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VICTORIAN SCRAPBOOKS AND THE AMERICAN MIDDLE CLASS

by

Raechel Elisabeth Guest

Approved: Christine L. Heyrman, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved: James C. Curtis, Ph.D.
Director of the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture

Approved: John C. Cavanaugh, Ph.D.
Interim Associate Provost for Graduate Studies
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Two basic forms of scrapbooks appeared in the nineteenth century; the first type usually consisted of newspaper clippings pasted into old account books or other blank albums, the second usually consisted of colorful printed cards and die-cuts pasted into ornately-bound blank albums sold as scrapbooks.

Research for this thesis involved the examination of dozens of nineteenth-century scrapbooks for several factors, including: approximate age of the compiler; type of binding used, whether plain or ornate, home-made or store-bought; types of scraps saved; approximate dates of compilation; and the apparent function of the scrapbook in its owner's life. Examination of nineteenth-century prescriptive literature revealed popular attitudes towards scrapbooks, particularly after the Civil War. Modern works on the Victorian period helped explain the societal contexts which created the scrapbooks.

Scrapbooks first appeared in the early nineteenth century as a form of commonplace book, responding to a surge in printed matter. Popular for all ages from the 1830s to the 1880s, this form of scrapbook changed after the Civil
War, becoming as popular with women as men, and far less with children. Ornate scrapbooks filled with colorful scraps appeared by the early 1870s as a juvenile form of scrapbook, made possible by new printing technologies. Both postbellum forms embraced sentimentalism in protest to industrialism, yet were possible only through that industrialism.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades of the nineteenth century, the custom of keeping scrapbooks became the rage of the American middle class. Scrapbooks were books into which objects, usually paper, had been pasted. As such, scrapbooks have existed since at least the eighteenth century, but the scrapbook as a cultural feature belongs to the nineteenth century. Scrapbooks appeared early in the nineteenth century as a form of commonplace book. Men and women, and sometimes children as young as ten years, kept this type of album throughout the century. By mid-century the commonplace scrapbook evolved to imitate the popular gift books of the period, incorporating engravings as well as text and emphasizing amusement more than education. Prior to the Civil War, more men than women kept these scrapbooks; after the War, equal numbers of both sexes kept them. The postbellum period also saw the rise of a new form of scrapbook, one kept primarily by young children as a way to store and display collections of chromolithographed cards and figures. These pictorial scrapbooks tended towards
lavish ornamentation and were frequently given as gifts both before and after their pages had been filled.

Nearly everyone today has some basic concept of what a scrapbook is; but in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, nearly everyone of reasonable means had made one. The bindings and contents of the scrap albums were as varied as their owners and ranged from ornate embossed covers with thick wood-pulp pages, to recycled leather-bound account books, to home-made linen books held together with ribbon. Scraps varied from chromolithographed die-cuts made to be used as scraps, to clippings of anecdotes and engravings from local newspapers. Some scrapbooks even contained locks of hair, pressed flowers, and flattened shell casings. The arrangement of scraps on the page also varied; most collections of newspaper articles followed the papers' column format, usually with three columns per page. Some scrapbook keepers went so far as to create imaginative interior scenes with their scraps.

The scrapbook as a unique form emerges around the time of the Civil War. By the 1870s, stationers sold specially manufactured blank-books as scrap albums. By the 1880s a wealth of prescriptive literature became available. Children filled the blank pages of scrapbooks with colorful trade cards, greetings cards, and die-cut pictorial scraps. Teenagers and young women filled their scrapbooks with
clippings of text and engravings from newspapers and magazines. Popular authors (almost exclusively female) advocated that everyone should save clippings of text and paste them into blank-books by subject. Scrapbooks thus could serve as a reservoir of knowledge, storing articles on any subject for future reference. They also could serve as a creative amusement for women and children and were an essential feature of their domestic lives.

A scrapbook culture arose during the early 1870s, lasting until the end of the 1890s. During this period, the word 'scrapbook' described both commonplace scrapbooks and pictorial scrapbooks. Victorians saw the pictorial scrapbooks as a juvenile form of the commonplace scrapbook. Ornate album cover designs, patented in the 1870s, were intended for both types of book. Prescriptive literature offered a variety of ways to keep a scrapbook and even more varieties emerged in practice, expressing the individualism of their owners.

Two basic types of scrapbooks emerge from surviving albums and prescriptive literature, one text-oriented and the other picture-oriented. Text-oriented scrapbooks could include pictures, and picture-oriented books could include text, but the two types were set apart by other features. Text-oriented albums derived from the traditions of commonplace books and gift books as concerned their scraps,
which included a wide array of articles and black-and-white engravings. Their covers were usually plain, either black or brown paper or leather. Picture-oriented albums derived from scrap decoration and gift books in that their covers tended to be highly ornate and colorful, matching the busy quality of the scraps inside. These albums were meant to be seen, intended in part as a display, while the text-oriented books were more private, meant primarily for personal use.
Chapter 2

ORIGINS OF THE VICTORIAN SCRAPBOOK

Scrapbooks represent reinventions and combinations of several traditions. Early nineteenth-century scrapbooks were a form of commonplace book created in response to a rapid increase in printed matter. Predominantly kept by adults and teenagers, by mid-century these scrapbooks began imitating the popular annuals of the period by incorporating engravings into collections of text. Soon after the Civil War a juvenile form of scrapbook emerged, its pages filled with colorful paper scraps, and its covers ornately decorated after the fashion of the annuals.

