EVA WATSON SCHÜTZE
CHICAGO PHOTO-SECESSIONIST
This publication has been produced in conjunction with the exhibition "Eva Watson Schütze and the Philosophers' Circle," held in The Joseph Regenstein Library, February through April, 1985.

Cover: Hanni Steckner Jahrmarkt and Liese Steckner Webel, c. 1909.

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J. F. B.
INTRODUCTION

Eva Watson Schütze, wife of a young German instructor at the University of Chicago, was a founding member of the Photo-Secession, a turn-of-the-century movement led by Alfred Stieglitz which sought to establish photography as one of the fine arts. Also referred to as “pictorialists,” its members distinguished themselves from representational photographers who aimed to record as precisely as possible the appearance of persons, places, and objects. Rather, pictorialists regarded themselves as artists whose photography was a vehicle for individual expression and creative artistic worth. Although Schütze’s name and early work are familiar to students of the Photo-Secession, until recently very little has been known about her later life.

In 1979 a number of photographic prints bearing Eva Watson Schütze’s distinctive signature were added to the papers of philosophers James Hayden Tufts and George Herbert Mead in the University of Chicago Archives. They were the gift of Tufts’ daughter, Dr. Irene Tufts Mead, who had been married to Mead’s son. Two years later a large album of mounted Schütze prints was discovered at the Meads’ former summer home and also presented to the Archives by Dr. Mead. The complete collection contains over one hundred separate images dating from about 1902 to 1921.

The Eva Watson Schütze Collection graphically reveals the extensive web of social and intellectual relationships existing between some of the University’s most notable faculty, their families and their associates: John Dewey (1859–1952) and his colleagues James Hayden Tufts (1862–1942) and George Herbert Mead (1863–1931); Mead’s close friend and brother-in-law, Henry Castle (1862–1895); Henry Castle’s daughter Elinor (1894–1953) and her husband, John U. Nef, Jr. (1899–); Chicago social reformer Jane Addams (1860–1935); and the Schützes themselves. This exhibit draws on letters, diaries, and memoirs to help recreate these relationships and also to identify and place the photographs.

It was characteristic of the Photo-Secessionists that the portraits they made were of people whom they cared for and admired. They rejected the rigidity of the commercial studio and tried to convey the essence of the person being portrayed. As Frances Benjamin Johnston, a photographer committed to the new movement, put it: “Everywhere the professional photographer is breaking away from hide-bound tradition; the top-light, the headrest, the papier-maché accessories are being thrown out on the junk-heap along with the stilted pose and other affectations of former years.”1 Because the images were often intended to be idealized and symbolical, some pictorialists withheld identification of portraits if they were publicly displayed.
Therefore, it is particularly useful here to be able to identify the subjects for the insight we gain into what unites the sitter and the photographer.

While the exhibit concerns itself chiefly with the subjects of the photographs and their ties with each other, this publication which accompanies and augments it treats certain aspects of the photographer’s own life and development. The essay which follows is divided into three parts: Eva Watson Schütze’s early work and role in founding the Photo-Secession; her relationship with and portrayal of the University of Chicago philosophers and their families; and her growing involvement in modern art, both through her own painting and in her activities as president of the University’s Renaissance Society. This is followed by the plates indicated in the text and a note on Eva Watson Schütze’s signature and its use in dating her works. Unless otherwise indicated, the photographs referred to in the following text and reproduced in this publication are from the Eva Watson Schütze Collection in The University of Chicago Library.

Ewa

Eva Lawrence Watson was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1867. Her artistic inclinations emerged early, and at fifteen she entered the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts where, according to her own account, she began the serious study of painting and modeling in the life classes of Thomas Eakins and Thomas Anshutz. In notes she made some years later for an autobiographical sketch, she recalled this period: “After six years could draw and model, knew the ‘human form,’ hated the Classics especially Greek and Latin and the old Flemish masters. All seemed not art but artificial. Imaginative impulses all paralyzed—no outlet for creative impulses. Did not want to paint and ‘copy nature.’ Produced nothing for years... Worked for several years on copper process of reproductions of ‘Masterpieces of Art.’ (Commercially; had to) Nearly died of it. Made photographs and helped to obtain recognition of photography as a fine art in the first Photographic Salon at Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts.”

Joseph T. Keiley, a fellow pictorialist, described her at about this time
as being “a little above the average height, slight of figure, rather pale, with earnest, searching, expressive eyes. . . . quick and nervous of motion, reserved and self-reliant in bearing, and in speech quiet, thoughtful, and to the point.”

After several years of rigorous art education, Eva found the camera a new and exciting instrument of experimentation. Eakins, who was a master of nineteenth-century realistic painting, was also interested in experimenting with the camera and photographed Eva Watson when she was studying with him \(^5\) (Frontispiece). It is a painterly rather than a studio portrait, as were his photographs of another of his students, Amelia Van Buren, with whom Eva shared a photographic studio in Atlantic City between 1894 and 1896. \(^6\) \(^7\) In 1897 Eva opened her own studio in Philadelphia.

