

# The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly

VOLUME XXXIII  
NUMBER 1

WINTER 2016



**RIPPLE EFFECTS:** Louisiana Watercolors

## EVENT CALENDAR



### CREOLE CHRISTMAS HOME TOUR

Tour THNOC's Williams Residence and other historic French Quarter house museums, festively decked out for the season, as part of Friends of the Cabildo's annual holiday home tour.

**Sunday, December 27, 2015, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.**

718 Toulouse Street

\$25; tickets are available through Friends of the Cabildo, (504) 523-3939.

### MUSICAL LOUISIANA: AMERICA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

This year's concert with THNOC and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra remembers "A Fair to Remember: The 1884–1885 Concert Season in New Orleans." The 2016 concert marks the 10th year of LPO and THNOC's collaboration.

**Wednesday, January 27, 2016, 7:30 p.m.**

St. Louis Cathedral, 615 Pere Antoine Alley

Free

### WILLIAMS RESEARCH CENTER SYMPOSIUM

Complementing The Collection's exhibition *An Architect and His City: Henry Howard's New Orleans, 1837–1884*, the 21st annual WRC Symposium will explore "Perspectives on New Orleans Architecture: Past, Present, Future." Gregory Free, architectural historian and preservation specialist, will give the keynote address Friday, to be followed by a reception and special viewing of the Henry Howard show.

**Friday–Saturday, February 19–20, 2016**

533 Royal Street and the Hotel Monteleone, 214 Royal Street

For registration information and a complete schedule, please visit [www.hnoc.org/programs/symposia.html](http://www.hnoc.org/programs/symposia.html).

### TEACHER WORKSHOP WITH THNOC AND LPO

Educators are invited to join THNOC and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra in a free, half-day workshop focusing on music from the 1884–85 concert season, when New Orleans was hosting the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition.

**Saturday, February 27, 2016, 9 a.m.–noon**

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

Free; to register, please contact Education Coordinator Jenny Schwartzberg at [jennifers@hnoc.org](mailto:jennifers@hnoc.org) or (504) 556-7661.

### TEACHER WORKSHOP WITH THNOC AND GILDER LEHRMAN

THNOC and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History will host a teacher workshop on the French colonial period of Louisiana history.

**Saturday, March 5, 2016, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.**

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

Free; to register, please contact Education Coordinator Jenny Schwartzberg at [jennifers@hnoc.org](mailto:jennifers@hnoc.org) or (504) 556-7661.

## EXHIBITIONS & TOURS

All exhibitions are free unless noted otherwise.

### CURRENT

***The Katrina Decade: Images of an Altered City***

Through January 9, 2016

Laura Simon Nelson Galleries,  
400 Chartres Street

***Rolland Golden's Hurricane Katrina Series:  
A Selection***

Through January 16, 2016

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

***An Architect and His City: Henry Howard's  
New Orleans, 1837–1884***

Through April 3, 2016

Williams Gallery, 533 Royal Street

***At Home and at War: New Orleans, 1914–1919***

Through May 7, 2016

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

### PERMANENT

**Louisiana History Galleries**

533 Royal Street

Tuesday–Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Sunday, 10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**The Williams Residence Tour**

**THNOC Architectural Tour**

533 Royal Street

Tuesday–Saturday, 10 and 11 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m.

Sunday, 11 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m.

\$5 per person

*Groups of eight or more should call (504) 598-7145 for reservations or visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org).*

*Educational tours for school groups are available free of charge; please contact Daphne Derven, curator of education, at (504) 598-7154 or [daphned@hnoc.org](mailto:daphned@hnoc.org).*

### UPCOMING

***Awash with Color: Seldom-Seen Watercolor  
Paintings by Louisiana Artists, 1789–1989***

January 21–May 21, 2016

Laura Simon Nelson Galleries,  
400 Chartres Street

### GENERAL HOURS

**533 Royal Street**

Williams Gallery, Louisiana History Galleries,  
Shop, and Tours

Tuesday–Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sunday,  
10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**400 and 410 Chartres Street**

Williams Research Center, Boyd Cruise Gallery,  
and Laura Simon Nelson Galleries

Tuesday–Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.





## ON THE COVER:

### **Danish Maid**

1891; watercolor and gouache on paper  
mounted on board  
by Ellsworth Woodward  
gift of Laura Simon Nelson, 1999.118.11



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Truth and beauty. Words and pictures. At The Collection, our commitment to both history and art results in vastly different exhibitions in our various gallery spaces. Visitors can take in both information and aesthetics in whatever measure they prefer, and this winter, our curated offerings are more diverse than ever. *At Home and at War: New Orleans, 1914–1919* revisits the local home front during the difficult years of World War I. In addition to being one of the deadliest conflicts in American history, the Great War brought out divided loyalties in multiethnic New Orleans. The city worked to support the American war effort through victory gardens, fundraisers for European refugees of war, and patriotic popular songs—some published in New Orleans.

Far away from the grim business of World War I is *Awash with Color: Seldom-Seen Watercolor Paintings by Louisiana Artists, 1789–1989*. Senior Curator Judith H. Bonner, working with Curatorial Conservation Coordinator Maclyn Le Bourgeois Hickey, has put her decades of art-history expertise to work in this gorgeous celebration of 200 years of watercolor beauty. Even more festive is THNOC's off-site display of Carnival memorabilia at Antoine's Restaurant, which Curator of Decorative Arts Lydia Blackmore discusses on page 6.

If, however, you'd rather go to the library or the concert hall than to the Mardi Gras, The Collection has winter programming for you. The 21st annual Williams Research Center Symposium in February focuses on Louisiana architecture, and our annual concert with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, Musical Louisiana: America's Cultural Heritage, takes place January 27. This year's program showcases music from the 1884–85 concert season, when New Orleans was hosting the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition.

The biggest cause for excitement, however, is the start to our 50th-anniversary year. As we look back to our founding by Kemper and Leila Williams, we will also look forward and share some of our plans and dreams for the future. —PRISCILLA LAWRENCE

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New Orleans responds to the Great War.

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To kick off The Collection's 50th-anniversary year, a collection of milestones and memories.

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A

## EXHIBITION

***Awash with Color: Seldom-Seen Watercolor Paintings by Louisiana Artists, 1789–1989***

January 21–May 21, 2016

Laura Simon Nelson Galleries,  
400 Chartres Street

Free

## Local Color

The Laura Simon Nelson Galleries will showcase watercolors spanning two centuries.

The exhibition *Awash with Color: Seldom-Seen Watercolor Paintings by Louisiana Artists, 1789–1989* features rarely seen watercolors from the permanent holdings of The Historic New Orleans Collection. These paintings are exhibited infrequently because watercolor is a delicate medium that fades easily, even in the muted light of a museum gallery. Approximately 70 paintings by artists both well known, such as Walter Anderson and Alfred Jacob Miller, and more obscure, including Joseph Richards and William Thomas Smedley, will be on display. The subjects of the paintings run the gamut from landscapes and genre scenes, to architectural drawings and advertisements, to Mardi Gras float designs and portrait miniatures on ivory.

As anyone who has painted with watercolor knows, it is an unforgiving medium, applied in transparent, delicate layers, one atop another, to build depth, form, and bulk. Using this technique, watercolor artists are able to suggest the translucency of water or the texture of decaying plaster. In the 19th century, landscapists used watercolor for preliminary sketches *en plein air*, as watercolor sets are easily transportable, needing only a small cup of water to work magic. Because the watery pigment dries almost instantaneously, any slips of the brush are permanently recorded. Therefore, a successful watercolorist hones his or her craft over years of practice.

Ellsworth Woodward is known for his oil paintings, but he was also a masterful watercolorist. His depiction of a Danish maid in historical costume (featured on the cover) was

**A. *Two Dead Female Quail***

1863; watercolor and pastel  
by Marie-Pauline Casbergue Coulon  
gift of Laura Simon Nelson, 1999.118.3

**B. *The Levee at New Orleans***

1959; watercolor and gouache  
by Boyd Cruise  
gift of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond H. Kierr in memory  
of Robert M. Kierr, 1992.94



B



C



D



E

painted in 1891, while he was in Munich. Dappled light falls across her quilted bodice, highlighting its diamond pattern, the folds and tucks of her sleeves, and the crisp white fabric at her shoulders. Her white bonnet contrasts with broad transparent washes forming dark background shadows, and her smiling profile gently recedes into the darkness. Woodward served as head of the art department of Newcomb College and later as acting director of the Delgado Museum, which became the New Orleans Museum of Art.

A rare image by Carl Frederick Schwartz, completed in 1859, shows a New Orleans interior scene—rare for the medium at the time, particularly as it depicts an antebellum home on the cusp of the Civil War. The well-appointed, comfortable-looking room contains silver pitchers, goblets, and vases displayed on an étagère at the right; small horse sculptures adorn the mantel while the fireplace blazes underneath. Rich curtains punctuate tall, sun-filled windows, and a soft carpet runs wall to wall. A woman seated with her back turned to the viewer plays the piano while a younger person, also viewed from the back, seems to be writing or drawing at a table in the foreground. Refinement, art, and the importance of culture and learning seem to be the artist's focus.

