

The McClintock Letter

The official quarterly newsletter of the South Jersey Postcard Club
Serving Postcard Collectors Since 1971 – John H. McClintock, Founder

August 2009

Vol. 9. No. 3

Celia Lughton Thaxter lived most of her life in a location thought by many to be a romantic setting, the Isles of Shoals (islands off the New Hampshire–Maine border, 10 miles at sea), yet Celia experienced hardship and tragedy to the extreme. The islands were lonely places to grow up. Her father, the lighthouse keeper, was always busy, and the only play time she had was with her two younger brothers. Celia endured an unhappy marriage and after ten years she returned to the islands to be the hostess at her father's hotel – the Appledore House, where her clientele were among the rich and famous (writers Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, and artists Hunt and Hassam). Celia enjoyed the limelight, and became a published poet, however she soon found herself being forced to report on a very horrible event that took place just after mid-night on March 6, 1873 – the Smuttynose Murders. The following is an abridged rendering of her essay that appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, in May 1875. The original is over twelve pages long and runs to more than 10,000 words – you can find it at <http://www.seacoastnh.com/smuttynose/memo.html>.



A Memorable Murder, by Celia Thaxter

edited and abridged for this newsletter.

At the Isles of Shoals, on the 5th of March in the year 1873, occurred one of the most monstrous tragedies ever enacted on this planet. The sickening details of the double murder are well known; the newspapers teemed with them for months: but the pathos of the story is not realized; the world does not know how gentle a life these poor people led, how innocently happy were their quiet days. They were all Norwegians. The more I see of the natives of this far-off land, the more I admire the fine qualities which seem to characterize them as a race. Let me tell the story of their sorrow as simply as may be.

Louis Wagner murdered Anethe and Karen Christensen at midnight. The whole affair shows the calmness of a practiced hand; there was no malice in the deed; it was one of the coolest instances of deliberation ever chronicled in the annals of crime. He admits that these people had shown him nothing but kindness.

From the little town of Laurvig, in Norway, came John and Maren Hontvet to this country, and five years ago took up their abode in this desolate spot. John making a comfortable living by fishing, Maren, his wife, keeping as bright and tidy a home for him as man could desire. Maren, sometimes a little lonely was glad when the news came that some of her people were coming over from Norway to live with her. And first, in May 1871, came her sister Karen, then in October 1872, her brother, Ivan Christensen, and his wife, Anethe Mathea, came.



Louis Wagner, who had been in this country seven years, appeared at the Shoals two years before the day of the murder. He lived about the islands during that time. He was born in northern Prussia. Very little is known about him, though there were vague rumors that his past life had not been without difficulties, and he had boasted among his mates that "not many had done what he had done and got off in safety." Maren described him as tall, powerful, dark, with a peculiarly quiet manner. She never saw him drunk. During the winter preceding his hideous deed, he lived at Star Island and fished alone, in a wherry; but he made very little money, and came often to the Hontvets, where Maren gave him food when he was suffering from want.

On that day in March 1873 John Hontvet, his brother Mathew, and Ivan Christensen set sail in John's little schooner, the *Clara Bella*, to draw their trawls, which had been set miles to the east. They intended to be back for dinner, and then to go on to Portsmouth with their fish, and bait the trawls afresh to set again the next day. But the wind was strong and fair for Portsmouth and head-on for home; it would have been a long trip home; so they went on to Portsmouth, without touching at the island to leave one man to guard the women, as had been their custom. This was the first night in all the years Maren had lived there that the house was without a man to protect it.

The three women left alone watched and waited in vain for the schooner to return, they kept the dinner hot for the men, and patiently wondered why they did not come. At ten o'clock they went to bed. It was cold and "lonesome" up-stairs, so Maren put up chairs, laid a mattress upon them, and made a bed for Karen in the kitchen, where she presently fell asleep. Maren and Anethe slept in the next room. So safe they felt themselves, they did not pull down a curtain, nor even try to fasten the house-door. It was the first still night of the new year; a gentle wind breathed through the quiet dark, and the waves whispered gently about the island. I remember looking abroad over the waves that night and rejoicing over "the first calm night of the year!" It was so still, so bright!

