

117 First Dates: the Search for the Perfect Chap

By Alyssa Hockenberry '12

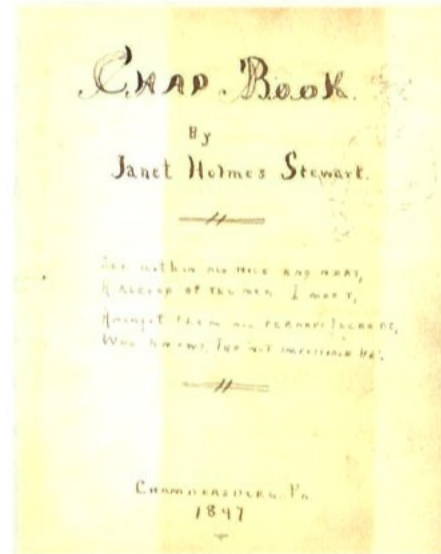
Alyssa Hockenberry '12 began her job in the archives several months after I became College Archivist. She has learned about the collection and the college alongside me for the past two years and has gone above and beyond the requirements of her work-study hours. She has played an integral role in cataloging collections, re-housing delicate items and researching queries from alumnae, genealogists and college administrators. She was named Disert Scholar for 2012 and presented her research on the relationship between Pop artists Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg during Academic Research Day in April. This fall she will begin a master's degree program in Art Market: Principles and Practice at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. She will be missed at the Hankey Center, but we cannot wait to see what she will do next.

— Amy Lucadamo,
College Archivist

In my two years of working in the archives for work-study, I have learned more about Wilson College and alumnae than I ever thought possible. Some of my favorite things are the many prom dance cards, the 1875 class ring (it is evocative of the style of Jasper Johns), the drawing of *The Wilson Girl* by Penrhyn Stanlaws that was published in the *Princeton Tiger* in March of 1900, and the sawdust filled kangaroo and dachshund from the 1950s. To me the most intriguing piece of memorabilia, and my favorite, is the *Chap Book*.

This particular chap book was put together by **Janet Holmes Stewart** of the class of 1897 as she searched to find a partner.

*See within all nice and neat,
A record of the men I meet,
Amongst them all perhaps there be,
Who knows, the 'Not Impossible He'*



Janet drew her ideal chap on the cover as well as among the pages that record meetings with potential suitors. She, and other young women keeping chap books, would note the man's name, occupation, date, place of meeting, and lastly, but most importantly, her candid opinion of the gentleman.

Most men "made no impression," or were given an indifferent statement like Oliver Cramer who was "a good example of a country lawyer." Some suitors were friendly, but not worth pursuing, such as James Gilmore Fletcher who was "a good friend (perhaps) but a poor lover," with a note that he married on Feb. 27, 1902. Only a few men made as positive an impression on Ms. Stewart as A. H. Rue de Bush who was "Lovely! Handsome—well educated, intelligent and a perfect gentleman." Arnold Polk of Galveston, Texas, contrasted sharply to Mr. Rue de Bush, as he was "Hot-Tempered—& Stubborn."

Stewart recorded meeting 117 men from 1897-1906, but she never married. She traveled and studied in 12 countries through Europe and Asia before settling in Berkeley, Calif., where she became the editor of the *North American Newspaper Alliance*. In 1925 she purchased a large interest of *The Riverside Daily Enterprise* (known today as *The Press-Enterprise*), for which she was an editor. She returned to Chambersburg in 1943 when she retired and remained here until her death in 1965.

The *Chap Book* is my favorite item in the C. Elizabeth Boyd '33 Archives because it is unique and, aside from the now browned newspaper article glued on the front cover, I have never seen a reference to anything like it. It gives a glimpse into the life and mind of one of our alumnae, **Janet Holmes Stewart** class of 1897, as she methodically looked for a partner during her senior year at Wilson and the years after.