A *nature morte* (still life featuring dead animals) executed in 1863 by Marie-Pauline Casbergue Coulon, wife of prolific 19th-century artist George David Coulon, is another rarity: few of her works are known to exist. In this combination watercolor and pastel, two birds hang from a nail, one by its foot with the other foot gracefully askew, the second by its head. Colors and shapes mingle and overlap, merging wings and feathers; white highlights suggest the right-hand bird's plump belly. Earth tones repeat in patterns of long and short lines, arcs, and dots. Coulon's artwork is a celebration of shape, texture, and color, and its delicate richness is a wonderful example of watercolor's enduring appeal. —MACLYN LE BOURGEOIS HICKEY

**C. *Cars and People on Canal Street***

between 1944 and 1947; watercolor and pencil  
by Walter Inglis Anderson  
1999.18.1

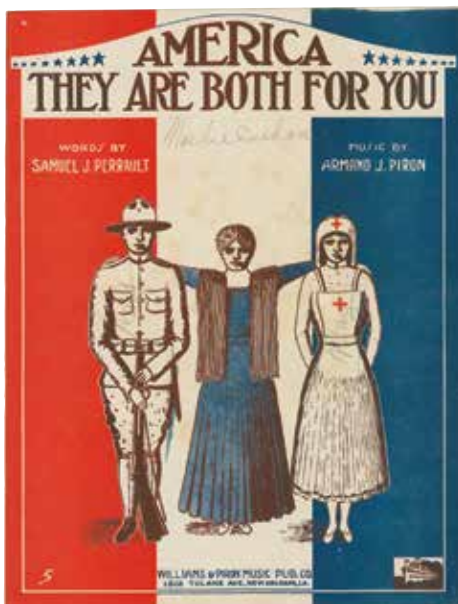
**D. *Oil Rig in the Gulf of Mexico***

between 1960 and 1980; watercolor  
by Frank Lowe  
gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Wedemeyer, 2000.81.1

**E. *Unsere Stube in Dauphin Street 67, New Orleans***

1859; watercolor and gouache  
by Carl Frederick Schwartz  
1999.39





A



B



C

## EXHIBITION

***At Home and at War: New Orleans, 1914–1919***

Through May 7, 2016

Williams Research Center,  
410 Chartres Street

Free

**A. “America They Are Both for You”**

lyrics by Samuel J. Perrault; music by Armand J. Piron

New Orleans: Williams and Piron, 1917

gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Judice, 92-521-LR

**B. *For Home and Country: Victory Liberty Loan***

1917 or 1918; color lithograph

by Alfred Everitt Orr, illustrator; American Lithographic Co., printer

gift of Mrs. Francis Gary Moore, 1983.238.4

**C. *Belgian Relief Cook Book***

by Mary Archer

Reading, PA: Belgian Relief Committee, 1915

bequest of Clarisse Claiborne Grima, 81-99-L.6

## New Orleans and the Great War

*At Home and at War* looks at the New Orleans home front during World War I.

In the summer of 1914, the crisis in Europe following the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand quickly spiraled into the devastating conflict that became the First World War. Less than three years later, in April 1917, the United States, wary of a German victory and its potential risks to national security—and anxious to participate in postwar international diplomacy—entered the fight with a declaration of war against Germany. Over the course of the next year and a half, America’s military would grow to 4.8 million men and women in service, 74,103 of whom hailed from Louisiana. By the conclusion of the war nearly 1.4 million US military personnel had fought on the front lines; 122,500 of them lost their lives to injury, disease, or other factors exacerbated by wartime conditions.

*At Home and at War: New Orleans, 1914–1919*, which opened December 9 at the Williams Research Center, examines the many contributions of New Orleanians abroad as well as the effects of the war on the Crescent City—from the public response to the start of hostilities in Europe to the November 1919 erection of the Victory Arch in Macarty Square, the first permanent memorial to American servicepeople in WWI.

As the United States remained neutral during the first years of the war, news of the conflict brought out the varied sympathies of New Orleans’s diverse population. Those connected to the Allies were appalled to see the devastation wreaked upon nations and peoples—both the French and Belgians—with whom they felt a continuing kinship and, in many corners, shared a language. Letters on display from Clarisse Claiborne to Belgian soldiers, as well as Claiborne’s copy of the *Belgian Relief Cook Book*, illustrate the city’s francophone connection and the sentiments of a segment of New Orleans’s population during the period of American neutrality. Concurrently, the city’s large German population was active in supporting the war effort of their fatherland. Receipts and donations from a 1915 German Red Cross fundraiser show the variety and quantity of businesses that offered aid to the German cause.

The US declaration of war in the spring of 1917 immediately altered life in New Orleans. Photos of Camp Martin and Camp Nicholls, which were expeditiously erected at the New



Orleans Fair Grounds and in City Park, respectively, document the military presence in the city. Additional items from THNOC's collections, including Liberty Loan posters for war bonds, a victory garden scrapbook, and patriotic sheet music from the city's various publishers and composers, illustrate the roles played by New Orleans civilians during American involvement.

Many New Orleanians also served abroad, and items from a variety of sources highlight these efforts. Letters home from France allude to the excitement, sufferings, danger, and uncertainty of life in a war zone. Uniform pieces and military

papers from the Rudolph Weinmann Collection and a book of cartoons from Roy Aymond, cartoonist for the *New Orleans States*, elucidate the varied facets of life in the American Expeditionary Force, the combined US armed forces sent to fight in France. The daily violence and tragedy of the war did not evade New Orleans, and the suffering caused by the war's destruction is evident in condolence letters from commanding officers and Tulane University colleagues following the death of pilot Alvin Callender. In a letter to Callender's grieving mother, Tulane University professor William Woodward expressed his condolences and, in the process, conveyed the impact of the war at home: "All of us, his friends in the School of Architecture, were grieved at the sudden news and expressions of pride and esteem were heard on all sides. The school promptly posted a golden star after his name on the long list of men, former students of the school, who are or were before death in the service of our or [our] allied Countries." —ERIC SEIFERTH



**D. The Victory Arch, Macarty Square, Ninth Ward**

March 4, 1920; glass-plate negative  
by John Tibule Mendes  
gift of Waldemar S. Nelson, 2003.0182.247

**E. *Guide thru New Orleans and A.E.F. Memoirs in Cartoon***

by Roy Aymond  
New Orleans: Industrial Life, 1922  
91-307-RL

**F. Postcard featuring Belgian soldier, sent by Louis Lemoine to Clarisse Claiborne**

April 20, 1917; hand-colored photo postcard  
by Établissements photographiques de Boulogne-sur-Seine  
bequest of Clarisse Claiborne Grima, 81-99-L.12

**G. Alfred Grima Jr.**

1918; gelatin silver print  
bequest of Clarisse Claiborne Grima, 81-99-L.8

**H. Rudolph John Weinmann**

1917 or 1918; photoprint  
gift of Ambassador John Giffen Weinmann, 2009.0298.5





A. **Sword** (detail)  
ca. 1875; steel, glass, gold, cloth  
1979.254.2 a,b

B. **Crown worn by Judge Wayne G. Borah, Rex**  
1946; rhinestones, glass, metal  
1983.134.1

C. **Bracelet worn by Alice Rathbone, Queen of Carnival**  
1880; rhinestones, pearls, cameos, gold  
1979.254.1.4



## OFF-SITE SPOTLIGHT

# Royal Feast

For more than two decades, THNOC has curated the Rex Room at Antoine's Restaurant. Curator Lydia Blackmore explains the room's recent revamp.

Dinner at Antoine's Restaurant is a quintessential New Orleans experience. The historic restaurant is known for its white tablecloths, crusty bread, and traditional French-Creole cuisine. Like many buildings in the French Quarter, Antoine's comprises a rabbit warren of connected rooms. Each space has a different theme, related either to the history of the building or to one of the city's prestigious Mardi Gras krewes. Among the most lavish spaces in the restaurant is the Rex Room, just behind the main dining area. Those lucky enough to dine in the purple, green, and gold room are surrounded by relics of the King of Carnival, and the glittering crowns, scepters, ducal decorations, and gown on display are part of a long-term loan from The Historic New Orleans Collection. This past summer, THNOC refreshed the Rex Room's Mardi Gras display, changing out items and replacing them with 80 duplicate or new pieces.

The Collection has loaned objects for display in the Rex Room for more than 20 years. The last major overhaul was in 2004, when fresh items were placed on view, including a beautiful gold gown worn by Shelby Scott Westfeldt, Queen of Carnival in 2003. The 2015 reinstallation was precipitated by Antoine's efforts to update lighting fixtures and improve the environmental conditions for housing museum objects. During the construction, the items on display came home for evaluation. Many will remain in storage so that they can be cleaned, photographed, and documented before getting some well-deserved rest.

Souvenirs, ducal decorations, and other items that proliferate in THNOC's extensive collection of Mardi Gras materials have been replaced with exact duplicates. In the case of the crowns, scepters, and jewelry, for which there are no exact replacements, other regalia—much of it older and more historical than the predecessors—have taken their place. The scepters and crowns are made of gilt or silver-plated metal and set with clear and colored glass stones. One scepter was replaced with an 1875 sword wielded by one







D

of the earliest Kings of Carnival. Among the most beautiful pieces on display are a pair of cameo bracelets worn by Alice Rathbone as Queen of Carnival in 1880.

