

San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club

Meetings are held the fourth Saturday of every month except December.

Visitors and dealers always welcome. On the web at www.postcard.org

October 2003

Volume XVIII, No. 9

Next Meeting: Saturday, October 25, 12 to 3 PM

Fort Mason Center, **Room C-260**

Laguna Street at Marina Boulevard, San Francisco

Please disarm pagers, cell phones, and alarms during the meeting.

Program Notes: Our speaker will be Chuck Stucker who will tell us his story of being “Raised on the Rock.” Chuck is the son of a correctional officer and grew up on Alcatraz in the 1940s and ’50s. For the past several years Chuck has been collecting information and memorabilia—including postcards—that tell the story of Alcatraz. Don’t miss this!

Show & Tell: Alcatraz, political protests, I love a mystery, and, as always, collector’s choice. Three item, two minute limit.

COVER CARD



From Jack Hudson’s collection: Roberts-at-the-Beach, “famous old Californian landmark of the Gay ’90s. Noted for its fine food and its cozy intimate Seabreeze Cocktail Lounge. It is also the home of a novel four-sided fireplace which breathes old fashioned hospitality...Under same management and ownership since 1897.” By the 1960s Roberts had relocated and downsized into a catering company. But for postcarders it will always be remembered for the

Weidner large format photo of the 1904 Bear Barbecue which Jack discovered and which later appeared on a vintage card found by David Parry. Now Jack has also come up with a more modern version paired with this real photo of how the hangout looked in 1897 on an EKC backed card, issued circa 1945. Roberts was well known for having organized the cross Golden Gate swim by Blackie the race horse in 1938. Blackie, swaybacked but still proud, stood at pasture for many years in Tiburon and was memorialized on plates used at Roberts-at-the-Beach.

—Lew Baer

CLUB LEADERS

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Newsletter Deadline: 10th of each month

MINUTES, September 20, 2003

Thirty-three people signed the roster, and as usual, several others did not. Cards were brought for sale or trade by Dave Parry, Nancy Tucker, Bill Ashley, Henry and Lynn Michalski, and Jane Dawson.

We were called to order by Vice President Bob Bowen.

Guests included Ruth and Harry Hanham, who became our newest members; Mrs. Michalski, Henry's mother; Michele Francis, a native San Franciscan who collects her city; Al and Julie Alden, friends of John and Alanna Freeman.

A festive board was set up at the front of the room. Darlene Thorne had brought a cake to celebrate the Costas' or the Eppersons' anniversary. There were also premature Halloween cookies.

Announcements: Lew Baer reminded us of the upcoming and very friendly joint postcard and antique bottle show in Santa Rosa on October 11 and 12; he also told of a New Zealand mail auction.

Jack Hudson told about Joseph Jaynes giving a street person change for a \$20 bill at the Cow Palace. It was counterfeit! The police were nearby and responded to Joseph's call for help, and they apprehended the ne'er-do-wells. Morale: Don't

mess with the SFBAPCC!

Darlene Thorne told of being at the Petaluma Museum and discovering postcards from Ed Mannion's collection reproduced as note cards by Jim Staley.

Daniel Saks advised us that next month we will meet in room 260.

Show & Tell: Jim Staley showed some postcards that came to his post office box in an envelope; the backs are numbered tickets with instructions to check a web site to see if you have won. ... Lew Baer showed a Weidner real photo from the 1913 Portola Festival—a pro America float with a Chinese Uncle Sam. ... Dan Saks showed a prize card of the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant published by the Office of Emergency Services, a warning to residents of the San Luis Obispo area of siren testing; there are very few cards of the plant because people hate it so. ... Dan Cudworth brought new additions to his collection of primo cards: a linen of a walk-in—not drive-in—theater; a Drama-Log shop window display business reply card; a Bank of Benton (IL) view of the first auto banking window in the US, 1947; and an advertising card for "Gone with the Wind" with a picture of Margaret Mitchell.



Bill Ashley got a lead on lots of cards in a fleamarket shop in Hayward at the Hayward Fair. ... Bob Bowen, the political junkie, brought a card of Governor Sunny Jim Rolph, once mayor of San Francisco—he ran in 1915 and lost but won in 1919; Earl Warren, the “humane and liberal” candidate; and an 1890s postal card from the California National Guard with orders to report sent by George C. Pardee who was Governor during 1906. ... Jack Hudson showed a card of the Izuma, the Japanese cruiser that was here during the Portola Festival.

