



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION NEWSLETTER

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A Creole Legacy

A Creole Legacy: Decorative Arts from the Clarisse Claiborne Grima House, currently on view in the Williams Gallery, pays tribute to an important benefactor and serves as a showcase for significant items from her bequest. John W. Keefe, principal curator of decorative arts at the New Orleans Museum of Art, was guest curator. The exhibition features examples of Mrs. Grima's furniture,

silver, porcelain, glass, faïence, sculpture, and paintings.

In 1975, Mrs. Grima donated her home to the Historic New Orleans Collection; after her death in 1981, the Collection received the furnishings of her home, consisting of manuscripts, paintings, and decorative arts. Behind this legacy is Mrs. Grima, Creole extraordinaire, a lady to remember.

REMEMBERING CLARISSE CLAIBORNE GRIMA



She was very pretty and very French. Clarisse Claiborne Grima — Tante Clarisse in later years to her young friends and relatives — was known for the ribbon in her hair, a one-inch-wide grosgrain headband, tied in a bow, in pastel shades of pink or blue. The ribbon became her emblem, just as her love of beauty, deeply imbedded in her nature, affected everything she did, from gardening to acquiring a fine Louis XV chest of drawers. Her collector's eye was complemented by an appreciation of New Orleans history, so intricately related to the history of her own family.

Born Clarisse Claiborne January 9, 1895, to Fernand Claiborne and Marie Louise Villeré Claiborne, she spent the early years of her life on Esplanade Avenue, home to many prominent Creole families. On either side of her family she was related to those who figured in the city's early history, most notably the first two governors of American Louisiana: William C. C. Claiborne, a Virginian, who served as territorial governor and first governor of the state, and his successor, Jacques Philippe Villeré, first Creole governor of Louisiana.

Generations later, Clarisse Claiborne grew up in her ancestral city with its established social customs and, around 1912, was a debutante of the season. Her participation in carnival balls continued for several years afterward, for newspaper clippings show her as a maid in the Atlanteans Ball in 1914 and a member of the Rex court on Mardi Gras, March 7, 1916.

Some years later, her attendance at a party was noted by a social columnist, who, writing in the elaborate style of the day, noted that "Clarisse Claiborne was there, her prettiness as always naive as a child's prettiness....and the moment that Claiborne entered spreading a sort of ripple of 'who is she?' 'Introduce me' in her radiant wake, I saw the stag-line rise like a tidal wave and break in attentive foam about her."

In 1928 she married Alfred Grima,



1604 Fourth Street by Charles L. Franck, 1961; detail, side porch (81-99-L)

scion of another distinguished Creole family, and moved to his family's home on St. Charles Avenue at Fourth Street in the Garden District. Describing the engagement, a newspaper columnist wrote that Miss Claiborne was "...more than just 'popular' ever since her coming out, for besides being a belle and a decided beauty, she has been a charming personality among the young people that 'count.'"

It was a gentle world she lived in, one where there was leisure time to schedule the rolling up of a parlor rug or to think of placing doilies under the finger bowls. Entertainment for the Grimas could be as simple as sitting on the side gallery and watching an occasional automobile pass on St. Charles Avenue or as orchestrated as a well-planned dinner party for twelve on a Thursday evening. They frequently gardened together, Clarisse and Alfred Grima: there was Cape jasmine to cut at Bois Fleuri, their country home across the lake in Covington, or, on Fourth Street,



crepe myrtles to trim and box hedge to clip. In a small, precise, and mannered hand — an extension of herself — Clarisse Grima noted these "events" in her daily engagement calendar. Her compatible marriage of sixteen years to Alfred Grima was cut short by his unexpected death in 1945 at the age of 60; Clarisse Grima remained a widow until she died on April 29, 1981.



She was a quintessential Creole, those descendants of the original French and Spanish settlers, who combined a zest for living with a sense of thrift, an ingrained streak of practicality with a love of danc-

ing and a taste for opera. Clarisse Grima traveled extensively but was always deeply rooted in her city with its network of familial connections. Once, when she was visiting in the province of Quebec, an acquaintance asked her if there were many Creoles left in New Orleans. She was quick to respond, "I am a Creole!" She was bilingual and maintained a proper concern for good manners; "I had to be *'bien élevée,'*" she remarked. The Creole disdain for Americans — *les Américains* — she softened with humor, calling a favorite young friend "my American niece."

Clarisse Claiborne Grima had a distinct style that ran to dresses of organdy and linen, often embroidered, often white, and included big hats with ribbons. It was an old-fashioned look that went with her well-cared-for skin, protected from the sun for years by a suitable hat. Diminutive, like England's Queen Victoria, she understood the importance of fine posture: she knew how to sit, ankles crossed, hands lying one on top of the other with the palms up. A newspaper clipping from a society column, circa 1923, offers this glimpse: "...always an exquisite creature, Clarisse yesterday even outdid herself, looking for all the world like a piquant bit of porcelain."

Loving beautiful things, Mrs. Grima turned naturally to her house and to her garden. Her travels in France, where she visited her niece



Clarisse Claiborne, ca 1920 (1981.376.5)

Adélaïde, comtesse d'Eudeville, in St. Nicholas d'Acy outside of Paris, or in Brussels where her brother Omer Claiborne lived for a time, heightened her appreciation of French architecture and furniture. A few years after her husband's death, she decided to sell the family home and chose to build a French-inspired residence in suburban Metairie. Some twelve years later, she bought back the Grima house on Fourth Street: it was her real

home.

Once back uptown, she engaged the architect Douglass Freret to help her with a number of architectural embellishments, including installing mirrors and two fountains, placed on either side of the French doors, in the dining room. Just outside these doors lay the garden — it was a formal garden — with an expanse of trellis, wisteria, box hedges, and a small pool graced with the bronze statue of a young

ABOUT THE GRIMA COLLECTION:

In the dining room, the *boiserie* was painted that distinct shade of pale gray-white known as *blanc de Trianon*. A Louis XVI note was struck; this, too, initially seemed to be in accord with neoclassical 18th-century taste until one became aware of the pair of superb serpentine front marble-topped rosewood Rococo Revival cabinets flanking the fireplace. The inclusion of these mid-19th-century pieces of furniture occurred at a time when most of Mrs. Grima's generation

had dismissed such Victorian decorative arts as old-fashioned, tasteless, hideous, or worse. The decision to retain the major pieces of beautiful, out-of-fashion furniture demonstrated an independence of spirit and taste remarkable for its period. The retention of such bold furniture corroborated Mrs. Grima's remark that she "loved everything that was beautiful, from jewelry to a coal scuttle."

— John W. Keefe
Guest Curator, *A Creole Legacy*



girl. Clarisse Grima, back from a trip to New York, delighted in seeing the garden. "New Orleans!" she wrote. "Back at 10:00 p.m. at last! Raining — Can see in the dark lovely azaleas in the garden." This was the setting for tea — a place for friends' children to come and to see the goldfish in the pool.

