

ALBUM WEEKLY DISCOVERY: TOURISM BY STEREOSCOPE

Album Description

This week, as I began to explore the vast digitized collections of the Library of Congress, I thought it would be fun to start with one of my favorite formats: the stereograph. **Stereographs** consist of two photographs or prints of the same scene, taken at slightly different angles, and often displayed on a card. When viewed through a device with two lenses (called a **stereoscope**), the card creates the impression of a three-dimensional image. Stereographs were first produced in the 1850s and became especially popular between 1870-1920.

Last fall, I had the opportunity to collaborate with a local library on plans to feature their stereograph collection during a public event, which included a “create-your-own stereo card” activity for children and families. We also developed an exhibit highlighting the connection of historic stereographs to tourism. People often bought stereographs as souvenirs at tourist sites, and they could also use stereographs to virtually tour places that they might never see in person.

I was excited to learn that the Library has [more than 52,000 stereograph cards](#) in the Prints & Photographs Division's holdings, and that a large percentage are available to view through the [Stereograph Cards digital collection](#).

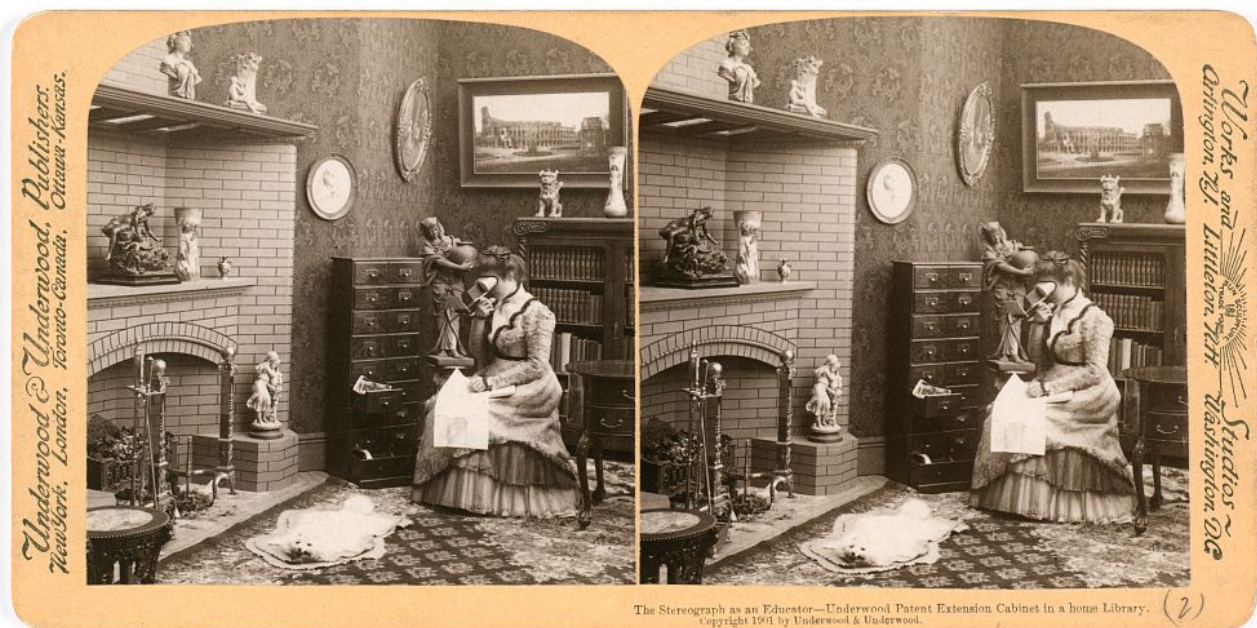


Image: [The stereograph as an educator - Underwood patent extension cabinet in a home library](#)



During my search I also came across several digitized versions of guidebooks published by stereograph companies. One such work is [The United States of America through the stereoscope; one hundred outlooks from successive standpoints in different parts of the world's greatest republic](#), published by Underwood & Underwood in 1904 to accompany a box set of 100 stereographs depicting landscapes, architecture, industries, and people of the United States. This book offers a “stereoscopic tour” through the country, with an itinerary, maps, and suggestions for how to look at and interpret the images.

