

Library Company of Philadelphia

McA 10090.F

RIBBONS AND TEXTILES COLLECTION

1832-1880

1.54 linear feet, 3 boxes

- Series I. Politics, 1840-1880
- Series II. Celebrations, Organizations, and People, 1832-1862
- Series III. Civil War and Patriotic Themes, 1860-1878
- Series IV. Relics, 1861-1862
- Series V. Great Central Fair, 1864

May 2006

Descriptive Summary**Repository**

Library Company of Philadelphia
1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5698

Call Number

McA 10090.F

Creator

McAllister, John A. (John Allister), 1822-1896.

Title

Ribbons and Textiles Collection

Inclusive Dates

1832-1880

Quantity

1.54 linear feet (3 boxes)

Language of Materials

Materials are in English.

Abstract

The collection holds small ribbons and textile fragments printed with designs reflecting patriotic, celebratory, and memorial themes. The collection is arranged in five series: Series I, Politics; Series II, Celebrations, Organizations, and People; Series III, Civil War and Patriotic Themes; Series IV, Relics; and Series V, Great Central Fair.

Administrative Information**Restrictions to Access**

The collection is open to researchers.

Acquisition Information

Gift of John A. McAllister; forms part of the McAllister Collection.

Processing Information

The Ribbons and Textiles Collection material was formerly housed within several folio albums that had been created after the McAllister Collection arrived at the Library Company. The material was removed from the albums, and arranged and described in 2006, under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the William Penn Foundation. The collection was processed by Sandra Markham. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this finding aid do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Preferred Citation

This collection should be cited as: [indicate specific item or series here], Ribbons and Textiles Collection (McA 10090.F), McAllister Collection, The Library Company of Philadelphia. For permission to publish materials or images in this collection, contact the Coordinator of Rights and Reproductions, Library Company of Philadelphia,

1314 Locust St., Philadelphia, PA 19107-5698. Please include complete citation(s) when making a request. See the Library Company's website, <http://www.librarycompany.org/>, for further information.

Online Catalog Headings

Subject Names

Adams, John Quincy, 1767-1848--Collectibles
 Clay, Henry, 1777-1852--Collectibles
 Field, Cyrus W. (Cyrus West), 1819-1892--Collectibles
 Fillmore, Millard, 1800-1874--Collectibles
 Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Collectibles
 Harrison, William Henry, 1773-1841--Collectibles
 Hayes, Rutherford Birchard, 1822-1893--Collectibles
 Kane, Elisha Kent, 1820-1857--Collectibles
 Kemper, Jackson, 1789-1870--Collectibles
 Kossuth, Lajos, 1802-1894--Collectibles
 Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, 1757-1834--Collectibles
 Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865--Collectibles
 Polk, James K. (James Knox), 1795-1849--Collectibles
 Van Buren, Martin, 1782-1862--Collectibles
 Mathew, Theobald, 1790-1856--Collectibles
 Marshall, Thomas Francis, 1801-1864--Collectibles.
 Ellsworth, E. E., 1837-1861--Collectibles
 Great Central Fair for the U.S. Sanitary Commission (1864: Philadelphia, Pa.) --Collectibles
 Fort Donelson (Tenn.) --Collectibles
 Croton Aqueduct (N.Y.) --Collectibles
 Washington Benevolent Society of Pennsylvania--Collectibles

Subject Topics

Political campaigns--United States--Collectibles
 Presidents--United States--Election--Collectibles
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Collectibles
 Temperance--Miscellanea
 Mourning customs--United States--History--Sources
 Transatlantic cables--Miscellanea

Document Types

Artifacts
 Badges
 Ribbon
 Cloth
 Souvenirs (Keepsakes)

Related Collections

Two sets of fragments from the Star-Spangled Banner can be found in the Library Company's object collection; both are part of the McAllister Collection. The set with the largest pieces was once enclosed in a frame, along with a photograph of the flag. The smaller fragments were pasted in one of the McAllister albums created by the Library Company. See also correspondence with George Henry Preble in the John A. McAllister Papers (McA MSS 001). The Civil War Miscellanies Ephemera Collection (McA 5786.F) contains ephemera related to events in the Ribbons and Textiles collection.