—Bruce Diggelman, Recording Secretary

John Freeman: Portola [Portolá] Festival

See images: <http://postcard.org/portola.htm>

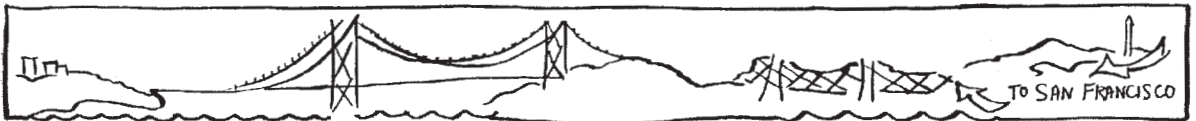
John began by expressing thanks to other club members who had helped by loaning images in their collections: Glenn Koch, Chris Pollock, Kathy Elwell, David Parry, Kathryn Ayres (who also helped decorate the room); and to Alanna Freeman. It was truly a group effort. The decorations included red and yellow banners sewn by Alanna. After a few minutes of typical computer user ex-coriation the machine settled down and the PowerPoint presentation, a computer generated slide show, got under way.

First to appear was a map showing the burned area of San Francisco following the 'ought-six fire—the entire northeast portion of the city, larger than the Boston, Baltimore and Chicago fires combined. Next mounds of rubble—not from the quake or fire but from demolition. Reconstruction: many class A buildings were quickly repaired; bread lines on Ellis, Fillmore to Octavia; life was very inconvenient. Earthquake shacks were crowded together with board sidewalks; little privacy. Public toilets were two door shacks, one ladies, t'other gents,

over a manhole. People were allowed to cook only in the streets as there were damaged flues and no water for fire protection. Images: the effort needed to heat and carry water to take a bath, black demolition workers on Sansome Street, crowded street-cars, dust everywhere—city dirty and nasty, iron frameworks going up. There was no shopping downtown; it was too dangerous and too dirty, but folks did come to see the red hot rivets being tossed around at night by steel workers. Sheet music: “Back to Market Street.”

The Merchants Association was first to propose an event to let the world know that San Francisco was back in business and soon all of downtown was festooned in red and yellow, the Portola colors, or red, white and blue for President Taft’s visit after stopping at the AYP fair in Seattle. Folks had to learn how to pronounce Portola; the town or the street could be Port-O-la; but the man and the festival were Port-o-LA, as in la la LA. Nicholas Covarrubias was chosen to represent Don Gaspar de Portola; he was a good horseman and made a great image. His very regal queen, Virgilia, 22, was five feet nine and a quarter inches in a Merry Widow hat. A souvenir program told of a hot air balloon race the week before the festival and of the Mardi Gras-like atmosphere.

Advertising told that hotels are open and ready for visitors. The city has recovered from 1906. Post-cards promoted the festival: Portola’s first view of the bay, sailors and women on shipboard, other cards bearing red and yellow stickers, cornucopia, woman cuddling a bear, a flower series, a faux ticket to Portola fun—like the more common Admission Day card of 1910, a Mitchell series (of unusual poor quality). A pennant card advised that the “Big Bugs will be in Town,” arcania for big



shots. A Pacific Novelty card of a bear atop the Call Building showed the old and the new. Tuck carnival series cards were overprinted for Portola. Even a Portola hankie! Weidner cards showed the 45 foot high letters on Yerba Buena Island, both close up and at a distance.

There was a competition on Market Street for building displays; the Ferry building was outlined in lights and chains of lights crossed Market Street every forty feet. A distant real photo showed the curtain of lights on the Palace Hotel, a bell in lights on Market, the lights crossing the street and the lighted domes of the Call and Humboldt buildings. The bell of lights was at 3rd and Market and had 4000 bulbs; it was used again several times. A tight-rope walker performed near it every night at eleven o'clock. A night view of the St. Francis Hotel showed the murals in the bays between the eaves. A night view showed the fireworks on Union Square, every night at nine. An Emporium ad showed Virgilia at an auto show in the Emporium basement. A Buick ad was for the Howard Auto Company—you know, Charles Howard, Seabiscuit's owner.

The Conservatory was got up in red and yellow flowers shown on colored postcards; a more distant RP showed the whole design that now was obviously for Portola. Ships were outlined in lights; the Japanese cruiser Izuma was the most popular to visit.

Four parades were held, one each day, and many cards show the floats and marchers. The most surprising was the Japanese float with cherry trees and blossoms tied on—an ugly card, a beautiful float. Another card showed the giant flag, 65 by 160 feet, carried by 140 Spanish American War veterans. A Britton and Rey card showed the Sing

Fat building in Chinatown. The Chinese took part in the celebration and won many awards especially for their 375 foot long dragon “worn” by 200 men. Britton and Rey cards also showed the festival at the Cliff House and another at Fort Point.

Sporting events took place in Golden Gate park including swimming races at Spreckels Lake! In the East Bay 200,000 viewers saw a seventeen car auto race; average speed: 62.8 MPH.

There are no good images of the last parade—the Historical and Electrical Parade—and its confetti volcano. Confetti was exciting in 1909 as there had been no New Year's Eve parades while the downtown was a construction zone. Portola made up for it that last night. Southern Pacific hauled away 300 tons of used confetti which it placed as ballast along its lines.