The United States of America through the stereoscope presents the stereoscopic tour as an accessible alternative to actual travel: “[I]t is easily possible for any man... to learn from his own observation the large, typical facts of this country, how it looks when one stands bodily in the middle of a great Illinois farm, or on

the dizzy brink of the mad Whirlpool Rapids of Niagara, or peering down into the unbelievable, ragged depths of the Grand Canyon of Arizona. ... *This memorable experience is possible for all sorts and conditions of men.* It is made thus possible by the practical perfection of stereoscopic photography” ([pp. 9-10](#)).

Interestingly, many of the stereographs in this “tour” are digitized and accessible through the Library of Congress. The attached album includes an abbreviated version of the tour itinerary along with the associated digitized stereographs. While educators may wish to review the full itinerary ([pp. 3-8](#)), it should be noted that the original publication from 1904 includes descriptions of Native Americans that are now recognized as derogatory and harmful. The tour also presents an exalted vision of turn-of-the-century America as a place of natural grandeur and bustling industry. Close analysis of the images, however, provides insight into some of the issues of the time (such as child labor in the “great spinning room” – see teacher’s note), as well as raising questions about what types of American stories might be missing.

Teachers of middle or high school history, geography, or social studies classes might use the abbreviated itinerary to help students practice Library of Congress search techniques while also learning about stereoscopic technology and analyzing images of early-twentieth-century America. First, learners could select a tour stop and search for the associated stereograph in the Library’s collections. Usually the correct stereograph can be located with a simple search using the title from the itinerary. However, in some cases learners may need to narrow down the options from several similar images. To identify the correct image, students might look for clues, including the exact **title**, the **date** (on or within a few years before 1904), the **contributor** (Underwood & Underwood), and the **genre** (stereographs).

Once the desired stereographs are located, learners could [analyze the 2D images](#) and, ideally, view the stereographs in 3D as well. There are several options for creating the 3D effect. Most digitized stereographs in the Library’s collections may be printed, without resizing, and viewed through an antique stereoscope, an inexpensive modern stereoscope (available at online retailers), or a DIY stereoscope made from cardboard and lenses (many tutorials exist online). Additional ideas for viewing stereographs in classrooms are discussed in [this post](#) by  [Cheryl Davis](#) and [this post](#) by  [Mary Johnson](#).

Potential questions for further reflection and discussion include:

- Locate the stereograph on a map and find a contemporary image of the same (or similar) place. What is different? Is anything the same?
- Why do you think the stereograph producer chose this particular scene? What stories about America do you think the producer wanted to convey? What does the title of the image tell us about the producer’s point of view?
- How is the experience of viewing this scene in 3D different from looking at a 2D image? How is looking at a scene in 3D different from visiting it in person?
- If you could create a virtual tour of your town/city/community, what scenes would you include? Why?

Have you used stereographs in your classrooms? I'd love to hear about it, if so!

[Social Studies/History](#) [Technology](#)



**A STEREOSCOPIC TOUR OF THE UNITED STATES, BY UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD,
1904.DOCX**

Teaching Notes:

Teachers of middle or high school history, geography, or social studies classes might use this abbreviated itinerary to help students practice Library of Congress search techniques while also learning about stereoscopic technology and life in early-twentieth-century America.

The image “In the great spinning room” depicts child labor. For context regarding child labor in early-twentieth-century America, see [Lewis Hine’s investigative photography for the National Child Labor Committee \(NCLC\)](#). This [Lesson Plan](#) provides suggestions for addressing the topic of child labor in your classroom.

**THE MAGNIFICENT NEW CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY THE MOST SPACIOUS BOOK
REPOSITORY IN THE WORLD, WASHINGTON, U.S.A.**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2017647087/>

Created / Published

- [1902]

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s05895 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s05895

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT SIGNING BILLS, WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2010646564/>

Summary

- Stereograph showing Roosevelt sitting at his desk writing.

Created / Published

- New York, London, Toronto-Canada, Ottawa-Kansas, : Underwood & Underwood, publishers, c1903 June 11.

Notes

- - H31794 U.S. Copyright Office.
- - Title from item.
- - On recto: Copyright 1903 by Underwood & Underwood.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s01933 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s01933>
- cph 3b42204 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b42204>

**IN THE GREAT SPINNING ROOM - 104,000 SPINDLES - OLYMPIAN COTTON MILLS,
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA**



Teaching Notes:

This image depicts child labor. For context regarding child labor in early-twentieth-century America, see [Lewis Hine's investigative photography for the National Child Labor Committee \(NCLC\)](#). This [Lesson Plan](#) provides suggestions for addressing the topic of child labor in your classroom.