Collection Overview

The collection is arranged in five series: Series I, Politics; Series II, Celebrations, Organizations, and People; Series III, Civil War and Patriotic Themes; Series IV, Relics; and Series V, Great Central Fair. Many of the ribbons have themes of national interest, and little provenance to know where they were made or if they were worn in Philadelphia. Printers' names appear on some; street names suggest a New York origin for several.

Series I, Politics (1840-1880) holds campaign, commemorative, and mourning ribbons for a variety of politicians. Particularly noteworthy is the material related to Abraham Lincoln, which includes many proof prints on paper for the numerous printed silk and satin mourning ribbons (and one campaign ribbon) which were created in Philadelphia by firms including A. W. Auner and the Satin & Paper Badge Depot.

Series II, Celebrations, Organizations, and People (1832-1862) is arranged in those three subseries, and holds printed and woven commemorative ribbons printed to be worn in honor of events, societies, and men. There are ribbons to acknowledge the Atlantic Cable that was successfully laid on the ocean floor between Newfoundland and Ireland (1858), for the visit of an embassy from Japan in 1860, and for two different anniversary celebrations for Washington's birthday (1832 and 1862). There are portraits of several men including the explorer Elisha Kent Kane (1820-1857) and the Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834). Though an event is not specified, a single ribbon is present to honor the Right Reverend Jackson Kemper (1789-1870), the "First Missionary Bishop" of the Episcopal Church who led outreach efforts in the western United States, including translating the scriptures and church services into Indian languages. Other ribbons include two with temperance themes: a portrait of Irish priest Father Theobald Mathew (1790-1856) who, during a visit to America (1849-1851) swore more than a half-million people to the cause of temperance; and a portrait ribbon of Kentucky congressman Thomas Francis Marshall (1801-1864) taking a temperance pledge. There are two copies of a ribbon for a chapter of the Washington Benevolent Society, an early-nineteenth-century political club which worked in secret to organize Federalists in towns and cities around the country.

Series III, Civil War and Patriotic Themes (1860-1878) has a wider variety of formats and material. Here are eighteen pieces of printed cotton fabric with union-based designs, some in alternate colorways. The folder of flags has woven and printed versions of the American flag, including one overprinted with an advertisement for William Horstmann & Son's Flag Depot at Fifth and Cherry streets in Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia City Council's celebration of the seventy-fourth anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution was a one-day event held in reaction to the Secession movement that threatened to destroy the Union. That day Council passed a series of resolutions affirming the perpetuity of the country as established by the constitution and condemning any states' secession from the Union as "a monstrous political heresy" and "a crime of the deepest dye." The final resolution stated that the citizens will recognize two distinct classes: the friends and the enemies of the country. The folder for the celebration holds a variety of ribbons, as well as paper proof prints, which were made for the event. The McAllister Collection's Civil War Miscellanies Ephemera Collection (McA 5786.F) contains programs, resolutions, and tickets from the event.

The folder of Miscellaneous ribbons contains paper proof prints for ribbons for which a related event can not be identified. Themes include "Richmond has Fallen!," "Victory will lead to peace!," and two date-specific ribbons: "Soldier's Home, December 22, 1863," and "Welcome Home Brave Boys, June 10, 1865."

