



MACCULLOCH HALL
HISTORICAL MUSEUM

National History Day Topics at Macculloch Hall Historical Museum



Explore topics from Macculloch Hall Historical Museum related to this year's NHD theme: *Innovation in History: Impact, Influence, Change*

Morris Canal

The Morris Canal provided critical transportation to bring economic growth to north Jersey towns like Rockaway and Dover. George Macculloch envisioned the Morris Canal connecting eastern Pennsylvania with the New York City Harbor to transport coal and iron. Geographic challenges meant that innovative engineering techniques were applied to construct a series of incline planes to move boats over the steep elevation changes.

Thomas Nast

Thomas Nast (1840-1902), the father of American cartoons, used his skills as an illustrator and satirist to influence readers of *Harper's Weekly* in the 19th century. His images could make or break presidential candidates, illuminate corruption, and garner support for service members.

Presidential Campaigns

Nast illustrated cartoons across eight presidential campaigns from 1864 to 1892. Each of the candidates Nast supported was elected. President Grant, President Garfield, President Cleveland, and others owe part of their victory to Nast. His images were scathing toward opponents he viewed as unsuitable for the presidency. Nast popularized the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant during this time, which are still used today to represent the political parties.

Revealing Corruption

One of the reasons Nast is most remembered is for his unrelenting campaign against William "Boss" Tweed. Tweed's corruption spread throughout New York City, and Nast, through his illustrations published in *Harper's Weekly*, not only drew public attention to it but also political attention. By using illustrations, Nast ensured that even citizens who could not read understood what Tweed was doing. Thanks in part to Nast's innovative illustration, Tweed was brought to justice.

Recruiting Sergeant for the North

President Abraham Lincoln called Nast the "best recruiting sergeant for the North" as a result of Nast's illustrations during the Civil War. One of his most famous images, "Compromise with the South", was reprinted millions of times as a campaign poster for Lincoln and is considered to be one of the most effective campaign image ever published.

Reach out to learn more or set up a visit to the Museum. Our team is knowledgeable and always excited to help NHD students with their projects.

Email Curator of Education, Karina Filipowski, to learn more: kfilipowski@maccullochhall.org