

**To:** South Central Regional Library Council

**From:** Sophie Clough, Collections & Research Assistant at the Cortland County Historical Society.

**Subject:** 2024-2025 Digitization Grant Final Report

**Date:** July 24, 2025

The Helen Jewett McAleer postcard digitization project has consisted of the scanning of over 2,000 postcards collected during the travels of members of the Smith and Jewett families all around the globe, along with the creation of metadata and uploading to the New York Heritage site for public access. Staff and volunteers at the Cortland County Historical Society performed the scanning portion of the project and received the services of SCRLC staff to perform the metadata creation. The entirety of the collection was scanned and uploaded, completed in January of 2025.

The public was made aware of the new digital collection through several social media posts reaching over 7,000 followers, as well as to the CCHS membership base of almost 400 via the CCHS quarterly newsletter published in February 2025. Furthermore, Collections and Research Assistant, Sophie Clough, is developing a program scheduled for September that will highlight the use of the collection to learn about Helen Jewett McAleer and her globe-trotting uncle, Dr. David Eugene Smith. This program will also discuss early 20th century travel, cultural perspectives, tourism, and global interconnectedness during that era, comparing these to modern depictions and perspectives. This will only be just the start of covering all the topics into which this extensive collection might provide insights.

A clear long-term benefit of the digitization of the Helen Jewett McAleer postcard collection will not only be the increased access, but also preservation of the cards that will no longer need to be removed from their albums in order to read the writing on the backs. This gem of a collection may now receive the attention it deserves without endangering the condition of the postcards.