Commonplace Books

Commonplace books date back at least as far as the middle ages. By the eighteenth century they were an established feature of a young boy's education and a valuable resource for an orator. Eighteenth-century commonplace books were blank books into which their owners transcribed passages, usually from printed works, as a memory aide and for future reference. While some people
today still keep commonplace books, their decline in popularity was evident by 1835, when one man noted that "Books are so common and so constantly multiplying, that few have the courage to undertake to make extracts, and to copy what is really valuable." The printed media had expanded to the point where few could keep track of everything worth reading and saving. Scrapbooks were an excellent solution to this problem. Clipping and pasting passages takes far less time and effort than transcribing, and allows the compiler to save a greater quantity of material. The increase in popularity of the scrapbook coincided with the decline in popularity of the traditional commonplace book, and the format of the scrapbook mimicked that of the commonplace.

Decorating with Paper Scraps

Decorating with scraps as an American amusement dates to at least 1760, with the publication of Robert Sayer's *The Ladies Amusement; or, Whole Art of Japanning Made Easy*. Japanning, an imitation of oriental laquerwork, was a popular decoration for mid-seventeenth-century furniture. *The Ladies Amusement* contained in the second edition two

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hundred pages of engravings preceded by a few pages of instructions. Sayer expected the lady to watercolor and then cut out her desired 'objects' and paste them onto a carefully prepared surface, and then preserve it all with several layers of varnish. The engravings were suitable for any surface, from "the superb Cabinet, to the smallest Article of the Toilet".2

In the 1830s Lydia Maria Child advocated the creation of scrap boxes, tables, and fire-boards in much the same fashion as Sayer's instructions. Mrs. Child cautioned her readers in the aesthetics of decorating with scraps, noting that the figures would look best if light and airy and if cut from quality engravings, as opposed to those found in newspapers. She advised using colored engravings only if "delicate and beautiful" for they would otherwise be too gaudy.3

Mrs. Child would no doubt have been horrified by the results of chromolithography several decades later. William Sharp printed the first American chromolithograph in Boston in 1840, and the technique caught on fairly quickly.4 By definition a chromolithograph, commonly known as a 'chromo',

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was any image printed in color using two or more lithographic stones. The process could reproduce oil paintings and watercolors as well as a variety of greeting and trade cards. The popularity of chromos, especially in regards to scrapbooks, did not reach its full height until the 1870s. The intervening decades saw a gradual increase in the quality of chromos, and by 1875 most cities had at least one chromolithography company. The main business of the chromo companies consisted of reproducing paintings for low-cost consumption and advertisements, but starting in the late 1860s and lasting through the 1890s printers also specialized in die-cut images for children which were used for decoration and for scrapbooks (fig. 1).

Decorating with scraps continued as a pastime for girls through the end of the century. Screens were recommended most frequently for scrap decoration. In 1885 Lucretia Hale and Margaret White advised the use of bright-colored pictures clipped from the Illustrated London News, the Queen, and various Christmas periodicals. In her 1902 manual, Mrs. Valentine advised against the excessive use of bright colors on scrap screens, although she too suggested

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5 Marzio, The Democratic Art, 15.
6 Marzio, The Democratic Art, 19.
8 Lucretia P. Hale and Margaret E. White, Three Hundred Decorative and Fancy Articles for Presents, Fairs, Etc., Etc. (Boston: S. W. Tilton and Co., 1885), 33.
Figure 1. Example of chromolithographed die-cuts. Willie Scherffius Scrapbook, c. 1894. Col. 120.
the Illustrated News and the Queen as good sources for prints.9 Despite some apprehension over color intensity, Mrs. Valentine's main concern lay, as did Hale and White's, in the tasteful arrangement of the scraps on the screen. The three authorities agreed that the final varnishing should be done by a professional, if at all, because it required "a good deal of skill and practice, besides being rather dirty work."10

Gift Books

In vogue from the early to middle decades of the nineteenth century was the fashion of giving an annual (also known as a gift book) as a present, especially to young ladies and children. Publishers filled these ornately-bound books with short stories, anecdotes, poems, and engravings and marketed them as gifts, with titles such as The Keepsake, Friendship's Offering, and The Atlantic Souvenir: A Christmas and New Year's Offering. Gift books fell out of favor (for many reasons, particularly a decline in quality) during the 1860s. The rage for scrapbooks (many of which followed the gift book format with similarly ornate bindings and which were sometimes given as gifts to or from young

10Hale and White, Three Hundred Decorative and Fancy Articles, 32.
ladies and children) began at about the same time as the annual’s decline, if not soon after. Many scrapbooks resembled home-made annuals, their pages filled with carefully laid-out selections of articles, anecdotes, short stories, poems, and engravings.

