Table of Contents

Descriptive Summary 3
Information on Use 3
Access 3
Digital Images 3
Citation 4
Scope Note 4
Related Resources 4
Subject Headings 4
INVENTORY 4
Descriptive Summary

Identifier        ICU.SPCL.PAPERDOLLS
Title             Paper Dolls. Collection
Date              mid 19th century
Size              0.25 linear feet (1 box)
Repository        Special Collections Research Center
                   University of Chicago Library
                   1100 East 57th Street
                   Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract          This collection consists of paper dolls and accompanying paper clothing and accessories. The dolls were found in an 1839 volume of the New York Mirror, a weekly gazette of literature and the fine arts. Made by hand from scraps of magazines and wallpaper, the dolls are each unique, well-preserved examples of a typically fragile and ephemeral folk art.

Information on Use

Access            No restrictions

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The University of Chicago Library appreciates hearing from anyone who may have information about any of the images in this collection.
Citation
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Paper Dolls. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Scope Note
The dolls in this collection appear to date from the mid-19th century. Their exact date and place of origin are unknown.

The first Western paper dolls appeared in 18th century Paris during the reign of Louis XV. Several sources assert their existence in 9th century Japan. While the French considered the dolls to be whimsical toys, the British used similar dolls to convey moral messages. Early European paper dolls often depicted actors and actresses and could be used with toy stages. Many of these dolls had permanently printed costumes. Early dressmakers also used a version of a paper doll, eight inches tall with joints made of thread, to design and model clothing.

The first American paper dolls were much less elaborate. As paper was a prized resource in Pioneer America, it was rarely used for toys. Those children privileged enough to obtain them often stored them between the pages of a book. As paper became more available, the dolls were mass produced on cardboard. McLoughlin Brothers, founded in 1828, was the largest paper doll manufacturer of its day. The dolls were printed from engraved wood blocks. Early American paper dolls were typically colored by hand. During the Civil War, widows often earned money by making and embellishing paper dolls. The first paper dolls did not include tabs for dressing the dolls. Instead, drops of sealing wax attached the clothing.

Related Resources
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Subject Headings
• Children -- United States -- History
• Dolls
• Material Culture -- United States
• Paper Dolls
• Toys
• Toys -- History
• Toys -- Social Aspects -- United States
• Youth -- United States -- History

INVENTORY
Box 1
Folder 1
Accession information

Box 1
Folder 2
Four paper dolls (female)

Box 1
Folder 3
Two paper dolls (male)
View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-003

Box 1
Folder 4
Three paper doll gowns

Box 1
Folder 5
Paper doll dresses
View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-005

Box 1
Folder 6
Paper doll jackets (female)

Box 1
Folder 7
Paper doll hats (female)
View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-007

Box 1
Folder 8
Paper doll top hat and accessories

Box 1
Folder 9
Paper doll undergarments

Box 1
Folder 10
Paper doll cloaks/shawls
View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-010

Box 1
Folder 11
Paper doll lace collars

Box 1
Folder 12
Paper doll suits (male)
Box 1
Folder 13
Misc. paper doll accessories