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Guide to the Fowler & Wells Portrait Posters for Physiognomy Lectures

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by Beinecke Staff

2014

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 1000

CREATOR: Fowler & Wells, attributed name

TITLE: Fowler & Wells Portrait Posters for Physiognomy Lectures

DATES: circa 1860

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 19 boxes (111 drawings on 19 posters)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: A set of nineteen posters with 112 bust portraits depicting identified men and women, primarily authors, artists, scientists, monarchs, and religious and political leaders from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a group of idealized heads illustrating characteristics identified by phrenologists.

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Ian Brabner, Bookseller, on the Edwin J. Beinecke Book Fund, 2011.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Fowler & Wells Portrait Posters for Physiognomy Lectures is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Fowler & Wells, Portrait Posters for Physiognomy Lectures. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Biographical / Historical

Fowler & Wells, American practical phrenologists in the mid-nineteenth century, and creators and publishers of illustrative charts, diagrams, and posters for use by lecturers on physiognomy and phrenology. Based in New York, the firm also had offices in Boston, Philadelphia, and London.

Scope and Contents

A set of nineteen posters with 112 bust portraits depicting identified men and women, primarily authors, artists, scientists, monarchs, and religious and political leaders from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a group of idealized heads illustrating characteristics identified by phrenologists, such as inhabitiveness and philoprogenitiveness. The portraits, or plates, were rendered in sepia ink and wash on paper, and were mounted on linen or canvas in groups of six; each set has wooden rods at each end to aid in hanging for display, and rolling for compact storage and travel. Each portrait or head is captioned with name of the sitter or the prominent character type portrayed. The posters were likely intended as exhibits supporting phrenology lectures.

Collection Contents

b. 1	Poster 1: Destructiveness small, Destructiveness large, Hydrocephalus James Cardinal, Thomas Sewall, Red Jacket, Language large
b. 2	Poster 2: William Shakespeare, Alphonse de Lamartine, Alexander von Humboldt, Jonathan Edwards, Perfect Male Head, Perfect Female Head
b. 3	Poster 3: Johann Gaspar Spurzheim, J. W. Gall, Robert Fulton, Isaac Newton, Constructiveness large, African
b. 4	Poster 4: George Washington, James Madison, John Adams, James Monroe, Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams
b. 5	Poster 5: Laura Bridgeman and Oliver Caswell, Junius Brutus, Dioclesian
b. 6	Poster 6: William Herschel, William Harvey, Charles Sumner, Preston Brooks, Inhabitiveness large, Patrick Henry
b. 7	Poster 7: Cautiousness small, Aimable-Jean-Jacques Pélissier, John Bunyan, Henry VIII, Omer Pasha, Abdool Medjid (Abdul-Mejid I)
b. 8	Poster 8: Emanuel Swedenborg, Voltaire, Sarah Josepha Buell Hale, Coarse Organization, Frances Sargent Osgood, Cautiousness large
b. 9	Poster 9: Washington Irving, Horace Greeley, Aaron Burr, John Knox, Robert R. Livingston, David Hume
b. 10	Poster 10: Benevolence small, Benevolence large, Robert Pollok, John Collins, Gottfried (a murderer, two portraits)
b. 11	Poster 11: Moral Sentiments large, Charles Caldwell, Pope Alexander VI, Caligula, Madame de Staël, Joseph C. Neal
b. 12	Poster 12: Galileo, Firmness large, John Howard, Stephen Decatur, Horatio Nelson, Israel Putnam
b. 13	Poster 13: Nicolaus Copernicus, Raphael, Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots, Conceited Simpleton, Thief
b. 14	Poster 14: Prince Gortschakoff, Peter the Great, Frederick William IV, Franz Joseph I, Lord Raglan, Charles Napier
b. 15	Poster 15: George Washington, Francis Bacon, Alexander Frisbie, Emerson (an idiot), Convict, Tribulation Trepid
b. 16	Poster 16: Fannie Forrester, William Wordsworth, Jenny Lind, Calculation small, Thomas H. Benton, Harriet Martineau
b. 17	Poster 17: Martin Luther, Philipp Melancthon, Alexander Campbell, Oliver Cromwell, Armstrong (a Murderer), Parricide
b. 18	Poster 18: Socrates, William Tyndale, George Gordon Byron, Alexander Pope, Philoprogenitiveness small, Philoprogenitiveness large
b. 19	Poster 19: William Cullen Bryant, Benjamin West, Oliver Hazard Perry, Samuel F. B. Morse, Tadeusz Kościuszko, Sydney Smith

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Phrenology -- United States
Physiognomy -- United States

Genres / Formats

Drawings (visual works) -- United States -- 19th century
Posters -- United States -- 19th century

