

Collection #
SC 2848

**MADAM C. J. WALKER MANUFACTURING COMPANY
CHRISTMAS CARD, 1918**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 1 folder

COLLECTION
DATES: 1918

PROVENANCE: Swann Galleries, Inc., 2008

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

REPRODUCTION
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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED
HOLDINGS: M 0399; Consult online catalog for several books (adult and
juvenile)

ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2008.0145

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

After living in St. Louis, Denver, and Pittsburgh, Sarah Breedlove Walker moved to Indianapolis where she located her company's headquarters in 1910. The company that sold hair and beauty care products was incorporated as the Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company in Indianapolis in 1911. Robert Brokenburr and Freeman B. Ransom, two young attorneys helped Walker to file incorporation papers and with other legal work. Brokenburr was the first African American to serve in the Indiana State Senate, and Ransom worked as the longtime business manager of the Walker Company.

Walker commissioned architect Vertner Tandy to build a palatial mansion on the Hudson River, and she moved to New York in 1916. During the summer of 1918, she hosted a reception for Emmett Scott, who had been appointed a special assistant to the U.S. secretary of war in charge of Negro affairs at the start of World War I. The mansion, called Villa Lewaro, also served as a venue for several events for black World War I soldiers. Walker showed her support of the soldiers in various ways. She visited black training camps; advocated for training facilities for black officers; and was outspoken about rights for black soldiers. She also spearheaded a drive among her agents to purchase war bonds; along with the Women's Motor Corps she raised money to procure an ambulance to transport black soldiers; and she served on the advisory board of the Circle for Negro War Relief. She had hoped to visit Paris to observe the peace talks regarding the Treaty of Versailles, but was denied a passport by Woodrow Wilson's administration.

Like Madam Walker, her daughter, A'Lelia; the Walker agents; and the general African American community demonstrated strong support for the soldiers. A'Lelia trained to drive an ambulance and held fundraisers for the troops.

With Ransom managing the company's daily operation, the central office and factory remained in Indianapolis. The company was sold to Ray Randolph in 1985.

Sources:

Materials in the collection

A'Lelia Perry Bundles, *On her own ground: The Life and Times of Madam C. J. Walker*. New York: Scribner, 2001.

Madam C. J. Walker Papers, M 0399, Indiana Historical Society

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes a greeting card and a plain envelope. Most likely, as an expression of patriotism at the end of World War I, the Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company's greeting card for Christmas/1918 and New Year/1919 sported an embossed red, white, and blue American flag on the front cover. The inside of the card contained two etchings: 1). snow-covered houses and trees representing Christmas and 2). a sunrise representing the New Year. The card indicates that it was being sent to patrons as an expression of the company's appreciation. It includes the company's address: 640 N. West Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. It was the last year the company sent a Christmas card prior to Walker's death in May, 1919.

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Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company
Christmas/New Year card and plain envelope, 1918

CONTAINER

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 2848).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.