Scrapbooks with fancy covers made suitable gifts for young ladies and children and, like the annuals, adorned the parlor table. Clippings pasted into scrapbooks mimicked the poems and stories found in annuals. They often expressed Victorian sentimentalism, with angelic children and saintly mothers as favored subjects. The crucial difference between scrapbooks and annuals was the individualism found in the scrapbooks. Publishers and editors selected the contents of the annuals with an eye towards marketability. The contents of the scrapbooks were determined solely by the personal tastes and interests of the owner. This difference may have been partly responsible for the decline of the annual, with consumers preferring to compile their own selections of literature and art.
Chapter 3

VICTORIAN SCRAPBOOKS

Overview

Prescriptive literature for scrapbooks began most noticeably with the 1880 publication of E. W. Gurley's *Scrap-Books and How To Make Them.* Gurley's book set the tone for later descriptions of scrapbooks, focusing almost exclusively on the collection and systematic organization of newspaper and magazine articles. She briefly mentions "collections of attractive pictures" sold for use in children's scrapbooks, and recommends the inclusion of short poems and stories to accompany the pictures. A few years later, Janet Ruutz-Rees further defined the scrapbook with regard to selective age groups, noting that scrapbooks intended for the nursery were to be made of linen and filled with colorful pictures. Lucretia Hale and Margaret White

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echoed her advice, declaring linen scrapbooks "a very nice present for young children". Hale and White further added the concept of the rolled book, made of a single sheet of linen, to be placed unrolled on the floor for the very young child. Ruutz-Rees noted that adolescent boys filled their scrapbooks with "quaint oddities and scraps," while the girls compiled sentimental poetry. Although her book focused on amusements for children, Ruutz-Rees mentioned an adult scrapbook-keeper, a "young lady" who divided her scrapbook into twenty-six classifications including history, science, art and biography.

Surviving scrapbooks adhere loosely to Ruutz-Rees' prescriptive forms, although they do seem to fall neatly into the defined age categories. Children's scrapbooks comprise the majority of the surviving albums, probably because of their greater collectability. Their colorful trade cards and die-cuts are as appealing today as they were then, while the yellowed clippings of Victorian sentimentalism that filled the adult scrapbooks inspire few collectors.

As the age of the scrapbook keeper increased, the nature of the album changed. Toddlers were entertained by

14 Hale and White, *Three Hundred Decorative and Fancy Articles*, 86.
15 Hale and White, *Three Hundred*, 87.
books put together for them by their mothers or possibly an older sister. These books contained only pictures, in the form of chromolithographed trade cards, greeting cards, and sometimes die-cuts. As Ruutz-Rees noted, these books gave the child "his first ideas of pictures, of form and color." 18 When a child was old enough to cut and paste by himself, die-cuts appeared more frequently but did not entirely replace cards. Parents saw these picture-scrapbooks as a sort of educational amusement, with the child acquiring certain skills through cutting, arranging, and pasting. 19 Older children, entering adolescence, used their scrapbooks to explore their growing interests and dreams. Collage albums in particular reveal an amazing fantasy world. Gender differences appear at this stage, with boys generally rejecting the colorful pictures in favor of newspaper clippings. Chromo-scrapbooks belonged almost exclusively to children and teenage girls. Scrapbooks filled with anecdotes and articles clipped from newspapers belonged to an older group which included young women and teenage boys.

18 Ruutz-Rees, Home Occupations, 97.
19 Activities involving cutting and pasting were viewed by nineteenth-century educators as a way to improve a child's creativity, dexterity, and visual memory, as noted in Todd S. Gernes, "Scrapiana Americana," in Winterthur Magazine (Spring 1996): 18.
Adults' Scrapbooks

Commonplace books were books into which the owner "paraphrased or transcribed anecdotes, quotations, and information from other sources, usually printed" and were "dominated by the reproduction of of passages from other works.\textsuperscript{20} The great era of the commonplace book began in the Renaissance and lasted through the Enlightenment, undergoing several changes in their fundamental purpose yet maintaining their basic format. The practice of keeping a commonplace book threatened to fade into obscurity during the early decades of the nineteenth century, but was rescued and reformed by the advent of the scrapbook. Early nineteenth-century scrapbooks were books into which the owner pasted anecdotes, information, and poetry clipped from newspapers and magazines. Later scrapbooks of this format included engravings, but the popular use of the scrapbook as a commonplace book continued through the Victorian period.

Much of the prescriptive literature of the 1880s described scrapbooks as a sort of superior commonplace book, easy to compile and easy to keep in subject order. The great advantage to scrapbooks was seen in the ability to organize and catalogue, and sometimes discard, passages before pasting. A commonplace book was more likely to be

disorganized, with passages entered in the order in which they were found. The delay between clipping and pasting allowed the scrapbook keeper to be more discriminating in his permanent selection.

The scrapbook was promoted as an indispensable resource for "every one who reads the newspapers." Most advocates of scrapbook keeping promoted scrapbooks as reservoirs of knowledge to be used as a commonplace book. Many famous men, from Jefferson to Hayes, were lauded as scrapbook keepers. Their example was used to inspire readers to keep their own scrapbooks. President Garfield was a particularly famous scrapbook keeper, and he credited some of his success as a speaker in Congress to his numerous and comprehensive scrapbooks. Garfield reputedly began compiling scrapbooks as a young man and used them just as one would commonplace books.

