Robert Taft photography research notes

Section 3, Pages 61 - 90

These research notes document the research Robert Taft undertook in writing his works on the history of American photography. This series complements the series of Taft's photography correspondence included on Kansas Memory as unit 221204.

Creator: Taft, Robert, 1894-1955

Date: 1920s - 1950s

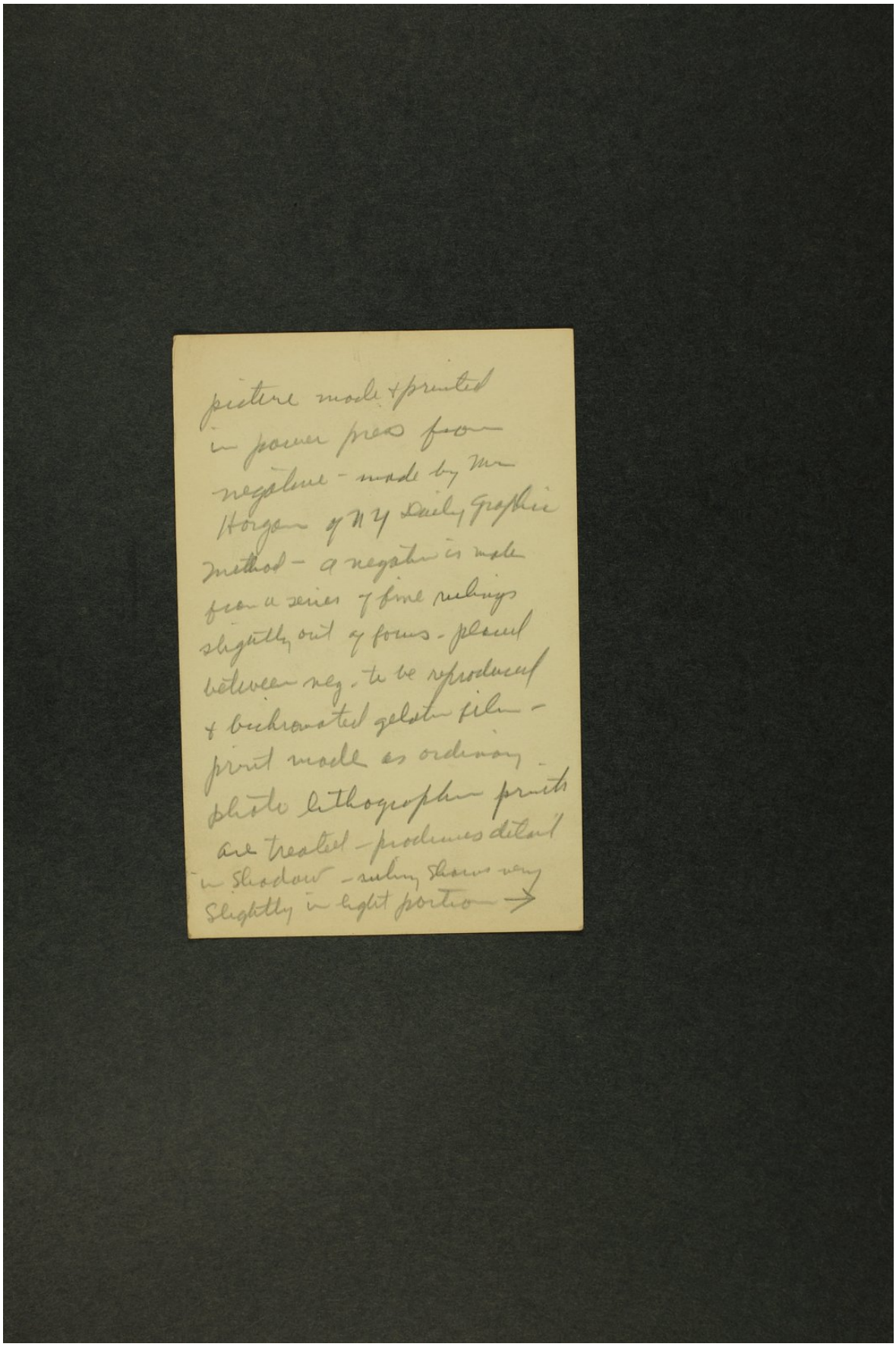
Callnumber: Robert Taft Coll. #172, Boxes 14-17

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 228066

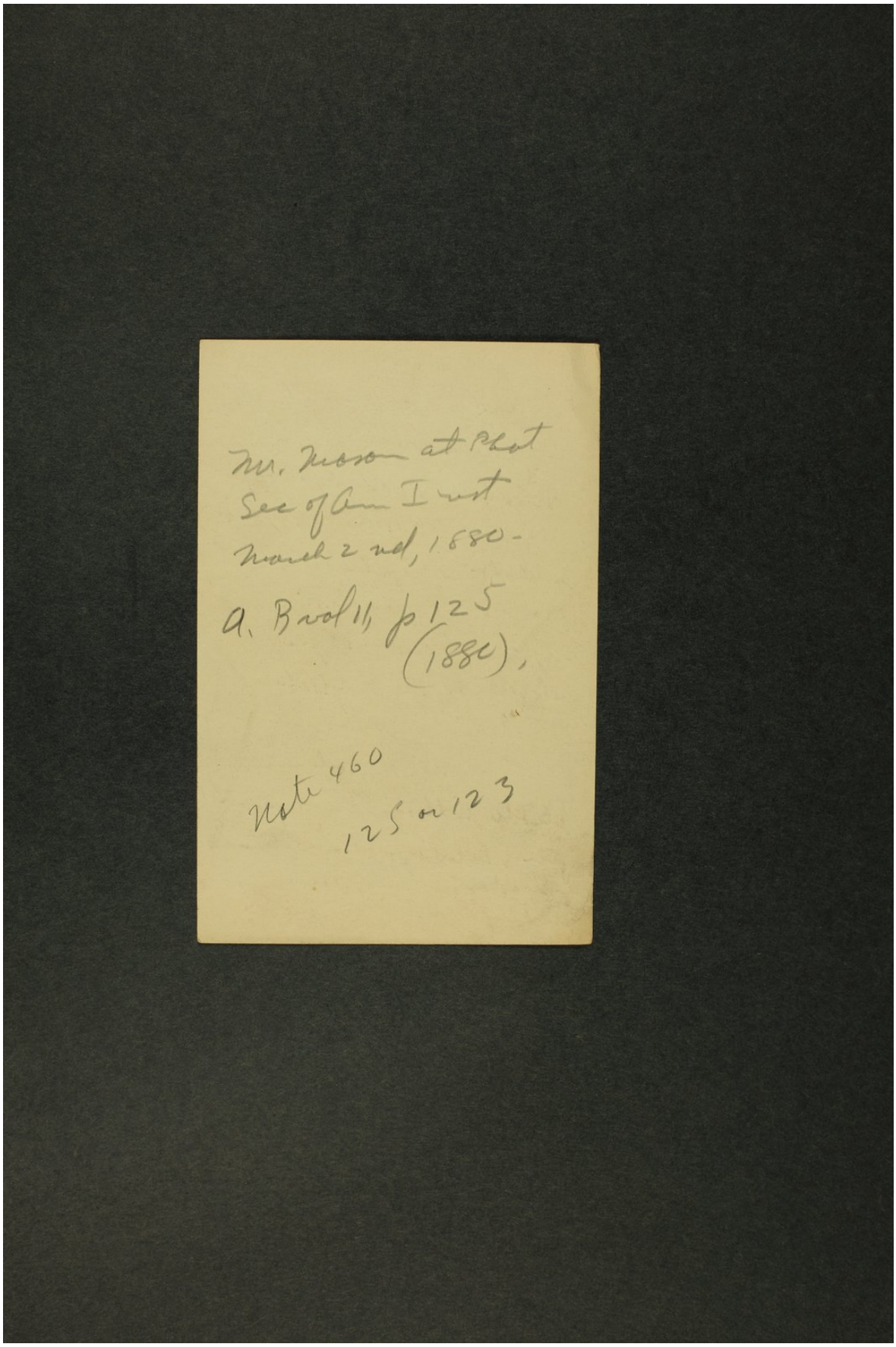
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www.kansasmemory.org/item/228066

