

THE CARD – Vol. 17, No. 4 Issue 196 April 2006

Monthly Publication of the Lancaster County Postcard Club, Lancaster, PA.
Next Meeting: Mon., April 17, 2006. Farm & Home Center. Buy, sell, trade from 5:30. Meeting at 7pm.
Yearly membership is \$10 (\$5 for each additional member at the same address.)
Club/editors address: LCPC c/o Bryan Benner 127 E. Clay St. Lancaster, PA 17602
Club website: www.playle.com/clubs/lanaster or Google search: Lancaster County Postcard Club

CHILDS

John Lewis Childs.
Proprietor of the Great Floral Establishment
at Floral Park, N. Y.

RARE FLOWERS, VEGETABLES & FRUITS.
JOHN LEWIS CHILDS, FLORAL PARK, N. Y.

H. WALL LITHO. BROOKLYN, N. Y.

CHILDS NURSERY ON POSTCARDS

John Lewis Childs (1856- 1921) started his nursery in 1874 when he was eighteen years old, after having worked in a greenhouse for one year on Long Island, NY. He acquired a few acres and set up his business as a seedsman and florist in what was then known as East Hinsdale, NY, also on Long Island. The name of this very small town was later changed to Floral Park by Childs, who also named the streets after flowers.

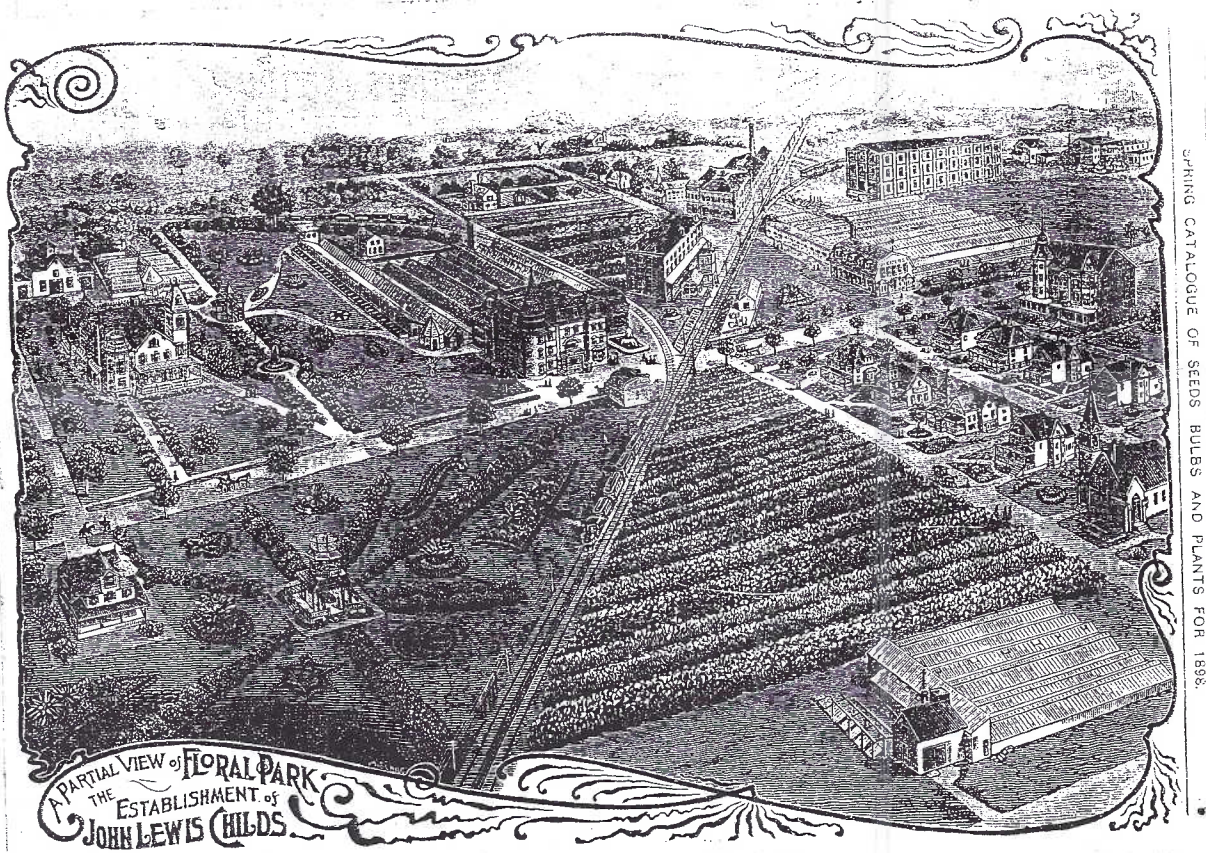
He started one of the first seed catalog businesses in America and the business grew to hundreds of acres of production area and many buildings used for various aspects of his business. They included everything from his own Victorian mansion and private conservatories to greenhouses, seed beds, seed stores, Victorian gardens, and a rail spur, canal, and farm. At its height they would receive as many as eight thousand orders in a day.

