



The graphic features a dark blue banner at the top with the word "PENNSYLVANIA" in white, serif, all-caps font. Below the banner, the words "POLITICAL" and "EPHEMERA" are stacked in a large, bold, yellow, serif, all-caps font. The letters have a subtle drop shadow and are separated by thin horizontal lines. At the bottom of the title section, there are three dark blue stars arranged horizontally.

PENNSYLVANIA POLITICAL EPHEMERA

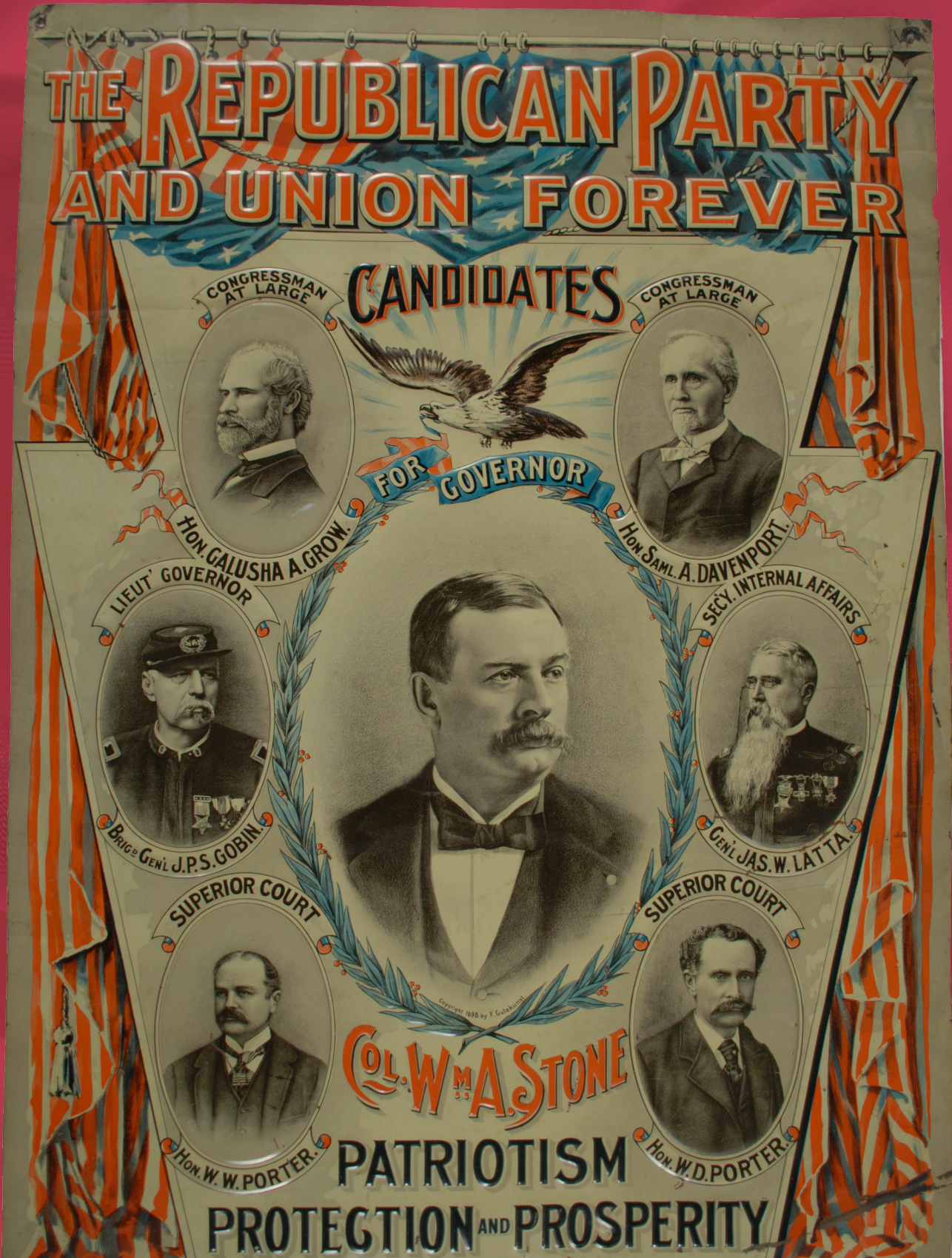
By Carrie Hadley, Cataloger

The Elaine B. and Carl Krasik Pennsylvania and Presidential Political Memorabilia Collection contains thousands of pieces of political ephemera—buttons, pins, tokens, ribbons, hats, badges, paperweights—that are not only visually striking but offer clues about political elections and campaigns of the past. The material dates back to the late 18th century and numbers more than 4,000 items; roughly 1,130 of the three-dimensional artifacts have been cataloged so far and nearly 600 paper pieces have been processed and are housed in the Detre Library & Archives.

The importance of this vast collection is clear. Pennsylvania-based politics are the most common theme, from gubernatorial and senatorial to state Supreme Court and general assembly campaigns. From Presidential campaigns come souvenirs of William Henry Harrison, James K. Polk, Abraham Lincoln, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. These pieces often show connections between state and national politics; a campaign item for a Pennsylvania Governor may feature an image

