



The A B A A NEWSLETTER



VOLUME SEVENTEEN, NUMBER 4 ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

FALL 2006

INSIDE: George Ritzlin Celebrates 30 Years in the Trade.....PAGE 9



Emeritus Member Larry Dingman employs a new technique for book scouting.

New Book Offers Insight into Bibliomania and the Trade

by William L. Butts

JACKSON, Robert H., and ROTHKOPF, Carol Z. (editors). *Book Talk: Essays on Books, Booksellers, Collecting, and Special Collections*. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2006. Small quarto. Cloth-bound, dust jacket. xvii, 265pp. Illustrations. \$49.95

Book Talk: Essays on Books, Booksellers, Collecting, and Special Collections is an odd sort of book – enjoyable as a gathering of bookish essays loosely grouped

into the four categories of the book's subtitle, yet so eclectic that the overall effect is disjointed, splintered. The subjects are simply too broad and large to capture any essence in 18 essays – much as I admire the editors for trying. Each one of these categories could easily occupy a hefty volume. But as problematic as is the sum, many of its parts have a lot going for them.

Robert H. Jackson's preface is enjoyable and provocative, even if you can't

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ILAB Awards Bibliography Prize to Two Recipients

by Raymond Kilgariff

The winners of the International Prize for Bibliography were announced before two hundred guests at the ABA Centenary Ball held at the Royal Geographical Society in London. Presenting the judges' verdict, the Prize Secretary said:

"I must say it sometimes seems there are rather a lot of Prizes. We have no sooner got over the Booker, the Whitbread and the Orange, when it's time for the Baftas and the Oscars – and hundreds of others."

But the League's Bibliography Prize is different. It wasn't invented last week by some spin doctor to promote a product. It was founded fifty years ago by the League to repay in a small way the debt the trade owes to the bibliographers who toil away in libraries, largely unsung, to produce the reference books that we need, and help us to become better booksellers. This is the fourteenth Award. There have been around a hundred entries from all over the world and they cover every aspect of bibliography and the history of the book in its widest sense, as well as cartography and all the book arts. The criteria are originality and significance – and of course bibliographical rigor.

To pick a winner from such a field has not been easy – and of course there can only be one winner. But the judges have

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ILAB Book Fairs

2006

November 3 & 4

London, UK (ABA)
Old Chelsea Town Hall

November 17-19

Boston, MA (ILAB)
Hynes Convention Center

2007

January 26-28

Stuttgart, Germany (VDA)
Haus des Württembergischen
Kunstverein

February 16-18

San Francisco, CA (ILAB)
Concourse Exhibition Center

March 22-24

Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Passenger Terminal
Amsterdam

March 23 & 24

Edinburgh, Scotland (ABA)
The Ballroom, Assembly
Rooms

April 19-22

New York, NY (ILAB)
Park Avenue Armory

For a calendar including non-ILAB book
fairs, visit www.abaa.org



Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair



November 17-19, 2006



The 2006 Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair, one of the oldest and most respected antiquarian book shows in the country, celebrates thirty years, from November 17-19, 2006 at Boston's Hynes Convention Center. Rare booksellers and dealers will gather to exhibit and sell rare, collectible, and antiquarian books, modern first editions, manuscripts, autographs, maps, and a plethora of other literary ephemera. Dealers of fine and decorative prints will feature fine prints and drawings.

Bibliophiles, memorabilia and ephemera enthusiasts, sports fans, beginning collectors and aficionados alike, will delight in the vast selection of the written word in all its intriguing forms and facets. Whether a browser, buyer, or poker, there will be something wonderful for every taste and budget. The International Antiquarian Book Fair is the ideal marketplace for that one-of-a-kind holiday gift.

Hours

Friday 5pm-9pm
Saturday noon-7pm
Sunday noon-5pm

Tickets

Friday: \$15 (good for three days)
Saturday, Sunday: \$8 each day

For more info, visit bostonbookfair.com or call (617) 266-6540.

Antiquarian Bookseller Ken Karmiole Establishes Collection Endowment at the UCLA Library

by Dawn Setzer

Ken Karmiole, owner of Kenneth Karmiole, Bookseller Inc., in Santa Monica, has given \$100,000 to the UCLA Library to establish the Kenneth Karmiole Endowment for Rare Books and Manuscripts, which will support the acquisition of special collections materials throughout the Library. Karmiole is the first member of the Library's recently established Board of Visitors to make a major gift in support of the Library.

"Ken's generosity and leadership are exemplary," said University Librarian Gary E. Strong. "He understands the importance of the Library's need for funding to make extraordinary purchases of rare books and manuscripts to support the curriculum and the research needs of scholars here at UCLA and worldwide."

The endowment will be used to acquire materials for the Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library History and Special Collections, Performing Arts Special Collections and the Charles E. Young Research Library Department of Special

Collections. Holdings in these departments encompass artists' books, business archives, drawings and prints, literary manuscripts, maps, museum objects, personal papers, photographs, rare books, printed and manuscript music scores, and scripts.

Although this was the initial gift to establish this endowment, Karmiole said he feels very strongly that others who support rare books and manuscripts should also give to the fund.

"The UCLA Library requires private support for the maintenance and development of its collections in order to guarantee the future of first-class scholarly research at UCLA," he noted.

Ranked among the top five research libraries in the United States, the UCLA Library system is a campus-wide network of libraries serving programs of study and research in many fields. Its holdings encompass some eight million volumes as well as important collections of archives, audiovisual materials, corporate reports, government publications, manuscripts,

maps, microforms, oral history transcripts, photographs, technical reports and other scholarly resources, as well as some 80,000 serial titles.

Karmiole earned a bachelor of arts in history from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a master's in library science with a specialization in rare books and manuscripts from UCLA.

Other UCLA programs he has funded include the Kenneth Karmiole Lecture Series on the History of the Book Trade in the Center for Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Studies at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library and the Kenneth Karmiole Fellowship in the Department of Information Studies, which supports one student each year in the field of rare books and manuscripts.

Editor's Note: We also wish to acknowledge William Reese's very generous gift supporting the map collection at Yale's Sterling Memorial Library. An article will appear in the next issue. ■

Skype Hype or eBay's The Power of Us All and Our Money-Making Mouths

by Ian Brabner

Have you been Skype'd? It sounds like someone razored your wallet out of your back pocket, but don't fret. Just yet, at least.

Skype is an excellent Internet telephone software program, and a potentially powerful selling tool for booksellers, that allows users to talk, see, and communicate with each other in a simple design interface. It is remarkably clever and intuitive. Recently acquired by eBay, Skype (www.skype.com) is being groomed and trained by eBay as the new tool to facilitate buying and selling between its members.

In a moment, we'll talk about its uses for ABAA members. Then, we'll digress

and talk about eBay. Somehow, a fuzzy picture might emerge. Stay on your toes! This writer is capable of any number of convoluted sentences!

How Skype Works:

Voice and data quality is very good; a cable or DSL connection is needed. A person uses Skype and their own personal computer to call regular land-lines, cell phones, or a fellow Skype PC-to-telephone user, to communicate via voice, text, video, etc. With a \$20 microphone/speaker, or a microphone/headset combo, preferable for sound quality, a user is set to Skype and be Skype'd. (I strongly suggest a cheap Altec Lansing head-phone with boom swing mic that plugs

into your PC. A microphone that stands alone on your desk can cause echo.) For the more financially-adventurous, there are wireless headsets and also a Skype cordless phone that also acts, in tandem, as a land-line cordless phone. A form of Skype wi-fi (wireless) that can be used in metro cities is in the works.

