The ABAA NEWSLETTER

VOLUME EIGHT, NUMBER 4 ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA SUMMER 1997

The new home of ABAA headquarters: 20 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036-6604.

ABAA Relocates Headquarters

By Liane Wood-Thomas

In early September the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America will relocate its headquarters office for the first time in thirty-four years. Since 1963, the ABAA's address has been 50 Rockefeller Plaza.

The new location will be at the General Society for Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York, 20 West 44th Street. The Society, founded in 1785, was located on Broadway and Robinson Street (now Park Place). Its present building, constructed in 1891, first served as a military boarding school for the Army's Silk Stocking Regiment until acquired by the society in 1898. The Society refurbished the building, which has been nominated for the National Register, with the help of Andrew Carnegie, a member. The structure houses the Society Library (private), the Mechanics Institute, and the Lock Museum. Free evening classes, including computer instruction, are held for those employed in building and construction trades. The Small Press Center is the only other tenant.

According to the American Institute of Architects in their *Guide to New York City*, "a free, evening technical school founded in 1820 is housed in this grim classical structure. The interior is the surprise: a three-story gallery ringed drill hall housing a library and exhibits of old locks."

Indeed, the interior is an imposing three-story atrium encased in elegant polished wood. The library began as a general collection for young journeymen and apprentices. Its distinctive holding sprang from the needs of the unfolding technological developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Great

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Suppressed Introduction Causes Stir

The following was written by Germaine Greer at the invitation of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association as an introduction to its June 1997 London book fair catalogue. ABA officers, however, "decided that the submitted piece condemned, at least by implication," some of its members and declined to publish the piece in the catalogue. The London Times *subsequently printed the article, which appeared as a feature a couple weeks before the opening of the ABA fair. With Ms. Greer's permission, it is printed here for the first time in the United States.*

by Germaine Greer

A book, whether well or badly made, is a very intimate thing. Only you the reader can hold it in your hands, open it, and enter its pages. If other people try to share your reading with you, peering over your shoulder as you read on the Underground, you feel embarrassed and try to angle the opening away from the violating gaze. A stranger who tries to read what you read as you are reading it is the worst kind of intruder, reading your mind as it were without your permission, worse than tapping your phone. If the book is well made, of handmade paper stoutly stitched and hand-tooled leather binding,

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Letters to the Editor

From: Bo Wreden
Menlo Park, CA
My mother, Byra J. Wreden, thanks you for your generous coverage in the spring 1997 *ABAA Newsletter* upon her receipt of the Warren R. Howell Award this year.

We would also particularly bring to the attention of your readers and any researchers of the history of the American antiquarian book trade an addition to Donald C. Dickinson's fine story on book dealers' archives in the same issue. As mentioned in the Howell award article, in late 1996 my mother gave the William P. Wreden Books and Manuscripts Archive, ca. 1937-1987, to the Department of Special Collections at the Stanford University Libraries. Along with the many other archival collections listed in Dickinson's story this collection is now available at Stanford for use by scholarly researchers. Additional archival papers relating to the business for the period 1987 to the present will be donated in future years.

Mr. Dickinson has been in contact with us regarding the reference work he is preparing on American antiquarian book dealers.

From: Joel McKee Chapman
Acorn Books
On all [Internet] sites wherein our inventory is listed (Interloc, ABE, Bibliofind, and our own), we state in our terms that our prices are net to all. Our purpose is to disallow those who might pass themselves off as booksellers who in fact are not—the Internet not providing for a face-to-face or print method of ascertaining the veracity of such "booksellers."

On the other hand, we realize that the ABAA Code of Ethics states that members "should" offer a reciprocal discount to other members, so as of this month (August 1997), Acorn Books does pass that along, except for the very, very few instances where we're constricted by the amount of money we've paid for an item, despite our not stating such in our aforementioned terms. To do so ("Prices net to all, except ABAA members"), might just get some folks' dander up, which is all too likely on this [electronic] medium.

Because of the immediate accessibility of everyone's inventory on-line and that word "should" in the code of ethics, we wonder if the ABAA might wish to put forth some statement on this new situation. We have had instances where we've received postcard quotes for higher prices than we have found them on that same dealer's on-line listings. And many times we've paid full price or have had to ask if we could have a discount, which can be a bit awkward or potentially embarrassing with some folks. In fact there've been many times when members have had to ask us the same. Perhaps every member could state his discount policy in the membership directory? We just wish there was a way to make this on-line discounting to ABAA members crystal clear so that there would not be the potential problem for "hard feelings." Maybe it just cannot be done, but we thought we'd raise the question in any case. ■

Marilyn Darnaby and Florence Shay, of Titles, Inc., at the Chicago Book Fair in May.

Correction

Donald C. Dickinson's e-mail address was incorrectly cited in the the last issue of the *Newsletter* (volume VIII, no. 3). His address is: DON1927@CIT.ARIZONA.EDU

Mr. Dickinson would still like to hear from you regarding archival collections of notable antiquarian book dealers in the United States. Besides e-mail, he can be reached at: Donald C. Dickinson, 8451 Malvern Place, Tucson, AZ 85710; phone: 520-885-3235.

New Venue for Los Angeles Fair

The Southern California Chapter of the ABAA is very happy to announce that the XXXI California International Antiquarian Book Fair scheduled for February 13-15, 1998 will take place at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

The Fair will be held in the Convention Center's West Hall, which boasts 63,000 square feet of exhibition space. In contrast, the Airport Hilton, site of previous Los Angeles fairs, offered a combined exhibition space of 41,000 square feet over two semi-adjacent rooms.

The spacious new fair setting will include display booths measuring ten feet by ten feet spread along aisles that are ten feet wide. The exhibition area will be fully carpeted, and no posts or pillars will disrupt views or booths.

The West Exhibit Hall is illuminated with multiple high-intensity lights on a thirty-six-foot high ceiling, resulting in even lighting for every booth.

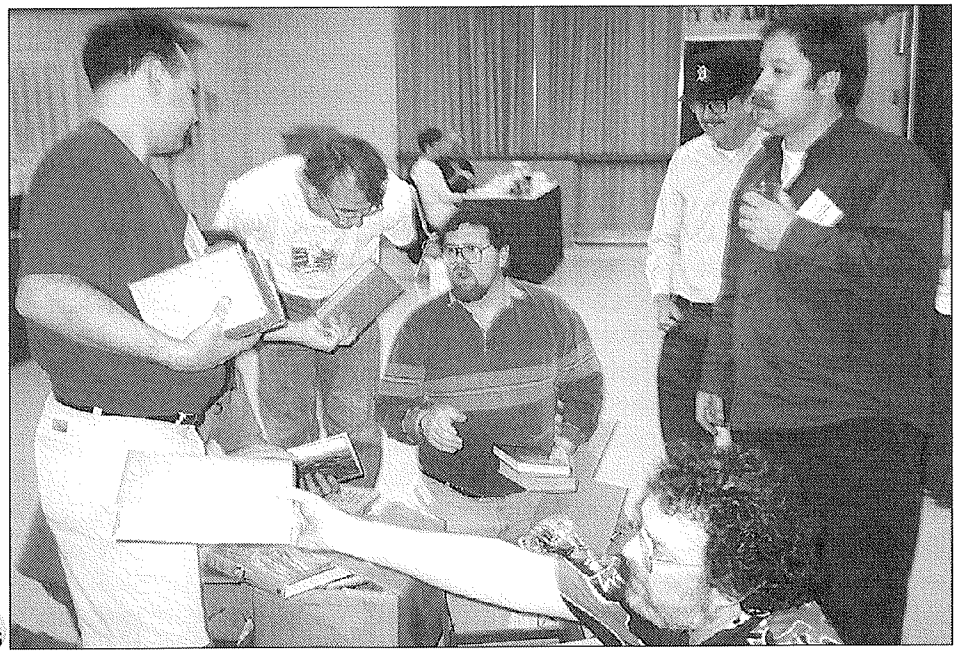
The 1996 Los Angeles fair set new attendance records. Three parking garages were filled, and the exhibit halls were crowded at the 5:00 pm closing time on Sunday. The fair's new location in the Convention Center is close to all freeways serving downtown Los Angeles. Incoming downtown traffic is normally light on Friday afternoons and weekends, affording easy access to the fair.