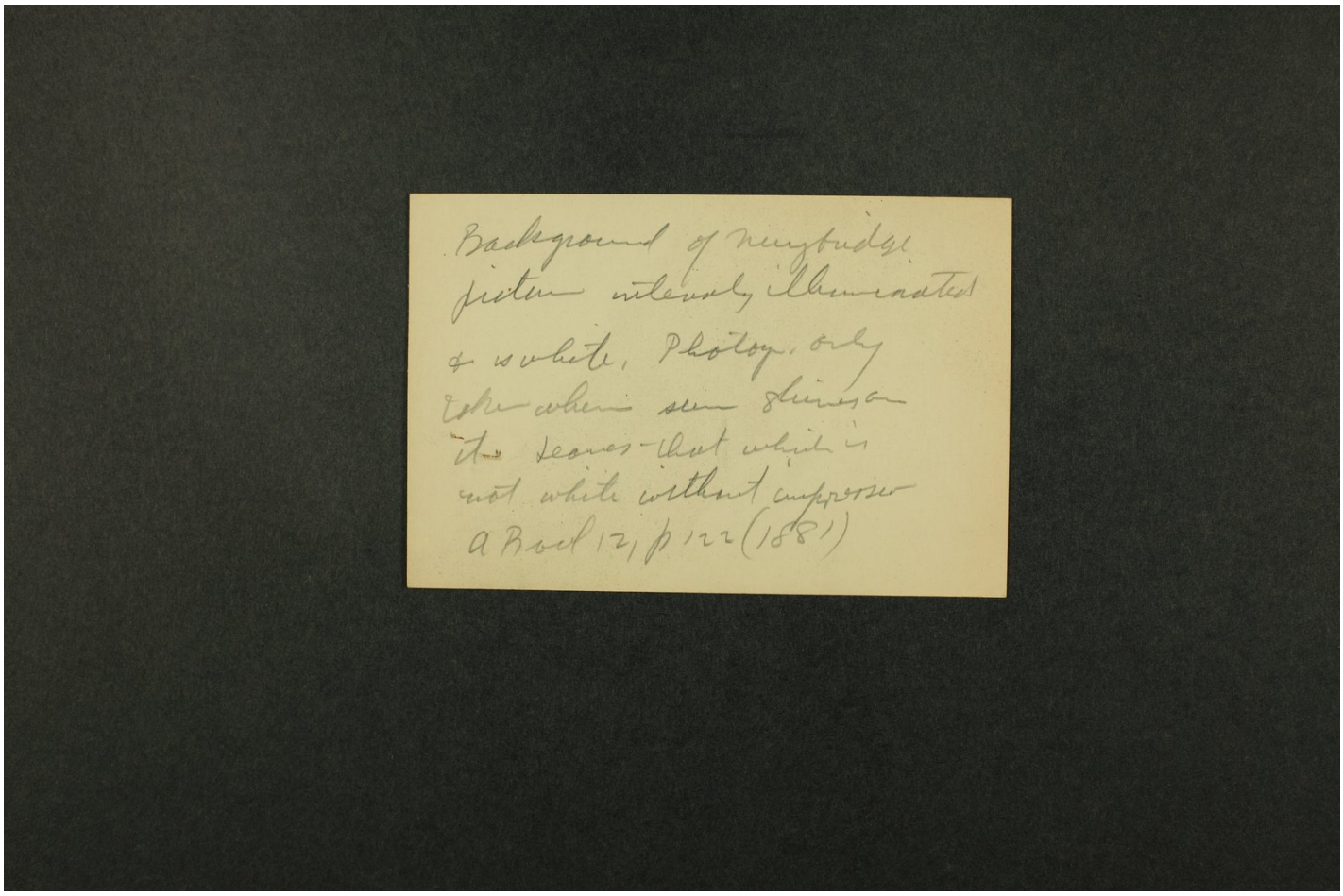
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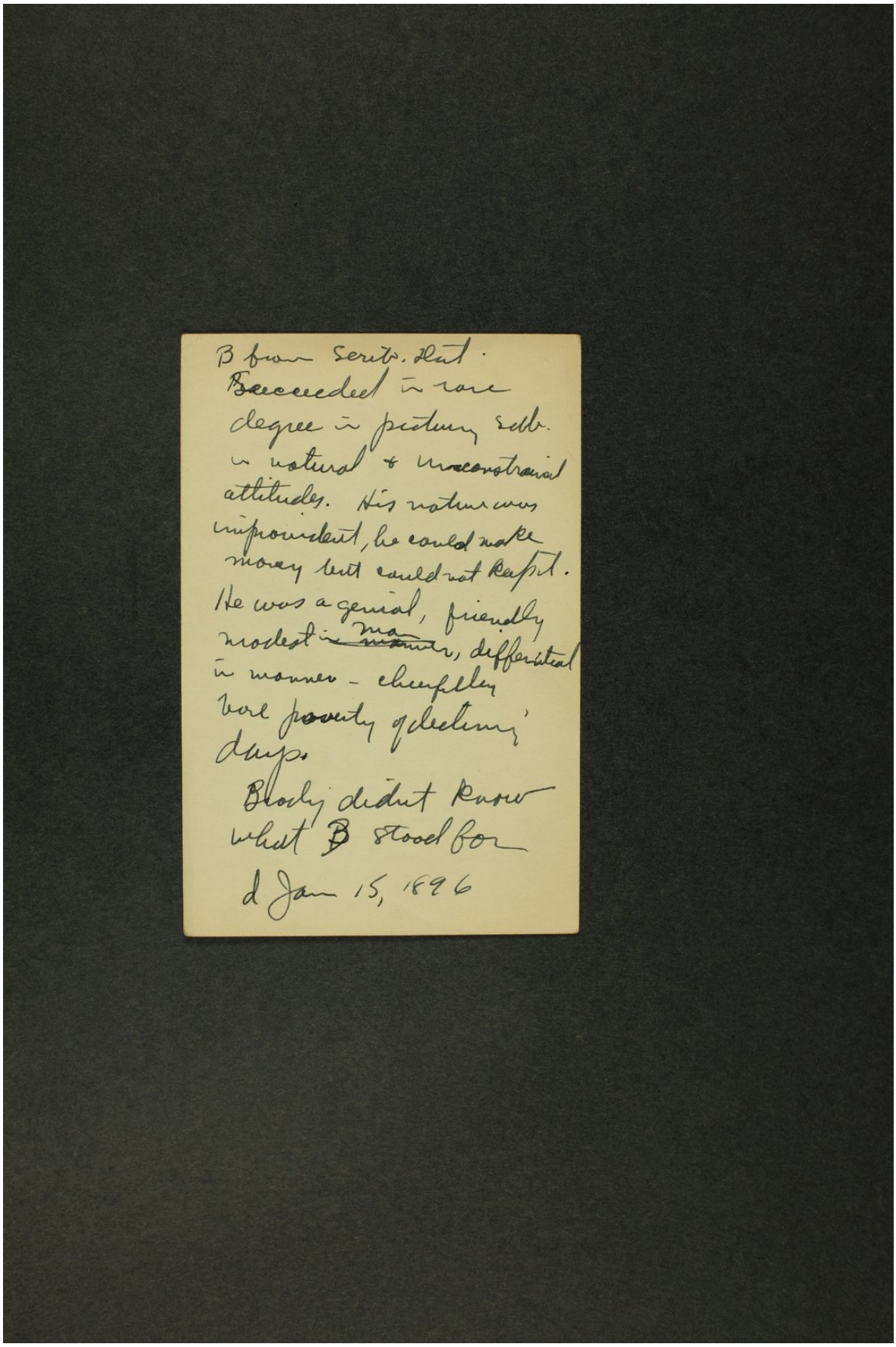
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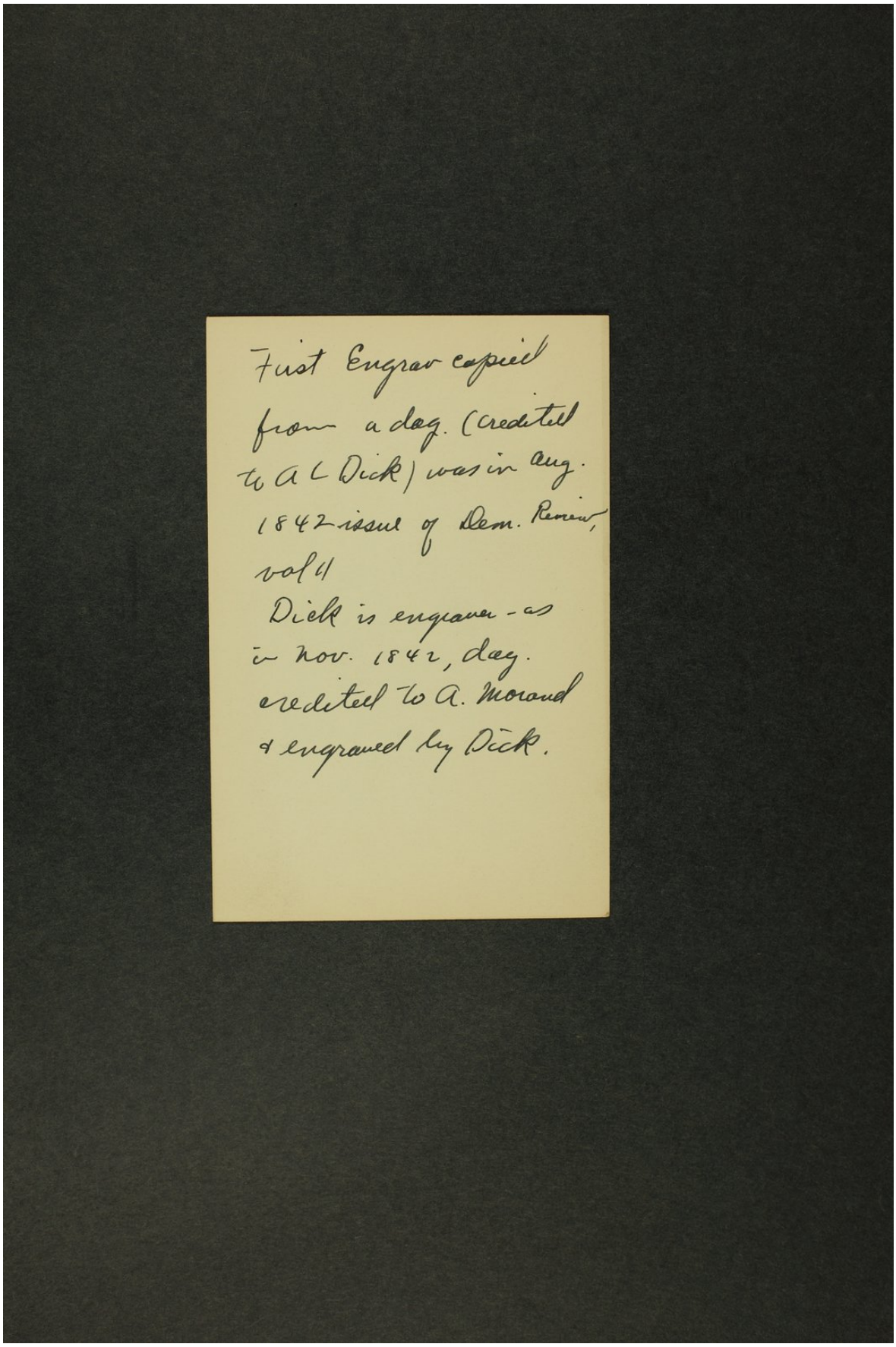
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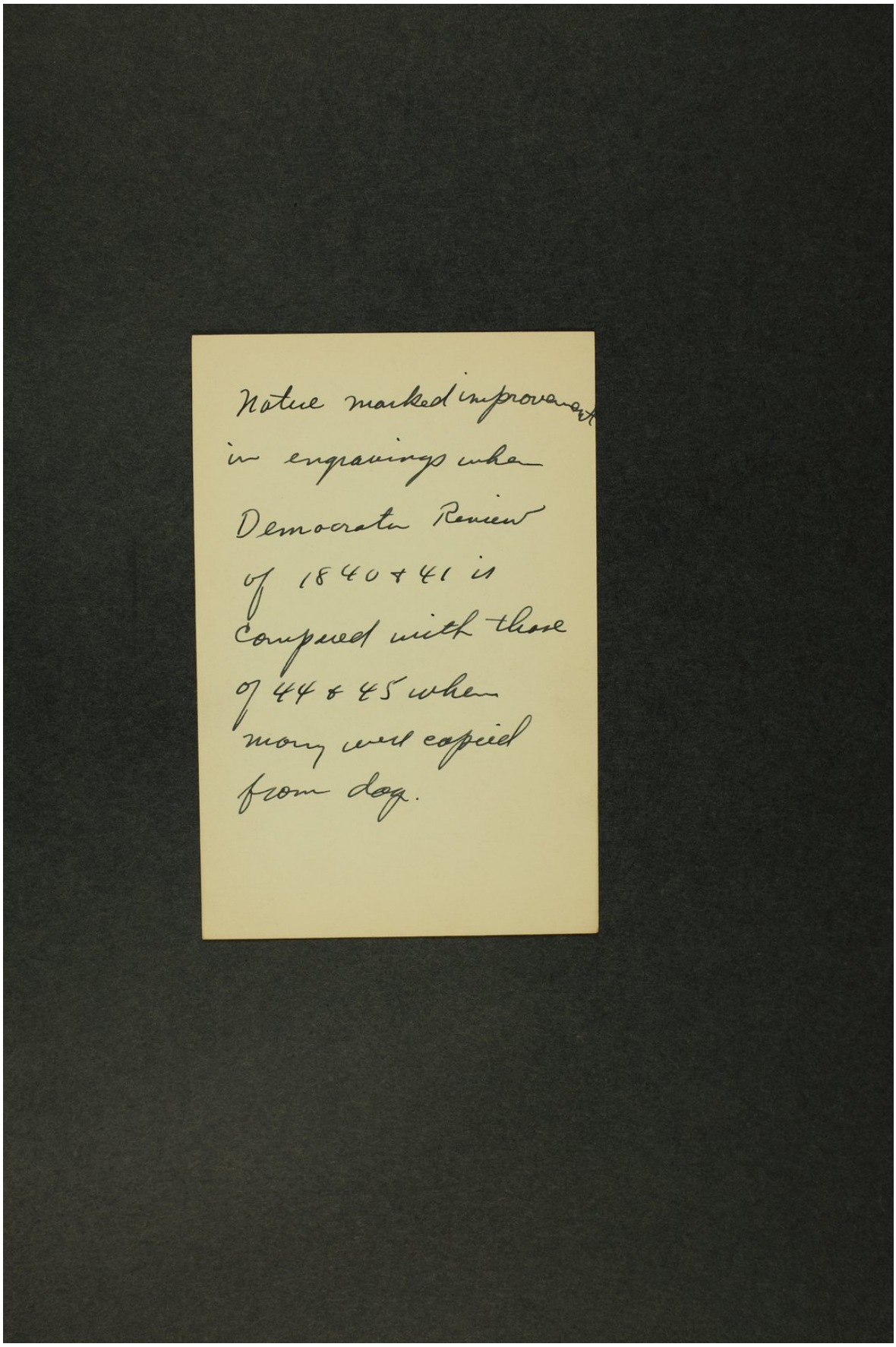
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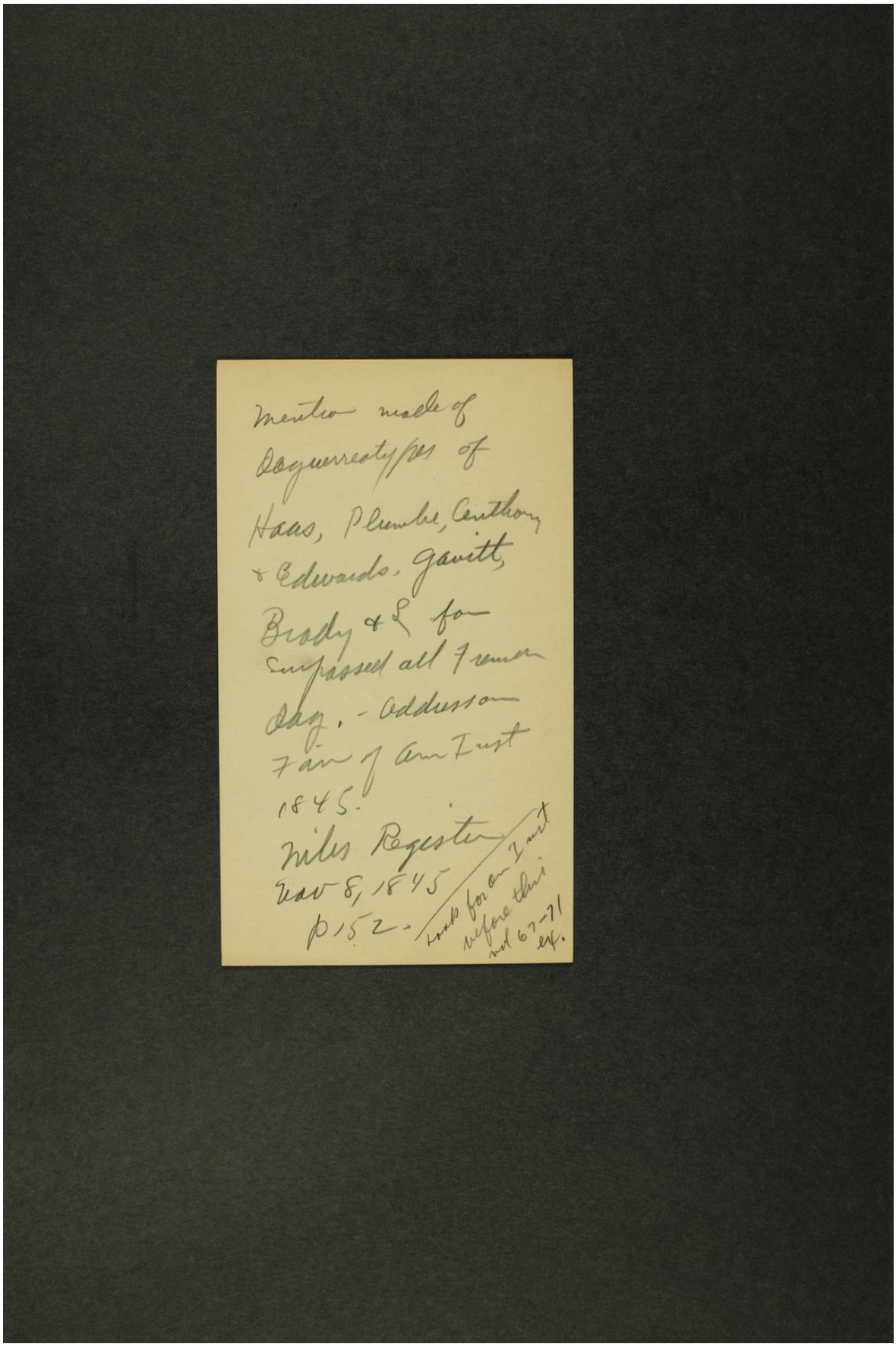
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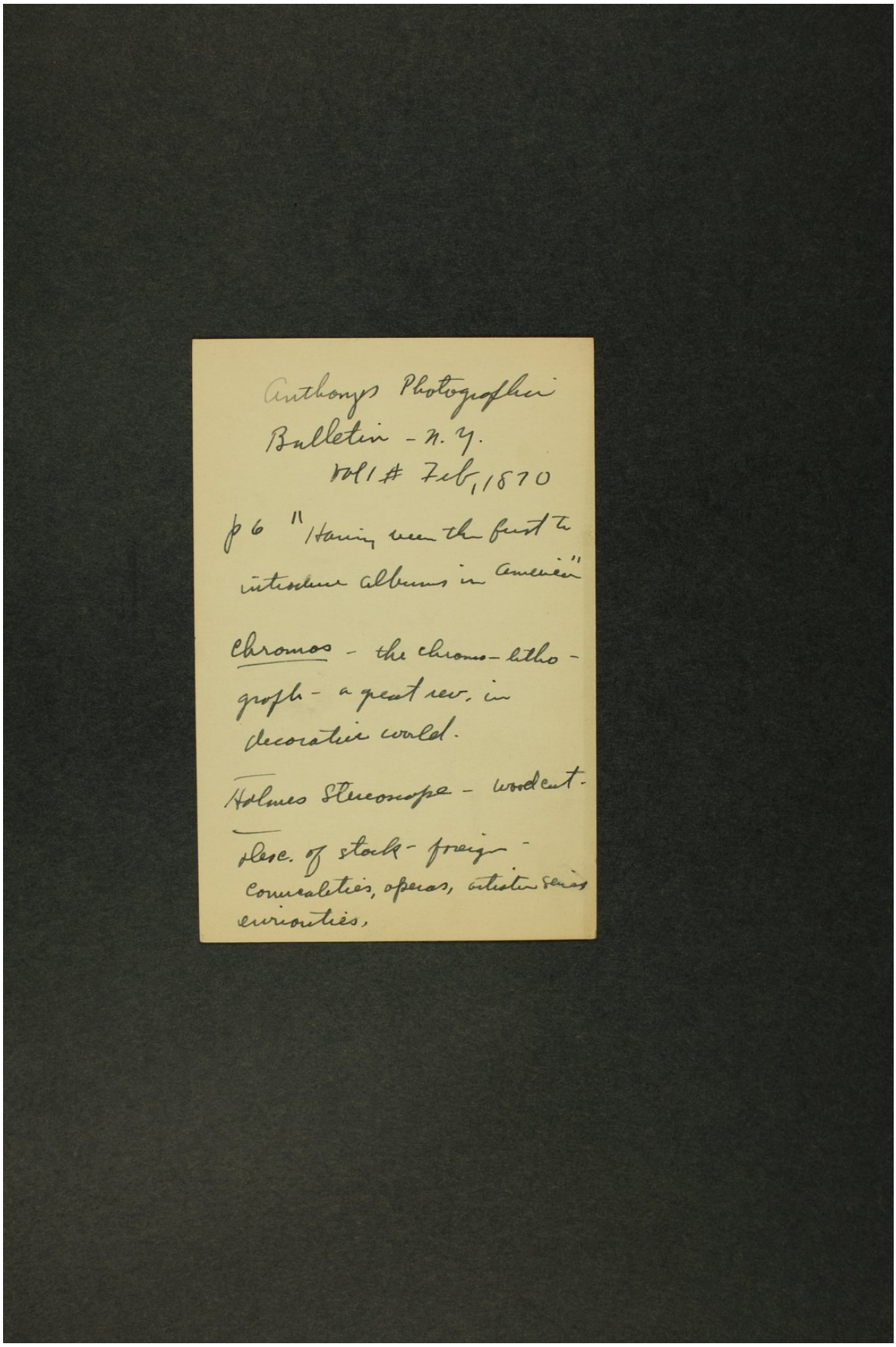
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Anthonys Photographic
Bulletin - N. Y.
Vol I # Feb, 1870