By 1911, two years after the Portola Festival, all thoughts and frivolity turned to the PPIE—first promoting it and then preparing for it. The Portola Festival had drifted into obscurity. See images:

<http://postcard.org/portola.htm> —Notes by Lew Baer

TREASURER/HALL MANAGER REPORT

As of October 10, 2003 \$1363.97

—Daniel Saks

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Ruth and Harry Hanham

Kensington CA

California agriculture, Eastern

Europe, British India, and old Berkeley.

Bill Haynes

San Mateo CA Bill is Darlene

Thorne's father; he has just turned ninety and likes San Francisco of the '30s through '50s.



Jan Ferris Heenan
Sacramento CA

Jan discovered us through our site at postcard.org; she collects Sacramento, Boise, and Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Michael J. Semas Hanford CA

Michael collects views of Central California—Hanford, Fresno, Lemoore, Visalia, Tulare, Laton, Armona and all of Kings County.

David Hunter has changed his address.

WWW.POSTCARD.ORG

Jack Daley, our valiant and hard toiling Web Master, is again deserving of our congratulations and thanks. The kudos are not only for the super job he has done for the club but also in recognition of the visitor counter on the web site passing the 10,000 mark at the first of October. The thanks are continual and doubly so for the remarkable slide show of San Francisco celebration cards that is now on .org's home page. The Admission Day card with bear and goddess has been there since May 17, 2003, but now if you linger there for a few seconds it changes into a revolving series of cards for Portola, PPIE, GGIE, the Great White Fleet, and more... forty-six! different cards as of press time. Click on each one for an enlarged view and card details. Jack should also be proud of the 30 members of our Yahoo Groups discussion list. Visitors ask questions at our web site which go out to all 30 for their responses.

Thank you Jack!

POSTCARD CALENDAR

Nov. 1-2, Saturday-Sunday **Pomona**, RBF Antique & Collectibles Show, Pomona County Fair-

grounds, **75+ dealers!** Info: 877 859-9909; 10am to 6 and 3pm*+

Nov. 7-8, Friday-Saturday, **Tulare**, Antique & Collectibles Show, 1771 E. Tulare Avenue Friday 11am-6pm, Sat. 9am-4pm*

Nov. 8, Saturday, **Sunnyvale**, Silicon Valley Post Card and Paper show, Sunnyvale Elks Hall. 10am-5pm. **Free entry** for SFBAPCC members!

Nov. 8-9, Saturday-Sunday, **Arcadia**, San Gabriel Valley Postcard and Paper show, 50 West Duarte Road, 10am-6 and 4pm+

Nov. 9, Sunday, **San Francisco**, Antique Show, Hall of Flowers, 9th Ave. & Lincoln, 10am-4pm*

Nov. 15-16, Saturday-Sunday, **Concord**, Hal Lutsky's Postcard and Paper Collectibles Show, Concord Centre, 5298 Clayton Road, 10am-6 and 4pm*+

Nov. 20-23, Thursday-Sunday, **San Mateo**, Antique Show, San Mateo Expo Fairgrounds, Thursday-Saturday 11am-8pm, Sunday 11am-5pm*

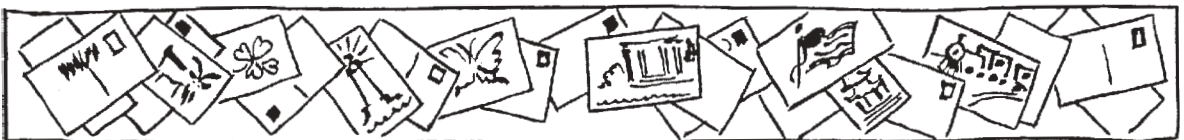
Nov. 28-30, Friday-Sunday, **Sacramento**, America's Largest Christmas Bazaar, Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd. Fri-Sat 10am-8pm, Sun 10am-6pm*

Dec. 6-7, Saturday-Sunday, **San Rafael**, Antique Show, Marin Civic Center, 10am-6 and 5pm*

Dec. 13-14, Saturday-Sunday, **Granada Hills**, San Fernando Valley Postcard and Paper show, Granada Pavilion, 10am-6 and 4pm+

Jan. 1-4, Thursday-Sunday, **San Francisco**, Antique Show at Fort Mason, Thurs.-Sat. 11am-7pm, Sun. 11am-5pm*

Jan. 8-11, Thursday-Sunday, **San Jose**, Antique & Collectibles Show, 1600 Saratoga Avenue, Free Admission!, Thurs.-Fri. 10am-9pm, Sat.



