



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION QUARTERLY

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EDITORIAL ROOMS
33 EAST 17TH ST. NY

May 26, 1891.

Mrs. Dodge desires me to say that your little "Raisin
People" are delightful and that she will be glad to introduce them
to the readers of St. Nicholas. For our use, however, the pi
would be improved by the omission of the fourth and fifth sta
Have we your consent to this condensation?

The drawing is also very quaint and clever and
either reproduced exactly or shall be utilized as a
on this p

to be closely

anager will
Mrs.

The Story of Their Lives. WOMEN'S PAPERS

New York, Nov. 21, 1889.

at the West 129th St.

Dear Pearl.

Historic New Orleans Collection

your "Hagar" with care. This a strong
poem and surpasses anything of the
kind in our literature. The heroine is
best drawn by a woman. You have made
her proud, passionate, self-reliant, yet
tender, loving and every inch a woman.
The poem has a certain fascination for
me and no doubt will similarly affect
other readers. The blending of power and
pathos is everywhere apparent.

The breaking heart of "Hagar" is finely

to have heard, as asked, have your relative - perhaps list in glass

I have read your Hagar, and will not let expression find to make me express. Besides its striking merit as thoughts. Abraham Lincoln Hagar

FRANKLE
EDITOR AND PR
No. 11
POPULAR MONTHLY
PLEASANT HOURS
BUDGET OF FUN
CHRISTMAS BOOK
LORD ALMANAC
ALMANAC
SCRIPTION BOOKS

May 14
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to have
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“You have made her proud,
 passionate, self-reliant, yet tender,
 loving and every inch a woman.”

This critique of Eliza Jane Nicholson’s poem “Hagar” by New York editor John W. Overall, comes from a letter he sent to the New Orleans poet at the end of the last century. His description of the biblical Hagar could be applied as well to the poem’s author. “Hurrah for Hagar and Pearl Rivers,” Overall saluted his “dear friend of the bright old days,” referring to earlier years in New Orleans. Nicholson wrote under the pen name Pearl Rivers, a reference to her childhood terrain – Pearlington, her birthplace in southern Mississippi, and the nearby Pearl River that flows through the state toward the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Her story – Eliza was also the publisher of the *Daily Picayune* newspaper in New Orleans – emerges from the labeled folders of the Nicholson Family Papers, one of the manuscript holdings found at the Historic New Orleans Collection’s Williams Research Center on Chartres Street.

Women’s papers at THNOC reveal lives that are rich and full and lead the researcher to individuals who have left their mark in the worlds of business, art, and politics. Opening the Hollinger boxes that contain their manuscript materials conjures up a certain magic – strong personalities jump out like benevolent genies waiting to be freed from their enclosures.

Scholar Mary Catherine Bateson has written that a woman’s life is an improvised art. “Composing a life,” she goes on to say, “has a metaphorical relation to many different arts, including architecture and dance and cooking,” calling to mind the structure, harmony, and complexity that are key elements of

these arts as they are of a well-lived life. The women considered here also possessed a quality – a directed energy – that pushed them forward. Clementine Hunter painted at night after picking cotton all day, botanist Caroline Dormon thought nothing of driving around for hours until she found an elusive plant specimen, Eliza Jane Nicholson managed a publishing business and found time to write poetry.

A look at a number of papers relating to women – Nicholson, Cammie Henry (with letters from Caroline Dormon), Clementine Hunter, Hilda Phelps Hammond, Marilyn Barnett (with letters from Pearl Bailey) – presents a fine sampling of creative lives. And they were, perhaps unknowingly, women who were familiar with power as defined by writer Carolyn Heilbrun: “Power is the ability to take one’s place in whatever discourse is essential to action and the right to have one’s part matter.”

Eliza Jane Nicholson’s extraordinary life is a case study of a talented and ambitious woman who possessed both literary aspirations and business acumen. Born Eliza Jane Poitevent in 1849, she developed a love of nature and poetry during a childhood inspired by the natural beauty of the Pearl River country in southern Mississippi. When she moved to New Orleans, Eliza was hired to write poetry at the *Picayune* and married her publisher, Col. Alva Morris Holbrooke. After his death in 1876, Eliza sold an interest in the paper to the managing edi-



Birdfoot violets, illustration in *Flowers Native to the Deep South*, text and illustrations by Caroline Dormon (78-912-RL). Lively letters of artist and botanist Caroline Dormon are found in the *Cammie Henry Papers*.

tor George Nicholson, and the paper grew to be a successful daily under their direction. Eliza married Nicholson in 1878. She continued writing poetry, which, if not appreciated by today’s standards, received ample praise during her lifetime. Author Mollie Moore Davis wrote, “I have had an extraordinary pleasure in reading your poem Hagar to Abraham,” while poet Margaret Bisland’s letter to Eliza praised the poem’s rhythm and content – “all that is most tragic in fate and dramatic in song and story.”

What the papers also contain are small revelations of Eliza’s character. The paw of her favorite dog Matt is preserved in the Nicholson Collection. She was a tiny woman and an animal lover, as remembered in interviews with her granddaughters. You can imagine a small figure berating a careless carriage driver for ill treatment of a horse, or you can picture Eliza, in your mind’s eye, heading home (Jackson Avenue at Carondelet Street), with a poem in hand to finish later in the day.

The Story of Their Lives: Women's Papers at the Historic New Orleans Collection

Her good friend Elizabeth Meriwether Gilmer, who wrote as Dorothy Dix, offered this about Eliza:

She looked the least like a career woman of anybody I have ever seen, for she was shy and gentle and afraid of people, but she had already taken hold of a bankrupt newspaper and had made it a successful political daily, and that is something no other woman has done to this good day.

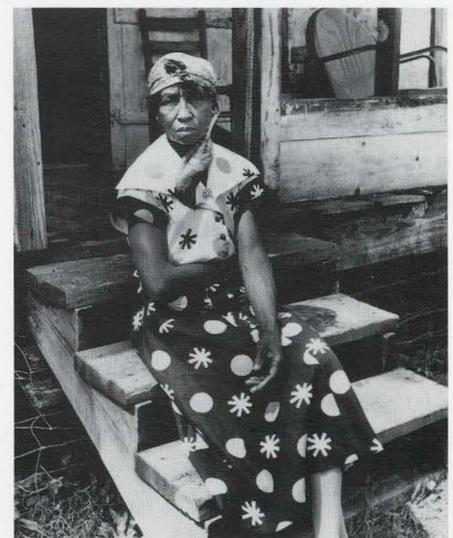
The Cammie Henry Papers tell more about the recipients of Henry's encouragement than about the generous, farsighted patron of the arts herself. Carmelite Garrett Henry (1871-1948) was the well-known chatelaine of Melrose Plantation, near Natchitoches, where she had moved with her husband in 1899. She countered the isolation of her geography by inviting artists and writers to come to Melrose for extended periods, providing them time and space to pursue their writing and painting –

Alberta Kinsey, Roark Bradford, and Lyle Saxon were some of those who enjoyed Miss Cammie's hospitality. She created an artists' colony, encouraged local crafts, and maintained an extensive library. High points throughout her papers are the letters, written in the 1930s, from two brilliant friends, Caroline Dormon and Lyle Saxon. Caroline, advocate of native plants, artist, and plant person without equal, dashed off witty notes to Cammie, calling her "Dear Mate": "Your yellow iris must be 'Lee Gibert' come to life at last....The yellow ones are the hardest to paint....If I don't get there [Melrose] soon I'll just blow up." And "Do you think I had better keep your little Pinckneya till fall?...It is quite small yet and its yours, nobody else shall have it." She described a search: "I went to get a white birdfoot violet a girl found and marked for me. It was off in the sandhills, and of course the road was washed away from the recent flood - - - we had to walk the last half mile."

A long letter from writer Lyle Saxon finds him confiding in Miss Cammie: "*Children of Strangers* is actually finished. Will it be any good? Of course not.... I really don't know what the last chapters are about; I had written them over so many times, and each time they seemed worse." And then this, some three months later: "*Children* continues to get a magnificent press – I can't understand it –."