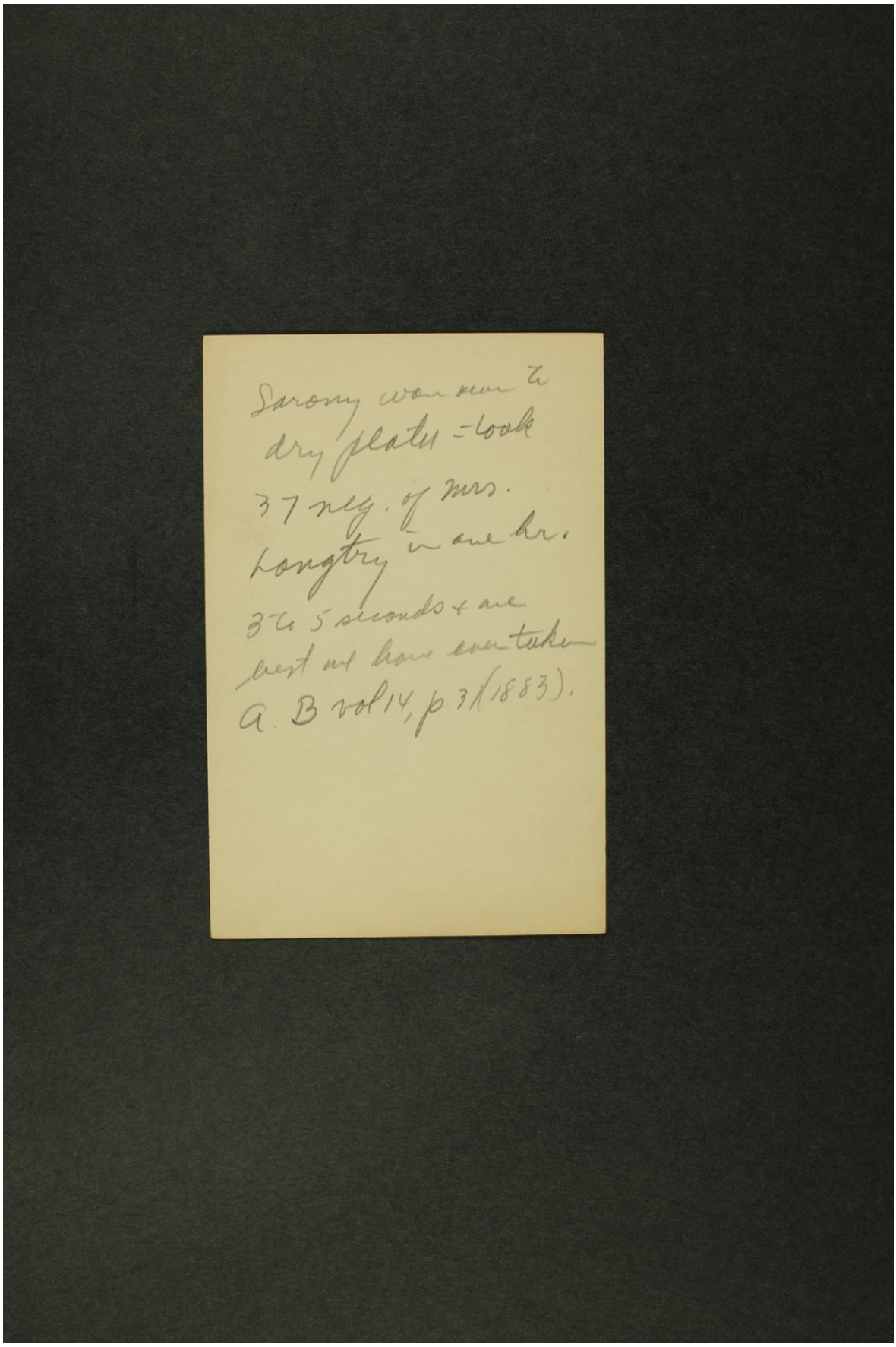
p 6 "Having been the first to introduce albums in America"

Chromos - the chromo-litho-graph - a great rev. in decorative world.

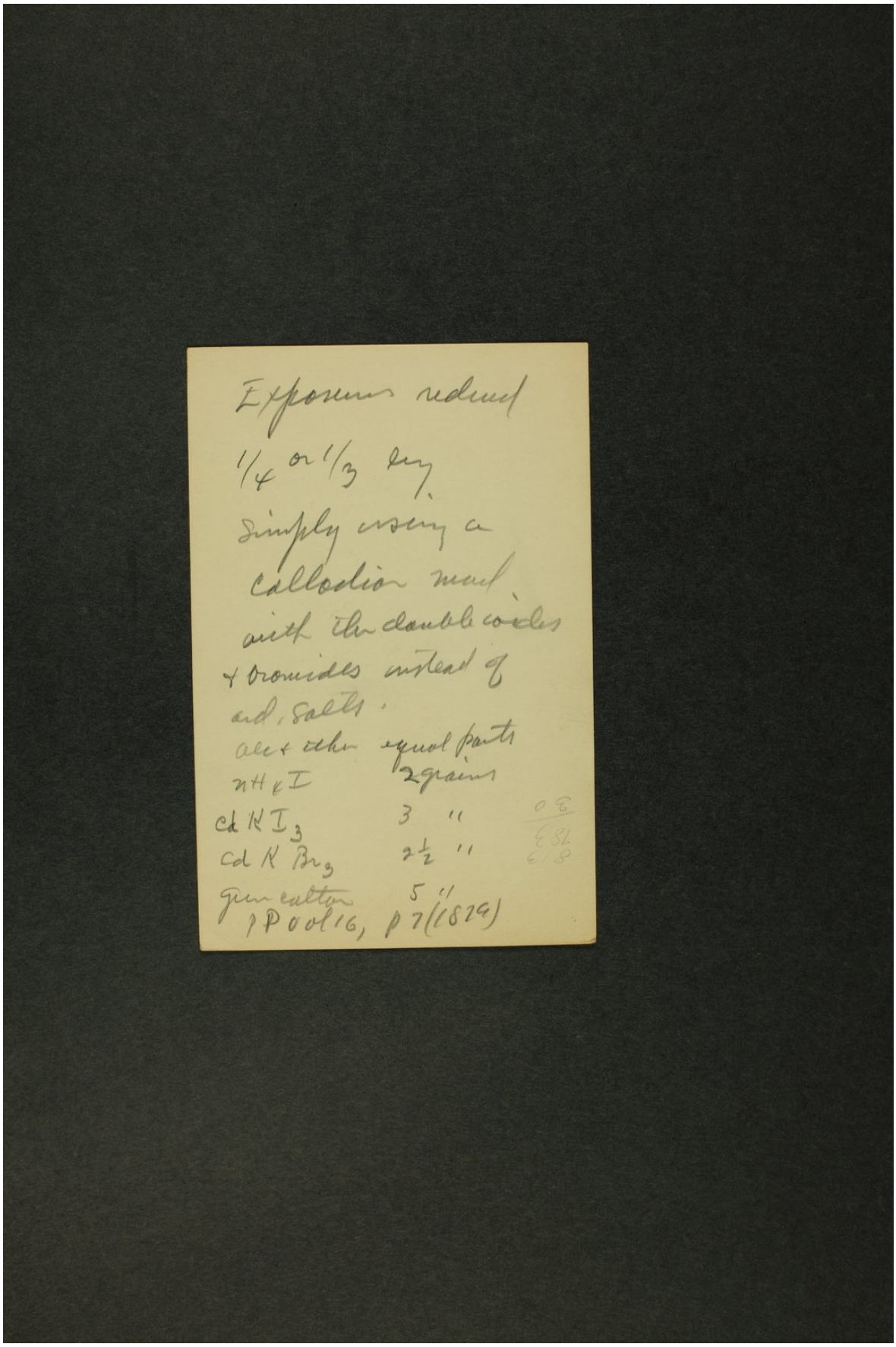
Holmes Stereoscope - woodcut.

Desc. of stock - foreign - Comicalities, operas, artistic series curiosities.

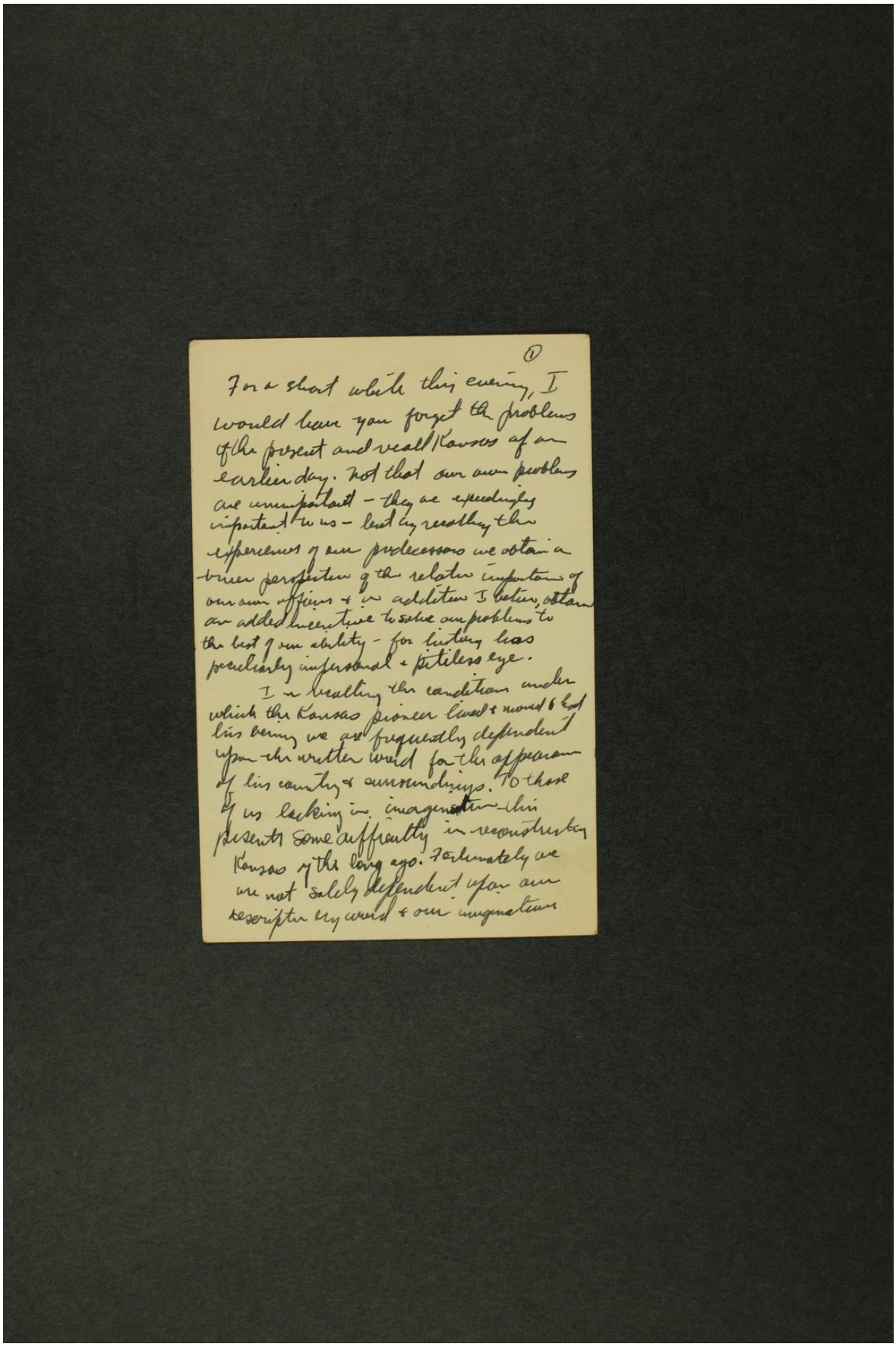
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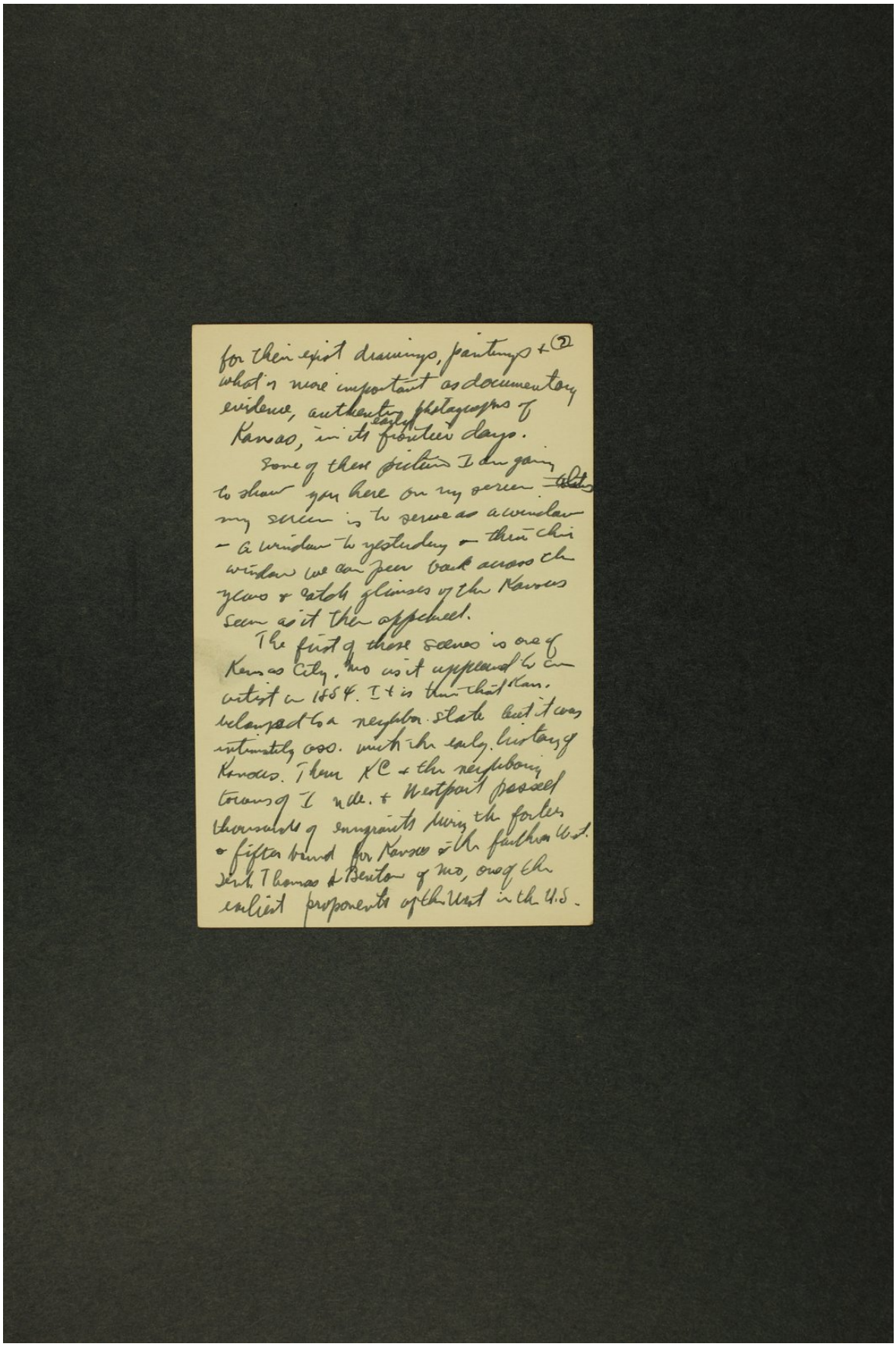