or quote from a Presidential figure to draw on his popularity, or vice versa. Multiple parties in almost every election are represented throughout, broadening one's perspective on the political issues of these time periods; even the unsuccessful candidates' pieces offer fascinating insight into the elections and what may or may not have appealed to voters. It is worth studying elections of the past to gain historical perspective for our current and future elections.

Like all ephemera, these pieces were never intended to last long after their use. Items were manufactured for a specific event, rally, or election, and once the event was over—depending on the winner, of course—items were usually thrown out or tossed in a drawer, never to be thought of again by their owners. This collection shows that these artifacts have the ability, long after their production date, to reveal hidden histories and enrich our understanding of politics in Pennsylvania. The following are just a few of the incredible stories and interesting finds held in the Krasik Collection.



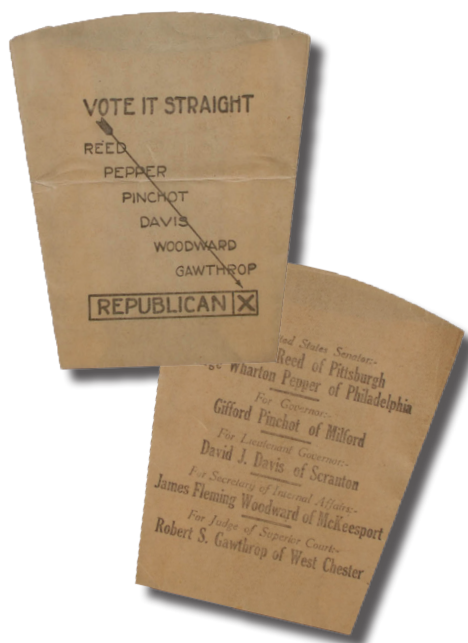
This is a tin poster for Governor William A. Stone's successful 1898 campaign decorated with paint. It is large, roughly 27 inches tall and 19 inches wide. Striking in appearance, it is also interesting to note that the candidates' Civil War service, over for 33 years by the time of this election, still plays a visible role in the campaign.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.889

2

These disposable paper cups are the perfect example of ephemera. Most likely used at a rally or picnic for Gifford Pinchot during his 1922 gubernatorial campaign, these two that survived were probably not actually used to hold water and were purposefully saved. Pinchot, a well-known conservationist, had a lively political career: he served as Chief of Forestry under President Theodore Roosevelt, was a supporter of the Progressive movement, and served as Governor from 1923-1926, and again from 1931-1935.¹

