Edith M. Richardson: Woman of Mystery and Her Subjects

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State University of New York
College at Buffalo
Department of History and Social Studies Education

*Edith M. Richardson: Woman of Mystery and Her Subjects*

A Thesis Project in
Museum Studies

by

Adam J. Barnes

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of the Requirements
for the
Degree of
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Abstract

This paper and corresponding exhibit fulfill the final requirement for a M.A. in Museum Studies. They are both titled *Edith M. Richardson: Woman of Mystery and Her Subjects* because the people involved, including the donors of the collection, did not know or could not find anything about Richardson. In this paper I will write about my search for Richardson and her subjects as well as implementing the exhibit.

This paper is divided up into five sections not including this abstract, introduction, and bibliography. The first section is my literature review where I write about the articles and books I read as references for this exhibit and paper. I also talk about the online sources I used. The second section I talk about the field of photography that Richardson was involved with most of her professional career, which was home portraiture work. The third section I write about my search for Richardson and her subjects. The fourth section is Richardson’s biography. The final section I talk about the exhibit itself. I include the photo labels that I used in the exhibit. There are also 3 appendices: additional Richardson images, survey of Richardson negatives, and some of the letters she wrote.
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Chapter I
Introduction

The beginnings of photography in Buffalo, NY, has its roots in 1839 when S.P. Pease of the Weed’s Hardware store took the first photo in Buffalo.¹ Between then and the beginning of the Great Depression many photography studios were opened in Buffalo. One of them was the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio which actually was the combination of two other photography studios.

Howard D. Beach came to Buffalo in 1884 to study photography under Andrew Simson.² Twelve years later, Beach became Simson’s partner and subsequently bought the studio, which was located at 456 Main Street in Buffalo, in 1900.³ In 1908, Howard D. Beach brought the Eleck F. Hall Photography Studio at 469 Virginia Street.⁴

Howard D. Beach passed away in 1954.⁵ 469 Virginia Street, which was also the family’s residence, and the glass plates were passed to his daughter Margaret. In 1974, Margaret sold 469 Virginia Street to attorney Salvatore Giallombardo.⁶ He allowed Margaret to continue to live in the family quarters rent free.⁷ Margaret moved to New Britain, Connecticut sometime in the 1980s.⁸ Even after Margaret moved away, the glass plates remained in the Virginia Street studio where Beach had placed them.

³ Ibid, 88
⁴ Ibid, 88
⁵ Ibid, 95
⁶ Ibid, 95
⁷ Ibid, 95
⁸ Ibid, 95
After purchasing 469 Virginia Street, the Giallombardo family started researching the collection and Beach. They sought to have Beach recognized as an exceptional photographer and they planned a museum. The museum never materialized, so in 2008, Salvatore and his brother Michael approached the The Buffalo History Museum (then known as the Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society) about donating the collection.

In 2011, The Buffalo History Museum acquired the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection. The collection was moved from 469 Virginia Street to the Reinstein Building located on The Buffalo History Museum campus. The bulk of the collection remains in storage at the museum today.

In the collection there are over 57,000 individual glass plate negatives, along with acetate and nitrate film negatives, business documents, and personal documents dating from the late 1880s to the mid-1950s. The collection is the possibly the most complete and fully documented negative collection in Buffalo.

Even though the collection is called the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection, the items, including negatives and documents, contained in it relate to other people as well. This includes his daughter, Margaret, and predecessors and colleagues, including his mentor and business partner Andrew Simson as well as Eleck F. Hall.

Even though it is mostly complete, some negatives have been gifted to people over the years by Margaret’s husband, Howard A. Beach. From the time the studio closed to the time the

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9 Ibid, 95
10 Ibid, 95
11 Ibid, 95
12 Ibid, 83
13 Kimberly A. Bruckman, "Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection" (Master’s Project, State University College at Buffalo, 2018). 4
14 Ibid, 5.
History Museum acquired them they had been exposed to dirt, mold, and, and some of the glass plate negatives had been cracked or broken.\textsuperscript{15}

The Buffalo History Museum has little funding and manpower to deal with the collection. To help preserve the collection, a partnership was arranged with the Museum Studies graduate program at SUNY Buffalo State. Students in the program clean, digitize, rehouse, and accession the negatives. They also research the people in the portraits. Several students have used images from the collection for their Master’s Projects. So far, including this project, there have been three student exhibits featuring the collection. The first one was \textit{Buffalo’s World War I Experience: Portrait from the Howard D. Beach Photography Collection}, followed by \textit{Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection}. \textit{Picturing Buffalo} was the only exhibit not displayed at SUNY Buffalo State. It was displayed at the Porter Hall location of the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum in Buffalo, NY.\textsuperscript{16}

Also included in the collection were both film and glass plate negatives taken by a female photographer by the name of Edith M. Richardson. No one, including the Giallombardo family, could find much information about her. I first became aware of her during my first semester at Buffalo State in the Spring of 2017. I decided to see what I could uncover. I mainly used online resources, including Ancestry.com and Old Fulton NY Postcard websites. I also used the paper archives of the studio where I found documents and letters pertaining to Richardson. There were two questions I tried to answer. They were: Did Edith M. Richardson work at the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio and if so, when? And if she did not work there, why were her negatives and card catalog part of the studio collection?

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, 5.
\textsuperscript{16} Kimberly A. Bruckman, “\textit{Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection}” (Master’s Project, State University College at Buffalo, 2018).
Chapter II

Literature Review

Other than the interview that Edith M. Richardson gave in the San Diego Public Library Bulletin, which I will quote in a following section, the only other reading I could find any mention of Richardson was in Dr. Cynthia Conides’s article “Preserving and Accessing the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Glass Plate Negative Collection”.17

Dr. Cynthia Conides was the director of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, now The Buffalo History Museum, from August 2007 to December 2010, and began the negotiations to acquire the collection. The acquisition was completed in 2011. In the article, she writes about the history of the collection and the challenges faced with preserving a huge collection, especially one that is environmentally challenged.

The only time Dr. Conides mentions Richardson is in the following sentence: “A card catalog, meticulously kept by Beach and his contemporaries, contains detailed information on each glass plate negative, including the name of the original photographer (Simson, Hall, Beach, or Richardson)…”18

Dr. Conides’s article is right now the only publicly available writing about the Beach Collection. There is an unpublished paper, compiled by a researcher, that traces the lineage of the studio, but only people who work at The Buffalo History Museum have permission to use it. Later this year, Western New York Heritage magazine is going to start publishing a series of articles about the Beach Studio.

18 Ibid, 84
Another master’s project is Kimberly Bruckman’s entitled *Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection*. In her project, Bruckman used family narratives to show the depth of information contained within the Beach Collection. She highlighted five families, including the Beach family from Buffalo.

Even though the survey that Clinton Brown Company did about the Caulkins Building is mostly about the building and the architecture, it does have a section titled “A History of Photography in Buffalo, NY.” That section mentions how many of the photography studios opened up along Main Street. There have been so many photographers in Buffalo’s history they could only mention a few and sadly they did not mention Simson (who was one of the earliest photographers in Buffalo), Hall, Beach or Richardson. 19

In the 1890s, a new field of photography came about called home portraiture work where subjects were photographed in their homes instead of a studio. This is kind of photography that Richardson took part in for most of her career. Around that time many articles appeared in photography magazines and books describing the how-to of home portraiture work.

One of the earliest journal articles written about home portraiture work was “Photography at Home” by John A. Tennant. Tennant was the editor of *Photo Miniature* magazine. He wrote this article in 1899 and published it in his magazine. In the article Tennant gives tips to amateur photographers who want to get into “home portraiture” work. He really encourages women to get involved in this field. Even though it was written mostly for amateur photographers it seems certain that Richardson was familiar with the techniques described. By looking at her photography, it is apparent she used some of the tips in the article.

“Study the subject previous to making an attempt at posing before the camera; acquaint yourself with the subject’s individual peculiarities, and, in posing, aim to reproduce as many strong characteristics as possible. Do not begin to “fish for ideas on the focusing screen, while the sitter is losing confidence in you, and patience for the ordeal.””  

This was one of the main tips that the American School of Art and Photography included in one of their volumes of their Complete Self-Instructing Library of Practical Photography. They published two volumes in 1908 and 1909 about home portraiture work. The books were titled, *At home portraiture: flashlight, interiors, copying, enlarging, lantern slides* (1908) and *At home portraiture, flashlight, interiors, lenses* (1909). As the following paragraph from the preface shows, they wrote them for both the amateur photographer and the professional photographer:

“In gathering together the material for this volume, the editors, have not lost sight of the fact that not alone the amateur, but the professional also, is frequently desirous of making portrait, *in the home*, with all the surroundings of home that help to make up the effective studies now so much in vogue.”

Also, in the preface they wanted to make sure that everybody knew that anyone could do home portraiture work. They wrote that:

“The apparatus necessary for the various phases of work taken up in detail in this volume is easily constructed, or bought at little expense, and, together with the instruction given, will enable anyone to produce excellent results.”

One of the more recent journal articles written about home portraiture work is “Home Portraiture” by Christian A. Peterson. Mr. Peterson was the Associate Curator of Photographs at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. He has written much about the history of photography.

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20 Schriever, J.B. and Thomas Harrison Cummings, eds. Complete Self-instructing Library of Practical Photography: At home portraiture: flashlight, interiors, copying, enlarging, lantern slides. (Scranton, PA: American School of Art and Photography, 1908) v,
https://books.google.com/books?id=Q4tuAAAAMAAJ&dq=home+portraiture&source=gbs_nnavlinks_s
21 Ibid, vi.
In 2011 Peterson wrote an article titled “Home Portraiture” in which he traces the history of home portraiture work. He quotes from three monographs that were published in 1899: *Home Portraiture for Amateur Photographers* by Richard Penlake, *Amateur Portraiture at Home* by the editor of *Photo Beacon* magazine, F. Dundas Todd, and an issue of *Photo Miniature* edited by John A. Tennant. He uses nine photos in his article as examples.

Another book that Richardson might have read was *Composition in Portraiture* by Sadakichi Hartmann published under his penname Sidney Allan. Sadakichi Hartmann was a photography critic. Interestingly enough, he had at least one photo taken by Howard D. Beach. Hartmann mostly wrote the book for photographers who worked in a studio and wanted their photographs to be artistic. Hartman writes that:

“Photographic portraiture … is a record, the record of a person at a certain age, in a certain mood, in a certain garb, etc.”

In his introduction Sadakichi Hartmann writes:

“All that I shall attempt to do in my treatise is to analyze composition; as far as it is of moment to portrait photography, and to come down to the few fundamental laws which underlie all portrait composition, these which every photographer should know, and will endeavor to make my statements is as simple and straight forward a manner as possible.”

In his book, Hartmann give tips about certain aspects of portrait photography such as placement of head, profile view, full face and three-quarter views, sittings, standings, backgrounds, and the arrangement of groups. It is interesting that most of the examples shown in his book are paintings, not photographs.