The only major change to the previous Rex Room display is the expansion of the area dedicated to ducal decorations. THNOC has three nearly complete runs of ducal medallions worn by members of Rex. The new display features a medallion for almost every year from 1874 to 1914. This expanded display provides a rare public opportunity to view a complete chronology of Rex decorations.

Stephen Hales, historian of the Rex organization, assisted The Collection in adding descriptive labels to the display cases. These new labels explain the role of Rex in New Orleans Mardi Gras celebrations and highlight some of the historic pieces on display. Visitors from around the world dine at Antoine's, and many take up their waiter's offer of a tour. Unless they visit during Mardi Gras, viewing the Rex Room might be their only chance to experience the glittering majesty of the King of Carnival. —LYDIA BLACKMORE

D. The Rex Room at Antoine's Restaurant can be reserved only for private dinner parties, but any diner can request a tour of the space.

E., F. **Crown and scepter used by Elinor Bright, Queen of Carnival**

1920; silver, rhinestones, pearls  
gift of Mrs. Edmund Ernest Richardson,  
1976.141.1–.2



E



F

OFF-SITE

## Remembering the Flood

The following are holdings that have appeared outside The Collection, either on loan to other institutions or reproduced in noteworthy media projects.



**Harmony Street, Central City**

2006; photoprint

gift of the Federal Emergency Management Agency,  
2013.0274.1



**2612–14 Palmyra Street, Mid-City**

2008; photoprint

gift of the Federal Emergency Management Agency,  
2013.0274.3

As part of its coverage of the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina this past August, the **Lens**, in partnership with the **Nation**, published 14 sets of THNOC images of storm-damaged historic houses slated to be demolished by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



**Portrait of an African American woman holding a ewer**

between 1893 and 1896; oil on canvas  
by Selina Elizabeth Brès  
1997.72.2



**Louisa Werninger Robb**

ca. 1844; oil on canvas  
by Thomas Sully  
acquisition made possible by the  
Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund,  
2001.89

THNOC loaned 11 paintings to the **West Baton Rouge Museum** for the current exhibition *The Portrait, the Artist, and the Patron: 19th-Century Portraiture in Louisiana*, which runs through January 17, 2016.

Five images were provided to **Shannon Lee Dawdy** for her forthcoming monograph *Patina: A Profane Archaeology* (University of Chicago Press, 2016). The book explores the concepts of material culture and antiquity.

**Advertisement and photograph of brothel interior**

from *Blue Book*  
[New Orleans, 1903]  
2006.0237



THNOC loaned two objects relating to Margaret Haughery to the Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Catholic Cultural Heritage Center for their upcoming exhibition *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives: The Road to Sainthood*. The show, housed at the **Old Ursuline Convent Museum** in New Orleans, will be up through September 2, 2016.

**Margaret Haughery brooch**

ca. 1885; photoprint and braided hair  
in metal frame  
gift of Mrs. William Francis Scheyd, 1988.50.2

**Margaret Haughery bakery receipt**

1869  
gift of Eric J. Brock, 98-40-L



THNOC provided the **City of New Orleans** with 44 images to use in the "Past" section of a film shown at its Hurricane Katrina commemoration event held at the New Orleans Arena on August 29, 2015.

**Evacuating residents after Hurricane Betsy**

1965; photoprint  
by G. E. Arnold  
1974.25.11.76

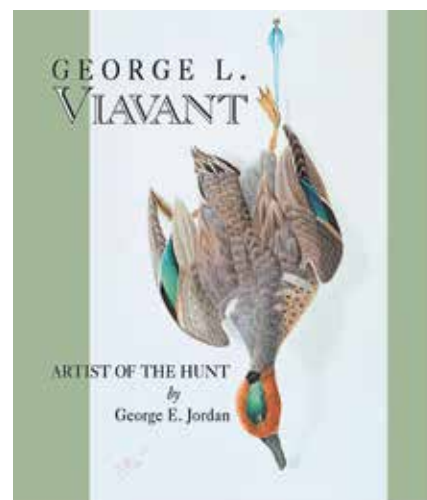


# Nature Morte

THNOC reintroduces the first volume of its Louisiana Artists Biography Series with a reprint of *George L. Viavant: Artist of the Hunt*.

Popular among art lovers and outdoors enthusiasts alike, *George L. Viavant: Artist of the Hunt*, the first volume in The Collection's Louisiana Artists Biography Series, entered its second printing this past fall. Artist George Louis Viavant (1872–1925), a keen outdoorsman, produced exquisitely detailed paintings of the birds, fish, and small game that he knew so well from years spent hunting on his family's property in then-rural Gentilly. Featuring full-color reproductions of numerous works, this illustrated biography, first published in 2003, explores the life and times of Viavant, whose work won acclaim in Louisiana and beyond.

Author George E. Jordan, using the extensive collection of Viavant family papers in the holdings of The Historic New Orleans Collection, has crafted a history of the Viavant family and the complex life of an “artist of the hunt.” Viavant studied under prominent artist and sculptor Achille Perelli and, like Perelli, specialized in *nature morte* paintings. His meticulous watercolors expertly capture each feather and fin of his subjects, which he depicted after the hunt, typically hanging from a small cord or string. Here was the bounty and beauty of wildlife, captured in realistic detail. The inclusion of Viavant's personal correspondence, including letters to and from patrons and regarding his work, adds intimacy to the historical tale and allows us a glimpse into the workings of the artist's mind. —MARY M. GARSAUD



## THNOC REPRINT

### *George L. Viavant: Artist of the Hunt*

by George E. Jordan

The Historic New Orleans Collection,  
2003

\$25, hardcover, 8 x 9½ inches, 128 pages,  
84 full-color images

ISBN 978-0-917860-48-5

Now in its second printing, available at  
The Shop at The Collection, [www.hnoc.org/shop](http://www.hnoc.org/shop), and local booksellers



A



B

#### A. Green trout

1923

by George L. Viavant  
courtesy of the Viavant Family

#### B. Perch

1923

by George L. Viavant  
courtesy of the Viavant Family

# Building an Institution

Throughout 2016, *THNOC Quarterly* will be celebrating The Historic New Orleans Collection's 50th birthday. To start, here's a look at our starts and strides over the decades.



**Merieult House, 527–533 Royal Street**  
1964; photoprint  
by Daniel Sweeney Leyrer  
1974.25.3.137

## Late 1930s

THNOC founders L. Kemper and Leila Williams, desirous of contributing to the burgeoning preservation movement in New Orleans, purchase the buildings occupying **527–533 Royal Street**, in the French Quarter. The property is fronted by the Merieult House, named for merchant and trader Jean François Merieult, who began construction on the lot in 1792. The property would later go to The Collection as part of the Williamses' foundational trust.



**America**  
between 1607 and 1612; engraving with watercolor  
by Gerardus Mercator, cartographer  
*The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 00.1*

Aware of her husband's interest in history, Leila gives Kemper a set of antique European maps and encourages him to expand the collection. These items establish **the Williams Collection**, which later becomes the founding holdings of The Historic New Orleans Collection.

## 1945

The Williamses purchase the Creole townhouse at **722 Toulouse Street**, which connects to the properties fronted on Royal Street. The townhouse, called the Louis Adam House, is known for having housed playwright **Tennessee Williams** during a transformational period, 1938–39. Poor and virtually unpublished, the young writer soaked up the atmosphere of the Quarter's bohemian scene and sent out some of the earliest scripts bearing his nom de plume from his garret apartment.



**722 Toulouse Street**  
ink drawing  
by Rolland Golden  
1967.30

## 1946

Kemper and Leila Williams move from their Audubon Street home into 718 Toulouse Street, making it their main residence in New Orleans. Although they had a summer home in Santa Barbara and a house in Patterson, Louisiana, and regularly traveled to New York and Europe, they spent at least six months a year at their French Quarter abode and remained there until 1964, when they moved to the Garden District. Today the **Williams Residence** is preserved as a house museum offering regular tours.

## 1947

Eager to establish a legacy trust dedicated to preserving New Orleans history, the Williamses establish the Williams Fund. The name was later changed to the **Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation**.





**Boyd Cruise**  
1950s; photoprint  
bequest of Boyd  
Cruise and Harold  
Schilke, 1989.79.336

## 1949

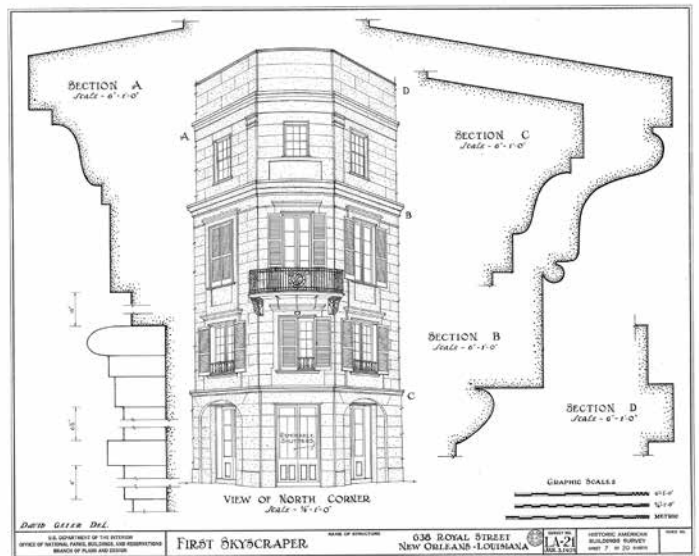
Kemper Williams hires **Boyd Cruise**, a New Orleans artist, to catalog his collection of historical materials. Cruise later became THNOC's first executive director.