①

For a short while this evening, I would have you forget the problems of the present and recall Kansas of an earlier day. Not that our own problems are unimportant - they are exceedingly important to us - but by recalling the experiences of our predecessors we obtain a truer perspective of the relative importance of our own affairs & in addition I believe obtain an added incentive to solve our problems to the best of our ability - for history has peculiarly impersonal & pitiless eye.

In recalling the conditions under which the Kansas pioneer lived & moved & had his being we are frequently dependent upon the written word for the appearance of his country & surroundings. To those of us lacking in imagination this presents some difficulty in reconstructing Kansas of the long ago. Fortunately we are not solely dependent upon our descriptive powers & our imaginations

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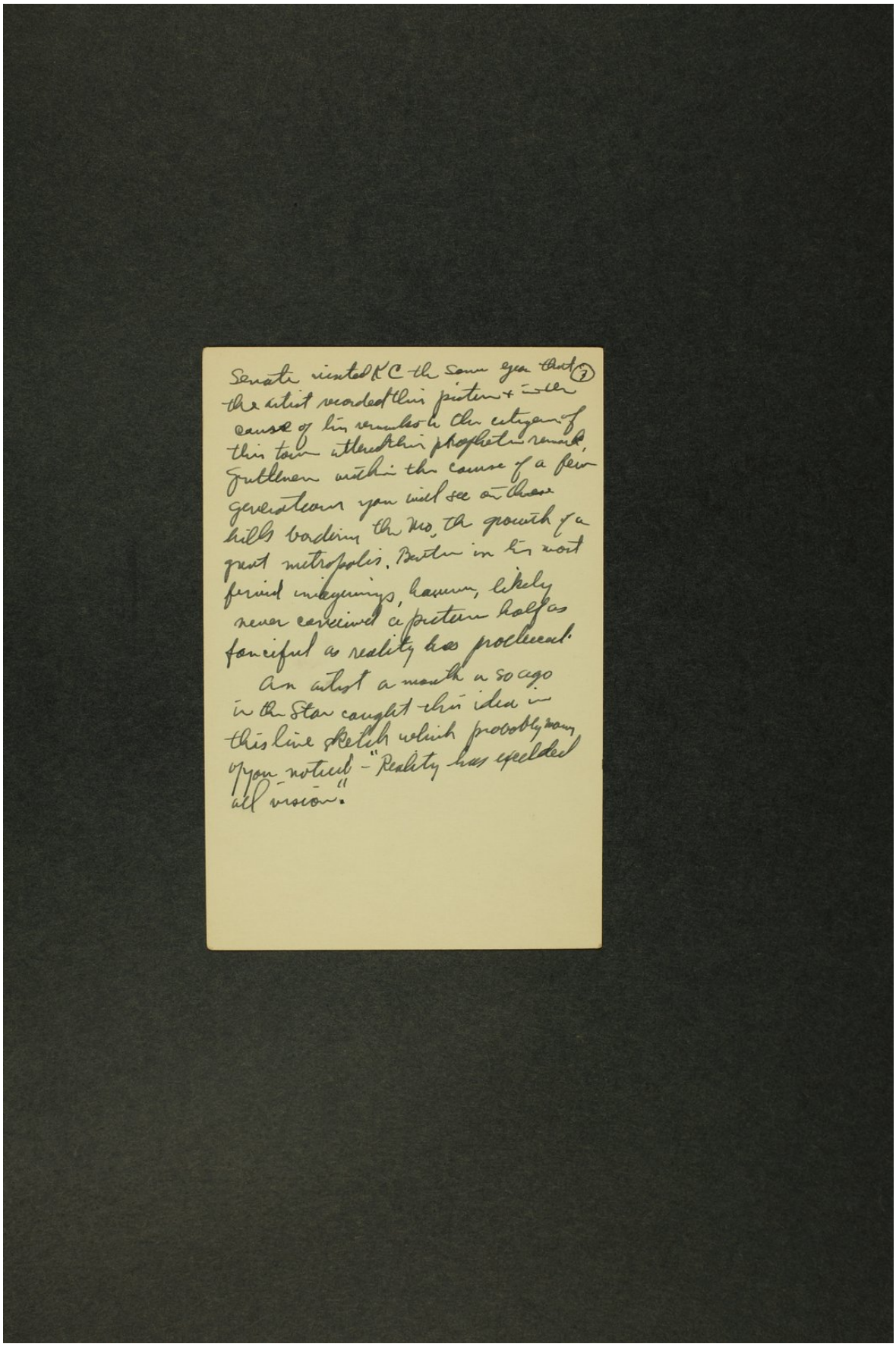


for their epic drawings, paintings + (2)
what is more important as documentary
evidence, authentic photographs of
Kansas, in its early frontier days.

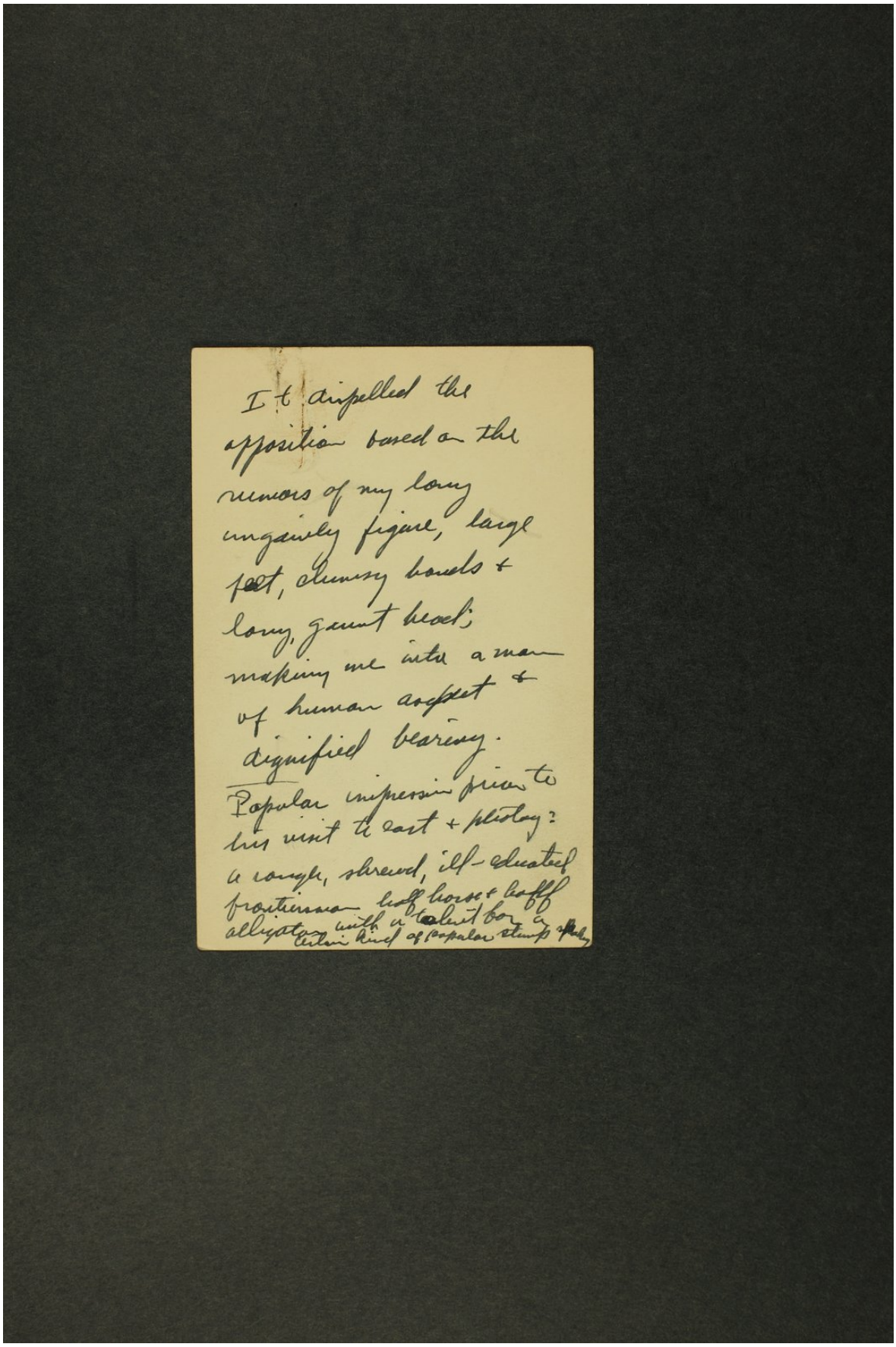
Some of these pictures I am going
to show you here on my screen - that
my screen is to serve as a window
- a window to yesterday - thru this
window we can peer back across the
years + catch glimpses of the Kansas
scene as it then appeared.

The first of these scenes is one of
Kansas City, Mo as it appeared to an
artist in 1854. It is then that Kan.
belonged to a neighbor state but it was
intimately asso. with the early history of
Kansas. Then KC + the neighboring
towns of Ind. + Westport passed
thousands of emigrants during the forties
+ fifties bound for Kansas + the further W.
Genl Thomas H Benton of Mo, among the
earliest proponents of the West in the U.S.

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Senate visited KC the same year that (1)
the artist recorded this picture + (illegible)
cause of his remarks the citizens of
this town attended his prophetic remark.
Gentlemen within the course of a few
generations you will see on those
hills bordering the Mo, the growth of a
great metropolis. Barton in his most
fervid imaginings, however, likely
never conceived a picture half as
fanciful as reality has produced.
An artist a month a go ago
in the Star caught this idea in
this line sketch which probably many
of you noticed - "Reality has excelled
all vision."

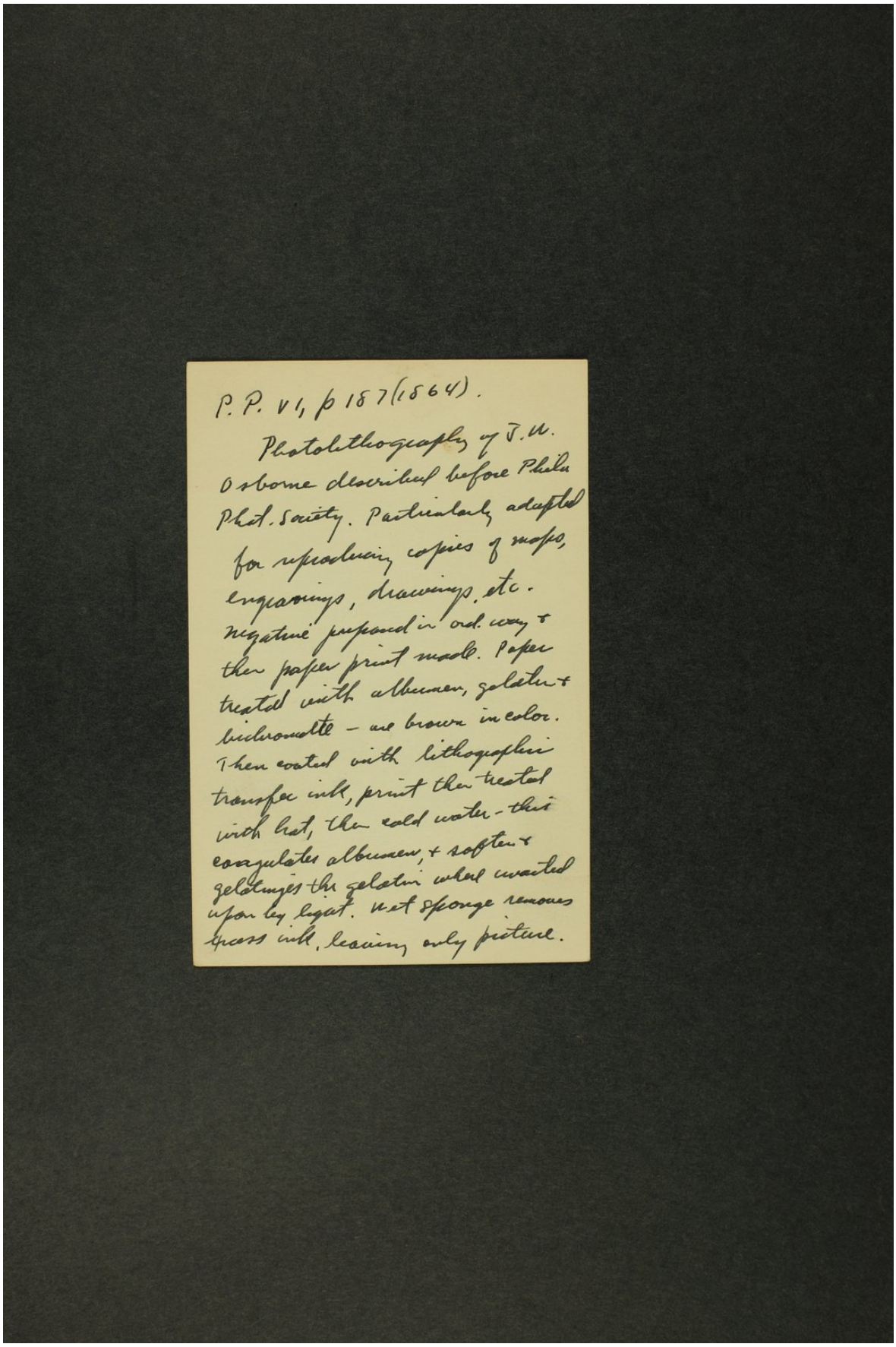
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It dispelled the
opposition based on the
rumors of my long
ungainly figure, large
feet, clumsy hands &
long, gaunt head;
making me into a man
of human aspect &
dignified bearing.