A sketch of Mrs. Grima would naturally include a succession of images: she is in her garden, hatted, dressed in white, and separating chrysanthemums; she is in the library on Fourth Street, surrounded by her husband's books and family portraits; here she is on Mardi Gras, gathered with friends on the gallery to salute Rex; here she is lunching at Antoine's; she is in Paris, attending mass at La Madeleine; then she is looking at her garden and thinking of her adored Alfred and how he used to say, "Oh, hello, little Claiborne," in the early days of their acquaintance.

She enjoyed a sense of humor, which as she once noted, consisted of mixing some poetic imagery and self-criticism with a little irresponsibility and frivolity. She had an eye for beauty and detail: "The mockingbird," she wrote in her calendar, "is on a nest in the Jasmin d'Espagne outside my room." And, as Tante Clarisse to a large number of young people, she remained young in spirit.

— Louise C. Hoffman



John W. Keefe, guest curator for the current exhibition, will give a lecture, illustrated with slides, entitled "A Quest for Excellence: The Clarisse Claiborne Grima Decorative Arts Collection" on Sunday, February 19, 1989. The lecture will be in the Counting House of the Historic New Orleans Collection at 2 p.m. It is free and open to the public. The exhibition, *A Creole Legacy: Decorative Arts from the Clarisse Claiborne Grima House*, will be open at this time.



Chief curator John A. Mahé II; John W. Keefe, New Orleans Museum of Art, guest curator; and Maureen Donnelly, registrar



Walnut sidechair,
ca. 1725
(1981.376.13)

**THE HISTORIC
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COLLECTION
NEWSLETTER**

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The Historic New Orleans Collection

From the

Director



It's all very exciting. It's happening very fast. In the vernacular of the business world, the Collection is "positioning" itself for the future. In the 21st century, researchers will be able to search for information through computers, call up images on the screen, and then request a copy to be sent instantly through telephone lines across the country. A researcher will not have to visit each research center personally.

The Collection is currently entering its information on one of the most sophisticated computer programs in the country. Institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Glenbow Museum in Canada are among the major institutions that have sent representatives to observe our computer project.

Entering the hundreds of thousands of curatorial items (our present priority) and later the manuscripts and library resources into the versatile and retrievable program is just the beginning. We will also be able to tie into national and regional programs for libraries and archives and, eventually, museums.

Besides making our collections available to a vast group of scholars, having information in an electronic format reduces wear on the original objects. The researcher can be more selective about the exact items, requesting to see the original only when necessary.

Through all this technology we will be able to store and transmit information, but it will not replace — only expedite — the help offered by our research staff.

— Dode Platou

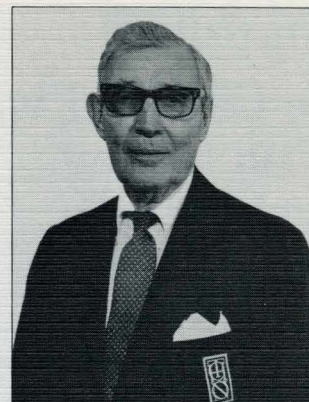
In Memoriam: Boyd Cruise

Boyd Cruise, the first director of the Historic New Orleans Collection, died on December 4, 1988, at the age of 79.

An accomplished artist, Mr. Cruise was initially hired on a part-time basis by General and Mrs. Williams to catalog and to care for the prints and paintings that the couple had been collecting for some time. Eventually, he became curator of their collection. General Williams also asked Boyd Cruise to prepare a cumulative index to the *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* — a project he carried a step further by illustrating the entries with 27 ink drawings called *Louisiana Alphabet*.

In her biography of Mr. Cruise, board member Mary Louise Christovich noted his assistance to the Williamses. She wrote that he "constantly researched, consulted, and studied. Years before he had begun collecting prints in a very modest way, befitting his income. Bargains were a necessity; his eye became sharp and trained against fakery....His own interest in the Battle of New Orleans...helped steer the General into the accumulation of an extensive collection of material on the battle." With his advice and that of Albert Lieutaud — the prominent art dealer who handled Boyd Cruise's watercolors — the General was able to accumulate the material that would form the nucleus of the Historic New Orleans Collection. THNOC, officially incorporated in 1966, was opened to the public in 1970. Upon General Williams's death the next year, Mr. Cruise became its first director.

When ill health caused him to resign, Mr. Cruise continued his painstaking research on the city's artists, a commitment he was to pursue for many years. His meticulous work for the *Encyclopaedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918* was incorporated into the volume published by THNOC in 1987. As author of another THNOC publication, *Signor Faranta's Iron Theatre*, Mr. Cruise blended historical research with an appreciation of theatrical artistry.



Boyd Cruise was born in Little Springs, Mississippi, in 1909 and grew up in Lake Charles, Louisiana. In 1928 at the age of 19 he came to New Orleans where he had won a scholarship to study at the Arts and Crafts Club at 520 Royal Street. Two years later he won second place in the Arts and Crafts exhibition; the following year he won the Blanche S. Benjamin award and a scholarship to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

His career in art included work for the Historic American Buildings Survey, sponsored by the WPA. Architect Richard Koch, who was the director, hired Boyd Cruise to make watercolors of the historic buildings which were being documented. Mr. Cruise also taught art classes at the Arts and Crafts Club, at Newcomb, and later, at the McCrady school. In 1938, ten years after arriving in New Orleans, he was given a one-man show at the Delgado Museum. Many of Mr. Cruise's finest watercolors are the subject of a book, *Boyd Cruise*, brought out by THNOC in conjunction with an exhibition of his work in 1976.

Although he gave up painting after he began assisting the Williamses with their collection, he brought an artist's precision and love of detail to his new work. Mrs. Christovich expresses her appreciation with these words: "It was within the 19th century's imagined milieu that he felt most comfortable. Those were the manners which he emulated and the standards which he imposed....His dress and manner are at all times effortlessly proper....An ancient dignity pervades his nature."

Boyd Cruise's work at the Collection will be remembered and his presence will be missed.