In addition, commuter trains from San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and other locations provide direct connections with the Metro Blue Line which stops at the 12th Street/Convention Center station one block from the entrance to the Book Fair. ■

Norwegian Association Moves

ILAB member organization Norsk Antikvarbokhandlerforening has moved. It can now be reached at:

Norsk Antikvarbokhandlerforening
Boks 3167 Elisenberg
N-0208 Oslo
NORWAY ■



Feeding frenzy at the Chicago fair: (left to right) John Wronoski (Lame Duck Books), Jeff Marks, Tom Congalton (Between the Covers), Lin Respess, Stephen Daiter, and (in front) Andrew Cahan.

ILAB Book Fairs

1997

September 18-20
Washington, DC (ABAA)
Convention Center

September 19-21
Cologne, Germany (VDA)
Josef Haubrich Kunsthalle

September 22-24
Barcelona, Spain (AILA)
Estació del Nord

October 31-November 2
Sydney, Australia (ANZAAB)
Hotel Inter-Continental

November 14-16
Boston, MA (ABAA)
Hynes Convention Center

November 21-23
Helsinki, Finland (SA)
Valkoinen Sali

1998

January 29-February 1
Stuttgart, Germany (VDA)

February 13-15
Los Angeles, California (ABAA)
Los Angeles Convention Center

February 26-28
Amsterdam, Netherlands (NVvA)
Rai Congress Center

April 16-19
New York, NY (ABAA)
Park Avenue Armory

May 14-17
Paris, France (SLAM)
La Maison de la Mutualité

May 29-30
Copenhagen, Denmark

June 4-7
London, England (ABA)
Olympia Exhibition Centre

October 9-11
Vienna, Austria
17th Annual ILAB Book Fair

Children's Literature

The following is based on a lecture delivered at the Kerlan Collection of Children's Literature at the University of Minnesota in the summer of 1995. I had been asked to speak about juveniles and children's literature, a subject about which I know little. Pressed for an appropriate topic, I spoke instead on the books I experienced as a child and adolescent, my personal children's literature.

by Rob Rulon-Miller

As a child I did not think of books in the same way as I think of them today. Books then were no more or less important to me than, say, the bathtub. I can recall neither my first encounter with a book, nor a significant moment in which a book played a part. I was enamoured of no specific character or story. The books were just there, in quantity, and they became part of my consciousness, if not my every-day life. What more could I have made of them at such an early age? I recognized the basic physical features. I saw that they lined the walls. I took them for granted.

I have only sparse recollections of my parents' reading to me, and those stand out, not for the words or the illustrations, but for the setting: an ample, well-cushioned window-seat, second floor, high under the canopy of a gigantic copper beach, pleasant enough for reading, and sublime for daydreaming. I have an early, isolated memory of my mother showing me crossword puzzles up there, the salty breeze blowing in from Narragansett Bay. She was working a spiral-bound book of puzzles, edited, no doubt, by Margaret Farrar of the *Times*. Puzzle books and quiz books were ubiquitous in my family, and we were always challenging one another with trivia and riddles.

At the beginning of one of my early years in school I remember a questionnaire that I brought home from school—maybe third or fourth grade—one question of which was this: How many books are in your home? a) none; b) 1-10; c) 10-25; d) over 25. This question boggled me. I grew up in a house with a thousand books at least, and there were almost that many again next door, at grandmother's. What wasn't on the shelves was stacked in store-rooms, or later, as the quantities grew, in boxes in the basement. Didn't everybody have a thousand books?

ABAA Publicity Campaign Update

by Esther C. Fan

My thanks to all the book fair promoters who cooperated in sending me information about their PR efforts. I have added your ideas to my own and formed a centralized plan that should serve as a helpful guideline for those looking for more PR ideas. It is essential that each of the promoters see what their colleagues are doing and to confirm that all bases are being covered. I have also put together a PR summary form that each promoter will be required to fill out before and after their event, so we can see how PR can be improved from year to year.

Over 160 book organizations and book trade publications now know about our speakers' bureau through a press release I issued in June. Fifteen members have signed on, but this is not nearly enough when we have over 450 members. We need more of you! I have received inquiries for more information from many organizations, including the Museum of Printing in Texas and the International Society of Appraisers. We will get more responses if people know more local members are available. In addition to the PR exposure, speakers are often treated as guests, incurring little or no expenses. I am planning more publicity in the future, targeting special collections and major institutional libraries, but would like to have more volunteers before doing such a large mailing.

In our continuing outreach to other book organizations, I have contacted nine groups to explore how they and ABAA can work together to promote interest in rare books and book collecting. So far, two of these groups, the American Library Association and the Friends of Libraries USA, have indicated interest in working with the ABAA.

Now, I know that ABAA members are chock-full of interesting stories and anecdotes gathered from their experiences in working with rare books, collectors, and other wondrous birds in the book world. Thus, I will begin asking many of you to share your fabulous book tales with me, the ABAA *Newsletter,* the book trade, and special interest magazines. But don't wait to hear from me! If you have great tales about your experiences as a bookseller, tell me and the *Newsletter.* This is a wonderful opportunity to get the word aout about the ABAA in a way that bibliophiles would love to hear about. I want to gather as much of each member's background and experiences as possible, since all of it is also important to the ABAA's history and tradition, where the organization comes from and where it is going in the future. What a great book this would certainly make someday!

Last but not least, we are taking a very serious and critical long-term look at the role advertising can still play for the ABAA. Since advertising is the most expensive method of PR, and must be tracked as carefully and as accurately as possible, we are debating if there are any worthy goals achievable with advertising, and if so, how to get the best results for our advertising dollar.

As always, I encourage you to tell me about any book events, discoveries, encounters, and other news that would help keep the book-loving public aware of how ABAA are the best people to approach in the rare and antiquarian book world. To get in touch with me, contact Esther Fan at 414 Delaware Street, New Castle DE 19720; phone: 302-326-1976 (always leave a message); fax: 302-328-7274; e-mail: Esther.Fan@ssnet.com. ■

The cellars of grandmothers the world over contain much that is both mysterious and instructive to grandchildren, and my grandmother's cellar was no different. She lived alone next door for as long as I knew her, which was twenty-five years, in a large Victorian house with thirty-odd rooms on five and a half levels. The two special places for me in this majestic building, places I planted my flag and claimed as my own, were the one-room aerie at the top of a tower on the fourth and a half floor; and a dark, cavernous, magical basement. Time and time again, I was sucked down its cool granite halls, drawn by the dark and the dank, drawn by shadow toward the coal shoot and bin, the blackest and most foreboding corner still heaped with a crusty mound of coal. Far back in a distant recess, behind a squat stand of steamer trunks, along a dirty outside wall, were three large book cases filled with books, each case about three feet long, and each with perhaps five or six shelves. More books were stacked between them on the floor, and more still were mixed in with old blankets in the trunks.

What made these books special to me, and what made them my books in the end, was their state of decay. All were water-damaged. On some, mold had set in, and on others, vermin had nipped the corners. Lots of dead bugs were scattered about them, and sheets of dust and mortar had settled over their top edges. With bookseller eyes I see them now as never important books, rather secondary and tertiary literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mixed in with some local history. It was strange to me that even though they were damaged and consigned to perdition in this basement, no one could bring themselves to throw them out, as if someone were saving them just for me. I came to covet, in those youthful hours, those moldy books, many of whose pages could not be turned without them tearing off in my hands.

What a find for me! Those books in grandmother's cellar fascinated me in a way those that were read to me, or those I was told read, did not. I never once "read" a book that came from grandmother's basement. But I paged through a lot of them, and it was here, in this dim alcove that I perhaps first grasped not what a book was—for I had gotten that much from reading Dr. Seuss—but rather, what a book could be: a mystery to be fathomed, very much like the basement itself, foreboding and comforting at the same time. It was on these shelves that I first encountered the names of Longfellow and Holmes, Higginson and Stowe. I distinctly remember *The Memoirs of U.S. Grant*, and there was a long run of *Harper's Magazine*, to which I returned years later in my early career as a bookseller, to extract volume V, containing the October, 1851 issue in which was printed a contribution by Herman Melville used by Harper's as a promo for *Moby Dick*. I'd like to think of this as the first book I scouted.

What now seems remarkable about my fascination for these books in grandmother's basement is that in my own home next door there were two tons of books at least, not damaged, readily accessible, and with good light to read by. I can only guess why I ignored these books early on. Perhaps they were too much an extension of my parents' personal world for me to grasp, while the books in the bowels of grandmother's cellar were too easily accessible to a curious and adventurous little kid, rummaging to his heat's content, not to take for all they were worth.

When I was ten or eleven my father had new bookcases built in the library. There were two banks of shelves, with glass doors above and cabinets beneath, and the shelves were lit by soft gray florescent lights up and down the sides, so that at night, with all the other lights out, the books radiated and glowed like something primordial.