Popular impression prior to
his visit to East + Pluto:
a rough, shrewd, ill-educated
prizefighter half horse & half
alligator with a talent for a certain kind of popular stump speaking

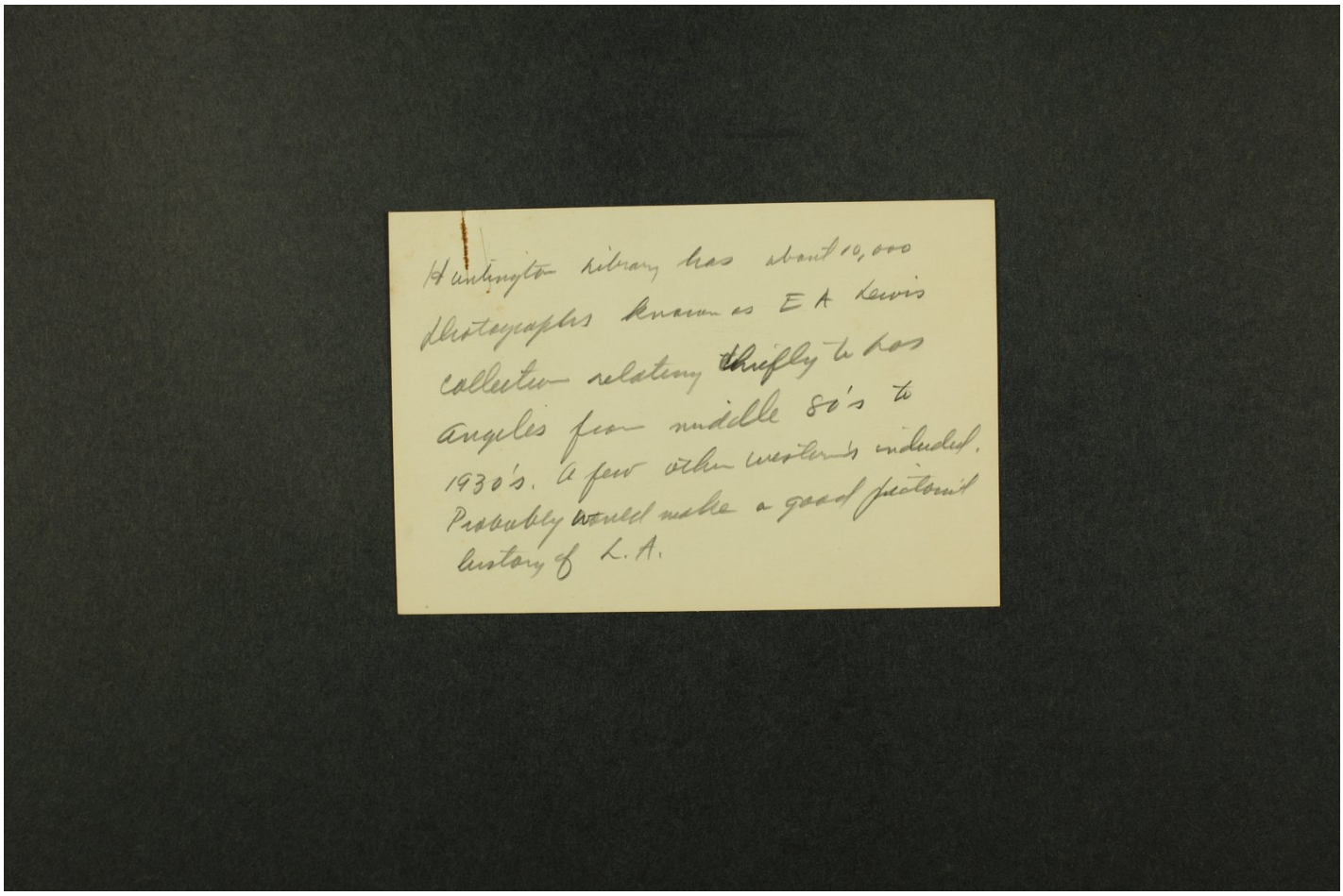
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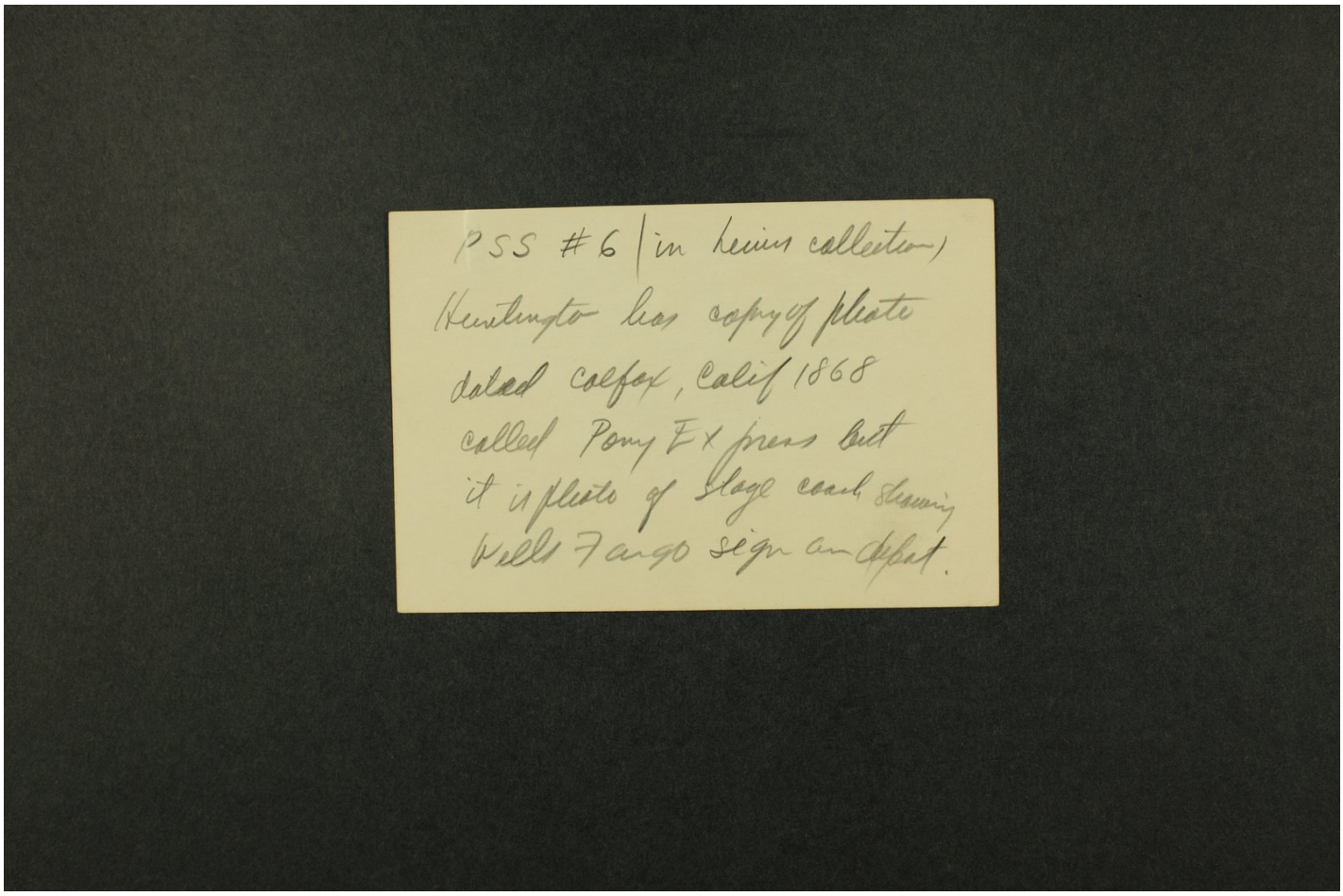
P. P. V1, p 187 (1864).

Photolithography of J. W. Osborne described before Phila Phot. Society. Particularly adapted for reproducing copies of maps, engravings, drawings, etc. negative prepared in ord. way & then paper print made. Paper treated with albumen, gelatin & bichromate – are brown in color. Then coated with lithographic transfer ink, print then treated with heat, then cold water – this coagulates albumen, & softens & gelatinizes the gelatin which exacted upon by light. Wet sponge removes press ink, leaving only picture.

