

Appendix B. Simon Wing's Personal Notebook, c. 1899-1903.
Transcribed by Marcel Safier

An undated, handwritten notebook held at George Eastman Museum, Rochester, New York, chronicles Simon Wing's visit to New York and Philadelphia at the end of the nineteenth century. Wing systematically called on studios in those towns to enquire about the products they used and to promote a range of materials his company could supply, with particular mention made of photograph mounts. He met with considerable resistance, finding a number of the photographers already satisfied with the products they were using and not inclined to change. The notebook also provides a fascinating insight into a rapidly changing tintype market.

On seventeen pages, Simon Wing writes:

Some 200 photographers in N. Y. City and are as a rule well scattered. Fully 3/4 are Jews and they compose the class that buy the cheapest stuff they can find & in hand to mouth quantities. The others are independently well to do with whom lower prices cut no figure.

The Jews buy entirely I think, of the foreign dealers such as Luthin¹, Hein², etc. etc. They use mostly "special" paper @ 90¢ per Gross & C.D.V. is the size run most, almost no diamonds being used.

Bowery prices are C.D.V. 10¢ each, single figures or group & cabinets 75¢ per dozen. No tintypes are made except in the summer.

Betts Triess & McCabe mounts are everywhere & Collins seems to have given up the cheap market to them. In the better studios they won't think of any others but Collins mounts except occasionally [sic] they do buy a few of McCabe's best fancy mounts.

We certainly have no chance with mounts in N.Y. City & most photographers were surprised that Boston should attempt to sell New York, mounts. Many laughed at our prices & guessed they could sell us mounts & make a good profit. Retail pedlers [sic] call on the cheap trade every little while & sell from 1 doz. to 100 mounts as wanted. Every dealer, including Anthony, has other makes of mounts on his shelves as well as Collins.

On ferro envelopes our only chance I believe is with the dealers. None, practically, are used except in the summer and then only in quantities enough for a day or week according to the amount of cash the photographer has.

Worcester has already either called on the dealers, or written, and promised better goods than last year and quoted prices and the dealers say their designs are newer and more salable than ours & have more variety & are to be preferred [sic] even at the same prices. If we sell many it will have to be as low as Worcester quotes items, at least.

Luthin said he had thought he would handle only the other make this year but finally did agree to take 100 doz. if @ .50¢ & although it was no special inducement. Had no sale for 2B [likely one of Wing's stock numbers] but would like some Victorias like his sample & if he could get them at a reasonable price thought he could sell quite a number. Has rather a small place but evidently

does a big cash business. Had 200 8oz Bottles Anthony's Collodion come in in trays while I was there. Has quite a number of clerks & bet his men talk German or Jewish to most of their customers.

Geo Murphy said substantially the same in regard to envelopes. Spoke of Worcester's offers for this year and did not see any advantage particularly in buying our make. If we would meet them on question of freight however would take 100 doz. @ 55 for Buff & 65 for Pearl.

M. M. Govan out of town, expected back Tuesday P.M. or Wed morning. Called again Wed P.M. about 4 but had not yet returned Man thought he would order by mail if we sent samples & prices.

R. H. Moran not at 389 Broome St. Laundry there now said he had moved away somewhere & thought he had gone out of the business as some of his goods were still stored there in cases.

Mr. Hein out Tuesday a.m. Called in p.m. & still out. Nobody else could order. Called again Wed p.m. & he was glad to have us call. Seems a decent kind of a man. Is a big German. Said he sent to me for samples & prices because he had had so many complaints about poor pasting that he did not know but what it was 2nds he had been buying & wanted to see if we had any better grade. That not being so he did not see how he could order of us this year as both Straub and Worcester envelopes seemed to be better made & prices were even less. Hated not to deal with us however as dealings had always been satisfactory in past. Inquired particularly for Mrs. S. Wing.

Did not think it would be wise for us to give up the N.Y. market at this time & that if I thought the pasting would go this year he would try 25 doz. & if passably good would order 75 doz. more. Price would have to be 50¢ & fght [freight] paid though same as others. Ordered a few other sizes and would like his name stamped on cards if he could have it.

Straub Envelope Co - ferro cases a specialty - occupy 1 floor of a small wooden building at 27 Beekman St, in what seems a paper & stationary district. Think he makes very few ferro envelopes as correspondence envelopes seem to be his principal business. Has quite a number of envelope machines but only 2 were running. No stock for ferro envelopes in these that I could see.

Rhea out first two times I called. Found him in at 8.30 in the evening. Says he has gotten up a \$100 Automatic Phototype machine to compete with the \$400 ones & has a "Company" organized to make & put them on the market. Says he has sold a good many already & was just stamping a lot of envelopes with circulars in them to send out all over the country. They were to give 1000 small tin plates all ready for use and 1000 "mounts" with each machine & have got to have something cheap. The cards you quoted 1 1/4¢ on are beyond their means at present. Collins makes them for the other company & has just quoted him 1.75 per 1000 for cards such as we figured on only with gum paper backs. Prefers to gum the paper himself though as he can save something by doing it. Buys red poster [likely poster board] in rolls & paints on [word illegible] trim with a whitewash brush & he & his wife cut it up & paste it in evenings. Says 1.00 for 1000 is his limit at present & wants to know if we cannot get up some cheap flashy card at

this price. Does not care what the material is but it must be thick, large & look a good deal for the money. Would like a colored stock if as cheap [2 illegible words] cards are all right but must have something larger now. Thinks he will use a great many & hopes we can get something up that will do.