There are currently no month-to-month Skype subscription costs. Through 2006, as an eBay promotion, all calls within the USA are free, whether they be cell or land-line or Skype-to-Skype calls. Calls outside of the USA are approximately 3-10 cents a minute, as of this article being written, but this can vary based upon

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county and whether you're calling a land-line or a cell user. Calls connecting to cell phones outside of the USA cost more.

(Again, Skype is currently free to use through 2006 as eBay gets people warmed up to the program and broadens market presence. In the past, PC-to-PC calls have been free while PC-to-land-line or cell phones have had a cost. When will eBay put the hammer down? What? I'm a mind-reader?)

Skype lives on your desktop. Think of it as an extra phone line that clears up your main business line, etc. for your outgoing calls and offers very powerful Internet features. As a Skype user, you choose various modes like, Online, Invisible, Skype Me, Do Not Disturb, etc. When you are Online others can see you and can call you. If they are Online you can see them. Shy? Go Invisible and be a lurker. You can also search for other Skype members through an online directory. You can add or block users to your contact list and clicking on their name or icon will initiate a call. As an example, if you wanted to make a call to the NY ABAA HQ, you would use the screen's dial pad and enter in a +1 (always required for all USA calls) and the number, in full. So, to reach ABAA HQ you'd type or paste in: +1 (212) 944-8291. You'd hit a green telephone symbol to start the call. A red telephone to hang up. I would rate voice quality at about 95% perfect.

Skype supports voice and video conference calling. Five people can be on a Skype conference call. For instance, I can Skype ABAA HQ by calling them on their office number. I can then Skype another Skype member, PC-to-PC, and add them to the call. I could also bring the big boss into the conversation and call George W. Bush on his cell phone. I can then bring in my dealer-friend from Singapore on video-phone via Skype. My Singapore friend can show everyone in the conference call the wonderful books he has to sell us by waving them in front of his digital eyeball. (Cost is about \$99

for a video cam.) If you don't have a video cam, Skype is still video-enabled so you can see someone in front of their video cam. As an aside, upgrades for a "town hall" conference call for larger user groups is in the works. (Also, I have no dealer friends in Singapore. Sorry, I do not know W's cell phone number, either.)

Skype also supports a chat session when you're talked out or need to be creative. Say you Skyped your dealer friend in Singapore. You could be speaking to him on the phone and struggling over some terrible Latin. He doesn't understand. You could go to your database, find the title, start a chat session during the telephone call, send a text chat message like: "Sorry. I just had my wisdom teeth pulled. The title is 'De humani corporis fabrica libri septem.' Interested?" Perhaps, they reply. If your Singapore friend wants to see the book, you can keep the call going, right click on his contact name, and send them an image file attachment with scans of the book in question that they then see instantly on their computer.

Also, the chat session is quite useful when you're talking about stuff online. Like, "Hey Mike, have you seen that great website article on Hemingway's underground motorcycle shop? Here's the link: http://www.blahblahblahblah.com/blahvask113131e/articles/hemingway_motorcycle.htm ..."

For a bookseller's web site, you can have an icon on your web page that shows that your shop is available for a call or chat. If you are "away" or not at your computer this status is reflected. This benefit alone could be one reason why eBay seems to be changing its former "Live Support" models. See www.skypejournal.com for an example of this feature.

Shaping Buying and Selling Behavior

eBay wants its sellers to sell faster, its buyers to buy faster. Money will come in faster, cash flow will improve, waist bands will expand, small third world countries will be acquired. Paypal was their first coup. Skype could be their next.

Theoretically, Skype will replace the current "Silent Spring" two-dimensional seller and buyer auction game and all of its market inefficiencies with happy little "Skype Me" icons that mean, "I'm online. Bug me. Buy from me. Sell to me. Tell me more. Prove to me that you're not a bad seller apple. Prove to me that you're a real buyer. Stop hiding! I see you! Yes, I do! OK. I see your great item. OK. I'll buy it. Talk. Talk. Blah. Blah. Buy. Buy. Sell. Sell." While busy eBay sellers are posting up new auctions, prospective buyers will be Skyping left and right, asking questions like: "How much is shipping to Toledo?" or "How do you know it's really flatsigned?" or "Do you have more of those Luray Cavern pictographs? Will you be back there soon to offer more for sale?"

Since the start, eBay has pushed the idea of its "community" and the "power of us all" ad (vertising) infinitum. eBay's new generation of buyers and sellers will be talking to each other more, seeing each other more (through video conferencing, file sharing, and text chatting), and basically, "being there" more as online entities defined via Skype as healthy, thriving, active and participating community members. Through their Skype, presence eBay's members will be validating their commercial viability as either buyer or seller.

Questions...

For the Jonah whales it's always market efficiency and bottom-line growth: more, more, more! Should ABAA booksellers use these technologies more to play the more game? Can ABAA booksellers Skype their way to more sales, more customers, more market presence, more market awareness, and more positive reinforcements of successful commerce activity? And as a caveat, is, or will, Skype allowable by eBay to be used by commercial entities outside of the eBay realm?

Related links:

www.skype.com

www.skypejournal.com

<http://www.belkin.com/skype/wifiphone/>

Memoir: The Beginnings of a Bookseller

by John Windle

Trying to buy back my youth? Why I am a bookseller.

I have occasionally wondered what it is that drives those of us who have chosen to make a full-time life (if not a living) in the world of books. For me, it would seem to have been chance driven by inclination or vice versa; some of my earliest memories as an adopted child growing up in an Edwardian family in Hove involve begging relatives and friends for book tokens, those wonderful birthday or Christmas cards that you opened to find a sort of postage stamp inside printed with an amount of money that could be redeemed only at a bookshop or (if memory serves) a news agent. My family was not bookish, in fact we had very few books in the house beyond the socially acceptable books my mother wanted people to see - volumes of the *Saturday Book*, books about the Royal Family, copies of *Punch*, *Tailor*, and *Country Life*, all quite standard for a Hove family of that time.

By the time I was 10 or so I had a complete set of Rudyard Kipling in the small leatherette editions, the historical romances of Conan Doyle (I didn't come to Sherlock Holmes until much later), and all of Walter Scott. I also treasured my run of *Eagle* and my sister's run of *Girl*, both of which we devoured when they arrived, as they were the only comics we were allowed. I remember my mother, who had the nasty habit not uncommon at the time of explaining everything as if it were a punishment or at least a dire warning, reminding us every week it seemed that we were only permitted *Eagle* and *Girl* because they were edited by a clergyman. Despite such strictures, I idolised the evil extra-terrestrial Mighty Mekon of Mekonta with his huge green throbbing head, and his deadly enemy the goody-goody spaceman Dan Dare; in fact, I still do.

Then came cricket. I was useful enough at the game to make the school teams while still fairly young which led to coaching during the holidays at the Sussex nets and even a week at Lords once

or twice. Our house was across the street from the Sussex County Cricket Club and every year I was given for my birthday a junior membership card which came in a fancy little leather wallet and entitled me to live on the grounds from dawn to dusk. Practices, second XI matches, club matches, I went to them all - and when the touring teams came to play the Sussex team I was in heaven. In those days a boy could easily approach the players and get their autographs, and I filled books about my heroes with their signatures as they entered or exited the field or as they warmed up in the nets. From Don Bradman and Dennis Compton, Godfrey Evans and David Shepherd, Alec and Eric Bedser, Ted Dexter and Jim Parks, Laker and Locke, Ramadin and Valentine, Weekes Worrell and Walcott, Gary Sobers, so many wonderful and friendly faces so willing to make a small boy's day and sign his book. Freddie Truman and Typhoon Tyson, Griffith and the terrifying Wes Hall with his thick neck and huge hands signed for me - so did Jack Hobbs as an old man when I was lucky enough to win a bat in a newspaper competition and went up to London to receive it from his hands.