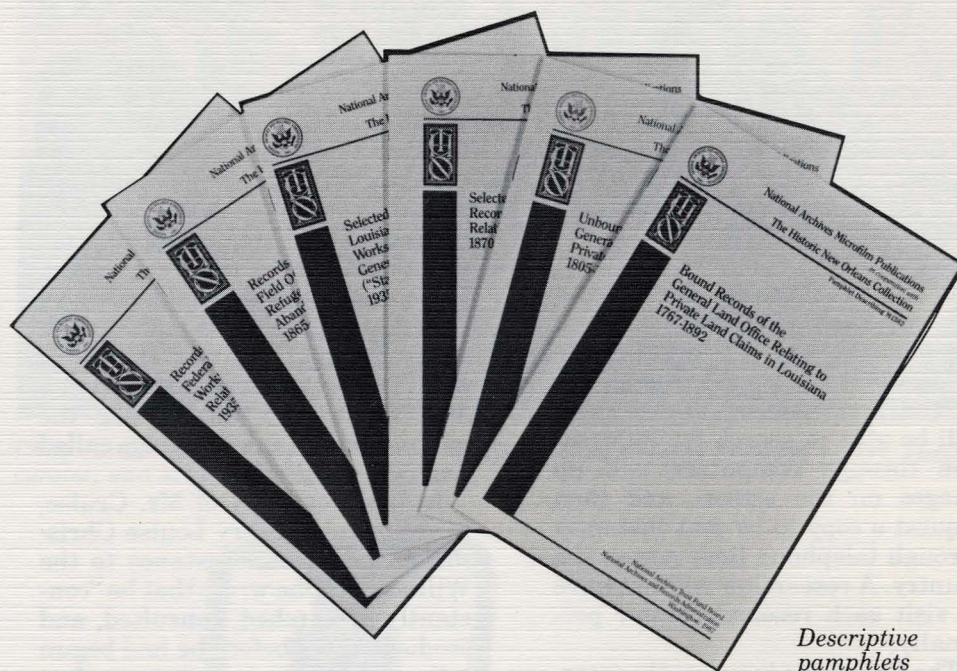
On Microfilm

“The Channel was sort of exciting at times, but we never had no killings....It was just a real cosmopolitan neighborhood....”

comments a resident in *Gumbo Ya-Ya's* chapter on the Irish Channel. Gleaned from interviews, this classic collection of Louisiana folklore hardly seems the work of federal bureaucrats, but Lyle Saxon, state director of the Federal Writers' Project for Louisiana, was an accomplished journalist and writer who didn't know how to be boring. Another FWP book, the *New Orleans City Guide* (reissued in 1983 with an introduction by THNOC staff), is packed with memorable lines. On Creole cuisine: “the difference between one clove of garlic and two cloves of garlic is enough to disorganize a happy home.”

Microfilm at the Historic New Orleans Collection now allows researchers to investigate the workings of the agency which produced these books, as well as *Louisiana: A Guide to the State*, oral history files on folklore and slavery, contributions to *American Stuff*, and such oddities as a lexicon of trade jargon. The records of the Federal Writers' Project (1935-1943), sponsored by the Depression-era Works Progress Administration, are housed in the National Archives, the historical treasure house of the nation. Previously, scholars interested in the FWP or other federal agencies were forced to go to Washington, D.C., to examine documents at the Archives, most of which had not been filmed.

In 1983, to make documents concerning Louisiana more readily available to local researchers, THNOC undertook an ambitious microfilming project, commissioning the Archives to film previously unfiled Louisiana documents. Washington-based historical consultant Jannelle Warren-Findley was employed to identify, catalog, and arrange documents for filming. Dr. Warren-Findley led a team of graduate researchers in combing the records at the Archives, selecting Louisiana-related materials from larger collections.



Descriptive pamphlets

Ultimately, the Archives and the Collection agreed to six joint microfilm publications, along with accompanying descriptive pamphlets: these included records from the General Land Office; the Weather Bureau; the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (generally known as the Freedmen's Bureau); and the Works Progress Administration. The only joint publication project ever undertaken by the National Archives, the film (61 rolls containing thousands of documents) and the pamphlets are now available in the manuscripts division at THNOC.

These publications provide documentary evidence to study the work of federal agencies in Louisiana or to supplement broader research projects. Especially rich are the records of the New Orleans field offices of the Freedmen's Bureau (1865-1869). Reconstruction is still a bloody battleground for historians, both professional and amateur, and the Freedmen's Bureau was especially controversial with its attempt to provide federal assistance and protection to newly freed slaves. Work contracts and records of the freedmen's bank, their hospi-

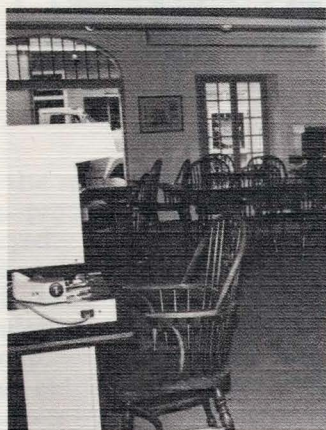
tals and schools, are among the bureau's records. Registers of freedmen employed on certain plantations will be useful to genealogists.

Freedmen's Bureau officials exercised judicial powers over some matters concerning freedmen. At times cases were dismissed as not proven or without merit. In other cases, detailed in this microfilm, bureau officers took vigorous action. For example, freedwoman Mary George, a laundress, charged that her customers, Katie and Tilly, “Women of the Town,” refused to pay her for washing clothes. The defendants declined to appear before the bureau, and “insulted the bearer of the notice and sent an insulting message to the officers of the Bureau.” A guard was sent who compelled the women to pay on the spot; the laundress received her money. In another case, a local man threatened the life of a freedwoman, and when bureau officials intervened, he referred to them as “Damn. Yankee S--s of Bitches.” His case was sent to the U.S. Commissioner for trial.

For biographers and fiction writers, the records of the Weather Bureau in New Orleans (1870-

1912) are an interesting source. Knowing the weather on a certain day can be helpful in setting the mood for an important event or scene. Weather is also important for studies in the local economy and health/disease. Bound and unbound land records can be used by genealogists to establish a family's location at a certain time; by cartographers to document changes in terrain, such as a change in the course of a river; and by surveyors to establish historically correct boundaries.

In addition to the specially initiated and commissioned microfilm, THNOC also purchased all microfilm of documents concerning Louisiana previously available from the Archives — 1,760 rolls. Among the many documents on film are census and military records, Department of State territorial papers, and records of the District Court.



Reading room, manuscripts division

Film from the National Archives is but one aspect of the Collection's major commitment to the acquisition of microfilm, both to supplement its extensive manuscript holdings and to provide more extensive basic research tools for staff and researchers. Microfilm of New Orleans newspapers, French and Spanish documents, Sanborn maps, German church and society records, Confederate imprints, and city directories were selected for their relevance to other material at THNOC.

Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon, research archivist, was in charge of acquiring microfilm copies of Louisiana colonial records found in the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville. This project, begun in 1958 at



Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon with microfilm cabinets

Loyola University, was vast: filming two immense series of documents relating to the Louisiana colony, the Santo Domingo Papers and the Cuban Papers. While the Santo Domingo Papers have been cataloged and microfilmed for some years, work continues on the Cuban Papers. When Loyola funds for the project ran out in 1983, THNOC agreed to assume the university's role in its completion. Dr. Lemmon has worked with colleagues at Loyola and LSU and with Spanish archival administrators.