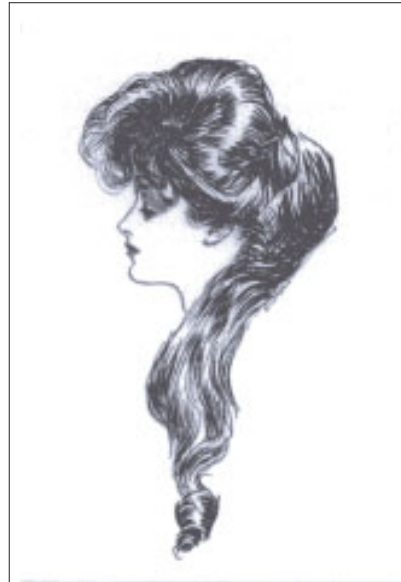
The Lady in Question

by C. W. Eldridge

At one time along the road in Danville, Virginia there was a cast iron highway sign that marked the birth site of Irene Langhorne Gibson, the beautiful wife of American illustrator Charles Dana Gibson. Many have said that C. D. Gibson used his lovely wife as his model to create the now famous Gibson Girl. It is probably true that he used her as a model for many of his illustrations, but their marriage in 1895 was after Gibson had already created his all-American icon.

The Gibson Girl took the U.S. by storm in the late

1800s. Homes all over the land had prints of Gibson drawings hung on their walls. Manufacturers gave the "Gibson Girl" label to all manner of women's clothes, shirtwaists with the "Gibson pleat," hats, riding stocks, spoons, plates, even wall pa-



The Eternal Question
C. D. Gibson – 1905

per. Songs such as *Why Do they Call Me a Gibson Girl?* were written in her honor.

So, with all this exposure it is easy to see how a

- 10am-8pm, Sun. 11am-6pm*
- Jan. 17-18**, Saturday-Sunday, **Sacramento**, Capitol Postcard Show, 6100 H Street, 10am to 5 and 4 pm.*+
- Jan. 30-Feb. 1**, Friday-Sunday, **Pasadena**, Hal Lutsky's Postcard & Paper Show, 400 West Colorado Blvd., Fri. 1pm-7pm, Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 10am-4pm*+
- Feb. 7-8**, Saturday-Sunday, **Concord**, Hal Lutsky's Postcard & Paper Show, 5298 Clayton Road, 10am-6 and 4pm.*+
- Feb. 12-15, Friday-Sunday, **San Mateo**, Antique Show, San Mateo Expo Fairgrounds, Thurs.-Sat. 11am-8pm, Sun. 11am-5pm*
- Feb. 21-22, Saturday-Sunday, **Pleasanton**, Antique & Collectibles Show, Pleasanton Fairgrounds, Free Admission!, 9am-5pm*
- Feb. 28-29, Saturday-Sunday, **Daly City**, Model Railroad & Railroad Show, Cow Palace, 11am-5pm*
- Mar. 27-28**, Saturday-Sunday, **Santa Cruz**, Central Coast Postcard Show, UCSC Inn, 600 Ocean, 10am-5 and 4 pm.*+ Sat . 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm

Bolded dates are shows produced by SFBAPCC members.

*Ken Prag will set up at these shows. Call him at 415 586-9386 or kprag(at)planetaria.net to let him know what he can bring for you.

+R&N Postcards will be at these shows with cards and postcard supplies for sale.

Postcards are available for browsing and sale 7 days a week at the San Francisco Antique Mall, 701 Bayshore Blvd., where 101 and 280 meet, info: (415) 656-3530; also Wednesday through Sunday, at Postcards, Books, Etc. in Cotati. Call before coming: 707 795-6499.





Percy Waters
Tattoo Design – 1930s



Fred Marquand
Tattoo Design 1940s



Percy Waters
Tattoo Design – 1940s

tattoo shop customer might walk into the shop with a postcard copy of a Gibson Girl and want her image tattooed on his arm. The C. D. Gibson design that was the most popular in the tattoo business was known as the “Question Mark Girl” (QMG) which was named so because of the shape of the hair. In the tattoo biz, however, the design was often flipped to face the opposite direction. This design showed up on many sheets of flash in the early part of the twentieth century and was still on shop walls in the 1950s.

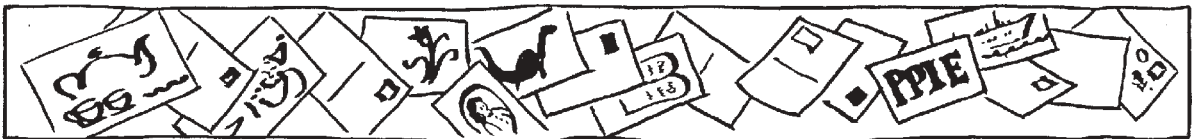
The Gibson Girl was generally a composite of many different faces and shapes, not just one individual woman. Gibson’s early models were often young society girls, and it was Evelyn Nesbit who was used for the QMG. She was an artist’s model

at the age of fourteen; a show girl; mistress to the famous New York City and Fairmont Hotel architect, Stanford White; wife of a Mr. Harry Thaw, heir to a Pittsburgh rail fortune; and later star witness when her husband killed Stanford White.

In 1934 Evelyn wrote the story of her life, titled *Prodigal Days* and used the Charles Dana Gibson drawing of her as the frontispiece. Evelyn Nesbit Thaw, the Question Mark Girl, died at the age of eighty-two.