Also a part of Melrose was the indefatigable Clementine Hunter who is portrayed in letters that François Mignon, resident writer and curator at Melrose, sent to art collector James Register. The facts of Clementine's life are familiar. Born in the mid-1880s on a plantation near Cloutierville in central Louisiana,

Top, Eliza Jane Nicholson, photoprint by Eugene Simon, between 1892 and 1894 (1981.369.44); middle, Cammie Garrett Henry at the spinning wheel, Melrose Plantation, ca. 1927 (1981.330.32); bottom, Clementine Hunter on the steps of her cabin by Clarence John Laughlin, entitled Portrait of a Primitive Painter, Number One, 1952 (1981.247.5.1967)



she lived past the century mark and died in 1988. She spent most of her life on Melrose Plantation, working as a cotton picker and later as cook and laundress in the plantation house.

The story goes that Clementine decided to “mark” a painting when she found paints and brushes left behind by New Orleans artist Alberta Kinsey. François Mignon – who remained at Melrose 32 years – gave Clementine some materials, and she began to paint the scenes that were in her head from a lifetime of plantation living. Angels, church goers, and Saturday-night revelers were interpreted in her naïf style, unfettered by rules of perspective or the sequence of time. Mignon’s transcribed letters for the years 1944-45, part of the Hunter papers, provide a running commentary about Clementine (also known as Clémance, “our girl friend,” and Miss H. in the correspondence). On the source of her inspiration, Mignon wrote that she “declared she didn’t have to go to learn something from anybody....because God made the flowers grow in her own mind and that she wanted to paint them and not the ones that merely grow in the ground.” About an encounter with Alberta Kinsey, he wrote “Miss A....she took Clementine to the Shop, and asked her to examine an impressionist painting she was doing. She asked Clémance where she would place the various colors, and lo! according to Miss A., Clémance indicated just the proper points.”

Clementine’s disposition was one of her greatest assets. Mignon wrote, “I was at the girl friend’s again, thanks to the aid and comfort of a nice moon. Found her gay and industrious.” And this: “Visited Clémance this afternoon about 2:00 and had a lovely sitting. She was looking quite cool, in spite of the excessive heat. She was barefooted, and with her it was all so nice and somehow of the true elegance that is a part of the good earth, the sky and all the elemental things which are invariably in such good taste.” She never stopped working. “Almost every night she [a family mem-

ber] would ask Clémance if she intended painting,” Mignon wrote in October 1945, “and the answer would be negative, – and that every time, after the elder of the two had jumped into the bed, she would ‘worry around’ for a little while, and then bolt out from under the covers and lighting the lamp, start in to mark something down.” He continued, “I presume that when the pecans and cotton are over and done with, she may find time to do a bit of daylight painting.”

The scene changes from the Cane River country to uptown New Orleans where Hilda Phelps Hammond, with the backing of the Women’s Committee of New Orleans, led a campaign against Huey Long in the 1930s. The redoubtable Mrs. Hammond and her committee adamantly called for Senate investigation of the charges that Long, himself a senator, had used fraudulent means to get John H. Overton elected as the second senator from Louisiana in 1932. The women sent letters to newspapers and to influential people around the country to inform Americans that “we are fighting a battle for decency in state and National Government.” Hilda Phelps Hammond stated unequivocally: “We only want the American press to insist that the Senate cannot investigate fraud and corruption charged against private citizens and ignore charges of fraud and corruption practiced by its own members.”

Mrs. Hammond’s pamphlet, “Watch Out America!,” enumerated in dramatic terms the efforts made by the Women’s Committee to raise money for legal fees incurred in the Long-Overton investigation. “In the heart of the French Quarter of New Orleans,” she wrote, “paisley shawls, rare pieces of family china, jewelry and antiques lie for sale behind batten shutters – mute testimony of sacrifice made by Louisiana women.”

Her 1936 book *Let Freedom Ring* recounts her beliefs and crusades, shedding light as well on the formative periods of her life. “We read freely the lives and passions of great men and women,”



Hilda Phelps Hammond, ca. 1930s (90-31-L)



Marilyn Barnett, ca. 1960s (84-28-L)

she wrote of her Newcomb College days. "In the pages of Balzac, George Sand, Victor Hugo and Voltaire we browsed without restriction" – a cerebral preparation for future challenges that would include the mighty Kingfish.

The value of friendship is like a strong current running through the Marilyn Barnett Papers. As public relations director for the New Orleans Symphony in the 1950s and for several New Orleans hotels from the 1960s to the 1980s, Marilyn Barnett was the person behind the scenes attending to celebrities, arranging dinners – the one who knew that Marlene Dietrich preferred white and yellow flowers and Dom Perignon champagne, the one Mrs. Edgar Stern wrote when she needed a Dome Stadium-shaped cake for a farewell dinner.

The names of the famous and the locally famous appear and reappear in the collection in the form of thank yous to Marilyn Barnett, memos, press clippings. There are letters from composers Virgil Thomson and William Grant Still, notes about tennis games with actor José Ferrer, and assurances from Lillian Hellman that she had tried to call when Marilyn was in New York. But the letters and cards from singer Pearl Bailey underscore a privileged friendship. Pearl's voice rings true, her verve, intelligence, and good will spilling out of the messages she sent to her New Orleans friend. "To my darling sister, Can you believe it, your sister here is a smashing 61 years young – and will be a sophomore in college next semester!!! Getting a B+ average this semester!" (1979). She writes, "Hi sweetheart, It's my second year at school – slowly, but surely I'm getting there. Just wait till I get the ole degree. Ah! Professor Bailey huh!" Or this from the 1970s when she was a member of the American delegation to the United Nations, "Dearest Sister, If anyone can

explain this 17 hour gig – I'm doing – Wow! – trying to keep up with everything but must get rest." Pearl's friend Marilyn – model for the heroine of a bestseller (Arthur Hailey's *Airport*) – efficiently preserved the letters and other manuscript materials that help document an era.

The stories of these women are woven into a period that covers more than a century, artful lives that call to mind an observation made by the writer May Sarton in her introspective *Journal of a Solitude*, "The only thing that is not chance is what one asks of oneself and how well or how badly one meets one's own standard." For the women considered here, the standards were high and the stories are good.

— Louise C. Hoffman

Sources: Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York, 1990); Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life* (New York, 1989); collected papers, THNOC; T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (New York, 1970).



Coral bean or mamou, illustration in *Flowers Native to the Deep South*, text and illustrations by Caroline Dormon (78-912-RL)

I would like to thank all of you who are donors to the Historic New Orleans Collection. It's due in large part to your support that we are able to go about the business of preserving our history for future generations. Because of donations of family materials and gifts from discerning collectors, we are able to provide opportunities for research and to offer access to a wealth of artifacts and information that tell us about our past – and our present.



In December it was our privilege to pay tribute to the Collection's donors at the Leila Williams Tea and to celebrate the generosity and foresight of patrons from different parts of the country, as well as from Europe. In honor of Mrs. Williams, the tea is held in the Kemper and Leila Williams home on Toulouse Street, a residence that we preserve as part of the museum complex. Reflecting the lifestyle of the Williamses in the 1940s and 1950s, the home is eclectically furnished with elegant antique furniture, beautiful fabrics, linens, porcelain, and silver.

The kitchen restoration was completed just in the time for the donors tea, and guests were able to enjoy the informal rooms – kitchen and pantry – much as they would have been when the Williamses were in residence. Kemper and Leila Williams's spirit of generosity was underscored by the presence of so many friends who have donated their papers, paintings, books, and memorabilia to the Collection.

Your gifts enrich us all.