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/96511502/>

Summary

- Two men with working children.

Created / Published

- New York : Underwood & Underwood, c1903.

Genre

- Photographic prints--1900-1910
- Stereographs--1900-1910

Notes

- - Copyright by Underwood & Underwood.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id



- [stereo 1s15405 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s15405](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s15405)
- [cph 3b37840 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b37840](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b37840)



Teaching Notes:

Hi Mara! Great post on stereographs! I loved the potential reflection questions that you provided at the end of your post. Your questions foster engagement and create an opportunity for good thinking. I can't wait to see your discovery next week!



Teaching Notes:

Excellent post, Mara! I have often wondered why items in the Library appear in this format.

**THE FAMOUS "FLATIRON" BUILDING - MOST REMARKABLE COMMERCIAL BUILDING
IN THE WORLD, NEW YORK**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2017649043/>

Created / Published

- New York ; London ; Toronto-Canada ; Ottawa-Kansas : Underwood & Underwood, Publishers, 1904.

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - H46790 U.S. Copyright Office.
- - Copyright 1904 by Underwood & Underwood.
- - On mount: Works and Studios, Arlington, N.J., Littleton, N.H., Washington, D.C.
- - No. 4.
- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s06898 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s06898

THE CRADLE OF AMERICAN LIBERTY; INTERIOR FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON-SCENE OF EPOCH MAKING MEETINGS OF TWO CENTURIES



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018649668/>

Created / Published

- c1903 Jun 11.

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - H81824 U.S. Copyright Office
- - Copyright 1903 by Underwood & Underwood.
- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s13081 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s13081

**SOURCE OF THE WORLD'S MOST GIGANTIC FORTUNES - PUMPING WELLS IN THE OIL -
COUNTRY - WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018652397/>

Created / Published

- [1903]

Genre

- Stereographs--1900 - 1910
- Photographic prints--1900 - 1910

Notes

- - No 1.
- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s15005 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s15005

**STATE ST., CHICAGO, ILL (N. FROM ADAMS): NOONDAY CROWDS ON A THOROUGHFARE
18 MILES LONG**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2014650313/>

Summary

- Stereograph showing traffic congestion with several streetcars and carriages in the street; hundreds of people crowded onto sidewalks entering and exiting several businesses in downtown area.

Created / Published

- New York ; London ; Toronto-Canada ; Ottawa-Kansas : Underwood & Underwood, Publishers, c1903 Mar 26.

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - Copyright 1903 by Underwood & Underwood.
- - On mount: Works and Studios Washington, D.C., Arlington, N.J., Littleton, N.H.
- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id



- cph 3a18404 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a18404>

**GIGANTIC LILY LEAF (VICTORIA REGIA), USED AS A RAFT - IN CHARMING COMO PARK,
ST. PAUL, MINN.**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018650098/>

Created / Published

- [1903]

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - Title from item.
- - No. 3.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s13568 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s13568

IN THE GREAT CORN FIELDS OF EASTERN KANSAS, U.S.A.



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2005684936/>

Summary

- Bird's-eye view of woman dwarfed by tall stalks of corn.

Created / Published

- c1897.

Genre

- Stereographs--1890-1900
- Photographic prints--1890-1900

Notes

- - Stereo copyrighted by Strohmeier & Wyman.
- - Title from item.
- - Caption card tracings: Kansas; Farms...; Shelf.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s12772 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s12772
- cph 3b10549 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b10549

**PICTURESQUE GRANDEUR OF THE GREAT COLUMBIA RIVER-"PILLARS OF HERCULES,"
REMARKABLE ROCK FORMATION (LOOKING WEST), OREGON**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018651284/>

Created / Published

- c1902 Mar 15.

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - H15111 U.S. Copyright Office
- - Copyright 1902 by Underwood & Underwood.
- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s14816 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s14816

**CLIFF HOUSE AND SEAL ROCKS, FROM THE BEACH--SHOWING THE TIDE COMING IN--
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018645899/>

Created / Published

- [1902]

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - No. 1.
- - Title from item.