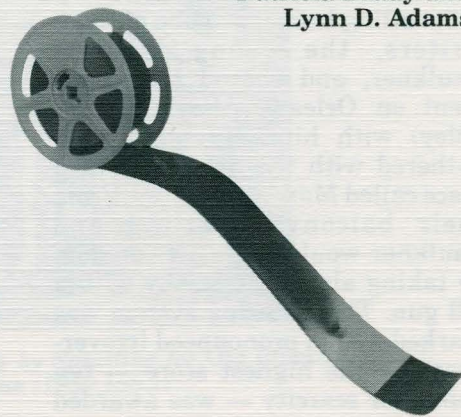
A wealth of information on colonial life under Spanish rule may be found in these records. Secret details of treaties and boundary disputes, food shortages, conditions of buildings, teachers' records, early newspapers, and reports on gifts to Indian tribes are only a few of the many matters covered. The microfilm collection has become an integral part of staff research at THNOC. Research for the *Encyclopaedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918* was greatly facilitated by the use of newspapers, census records, and city directories — all in microform. The microfilms of the French and Spanish papers and Confederate imprints were used in the research for the forthcoming *Bibliography of New Orleans Imprints, 1764-1864*. Architectural historians, scholars, musicologists, and cultural historians have made such wide use of the microfilm collection

that it now accounts for about 50 per cent of the material used by researchers.

Besides adding to the research materials available through purchase, THNOC has also microfilmed copies of its own holdings; these serve as an essential security device, preserving fragile documents from constant handling. The Survey of Historic New Orleans Cemeteries, the Cane River Collection, and the Louisiana Land Surveys are among valuable collections which have been microfilmed as part of an ongoing preservation effort.

Because of their value to researchers, the microfilm holdings of THNOC have been detailed in *Manuscripts Division Update*, an annual publication of the manuscripts division. Copies of this publication may be obtained from Dr. Lemmon.

— Patricia Brady and
Lynn D. Adams



William Spratling: "Viva Art"

In the late 1950s, William Spratling flew his small Ercoupe from his residence in Taxco to Mexico City, where he boarded an Eastern Airlines flight for New Orleans. Spratling had been absent from the city for nearly 30 years. He declared that had he known how quick and simple it was to reach New Orleans by air, he would have become a commuter.

From 1921 to 1929, as a member of the faculty of the Tulane School of Architecture, Spratling had been an integral part of the art community in New Orleans. He illustrated a number of books on New Orleans architecture and wrote a book called *The Art of Pencil Drawing*. These sketches depict European monuments and reveal the delicately penciled line for which Spratling was so well known locally. He taught cast and clay modeling at the Arts and Crafts Club on Royal Street during those years when it was a thriving art center; he exhibited there and with the New Orleans Art League. He also helped plan the annual *Bal des Artistes* and the galas held by the Arts Club.

During this time, the 1920s, the Vieux Carré offered inexpensive housing to the struggling art community, including the writer Sherwood Anderson, who had an apartment in the Pontalba building. Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* and other works had been widely acclaimed; aspiring writers, artists, and musicians gathered like satellites around him.

Spratling befriended one of these writers, the young William Faulkner, and shared his apartment on Orleans Alley (Pirates' Alley) with him. By night they gathered with the art crowd at a place called Max in the Alley. From their balcony Spratling and Faulkner would stave off boredom by taking aim at passersby with a BB gun. Their scoring system was marked with a pronounced irreverence, for the highest score — ten points for scarcity — was awarded



William Spratling and William Faulkner, drawing by Spratling for *Sherwood Anderson & Other Famous Creoles* (73-320-L)

for successful aim at the posteriors of members of an order of nuns residing in the Quarter. On another occasion, they held a foot race across the rooftops of the French Quarter.

Their wry sense of humor led to Spratling's book of caricatures of the literati of their group, arranged by Faulkner and with a foreword by him which parodied Sherwood Anderson's style of prose. This first publication of the Pelican Book Shop was a limited edition of 250 copies, although accounts list an additional 150 unnumbered volumes. Dedicated "To All the Artful and Crafty Ones of the French Quarter," the book was inspired by Miguel Covarrubia's *Prince of Wales and Other Famous Americans*.

The drawings depict artists Ellsworth Woodward, Alberta Kinsey, and Caroline Durieux; writers Anderson, Hamilton Basso, Lyle Saxon, Roark Bradford, Grace King, Fannie Ventadour, and Oliver LaFarge; architects Moise Goldstein and Nathaniel C. Curtis; photographers "Pops" Whitesell and Ordione; newspapermen John McClure, Keith Temple, Meigs Frost; and managing editor of the *Double Dealer*, Lillian Marcus Friend. The final sketch depicts Spratling and Faulkner, the BB gun prominent on the wall behind them over a sign reading "Viva Art." Spratling holds his pencil at arm's length, while Faulkner characteristically holds a drink. The keys beneath the chair comment



Orleans Alley (Pirates' Alley), drawing by Spratling for Picturesque New Orleans (1950.58.18)

on the spirit of life in the '20s and the prominent part which liquor played.

Natalie Scott, Spratling's landlady, who had introduced him to Anderson and the glittering art group, was caricatured in a drawing, entitled *Peggy Passe Partout Takes a Hurdle*, the meaning being obvious only to the intimates of the group. After a three-year period of driving expeditions through the state, she and Spratling published *Old Plantation Houses in Louisiana*, with text by Scott and 75 illustrations by Spratling.

Spratling had for several summers lectured on architecture in Mexico and in 1929, with book contract in hand, left Tulane to take up residence in Taxco to write an "insider's view" of Mexico. Taxco at that time was a small mining community with dwindling revenues. Initiating a workshop system, Spratling established an immensely successful silver industry.

He and Scott again collaborated on *200 Years of New Orleans Cooking*, with Spratling's vignettes of Vieux Carré architecture enhancing Scott's text and recipes. Scott,

a Newcomb graduate and a decorated heroine during World War I, also moved to Taxco where she established an orphanage. The little artists' community which had begun in the French Quarter slid south of the border, attracting the visits of numerous notables. Elizabeth Anderson, after her marriage to Sherwood dissolved, lived for a time at Spratling's ranch in an apartment he had constructed for her.

Spratling's book *Little Mexico*, published in 1931, was republished as *A Small Mexican World* (1964). It was translated into Spanish and circulated widely throughout Spanish-speaking countries. Spratling had become an authority on pre-Hispanic sculpture. His ranch evolved into a small museum, and he awakened Mexican officials to the value of their archeological treasures. In recognition of his contributions, the street outside his workshop was renamed "Calle Guillermo Spratling." As his fame grew, J. P. McEvoy wrote an article entitled "Silver Bill" for *Reader's Digest*. Jack Warner subsequently became interested in making a movie about him. Spratling threatened, "If you call me Silver Bill, I'll sue you! Nobody ever called me Silver Bill and got away with it." Warner Brothers acknowledged his seminal years in the Vieux Carré by titling the film "The Man from New Orleans" (1947). Spratling through the years has been consistently called "The Silver King" and the "Father of Taxco's Silver Industry."