## 1966

With the December 13 death of Leila Williams, the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, which will come to operate as **The Historic New Orleans Collection, is born**. The official name was first used and trademarked in 1969.



**Leila Moore Williams**  
1960s; photoprint  
gift of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Bright Jr., 2009.0292



### **First Skyscraper (638 Royal Street, north corner)**

1935; by David Geier, delineator  
courtesy of the *Historic American Buildings Survey: Survey No. LA-21, image number 2-042-055*  
Collins C. Diboll *Vieux Carré Digital Survey at The Historic New Orleans Collection*

Phase One work is completed on the **Vieux Carré Survey**, a comprehensive photographic inventory and study of the French Quarter's land-use history. Kemper Williams and Boyd Cruise served on the project's advisory board, and the physical survey was housed in the French Quarter with the Williams Collection, where it was made available to researchers. THNOC continues to refine and add to the survey, now digitized and online thanks in part to a grant from the Collins C. Diboll Foundation.

## 1970

In May, The Collection's **museum space opens to the public**, at 533 Royal Street.



Former staff members John Mahé and Maria Ybor join John H. Lawrence (right) at an exhibition opening in the Williams Gallery.

## 1971

On November 17, **Kemper Williams** passes away.



**Colonel [later General] L. Kemper Williams**  
ca. 1929; oil on canvas  
by Archibald George Barnes  
00.47

## 1974

The acquisition of **Leonard Huber's print collection** greatly enhances THNOC's pictorial holdings. Huber's carefully categorized collection helped inform THNOC's own catalog for visual materials, making images more accessible to researchers and media outlets.

## 1975

Through the efforts of founding board member Ernest C. Villeré, THNOC makes one of its early landmark acquisitions, the **papers of Pierre Clément de Laussat** (MSS 125), French colonial prefect at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. The Collection's first member organization, the Laussat Society, was later named in his honor.



### **Pitcher Plant**

1951; watercolor  
by Boyd Cruise  
bequest of Edwin A. Zelnicker Jr.,  
1996.76

## 1976

With the release of **Boyd Cruise**, a hardcover catalog accompanying an exhibition of the then-emeritus director's watercolors and drawings, **THNOC's publishing house is born.**

## 1978

The Collection receives its **first accreditation** from the American Association of Museums, now called the American Alliance of Museums.

## 1979

THNOC acquires the **archive of Charles L. Franck**, whose photography firm documented the places and people of New Orleans for nearly the entire 20th century.



### **French Opera House being hosed down after a fire**

1919; photograph  
by Charles L. Franck  
Photographers  
The Charles L. Franck Studio  
Collection at The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1979.325.5862

## 1981

THNOC begins acquiring the monumental archive of photographer **Clarence John Laughlin**.

### **A Dream of Pearls**

1940; photoprint  
by Clarence John Laughlin  
The Clarence John Laughlin Archive  
at The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1981.247.11.57





# 1983

*The Historic New Orleans Collection* Newsletter launches. In 1992 it is renamed *The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly*.



# 1985

Entering the age of computerization, THNOC works with consultants to design a **customized collections-management system**.



Former staffer Carolyn Dong poses with the Systems Department's crop of computers.



**Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville**  
between 1743 and 1768; oil on canvas  
acquisition made possible by the Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund, 1990.49

# 1990

After a lengthy process, The Collection acquires an original **portrait of Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville**, founder of New Orleans.

# 1992

THNOC acquires the extensive **William Russell Jazz Collection**, the papers, images, and recordings of devoted jazz scholar Bill Russell. The Collection hosts an annual music-themed lecture and concert in his memory.



**Bill Russell playing a flute**  
1941; photograph  
acquisition made possible by the Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund, 92-38-L.45



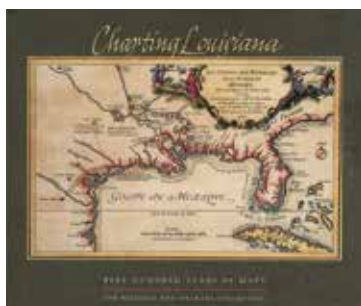
Stanley J. and Betty McDermott join the second line down Chartres Street for the WRC opening.

## 1996

**The Williams Research Center opens** to the public January 20. The Chartres Street facility makes all The Collection's holdings accessible from a single location. The same year, The Collection hosts its first **WRC Symposium**.

## 2003

The landmark exhibition *A Fusion of Nations, A Fusion of Cultures: Spain, France, the United States and the Louisiana Purchase* garners international media attention and **record attendance figures**. Also part of the Louisiana Purchase bicentennial is the release of **Charting Louisiana: Five Hundred Years of Maps**.



**The Laussat Society** is founded, opening up public membership to The Collection. Other membership levels were added soon after.

*George L. Viavant: Artist of the Hunt* inaugurates THNOC's **Louisiana Artists Biography Series**.

THNOC mounts its **first off-site, international exhibition**, *From Louis XIV to Louis Armstrong*, at the Mona Bismarck Foundation in Paris.



Conservators examine flood-damaged textiles as part of THNOC's Restoration Roadshow.

## 2005

On October 9, The Collection becomes the first New Orleans museum to **reopen after Hurricane Katrina** and the levee breaches. THNOC embarked on a major oral history and photographic project to document the tragedy, and the **Oral History Program** lives on as an outgrowth of that work. The Collection also hosted a free consultation service, the Restoration Roadshow, to help returning residents salvage treasured possessions.



**Trombone Shorty onstage with Bo Diddley, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival**  
1990  
photograph by Michael P. Smith © The Historic New Orleans Collection, 2007.0103.2.276

## 2007

THNOC acquires the **archive of photographer Michael P. Smith**, who tirelessly documented New Orleans musical culture from 1968 to the early 2000s.



## 2008

In collaboration with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, THNOC presents its first edition of **Musical Louisiana: America's Cultural Heritage**. The annual concert is now broadcast live and generates educational material for teachers and students throughout the state.



The annual concert is held at St. Louis Cathedral in the French Quarter.

In August, the inaugural **New Orleans Antiques Forum** at The Collection brings together decorative arts lovers and experts from around the country.



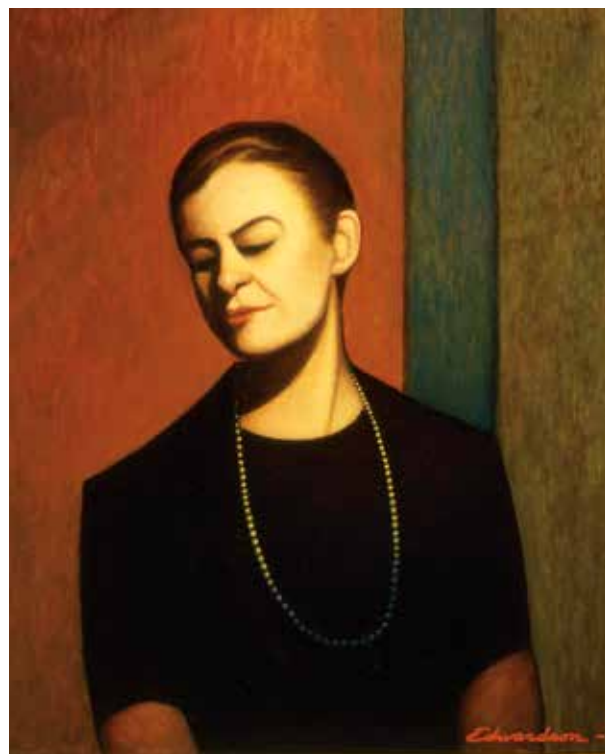
**Cher, Sonny Bono, and Harold Battiste Jr.**  
recording the theme song for *Alfie*

1965  
photographer unknown  
gift of Mr. Harold R. Battiste Jr., 2008.0225

## 2010

THNOC launches its **Louisiana Musicians Biography Series** with the release of Harold Battiste Jr.'s memoir *Unfinished Blues: Memories of a New Orleans Music Man*.

**Furnishing Louisiana: 1735–1835**, a groundbreaking, comprehensive addition to the state's decorative arts history, is published.



**Laura Simon Nelson**

1971, oil on Masonite  
by Laurence Christie Edwardson  
gift of Laura Simon Nelson, 1996.122.4

## 2012

THNOC finishes its restoration of the Perrilliat House, adjacent to the WRC on Chartres Street. In addition to office space, the historic building houses the **Laura Simon Nelson Galleries**, named in honor of Nelson's tremendous 1996 donation of Louisiana artworks.



## 2016

The Historic New Orleans Collection celebrates its 50th birthday!