© Tattoo Archive 2003

The Tattoo Archive is located at 2804 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. We do research and writing on the history of tattooing, and we are always on the lookout for items to add to the collection.



WILL ROGERS

by Gail Ellerbrake

Will Rogers was the conscience and voice for the American people in the 1920s and '30s. His commentaries on political abuses, social inequalities and the follies of bigwigs were read in syndicated columns in 4,000 newspapers. He had a way of putting things so that they went straight to the heart of the matter. The public just couldn't get enough of his daily column filled with philosophical quips, shrewd wit and humorous ways of targeting politicians.

Will became known nationally for his media endeavors. But there was a lot more to the man; multifaceted comes to mind. He was a Native son, Cherokee; cowboy; Wild West showman; vaudeville, stage and screen actor; humorist; banquet speaker; ambassador of good will; friend of paupers and four presidents; world citizen; devoted husband and father.... Not many like him before or since.

Born in 1879 in Indian Territory, now the state of Oklahoma, Will learned to rope on his father's 60,000 acre cattle ranch. His lariat led him to fame and fortune in 1902 traveling with Texas Jack's Wild West Show in South Africa. He was billed as "The Cherokee Kid - the Man Who Can Lasso the Tail Off a Blowfly." In the U.S. he worked for Colonel Zach Mulhall's Wild West Show at the "meet me in St. Loo-ey, Loo-ey, meet me at the Fair" ex-

position of 1904.

Wanderlust and opportunity took him to New York City and the theatrical circuits in the early 1900s.



Homespun cowboy, entertainer, columnist...

His fancy rope tricks got him top billing at the Palace Theater. Around 1915 he hit his stride at the New Amsterdam Theater, showcase for the Ziegfeld Follies and the Midnight Frolic, where he entertained wealthy society people. Here he punctuated his trick roping with jokes about the show, the girls—dazzling, beautiful and outrageously costumed—and even Ziggy himself. He also started commenting on the news to keep his act from getting stale.

In 1919 he moved to Hollywood and silent films. During this time he developed his talents as lecturer and newspaper columnist.

His first *New York Times* column ran in December 1922. The column was then syndicated as "Will Rogers Says..." in over five hundred national newspapers, and his name became a household word. Will's first talkie was in 1929 when he was in his late forties. At the time of his death, in 1939, he shared top box office attraction status with Shirley Temple.

Will had married Betty Blake in 1908, and they had three sons and one daughter. Mrs. Rogers used to say there was something neighborly about her





A typical wild West show

husband that made you feel as though you'd known him. Will and the family lived in Beverly Hills for eight years in the 1920s while he pursued his acting endeavors. But he needed the freedom of open space, horses afoot and a place to relax from his hectic schedule. In 1929 Will and Betty purchased a 186 acre ranch in the Santa Monica Mountains that they lived on until his death. Will specially designed the thirty-one room house, stables, polo field and horse trails to mesh with his unassuming cowboy style.

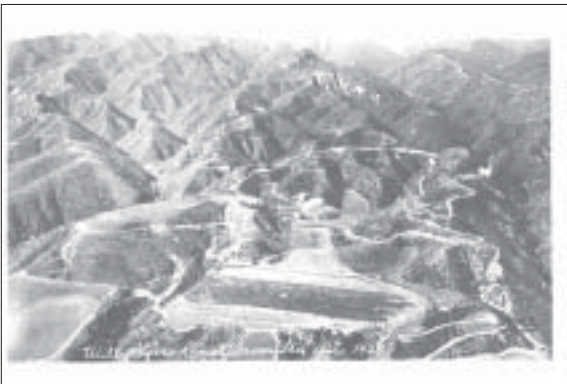
Will Rogers was an adventurer and world trekker, traveling in early planes of the era. Tragi-



Left to right: Mary, Betty, Will Jim, Will Jr.
Youngest son Freddie died in 1920

cally he met his demise in a remote territory of Alaska in a plane crash with Wiley Post, a leading aviator of the time. A postcard bears a poem by T. W. Hurst that says better than anyone else how the world felt learning of his death. The Joe Crosson who

*The "Big Boss" called Will Rogers
To the ranch beyond the divide,
So we are lonesome rangers
For we miss him on our side.
It happened Will was a ridin',
Up on the Alaskan range,
When the big alarm clock sounded,
And Joe Crosson took the reins.
The "pictures" don't seem natural,
The newspapers all seem dull,
Without Will's quips in the corner,
And him grinnin', just above.*



Ranch in Santa Monica Mountains



Ranch home





Last photo taken of Will Rogers and Wiley Post before the plane trip which ended in the fateful crack-up in the frozen wastes of Alaska, August 15, 1935.