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22 Hartmann, Sadakichi. *Composition in Portraiture* (New York: Edward L. Wilson, 1909), 12-13
23 Ibid, 17.
With the amount of reading material pertaining to Richardson being limited, I decided to read a book about women photographers written by a highly regarded author on that subject. Naomi Rosenblum is a qualified expert on the history of photography. One of her books, *World History of Photography* has become a highly regarded textbook. She has written on photographers Lewis W. Hine and Paul Strand.

In 1994, Rosenblum wrote the first edition of *A History of Women Photographers*. In 2000, she wrote an updated and expanded edition where she traces the history of women in photography from the beginning of photography in 1869 to 2000. In the book she mostly focuses on American photographers, but also writes about European photographers.

In the introduction to her book *A History of Women Photographers*, Rosenblum asks a few questions: Have women and their photographs been as visible as they should be in view of their numbers and past influence? Have inquiries into their activities been as rigorous and as insightful as their male colleagues? And have their contributions been understood in the context of the medium’s overall development? According to Rosenblum, the answer is no. That is why she wrote the book. She uses Beaumont Newhall’s *History of Photography from 1839 to the Present Day*, Mike Weaver’s *Art of Photography, 1839-1989* and John Szarkowski’s *Photography Until Now* as examples of work that focused more on male photographers than women photographers.

The book is divided into nine chapters dealing with different time periods. The three chapters most relevant for this work were: Chapter 2: Not Just for Fun: Women become Professionals 1880-1915, Chapter 3: Portraiture 1890-1915, and Chapter 6: Photography between the Wars North America 1920-1940. These chapters dealt with the time period that Richardson was active.

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I was hoping that Rosenblum would write about the difficulties that women photographers had during the Great Depression. I wanted to see if they faced the same difficulties as Richardson did.

Another expert like Naomi Rosenblum is C. Jane Gover. In 1988, Gover wrote *The Positive Image: Women Photographers in Turn of the Century America*. In her introduction she writes the purpose of her book:

“is to explore and reveal the multifaceted nature of women’s experience in photography during the years 1880-1920, with particular emphasis on the turn of the century period.”

In the book Gover “places the appearance of women photographers in the context of more general changes in the lives of middle-class women…” Gover argues in her book that it was the industrialization of the United States that got women involved in photography. She argued it by showing how the invention of household appliances gave women more free time. Gover also argues that women felt empowered by taking up the field of photography.

Like Rosenblum, Gover mentions that little literature on the field of photography focused on female involvement. She also mentions *Beaumont Newhall’s History of Photography from 1839 to the Present Day* as an example of that. In her introduction Gover writes:

“Writers make sincere efforts to bring to light the contributions of special women. Yet none has done so in a completely satisfying way mostly because they treat these women as idiosyncratic figures rather than women whose lives defined them as significant transitional figures in the history of women in American artistic and professional life.”

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https://books.google.com/books?id=skV2Nlj69T0C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false
26 Ibid, xi.
27 Ibid, xiv.
28 Ibid, xiv.
In Gover’s opinion:

“It is no longer enough to provide names, show pictures, or discuss individuals apart from the historical context. The historian must now relate the individuals to the ideology and to the changes that shape any historical period.”

The main book she uses as an example for this is Anne Tucker’s *The Woman’s Eye*. In that book Tucker evaluates female photographers from a feminist perspective. Tucker writes about the relationship between sex (male or female) and art. Gover finds a common problem of literature in that the authors, such as Tucker, do not connect the individual women photographers to their nineteenth century contemporaries.

Another book I read about photography was *American Album* written by three editors of *American Heritage* magazine: Oliver Jensen, Joan Paterson Kerr, and Murray Belsky. In the introduction the authors wrote:

“The purpose of this book is to revisit an utterly vanished earlier America by means of old photographs as fresh and revealing as we could find. In terms of time they run from 1839, when the first daguerreotypes were taken, until the eve of the First World War, which marks the end of an era, or what we may regard as the beginning of our own time.”

Another reference book that turned up in a search was *History of West Virginia Old and New* by Special Staff of Writers for The American Historical Society copyrighted in 1923. The volume I found was Volume 3 which contains biographies of notable men of West Virginia. I was able to find information on the Seal family who is in the Richardson collection.

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29 Gover, xiv.
30 Ibid, xv.
31 Ibid, xv.
To learn more about the US Census (which was one of the main tools I used in my research), I read Mary Penner’s excellent article titled “Census” found in the March-April 2010 issue of *Ancestry Magazine*. I learned that Congress had prepared for residents to not willing to answer the questions by either fining them or sending them to jail for a few days. The Census takers also could face a fine or jail time if they did not count everyone in their district.

Ancestry.com is a for a profit genealogy website. One must be careful because not all of the information on Ancestry.com is correct due to the fact anybody with a membership can add information about any person. Also, the records that are digitalized were not always correct. Take as an example the US Census, like Mary Penner mentions in her article, not everybody was truthful when they answered the questions they were asked\(^{34}\), the person who was answering the questions might not know the answer so they might guess, and also the census taker sometimes misunderstood or could not understand what the person who was answering the questions was saying, so they wrote down their best estimate. Also the person answering might lie, especially if it was a woman answering the question how old she is. An example in the Richardson collection is Lyda Horner who gave different years of her birth. One of the many helpful things on Ancestry.com is in the right hand side of the record page. There are usually records related to the person being researched.

Old Fulton NY Postcards was founded and is owned by Tom Tryniski. It is a free website that includes over 41,443,000 old newspaper pages from the United States and Canada. Many of the newspapers are from New York State.

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Newspapers.com is a for profit website that has pages from more than 7,100 papers from all over the United States. What is helpful in this site is that you can narrow you search by state and newspaper.

Findagrave.com was founded in 1995. It a free user generated website. It allows users to create memorials to any deceased person. According to the homepage there are over 170 million memorials. Like Ancestry.com, you have to take the information provided with a grain of salt because the information put on the website by the creator could be wrong.
Chapter III

Home Portraiture Work

A new genre of photography came about at the turn of the twentieth century called home portraiture, which was photographing subjects in their own homes. Subjects before that time were photographed in a studio. In the studio they were posed stiffly and props surrounded them. According to Christian A. Peterson, this is what led to the field of home portraiture. He wrote that “home portraiture came into its own as a reaction to the artificiality of the studio portrait; it was meant to embrace relaxed poses, soft natural lighting and the subject’s possessions.”35 Both amateur and professional photographers did home portraiture work.

Advocates of home portraiture thought it was essential to find an appropriate place in the house to make their subject comfortable.”36 John A. Tennant, in his article, “Photography at Home,” that appeared in Tennant’s Photo Miniature magazine, writes that, “some sign of life or occupancy is desirable, A piece of music at the open piano, a violin with its bow, or a guitar laid carelessly in a not too prominent place, or, in a bedroom, a pair of lady’s slippers will give the effect desired.”37 It was suggested to photographers who were doing home portraiture work that they avoid putting certain heavily patterned interior elements such as wallpaper, drapes and carpeting in their photos because they could distract attention away from the subject.38 It seems like Richardson took this advice to heart because of the negatives I digitalized, there are only about four that had heavily patterned interior elements.

Tennant’s magazine was the not the only place that photographers could find tips on home portraiture work. The following tips came from The American School of Art and Photography’s,

36 Imid, 375
37 John A. Tennant, “Photography at Home,” Photo Miniature 1 no. 8 (November 1899): 379
38 Christian A. Peterson, “Home Portraiture”, 375
Likeness of a Person - Referring to Webster…. You should include in the portrait everything that will add to the likeness of the subject - omit everything else. In order to secure this effect study the expression and the natural pose of the individual. It may be necessary to include the hands, and sometimes even the feet; anything that will help to interpret character, leaving out all those features which tend to detract from it.\textsuperscript{39}

Obtaining Ideas for Posing- Many excellent ideas may be secured by looking over the various popular magazines, as they contain splendid studies made by the very best photographic artists. If you will study these, many ideas will be presented which will lead away from the stereotyped forms of posing. It is sometimes a good plan to make a few rough sketches of favorite poses, some pleasing lightings or other details which you can study and impress upon your mind. Arrange and re-arrange until the whole scheme appears quite clear to you …\textsuperscript{40}

At the same time home portraiture came about, a movement called American Arts and Crafts was beginning. In the movement, architecture and usable items had a simplified look. The movement embraced nature. This led many photographers who did home portraiture work to take portraits outside of the house in the surrounding yards and gardens.\textsuperscript{41} Even though most of her portraits were taken inside, about 17 of the negatives I digitalized were taken outside (see Figure I).

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 79.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, 377
Since the beginnings of photography, women have been involved either as professionals or amateurs, but they seem to have dominated “home portraiture” work. There were a few reasons for that. One reason was because women were in the home environment for more of the day than men. Another reason, according to Naomi Rosenblum, was that women were “considered more attuned then men to family relationships in general and to offspring in particular, women were expected to excel at portraits that embodied middle-class values about motherhood, family, and woman’s role in the proper upbringing of children.”42 A third reason was that there was a feeling that male photographers were lacking in parental feeling and also because they were usually not welcome in private residences.43

There were many advocates for women being involved in that field of photography, including John A. Tennant and photographer Pearl Grace Loehr. In 1912 Loehr gave a speech, titled ‘Home Portraiture for Women’, at the annual convention of the Photographers’ Association of America in which she said:

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43 Ibid, 83
“Is it a woman’s work? Preeminently so. Women have a special gift to see, grasp and to enter into the intimate affairs of the home life. Under no studio conditions is the personal side and character of the worker so put to the test as in home portraiture.”

The main subjects of home portraiture were women and children. One reason was because the portraits were usually taken during the daytime and normal business hours when men were working and the only people home were the wife and children. Another reason was because during the first half of the twentieth century, when people thought of the home environment, they associated it with women and children.

According to Christian A. Peterson, the golden age of home portraiture work lasted about fifty years from about the 1890s to the 1940s.

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45 Christian A. Peterson, “Home Portraiture.” 374
Chapter IV

The Search for Edith M. Richardson and Her Subjects

My search for Edith M. Richardson started my first semester at Buffalo State during the Spring 2017 semester. I started my search online. On Ancestry.com I found her in all of the US Censuses that were taken in her lifetime (1870-1940) I also found her in city directories for different places she lived including Denver Colorado, San Diego California, and Geneva, NY.

I also used the newspaper sites Old Fulton NY Postcards and Newspapers.com to find articles on Edith and her subjects. I used the following search terms for Richardson: “Edith Richardson” and “Edith M. Richardson”. What I found was that over 80% of the articles under the search term “Edith M. Richardson” were about the one I was searching for, while only 50% of the articles under the other search term were about her. I also used the same sites except Old Fulton Newspapers to search for her subjects. I searched four US Censuses (1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940) on Ancestry.com for them.