In my parents' bedroom were my mother's novels, mostly current or recent fiction, including, as I remember, a lot of Graham Greene, Hemingway and Aldous Huxley, and a thick paperback whose spine I can see still, the chilling silhouettes of two distinctly-clad figures, Stendahl's *The Red and the Black*. Simple words, that title, so I remembered it. There was also Agatha Christie and Alastair McLean—authors I ploughed through in my late teens—and my father's Perry Masons, which I never touched.

There was another title I remember from those shelves in my parents' room, the one incongruity among the modern novels and thrillers: Sir Martin Conway's *The First Crossing of Spitzbergen,* which contained, I discovered, my other grandmother's bookplate. I remember having it down off the shelf once when the cloth spine suddenly separated from the rest of the binding. I quickly put it back on the shelf, and tried to position the spine in a way so as to conceal the damage, but to no avail. I decided to hide the evidence and took the book with me to my room, and I shoved it behind others on my own shelves. This book is still on my shelf at home today. The spine is still off and you can easily spot the book from across the room for the elastic bands that hold it on.

In the hall, just outside my own bedroom were more modern novels and historical works: John Masefield was here, as was George Moore, John Galsworthy, and Henry Adams, and the collected works of the nineteenth-century historian John Fiske. I walked past these books—hundreds of them—day in, day out. Occasionally I looked at them, on rainy days, or to escape the babysitters. Once I counted them for no particular reason, except perhaps in response to that school questionnaire.

In my own bedroom there were bookcases on the east and north walls, and these were lined with books on sports (mostly baseball, but football was making inroads) and Ripley's *Believe It or Not*s that I snitched from my parents' shelves—an early sign of the bibliomania. There were also the *Mad Magazine* paperbacks that I still have in a carton in the furthest recesses of my bathroom closet, some 30 or 40 of them. I was a subscriber to *Mad*, and the magazine and the books they published played a big part in my negotiating adolescence. I doubt I'll ever sell them.

My grandmother would not have approved of *Mad*, had she only known. To have her own sway, she subscribed me to every Time-Life series going, and there were plenty in the early sixties: Nature Series, Science Series, Travel Series. These were on my shelves in abundance, neatly shelved in chronological order. The

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Rulon-Miller

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best of the lot was the Historical Series, which only lasted six issues or so, or at least that's all I ever received, and I'm sure it was the publishers, and not my grandmother, who stopped the subscription. The Historical Series had all kinds of great pictures of the American West, bear hunts, and steamboats, gunslingers and illustrations of old political broadsides printed in bold wooden types. I was fascinated by these. Equally fascinating for me was *American Heritage* magazine, with lavish color reproductions of Currier & Ives lithographs of trains steaming across the continent, or firefighters battling raging blazes in the heart of Harlem. I still own the set I grew up with, and when I went back to sort through them about seven or eight years ago, I remember how soiled and worn the early volumes were—evidence of so many late nights paging through them. *American Heritage* is a scorned set now, for it is a long and cumbersome set in its complete state, common and unsaleable; but in my opinion, no household with children should be without them. I was also subscribed to *Horizon* magazine, which was oriented towards the fine arts, but these didn't appeal to an adolescent boy so much as the whaling scenes of stove longboats and spoutings of the agonized, bloody whale.

My mother must have worried about the blood and gore because books started turning up in my room that I wouldn't have wanted ordinarily, like Jean Kerr's *Please Don't Eat the Daisies*; and Watson and Crick's *The Double Helix*. On the other hand, Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon*, with its illustrations of the bullfight, mysteriously disappeared.

In time, all these books satisfied and enriched; gradually, I began to notice the books at home, especially those behind the glass doors in the room we called the library, our living room. Here was my father's collection of New England authors, and selected highspots in any number of fields, many of which had passed on to him from his mother (the other grandmother), a woman I never knew, though herself a noted collector of books and antiques in Baltimore in the thirties and forties. Many others had been collected by my father in his early days, as a student at Brown University.

Occasionally my father would take down a volume and show it to me, gingerly opening the book to the title-page and illustrations, as if the pages themselves were made of gold. I remember the thick, stout copy of the American edition of *Moby Dick*; I remember the brilliant color plates in Audubon's eight-volume *Birds of America*; Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* in its original bright yellow monthly parts; I remember the fore-edge painting of a fishing scene; I remember the bright green and gilt pictorial cloth binding on the first edition of *Huck Finn*. Oddly, I don't have any early memories of the best part of the collection, that which pertained to Henry David Thoreau, the author with whom, in the end, I most closely identified my father. Perhaps he thought of these as his most private books, and that by showing them to me, some connection he had with them would be broken. His collection of Thoreau, I learned later, was very good, with fine first editions in slipcases of *Walden* and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, the latter with pencil corrections in the text by Thoreau, and there was a long run of various editions of *Walden*, including many foreign ones, as well as family and association copies. He also owned, incredibly enough, two pages of the *Walden* manuscript. Such touchstones of literary history within inches of my grubby, inexperienced hands! But what could I, a boy of twelve or thirteen, know of these?

What I did know was that opening the glass doors to my father's books was a nuisance; it meant moving chairs and lamps, which I'm now certain were strategically placed. So I was drawn for practical reasons to the other end of the library where there were three or four floor-to-ceiling sections of family books, for want of a better term—books that somehow belonged to everybody and anybody. On the east wall were nautical and yachting books (our other family passion was boats), including two or three my father had written and published himself. On the south wall was a section of travel books, Michelin and Baedeker guides, books my parents had purchased or had been given as presents before, during, or after their wanderings, and another section on the art and antiquities of the countries they visited. On the west wall was a small section of architecture—coffee table books with stunning black and white photographs of colonial and Georgian houses, and others with color photographs of castles and villas, plus a shelf or two of books about furniture, some of which pictured—my mother made sure I knew—pieces that were in the next room.

The two books my father wrote, about cruising in the Mediterranean, attracted me to the nautical shelves because I was pictured there in his books, many times a Kodak memory, a skinny, towhead kid of nine. His books drew me to others in the same section, and by the time I went off to college I doubt there was a book on those shelves I hadn't paged through, not a picture I had missed. One of my favorites was *Heavy Weather Sailing* by Adlard Coles, a Brit from Cowes on the Isle of Wight. I didn't know it then, of course, but it was a book that became and remains the standard textbook for surviving storms at sea in sail boats. Again and again I went back to its series of plates showing storms whipping the enraged ocean, and the damaged rigs and hulls of yachts that had been pitch-poled or turtled. The last and, for me, most fascinating plate of all showed a rare photograph of a rogue wave eighty or ninety feet high, rising out of a turbulent, chaotic sea. I remember also the books of yachting photographs by Stanley and Morris Rosenfeld, the premier yachting photographers from the forties to the sixties, and the accounts of the great single-handers, among them Joshua Slocum, the first to sail around the world alone, and the great solo racer, Sir Francis Chichester, whose accounts of solo trans-Atlantic voyages thrilled me. Many of these pictures and texts are clear in my mind today, and I believe they had a profound effect on whatever abilities I have as a sailor, and they have certainly given me a deeper understanding for the power and magnitude of even tranquil seas.

Another book I remember well: Ralph Ceram's *The March of Archaeology*, published in the late fifties, was a popular

account of the history of archaeology. Many a winter's afternoon found me captive to the pictures and accounts of the great archaeological discoveries in Egypt and Asia Minor in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when layers of Troy were successively unearthed and the tomb of Tutankhamen discovered. One picture in particular haunted me, that of the mummified body of Ramses II—and I swear there was a time I was checking the book once a week to assure myself that the mummy was still in print and not in my room. (As it turned out, a mummy did find its way to my house, if not my room: a mummy case with scattered body parts left among the linen wrappings which I recently offered on behalf of a local consignor. If you think there is no connection between this mummy case and those parts of *The March of Archaeology* I absorbed when I was young, you are wrong. When I first heard of a mummy case needing to be sold, don't think I didn't flash back to the excitement I felt in our family library thirty-odd years ago.)

In September 1966 I transferred into the seventh grade of a private school. The summer before, I encountered my first reading list, a typed list of more than thirty (yes, thirty!) titles presented to me by my mother, titles I was told were required reading by the school. It was daunting, to say the least, but my parents had virtually all of the books, and we would be on the boats a lot that summer, so I set in to reading them in a major-league sort of way, and got through most—eighty or ninety percent of them. One of the ones I didn't read was *The Prince and the Pauper*. When I arrived for my first day of school in September I was given my first assignment: book reports on the three books assigned for summer reading, among them, yes, *The Prince and the Pauper*. Classmates had it all too easy, reading Mark Twain and Jack London, and I forget the third—maybe Salinger. I, on the other hand, a young teenager in a new school with no friends, was already looked upon as a freak for having read books like *David Goes Voyaging in the Galapagos*, and *The Sea Around Us* by Rachel Carson, and twenty-eight or so others of the same ilk—a list my mother had snookered me with.