— Judith H. Bonner

Sources: Elizabeth Anderson and Gerald R. Kelly, *Miss Elizabeth: A Memoir* (Boston, 1969); Artists files, The Historic New Orleans Collection; Natalie Scott, *Old Plantation Houses in Louisiana* (New York and New Orleans, 1927); Natalie V. Scott, *200 Years of New Orleans Cooking* (New York, 1931); William Philip Spratling, *File on Spratling: An Autobiography* (Boston, 1967); William Philip Spratling, *Little Mexico* (New York, 1932); William Spratling and William Faulkner, *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles* (New Orleans, 1926).



Belle Alliance, drawing by Spratling for *Old Plantation Houses in Louisiana* (1959.156.1)

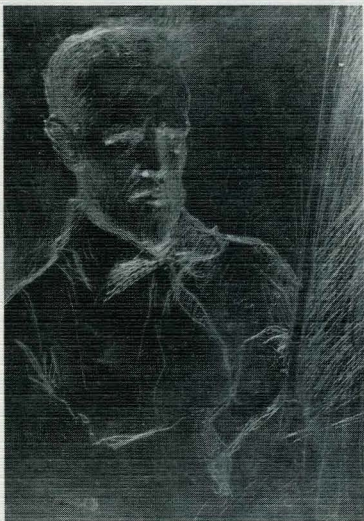
Acquisitions



The Historic New Orleans Collection acquires thousands of items through purchase and donation during the course of each year. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

CURATORIAL

Following the lead of many Scandinavian immigrants, Swedish-born Knute Heldner (1886-1952) settled in the colder climate of Minnesota where he became one of the leading landscape painters in the United States. In 1923, he and his wife Collette Pope first visited New Orleans, and the French Quarter became a second home where both painted Louisiana landscapes and bayous in cool, northern colors. Heldner's etchings, however, are considered more sympathetic than his paintings in portraying Louisiana settings, and THNOC recently acquired an important collection of 25 of his copper plates. All but one is etched on both sides, probably an attempt by the artist to economize on the expensive copper.



Self-portrait, Knute Heldner, copper plate (1988.100.1.i)



Artist's family, Knute Heldner (1988.100.68)

Most of the 49 scenes, depicting courtyards and buildings in the Heldners' Vieux Carré neighborhood, were made during the 1930s. Particularly significant are the family portraits: an intense self-portrait of the artist behind his easel and seven plates showing his wife and their two children, Franz and Pauline. A complete set of reprints was recently pulled from the plates and is available for study by researchers.

■ The curatorial division has received two gifts commemorating the visits of two prominent "tourists" in New Orleans. During September 11-13, 1987, Pope John Paul II came to New Orleans, one of the nine American cities he would visit during his second tour of the United States. The Most Reverend Philip M. Hannan acted as the city's host to the pontiff at the archbishop's residence on Walmsley Avenue, where meals were served on a special commemorative dinner service. Twenty-five place settings, totaling 225 pieces, were specially made by Lenox China and Crystal of Lawrenceville, New

Jersey, and one six-piece set and two stems of crystal were donated to the Collection by Mrs. R. King Milling, a member of the papal-visit committee. The fine bone china is emblazoned in parcel gilt with the papal coat-of-arms and that of the archdiocese.

The second and more recent visitor was Vice-President George Bush, who came in July when New Orleans hosted the Republican National Convention that nominated the now president-elect. The official poster of the convention, appropriately named the "Presidential edition," was donated by local watercolorist Peter Briant, who created the panoramic view of New Orleans depicted on the poster.

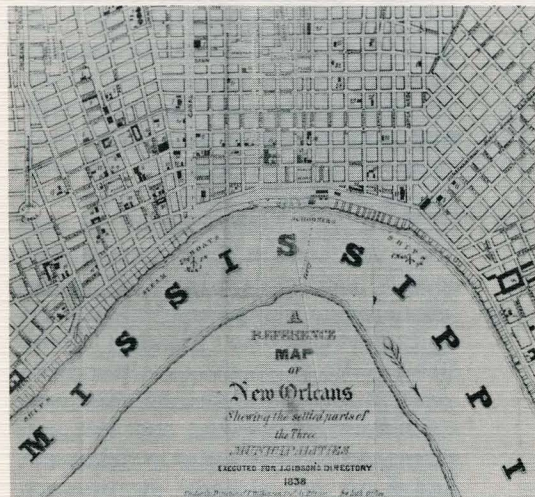
■ With the publication in 1987 of THNOC's *Encyclopaedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918*, the curatorial division determined to acquire portraits of New Orleans artists, either in the original medium or through copy images. The self-portrait of antebellum painter Jacques G. L. Amans (1801-1888) was a major donation in 1986, and recently, a rare photographic por-



Amelie Roman (1988.146.13)

trait of artist/teacher Amelie Roman (1873-1955) was given by Mrs. Gladys Landry. Miss Roman, a granddaughter of Louisiana Governor André B. Roman, was a member of the first pottery class in 1885 at Newcomb College, where she was considered one of the best pottery decorators in the renowned Newcomb style. She graduated in 1896 but returned as a faculty member in 1900 and continued to teach there until her retirement in 1939 as assistant professor of drawing and design.

■ The unusual format of so-called Cirkut photographs, each approximately 8x48 inches, was ideal for portraying large groups of people and wider vistas than could be captured by standard formats. THNOC's Charles L. Franck Collection includes over 500 of these photographs, and three others were donated by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Whitney. One is a rare scene in



Map published for Gibson's 1838 directory

1918 of Camp Beauregard, the U.S. Army installation near Bayou St. John where recruits were trained for combat in World War I. The other two photos are group portraits of Company F of the 114th Engineers of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. The curatorial division would welcome assistance in identifying any of the 273 men in the photos.

■ Local photographer Patrick McKee was the only civilian allowed behind the scenes to document the negotiations of the Police Association of New Orleans during the 1979 strike that lasted 16 days. Most of the 35mm negatives, acquired from Mr. McKee, have been printed by staff photographer Judy Tarantino.

■ During the 19th century, New Orleans city directories published the names, addresses, and occupations of the city's residents and other useful information. Many publishers of the directories also printed maps of the city to show the streets and important buildings that were listed in the accompanying directory, and they were often bound into the book. Perhaps the first of such maps was the one known to have been published for John Gibson's 1838 directory, but none has survived in the extant copies of this important publication. THNOC recently acquired one of these rare 1838 maps through a Massachusetts book dealer. The map bears the name of its printer, the Bee Lithographic office, which was the printing facility run by one of the most important 19th-century New Orleans newspapers, the *Bee*.

— John A. Mahé II

THNOC is seeking the donation of a mantle for one of the rooms in the permanent galleries. The mantle should be from the period 1850-1860, in good condition, and should fit chimney works measuring 61 inches wide. Prospective donors should call John Mahé at 523-4662.

MANUSCRIPTS

Cecil Morgan, Dean Emeritus of the Tulane University School of Law — legislator, judge, legal scholar — is the author of the Historic New Orleans Collection's monograph, *The First Constitution of the State of Louisiana*. In honor of Cecil Morgan's 90th birthday, the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation, Inc., has donated a number of manuscript drafts of works by Frances Parkinson Keyes.