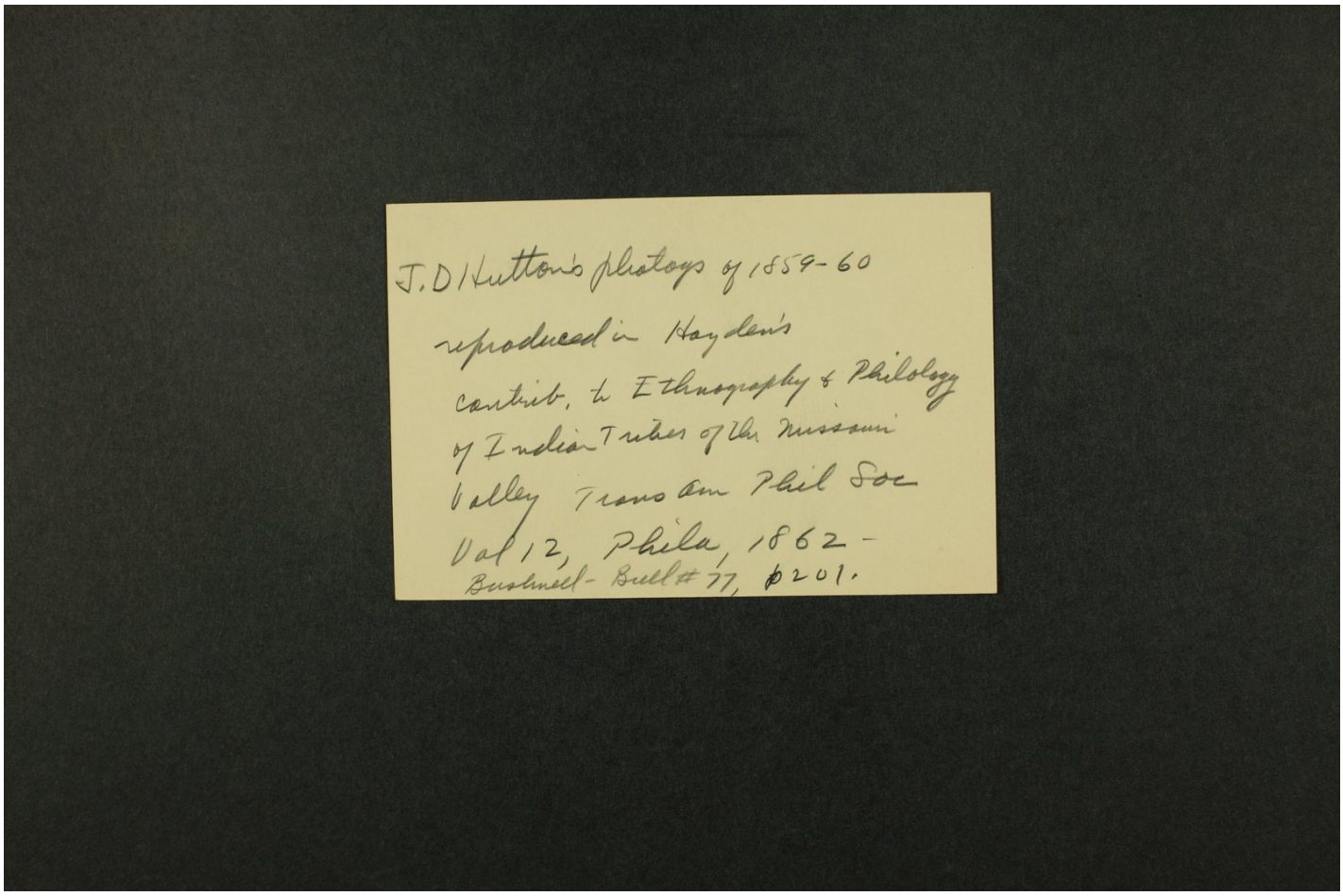
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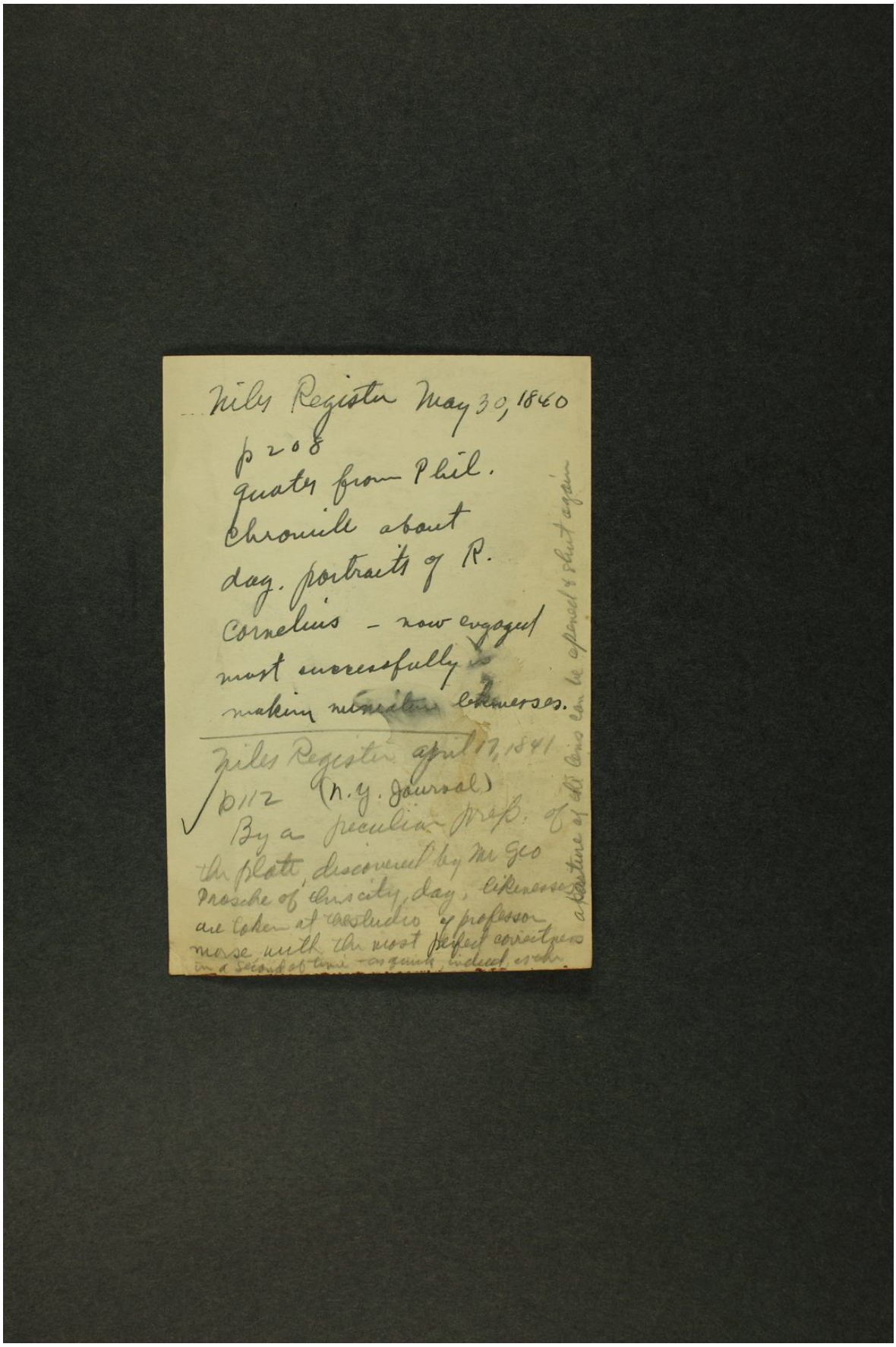
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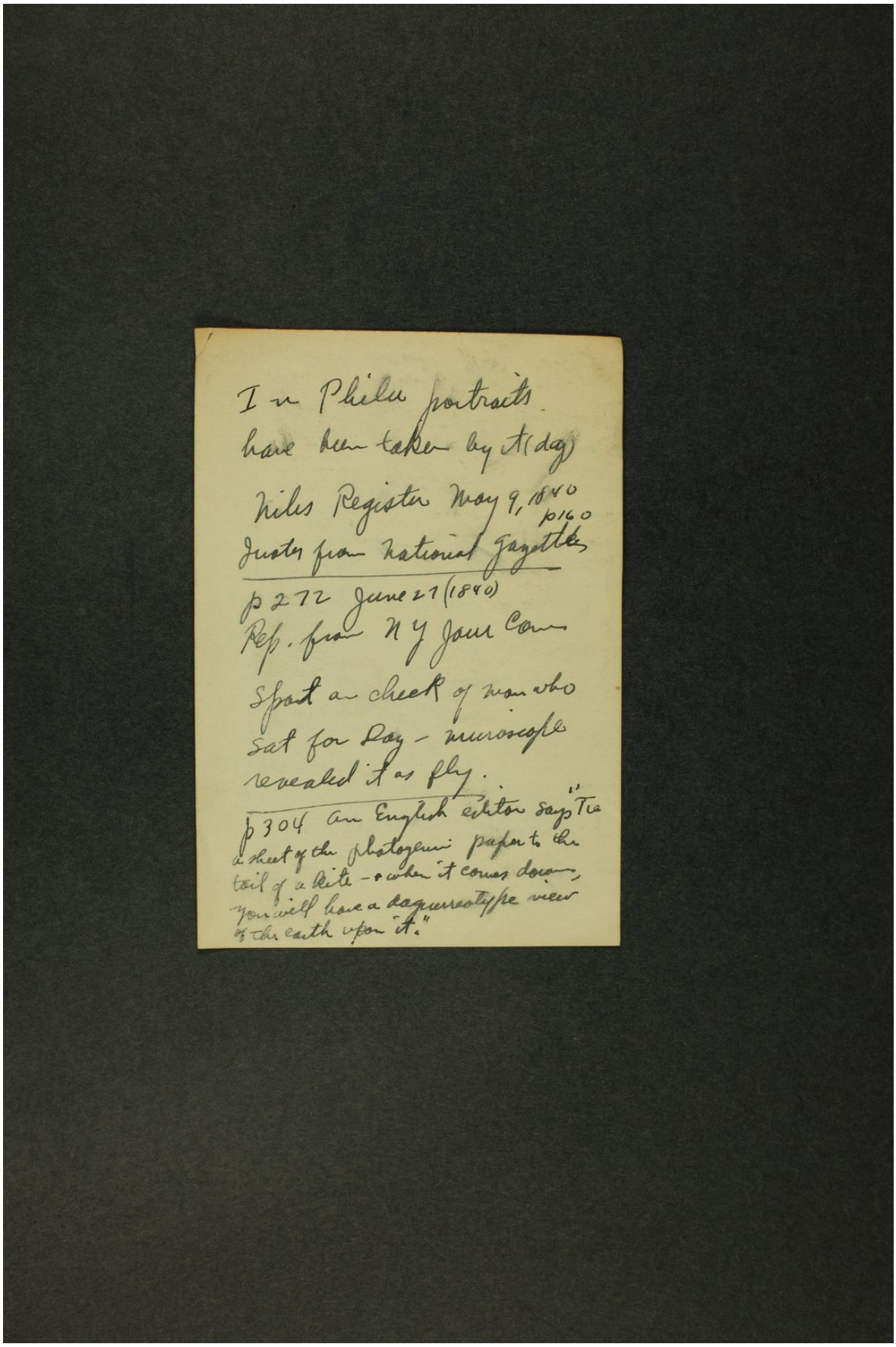
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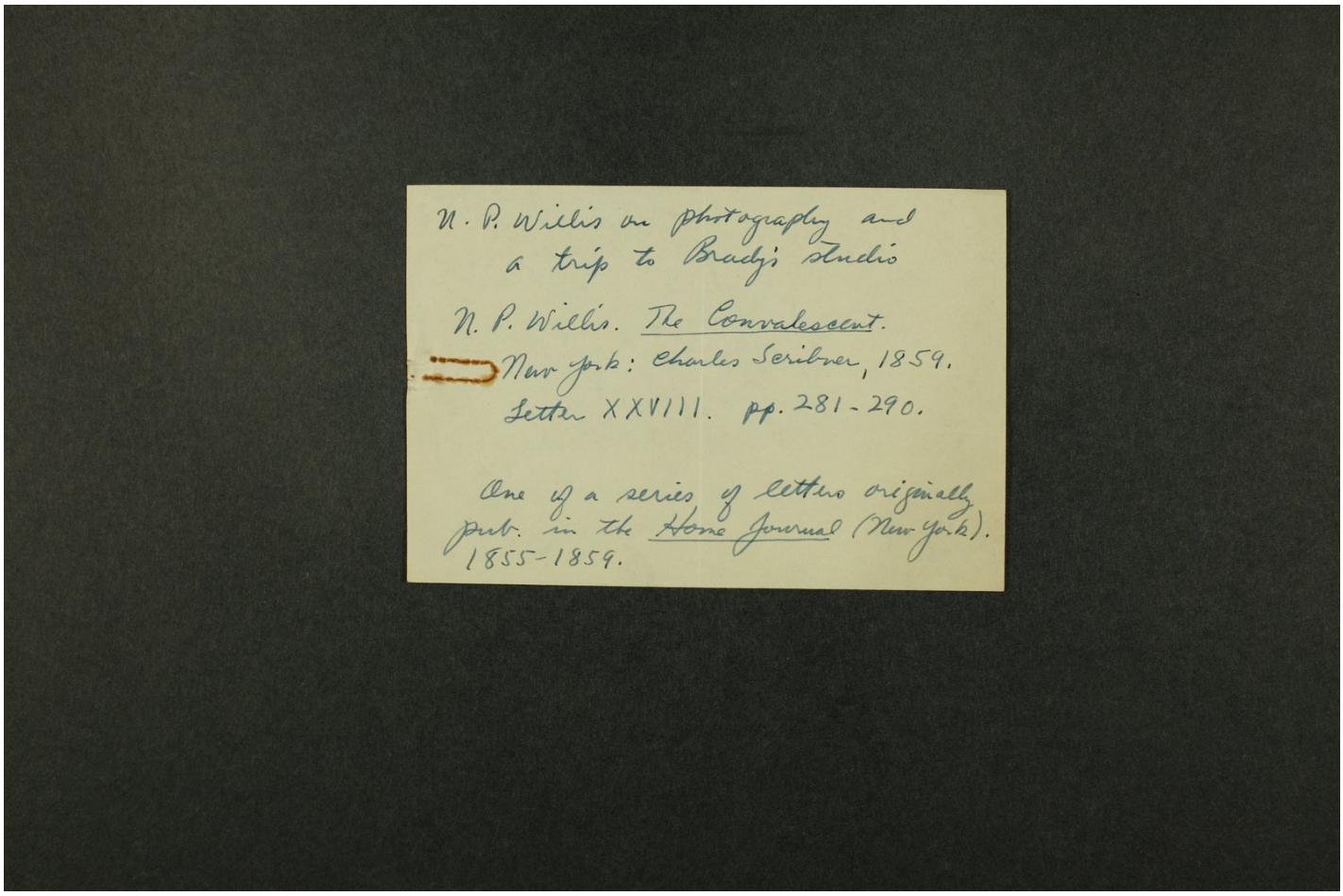


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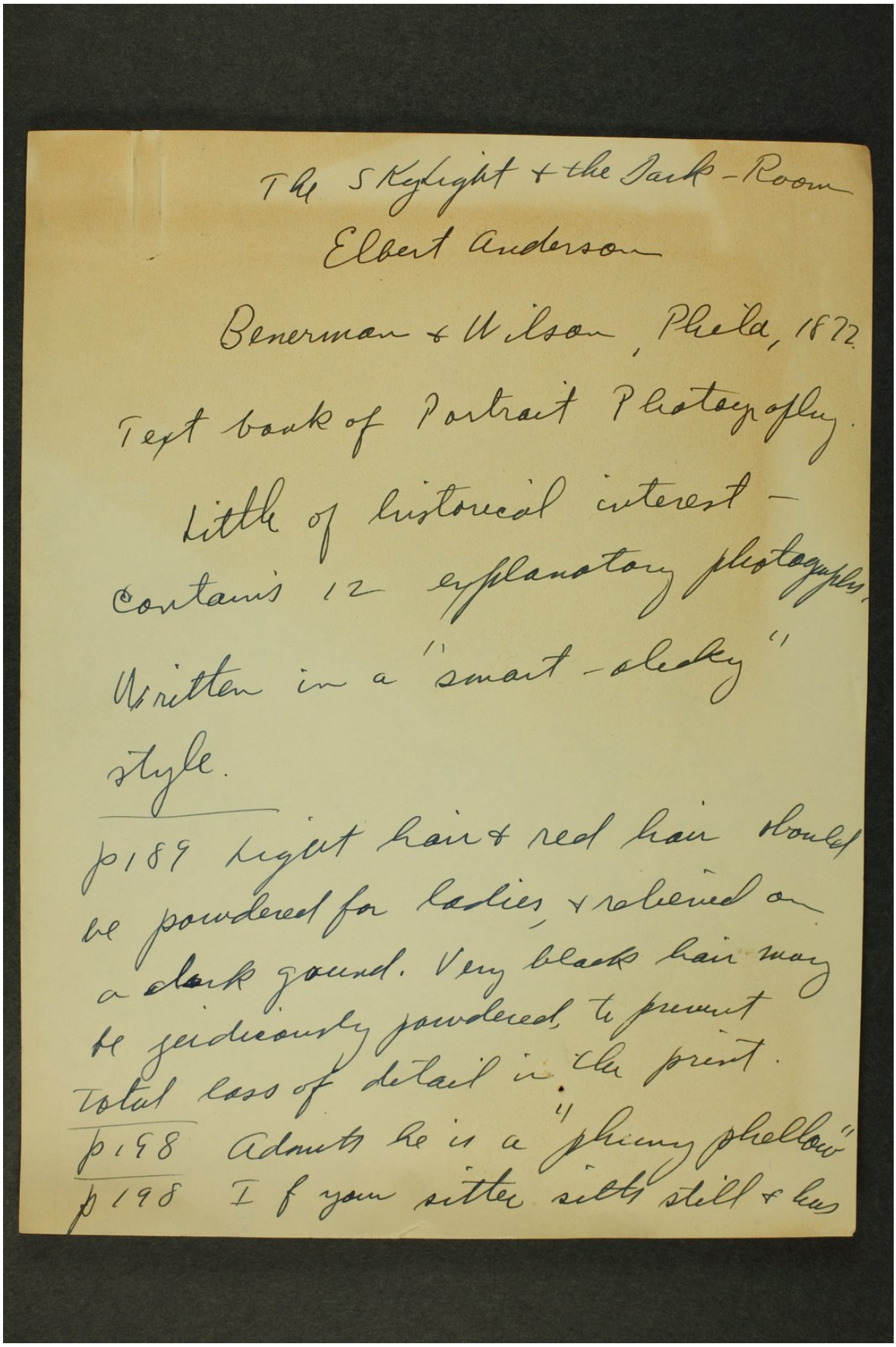


In Phila portraits
have been taken by it (dag)
Niles Register May 9, 1840 p160
Quotes from National Gazette
p272 June 27 (1840)
Rep. from N Y Journ Comm
Spoke an check of man who
sat for Day - microscope
revealed it as fly.
p304 An English editor says "Tie
a sheet of the photogenic paper to the
tail of a kite - & when it comes down,
you will have a daguerreotype view
of the earth upon it."

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The Skylight & the Dark-Room

Elbert Anderson

Benerman & Wilson, Phila, 1872.

Text book of Portrait Photography.