— Priscilla Lawrence

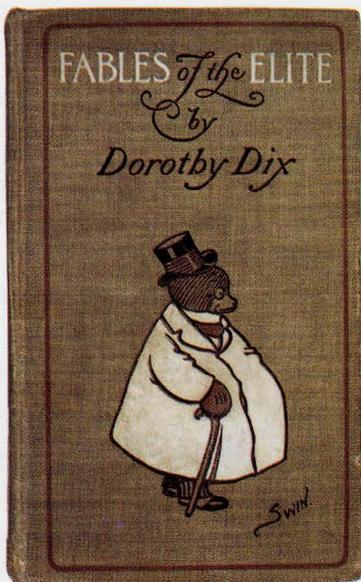
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM MEETS IN NEW ORLEANS

A reception at the Historic New Orleans Collection welcomed the International Women's Forum to the city during the organization's conference in mid-October. IWF member Mary Louise Christovich, president of the board of directors of the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, greeted IWF members along with Flo Schornstein and Sybil Morial, organizers of the New Orleans conference, and president Fran A. Streets from the California Forum. A specially mounted exhibition was on display, *Women of New Orleans: From the Age of Victoria to World War II*. Members attended sessions organized around the theme "In Pursuit of a Higher Culture."

Top right, Sybil Morial and Flo Schornstein. Bottom row, left to right, Suzanne Mestayer, Lindy Boggs, Pat Denechaud; Fran A. Streets, Mary Louise Christovich, and Priscilla Lawrence



WOMEN OF NEW ORLEANS



Dorothy Dix's good advice, in disguise, can be found in Fables of the Elite (77-078-RL). The sketches originally appeared in the New York Journal and were published in book form in 1902.

Women of New Orleans: From the Age of Victoria to World War II is on view in the second-floor gallery of the Williams Research Center at 410 Chartres Street. Previously presented for one evening in October as part of the events surrounding the International Women's Forum, the exhibition was also on view during the Leila Williams Tea and continues until April 24, 1999. The items on display highlight the activities and accomplishments of New Orleans women in many areas of endeavor.

In the 19th century, the most socially acceptable occupation for women was that of homemaker. Disadvantaged women had little choice but to work in sweat shops or as servants, while those from the middle and upper classes had a limited choice of career opportunities from among the arts, education, religion, nursing, and business. However, Louisiana law accorded women control over property they inherited or brought with them from a previous marriage, allowing them to engage in business

dealings in their own names – not the case in other states. As an example, one of the most notable women in 19th century New Orleans was Micaëla, Baroness de Pontalba who constructed the Pontalba Buildings and beautified Jackson Square in the early 1850s.

Other local ladies featured in the exhibition include Mardi Gras designer Jennie Wilde, *Picayune* editor Eliza Jane Nicholson, authors Kate Chopin and Mollie Moore Davis, advice columnist Dorothy Dix (*pseud.* of Elizabeth Meriwether Gilmer), educator Sophie Bell Wright, restaurateur Elizabeth Kettenring Begué, entrepreneur Mme Olympe, women's activist Caroline Merrick, and Dr. Sara Tew Mayo. The Ursuline Sisters and the Sisters of the Holy Family with their long histories of public service are represented, along with Margaret Haughery who devoted her life as well as the profits of her successful bakery to the work of the Sisters of Charity.

— Pamela D. Arceneaux

AROUND THE WORLD IN 76 DAYS: LOUISIANA'S INTREPID BESSIE BISLAND

Twenty years of Civil War, Reconstruction, and a major depression brought financial ruin to many southern planters, but there were unexpected benefits for their womenfolk. Every penny counted in the post-war South, and fathers actually began to encourage their daughters' literary ambitions.

Bright young women from plantations and small towns were allowed to follow those ambitions to the hurly-burly of big cities — unthinkable before the war. Like *Little Women's* Jo March, they lived on minute salaries in shabby boarding houses, writing thousands of words a year for newspapers and magazines. For would-be writers in the lower South, New Orleans was the big city, filled with intoxicating opportunities.

Besides hard news, the city's leading newspapers — the *Daily Picayune* and the *Times-Democrat* — published poetry, travel accounts, essays, short stories, and serialized novels. Eliza Jane Nicholson, fresh from a Mississippi farm, had become the first woman publisher in the South, transforming the *Daily Picayune* into a literary force during the 1870s. In 1881 the rival *Times-Democrat* hired away her literary editor to offer the *Picayune* serious competition.

Born in south Louisiana at Fairfax Plantation in 1861, Elizabeth Bisland (called Bessie), a tall, beautiful brunette, was among the determined country girls aspiring to a literary career. Bessie, whose mother wrote poetry, submitted sonnets to the *Times-Democrat* under a pseudonym. When her identity was discovered — the paper wrote to Mrs. Bisland seeking clues to neighborhood poets — she was offered employment.



Sketch of Bessie Bisland at Grand Isle by Lafcadio Hearn, 1884

Bessie moved to a “small, quaint” (read: cheap, rundown) hotel in the French Quarter and soon began meeting other writers both professionally and socially. Although young and at first a little shy, she was forceful in pursuing her ambitions. She had the gift of charm; her voice was particularly alluring — “low and clear and at times like a flute.” She smiled spontaneously with pleasure like a child, according to an admirer, creating “a little circle of magnetic sunshine.”

She described herself as one of a “mob of gentlewomen, who wrote with ease.”

For the newspaper, she wrote anything and everything from poetry to filler to social news. She described herself as one of a “mob of gentlewomen, who wrote with ease.” As her talent developed, her writing was marked by

intelligence, freshness of feeling, and a certain tartness. She later observed about some southern writing that “there doesn't seem to have been any one before the [Civil] war who wasn't good-looking and clever, and had lots of money.” With a very few words, she could create a powerful and lasting impression.

In the 1880s New Orleans was awakening from its long postbellum stagnation. Things were happening, and the city was just the place for a young writer to get ahead. The 1884-85 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition was backed by local businessmen for commercial reasons, but it also had larger cultural implications. The exposition's Women's Department was headed by the redoubtable Julia Ward Howe of Boston. Social gatherings at her borrowed house sparkled with intellectual conversation and she hosted a weekly literary club, which included Bessie Bisland among its members. More significantly, she brought down famous authors, editors, and literary critics from national magazines, fashioning a network of invaluable acquaintances for local writers.

A social/literary salon in the French Quarter also became a must-do for visiting celebrities from the publishing world. All the “right people” came to the famous Fridays of the writer Mollie Moore Davis. At simple afternoon receptions in a Royal Street apartment, she gathered friends from the universities, newspapers, women's clubs, and both Anglo and Creole high society. A welcome guest, Bessie joined other friends — Grace King, Kate Chopin, Ruth McEnery Stuart, George Washington Cable — in Davis's drawing room.

*"My dear little girl,
pack your trunk and
go back home; this is
no place for you."*

One of her friendships, though, was decidedly unusual. She greatly admired the work of Lafcadio Hearn (still virtually unknown), who wrote brilliantly idiosyncratic essays and reviews for the *Times-Democrat*. Reclusive and socially inept, Hearn nevertheless responded to Bessie's overtures, and they became such close friends that he nursed her through an attack of yellow fever. With other journalists, they vacationed at Grand Isle, where their conversation, he said, was "an absolute poem."

In 1887, New Orleans began to seem like a cage to both writers. Hearn left the city forever on an odyssey that would eventually take him to Japan and lasting literary fame. Bessie headed for New York and the journalistic big time. Hearn admired her "pluck in going boldly into the mouth of that most merciless of all monsters." Although she received the ritual discouragement from a gruff, cigar-smoking newspaper editor — "My dear little girl, pack your trunk and go back home; this is no place for you" — she persevered, writing for several newspapers and becoming an assistant editor, book reviewer, and celebrity journalist at the new *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, "a first-class family magazine," quite unlike today's *Cosmo*.