The husbands at Portsmouth, where they arrived about four o'clock that afternoon, but found themselves unable to leave, for the bait they needed for their trawls had not arrived by train from Boston, worked though the night. They had met Louis Wagner on arrival but when they parted, the honest three went about their business; Louis, his movements were yet to be learned. As it seems he took a boat from the river in which he did a terrible piece of rowing, in one night! Twelve miles from the city to the Shoals – three to the light-houses, where the river meets the open sea, nine more to the islands, then out past the lights at Boone Island to the Shoals light at White Island and later by Appledore and finally he reached the island he knew so well.

All is silent: nothing moves, nothing sounds but the hushed voices of the sea. His hand is on the latch, he enters stealthily, and there is nothing to resist him. The little dog, Ringe, begins to bark sharp and loud, and Karen rouses, crying, "John, is that you?" thinking the expected fishermen had returned. Louis seizes a chair and strikes at her in the dark; the clock on a shelf above her head falls down with the jarring of the blow, and stops at exactly seven minutes to one. Maren in the next room, waked suddenly from her sleep, trying to make out the meaning of it all. She tries to open the door but Louis has blocked the latch with a stick. In terror she shakes the door with all her might, in vain. Utterly confounded and bewildered, she hears the sound of repeated blows and Karen's screaming shrieks, she is aware of her sister falling heavily against the door, which at last gives way. Maren rushes out, she catches a glimpse of a tall figure outlined against the southern window; she seizes poor Karen and drags her with the strength of frenzy into the bedroom.

Awhile this brutal attack, Anethe lay dumb, not daring to move or breathe. Maren, while she strives to hold the door at which Louis rattles again, calls to her in anguish, "Anethe, Anethe! Get out of the window! run! hide!" The poor girl, almost paralyzed with fear, tries to obey, she puts her feet out the low window, and stands outside in the freezing snow, with one light garment over her cowering figure, shrinking in the cold, the moonlight touching her white face and bright hair and fair young shoulders. "Scream! scream!" shouts frantic Maren. "Somebody at Star Island may hear!" but Anethe answers with the calmness of despair, "I cannot make a sound." Maren screams, herself, but the feeble sound avails nothing. "Run! run!" she cries to Anethe; but again Anethe answers, "I cannot move." (TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE.)

The Professor and His Picture

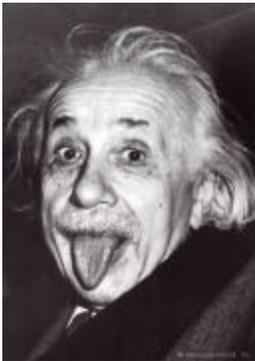
Albert Einstein, one of the best known scientists of the 20th century, was a man of many talents. He played the violin with skill and charm, he could name, in Latin, English, German, and Greek nearly every species of flora and fauna, and alas, he could tie his own shoes - the old wives' tale is myth.

Young Albert was a poor student. He hated school and thought a formal education would serve him no good. He entered the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School in Zurich 1896 to become a teacher but was unable to find employment. To accommodate his creditors Einstein took a job as a patent office clerk. The work was boring and tedious but it offered him spare time to work on his theories of physics. His formula for how all matter behaves ($E = mc^2$) is known to the world.

Einstein turned 72 years old in 1951. As he left his birthday party late that Wednesday night – March 14th – several photographers were waiting for him. He posed for many but Art Sasse, a representative of *International News Photos*, stood back along the curb where a car was parked waiting to take the professor home. As Einstein got into the car Sasse, called to him, 'Hey, Professor, smile for your birthday picture, Ya?'

Sasse, remembers in the book, *Great News Photos and the Stories Behind Them*, "... instantly he turned around and let me have it. I have no idea why."

Since that night this photo has appeared in newspapers, magazines, books and also on postcards.



★★★

Einstein Print Sells for \$74, 324

Recently at an auction in Concord, NH, one of the nine copies of this picture that Einstein himself purchased and autographed, sold to a collector from Great Neck, New York.

Einstein gave the photo that was sold to Howard K. Smith, the TV and news journalist, who many years before had devoted

news features to Einstein and his activities as a peace activist.



The Robinson Tree House

The 1812 novel, *Swiss Family Robinson*, was written by a German speaking pastor named Johann David Wyss. It was intended to teach his four sons about family values, good husbandry, the uses of the natural world and self-reliance.