About the Cover: This is the cover of John Lewis Childs seed and plant catalog for 1898. The image of John himself is from an undivided back postcard (I cropped the white space off this card) on which he touts his business as "The Great Floral Establishment."

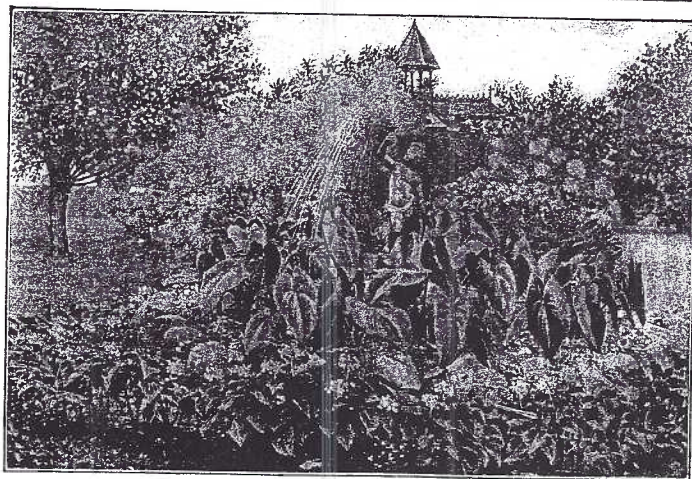
His catalogs were profusely illustrated with elaborate engravings of the exotic and new plants he had to offer. He also used different color paper for different types of plants; for example, shrubs were on white paper, vegetables on pink, etc. These sections would be divided by colorful lithographs of featured plants. The result was a beautiful catalog which, from the looks of pictures, created a very successful nursery.

By the turn of the century he had expanded to set up a seed house and production area in Pasadena, CA, where they raised geraniums, freesias, and amaryllis bulbs. Another farm in Suffolk County, NY, was devoted to the wholesale florist business and grew gladioli, cannas, and dahlias.

Childs started his own publishing company which he used not only for the catalog, but also for the publication of a monthly magazine called the *Mayflower*, an internationally known magazine of gardening and home adornment which was published from 1885-1906 with a circulation of a half a million copies. He also wrote a book *Guide to Lily Culture* that had seven



The above engraving of Childs Nursery and John Childs residence shows many of the buildings of his company including greenhouses, brick bulb warehouse, Mayflower Publishing Co. building, shipping building and many others as well as some of the town. Many of these buildings and surrounding gardens are shown on their postcards printed I speculate by his publishing co.

