Abstract: This scrapbook of advertisements, trade cards, and collectible ephemera from the 1876 Centennial Exposition was created by Richard W. Davids.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 093, Item 015
Creator: Davids, Richard W.
Title: Centennial Exposition scrapbook
Inclusive Dates: 1876
Extent: 1 v. (76 p.) ; 33.5 x 26 cm.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 093, Item 015, Richard W. Davids, Centennial Exposition scrapbook, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Item 015: Shelved in SPEC MSS 093 FOLIO
Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
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Historical Note

The Centennial International Exhibition was the first World's Fair held in the United States. Commemorating the centennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, hosted the Centennial Exhibition from May 10 to October 10, 1876. Although its formal name was the International Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures, and Products of the Soil and Mine, the official theme of the exposition was the United States centennial celebration. Boasting 250 separate pavilions, the Centennial Exposition attracted approximately nine million visitors and showcased the United States' scientific and technological innovations, achievements in art and culture, and advancements in trade and industry accomplished during its short history.

Sources:

Scope and Content Note

This scrapbook of advertisements, trade cards, and collectible ephemera from the 1876 Centennial Exposition was created by Richard W. Davids. Very little is known about Davids, though one advertisement for an R.W. Davids, a Philadelphia printer, does appear in the scrapbook; thus, a conclusion could be made there was some relation.

The volume features advertisements and collectible ephemera collected by Davids during one or more visits to the Centennial Exposition. The pieces advertise a variety of products, including household appliances and furniture, agricultural tools and machinery, clothing and accessories, and food and beverages. Stylistically, many of the advertisements feature tableaus of domestic and vocational activities and international and domestic political relations and represent examples of rich nineteenth-century color lithography. One highlight of the advertisements is the depiction of African-Americans and nineteenth-century race relations. Since the exposition was held in Philadelphia, many local Philadelphia businesses such as Wanamaker & Brown are represented. The majority of the advertisements are for products and businesses based in the United States; however, several international products and businesses are also included.

Although the bulk of the scrapbook consists of advertisements, other pieces of ephemera are included, such as souvenirs from the exhibition buildings and a menu from a café located on the fairgrounds.

Further materials related to world fairs and expositions are cataloged with imprints in Special Collections and can be found by searching DELCAT.
Selected Search Terms

Corporate Names

Centennial Exposition (1876 : Philadelphia, Pa.)

Topical Terms

Exhibitions--United States--History--19th century.

Geographic Names

Philadelphia (Pa.)--History--19th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Advertisements.

Scrapbooks.

Menus.

Trade cards.

Corporate Contributors

Wanamaker & Brown.

Pears (A. & F.) Limited.

Related Materials in this Repository

This item forms part of MSS 093 Commonplaces, Albums, and Scrapbooks collection.

MSS 630 World fairs and expositions collection
Detailed Description of the Collection

Centennial Exposition scrapbook, 1876 [Item 015]