A. **Robert Charles sketch**  
from the *Times-Democrat*  
July 28, 1900  
84-126-L

B. **"Mob Anger Is Vented at Random"**  
from the *Times-Democrat*  
July 26, 1900  
84-126-L

C. **A Squad of the Civic Guards**  
from the *Times-Democrat*  
July 28, 1900  
84-126-L



## Remembering a Riot

K. Stephen Prince, one of THNOC's 2015 Woest Fellows, examines one of the most disturbing episodes in New Orleans history, the Robert Charles riot of 1900.

In July 1900, the city of New Orleans experienced one of the most violent weeks in its history. Over the course of four days, at least 13 people died, with dozens more injured. Four members of the New Orleans Police Department were killed. Innocent black New Orleanians were pulled from streetcars and shot, and the city's premier black school was burned to the ground. Though police arrested more than a dozen people for their involvement in the violence, none were convicted. For many African Americans, the event cast a pall of racial violence and mob volatility at a time when Jim Crow segregation and lynching culture was beginning to take hold across the South. In the aftermath of the riot, an unknown number of African Americans fled New Orleans, never to return. And yet, few city residents know anything of these events today.

At the center of the 1900 riot was an African American man named Robert Charles. Charles was born in Mississippi in 1865 or 1866, and moved to New Orleans in 1894. He worked various odd jobs, but by 1900 he was supporting himself by selling subscriptions to a black newspaper and shares in a company devoted to helping southern African Americans migrate to Liberia. The 1890s were a particularly brutal time for black southerners. In 1896, the Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* affirmed the constitutionality of racial segregation, and in 1898, a new Louisiana state constitution denied huge majorities of African Americans their right to vote. White mobs across the South lynched hundreds of African Americans each year for a variety of real or imagined offenses. Charles's acquaintances reported that Charles was infuriated and appalled at the rising tide of white supremacy in the 1890s. He regularly carried a gun for self-defense.

On the night of July 23, 1900, Charles and his roommate, Leonard Pierce, sat on a stoop on Dryades Street. Though the two men were not breaking any laws, three members of the New Orleans Police Department arrived and began to interrogate them. When the exchange grew heated, a patrolman began to beat Charles with his nightstick. Charles spun away, and both men drew their guns and exchanged fire. Charles was wounded but managed to escape. Later that night, members of the NOPD tracked Charles to his rented apartment on Fourth Street. As the officers walked down the dark alley toward his rooms, Charles burst out, holding a Winchester rifle. He shot and killed Captain John T. Day and Patrolman Peter J. Lamb. Charles once again escaped into the night and sought asylum with friends.



A SQUAD OF THE CIVIC GUARDS.



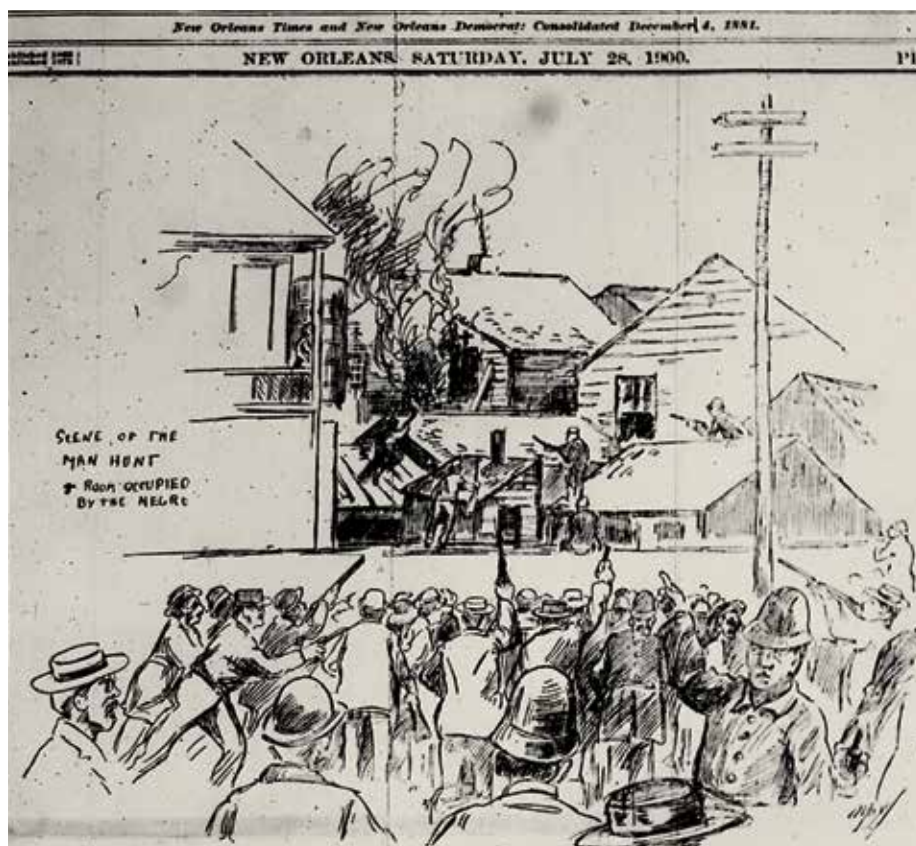
Word of the murders quickly spread. New Orleans newspapers covered the events extensively, fanning the flames of racial discord. By early morning on July 24, a crowd had gathered outside the Fourth Street apartment, and the next day, with Charles still missing, violence erupted. Around nightfall on July 25, a mob gathered at Lee Circle and spread out across the city. They attacked streetcars, beating and shooting black riders. The victims included a 75-year-old man killed on his way to work at the French Market. According to the July 26, 1900, edition of the *Daily Picayune*, “the police were entirely unable to stop the depredations of the mobs.”

In response, Mayor Paul Capdevielle organized a “citizen police” force in an attempt to restore order to the city. Approximately 1,500 civilians were deputized and received commemorative badges for their services. (One of these badges, earned by St. Denis J. Villeré and labeled with a short descriptive note in French, resides in the Ernest Caliste Villeré Papers [MSS 13] at The Historic New Orleans Collection.) The citizen police proved relatively successful in suppressing rioting. Even so, a black woman named Hannah Mabry was killed in her own home shortly after midnight on July 26.

On July 27, police finally located Robert Charles on Saratoga Street, in the neighborhood known today as Central City. After Charles burst from a closet and killed two police officers, an enormous crowd gathered. During a massive shootout, Charles killed three white civilians and wounded dozens more. When authorities decided to burn his hideout, Charles attempted to escape from the blazing building. He was shot and killed as he crossed the yard. The enraged crowd fired their weapons into the corpse—the coroner later counted 30 bullet holes. During the shootout, white mobs killed two more African Americans, one of them in police custody. Later that night, in a final act of rage, a white crowd burned one of the city’s premier African American schools, Thomy Lafon. In all, Robert Charles killed seven white people, including four members of the New Orleans police department. The official tally charged white mobs with the murder of five African Americans, though the true number could be higher.

The events of July 23–27, 1900, quickly faded from sight in the mainstream press. Among the city’s African American population, however, stories of the riot lingered. In the decades to come, several notable New Orleans jazzmen, including Jelly Roll Morton, Louis “Big Eye” Nelson, Danny Barker, and Sidney Bechet, would offer their recollections of the Charles affair. Nelson’s response to the riot was deeply personal: a white mob had killed his father. Jelly Roll Morton insisted that a song about Robert Charles had circulated in the community, though he claimed to have forgotten the words. Echoes of the Charles incident reverberate to this day: in the age of Ferguson, Missouri, and Black Lives Matter, the complex interplay of race, violence, and policing continues to attract attention and provoke controversy. The story of Robert Charles and the 1900 riot is complicated and upsetting, but it is well worth remembering.

—K. STEPHEN PRINCE, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA



D

D. *Scene of the Man Hunt*  
from the *Times-Democrat*  
July 28, 1900  
84-126-L

E. *Citizen police badge*  
1900  
gift of Ernest Caliste Villeré, MSS 13



E



## ON THE JOB

# Keely Merritt

**POSITION:** Head of photography, on staff since 2003

**ASSIGNMENT:** Photograph off-site events and projects

Although it's a pleasure to work in The Collection's beautifully renovated buildings, handling interesting artifacts and materials and learning new things every day, I must admit, I love a good field trip! Getting out of the office for an off-site photo shoot is rejuvenating and fun, giving me a chance to visit new places and meet people I never would have otherwise. It's another way to learn more about the history of the area, to record and document important places or events as an ambassador of The Collection.

Part of the Photo Department's mission is to shoot not only items in our holdings or events that we host but also locations of historical importance throughout the area, especially ones that are in the process of changing. In 2008, the US Custom House was renovating its large room called Marble Hall, and my coworker Melissa Carrier and I went over to photograph the progress. Scaffolding had been erected to provide a floor near the ceiling. It was exciting to be near the top of the 19th-century building's intricately carved columns and to document efforts to preserve the structure. I hope everyone who enters this majestic room takes the time to look up and admire.

Another local landmark I photographed pre-renovation is the Étoile Polaire Lodge No. 1, the oldest Masonic hall in New Orleans and one of the oldest in the country. I felt privileged to be in this place that seemed mysterious and secret, as well as excited to tell my dad, who is a Mason.