Little of historical interest —

Contains 12 explanatory photographs,

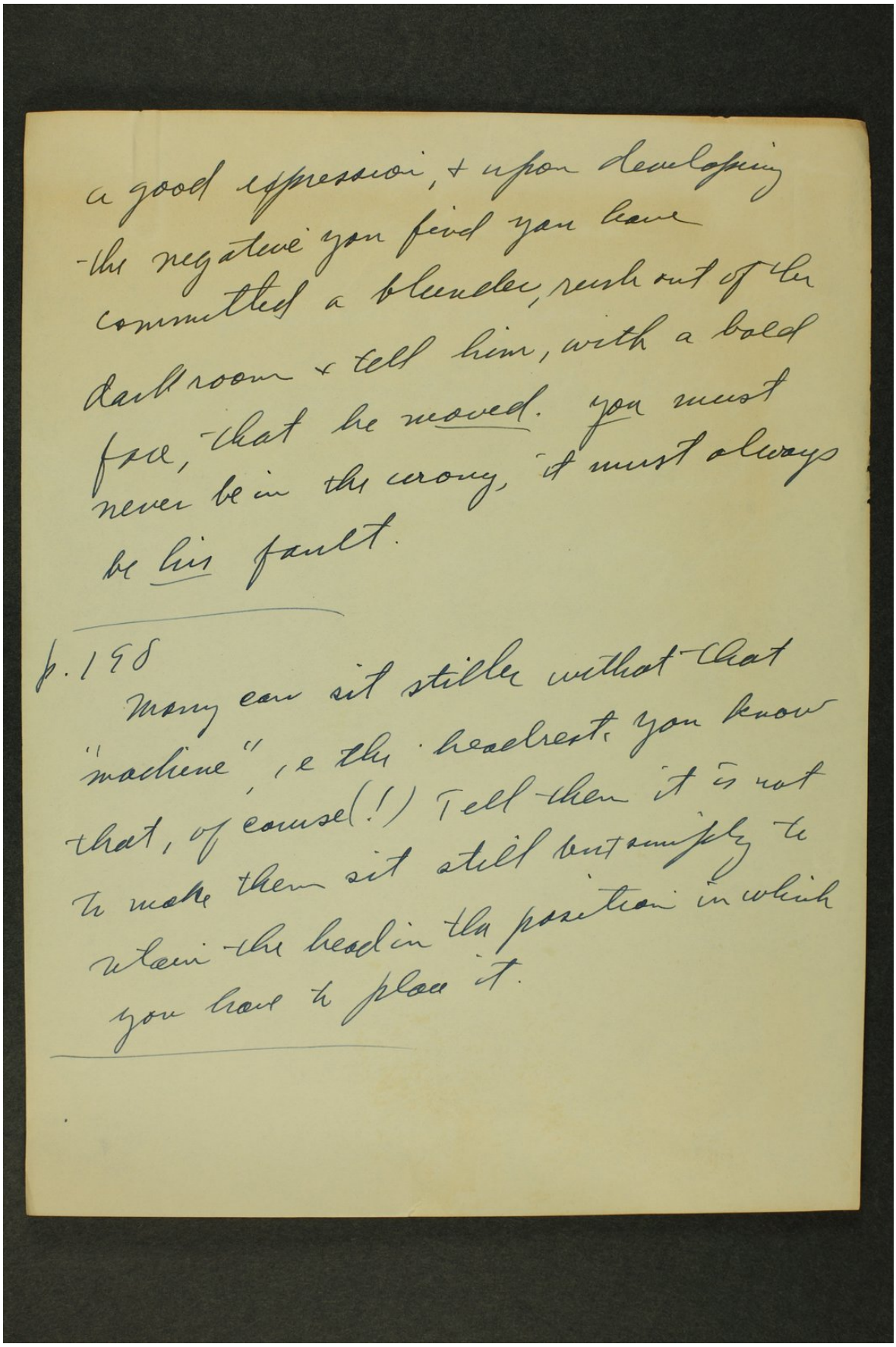
Written in a "smart-aleaky"

style.

p. 189 Light hair & red hair should be powdered for ladies, & relieved on a dark ground. Very black hair may be judiciously powdered, to prevent total loss of detail in the print.

p. 198 Admits he is a "phiney phellow"

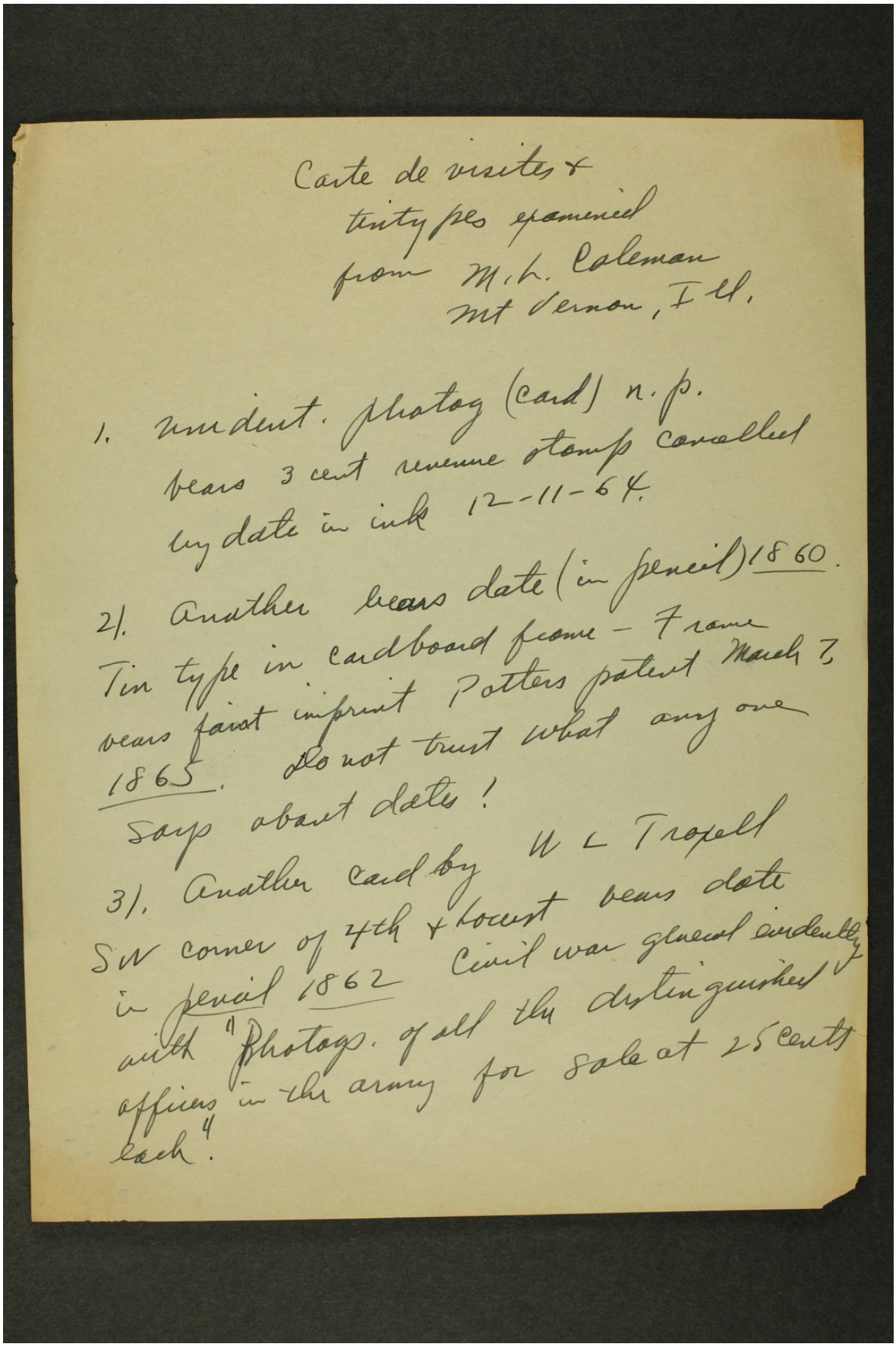
p. 198 If your sitter sits still & has



a good impression, & upon developing
the negative you find you have
committed a blunder, rush out of the
darkroom & tell him, with a bold
face, that he moved. you must
never be in the wrong, it must always
be his fault.

p. 198

Many can sit still what-that
"machine", i.e. the headrest you know
that, of course(!) Tell them it is not
to make them sit still but simply to
obtain the head in the position in which
you have to place it.



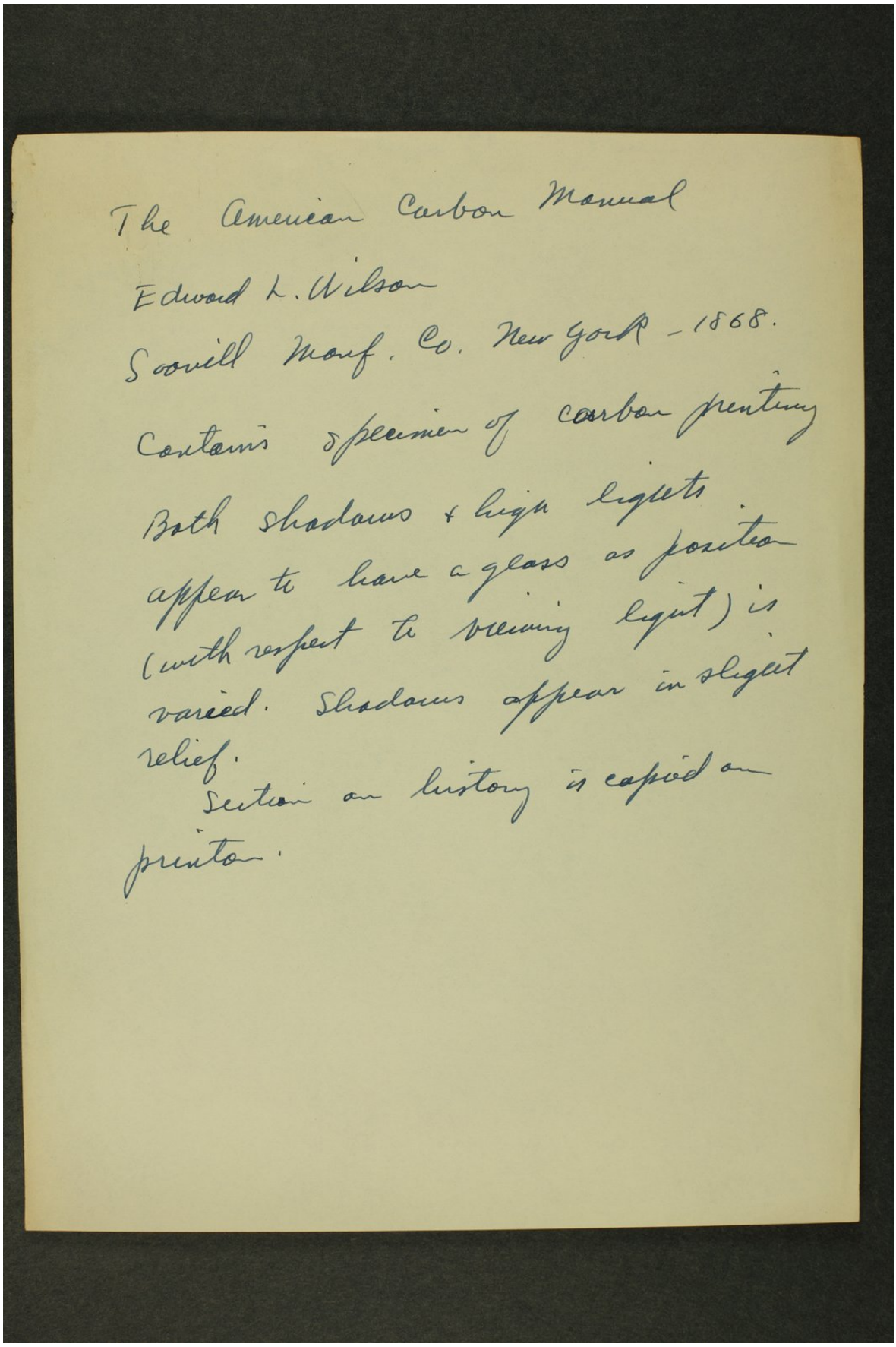
Carte de visites &
tintypes examined
from M.L. Coleman
Mt Vernon, Ill.

1. unident. photog (card) n.p.
bears 3 cent revenue stamp cancelled
by date in ink 12-11-64.

2. Another bears date (in pencil) 1860.
Tin type in cardboard frame - Frame
bears faint imprint Potters patent March 7.
1865. do not trust what any one
says about dates!

3. Another card by H L Tropell
SW corner of 4th & Locust bears date
in pencil 1862 Civil war general indentity
with "Photogs. of all the distinguished
offices in the army for sale at 25 cents
each".

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The American Carbon Manual

Edward L. Wilson

Scovill Manf. Co. New York - 1868.

Contains specimen of carbon printing

Both shadows & high lights

appear to have a glass as positive

(with respect to viewing light) is

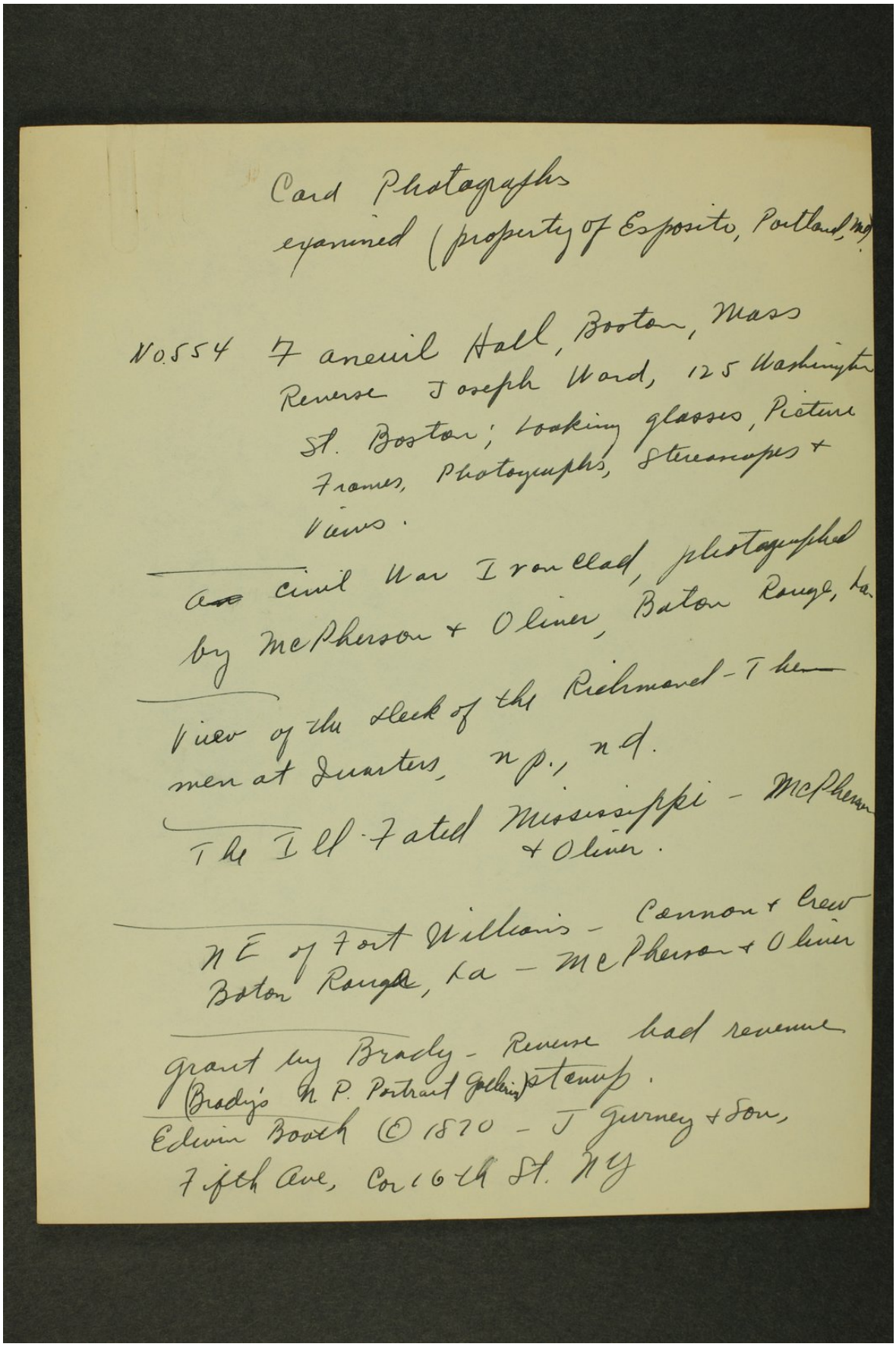
varied. Shadows appear in slight

relief.