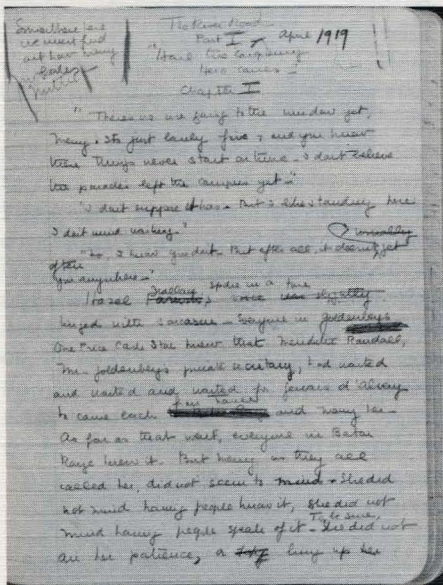
Cecil Morgan

The appropriateness of the gift is highlighted by a story told by Cecil Morgan of his first encounter with the noted author during World War II. Mrs. Keyes, as was her usual custom, had moved into The Cottage plantation near Baton Rouge, to absorb atmosphere for her latest book. She called on Mr. Morgan to aid her in obtaining war-scarce commodities and services. The novel in process was *The River Road*, one of the donated manuscripts.

Dean Morgan also relates how he met Carl Pforzheimer in 1945. In his capacity as attorney for Standard Oil, Cecil Morgan was working on a city charter for Baton Rouge, eliminating the Police Jury and consolidating parish and municipal government. Carl Pforzheimer was deeply committed to improvement in city government, through the National Municipal League, and although he lived in New York, he had close family ties in Baton Rouge. Their common cause brought them together and continued when Cecil

Morgan moved to New York in 1951. They remained friends until Mr. Pforzheimer's death in 1957.

The Frances Parkinson Keyes material consists of 14 notebooks containing a manuscript draft of *The River Road*, eight notebooks of *All This is Louisiana*, and one notebook draft of *Our Lady of the Bayou*. About the latter she writes, "Unfortunately, many of the old copybooks, in which I always write, are so scribbled over with notes relating to varied projects that it is hard to find a complete article that is intact and would not cause confusion." Besides the manuscript notebooks, there are a few items of correspondence between Carl Pforzheimer and Frances Parkinson Keyes. Mrs. Keyes writes, "...my sons have begged me not to continue giving away my scripts but to keep them in the family....When I first began to write, I simply tore up the original scripts as soon as the story was in book form...."



Manuscript draft, *The River Road* (88-44-L)

Mrs. Keyes was an avid opera lover and thanked Mr. Pforzheimer with a gift of her work after he plied her with tickets to the Metropolitan Opera. He writes in return, "The eight copybooks of your manuscript, *All This is Louisiana*, are up here with me in the library. I am simply delighted that you were kind enough to think of me in connection with this gift."

■ Mlle. Elisabeth Louise Blanc is the central figure in the Williams/Monroe/ Blanc Family Papers. This

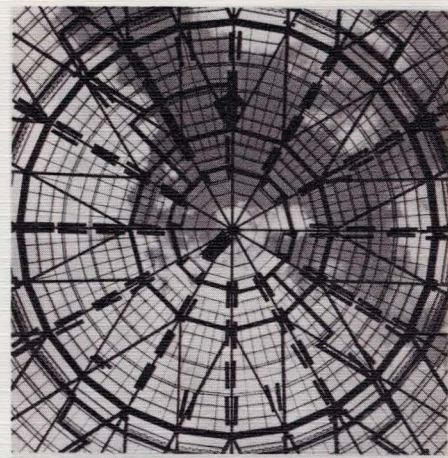
donation, containing 100 items of correspondence, and legal and financial documents, weaves a full picture of life in New Orleans in the third and fourth decades of the 19th century. Lise, as she was called, is described in one letter as a woman full of sense, spirit, and originality. She had numerous admirers and was recommended by one of her friends to an acquaintance in Paris with these words, translated from the French: "My client is essentially nervous; two years ago she was stricken with chronic illness which left her in a state of melancholia which lasted several months. All of a sudden this melancholia disappeared and everyone was very surprised to see our misanthrope back in society." The writer claims he never worried, Mlle. Lise was just homesick for France.

On her journey to France, Lise Blanc met a French family, who invited her to stay at their home in Normandy to partake of the healing salt air. Her treatment in their house fell far short of her expectations, and to make matters worse, they presented her with a large bill, a situation that was not an unusual one for Americans traveling abroad in 1845. Lise Blanc, however, was not to be intimidated and sought legal help after determining that the accounts were filled with errors. Most of this information is gleaned from legal documents in French. The Williams/Monroe/ Blanc Family Papers are the gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. Herbert Williams.

— Catherine C. Kahn

LIBRARY

The Louisiana Superdome: "Where Someday a Future President of the United States Will Be Nominated." This prediction, made by Dave Dixon about 15 years ago, is displayed prominently on the cover of a pamphlet containing color photographs of the Superdome, taken while the building was under construction. Fred Kahn II donated a copy of the pamphlet the day after the Republican National Convention, in the Superdome, put forward George Bush for the office of president; Messrs. Kahn and Bush were classmates at Andover. George



WHERE SOMEDAY
A FUTURE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
WILL BE NOMINATED

Superdome pamphlet (88-335-RL)

Bush's election on November 8 took Dixon's prophecy a step closer to the fulfillment it will achieve on January 20 when he is inaugurated.

■ A much earlier addition to the library's holdings is a copy of a *Circulaire* addressed to the inhabitants of the province of Louisiana in 1794. France was, at the time, in the throes of revolution, and that nation's domestic turbulence and aggressive foreign policy affected political events in the Spanish-controlled Mississippi Valley. Governor Carondelet tightened security as Louisianians began singing "La Marseillaise" in the streets of New Orleans, and the French envoy to the United States, Edmond Genêt, issued a call to "brothers in Louisiana" to join him in an armed action by means of which he planned to seize upper Louisiana. The United States eventually expelled Genêt, but not before Carondelet sought to rally loyalty to Spain. His *Circulaire*, probably the first thing printed in New Orleans by Louis Duclot, the city's third printer, exhorted the citizens to resist Genêt's deceptive promises and pledged to defend them if they remained faithful subjects of Spain.

■ From "La Marseillaise" in the 18th century to jazz and other sounds popular two hundred years later, music has played an important part in the lives of New Orleanians. Recent acquisitions exemplify several aspects of this musical heritage: opera, the concert stage, and popular songs and dances. Added to an already significant

collection is the libretto of *Haydée, or The Greek Slave*, a comic opera by Auber that was produced locally in 1849. Other librettos acquired recently include Bizet's *Carmen*, Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, and others issued in conjunction with New Orleans performances in the late 1860s.