Series IV, Relics (1861-1862), holds fabric fragments which purport to have historic significance. There are three pieces which are said to be remains from the "Secession Flag," a Confederate banner that was flying above the Marshall House hotel in Alexandria, VA, when the city was occupied by Union forces in May 1861. Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth of the New York Fire Zouaves (Eleventh New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment) climbed up and tore down the flag, an act for which he was shot and killed by the hotel's proprietor, James Jackson. In death Ellsworth became a hero and one of the first martyrs for the Union cause; his name and image were invoked repeatedly during the war. Two of the fragments were sent to John A. McAllister by New York collector John B. Moreau (1812-1886) in July 1861; they are attached to a letter that gives their provenance, though Moreau admits "I have no means of knowing whether it be true or not, but simply send the fragments without any more comment." The third piece, which is from a much more finely-woven cloth, is encased in a printed enclosure on which the legend "Piece of the Secession Flag, taken by Co. Ellsworth at Alexandria, and stained with his blood" has been lettered in ink.

A single fragment purports to be (according to an accompanying newspaper clipping) from a flag flown on a ship from Georgia that arrived at Boston in April 1861. The banner was torn apart by local citizens. Another piece represents a flag involved in the Battle of Fort Donelson, Tennessee, fought February 12-16, 1862, and which promoted the victorious Union General Ulysses S. Grant's stature as a military hero.

Series V, Great Central Fair (1864) contains a variety of ribbons and textile badges from Philadelphia's Sanitary Fair. They were worn by committee members who participated in planning the fair and staffing its exhibition booths. Additional material related to that event is held in the McAllister Collection's Sanitary Fairs Collection (McA 5781.F).

Box Folder

SERIES I. POLITICS

1840-1880

Arranged alphabetically.

1	1	Adams, John Quincy	1848
	2	Clay, Henry	1844
	3	Fillmore, Millard	1856
	4	Garfield, James	1880
		Harrison, William Henry	
	5	Campaign	1840
	6	Mourning See also: Box 1, folder 25	1841
	7	Hayes, Rutherford	1876
		Lincoln, Abraham	
	8	Campaigns	1860, 1864
		Mourning	
	9	Printed and woven ribbons	1865
	10	Printed ribbons with proof prints	1865
	11	Proof prints, black and white	1865
	12	Proof prints, color	1865
	13	Polk, James K.	1844
	14	Van Buren, Martin	1848
	15	Miscellaneous	1866, 1877

Box Folder

SERIES II. CELEBRATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PEOPLE 1832-1862

Celebrations

[1]	16	American Republican Celebration & Procession	1844
	17	Atlantic Cable	1858
	18	Croton Aqueduct, New York	1842
	19	Japanese Embassy visit	1860 Jun 9
	20	Washington's Birthday	1832 Feb 22
	21	Washington's Birthday	1862 Feb 22
	22	Whig Celebration	1837 Nov 22

Organizations

	23	Union Leagues	undated
	24	Washington Benevolent Society	undated
	25	William Wirt Library & Literary Institute	1834

People

	26	Kane, Elisha Kent, mourning	1857
	27	Kemper, Jackson, Episcopalian missionary	circa 1850
	28	Kossuth, Lajos, welcome to Philadelphia	1851 Dec 24
	29	Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier	1834, undated
	30	Temperance	circa 1850

Box Folder

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		Series III. CIVIL WAR AND PATRIOTIC THEMES	1860-1878
2	31	Dress fabrics	circa 1863
	32	Flags	undated
		Ribbons	
	33	City Council Constitution Celebration	1861 Sep 17
	34	Death to Traitors	circa 1862
	35	Fair for the Soldiers' Home, Philadelphia	1865 Nov
	36	Friends of the Union at Philadelphia	1863 Jul 4
	37	95th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers	1878 Oct 12
	38	"So Perish Secession!!!"	1861
	39	Miscellaneous	1863, 1865
		Series IV. RELICS	
	40	Fragments (2) of the Secession Flag, taken by Col. Elmer Ellsworth at Alexandria	1861
	41	Fragment of Southern "rattlesnake flag"	undated
	42	Fragment of flag from Fort Donelson, Tennessee	1862
		Series V. GREAT CENTRAL FAIR	
3		Ribbons and badges	1864