On March 29, 2017, my MST 623 Digital Museum Collections instructor, Noelle Wiedemer, sent me the excel file that The Buffalo History Museum volunteer, Phyllis Walling, prepared of Richardson’s card catalog so I could search for her subjects. It was in alphabetical order, but I changed my copy to be in chronological order to better track her potential location. I thought it would make it easier to make sure the person I was searching for was the right one. If the person on the list after the person I was searching for was from the same area, I could be more certain I had found the right person.

While researching the people she took portraits of, I noticed that only a few in the very beginning were from the Buffalo area or even New York State. Most of them were from West Virginia, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania. That got me to thinking and I came up with two
questions: Did she work at the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio and if so, when? If she did not work there, why were her negatives and card catalog part of the studio collection?

The smoking gun came when I started to organize the paper archives of the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio. I found in the collection three items referencing Richardson with 469 Virginia Street, Buffalo, NY. This was the address of the Beach Studio. They are: a photo mat that has Richardson above the address, a receipt for a 12x17 copy sold to a Dr. Rubright of North Canton, OH, on Jan 1, 1930, and letter from Richardson to Miss Cronin on a paper with the letter head that reads Edith M. Richardson 469 Virginia St Buffalo, NY. It was determined that Rita Cronin worked at the Beach Studio. However, those were not the items that cracked the case right open. The items that did were letters from Richardson to the Studio from 1929 to the mid-1930s.

After finding them, my thought is she did not work in the studio itself. In most of the letters she mentions she is sending a certain number of films to the studio and how she wants some of them developed. I am thinking that because she did not stay in one place more than a few months, she needed to be connected to a studio where she could get the photos developed and where people could order prints when she was not in the town that those people lived.

Places that Edith M. Richardson’s Subjects Lived

Most of Richardson’s subjects lived in five main states: Ohio, West Virginia, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Florida. The cities I found them living were:

- East Hamburg, NY
- Perry, NY
- Tampa, FL
- Charleston, WV
- Bluefield, WV
- Bramwell, WV
- Clarksburg, WV
- Elk, WV
- Weston, WV
- Wheeling, WV
- Triadelphia, WV
- Morgantown, WV
- Wellsburg, WV
- Oil City, PA
- Titusville, PA
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Westmont, PA
- Southmont, PA
- Johnstown, PA
- Connellsville, PA
- Uniontown, PA
- Springfield, OH
- Dayton, OH
- Oakwood, OH
- Youngstown, OH
- Cleveland, OH
- Akron, OH
- Canton, OH
- Plain, OH
- Massillon, OH
- Alliance, OH
- Tulsa, OK

Some of those places she only visited a couple of times while some it seemed like she visited each year. Of those places she visited each year it seems like her main bases were Uniontown, PA, Connellsville, PA, Johnstown, PA, Canton OH, and Akron, OH. Looking at the dates of when the photos were taken it seemed like she only stayed at one place at most three months and then moved to another city.
Figure 2 Screenshot from Google Maps showing the places where her subjects in West Virginia lived
Figure 3 Screenshot from Google Maps showing where her subjects in Pennsylvania lived
Figure 4 Screenshot from Google Maps showing where her subjects in Ohio lived
Chapter V

Edith M. Richardson

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were the beginning of social changes that affected gender roles and the place of women in American life. 46 Between 1890 and 1920, the number of women who went to college almost tripled and the number of women who worked more than doubled between 1880 and 1900. 47

Before the end of the 19th century, women’s roles and place in society were much different according to Oliver Jensen et al:

“Rich women lived relatively idle lives on their “pedestals,” while poor ones knew, as the jingle says, that woman’s work is never done. Poised variously between the extremes, those of the middle class were hedged about by a propriety even more restrictive than their formidable undergarments. “Good” women could easily be told from “bad women” in that pre-Freudian time. Woman’s rightful place was in the home; save for a few disruptive advocates of women’s rights, no one felt that women, much less ladies, belonged in the political, economic, or intellectual worlds.” 48

Women were peripherally involved in photography from the mid-19th century, but it was not until the 1880s that they started to get more involved. One reason were the improvements of camera technology such as dry plates, celluloid roll film, and the hand-held camera.49 In 1889, the Kodak Camera and nitro-cellulose film were introduced. 50

Photography has been a field where it has seemed women have always been welcomed. Unlike female painters who faced prejudice from academicians, women could learn photography either themselves or in schools, clubs, or classes which were all opened to females.51 They did not

47 Ibid, 3
49 Gover, Ibid, 6.
50 Ibid, 7.
51 Ibid, xvi.
face the suspicion that women who wanted to enter other fields like medicine or the law faced. On the other hand, while it is noted that articles appeared in photography journals that sought to keep women within the domestic space, I was unable to find an example of this.

Women were welcome to enter the field as independent workers, but at the same time were told to do so in menial roles such as receptionists or helpmates to the husband who was a photographer. As the number of women who entered the field grew, the male photographers were worried about the possibility of the feminization of their field. It did not stop women from becoming photographers. By 1900 there were over 3,500 who worked as professional photographers. One of those women was a woman by the name of Edith M. Richardson.

Edith M. Richardson was born May 21, 1865, near Gibsonville, NY. She was the eighth of nine children of Hiram and Jane Tabor Richardson. She grew up in Leicester, NY and Perry, NY. According to an article in the Sept 11, 1884 issue of the *Perry Herald* she moved to Washington, DC. to attend school. I have not been able to figure out what school. The following fall, Richardson started at the State Normal and Training School at Geneseo, NY, from which she graduated from in 1889 with a scientific degree. According to the 1888 *Circular of the State Normal School at Geneseo, N.Y.*, the scientific degree included, “all the subject of the Advanced English Course, together with a two years’ course in two of the following languages: Latin, French, German.”

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52 Ibid, xvi.
53 Ibid, xvi-xvii
54 Ibid, xvi-xvii
55 Ibid, 17.
56 “Circular,” 1888. SUNY Geneseo Archives
After graduating, Richardson taught school mostly in Denver, Colorado. The two schools I have found her teaching at in Denver are Ashland and Louisa M. Alcott. Richardson taught school until 1901 or 1902. She then moved to San Diego and purchased the Elite Studio at the corner of Fifth and F Streets, San Diego. In the February 6, 1902 issue of *The San Diego Public Library Bulletin*, an article titled “A Lady Photographer For San Diego” appeared. It reads as follows:

“The women are invading every line of business. but there certainly is none more appropriate and adapted to her natural artistic tastes and talent than photography.

Miss Edith M. Richardson of New York has purchased the Elite Studio and proposes to revolutionize it. The Store News reporter of THE BULLETIN stepped into the Elite a few days ago and learned the above facts.

Miss Richardson says: “I have been a teacher of art for several years, both in the east and at Denver where I took up the study of photography.”

“What part of the work do you like best?” was asked. “Well,” said Miss Richardson, “It is all interesting and important, but the study of natural poses and expression is my special hobby, and the work with children.”

“Do you know,” with a merry laugh, “lady photographers, like lady teachers, are necessary to get the best results from children. Men cannot compete with women in this respect.”

Miss Richardson went on to say that she makes a specialty of ladies fine work. “A woman feels less restraint with a woman in these matters, and good results are much more easily obtained. I must confess though” said she, “that much of my success has been in portraits of the men, but of course they are not fussy like we women, as a rule.”
“Will you change the name of the studio?” was asked. “Oh no, the name is good enough, the class of work is all I shall change. The prices will be reasonable.”

Edith M. Richardson owned the Elite Studio until around 1906. In the Thursday March 28, 1907 issue of the *Advertiser- Gazette* from Geneva, NY the following article under the title In Photograph appeared:

“The photographic studio over 64 Seneca St., formerly conducted by H.W. Archer, has been purchased by two lady photographers, Miss Myrtle Randall of Perry, N.Y., and Miss E. M. Richardson of San Diego, Cal. These ladies had several years’ experience in the business, and show a highly finished grade of work. Miss Richardson for several years operated a studio in San Diego, where she made a specialty of children’s work. She has been remarkably successful in this line, and the happy, bright little faces that fill her studio attest their appreciation of one who not only enjoys and knows how to amuse them, but who can also “press the button” at the proper moment.

Misses Richardson and Randall are prepared to do all lines of photographic work, and we predict for them a successful business in Geneva.”

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57 “A Lady Photographer for San Diego.” *The San Diego Public Library Bulletin* 1 no 9 (February 6, 1902)

Richardson sold the studio in 1912 to Chrystler & Wilton. It seems likely around 1915 she entered into some kind of agreement with Howard D. Beach and his studio in which she could use the studio address as her professional business address and that she could send them her negatives and they would develop them. There are no letters or supporting documents from this time to tell us for sure about the agreement and when it started. From 1915 to 1937 she traveled to Ohio, West Virginia, Florida, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania, doing home portraiture work.

Other than her card catalog, the earliest notice of Richardson’s travels and home portraiture work was this snippet from the October 5, 1916 issue of the *Perry Record*:

“Miss Edith Richardson motored from Titusville, PA., to Perry last week, to look after her farm in Gibsonville. She has been doing home portraiture in Florida and West Virginia during the past year, and incidentally assisting the women of West Virginia in their fight for suffrage. That state will vote on a suffrage amendment this fall, and Miss Richardson thinks there is a good chance for carrying the amendment.” 59

With this being the last published piece dealing with her photography career before her obituary, we have to piece together the story using the letters that are in the Beach Studio paper collection. Of course, because they only cover about five years around the end of career, we cannot piece together the middle part of her career. The letters we have cover the period of the Great Depression.

Like most photographers during the Great Depression, Richardson had trouble getting her customers to pay, even the ones with money. She also encountered other problems as well, mostly in Canton, Ohio. There was an artist who was either painting miniatures or making miniature cameos for people. Some of Richardson’s customers hired him and they used the photos that she took. She was not happy because he was charging somewhere around $500 for them and she only

made what she charged for the photos. Richardson decided to copyright some of her photos. One time, the Beach Studio put the copyright mark where it was not supposed to be and ruined some of the photos. She then lost some customers, including the Hoover family who were the founders of the vacuum cleaner company. Here is a letter that Richardson wrote to Howard D. Beach about her encounter with Mrs. Hoover after that happened:

524 S. Main St.
Findlay, OH
Aug. 6th 1931

My Dear Mr. Beach:-

This is to report on my encounter with Mrs. Hoover.

I drove out there intending to smooth her down- and do almost anything to fix things up peaceably.

There is no use going into details- but will just say that she was so insulting that no self-respecting person or firm would stand for it.

Tried to intimidate- brow beat and threaten me- regular gangster methods- and- I can see now- why Sawyer acted so outrageously- He works in Mr. Hoovers office- (Hoovers did not send him to me however)

I offered to send back some of the pictures and have © placed an inconspicuous corner But- nothing doing- She would not let me have the pictures.

I would have let the copyright go entirely- if she had not taken the attitude she did.

