

WILLIAM LEE RICHARDS ART COLLECTION OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTS

Repository: Crandall Public Library.
Folklife Center
Glens Falls, NY.

Collector: William Lee Richards (1926 – 2013)

Title: William Lee Richards Art Collection

Quantity: 1.5 cubic feet

Identification: Art & Artifacts: Art

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

William Lee Richards (“Bill”), the collector and donor of these pieces, was born in 1926. He is a descendant of a local family which was in the lumber business for several generations. His grandfather, Frederick Richards, was a local historian and author of several books of local history, as well as a businessman. Bill served in the Marine Corp in the Pacific during World War II. After the war he worked in the early stages of the missile industry in Los Angeles. He married Marilyn J. Pratt in April 1950. Later he and his family moved back to the Glens Falls/Lake George region, where he had spent his childhood. He worked as an antiques dealer and also in several home-building sales and management positions.

“Bill loved history and put a great deal of effort into investigating all the different facets of local and regional history. He loved cars and antiques and loved investigating all the old houses in this area and what their histories were. He also built reproduction furniture and was a master gardener. Most of all, he loved to entertain the masses with song and by playing his horn, the trombone. Both Bill and Marilyn played in their own band or on their own for nearly 60 years. He also loved a good conversation with friends and relatives on many of his favorite topics, and had a good sense of humor.” (obituary, *Post-Star* of Glens Falls, Dec. 13, 2013).

INDEX TERMS

Topics: Bridges
Waterfalls

Places: Hudson (River)
Glens Falls, Warren, NY
Hudson Falls, Washington, NY

Important People: Jacques-Gerard Millbert (artist) 1766 – 1840
William Henry Bartlett (artist) 1809 – 1854

John Bradshaw Crandell (artist) 1896 – 1966
William Guy Wall (artist) 1792 – 1864
Jim E. Palmer (artist) 1921 – 2008
William Lee Richards (collector) 1926 - 2013

Form/Genre: Realia

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation: William Lee Richards Art Collection
Folklife Center
Crandall Public Library, Glens Falls, NY.

Accession Information: Donated to the Folklife Center by William Lee Richards

Processing Information: Arranged and described by Erica Wolfe Burke and Pamela Reed, October 2017

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT(S)

#1 The print is a copy of a design by Jacques-Gerard Milbert (1766 – 1840 Paris, France). Milbert explored North America from 1825 to 1835. In the set of lithographs Picturesque Itinerary of the Hudson River, this is #23, entitled “Saw Mill at the Village of Glens.”

The Richards print is 13.5” w x 9” h. The print is in color. It is mounted on foam-core and double matted.

#2 The colored print is a copy of a design for an engraving by William Henry Bartlett of the Glens Falls “Free Bridge”. Bridging the Years: Glens Falls NY 1763 – 1978, p. 25: “W.H. Bartlett, English artist and author journeyed to America four times between 1836 and 1852. He made drawings for the steel engravings which illustrate the 2 volumes of N.P. Willis’ American Scenery, published in 1840. . . .This plate “Bridge of Glens Falls” is in Volume 2.”

The “Free Bridge” stood from 1833 to 1842. Bartlett must have done his drawing of it between 1836 and 1840.

The oil painting “The Bridge at Glens 1792,” by John Bradshaw Crandell (1896 – 1966), which hangs in the Folklife Center, appears to be derived from Bartlett’s original design.

The Richards print in 13.5” w x 8.5” h. Mounted and matted same as #1.

#3 The colored print is a copy of a design by William Guy Wall of the Glens Falls toll bridge that stood from 1803 to 1833. Bridging the Years: Glens Falls NY 1763 – 1978, p. 24: “William Guy Wall, a Dublin artist, made watercolors from which were engraved the 20 aquatints known as the Hudson River Portfolio, published in New York about

1823. Glens Falls is plate 6. Similar views were painted by French artist Jacques-Gerard Milbert and by Alvan Fisher, an American artist." Milbert's similar drawing is lithograph # 22 in Picturesque Itinerary of the Hudson River.

The Richards print is 13.5" w x 8.75" h. Mounted and matted same as #1.

#4 This colored print has no identifying marks or date, but likely the original was done in the 1800s, as were the other three prints. The design is a landscape with a steep hill on the right, trees and rocks in the foreground, and a person coming up hill in the center. There is a river with falls in the background, along with several wooden structures (mills?) along or across the river.

The print is 13 3/8" w x 6.5" h. Mounted and matted as above.

#5 This small print of Baker's Falls entitled "The Falls in the Hudson River at Hudson Falls NY circa 1757" is signed by Jim E. Palmer (1921 – 2008). Palmer was a past president of the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council.

The print is 6.5" w x 3.75" w.

#6 This is an original watercolor titled "Dead Chicken Gulch" signed by [E superimposed on L] which could be E.L. or L.E. There is no other information except that it was matted by the above Jim E. Palmer, 11-11-1990.

The image shows a dirt road heading off into the distance with a rail fence on the left side of the road. In the left center of the picture is a two-part structure built into a hill side. The upper part has a tall stone foundation with a wooden upper story. The roof is vertical boards and it peaks in the center. There is a ventilation structure at the peak of the roof. The lower part backs up to the base of the other part. It has a roof with a ridge-line, a line of high unglazed windows and a door opening facing the road. Again, the roof is made from vertical boards. A driveway branches off of the road and appears to run up the hill behind the building, leading, perhaps, to a door into the upper part. At the extreme right of the picture, a small part of a picket fence is visible, suggesting there might be a house facing across the road to the visible structure. The purpose of this structure is, at this point, unknown.

The painting measures 11 3/8" w x 8 1/8" h. It is double matted and framed in an inexpensive gold-colored wooden frame.

The Folklife Center has papers, maps and other collections donated by William Lee Richards, as well as copies of his books William Little Lee: The Justinian of Hawaii, and Orson Richards: the Lumber King of the Hudson, and also books and papers of Frederick Richards.