The following year the first juried exhibition of pictorial photography in a major United States museum opened in Philadelphia under the joint auspices of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Photographic Society of Philadelphia. According to critic Charles H. Caffin, its purpose was “to show only such pictures produced by photography as may give distinct evidence of individual artistic feeling and execution. For the first time in this country is presented a photographic exhibition confined exclusively to such pictures, rigidly selected by a Jury, whose certificate of acceptance is the only award.”

Alfred Stieglitz was one of the two photographer-jurors. He had studied the chemical and technical aspects of photography in Germany and, in 1894, had been one of the first Americans to be elected to the Linked Ring, a group of British photographers that had broken away from the Royal Society to form a competing association of non-commercial amateurs interested in creating artistic photographs. Stieglitz, intent on raising the aesthetic standards of American photography, encouraged the creation of images that were not only technically excellent but imaginative and skillful in their selection of subject and use of composition, line, tone, and light. When his efforts to merge the Society of Amateur Photographers and the New York Camera Club resulted in the creation of the Camera Club of New York in 1896, he became chairman of the latter’s publications committee and started Camera Notes, a periodical that would explore the techniques and provide critical reviews of the new pictorialism.

Eva Watson exhibited six pictures in this Philadelphia Salon of 1898, and with them she was plunged headlong into a movement that was at once exhilarating and widely controversial. She wrote articles for American Amateur Photography, Camera Notes, and, later, Camera Work. Her work was reproduced and reviewed in these publications and others as well. \(^9\)
One reviewer acclaimed her as “a master in photography with the instincts and training of an artist,” and, after describing several of her pictures, he concluded that “no one can view Miss Watson’s collection of pictures and say that it is other than art.” Commenting on the Philadelphia Salon in the January 1900 issue of Camera Notes, Joseph T. Keiley, now Stieglitz’s associate editor, mentioned six pictures by Eva Lawrence Watson that were “examples of delicate taste and artistic originality. . . . Their maker is an artist not only by instinct but by training.” In an illustrated article in Brush and Pencil another reviewer said of her New York Camera Club exhibit: “The pictures are full of human interest, and each one bespeaks the earnest effort of the artist. They tell of a thoughtful mind, a skillful hand and a keen appreciation. There is not one that is trivial, for Miss Watson does not trifle. She is serious; her work shows it. There is to be found in it no bizarre effects. In portraiture her efforts aim to produce the simple and direct; and in this line of her work there is present abundant evidence of a personal interest in her sitter.”

Eva served on the jury of the second Philadelphia Salon in 1899, and again in 1900, as well as the jury of the Art Institute of Chicago exhibit in 1900. Through Stieglitz, who orchestrated the movement and promoted its participants, her photographs were shown in all the important exhibits in this country and abroad.

In the spring of 1900 Eva Watson became engaged to Martin Schütze, a German-born and-trained lawyer. Unable to use his legal education in this country, Schütze turned to German literature, getting his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1899. After teaching German at Northwestern University in Evanston he came to the University of Chicago in 1901 as an instructor in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literature (Pl. 1). Eva and Martin had undoubtedly known each other in Philadelphia and had seen each other again when she came with Stieglitz to judge the Chicago Salon in April 1900. She wrote to tell Stieglitz of her engagement at the end of May. “I have so often thought of our conversation on the train to Chicago—do you remember? I think you may be interested to know that the man is German [a reference to Stieglitz’s own ancestry and education]—I believe I have an unexplainable streak of sympathy with the German temperament—at its best.” In reply to Stieglitz’s response she elaborated on her feelings, “Mr. Schütze and I having exactly the same feeling about things, recognized the sympathy in five minutes—this sounds like a poem—but it is a calm—plain—beautiful fact.” The marriage did not take place for a year, however, and Eva continued to write to Stieglitz from Philadelphia, keeping him in touch with developments in the movement, or “the Cause,” as they called it.
The letters are warm, friendly, and filled with admiration for Stieglitz and his leadership.

It is difficult today as we look at the gentle, lyrical prints made by the pictorialists to imagine the controversy the movement provoked both in this country and abroad. In Philadelphia the self-designated Rationalists, those who believed that the camera should be used exclusively for making records of the greatest precision and scientific fidelity, were increasingly outraged by the growing group of artistic photographers who they felt were taking over the Philadelphia Photographic Society. The issue centered around which faction’s photographs should be shown at the annual Salon. In 1901 the dispute split the Society. The 1900 jury on which Eva Watson had served was described as being made up of “five of the most representative cranks and freak photographers of the United States who for the past few years have deluged the photographic public with their bad photography, worse art, etc.”15