As a teenager I played for the Sussex Martlets and met many more first-class cricketers; although the days of the separate gates and dressing rooms for "gentlemen" and "players" were over, there was still a divide that didn't really disappear until the late 60s in my experience - though perhaps we provincials lived longer in the past than others. In any event, I came home from my boarding school one awful day aged 14 to find that mother had redecorated my room in Danish modern and the books were all gone -- all the Scott and Kipling and Doyle and cricket books given to a local boy's club. My godmother, a keen supporter of my book addiction, had had a bookplate printed for me, perhaps through her friend Francis Meynell for I recall it was typographically quite elaborate and had a lovely border of printer's flowers, and I had glued one carefully into every

book - EX LIBRIS JOHN RICHARD WINDLE nicely spaced and centered within the border. Since that time I must have handled hundreds of thousands of books and I have never seen or heard of a single book from my collection - I often wonder what happened to them as I scout book fairs in a quixotic quest to buy back a memento of my youth.

As we all know, 15 is the age of rebellion and I was ready; the loss of all my treasures drove me into a phase that seems to have lasted over forty-five years and from which many of my book passions can now be seen to have grown. First came existentialism, starting with Colin Wilson's *The Outsider*. The book spoke directly to my lonely teen-age agony and I read it again and again, imagining myself living in a tent on Hampstead Heath while working all day in the British Museum reading room. Funnily enough, I was to do both in due course, though the tent was not pitched in Hampstead but all across the plains and mountains of the USA, and my work in the BM was research for my employer.

In case my family sounds insufferable, which it was, I should add one factor that contributed mightily to my life's future and for which I am entirely indebted to my cold and distant father. He gave me my own bank account, a checkbook with big beautiful pink checks striped diagonally so you could cross them, and the instructions that I could buy educational material only, which of course meant books. Armed with said checkbook and the bibliography at the end of *The Outsider* (which, by the way, I still think is a pretty decent introduction to the literature of alienation) I proceeded to open an account with Blackwell's, who obligingly sent me a catalogue.

It was to be a while before the more esoteric joys of out-of-print or even rare books swam into my ken, but to start with I ordered every single book Wilson had mentioned and they soon arrived in all their paperbacked glory. Most were

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Penguins, and I found myself arranging them in my ghastly room at my ghastly boarding school first by color, then by serial number within the color, or, if I had many books by the same author, alphabetically within the author. I have to say that my collection of Penguins (eventually given away by a wife whom I must have married for her ability to mimic my mother, as she redecorated while I was away on a trip and when I returned "all my silly old paperbacks" were gone) was only a little short of what one might have seen on the shelves of Hatchards or Foyles, or Combridge's in Hove where I was a fixture for years.

I had over 1,000 of them, green, purple, blue, red, orange for poetry if memory serves as the collected poems of Blake was a well-thumbed favorite though his visionary works remained then as now impenetrable. I had them all - Dostoevsky and Tolstoi, all of Virginia Woolf and Henry James and Proust, and lo! another tendency had manifested itself which has lasted to this day - to wit, if I like a writer I tend almost always to buy every single book they wrote even if I don't read them all. Thus my set of Anthony Powell sat next to my set of Dawn Powell until another marriage ended under a mountain of books. Barney Rosenthal told me that his grandfather once said "Between every bookseller and his wife lies an enormous pile of catalogues." How true, how true.

School ended early for me as I had that happy gift, so much more useful than an elevated IQ, of being good at exams. I loved exams, ate them up, would finish the test (no multiple choice questions in those days) and then do it again for fun while the other boys huddled over their tearstained ruled paper desperately trying to remember why existence preceded essence or was it the other way round. Too young to go on to University (I had snubbed Cambridge, where my father had gone, for the ultra trendy Sussex, then in its second year and largely renowned for its gorgeous young women and liberal

professors, um, liberal women and gorgeous young professors) I wangled what Americans call a junior year abroad and at seventeen I headed off to Tours to live with the Le Bourgeois family on rue Bernard Palissy and study for my CAEFE (Certificat de l'aptitude à l'enseignement du Français à l'étranger - a teaching credential, since it already seemed to be known I would never hold a real job). I took the word "Etranger" out of context and began buying Camus and Sartre and Valéry in those lovely French creamy paperback editions with the untrimmed edges and the unopened pages or the gaudy brightly-colored glossy covers with decorations by Miro or Matisse or Chagall. After a few weeks Madame Le Bourgeois, who had nine children and a saintly tolerance beyond anything I had ever known before, enquired gently if I wanted to know where the library was since surely I didn't need to buy all these books that were piling up knee deep in my room.

I returned to Sussex a year later with several hundred more books, an American girlfriend, an amazing ability to play Peter, Paul, and Mary songs on the guitar, and a passing grade in my CAEFE without ever having set foot in the Lycée from registration to finals. I wrote (I recall it to this day) a brilliantly incisive paper on "Le problème du mal chez Camus et Sartre" in about thirty minutes before swanning out of the exam room to meet Suzanne Robinson from Shawnee Mission, Kansas, for a demitasse and my final experience of the joys of an all-American woman before her departure back to Connecticut Women's College.

I found out just recently, thanks to the wonders of the Internet, which also helped me find my paternal family of origin that had eluded me for thirty years, that Suzanne died of cancer four years ago - she never married and, to judge from the photo her family kindly sent me, was as beautiful at 53 as she was at twenty. Perhaps nostalgia or sentimentality is a weakness, but I wish I had made a more determined effort to find her sooner, if only to know that the girl I once loved was a woman I would have liked. And it is surely no coincidence that 40 years

later I am married to someone who looks exactly like her.

On to Sussex, and my first taste of book selling as opposed to buying. Courses were pretty unstructured at Sussex and, aside from the occasional visit to soon-to-be famous tutors such as David Daiches or Asa Briggs, we were left to our own devices. As student housing had not yet been built, groups got together and rented flats in Lewes or, better by far, Brighton and I shared a house in Brighton on Dyke Road with four people, one of whom taught me a lesson that to this day I can recall as clearly as if it had just happened. Bob Harvey, a friendly handsome, rogue who always had something up his sleeve and seemed to be paying his way by less than conventional means, came back to the flat one night in great excitement. It seemed he had bought a few old books including a copy (used, of course) of an economics text book he needed by someone named Malthus. After reading it, he decided to sell it. He had paid a few pounds for it at the old bookshop opposite the Theatre Royal in Brighton where I had also been buying books, but Bob, visionary that he was, decided to see if he could sell it for more, a concept that had heretofore never crossed my mind. Somehow he got up to town and took it to a bookshop that after a little gentle haggling paid him three hundred and fifty pounds for it. To say I was stunned is putting it mildly; firstly, this obviously meant that my books must be worth a fortune, and secondly, how many more old books could I buy before everyone else found out about this amazing fact. Right away I shrewdly bought the rest of Bob's books, most of which I would have to this day had they not been lost in one move or another, but the seed was planted or, as collectors often exclaim, "I was hooked."

It was to be some time yet before I would actually make a profit on a book. I left Sussex in a daze, with no money, no job, and nowhere to live. A guidance counselor had suggested "insurance," in a way that now reminds me of the way the family friend in *The Graduate* suggests to Dustin Hoffman "plastics". But having no

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options I interviewed for a job in London and got it, after being rejected by Jardine Matheson and the Foreign Office where I had applied to please my family. I lasted six weeks in insurance, long enough to rent a flat in Islington before it was trendy (three pounds a week and a shilling in the meter for heat and light) and make friends with the owner of the Angel bookshop, a saint named Hugh Crace. He made two suggestions that changed my life in an instant.