Section on history is copied on

printer.

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Card Photographs
examined (property of Esposito, Portland, Me)

No. 554 Faneuil Hall, Boston, Mass
Reverse Joseph Ward, 125 Washington St. Boston; Looking glasses, Picture Frames, Photographs, Stereoscopes + Views.

Civil War Ironclad, photographed by McPherson + Oliver, Baton Rouge, La.

View of the deck of the Richmond - Taken men at Quarters, n.p., n.d.

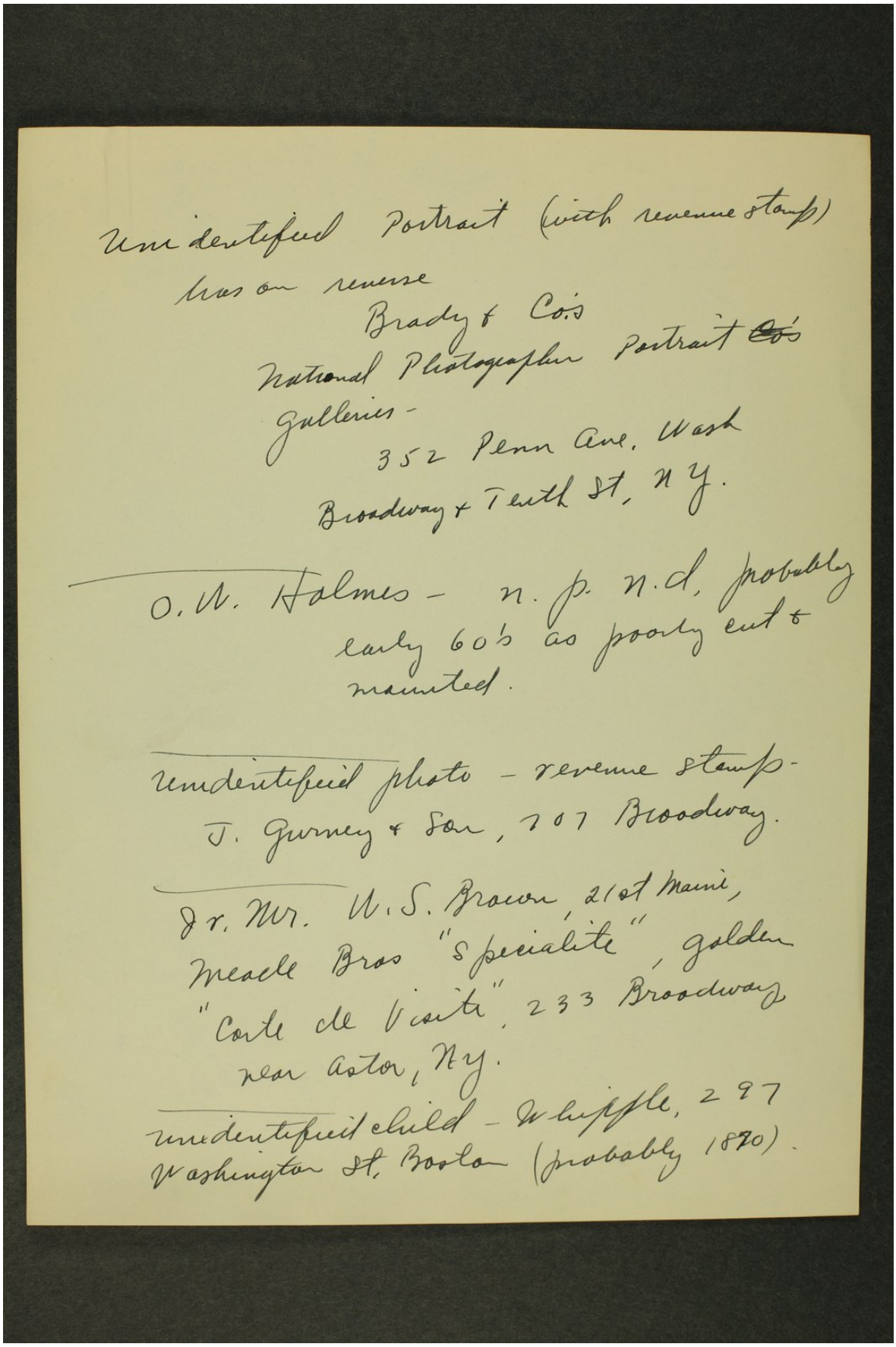
The Ill-Fated Mississippi - McPherson + Oliver.

NE of Fort Williams - Cannon + Crew Baton Rouge, La - McPherson + Oliver

grant by Brady - Reverse had revenue Brady's N.P. Portrait Gallery stamp.

Edwin Booth © 1870 - J Gurney + Son, Fifth Ave, Cor 16th St. NY

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Unidentified Portrait (with revenue stamp)
has on reverse
Brady & Co's
National Photographic Portrait ~~Co's~~
Galleries -
352 Penn Ave. Wash
Broadway & Tenth St. N.Y.

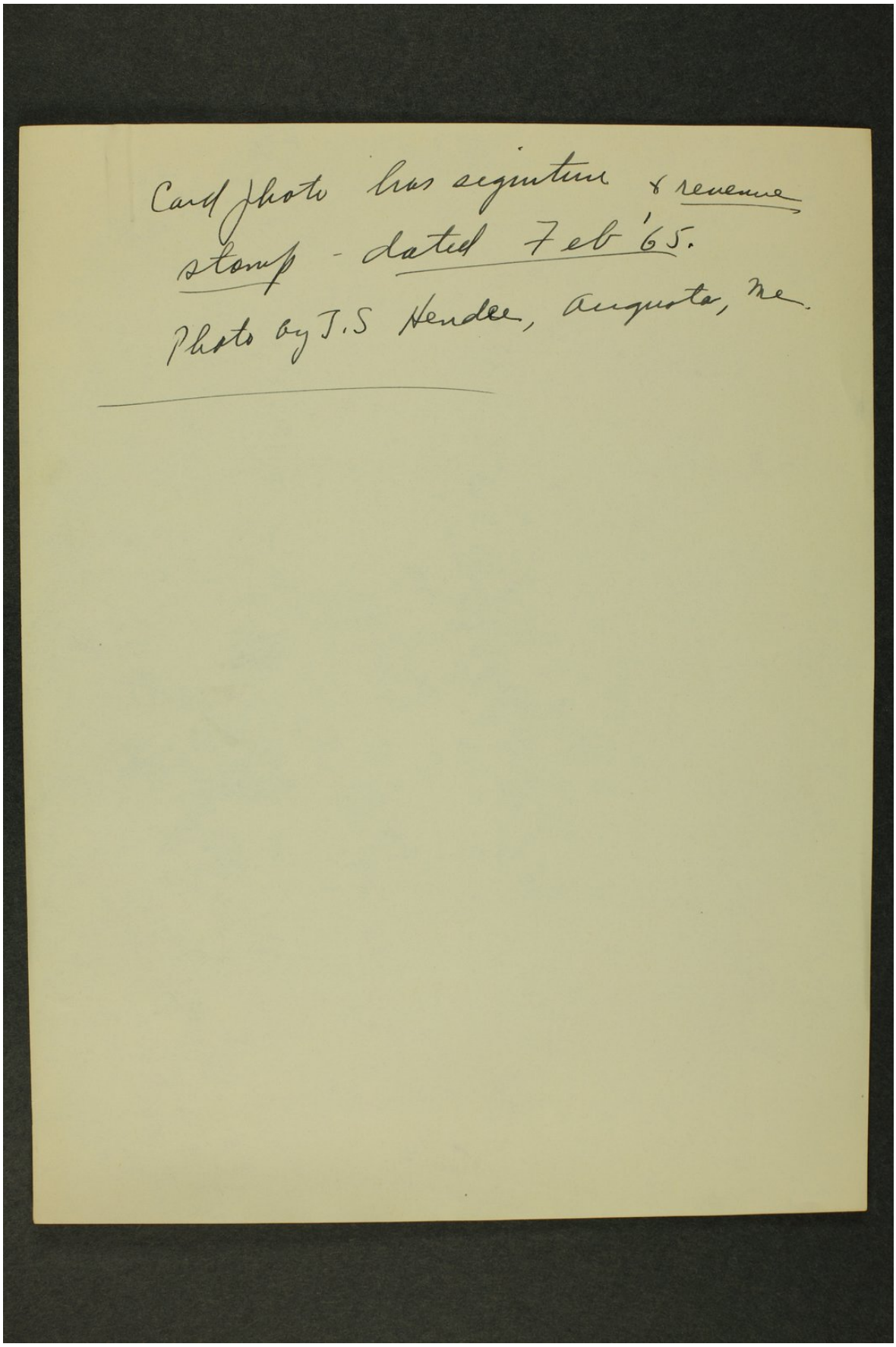
O. W. Holmes - n. p. n.d. probably
early 60's as poorly cut &
mounted.

Unidentified photo - revenue stamp -
J. Gurney & Son, 707 Broadway.

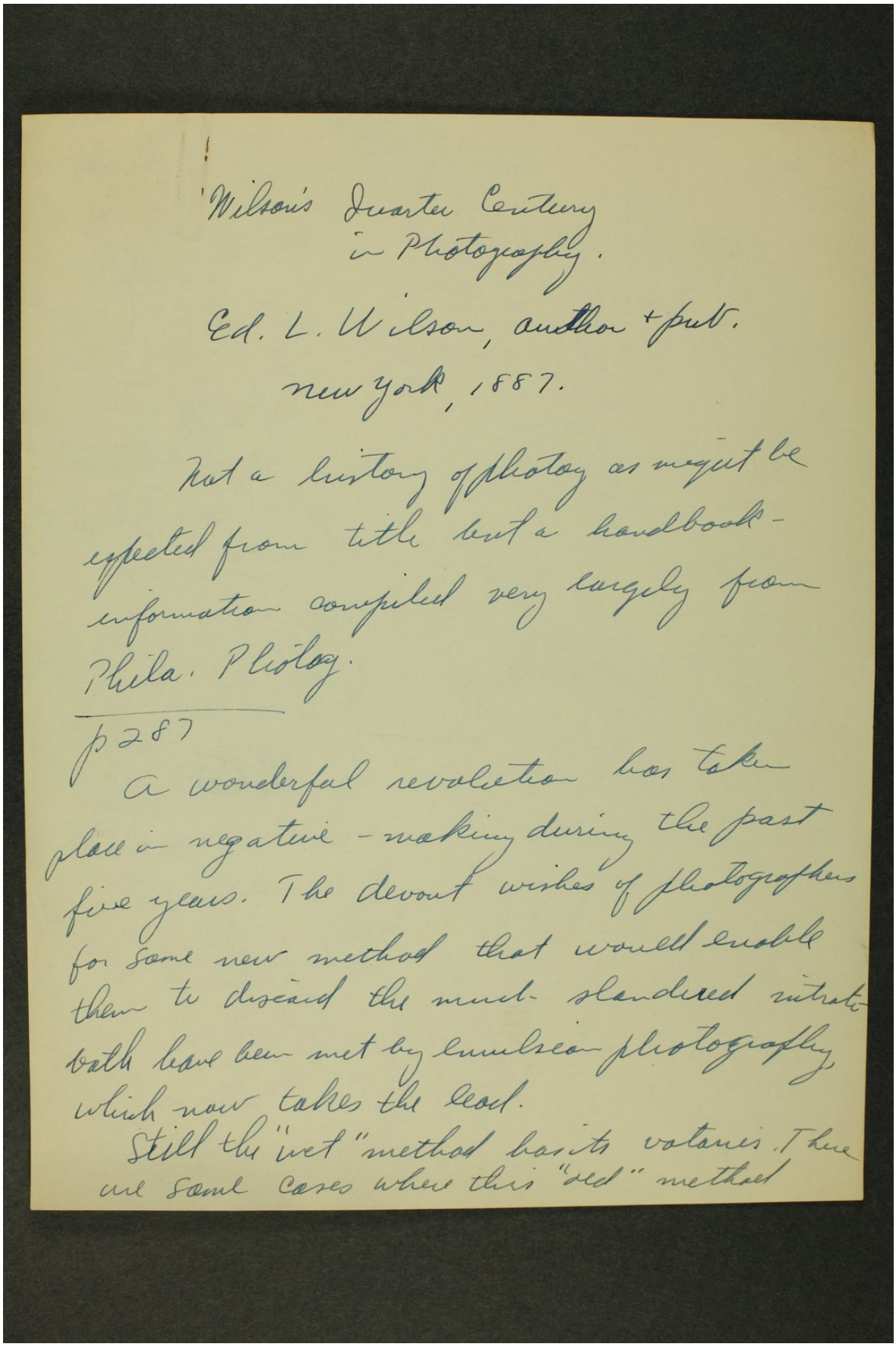
Dr. Mr. W. S. Brown, 21st Maine,
Meade Bros "Specialite", golden
"Carte de Visite", 233 Broadway
near Astor, N.Y.

Unidentified child - Whipple, 297
Washington St. Boston (probably 1870).

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Wilson's Quarter Century
in Photography.

Ed. L. Wilson, author + pub.
new York, 1887.

Not a history of photog as might be
expected from title but a handbook-
information compiled very largely from
Phila. Photog.

p 287

A wonderful revolution has taken
place in negative-making during the past
five years. The devout wishes of photographers
for some new method that would enable
them to discard the much-slandered nitrate
bath have been met by emulsion photography,
which now takes the lead.

Still the "wet" method has its votaries. There
are some cases where this "old" method

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