Scrapbooks used as commonplace books, primarily associated with adults, were the normative form of scrapbook throughout the nineteenth century. Even though most antebellum scrapbooks were kept by men, one of the earliest surviving albums was compiled by a young lady from Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania (fig. 2). Phebe Sinton began her scrapbook collection in 1815, pasting her clippings into a

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22Gurley, Scrap-Books, 11-12.
23Charles F. Adams, "Great Scrap-Book Makers," Harper's Young People. vol. 9, no. 469 (23 October 1888), 894.
Figure 2. Phebe Sinton Scrapbook, 1815-1817. Doc. 38.
8.7" x 10.6"
book previously used for penmanship practice. The topics of her clippings included poems about "Home" and "Love", brief biographies, and an account of an experiment in breathing "nitrous oxygen gas". Phebe's album differed from the commonplace books of an earlier generation only in that her passages were clipped, not transcribed.

The first great flourishing of scrapbooks occurred in the 1830s, when numerous account books were re-used for scraps. Children as well as adults saved clippings during this period, as demonstrated by the scrapbook kept by ten-year-old Bayard Taylor of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Bayard filled one of his father's daybooks with clippings about other countries and poets whose work he presumably admired. Like a traditional commonplace book, Bayard's scrapbook reveals his interests and suggests his inner desires, most notably a longing to escape the ordinary world of his father's general store.

Also flourishing during the 1830s were the multitudes of gift books, which first appeared in the form of annual publications in the previous decade. Gift books resembled commonplace books and scrapbooks in that they were collections of poems, anecdotes, and occasionally factual information (although this feature disappeared early on).

24 Phebe Sinton Scrapbook, 1815-1817, Downs Collection Doc. 38.
Gift books also included engravings to accompany the text and were bound up in ornate covers. They were just as likely to decorate a drawing-room or parlor table as they were to be read, and symbolized gentility and culture to the American middle class. The creators of these collections of poetry and prose were aware of the similarity to scrapbooks, which they happily exploited. *Fisher's Drawing-Room Scrap-Book* first appeared in 1832 and was followed four years later by a *Juvenile Scrap-Book*.26

To a large extent the gift books directly imitated scrapbooks, but also developed qualities of their own. These qualities began to appear in scrapbooks by the mid-nineteenth century, as they increasingly included engravings alongside text, in the fashion of the gift books. The scrapbooks also became increasingly communal, as were the gift books. By 1883 "Just look in my scrapbook" was declared a family by-word.27 Gift books appealed to young women more than any other group, and the obvious associations of gift books with scrapbooks encouraged these women to enter the predominantly male world of scrapbooking.

The normative form of scrapbook, imitating the commonplace book, remained fairly constant in format

throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, but by the mid-seventies it had gained the attention of book publishers and sellers. A spate of blank books were designed, patented, and marketed as scrap books, including a self-adhesive album patented by Mark Twain. By 1887 the Daniel Slote & Co. manufacturers of blank books were able to devote several dozen pages of their trade catalogue to scrapbooks.\textsuperscript{28} Plain leather, cloth, and paper covers were still available, but most of the commercial scrapbook covers featured ornately embossed and gilded designs of flowers, birds, deer and other such imagery.

While the overwhelming majority of adult scrapbook keepers preferred plain, drab covers, a few used fancy covers like those sold by Slote & Co. An album used by an Ohio woman, Maggie Briggs Fluhart, boasts not only gilt embossed images but also a chromolithographed image of a fashionable young woman (fig. 3).\textsuperscript{29} The frontispiece is entitled "Autographs," indicating that it was not sold for use with scraps. Maggie used this frivolously cheerful book for saving obituaries of her family members, which suggests that she was less concerned with its decoration than its utility. Stephen Parrish, a Philadelphia artist and father of Maxfield Parrish, pasted his clippings into a volume clearly

\textsuperscript{29}Maggie Briggs Fluhart Scrapbook, 1872-1913, Collection of the Author.
Figure 3. Maggie Briggs Fluhart Scrapbook, 1872-1913. Private Collection. 8.0" x 5.0"
intended for newspaper scraps (fig. 4). The spine is entitled "Newspapers and Cuttings," the front reads "Newscuttings" and displays an image of a pile of newspapers, and the frontispiece is inscribed:

NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS
A Ready Reference Receptacle
for Scraps of Print, from our
chief sources of knowledge,
the Newspapers; with Patent
Alphabetical Index, and
Spaces for Marginal Notes.

The decoration of the cover is colorful and ornate, but stresses the utility of the book more than the typical fancy cover would, as with Maggie Fluhart's book.

Seen as a way to avoid "gossipy" reading, the culling of preferred articles from newspapers encouraged readers to think about the material presented in the papers and to pay closer attention to quality items. The composition of the scrapbooks depended entirely on the wishes of the compiler. While some authorities advised careful classification and division of articles within the scrapbook, others declared the scrapbook to have "no legitimate arrangement" with

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31Gurley, Scrap-Books, 10.
Figure 4. Stephen Parrish Scrapbook, c.1880-1892.
Col. 202. 9.3" x 12.0"
articles and pictures placed "promiscuously" throughout the volume.32

Some adult scrapbook keepers saved clippings pertaining to a single subject. Annie H. Swayne of Chester County, Pennsylvania compiled nearly thirty pages of religious clippings and close to 100 pages of religious transcriptions.33 The clippings consist primarily of sentimental poems with titles such as "Come Home to Die" and "The Little Voyager". The transcriptions include John Lightfoot's biblical chronology of the world beginning in the year 4004 B.C., a number of poems and stories copied from borrowed books, and descriptions of entertainment suitable for church. Swayne's inclusion of transcriptions hearkens back to the commonplace books of nearly a century before.

