

South Jersey Post Card Club Newsletter

April 2002

Serving Post Card Collectors Since 1971

Re. Vol. 2 No. Two

"The NOW Infamous Italian Market Real Photo Philadelphia Postcard"

by Jay Miller

Well before I moved to the 9th Street area of South Philadelphia (just above the Italian or 9th Street Market), in my earlier collecting days, I chanced onto three dazzling, high contrast, detailed, real photo cards of early Philadelphia - one of which was the now famous view of the Italian Market, circa 1910.

Carefully tucked away, my Italian Market postcard gem first surfaced when I met the former curator of Philly's Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies at my space in an Old City antique co-op in the early 80s. The Institute was hunting for material for an exhibit entitled DESTINATION PHILADELPHIA, documenting the variety of immigrants that settled in Philadelphia from about the 1880s to the 1920s. They had gathered photos, diaries, objects, scrapbooks and of course, family postcards.

The Italian Market postcard from my collection was enlarged and mounted for the exhibit, and later graced a second floor wall as a permanent fixture. (Not sure if it still remains or not!)



Naturally the original card was returned to me, staying dormant (except for occasional viewings) until that fateful December 1999 South Jersey Postcard Club meeting, where it was entered in the "2000 PoCax Program Cover Contest" and subsequently chosen as the "winner."

Not long after that show, I showed an Italian Market area restaurant owner the card and presented the idea that it could be enlarged to decorate one of her walls. She was refurbishing the building, and having had her former business right in the market for some years, she became excited by the prospect. However, just as the enlargement was completed, her association with the restaurant ended.

She kept a copy of the enlarged postcard and gave me one for my efforts. Perhaps this now known postcard of Philly's Italian Market at the turn of the last century will be resurrected once again.

PoCax '02

May 4th, 2002 – 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Garden Room of the Days Inn
Mt. Laurel, New Jersey,
Exit 4 off the New Jersey Turnpike
at Fellowship Road and Route #73

Dare Devils of the Past . . .

by Alex F. Antal

Joseph Albert Jean Lussier was born in Concord, New Hampshire in 1892 of French Canadian parents. At age 16, Lussier, after living in Quebec, returned to New Hampshire in order to learn the English language. He was working at a grocery store when he heard about the tragedy of Charles Stevens, the man who tried to ride over Niagara Falls in a barrel and died.

Lussier became interested in the challenge of going over the falls and went to an Akron, Ohio, rubber company to further his idea. Using his life savings of \$1,500, Lussier came up with a design for a six-foot (diameter) rubber ball with inner and outer steel bands. The interior was lined with thirty-two inner tubes for shock protection and had an empty space in the middle for him.

The ball also contained 150 pounds of hard rubber ballast in the bottom to keep it upright. In addition, he devised a system of valves and air tanks to keep him alive for 40 hours in the event he became trapped under the falls.

On July 4th, 1928, Lussier rowed his ball about two miles upstream of the Horseshoe Falls and began his journey. At 3:35 PM the rubber ball went over the falls – a drop of 162 feet. At 4:23 PM he was picked up by a "Maid of the Mist" boat and towed to shore.

Lussier capitalized on his feat by selling pieces of his rubber ball for 50¢ to the tourists at Niagara Falls. When he ran out of pieces from the original rubber ball he went to the local tire stores for more material.



Lussier inside his ball went over the falls. It is dated July 28, 1938, and autographed: Jean. Today cards like this one are worth between \$12.00 and \$15.00.

Mr. Lussier also autographed and sold post cards depicting his news making feat. The card shown here is a photo of the very minute when

Oldest postcard sells for £31,750

*** Reprinted from the BBC News Website – March 8, 2002 ***

The world's oldest picture postcard has sold for a record sum at auction in London. The card - with a Penny Black stamp - was sent in 1840 to a writer called Theodore Hook who lived at Fulham in London.

The hammer went down at £27, 000 but the total price including commission and tax was £31, 750. [Editor's Note: £31, 750 is equal to approximately \$45, 000.]

This is a record for a postcard, according to postal historian Edward Proud, who discovered the card. It was bought by collector Eugene Gomberg, of Riga, Latvia, in a telephone bid at the London Stamp Exchange auction.



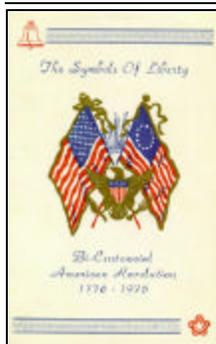
The card caricatures the postal service.

Posted in 1840, the hand-coloured card was addressed to "Theodore Hook Esq., Fulham", a playwright and novelist noted at the time for his "wit and drollery". It caricatures the postal service by showing post office "scribes" sitting around an enormous inkwell.

Hook probably sent it to himself as a practical joke. The significance of Hook's card was not realized until last year, when an expert discovered it in a stamp collection.

Until then it had been thought the postcard was invented in Austria, Germany or the United States in the 1860s. But the card's discovery makes Hook the undisputed "postal equivalent of the Earl of Sandwich", said Mr. Proud.

The card was authenticated by the British Philatelic Association.