In England, as well, the pictorialists were derisively attacked for deviating from strict representationalism. Eva Watson was elected to membership in the Linked Ring in 1901 and submitted a number of prints to their London Salon. Camera Notes reprinted excerpts from the English reviewers who, with the exception of A. Horsley Hinton, editor of Amateur Photographer and an early pictorialist himself, found much “food for mirth” in the show. The prints were described as “perverted and bizarre”; the reliance on the gum bichromate process which allowed the photographer to manipulate the print, giving it a painterly quality, was referred to as “The Cult of the Spoilt Print.”16 Child Bayley, editor of Photography, conscientiously analyzed the work of the individual photographers with what he obviously felt was great wit: “Miss Watson has a way of placing the heads of her sitters so much in the corner that in one case—No. 77, ‘Lady with a Cat’—it amounts to trepanning and ear slicing. This is a great pity for the sitter has so fine a face that we are sure all her head, and her hair in the bargain, would have made a more taking picture. The cat is good and is all there.”17 The effect of this kind of criticism by the conservative photographers was to strengthen the bonds among the pictorialists, to intensify their feeling of fellowship, and to increase their desire for a way to bring their work before the public.

Eva continued to keep Stieglitz in touch with what was going on in Philadelphia, and when the Rationalist sector, in April 1901, won out over the pictorialists for control of the Philadelphia Photographic Society, resulting in the resignation of the exhibition committee, she suggested the formation of an independent group: “. . . it would be a good thing as things stand—to make use of the three first Salons as the foundation of an American Salon—expanding your idea of privileged exhibitors for an organization—
exhibitors in any one of the three Salons—say four—including Chicago if advisable—being eligible for membership—the exhibition jury to be composed of all (present at time for duty!) members whose work has been accepted at two successive salons. . . . Surely fifty people at least would be ready to join such a society where there would be little chance to accuse any one—jury or exhibitor—of favoritism. Tell me what you think. . . . I feel very strongly that now is the time for action.”18 Later, recalling Eva’s part in the movement, Joseph Keiley noted that after the collapse of the Philadelphia Salon her studio became the recognized rendezvous in Philadelphia for those of the pictorial movement.

In the summer of 1901 Eva Watson married Martin Schütze and moved to Chicago. She tried to keep her contacts with the movement, maintaining a friendship with William Dyer, a Chicago pictorialist, and continuing her correspondence with Alfred Stieglitz in New York. Her letters to Stieglitz reveal both her feelings of isolation in Chicago and her eagerness to participate in forming a secessionist group. “I feel as if I had come to the end of the world and would never get back,” she wrote in September of 1901, and in November she wrote, “Glad you are getting ready to League—shall be interested to hear developments. . . . I wish we had a simpler name for the American order.”19 Stieglitz, whose letters to Eva do not survive, apparently responded indicating his organizational intent. The following January she wrote: “I hear the row is progressing hotly in Philadelphia and I believe it will at least result in a better understanding by some people who had formerly been bewildered. I saw Mr. Dyer this morning. He is interested in the Nat. Arts Club Exhibit in February and is going to have some fine things to send. . . . And by the way—Mr. Dyer hopes to go on to N.Y. to see it—which I thought might interest you in case you are getting ready for a consultation for the new ‘Pictorial League.’” Then she added, wistfully, “I wish I were fortunate enough to be able to be among you at that time—Philadelphia seems just across the street from New York to me now.”20

The Photo-Secession was founded in February 1902, but no distinctive organizational framework was set. Stieglitz continued to mull over the form the organization should take. He evidently kept Eva informed about his ideas and plans. During the summer she wrote: “About the League. I think your plan was wonderfully well constructed—and for my own part I could wish to have the Council consist only of those who have worked together in one spirit during these past years. . . . As soon as you have got the plan in more definite shape so that you can indicate the changes on one of the printed sheets Mr. Stirling made—could you send it to me—and I will copy it—and send it to Mr. Day—.”21 In response to what must have been a
draft of a manifesto sent to her by Stieglitz and Keiley, Eva made several suggestions for how the organization should be set up, ending with the statement, "The great point made by the organization is to prevent interference and lowering of standards by philistines, and that curb to progress will certainly be effectively shut out." 22 Statements of purpose and organization continued to be passed back and forth. "I think the draft is fine," Eva wrote. "I hope all will sail on now with a fair wind—I think our position is really very strong—and I don't see how the construction of the 'Secession' could be any simpler." 23 In December 1902 a statement of the aims of the group was published, and the membership of a governing council composed of thirteen founders was determined. Eva was among them. The council had the power to designate fellows who demonstrated their qualifications as well as to admit associates for whom the only requirement was interest in the aims of the organization. 24