Possibly we can sell him the plates also and it has occurred to me that very likely the other company is the one the Am. Dry Plate Co. of Worcester buy so many tin-plates of [Mr.?] [Keesport for. The plates are coated with a grayish matter when put into the machine & I think must be sensitized. It may be the Am Plate Co supply them all sensitized. I do not think they are silvered or anything before the exposure is made.

Specimens of results of calls made in some of the N.Y. Photographers.

Jordonsky. - Big stock on hand - several hundred mounts - all loaded up & no business. Buys of [sic] Luthin & uses a very cheap Gold serrated Edge [Trier?] Cabt mount. Would not tell what he paid.

Weinstein & Dienstag pay 3.00 for a [Tea?] ea? Gold Beveled Cabt. 7¢ a dozen or 4.00 per 1000 for a card size serrated edge mantello [a style of mount] like our 743 -

World Portrait Studio makes "Two fine satin finish Cabts. for 50¢" Card size 10c each - our stock too good - they use common view mount stock cut up with round corners.

Feinberg - mostly theatrical work & uses large & fancy sizes of McCabes. Buys few at time as needs item. Business very dull.

Wendt buys direct from "Warner Bott of Albany" uses only Cabt size with a blue embossed border & name embossed in blue to match. Gets 75¢ per dozen. No use talk with us.

Garber only buy few at time. Pays 2.80 for a mount like our 06 & 4.00 for same gold beveled.

Wood McNabe mount suit me. Prices are right. no object in buying from Boston.

Coe 681 B/way claims he uses 10,000 C. D. V. a month but would use none but Collins at any price. Gets them direct from Phila all printed.

McNabb upper B/way is a Collins man. Lower prices would cut no ice. Would have nothing but gold leaf embossing any way.

De Young upper B/way ditto etc, etc. Funny Boston should try to sell mounts in N.Y.

Philadelphia

Mount market here similar to New York but not so much cheap stuff. Collins by no means the only ones used however. Botts & McCabes on all the dealers shelves & some of Triers. No diamonds or tintypes used as all that I could find out. Almost 100 galleries here & Haworth

Buchanan & McCollin supply them will nearly everything they get. They have their salesman call around through the city frequently & keep the field well covered. Haworth the principal dealer has quite a store & employs 9 or 10 hands. Does mount printing & embossing up stairs. Seems a nice honest old gentleman & he talked awhile & then turned me over to his young man who is sort of manager & practically runs the business. I think they just laid in 100,000 Worcester ferro envelopes. Thinks them better than ours but had a few of ours on his shelves also. Has quite a call for a better grade like our gilt & maroon but said 4.00 would be way beyond them on 4 [doz.?] They have a kind they sell for \$2.25 which they think is ahead of ours although a little lighter. A paper bag maker & printer near-by make them for them. Has had them 3 seasons now. Collins also makes them a nice cabt. size for 7.00 but the [trade?] prefer our maroon & scarlet colors like our #2B & they ordered [2?]000 & want the very brightest we can give them. Glad to have us call at any time.

Thos H McCollin Co³ did not care to order before May 1st even if there was a chance of the price being different. I think the trouble is a shortage of cash. Have quite a large place on the 2nd floor of a building but seem to be doing very little business. Say they sell no ferro env. anyway until the sea-shore trade opens up & it would not pay them to order This after waiting nearly an hour to see the young man who seems to run the business. But two men are in the concern now - Thos H. McCollin and this young man. Would like to send prices about May 1st.

W. P. Buchanan out of the city for a week. Saw his brother but he did not care to order. If we sent samples though we would get an order by mail all right. Has rather a small place & deals mostly I think in amateur goods.

Wilson, Hood & [illegible word]⁴ have quite a large room but deal mostly in apparatus & only sell a few chemicals etc. Have very little tintype trade even in summer. Would write for any special thing they need. Right man to talk with not in anyway.

[Sch __ [?]] & Schroeder Co. occupy 5th floor of a cheap manufacturing building. Have about 4 men in all I think. Either they do not make Collins mount dies or do not want to let us know anything about it. Could not tell anything about cost of such dies off hand. Would have to see what we wanted & look into it etc. Seem pleasant & obliging however & I hardly think they make such dies at all. Most of the men were working on big business dies such as I suppose are used for embossing trade marks etc. on wooden boxes.

¹ Reinhard Henry Luthin was a German-born wholesale druggist & photographic dealer based at 191 Bowery, New York City.

² Hein Photo Supply Company, 188 Grand Street, New York City.

³ Thomas H. McCollin & Alfred E. Maris, dealers in photographic materials, 1030 Arch Street, Philadelphia.

⁴ Wilson, Hood & Company was a well-known firm, run by Edward L. Wilson and John G. Hood, of 822 Arch Street, Philadelphia. The illegible word could be the name of another partner in the business that existed at some point.