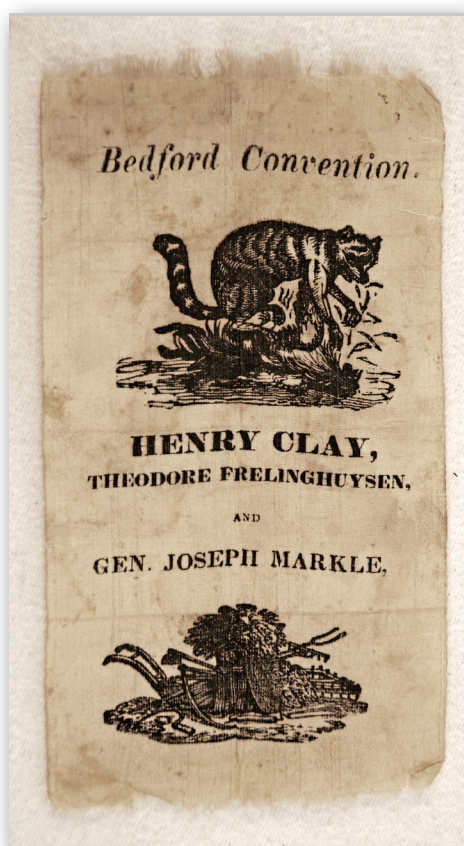
HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.1065 and 2015.22.1066.



4

This badge is from the Presidential Congressional Election of 1920, the first election that women throughout the country were able to vote in thanks to the passage of the 19th Amendment, passed by Congress in May of 1919, and finally ratified by three-fourths of the states over a year later on August 19, 1920. The face of the button features images of President Warren G. Harding, Vice President Calvin Coolidge, and State Senator Boies Penrose, all of whom would win the election.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.720.



3

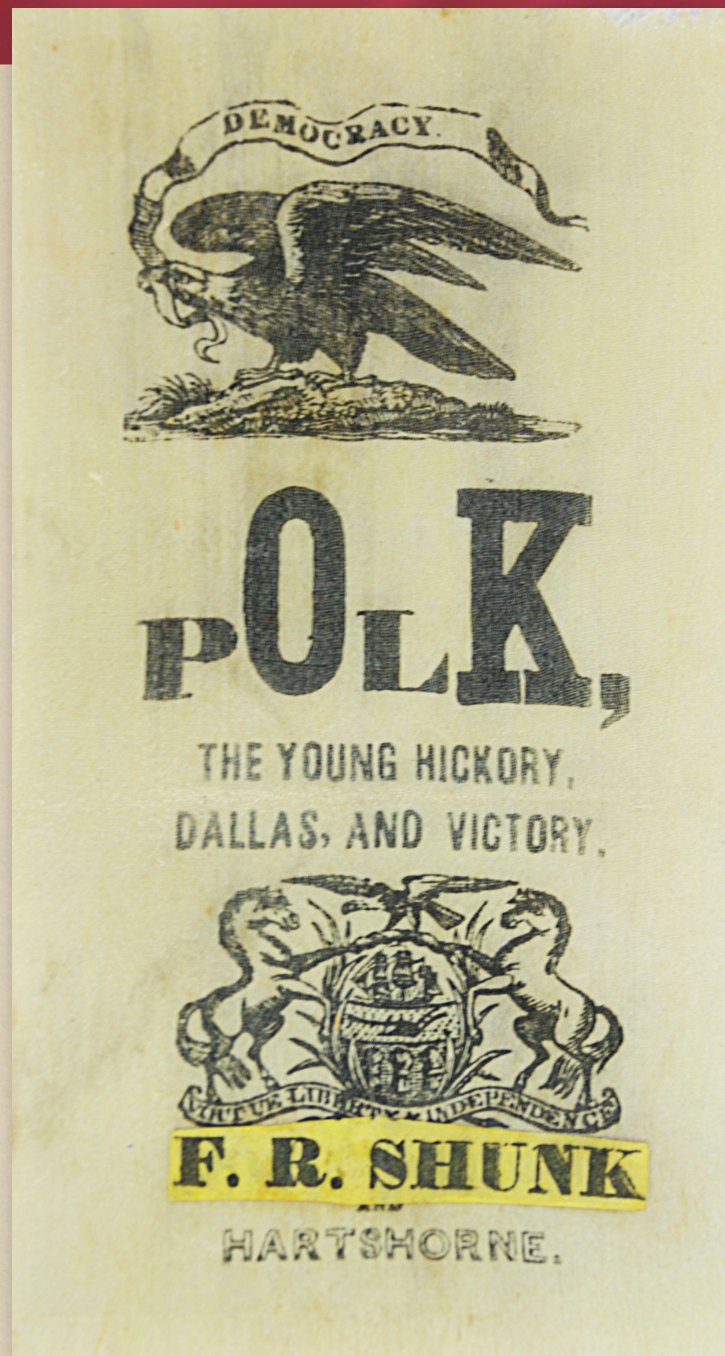
Is the 2016 presidential campaign the most polarizing campaign Americans have seen? This ribbon from the Presidential campaign of 1844, depicting a raccoon (then the symbol of the Whig Party) violently attacking a rooster (a symbol of the Democratic Party), suggests that political campaigning has been contentious for a long time.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.27.