Publication of Camera Work, the official organ of the Photo-Secession edited by Alfred Stieglitz, began in January 1903. Eva participated to the extent that she could from Chicago, procuring subscribers and writing two short articles. But by the end of 1904 she began to feel that she was being shut out from the fellowship. She wrote to Stieglitz asking for a "heart to heart" talk. "I have seen the feeling develop that the New York Fellows were forming a clique. I hear it directly and indirectly, and smile and say, that is only the cry of the dissatisfied. But is there not seriously too much foundation for it?" She was distressed that no announcement had been made of a forthcoming issue of Camera Work featuring her prints, the material having been on hand for a year. She felt that William Dyer, who had worked so hard for the cause in Chicago, was also being treated unfairly. "I can no longer refuse to admit," she wrote, "that if Mr. Dyer and Mrs. Schütze had been in New York things would have been otherwise." 25 Other unhappy letters ensued, culminating in her disappointment in the issue of Camera Work which reproduced only four of her prints. "The issue of Camera Work with my things presented as they were was just too much. There are plenty of my things that are not so difficult to reproduce. In the sight of all our friends my work has been presented as a middle-class collection. It is not pleasant to have your friends resenting things for you. . . . I told you in a letter last Winter it was perfectly evident how things were going in New York." 26

It was the beginning of the end of their relationship. Eva's geographical isolation, coupled with her feeling that her work was not being given the place it deserved, was, in her words, "just too much." The last letter that we have from Eva to Stieglitz is on Camera Club stationery and written while she was in New York in the summer of 1905. They had talked and come to a
certain understanding. Stieglitz must have told her something of his poor health and of his problems with other photographers and rival groups, for she wrote, 

“I wanted to tell you how glad I am to have had the talks with you—many things have come up that I did not know about—which it is wise I should know—and as to yourself you are as I have known you all along—though now I see reasons for things I did not know the combination to open. . . . if I say now that I am satisfied it is not because I am withdrawing the main of what I said before—but because I appreciate the difficulties even more and the inevitable trend of things. . . .”

Although her work was shown in the first photographic exhibit of Stieglitz’s Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession when they opened in November 1905, it was not represented in the subsequent series. In 1909 she had seven prints in a retrospective exhibit of the Photo-Secession held in the National Arts Club in New York, but her name no longer appeared on the list of its members.

By 1906 Stieglitz was becoming interested in showing avant-garde paintings in his newly opened gallery, referred to as “291” after its address on Fifth Avenue. Eva’s perception of the “inevitable trend of things” was accurate. Although individual pictorial photographers continued to pursue their art, and Camera Work was published for another decade, the strong sense of fellowship characterizing a revolutionary and beleaguered group, united under one acclaimed leader, gradually disappeared.

When Eva and Martin Schütze came to the University of Chicago in the fall of 1901 they found a young institution, not yet ten years old, but growing rapidly and with its own strong sense of vitality and mission. They took an apartment in the Beatrice, a building three blocks from campus, and Eva set about developing a clientele. Martin was just beginning his academic career and, as Eva wrote Stieglitz, her intent was to do portraits and “make some pennies.”

Among the people they came to know—the Dewey, Mead, and Tufts
families and the Hull House group, they would find the same idealism, creativity, and emphasis on the importance of the individual that Eva had valued among the pictorialists. The faculty was small and neighborly. Alfred Steiglitz's brother Julius was a professor in the Department of Chemistry, and he and his wife took an interest in Eva's work, coming to hear her speak at the Art Institute, and lending her a portrait of Alfred's and Julius's mother, made by Gertrude Käsebier, for a little exhibit of Photo-Secessionist prints she held in her apartment. "The people were mostly from the University set and were most appreciative." When Steiglitz père, a collector and patron of the arts, came to Chicago, he called upon her, and, to her great delight, admired her work. It may well have been through Julius Steiglitz and his wife that she obtained her first commissions. By the first of January 1902, Eva was able to write to Alfred Steiglitz that she had made a good beginning and "among just the kind of people I want to reach—who have taste and are willing to pay for what they want—began with an eighty dollar order—and more to come!" Later in the year she found a studio on the top floor of the Fine Arts Building in downtown Chicago which she used for both photography and painting, finding that "one helps the other."

In 1902, also, the Schützes joined the nucleus of a newly established arts and crafts colony in Woodstock, New York. Other Chicagoans included book artist Ellen Gates Starr, co-founder with Jane Addams of Hull House, and Olivia Dunbar, later the biographer of Mrs. William Vaughn Moody. From that time on Eva spent about six months a year in Woodstock.