It is, by some accounts, a story of a family who are shipwrecked off the good ship *Swallow* in July 1805, en route to Port Jackson, Australia.

Port Jackson is the site of the Sydney Opera House.

The site of the postcard view is unknown.



There's a Rhinoceros in Town

In a recent book, *Clara's Grand Tour*, the story is told of a Dutchman named Douwermout Van der Meer, who at age 36 had earned the rights and privileges of captain on the sailing vessel *Knabenhoe*.



By 1741 Van de Meer decided to take the spoils of his career home to Rotterdam. That amounted to one 450 pound rhinoceros – named Clara – the first such animal to be seen in Europe in more than 400 years. His plan was to display Clara to the public and present her as entertainment for the royal families of the continent.

Clara traveled thousands of miles, was seen by millions, including King Louis XV who wanted to buy her. Van der Meer did not sell Clara, but the king had a statue built in Clara's likeness and that sculpture is now on exhibit at the Musee d'Orsay in Paris.



Hell's Kitchen

There are numerous places on earth where people with active imaginations have named places using "hell" as both a noun and/or an adjective. By count there are nine such places listed in the *National Geographic Atlas of the World*. Among them are a city in Norway, a village in the Cayman Islands, a canyon, a mountain gate in British Columbia, and a Half-Acre in Wyoming. Here's another!



Hell's Kitchen, at Mullet Island, Salton Sea, California

The real-photo postcard seen here was submitted to our newsletter by a librarian at UCLA who thought it a curiosity worth sharing.

The Salton Sea is in reality not a sea but an often shallow saline lake in the Sonoran Desert – 130 miles east, south-east of Los Angeles. Its location actually straddles the San Andreas Fault. The Sea did not exist before 1905 when a flood along the Colorado River flowed over the Imperial Valley dike and because there is no drainage due to the below sea-level elevation, the inundation consumed the town of Salton and the Torres-Martinez Indian reservation.

Visitors to the area in the early years would have found this café along the edge of the land formation known as the Salton Sink – a refuse for birds and other desert fauna.

It is unknown if fish dinners were on the menu.

The Legend of the White Canoe; by William Trumbull (1861-1933)

Is there anyone who collects postcards that hasn't seen a card like this?

The image is meant to illustrate an occasional event in the lives of the native Americans, who lived in northwestern New York along the Niagara River or on the islands in the river: Squaw, Beaver, Grand, Buckthorn, Three Sisters, Goat, Bird, or Robinson.



The legend first appeared in English when Knickerbocker Press of New York published William Trumbull's epic poem *The Legend of the White Canoe* in 1893. Today the ideal of "noble savage" is as disgusting as many other racial epithets, however in Trumbull's day, it was a common and idyllic concept that native Americans were heroic custodians of nature, but cruel and uncaring with kith and kin when it was time to honor their spirits.

The introduction to Trumbull's book reads; *Long before the solitudes of western New York were disturbed by the advent of the white man, it was the custom of the Indian tribes to assemble occasionally at Niagara, and offer sacrifice to the Spirit of the Falls.*

This sacrifice consisted of a white birch-bark canoe, which was sent over the terrible cliff, filled with ripe fruits and blooming flowers, and bearing the fairest girl in the tribe who had just attained the age of womanhood.

The story as told by Trumbull has six verses: *Proem [Prelude], Wenonah, The Council, Kwasind, The Sacrifice, and Epilogue.* Each verse was illustrated by F. V. [Frank Vincent] Du Mond, an accomplished artist and engraver who also worked to illuminate books by Mark Twain and other of his contemporaries.

In his later years Du Mond taught drawing to such notables as Georgia O'Keefe and Gifford Beal. Du Mond's work appears in the Corcoran Gallery (Washington, D.C.), the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (Philadelphia), and in the collections of the Hudson Valley Art Association and the Art Institute of Chicago, *et.al.* Those who collect exposition postcards are already familiar with his work – he is the artist who created the postcards used as souvenir tickets at the Chicago Columbian Exhibition of 1893. Du Mond also worked on much of the art used at the St. Louis Expo of 1904.

From the verse titles we learn the names Wenonah and Kwasind – the maiden and her proud father. Two of Du Mond's illustrations are seen below.