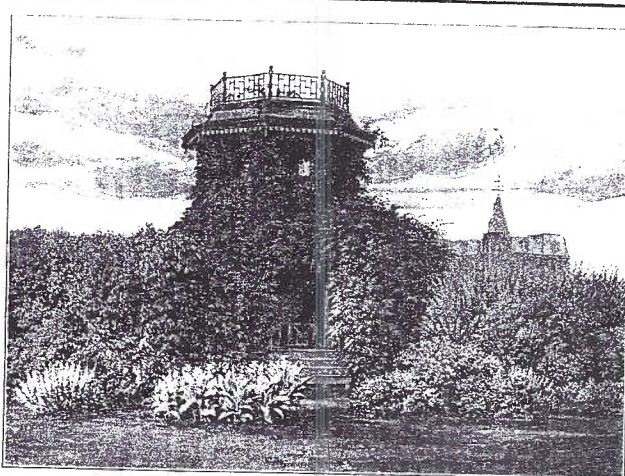


Fountain on Lawn of John Lewis Childs, Floral Park, N. Y.

editions. (He sort of sounds like the Martha Stewart of his day!)

There are postcards of the nursery which one would suspect were printed by his Mayflower Publishing Co. as advertising. I have come across nine different views and continue looking for more. All I have are undivided backs and have no publisher or printer markings. They all do have a coat of arms with Latin inscription on the top left corner. They are all on white card stock with a single color of ink used to print the image ranging from brown, green, blue, and black. The card of Childs on the front cover is the only one not showing a garden or building on the property.

The town of Floral Park is still going strong today with a population of 16,800. Though Childs' nursery has long since gone out of business the town school carries his name.



Pagoda on Grounds of John Lewis Childs, Floral Park, N. Y.

Illustrations on this page are from undivided back postcards. The elaborate gardens I'm sure were meant to inspire you to buy plants from him and create your own!

Library Highlight

PICTURES IN THE POST

The Story of the Picture Postcard
by Richard Carline

Those who only know the postcards of today can scarcely be expected to appreciate what they meant to people 75 or more years ago. Many of us seldom think of buying a picture postcard, except as a matter of convenience; but during the quarter century that preceded World War I, it would have been difficult to find anyone who did not buy postcards from genuine pleasure. People preserved them carefully in albums or sent them to friends and relatives hoping to receive others in return.

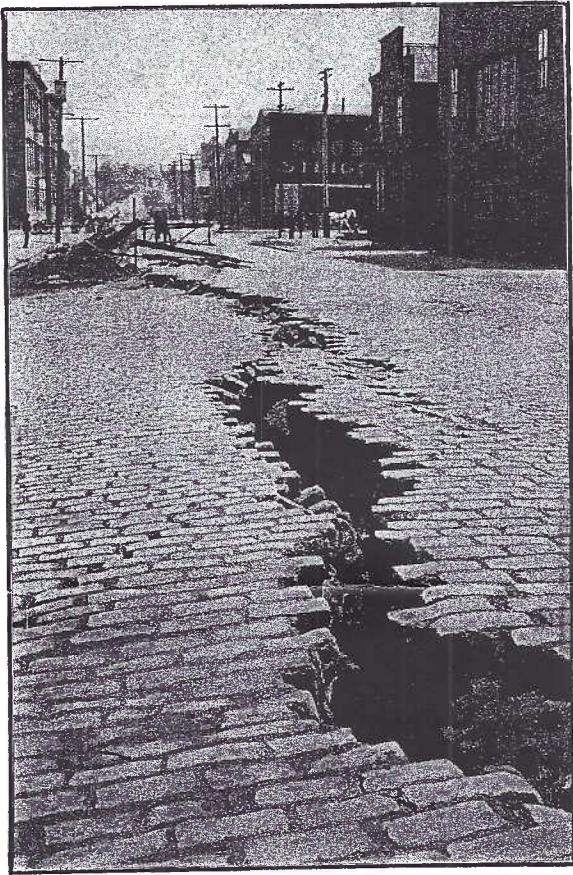
Pictures in the Post is not only essential reading for the postcard enthusiast of today, but will also entertain and inform anyone interested in the development of the public's taste in popular art. The author pioneered the fascinating story of the picture postcard craze and, with the previous edition, was the first to place the story of the picture postcard in its historical, social, and artistic setting. He has now revised and increased the scope of the book to provide much additional and illustrative material, particularly concerning the worldwide aspects of the postcard's history.