In a heavily covered publicity stunt, she briefly achieved national fame. The *New York World* sponsored their reporter Nellie Bly on an around-the-world journey, challenging the record of 80 days set by Jules Verne's fictional Phileas Fogg. *Cosmopolitan* decided to compete by sending Bessie Bisland; she wired back a series of vivid travelogues, later published as *A Flying Trip Around the World*. Bly sailed from New York in November 1889, while Bisland took off

by train for San Francisco. Many adventures later, she reached the city to discover that her 76-day trip was second best. Bly had circled the globe in 72 days and six hours. Nellie Bly today appears in the *Britannica*; Bessie Bisland doesn't.

Choosing among the many suitors who courted her, in 1891 Bisland married a successful attorney who was proud of her career. She retired from journalism to write well-received novels, collections of essays, and memoirs. Ironically, however, it is for her biography of Lafcadio Hearn that she is known today.

Even though he had a nasty habit of quarreling with friends and cutting them off, Hearn corresponded fondly with his "fairy god-sister" until his death, signing himself "Your friend and literary brother." In 1906, shortly after he died, Bisland published the first biography of Hearn, which included many of his letters, bringing his work widespread public attention.

*Hearn described
Bessie Bisland as
"a beautiful and
wonderful person,
whom I knew long ago
in the strange city of
New Orleans."*

Hearn described Bessie Bisland as "a beautiful and wonderful person, whom I knew long ago in the strange city of New Orleans." And it was in the city of New Orleans that an intrepid young writer from a backwater plantation honed her talents and transformed herself into a serious and successful writer.

— Patricia Brady

Sources: Edwin A. Alderman and Joel Chandler Harris, eds., *Library of Southern Literature*, 6 vols. (Atlanta, 1909-1913); Elizabeth Bisland, *The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1906); Patricia Brady, "Literary Ladies of New Orleans in the Gilded Age," *Louisiana History* (Spring 1992); Jonathan Cott, *Wandering Ghost: The Odyssey of Lafcadio Hearn* (New York, 1991).

MOTHER CAT

In 1922, a 35-year old preacher called Mother Catherine Seals launched her church in a compound near the levee in the lower Ninth Ward. She called it the Manger. "Childbirth is the most important element of her creed," wrote Zora Neale Hurston, the folklorist and future novelist who visited Mother Catherine there. "[She] is dedicated to the birth of children in or out of wedlock."

For eight years the Manger functioned as a commune and shelter for battered or neglected women. Mother Catherine, who sometimes played trombone, filled the place with musical instruments and invited jazzmen to play at religious services, something unheard of in most churches of the day. Harold Dejan, 89, the retired leader of the Olympia Brass Band, played at the Manger on several occasions.

Children of Mother Catherine's followers stayed or spent time in the Manger; many came from families going through hard times. She gave the children names of saints. Ernie Cagnolatti, who became a respected jazz trumpeter, spent part of his formative years in the Manger, where he met the young woman who became his wife. Cagnolatti is somewhere in the accompanying photograph (see page 10), which was taken in the late 1920s. When jazz guitarist and writer Danny Barker sold a copy of the photo to William Russell, he wrote on the back: "Ernie Cagnolatti played the Angel Gabriel."

At services Mother Catherine anointed the sick, and as stories spread of her healing power, the tent where she held religious services became a magnet for more than just the black poor. Italian, Irish, and other ethnic whites flocked to her services.

When she died, on August 12, 1930, thousands of people followed the brass band funeral procession through a pounding thunderstorm. "Mother Catherine always told us there'd come a day when the sun would shine in the rain," one of her disciples, the late Frank Lastie, recalled in a 1979 interview. "When the funeral

HERINE SEALS – A HEALER IN THE CITY

reached Industrial Canal bridge, the sun broke through and people started *fallin' out* on the bridge. People had *babies* in their arms, and they knew it was prophecy.”

“Her uncanny understanding and complete knowledge of human psychology were among her outstanding characteristics,” an editorial in *The Louisiana Weekly* noted. “The seething mass of humanity that turned out for her funeral rites eloquently testified to her far-reaching influence.” And yet, she was illiterate. What was it about her personality and ministry that drew Italians as well as blacks to the semi-rural compound?

Snapshots of her life open a window on the times.

Although no birth certificate has been found, she dictated a will, dated October 11, 1929, which she signed with an X, stating that she was born in Kentucky and raised near the town of Lexington; her given name was Nanny Cowans. The will (which is in the Robert Tallant Collection at the New Orleans Public Library) states that she came to New Orleans at age sixteen. This would have been in 1903.

Much of the biographical material on her life comes from field interviews conducted by the Louisiana Writers' Project (LWP), as part of the Federal Works Progress Administration. Lyle Saxon directed the state program; Edward Dreyer was assistant director, and Robert Tallant worked as a special writer. The three drew on transcripts by

field interviewers in writing *Gumbo Ya-Ya*, the compendium of folk tales and folklore that has been in print since its 1945 publication.

The chapter on Mother Catherine paints an unflattering picture of the aban-

Church movement in 1920, the four-page profile of Mother Catherine is all too spare. The book reflects a skepticism bordering on derision of a religious culture marked by visitations of the spirit.

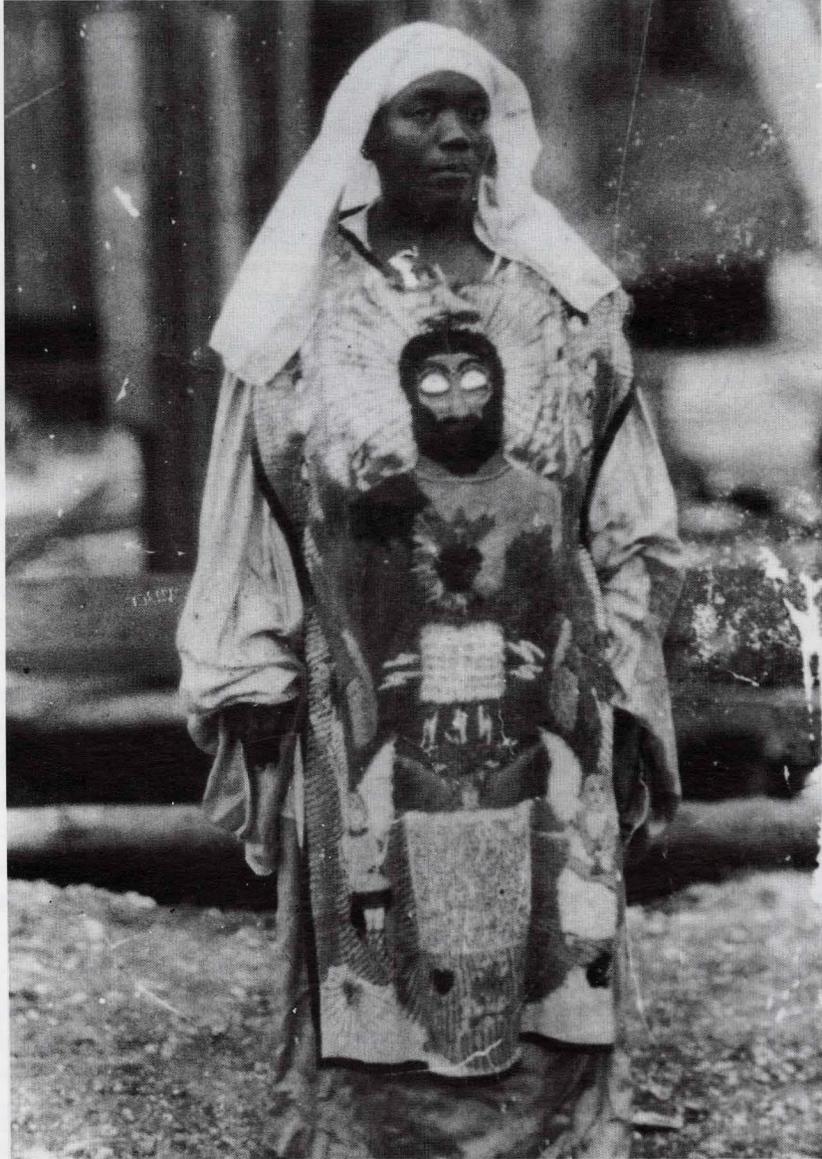
That attitude is unfortunate.