In 1850 Jenny Lind, the internationally acclaimed Swedish soprano, embarked upon a triumphant concert tour of American cities. Her itinerary included New Orleans, where she presented 13 concerts between February 10 and March 8, 1851. Tickets were sold at auction, their prices soaring as high as an unprecedented \$240.00. Programs of two of the concerts supplement other Lind programs already at THNOC. They reveal that the Swedish Nightingale's repertoire included ballads that remain familiar today, such as "Home, Sweet Home" and "The Last Rose of Summer," as well as arias from Bellini's *Sonnambula*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and other operas.

Among additions to the extensive collection of sheet music are several Confederate pieces published in New Orleans by the impassioned rebel A. E. Blackmar during the early months of the Civil War; they include "The Stars of Our Banner" with music by Alice Lane and lyrics by M. F. Bigney, "Gen. Beauregard's Grand March" by Mrs. V. F. Cowdin, and "The Banner of the South" with music by Newton Fitz and lyrics by P. E. Collins. Further supplementing the holdings of sheet music are numerous pieces associated with New Orleans donated by George Bey, such as J. Vegas's "Camelia: A New Dance" (1857), "La Harpe Eolienne" (1884) by Sydney Smith, and "Hours of Mirth: Waltz" (1885) by Laurent L. Comes.

■ With the exception of state and city government, the Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Louisiana probably were responsible for more 19th-century New Orleans publications than any other group or individual. Two items issued by the Grand Lodge in the 1840s augment existing holdings of Masonic materials: the *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Louisiana, and the Accumulation of Rites in and by the*



Jenny Lind (88-268-RL)

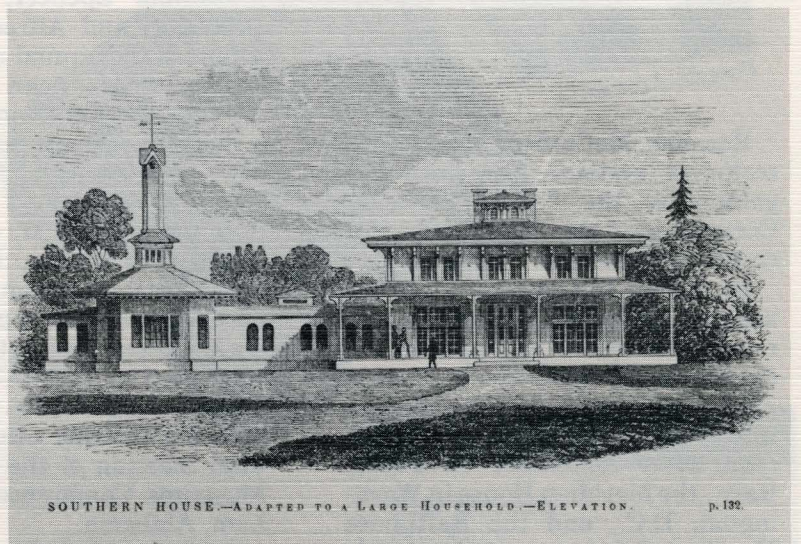
State Grand Lodge, which discusses the history of Freemasonry in Louisiana from 1793 to 1849 and provides a list of lodges, and "Manu-Propria des Grands Officiers de la Grande Loge de l'Etat de la Louisiane" (1844). More recent Masonic publications include an *Outline of the Organization and Chartering of George Washington Lodge No. 65, Free and Accepted Masons, Together with By-Laws and Roster*, issued in 1950 to commemorate the lodge's centennial.

■ The New Orleans publishing/bookselling firm of Burnett & Bostwick opened for business in 1853 and closed in 1854. During its brief tenure it sold reprints of popular books recently published by other firms, with new title pages that bore the Burnett & Bostwick imprint. These reprints, now scarce, pertained to such diverse subjects

as etiquette, world history, and travel. A new acquisition is Burnett & Bostwick's edition of *Rural Homes; or, Sketches of Houses Suited to American Country Life* by Gervase Wheeler, a profusely illustrated study of domestic architecture that provides information on selecting the site for one's home, the distribution of rooms, choosing construction materials, providing adequate ventilation, and outbuildings. Although the first edition of a work is usually considered the most desirable, Burnett & Bostwick's reprints are of greater interest because their existence confirms that the information they contain was available in New Orleans.

■ Foremost among new books is *A Dictionary of Louisiana Biography*, just published by the Louisiana Historical Association. Containing biographical sketches of some three thousand persons who have shaped the course of Louisiana history and culture from colonial times to the present, the DLB provided answers to three reference questions before it had been on the shelf for one day. Other 1988 publications include "Not Worth a Straw": *French Colonial Policy and the Early Years of Louisiana* by Mathé Allain; Henry C. Dethloff's *History of the American Rice Industry, 1685-1985*; and *Louisiana's Fiscal Alternatives: Finding Permanent Solutions to Recurring Budget Crises*, edited by James A. Richardson.

— Florence M. Jumonville



Illustration, *Rural Homes* (88-272-RL)

Staff



Priscilla O'Reilly

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Priscilla O'Reilly, collections manager, was elected vice-president of the Southeastern Registrars Association.

Pamela Arceneaux, reference librarian, chaired a session on New Orleans at the conference of the Popular Culture Association in the South in Knoxville, Tennessee, and delivered a slide presentation, "A Red-Light Look at New Orleans History."



Pamela Arceneaux

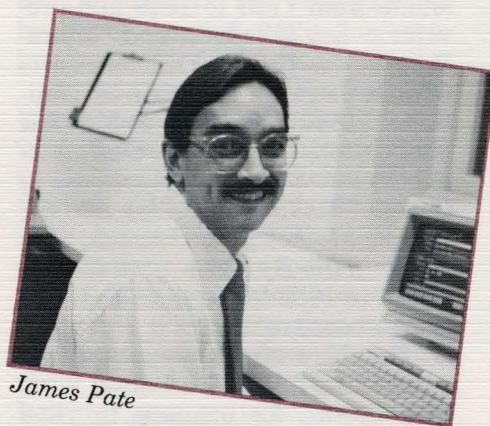
Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie, director of systems, has been appointed to the Project Advisory Committee of the Louisiana Association of Museums.

Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon, reference archivist, presented two papers at a recent conference on cultural exchange in the Americas in Buenos Aires...his paper on the Italian influence on New World music was read at a conference in Prata, Italy...the Meridien House in Washington, D.C., and the Baltimore Museum of Art presented concerts featuring Dr. Lemmon's transcrip-

tions of baroque music from the Americas.

John H. Lawrence, curator of photographs, presented slide lectures of his photographic work at the New Orleans Museum of Art and at the University of New Orleans in October...Mr. Lawrence was one of five artists included in the *Selections Five* exhibition at the UNO art gallery...he was also one of five artists to exhibit at the Save Our Cemeteries exhibition in Place St. Charles.

James Pate, systems department assistant, served as project coordinator for the Contemporary Arts Center's annual fundraising event, Art for Arts' Sake, in the Piazza d'Italia.