Sometimes the Photo Department documents a location of cultural importance because it's disappearing altogether. The Deutches Haus building that had stood on Galvez Street since 1910 was demolished in 2011 to clear the site for a new, large medical complex, but before its demise, Melissa and I photographed it completely, inside and out. Having been to many crowded Oktoberfests there, I'm glad I got to be a part of preserving the original

Deutches Haus's memory. A few more locations Photo was lucky to shoot before some kind of significant change were the Mother-In-Law Lounge, the former musical home of Ernie K-Doe; Rock 'n' Bowl, before it moved to its new location; and the Musée Conti Wax Museum here in the French Quarter, which is set to close in early 2016, after 51 years.

Every year The Collection's New Orleans Antiques Forum offers an optional bus tour to visit plantation houses and historic private homes, most of which are not usually open to the public. I typically go on a preliminary photography trip a few weeks beforehand to gather shots for promotional use, and sometimes I join the actual bus trip to record the fun. These locations are energizing for a photographer, with beautiful pictures to take everywhere I look. It's different every year and truly something to look forward to.

### A. Atop the Hotel Monteleone

January 24, 2015

by Keely Merritt

### B. Funeral procession for Archbishop Philip Hannan

November 5, 2011

by Keely Merritt

### C. Albania Plantation House

May 5, 2015

by Keely Merritt



A





These off-site photo shoots make me feel like I have a backstage pass. For instance, every year at our annual concert with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, I go up in the balcony of St. Louis Cathedral. At first I'm just doing my job, concerned with getting the best shots possible, but then the music starts and I'm floating like all the saints painted on the walls around me. It's thrilling and surprises me every time. In October 2011 I got permission to shoot from the balcony of the Cabildo, to get an aerial view of the solemn funeral procession for Archbishop Philip Hannan. There have been a few instances where it wasn't my intention to get behind the scenes, but I just started talking to people and

things happened! I was shooting the dinner event at the Hotel Monteleone that concludes THNOC's annual Williams Research Center Symposium, and the next thing I knew I was on the rooftop getting some twinkly nighttime views of the city.

But for now I'll be back at my desk or in the studio, looking forward to the next field trip. While I wait maybe I'll remember that bus trip to Port Hudson. It was a crisp February day, strolling with the group and snapping pictures, learning about the Civil War and soldiers and battles. And as I walked a trail I turned my camera toward the sky through the bare tree branches and took a peaceful, present-day picture of blue and gray. —KEELY



C MERRITT

## STAFF NEWS

### New Staff

**Lindsey Barnes**, database manager.  
**Heather Green**, reference assistant. **Laura Jordan**, docent. **Nick Borkowski**, **Lea Young**, **Diane Finley**, **Wayne Hanley**, **Ian McCormick**, **Scott Noren**, **Erin Royal**, and **Elizabeth Vegas**, volunteers.

### Changes

**Eric Seiferth** is now assistant curator/historian.

### In the Community

In October, Senior Librarian/Rare Books Curator **Pamela D. Arceneaux** and graphic designer **Nancy Sharon Collins** delivered a joint presentation at the WRC for attendees of the American Institute of Graphic Arts Design Conference. The lecture, "Law and Lawless in New Orleans," showcased some of The Collection's more salacious pieces of graphic media.

**Chris Cook**, **Kevin Harrell**, and **Robert Ticknor** participated in a panel discussion at the Gulf South Historical Association (GSHA) conference in Natchez, Mississippi. The panel was titled "A Quarter Century of Modernity: Conflict, Disease, and Expression in New Orleans at the Dawn of the 20th Century."

Curator **Howard Margot** gave two lectures in September: he presented "The Odyssey (So Far) of New Orleans's French and Spanish Colonial Archives" to members of the Louisiana Historical Society, and at the GSHA conference he presented a lecture about two of The Collection's online databases, the **Collins C. Diboll Vieux Carré Digital Survey** and the **1926 Surrey Calendar**.

In October, **Mark Cave** and **Howard Margot** presented a lecture about THNOC at the Louisiana State Archives in Baton Rouge, in celebration of Archives Month.

### Publications

**Robert Ticknor** wrote an article, "The Famous French Quarter Entresol," for the November 2015 issue of *Preservation in Print*.





All members receive a 10 percent discount at The Shop at The Collection, a great place to purchase holiday gifts.

### MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

**Founder Individual \$35**

**Founder Family \$65**

*Full membership benefits*

Family memberships are for one or two adults and any children under 18 all residing in a single household, or for one member and a guest.

**Merieult Society \$100**

*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift

**Mahalia Society \$250**

*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)

**Jackson Society \$500**

*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures

**Laussat Society \$1,000**

*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala

**Bienville Circle \$5,000**

*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala
- lunch with the executive director



Debbie Fallis, Dot Weisler, Katie Hovas, and Michelle Leckert enjoy the 2015 Laussat Gala.

## Become a Member

### BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

All members of The Collection enjoy the following benefits for one full year:

- complimentary admission to all permanent tours and rotating exhibitions
- special invitations to events, trips, receptions, and exhibition previews
- complimentary admission to the Concerts in the Courtyard series
- a 10 percent discount at The Shop at The Collection
- a subscription to *The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly*

### HOW TO JOIN

Visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) and click the **Support Us** link or complete the enclosed envelope and return it with your gift.



Members of the Laussat Society made possible The Collection's recent acquisition of the 1964 Noel Rockmore painting *Shipyards and Construction* (2015.0096.2).

### NORTH AMERICAN RECIPROCAL MUSEUM PROGRAM

Members of the Merieult, Mahalia, Jackson, and Laussat Societies and the Bienville Circle receive reciprocal benefits at other leading museums through the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) program. These benefits include free member admission, discounts on concert and lecture tickets, and discounts at the shops of participating museums. Visit [www.narmassociation.org](http://www.narmassociation.org) for more information.



## ON THE SCENE

# Member Appreciation and a Prohibition Party



A



B



C



D

The 2015 Laussat Gala honored members of The Collection's Laussat Society and Bienville Circle. This year, in addition to the Rockmore acquisition (see p. 20), the member groups made possible the publication of a forthcoming monograph on sculptor Enrique Alf  rez. Joseph and Sue Ellen Canizaro hosted the elegant affair at their Old Metairie home.

A. John H. and Priscilla Lawrence, Joseph Canizaro, and Jack Pruitt

B. E. Alexandra Stafford and Raymond Rathle

C. Mary Lou Christovich and Elyria Grote

D. Claudia Kelleher, Mary Jane Becker, and Emanuel Blessey

E. John and Lillian Uhl

F. Robert Marks and Lee Adler

G. Harvey Burns, Jim and Kay Orth, Bill and Joan Tebow, and Davis Jahncke



E



F



G



H

As part of its 175th anniversary celebration, **Antoine's Restaurant** hosted a Prohibition-themed "speakeasy" dinner, with part of the proceeds benefiting The Historic New Orleans Collection. As costumed protesters advocated temperance outside the door, the French Quarter restaurant provided food and drinks, entertainment by Jimmy Maxwell and Giselle Bonfaire, and a chance to relive a piece of New Orleans history.

H. The Temperance Women: Ain   Branch, Sarah Allison, Sara Hudson, and Hillary Eklund

I. Rick and Lisa Blount

J. Servers preparing Caf   Brulot to accompany Baked Alaska

K. Diane Lyons, Betsie Gambel, Jerry Miller, and Laurie Valentino



I



J



K



## FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

### Charles Smith

In southern Louisiana, where great natural beauty comes packaged with hurricanes and high water tables, a harmonious relationship with the environment is often held up as a precious but fleeting ideal, one that modernity has made harder and harder to maintain. THNOC member Charles Smith knows what it means to accept Louisiana's environment on its own terms, having experienced its bounty, tranquility, and volatility in his unique upbringing in Pilottown. Located in Plaquemines Parish just above the mouth of the Mississippi River, where the river breaks into the three estuaries of the bird's foot delta, Pilottown was and is accessible only "by helicopter, seaplane, or boat," Smith said. His experience at the outer reaches of southern Louisiana habitation has made him appreciate The Collection's dedication to preserving all aspects of the area's culture and history, no matter how off the beaten path.

Pilottown, founded as an outpost for the various river pilots who navigated vessels through specific stretches of the Mississippi, is in Smith's blood. His great-grandfather,

Charlie Smith, helped make navigation safer by manning a light platform from the early 1900s until the 1960s. "Back then the lights still ran on kerosene, and he would row out to light the light every night and then go back out in his small rowboat to turn it out in the morning," Smith said. "Still today the navigational light is known as the Charlie Smith Light." Pilottown had about 200 residents before Hurricane Camille wreaked its havoc in 1969. By the time Smith was a little boy, in the 1970s, the population was down to 35 to 40 residents.

"After Camille, people moved upriver," Smith said. "People get used to civilization, that way of life. And life down in Pilottown wasn't easy."