Although the authors had field reports mentioning Chris Kelly, an important jazz trumpeter who played in the small, vernacular church of Mother Anderson, they ignored the musician and the founder. At services at her uptown church on Amelia Street, Leafy Anderson dramatized scenes of her own life and performed acts of benevolent spirit worship. Men led the larger Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal churches. Leafy Anderson was a divorced woman whose dynamic personality and spirit-summoning drew in poor folk seeking something more than fellowship – they wanted hope in the void of a city. Leafy Anderson and the circle of reverend mothers she taught remade themselves into charismatic figures; their rituals conjured a world of protective spirits interwoven with the hard lot of daily life.

In 1920, when she gravitated to Leafy Anderson, Nanny Cowans had been married three times, and

apparently had at least two natural children. She had also suffered a “supposed paralytic stroke, resulting from a terrific battle with her third husband,” according to an LWP report. Put another way, she was a badly battered wife.

Renaming herself Mother Catherine



Mother Catherine Seals, ca. 1925. Photograph courtesy Jason Berry

doned grounds of her compound, nearly a decade after her death: “Pigs wallow in the ‘baptismal pool’ ...[and] chickens are busy in her ‘Temple.’” Considering the abundant material the authors had on her life, and that of her mentor, Mother Leafy Anderson, who founded the Spiritual

was part of her transformation. Imagine the impact Leafy had on Catherine: a compelling orator, summoning spirits, planting jazzmen in sacred spaces.

New Orleans in the 1920s was teeming with tiny churches, storefront chapels, and not a few self-styled healers. The daily press gave extensive coverage to a would-be healer, one John Cudney, popularly known as Brother Isaiah, a white man with a snowy beard who drew huge crowds to a houseboat where he lived on the Mississippi River at Calhoun Street; he called his place the Camp of Saints. Eventually his miracles proved hollow and he fled to Biloxi, stalked by accusations that he had fleeced his own sister of \$2,000.

When Nanny Cowans limped out to his houseboat for healing, Brother Isaiah spurned her because she was black. As Mother Catherine, she would tell a white follower: "Lord heals me, I heals all colors."

The Spiritual churches drew liberally from Roman Catholicism, black Protestantism and an African ritual psyche. The pantheon of spirits venerated included Michael the Archangel, among other Christian saints, and Black Hawk, the rebellious leader of Sauk Indians in Illinois in the early 1830s. Mother Anderson introduced Black Hawk to New Orleans as her "spirit guide." Ceremonies honoring Black Hawk are still a vibrant force in many Spiritual churches in the city today.

In a religious movement lacking the hard planks of dogma, Mother Catherine looked to the Old Testament. "First she got the spirit of King David and opened a church on Jackson Avenue," a white follower, Natalie Scott, told an LWP interviewer. "Her church was originally founded to stop abortions."

Her identification with a King of Israel probably signaled a desire for protection from the world of men. No men lived at the Manger, though she had many male followers and men who helped on a daily basis. "We are happy living together with Virgin children in here with me an other Virgin Wemon," reads the will, verbatim. In a community with pregnant teenagers and young women, children and older women, she replicated the earliest

Christians who embraced celibacy in middle life, "a principle of reversibility, [that] the flow of life itself could be halted," according to Peter Brown, the Princeton scholar and authority on early Christianity.

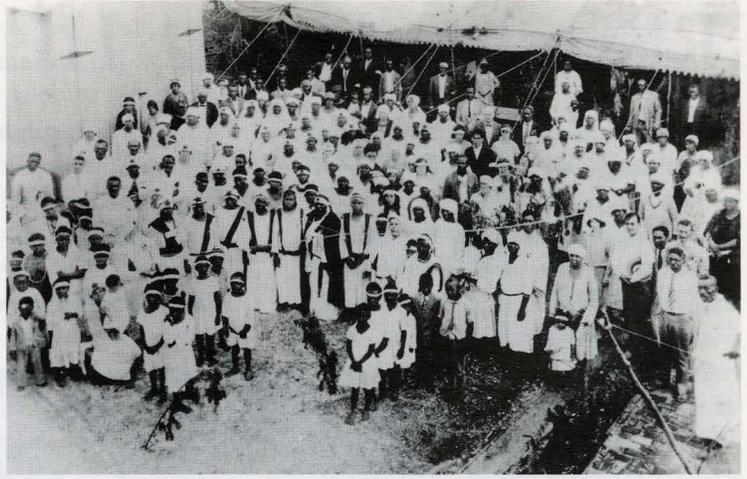
Catherine was reversing the suffering of her own life and that of those in her midst. "She was always taking people in who had no place to go and no one to help them," a white admirer, one Mrs. Fuccich, who lived in the French Quarter, told an LWP interviewer some 60 years ago. "She always had girls who had babies, or were going to have babies, and had no place to go or their husbands had left them."

"I never saw any miraculous cures but heard people talk about them," continues Mrs. Fuccich's statement. "I was told about a little Italian girl who was unable to walk and Mother Catherine cured her...the parents gave Mother Catherine \$500 for the cure."

Mrs. Gloria Rosselli, a retired pianist, was the child in question. In a February 8, 1996 interview, when she was 70, Mrs. Rosselli explained that she was born with osteoporosis, or rickets, and was unable to walk. She was two when her family brought her to the Manger.

"My grandmother gave her \$500...It seemed like she lived in a tent, if I remember right." "She said put this child out in the heat of the day, give her cod liver oil till it's coming out of her ears," Mrs. Rosselli continued, half seriously. "That must have been her cure. It was God first and then cod liver oil. I believe in miracles...I became a musician."

The commune of women-helping-women Mother Catherine created around



Mother Catherine's Religious Cult from Danny Barker
c. 1920
Ernie Cagnolletti was the Angel Gabriel

Mother Catherine's understanding of people and her spiritual leadership attracted many followers. The inscription (above) was written on the back of the photograph, 1920s, by musician Danny Barker (92-48-L).

herself did not last long. No comparable leader emerged to take her place. A decade after her death the site was barely functioning, as cynically described in *Gumbo Ya-Ya*.

Yet the measure of her life is that she managed to achieve as much as she did, and how deeply she affected the lives of people who lived at the Manger or visited there by the hundreds for her services. The LWP field interviews make frequent reference to claims that she performed miraculous cures. What medical science might say of those stories is anybody's guess. The greater lesson is that her followers believed in her spiritual power, and provided a body of fact and lore about her life, which was a remarkable one by any gauge.

— Jason Berry

Jason Berry is a writer working with the jazz collections at THNOC. He is co-author of Up From the Cradle of Jazz and author of The Spirit of Black Hawk.

Sources: Jason Berry, *The Spirit of Black Hawk: A Mystery of Africans and Indians* (Oxford, Miss., 1995); Jason Berry, Jonathan Foote, Tad Jones, *Up From the Cradle of Jazz: New Orleans Music Since World War II* (Athens, Ga., 1986); Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988); Zora Neale Hurston, *The Sanctified Church* (Berkeley, Ca., 1981); *Louisiana Weekly*, Aug. 23, 1930; William Russell Collection, THNOC; Lyle Saxon, Edward Dreyer, Robert Tallant, *Gumbo Ya-Ya* (New York, 1945); Robert Tallant Collection, New Orleans Public Library.

WILLIAMS RESEARCH CENTER ACQUISITIONS



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION encourages research in the Williams Research Center at 410 Chartres Street from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays).

Cataloged materials available to researchers include books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, drawings, maps, photographs, and artifacts about the history and culture of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Gulf South. Each year the Collection adds thousands of items to its holdings by donation or purchase. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

CURATORIAL

For five years, photographer Frank H. Methe III photographed the holiday celebrations at 718 Toulouse Street, the French Quarter home of Collection founders Kemper and Leila Williams. Though the Williamses had no children of their own, they enjoyed the company of an extended family, especially during the holidays. Methe's photographs, a gift of the photographer, provide a glimpse of the activities inside the "hidden house" of the Vieux Carré.