Other adults filled their scrapbooks with clippings on a variety of topics, as seen in the album compiled by Isaac L. Williams, another Philadelphia artist.34 The articles he saved ranged in subject from grave robbings by Atlanta medical schools to Shakespearean criticism to an eye-witness account of the Civil War evacuation of Charleston. He also

32Ruutz-Rees, Home Occupations, 98. For a detailed system of classification, see E. W. Gurley, Scrap-Books and How To Make Them, 18-35.
33Annie H. Swayne Scrapbook, c. 1895-1917, Downs Collection Fol. 18.
34Isaac L. Williams Scrapbook, c. 1868-1886, Downs Collection Col. 264.
included an 1825 fire insurance policy for one William Johnson and engravings from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, expressing the greater freedom in subject matter provided by scrapbooks as compared to commonplace books.

The popularity of cutting up newspapers and magazines led to the inception of at least one clipping service, the National Press Intelligence Company based in New York City. The service provided articles from national and international papers on any desired topic. Stephen Parrish and Laura Holloway Langford, a New York City editor and lecturer, both kept scrapbooks filled with clippings about themselves and their careers and employed the Company to facilitate the thoroughness of their collections.\[35\]

Scrapbooks kept by postbellum teenagers sometimes resembled those kept by adults, and other times took on a quality all their own. Dick Johnson, a native of Nashville, Tennessee, compiled nearly 150 pages of clippings pertaining to the Civil War and to issues of interest to young men.\[36\] He saved articles describing significant events of the War and biographies of Confederate heroes. Pasted alongside the War-related clippings were sentimental poems about angelic babies both live and dead; articles on the manufacture of things such as watches, wigs and pins; etchings and


\[36\]Dick Johnson Scrapbook, circa 1870, Private Collection.
mezzotints of famous historical and literary figures and of famous paintings; a copy of the Declaration of Independence and the confederate flag; advice on courtship, kissing, and the treatment of one's wife; confederate money and several love stories. His scrapbook stands as a testament to his interests and concerns. The great number of clippings pasted into his album, as compared to the more modest numbers kept by adults, resulted from his young age: unlike most adults, Johnson had the free time to fill 150 pages with scraps.

Teenage girls met different societal expectations than did boys. This is reflected in the girls' scrapbooks, which tend to retain a frivolous nature longer than boys'. Boys needed to prepare for a professional career, and their scrapbooks show a strong tendency to being educational more than entertaining. Girls were expected to become wives and mothers, and they were relegated to a sheltered domestic world. With finding a husband a primary goal for many teenage girls, their main interest tended to be their social lives, the forum in which they expected to find a mate.

A Germantown, Pennsylvania resident, Elsie Sargeant Abbot, kept a scrapbook in the 1890s as a keepsake of her social life.37 Given to her in 1894 by a friend, Dorothy Welsh, the album begins with items dating from the previous

37Elsie Sargeant Abbot Scrapbook, 1893-1899, Downs Library Doc. 156.
year. Elsie preserved letters from friends, invitations to social events (with her commentary), programs and playbills, snapshots, pencil sketches, pressed flowers, a .22 caliber shell casing to remember "shooting the rocks" at Kennebunkport, Maine, and so on (fig. 5). The majority of the objects relate to her friendships with a number of college men. A page near the middle of the album displays hand-painted pennants of Yale, Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia, Amherst, Williams, and four others. Beneath each pennant is a list of men's names, the longest underneath the University of Pennsylvania. Elsie's social life clearly focused on eligible young bachelors, and her scrapbook is a sort of record of her quest for a husband. Elsie's scrapbook stands as a sort of intermediary form between the pictorial scrapbooks of childhood and the textual scrapbooks of adulthood, as it combines elements of both.

The subject matter of many of the clippings saved in Victorian scrapbooks can seem very strange to modern readers. Poems and short stories about dead or dying infants (often referred to as 'little angels') appear in nearly every album. An intensely saccharine sentiment overlays numerous tales of motherhood and romantic love. Stranger still is the way these clippings are pasted alongside more serious articles, such as a factual listing
Figure 5. Elsie Sargeant Abbot Scrapbook, 1893-1899. Doc. 156. 9.0" x 11.0"
of the number of bones in the human body or an account of prehistoric man in California. This blind clinging to sentimentalism, as evidenced by the contents of the scrapbooks, is a defining trait of middle-class Americans in the late Victorian period.

Scrapbooks originated in response to the increasing large-scale production of printed material in the early nineteenth century. Throughout the entire century, adults preferred to paste newspaper scraps into old account books rather than purchase a fancy album for their collection. This economizing rejected the spread of industrialism into daily life, as did the sentimental subject matter of many of the scraps; while the presence of the clippings reveals a certain acceptance of mass-production.