James Pate

John Magill, assistant curator, was interviewed about jazz on WYES-TV. **Catherine Kahn**, acting curator of manuscripts, visited the Winterthur Museum as the guest of director Thomas Graves.

MEETINGS

Taronda Spencer, manuscripts cataloger, and **Alfred E. Lemmon** attended the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Atlanta...Dr. Lemmon also attended a workshop sponsored by the Society of American Archivists in Jackson, Mississippi.

John A. Mahé II, chief curator, traveled to Austin, Texas, for the 20th North American Print Conference, entitled *Prints and Printmakers in Texas*...the 19th NAPC was sponsored by THNOC in 1987.

Maureen Donnelly, registrar, and **Priscilla O'Reilly** attended the annual meeting of the Southeastern Museums Conference in Birmingham, Alabama.

Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie attended the Council meeting of the

Louisiana Association of Museums.

PUBLICATIONS

Basic Condition Reporting: A Handbook, second edition, has recently been published...the book was edited by **Priscilla O'Reilly** and **Allyn Lord**, registrar of the University Museum at the University of Arkansas.

John Magill contributed several articles to *Preservation in Print*: "When the Republicans Came to Town," "The French Market," and "Shopping Along the Streetcar Lines." **Alfred E. Lemmon** published an article on the 19th-century musical archive of the school of San Gregorio in Mexico City in *The Americas: A Quarterly*...he also reviewed the recent volume on the Acadians by Carl Brasseaux for *Southern Quarterly*.

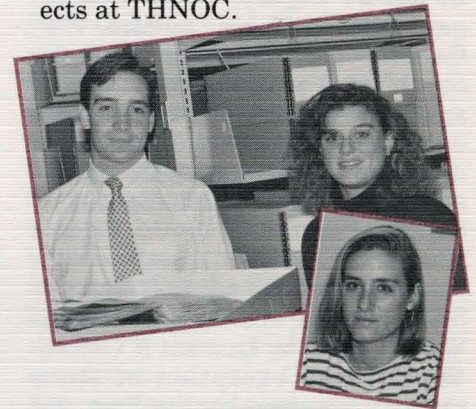
CHANGES

Joining the staff part-time are **Anne Pennison**, a docent on Saturday...**Dr. Joseph Scott**, manuscripts assistant...and **Shirley Ludlum**, shop assistant.

Jude Solomon, curatorial assistant for photographs, married **Owen Murphy** in November.

INTERN PROGRAM

College interns from Tulane University and the University of New Orleans assisted with various projects at THNOC.



Interns Pat Gorman and Suzanne Levin, and, bottom, Suzanne Hurley

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Staff members have recently made presentations to the following organizations: **Florence M. Jumonville**, St. Mary's Guild of Christ Church...**Pamela Arceneaux**, Louisiana Colonials...**John Magill**, Arts Council of New Orleans...**Alfred E. Lemmon**, Terrebonne Genealogical Society.

INVENTORY



During the month of November, curatorial staff members counted department holdings as part of the inventory update. Their work was facilitated by the use of computer-generated printouts that indicated the locations of all accessioned items. *From left:* Jude Solomon and Jill Roberts; Kathy Hardey and John Magill; Judith Bonner, Maclyn LeBourgeois, and Walter Wolf.

The Shop

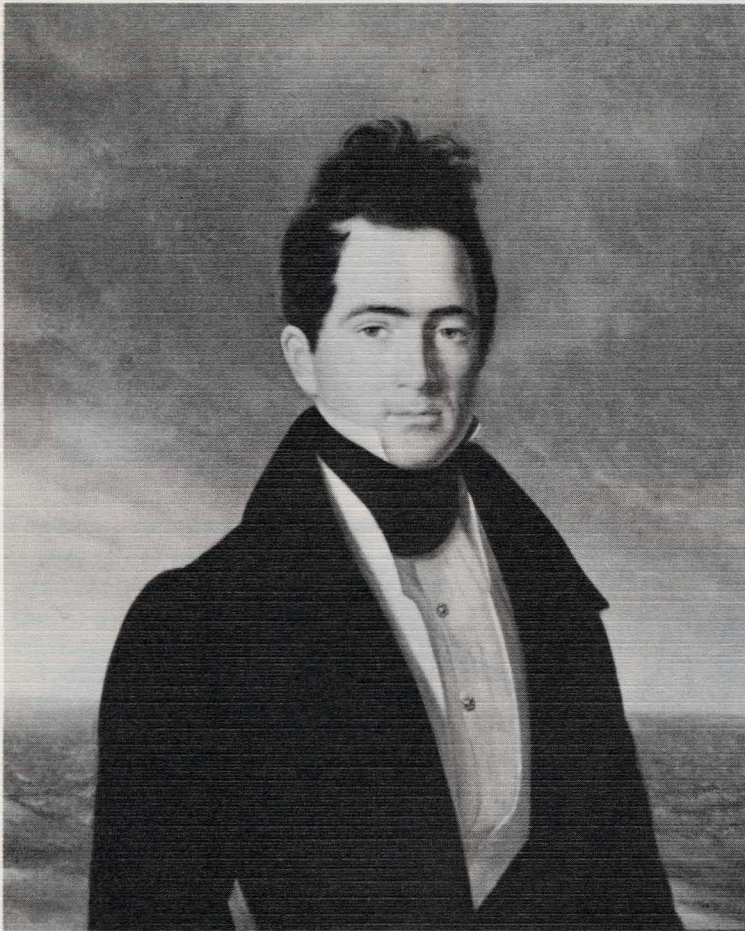
The Shop at the Collection offers for purchase a number of items related to the carnival season, which leads up to an early Mardi Gras on February 7. Of both artistic merit and historical value are various carnival ball invitations dating as far back as the 1880s. An assortment of appropriate ball favors is also available.



Rex invitation, 1885: top, closed; bottom, open

PHOTO CREDITS
 Judy Tarantino
 Jan White

Decorative Arts from the Clarisse Claiborne Grima House



Among the collection of fine paintings and decorative arts donated to the Historic New Orleans Collection by Clarisse Claiborne Grima is a portrait of her grandfather, William C. C. Claiborne, Jr. Claiborne (1808-1878) was the son of the first governor of Louisiana. This portrait, included in THNOC's exhibition, *A Creole Legacy*, is the earliest known work of Jean Joseph Vaudechamp (1790-1866), who was considered the city's leading portrait painter at the time. It is signed and dated 1831.

Mrs. Grima's house, donated to THNOC in 1975, served for years as headquarters for various special projects of the Collection. The house was sold in 1987 and the proceeds used to establish the Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund. All acquisitions from this fund will carry Mrs. Grima's name. The first purchase, made in January 1988, was a view of the New Orleans riverfront in 1858 by M. Adrien Persac (see *Newsletter*, vol. VI, no. 2).

William C. C. Claiborne, Jr., by Jean Joseph Vaudechamp (1981.376.1)



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