An Antiquarian Odyssey: Random Recollections of a Life in Bookselling

Part III

by Jens J. Christoffersen

As the years passed there were still two unfulfilled urges: a more hands-on role in the work with rare books (descriptive) and the wish to be independent. In 1972 my son had begun a four-year study at St. Lawrence University located at Canton, New York, close to the Canadian border and on the fringe of the Adirondacks. It brought with it the need to drive through this wonderful wilderness area several times a year, at different seasons. The experience was not entirely new because we had made the trip through the Adirondacks between Montreal and New York many times over the past twenty-five years. Once you have become a friend of the mountains the fascination keeps growing. When I continued to find standing want ads in the AB for "Adirondackana," I began to familiarize myself with the literature about the area, especially the early books, and became an Adirondack fan. During my visits to the area I started to buy, and the collection eventually became the springboard for dealing.

I left Kraus in 1978 and was almost ready to take off. The first catalogue was so successful that I knew I was on to something. Many catalogues followed, and eventually I expanded the scope to comprise the entire state of New York, especially Westchester County, where we lived. An early boost in building up an inventory of o.p. and rare books in this latter category came from acquiring Ed Glaser's local history section prior to his moving

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If there is a moral here it is this: kids don't just need kids' books. I had my share of *Winnie the Pooh*, the *Cat-in-the-Hat* series, and my favorite, *One Morning in Maine*, which was about a hurricane. But kids need grown-up books, too, for they will be grown-ups themselves someday, and navigating the course to adulthood is no easy chore. Books can still be had for a buck or two apiece. Two hundred and fifty dollars spent on even marginal books can have lasting, positive effects of the mind of a child.

Bigger changes are always in store, and successive generations will be there to surf them. How well they surf, how adroitly they navigate their future will depend on what they know and how they know it. Children can learn much through the power of observation, and books at any age level offer much to be observed, whether by reading the texts or just eyeballing the illustrations; to speak nothing of the tactile pleasure of holding even a badly-made book. Books as a whole still offer the best gateway to the past, as well as the future, and are themselves separate life forms happily coexisting with our own.

Although I don't recollect my father ever reading to me much, if at all, (unless it was hollering grammatically-lame instructions down a hatch at me trying to install some gismo in the bilge) but he could sure tell a story. On weekends, in the steely half-light of winter mornings, he would guide my sister and me through the magical world of Robbie the Rabbit, a happy-go-lucky, unharried hare who weekly assembled motley and sundry crews and mounted untold expeditions to capture the moon and bring it down to earth. The moon was inevitably harnessed, and the crew inevitably pulled and pulled, but to no avail, even with the help of celestial winches and cranes. No matter how weird, or far-fetched either the characters or the plot may have been, the moon would not budge. Not ever. Years later I saved up $700 and bought a telescope, thinking I wanted to be an astronomer. Every kid has dreams, and every piece of literature—oral or otherwise—an adult to call it its own. ■

Christoffersen

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from New Rochelle to the West Coast. Other dealers eventually offered me similar opportunities. As to Adirondackana, I had the good fortune to acquire part of the library of the late Miss Dorothy Plum, the well-known compiler of the standard Adirondack bibliography. She was nearing her ninetieth birthday and had to give up her house high on a mountain top in Keene Valley, New York, from which there was a breathtaking view of Mount Marcy, the state's highest peak. An general collection of New York state books came from buying York State Tradition, a mail order enterprise in Saranac. Thus started Harbor Hill Books, named for a street near our house in Mamaroneck, close to the harbor. I had become a regional specialist in the field of Americana. My experience in reprinting now had to be utilized as well, and as I discovered which titles were rare and high-priced, I compiled my list of candidates for reissue as offset reprints.

My first title was *Historical Sketches of Northern New York and the Adirondack Wilderness,* an 1877 book much in demand. Later I expanded my list to comprise most of the very early books on the Adirondacks, starting with the earliest printed book on the subject, *Long Lake,* by John Todd (1845). Many of these classics featured introductions by well-known scholars, and my bestseller became the two-volume set, *History of the Adirondacks,* by Alfred Donaldson, the cornerstone of the literature which at the time cost $200-250 on the antiquarian market. The reprint listed for $39.50, went through six printings, and provided the necessary capital to continue. The next most important area was Westchester County, my home county, reprinting many of its town histories and even three large town histories of Connecticut (Stamford, Greenwich, Ridgefield). My list included many original works published by Harbor Hill Books for the first time. Two of these were *The Place Names of Westchester County* and *History in Asphalt: The Origin of Bronx Street and Place Names,* both of which went through several printings. In the Adirondacks field, *The Birch Bark Books of Henry Abbott* got great reviews and had excellent sales. These miniature books on personal fishing adventures had been issued privately in around one hundred copies each as Christmas greetings to friends during the years 1914-1932, and I found individual copies listed in ABAA member Angler's Bookshelf's catalogues at between $100 and $200. The problem here was to find a complete set of all nineteen books. The *Union List of Serials* showed only two such sets, one being at St. Lawrence University Library, my son's alma mater. It pays to have friends (I had given a speech there on the rare book business a few years before), and the library graciously lent me their irreplaceable copy. It was photographed without being taken apart and returned in its original condition. The reprint, reproducing four pages to one, listed at $19.50, with a jacket picturing a grove of birch trees photographed on Weaver Street in Larchmont, New York.

The marketing was first by direct mail to a very comprehensive mailing list; second, wholesale through bookstores which were visited frequently; and last, but not least, by reviews in local newspapers and specialist magazines (*Adirondack Life,* for one, where I soon established a personal relationship with reviewers). This led to several comprehensive, personal interviews (not solicited by me!) which did much to cement my position in the field. Frankly, Harbor Hill Books had become a by-word to collectors, libraries, historical societies, town historians, and even to genealogists.

Concurrently with regional bookselling and publishing I had also begun to purchase rare books in a much higher price class, including early printed books, and I was fortunate to acquire several libraries in these categories. One such library, a collection of Greek and Latin classics, mostly from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with some incunabula and some early manuscripts, was steered to me by a good friend and book collector, and we decided to make it a joint venture. It formed my *Catalogue One: The Classics ... Auctores Graeci & Latini Saeculi XV ad XVIII.* It is perhaps ironic that, after having compiled and produced hundreds of antiquarian catalogues for others and for myself over a period of almost fifty years, I was at last ready for a *Catalogue One*. It was, however, the first catalogue bearing my personal name; all my previous catalogues had been published under a trade name. Many additional catalogues followed during the next ten years or so, and some of my colleagues may remember them. They were somewhat eclectic in scope, but I tried to continue the line of early Greek and Latin classics, a field that holds much fascination for me, and also Books about Books, a subject matter that we all love.

I have been asked why all my covers bear the same illustration of a Paris Seine bank *bouquiniste's* display. [Reproduced in *ABAA Newsletter* VIII, 2]. Not only is it, of course, suggestive of our trade but there is a special circumstance attached to this particular drawing by Leo Estvad, a popular book illustrator of pre-war Copenhagen. He had been engaged to illustrate the centennial publication about Høst's bookshop in 1936 and spent about a week wandering around the large building, sketching away, using charcoal or a felt pen, with a final water color tint. There were a number of discards which were auctioned off among the staff, and I was the successful bidder on this one (a different version is shown in the book). Unfortunately, one of my catalogue printers neglected to return the original, and it has been irretrievably lost.

Apropos the *ABAA Newsletter* series "House Calls": I have a nice story that fits this category—not a gyp story, however. A young lady who specialized in digging up old books in the homes of affluent Westchester County and then peddled them to dealers, came to me one day. She did not bring any books, but wanted me to make a house call in Scarsdale, on Brown Road, where there were some books that she wanted; the party wanted to sell the collection as a whole, and that was over her head. When I heard "Brown Road" something spooked in my mind: had I not known someone who commuted to there from New York city, or was it a dream, or perhaps something from a former life? Never mind—I went there and found some ladies sitting around the living room; there were some interesting and nice-looking

books on the shelves, among them first editions of the two Sherlock Holmes volumes. I was ready to make a bid or to hear what they were asking. They then showed me a one-drawer file cabinet in which there were "some autographs." I started to look through it and realized that the contents consisted of the correspondence file of bookseller Laurence Gomme, who had passed away in 1974. It now came back to me that Gomme always was in a hurry to catch the train to Scarsdale, and that he lived on Brown Road.