For my poetry, which was as fluent as it was trite though a few of my poems had squeaked into marginal magazines which was more encouragement than I deserved, he suggested that I should buy a printing press and publish myself in small editions on handmade paper. For a job to pay for this hobby (which I instantly embraced by buying an Adana table press, a font of Baskerville roman and italic, and some handmade paper, all from a shop in Bleeding Heart Yard which I hope and pray is there to this day though I doubt it) he suggested that I go and apply for work in a used bookshop, as he had no work for me and couldn't afford help anyway. How I was able to find Bernard Quaritch Ltd at 11 Grafton Street, and why the nice man in shirt sleeves, whom I took to be a packer but turned out to be the managing director, ever took me on, I shall never know. But hired I was, and started at the princely sum of eight pounds a week before deductions, after an apprenticeship of a few months on no pay to see if I had the makings of a bookseller's clerk.

In a manner that now seems amazingly enterprising, even audacious, I earned my living while on probation at Q's (and indeed thereafter, as the pay was hardly munificent) by sorting, cataloguing, and shelving the library of Sir Geoffrey Lloyd M.P. who had come to Q's seeking just such help. To spend evenings and weekends in his magnificent house in Belgravia was quite a privilege, especially as he was never there and I had the run of the place including the swimming pool in

the basement. He would leave a fiver for me in a Smythson envelope by the door and that would last a week with a little careful budgeting. In those days, Q's, like Heywood Hill and Maggs I suspect, had a seemingly unending stream of wealthy and aristocratic customers to whom service was far more important than price and, in those days, a little money went a long way. Thus, when Bryan Guinness (Lord Moyne) came in one day and asked if we knew someone who could get his novel published privately, I was bold enough to offer my services and smart enough to go straight to Will Carter at the Rampant Lions Press to design and print *The Engagement* in a small edition. Bryan was indulgent enough of this presumptuous young man to ask me to print a Christmas card for him, which I did on handmade paper on my little table press, using (and I cringe now to even contemplate it) the original woodblock depicting the Christmas table from *A Christmas Carol* in the Nonesuch Dickens set which I "borrowed" for the weekend from Q's. Had the block cracked as I now realize it easily could have, I would have had to work free for a year or more to pay for that set.

My immediate boss at Q's was Ian Hustwick, who was a firm believer in the "total immersion" theory of bookselling apprenticeships. As soon as I had earned a desk on the ground floor, which was a

few months after beginning in the packing room running errands and cleaning and dusting, Ian dumped a couple of boxes on my desk and suggested I collate the contents. Never having seen a Dickens novel in parts before, I was excited to be accorded this opportunity to start handling "real books". Our department was modern first editions (in those days books after 1700), private press books, printed music, autograph letters and literary manuscripts, and new books, and I was so excited to be surrounded by such beautiful and exciting items that I could hardly wait to get to work. From running round the auction houses to bid for Q's, to picking up purchases at auction and from private collectors, finding or creating inventory slips for new acquisitions, greeting customers and directing them to the right departments (we were on seven floors in those days), answering the phone, and generally taking care of all the details that freed up my seniors to sell the serious books that I would pore over during my lunch breaks, it wasn't long before I realized I had found my dream occupation. Even my mother's horror at my having "gone into trade" did not deter me, and in the trade I remain to this day, as happy now as then to be surrounded by books and in the company of bookish people...



Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair



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Hours

Friday 5pm-9pm
Saturday noon-7pm
Sunday noon-5pm

Tickets

Friday: \$15 (good for three days)
Saturday, Sunday: \$8 each day

For more info, visit bostonbookfair.com or call (617) 266-6540.

Grolier Club Opens Season with Miniature Bindings Exhibit

Opening on September 14, the Grolier Club of New York is proud to present a special exhibition of The Neale M. Albert Collection of Miniature Designer Bindings. As part of its mission to promote the book arts, the Grolier Club in its 122-year history has mounted numerous exhibitions on both craft binding and miniature books, but this is the first show of works which combine the two themes.

This remarkable collection includes two hundred and fifty unique bindings for miniature books, each individually commissioned by the collector from binders and book artists such as Tim Ely, Roger Powell, Santiago Brugalla, Jean de Gonet, and many others throughout the world. Mr. Albert provided complete artistic freedom to the binders represented in the collection, setting no restrictions on either materials or theme. Following their inspiration, these binders have crafted diminutive contemporary artworks which stretch the limits of the binder's art, with results at once poetic, whimsical and surprising. The collection, a long-term passion of Mr. Albert, is the world's largest assemblage of miniature commissioned bindings, including examples from binders in America, Great Britain, and Europe. While many of the designers and craftspeople are well-known to bibliophiles, others were discovered by Mr. Albert as the reputation of his project grew.

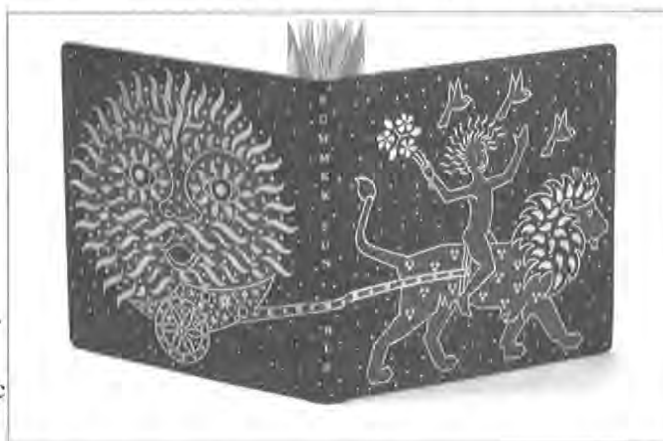
Among the works on display is George Kirkpatrick's remarkable version of the *Atlas of the British Empire*, a facsimile of a book housed in the diminutive library of Queen Mary's Dollhouse. The intricate morocco-bound volume is housed within a baseball-sized leather globe, in turn

contained within a wooden box, all of which are sized to fit in the palm of the hand.

Some of the tiny volumes transcend the concept of "binding." For their collaborative design, Roger Powell and Peter Waters created an ingenious "chained library" of six tiny books shackled to a wooden lectern, all concealed in a diminutive tooled-leather box; to house a small book in the shape of a dog, binder

which must be slipped off before the book can be opened.

A fully-illustrated catalogue of the exhibition (hardcover in slipcase) will be available, featuring a foreword by Mr. Albert, an introduction by Grolier Club member and former ABAA President Priscilla Juvelis, and full descriptions of the hundreds of tiny books on show, many composed by the binders who created them. Designed by Joe Marc



Left: *Summer Sun* by Robert Louis Stevenson, bound in goatskin with colored onlays and gold tooling by Matthew Wilcox. Right: *Atlas of the British Empire*, Edward Stanford Ltd., n.d. This miniature atlas is a facsimile of the original, which is in Queen Mary's dollhouse. Bound by George Kilpatrick, it is enclosed in a box in the form of a globe.



Jill Oriane Tarlau fashioned an exquisitely embroidered "doghouse," while Eleanor Ramsey's binding for *Desert Tale* resembles a jewelled bag suitable for this Arabic treasure; and Deborah Evett's ingenious leather binding for *Covered Bridges in Pennsylvania* not only resembles these barn-like structures, but opens to reveal a dark tunnel, joining the book's subject and its structure.