Children's Scrapbooks

Scrapbooks kept by children in the late nineteenth century were filled with colorful lithographic prints in the form of greeting cards, advertising or trade cards, and special die-cut images sold for use by children. Young women used die-cuts to decorate tables and screens, part of a long tradition of decorating with paper scraps. This tradition, sometimes known as decalomania, created an affinity for pictorial scraps within the domestic sphere.
The simple transition from decorating with scraps to allowing small children to paste scraps into albums created a juvenile form of scrapbook. Scraps were considered appropriate material for the albums of children too young to be interested in newspaper and magazine clippings. Not unlike mass-produced picture books, children's scrapbooks served as both entertainment and a tool for education. A child could learn elements of decorative aesthetics through the designs and arrangements of the scraps, and principles of organization and taxonomy by grouping similar subjects. Encouraging children as young as two years to paste pictures into a blank book was a way to inculcate a "love for the practice of making scrap-books." The connection between scraps and decoration allowed the pictorial scrapbook to take on a greater role as creative amusement than the textual scrapbook ever could.

The invention of a juvenile form of scrapbook was an essential feature of the Victorian childhood. The Victorians lived in a rapidly changing world, one in which industry replaced agriculture and cities replaced farms. Americans were noted around the world for their "nervousness", which was attributed in 1881 to five elements of modern civilization: steam power, the periodical press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of

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38 Gurley, Scrap-Books, 51.
women. Other features of modern industrial life were also blamed, such as the increased necessity of punctuality. In reaction to the changes brought about by industrialization, Americans began creating a new concept of childhood early in the century. Children were distinct from adults, almost to the point of being other than human. Numerous poems and short stories portrayed infants as angelic creatures, and if they died young, as they often did in Victorian fiction, it was because they were too pure for this corrupt world. Fictional children were usually morally superior to their elders.40

American parents went to great lengths to create sheltered, innocent worlds for their children to live in, as far removed from the harsh realities of industrialism as possible. Nurseries isolated children from adult society found in the rest of the house, serving as a safe haven reminiscent, in the minds of many Victorians, of the Garden of Eden.41 Children's scrapbooks reflected this sentimental

view, both in cover designs and in the scraps used. 
Flowers, birds, and cherubs appear in every album.

Children's scrapbooks also reflect one of the great contradictions of Victorian America. While the scrapbooks were ostensibly part of the material culture protecting children from the corruption of industrialism, they were fully the products of mass-production and commercialism. Nearly all the blank albums used were commercially published. The scraps used inside, whether Christmas cards, trade cards or die-cuts, were mass-produced. Most insidious of all were the trade cards whose whimsical decoration appealed to children and parents, allowing commercialism to invade the sanctity of the nursery. Despite their protestations, middle-class Americans were firmly entrenched in the world of industry.

The images pasted into children's scrapbooks bear a remarkable similarity to one another. They come from two sources; advertising (or trade) cards used by local merchants and published by manufacturing companies, and sheets of partially-cut chromolithographed figures sold by lithography companies for use in children's scrapbooks. The images on the advertising cards seem tailor-made for use by children. The cards often bear scenes of fanciful animals, such as cartoon-like frogs and owls, engaging in a variety
of humorous activities. Some cards belonged to a series which, when put together, illustrated a story. A series in a scrapbook kept by a girl from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania shows a frog and duck fighting over the duck's egg, only to have the conflict resolved with the timely hatching of the baby duck (fig. 6). The infant, shown as the mediator between the adults, exemplified popular views of children as superior to grown-ups. Other cards in this album unfold to show "before" and "after" images of disgruntled consumers satisfied by the advertised product (fig. 7), introducing the scrapbook keeper early on to a "new discourse of consumption" which was to pervade all aspects of American life by the end of the century. The consumers are depicted in caricature style and are accompanied by monologue expressing their delight in a fairly innocuous manner. Cards in a series encouraged collecting, as did the images. Children collected the advertising cards in much the same fashion as modern-day children do baseball cards.

Die-cut images, intended for use by children, consist exclusively of images suitable for the nursery. Anthropomorphic animals, angelic babies, fashionable ladies, and children at play are teamed with soldiers, baseball

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42 Lillie Ginkinger Scrapbook, c. 1879-c. 1890, Downs Library Fol. 60.
Figure 6. Frog & Duck page, Lillie Ginkinger Scrapbook, c. 1879-c. 1890. Fol. 60. 11.0" x 14.0"
Figure 7. Mechanical cards, Lillie Ginkinger Scrapbook, c. 1879-c. 1890. Fol. 60. 11.0" x 14.0"
players, famous architecture and historical figures. Flowers, fruits, and naturalistic representations of animals abound. The size of the die-cuts ranges from dime-sized floral bouquets to battle scenes that fill the page. The small bouquets were often used to decorate trade cards within scrapbooks, depending on the skill of the compiler. Arrangement of the cards and die-cuts also varied with skill. Some were haphazard, pasting scraps wherever they might fit; others were carefully orchestrated, grouped by similar subject matter and arranged symmetrically on the page. Skill in arrangements presumably increased with age.