I purchased the small collection which, I am sure, was only a fractional remnant of his original library. The books were not bad, but the correspondence file was remarkable, particularly to me because Gomme had been my first boss in America some forty years earlier. There was much material dating back to Gomme's association with Mitchell Kennerley's "Little Book Shop Around the Corner" on Manhattan's 29th Street. Much of the autograph material was offered in my *Catalogue No.4*, 1986. It was on this occasion that I came to realize Gomme's standing in American literary life.

The time had come when Harbor Hill Books and Rare Books would have to part ways. Even though the publishing business provided a more regular cash flow it also required continued investment in order to remain viable, and the back list inventory had a tendency of growing. I rented considerable space in a nearby warehouse, where the rent had tripled, and the nature of the business, especially the wholesale end of it, demanded my presence at all times. The chain stores Waldenbooks and B. Dalton had been important markets, but changes in ownership, new buying policies, arbitrary returns, etc. had made them rather undesirable to do business with. I wanted to sell that business as an entity: publishing rights, name, and all.

I am tempted to pause here for a few reflections on the book trade as a whole, as its structure has changed during the postwar years. Are antiquarian booksellers perhaps the last individualists left among its members? I have seen one country, supposedly of high social and intellectual standards, go down the tube, "book-shop-wise," within a few years, giving way to chain stores managed from some remote place (as far as from Stamford, Connecticut to California!), and for the most part staffed with young people whose sole instruction in the business was how to operate the company network computer. The chain stores proliferated, killing off local businesses, which in many cases had been built up by generations of able, hard-working families, only for the chains to collapse in the end under their own weight, or to be merged into still more unmanageable behemoths. Will the situation eventually correct itself or is this just a case of old-age nostalgia?

I found the buyer for Harbor Hill Books in Purple Mountain Press, a small publisher of regional books, for the most part on the Catskills and the Hudson River. The owners are Wray and Loni Rominger, and the business is located in Fleischmanns, New York. The sale took place as of June 1, 1990, and I felt relieved when my large inventory had been taken off my hands. There remained now only the task of liquidating the antiquarian inventory of New York State material. After a couple of sale lists the rest was sold to a few dealers, but to date no single dealer has seized upon the opportunity of continuing what is actually a large and rewarding field in regional Americana. Harold Nestler has, of course, plowed the field for a good many years, even before I started doing it, and I suppose he is now happy to have lost a competitor. Purple Mountain Press has, however, continued the publishing activity in the most admirable manner. In football lingo, they "were thrown a ball, and surely caught it and ran with it." Wray Rominger has shown tremendous imagination and expanded the list with many successful titles, for the most part with new manuscripts of high scholarly quality.

As I was preparing to spend my last few years devoting full time to rare books something happened that threw me right back whence I had come. A dear friend and good customer of mine, Richard M. Lederer, Jr., passed away after a short illness. I had designed and published his first book, *Place Names of Westchester County,* years before and we had served together on the publications board of the Westchester County Historical Society. Lederer had been the Scarsdale Village Historian for years. When I first learned about his death I remember thinking: there goes a wonderful library. I felt certain that he had willed his books, atlases, and maps to a local library. About six or eight months later I received a phone call from the executor of his estate: would I be interested in bidding on his library? As the legal executor he was required to obtain several bids.

It was a great temptation; still, I tried to convince myself that you have to stop sometime. Curiosity got the better of me, and I went to inspect the collection, housed partly in Dick's Scarsdale office, partly in his elegant home. It was enough to make a diehard antiquarian's blood boil. His collection of historical county and town atlases of Westchester was complete. Complete. So much so that the eventual catalogue of them would constitute a bibliography including several items not in Library of Congress map collection. I really did not expect to outbid whomever I was up against, but made a bid nonetheless—and got stuck with the collection.

In the middle of one of the hottest summers in memory it had to be brought to Mamaroneck, a distance of about five miles. Processing and cataloguing started, and I worked on it night and day (mostly nights because of the cooler temperature!). The catalogue was out by mid-November of 1993. It comprised 760 entries, but quality in this case exceeded quantity. Some of the highlights were: Burr's first printed map of Westchester County, the original 1829 imprint; an unpublished manuscript survey made in 1854 of some important Scarsdale property; a collection of eighteenth-century manuscript indentures regarding Scarsdale property; and much more. The catalogue also included a collection of early maps of the Bronx River Parkway, the first in the nation thus designated, which Dick had worked so hard to have placed on the National Register. These maps later turned out not to be present in the county archives.

I have to admit that it was a nice flourish as an end to my professional activity, and my efforts were recognized in reviews in local newspapers. Suzi Oppenheimer, my

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Greer

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sensual pleasure is added to this intense intimacy. The best-made books have individual smells; my morocco-bound presentation copy of *The Waterbabies* has a smell that recalls my childhood every bit as effectively as the scent of Proust's madeleines. If, on the other hand, you have in your hand a block of cheap modern paper in what is laughingly known as "perfect binding" which uses no stitching at all, you know that this is a book that will not be around long enough to become a friend because, when its glue dries out, as glues must do, there will come a day when you will open it and all its leaves will fall to the floor.

Usually we are unaware of the people who have had our book before us. We read on in blissful communion unless we are brought up short by some marginal comment, as disconcerting as a lipstick mark upon a collar. I shall never forget the shock of finding, written in a contemporary hand in the margin of a copy of the 1667 folio edition of the works of the poet, Katherine Philips, the words "Cunt in folio." That particular copy of this handsome edition, left to the Victoria and Albert Museum by the scholar and collector, the Reverend Alexander Dyce, in 1869, contains other seventeenth-century marginalia that are rather less disturbing. To a bibliophile, as distinct from a textual scholar (though many booklovers are both), it is important to find out the identity of past owners of a book; in his *Index of English Literary Manuscripts* Dr. Peter Beal gives almost as much importance to books that can be proved to have been owned by particular authors as he does to the manuscripts of their own work. All writers read more than they write, and what they write is illuminated by knowing what they read. Nowadays historians are putting more energy than ever before into the history of reading; we cannot understand intellectual life in any epoch if we do not know what was read, by how many, how often, and how understood. Ironically, the more popular a book, the more it is handled, carried, and passed from hand to hand, the less likely it is to survive.

Scholars in my line of business are hooked on the sensual appeal of old books. Though they know that some of the most valuable books in the British Library (the most comprehensive and valuable collection of pre-nineteenth-century printed books in the world) are suffering from regular handling by thousands of bare hands, their pages turned by an endless succession of fingertips each equipped with a sweat-pad, they refuse to consult the same books on microfilm. They want to get the feel, feel the weight, smell the smell of the real, surviving, actual book, whether they have a special bibliographic interest or not. These are pleasures they will soon have to forgo. In the past fortunes were spent on restoring old books, which meant in effect destroying them. They were taken apart, sometimes the leaves were encased in special membranes, and rebound as fat, tight, glossy things that would withstand all handling. The process was not only expensive but, like a good deal of art restoration, misguided to the point of insane vandalism. A historian of the book can learn little or nothing from a book that has been treated in this way. With the aid of specially engineered computers and specially designed software, we will soon be able to find out much more about papers, types, inks, and bindings than was dreamed of before—provided that their structure has not been obliterated. We should already be able to arrange surviving copies of an edition in the order that they came off the press, for example, merely by microscopic analysis of wear to the type, and thus to arrive at accurate assessments of stop press corrections and suppressions. Better knowledge of the book is important to me as a scholar of literature; if in the pursuit of better understanding I have to forgo the deep and quiet pleasure of holding some of our most precious old books in my bare hands, for nothing, so be it. Our national collections of books are our birthright but it is no longer feasible to allow us to paw them, any more than we can try on the crown jewels. If we want to hold these precious parcels in our naked hands in future, we are going to have to own them.

It is now thirty years since I became a collector and a custodian of old books myself. At first I bought copies of printings of rare women poets, most of them first editions, not because I wanted the books but because I wanted the poems. For years I let these slim volumes kick around all over the house, on my desk, on the floor, by my bed, and occasionally on a bookshelf; only last week I began slipping them into sleeves, to protect them against further damage from central heating, light, dust, and pollution, noticing guiltily how many of them had inscriptions and dedications, and how little account I had made of them. These were not for the most part well-made books, and given my rough treatment they have aged very badly. Ten years ago I began to acquire seventeenth-century editions. Though I like nothing better than looking at their gold-tooled leather spines ranged in their walnut bookcase, I'm afraid they too may have to go into

Christoffersen

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state senator, wrote me: "Dear Jens, I'm so happy you catalogued Dick Lederer's library. It should be utilized to its fullest. I was a great friend and fan of Dick's." I did manage to get out four more catalogues and lists of general antiquarian books, finishing with my *List No. 15* in 1995.