Other designs are virtuoso displays, crafted in sumptuous materials with elaborate technique. Spanish binder Santiago Brugalla created a miniature binding in the "Cosway" style for a volume of the *Portraits of the Sovereigns of England*, with two miniature tooled royal portraits on the cover. Susan Allix's binding for *Shakespeare's Flowers* is enfolded by intertwined silver blossoms and vines,

Freedman of The Sarabande Press, and printed in an edition of 2000, copies will be available for purchase at The Grolier Club and through The Veatchs Arts of the Book, P.O. Box 328, Northampton, MA 01060; phone: (413) 584-1867; fax: (413) 584-2751; e-mail: veatchs@veatchs.com.

LOCATION AND TIMES: The Neale M. Albert Collection of Miniature Designer Bindings will be on view in the second floor gallery of at the Grolier Club from September 14 – November 4, 2006. Hours: Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm. The Grolier Club is located at 47 East 60th Street in Manhattan and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please call (212) 838-6690.

George Ritzlin Maps & Books Celebrates 30th Anniversary

by George Ritzlin

Like many others before me, I turned from collector to dealer, in this case leaving a career in accounting and taxes for the world of rare books and antique maps. A member of the ABAA since 1982, I have also served on the Association's Board.

Though attracted to maps since childhood, I did not discover older maps until the early 1970's when I made my first purchase (a London Ward map). When the late Professor David Woodward offered a class in the history of cartography at Chicago's Newberry Library, I immediately signed up. Our shared enthusiasm inspired us to form the Chicago Map Society in 1976, the first organization of its kind in the western hemisphere. (The CMS meets monthly during the academic year and also celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2006.)

Soon I began dealing privately and was joined by Mary McMichael whose own interest in history and art was useful in researching and writing catalogs. We married in 1979 and have a son, David.

Bucking the trend toward the private dealer operating from home or office, in 1991 we opened our first gallery in Highland Park, Illinois, and in 2004 moved to larger quarters in Evanston, Illinois. In August of this year the gallery was included in Chicago Magazine's annual "Best" awards issue. It listed us under the heading *Best Relics*, and Mary commented that our son wondered whether they were referring to the inventory or to his parents.

In addition to traditional dealer activities of exhibiting at fairs and issuing catalogs, I have taught classes about maps and atlases at the Newberry Library, for

adult education programs at local schools, and have twice conducted a week-long course for librarians, book dealers and collectors at Indiana University's Lilly Library.

Mary's research on pre-20th century

Chicago. Even Marshall Field's department store had a rare book and map department. The role of auction houses has also changed with most now marketing directly to collectors (though not offering the guarantees that dealers provide).



George Ritzlin, first president of the Chicago Map Society, and his wife Mary, the current president, at a party celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Society.

women in the map trades led to publication in various journals and a stint as guest editor of *Cartographica* (University of Toronto Press) for a special issue on women and maps. Most recently she contributed the section on Mrs. Kinzie's map of the Fort Dearborn massacre for Dr. Robert Holland's *Chicago in Maps 1612 to 2002* (Rizzoli, 2005).

From the perspective of 30 years in business and having witnessed several economic cycles, I have seen major changes in the trade: fewer open shops partly due to higher rents and the Internet. When we started there were half a dozen antiquarian dealers in downtown

Nonetheless we remain optimistic. There will be a place for the open gallery as there always are people who want to personally examine rare maps, books and prints before making a purchase, and who also want to learn more than can be found in a one-paragraph description. Buying will become more difficult but opportunities will continue to arise as collections recycle. We are living in a Golden Age; if you don't believe it, just wait twenty years! And there will still be the serious collector whose knowledge informs both dealers and scholars.

We look forward to spending many more years in this fascinating business. ■

Students Make Book Collecting “The Cool Thing To Do, One Person at a Time”

A little-known tradition on college campuses has enjoyed an unexpected revival this year. Since the 1920s, universities across the United States and Canada have held book-collecting contests for their students. Competitors write essays about their collection, compile bibliographies, and bring their books to the library for judging. (At Yale, judges storm into the dormitories to see the collections and interview the students on their own turf.)

Today 36 universities sponsor the contests, and this year *Fine Books & Collections* magazine established a national championship. The winners attended an awards ceremony, which was open to the public, at the Grolier Club in New York on September 16.

Most of these young collectors have never known a time when the only way to find a book was to visit a bookstore or send want lists to book dealers. William Miglore, age 22, who just won Amherst College's contest for his extensive Ray Bradbury collection, said, “It's hard for me to imagine what it was like before the Internet.” That's what “started me collecting in 1996.” He says that his friends didn't know much about book collecting when they met him. “I'm still a bit embarrassed to bring it up in conversation, but a lot of my friends have started collecting. I'm making it the cool thing to do, one person at a time.”

Scott Brown, editor of *Fine Books & Collections*, was surprised to learn that some of the most eminent figures in the rare book world were winners of their own college contests. Breon Mitchell, head of the Lilly Library, noted bookseller William Reese, and bibliographer Matthew Bruccoli all won their competitions as undergraduates. “With the popularity of digital media, well-established collectors and dealers are wondering about the next generation,” he said. “When word got out that we wanted to give a national book-collecting prize to a college student, a lot of people wanted to be involved.”

The Grolier Club, America's largest

and oldest society for bibliophiles, offered to host the awards ceremony and give a coveted one-year membership to the winner. Online book marketplace Biblio.com, auction house PBA Galleries, and the prestigious Heritage Book Shop also joined as sponsors of the contest. A panel of judges, including a librarian, a bookseller, and a collector, reviewed forty-four winning entries and named selected three winners:

First Place: Daniel McKee, Cornell University. Subject: “Educational Books from Japan's Meiji Period (1868–1912)”

Second Place: William Miglore, Amherst College. Subject: “Ray Bradbury”

Third Place: David Rando, Cornell University (tied with Daniel McKee for first place in Cornell's contest). Subject: “Finnegans Wake Reference Books”

Several colleges have reported that the national championship has revived interest in their contests. “I'm hearing from librarians who have been able to raise funds and attract more support from the administration because there's a national competition,” said Brown. “I'd like to see more campuses and more students get involved in book collecting as both an art and a competitive sport.” ■

Wreden Collecting Prize Awarded

by Susan Benne

The inaugural Byra J. and William P. Wreden Prize for Collecting Books and Related Materials was awarded on June 3, 2006 by Stanford University Libraries. The prize was awarded to Jonathan Fetter-Vorm for his collection of graphic novels.

The \$1,000 prize was created to honor the late Mr. and Mrs. Wreden, who were members of the ABAA. Funding originally came from gifts given in their memory, including a generous one from the Northern California Chapter of the ABAA. The competition was open to all Stanford University students in a degree program. Entrants were required to compose an essay and annotated bibliography of no more than 50 items on a subject of their choice. Finalists were selected from written applications, and were required to exhibit a sampling of their collections and give a five-minute presentation. All applicants were given membership in the Associates of the Stanford University Libraries. It is anticipated that the award will be given every two or three years.

The winner, Mr. Fetter-Vorm, is a

senior at Stanford majoring in art history and studio art. Jonathan's essay and bibliography entry for the Wreden Prize was “The Graphic Novel In America.” He writes, “Much of my interest in graphic novels stems from my art practice. At Stanford I study both history and studio art, and the graphic novel offers a chance to bridge these disciplines. In the next months I will print the first part of my graphic novel adaptation of the Old English poem Beowulf, executed with funds from Stanford and under the guidance of Professor George Brown.”

In addition, three honorable mentions were given to:

Sidney W. Carter, for his essay and bibliography, “Investigating the Intersections between the Archaeological and Geological Components of the Grant Canyon Landscape from a Geoarchaeological Perspective on Ceramics and Sources.”

Stephanie Adams, for her essay and bibliography, “The Unconscious Journey: How I Collect.”