Among Eva's earliest Chicago portraits are those of John Dewey and his family. John Dewey had come from the University of Michigan in 1894 to head the Department of Philosophy on the recommendation of James Hayden Tufts, who had worked with Dewey, first at the University of Minnesota and then at Michigan. Describing Dewey's qualifications to University President William Rainey Harper, Tufts wrote: "As a man he is simple, modest, utterly devoid of any affectation or self-consciousness, and makes many friends and no enemies. . . . He is, moreover, actively interested in practical ethical activity and is a valued friend of Hull House in this city." Dewey accepted President Harper's offer and came to Chicago, bringing a young colleague, George Herbert Mead, with him. Recalling those early days, Dewey said, "It was some forty years ago in Ann Arbor that Alice Dewey and myself made the acquaintance of Helen and George Mead, an acquaintance which ripened rapidly into a friendship which is one of the most precious possessions of my life—a possession which is so much more than a memory that not death itself can dull its force nor dim its reality. We lived in neighboring houses; we came to Chicago at the same time; we lived many years in the same building;
there was hardly a day we did not exchange visits.” 36 Together Dewey, Tufts, and Mead built a flourishing Department of Philosophy, which, by the time the Schützes arrived, had become known nationally and internationally as the Chicago School. Among Dewey, Tufts, and Mead each had his own special interests: Dewey—philosophy, psychology, and education; Tufts—ethics, social philosophy, and aesthetics; and Mead—the nature of personality and social psychology. Like Dewey, Mead and Tufts were friends of Hull House and staunch believers in the value of the social settlement.

Their wives were friends, and their children were of an age and played together. They helped each other whenever possible. Dewey persuaded Harper to advance Mead, who had not quite finished the formalities for his Ph.D., and Mead raised money for Dewey’s school. During Dewey’s absence the Meads prepared Dewey’s famous book *The School and Society* for press. The Meads reworked Dewey’s “colloquial remarks [based on a series of lectures] until they were fit to print.” 37

It was to this devoted and high-minded band that Eva and Martin Schütze were introduced when Eva made her first pictures of John and Alice Dewey and their children (Pls. 2, 3). These photographs go well beyond the standard representational studio portraits of the day. Seemingly unposed, they are nevertheless carefully arranged to achieve a pleasing and meaningful composition. There is a lofty serenity and dignity in the portrait of Dewey; the academic robe not only indicates his occupation but provides the simplest of settings for the salient features of the head. In the print of Alice Dewey with her children the emphasis on the naturalness of the child reflects the Deweys’ attitudes toward childhood. The composition of the figures, with the smaller child still encircled by her mother, while the older one gazes out onto the world makes a psychological as well as an aesthetic statement.

The early prints marked the beginning of a life-long friendship between the Deweys and Schützes. Not only an instructor in German literature but also a poet in his own right, Martin Schütze had an abiding interest in philosophy and in social and educational reform. He shared John Dewey’s commitment to Hull House and its programs. These personal relationships were movingly expressed when, in 1904, eight-year-old Gordon Dewey died of typhoid fever. Jane Addams arranged a service at Hull House for which she herself wrote the eulogy. 38 Martin Schütze memorialized the occasion with a poem, “Morning Glory,” dedicated to “J. and A.D. in Memory of G.D.” 39 Even after the Deweys left Chicago in 1904, Eva continued to make portraits of the family, prints of which were sent back to the Meads. The picture of Fred, the Dewey’s eldest son, was probably made in 1905 when he was studying in Ann Arbor and came to visit the Meads for Thanksgiving (Pl. 4).
The use of the window, both as a source of light and an element in the composition, is frequently found in Eva’s work, as is the provision of an object, in this case a book, as a focal point and a symbolic reference to the interests of the sitter. The series of six photographs of Lucy Dewey in different poses, capturing the mystery and sobriety of childhood, may have been made in 1905 at the Dewey’s summer camp in the Adirondacks. A picture of the little girl posed unclothed against a rough wooden wall pairs her hair-bow and a butterfly print to make a metaphor for her youth (Pl. 5). Other portraits were made of Evelyn, Lucy, and Jane Dewey as they grew older.

Summer visits were exchanged among the Deweys and Schützes, a correspondence maintained, and an intellectual dialogue carried on over the years. Many years later John Dewey reviewed Martin Schütze’s book Academic Illusions in the Field of Letters and Arts in The New Republic, saying appreciatively, “Speaking from my own experience, I should say that those whose interest is philosophical cannot fail to learn a great deal from the accounts of the esthetics of literature propounded by critics who depended on philosophical direction. Seeing their basic ideas reflected in the field of literature has the effect of a stereoscopic vision.”

The early Dewey portraits brought Eva’s talents to the attention of the Tufts and Mead families. One of Eva’s early photographs is of James Tufts’s wife, Cynthia (Pl. 6). The seemingly casual picture is actually carefully composed, the ornamentation of the settee balancing the seated figure, the curve of the sitter’s hand echoing the curve of the settee’s frame. The particular beauty of the face is highlighted against the quiet background. The photograph of James Tufts is later than those of his wife and the Deweys; it attests to Eva Watson Schütze’s continuing skill as a portraitist as well as to the durability of her relationships with her subjects (Pl. 7).

Of the Mead photographs the most arresting are those of George Herbert Mead (Pl. 8). The intensity of his gaze and the roughness of his clothing suggest his power. In the portraits of Helen Mead (Pl. 9) and their son Henry (Pl. 10) we see again the photographer’s efforts to capture with sensitivity the essence of the individual’s personality. The Schützes’ friendship with the Meads also proved to be an enduring one, and as a result there are a number of photographs of Helen Mead’s large and far-flung family, the Castles of Hawaii. Inveterate travelers, they kept in touch through a steady stream of letters that were forwarded from one family member to another. It is through these letters that we can learn something of the subjects of the pictures, and, in some cases, date them.