Names

Abdülmecit, Sultan of the Turks, 1823-1861 -- Portraits
Adams, John, 1735-1826 -- Portraits
Adams, John Quincy, 1767-1848 -- Portraits
Alexander, Pope, VI, 1431-1503 -- Portraits
Bacon, Francis, 1561-1626 -- Portraits
Benton, Thomas Hart, 1782-1858 -- Portraits
Bridgman, Laura Dewey, 1829-1889 -- Portraits
Brooks, Preston S. (Preston Smith), 1819-1857 -- Portraits
Brutus, Marcus Junius, 85 B.C.?-42 B.C. -- Portraits
Bryant, William Cullen, 1794-1878 -- Portraits
Bunyan, John, 1628-1688 -- Portraits
Burr, Aaron, 1756-1836 -- Portraits
Byron, George Gordon Byron, Baron, 1788-1824 -- Portraits
Caldwell, Charles, 1772-1853 -- Portraits
Caligula, Emperor of Rome, 12-41 -- Portraits
Campbell, Alexander, 1788-1866 -- Portraits
Collins, John, 1811-1874 -- Portraits
Copernicus, Nicolaus, 1473-1543 -- Portraits
Cromwell, Oliver, 1599-1658 -- Portraits
Decatur, Stephen, 1752-1808 -- Portraits
Diocletian, Emperor of Rome, 245-313 -- Portraits
Edwards, Jonathan, 1703-1758 -- Portraits
Elizabeth, Queen of England, I, 1533-1603 -- Portraits
Forrester, Fannie, active 19th century -- Portraits
Franz Joseph, Emperor of Austria, I, 1830-1916 -- Portraits
Frederick William, King of Prussia, IV, 1795-1861 -- Portraits

Fulton, Robert, 1765-1815 -- Portraits
Galilei, Galileo, 1564-1642 -- Portraits
Gorchakov, Aleksandr Mikhailovich, kníaǝz', 1798-1883 -- Portraits
Greeley, Horace, 1811-1872 -- Portraits
Hale, Sarah Josepha Buell, 1788-1879 -- Portraits
Harvey, William, 1578-1657 -- Portraits
Henry, Patrick, 1736-1799 -- Portraits
Herschel, William, 1738-1822 -- Portraits
Howard, John, 1726-1790 -- Portraits
Humboldt, Alexander von, 1769-1859 -- Portraits
Hume, David, 1711-1776 -- Portraits
Irving, Washington, 1783-1859 -- Portraits
Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826 -- Portraits
Knox, John, approximately 1514-1572 -- Portraits
Kościuszko, Tadeusz, 1746-1817 -- Portraits
Lamartine, Alphonse de, 1790-1869 -- Portraits
Lind, Jenny, 1820-1887 -- Portraits
Livingston, Robert R., 1718-1775 -- Portraits
Luther, Martin, 1483-1546 -- Portraits
Madison, James, 1751-1836 -- Portraits
Martineau, Harriet, 1802-1876 -- Portraits
Mary, Queen of Scots, 1542-1587 -- Portraits
Melanchthon, Philipp, 1497-1560 -- Portraits
Monroe, James, 1758-1831 -- Portraits
Morse, Samuel Finley Breese, 1791-1872 -- Portraits
Napier, Charles, 1786-1860 -- Portraits
Neal, Joseph C. (Joseph Clay), 1807-1847 -- Portraits
Nelson, Horatio Nelson, Viscount, 1758-1805 -- Portraits
Newton, Isaac, 1642-1727 -- Portraits
Ömer Lûtfi Paşa, 1806-1871 -- Portraits
Osgood, Frances Sargent, 1811-1850 -- Portraits
Pélissier, Aimable-Jean-Jacques, duc de Malakoff, 1794-1864 -- Portraits
Perry, Oliver Hazard, 1785-1819 -- Portraits
Peter, Emperor of Russia, I, 1672-1725 -- Portraits
Pollok, Robert, 1798-1827 -- Portraits
Pope, Alexander, 1688-1744 -- Portraits
Putnam, Israel, 1718-1790 -- Portraits
Raglan, FitzRoy James Henry Somerset, Baron, 1788-1855 -- Portraits
Raphael, 1483-1520 -- Portraits
Red Jacket, Seneca chief, approximately 1756-1830 -- Portraits
Sewall, Thomas, 1786 or 1787-1845 -- Portraits

Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616 (Portraits)
Smith, Sydney, 1771-1845 -- Portraits
Socrates -- Portraits
Spurzheim, J. G. (Johann Gaspar), 1776-1832 --
Portraits
Staël, Madame de (Anne-Louise-Germaine),
1766-1817 -- Portraits
Sumner, Charles, 1811-1874 -- Portraits
Swedenborg, Emanuel, 1688-1772 -- Portraits
Tyndale, William, -1536 -- Portraits
Voltaire, 1694-1778 -- Portraits
Washington, George, 1732-1799 -- Portraits
West, Benjamin, 1738-1820 -- Portraits
Wordsworth, William, 1770-1850 -- Portraits

Corporate Body

Fowler & Wells