It was now our plan to sell the house which we had occupied since 1956. In the spring of 1996 we found a buyer, and the sale was concluded in May. Thus ended a 43-year residence in Mamaroneck, New York, on beautiful Long Island Sound. It is a well-known Mecca for sailors, a condition which we had taken full advantage of in earlier years. The time for de facto retirement had come, and we headed south to Houston, Texas, where my son and his family, including our two young grandchildren, had lived for a number of years. ■

sleeves, to be taken out and handled only on quiet evenings in the company of a noble claret.

These days, as I poke about on bookstalls looking for something to rescue, I discover too often that I am too late. In stall after stall in street markets all over Europe vendors offer the wreckage of beautiful books in the shape of single leaves selling at inflated prices. Even reputable merchants with shops in elegant streets are unembarrassed to sell such leaves as prints. Whenever I see a page torn from a psalter or missal or worse still a herbal or a florilegium and sold off as something to frame and hang on a wall, I vow to ring my Euro MP and ask him to bring a bill in the European parliament to outlaw any further breaking up of antiquarian books for profit, and to require that each leaf of such a book offered for sale has a certificate of provenance. If it is barbarous to burn a book, it is hardly less barbarous to dismember it. And still I see, as I bid in book auctions, the vandals raising their paddles alongside me forcing the prices to something I cannot pay, because the tatters of the book can be sold for more than the book itself. These are outrages that we can stop and should, now.

Afterword

Letters in response to the English printing of this piece [in the *London Times*] still arrive in numbers every day. It is probably time that such a high level of public concern was translated into legislation. What we need is an international protocol requiring that all surviving volumes printed or written before 1800 be issued with an ID number, which could be marked electronically in a micro dot on every leaf if necessary, and that all single leaves appearing on the market exhibit evidence of certified provenance. This would immediately stymie the thieves who remove single leaves or plates from books in libraries and make life very much more difficult for the book-breakers as well. We also need to change public awareness so that the sight of single leaves offered for sale causes at least as much shock and revulsion as the sight of fur. ■

ABA Responds to Greer

ABA President Peter Miller responded to Germaine Greer's views on breaking books with the following letter to the editor of the* London Times*, dated June 10, 1997.

by Peter Miller

Your banner headline about Germaine Greer's article on the front page of Tuesday's *Times* suggests that we tried to ban it. This was not the case. The article was commissioned for the catalogue for our antiquarian book fair, which takes place from June 26th-28th at Grosvenor House, and contained implied criticism of some of our members. I therefore rejected it as inappropriate for that purpose. But at no time did we try to ban it, and I feel that it raises important but difficult issues.

Books have been cut up for their leaves and plates for hundreds of years. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example, there was a vogue for collecting title pages (a practice now thankfully defunct), and many medieval manuscripts were plundered for their illuminated initials, John Ruskin being a notable collector. As a result there are thousands of leaves and plates from early books on the market. Today early manuscripts tend to stay together as they have a higher value complete than broken up.

This brings us to the economics of the market. In the book trade as in any other we respond to the demand of customers. When the demand for the individual prints of leaves exceeds the sum for the whole then the economic temptation is to break them up. Many dealers resist this and try to sell something complete if they possibly can. Most booksellers would prefer that books stay complete and do in fact only break defective copies.

Changes in public taste are guided partly by the market but more importantly by scholarly opinion. In her article Dr. Greer reflects the increasing emphasis placed by scholars on the book as a unique artifact each with its own individual history. This emphasis on cultural history is already changing collecting patterns and will, in due course I am sure, change attitudes to the market in leaves and plates.

Her suggestion, however, of a provenance register for these leaves and plates, while laudable in some ways, would, I suggest, only result in an unworkable bureaucratic nightmare.

Wood-Thomas

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innovations—plumbing, electricity, the automobile, air conditioning, and early aviation—bred an immense demand for skilled technicians. The Mechanics Institute trained the first generation of young practitioners, and the Society Library collected the early trade magazines and books on these topics. It remains a unique assembly of material covering the technical foundations of modern society.

The Rockefeller Group managed Rockefeller Center until recently; last year TishmanSpeyer took over the property. Rumor has it that the new managers and owners wish to transform Rockefeller Center into a Disney-like theme park, or perhaps to restructure it as a mall for high-end clothing retailers. Christies auction house has already leased a substantial amount of space, and extensive new construction has begun in order to accommodate them. Whatever the plans, virtually all of the shops and small tenants have been bought out or have lost their leases. The banks are also leaving, including Marine Midland Bank, where the ABAA Benevolent Fund has its account.

The ABAA Rockefeller Center lease would have expired in March 1998. In the spring we began negotiations to end the terms of our lease by August, 1997. The ABAA agreed to five months of free occupancy, equivalent to a $12,000 buy-out, and to vacate by September 10, 1997.

I began searching for a new office for ABAA headquarters a few months ago, and a bleak search it was. Although the office had been barely adequate because of its small size and lack of windows, the amenities and ambience of Rockefeller Center had its compensations. I was shown space in the 32nd Street and Lexington Avenue area, and at 23rd Street on Sixth Avenue.

ABAA member Barbara Cohen, whose New York Bound Bookshop shared tenancy with the ABAA at Rockefeller Center, suggested I try the General Society. She is a member of the Board of the Small Press Center, a tenant in the Society building. I paid a call on the Director, Daniel R. Stimson, at the end of May, and we agreed that both organizations could benefit from our presence. The Society's Facilities Committee and their Board of Governors approved the plan in early July, as did the Executive Committee of the ABAA's Board of Governors. The General Society was particularly interested in the history of the Association and its financial reliability. The result is a five-year lease, with an option for five more years.

Moving day is September 10, 1997. The ABAA office will be on the fourth floor of the General Society, with a much larger space than at 50 Rockefeller Center and, of great importance to me, three large windows overlooking the Harvard Club. Forty-fourth Street is often referred to as "Club Row" west of Fifth Avenue: our neighbors include the New York Bar Association, the New York Yacht Club, the Century Association, and the Algonquin Hotel.

The new ABAA address is 20 West 44th Street, Fourth Floor, New York, NY 10036-6604. The telephone number we have had for many years will continue to be operative for the next year, until we can circulate the new one to the general public. People dialing it will be automatically forwarded to the new number, 212-944-8291, and will not be aware of a change until informed to use the new number. The fax number has changed to 212-944-9293, and the former number will not be forwarded to the new number. The ABAA internet and e-mail addresses remain the same.

When you are next in New York City, come and see us at the new office. ■

ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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Effective September 10, 1997

Recent Books by Members

reviewed by Rob Rulon-Miller

● ***Appraisals: A Guide for Bookmen. By Marvin Mondlin.*** New York City: American Sunbeam Publisher, 1997. Edition limited to 2100 copies; 55 pages, printed wrappers. $20.00

Marvin Mondlin has been a professional in the book trade since the 1950s and is currently "estate book buyer" at the Strand in New York City. This is a useful, but bare bones guide to appraising quantities of miscellaneous used and out-of-print books. Appraisers of rare and fine books may find some useful information, but advice such as making appraisals "without guidebooks or expert outside opinion" should be taken in context, if not with a grain or two of salt. Some minor errors, such as in the "examples" of Roman numerals where 1997 is given as mcmlxxxxvii (and not mcmxcvii), and the omission of any mention of IRS Form 8283 cast some aspersion on the rigorousness of the manual as may, to most readers nowadays, the gender-oriented noun in the title. Included are a "Checklist of Terms," "List of Basic References," and the text of Mondlin's "Judging a Book by Its Cover," a lecture given by him to the Friends of the Brooklyn College Library. *Appraisals* is handsomely designed by Abe Lerner and printed at the Stinehour Press.