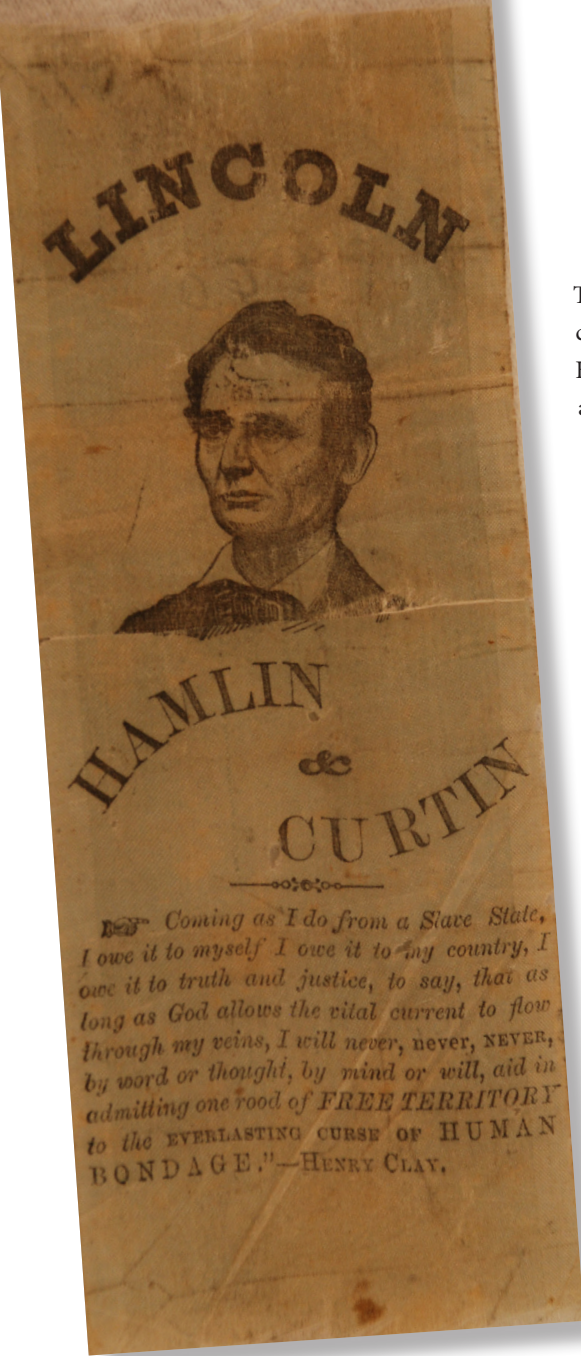


This political ribbon dates to 1844, when James K. Polk and Francis R. Shunk were the Democratic Party's nominees for U.S. President and Governor of Pennsylvania, respectively. There are multiple reasons this ribbon is interesting. First, the bright yellow fabric that "F.R. Shunk" is printed on appears to have been added later. Only a few months before the election, the original Democratic gubernatorial nominee, Henry A.P. Muhlenberg, died suddenly. Shunk was selected to replace Muhlenberg, and ended up winning the election. The enlarged "O" and "K" in "Polk" is not just a design element—it is a clever political statement. The term "O.K.", a phrase common to us today, is thought to have been first printed in the late 1830s in a Boston newspaper—essentially, it was a New England inside joke. The newspaper printed various abbreviations meant to be humorous twists on spelling (in this case, "all correct" = "oll korrekt" = O.K.) "O.K." was a joke that stuck, and was quickly picked up and used in campaigns of the 1840 presidential election. Presidential Incumbent Martin Van Buren's nickname, "Old Kinderhook", was the perfect opportunity to incorporate this popular new phrase. Van Buren's opponents, not to be left out, also found a way to use the term by making fun of Van Buren's predecessor and mentor, Andrew Jackson, and his lack of formal education and rumored "creative" spelling patterns. Around this time, a false rumor spread that Jackson was so bad at spelling, that he signed many formal, presidential documents with "O.K." to indicate his approval. The term quickly was added to America's slang vocabulary.² It's difficult to say with certainty what the designer of this ribbon was hoping to achieve; it could have been relishing Polk's ties to Andrew



