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## Columbia University Libraries Launches The Robert Biggert Collection of Architectural Vignettes on Commercial Stationery

NEW YORK, July 30, 2010 – Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library at Columbia University announces the public release of The Robert Biggert Collection of Architectural Vignettes on Commercial Stationery, an online image library of printed ephemera documenting the emerging industrial scene in America, now accessible on the Libraries' website.

The Biggert Collection contains over 1,300 items with architectural imagery spanning the dates 1850 to 1920, from more than 350 cities and towns in 45 states, as well as the District of Columbia and U.S. possessions. New York City is particularly well-represented with over 100 items portraying structures below Houston Street alone. Images scanned from the collection's billheads, letterheads, envelopes, checks, and business cards represent a variety of settings (such as factories, warehouses, mines, offices, stores, banks, and hotels) across a range of enterprises from printing, roofing, and brewing to wagon works, cordage, and merchandising.



The material offers a wealth of research opportunities for architectural historians, as well as students of commerce and graphic design. There are numerous images from the same businesses over successive decades, which show how the buildings changed over time in tandem with changes in typographic taste. The user can search by location, business name, date, or simply browse by image.

The original collection was donated to the Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library by Robert Biggert in honor of Lisa Ann Rivaux in 2007. Read the press release and learn more about the Biggert Collection.

The digital collection is a joint project of the Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, the Libraries' Preservation and Digital Conversion Division, and the Libraries' Digital Program Division.

**The Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library** is one of the most comprehensive architecture and the fine arts library collections in the world. Avery collects a full range of primary and secondary sources for the advanced study of architecture, historic preservation, art history, decorative arts, city planning, real estate, and archaeology. The Library contains more than 450,000 volumes including more than 40,000 rare books, and receives approximately 1,000 periodicals. Avery's Drawings and Archives collection includes 1.5 million architectural drawings and records. The Avery Library is home to the *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals*, the only comprehensive American guide to the current literature of architecture and design.

**Columbia University Libraries/Information Services** is one of the top five academic research library systems in North America. The collections include over 10 million volumes, over 100,000 journals and serials, as well as extensive electronic resources, manuscripts, rare books, microforms, maps, graphic and audio-visual

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materials. The services and collections are organized into 22 libraries and various academic technology centers. The Libraries employs more than 550 professional and support staff. The website of the Libraries at www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb is the gateway to its services and resources.

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