● ***Collected Books: The Guide to Values. 1998 Edition. By Allen and Patricia Ahearn.*** New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, [1997]. 767 pages, cloth. $75.00

In a recent article on book collecting (*The Book Collector*, Summer 1997) the well-known Paris dealer, Pierre Beres, remonstrates against books that pretend to ferret out for both collector and librarian the "significant" and the "distinguished" titles, otherwise known—and perhaps now pejoratively—as "highspots." These books, such as *Printing and the Mind of Man* and the *Grolier 100* lists, make facile and accessible to the public the opinions of persons "of scholarship and imagination." Beres speculates that because of the success of these books "public libraries are more or less compelled to take them into account;" and that "amateurs sometimes follow them to the letter." These notions, Beres says, "create illusory goals, making books unattainable by reason of rarity or price," and they limit "the scope of research and curiosity." The same might be said of price guides in general, and to a point, the price guide presently under our microscope.

The heirs to Van Allen Bradley's *Handbook of Values: An Encyclopedia of Rare Books for Collectors, Dealers and Librarians* (fourth edition, 1982), Allen and Patricia Ahearn have made a cottage industry of assigning prices to books. Nearly two-thirds of their 1995 publication, *Book Collecting: A Comprehensive Guide,* is devoted to the pricing of authors' first books—some 5000 of them. They also publish a series of *Author Price Guides* for over 160 authors, available individually from the Ahearns at prices ranging from $1.00 (Cynthia Ozick) to $10.00 (Agatha Christie) or, for the completists, in a (collectable?) three-volume set. By proxy, their recent gigantic *Catalogue 116* is itself a price guide of modern authors, containing over 4800 succinct catalogue descriptions with prices prominently affixed in a separate column in the margins, and itself one-third the size of the present second edition of *Collected Books: The Guide to Values.*

A comparison of Bradley's title with that of the Ahearns gives an indication of how aggressive the market for price guides has turned since the last edition of Bradley. While Bradley was a pioneer without peer, the Ahearns must contend with other successful books of the genre: *Bookman's Price Index*, The Clique's *Annual Register of Book Values*, Mandeville's *Used Book Price Guide*, Zempel and Verkler's *Book Prices: Used and Rare*, and other such compendia. The Ahearns' title is at once demonstrative and aggressive. Compare "collected books" with "the book collector's handbook of values." Bradley's language is more distant grammatically from the knock-me-down world of aggressive marketing: the word "handbook" rather deftly conveys the subtle idea that there is no weird science in the pricing of books, and that the book itself is friendly and instructive, not definitive. The Ahearns' title—*Collected Books: The Guide to Values*—has a hard, dominating sound to it, and the definite article "the" speaks volumes about where the Ahearns want to be positioned *vis-à-vis* their competitors. In fact, the subtitle more properly should read "A" *Guide to Values*, and the title, "Some" *Collected Books,* for virtually every book ever published is "collectable" and to pretend otherwise is disingenuous.

In the introductory material the Ahearns offer many words of caution, stating that prices are "estimated values" and "*believed* [my italics] to be accurate plus or minus twenty percent" (a rather considerable swing of forty percent *or more*), and that bibliographies should be consulted. "So take everything with a grain of salt," they say, "and consult other sources before making a final decision on buying or pricing an expensive book." These cautionary notes to the user of *Collected Books* are to be heeded, although due to the ready-to-use, alphabetical nature of the genre are apt not to be even seen by the average user.

There is both a culture bias and a culture loss in limiting the entries to books in English. I wonder how much better a book this may have been had the detritus been sifted out and replaced with important texts written in other languages. Are the twenty-eight entries needed, for example, for Gertrude Stein; the thirty-seven each for Faulkner and Edgar Rice Burroughs; the forty for Trollope; or the forty-seven for William Butler Yeats, the hands-down winner in the "most entries contest"? Do we need the sizeable stack of *jujitsu* books that the Ahearns deem worthy of inclusion? How much better a guide this may have been with entries for books by Einstein, Erasmus or Euclid, Dante, Diderot or Daudet, even if only in English translation? The Ahearns' formula for writers prior to the modern era is to include the author's first book and the

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Recent Books

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author's best known book. Many writers from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century—John Locke, William Cobbett, and John Evelyn among them—are listed only for their points of contact with the lists so scorned by Mr. Beres.

And yet even within the stated scope of *Collected Books* there are regretful omissions. There is no entry for any edition of "Beowulf," arguably one of the greatest poems in English (albeit Old English). Although there is an entry for the Koran, there is none for the Bible. Like "Beowulf," the 1611 edition of the King James Bible is a cornerstone in English literature, and it would have been an easy enough undertaking to list it (both the "he" and "she" versions) together with the Baskerville Bible, the Doves Press Bible, the Bruce Rogers Lectern Bible, and so on, but perhaps not to the extent that the compilers list the twenty-odd editions and issues of *Leaves of Grass*.

There is no Susanna Rowson, no John Cleland, no Andrew Marvell, no Thomas Heywood, no William Hogarth, no William Cowper, no David Garrick, no Hanna More, no Abraham Cowley, no Robert Barclay, no Junius, no Addison or Steele, no Edgar, George, Horace, Horatio, or Robert Walpole, or even Hugh Walpole; no William Temple, no Thomas Sheridan, no William Shenstone, no Samuel Plimsoll, no Walter Raleigh, no Joseph Priestley; no Francis Drake. To the compilers' credit, there are also no Salinger or Pynchon piracies.

Among the *non sequiturs* I find Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, but not John Quincy Adams' *Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory*. Books by Kennedy, Eisenhower, and both Roosevelts are included, as is Herbert Hoover's *Fishing for Fun,* but not Grover Cleveland's rare *A Defense of Fishermen*, nor even his common *Fishing and Shooting Sketches*. The *Genealogy* of Noah Webster as edited by Paul Leicester Ford is included, but not the original edition published by Webster himself. The Carey atlas is present, but not the Mitchell or the Colton atlases. The Merrymount Book of Common Prayer is present, but not the Updike Altar Book. Three titles in English translation are listed for Flaubert, but inexplicably not *Madame Bovary*; Sheraton and Chippendale are present, but neither the *Martial* nor the *Naval Achievements* by Jenkins. Stagg's book on American football is there, but not Spalding's book on baseball.

I was surprised to see in such a modern-oriented book the absence of books by rock stars. I found Jim Morrison but I would like to find—and where else would I go but Ahearn?—the numbers on Patti Smith, Bob Dylan, or John Lennon. (Or even Jethro Tull).

Nordoff and Hall's *Mutiny on the Bounty* is listed, but the other two books in the trilogy—*Pitcairn's Island* and *Men Against the Sea*—are not. In the same boat I find seven Patrick O'Brian titles listed (up from zero in the first edition of 1991), but not three of the toughest and most sought-after: *Surgeon's Mate*, *The Truelove*, and *The Far Side of the World.*

Collected editions are cursorily represented: I would have expected to find the collected works of Spenser (1609-11) as well the Constable edition of Melville (1922-24), which contains the first printed appearance of one of his greatest works of prose, *Billy Budd.* Under Shakespeare is listed the Pope edition of the collected plays, but not the far more important Rowe edition (1709). I did not find one miniature book, although I might have easily missed them. Science and medicine are poorly represented, as are architecture, archeology, early books, history, polar exploration, theology, and antiquarian scholarship, among other "collected" subjects, except where they become tangential to the sanitized *index librorum* such as *PMM*—titles and values that most savvy dealers and collectors will discern without the help of *Collected Books,* and that most amateurs would eschew. The most expensive book is the *Canterbury Tales* printed by Caxton in 1478 (unobtainable to the point of being irrelevant) listed at a half-million dollars. And at the other end of the spectrum is the stupidest, *The Encyclopedia of Golf Collectibles*, a limited, signed edition published in Florence, Alabama in 1985 listed at $150.

Is it a cabal of publishers, writers, and perhaps even booksellers that continues to conceive, produce, and sell "limited" and "signed" editions? Have book collectors, like cigarette smokers, become addicted to the product, hoodwinked by those who produce them? Is the term "collected books" becoming equated with "limited" and "signed" books? I didn't do the math but I suspect the percentage of limited and signed books—books insidiously produced for the purpose of being collected —is a large one. I, for one, become troubled by an entry such as that for William Gibson's *Neuromancer*—a seminal work of fiction about the futuristic world of cyberspace (a word, incidentally, coined by Gibson). The Ahearns list the first edition—an Ace paperback that may well have gone nowhere—at $100, and list the deluxe, limited, signed edition published two years after fame and fortune hit at $350. Whatever could it be about the latter that gives it preference over the former? Please don't say the signature.

So what about the millions and millions of other books in the world? Are these not to be collected? Are books in foreign and dead languages forever to be ignored? Are the "un"-collected books anathema to the pat world of specially signed and numbered editions, and modern firsts? I don't have the answers to these questions, but if *Collected Books* is "the" guide it claims to be, I'd say they are.