The scrapbook kept by Florence Hopper Fitch as a child in New York City and Unionville, Ohio demonstrates a simple method of arrangement. Florence started on her scrapbook before she was ten, and her collection of trade cards are laid out side by side with no attempt to create a decorative pattern (fig. 8). The scrapbook kept by Mattie Kiehl and her sister shows a greater sophistication in cutting and arranging, suggesting they were older than Florence. The Kiehls primarily collected trade cards and frequently cut around the figures on the cards, removing the name and address of the business, possibly in imitation of die-cuts. The subject matter is fairly typical, with babies, children

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44Florence L. Fitch Scrapbook, c. 1880-c. 1889, Downs Library Fol. 64.
45Scrapbook (E. & Mattie Kiehl), c. 1880-c. 1890, Downs Library Doc. 725.
Figure 8. Florence L. Fitch Scrapbook, c. 1880-c. 1889. Fol. 64. 11.5" x 15.0"
and flowers predominating. They arranged nearly every page with a large central image and smaller border images (fig. 9).

Even more sophisticated than the Kiehl scrapbook are a number of collage albums, anonymously kept yet intensely personal. Compiled by girls in their early teens, they functioned much as dollhouses. A single page represented a view of a fictional room in the girl's dreamhouse. One album from the 1870s still includes unpasted figures to be used as paper dolls in rooms furnished by cut-out engravings of furniture and other household objects, along with wallpaper samples and tissue paper imitating curtains (fig. 10).46 In another collage album an unknown girl cut and pasted figures of adults and children, engaged in a variety of activities, into the room scenes (fig. 11).47 These figures could help tell a story in this anonymous girl's make-believe world.

While some adolescent girls were creating private fantasy worlds with their collage albums, adolescent boys (and girls) were using scrapbooks for group activities. One album, originally used as an account book from 1829-1855, was used by a group of boys from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania for penmanship practice in the 1870s and the

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46 Collage Album, 1870s, Downs Library Fol. 36.
47 Collage Album, c. 1880-c. 1900, Downs Library Fol. 252.
Figure 9. Scrapbook (E. & Mattie Kiehl), c. 1880-c. 1890. Doc. 725. 12.5" x 10.0"
Figure 10. Collage Album, 1870s. Tissue paper used as curtains. Fol. 144. 11.5" x 14.0"
Figure 11. Collage Album, c.1880-c. 1900. Fol. 252. 11.5" x 14.0"

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1880s. The owner of the book at this time, Andrew Kidd, incorporated clippings from *Harper's Weekly*, *The Observer*, and other newspapers as well as including pressed leaves and flowers, and paper cut in leaf-shape.

Another scrapbook from Lancaster, Pennsylvania was used by an entire family and their friends in the 1880s. Nearly every page contains one or more signatures, usually with all but one crossed out (fig. 12). Whether the signatures represent the composers of each page, or whether the Allabachs used the finished scrapbook as an autograph album with the signers picking preferred pages for their names is unclear. Many of the signatures are in an unskilled, childish hand, while others such as "Mama Allabach" and "Papa Allabach" are clearly adult. Aunt and Uncle Bissinger of Philadelphia each have their own page, but their names almost certainly were inscribed by one of the children. The Allabach children (Peter, Jacob, Lizzie, and Mamie) each have several pages with their names, Peter's recurring most frequently. While it is uncertain which of the children claimed ownership of the volume, a suggestive inscription on the eighteenth page reads "To Mamie from her sister/Lizzie Allabach".

Many of the children's albums were purchased as blank-

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Figure 12. Allabach Family Scrapbook, c. 1876–c. 1882. Doc. 957. 8.7" x 6.5"
books with ornate covers, usually marketed as scrapbooks. Most of these books were intended for the parlor table; both their large size and their heavy embossing made them awkward for bookshelves. Cover decoration ranged from gilt images of flowers and birds in shallow relief to complex, multi-colored patterns on silk cloth. The most unusual would have to be an oversize black cover with four figures of Santa Claus in high relief surrounded by six chromolithographed Santa "heads" on gilt medallions (fig. 13). One of the more elegant scrapbook covers, owned by Lillie Ginkinger, has a dark blue, silk cover decorated in orange, red, beige, black, silver and gold with flowers and other decorative motifs in an Arabian style (fig. 14). Lillie received her album as a New Year's Day gift in 1883 to accommodate scraps she had already begun collecting. Presumably the Santa Claus album was a Christmas gift for some lucky child. The ornate covers made them obvious choices for gift-giving, as had happened with the annuals known as gift books.

The same company published both of these albums; the back covers bear identical embossed ribbon motifs and the inscription "Patented March 1876". A patent given to one Bernard J. Beck of Brooklyn, N.Y. in this month described a

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50 Scrapbook, c. 1876-c. 1895, Downs Library Fol. 149.
51 Lillie Ginkinger Scrapbook, c. 1879-c. 1890, Downs Library Fol. 60.
Figure 13. Santa Cover, Scrapbook, c. 1876-c.1895. Fol. 149. 11.3" x 14.0"
Figure 14. Cover, Lillie Ginkinger Scrapbook, c. 1879-c. 1890. Fol. 60. 11.3" x 14.0"
scrapbook made "with a filling-piece or guard of paper folded in opposite directions [accordian-style]" to create extra space between pages for scrap-accommodation.52 Beck's scrapbook patent became one of many in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Home-made albums often imitate Beck's accordian design by cutting out sections of pages to protect the binding from bulky scraps.