She took the position that I had tried to take advantage etc- and – if I backed down it simply meant an acknowledgement of such intention.

She would not (did not want to hear) listen to my right to do have copyrights- Said your firm must becoming very second class to send out such marks on pictures etc. Tried to force me to say that Bachrach’s work was superior to yours etc etc.

Finally I stopped trying to pacify her- and stepped on her ignorance- and- she was very much surprised- gathered up her photos and said she would pay for them but would never have any more work done. I assured her that I did not care to do anymore work for her- Really I never felt so insulted in my life.

I asked her if I should wait for her check- and she said no- I will send it to you”

She objected strenuously to the stamps on back of photo. Said it was cheap and common looking (Well it is) and to some of the ©s

On one photo the © was like this- big and very white and well up in a conspicuous place. It did look bad- but she would not let me change it-

About the stamp- Do not use it on any more photos-

I supposed when I ordered it that it would be a small affair and (un or in) conspicuous- Who selected it anyway?

One of the chief things that is the matter with Mrs Hoover is her jealousy (intense) of Mrs. Timkin-

There are plenty of people in Canton who do not admire Mrs Hoover. I have always been one of them- While she has some good qualities she is chiefly a combination of
ignorance and money- and now that her nerves are more or less shattered I cannot stand her.

Of course I realize that such occurrences are bad for business but this could not be fixed up-

Anyway when I had finished with her sitting this last time I was completely worn out and felt that I never could go through another one like that-

I did not have any trouble with Mrs Albrecht- because she was decent in her attitude- and had something to complain about.

None of the rest have found fault with the ©s

Mrs. Geo. Deuble told me that the Boyd’s liked their photos very much-

Am having a good rest here although it is very hot Sincerely,

E.M.R.  

The local photographers who were in Canton, Ohio, the whole year caused Richardson many troubles. They would bug her phones and listen in to her conversations with her customers and then go to her customers and try to get the sitting away from her. In 1934 the man who run the LaSalle Photo Studio got his friends in the City Council to pass an ordinance which read:

“Transient photographers working in the city in the future must pay a $10 license fee at the mayor’s office and $3 additional for each day they operate.

A similar daily fee will be charged for each assistant under provisions of an ordinance passed by council Monday night. It covers all branches of photography, including solicitations for enlargements.”

The ordinance caused her trouble for about a month before she had it resolved in her favor. Richardson wrote to both Howard D. Beach and Margaret Beach five letters in July of 1934 about that ordinance and how it came about and what she did about it. Two of the letters are undated. The first letter was the one that had the newspaper clipping with the ordinance. The text of the four letters that followed it are below:

My dear Mr Beach:–

I am inclosing text of an ordinance passed July 3rd by the City Council of Canton.

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60 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach Aug 6, 1931 found in Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

61 Canton Repository. 1934. “Transient Photographers must pay $10 and daily fee.” From letter to Margaret Beach from Edith M. Richardson dated July 3, 1934 found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum
In it they have tried to eliminate not only the “transient” photographers but some of those not transient meaning me.

The ordinance does not go into effect for thirty days so I have until Aug. 3rd to do business here.

Do not know whether I will be able to qualify by next season or not- under their terms- as they demand a “permanent” place of business.

Well- anyway- I can get a place just outside the city limits and [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] ate to my hearts content- if [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] do not blown me up.

The majority of my customers [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] outside the city-limits anyway- [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] different sub-divisions- Cangcers La [water damage- cannot figure out next letters] Massillon etc. Hills and Dales is a Village by itself. (over)

I never considered myself a transient here as I [water damage- cannot figure out next word] about three months every summer (for 15 years) own property here and pay taxes.

In 1919 I bought six lots of Judge Pontins- and still have one of them.

Bought an auto one year- and have spent considerable money---

However- that makes no difference with the rascals who put this ordinance through. They tried to frame it to keep me out- regardless- Judge Pontins said they evidently wrote it for me- and he was quite indignant about it. So are some of my customers. Mrs Chas Zollinger said- “We ought to boycott them” Mrs Fawcet + Mrs Rommel said it was an “outrage”-etc. Hardly any of my customers knew anything about it until it was too late and the thing had passed neither did I.

[Water damage- cannot figure out word(s)] learned of it the last day. Went to [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)]- (atty) who misinformed me of its [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)]- + then layed down and did not [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] a thing. I’m through with him.

The man principally responsible for it [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] fellow who runs The “LaSalle” (?) Studio came here about three years ago- Sold coupons all over the city- + made 1 photo large- colored for $2.00 or something like that. He has cut prices ever since + has been a great detriment to the other photographers here- Has hurt them ten times worse than all the transient photographers. He got an alderman to put the ordinance through for him- Don’t know how much they paid him

The LaSalle man was so angry because I got those wedding pictures- that he went off his balance- so to speak-

Well- anyway what do you think about it? Some attorneys here say that it is illegal.- But- it costs money to prove that in a town run by gangsters. So I have been advised to sit tight- and outwit them. My best customers will stand by me

The LaSalle fellow and Mr. Lester [water damage- cannot figure out next word(s)] done every mean dirty trick in the [water damage cannot figure out next word(s)] to head me off here. This is only the [water damage cannot figure out next word(s)]

Don’t think they will gain anything by it.

Sometimes people get too smart.

Hastily yours,
Edith M. Richardson

July 7, 1934

My dear Mr. Beach:-

I have just been to see Mr. Taylor- City Solicitor here to find out where I stand in regard to that ordinance.

He said- that as I am a property owner here and have been coming here each Summer for fifteen years- I am no transient that he will stand back of me in that- That on July 16th I am to go to the Mayor and as he (Taylor) will not be here then- he will write a letter to the Mayor and tell him I do not have to pay for a license.

However, if those photographers (meaning the LaSalle Studio) can by any means pull any (over) wires on the Mayor- they will do it- so I feel apprehensive still-

That old lot I have here certainly has been of some use- finally. It is the last one of six- and the improvement liens have been so high the past three years that I have tried to practically- give it away. Now- It is not for sale. So------------------------

I will pay taxes of forty dollars a year in order to do business- That is better than $10.00 per day.

I have been much upset over this- because I knew they were after my scalp-

Sincerely,

Later- Sat-E.M.R-

Went to see the Mayor- He said that ordinance did not affect me

E.M.R-63

My dear Margaret:-

Our troubles are not over yet-

The photographers sent the police after me-

I told them what the Mayor said- + sent them back + made one sitting-

Then last night they came again- + apologized + said the Mayor said I had to get a license.

I phoned the Mayor. He said he had seen no one + told them nothing- but perhaps they safety director had- That he would keep them “off me” until the City Solicitor returned from his vacation- next (over) Monday and gave an opinion-

So, I had to cancel an appointment today- + agree not to make any sittings until after Rodgers decides. He is elected- so is the Mayor- + I look for him to backwater also.

Meantime I have some sittings to make outside the city-limits.

“off again- On again Flanigan”

E.M.R-64

62 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach July 7, 1934 found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum
63 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach no date found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum
64 Edith M. Richardson to Margaret Beach no date found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum
My dear Margaret:-

Hurrah! We have them on the run!

I went to Judge Pontins a second time- and he got considerably aroused. Stormed around and said- that that ordinance did not go into effect for 30 days (Aug 2nd)

That when it did go into effect it was illegal and if I wanted him to contest it he would- That if any of those fellows annoyed me again to send them to him. He would settle the d- politicians-

So- I called up Lien’t Gerber + read the riot act to him in no uncertain tones + told him what the Judge said- That settled them (over) for Judge Pontins is a man of considerable weight here.

City Councilor Rodgers returned from his vacation Monday- and backed me up so I am sitting pretty.

Received the following from the Mayor today:-

July 25th 1934

To whom it May Concern

Permission is hereby granted to Edith M. Richardson to operate as a photographer, as she is a taxpayer in the city and has lived here for about 15 years and does not come under the ordinance passed recently

A.R. Turnbull

Mayor.

Those contemptible photographers found out I had more influential friends here than they did (to their surprise) When I was downtown today- I saw smiles all around- even in the newspaper office.

It is hot here- and everyone going away on trips- so business is slow-

I lost three sittings last week on account of that old ordinance - Two of those photographers went to the Mayors office + told a lot of lies so the old man did not know whether he was coming or going-

They help up a little old fellow going around with a pony taking pictures of children. “Why” he said- “I don’t earn that much in a year”

You see in trying to fix it up to head me off they made it wrong for everyone else.

Am mailing in some proofs.

(Over)

I will have to pay taxes on that d—old lot now whether I have the money or not-

E.M.R 65

Edith M. Richardson died on March 17, 1945, in Hallandale, FL. She is buried in Leicester Cemetery in Leicester, NY. According to her obituary, she was engaged in real estate work at the time of her death.

65 Edith M. Richardson to Margaret Beach July 25, 1934 found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum
Edith M. Richardson Timeline

1865- Born May 21 near Gibsonville, NY to Hiram and Jane Tabor Richardson
1885-89- Attended Geneseo Normal School graduating with a scientific degree
1895-1901- Teaching in Denver Colorado
1902- Purchased the Elite Studio in San Diego
1907- Along with Myrtle Randall purchased a photography studio at 64 Seneca St, Geneva NY
1912- Sold her Geneva studio to Chrystler & Wilton
1920- Living in East Hamburg, NY with her sister Ida and her husband, census says she is unemployed
1930- Living in Hallandale, FL
1945- Died March 17 in Hallandale, buried Leicester Cemetery NY, her obit says at the time of her death she was engaged in Real Estate
Chapter VI

Exhibit

Implementing the Exhibit

Sometime before the Fall 2017 semester started, I emailed my MST 623 Digital Museum Collections teacher Noelle Wiedemer if I could do an exhibit showcasing Edith M. Richardson’s photos and my research. She wrote back “absolutely”.

In the Fall 2017 semester, Noelle Wiedemer brought over from The Buffalo History Museum the one banker’s box she could find that had 15 boxes of Richardson’s negatives (which unlike the Beach negatives are mostly film negatives with a few glass plate negatives thrown in). Those 15 boxes do not even cover half of the negatives we are supposed to have. We are supposed to have about 2,511 of her negatives that cover the years 1915-1937. According to the card catalog we are supposed to have photos of a young Ogden Phipps, who owned Bold Ruler who sired Secretariat and the Hoover family from Canton, Ohio who founded the vacuum cleaner business. I do not know the exact number of negatives that are in the boxes we have because sadly, many of them are stuck together. I figured out those negatives cover the years 1915-1920. I was able to digitize 321 negatives. We digitize negatives by either taking a photo or scanning the negative and editing the photo with Adobe PhotoShop. The earliest negative we have is a photo of Barbara Bonnell (Brownell) taken on December 15, 1915 and the latest I digitized was one labeled Mrs G.E. Summers taken on April 18, 1921.
The first big decision I had to make dealing with the exhibit was if it was going to be an online and/or in person exhibit. One factor for me putting on an in person exhibit is transportation. I do not have my driver’s license or a car so the places I could put it on were narrowed. I figured I could only have it at either The Buffalo History Museum or at the E.H. Butler Library at Buffalo State. Noelle Wiedemer told me that the space that the students usually put exhibits on at the Museum was booked. There was a question if I could put it on at the Library because we knew sometime in 2018 it was going to be renovated. I filled out the form requesting the use of the front lobby standing, oblong, and wall cases for March 2018. I decided to have it in March because its National Women Month. I was approved on November 8, 2017.