Groceries were obtained in Venice, a 30-minute boat trip nine miles upriver. Upon returning home, "we'd get off the boat, and we'd put our groceries in the wheelbarrow, then walk down the pier and down the raised walkway to our house," Smith said. Rainwater was collected in a cistern and filtered for potable use. For baths, Smith's father would pump river

water into another cistern and add the chemical compound alum, which would force all the sediment down to the bottom. Smith's primary school was a two-room building, with one room used for the arts and the other for lessons. "There were only three students: me, my brother, and my sister." With no city sanitation department, trash was burned, but residents did receive electricity via underwater power lines. "If a barge or something hit it, we'd be out of power for six to eight weeks, until they could fix it," Smith said.

Though the conditions of Pilottown life sound like "camping all the time," for young Smith it was just home, not hardship. His free time was spent hunting, fishing, and playing. With no TV or movie theater, "my sister and I, we were outside playing all the time," he said. They'd set traps in the crawfish holes and have crawfish bisque for dinner. Some of Smith's best memories are of getting up in the morning with his mom, walking to a nearby stream, and pushing off in a pirogue to catch some fish. "We'd spend the whole day catching bass," he said. "Come home, clean the fish, fry it up." Smith's excellent marksmanship earned him the nickname Deadeye, and opportunities for hunting wildlife were literally all around his house. "My mama shot a deer out of the kitchen window, and I'd shoot ducks out my bedroom window, when the water was high," he remembered.

Hurricane Katrina destroyed Smith's Pilottown home, and now he lives on two acres near Ponchatoula. He loves his work as a horticulturist because it requires a lot of time, patience, vision, and attention to detail. Smith also is the cook in his family, and he enjoys recreating from memory recipes he learned by watching his mother and aunt. "My favorite pastime for relaxation is still getting out in a pirogue, watching the horizon, seeing the willow trees coming down to the water," he said.

Smith appreciates The Collection for its attention to both popular and lesser-known aspects of Louisiana history. "I trust them like I do a friend, to take all of the memories and history they're given," he said. "It's all about teaching people what's unique about our area." —MOLLY REID



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# July–September 2015

The Historic New Orleans Collection is honored to recognize and thank the following individuals and organizations for their financial and material donations.

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## Bookplates

**Donations are used to purchase books that will be marked with a commemorative bookplate.**

Mrs. William K. Christovich in memory of John Worthing "Jack" Calhoun—*Mardi Gras: Chronicles of the New Orleans Carnival* by Errol Laborde (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 2013)  
The board of directors and staff of The Historic New Orleans Collection in memory of John Worthing "Jack" Calhoun—*The Atchafalaya River Basin: History and Ecology of an American Wetland* by Bryan P. Piazza (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014)  
The board of directors and staff of The Historic New Orleans Collection in memory of Beauregard Louis Bassich—*New Orleans Memories: One Writer's City* by Carolyn Kolb (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013)



## ACQUISITIONS

### Related Holdings



**Treat It Gentle**  
by Sidney Bechet  
New York: Hill and Wang, [1960]  
78-832-RL



**Sidney Bechet; ou, l'Extraordinaire**  
**odyssée d'un musicien de jazz** [inscription  
to Bill Russell shown]  
by Jean Roland Hippenmeyer  
Geneva: Tribune, [1980]

**Bill Russell interviews with Manuel Manetta**  
1958, 1959, and 1968; oral history  
acquisition made possible by the Clarisse  
Claiborne Grima Fund, 92-48-L



**Sidney Bechet in Paris**  
photoprint  
by Andre Nisak  
1978.222

**Pops Foster, Bunk Johnson, and Sidney Bechet in**  
**front of the Savoy, Boston**  
1945; photoprint  
by Bill Russell  
acquisition made possible by the Clarisse Claiborne  
Grima Fund, 94-48-L.115



### ACQUISITION SPOTLIGHT

## Treat Them Gentle

**Sidney Bechet Clarinet and Jacket**  
2015.0152.1–2

A recent acquisition of The Historic New Orleans Collection is a clarinet and leopard-print jacket that belonged to Sidney Bechet (1897–1959). Bechet was born in New Orleans to a middle-class Creole family and demonstrated an interest in the clarinet at an early age. The mainly self-taught musical prodigy quickly became one of the best improvising musicians in New Orleans. As a teenager Bechet began many years of travel and was among the earliest jazz musicians to perform in Europe and the USSR. As a featured soloist with James Reese Europe's orchestra, Bechet received high praise from Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet, who labeled him a "genius." In England Bechet purchased a soprano saxophone, which, because of its much louder sound and more expressive dynamic capabilities, became his main instrument from that point on.

Bechet's unique style was characterized by a broad, singing tone, a wide vibrato, sweeping runs, extreme passion, and a bluesy lyricism. Duke Ellington called him "the very epitome of jazz" and "the most unique man to ever be in this music." Bechet helped to further the concept of improvised solo



playing and also influenced the development of the jazz saxophone and clarinet traditions. Most of the hundreds of songs that he recorded, such as his 1939 hit version of "Summertime," feature him on soprano saxophone. However, several of his greatest works—among them "Egyptian Fantasy," "Blue Horizon," and "Characteristic Blues"—feature his masterful clarinet playing. Bechet spent nearly the entire last decade of his life in France, where his numerous appearances and recorded compositions, like "Dans les Rues d'Antibes," "Les Oignons," and the international hit "Petite Fleur," made him a living legend.

The Sidney Bechet instrument recently acquired by The Historic New Orleans Collection is a rare B-flat Albert-system "plateau" clarinet manufactured by the Couesnon instrument company in France. Like most professional-grade clarinets, it is made from African blackwood and has silver-plated keys. The Albert-system clarinet was preferred by most early New Orleans jazz clarinetists because of its

## ACQUISITIONS

bigger sound and flexibility in producing a rich personal tone. This is a very different instrument from the now-dominant, technically easier and lighter-toned Boehm-system instruments used by most clarinetists since the 1930s. What makes this Bechet instrument even more rare is that it is a plateau clarinet, meaning that it has seven covered tone holes (normally, these holes are uncovered). The rarely seen plateau clarinets are made for persons who have difficulty covering the open holes with their fingers—for example, a small child or someone with some physical impairment or limitations.

Bechet rarely played clarinet during his later years and did not record on it after 1950. On his classic clarinet recordings made between the 1920s and '40s he mainly used regular Selmer Company-brand Albert-system clarinets. He acquired the Couesnon plateau clarinet at some point during the mid- to late 1950s but was never photographed with the instrument. Although it remains uncertain why Bechet had such an unusual instrument, he probably did not play it often. It could have been a gift from the instrument maker, a musician, or a fan who wanted to hear Bechet's lyrical clarinet sound again. Bechet had often complained about the difficulties of clarinet playing and may have wanted the plateau model to see if covered tone holes, like those on the soprano saxophone, would make it easier to play—especially as he began to slow down as he got older. It is also possible that Bechet could have bought the plateau clarinet for his son Daniel (b. 1954), who was only five years old when his father died. The plateau model would have been a likely choice for the small-fingered child to first learn the clarinet.

No matter the reason or circumstances for Sidney Bechet having a B-flat Albert-system plateau clarinet, this instrument is a very valuable piece to add to The Collection's holdings. It is a small part in the story of one of the greatest instrumental voices the world has ever known. The fact that Sidney Bechet owned it, touched it, and breathed his magical sound into it makes this instrument a rare gem. —MICHAEL G. WHITE, JAZZ CLARINETIST, HISTORIAN, AND XAVIER UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

## RECENT ADDITIONS

### Armstrong's Homecoming, Maritime Finds, and a Dressmaker Abroad



#### Henry Wight Diman Letter and Gunboat *Kineo* Watercolor

2015.0303, 2015.0305

These two items, acquired independently of each other, are both connected to the USS *Kineo* and the federal occupation of New Orleans during the Civil War. The *Kineo*, a Union gunboat in Admiral David Farragut's fleet, played a role in the naval engagements around Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip that led to the city's capture. The first item is an eight-page letter written by Henry Wight Diman and dated April 28, 1862. Diman came from a wealthy Rhode Island family and was the assistant paymaster on the *Kineo*. His letter, written to his brother Jeremiah

Lewis Diman, vividly describes the activities of the boat as it fought the Confederate navy, captured Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and helped take the city of New Orleans. At the beginning of his letter he writes,





“The past week has been probably the most eventful of my whole life, and I can but be thankful that I have escaped unharmed through the thrilling events & scenes which it has been my lot to pass through.” Diman then describes in great detail the preparations, the course of the battle itself, and the grisly aftermath—tending to the wounded and burying the dead. He further notes, “Do not call this Butler’s expedition anymore, he nor any of his troops . . . did the least thing until after the city and forts had surrendered, and now they will probably occupy the place, but to the gallant Farragut belongs the glory.”

The second item is a watercolor painting of the *Kineo* made by the master’s mate on the boat, Walter Davis, and dated November 8, 1862. It shows the boat on the Mississippi River and was sent by the commander of the *Kineo*, George Ransom, to Admiral Farragut. This piece aligns nicely with a 2014 acquisition of another watercolor made by Davis (2014.0262.1), showing the forts on the Mississippi River after their capture by Union forces.

