

# ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

## Albany Institute of History & Art

125 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12210

T: (518) 463-4478; F: (518) 462-1522

[www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org)

[www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute](http://www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute)

[www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute](http://www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute)

---

## NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**DECEMBER 20, 2011**

**CONTACT:**

Nycole Kinns, Marketing and Public Relations

(518) 463-4478, ext. 420; [kinnsn@albanyinstitute.org](mailto:kinnsn@albanyinstitute.org)

## AIHA RELEASES PUBLICATION ON “PEASE’S GREAT VARIETY STORE”

ALBANY, NY— The Albany Institute of History & Art is pleased to announce the release of the original publication “Pease's Great Variety Store in the Temple of Fancy and America's First Christmas Card” by Thomas Nelson, in association with the museum’s newest exhibition, *Temple of Fancy: Pease’s Great Variety Store*.

The book highlights new research on Richard H. Pease (1813-1891) and his great variety store. Pease built an impressive four story building at 516 Broadway in 1847, called the Temple of Fancy, where he sold fancy goods and household items until 1855. Both a proprietor and a noted printer, he was the first person in America to use an image of Santa Claus in an advertisement printed in 1841. Ten years later, he printed the first Christmas card in America, a card now so rare there is only one copy still in existence. Remarkably, both his store on Broadway and his fashionable home on Elk Street are also still around, a tribute to Albany's preservation of its historic past.

The special commemorative booklet is illustrated with twenty-eight images which include Pease's store, children's books, the Christmas card and advertisements. The publication is available in limited supply for \$9.95 at the Albany Institute of History & Art Museum Shop located at 125 Washington Avenue, Albany. The accompanying exhibition, *Temple of Fancy*, will be on display in the Institute’s Library Cases through March 25, 2012.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Related Exhibition:*

**TEMPLE OF FANCY: Pease’s Great Variety Store**

THROUGH MARCH 25, 2012

From the 1840s to the 1860s Pease's store was something of an upscale "Five and Dime," where Albany families could purchase fancy goods, toys, household items, children's books, and games. The building still stands at the corner of Broadway and Pine Street. The exhibit will draw from the collections of the Albany Institute and include photographs, prints, children's books, card games, and puzzles. *Main Floor Galleries*

\* \* \* \* \*

The Albany Institute’s distinguished collections and acclaimed exhibitions comprise the definitive expression of the cultural, historical, and artistic heritage of Albany and the upper Hudson Valley. From its world-renowned Hudson River School collection, to the famous Albany Mummies, to the wide range of performances, lectures, and

festivals, to its outstanding educational and family programming, this distinctive and engaging institution provides visitors of all ages and interests with a splendid museum experience. One of America's oldest museums, the Albany Institute of History & Art was founded in 1791, during the presidency of George Washington, making it older than the Louvre, the Smithsonian, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Visit [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org) for more information, and be sure to follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute](http://www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute](http://www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute)).

The Albany Institute of History & Art is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 AM-5 PM and Sundays NOON-5 PM. The museum is closed on Monday and open for pre-registered groups only on Tuesday. The library is open Thursdays 1:30-4:30 PM and by appointment.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Media inquiries:** Nycole Kinns, Marketing and Public Relations, at (518) 463-4478, ext. 420, [kinnsn@albanyinstitute.org](mailto:kinnsn@albanyinstitute.org).

# # #