■ A large collection of views, the gift of photographer Angelo Mariano, includes slides, film negatives, and photoprints of activities of the Port of New Orleans, as well as photographs of balls and parades of the Krewe of Proteus during the 1970s and 1980s. Two photographs showing flooded streets in Columbia, Louisiana, during the 1927 flood come from Sally Stassi.

■ Mrs. James P. Ewin has given a collection of silverware that belonged to the family of Charles Woodward Hutson. The pieces, dating between 1790 and 1871, were manufactured by S. Howland and A. B. Griswold and Co. The gift also includes a 1940s engraved calling card for Ethel Hutson.

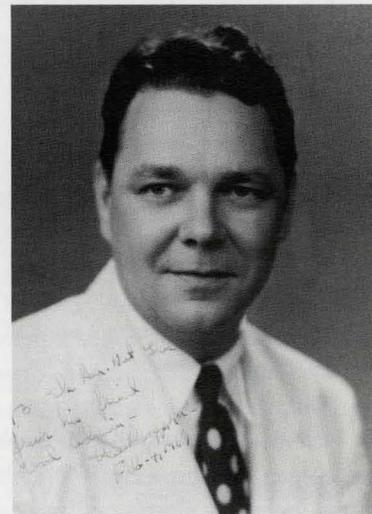
■ A 1965 color halftone map of the New Orleans area, published by the



United States Army Map Service, Corps of Engineers, is a gift of Mrs. Clara Paletou.

■ Recent additions to the Mardi Gras holdings include a souvenir from the 1998 Caliphs of Cairo ball, the gift of Dr. Wallace K. Tomlinson. The ball favor of glazed ceramic tile depicts a dragon from the opera *Turandot*, designed by Mary Wilkins Costa and made by local potters Joe and Lucianne Carmichael. James B. Akers has donated a Phunny Phorty Phellows membership certificate issued to Captain Thomas Leathers, dated December 3, 1879, published by the New Orleans Lithograph and Engraving Company, given in memory of Otis B. Folendore, Jr. The first ball of the Phunny Phorty Phellows was held in 1880 at Odd Fellows Hall.

■ Two oil portraits by Harold Edwards "Hal" Carney are recent donations. The portrait of Hugh Kohlmeier, New Orleans businessman, painted in 1965, is the gift of Mrs. Diane Laizer Carney. The portrait of John J. McKeithen, dated March 1966, is



Clockwise, top left, Leila Moore Williams in the residence at 718 Toulouse Street, 1957, by Frank H. Methe III (1998.76); Hale Boggs, 1957 (1998.75.7), see photographic acquisition, page 12; New Orleans Night Club by Thomas Hart Benton, ca. 1940, depicting "Fats" Pichon at left (1998.82)

from Ian Carney. McKeithen was governor of Louisiana from 1964 to 1972. *Leda and the Swan*, a 1980-1981 acrylic on canvas by Noel Rockmore, is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. George Wein and Festival Productions.

THIRD SATURDAY AT THE WILLIAMS RESEARCH CENTER

An introduction to research at the Williams Research Center is planned for the third Saturday in February, March, and April. Each session will include an orientation to the book, manuscript, and visual image collections and focuses on a particular resource.

February 20: Vieux Carré Survey

March 20: Historic Cemeteries

April 17: Cartographic Holdings

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Limited enrollment,
reservations required
(504) 598-7171
Light refreshments



Membership certificate, Phunny Phorty Phellows, 1879 (1998.74.1)

■ *New Orleans Night Club*, a pencil sketch by Thomas Hart Benton, drawn about 1940, shows two vignettes, one of “Fats” Pichon at the piano and the other a young woman smoking a cigarette. Other artworks include a plaster of Paris bas-relief sculpted by Marshall Wood for the tomb of French Quarter artist Kurt Kuhl. The relief, which shows a portrait of Kuhl at his easel and wearing his characteristic visored cap, is a gift of the sculptor.

■ The calendar, changing clothing styles, and technological advances are all ways of marking historical time. Political change is another. Recently acquired photographs of politicians bearing personal greetings and autographs of the sitters attest to this change. The portraits date from the middle 1950s to the early 1970s and show such well-known local politicians as district attorneys Jim Garrison and Harry Connick, Mayor “Chep” Morrison, and U.S. Representative Hale Boggs.

■ A recent gift from the Bronx County Historical Society includes a first-day cover from the inaugural flight of C.A.M. 23 from New Orleans’s Alvin Callender Field to New York in 1928 and a copy of the 1927 Airway Bulletin giving statistical data on Callender Field. The airfield was named for Alvin Callender, a Louisianian killed in combat during World War I.

— *Judith H. Bonner and John H. Lawrence*

MANUSCRIPTS

Family papers can reveal the impact of an individual on a community. Three recent additions highlight the involvement of men who influenced New Orleans politics and the economy.

■ James William Porch (1858?-1921) played a significant role in the commercial development of New Orleans. His involvement in New Orleans trade with Mexico and work with the New Orleans Progressive Union are documented in items donated by James Schwartz, his grandson. Included are an 1885 letter of appointment and a special passport given by President Grover Cleveland to Porch as consul general to Mexico City in 1886 and the acknowledgment of his position by Porfirio



Eagle watermark on special passport for American consul general to Mexico, 1886 (98-54-L)

Diaz, president of Mexico. The donation complements Mss 256, the James William Porch Collection.

■ In 1915 William J. Uhalt and Joseph H. Uhalt (1899-1975) began a 5-watt amateur radio station, 5CF. On July 23, 1923, the brothers started broadcasts from WCBE (later WDSU). William moved to Houston, Texas, and Joseph expanded the station to 1000 watts for WDSU’s first public broadcast on July 6, 1928. The call letters were based on the studio’s location at the Hotel DeSoto, the *New Orleans States* newspaper which supplied live telegraph coverage of events, and the Uhalt Radio Company. WDSU’s distinguished history includes many local firsts: remote report, network program, political speeches, election returns, and baseball, football, and boxing broadcasts. The Joseph H. Uhalt WDSU Papers, recently donated by his son, Hugh C. Uhalt, include correspondence, contracts, ephemera, photographs, and clippings which document the beginning



Huey Long, ca. 1930 (98-55-L), Uhalt Papers

and evolution of a dynamic force in New Orleans.

■ The Jane Read Schoonmaker Governor Hahn Collection, donated by her children, Susan S. Dufour, Ann S. Lopez, Rae S. Miller, Gail S. Ruddock, and Jan Schoonmaker, includes items which document the various phases of Michael Hahn’s political service to Louisiana. Michael Hahn (1830-1886) was born in Germany but moved to New Orleans as a child. After earning a law degree at the University of Louisiana in 1851 and practicing law, he purchased and edited the *New Orleans True Delta*. Hahn later published the *New Orleans Republican* (1867) and the *St. Charles Herald* (1872). Originally a Democrat and anti-secessionist, he joined the Republican party in 1862. Hahn served as congressman in 1863, governor in 1864, and U.S. Senator in 1865. A gunshot wound contributed to his retirement to St. Charles Parish where he founded Hahnville in 1872. He continued to serve in various political roles and was widely respected in spite of his Union sympathy.

■ From 1945 to 1981 Thomas “Tommy” Griffin (1906-1996) was a part of many New Orleanians’ lives through his “Roving Reporter” and “Lagniappe” columns in the *New Orleans Item*, later the *States-Item*, and his columns in *Figaro*. Lee Mason, Griffin’s nephew, has donated working papers which include chronologically arranged column clippings and scrapbooks of columns.

■ Joseph Marcal III has donated a volume containing 52 issues of *L’Impartial*, 1839-1840. Published in New Orleans in French by Adolphe Meynir & Co., the newspaper carried news of cultural events, poetry, fashion, and the economy.