This book is much more than a diverting record of one feature of the Victorian and Edwardian social scene; the author, in his analysis of his material as an index of popular taste, combines the insight of a painter with his special knowledge of the history and origins of the picture postcard.

If you are interested in borrowing this book, please call Carol Giona on 464-1410.



Lawn and Private Conservatories of John Lewis Childs, Floral Park, N. Y.



SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE

1906 – 2006

It was exactly 100 years ago this month that a major part of San Francisco was destroyed by earthquake and the fires that followed.

The earthquake occurred along the San Andreas fault at 5:12 AM on April 18, 1906 and was felt from Coos Bay in Oregon down to Los Angeles and east into Nevada. There was major damage from Eureka in northern California down to Fresno County.

In San Francisco streets buckled and sank and many large fissures opened up. People rushed into the streets, afraid to stay in the buildings, and many camped in the parks. A second major aftershock occurred at 8:14 AM. South of Market Street many buildings collapsed since they were poorly constructed on reclaimed land.

The earthquake started many fires in the city, caused by fallen electric lines, overturned stoves and coal oil lamps. It was impossible to fight the fires since most water lines were ruptured. The fires would continue to burn for four days and eventually would consume almost the entire downtown area.

The U.S. Army sent its entire supply of tents to the stricken city. And people lived in these until they could get back into regular housing. The city forbid indoor cooking for a time and, as a result, it was common to see a row of stoves out on the street and



residents making meals on them.

It is estimated that the earthquake would have registered about 8.25 on today's Richter scale. Damage was estimated at \$500,000,000 in 1906 dollars. Some 3,000 people lost their lives

Postcards were a major source in recording this event. Almost every known publisher or printer put out some pictures of the damage. They included Behrendt, Cardinell Vincent, Crocker, Kropp, Mitchell, Pacific Novelty, Rieder, Scheff, Selige, Souvenir and Weidner

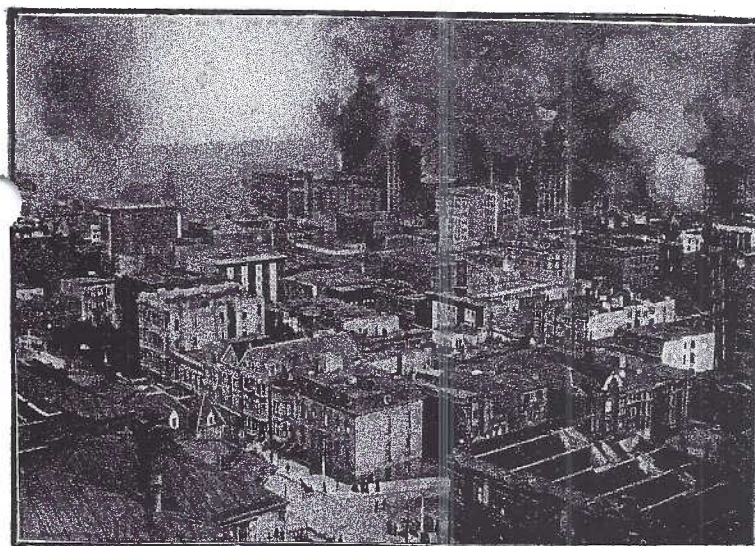
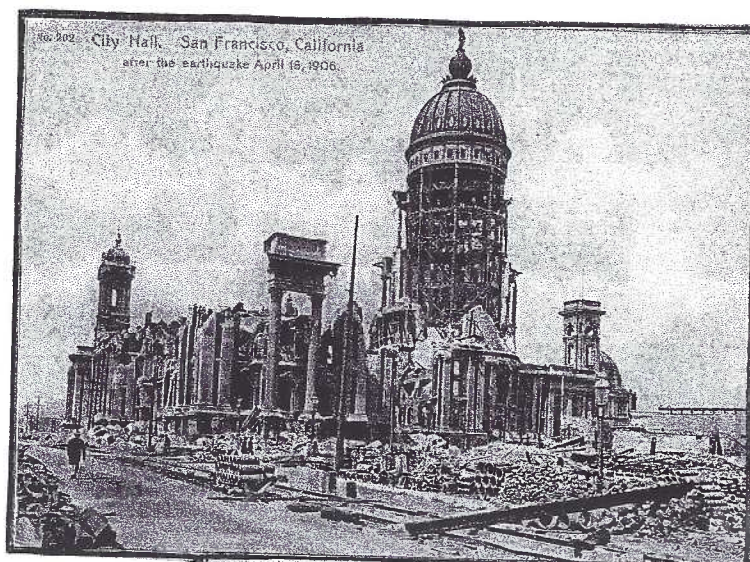