The Meads’ generosity was legendary. Their two apartments in a building on 60th Street provided hospitality for a host of relatives and friends.
Many of those who visited had their pictures taken by Eva Watson Schütze. Most of these family relationships were simple and straightforward: brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews. One set, however, was more complicated, and it was this set that yielded some of the most delicate and sensitive prints, about half of the total collection. These are the portraits of Henry Northrup Castle’s two families: the German relatives of his first wife, Frida Steckner; and his second wife Mabel, her daughter Elinor, and Elinor’s husband, John U. Nef, Jr.

Helen Mead’s brother Henry Castle and George Mead had been intimate friends at Oberlin College. Together they had gone through the torments of religious doubts and shared the perplexities of choosing their vocations. They studied philosophy together, Helen joining them for her own studies, both at Harvard and in Germany. In 1889 Henry married a young German woman, Frida Steckner, returning to Hawaii with her shortly before Helen and George were married. Henry’s marriage ended tragically when his wife was killed in a carriage accident shortly after the birth of their daughter Dorothy. Although he soon was remarried to Mabel Wing, he maintained his ties with Frida’s family. In the fall of 1894 he visited Germany with his daughter Dorothy so she would know her German grandmother and aunts and have the opportunity to learn to speak German. His wife Mabel, pregnant at the time, remained in Philadelphia under the care of a college friend. Their daughter, Elinor, was born in November, but Henry never saw her, for he and Dorothy, on their return home, were drowned at sea.

The Meads took a keen interest in the welfare of both the Castle and Steckner families. Elinor Castle was a frequent guest in the Mead apartment, often staying for long periods of time. Helen and George had known Frida’s mother and younger sisters, Hanni and Liese, when they were living in Leipzig, had grieved with them over the death of Frida, and now followed the girls’ lives with interest and solicitude. By a happy coincidence Mabel and Elinor Castle were in Germany in the winter of 1909–1910 when the Schützes also were there. Eva was commissioned to make a series of portraits of Elinor as well as a series of studies of the Steckner family to send back to the Meads. In the Steckner family Eva found a variety of subjects to challenge her skills as an artist and portrait maker: the elderly Frau Steckner, her daughters, her granddaughter, and her sons-in-law. She was able to portray them singly and in more complicated compositions of pairs, and play with the decorative elements of costume and background (Pls. 11, 12, 13). The portraits of Elinor, taken at the same time, offer a loving and sensitive interpretation of the pensive moods of a young girl (Pl. 14). Although Mabel and Elinor had known and admired the Schützes before, their relationship deepened at this
time, and, for Elinor in particular, it marked the beginning of an interest in art which she would share with Eva for years to come.

Upon returning to the United States, Mabel Castle, after years of ill health and travel from sanitarium to sanitarium, found meaning in her life through her work for women’s suffrage and her involvement in Jane Addams’s International Women’s League for Peace and Freedom (Pl. 15). In 1912 Martin Schütze joined Jane Addams in the campaign for the Progressive Party. Indeed, the spirit and friendship of Jane Addams and the Hull House group were of greatest importance to the people whom Eva photographed. Ellen Gates Starr bound Martin’s books of poetry; James Tufts and George Mead marched in suffragist parades with Jane Addams; Eva photographed her, conveying forcefully the sense of inward vision that governed her life (Pl. 16). And Jane Addams, speaking at Helen Mead’s memorial service, touchingly recalled the Meads’ first years at the University when Helen’s brother Henry and his little daughter had drowned, when Hull House had been a Mecca for the young philosophers searching for a social program that would give life to their ideals.42

Eva Watson Schütze was also commissioned, no doubt by the Meads, to take photographs of John U. Nef, Jr. John’s parents had been friends of the Deweys and the Meads, his father a member of the first University faculty, head of the Department of Chemistry, and friend and colleague of Julius Steiglitz. Mrs. Nef had died when John was quite young, and it was his father’s expressed wish that were anything to happen to him John should become the ward of the Meads. When his father died in the summer of 1915 John came to live with the Meads. Elinor Castle, with whom John was already in love, despite the fact that she was five years older than he, was also a member of the Mead household. In the photographs of John U. Nef, Jr. Eva was able to capture a feeling of youthful searching and uncertainty, clad in a swashbuckling romanticism (Pl. 17).