The other question I had figure out was how to fund the exhibit. I decided to see if the Graduate Student Association (GSA) would give me some funding. I know they are willing to give up to a $1,000 to students to go to conferences and for projects. I first emailed the Resources for
Information, Technology and Education (RITE) Graphic Design office for an itemized quote of the following items: 70- 8x10 photo prints, 3- 30x40 posters mounted in foam core, 20- 8.5x11 flyers, 50- 8.5x11 postcards, 20- 8.5 x 11 brochures, and a 12x48 title banner. On January 8, 2018, I received an estimate of $324.00. I also figured I would need to order easel backs to hold up my photo labels. I found 7 inch ones in packages of 25 for $9.99, so I figured I would need 4 packs in all. It would be $39.96 for the easel backs. Added to the RITE estimate; it would cost $363.96 to put on the exhibit. On February 8, 2018, I was notified that the GSA would give me $250 for the exhibit. I was able to cut back on what I was going to order. In all, the exhibit cost me $102.56 ($79.05 from RITE and $23.51 from Hyatt’s).

There were two problems I encountered while doing the exhibit. The first one was I was not able to have it up in time because it took RITE a while to print the items I needed. The other problem was that I ordered the easel backs from Amazon on February 12th and on the 19th I got an email saying they were shipped and were supposed to be here on the 22nd. They never showed up. I finally chatted with Amazon and they said because of a technical difficulty my order was stuck. I canceled it and had my parents pick them up from Hyatt’s.

With the help of my advisor for this project, Noelle Wiedemer, I put the exhibit up on March 5, 2018. In the wall cabinet we hung the title banner, the main label (which has information on Richardson, the collection, and my search for her), and a timeline of Richardson’s life. In the standing cabinets I put the photo labels. In the center cabinet I displayed photo mats that Richardson used to put photos in.
Photos of Exhibit

*Figure 8: Wall Case in Main Lobby of E.H. Butler Library showing the title banner, the main poster and timeline of Edith M. Richardson's life*

*Figure 9: Standing Cases in the Main Lobby of the E.H. Butler Library*
Figure 10: Close up of middle case in the main lobby of the E.H. Butler Library showing the photo mats that Edith M. Richardson used

Figure 11: Close up of one of the standing cases at E.H. Butler Library showing some of my labels
Exhibit Labels

I used 23 of her photos in my exhibit. Here are biographies of the people whom I used.

**Harry Filer (Taken January 14, 1916)**

Harry J. Filer Sr. was born April 13, 1865 or 1866 in Hickory Township, PA to Enoch and Elizabeth Lawrence Filer. In 1891 he married Mary (May) Johnson or Johnston. They had three children: Harry, Elizabeth and Mary. We have photos of Mrs. Filer and the children in the collection also.

Harry J. Filer Sr. was the president of the Sharon (PA) School Board and head of the Grove City (PA) Coal and Limestone Co. He passed away on September 10, 1936 and is buried at Oakwood Cemetery in Sharon, PA.

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68 Ibid

**Capt. John R. Seal (Taken March 6, 1916)**

John Ridley Seal was born September 22, 1842\(^{70}\) in Norfolk, VA to W.D and S.T. Seal. He married Nancy Cabell Wood.\(^{71}\) They had a son Gordon.\(^{72}\) John R. Seal was vice president of the Charleston (WV) National Bank and was also the owner and manager of extensive coal and railroad properties.\(^{73}\)

After Nancy died Capt. Seal marred Julia Faubo on October 5, 1916 in Washington, D.C.\(^{74}\) He passed away on December 19, 1921 in Jacksonville, FL.\(^{75}\) Capt. John R. Seal is buried at Elmwood Cemetery in Norfolk, VA.\(^{76}\)

\(^{70}\) Find A Grave, database and images (http://www.findagrave.com: accessed February 8, 2018), memorial page for John Ridley Seal (22 Sept 1842- 19 Dec 1921), Find A Grave Memorial no. 104411998, citing Elmwood Cemetery, Norfolk, Norfolk City, Virginia, USA; Maintained by SWF (contributor 47026053)

\(^{71}\) Ibid

\(^{72}\) The American Historical Society, Inc. The History of West Virginia, Old and New. Chicago and New York, 1923

\(^{73}\) Ibid


\(^{75}\) Find A Grave

\(^{76}\) Ibid
Margaret H. Cook (Taken April 28, 1917)

Margaret Halsted Cook was born on October 16, 1904 in Steubenville, OH to Homer C. and Margaret Hagan Cook.77 She married Fred M. Slaughter and had a son William H.78

Margaret Cook Slaughter was a member of the Colonial Dames and the Daughters of the American Revolution of Salem, Mass; the Salem Garden Club and the Busy Bees of Salem; the Essex Institute; the Peabody Museum in Salem; Marblehead Historical Society; and Boston Yacht Club.79

Margaret Cook Slaughter passed away on November 16, 1980 in Marblehead, Mass80. She is buried at Waterside Cemetery in Marblehead, Massachusetts.81

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77 Find A Grave, database and images (http://www.findagrave.com: accessed February 8, 2018) memorial page for Margaret Halsted Cook Slaughter (16 Oct 1904- 16 Nov 1980) , Find A Grave Memorial no. 103479231, citing Waterside Cemetery, Marblehead, Essex County, Massachusetts, USA; Maintained by RememberMe (contributor 46982451)
78 Ibid
79 Find A Grave
80 Ibid
81 Ibid
Robert Wallace Miller (Taken November 4, 1918)

Robert Wallace Miller was born August 2, 1917 in Uniontown, PA to Marling C. and Helen Minor Miller. He served in United States Navy during WWII in Hawaii and the Pacific. He worked at the family business: Wallace Miller and Brother Jewelry Store.


![Figure 15: Robert Wallace Miller taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum](image)

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83 Ibid
84 Ibid
85 Ibid
86 Ibid
87 Ibid
88 Ibid
89 Ibid
Nancy Playford (Taken October 23, 1919)

Nancy Playford was born May 5, 1918 to Attorney Robert William and Nancy Sterling Playford. She was the second daughter out of four.

The story of Nancy and her family is one of the great tragedies that came out of the Great Depression.

In the morning of November 13, 1930 Robert Playford who was apparently suffering under delusion that they were facing poverty and shot his family and then himself.

The family is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in Uniontown, PA.

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90 Ibid
Edith’s Response to the Playford Tragedy

One of the letters I found in the paper archives of the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio was this one dated Nov 19th, 1930 that Edith wrote to Rita M. Cronin who worked at the studio as a bookkeeper/clerk:

My dear Miss Cronin:-

Received your letter and at the same time received a letter and paper from Uniontown about the Playford tragedy-

It seems too terrible to be true.

Of course he must have been insane- but he made himself so by making a God of his money Though more of it than he did his family.

Lived a gay bachelor life and married only about fifteen years ago, after keeping company with another woman there in Uniontown for about twenty years-

He had plenty of money but quarreled with his wife eternally over necessary family expenses.

Would nearly throw a fit whenever he saw me in town- for fear his wife would order pictures made.

You know she never did order many-

I never did like him- Think he was just a rotten sport but because he came from a prominent family there (years ago) and was wealthy of course they probably buried him “with honors”

He was a law partner of Mr. Linn Phillips.

Had a letter from Mrs. Phillips only two days before saying she was ill in bed.

This will just finish her. The Playfords lived near them and their children were playmates.

And- it seems like Playford was not broke. Had a great deal of property but worried because he had lost on the stock market.  

91 Edith M. Richardson to Rita M. Cronin, November 19, 1930 found the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum
Robert Work (Taken October 23, 1919)

Robert Charles Work was born November 18, 1912 in Connellsville, PA to Charles L. and Ruth Artman Work. He married Judy Murray. They had a son Robert.

Robert C. Work was head of the Work Motor Company and operated a service station. He also conducted a lumber business that had been established by his father. Robert C. Work passed away on July 3, 1947 in Connellsville, PA. He is buried at Green Ridge Memorial Park in Connellsville.

94 Ibid
95 Ibid
James Edwards Whipkey was born May 4, 1914 in Connellsville, PA to Solomon C. and Zella Edwards Whipkey.98

James Edwards Whipkey passed away on February 5, 1994 and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.99

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**Lyda Horner (Taken December 2, 1919)**

Lyda was born November 17th of a certain year in Vanderbilt, PA to Ewing Finis and Emma Hutchinson Oglevee. 100 There is a question of what year she was born. The 1880 US Census says 1879, the 1900 US Census says 1878, the 1910 US Census says 1880, the 1920 US Census 1885, 1930 US Census says 1882 and the 1940 US Census says 1883. Her marriage certificate says 1878. Her death certificate and obituary says 1883 and gravestone says 1884.101

Lyda Oglevee married Carl S. Horner. 102 They had two sons: Carl S. and Ewing.

Lyda Horner was found dead in an automobile on September 13, 1941.103 According to her death certificate she died of a probable suicide due to carbon monoxide gas.104 Lyda Horner is buried at Dickerson Run Union Cemetery in Dickerson Run, PA.105

![Figure 19: Lyda Horner taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum](image)

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100 Find A Grave, database and images (www.findagrave.com : accessed February 6, 2018) memorial page for Lyda Hutchinson Oglevee Horner (17 Nov 1884- 9 Sept 1941), Find A Grave Memorial no. 85311939, citing Dickerson Run Union Cemetery, Dickerson Run, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, USA ; Maintained by Rebekah Billings (contributor 47129658).

101 ibid

102 Ibid

103 Ibid


105 Ibid
Flora Reichard (Taken December 2, 1919)

Flora Reichard was born November 11, 1910 in Brownsville, PA to Dr. Lewis N. and Sara Reichard. Flora married Harold Bays. They had two children: Harold Jr. and Reichard. Flora passed away on March 1976.

Figure 20: Photo of Flora Reichard taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum

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Elizabeth and Lucille Jeffrey (Taken December 8, 1919)

Elizabeth Jeffrey was born March 29, 1888\textsuperscript{109} to Frank and Mary McCormick Brooke. She married Robert H. Jeffrey on June 23, 1914 in Uniontown, PA.\textsuperscript{110} They had two children: Lucille and Robert.\textsuperscript{111} Elizabeth Jeffrey passed away on February 5, 1980. She is buried at Sylvan Heights Cemetery in Oliver, PA.\textsuperscript{112}

Lucille Jeffrey was born on October 9, 1919 in Uniontown, PA.\textsuperscript{113} She graduated from South Union High School in 1937.\textsuperscript{114} Lucille Jeffrey graduated with a B.A. in English in 1941 from Denison University in Grandville, OH.\textsuperscript{115} The following year she married William Houston Board.\textsuperscript{116} They had three children: William, Robert, and Elizabeth.

