rare; only 100 copies of this official edition were issued, and only about 63 of these copies were distributed, mostly to foreign governments and heads of state.

By The Company We Keep . . .

To celebrate the bicentennial of John James Audubon's birth, the American Museum of Natural History in New York commissioned Alecto Historical Editions of London to produce a limited edition of 125 copies of six Audubon drawings from the original double-elephant sized copper plates owned by the museum.

To achieve in this edition the coloring originally envisioned by Audubon, the Museum and Alecto went back to the original watercolors plus Audubon's notes, letters, and bird specimens. A set of these six Alecto edition prints was purchased for the McIlhenny collection by a generous benefactor. An advertisement by the Museum in *Natural History* states, "Already, most of the edition has been claimed, the majority of the sets going to important collections in North America including the Library of Congress, the Boston Public Library, the McIlhenny Collection, and the National Library of Canada." We are so famous there seems to be no need to add the geographic location to identify the McIlhenny Collection!

MEMORIALS

In Memory of:

William Curtis Bailey, Jr.
by Ms. Alene Melancon

Mrs. Cleanth Brooks
by Dr. and Mrs. T. A. Kirby
Dr. and Mrs. Lewis P. Simpson

Professor Charlie M. Curtis
by Dr. and Mrs. Max Goodrich

Mrs. Hazel Daigle
by Ms. Renee Nesbitt

Dr. James Godfrey
by Mr. and Mrs. R. Gordon Kean

Mrs. Elizabeth Hewes
by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Bennett

Mr. William B. Holmes, Jr.
by Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Middleton, Jr.,
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Kean

Mrs. Hazel McLaren
by Chancellor Emeritus Cecil G. Taylor

Mrs. Marie B. Nelson
by Miss Renee Nesbitt

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by The Book Club of Baton Rouge
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Ms. Judith Singleton
by Mrs. Anna H. Perrault

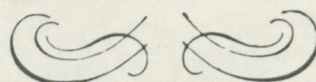
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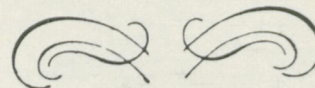
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