Jackson ("Old Hickory" to Polk's "Young Hickory", demonstrated by the ribbon); as a way to put a competitive spin on Martin Van Buren's claim to the abbreviation as he ran against Polk in Van Buren's second bid as the Democratic nominee in 1844; or, perhaps more simply, as a way to jump on the trendy bandwagon. Either way, this term is an entertaining political genesis story.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.12.



This political ribbon is from the 1860 campaign for Abraham Lincoln for President, Hannibal Hamlin for Vice President, and Andrew G. Curtin for Governor of Pennsylvania. There is a long quote from Henry Clay printed at the bottom that reads “Coming as I do from a Slave State, I owe it to myself I owe it to my country, I owe it to truth and justice, to say, that as long as God allows the vital current to flow through my veins, I will never, never NEVER, by word or thought, by mind or will, aid in admitting one rood of FREE TERRITORY to the EVERLASTING CURSE OF HUMAN BONDAGE.” --HENRY CLAY.” Abraham Lincoln was a great admirer of Senator Henry Clay (1777-1852), known as “The Great Compromiser” for his handling of various contentious political issues, including the nullification crisis of 1828 and the Great Compromise of 1850. Lincoln ran on the platform of limiting the expansion of slavery into U.S. territories, which is clearly outlined in Clay’s quote. Clay was a major figure of the Whig Party, to which Lincoln belonged before its dissolution in the mid-1850s, and it is interesting to see Lincoln tying his platform to Clay’s legacy.³ It is also interesting, considering that if one were to wear this ribbon, the quote would be difficult to read by a passerby!

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.29.

In September of 1862, the Union Army was not doing well in the American Civil War. After a demoralizing summer, including a recent loss in the Second Battle of Bull Run, anxiety over the Union’s situation was high. As a result, Pennsylvania Governor Curtin decided to quietly organize a meeting in Altoona, Pa., of other Union governors to reaffirm their loyalty to the Union cause and to President Abraham Lincoln’s policies. This meeting, called the Loyal War Governor’s Conference, served multiple purposes; it strengthened the Union’s commitment to the war during a contentious time, and gave Lincoln the support he needed just days after announcing the Emancipation Proclamation, a controversial policy at the time. The Governors even advised Lincoln to remove General George B. McClellan from command of the Union Army, and asked him to call for more soldiers.⁴ In 1912, a Semi-Centennial commemoration of this meeting was held in Altoona, Pa., and this interesting badge—complete with a moveable miniature cannon—was most likely worn during the three days of festivities.⁵ There are many different pieces from this commemorative event within the Krasik Collection.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.1072.





8

This elaborate political badge probably belonged to a member of the Morton Colored Republican Club, a political club chartered in 1896 for African American men from eastern Pennsylvania. This badge offers a perspective on political difficulties and barriers that African Americans experienced twenty-six years after receiving the right to vote, and the subsequent ways in which they carved their own political paths. Interestingly, the reverse side appears to have been meant to be worn to a funeral or memorial service of a member of the political club, indicating the close-knit nature of the club. One would also note that the two hands shaking on the badge appear to be white.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.557.

9

This cigar box likely dates back to the late 1800s- early 1900s. Andrew G. Curtin was the Governor of Pennsylvania during the Civil War, and was an important figure in supporting the Union and Abraham Lincoln. His success and popularity during this tumultuous time is clear by his portrayal on this cigar box picturing him later in life.⁶

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.1071.