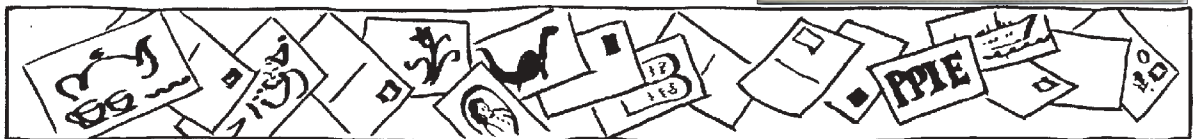
Sitting room at ranch house

From the back of a Bob Hendricks PCCOA card is mentioned flew a plane to Point Barrow, Alaska to pick up the bodies of Rogers and Post. Crosson also delivered Will's last newspaper column. Today there are many places that commemorate Mr. Rogers. His final resting place is in Claremore, Oklahoma. There is a twenty acre museum site, a statue in his honor, artifacts and exhibits of his life's

work. The archives there hold most of his writings including his many famous lines such as "People don't change under governments. Governments change. People remain the same." "Live your life so whenever you lose, you are ahead." "No nation ever had two better friends than we have. You know who they are? The Atlantic and the Pacific oceans." Another tribute is the hundred foot high stone Shrine of the Sun tower named in Will's honor. It is halfway



Flo Ziegfeld window at ranch house





Statue in ranch home



Soapsuds



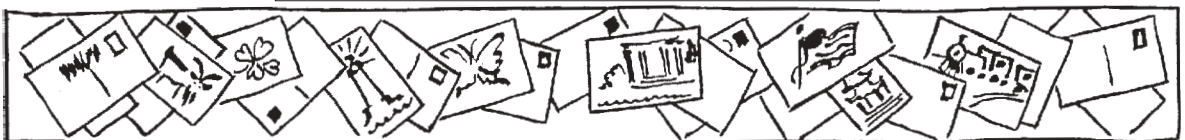
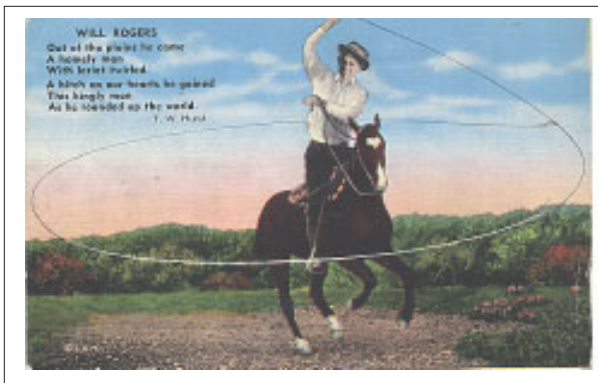
Will Rogers in polo gear

up Cheyenne Mountain overlooking Colorado Springs. The sun shines on the shrine from dawn to sundown. With a touch of irony, it should be noted, the mountain interior houses NORAD.

His ranch home is now the Will Rogers State Historic Park. It is on the border of Santa Monica and Pacific Palisades, so the location names get interchanged. The interior of the house looks the same as when the family lived there. There are priceless Indian rugs, Charles Russell and Tex Wheeler sculptures, early California period tiles in many of the eleven bathrooms, numerous lariats and statues of his favorite horse, Soapsuds. Polo

matches are held every Sunday—Will was an avid player—and are attended by a wide range of Angelenos. There are acres of hiking trails open to the public with vistas of Santa Monica Bay and the San Fernando Valley.

The park was my playground as a child and teenager. We lived one canyon over and our little band of neighborhood kids would trek over and explore the territory. We'd look for cowboys or Indians or try to lasso a few snakes. Will's spirit was omnipresent.



P.S.

SUZANNE DUMONT is awarded a bouquet of kudos, nay a greenhouse full, for her dedication to helping to rebuild and restore the Conservatory. She did not sit around like Rodin's "Thinker"; she made greeting cards using vintage SF postcards. Their sales went to aid the \$25 million project which is now completed. Have you been there yet?

WANT TO HELP with turning the old Mint into a city museum and have fun at the same time? You can do it by attending the SF Museum and Historical Society Alamo Square House tour on November 1 at 11AM. See five historical and architectural homes! Tickets: \$25 for non SFM&HS members. Drawing tickets: \$2. Info: 415 775-1111. ... John Freeman got wind of another project that can use our support. There is a campaign to send postcards to the USPS to support issuance of a San Francisco Earthquake centennial stamp for April 18, 2006. Address your cards to: Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, Room 5800, Washington, DC 20260-6753. ... Hallie Bagnall who is working on next year's GGNRA exhibit on the PPIE would like to know how many of our members would like to speak on the fair during the event.

And "What specifically will you talk about?" she asks. Once you have made up your mind let Bob Bowen know of your ideas. ... Randy Harter of Fort Wayne, Indiana is eager to add some cards of Art Smith at the PPIE to his collection. If you have ones to spare reach him at FortViews(at)aol.com. ... David Parry, our real estate agent in residence, is offering a charming bungalow for sale in the eight figure neighborhood. So charming, in fact, that he's created a web site for it, 2516 Pacific.com, which features a vintage postcard view of the property. If you visit look for links to David's own site with his architectural history essays.