Other scrapbook covers tended to be less ornate and probably less expensive. Red cardboard backgrounds with gilt images of flowers and birds predominate. Many covers also incorporate chromolithographed images of fashionable young women, and sometimes exotic birds (figs. 15, 16).53 One scrapbook is decorated in typical fashion with a green cloth cover and gold lettering, but this is a fold-out book decorated the same on front and back.54 All the other books, opening with the spine on the left, have plain back covers. Many of the album covers are inscribed with

53Images of fashionable young ladies seem to have been very popular, not only as cover ornament, but as collectable scraps. This certainly suggests an association of scrapbooks with young girls who would see the ladies as role models of proper attire and behaviour. They were presented as an ideal to "flatter the possibilities of [the] audience," a fairly clever marketing ploy. See Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Culture (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 4.
54Scrapbook, c. 1870-c. 1880, Downs Library Doc. 443.
Figure 15. Cover, Scrapbook (E. & Mattie Kiehl), c. 1880–c. 1890. Doc. 725. 12.5" x 10.0"
Figure 16. Bird Cover, Scrapbook, c. 1880-c. 1889. Fol. 98. 12.5" x 15"
embossed, gilt lettering "Scraps" or "Scrap Album", making their intended purpose clear.

While most of the surviving scrapbooks kept by children are in fancy albums, prescriptive literature advocated plain, home-made books. Janet Ruutz-Rees recommended in 1883 that scrapbooks intended for use in the nursery be made of linen pages with the pictures securely pasted in order to be "indestructable". An early-1880s scrapbook owned by a child named Anna in Nashville, TN was constructed in much the prescriptive fashion. Anna's scrapbook is composed of linen pages with pasted-on pictures, but where Ruutz-Rees calls for silk edging and the whole to be bound up in ribbon, Anna's pages have been sewn into a cardboard cover and the edges are unadorned (fig. 17). The cover of the volume originally held a collection of engravings or lithographs as indicated both by the title "Dresden Gallery" and the portfolio-style fold-out flaps of the back cover. This recycling of the cover fits well with much of the prescriptive literature, which advocated economy in scrapbook-making.

The popular and abundant scrapbooks filled with chromolithographed paper scraps were a juvenile, derivative version of the normative form kept by adults. They were created as one of many barriers between the conceived

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56 Anna Bell Scrapbook, c. 1880-c. 1884, Private Collection.
Figure 17. Anna Bell Scrapbook, c. 1880-c. 1884.
Private Collection. 7.5" x 10.0"
innocence of children's lives and the corruptness of adults'. Ironically, the use of store-bought albums and mass-produced chromos introduced children into the very world from which their parents sought to shield them.
Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

The rapid industrialization of the mid-nineteenth century caused something of a crisis for the middle class. While embracing the fruits of industrialism and mass-production, Americans viewed the newly competitive world of commerce and urbanization as corrupt and wicked. In reaction to their "modern civilization", middle-class Americans sought out the sentimental, valuing a pre-industrial innocence and morality over all else. As mass-produced material goods increasingly shaped and defined their daily lives, they created a "culture of feelings" for their own protection.57

Despite their great affection for religious sentiment and pre-industrial fairy-tale lands, middle-class Americans were inextricably caught up in the industrial realities of the nineteenth century. Their scrapbooks, made possible by mass-production, demonstrate this vividly. Scrapbooks were a symbol of the Victorian middle-class, who were by nature dualistic. They embraced the fruits of industrialism while

clinging to a pre-industrial image of the world. They spewed forth religious sentiment while codifying their world according to scientific principles.

Scrapbooks kept by adults as a form of commonplace book developed in direct reaction to the mass-production of printed ephemera, yet nearly always contained elements of sentimentalism. The scrapbook itself is a form of sentimentalism in its connection to preserving memories. The scrapbooks kept by Stephen Parrish and Laura Holloway Langford, filled with clippings about their careers, are in their own way just as sentimental as the book kept by Annie Swayne, filled with sweet religious sentiments, or the book kept by Dick Johnson, which contained numerous clippings of "beautiful thoughts" and articles mourning the South's loss. Elsie Sargeant Abbot's scrapbook shows the most personal level of sentiment, preserving souvenirs and mementoes from a seven-year period of her life.

Victorians delineated scrapbooks by age of composer; children's scrapbooks were supposed to be different from adults', because children were seen as being different. Children were to live in a world of innocence, as far removed from the harsh realities of industrialism as possible. Women were also meant to be sheltered, but their role as primary consummerr of the household made this difficult. Men were seen as being obliged to go out into
the corrupt and competitive to support his family, with the innocence and charm of his domestic life as reward.

Children's scrapbooks, filled with images that can only be described as sentimental and "cute", represent the greatest irony in Victorian scrapbook-keeping and, by extension, in the lives of middle-class Americans of the late nineteenth century. As with the adult scrapbook, children's scrapbooks developed as a result of mass-production, in this case production of chromolithographs. While the images on the cards and die-cuts were perfectly suited for the sheltered Victorian domestic sphere, the scraps were undeniably part of industrialism, the very thing the middle-class feared. Victorian scrapbooks were cultural features of the American middle-class, representing their crucial nature as consumers of mass-produced goods, yet revealing their insecurity over the rise of industrialization and urbanization as America transformed into a capitalist society.
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