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Guide to the Paper Dolls Collection mid 19th century



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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

Digital Images

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The images presented here may include materials reflecting the attitudes, language, and stereotypes of an earlier time period. These materials are presented as historical resources in support of study and research. Inclusion of such materials does not constitute an endorsement of their content by the University of Chicago.

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)

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-002>

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

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-004>

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)

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-006>

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

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-008>

Box 1**Folder 9**

Paper doll undergarments

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-009>

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

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-011>

Box 1**Folder 12**

Paper doll suits (male)

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-012>

Box 1

Folder 13

Misc. paper doll accessories

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/paperdolls-0001-013>