— *M. Theresa LeFevre*

LIBRARY

A recent acquisition, *Annual Reports of The State Superintendent of Public Education For Louisiana, and of The Chief Superintendent of Public Schools of the City of New Orleans, For the Year 1878*, focuses on issues that are still relevant today, stating that "the teachers of the public schools of the City Of New Orleans have suffered grievous hardships from the inability of the city to pay, regularly, the too moderate salaries allowed them."

■ *State of Louisiana. Fifth District Court of New Orleans. Mrs. J. S. Clark et al., Vs. I. T. Preston, Executor of Jas. Brown* is an 1847 New Orleans imprint, hand sewn in original wrappers, concerning a dispute over the disposition of plantation property, including slaves.

In 1832 James Brown, a Louisiana plantation owner on the German Coast in St. Charles Parish, designated that his assets and community property be apportioned so that at his death half would go to his wife's legal representatives. The other half of his possessions in Louisiana, the plantation with its appurtenances in slaves and all utensils, he wanted "disposed of as my executors think fit." A series of legal petitions and court filings attempting to settle the property controversy are part of the document. After nearly a decade of legal wrangling, Judge A. M. Buchanan rendered a judgment of \$3064.17 in favor of the plaintiffs.

■ *List of Post Lights on the Western Rivers* is an 1895 Government Printing Office publication bound in a handsome wooden cover with an imprinted leather spine.

In the early days of American river traffic, post lights were essential aids for river pilots who navigated more than 25,000 miles of the country's waterways. Of note in this publication are the sections that list the post lights on the Mississippi River above and below Cairo, Illinois, as well as on the Red River flowing into Louisiana. Light No. 349, for example, was a white light positioned on the left side of the river channel, at the Bonnet Carré Crevasse 961.3 miles south of Cairo, Illinois.

Occasional red lights could be found on some of the post lights on Ohio River locations. Certain remarks, changes, and handwritten notes can be found scribbled on various pages.

Today nearly 60,000 marine aids are used by pilots navigating the coasts, rivers, and inland lakes. The specific locations of all these aids as well as detailed maps can now be easily located via the Internet or a computer CD-ROM product.

— Gerald Patout

DO YOU HAVE THESE TITLES?

The Williams Research Center Library wishes to fill in some gaps in its collection of noteworthy 19th-century Louisiana authors. Anyone interested in donating any of the fiction titles listed below should call Gerald Patout, head librarian, at 504-598-7125 or send an e-mail message to Geraldp@hnoc.org.

Augustin, George. *Claude Mirelle: A Christmas Story*. [S.l.] Creole Fireside, [1897].

[Cable, George Washington; Stuart, Ruth McEnery; and others.] Ford, Paul Leicester, comp. *A House Party: An Account of Old Stories Told at a Gathering of Famous American Authors*. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co., 1901.

Davis, Mary Evelyn Moore. *The Queen's Garden*. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1900.

Delpit, Albert. *Odette's Marriage; A Novel*. Trans. from the French by Emily Prescott. Chicago: H. A. Sumner, 1880.

Dorsey, Sarah A. *Athalie; or, A Southern Villeggiatura: A Winter's Tale*. By "Filia" [pseud]. Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger; New Orleans: J. A. Gresham, 1872.

Chopin, Kate. *At Fault*. St. Louis: Nixon-Jones Printing Co., 1890.

DONORS JULY – SEPTEMBER, 1998

William T. Abbott
James B. Akers, in memory of
Otis B. Folendore, Jr.
Eugene Antoine
Adele S. Antoine
Arthur Roger Gallery
Olive Smith Bel
Sarah V. Bohlen in memory of Ernest C. Villeré
Dr. Patricia Brady
Eric J. Brock
The Bronx County Historical Society
The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies
Dr. Gordon W. Callender, Jr.
Diane Laizer Carney
Ian Carney
Mrs. William K. Christovich
Ralph Collins
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Mrs. S. H. Colvin, Jr.
Susan Dart
Thomas B. Denègre, Jr.
Susan S. Dufour
Mrs. James P. Ewin, Jr.
Friends of the Cabildo
Lewis M. Hall
John R. Hébert
Hilderbrand Gallery
Joseph V. Hopkins, Jr.
The Japanese Garden Society of New Orleans
Lauren Rogers Museum of Art
Ann S. Lopez
Joseph Marcal III
Angelo Mariano
Lee Mason
Mayor's Office of Communications
Frank Henry Methe III
Rae S. Miller
New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival
Mrs. Rene Nicaud
Clara Paletou
Michael Patrykus
Bettie S. Pendley
Louis Peneguy
John Perret
Joseph F. Perret
Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana
Claes Ringqvist
Gail S. Ruddock
Saints Peter and Paul Parish
Jan Schoonmaker
James Schwartz
Serendipity Books
Sally Stassi
Tennessee State Library and Archives
Dr. Wallace K. Tomlinson
Hugh C. Uhalt
University Art Museum, University of
Southwestern Louisiana
University of North Carolina Press
Ursuline Convent
Joseph Seth Warner
Mr. and Mrs. George Wein
Donald E. Wilson
Marshall Wood

STAFF



John Lawrence and Eikoh Hosoe,
Director of the Kiyosato Museum
of Photographic Art

Chuck Patch

IN THE COMMUNITY

John H. Lawrence was invited to attend Oracle XVI, an international meeting of photography curators in Kiyosato, Japan. **Jan Brantley** participated in two book signings for *Southern Comfort* (photographic contributions) and has photographs on display at New Orleans International Airport. **Chuck Patch** was a featured speaker at the School for Scanning workshop sponsored by the Northeast Document Conservation Center. **Priscilla Lawrence** served as an emcee for the WYES Art Auction. **Elsa Schneider** helped with WWNO's membership drive. **Patricia Brady** serves on the Southern Historical Association's Owsley Award Committee for publications.

Speeches: **John Magill**, Living History Project, UNO College of Urban and Public Affairs, National Public Health Information Coalition, Le Petit Salon, Naim Conference, and Entre Nous Book Club; **John H. Lawrence**, Morris Museum of Art in Augusta, Georgia, and panel participant, Contemporary Arts Center; **Carol Bartels**, Louisiana Archives and Manuscripts Association; **Judith H. Bonner**, Southeastern Museums Conference; **Gerald Patout**, Jefferson Genealogical Society; **Betty Pendley**, Gentilly Rotary Club.

Interviewed: **John Magill**, *New Orleans Magazine*, *Times-Picayune*, and *GlobaLearn*.

PAPER PRESENTED

Patricia Brady, "Nelly Custis Lewis: Keeper of the Federalist Flame," at the symposium *George Washington: Death and Mourning*, held at Mount Vernon.

MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

James Powell, Louisiana Association of Museums workshop "Building Better

Exhibits for Small Museums"; **Joan Lennox** and **Marjy Greenburg**, teachers workshop, Hermann-Grima House; **Warren Woods**, Southeastern Museums Conference; **Louise Hoffman** and **Patricia Brady**, winter conclave, Publishers Association of the South. School for Scanning workshop sponsored by the Northeast Document Conservation Center, **Carol Bartels**, **Dustin Booksh**, **Judith Bonner**, **Jan Brantley**, **Mark Cave**, **Denise Klingman-Meunier**, **John Lawrence**, **Theresa LeFevre**, **Alfred Lemmon**, **John Magill**, **Chuck Patch**, **Gerald Patout**, **Nancy Ruck**, **Steve Sweet**, and **Warren Woods**.



Terry Weldon



Robin Goldblum



Joseph Warner

CHANGES

New to the Collection are **Terry Weldon**, assistant preparator, who has studied at the Cleveland Art Institute and the Chataqua Art Colony; **Joseph Warner** (B.A., Tulane University) and **Robin Goldblum** (B.A., University of Arizona at Tucson), photographic collections processors; **Judy Walston** (Loyola University), intern. **Ann Tenold** has accepted a position with the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and **Marcia Wilderman** with the Missouri Historical Society.