The James Tufts photograph, those of John U. Nef, Jr., a set of pictures of Elinor, and a series made of Helen Mead’s sister Hattie Castle Coleman with her grandson and companion are the latest of Eva’s known photographs. In a rare statement of purpose behind her work, Eva wrote, “Mrs. Coleman has a sweet sensitive sort of radiance. I wish I might be able to get for the family the thing they want to see, of which she herself is unconscious”43 (Pl. 18). It is this effort to capture the sitter’s unique individuality that makes Eva Watson Schütze’s portraits so fascinating. They go beyond simple representation, subtly shaping our interpretations by their use of composition, light, tone, and line and their symbolic use of objects and clothing. The network of friendships and the shared interests and values provided the setting
in which the photographer, over a period of two decades, could produce these very personal images.

Eva Watson Schütze used her Chicago and Woodstock studios for both photography and painting, but ultimately it was painting that seemed to present her with a greater challenge. It is significant that she presents herself as a painter in her autobiographical sketch, and in Martin’s outline for a proposed biography her photography is scarcely mentioned. Unfortunately, her paintings seem to have been dispersed, but, true to the tenets of the pictorialist movement, the basic influences on her artistic growth are also apparent in her photographs. Describing her development, she acknowledged three major influences on her work: the teaching of Thomas Eakins and Thomas Anshutz at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; Japanese prints and Oriental art; and Thomas Schumacher, a Woodstock painter. From Eakins she learned “the necessity of a direct and unsentimental approach.” Unlike some Photo-Secessionists, her prints are for the most part straightforward and unmanipulated, their range and depth of tone deriving from the fact that they are platinum prints. Ernest Fenollosa, a scholar in Oriental art, was both a friend and a photographic subject. Eva shared with him an interest in Japanese prints and Oriental art and attributed to this interest “the first intimation of the meaning of design.” Her asymmetrical, carefully balanced compositions, the meticulously planned backgrounds, the use of the stylized signature judiciously placed, all reflect this Japanese influence. Her interest in the developments in art in France was stimulated by her work with William Schumacher, newly returned from that country to Woodstock in 1912. She attributed to Schumacher the reawakening of her “desire to find expression through form, color and design based on a visible and living world.” Her experiments with color, in particular, presented new opportunities.

Both Eva and Martin Schütze were interested in aesthetic theory and the philosophy of art, and in the twenties Eva found herself much absorbed by the theories expounded by the A.C. Barnes Foundation, under the guidance of her old friend John Dewey. Albert C. Barnes, a physician who had
made a fortune in the antiseptic Argyrol, determined to amass a great art collection and to educate people to appreciate it. He enrolled in one of Dewey’s seminars at Columbia in order to inform himself about the educative process and later retained Dewey as an advisor to his art foundation. Barnes’s book, *The Art in Painting*, which he dedicated to Dewey, was read by Eva with intense admiration and interest. It was perhaps her increasing concern with art appreciation and criticism, coupled with a growing physical frailty which prevented her painting long hours, that led to her involvement with the Renaissance Society of the University of Chicago, where she served as president from the spring of 1929 until her death in 1935. In this work she was assisted by her old admirer, Elinor Castle Nef, recently returned to the Chicago campus from Europe, and with her husband, John U. Nef, Jr., a budding collector of art (Pl. 19).

The Renaissance Society had been established at the University in 1915 “to stimulate love of the beautiful and to enrich the life of the community through the cultivation of the arts.”Martin Schütze was among the founders. A program of lectures and loan exhibitions was initiated with the first being Impressionist paintings drawn largely from the private collection of Martin Ryerson, president of the University Board of Trustees.

Eva threw herself into the work of introducing the general public to the mysteries of contemporary art with the same zeal she had brought to the organization of the Photo-Secession. Although initially it was decided not to try to involve people outside the local academic community, under Eva Schütze’s presidency a number of non-University members were drawn in. Among these were Inez Cunningham, critic for *The Chicago Evening Post Art World*, James Johnson Sweeney, the *Post’s* New York correspondent, and Daniel Catton Rich, curator of painting at the Art Institute of Chicago. Elinor Castle Nef helped Eva, serving on the Society’s finance committee, assisting with the bulletin, visiting museums and galleries to select pictures, and dining with gallery owners and curators. A rich program of lectures, exhibits, and foreign films was set before the membership, which by now included a number of “north-siders.”

The culmination of the program for the Renaissance Society instituted by Eva Watson Schütze was the publication in 1934 and 1935 of three little volumes: *Studies of Meaning in Art: Plastic Redirections in 20th Century Painting*, by James Johnson Sweeney, then at the very beginning of what would be a long and distinguished career as an art critic; *The Meaning of Unintelligibility in Modern Art*, by Edward Rothschild of the University’s Department of Art; and *Seurat and the Evolution of “La Grande Jatte,”* by Daniel Catton Rich, like Sweeney, a rising young star in the art world. The
books were edited by Thornton Wilder and published by the University of Chicago Press. In her preface to the series, Eva referred to John Dewey's recently published work, *Art as Experience*, quoting him: "Men associate in many ways, but the only form of association that is truly human, and not a gregarious gathering for warmth and protection, or a mere device for efficiency in outer action is the participation in meaning and goods that is effected by communication, the *expressions that constitute art* are communication in its pure and undefiled form. Art breaks through the barriers that divide human beings, which are impenetrable under ordinary circumstances."  