Photo Credits

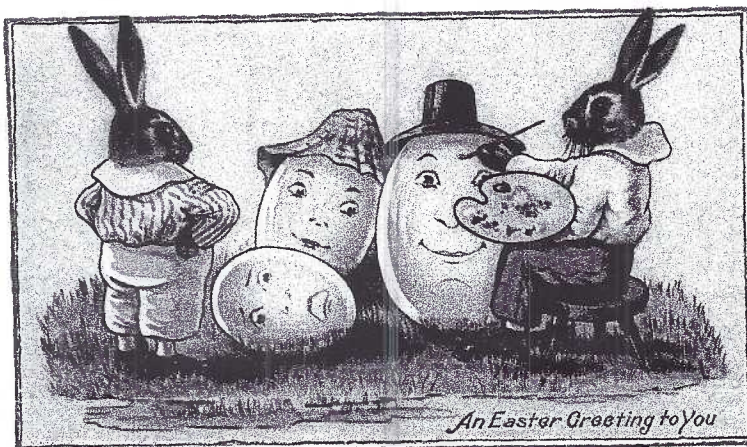
Bottom Left -
I Scheff
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M. Rieder
All Others -
Chas. Weidner

CLUB PAGE

By Dick Pendergrast

MARCH MEETING

Dr. Victor Christie presented the program on artist Bessie Pease Gutman. A Philadelphia area artist, Bessie became famous for her illustrations in books and magazines. Her postcard work was done just prior to World War I, which limited her output. There were many unauthorized copies of her work printed in Europe.



The monthly competition was a single card with the subject "Children". There were 27 entries submitted – probably the most we've ever had in one night. The winners were:

First Place – Tom Beck – United We Stand

Second Place – Maria Schurz – The Baby

Third Place – Gisela Withers – The Rainmaker

Thanks also to everyone who contributed – Blanche Corrigan, Doug Milliken, Jim Ward, Ruth and Harold Moyer, Sandy Shaub, Mike Middleton, Ray and Carol Dennis, George Graham, Bonnie Gable, Carl and Dorothy Haffly, Joe Myers, Tom and Becky Schaum, Don and Teresa Jumper, Walt and Barb Mowrer, Linda Mylin, Gwynn Fulmer and Mary Darrenkamp.

Door Prize winners were Mary Darrenkamp and Carl Haffly.
The 50/50 winner was Tom Schaum

APRIL MEETING

Dick Pendergrast will give a program on the San Francisco earthquake which occurred just 100 years ago. The monthly competition will be a single card with subject "Umbrellas"

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

#756 **Lou Philip**, 6128 Daniel Street, Allentown, Pa. 18104. (610)336-9297. Collects Pre 1950 and Curteich Large Letters, State Capitols, Lehigh Valley and University of Notre Dame

NEW VOLUNTEERS

Special thanks to the following people who assumed new volunteer positions:

Mary Darrenkamp – Social Secretary

Carol and Ray Dennis – Refreshments Committee

Walter and Barb Mowrer, Bud and Barb Heim – Distribution Committee for the Card