

Agatha! presents a sketch book developed during Agatha's tour of Europe with three companions in 1912. It includes her original images and cryptic comments, discussions of the comments, the people she met as well as traveling in the early 20th c.

AGATHA!
**Agatha Snow Abroad: A Sketch Book from her
1912 European Tour**
By Susan Snow Lukesh

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Susan Snow Lukesh

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Agatha, captioned "An Artist." From an early 20th c Snow family album of Kodak photos.

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Foreword

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Oliver, who would later serve as lawyer for Sarah until her death, picks up the story, when he wrote in 1980 to Robert Snow's widow, shortly after Robert's death.¹⁸

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Ultimately the difficulties of living with Agatha forced Sarah to ask her to leave the family home and find her own place to live in New Bedford, from which she continued her work as an interior designer and decorator. Agatha was an artistic and bright yet difficult young woman; thinking of her today evokes *The Sound of Music*: "How to solve a problem like Maria?"

Indeed, how to solve this problem of Agatha after her sister's engagement? Focus Agatha on something that is hers and will consume her energy and time, leaving Constance to the world of engagement parties and plans for the wedding and her future married life with lawyer Blackman. And so, we surmise, a plan was hatched to send Agatha and companions to Europe for three months. From this problem and Agatha's artistic gifts, the small travel sketch book¹⁹ remains to assist in tracing the trip from mid-April to early August 1912 and show us her creativity, providing enjoyment and amusement, and education, well over a century later.

Agatha!

60 Postcard: Bois de Boulogne



A postcard available to Agatha at the time offers an image of a scene reminiscent of what she sketched, and Addison described.

61 Café Riche Ladies

Sketch Book: Lower Page 35 (130%) Paris



Café Riche

-

6/7 '12

Café Riche,⁷³ founded in 1785 by Madame Riche, was a Parisian restaurant located at the corner of Boulevard des Italiens.⁷⁴ Around 1847, Louis Bignon bought the restaurant, which had had become run down, for the sum of one million francs. He enlarged it in 1865 and made it a luxury restaurant, with elaborate dishes, great wines, and high prices. Café Riche closed in 1916 to make room for a bank. Our travelers visited it with only a few years of its life to spare. In fact, the block of Boulevard des Italiens from house numbers 2-18 (Café Riche was number 16) was demolished due to the extension of Boulevard Haussmann in 1924.

The women in Agatha's sketch are wearing elaborate hats and the one smoking seems bored. Please note, as visible in the enlargement of the Café Riche sketch, that Agatha provides some interesting detail, not readily seen in the image until enlarged – that is, in front of the woman on our left, is a small box labelled powder, its cover on the table. In her right hand is a powder puff with which she dusts her right cheek. Is she holding a mirror in her left hand or reading a note from an admirer? This attention to detail, even in the exceedingly small detail, recalls her detail on the champagne bottle on Sketch Book page 12. This leaves us with the question, how did she see these ladies to capture the image? Perhaps in a ladies' lounge, on break.