The Boards lived in Front Royal, VA. Lucille Jeffrey Board was a Sunday School teacher, children’s choir director and Alter Guild member at Calvary Episcopal Church in Front Royal.\textsuperscript{117} She was President of the Front Royal Music Study Club, volunteered at Warren Memorial Hospital clinic and Second Chance, and was active in the Garden Club of Warren County.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{109} Find A Grave, database and images (http://www.findagrave.com; accessed on February 8, 2018), memorial page for Elizabeth Brooke Jeffrey (29 Mar 1888- 5 Feb 1980), Find A Grave Memorial no. 182916063, citing Sylvan Heights Cemetery, Oliver, Fayette County Pennsylvania, USA; Maintained by Donna Fike Beck (contributor 47900010).
\textsuperscript{112} Find A Grave, database and images (http://www.findagrave.com; accessed on February 8, 2018), memorial page for Elizabeth Brooke Jeffrey (29 Mar 1888- 5 Feb 1980), Find A Grave Memorial no. 182916063, citing Sylvan Heights Cemetery, Oliver, Fayette County Pennsylvania, USA; Maintained by Donna Fike Beck (contributor 47900010).
\textsuperscript{113} Find A Grave, database and images (http://www.findagrave.com; accessed on February 8, 2018), memorial page for Lucille Brooke Board (9 Oct 1919-27 Dec 2014), Find A Grave Memorial no. 141241417, citing Prospect Hill Cemetery, Front Royal, Warren County, Virginia, USA; Maintained by dMf (contributor 47174180).
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid
Lucille Jeffrey Board passed away on December 27, 2014 and is buried at Prospect Hill Cemetery in Front Royal.\textsuperscript{119}

\textbf{Figure 21:} Elizabeth and Lucille Jeffrey taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid
Anna Mary Tropf (Taken May 3, 1920)

Anna Mary Tropf was born November 2, 1909 in Everson, PA to Frederick and Margaret McGoogan Tropf. She attended the University of West Virginia. Anna married Merl D. Wright in 1933. They had two children: Merl and Peggy Ann. She passed away on March 31, 1996 in Newark, OH and is buried at East Oak Grove Cemetery in Morgantown, WV.

Figure 22: Anna Mary Tropf taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum

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125 Find A Grave, database and images (http://www.findagrave.com; accessed Feb 8, 2018), memorial page for Anna Mary Tropf Wright (1909-1996), Find A Grave Memorial no. 12486363, citing East Oak Grove Cemetery, Morgantown, Monongalia County, West Virginia, USA; Maintained by Jennifer Selfridge (contributor 46594182).
McKeel Family (Taken August 13, 1920)

Martha Clarissa (Clara) McKeel was born January 17, 1886 in Dawson, PA to Norval and Anne Huston Cochran Smith. She married Paul L. McKeel on February 15, 1907 in Louisville, KY. They had four children: James C, Paul, Ann, and Lucian. She passed away on March 23, 1963 in Middle Paxton Dauphin, PA.

James C. McKeel was born about 1907. He married a woman by the name of Margaret. At the time of the 1940 US Census James was a claim adjuster for fire insurance.

Paul L. McKeel Jr. was born abt 1914. He attended West Virginia University in Morgantown. Paul L. McKeel Jr. was an officer and student instructor in the R.O.T.C at the University. Sadly, on June 10, 1940 he was in a plane, learning to fly, when it crashed.

Ann McKeel was born July 29, 1917. She was married to Charles A. Stiefelmaier. Ann McKeel Stiefelmaier passed away on February 19, 1983 in San Carlos, CA.
Lucian Smith McKeel was born about 1919. He was named after his uncle who perished on the Titanic. He passed away of diphtheria on January 22, 1927 in Morgantown, WV.

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138 Ibid
Rozilla and Rutledge Morton (Taken September 7, 1920)

Rozilla Morton was born August 7, 1912 in Johnstown, PA to Ernest W. and Ethel Burrowes Morton.\(^{139}\) She graduated from Deering High School in Portland ME. Rozilla graduated from Wheelock College with a major in elementary education.\(^{140}\)

Rozilla Morton taught grades K through 4 in a one room schoolhouse in Cumberland Center, ME.\(^{141}\) While there she met and married Lewis P. Roberts. They had a son David. Rozilla also taught at Pleasant Street School in Dover-Foxcroft, ME and the Zipple School in Presque Isle, ME.\(^{142}\)

Rozilla Morton Roberts passed away on November 9, 2013 in Bangor, ME and is buried at Dover Cemetery in Dover-Foxcroft, ME.\(^{143}\)

Rutledge Morton was born October 20, 1913 in Johnstown, PA to Ernest and Ethel Burroughs Morton.\(^{144}\) He married Mary Boynton and they had five children.\(^{145}\)

Rutledge Morton designed ventilation systems for war ships at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, and engineered projects for Stevens and Saunders (including a bomb plant in Quincy, Mass).\(^{146}\)

In 1958 Rutledge Morton formed Allied Engineering of Gorham, ME which he operated until he retired in 1980. He personally designed all the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and plumbing required for 21 public schools in Maine.\(^{147}\) Rutledge Morton designed two churches: St.

\(^{139}\) Find A Grave database and images (http://www.findagrave.com accessed on February 4, 2018), Memorial page for Rozilla Morton Roberts (7 Aug 1912-9 Nov 2013), Find A Grave Memorial no. 120148611, citing Dover Cemetery, Dover-Foxcroft, Piscataquis County, Maine, USA; Maintained by Bev Winship (contributor 46831240).

\(^{140}\) Ibid

\(^{141}\) Ibid

\(^{142}\) Ibid

\(^{143}\) Ibid


\(^{145}\) Ibid

\(^{146}\) Ibid

\(^{147}\) Ibid
Margaret’s in Gorham, ME, and also an addition to the Standish Congregational Church. His company designed eight buildings for the university system in Maine.\textsuperscript{148}

Rutledge Morton passed away on June 26, 2001 in Portland, Maine and is buried at Arundel Cemetery in Kennebunkport, ME.\textsuperscript{149}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Rozilla and Rutledge Morton taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid
Jacob Denny (Taken September 13, 1920)

Jacob M. Denny was born May 22, 1917 in Johnstown, PA. His mother died when he was a year and a half old and his father deserted him. Jacob was raised by his maternal grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Murdock (Jacob was a wealthy lumber dealer). In April of 1926 or 1927 after Jacob Denny’s father’s third marriage, his father decided he wanted Jacob to live with him. The Murdock’s reasoned with Jacob’s father to let them legally adopt him. While the proceedings were pending Mr. Denny stole Jacob from them and took him to New York City.

On June 10, 1927 Jacob Denny was out shopping with his stepmother when a large closed automobile drove up with four men in it who seized and drove off with him. His father said that Mr. Murdock, Jacob Denny’s grandfather, was connected to the kidnapping. On July 8th, 1927 Jacob Murdock was indicted for the kidnapping and pleaded not guilty and was released in bail of $2,500. I could not find any news articles about what happened next.

It seems like the courts agreed to have the Murdock’s adopt him because by the time of the 1930 US Census his name was changed to Jacob Murdock.

Jacob Murdock married Beverly Dillon.

Jacob Murdock served in WWII from July 7, 1941- Dec 27, 1945 (Major Hq, Co Div Arty 4th Armored Div FA USA).

152 Ibid
153 Ibid
154 Ibid
155 Ibid
Jacob Murdock passed away on May 8, 1961 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.\textsuperscript{157}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure25.jpg}
\caption{Jacob M. Denny, taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{157} Ibid
**William Henry Clothier Webster (Taken Sept 13, 1920)**

William H. C. Webster was born November 20, 1911 in Johnstown, PA\textsuperscript{158} to William R. and Edna Webster.\textsuperscript{159} He married Dorothy Van Cleve. They had a son William Van Cleve Webster.\textsuperscript{160}

William H. C. Webster was an army colonel during WWII.\textsuperscript{161}

William H. C. Webster was vice president of purchasing and traffic at National Steel Corp, Weirton (WV) Division.\textsuperscript{162}

William H. C. Webster passed away on December 14, 1985 and is buried at Chapel Mausoleum in Weirton, WV.\textsuperscript{163}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{William H.C. Webster taken by Edith M. Richardson Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{161} Ibid

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid

\textsuperscript{163} Ibid
Jane Replogle (Taken Sept 13, 1920)

Jane Replogle was born May 3, 1920 in Johnstown, PA to H. Leroy and Mabel Shumaker Replogle.164 She graduated from high school in Brookline, MA and attended Simmons College.165

Jane Replogle was married three times: James C. Gahan, Eugene Trenholm, and Charles Stockbridge. She had three children: Janet, Barbara, and James.166

Jane Replogle worked for Arkwright Boston Insurance Company as a compensation analyst.167

After Jane Replogle retired she became an active volunteer in various Mashpee, MA activities.168

Jane Replogle was a member of Mensa.169

Jane Replogle passed away on October 2, 2015 and is buried in Walnut Hill Cemetery in Brookline, MA.170

Figure 27: Jane Replogle taken by Edith M. Richardson Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum

164 Cape Cod Times. 2015. “Jane R. Stockbridge” Accessed at Cape Cod Times on February 8, 2018
165 Ibid
166 Ibid
167 Ibid
168 Ibid
169 Ibid
170 Ibid
**Hiram Hamilton Hackney (Taken on October 14, 1920)**

Hiram Hamilton Hackney was born November 21, 1899 in Uniontown, PA to Edgar and Caroline Hogg Hackney.\(^1\) He was a PVT. in the SATC at Princeton University from October 11, 1918 to December 10, 1918.\(^2\)

Hiram Hamilton Hackney married an Alice. They had four children: Alice, Carroll, H. Hamilton, and George.\(^3\)

In the 1930 US Census Hiram Hamilton Hackney was a lawyer in Baltimore, MD.\(^4\) In the 1940 US Census he was a Judge.\(^5\)

Hiram Hamilton Hackney passed away on March 5, 1961 and was buried at St. John’s Episcopal Church Cemetery in Reistertown, MD.\(^6\)

![Image of Hiram Hamilton Hackney](image)

**Figure 28: Hiram Hamilton Hackney taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum**

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**William Parshall (Taken October 25, 1920)**

William J. Parshall was born June 22, 1867 in Redstone Township, PA to James M. and Mary Higginbottom Parshall. On October 11, 1888 he married Mary Ella Cox (who we also have a picture of in the collection).