Collected Books is geared toward the fat of the market—modern first editions, western Americana, and avowed highspots in a number of fields. To be fair there is a smattering of photography books, travel books, press books, bibliographies, and, for some reason, small preponderances of books on papermaking, Mormons, silver, and the martial arts. These and other subject areas are traceable to dealers other than the Ahearns who have supplied them with lists of books from specialties with which the Ahearns might not be familiar.

The subtleties of the sport in books are so deep and various, and at times so arcane that perhaps the world is entitled to a basic guide such as this, cursory though it may be. In this the Ahearns

Carl Hertzog Book Design Award, 1997

Book designers, printers, and publishers throughout the United States are encouraged to submit books printed in 1996 or 1997 for the sixth annual competition for the Carl Hertzog Book Design Award. Sponsored by the Associates of the University Library of the University of Texas at El Paso, this national award honors the lifework of one of this country's most accomplished book designers and printers, the late Carl Hertzog (1902-84).

The competition is open to presses and publishers of all types and sizes. The winner and runners-up will receive national publicity and will be exhibited in the University Library of the University of Texas at El Paso for two months after the announcement of the award on February 8, 1998.

The winner will receive a $1,000 cash prize, a framed certificate, and a specially struck bronze medal designed by Hertzog's long-time associate, Tom Lea.

The Associates of the University Library was established in 1987 as the support group of the University Library of the University of Texas at El Paso. Its purposes are to inform the El Paso community of Library programs and accomplishments; to involve the community in Library activities; and to encourage gifts to the Library.

By creating and sponsoring the Hertzog Award, the Associates of the University Library endeavor to underscore the importance of fine printing as an art, to encourage work by new and established artisans, and to annually recognize outstanding accomplishments in the field.

Previous winners of the Carl Hertzog Book Design Award are Gerald W. Lange, USC Fine Arts Press, *The Letter of Columbus on His Discovery of the New World* (1989); Patrick Reagh, Patrick Reagh Printers, Inc., *Jean Cocteau and the Illustrated Book* (1990); W. Thomas Taylor, for Chama Press, *Self-Portrait with Birds* (1991); Richard Eckersley, University of Nebraska Press, *O Pioneers!* (1992); and James Linden, *The Ephemera of Adrian Wilson* (1994).

- Only books and pamphlets, both finely printed and trade items, may be submitted; minimum length is 16 pages.
- Privately published volumes with a minimum print run of 25 copies are eligible.
- Entries must be published and entirely produced (designed, typeset or composed, printed, bound, etc.) in the United States.
- There is a maximum number of five entries allowed, and all must have been printed in 1996 or 1997.
- Books previously entered are not eligible.
- Only one copy need be submitted.
- There is no entry or handling fee.
- The winning entry will become the property of the University of Texas at El Paso Library and will be placed in the Carl Hertzog Collection. Other entries will be kept by the Library at the option of the contestants.
- While a printer, publisher, or designer can submit an entry, only the designer is eligible to receive the award.
- All entries must be postmarked by October 1, 1997.

Submissions and entry forms should be sent first-class, insured mail to: Hertzog Award Competition, c/o University Librarian, UTEP Library, El Paso, Texas 79968-0582. Questions regarding the competition should be directed to the University Librarian, 915-747-5683. ■

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have succeeded as well if not better than anyone else. They have enlisted the first-rate support of well-known and established dealers and experts in the field (see the three-plus pages of acknowledgements). Bibliographical points are mentioned and, when necessary, meticulously described in order to help identify first editions and issue points. An occasional auction price is cited to bolster a stated value, and the preliminary section, "First-Edition Identification by Publisher," will be useful to those dealing or collecting twentieth-century books. At the back is a thirty-eight page list of bibliographies for authors included in *Collected Books*, though I was a little disappointed at the number of references to the general bibliographies such as Leper, *First Printings of American Authors*, and *BAL*.

Entries such as those (on three consecutive pages) for Maurice Sendak, Ernest Thompson Seton (later Seton Thompson), and Dr. Seuss (Theodore Geisel) are both useful and informative. The selection given for these three seems a reasonable cross-section of their work, and, as there are no major bibliographies for any of these author/illustrators, the bibliographic details that are provided are all that much of the book world has available to consult. It is in the likes of these three that *Collected Books* excels.

Yes, there are bibliographical mistakes, but I did not find too many, and some typos in the proof that may yet be caught in the published edition. A few titles are given wrong (see Slocum, for example, where *The Voyage of the Liberdade* is given as *Voyage of the Destroyer*). And I did raise my eyebrows at some of the prices, but again, not so many. The prices we can argue till the cows come home.

Inchoate yet instrumental, *Collected Books* is limited to what the editors know from their own business (primarily literature in English since 1850), and what they have been able to glean from catalogues and lists of a select number of their colleagues. In these arenas they are successful. But given the broad sweep of printing history, and the vast numbers of people in various guises waving untold desiderata, the Ahearns' quest to produce "the" guide is hopeless, their dragon to slay peremptorily Protean and ubiquitous. Credit them for taking up the sword and bringing us dinner, but the cupboard remains barely half full. ■

Membership Updates

Marjorie Parrott Adams has a new phone and fax number: 978-368-4225.

Antic Hay Books has a new address, fax, and e-mail: PO Box 2185, Asbury Park, NJ 07712; fax: 732-774-4770; e-mail: AnticHay@bellatlantic.com

Stephen Avedikian has a new address: Forest Hall, 2906 Forest Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705.

Stuart Bennett no longer has a street address for courier shipments; his mailing address, phone, fax, and e-mail remain the same.

Biblioctopus has a new address: 2131 Century Park Lane, Century City, CA 90067.

The Book Broker now has a web site: http://www.bookbrk.com

Calhoun's Books has a new e-mail address: calbooks@epix.net

Gilann Books has a new address, phone, and fax: 69 Jefferson Street, Stamford, CT 06902; phone: 203-327-6022; fax: 203-327-4858.

Colophon Book Shop now has a web site: http://www.colophonbooks.com

Jens J. Christoffersen has a new address: 444 East Medical Center Boulevard, Apt. 1010, Webster, TX 77598.

Donal A. Brody, **Great Epic Books,** has a new personal e-mail address: africabooks@worldnet.att.net

Gregor Books has a new e-mail address: gregorbooks@foxinternet.net

Hamill & Barker now has e-mail: handb@pop.wwa.com

Heritage Book Shop has a new web site: http://www.heritagebookshop.com

Kauai Fine Arts now has e-mail and a web site: kfa@brunias.com; web site: http://www.brunias.com

Edward J. Lefkowicz has a new address phones, and fax: 500 Angell Street, Providence, RI 02906; phone: 401-277-0787; toll-free: 800-201-7901; fax: 401-277-1459.

J. & J. Lubrano has a new address and e-mail: 8 George Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230; e-mail: lubrano@bcn.net

David L. O'Neal has a new e-mail address: onealbks@tiac.net

Riverow Bookshop has a new e-mail address: Riverow@clarityconnect.com

Tavistock Books has a new address and fax: 1503 Webster Street, Alameda, CA 94501; fax: 510-814-0486.

Roy Young Bookseller now has a web site: http://www.royoung.com ■

BSA Fellowship Program for 1998

The Bibliographical Society of America (BSA) invites applications for its annual fellowship program, which supports bibliographical inquiry as well as research in the history of the book trades and in publishing history. Eligible topics may concentrate on books and documents in any field, but should focus on the book or manuscript (the physical object) as historical evidence. Such topics may include establishing a text or studying the history of book production, publication, distribution, collecting, or reading. Enumerative listings do not fall within the scope of this program.

BSA fellowships may be held for one or two months. The program is open to applicants of any nationality. Fellows will be paid a stipend of up to $1,000 per month in support of travel, living, and research expenses. Applications, including three letters of reference, for this program will be due on December 1, 1997.

In 1997 the BSA awarded twelve months of support to ten scholars from a variety of disciplines. Announcements of past Fellows are available upon request from the Executive Secretary or may be viewed on the Society's Home Page at http://www.cla.sc.edu/engl/bsa. The Fellows are also announced annually in the *Papers* of the BSA, the Society's quarterly journal.

Membership in the Society is open to all interested in bibliographical projects and problems. For more information on BSA Fellowships or society membership contact the Executive Secretary, Bibliographical Society of America P.O. Box 397 Grand Central Station, New York, NY10163; phone/fax: (212) 647-9171; e-mail: bibsocamer@aol.com. ■

Deadline for submissions to the next* Newsletter *is October 13, 1997

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