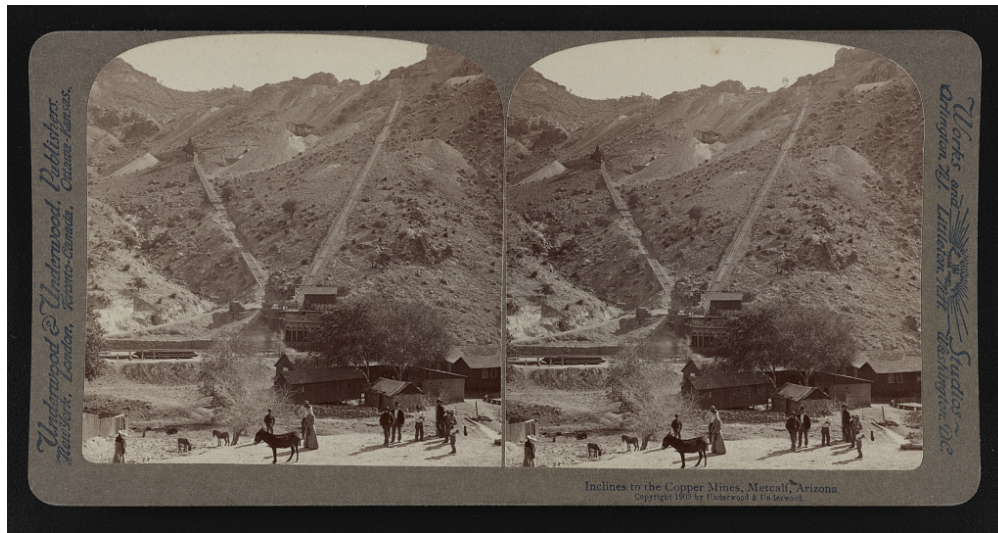
Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s10604 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s10604

INCLINES TO THE COPPER MINES, METCALF, ARIZONA



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2017652839/>

Created / Published

- [1903]

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s10158 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s10158

\$10,000,000 BRIDGE OVER MISSISSIPPI, ST. LOUIS, MO.--2500 FT. LONG, ARCHES 60 FT. ABOVE WATER.



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018650137/>

Created / Published

- [1903]

Genre

- Stereographs--1900-1910
- Photographic prints--1900-1910

Notes

- - Title from item.

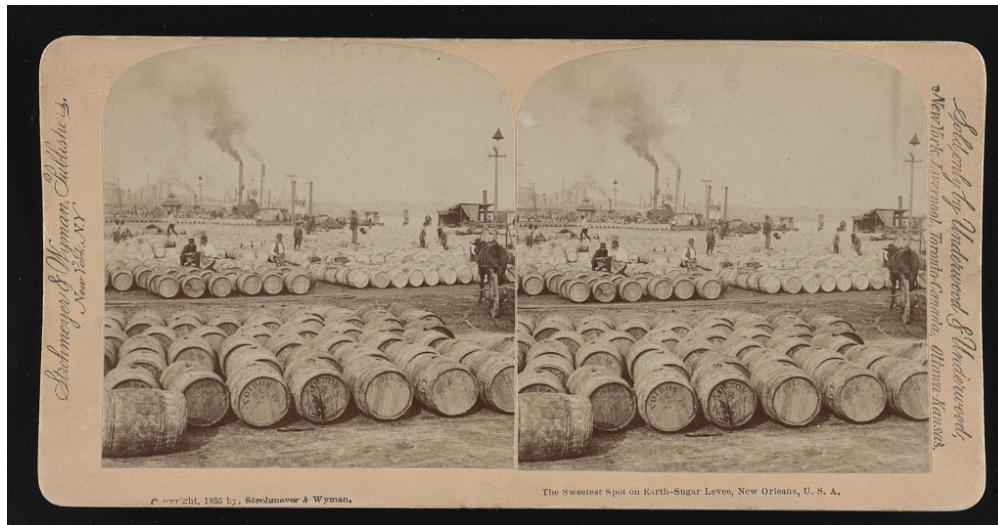
Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s13659 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s13659

THE SWEETEST SPOT ON EARTH-SUGAR LEVEE, NEW ORLEANS, U. S. A.



Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018649759/>

Created / Published

- [1895]

Genre

- Stereographs--1890-1900
- Photographic prints--1890-1900

Notes

- - Title from item.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- stereo 1s12846 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s12846