William J. Parshall was involved in a number of coal and coke enterprises and is said to have amassed a fortune of $2,000,000 to $3,000,000 (in 1921 figures). He passed away on August 7, 1921 in Uniontown, PA and is buried at Oak Grove Cemetery in Uniontown.

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178 Ibid

179 Ibid

180 Ibid
Joseph M. Fee Jr. (Taken November 12, 1920)

Joseph M. Fee, Jr. was born in 1920 in Wilson, PA to Joseph M. and Mary Hopwood Fee. In 1928, the family moved to Michigan. His father became the first mayor of Grosse Point City, Michigan. In 1938, Joseph M. Fee, Jr. graduated from Grosse Pointe High School. He attended several semesters at Pomona College.

In 1942, Joseph M. Fee, Jr. enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He later received a naval officer’s commission. After graduating Midshipmen’s School in October 1944, Joseph M. Fee, Jr. was assigned to the U.S.S. Tangier.

In 1947, Joseph M. Fee, Jr. graduated Phi Betta Kappa in Economics from Yale. While there, he befriended playwright Thornton Wilder.

In 1948 Joseph M. Fee, Jr. married Elizabeth Crawford. They had two daughters.


Joseph M. Fee Jr. was in the boards of the Grace Cathedral, the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco Mental Health Association, and the San Francisco Chapter of the American Cancer Society.

Joseph M. Fee Jr. passed away on March 13, 2017 in San Francisco, CA.

182 Ibid
183 Ibid
184 Ibid
185 Ibid
186 Ibid
187 Ibid
188 Ibid
189 Ibid
Figure 30: Joseph M. Fee Jr taken by Edith M. Richardson, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Alfred Wright Sr. and Jr. (Taken November 12, 1920)

Alfred E. Wright, Sr. was born May 10, 1887 in Sharon, PA to John and Eliza Meikle Wright. He married Katherine Beighley. They had three sons: Alfred Jr., Robert, and Samuel. In the 1920 US Census Alfred E. Wright, Sr. was a teacher. At the time of his death he was selling insurance. Alfred E. Wright, Sr. passed away on August 7, 1951 and is buried at Sylvan Heights Cemetery in Uniontown, PA.

Alfred E. Wright, Jr. was born December 17, 1918. He married Peggy Euder on August 18, 1942 on Pittsburgh, PA. Alfred E. Wright, Jr. was a doctor. He passed away on August 5, 2006.
Figure 31: Alfred Wright Sr. and Jr. taken by Edith M. Richardson courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Elma Esther Binn(s) (Taken November 12, 1920)

Elma Esther Binn(s) was born April 15, 1907 to James Garfield and Elizabeth Parsons Binn(s).\textsuperscript{200} She married H. Vinton Overholt.\textsuperscript{201} They had one daughter.\textsuperscript{202}

Elma Overholt was President of Buckhannon River Coal Co.\textsuperscript{203}

Elma Overholt passed away July 17, 1968 in Buckhannon, WV\textsuperscript{204} and was buried at Sylvan Heights Cemetery in Uniontown, PA.\textsuperscript{205}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure32.png}
\caption{Elma Binn(s) taken by Edith M. Richardson courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{201} Ibid
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid
\textsuperscript{204} Ibid
Anna Barbara Carroll (Taken November 27, 1920)

Anna Barbara Carroll was born April 28, 1909 in Uniontown, PA to Joseph Grant and Anna Rosselle Carroll. Anna Carroll married Alfred E. Jones. She passed away on November 15 1992.

Figure 33: Anna Barbara Carroll taken by Edith M. Richardson Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Jean Miller Brundred (Taken on March 14, 1921)

Jean Miller Brundred was born on June 10, 1929 in Tulsa, OK\textsuperscript{209} to oil producer Lathan L. and Jean Brundred.\textsuperscript{210}

Jean Brundred graduated from Chatham Hall in 1938 and attended Vassar and the University of Pittsburgh where she majored in art.\textsuperscript{211} After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, she dropped out of college and joined the military. Jean Brundred was one of the first women to join the Navy’s Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (W.A.V.E.S.).\textsuperscript{212} She was trained as an aircraft technician. Jean Brundred later attended officer candidate school and received a commission.\textsuperscript{213}

Jean Brundred married James B. Murray. They had eight sons.\textsuperscript{214}

Jean Brundred Murray was on the boards of the Piedmont Environmental Council, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Rivanna River Basin Roundtable, The Albemarle Garden Club, Martha Jefferson House, and the Hospice of the Piedmont. She served on the University of Virginia’s Human Investigation Committee.\textsuperscript{215}

Jean Brundred Murray passed away on May 19, 2012.\textsuperscript{216}

\hspace{1cm}


\textsuperscript{212} Ibid

\textsuperscript{213} Ibid

\textsuperscript{214} Ibid

\textsuperscript{215} Ibid

Figure 34: Jean Miller Brundred taken by Edith M. Richardson Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Joe Powers Jr. (Taken April 9, 1921)

Joe Harry Powers, Jr. was born in 1920 to Joe and Ruth Powers.217

Joe H. Powers Jr. was living in Tulsa, OK when he entered the service and was the pilot of a F-51D Mustang night fighter with the 67th Fighter Bomber Squadron, 18th Fighter Bomber Wing.218

On January 18, 1951, while on a combat mission, his aircraft received a direct hit by anti-aircraft fire and crashed into the sea near Pultang-do, South Korea. His remains were never recovered.219 Joe H. Powers, Jr’s name is inscribed on the courts of the Mission at the Honolulu Memorial.220

For his leadership and valor, Captain Powers was awarded the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation, and the Republic of Korea War Service Medal.221

Figure 35: Joe Harry Powers, Jr. taken by Edith M. Richardson Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum


218 Ibid

219 Ibid

220 Ibid

221 Ibid
Conclusion

When I started my research on Edith M. Richardson, she was a woman of mystery. Thanks to my research, she is not much of a mystery anymore. I was able to answer the two questions that I had: Did she work at the Beach Studio and if so, when? If she did not work there, why were her negatives and card catalog part of the studio collection? My best guess is she did not work directly at the studio but came to an agreement with them to send in her negatives and they would develop them.

Through my research I found that Richardson was a progressive woman and did not follow the typical role of a woman of her time period post Civil War to World War II. She was a teacher for a few years in her early years which was a normal job for a female. During her lifetime women who were teachers either stayed single and taught their whole lives or taught until married. Richardson never married and only taught for a few years until she bought her own photography studio. She paid attention to what was going on in the world. According to what I found, Richardson fought for women’s right to vote and was a strong prohibitionist. She traveled across the country by herself.

In his preface to Jane Gover’s book, the series editor, William R. Taylor, writes that:

“The single life, for most of these women, appears to have been necessary for them to pursue their interests and their work as photographers. But even in the most enlightened circles, the photographic work of women was often dominated by the vision of male mentors.” 222

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https://books.google.com/books?id=skV2Nlj69T0C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false
The last line makes me think about the relationship between Richardson and Beach. In some of the letters she wrote to Beach she asked him for advice. Examples of that are the Jul 22, 1929 and Aug 13, 1930 letters that I included in appendix c.

I did come up with a few more questions that might be answered through further research: The exact nature of the agreement between Edith M. Richardson and the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio, When did the partnership start? Where are the rest of Edith M. Richardson’s negatives we are supposed to have in the collection? If they are film negatives, perhaps they degraded to the point of having to be discarded. Why did the studio only keep the letters it did or are there any more somewhere else in the collection? How Richardson choose the places where she took photos?

The Howard D. Beach Studio Collection is important to the Buffalo area because of the prominent individuals from Buffalo’s history included in it. With the inclusion of Edith M. Richardson’s negatives which cover other parts of the country and the prominent from those areas make this collection important for more of this country than the Buffalo. If we could get the negatives in bad shape conserved and digitized we probably could partner with museums and historical societies from the areas that Richardson took photos and organize a showing of her work.
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Ancestry.com

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Bruckman, Kimberly A. *Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection* (Masters’s Project, State University College at Buffalo, 2018).

*Canton Repository*. 1934. “Transient Photographers must pay $10 and daily fee.” From letter to Margaret Beach from Edith M. Richardson dated July 3, 1934 found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

Capt. Joe Harry Powers Jr Find A Grave Memorial Page
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/88785007/joe-harry-powers

Capt. John R. Seal Find A Grave Memorial Page
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/104411998/john-ridley-seal

The Caulkins Building Historic Background done by Clinton Brown Company Architecture RebUild. Accessed on Buffalo Architecture and History
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“Circular,” 1888. SUNY Geneseo Archives


Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach July 7, 1934 found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach August 6, 1931 found in Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach no date found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

Edith M. Richardson to Margaret Beach no date found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

Edith M. Richardson to Margaret Beach July 25, 1934 found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

Edith M. Richardson to Rita M. Cronin November 19, 1930 Found in the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection at the Buffalo History Museum

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Google Maps


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Joseph Fee Jr. Obituary

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Appendices

Appendix A: Additional Richardson Images

Here are few other photos that Edith M. Richardson took that I did not use in the exhibit.

The main reason is I cannot find any or much information on those people.

Figure 36: William Graves taken by Edith M. Richardson on Dec 26, 1917, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Figure 37: Labeled G.A. Leonard taken by Edith M. Richardson on July 12, 1920, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum

Figure 38: Labeled J.M. Hager taken by Edith M. Richardson on Sept. 3, 1920, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Figure 39: Virginia Harris taken by Edith M. Richardson on Sept 7, 1920, Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
Appendix B: Survey of Richardson Negatives

There are 15 boxes of Edith M. Richardson’s negatives. There are both film negatives and glass plate negatives.

10-90 cab Useable
100-130 cab Bad Shape
180-230 cab Bad Shape
240-290 Bad Shape
300 R Some are stick together
500 R Film Negatives some useable, rest are stick together
500 Rich Glass Plate Negatives Useable
600 Rich Film Negatives Bad Shape
600 Rich Glass Plate Negatives Useable
700 Some are useable most are not
800 Useable
900 Usable
1000 R Useable
1000 R Useable
1100 R Bad Shape
Appendix C: Letters

Those letters are just a handful of letters in the collection. I transcribed them the best I could. If there was a cross out I used the cross out feature in Microsoft Word. If Edith M. Richardson used an underline, I underlined it. If a word is spelled wrong it’s because that is how she spelt it.

My dear Mr. Beach :-

As I have not yet received that wide angle lens I am wondering whether I am going to get it- and time presses-

Mrs. Timkin has gone away- but will return next week- and then I must make those photos or lose the orders.

Have already copied the paintings.

She wants small photos. Says the large ones are a nuisance-

What there is a crying need of- is some superior finish for small photos so that a higher price can be charged for them- So many people are rebelling against large photos-

If you could send me a sample of some fine finish I feel sure Mrs Timkin would take it-as Mr. Timkin is the sixth wealthiest man in the U.S.- they say-

The paintings I copied were made by a Mr. Sterling of England- painter of Royalty etc.

