

Homer Davenport Editorial Cartoons Collection

Accession Number:	SC U:41
Location:	Map Cabinet A, Drawer 5
Dates:	c. 1893 – c. 1910
Size:	1 oversized folder; 7 items
Creator/Collector:	Unknown
Acquisition info:	Unknown
Accruals:	No accruals expected
Custodial history:	Unknown
Language:	English
Processed by:	Sarah Cain, January 2015
Conservation notes:	All items encapsulated in mylar sleeves and housed in an oversized acid-free folder.
Scope and Content:	<p>The collection contains seven (7) original artworks by editorial cartoonist Homer Calvin Davenport (1867-1912). Davenport was born in Waldo Hills, Oregon on March 8, 1867. Even though he lacked formal art training, Davenport became one of the highest paid political cartoonists in the world at \$25,000 a year which was equal to the salary of the U.S. President. As a hobby, Davenport breed Arabian horses and became one of the first major breeders in the United States. He later founded the Arabian Horse Club of America in 1908. Davenport died of pneumonia that was contracted while covering the survivors of the <i>Titanic</i> coming back to New York on the <i>Carpathia</i>. He passed away at the age of 45 on May 2, 1912.</p>

Davenport tried a variety of jobs before gaining employment as a political cartoonist, initially working at several newspapers on the West Coast. In 1889, Davenport began his newspaper career as an artist for *The Oregonian* where he was let go after four months. He then moved to the *Portland Mercury*. While on a job assignment for the *Mercury*, Davenport sent home a few sketches to his father. His father was highly impressed with his son's work and sent them to his cousin C.W. Smith, general manager of the Associated Press. Smith showed the drawings to the head of the art department for *The San Francisco Examiner* while entertaining him at one of his parties. *The Examiner* soon offered Homer Davenport a job which he began on February 8, 1892. His position was in the art department illustrating articles for the paper. He was let go after a short stint at the paper and soon gained employment at *The San Francisco Chronicle* all thanks to C.W. Smith.

Not wanting to settle down and wanting to see the World's Columbian Exposition (the Chicago World's Fair), Davenport moved to Chicago in April 1893 where yet again Smith helped him get hired at the *Chicago Daily Herald*. Davenport spent his time illustrating the horse races at Washington Park while at the paper. In 1894, the *Herald* let Davenport go because of the economic depression that hit the country in 1893. This sent him and his new wife, San Francisco's Daisy Moor, packing for her hometown where Davenport was rehired by the *The Chronicle*.

Davenport soon caught the attention of William Randolph Hearst, owner of *The Chronicle's* competitor *The Examiner*, with his cartoons. Hearst drew Davenport away from his competitor by offering him \$45 a week.

[...]Then a thing happened that I will never forget, for no raise before or since ever affected me to such a degree.

"I drew a cartoon of Senator 'Steve' White and his whiskers. The whiskers so pleased Mr. Hearst, that he called me in and said that my pay would be raised five dollars a week. I went home that night, and woke up my wife to tell her the glad news. She fairly wept for joy, and tears trickled down my own cheeks, for that increase meant appreciation that I had been starving for, and I felt almost secure,—and all on account of Senator 'Steve' White's whiskers."¹

Hearst who acquired the *New York Morning Journal* in 1895 wanted the paper to thrive so he lured Davenport away from *The Chronicle* and San Francisco by offering him \$75 a week, a handsome sum at the time. Davenport accepted his new position as a political cartoonist and moved to New York. It was at the

¹ Orison Swett Marden, *Little Visits With Great Americans: Or, Success Ideals and How to Attain Them*. (New York : Success Co., 1905), 340.

Morning Journal where Davenport's career blossomed from a local artist to a national figure, and later an internationally known political cartoonist. He remained at the *Morning Journal* until 1904 when he was hired on at the *New York Evening Mail*, a Republican paper.

Davenport illustrated the presidential campaigns of 1904 and 1908. It was during Roosevelt campaign of 1904 that Davenport drew a favorable cartoon of Roosevelt titled "He's good enough for me." The cartoon not only became famous and had millions of copies circulate, but it also gave a large boost to Roosevelt's campaign. The President returned the favor in 1906 when Davenport required diplomatic permission to travel abroad to Anazeh Bedouins in order to purchase Arabian horses. Davenport said this trip was the highpoint of his life. The twenty-seven pure, desert-bred horses Davenport purchased and brought back to America became the foundation of "Davenport Arabians." This business venture had a deep impact on Arabian horse breeding and served as the backbone of the Arabian Horse Association (formally the Arabian Horse Club of America) which is still going strong today.

Davenport introduced Howard Benton "Poke" Freeman to the newspaper art world. Davenport's character reference along with Freeman's natural talent allowed Freeman to gain quick cartooning success.

Books by Homer Davenport:

Cartoons. New York: DeWitt Pub. House, 1898.

The Dollar or the Man. Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1900.

My Quest of the Arabian Horse. New York: B.W. Dodge & Company, 1909.

The Country Boy. G.W. New York: Dillingham Company, 1910.

Arrangement:	Alphabetical by title ('The' included)
Restrictions:	Permission required to reproduce images. Copyright held by the newspaper in which the works were originally published.
Remarks:	The Special Collections and University Archives at University of Oregon Libraries holds the Davenport Family papers (6.0 linear feet; 10 containers, 85 oversize items), including some originals of Homer Davenport's cartoons.

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<u>Folder/Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
1/1	Finding aid
1/2	At last the wind blew
1/3	[Horse and buggy]
1/4	Now to wipe out the crime of polygamy
1/5	[Roosevelt buzzsaw]
1/6	The Czar's half-loaf of emancipation
1/7	The Russians' poor aim leaves the Czar safe again
1/8	[William Howard Taft & speech of acceptance]