62 Ca. 1905 Postcard: Entrance to Café Riche



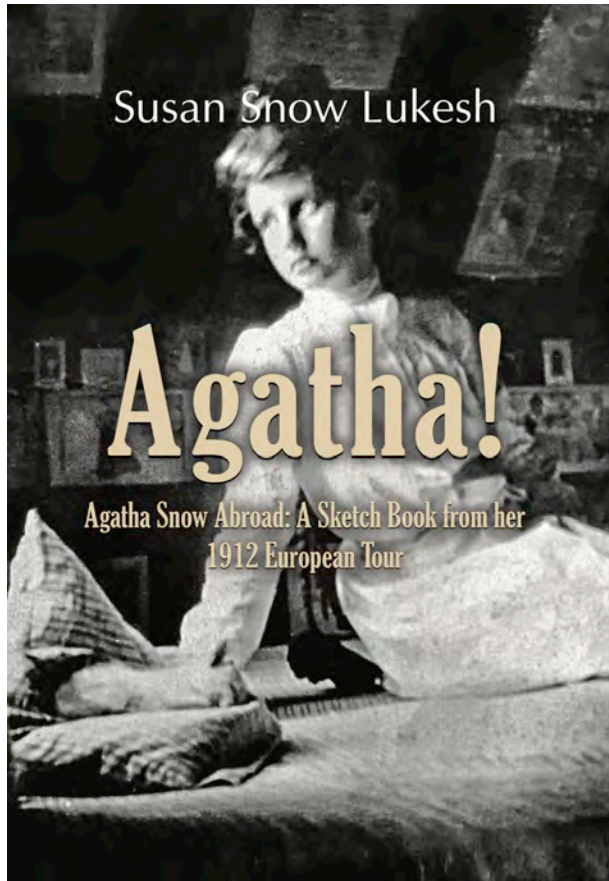
Epilogue

Now that we have followed Agatha and her companions through more than three months in Europe and attempted to answer the questions her images and comments provoke, it may have become clear to some readers that I have followed Thornton Wilder in his desire “to pile up a million details of daily living ... it is the business of writing to restore that sense of the whole.”¹⁰³ As an archaeologist myself, I concur in his opinion—drawn from his formative experience studying archaeology in Rome—of the archaeologist’s eyes:

An archaeologist’s eyes combine the view of the telescope with the view of the microscope. He [or she] reconstructs the very distant with the help of the very small.¹⁰⁴

As an archaeologist, I attempted to imagine past lives through what remains, taking seemingly mundane items—broken pieces of pottery—and proposed reconstructions of the lives of people thousands of years dead. And I suggest that this attempted reconstruction of Agatha’s 1912 European tour has taken seemingly small mundane items and events and worked to restore a sense of the whole. As indicated earlier, to restore a sense of the whole with facts such as train schedules and ocean crossings and knowledge of the families woven together with supposition and conjecture is a much easier job than singing the lives of prehistoric people (with no written records) out of the potsherds and stone foundations left behind. I suggest that these activities and my archaeological work imagines and assembles and reconstructs histories or past lives from the fragments we have been left. And this reconstruction of stories allows us to honor the dead and their lives.

As a teen-ager I was struck by a quote of Evgeny Evtushenko with which, even at that age, I profoundly disagreed, yet had no idea what course my own interests would take. I used Evtushenko’s words as an epigraph to a poem I composed from a story my grandmother had told me—a poem that was in direct contradiction to Evtushenko, who wrote “They perish. They cannot be brought back. The secret worlds are not regenerated.” I share that school-girl poem here, honoring my grandmother, Constance, who, after all, is the older sister of Agatha and whose engagement apparently caused the plan to send Agatha to Europe. I suggest that both a reconstruction of Agatha’s trip and, after Constance read a previous poem of mine now lost, her sharing the story of her father waking her in the middle of the night prove that, in some fashion, parts of previous lives can be brought back and parts of their worlds regenerated. So today, as a genealogist, I continue to work to regenerate parts of the worlds of the four centuries of my ancestors in this country.



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61 Café Riche Ladies

Sketch Book: Lower Page 35 (130%) Paris



Café Riche

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6/7 '12

Café Riche,⁷³ founded in 1785 by Madame Riche, was a Parisian restaurant located at the corner of Boulevard des Italiens.⁷⁴ Around 1847, Louis Bignon bought the restaurant, which had had become run down, for the sum of one million francs. He enlarged it in 1865 and made it a luxury restaurant, with elaborate dishes, great wines, and high prices. Café Riche closed in 1916 to make room for a bank. Our travelers visited it with only a few years of its life to spare. In fact, the block of Boulevard des Italiens from house numbers 2-18 (Café Riche was number 16) was demolished due to the extension of Boulevard Haussmann in 1924.

The women in Agatha's sketch are wearing elaborate hats and the one smoking seems bored. Please note, as visible in the enlargement of the Café Riche sketch, that Agatha provides some interesting detail, not readily seen in the image until enlarged – that is, in front of the woman on our left, is a small box labelled powder, its cover on the table. In her right hand is a powder puff with which she dusts her right cheek. Is she holding a mirror in her left hand or reading a note from an admirer? This attention to detail, even in the exceedingly small detail, recalls her detail on the champagne bottle on Sketch Book page 12. This leaves us with the question, how did she see these ladies to capture the image? Perhaps in a ladies' lounge, on break.