Caleb Richardson, for his untitled essay and bibliography on collecting humorous “writing.” ■

The Blogosphere & the Rare Book Trade

by Susan Benne

By now, most of us can confess to reading a blog occasionally. I say "confess" because so many blogs are a guilty pleasure, whether guilty because of content, poor writing or the narcissistic inclination of the author. (For those not yet familiar, blogs are online journals usually written by one author on any topic of the author's choosing.) Several rare booksellers have jumped on the bandwagon. The blogs I'm about to discuss are a pleasure, but rest assured, you will experience (almost) no guilt.

One of the first blogs I discovered is Forrest Proper's Foggy Gates-A Bookish Blog (<http://foggygates.blogspot.com>). Forrest tells me that he primarily started the blog as a bookselling tool. Many of the entries are books offered for sale accompanied by witty descriptions of the

material. Thus far, he says it's not produced many sales, but still it is quick and easy to update and highlight new inventory. Forrest also maintains a blog called Madbookseller (<http://madbookseller.blogspot.com>) which contains pithy and humorous stories about the book trade, as well as, fun scans of pulp romance novel covers and even more risqué items that you'll have to discover on your own.

Another member, Ron Lieberman, authors a rare book blog at <http://books-rare.blogspot.com>. Although new to blogging, Ron has posted a few lengthy musings about his life in the trade and the way technology has advanced and affected the rare book trade in recent years. He foresees the blog as a forum for the philosophical and scholarly conversations that used to take place in bookstores.

The most comprehensive rare book

blog I've yet come across is Canadian Nigel Beale's Nota Bene Books blog (www.nigelbeale.com). Beale champions the trade both on his blog and on his radio program "The Biblio File." He has posted a dozen or so audio interviews of booksellers you might recognize.

Two other blogs worth noting: Fine Books and Collections Magazine's blog at www.blog.myfinebooks.com and Bibliophile Bullpen at www.bibliophilebullpen.blogspot.com. Both cover rare book news, with Bibliophile Bullpen covering new books, current events, and gadgets, as well. Bibliophile Bullpen has links to other bookselling blogs.

For those interested in creating a blog, a good place to begin is www.blogger.com. ■

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agree with his "points." When discussing bookselling, for instance, he repeatedly buys into some of the most tiresome clichés. (Mr. Jackson, by the way, is an attorney, as *Book Talk* informs me – though I'll refrain from regaling you with my own cliché-riddled version of what being a lawyer is really about. But did you hear the one about the lawyer, the bookseller and the prostitute....)

"Today's dealers can no longer rely on one or two wealthy individuals for their livelihoods," he notes. As endearing as I, too, find that nostalgic image of the genteel antiquarian of yore doling out jaw-dropping rarities at a leisurely pace to stodgy Edwardian industrialists, the reality of antiquarian bookselling has long been far different. Only the tiniest percentage of booksellers have ever operated in this rarified, largely nonexistent world. Three percent? One percent? Who knows. But any realist knows that this is not the routine business model Jackson advocates%.

Jackson continues: "Gone are the days when book dealing was the incidental pastime of a bored dilettante." Again, this is an amusing stereotype one encounters – but hardly a reality, now or ever. Once more, perhaps a minuscule percentage of booksellers actually fit this description. At the risk of applying my own experience to dealers everywhere, I can honestly say that after nearly twenty years of full-time operation I've yet to meet a bookseller who could be described as a "bored dilettante." To present that image as any kind of norm is ill-advised indeed. Those days aren't, to borrow Jackson's word, gone – they scarcely existed in the first place, and then mainly in film and fiction.

"Today's successful book dealer," Jackson concludes, "is an aggressive, full-time business person, applying the latest marketing, financial, and promotional techniques to the work at hand." Finally, something with which I can agree! If only partly, for he elaborates: "The Internet has become the book dealers' most valuable tool, creating a broader market of book collectors, and permitting even more dealers to flourish." Well, success-

ful booksellers have long been aggressive full-time business people – this isn't some newfangled Internet-spawned breed of bookseller that exists today but didn't in previous years, as Jackson suggests.

It's difficult to argue that the Internet isn't "the book dealers' most valuable tool," though many bibliopoles might argue that it's not necessarily their most liked tool. But has the Internet truly "permitt[ed] even more dealers to flourish"? (Italics mine.) Not to nitpick over verbs, but flourish is a highly charged description. True, more people than ever certainly survive today selling books – but they're often neither experienced antiquarians nor full-time. And "flourish" might not be most dealers' verb of choice to state their current status. To generalize such an upbeat sentiment when the antiquarian bookselling world is undergoing radical and disturbing changes strikes at least this reviewer as rash.

Book Talk is introduced by Lawrence N. Siegler, former president of Cleveland's Rowfant Club. His discussion of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies – FABS – is, well, fab. I profess

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to having never heard of this nonprofit, “nonpolitical and noninvasive” association of more than thirty bibliographic and bookish clubs, though many of its member clubs are well-known individually, but I am reassured to know of such a unifying organization. Among other things, FABS issues a newsletter, organizes an annual trip and coordinates all kinds of activities for its member clubs.

Among the high points of *Book Talk* is UCLA librarian Bruce Whiteman’s “‘Only Copy Known’: Random Reflections on Rarity,” a lucid discussion of this much-misunderstood concept. “Rarity” is a word so overused by so many that any book person who takes its meaning seriously and uses it sparingly will delight in this bookman’s lighthearted, informative look at the word’s etymology and the various ways people employ it. Every collector should be either annoyed or amused by Whiteman’s painfully honest assessment that, “We do not like to admit it, but rarity is to some extent a relative term and it can be twisted when the point is to turn something common and unattractive into something desirable.” The examples he provides are as hilarious as they are outrageous. I can think of very few collectors who wouldn’t benefit from reading Whiteman on rarity – then re-reading it and taking its message to heart.

Daniel De Simone’s “The Woodcut in Ferrera in the Late Fifteenth Century” is a detailed and absorbing, if arcane and scholarly, study of this highly-focused topic. Not everyone’s cappuccino, certainly, but illustration represents one important aspect of the book world that Jackson and Rothkopf wouldn’t wish to be neglected.

Am I biased or does the “Booksellers” section blow the rest of *Book Talk* out of the water? Every bookseller, if asked to pontificate on today’s bookselling scene and what drives the market, will tend to come up with an entirely different theory than every other bookseller – us being an opinionated lot. If some of the bookseller essays sound familiar, it’s because several



of them first appeared in this very Newsletter. Each contains its own insights, its own kernels of truth, its own spine and interpretation with which dealers will surely agree or dispute.

Tom Congalton’s “The Messiah Factor in Bookselling” is an amusing chronicle of the various false idols he’s seen the bookselling community latch onto since his first days in the book trade in the early ‘70s: first, “the Arabs were going to save us;” then, “the Japanese were going to save us;” then, regional book fairs; then, “in the late 1980s...a new savior rose: Hollywood and the entertainment community;” until finally, “by the mid-1990s we put all false gods behind us and accepted the one, true messiah: the Internet.” Funny stuff, this – classic Congalton – witty, savvy, perceptive. “The Internet,” he concludes, “is neither the new messiah, nor the ultimate bookselling weapon, but just another arrow in the quiver of the working bookseller and collector.” Tough to argue with that.