Eva Watson Schütze was helping prepare Daniel Rich's book on Seurat for press at the time of her death in May 1935. Her life story is that of one who was constantly exploring the frontiers of artistic expression in her photography, her own painting, and the work of others. In Dewey's terms, Eva Watson Schütze's photographs broke through the barriers that divide human beings, reconstituting for us a group of intellectual and social intimates, and deepening our understanding of their lives.
PLATES

All illustrations are reproduced in their actual sizes unless otherwise indicated.
PLATE 1. Martin Schütze, 1902. Courtesy of Mrs. Frieda Schütze.
PLATE 5. Lucy Dewey, c. 1905.
(Original size: 6" x 8").
PLATE 6. Cynthia Tufts, c. 1902. Courtesy of Dr. Irene Tufts Mead.
PLATE 8. George Herbert Mead, c. 1903.
PLATE 9. Helen Castle Mead. Frontispiece from memorial booklet: Helen Castle Mead. Chicago: (privately printed), 1929.
(Original size: 6 1/4" × 8").
PLATE 15. Mabel Wing Castle, c. 1906.
(Original size: 6½" × 7½").
PLATE 19. Elinor Castle Nef, 1921.
A NOTE ON THE SIGNATURES

In 1902 Eva Watson Schütze prepared an article on signatures for the first volume of Camera Work. In it she indicated the importance of the signature by relating it to her philosophy of art and photography: "Picture making is the symbolic use of objects, form and color to express ideas. . . . Such details of a picture as have not to do with the expression of its main idea should be used only as decorations of the various parts, made harmonious in form and color, and placed with interest to add beauty and give completeness." She referred to Whistler as the most notable user of a symbolic signature and suggested studying the part that the signature plays in the composition of Japanese prints.

Fortunately, the concern Eva attached to the use of signatures and her own evolving style enable us to attribute at least approximate dates to her work. Early signatures appear on some of the photographs in her New York Camera Club exhibit, reviewed with illustrations by William Dyer in the September 1900 issue of Brush and Pencil. Her initials EW appear in two forms: (a) for "Lily Arrangement" and (b) for "Portrait of Father Huntington." The second signature also appears on reproductions in Camera Notes IV, October 1900. Weston Naef in his review of her work in The Collection of Alfred Stieglitz notes the monogram (c) dating it 1902 or before. It seems likely that the addition of the S to this monogram occurred at the time of her marriage in 1901. Naef also cites the use of the dragonfly (d) dating it 1903 or before. The dragonfly enclosed in a square or rectangle (e) appears on the photographs of John and Alice Dewey, probably taken circa 1902. This signature was subsequently enclosed by a block S (f) in about 1904, and remained characteristic of her work until 1921, the date of the last of her photographs in the Chicago collection.
NOTES

Unless otherwise noted, all manuscript collections cited below are in the Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Library.

3. Martin Schütze Papers, 6:14, p. 84.
8. Naef, p. 60.
12. See Naef for list of exhibits, p. 478.
13. Eva Watson to Alfred Stieglitz, 29 May 1900. Stieglitz Archives, Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. Henceforth referred to as YCAL.
14. Eva Watson to Alfred Stieglitz, 13 June 1900. YCAL.
17. Ibid., pp. 174–175.
18. Eva Watson to Alfred Stieglitz, 21 April 1901. YCAL.
19. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 4 November 1901. YCAL.
20. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 10 January 1902. YCAL.
21. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 13 August 1902. YCAL.
22. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 7 September 1902. YCAL.
23. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 15 December 1902. YCAL.
25. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 30 November 1904. YCAL.
26. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 24 May 1905. YCAL.
27. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, Summer 1905, YCAL.
29. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 20 September 1901. YCAL.
30. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 4 November 1902. YCAL.
31. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, n.d. YCAL.
32. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 27 November 1904. YCAL.
33. Eva Watson Schütze to Alfred Stieglitz, 23 October 1902. YCAL.
34. Martin Schütze Papers 6:5. Because the Schützes had two residences we have, in addition to those photographs that were published in the various periodicals between 1900 and 1905, two major groups of Eva Watson Schütze’s work: the prints that were made in Woodstock and those that were made in Chicago. Some of the Woodstock work is represented in the International Museum of Photography in George Eastman House, Rochester, New York; some is in the private collection of Howard Greenberg/Photofind Gallery of Woodstock.
41. For a remarkable record of Henry Northrup Castle’s life see his letters, prepared for press after his death by George and Helen Mead, Henry Northrup Castle, Letters (London: Printed by Mary Castle for Her Children, 1902).
42. Helen Castle Mead (Chicago: privately printed, 1929), p. 18. George Herbert Mead Adenda 1:3.
44. Jacobson, p. 119.