62 Ca. 1905 Postcard: Entrance to Café Riche



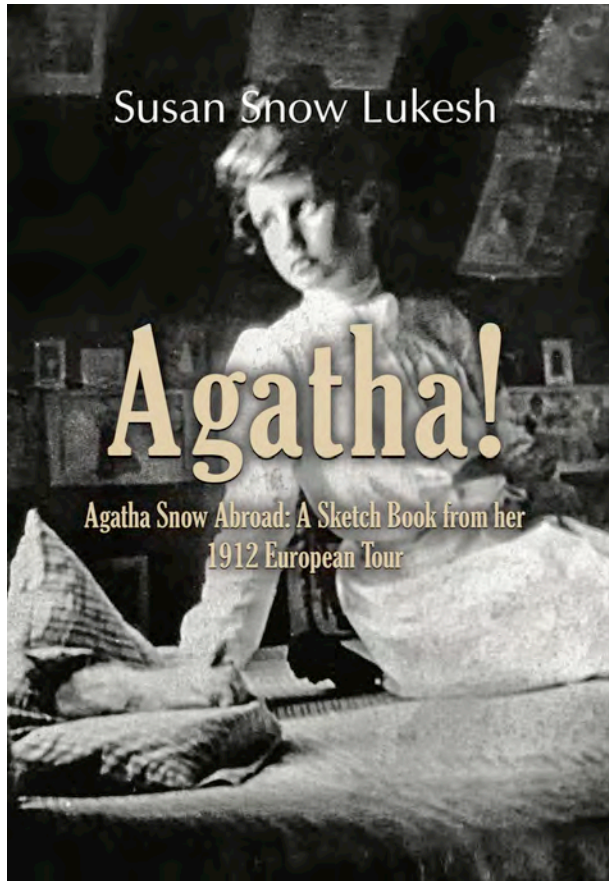
Epilogue

Now that we have followed Agatha and her companions through more than three months in Europe and attempted to answer the questions her images and comments provoke, it may have become clear to some readers that I have followed Thornton Wilder in his desire “to pile up a million details of daily living ... it is the business of writing to restore that sense of the whole.”¹⁰³ As an archaeologist myself, I concur in his opinion—drawn from his formative experience studying archaeology in Rome—of the archaeologist’s eyes:

An archaeologist’s eyes combine the view of the telescope with the view of the microscope. He [or she] reconstructs the very distant with the help of the very small.¹⁰⁴

As an archaeologist, I attempted to imagine past lives through what remains, taking seemingly mundane items—broken pieces of pottery—and proposed reconstructions of the lives of people thousands of years dead. And I suggest that this attempted reconstruction of Agatha’s 1912 European tour has taken seemingly small mundane items and events and worked to restore a sense of the whole. As indicated earlier, to restore a sense of the whole with facts such as train schedules and ocean crossings and knowledge of the families woven together with supposition and conjecture is a much easier job than singing the lives of prehistoric people (with no written records) out of the potsherds and stone foundations left behind. I suggest that these activities and my archaeological work imagines and assembles and reconstructs histories or past lives from the fragments we have been left. And this reconstruction of stories allows us to honor the dead and their lives.

As a teen-ager I was struck by a quote of Evgeny Evtushenko with which, even at that age, I profoundly disagreed, yet had no idea what course my own interests would take. I used Evtushenko’s words as an epigraph to a poem I composed from a story my grandmother had told me—a poem that was in direct contradiction to Evtushenko, who wrote “They perish. They cannot be brought back. The secret worlds are not regenerated.” I share that school-girl poem here, honoring my grandmother, Constance, who, after all, is the older sister of Agatha and whose engagement apparently caused the plan to send Agatha to Europe. I suggest that both a reconstruction of Agatha’s trip and, after Constance read a previous poem of mine now lost, her sharing the story of her father waking her in the middle of the night prove that, in some fashion, parts of previous lives can be brought back and parts of their worlds regenerated. So today, as a genealogist, I continue to work to regenerate parts of the worlds of the four centuries of my ancestors in this country.



Agatha! presents a sketch book developed during Agatha's tour of Europe with three companions in 1912. It includes her original images and cryptic comments, discussions of the comments, the people she met as well as traveling in the early 20th c.

AGATHA!
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