ERRATA (can you believe it?) In the September newsletter the Portola card captioned 1948 was indeed from the 1909 festival. Also It was Ray and Louise Costa who celebrated their fiftieth anniversary, not the Eppersons. George and Helen passed that mark a dozen years ago. But George does get congrats for his father's Popsicle invention story in the September *Smithsonian* magazine! ... Possibly an error was to have sent the cow home from the palace: the twice yearly Palmer-Wirf show has moomed us for the last time. We'll miss it, but it will mean just that much more action for our own local postcard bourses.

—Lew

— TWO SUPER POSTCARD and PAPER SHOWS PRESENTED BY CLUB MEMBERS —

Saturday, November 8th

10 AM — 5 PM

the first ever

SILICON VALLEY POSTCARD & PAPER SHOW

Sunnyvale Elks Lodge

375 North Pastoria Avenue

\$4 — admit one \$3 with copy of this ad

Mike Rasmussen

—

Joseph Jaynes

Hal Lutsky's

VINTAGE PAPER FAIR

27th year — over 80 booths

November 15-16

10 AM to 6 and 4 PM

Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Road, Concord

FOOD — all sorts of PAPER

and over 1,000,000

POSTCARDS!

\$5

for both days



HANDMADE CARDS... from SAN FRANCISCO

There is no divining what wonders lurk in the depths of the Gotham Book Mart postcard archives. Archivist, postcard scholar, promulgator of the delights and mysteries of real photo postcards, supporter of this newsletter, and—above all—postcard collector, Andreas Brown has taken time away from his voluminous responsibilities to bring a handful of handmade postcards of San Francisco origin to our attention. “I don’t know anything about them,” Andy told me on the phone the day they arrived. I, however, have been able to discover a bit, through the power of Google, and am able to surmise a bit more.

Handmade cards can be a connoisseur’s delight. Andy favors them because they are so unexpected and often so charming, witty, mysterious or elucidating. Cards made by children or little old ladies, either of whom found the penny postage a major expense in the early 1900s and who can be seen in the mind’s eye creating their missives to avoid the expense of another penny for a store bought card, often exceed in the charm category. Handmade cards by recognized artists and authors can be wildly rewarding in interest, information, and value. They can also be prime examples of Outsider Art, the currently *correct* term for folk art. Also, many correspondents with artistic talents have been lured by the intimate postcard format to create a friendly sketch, design or elaborate painting. In my collection is a small album filled with handmade, one-of-a-kind goat cards, many of which were made by Janet for my birthdays and other momentous events.

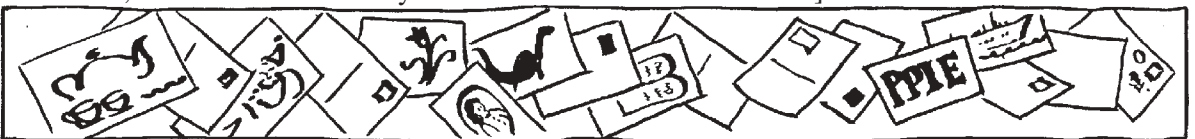
But back to the cards shown here. They are wholly handmade, both front and back by two cartoon-

ists who had worked for *The Call* in San Francisco at about the time of the earthquake and fire. Two of the cards were drawn by a fellow who signed himself Cupe; the other two are signed R.T. All are addressed to the Art Department at *The Call*, and mention several names including “Pot” Yardley.

It took me less than five minutes on the internet to glean a good deal of information about the cards’ writers and recipients.

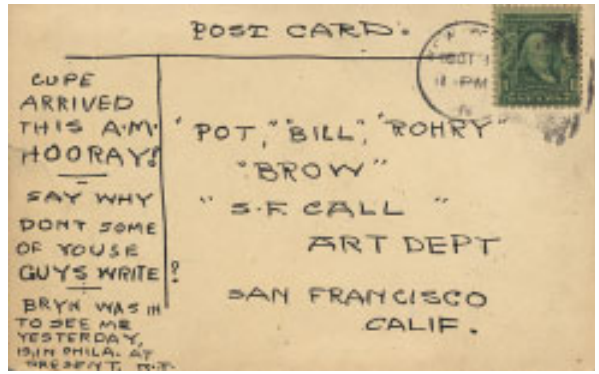
“Pot” Yardley was more commonly known as Ralph Oswald Yardley who was born in Stockton in 1878. After high school he left the Valley and studied at the Mark Hopkins Art Institute and Partington Art School. The *San Francisco Examiner* hired him as a quick sketch artist in 1898, and in 1900 he did the same for the *Honolulu Advertiser*. Then to New York and the *New York Globe* for two years before returning to San Francisco and the *Call* in 1907. By 1921 he was back in Stockton where he spent thirty years as a cartoonist for the *Stockton Record*. He died in Stockton in 1961, and his work can be seen at the Haggin Museum there and also in the Huntington Library in San Marino. [Thanks go to Hughes Publishing for this information.]