Wenonah, a free spirited young maiden and only daughter of Chief Kwasind, celebrates her womanhood.



Kwasind, Wenonah's father, tells his daughter of the Council's decision that she is to be sacrificed.



Wenonah, of course, is the maiden in the canoe and is remembered in legend as the *Maid of the Mist*.



Postcards of the white canoe legend go back more than a century. The oldest found, so far, dates from 1905 (left). It is an international friendship card common to the era. (Notice the Canadian flag is the old style Union flag. The Canadians adopted their maple leaf flag on February 15, 1965.)

A card from the late twenties (right) is postmarked 1927. The message reads; *Dear Family, We arrived here on Tuesday last and wish we had come years ago. Hope to see you when we return. Edith and Harry.*

The card at the top of the page is a common linen card posted on August 11, 1948.



If you have an interest in reading the original epic poem, it is available online at the University of California, Los Angeles, Library's archive website. Go to <http://www.archive.org/stream/legendofwhitecan00trumiala#page/n1/mode/2up>

The Black Bear

By Emily DiVento

The Black Bear lives mainly in North America and according to the season, has two different lives.



animals and vegetable substances.

In the spring, summer and fall, bears think only about food, and can be seen on the shores of lakes and streams fishing for salmon. Black bears are fond of tree resin and strip the bark of conifers (ever-green shrubs and trees) which destroys certain trees in the process. However, these foods are not the main part of a bear's diet – which consists of 25% rodents and 75% plants. This is considered an omnivorous diet, feeding on

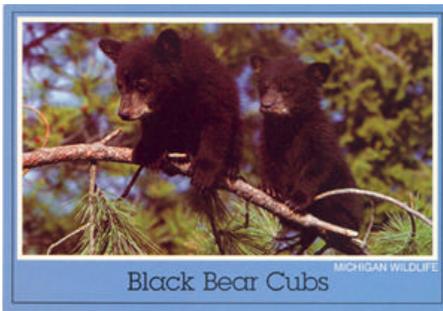
Black bears are usually 4½ to 6 feet in length and weigh approximately 200 to 600 pounds. They take shelter in their dens when winter nears and fall into a deep sleep. During cold weather bears experience "living in slow motion," a period of two to four months when their temperatures drop and their breathing slows. This is not however true hibernation. A bear's winter sleep is broken when the weather is milder and these wakeful periods allow them time to eat and recover some energy.



Black Bear Cub Kewadin Casino

wounded or provoked. A mother bear with cubs can be very dangerous if she feels threatened.

The clumsy gait of black bears makes us tend to forget their ability to climb, run, and swim so well – black bears are considered very agile. A bear normally does not attack unless



Black Bear Cubs MICHIGAN WILDLIFE

naked cubs that weigh no more than ten ounces each. The cubs do not leave their mother until their second winter when they can hibernate in their own quarters.

Most black bears are solitary and occupy a home-range of one to 36 square miles. They usually mate at times between May and July. The female usually has one to three nearly

Desperately Seeking ... Postcards!

For the first time in many issues we have heard from a member who is looking for some special cards . . .



Carol Pollock is looking for "Their New Love," a card in a series published in New York and copyrighted by Charles Scribner & Sons. The artist's name is uncertain but the image is quiet memorable. If you happen across this card or see it in an auction, please contact Carol – her address can be found in the roster on page 8.

Carol is also looking for cards of Magnolia, New Jersey, and the Fairbanks House in Dedham, Massachusetts. Carol wants only postcards, but the photograph below (from the Internet) will give you an idea what to look for.

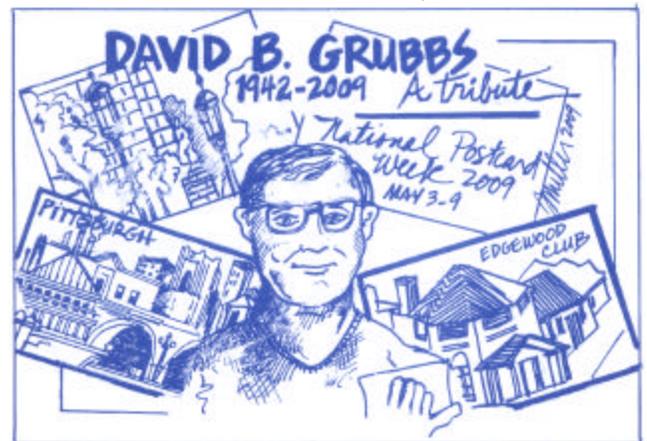


This house is thought to be the oldest timber frame building left in North America. It was built circa 1637 for the Fairebanke Family. It is now a museum open from early May to late October.