PUBLICATIONS

Alfred E. Lemmon, "El tratado de Santo Eulalia: un manuscrito musical nahuatl" in *Tlalocan*, XII; **Judith H. Bonner**, *New Orleans Art Review*; **Betty Pendley**, *Preservation in Print*.



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION QUARTERLY

Editors:

Patricia Brady
Louise C. Hoffman

Head of Photography:

Jan White Brantley

The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly is published by the Historic New Orleans Collection, which is operated by the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, a Louisiana nonprofit corporation. Housed in a complex of historic buildings in the French Quarter, facilities are open to the public, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Tours of the history galleries and the residence are available for a nominal fee.

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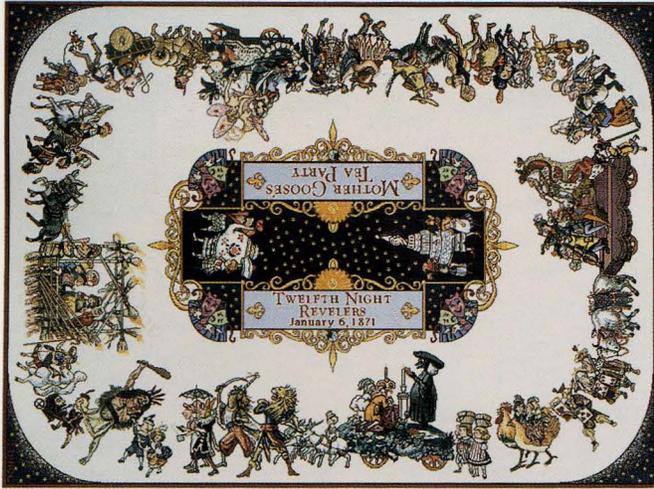
Additional photography by:

Dustin Booksh and Cornelius Regan



Fall speakers at the Collection included **Ray Hiner**, "Childhood in America: A 19th-Century Perspective"; **Gerald Patout** and **Dee Jones**, "Children's Literature: Then and Now"; and **Stephen Webre**, "Among the Cybercajuns: Constructing Identity in the Virtual Diaspora."

THE SHOP



Pictured above is the design for an afghan depicting Mother Gooses Tea Party taken from Charles Britton's 19th-century carnival drawings for the parade and ball of the Twelfth Night Revelers, held January 6, 1871. The afghan and other items in the Shop complement the current exhibition, Seen and Not Heard: Facets of Childhood in 19th-Century New Orleans. Call the Shop at 504-598-7147 for more information.

Seen and Not Heard: Facets of Childhood in 19th-Century New Orleans on view through May 1, 1999

SAA WORKSHOP SCHEDULED AT THE COLLECTION

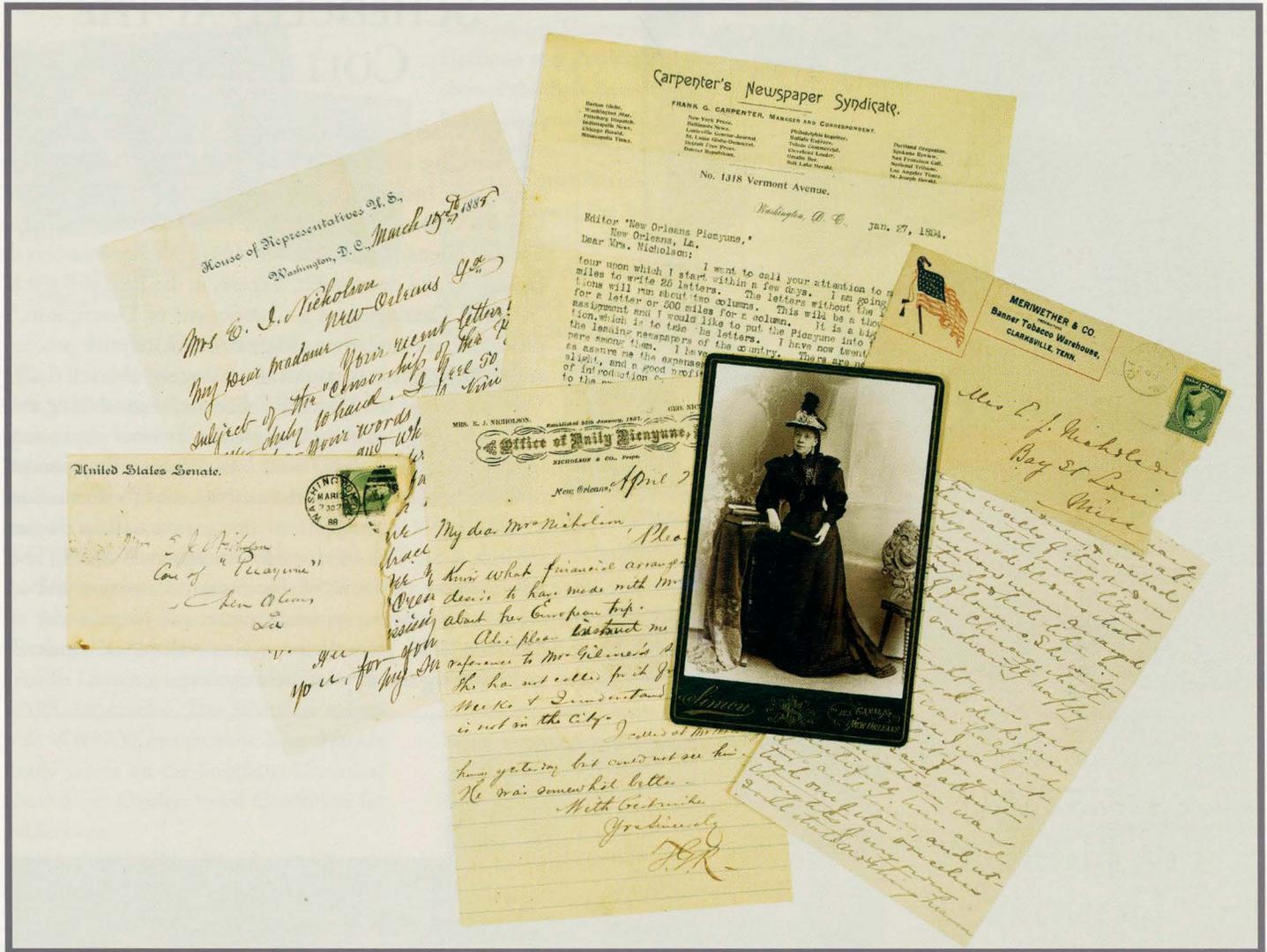
The Society of American Archivists announces a continuing education workshop, the Descriptive Standards Institute, to be held at the Historic New Orleans Collection, March 1-5, 1999. The Institute is a five-day intensive presentation of best practice in archival cataloging and description. Experts in the field will teach "Archival Cataloging as a Component of Description," presenting the underlying logic of the descriptive process and best practice in archival cataloging (March 1-2); "Application of the USMARC Format," introducing the USMARC fields and coding used in archival cataloging (March 3); and "Access Points," focusing on the concept of authority control, content analysis, and the formation of searchable access points in an archival catalogue (March 4-5). The fee for SAA members is \$623. The non-member rate is \$854. For more information and to request registration materials, please call Joan Sander at 312-922-0140. Information is also available at jsander@archivists.org and at www.archivists.org.

CHRISTMAS TEA HONORS DONORS



Donors to the Collection were honored at the annual Leila Williams Tea. Clockwise, top, Mary Louise Christovich and Celeste Judell; Elsa Schneider and Laura Simon Nelson; Joan Brown, Frank Methe, and Delilah Methe; and Dorothy Porter

THE STORY OF THEIR LIVES



Eliza Jane Nicholson, publisher of the Daily Picayune newspaper during the latter part of the 19th century, was also a poet who wrote under the pen name Pearl Rivers (see cover story, "Women's Papers at the Historic New Orleans Collection"). Pictured above are letters dealing with the affairs of the Picayune, addressed to Mrs. Nicholson (81-93-L).



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