Switching from modern firsts to more classic antiquarian, John Crichton presents a different twist in “The American Antiquarian Book Trade: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.” Equally entertaining yet quite different in approach from Tom’s perspective, John brings a rather more scholarly, analytic, less anecdotal style to the subject. While Tom founded a shop roughly a generation old, John is the

third owner of a shop only a handful of years from a centennial celebration – “a successful, medium-size, American rare book firm,” he describes it. John tracks his firm’s development over the decades – yet despite the enormous changes of the past couple decades, he shows how his business has evolved and adapted. Though John agrees that the Internet has been “a mixed blessing” to booksellers and its impact may “seem somewhat ominous,” he still maintains that “antiquarian booksellers are an enormously resilient, self-reliant group” who “have come through intact because the fundamental aspects of what we do have a foundation that simple trends and market changes cannot easily undo.” (A candid indoor photograph of the Brick Row Book Shop in 1916 alongside a different shot in 2005 startles – if it weren’t for the captions, you might easily assume these two were shot only minutes apart.)

Other ABAA-ers contribute worthy chapters to *Book Talk*. Booksellers tend to like nothing better than reading about how colleagues cut their teeth in the trade, and Priscilla Juvelis’ “Adventures of a Bookseller” recounts her exciting early years with the ever-memorable John F. Fleming. (If you’re more observant than I you’ll notice an unusual editorial glitch here: the illustrations here were meant to accompany a different essay of hers!)

Peter Kraus’ “Roxburghe to eBay: A Brief Survey of the Way Books Change Hands” reminds one of the Congalton and Crichton essays, though here one seems to find more with which to disagree. His comment, “Until 1963 – the year I entered the trade – book collecting was largely the pursuit of individuals,” is the kind of observation skewered earlier in Whiteman’s “‘Only Known Copy’” essay. Whiteman notes, “one might label it the empirical theorem – I, who am a dealer in a single city in a certain country during a particular period of time, can extrapolate my own experience to a universal truth.” Hazard of the profession, to be sure. As interesting and entertaining as I find many of Kraus’ remarks, his interpretation of the changing book market

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is filled with many such idiosyncratic "universal truths." Ken Lopez's "Some Thoughts on the Maturing of the Rare Book Market," on the other hand, is a refreshingly clear and persuasive discussion of how today's antiquarian book market operates.

Book Talk sounds appealing and intriguing in theory. After all, haven't Nick Basbanes' many thick volumes demonstrated the public's fascination with bibliomania and willingness to buy a book on the subject? *Book Talk* comes across as too diffuse in focus, though, to grab that kind of attention. Editorially, too, there's an irksome misuse of commas throughout. The editors either don't grasp the difference between restrictive and

nonrestrictive clauses or simply don't pay attention to that kind of detail.

Luckily, *Book Talk's* individual essays bear enough high spots that most readers will come away from it invigorated by these memorable contributions. The overwhelming sentiment conveyed here, whether by collectors, dealers or librarians, is that the antiquarian book world is adapting to the times, despite the turmoil of our frenetic and ever-connected lives. ■

ABAA Benevolent Fund & Woodburn Fund

A contribution to the ABAA Benevolent Fund or to the Elisabeth Woodburn Memorial Fund is a meaningful way to honor the memory of a departed colleague. A contribution can also be a thoughtful celebration of an important event in the life of an antiquarian bookseller—a birthday, an anniversary, or a retirement.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

The Antiquarian Booksellers' Benevolent Fund is a non-profit charity fund established by the ABAA in 1952 to benefit any antiquarian bookseller in time of personal need. The Elisabeth Woodburn Memorial Fund offers financial assistance for education and scholarly research relevant to the antiquarian book trade.

The Benevolent Fund helped booksellers in New Orleans affected by Hurricane Katrina to stay in business and rebuild after devastating losses. The Elisabeth Woodburn Fund has given scholarships to participants in the Colorado Rare Book Seminar and for other educational purposes.

Direct your contributions and inquiries to:
Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America
20 West 44th Street
Fourth Floor
New York, NY 10036
212.944.8291
hq@abaa.org



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excelled themselves and produced two. After much consideration, discussion and debate they decided it was impossible to separate the claims of two outstanding books and determined therefore that there should be two joint winners and the \$10,000 Prize be divided between them.

So here they are, in no particular order. First "John Payne Collier: Scholarship and Forgery in the 19th Century" by Arthur and Janet Freeman. 'It's a big book, with big aims, and it succeeds magisterially.' Those are not my words, but those of the learned reviewer in *The Library*. It's a bio-bibliography, consisting of a 1,000-page *Life of Collier* linked and keyed to a 400 page bibliography. And it is a fascinating read from start to finish. Collier of course was an influential, prolific and highly respected scholar and writer - and at the same time the promulgator of a great body of forgeries. The Freemans among much else have sorted out the authentic books and the forgeries and the fabrications. This book does what it says on the title page: *Scholarship and Forgery in the 19th Century*. Could it start a cult on the scale of the T.J. Wise cult? Could Freeman become a household name like Carter and Pollard? Could there be Collier Fellowships and Seminars in universities around the world? We shall see, but it would be nice to think so. Published by Yale at £100, the two volume set is no more than the price of your ticket this evening.

And the other co-winner is: "A Bibliography of 17th century Numismatic Books" by Christian Dekesel, published by Spink (as you might expect) in London, though Dr. Dekesel is a Belgian scholar. It is monumental and meticulous. The judges were impressed by its erudition - and also I suspect by its weight. This is just Vol. I of 3 - and I won't need to explain why the others are not here. But this heavyweight is an intellectual heavyweight. The author, assisted by Mme. Dekesel, has not just examined every book but every copy of every book he has located in over 300 libraries and

collections. Each entry has all the data and detail you could possibly want, with a facsimile of the title thrown in. And remember, numismatic writing occurs in history, travel, economics and portrait books, and much else too. This book follows the Dekesel volume on 16th century numismatics and will itself be followed by 18th century volumes, already well advanced. The whole will comprise the Dekesel *Bibliotheca Nummaria*, covering three centuries, a magnificent achievement.

I was once ticked off in the nicest possible way by an eminent historian of the book for applying the word 'definitive' to a bibliography. "Is anything ever definitive?" she said - ever so sweetly. Well I guess not. But these two books come pretty close. They will still be standing when we have long been gone and the International League is proud to honour them with its Prize.

The judges also nominated two books for their Specially Commended Award. First, from Germany, Bernhard Fischer's *Der Verleger Johann Friedrich Cotta*. Johann Friedrich was head of the great Cotta publishing house of Stuttgart and Munich in its most brilliant period, 1787-1832. Cotta published Goethe and Schiller and practically every other notable

in literature and scholarship of the time. This is a detailed bibliography of the entire Cotta output of those years, with the printing history of every one of its publications - books, journals and graphics. A substantial work, published in three volumes by Saur of Munich.

And also Specially Commended was David Griffiths' *Bibliography of the Book of Common Prayer*, the evening's only single volume work, published by British Library in the U.K and Oak Knoll elsewhere in the world. It offers 450 years of publishing history, from Cranmer's famous text of 1549 to date, some 5000 different editions (including 1200 different translations), all meticulously differentiated and described, with collations, as you would expect. In the trade we sometimes complain that academic bibliography is all about books we never see. Nobody will say that about the *Book of Common Prayer*. This excellent work will take its place alongside Darlow & Moule's great *Catalogue of Bibles*.

So, one American author, one Belgian, one German and one British. An international result - and four books worth a permanent place on all our reference shelves. ■



Opening day at the ILAB Book Fair at New York's Javits Center.