You may contact Carol at (856) 783-1246.



DAVID BARTON GRUBBS, 1942-2009



We have received a dozen copies of this very nice Tribute to Dave Grubbs postcard from our member and friend Don Brown, in Myerstown, PA.

Dave once served as President of the South Jersey Postcard Club and he is fondly remembered as a knowledgeable and hard working dealer who always had a smile and kind words for his customers.

To get your copy send a SASE to your editor or to Don Brown – his address is in the roster on Page 8.

Bookmark Postcards

Cards loaned by Lynn McKelvey

Recently a collection of eight Reutlinger (the well-known publisher in Paris) postcards came to my attention. I have seen bookmark size cards often, but these interested me because seven of the eight appear to be addressed by the same hand to mademoiselles at addresses in the Cher Department, a French "region," in West-Central France that shares its name with the Cher River. The size of these cards (1 11/16" x 5 1/2") is exactly half the width of a standard card of the era. Each card is printed in a monochrome format but two have had color added by hand. The photographs are of famous women of the time, i.e., Caroline Otera, Nina D'Arcy, Mlle. Degaby, and others.

Of special interest is the fact that only two are signed, one by Mary and one by Renee, even though the writing is identical.

The odd card is addressed to M. Henry Doulain and is postmarked December 31, 1904. The card is apparently part of a "month" set. The image on the card represents April.

Mademoiselle Noemie Garange is the recipient of the card dated September 22, 1904. It pictures Lucienne Breal, a Swiss opera singer whom the *New York Times* once referred to as a "peculiar person [who] has delighted some patrons of the house while she has bitterly disappointed others."



31 DEC 04



22 SEPT 04



22 OCT 05



19 JUNE 05

The card featuring Liane de Pougy who was a Folies Bergère dancer and renowned as one of Paris's most beautiful and notorious courtesans, was postmarked October 22, 1905, and mailed to Mademoiselle A. Renault in St. Amand Montrond.

Caroline Otero is the featured celebrity on the card dated June 19, 1905. (A rather lengthy article appeared in this newsletter around 2004.) This card was sent to Mademoiselle Olive Renault at the same address as the card dated October 22, 1905.

The card postmarked 7th of May 1904 was sent to Mademoiselle A. Duboys in Limoges. The picture is of Cecile Sorel, who in 1922 came to the USA to receive a "cluster of chrysanthemums with oak leaves" at the French Institute of the United States. When Mlle. Sorel died at age 93, on September 3, 1966, she had spent over 80 years as an actress in the Comedie Francaise.

Mlle. Antonia Duboys also received the card postmarked October 10, 1904. The lady on the card is identified as DeGaby or perhaps Degaby.

The only Internet reference to a person with that name is found on the 1896 *Black Sheep Index* of the London Newspaper Morgue. (This list contains over 200,000 entries of people whose names have appeared as villains, victims, and virtuous people in magazines, tabloids and newspapers.) It seems that an actress with a special notoriety for her representations of mythological and romantic statuary and for imitating statues was living in the attic of a London theater. Don't you agree that this is a strange discovery to be newsworthy?

Mademoiselle Berthe David was the recipient of both the August 1904 and the January 1905 cards – interestingly, at two different addresses. In Rochefort, Mlle. David received the card with the picture of Nina D'Asty. D'Asty was a dancer and actress with several European companies.

The last of the group was received by Mlle. David at the Institute of Mortagne (perhaps a school address?). The picture is of a favorite of the Reutlinger photographers – Blanche Toutain. Aside from her work in Parisian theaters and as a model for the Jeanne Le Monnier Costume Gallery of Paris, Toutain was among the first of many French actresses to make her way to the "silver screen." In 1917 Mlle. Toutain made her film debut in *L'unique aventure de Maître Petit-Pethon*.