Mystery Post Card . . . who recognizes it?

This card . . . The Symbols of Liberty Bi-Centennial American Revolution 1776-1976

. . . has an interesting history.

Who knows the ties it has to the South Jersey Postcard Club?

Stengel Postcard #29253

Portrait of the Countess of Derby by Sir Thomas Lawrence



Thomas Lawrence was born at Bristol in 1769. His father was landlord of the Black Bear Inn at Devizes. The first efforts of the young painter were portraits in chalk of his father's customers.

He worked in Oxford and Bath and finally in London. In 1791 he was elected Associate of the Academy of Fine Arts, and in 1794 to full membership.

Lawrence was knighted in 1815 and then in 1820 he was elected President of the Academy. Sir Thomas died at London in 1830.

A Story of a Lighthouse

by Steve Martorano

On old Route 47 in Southern New Jersey is a town called *Heislerville*. When you ride through this town, you go back in time . . .

Go down Main Street to the southern tip and it turns into Glade Road. Turn right on Glade toward the Bay and Glade Road will turn into East Point Road. Continue for almost 3½ miles, and just before you get to the Bay there will be a dirt road called Lighthouse Road.

If the reeds are not too high, you will see East Point Light.



This light is the second oldest in New Jersey. Built in 1848, it was called Maurice River Light until 1912 when its name was changed to East Point Light.

The two story building with a six order lens on top is 48 feet above sea level and shows a light 12 to 15 miles at night.

The Maurice Historical Society formed a group in February 1971, then in July of 1971 a fire almost destroyed the building, but by July of 1980 the light was turned on again.

A big thanks goes to the Society for saving this light for all of us to see.

Philadelphia Postcards, me too.

by Ray Hahn

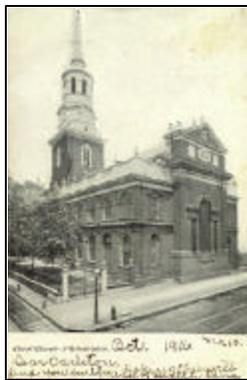
Until recently, I owned only a few Philadelphia postcards because my collecting criteria are fairly narrow and I have never found large numbers of artist drawn Philadelphia scenes.

At the February meeting I was looking through a box of Joe Engles's Philadelphia cards and experienced a postcard collecting epiphany. Here's what has happened.

In June, 2001, my daughter moved to Philadelphia to be the librarian at the Independent Seaport Museum. Since her move, I have been in Philadelphia more, in these last few months, than I had been in all my life.

During visits, I have walked with Megan to and from her library, to restaurants and movies and we always seem to be going by an historical site. Like any tourist, I look at the buildings and gawk at the people. (As for the buildings, I hope you have noticed: that there is some especially fine architecture in Philadelphia.) So as I'm looking through Joe's cards, I recognize at least a dozen or so of the scenes on his cards as buildings and places I've recently seen in Philadelphia.

So now, I too am joining the legion of SJGCC members who collect Philadelphia cards. Let me share what I've learned about two of the places I've seen in the last few months.



Christ Church . . . is one of America's most historic shrines. Organized in 1695 during the reign of William and Mary, it was built between 1727 and 1754 when George II was king. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Betsy Ross all worshipped here. Thomas Jefferson did too, on occasion. The 196-foot steeple is, even today, a visible

landmark from some parts of the city. Strangely when learning about the architecture of Christ Church, it is only the steeple that seems to concern architectural historians. Robert Smith built it, the same architect who designed Carpenters' Hall.

Carpenters' Hall

Carpenters' Hall has so much history associated with it that dozens of books could be filled with its stories.

The oldest trade guild in America, the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia, has owned and operated the hall since 1771. The Hall has been home to a host of firsts including the First Continental Congress, Benjamin Franklin's Library Company, the American Philosophical Society, the First and Second Banks of the United States - just to name a few. It was also the site of the first American bank robbery.



It may seem strange that the largest bank robbery of 18th century America took place inside Carpenters' Hall, however, the Hall was the temporary home of three banks.

The banks provided rental revenue for the Carpenters' Company and the building provided a secure site for the bank's holdings while

they put up their own buildings.

This is the story. In late summer 1798, the deadly yellow fever was raging in Philadelphia and about 1,300 Philadelphians would die. During the night of Saturday, August 31 or the morning hours of Sunday, September 1, 1798. the enormous sum of \$162,821 was taken from vaults of the Bank of Pennsylvania at Carpenters' Hall.

Patrick Lyon, a well know Philadelphia blacksmith and foundry owner was accused of the crime. In the next issue of this newsletter, I'll tell you the rest of the story.



Almost 100 years ago

The two postcards below are part of a collection at the Independent Seaport Museum in Philadelphia. Of the 176 cards in the collection, all are of maritime interest and some are fairly gruesome. Most of the cards are of shipwrecks in the Pacific northwest. It may not have been the photographer's intent, but as a record of history, these cards offer a fairly vivid image of life as a seaman in 1905.



The Peter Treagle wrecked on Clatsop Beach.



British Ship Glenesslin on the rocks at Neahkahnie Mt.