10

This poster is printed on thick paper or cardboard and has a small cardboard stand at the bottom, meant to prop up this figure of Governor William A. Stone. Not only is it unique that it survived the campaign of 1898, but the message “Compliments of the Philadelphia Inquirer” printed on it show how newspapers were unabashedly partisan and clearly favored one political party or candidate over another.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.350.



11

There is something inherently fitting about a shot glass featuring the image of a powerful and controversial political boss. Matthew Stanley Quay (1833-1904) was born in Dillsburg, Pa., and eventually moved to Beaver, Pa., where his large, white brick home still stands. Quay served in the Pennsylvania State Representatives, as a U.S. Senator, and as the Chair of the Republican National Committee. He was the driving force behind the Pennsylvania Republican political machine, and was once apparently dubbed “kingmaker” by President Benjamin Harrison.⁷

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.1036.



12

These buttons campaigning for Governor Edwin S. Stuart during the 1906 gubernatorial campaign feature Theodore Roosevelt in the background. The buttons demonstrate Stuart’s attempt to capitalize on Roosevelt’s popularity, all presented in bright and unique colors.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.728, .733, .737, .724.





Speaking of Theodore Roosevelt, he lends an interesting story line to this piece, a badge commemorating the dedication of the Pennsylvania State Capitol building in 1906. The story behind our stunning Capitol building is surprisingly scandalous. After the original building, known as the “Hills Capitol”, burned in 1897, and plans to complete a preliminary attempt at a replacement capitol, the “Cobb Capitol” building, were abandoned, plans for a third Capitol building were put in place in 1901. From the beginning, scandals mounted. A design competition that ultimately chose

the architect, Joseph Huston, was met with protests of favoritism.⁸ Eventually, the \$4.5 million budget for construction and furnishing of the building was exceeded \$9 million.⁹ The architect Huston and other state officials would even serve jail time for their roles. When the Capitol building was dedicated in October of 1906, President Roosevelt, pictured on this commemorative badge, was present at the ceremony.

HHC Collections, gift of Elaine B. and Carl Krasik, 2015.22.410.



To gaze at these pieces enriches our understanding of how politics and campaigns have evolved over time, offer a snapshot of a time period and its political issues and values, and present new perspectives on elections we thought we knew. They also add an interesting human connection to political history—these items were distributed, purchased, worn, and kept as mementos or expressions of personal belief, used in the same way that we may put a bumper sticker on our car or buy a T-shirt supporting our chosen candidate today. These artifacts also remind us to think about what the political ephemera of today will inform people in the future of our current elections. As the collection continues to be cataloged, there will certainly be more of these valuable lessons and interesting stories uncovered. Be sure

to visit the Heinz History Center’s *Visible Storage* exhibit to see a selection of the Krasik Collection in person.

¹ “Governor Gifford Pinchot” <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/governors/1876-1951/gifford-pinchot.html>

² <http://www.history.com/news/the-birth-of-ok-175-years-ago>

³ Daniel Walker Howe, “Why Abraham Lincoln Was a Whig” *Journal of The Abraham Lincoln Association* (Winter 1995) pp 27-38, <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jala/2629860.0016.105/-why-abraham-lincoln-was-a-whig?rgn=main;view=fulltext>

⁴ “Copy of Loyal War Governor’s Conference Address to the President of the United States, September 24, 1862,” Missouri History Museum (2009), at <http://collections.mohistory.org/resource/173478.html>.

⁵ A link to a copy of the “Souvenir booklet” handed out at the semi-centennial celebration can be found at www.usgwarchives.net/pa/blair/wargovspix.htm.

⁶ Andrew Curtin’s biography: <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/governors/1790-1876/andrew-curtin.html>

⁷ “Matthew Quay and the 1888 Presidential Election” *United States Senate*. http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/minute/Quay_1888PresidentialElection.htm

⁸ Wilson, Ruthann and Jason L., *Literature In Stone: The 100 Year History of Pennsylvania’s State Capitol*. Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee (2006), <http://www.pacapitol.com/Resources/PDF/History/Art-Architecture/05-Chapter-3.pdf>

⁹ Pennsylvania General Assembly, “The Capitol”, <http://www.pacapitol.com/main.html>