—ROBERT TICKNOR

### **An Accurate Chart of the Coast of West Florida and the Coast of Louisiana . . .** 2015.0330

From 1764 until 1771, Scottish-born surveyor George Gauld (1731–1782) devoted his professional life to exploring and charting the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Following the British acquisition of West Florida, in 1763, officials recognized the need for better intelligence concerning the “Isle of Orleans” and adjacent waterways—areas that might one day be navigated by British merchants or ships of war. Gauld was commissioned to carefully map the coastal areas of newly Spanish Louisiana and British Florida. After hostilities erupted between Britain and Spain, Gauld was captured in Pensacola, in 1781, by Spanish forces under the command of Bernardo de Gálvez, but he was eventually freed and allowed to return to England, where he died in 1782. The quality of Gauld’s surveys attracted the attention of geographer and publisher William Faden

(1749–1836), who issued Gauld’s work posthumously.

Gauld’s monumental 1803 chart of the coasts of West Florida and Louisiana was engraved and printed on four large sheets. The entire chart, when assembled, measures over 10 feet long. The reduction and reconciliation of multiple draft surveys to a common scale was likely done by Gauld himself, in 1779. This extremely rare admiralty chart is the crowning achievement of Gauld’s life’s work, encompassing over 850 nautical miles of the northern Gulf coast and delineating bays, rivers, and lakes in addition to recording depths and bottom characteristics. The commanders of the 1814 British expedition against New Orleans used the 1803 Gauld chart to plot their route to the city via Bayou Bienvenue.

—JASON WIESE

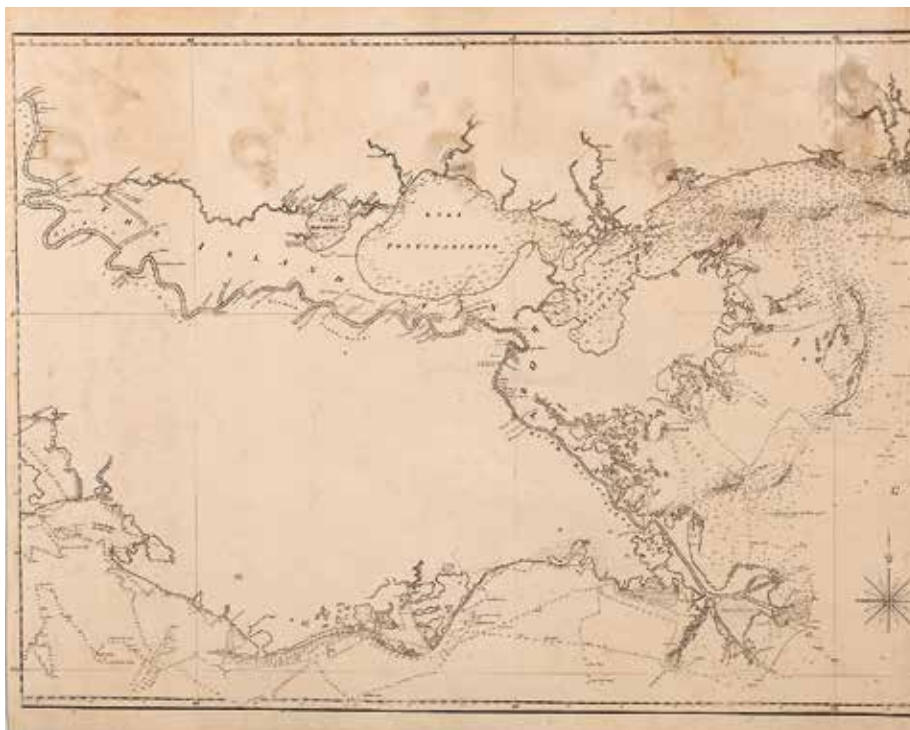
### **Playbill for Louis Armstrong at the Golden Dragon** 2015.0025.7

During his long performing career, trumpeter Louis Armstrong (1901–1971) was an international ambassador of jazz, goodwill, and what it means to be from New Orleans. His distinctive playing style and stage presence catapulted him from poverty



to recording studios, worldwide concert venues, and Hollywood soundstages. As a fledgling musician playing in dance bands on riverboats up and down the Mississippi River, Armstrong left New Orleans in 1922 to join his mentor, Joe “King” Oliver, in Chicago. King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band became Armstrong’s springboard to fame.

By the summer of 1931, Armstrong was touring the South with his own orchestra and stopped in New Orleans, where he lodged at the African American-only Astoria Hotel, 235 South Rampart Street, while under contract to perform at the



## ACQUISITIONS

whites-only Suburban Gardens, a nightclub in neighboring Jefferson Parish. Attempts to schedule performances for black New Orleanians during this tour were largely thwarted by his contract with Suburban Gardens, but, in 1935, Armstrong returned to New Orleans for three engagements at the Golden Dragon, a club located in the Astoria.

A handbill recently acquired by The Collection announces, “Biggest Event of the Season! Week of July 21–27 Our Own Louis Armstrong World-Famous Trumpet Soloist And His Orchestra at the Golden Dragon.” Including tax, admission for Armstrong’s Sunday matinee is given as \$0.87, with \$1.15 for his Sunday and Monday evening performances. Other events at the Golden Dragon that week included free concerts by the Rhapsodians Orchestra on Tuesday and Thursday and a Saturday-night dance featuring Kid Clayton’s band—admission, only \$0.20.

—PAMELA D. ARCENEUX

### Christine Laynaud Jaques Diary

2014.0520

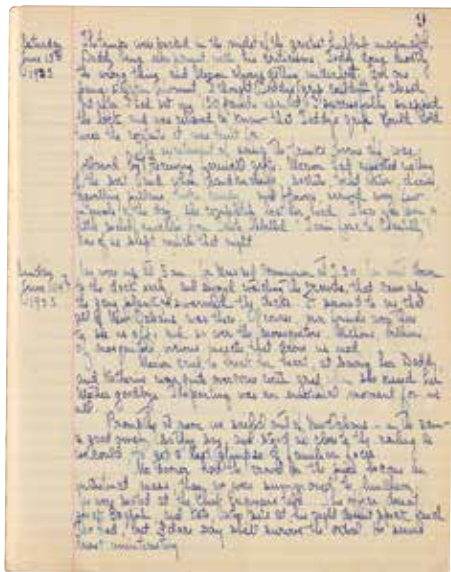
Self-taught French seamstress Anaïs Crozier, wife of Auguste Laynaud, established in late-19th-century New Orleans a dressmaking establishment known for copying and adapting current Parisian styles for the local social elite. When Madame Laynaud retired shortly before

World War I, her daughters, Christine, Jeanne, and Marie, took over the business. Adopting the name Laynaud Soeurs, the trio continued their mother’s tradition of traveling yearly to Europe to study the latest continental styles and adapting them for their clientele. In 1921, partner Jeanne Laynaud Touns died unexpectedly, leaving her surviving sisters, Christine Laynaud Jaques and Marie Laynaud Hoyle, to carry on the family business. In the summer of 1925, Jaques took one of her annual European vacations and buying trips, recounting it in a personal diary.

The Christine Laynaud Jaques diary, a gift of Jean Woods, chronicles the travels of a successful New Orleans seamstress and several family members as they journey overseas for pleasure, family visits, and stylistic inspiration. Jaques’s playful and candid narrative captures the joys and tribulations of international travel prior to the Great Depression. Whether reporting how she dealt with an overstuffed suitcase, lost luggage, unexpected hotel charges, bad food, or pretentious tourists, Jaques maintained keen insight and her sense of humor—even when a large stash of candy she had brought on the voyage melted in the tropical heat off the Florida Keys. “Our sixteen pounds are reduced to a sticky mass,” Jaques reported, “and we find it necessary to give much of it away!” There was, however, something about which she was most serious—her Roman Catholic faith and her quest to attend daily Mass and meet the Pope.

Diary highlights include an account of Jaques’s shopping trip to acquire appropriate attire for an audience with Pope Pius XI. Although successful in her mission, the distinguished dressmaker later realized she lacked the required black hosiery. Knowing she would be denied admission if she wore flesh-colored stockings, she improvised, donning instead her son’s black socks.

Although not illustrated, the diary is accompanied by several loose pen-and-ink sketches by Jaques’s teenage son, Teddy. Also included is an advertisement, published shortly after the family’s return home, promoting an exhibition of recently imported fashions. —M. L. EICHHORN



## OPPOSITE:

**Letter from Alfred Grima Jr. to his mother**  
1918  
*bequest of Clarisse Claiborne Grima,*  
81-99-L.13

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France July 18<sup>th</sup>

Dear Mamma, I wrote you on the 14<sup>th</sup> and told you we were still quiet in our sector, it was true for the moment, but about two hours later, hell broke loose, the boche attacked after a bombardment that was frightful, they rained shells down over our whole front and to a depth of eight or ten Kilometers for ten hours; the village in which we had our headquarters was under fire, & I never thought I'd come out of it alive, the building in which we had our command post was struck five times and it was a miracle that none of us were killed, the bombardment was largely with gas shells & we were obliged to wear our masks, the following morning, our poor village was a wreck. I wasn't touched except very slightly by the nose of a shrapnel shell that grazed my knee, tore my trousers & gave me quite a scratch, but not enough to send me to a hospital, but if that shrapnel nose had come two inches more left, I'm afraid

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