Anyway they are fine + must have cost real money.

Now-in regard to the lens- I do not care especially about buying a wide angle lens- as I almost never use one- but I would like to try one of your new lenses- if you have one for all round Home Portrait work-

My idea was to rent a wide angle- just for this work-

How much does the regular lens cost? You know I am feeling rather poor just now-

Sincerely Yours,
E.M. Richardson
1[4 or 7]00 Woodland Ave
Canton O-
July 11th 1929

223

Answered

3- sent on (?)

400.00 each

File this

July 22-1929

My dear Mr. Beach:-

I have not used the lens- as Mrs. Timkin has been away-but I think I “see” the idea in those circles.

Now, have you a portrait lens suitable for my use ready to deliver? And what is the price?

If I can get one will return this one and take the other- I do not do enough of this interior work to justify buying one- Marks +Fuller loaned me one when I did this work for Mrs. Timkin before- + charged me nothing- I presume Wollensak does not loan- but- would be willing to sell me another instead of this one-

Send me full directions for using . ? much impressed with the idea of “focusing” – as it would mean a lot- especially with children- out of doors – They always want to move around so much-

Would you like to have me sell some of these for you? Think I could- And- how much would there be in it for me?

And- Paintings- Would you care to send some large painting here on approval?

Hartungs- where I took pictures Sat. have a beautiful new home- and have two paintings sent them on approval- that they do not like-

The wall space for one is large- It would take a painting 2 1/2”” or 3” long to look well (or longer)

The other is wall at foot of stairs- upright picture- Dark Place 1 ½” x 3’ or so

For the first I would suggest a Flower piece- or landscape.

Do not think they would pay a high price- so make them as reasonable as possible.

223 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach July 11, 1929
If you care to send them get them here before I leave so that I can attend to reshipping them-- for pity sake-- do not have a glass over them--

If I purchased a new lens would like to sell the one I have. Would Wollensak take it in exchange?

Sincerely,

E.M. Richardson (over)

I will be here until Aug 1st. Would it be possible to get lens here to use before I leave?

Typed note after Edith’s written note

My dear Mr. Beach:-

Mrs. Beach thinks you had better answer this letter, also will you select the paintings on Sunday and the boys will ship them Monday - No one here would know what to tell Miss Richardson, or how to select the paintings.

Received July 17-R.M.C. 224

Aug 29th 1929

My dear Miss Cronin:-

Just received your letter + checks. Am down in the country.

Was very much surprised to learn about those frames being broken - and cannot understand how they could be broken unless the box was opened – the thing done purposely.

I packed them very carefully + not one of those frames could touch the outside of the box-

Did the box show any signs of a board having been taken off?

I have had some experiences in having canned fruit shipped to me in Florida (By my friends here) They pack each fruit can wrapped inside of a tin coffee can- + all well packed- Every time – one can in the middle has been smashed in at the top- + tin cover not dented at all- What happens is this:- Agents looking for bootleg liquor smash one can to see if it contains liquor- It is too much trouble I suppose to unfasten top of can- + do the job decently-

---

224 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach July 22, 1929
This same thing happened three times and I know very well that if any of those frames were broken- they were hit on purpose-

Cannot the Express Co. be made to pay the damage?

I am perfectly willing that they should examine contents of anything I ship. (Canton is full of bootleggers) but it makes me furious to have things destroyed ruthlessly like that-

When I go back to Perry I will send you the shipping receipt-

Which one was broken the worst?

Have been asked to make a sitting of two little boys in Perry. Will make it next week- Sincerely

E.M.R.

My dear Mr. Beach:-

One of my customers just phoned and asked me if I could make some silhouettes of her family- She has four children- That makes six with herself and husband. They wish to have some Christmas cards made with the family walking across the top.

I told her I had never made any- but as she is a good customer I would like to make them for her.

Can you tell me how to make them- and do you think it would pay to fuss with them? I probably would get a lot more to do if I make hers.

Please let me hear by return mail. (also price)

How is the lens business coming? Slowly, I suppose like everything else now. I would like very much to try one of your lenses- but this is the situation with me. I feel that I may not be in this business very long and I do not wish to load up with a lot of new expensive equipment. If I could sell the lens I have- that would be different. I am writing to Marks and Fuller to learn whether they think they could sell it for me.

I like my lens very much and – you know how you feel toward an old friend. However if your lens is better for taking babies I would like it. Besides I would like to “hold up your hands” by using one.

I do not wish to own a wide angle lens- for I hate interior view work + and in future think I shall refuse to do it (except for Mrs. Timkin)

The few I made for Mrs. Deuble- I borrowed a lens from Marks + Fuller to make. They loaned me one once before and charge nothing for it as I have bought my plates and films from them for about twenty-five years.

I thought Wollansak would not care to loan me one as they do not know me at all.
What I want in a lens is one good all round lens - fast enough to do home portrait work of all kinds.

My camera has got to the point where I think it will not pay, perhaps, to repair it, so I must purchase a new one- and- I don’t see just how I am going to afford both a new lens + new camera the same year.

I am trying to carry some property in Florida until values come back- and it takes every cent I can make to do it- Things are bad down there and I will have to hang on until 1932 I know.

The lens you sent me before had not been perfected- but I know you must have some good studio lenses.

How about those for Home Portraiture?

Last summer when I approached Mrs. Herbert Hoover about having her own portrait painted- she declined and said rather acridly- “I would never have another painted over a photograph anyway”

When I asserted that the one you made her was not painted over a photo- but was a regular free hand painting- she seemed to doubt it. You know there are a lot of “knockers” here in the business.

Now- is there anyway of convincing her that that painting is not made over a photo?

There is a Scotch artist here- whose backers are knocking any efforts of (mine?) to secure orders.

I may see you in Rochester when I get back to Perry in about two weeks as I have to go down there on business.

Wishing you all success in your work- I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Edith M. Richardson

Aug. 13th 1930

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My dear Mr. Beach:-

I presume you people think I have been lying around doing nothing this winter as I have not sent any work in.

Well the fact is of course that I have not made a picture this winter but I have spent considerable time and effort and gas trying to get orders. Had several spells of trying- Would get completely disgusted- and stop then- rest up and go at it again- No use. I decided I could not afford to spend four and five dollars a week for gas- on a fruitless proposition-

The Wealthy people have had so many calls for charity that they are cutting everything else possible- and of course photos are a very easy thing to pass up.

Here in Coconut Grove I have called on and talked to many very nice people. They are nice to me but no orders.

I am wondering whether I will get any business in Canton- Don’t know what I will do if I do not.

This “repression” is certainly a terrible thing on luxuries.

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226 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach Aug 13, 1930
And- the way some photographers are doing makes me furious-
Burdine’s Dep’t Store is the largest and best in Miami. A New York firm who have been making photos for $60.00 + $75.00 per doz. (were in Canton twice) got a space in Burdines and when they got no business advertised first $1.00 each (for 8x10) then later 3 for $5.00 Show good looking photos in window too.

Well people trying to economize buy those things
As home- portraits cannot be made on any such basis- and people are cutting out such things I simply could not make a go of it- and others who have tried here- have failed too.

Am sorry- but thought I would write and explain that I had tried my best gave a portfolio to a solicitor and he did not get an order either. Local photographers have been giving such low rates that I could not compete with them – and- there are some very good ones here.

I have been getting acquainted here in Coconut Grove – and- if times are a little better next year – I believe I could do some business-
This town- (now in Miami city limits) is older than Miami- and is rather a cultural center- a very nice class of educated people live here- and – there are many fine estates along the Bay front- called Millionaires Row-
Where I live on Saint Gaud [cannot figure out next few letters] Rd- is the heart of the artists colony- I have a garage apt in a very nice home owned by some Northern people who have lost most of their money.

As this apt. is built on one side of the house- it has a good front and rear view over nice grounds- and – I love it.
All around me here are people supposed to be very wealthy- but I cannot get any orders out of them-
Curtis James the railroad man worth many millions lives near- and – they say he has lost so much money recently that his is financially embarrassed- and – his wife is having something like a nervous breakdown- This is only one characteristic case.

I expect to be here a month longer- No use going North too early- I can live more cheaply here-
What about Mrs. MacKenzie’s pictures? I notice she has not paid for them- Have you heard anything from her?

Am inclosing a statement of two cash orders rec’ed.

Very Sincerely,
Edith M. Richardson

April 19th 1932.

(over)

I note the passing of Geo. Eastman- He certainly was a great business man – and- made good use of the money he made – but- Oh! He certainly bled the photographers

How is business up there anyway? Anything doing at all? I am very apprehensive about the Summer business.227

227 Edith M. Richardson to Howard D. Beach no date
Recd June 15th 1932

ansd

My dear Miss Cronin:-

I rented a show window and put in some photos yesterday- It is a fine window in a new business block and the pictures show up great.

I had to hustle around and borrow several of them of my customers, however, because you did not print the samples I marked-

Am having a great fight for business- and I need a picture of Mrs Timkin for the window badly. Ask Mr. Beach to hurry up that mutotone.

You see Mrs Hoover is doing all she can to block me- and- if I have Mrs Timkin’s picture in window it will counteract any influence Mrs Hoover has- and then some.

Mrs Hoover hates the Timkins is very jealous of them- for Timkins are very much more important than Hoovers.

Now- about prices. As it was a week before I heard from Mr. Beach- I meantime had to tell some of my customers what my prices are- so I went ahead and made

12”x17” $35.00 per doz
12”x17” 20.00 per ½ doz
7”x10”s $15.00 per doz

And cut out the 10”x14” entirely.

Told them that would be prices for this year only (Probably will be no business under a Democratic Pres. Next year- for the Hoover politicians seem bound to kill him with a wet plank.

The “Dry”s elected him last time and now they want to throw away their votes for a big drunk and noisy Wet minority- So I can see nothing but defeat for Hoover.

The Wets are determined not to let us have a dry candidate to vote for. I hope the Dry’s well put up a third man.

You made out Dr. Bowman’s bill-
6- 12x17’s $45.00

Of course it should have been 6- 12x17’s 30.00

He wrote you about it and if you had sent him a corrected bill he would have paid it last Fall.

You did not state how many negatives Gibbs had reduced so I was in the dark-

Presented them with a bill for $8.00 and they mailed me a bill check for $8.22 Wonder where they got that?

As to the worked in backgrounds you might send me a couple of samples- but I doubt if I can sell them at an advance.

All people think of here is reduced prices. Bachrac[h or k] is in here now- with his reduced prices also Crowley-Stokes of Cleveland- and a new local man making one colored photo for $2.50 – so you see I am lucky to get anything.

Have to hustle out to take a baby who has been sick cutting teeth.

E.M.R-

P.S-
I am sending in 10 films of a baby-
The mother is leaving Sat. P.M.- for her home in Milwaukee- so if you can – get
these proofs down here by Friday night-
E.M.R-228

228 Edith M. Richardson to Miss Cronin June 15, 1932