7 MAY 04



10 OCT 04



24 AUG 04



11 JAN 05



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

POCAX '09 IS OCTOBER 17th

DOUBLE-TREE SUITES – FELLOWSHIP ROAD – MT. LAUREL

A Series – My Reflections on the Presidents and the Health Crises They Faced ... by William Reynolds

Abraham Lincoln

Demons haunted Abraham Lincoln throughout his life. Tragedy would befall him several times, beginning with the death of his beloved mother when he was just nine years old.

At age 26, while Lincoln served as the New Salem, Illinois, postmaster, he stood at the bedside of his fiancée, Ann Rutledge, as she died from a fever. He was so despondent after her death that many of his friends feared that Lincoln would commit suicide. Nearly a decade later, the lanky, shy and socially inept fledgling state legislator found himself, engaged to be married, to a vivacious, outgoing and ambitious debutante from Lexington, Kentucky. Lincoln married Mary Ann Todd in November of 1842.

Mary Lincoln was temperamental, high strung, and often found herself at odds with her husband. Throughout their marriage, Mary's sometime erratic behavior was a concern for Lincoln, and by the time they entered the White House, Mary's condition had deteriorated to a near paranoid state. She suffered severe mood swings, and was unable to perform even simple household tasks.

Lincoln's own moodiness did not help matters. As often is the case, those with the deepest depression, hide it through humor, and at times, self-deprecating humor. Throughout his life, be it on the court circuit or the campaign trail, Lincoln had a treasure trove of humorous anecdotes to share with anyone within earshot.

At 6 feet, 4 inches tall, Lincoln was the tallest of our chief executives. He weighed 180 pounds, and was generally stooped over when standing. His ears were large and thick lobed and protruded from his face at near right angles. There is no doubt that, from an early age, Lincoln developed a sensitivity about his appearance.

His voice, it may surprise you, was high pitched and raspy, nothing like the baritone voices of actors Henry Fonda and Raymond Massey who portrayed him in movies, a century later.

Lincoln also suffered with his vision. He had a serious weakness of the eye muscles. The president's left eye had a tendency to turn upward, leaving more white surface exposed and giving him a staring effect that was all the more bizarre, as it only affected his left eye. When he became agitated or excited, his eyes looked to be

crossed. Accordingly, Lincoln had to depend on his right eye for general vision and reading. The over-compensation of his right eye led to



ABRAHAM LINCOLN
OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PORTRAIT

frequent bouts with headaches and eye-strain. Modern day medical theorists have come to the shared conclusion that this condition originated with an accident that Lincoln suffered as a young boy. He was kicked in the head by a horse and rendered unconscious. The skull was fractured to the point of causing brain damage. It is widely believed that a subdural hematoma, of significant size, developed. The lingering effects of the damage to his left frontal lobe played a major role in not only the nature of his personality, but was also responsible for the physical and mental imbalances he suffered from for the rest of his life.

It also may surprise the reader to know that when Lincoln delivered his famous Gettysburg address in November 1863, he was suffering from a severe case of smallpox.

As the months of Civil War fighting turned into years and the casualty lists mounted to horrific levels, leading the country as commander-in-chief took a toll on the emotional well-being of the president. The death of their son Willie, in 1862 from typhoid, also left an indelible imprint on the President's and his wife's psyches.

The euphoria that swept the country following General Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, did little to ease the president's deeply troubled and tortured mind. Just days before the

assassination, Lincoln had an eerily prophetic dream in which he saw a flag draped casket lying in state in the East Room of the White House. In his dream, he asked one of the soldiers standing guard, 'Who has died?' He was told that it was the president.

In today's political climate, a man so besieged with physical and emotional problems would never be considered as a viable candidate for the presidency, but, despite the overwhelming obstacles faced in his life, Abraham Lincoln developed the courage and tenacity to lead our country through some dark days, and is, rightfully, revered as one of the greatest leaders in our nation's history.



Presidents on Postcards

Lincoln is one of the most popular presidents found on postcards; here are a few to look for.



Lincoln Centennial Souvenir Card issued in 1908 in honor of the president's 100th birthday.



R. Tuck card issued in 1901 as part of a set of 25 cards honoring the American Presidents



Another in the Lincoln Centennial Set.