Recent Books by Members

The Fore-edge Paintings of John T. Beer: A Biographical & Historical Essay followed by a Catalogue Raisonné based on the sale of his library. With a Prologue: The ABC's of Fore-edge Painting. By Jeff Weber. Los Angeles: Jeff Weber Rare Books, 2005. 164 pages. 210 copies printed by the Castle Press. \$155.00

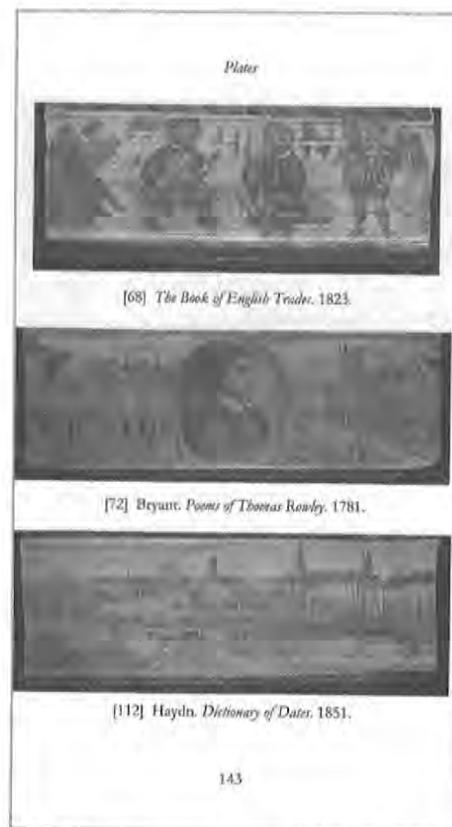
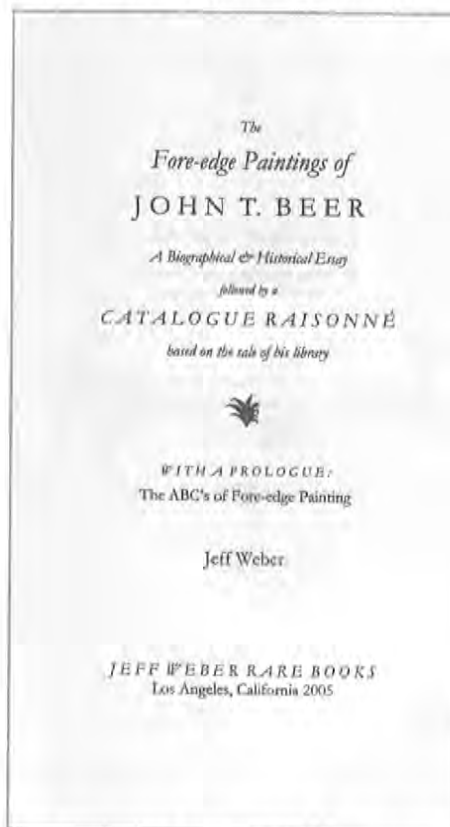
One might justifiably be a little suspicious of this reviewer's qualifications for reviewing a book about fore-edge painting. In the interest of full disclosure, I will admit to having held in my hands in 25 years of bookselling maybe five books which had paintings on their fore-edges, and only a single example during those same years has been in the inventory of the Brick Row Book Shop – and at that only for a few minutes; I had the painting removed (scraped off to be exact) from the book I thought it was defacing: an otherwise fine copy of an uncommon work of fiction by Sir Egerton Brydges.

But I am also an aficionado of thorough scholarship on relatively obscure and unrecorded but potentially interesting and useful subjects, and Jeff Weber has certainly accomplished that with his new book on the English fore-edge painter John Thomas Beer (1826-1902). Beer was also a tailor and clothier, a published poet, and a bookman, and once he advertised himself as a “funeral undertaker.” Jeff's book is the first work of its kind that is solely dedicated to the life and work of one fore-edge painter, and his expertise on such matters comes with solid pedigree. Jeff's grandfather, Carl J. Weber, wrote the earliest and still widely used treatises on fore-edge paintings; Jeff has been specializing in fore-edge paintings from the time of his beginnings in the trade; he has given talks and has written articles on the subject; and he is frequently consulted for his expertise by librarians, collectors and booksellers. I highly recommend that you consult with him before scraping off any fore-edge paintings.

John Thomas Beer lived in Rock Ferry, Cheshire. He painted fore-edges and

bindings for his own pleasure, and none were for sale during his lifetime. He was the first artist, according to Jeff, to identify himself by signing a fore-edge painting, and he painted on the fore-edges of at least 214 books, including four incunables. In this biography and history there is an analysis of the quality of his work, his methodology, including an accounting of how Beer acquired his books (his library was far more substantial than just the books on which he painted), the

he apparently wrote no poems on the subject of fore-edge painting – a missed opportunity.) The biography and analysis of Beer's work is carefully presented and interesting, but the most useful part of this work for the antiquarian bookseller is the 84-page *Catalogue Raisonné* of Beer's fore-edge paintings, with some bibliographic description of each book, details about the subject of the paintings, provenance after Beer's death and current location, if known. I am relieved to report that there are no works listed here by Egerton Brydges.



The title page (left) and illustrations of several examples of fore-edge paintings (right) including those on *The Book of English Trades*, *Poems of Thomas Rowley*, and *Dictionary of Dates*.

kinds of books he preferred for fore-edge paintings (bibles were the winner with 53 examples), the final dispensation of his library at auction following his death (Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, 1903), and some record of where those books went. Among the illustrations are 10 color photographs of Beer's work, examples of his bookplate, facsimiles of his handwriting, advertisements for his clothing businesses, and the title page of one of his four books of poetry. (Alas,

In the history of bookbinding, the subject of fore-edge painting is controversial, and for the bookseller who wants to sell them it is certainly a challenging field. The Webers (Jeff and Carl) have made important contributions towards establishing scholarly legitimacy to the study of fore-edge paintings, and Jeff's new work on John Thomas Beer is a noble and welcome continuation in those efforts. ■

John Crichton

New Members

The ABAA *Newsletter* is pleased to welcome the following new full members who were accepted at the Board of Governors Meeting in August:

Earl M. Manz, Yesterday's Gallery, P.O. Box 154, 179 Prospect St., East Woodstock, CT 06244. Ph: (860) 928-1216. Email: pmanz23yahoo.com.

James Sarantidis, Grendel Books, 18 Ireland St., W. Chesterfield, MA 01084. Tel: (413) 296-0099 Email: jim@grendelbooks.com.

Larry S. Zeman, Productive Arts, 2030

Main St., Ste. 1050, Irvine, CA 92614.
(800) 533-3244. Fax: (216) 398-8691
Email: infoproductivearts.com.

Associate Memberships:

Lynne Veatch, The Veatches Arts of the Book, Northampton, MA.

Emily Klug, Leonard Fox, Ltd, New York, NY. Membership effective January, 2007.

Kelly F. Chandler, Oak Knoll Books, New Castle, DE. Membership effective January, 2007.

Membership Updates

Bartleby's has a new address and fax:
1132 29th St., Washington, D.C. 20007.
Fax: (202) 298-5554.

The Burrow Bookshop has a new address and phone: 52 Tory Hill Rd., Langdon, NH 03602. Phone: (603) 835-2535.

Caney Booksellers has a new address and phone: 418 Pavonia Circle, Marlton, NJ 08053. Phone: (856) 396-4077.

First Folio has a new email address:
firstfolio@charter.net.

Norman Kane has a new address and phone: 113 Creek's Edge Chapel Hill, NC 27516. Phone: (919) 967-9287.

Charles B. Wood III has an address change. His new P.O. box number was incorrectly listed last issue. It should be: 382369.

The ABAA *Newsletter* is looking for regular contributors to write columns or occasional articles. The *Newsletter* relies on our members to contribute material. Specific areas of in need of coverage are:

Bibliography Bar
Book-related Events and Exhibitions
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If you are interested, please contact Susan Benne,
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The deadline for submissions
to the next Newsletter is

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