One of the correspondents who signed himself Cupe on one card and Ewer on another turns out to be Raymond Crawford Ewer. He took over the “Slim Jim” comic strip in 1911 when George Frink who had been drawing it died. Little is known about Ewer except that he worked diligently until he, too, died in 1914. His work on the postcards is recognizable as the same as in post-1911 “Slim Jim” drawings. [*Lambiek Comiclopedia* is responsible for these details.]



The second correspondent, R. T., is Randall Thoms about whom I could find nothing other than a man with the same name living in Connecticut. Frank

Munsey was a newspaper publisher and the originator of *Argosy* and other pulp magazines. And so, to the postcards...
—Lewis Baer



Postmarked 1 PM, Oct 3, New York

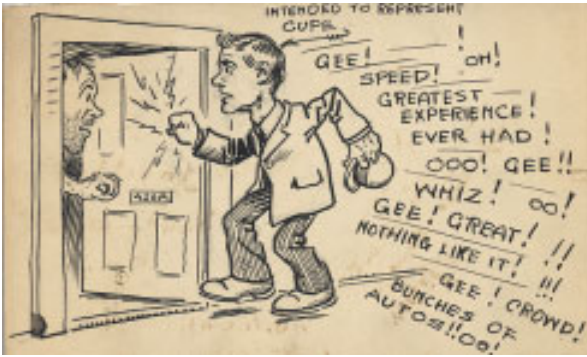
RT (Randall Thoms) writes to let his old pals at the Call know that Cupe has arrived, suitcases in hand. Note that everything about these cards is handmade—irregular sizes, lettering, dividing lines.



Postmarked 1 PM, Oct 3, 1908, New York.

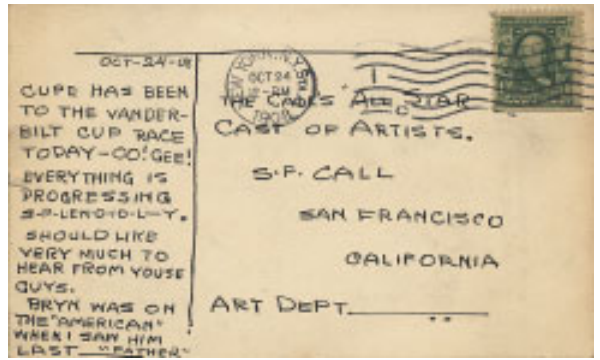
Cupe writes to let his old pals know that he has arrived in N'York. He's apparently staying with Randall (Toms'es' Hostelery) who's hard at work at his drawing board. Randall's slim and angular view of himself on the first card is not shared by Cupe. Cupe's drawing is much more "funny paper" like, while Randall's is more suited to editorial cartooning. Spelling, Welsh names in particular, is not Cupe's strong suit.





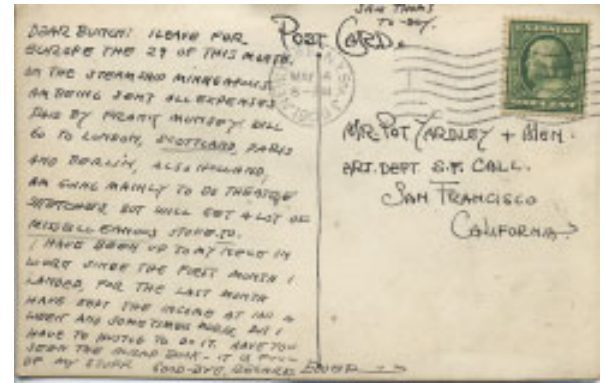
Postmarked Oct 24, 1908, New York.

Three weeks later Randall Thoms writes to tell of Cupe's success and excitement at covering the Vanderbilt Cup Race. "Bunches of autos!! OO!" Thoms' drawing is perhaps more lifelike, but it is also stiff and stilted compared to Cupe's fluid line. Cupe, on this card, seems to have overcome any apprehension of the big city.



Postmarked May 4, 1909, New York

Six months pass, and Cupe sends a card to "Pot" Yardley and his crew. Cupe's off to Europe aboard the SS Minneapolis, "all expenses paid by Frank Munsey." He's been busy enough to keep his income at \$100 per week. Cupe notes that he "saw Thoms today"; also says good bye to Randall in the drawing sent to SF.



FOR SALE



Revolving post card rack custom made for the old Agnew's Pharmacy at Chestnut and Scott Streets in San Francisco. It is wood, stands 5' 10", has 72 slots, can hold rackcards or smaller standard size postcards—also a secret compartment. It's a beautiful piece of furniture. I am selling it because I am downsizing my collections. Asking \$95. If interested, please call Bob Bowen on 415 563-8442.



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See calendar for details

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2003

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November 22

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